



MALTA GOLF ASSOCIATION

8TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (2018)

Minutes of the 8th Annual General Meeting
held at the Royal Malta Golf Club on Wednesday, 10th April 2019 at 18:30 hours

Agenda:

1. Reading and approval of minutes of the AGM held on 7th March 2018
2. Receiving the Accounts for Year ending December 2018
3. Appointment of V. Curmi & Associates as Auditors for the ensuing year
4. Motions to amend the Constitution
5. Tournaments' Report
6. President's Statement
7. Matters Arising
8. Closure of Meeting

Introduction

As no quorum was available, the meeting was postponed by 15 minutes.

Mr Ian Restall, *MGA Secretary*, opened the meeting at 18:45 hours by welcoming Mr Paul Stoner (*RMGC Chairman*), Mr Thomas Jacobsen (*RMGC Club Captain*), Dr Marianne Schaefer Noll (*RMGC Lady Captain*), Mr John Bonello and Mr JJ Micallef and thanked them for attending.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the 7th Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 7th March 2018 [circulated in advance] were taken as read and approved.

2. Treasurer's Report

Mr. Kenneth Micallef, *MGA Treasurer*, presented and explained the accounts for the financial period January-December 2018. Mr Micallef thanked the auditors for their professional services.

3. Appointment of Auditors

The appointment of V. Curmi & Associates as the MGA's auditors for the financial year ending December 2019 was approved unanimously.

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4. Motions to amend Constitution

There were no motions proposed to amend the Constitution.

5. Tournaments' Report

The Tournaments' Report for the year 2018 was presented by Mrs Maureen Borg, *MGA Executive Council Member*.

6. President's Statement

The President's Statement for the year 2018 was presented by Mr William Beck, *MGA President*.

Just ahead of this, the *RMGC Chairman* pointed out that although the MGA funded several players to play in overseas tournaments only one was present at the meeting. The *MGA President* expressed that he was totally aware and also saddened by this. He remarked that the MGA executive members were in office not for their own benefit but to work towards the general development of the game of golf. The absence of RMGC members, the absence of the next generation and the absence of those who benefitted most dismayed him. He continued that if the MGA executive members, indeed even the Club's Committees, had to work within and consider just their own personal life commitments then nothing would be done.

Mr Stoner suggested that perhaps the way forward would be to stop funding those players who did not attend such meetings.

There being no further matters, the meeting was called to an end at 19:30 hours.

These are draft minutes and remain subject to approval by the members at the AGM of 2020.

William Beck
Hon President

Ian Restall
Hon Secretary

MALTA GOLF ASSOCIATION

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A year ago, saw the start of this fourth quadrennial year. It was an election year during which Mrs Doreen Balzan became the eighth new board member to join the MGA Executive Council since inception. During the year under review, the Executive met formally seven times with the RMGC represented either by its Chairman or Club Captain.



At that same AGM, we had the pleasure to be addressed by Peter Bromley – the Handicap and Golf Course Rating Chairman of the Cyprus Golf Federation. Peter addressed some of the more pertinent matters that will be affecting us from the commencement of the World Handicapping System.

Then, we all seemed to take it for granted that the WHS was to be implemented on 1st January 2020. However, the Annual General Meeting of the European Golf Association, held in November, highlighted Europe's reservations on the governance structure of the WHS and a vote restricting the automatic implementation of the WHS was carried at this AGM. Instead the European Federations empowered the

EGA Executive Committee to seek further clarifications from the WHS Board.



In a nutshell, the European Federations were not happy with the vagueness of the WHS vis-à-vis the protection of the administration of the handicaps within Europe indeed within each individual country. The first WHS draft agreement seemed to imply that handicapping authorities could award a handicap index to golfers outside their territory (Asia selling handicap licences to golfers in America or Europe as an example).



I happily report that these doubts were put to rest recently when the European Federations met the USGA and The R&A during a seminar in Amsterdam.

The WHS requires each country to adopt the system as soon as practicably possible after the 1st January 2020. In Malta's case we read this as September 2020 and i.e. at the start of the RMGC's 2020-2021 season giving the Club the preceding summer months to translate the current CONGU handicaps to WHS handicap

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index and for the members to get used to how the new system will work.

