

## **Port Macquarie – Beverley PARk 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

### **Port Background:**

After extensive reading in the archives of Port Macquarie Golf Club, it would probably be the most appropriate place to start. In 1948, Charles Uptin was the major force in locating our golf club to its current location at Tacking Point from Oxley Park. The UPTIN family, Charles, Keith and Alan are synonymous in Port Golf Club history.

History indicates, 129 acres for 5050 pounds, cleared the land and links constructed, and November 1953 nine holes were completed and a plan realised. In April 1967, completed a further nine holes and Port Macquarie Golf Club officially opened on February 24<sup>th</sup> 1968. President Jack Pike and Beverley Park President Cyril Landon were in attendance.

### **Port-PARk Beginnings:**

Records show that in 1953 Ken Innes, Secretary Manager of Beverley Park at the time, was invited to partner Macquarie and Royal Hotel's Publican Bob Byrnes in a four-ball event at the new links layout at Tacking Point. Records also reveal that Ken next visited Port in 1957, however this time he was accompanied by Beverley Park President Viv Davies and Port's Bob Huddleston establishing reciprocal rights between the two golf clubs. Both club's hierarchy showed significant support for this reciprocal challenge.

It is documented in history that Ken and Viv whilst holidaying in Port fishing and playing golf in 1959, challenged Port golfers during their visit to create a bond between the two clubs. According to Ken, he received warning of Port Macquarie members coming to Beverley Park in March 1960 to accept the challenge.

Those pioneering members from Port were; Tony Boswell, Don Moore, Roy Calvert, Dick Gentle, Bill Crozier, Ted Townsend, Jack McLaren, John Makaway, Ches Pilcher, Mick Dick, Don Locke, Bob Byrnes, Tony Reed, Charlie Uptin, Glen Fowler, Stewie Kennedy, Athol Platt, Dick Spence, Jack Pike, Jim Reed, Tom Rissell, Bob Huddleston, Basil Young, Morrie Lynch, Alan Uptin, Dave Hibbard, Brian Heagney, Joe Debenham and Laurie Coulton. The rivalry between the two clubs remains to this day and there are two surviving members from the original trip to the PARk in 1960, Jim Reed and Alan Uptin.

### **30 years on:**

You only have to look at the reciprocal trophy to notice engraved history showing Port being far more focussed and committed on golf between 1960 to 1990 with BP tasting overall success on only two occasions. Winning isn't everything though, is it...?

In BP's defence, their week begins on the "Safari" tour. According to BP's legend Neville "Yetti" Smith in his 50th Anniversary Safari Tour Report, the Safari Tour was created by Ken "Bwana" Brooks and Joe Cohen in 1963 to sharpen their golfing skills, discuss strategies in a relaxed environment on how BP were going to defeat Port and promote camaraderie within their team. Ken passed away in February, 2002, however, his legacy, the "Safari" tour continues on in BP's Bi-Annual clashes.

In 1990, Brendan Bull and Phil “Edward Scissorhands” Alexander led an expedition of younger BP golfers further north to Coffs Harbour, to coincide with the opening of the new Bonville International course and Coffs Harbour GC’s annual Festival of Golf week. This single expedition continued annually and named the “Rebel” tour and eventuated in BP and Coffs Harbour to become reciprocated.

On random occasions, Port has also toured reciprocal clubs in Sydney whilst on the “Walk About” tour before arriving at BP’s welcoming dinner. Some of the reciprocal courses Port golfers played included; Liverpool GC, Oatlands GC, Ryde-Parramatta GC and other courses included Cabramatta GC, St Michaels GC, NSW GC, and Bankstown GC. Neville “Yetti” Smith has also organised many competition days on Friday at the Coast GC for both clubs to mingle socially prior to the weekend’s events at the PARK. Huge thanks to Yetti on those well organised days spent at the Coast GC and the PARK golfers who accompany us.

### **30 – 60 years:**

Over time, the welcoming dinner on Friday night to start the weekend off, four-ball best ball Saturday competition and four-man Ambrose Sunday remains the same along with the closing ceremony and trophy presentation on Sunday afternoon. Also remaining the same, is the inclusion of any member from either club to participate in this reciprocal challenge and encourage you to bring your mate for the four-ball competition.

