



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, and the pizza oven in The Pavilion was a success. It is my privilege to share this, my third message, with you through the Jacaranda magazine. The prior message was written at a time when we were faced with the reality that the pandemic had harmed the Club financially, and much was of concern. We knew it was imperative for the respective governing bodies and management team to lead an effective recovery phase, thereby enabling the long-term security of the Club. I admit that the previous letter had an ominous tone but am pleased to report that, within the intervening period, the performance of the Club has improved our spirits greatly.

Our journey to recovery has been remarkable and encouraging. On 28 February 2021, our financial year closed – a year in which the Club earned no revenue from operations for over two months (69 days). Our largest source of revenue – golf – was closed for 79 days. The preliminary management accounts of the 2020/1 financial year indicate that we have recovered, post lockdown, from a potentially disastrous financial loss to making a small profit before capital expenditure. The extent of the financial recovery has allowed us to minimise the annual subscription increase for 2021/2 to only 2% for most membership categories.

What a year it would have been if we had not been closed for 79 days! In addition, the response from our insurer regarding our business interruption claim remains positive and the Main Committee will soon

make an announcement to members in this regard.

As Club Chairman, I am encouraged that the recovery was the result of various strategies to improve club revenue streams. As you are aware, in recent years the Main Committee initiated projects and adopted policies aimed at generating revenue growth to reduce the Club's dependency on subscription fees. Our aim has been to both improve members' experience at the Club, as well as provide additional facilities, entertainment, and services to the membership. In so doing, we have increased member participation, which, in turn, has profitably leveraged club assets to the benefit of all members. The implementation of these strategies was unfortunately delayed by the lockdown period, but since the relaxation of the lockdown measures, they have kicked in and are now delivering the concomitant financial results.

Our 'new' golf shop offering, led by Calvin Erasmus, Mike Usendorf, and Lazy Maila, has commenced business, and the Global Golf team is working closely with our golf management team (Christiaan, Sybies and Athol) to enhance the golf experience at the Club. I can confirm that member support and feedback to date has been extremely positive. Our new golf cart fleet and the storage and maintenance facility are in place, and together generate revenue levels that has exceeded our expectations.

Our Snooker Section continues to grow its membership to the extent that it has become necessary to improve and expand the facility. Four additional tables were secured, and a request was made to

the Main Committee to allocate a new club room to the section. The implementation of expansion initiatives in a club is often hampered by a challenge to secure funding, as was the case in this instance. In response, our Snooker members increased member participation to a new level and the funding for the new facility was largely covered through generous contributions from these members.

Our children's playground continues to grow in popularity, and it is clear from recent activities in the area that the offering is happily embraced by our member families. It has become a common occurrence to see young families and, at times, grandparents enjoying a beverage or light snack whilst children play on the colourful equipment. Since its introduction, this area has been the most visible evidence of the Club's objective

“to create an enhanced family experience for members at Pretoria Country Club that is interactive, co-operative, effective, powerful and, most importantly, fun”.

The children's playground area has attracted many new families to join the Club and, as a result, the Main Committee is reviewing plans to enhance these facilities.

Our Marketing Committee, chaired by Piet Jordaan and ably supported by Mon-Mari Naude, has become an effective marketing machine. In Piet's own words, "if you find the right jockey, new initiatives can work". The Club certainly found the right jockeys to lead the marketing charge. The team succeeded in enhancing the Club's image through effective communication across all social media platforms, introducing new Club events, encouraging all sections to communicate continuously and by driving partnerships with wider businesses.

As evidence of this success, in a recent survey conducted by the Beeld newspaper, titled “Waarde vir geld is deurslaggewend”, PCC was rated by readers as the 'best value for money' offering of all golf clubs in the greater Pretoria area. There is no doubt that the improved membership value, and the more effective communication of that value, impacted the survey results. There is much that Pretoria Country Club can be proud of and our grateful thanks go to the marketing team.

It would be remiss of me if I were not to recognise the role that our members played in recent months. Member participation has reached new heights since the lockdown. The successes of recent club championship competitions and events attest to

members' commitment and participation. Allow me to recognise the exploits of the Maas family (golf) and the Doëg family (golf and squash) on the sports fields of this family club. I was proud to note that the golf Club Championships included participation by three players ranked in the top 20 amateurs in South Africa (rankings being 1, 12 and 19). Read more about these events and achievements in the pages of the magazine.

Please be aware, however, that your continued support in uncertain times ensures that our Club survives and thrives through and after this pandemic period.

Our Chairpersons and Captains confirm, without hesitation, that members are returning to the Club in numbers and that club spirit continues to grow unabated. Captains Pieter Fouché (golf), Alet Vorster (ladies golf), Louis Marais (tennis), Ashley Ferguson (squash), Ernst Burger (snooker), Elma Van Wyk (bowls) and chairmen Charles van Staden (Pretoria Club), Johan Mook (Wine Fraternity) and Piet Jordaan (marketing) remain ready with their committees to ensure that membership can be enjoyed in a safe and happy environment.

Your governing bodies will continue to emphasise the provision of a safe environment. We continue to monitor the situation closely and, as a Club, have made it our priority to protect the wellbeing of every person who enters our premises. We are, and will remain, committed to provide the safest environment possible and will update any precautions as required.

I commend our members for their adherence to our safety protocols regarding required notifications, quarantine measures and the disinfecting of facilities. We must, however, guard against becoming complacent in these challenging times. Please continue to adhere to all cleaning regimes and the rules announced by the authorities and Club management. If we remain sensible and do not endanger the wellbeing of others through our own behaviour, the Club can be a safe haven in a sea of social uncertainty.

Personally, the 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 for continuing to make this safe haven available to us all. I am enjoying every minute of my return to club life and welcome you all to join with me, similarly, in enjoying the Club.

Please remain socially responsible. Stay safe. Remember, it all happens at PCC – make it yours again.

Dawid Muller Chairman