



KARNATAKA GOLF ASSOCIATION

#ISSUE 1
AUGUST - 2022

Dear Member,

A new committee term is upon us, and we take this opportunity to thank all our members who have placed their faith in us.

We hope we have your trust as we attempt to make the golf environment and the facilities a better place for everyone.

We have a young and talented team who are here to work with our members and take our Club to greater heights.

The portfolios are given below. We have also had a good response for volunteers from our permanent members volunteering their services to the club, THANK YOU.

Committee Members:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Mrs. Roopa Pratap | - Chairperson , Driving Range, Jr. Golf , Caddies, Proshop & Ladies Section |
| Mr. Hari R Achanta | - Chairman , Course |
| Mr. Ranjan Biswas | - Chairman , Entertainment |
| Mr. Sanjay G Mathias | - Chairman , Tournaments, Handicapping & Time Sheet |
| Mr. Vijay. M. R | - Chairman , Club House |
| Mr. Peter Prem | - Chairman , Food & Beverages |

Clarification on the revision of Charges:-

After much deliberation, the managing committee has deemed it necessary to adjust our subscription rates in order to keep pace with inflation, additional facilities added and facilities improved upon.

We are also looking at improving our existing facilities.

Increasing the rates was a tough decision to make, and we understand that members do feel aggrieved that it was not shared with them earlier. I do apologise for the same. However, it is imperative that these changes are made in order to better the financial health of the club.





As you are all aware we did eat into our reserves in the last financial year.

As a committee we are certainly looking at ways to cut costs, besides ensuring that there is better fiscal discipline. Two areas which at times does burden the clubs expenses are tournaments and entertainment programs. We are looking at these being sponsored to a large extent and that they do not burden the clubs finances. In short being self-sustaining.

To share a few points with our members:

- Gym Charges – The last increase was in the year 2000. Since then much has changed, we have better equipment, steam and sauna have been added, better change rooms and additional facilities.
- Swimming Pool – Here again the last increase was in 2000. The pool has been renovated, it is temperature controlled which means it can be used on all days of the year barring inclement weather conditions.
- Guest Charges have not been increased since they were first introduced at KGA.

We thank you for your ongoing support and trust that these changes will help us continue providing you with premium quality and service.

As always, we welcome any questions or comments.

Best Regards,

Prithvi Raj Urs
President





ARTICLES

SEASON OF THE BALLOT

Come June and its time for most of the clubs (golfing or otherwise) in India to go through the rigmarole of the annual elections to elect their office bearers. This exercise is accompanied by all the intrigue and fanfare that accompanies a Lok Sabha election. Parties, syndicates and consortiums are formed, though without any well thought-out policy or manifesto. Suddenly, people you barely know hail you heartily and anxiously enquire about your well-being.

It all starts off with intense speculation about who's going to stand, who's not, who's going to re-contest etc .People exhort their friends to throw their hats in the ring, assuring them that they would be ideal office- bearer material. These instigators feel that "things are going to the dogs", though it's unclear why they themselves are unwilling to join the fray and set things right.

There are dark allegations and insinuations of financial impropriety, though there is never any concrete proof and probably no grounds to assume such things. The state of the golf course during the tenure of the incumbent committee is a point of particular wrath and caustic comment. The clubhouse and matters connected, like crockery, cutlery and any new furniture procured are next in the line of attack. The members are also virulently disgruntled about any increase in subscriptions and levies.

Generally, the incumbent committee faces the ire of all and sundry. As everywhere, the anti-incumbency factor is strong. The aspiring candidates on their part promise the earth and earnestly vow to equip themselves with brand new brooms to sweep everything clean. Finally, after much frenzied activity, the election takes place and the newly elected members assume office with pomp and ceremony. And then.....well nothing, the wheel of time turns slowly till next June. All quiet on the western front.

This whole business of club elections needs to be put in the right perspective. Let's look at the case for the committees on the one hand and the general body of members on the other.

First the committees. They are usually caught between Scylla and Charybdis. Damned if you do, damned if you don't. It's impossible to please all of a thousand members. The average member is unable to understand that actions taken to improve course conditions need a fair bit of time to fructify. Rome, after all wasn't built in a day. Issues like interior décor are highly subjective. One man's meat is likely to be another man's poison. On the volatile issue of subscriptions, the members don't understand that quality of service, food , equipment, upkeep is directly proportional to money spent. If you spend peanuts, you get only peanuts. The days of subsidised clubbing are long gone. Just because the Brits subsidised clubs for their expats as a





sop (India was considered a punishment posting) does not mean it should happen in this day and age. Members have to pay for quality if they want it. Members also need to be more proactive. Talk is cheap, but actions speak louder than words. Mere armchair philosophy does not make for constructive criticism.