However, over the years, both clubs have made substantial improvements to their course and clubhouse. Improvements were also made on catering for the weekend and changes to entertainment. Professional entertainment was sought to replace the miming shows by the host club. Huge thanks to Port’s Geoff “Punchy” Bollard, Hayden “Red October” Bennett and BP’s Sax Sorensen, Billy Edwards and John Whittemore for all their work to produce and direct years of shows which packed both host clubs to the rafters.

Changes were also made to accommodation at Beverley Park with hired caravans being replaced with what is known as “Camp David” named after David “Doc” Heagney being the first to set up camp at BP. Port trippers wishing for more luxurious accommodation stay in local motels and travel to and from Beverley Park or stay with mates or family in the area. BP members are also arriving in caravans to stay on the Port course at powered sites.

In 2016, Beverley Park Golf Club celebrated 75 years, and our current President Bill MacDonald, late Captain Ron Callaghan, affectionately nicknamed “Dirty Harry” by BP’s Neville “Yetti” Smith, Life Member Neil Stevenson and I were fortunate enough to be in attendance for BP’s milestone, thanks to Beverley Park President Frank Bates for the invitation to the fabulous event and congrats on 75 years!!!

### **Beyond 60 years:**

Since the inception of the Port/PARK challenge in 1960, it has become the longest interclub golf challenge in Australia, if not the World. Not sure what our fore father pioneer trippers were thinking or had in mind when they decided to build the bonds between two great clubs. I’m pretty sure in the beginning; golf, mateship and alcohol were the contributing factors.

After 60+ years, the bonds are still very strong and the tradition continues to endure the test of time along with golf, mateship and alcohol. However, the pioneer trippers are responsible for us having lifelong friendships filled with great memories and some we would care to forget.

One aspect of the reciprocal rivalry you'll notice, is the years of mateship that some members from both clubs have given. Some members have racked up 5 years, some 10, and 15, however some members exceed 20, 25, 30 and a couple nearing 40 if not already. Two PARk members in particular, the late Greg Boyd aka "Piranha" and Sax Sorensen reached 50 years of reciprocal visits. Outstanding effort members and keep the good times rolling.

In moving beyond 60+ years, it is pleasing to see younger members getting involved and maybe one day in time, take the reins of our traditional reciprocal rivalry. Particularly the Port young fellas continuing to defend our undefeated sacred home turf and continue our bragging rights off the course in Bowls, Darts, Pool, and more recently Euchre and Table Tennis.

Just as important are the members attending their first Port/PARk weekend. Not sure what advice I can offer, but it is a sensational weekend. Rest assured; the hospitality bestowed on you at the PARk is second to none. Ask any member about their first time and its usually a blur. If you're thinking about doing your first trip, it's the hardest one and the rest get easier.

Over the 60+ years, there have been hundreds of strong supporters and participants of the reciprocal mateship, camaraderie and rivalry visit and too many to name. However, for whatever reason, we give many thanks and ensuring to receive continued support from the Boards of both clubs for reciprocal committees to enable this to continue. See you on tour!!!

### **"Camaraderie"- at its best**

Over the years, some individuals have shown acts of camaraderie that defines mateship;

- Dennis "Danny Mac" McNamara would generously open his home after the Friday welcoming dinner and host a late-night BBQ and breakfast's for members of both teams until his untimely passing in 2001. His and "Yetii's" trophy is still played for at Port to this day.
- After the Port club closed after the welcoming dinner, Tony Reed would host 50+ people at his Sandcastle Motor Inn's bar until morning for Port/PARk players.
- Late President Jim Banks, Grahame "Cap" Gunn, and John "Probes" Proberts hosted the teams snooker match at their homes.
- Chris "Dicko" Dixon, hosted the prestigious "Royal Sancrox Open" in his backyard.
- BP's Vic "Camel" Malouf being loaded onto a camel.

There are many more such examples, however there are far too many to mention.

To quote Beverley Park President John Wilson's message in 1989, 30<sup>th</sup> reciprocal visit "I always likened the Port Macquarie visit to having a honeymoon every year – because you're still rooted a week after it's over".

Andrew Goulding aka Eddie Mabo

Reciprocal Chairman PMQGC