

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO 2014 AGM
of the FORBES GOLFERS ASSOCIATION INC.

INTRODUCTION:

It is with great pleasure that I present the sixth President's Report of the Forbes Golfers Association Inc. (FGA).

2013/14 has been a turbulent year of change and a high level of activity.

The Financial Statements show that FGA achieved an overall Deficit of -\$18,371, a result reflecting the on-going capital and renovation works carried out during the year; significant cost increases from water, power and course repairs and maintenance; and depreciation of \$18,606 (a book item).

All positions in the Pro-shop and on course have changed during the year, resulting in redundancy, insurance and termination expenses, as well as a large amount of work for FGA's committees in making new appointments.

As in past years, FGA has been supported by the fund-raising of the various Sub-Committees. In 2013/14, the combined Sub-Committees earned a Surplus of \$37,571 (a fine overall result), with the Sixes and Junior Committees the stand out successes, while the major projects and additional costs of the Management Committee resulted in a Management Committee deficit of -\$55,942.

Once again during 2013/14, FGA has received valuable support from Forbes Shire Council (FSC) in the form of loaned machinery and machinery maintenance, as well as another \$5,000 contribution to support the Greens Reconstruction Program. We thank Council very much for their support.

The impact of the significant improvement projects carried out by FGA and the purchase of additional plant and equipment will be explained in the main body of this report and in the Treasurer's Report.

MAJOR ISSUES IN 2013/14

1. Course Management Issues:

Another hot summer resulted in a heavy work-load with watering and mowing the course for the ground-staff of Brett Thomas and Nathain Gibson. The result was another year of higher electricity, water, repair and maintenance costs. Fertilizer top-dressing, spraying out broad-leaf weeds and regular mowing of fairways and rough with available machinery all contributed to a high standard of maintenance of the course, so that by autumn the fairways were in very good shape despite the heat.

However, all concerned were disappointed with the deterioration of the greens that occurred after Christmas for a second year running. A contributing factor was the river pump, which failed during January 2014, resulting in the need to purchase expensive town water from Forbes Shire Council. Council has charged

FGA \$350 per megalitre for this emergency water. The pump repair was extensive and also required re-construction of the entire installation at the river bank, at significant cost.

The costs and time taken to reconstruct the 13th and 18th greens were also a significant burden as well as being an inconvenience to golfers. FGA thanks you for your patience with the 2 temporary greens that seemed to be in play forever. There are no on course greens reconstructions planned for 2014/15.

As referred to earlier, our ground-staff changed during the year. Charlie Haynes suffered an injury in August 2013 and has since had back surgery resulting in Charlie ceasing work as of August 2014. We thank Charlie for his services over many years. In May 2014, the Management Committee decided to declare all full time ground-staff positions vacant, appointed Justin Clarke as full time Course Supervisor, set up an Apprenticeship position for a trainee green-keeper and offered a redundancy to Brett Thomas (who was eligible to apply for the Apprenticeship position). The Apprenticeship position was eventually filled by Nathain Gibson. I would like to thank our employed staff, Brett and Nathain, for their work throughout most of the year. Also, thanks to Justin Clarke for his over-seeing of work earlier in the year. FGA extends its best wishes to Justin in his role as Course Supervisor for 2014/15 and beyond.

Lyn Roberts is a tireless volunteer, regularly assisting with mowing on a weekly basis. All members of FGA appreciate the contribution made by Lyn.

The various sub-committees make regular contributions to tidying, spraying of the rough and improvements works – please refer to the front of this Report to see the members of these sub-committees who contribute to the success of the course and events.

2. Pro-Shop:

As a result of negotiations with Jack Newton Junior Golf (JNJG) and the Junior Committee, FGA resolved to appoint an accredited Golf Professional to be the contracted operator of the Pro-shop. The incumbent operator, Tony Ross, agreed he was not eligible for such a position. As a consequence of negotiations with Todd Iffland of Impact Golf at Wentworth Golf Club in Orange and Peter van Wegen of JNJG, Todd Iffland was appointed as Golf Professional at Forbes, commencing on 1st February 2014.

We would like to thank Tony Ross for his assistance and service over the previous 5-6 years and in the transition from his management of the Pro-shop to that of Todd Iffland.

Unfortunately, Todd has not been able to continue with his contract due to pressures of time, travel and commitments in Orange. On 11th June 2014, Todd gave the required 3 months' notice to cease his operation of the Pro-shop from 11th September 2014. FGA has advertised the position through the PGA NSW web-site and has received encouraging responses from PGA members. Until a new contractor is appointed, FGA will operate the Pro-shop and Todd Iffland and Todd Brackenridge will continue with lessons in Forbes and attend the Junior Holiday Camps.

FGA would like to thank the 'Two Todds' for their help and friendship in fostering golf in Forbes. It is a shame they were not able to continue their service, however, we look forward to continuing contact in one form or another. Lastly, I would like to thank the Pro-shop staff (Ray Taylor and Margaret and Ron Hurst) for their great help and good-natured support to golfers throughout the year.

3. Refurbishment of Assets:

As stated in past years, the Forbes golf course has been in need of investment for the refurbishment of assets, given that the irrigation system, the greens, the bridges and the buildings were built more than 40 years ago. FGA's broad approach has been to raise an asset levy as part of competition fees; seek support from funding bodies, Council and its own sub-committees; and lift green fee revenue by more games being played. It is capital works that are often the hidden costs of running such a facility as a golf course. All Golf Clubs have to deal with this capital works issue by developing Capital Works Plans, which are mostly expensive but necessary.