From the members' point of view, they are entitled to good management and accountability from their committees. Judicious use of money is sine qua non. An EGM for getting sanctions is usually thinly attended and may not accurately reflect the wishes of the members at large. Perhaps there is a case for a referendum by means of a postal ballot. Members' expectations that a golf club should focus on golf related activities is valid and committees should bear that in mind. Committee members tend to get pretentious, forgetting the raison d'être of a golf club. Golf is the primary activity and anything which furthers the play and enjoyment of the game should be the platform for any new policies and decision making. Office bearers enjoy an enhanced status and prestige by virtue of their office and they should rise above the "power thing". To serve should be the only creed.

All said and done, whether one is a committee member or an ordinary member, everyone is a golfer. By definition, a golfer is gentleman. So gentlemen, let's get ahead with the enjoyment of the game without murky politics, unfounded allegations, malicious criticism, draconian decision making and rumour mongering.

Just tee it up.

Hari R Achanta





CLUB FITTING – TO DO OR NOT TO DO!

Very often, I come across golfers – friends and acquaintances from our club who ask ‘Isn't Club Fitting pertinent to Professionals or better golfers only? Time and again, I remind them all that it is the other way round.

Club Fitting indeed is more pertinent to the less skilled golfers such as us Club Golfers of all handicap levels – some more than others. The highly skilled golfer be it a low single digit handicapper or a Professional has the skillset to understand what the club is doing and make the necessary adjustment to their swing.

On the other hand, the less skilled handicap golfer has very little understanding of their swing and even lesser understanding of what their club is doing and hence require that much more help when it comes to club fitting.

Many golfers also assume that performance gains from Club fitting are too miniscule to go through the process. That is not true – I can attest and guarantee the fact that any golfer who goes through a proper club fitting process stands to improve by 4-5 strokes.

To explain the effects of club fitting in a simple manner, let's assume that most golfers make at least 5 good swings out of 10. With this assumption, the effects of playing off-the-rack clubs versus properly fitted clubs are:

1. Off the Rack Clubs
 - a. 5 good swings = 5 decent results
 - b. 5 bad swings = 5 terrible results.
2. Fitted clubs
 - a. 5 good swings = 5 excellent results
 - b. 5 bad swings = 5 good results.

I have also come across many golfers and fellow club members who have expressed their disillusionment with ‘fitting’ at a Demo day. Unfortunately, Demo days are not meant to be club fitting days. This brings us to the question – What is truly Club Fitting?

A proper club fitting process is a 2-3 hour session with a qualified Club fitter who uses state of the art technology to put together the 5 most important factors of club fitting – Playing ability, Physical ability, length, lie/loft and feel. Finally, the golfers budget also determines the final outcome of this process. In my next article, I will be explaining these factors in more detail. I hope this small insight into Custom Club Fitting helps my fellow club members play better equipment and better golf!

Krishna Prasad





8TH EDITION OF THE HEADSTART FRIENDSHIP TOURNAMENT

The 8th edition of the Head Start Friendship Games inter- school golf championship organised by Head Start Educational Academy was eagerly awaited and very well attended. Close to a hundred school going golfers teed it up at the KGA on the 25th of July 2022. The golf course was as usual at its best, posing some interesting challenges that make it unique and reward the thinking golfer.

As per the tournament tradition the opening tee shot is always hit by a professional who can inspire young golfers. This time around local pro M. Dharma did not disappoint all those gathered at the first tee by hitting a perfect draw that almost reached the first green.

There were 5 categories, for ages 6 to 19 from Grades One to Twelve.

This tournament is aimed at giving these young children an opportunity to participate and enjoy playing at a championship level golf course such as KGA. It was heartwarming to see so many youngsters show up, prepared and raring to go. For some it was another chance to take on this majestic golf course while for a few it was an opportunity they seldom get.



The fast greens made shot making challenging, however the enthusiasm displayed by the kids was what made the entire experience worthwhile. The tricky bunkers and impeccably manicured fairways added the twists and turns to one's round as the beautiful trees, the birds and water bodies added to the tranquility of the surroundings. For us at KGA, it was great to see quite a few of our youngsters from the JDP, show promise and joy as they traversed the par 72 layout.