With the onset of the WHS, CONGU will become ineffective outside the UK. The Authorised Handicapping Board for Malta will become the EGA. We are confident of their support to help us with the transition even more so now that Peter Bromley has been appointed as a member of their Handicapping Committee. The issue we face concerns the improvement of the RMGC course during this same time. The WHS requires a proper course and slope rating exercise. We could be facing a period where the ratings cannot be concluded and therefore the competitions could become non-qualifying.



Remaining with the EGA, in November we had the pleasure to welcome in our midst their Annual General Meeting. This was the first time that the EGA hosted this event in an emerging golf country and we are delighted that everything went extraordinarily well.



As the pictures relate, it was a happy event for all those that travelled to our country and the

success was due to a determined effort not just by the MGA but also by the RMGC, The Hilton and the Mediterranean Conference Centre.

Our gratitude extends to the RMGC Ladies' Section for freeing their Thursday morning. This enabled the Luxembourg Salver to be organised. Congratulations to Maureen and Doreen for their top placings in this competition.

Moreover, we can confirm that we have benefitted € 3000 from Sports Malta's tourism incentive scheme which amount we are today happily transferring to the RMGC for allowing use of the course.



With The R&A's presence at the EGA's AGM, we felt that we should take the opportunity to invite the visiting Directors to the RMGC. Kevin Barker, Assistant Director of Golf Development took the opportunity to find out more about our work here including that being undertaken by the RMGC's Junior Academy. His comments on the importance for a clear pathway from junior to adult golf remain clear in our minds.

On the other hand, David Rickman Executive Director Governance and Chief of Staff together with David Bosnall Chairman Rules of Golf Committee addressed a good gathering of members on the new Rules of Golf that came in force in January 2019. It was a pleasant evening and the members who attended received first-hand information from a couple of the best golf referees out there.

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Additionally, David Rickman did have a look at our course markings whilst he was refereeing the Luxembourg Salver and, after consulting with Bosnall, forwarded his advice. I must say that I do find it bizarre when the experts' recommendations are not heeded, and we go beyond their intelligence.

But then things in life are not always straight forward and we do continue to encounter frustrations and situations that test our resolve and character. How players conduct themselves on the golf course has been and still is a matter of concern and discussion for many a committee.



The new Rules of Golf have addressed this situation by guiding committees to the possibility of introducing a code of conduct. An unfortunate incident, involving one of our own players during the European Team Shield Championship, highlighted the importance of us addressing the situation head on and we sanctioned the player. We also took the necessary administrative steps to draft a code, made it part of our terms of competition and revised our other related documents. We trust that such a code will assist golfers towards improving their behaviour when faced with adversity. Indeed, I am happy to note that one of our players has understood the concept of the code and has recently reported himself to the Club Captain. The reality last summer was however, that a much larger union did not react like us when faced with a similar incident involving one of their players. Now that the

Rules have provided the appropriate guidelines, we look forward to them being universally adopted. This should enable fair and similar decisions being reached by all committees both at national and international level whether in amateur or professional golf.



In early September, the International Golf Federation held its Biennial General Meeting at Carton House in Dublin. The meeting endorsed a resolution to rescind the requirement for the host nation to provide two golf courses for these Championships.

The direct impact would mean that from 2024 the number of teams would be limited to a maximum of 48. The IGF has still to put in place a qualification process to determine which teams would be eligible to participate. In the meantime, the 2020 tournament will be played in Hong Kong whilst the 2022 will be played in France at the same conditions presently in place.



The MGA Executive feels that Malta's presence in this championship has been an enormous experience and our players have been great

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ambassadors every time that they sported the national colours. But we also have the responsibility to understand reality and decide accordingly.



The World Amateur Team Championships are played on championship courses. Killer rough, pot bunkers and punishing penalty areas. The very length of the courses not just tests one physically but can be mentally daunting. Our resources limit us how we can prepare our players to be able to compete to a certain level in such competitions.

Thus, I think the MGA's Executive decision to stop putting money into the WATC was a thorough one and, perhaps, the IGF has done us a favour with the restrictions as from 2024. Of course, this does not mean that the players cannot participate under their own steam should Malta win a place in forthcoming championships. Should this become the case, then the MGA will administratively facilitate such a participation.

