

THE CLUB HISTORY

EVOLUTION OF THE PLAYERS CLUB

The concept for the establishment of the "THE PLAYERS CLUB" was born during a lunch at the WA. TATTERSALLS CLUB in the year 1969, a concept that was imbued with copious quantities of swan lager and a spirit of challenge.

The participants of this insignificant but auspicious luncheon were Jeffrey Morphett and Kim Williamson, who with grim determination to stave off the onset of alcoholic haze, sought to define, then and there, the basic doctrines for a suitable formula to provide for; The competitive enjoyment of golf with resultant social advantages, without the prohibitive costs relative to a private golf club.

Flushed with youthful and innovative exuberance, they agreed that invitations would be issued to carefully selected persons of like ilk (readers of this liturgy could be excused for thinking that 'persons of like ilk' were in fact persons of only average golfing ability and below average financial resources) to attend a 9-hole game of golf at Wembley Golf Course on the 19th of April 1969, to be followed by an in-depth discussion of the proposal to establish a unique golf club.

Thus it came to pass that brethren in the form of Rod Scott, Geoff Miller, David Peterson, Mark Hickey, Kim Paterson and Dick Leonard joined with the "conceptors" to agree in principal that such a club be formed. It is significant to note that the quality of thought behind this discussion led to the format of a proper constitution incorporating the rule and regulations which has seen the Players Club prosper and flourish over the years. The first official club fixture was played on the 3rd May 1969.

THE PLAYERS CLUB FOUNDING MEMBERS 19th April 1969



Left-Right: Geoff Miller, Kim Williamson, Dick Leonard, Kim Paterson, Rod Scott, Peter Domenech, David Peterson
Photographer: Jeff Morphett

During this formative period of establishment, the matters of a constitution and the design of the club's crest were relatively easy achievements. What proved to be a most difficult task was the choice of a name for the club, which proved to be an exercise of true democratic process. No less than seven different names were put forward by seven 'inaugurators', (Jeff Morphett was grudgingly excused due to the fact that he was getting married that same day) and the final decision to choose the name "Players" was left to the casting vote of the acting chairman, who naturally voted for his own choice. (for further details, see "THE SEARCH FOR A CLUB NAME".)

What followed is, of course, now history and can be followed with chronological sequence through the "Players" pictorial history. The true strength of the Players Club is that it has stood the test of time and that it has had men of quality at its helm over successive years. The existing membership is thus charged with the responsibility of perpetuating the ideology of the Club - THE COMPETITIVE ENJOYMENT OF GOLF - good luck and keep swinging.

SEARCH FOR A CLUB NAME

The inaugural general meeting of the 19th of April 1969 discussed suitable names for the club. It was decided to defer selection until the first formal committee meeting, to be held on the 3rd of May 1969.

In the meantime nominations were called for and the Club was known as the 'WHATSOEVERNAME CLUB'. Seven nominations were accepted: Ace Club, Clubman, Cavaliers, Players Club, St Andrews, The Players Club and Tyros. Another nomination for the 'West League Club' was not seconded and therefore not accepted. As a result of the first round of voting all but 'The Players Club' and 'Tyros' were eliminated.

Result of the second round were:
* 'The Players Club' 4 votes
'Tyros' 3 votes
One member abstained.

THE PRESIDENT'S MUG

The concept of the President's Mug originated in the first year of the club. The formal name for the mug is "The President's Trough", and the name of the mug, the names of the inaugural members, and the date were engraved on the base. As the club was a 'drinking club', it was felt that the President had to set the standard. It was considered to be an essential aspect of the President's role that he should be able to hold his drink. A large mug was purchased for the incumbent to use at every function. He was expected to maintain the same drinking rate as other members despite the size of his mug.

The mug itself has an interesting history. In 1971 the President of the day, Geoff Miller, had his car broken into and the mug was stolen. Geoff was most upset and organised an intensive search in case the thieves had later discarded the mug. A few days later the sacred mug was found in a vacant lot. It was in a reasonable condition except for the base, which was very badly damaged. A new base was purchased and welded to the original mug.

CLUB COURSES

From 1969 to 1975 (inclusive) the club did not have a home course and played at various public courses in turn, although mainly at Hamersley. In 1976, the club decided to look for a more permanent home and adopted Lake Claremont. This was the home course until the end of the 1995 season. There were concerns about the condition and future of the Lake Claremont course and the club moved to the Peninsula course for the beginning of the 1996 season.



Lake Claremont Golf Course

NEW MEMBER'S NIGHT

The first New Members Night was held in 1970 when the inaugural members inducted twelve new members into the club.