Youngsters like Ishnidh Singh Viridi who have come through the KGA JDP, displayed great promise. S Manoj shot a very respectable one under par 71 from the black tees. The A category boys played off the blacks while the B category boys and girls played off the whites, and were up to taking on the length of the course playing at 6900 yards (white tees) and 7200 yards (black) tees.

This event has been played at the KGA for quite a few years now and it was one of those mornings dedicated to junior golfers who filled the lower deck with banter and laughter. We do believe that these experiences make for a lot of learning and encourage the young golfers to want to take to the sport more seriously.

One may ask, Is KGA a long hitter's course, is it a shot maker's course or both? Either way it's the perfect layout for any youngster to better their game and represent one's school at a golf tournament.

Riad Mahmood





GOLF AND MENTAL HEALTH

“Doctors by nature are generally very caring people. It is very easy to over commit, particularly when working in under-resourced areas. I think one of the main things I have learnt throughout my years of working in mental health, is to make a conscious effort to create time for self-care... to maintain my own mental fitness.”

I chanced upon this statement by Dr Amanda Thomson from Australia one evening as I was browsing the internet. It struck me that she was putting in words what I had been practicing for decades.

Golf, for me, is the best and most effective form of self-care.



I firmly believe that everybody must have some outlet or the other which is different from one 's profession. This is more essential for doctors, especially for us mental health professionals. 'Why?', you ask? Because, day in and day out, six days a week, we are trying to find solutions to many people 's mental health problems, and this can be very taxing. Golf, for me, has been my personal psychiatrist for over three decades now.

You may be wondering why a practicing psychiatrist needs help in the mental health department.

Consider this. If a person has appendicitis, the operating surgeon will have no problem taking out the appendix and leaving the OT thereafter. In most cases, his relationship with the patient is limited to only the appendix and nothing else. Similarly, a cardiologist/cardiac surgeon may locate blocks in a person's blood vessels, insert a stent or two or do a bypass surgery if indicated, wish the patient a good recovery, and move on to the next patient.





In the case of psychiatry however, every mental health professional (be it a psychiatrist, psychologist, or anyone else) deals with one or more psychological concerns on a daily basis. Each component in a person with a mental health challenge is critical and not easy to handle since it may involve multiple complicated issues. Further, these issues and challenges also impact the care givers / family members / colleagues in some way or the other. The emotional investment in dealing with people who have such complicated problems is challenging, and at times draining too, for mental health professionals.

Dealing with issues of mental health is very different when compared with most other medical illnesses. For example, if somebody has typhoid or tuberculosis or a chest infection, the chances are that ten other people with the same diagnoses will have largely similar symptoms. However, in psychiatry, no two people with the same diagnosis will have the same clinical picture. I am yet to see two people with a diagnosis of schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, or obsessive-compulsive disorder coming for consultation with the same set of symptoms, same triggering factors, or with similar family support or the lack of it in the last five decades of my practice! Every individual with a mental health issue is different from the next one.

To bring in the analogy to golf – no two golf courses have the same layouts anywhere in the world unlike courts for basketball, volleyball, tennis.

Areas of play marked for football, hockey and cricket are all identical. For example, in cricket, the same twenty-two yards separates the stumps with three stumps on one side and three on the other, the boundary line all around. Dimensions and layouts of tennis courts are the same across the world, be it Cincinnati, China or Chennai.





But, like life itself, no two days are the same, no two rounds of golf are the same, and no two patients are similar in all respects. One must learn to take the good, the bad and the ugly with equanimity.

Quoting Bobby Jones, “Golf is the closest game to the game we call life. You get bad breaks from good shots; you get good breaks from bad shots—but you have to play the ball where it lies.”

No matter what challenges you face, what terrible times you have, and what arguments and disagreements about the ‘rules’ of the game you may have had with your opponent, at the end of the round, everything gets sorted out on the 19th hole – the watering hole, and you discuss with your mates about the next round of golf after paying / collecting your dues!

When you are a mental health specialist, you wear your professional mask, use your experience to the fullest, and always try to do the right thing you have been trained to do. Managing people with mental health concerns is incredibly challenging. And yet, one continues to work and enjoy it because, the improvement you see in your patient, the smile and relief you see in the care givers makes you feel it is all worth the effort. In addition, the next patient or the next day may be more rewarding, and you look forward to that.

