

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO 2015 AGM  
of the FORBES GOLFERS ASSOCIATION INC.**

**INTRODUCTION:**

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

2014/15 can be summed up as a year of construction and a blossoming of the course to its best condition in a generation.

The Financial Statements show that FGA achieved an overall Deficit of -\$31,827, a result reflecting solid patronage of the course and revenues; high capital expenditure on the completion of the irrigation system (\$457,000 full cost), the Cart Sheds (\$55,531 full cost) and Driving Range (\$28,143 full cost) projects; and a full irrigation and fertiliser program resulting in high water, power, fuel, R&M and mowing costs. Depreciation and amortization total an additional \$60,310 (a book item).

The result of this program has been a dramatic improvement of the course back towards a championship standard.

Positions in the Pro-shop changed again, from September 2014 with the departure of Todd Iffland and Todd Brackenridge; with operation of the Pro-shop by FGA until 30<sup>th</sup> November 2014; and with the appointment of Daniel Newton as Head Professional from 1st December 2014.

As in past years, FGA has been supported by the fund-raising of the various Sub-Committees. In 2014/15, the combined Sub-Committees earned a Surplus of \$29,232 (a fine overall result), with the Ladies, Sixes and Vets Committees the most notable successes, while the major projects and additional costs (including depreciation and amortization) resulted in a Management Committee deficit of -\$63,075.

Once again during 2014/15, FGA has received outstanding support from Forbes Shire Council (FSC). Features of this support are: A new agreement for a rolling program of mowing machinery replacement valued at \$30,000 per annum will commence in 2015/16; continued loan of existing machinery; and maintenance of that machinery. From 2015/16 onwards, a \$15,000 per annum contribution will be made by Council for general maintenance including greens reconstruction. FGA has also reached agreement with Council on pricing and supply of General Security river water and High Security untreated bulk raw water from the Town water supply. We thank Council very much for their support.

The impact of the significant improvement projects carried out by FGA and the magnificent condition of the course will be explained in the main body of this report and in the Treasurer's Report.

**MAJOR ISSUES IN 2014/15**

1. Course Management Issues:

FGA is fortunate to have our Course Supervisor, Justin Clarke, and Apprentice Tim Hosler to carry out the high level of care and attention to detail that has led the condition of the Forbes golf course being the best in a generation.

The ground staff also received a very high level of support from Volunteers who have assisted with trench filling, rough and fairway mowing, tree management, stick picking, fertilizer spreading and spraying of khaki weed, paspalum and kikuyu in the greens.

A full program of fairway irrigation, fertilizing and mowing was conducted as well as timely renovations of the greens. Fungicide applications and fertilizing of greens have also been a feature of 2014/15. The result has been a high level of expense on Course, Plant and Irrigation Repairs and Maintenance which you will notice in the Management Committee statement. FGA expects this level of care and associated expense to continue in 2015/16.

I would like to thank the 11 Hole Captain volunteers who throughout last summer carried out the above work on their chosen holes. Thank you also to Lyn Roberts and Tom Edols who regularly assisted with mowing on a weekly basis.

The various sub-committees also 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:

A review of contract arrangements with Wentworth Golf Club meant that Todd Iffland and his company Impact Golf were not been able to continue with the Golf Professional role due to pressures of time, travel and commitments in Orange. Todd ceased his operation of the Pro-shop from 11<sup>th</sup> September 2014, whereupon FGA operated the Pro-shop until 30<sup>th</sup> November 2014 with the willing assistance of Ray Taylor and Margaret Hurst. John Bruce and Jeff Haley stepped up to oversee the management of this transition while the position of Golf Professional was advertised.

FGA would like to thank Ray and Margaret for their help and ongoing service in the Pro-shop.

We are very fortunate that since 1st December 2014 Daniel and Holly Newton have become members of our golf and broader community. Daniel has already made his mark in taking up the position of Golf Professional, with well supported fitting days, golf clinics for new and established players, holiday camps for juniors, a well-run and orderly Pro-shop and a growing schools program in conjunction with Jack Newton Junior Golf. FGA looks forward to the development of the game of golf with Daniel as a key contributor.

## 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.

2014/15 has been a year of construction and completion of major projects which have been essential to the revival of golf in Forbes. The major project has been the irrigation system installation, which was completed on schedule and to budget on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2014, followed by filling of trenches and restoration of the fairways for the last 12 months. On behalf of the Management Committee I would like to thank all the volunteers (led by Jeff Haley, Barry Shine, Richard Nixon, Ralph Baker, Peter Grayson and the Men's Committee) who have completed 4 passes over all fairways to fill trenches and control box areas.

Thanks also to John Bruce for his cleaning up of the Workshop surrounds, tree cuttings and unused areas within the confines of the course. Steve Gralleis and the Men's Committee have quietly and efficiently trimmed trees to allow fairer fairways and to manage their impact on greens and tees.

The new practice green on the Driving Range is nearly completed and the use of practice balls is growing steadily. Greg Finn has been very helpful in ball picking and cleaning as well as donating new range signs.