The committee wanted to celebrate this event by doing something 'with style'. It was decided that members would organise a night with a play as the focal point. Bob Bembo offered his brand new residence because the walls were unpainted and there were no floor coverings. He thought members could celebrate with fervor and do little damage.

Perhaps the most notable feature of the night was the fact that both new and inducted members engaged in a disgusting orgy of food and drink, and considerable damage was done to the newly plastered walls. The bill for the damage was approximately \$200, a considerable sum in those days, which nearly bankrupted the club. The tradition of the play by the committee was continued until 1988, but spiraling costs and poor response from members has seen its demise.



New Members' Night 1970: An unorthodox interpretation of "CINDERELLA"

ANNUAL DINNER AND PRESENTATIONS

In the beginning, all members of the club were relatively young and single. Consequently, most of the socialising consisted of men-only nights. The annual dinners commenced in 1970 at the Ocean Beach Hotel and were usually an opportunity to 'get smashed'. In fact this process was formalised in the running of an event called the Gulp Cup.

Tables were organised in a square so that all participants could see each other. The event was complete with Starter, Bookmaker, Timekeeper and Stewards. More details follow in the next section.

In 1976 women were invited to attend the annual dinner. Until this time, presentations had been held at the barbecue following the Club Championships, 1977 being the first year when the annual dinner and presentations were combined. This is one social event that continues to thrive!



1976 Annual Dinner: The first appearance of WAGs at the end-of-season dinner. RIP Gulp Cup!

PLAYERS GULP CUP

This is an account of a Gulp Cup event provided by Jeff Morphett and Geoff Miller. After a round of drinks two Players were tied for first place, Geoff Miller (foundation member) and Bobby Neille (SW Open stalwart). Their time was 3.5 seconds. This required a rerun between the two and the clear winner was Geoff Miller with a time of 2.3 seconds which stands as the official club record. It's reported that at least one of the contestants had to be carried out.



Geoff Miller (left) and Bobby Neille (right) in a race to break the tie



President Jeff Morphett presents the Gulp Cup to the inaugural winner, Geoff Miller

Rules of Racing

1. THE EVENT:-
The Event shall be known as "The Players Gulp Cup".
2. The Event shall be run over a distance of 20 ounces (one pint) of a beverage commonly referred to as 'beer', and shall be a brand of the local establishments, The Swan Brewery Co., or The Emu Brewery Co.
3. The Event shall be run from a 'lip start' in a standing position.
4. Each run of The Event shall cease at the time that contact is made between the vessel and the table.
5. There shall be appointed by the Committee the following officials:-
2 Stipendiary Stewards, a Judge and a Timekeeper.
6. All times for each run during The Event will be measured on a suitable stopwatch and recorded in the records of racing.

7. All liquid must be consumed through the mouth and none may be retained in the mouth. Each participant must indicate at the end of his run that his mouth is empty by uttering the following words in a clear and precise manner - 'I am finished'.
8. Dribbling - Dribbling during the running of The Event shall be allowed to a limit set by the Judge and Stewards. Should the Judge and Stewards decide that there has been dribbling in excess of the allowed limit, the dribbling participant shall be disqualified.
9. A participant disqualified under the above rule of racing may apply to the Judge and Stewards for a re-run. In this event permission will not be unduly withheld, however the following procedure must be adhered to:
 - (a) A return fee of 50c must be paid into the common fund
 - (b) The re-run must take place within 15 minutes of the initial run
10. Should any participant involve himself in the disgusting activity commonly referred to as 'Technicolor Yawning' within 5 minutes of participating in The Event, he shall be disqualified and fined 50c for improper practice. A participant so disqualified will not have the right to apply for a re-run.
11. At the expiration of a period of one minute after the end of each run, the amount of liquid remaining in the vessel shall be measured and in the event of the depth of the liquid exceeding one quarter of one inch, the participant shall be disqualified. Such disqualification being subject to the rules as laid down in 'Rules of Racing (8)' - Dribbling.

THE PLAYERS MEMORIAL CUP

This trophy is contested on an annual basis in memory of Players Club members who have passed away. The event was originally known as the Brian Miller Memorial Trophy and it was first awarded in 1982. It became a tradition for Brian's widow Val to present a trophy at the club's windup each year. In 1992, after consultation with the family it was decided to purchase a perpetual trophy and engrave the names of all previous winners on it. In recognition of the fact that a number of club veterans had also passed away it became known as The Players Memorial Cup. It continues to be one of the most prestigious events on our golfing calendar.



