



# MESSAGE from the chairman



## Dear Member,

When I wrote my first newsletter as Chairman, we were just crowned Rugby World Cup champions, our golf course was back to its best, the success of the pizza oven in The Pavilion restaurant was undeniable and member participation was growing. I have always enjoyed and appreciated the ability of humourist, newspaper columnist and social commentator, Will Rogers, to deliver simple truths with witty quotes. It was Rogers who coined the well-known phrase, "Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there". So, in my November newsletter, bolstered by these positive events, I asserted that the Club was on the right track, albeit with much remaining to be done. I, and the main committee and management were excited and ready to tackle the tasks ahead.

Yes, I was in high spirits and we were looking forward to 2020.

Unfortunately, we did not know that at about the same time a deadly virus started its devastating journey towards us. Wuhan, China, seemed so very far away, until 5 March 2020. On that day we received confirmation that the virus had arrived in South Africa, with the first known patient being a male citizen who tested positive upon his return from Milan, Italy. Little did we know then how rapid the spread of the virus, and how devastating its impact, would be on our daily lives. As I write this, our country ranks fifth globally for reported COVID-19 cases. Tragically, we have experienced more than 13 600 COVID-19-related deaths to date, testament to the aggressive nature of this infectious disease and how dangerous it can be.

**The impact of the pandemic forced South Africa into a full national lockdown and the Club was closed for 68 days. It was only on 2 June that we were able to invite members (in groups of three) to return for a walk on the Club premises. Golf was our first sport section to open, 79 days after lockdown began. Understandably, as I write this, my state of mind is very different from the writing of my first newsletter.**

The Club has faced challenging financial times with no income from operations for a period, but I am grateful to confirm that we have survived the lockdown in a sound financial condition. Not only have we survived this period, we have done so whilst management, with the assistance of some of our key suppliers, have kept the Club and its premises in immaculate condition. The efforts of our general manager, Vivian Van Wyk, and his team to maintain the Club, manage our service providers and to keep our operational costs in check, are highly appreciated. These efforts are highly commendable considering that the team had to accept unavoidable personal financial sacrifices. This we will correct as soon as possible.

**Notwithstanding the challenges, we are open again and our journey toward normality has begun. It is now time to positively focus on the tasks at hand.**

I must again voice our appreciation for members' support and co-operation for heeding the call to pay Club subscriptions. We recognise that this support was forthcoming in demanding financial times and the Club intends to show its appreciation, in the form of incentives aimed at improving membership

value and participation, as soon as practically possible. With the phased opening of facilities, a slow improvement of our cash flow position means that incentives will be announced when financially feasible.

Secondly, I can confirm that the main committee is encouraged with the responses received from our insurer to the Club's claims for damages suffered during the period of business interruption. Management has been tasked to keep their primary focus on the submission of these claims and to ensure that we comply with all policy requirements. In this regard, we are grateful for the support and advice provided by one of our valued members, Russell Burgess, who has guided us in these matters admirably. If I could, I would give that man a Bells...

Thirdly, the main committee will further drive the recovery phase by implementing strategies aimed at an improvement of the Club's revenue streams. As indicated in my first newsletter, the seeds we planted to generate revenue growth will now be nurtured to remove the Club's dependency on subscription fees. The implementation of these strategies was inevitably delayed by the lockdown period and it is therefore essential that we now expedite the implementation phase so that the new initiatives can kick in as we return towards normality.

As I write this, we are finalising the final proposal for our 'new' Pro Shop offering. I can confirm that we have completed our new golf cart storage and maintenance facility. We have concluded an agreement with a leading golf cart manufacturer to provide carts and the maintenance thereof in a revenue sharing deal. We are also making good progress in finalising a deal with a leading company that provides Pro Shop stock and management services. We are convinced that the finalisation of these deals will improve the general golf experience at our Club. I am pleased to announce that Sybies and Athol, notwithstanding reaching the age of 'final independence', have agreed to remain with the Club for the foreseeable future. They have agreed to remain in the employ of the Club and will be tasked with the organisation and arrangement of all member competitions and Club days.

***Lastly, while the recovery phase demands the involvement of management and the committees, you, the Club member, have a valuable role to play.***

Everything we do and plan to do is to ensure that, upon return, you experience the value a premier Club aims to provide. Captains Louw van Wyk (golf), Tersia Pelser (ladies golf), Louis Marais (tennis), Piet Jordaan (squash, snooker), George Wesson (bowls) and Chairman, Charles Van Staden (Pretoria Club), are ready to continue the excellent work begun before the lockdown. Their committees are ready to find new and innovative ways to ensure that membership can be enjoyed in a safe environment, in what has become known as the 'new normal'.

***You are encouraged to return to the Club to enjoy the benefits of your membership.***

We put specific emphasis on the provision of a safe environment. The main committee and management have been monitoring the situation closely since the COVID-19 outbreak and, as a Club, we have made it our priority to protect the wellbeing of every person who enters our premises. We have applied precautionary measures in keeping with the guidance we continue to receive from Government, the World Health Organisation and other relevant authorities. We are, and have remained, committed to providing the safest environment possible and will continue to update any precautions as required.

Unfortunately, the prevalence of the virus in South Africa has now forced us to continually face potential infection and a few members have been infected in recent weeks. Fortunately, all have recovered, and I must commend those involved (management, the affected members and those in contact with them) for their adherence to our safety protocols regarding required notifications, quarantine measures and the disinfecting of facilities. This has confirmed that we have the correct measures in place to run the Club safely for all involved. We will continue to adhere to all cleaning regimes and the rules announced by the authorities, with your continued support. If we are all sensible and do not endanger the wellbeing of others through our own behaviour, the Club can be a safe haven in these uncertain times.

For me, this period of forced separation and applied social distancing created a deep need for a warm, welcoming, accommodating and safe family environment. I thank my committee, sub-committees and management, as I believe that this is what has been created at the Club. I am enjoying every minute of my return to Club life and welcome you all to join me in enjoying the Club.

Please remain socially responsible. Stay safe. Remember, it is all happening at PCC, so make it yours again.

Dawid Muller Chairman