The Cart Shed Storage Project, with 28 cart spaces built at the cost of \$56,919 excluding volunteer labour, has been completed and occupancy commenced from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015. FGA thanks Jeff Haley assisted by Peter Cripps, Niel Duncan, Ralph Baker, Peter Grayson and Geoff and Steve Betland for their work in constructing the 2 sheds. Funding for this project has been entirely from loans by members, cash donations from members and pre-paid subscriptions by some member users of the Sheds. The Cart Sheds will be a valuable contributor to capital works funding from 2019 onwards, when it is expected the loans will be repaid and the pre-paid subscription terms completed.

FGA thanks again our sub-committees for their support of these projects and for their contribution to our Asset Refurbishment Plan.

#### 4. Support from Forbes Shire Council:

As a result of FGA raising its membership fee, charging an asset levy, employing skilled staff and installing the irrigation system to allow a high level of care for the golf course, Council resolved to assist FGA by beginning a program of replacing the current old mowing machinery with new equipment to the value of \$30,000 per annum. The first item, a 5 gang TORO surrounds mower, arrived in July 2015 and a new greens mower is expected in the next 12 months. These items will be Council property but will be dedicated to use on the golf course.

In addition, Council has resolved to pay FGA \$15,000 per annum for general maintenance costs commencing in July 2015. FGA also reached agreement with Council on transferring General Security river water to the course for State Water

charges only, as well as paying direct cost only for emergency supplies of untreated raw Town water.

Please note, this level of assistance from Council is the equivalent of an additional 100 memberships and as noted above is provided because of the initiative FGA has shown in restoring the golf course to a championship standard.

#### 5. Asset Levy and Donations:

The Asset Levy has been built up over the last 3 years to avoid a large impact on the cost of golf in any one year and to match capital expenses as they have occurred. Purchase of the New Holland tractor with front end loader has been funded by the Asset Levy and will be paid off by February 2016.

Council has also assisted FGA by way of loans for the irrigation system, which are repayable by FGA over the next 10 years and will be the major purpose from now on for the Asset Levy. Currently, the Asset Levy for 2015/16 of \$3.00 per game played is charged on all games except for Greens Ticket holders but does NOT cover all the annual repayments to Council. Accordingly, FGA would like to give notice to all golfers that the Asset Levy will have to increase again by \$1.00 per game for 2016/17 (to \$4.00 per game).

The Asset Levy should remain as a permanent part of FGA's long term Capital Plan to avoid the need for capital raising by calls on members and to avoid the decline in the course assets that we have experienced recently.

I would also like to acknowledge financial donations and donations in kind that have been made by members of the golf community. Cash donations have totaled approximately \$8,000 in 2014/15 for fertiliser, lime, gypsum and chicken manure for the fairways program. An additional \$9,000 in cash has been donated to pay for contractors' fees for concreting and signage. Use of equipment for spreading, trenching, spraying, back hoe and bob cat work would reach an additional value of \$20,000 for 2014/15. These all make very significant impacts on keeping down fees and charges to members and golf course users.

We hope all members understand that FGA tries to keep the cost of golf as low as possible, however, we believe fees and charges are very good value when the condition of the course is taken into account and when compared to other well run clubs such as Cowra, Parkes, Mudgee, Wentworth and Young.

#### 6. Hire Carts:

To provide services to golfers, FGA hires from EZGO 10 new golf carts for hire by golfers. The contract Golf Pro receives a commission on managing the carts. Over a full year, the cart hire revenue has steadily increased and we are confident that the Carts will contribute significantly to FGA's earnings.

#### 7. Sixes Golf Competition:

In 2014/15 the Sixes was again a solid performer, delivering a high level of games played 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, Warwick Judge, Christine Davies, Graham Coombs and Jeff Haley for their enthusiastic conduct of the competition.

Thanks also to ASI for their support as prime sponsor for the Sixes 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.

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, the Juniors-on-the-move program and well-attended holiday camps have been features of the year's program.

I would like to thank Anthony Gordon, Annie Mooy, Jill Cripps, Andrew Grierson, Brett Thomas, Randal Grayson and Neil McMillan for their contribution to Junior Golf.

#### 10. Course Committee.

Steve Grallelis, Niel Duncan, Jeff Haley and I have formed the Course Committee, as well as the two Captains, Robyn Hammond and Andrew Dukes. The Course Committee meets monthly before each Management Committee meeting to develop recommendations for works on the course, discuss the works program with the Course Supervisor and oversee the Operating Budget for labour costs and Course, Irrigation and Plant R&M.

Thanks to Justin Clarke for his punctual and well-targeted contributions to the Course Committee meetings.

#### 11. Other Contributions.

Wrapping up the year would be incomplete without thanking our 2 handicappers (Jenny Hubbard and Ted Morgan) also the Ladies Captain, Robyn Hammond, and the Men's and Club Captain Andrew Dukes. 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.

Andrew McDonald  
President FGA Inc. 21st October 2015