We do not have similar hesitations with Malta's presence in the EGA's European Team Shield and other similar competitions like the Cyprus Amateur Open and Junior Open tournaments where both our national team and junior players can, not just participate but, also have a chance to truly compete and place well.

We are proud that the team's silver in the ETSC, JJ's second place in the Cyprus Amateur

and Laurens' first place in the Latvian Juniors were all recognised by the Maltese Olympic Committee in their Sports Awards which were held late in the year.



Here I take the opportunity to thank the MOC, Sport Malta, the IGF, The R&A and our sponsoring partners especially Nescafe Dolce Gusto for their continuous and unwavering support towards our participation in these tournaments and towards the development of the game in Malta.

The Golf to Schools programme continued during the current administrative year when, in early October, the appointed professional revisited us to what was supposed to be his final input at Level 1. This should have covered the last group of teachers that had not yet been exposed to this programme.



However, things have been fluctuating with some teachers changing their position within the education system. This means that we still have a nucleus of teachers and classes that remain unfamiliar about the game. We are highly conscious of this and will be looking at

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ways as to how we can circumvent the problem. It is also imperative that the momentum is maintained throughout successive years.

Our endeavours have continued to attract the support of The R&A to whom we hold a responsibility to report back on a regular basis. This responsibility is becoming even more vital as the world – even that of sport – is becoming increasingly conscious towards transparency, proper governance and professional accountability including the need for a rolling strategic plan.

The MGA has always been in the forefront to be transparent with all its national and international authorities but a strategy requiring the establishing of key performance indexes and testing regularly against these is going to be crucial also for the future of the MGA and to the financial assistance we receive.



One key point for this strategy must be the development of the game. Our Golf to Schools programme has the intention to attract more Maltese children to the game. But the reality is that even a successful Golf to Schools programme will not start to yield results before several years.

At club level, the RMGC Junior Academy is doing sterling work with these youngsters however most of the RMGC juniors are not Maltese and, unless they are able to change

citizenship, they cannot represent our country abroad. As we look at this fledgling membership, we currently have only one boy and one girl who can fly the national flag.

We believe that one of the strongest methods to get children playing golf is through the family especially through their parents – even more so if the mother is involved.



A simple check on the current membership suggests that only 27% are female and only 6% are females under the age of 50. Our combined signatures to The R&A's Women in Golf charter underlines our determination to make an effort to get more ladies playing the game.



Although it should be part of next year's report, I think it would be wrong of me not to mention the effort that has been embarked mainly due to the kindness of the RMGC professional. Henning has sacrificed his time over these last months to try and get Rebecca Dalli and Adam Pisani, the two athletes identified by Special Olympics Malta, ready to participate in the World Special Olympic Games.

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Henning undertook this task without reservations and without charge. We are distinctly appreciative of Henning's efforts to make it possible for golf to be part of a contingent of 28 local athletes to join over 7,500 more athletes in Abu Dhabi and I am also more than delighted that both the MSC and the RMGC took the baton and invited these two athletes to the Club without charging them or their family anything.



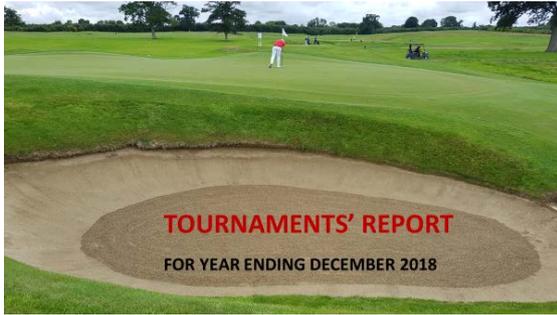
The sign on the buggy being shared by Adam and his caddie says it all. These athletes need to be continued to be embraced by all of us and the MGA's support towards the continuation of such a programme will be underlined in our strategy going forwards.