Since the introduction of the Memorial Cup, there have been instances where the family of a deceased player has offered to provide an individual memorial trophy. Declining such requests at such a difficult time is never easy but experience over the years has shown that once the family is acquainted with the existence of an all embracing Memorial Cup event, where recent deaths are acknowledged annually, a polite refusal is readily accepted. This practice has become club policy and committees are urged not to deviate from it in the future.

LEN PAYNE MEMORIAL SOUTH-WEST OPEN

In February 1987 a tour of South West golf courses was organised as a prelude to the regular season, usually during the third week in February. The courses originally played were Bunbury, Capel, Busselton and Harvey. At one time Harvey had 18 temporary greens in place and Busselton was in poor condition due to reticulation problems. For these reasons other courses were considered. Over the years several other courses have been selected including Sanctuary (Bunbury), Collie, Halls Head (Mandurah) and Pinjarra.



Len Payne

The event carries the name of the late Len Payne, the original bus driver and club stalwart. Len drove the bus because it belonged to his son, a minister of religion. In recent times the event has grown in popularity necessitating a much larger bus and a higher standard of accommodation. The event is conducted over four days and provides exciting golfing and social activities.

PAST INTERCLUB COMPETITIONS

Lake Claremont

In the days when the Players Club was located at Lake Claremont it played alternate Saturday and Sunday fixtures. Therefore, on every second week tee off times and the use of the club rooms were shared with the Lake Claremont Club. A rivalry developed between the two clubs.

The local course professional was Mark Craig and he encouraged this rivalry by donating a trophy in his name for an inter-club competition. This was contested for a number of years. Later the Players Club moved to a predominately Sunday set of fixtures. On the other hand Lake Claremont retained a predominately Saturday fixture list. This resulted in a break between the two clubs and the trophy and the records of the event have been lost.

Ingham's Golf Club

The genesis of The Players Club's association with Inghams is lost in time but it is likely to have occurred at the Lake Claremont course in the eighties when both clubs enjoyed a block booking facility. In winter The Players normally teed off in front of Inghams (commonly referred to as 'the chickens') which led to many friendly jibes about our slow play. Roles were reversed during summer when similar suggestions were made. Eventually the time arrived to decide who was the superior club and a grudge match/barbeque was scheduled. This became an annual event which has survived to this day. Unfortunately the original perpetual trophy was lost during the move of both clubs to Peninsula making it almost impossible to establish just who is the more successful club since the competition began.

For the past few years the event has been conducted under a four ball better ball stableford format, with each match decided on a hole by hole basis. There is no limit to the number of pairs but a loose seeding of matches is usually applied. Each club conducts its own 4BBB competition alongside the team event and balls are contributed by both clubs for NTPs, long drives, nearest 2nd shots etc. As Inghams have a number of female members in their club, the annual challenge provides a unique opportunity for members of The Players Club to subject themselves to the rigours of expletive free play.

Whilst not quite possessing the ferocity of a Western Derby this is definitely an event not to be missed. Great fellowship and occasionally, some good golf!

Ingham's was disbanded at the end of the 2007 season.

ABM (Australian Blue Metal)

The friendly rivalry between the two clubs started in 1970. The Players Club had no home course and would play at each of the public courses in turn but mainly at Hamersley. Problems became apparent at the Hamersley course when the new course professional insisted that all social clubs book by phone for weekend play. Consequently a sort of rivalry commenced to get the best time for hit-off. Also the two clubs would play at approximately the same time.

Eventually, in 1976, the Players committee got tired of the phone-in arrangement and decided to adopt Lake Claremont as its home course. ABM stayed at Hamersley but the two clubs decided to continue the rivalry and play two competitions each year, each club to host the event and a social in turn. The following year (1977) it was decided to organise a more competitive match play challenge at an independent course. Three members of each club formed a working group to draw up the terms of reference. The competition was played at Halls head Golf Club. Each club selected a team of 16 members, eight A grade and eight B grade. The Competition ceased in 1992.



Australian Blue Metal: 1982 at Lake Claremont

Chequers Golf Club

This competition started in May 2005. A challenge was issued by the members of the Chequers Golf Club who participate in the SW Open each year. Because of their small numbers other non Players Club participants in the SW Open swell the ranks of the Chequers team.

This is basically a stableford event and the rules for the event change depending on the turn out and the organizers at the time. Originally the best five cards from each team were used as the basis for calculating gross team scores. The normal prizes for individual play in the combined field were also awarded. Prize money from both teams is pooled and golf balls were awarded as follows: 5 Balls for first, 3 balls for second, 2 balls for third, 2 balls each for NTPs, 1 ball for the LD and 1 ball for N2nd.

The photo to the right shows former Players Club Golf Captain Tod Maskiell and SW Open participant and former Chequers President Gerry Klashorst holding the annual trophy.

