

Welcome to my Annual Report.

This year's Captain's Annual Report will be vastly different than any other Annual Report I have written. This is to coincide with the vastly different year 2020 has brought us. I also write this report to document and record the year that was, as we easily forget.

2020 started like any other year recent year for us. Trade was great, our Golf schedule was set, Men's A,B,C and Juniors were playing Pennants with some good results. We started hearing about a virus in China and that hospitals were being built to cope with the spread. Collectively we shrugged our shoulders. Oh well, we have had Bird Flu, SARS H1 N1, Spanish Flu, so what's new? Then as cases ramped up globally, the news of lockdown came on the 23 March 2020. Everything including our golf club and golf was shut indefinitely.

Your board and management went into overdrive. Zoom meetings became the norm as we battled through every challenge. One government department was advising one thing, another government department advised another. One golfing governing body advised one thing, another advised completely different. But during these early stages, we collectively agreed to one thing. If the government advise us doing A, B and C. We did A, B and C. We didn't make up D, E and F to make us feel good.

And so, golf was re-opened under strict conditions. Almost every day there was a hurdle to get over. I remember my wife coined the phrase "COVID-19 did not come with an instruction booklet." Who can remember that for months we played in twos? We would finish golf and then head straight home. Not even on drink after the game with our playing partners. We forget pretty easily.

No sand buckets, no touching of flags, flag cups to be turned upside down and so the list went on. With every new recommendation released, we implemented that recommendation with no hesitation or complaint. With the clubhouse shut, we could not do our usual time sheet draws, so we went to an on-line method. Within the first few weeks we saw that the same people were getting the same spots each week. I shared the frustration with you of logging in at 5.00pm and 000.1 seconds only to be waiting for 20 minutes and not get a game. We were inundated with justifiable complaints from members so we had to adapt, improvise and overcome. We went to a live draw via Facebook to ensure fairness. Huge to thanks to Mark Pavey at Erina Creek for allowing us to broadcast from his studio. Not only were we able to do the draw, but we were able to keep our members advised of developments. Also huge thanks to our board members who worked tirelessly to ensure the draw process worked seamlessly, in particular Mick Lamaro, Susan Eastway and Toni McSweeney. Thanks also to Malcolm Sheldon and Dave Fletcher for on camera work during broadcasts.

With the daily changes to golfing operations coming through, we knew that ingenuity would take over. Cut off pool noodles were placed in the bottom of the holes to reduce the risk of touching. Handshakes became fist pumps or club touches or elbow touches. The development of the 'Ronny Retriever' to remove the ball from the hole. Then we were faced with challenges that were harder to swallow and justify. Rules such as one person per cart regardless of relationships. We had to enforce a scenario, whereby a married a couple could share the same bed, drive to golf together, and then arrive at the course and not be able to share a golf cart, nor have 2 sets of clubs on one cart? But with every hurdle, we asked and begged for our greater membership to comply, and you all did.

One thing we found challenging was to control the behavior of our visitors and social players as they are not bound by our standards as set in our constitution and by-laws. By and large, our visitor social golfers complied, but all it would take is two people to share a cart, and golf operations across the state could be jeopardised. We decided to address this - we needed more competition golf. And wow, you as members sure did take up the offer! We implemented competitions 7 days a week and had record numbers of golfers played. Undoubtedly, this provided much needed social and mental exercise during telling times.

Normally this report is 90% made up of reporting on the various champions through the year, but this year, I purposefully will not report on them. The reason being, that in the next coming months, those names will adorn our honour boards for all time and I invite you to look at all those names. Additionally, I want you to notice, that unlike many other clubs, our honour boards will not contain the words "Not played due to COVID-19". With the completion of the Men's Top Gun event yesterday, every board event was played during 2020. This was not achieved through ignoring government advice or directions. It was by careful planning and strict adherence to government advice, but more importantly the trust we placed in our members to comply. You collectively recognised, that short term pain, would be long term gain. I am happy to report, that we had almost no complaints about member behavior and not complying with COVID guidelines, and any complaint was minor.

A huge thank you to our staff led by General Manager Scott Armstrong, for their incredible efforts during the year. I will always remember seeing Scott in the pre-JobKeeper days, riding a mower cutting fairways, then stopping to answer numerous club related phone calls, then returning to cut fairways. A huge thanks to our frontline staff, especially our pro shop staff, who for months kept golf operations going during periods of uncertainty. And to all our clubhouse staff, I say thank you. To Andrew Banning and his team, we offer great praise and thanks for the year-round condition of the course again under challenging circumstances.

And finally, our members. You! Without you, we are nothing. We asked so much of you through the year, and you delivered. In some way maybe this insidious disease has added to our positive and friendly culture that is Shelly Beach. Let's build on this culture and continue to grow and cement SBGC as the friendliest and premiere golf course on the Central Coast.