His caddie's words at the end of the tournament is a strong and poignant reminder to all of us of what the game of life should be all about. She says "Adam has forever changed my life. He truly is a gift. So polite and honest. Everyone needs an Adam in their life. What an uplift. He is the bravest and the boldest. In my four days with him he was the kindest, the calmest and the coolest. Ronaldo would be proud. Thank you Adam. My life has changed for the better". Her words that everyone needs an Adam in their life are powerful and meaningful.

To conclude I must remark that it has been a wonderful experience to work alongside the marketing team at Nescafe Dolce Gusto during our two local competitions. Irwin Gratil, the RMGC Captain and his Committee have been tremendous with all the arrangements of the Malta Junior Open. Thank you RMGC Chairman and your Board for your patronage. My gratitude extends to my fellow directors on the Executive for the time that they have dedicated throughout the year and, of course, to the general membership for their continuous support.



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The Malta Golf Association is indebted to Nescafe Dolce Gusto who has over the past few years greatly supported our 2 national tournaments. It is their valuable support and contribution together with the administrative co-operation of the RMGC that has ensured the success and enjoyment of these competitions.



The eighth edition of the MGA Generation Cup attracted twenty teams in the main tournament. It was won by Eileen Borg with her adopted junior Zhofrey Sagaydak. Played in aggregate Stableford format, the pair ran away with the trophy being nine shots clear of Irwin Gratil playing with his son Noah. Ricky and Sam Reeves one shot back placed third.



Ten other teams played in the nine-hole competition intended for the younger players. This was won by Laine Tutane playing with her son Thomas, ahead of second placed Erik Akkerhuis with adopted Luigi Gatt and Patrick Baldacchino playing with his daughter Carla.



The twelfth edition of the Malta Association Shield was earmarked to be played in October however due to bad weather this was postponed to February.

110 players entered the competition, of which 24 were ladies. In the ladies' part of the competition, Miho Karasawa placed second & Mia Allsopp third. While Ian Wirth and Peter Satariano were second and third on the men's side.



Remarkably however, first place for both the men & the ladies went to Rebecca and her husband Paul Howes who managed to make history by being the first husband and wife couple to be declared joint winners.

Five local players joined 54 others to participate in the Cyprus Men's Amateur Open.

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Characterized by very hot weather and strong winds, the competition produced varying results from our players. Luc placed 27th with a +36; Laurens 23rd with a +29; Quint 19th with a +27; Andy placed 3rd with a +12 and JJ's +11 placed him second – four shots behind the local hero who returned to his home country from his studies in the USA to participate.



The Maltese Olympic Committee chose golf to be part of the contingent that went to the Mediterranean Games that were held in Tarragona Spain. The confidence of our national team, composed of Andy Borg; Danny Holland and JJ Micallef, was high as they had all played the course a few weeks ahead of the tournament and returned under par scores. Unexpectedly, it was a disappointing showing for our players over the four days, in the end Malta placed tenth ahead of Andorra and Greece with Spain, Italy and France enjoying the top positions.

The World Amateur Team Championship that took place in Dublin was also rather disappointing for our team composed of Andy Borg, Ruud Critien and JJ Micallef.



Despite improving their score by 58 strokes from their previous showing in this competition, their aggregate score of 29 over par through 72 holes placed them 60th out of 71 teams – 68 shots behind Denmark – the winning team.

The level of the players in the Eisenhower Trophy was such that a level par for the course would still have meant a placing below half way.



A few of the Club's junior players were also exposed to international competition thanks to the endeavours of our Pro Henning Schultze Doering. In Latvia Laurens and his sister Filippa won their age category.

Laurens started badly going five over after five holes. Remarkably however he managed to compose himself & ended his first day with a 2 over par score. He accomplished this by not dropping another shot and making three birdies.

His consecutive +2 scores over the next two days not only ensured that he played below his

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handicap for the tournament but also meant that he had the best score out of all boys in all categories. Young Nicholas Scerri and Oliver Stuart completed the quartet going to this Junior Open. We wish them well for their future experiences in golf.

Filippa additionally featured when she had the best net score on day 1 at the Cyprus Youth Golf Open that was played at the Secret Valley Golf Club. She finished the tournament tied 51st with Finley Gratil out of 58 players. Laurens placed 12th despite a two under par for the course on the second day of the tournament. A young Luigi Gatt placed third in the six holes category.