Both golf and psychiatry can affect your emotional state while you are at it, and one always hopes for a better round / outcome the next time.

However, in the case of both golf and people with mental health challenges, uninvited and unwanted ‘free advice’ is doled out frequently. And that is something that a player and a psychiatrist must deal with on an ongoing basis.



It's not that the fundamentals of golf are not known to the players. The playing partners however become uninvited golf coaches, and often make one or more of the following comments, usually accompanied by a smirk, when they see the playing partners make a mess of the shot:

- You are holding the club a bit too tight.
- Loosen the grip!
- Tuck your thumb inside the palm.
- You didn't complete the swing.
- You are swinging the club too fast / too slow.
- You lifted your head / you topped the ball.
- You opened / closed the stance.
- Hit behind the ball in the bunker and follow through not done
- Putter is closed / Putter is open
- Putted too fast on a downhill / too slow for an uphill putt!

And several more!

It is another matter that the same bloke may make one or more of the same errors when it is his turn to putt.

It is a similar yet different case when it comes to mental health. Freedom of speech is taken to an entirely different level when it comes to matters of the health. Everyone has an opinion, and when it's related to mental health, everyone becomes a super specialist and gives his / her opinion with such authority on a subject they know precious little about that it is frustrating to us mental health professionals.

Here are some gems that I have encountered countless number of times in my five decades of practice:

- Doctor, I know what my problem is, and I also know the solution. I do not need medication for this!
- This when we are talking about some brain conditions which are best treated with the correct medication.
- What are the side effects doctor?
- This even before we begin to discuss management and the prescription is just being written. We have not even seen the effects boss! And you are asking about side effects?
- When can I stop treatment!!
- But sir/ma'am, you haven't even started it yet!

In many cases, patients and/or their families decide that medicines need not be continued beyond a point of time – when to stop medication is decided by them and not the treating psychiatrist.