In April and June 2014, the Management Committee met with the office bearers of all sub-committees to discuss the present and future funding of capital projects around the course. The sub-committees generously agreed to have their ledger balances lowered by a total of \$97,229.27 to in effect pay for the following projects which had been funded through the main bank account up to that point: Men's Committee (Workshop Extension \$20,615.60), Ladies Committee (FGA House Refurbishment \$22,142.31), Sixes Committee (Machinery and Equipment \$30,000.00), Classic Committee (Security and Lights \$7,010.67), Vets Committee (River Pump and connecting pipeline \$8,390.27), Junior Committee (Membership, Scoring and Website \$5,884.86).

This is in addition to other works done around the course eg. 1st Tee (Mens), 2nd Tee (Classic), Tigers Pass (Ladies) etc.

On behalf of the Management Committee I would like to thank our sub-committees for their support of these projects and for their contribution to the vexed process of developing a Capital Plan.

4. Irrigation Project:

Installation of the new irrigation system is the priority project that was commenced on May 20th 2014 and was completed to operational level on schedule and to Budget for the original specifications by 30th August 2014. Some additional items were approved by FGA (namely water connection to the half-way house toilets, an additional small pump to allow hand watering of the greens throughout the course (\$6701.25) and interest that will have to be paid on the

loan from TORO to cover the installation costs of the project (\$29,018)). The whole project will now cost \$443,170.31, including interest but excluding GST. Justin Clarke led an installation team from Darling Irrigation, which very efficiently installed the system with minimum interruption to golf events. Our thanks and appreciation goes to Justin and his DI team.

Particular thanks must also go to Jeff Haley who for 3 months has been daily on the job with his tractor to restore the course, hole by hole, as the DI team completed pipe installation. I cannot speak highly enough of Jeff's contribution on behalf of Forbes golfers. Other volunteers to help with the course restoration work have included Ralph Baker, Barry Shine, Mary Ewing, Judy Hodge and members of the Men's Committee, who also receive our thanks

5. Hire Carts and new Cart Shed Construction:

To provide services to golfers, FGA purchased 10 new EZGO golf carts for hire, commencing from 1st February 2014. The contract Golf Pro is to receive a commission on managing the carts. To date the cart hire revenue has covered the finance payments, including the quiet time of the year.

As a consequence of this purchase, FGA instigated the planning, approval and construction process for 2 by14 berth cart sheds to be constructed on FGA's property. This process has been very drawn out and the plans have been subject to considerable review by Council in order to obtain a construction certificate. FGA expects this to be granted promptly now an Engineer's re-design has been completed.

Finance for this facility has been from pre-payment by interested members for a space, plus loans from Management Committee members repayable from proceeds from hiring the remaining spaces. In order to avoid price rises, the materials for the 2 sheds have been purchased and await the go-ahead.

It is expected that this shed will then release the entire old cart shed for FGA's ten carts plus room for a work/storage area for the Golf Professional. FGA expects the revenue from the new shed hire will, after 4 years, make a valuable contribution to other capital works around the course.

6. Driving Range Development:

FGA successfully applied for a NSW Sport and Recreation Grant of \$25,000 to construct and equip our Driving Range, so that it becomes a modern facility where members and the public can practice using FGA's range balls and have them picked up by a ball picker owned by FGA.

The ball picker is about to be re-delivered, after being damaged in transit some months ago. Range balls have been acquired and the irrigation system has been installed on the Driving Range.

The construction of a practice green near the 15th green is part of the development and this will commence in 2015. This green will also act as a

temporary Par 3 hole when future greens reconstructions are to take place, thus avoiding temporary greens.

7. Sixes Golf Competition:

In 2013/14 the Sixes was run a star performer, again delivering more golf and a high degree of fund retention by FGA. All surplus funds from the Sixes have gone into course equipment and improvements. I would like to thank particularly Ted Morgan, Mary Ewing, Evelyn Uphill and Graham Coombs for their enthusiastic conduct of the competition.

8. Thanks to Volunteers:

I would like to thank all volunteers and committee members who have helped in running golf events, administration and on the course. Golfers should always bear in mind the savings that volunteers make for all golfers, as the conduct of events and membership issues is complex and time consuming.

9. Junior Committee.

As well as recording another increased financial surplus for the year, the FGA Junior Committee has continued to be an outstanding performer in developing well-attended junior golf activities. Trips for juniors to the Australian Open at Royal Sydney and well-attended holiday camps have once again been features of the year's program.

I would like to thank, Anthony Gordon, Annie Mooy, Jill Cripps, Andrew Grierson, Brett Thomas and Neil McMillan

10. Course Committee.

David Sly, Randal Grayson, Niel Duncan, Jeff Haley and I have formed the Course Committee, as well as the two Captains, Robyn Hammond and Steve Betland. The Course Committee meets before each Management Committee meeting to develop recommendations for works on the course.

11. Other Contributions.

Wrapping up the year would be incomplete without thanking our 2 handicappers, Jenny Hubbard and Garry Fordham; also the Ladies Captain, Robyn Hammond, and the Men's and Club Captain Steve Betland.

Thanks also to other members of the golf community who have assisted during the year but who may not have been acknowledged.

I would like to conclude by thanking all members for their membership renewals and all golfers for their continued support by way of the games played.

As a consequence of the high standard FGA is seeking to restore to the Forbes golf course and the significant costs pressures specified in the Management Committee accounts, FGA has had to increase membership fees by 10% for 2014/15 and to adjust green fees to take inflation into account. I ask for your understanding with this policy. We try to keep the cost of golf in Forbes at a similar level to costs at Parkes and Cowra, with a corresponding quality level on the course. However, all clubs are struggling with costs and while we try to provide golf in Forbes at a significant discount to urban and regional centers, FGA cannot provide golf at below cost.

Andrew McDonald
President FGA Inc. 22nd October 2014