Although the MGA was not at all involved, we feel that is apt to recognise the efforts made by the Cristina family to expose their daughter Laya to overseas tournaments during the summer of 2018.

Laya not only gained a right to play in the US Kids finals in Pinehurst but also enjoyed a win in the girls under-10 category when she played the Irish Kids Tour in Munster.



Just before Easter, 93 players from 22 different countries congregated at Royal Malta to play the Malta Junior Open – the first WAGR endorsed tournament in the history of the Club. Four out of the 93 entries had a handicap below scratch whilst more than half the field had a handicap lower than 5.

Vivien Roesner from Germany won the girls' division with a score of +19 over 54 holes whilst Piet Hein Bakkenes from Netherlands led the boys with a +2 score. The best local players were siblings Laurens and Filippa.



The R&A Junior Open biennial event managed to attract a total of 145 emerging boy and girl golfers, all under sixteen years of age, from 78 different countries. Malta's representative was Laurens Schultz Doering. Laurens ended his first day with a creditable five over par and then followed it with a level par score for the course on the second day placing him 17th overall after two days of competition.

At this point, the cut for the third day was established and the regional trophies were awarded. With a net score of one under par Laurens was declared winner of the Southern European Trophy – having registered one shot better than Belgium's James Skeet.

Only 80 players proceeded to the third and final day. Laurens struggled from the start in the final round and was already five over par after four holes of play. He managed however to settle down on the back nine but his final

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round score of ten over par pushed him down the overall leader board placing him 42nd – still a very creditable position for this 14-year old.

In August, Malta joined twelve other countries to participate in the fourth edition of the European Team Shield Championships at the Riverside Golf Club just outside Zagreb in Croatia. In the previous editions Malta placed fifth in its first showing and followed this with two successive bronze medals.



The team was composed of Nicholas Beck, Andy Borg, Ruud Critien and JJ Micallef. Their first round was a stroke play qualifier. Their aggregate score of +11 was due to a +8 from Nicholas, a +6 from JJ & an outstanding -3 from Andy, which placed the team third overall and earned them a match against Cyprus in the quarter finals of the match play knockouts.

The combination of Nick and Ruud as the foursomes' pair with JJ and Andy to play in the singles matches was retained from the previous editions as this had proven to be successful. Although never down in their match, Nick and Ruud had to remain focused to eventually win their match 2&1. JJ had a very tight match that never wavered by more than one-hole and remained all square until the 17th. An outstanding second shot on the 18th however secured the win, while Andy halved his match.

Liechtenstein's win over Greece placed them against Malta in the semi-finals. It was vital for

Malta to win as a loss would have ruled them out of going for gold or silver on the final day; whilst a win guaranteed a silver medal as a minimum. Andy quickly saw off his opponent with a 5&4 win whilst JJ struggled all day and eventually lost 2&1. The foursomes pair continued their winning streak and were dormie four when their opponents' errant tee shot on the 15th found the water. A 5&3 win secured Malta's place in the final. Their opponents were Croatia – the host team – who had beaten Lithuania and Hungary in the process.

Croatia was undoubtedly the strongest team in the tournament with the added advantage of playing on home ground. Unfortunately, Nick and Ruud struggled from the very start and had to bow down to the strength of their opponents with a 6&5 loss. JJ also struggled from the outset and was four down after nine. Three successive birdies however brought him back to only one down after twelve.



With Andy playing well, and better as the holes progressed, this gave the team a glimmer of hope. However, JJ lost the 14th hole going back to two down from which he never recovered. Andy meanwhile was playing well and was two up after 15 holes. Unfortunately, his efforts were in vain as with two wins out of three Croatia had already secured the gold.

Despite everything, Malta's silver medal was an improvement from the previous editions and a very honourable placing in this tournament.

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2019 will be a relatively quieter year. Some players will return to Cyprus to play in both the Juniors and Men Amateur Championships. Laurens and Laya are due to play in other junior open competitions. We shall also be part of the Maltese Olympic Committee contingent going to the Friendship Games being played in Sicily and the team will travel to Lithuania to defend and hopefully improve their record in the European Team Shield Championship.

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