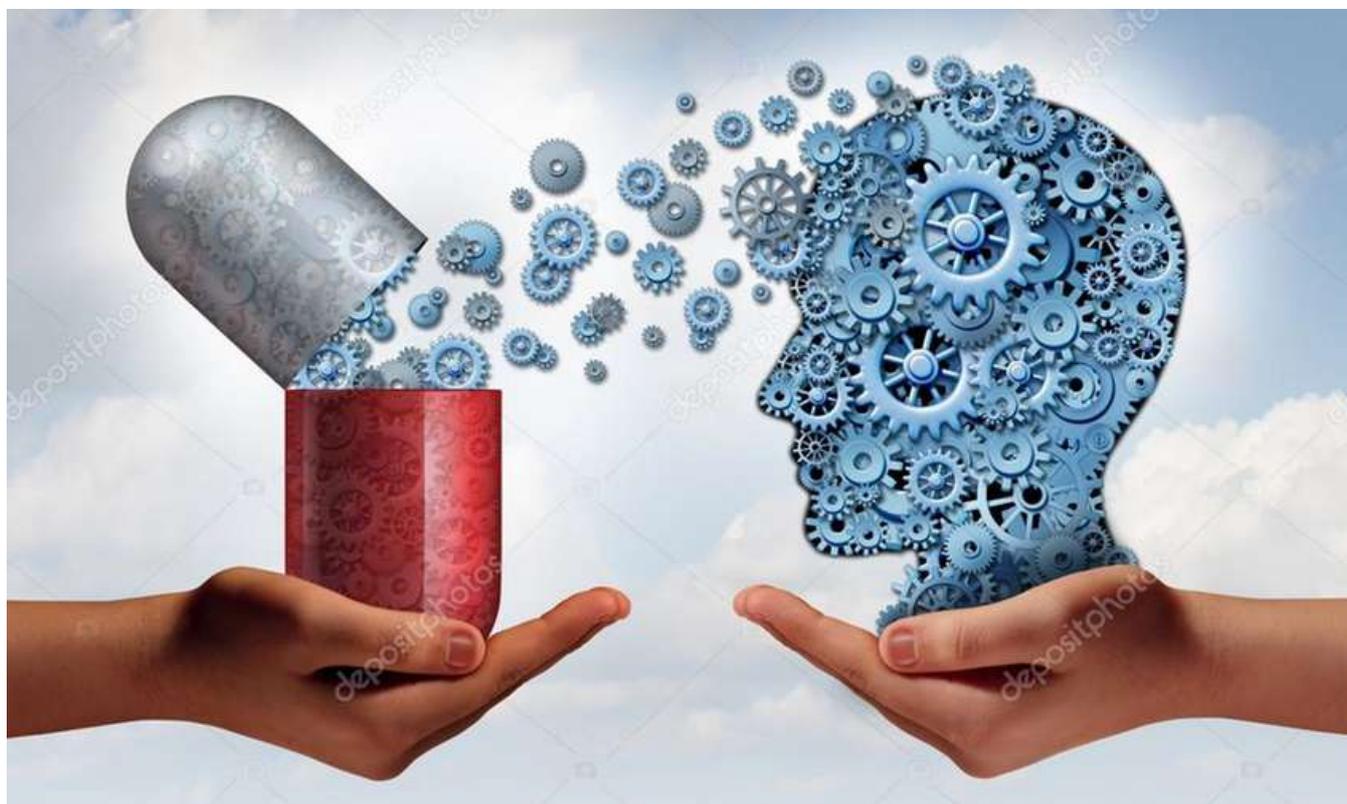




Opinions flow from across continents, like 'The neighbour's brother-in law's niece 'asked me to stop the medication'. Is she a psychiatrist? No! A doctor? No! But these people, without understanding the consequences, override the treating doctor's opinion time and time again little realising that it will be their loved one and they themselves who will have to pay the heavy price of relapses and severe suffering.

They will however not stop treatment for physical ailments like high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, low thyroid disease or cardiac illness.

Not to give the medical fraternity a bad name, but there are some non-psychiatrist doctors who tell their patients, 'You can stop the (mental health) medication now since you have become normal!'



Unfortunately, stopping medication for any reason whatsoever, without the treating doctor's advice, results in disastrous consequences. Managing the fallout of this becomes even more challenging for both the patient and the caregiver, not to mention the treating doctor.

This brings us to another aspect of similarity between golf and life. Blame games.





A player 'blaming' the caddie or other players for all things that go wrong is a very common sight on the golf course. Invariably always, it is the other person who is responsible for your bad game. These words may sound familiar:

- You didn't tell me it's a tail wind.
- You didn't warn me that it's head wind.
- Why did you not warn me that the green is fast and it's a downhill putt?
- You did not give me the correct line!
- The yardage was wrong.
- The club was the wrong one!
- The other player moved while I was swinging my club!
- He was walking while I was playing / addressing the ball.

Similar examples can be seen in life too! Some very common complaints include:

- You provoked me! That is why I am angry.
- You didn't keep things ready for me.
- Breakfast wasn't given on time.
- There is too much / little salt in this dish.
- It's always your fault. Not mine!

The 'grumbler' will always grumble about things around him/her. The spouse and/or the children are responsible for the person's troubles and temper. At work, it's the subordinate's fault or else the boss is a bad one. And some of the people grumbling play golf too!





Not everything is negative though when it comes to golf and mental health. Some terms that are common to both and equally important for a good game of golf and living with a mental health challenge include:

- Resilience
- Tenacity
- Not giving up
- Fighting Spirit
- Positive attitude

These attributes can and do take people a long way, be it in golf or in life. Like Hale Irwin says, "You can talk about strategy all you want, but what really matters is resiliency."

The Cambridge dictionary defines 'Resilience' as 'the ability to be happy, successful, etc. again after something difficult or bad has happened'. And this is a quality that is needed most by us mental health professionals.

And then there is Golf etiquette. It could be about the kind of dress you wear, how you behave on the golf course, and how you interact with your fellow players. Some golden rules include 'look and dress your best every time', 'That temper of yours? Keep it under control!', 'Take your time to hit your shots, but walk briskly between shots. Slow play is frowned upon!', 'Silence, dear friend. The game is on', and most importantly, 'No fudging on the scores!'

Similarly, to maintain good mental and physical health, one needs to take care of these important aspects (not an exhaustive list): proper diet, healthy habits, efficient work-life balance, drink - if at all - in moderation, and no missing out on the required amount of beauty sleep. Cheating in these aspects of life will only be counter-productive.

It is said that the game of golf is "played between the ears", and similarly our Mental well-being depends on how well we take care and use our vital organ, the brain, situated between our ears!

There are three things that I recommend to mental health and other professionals for improving their mental health.

First, never take work home. Finish work for the day, close it and go. Never carry files in your head (especially those mental notes of your patients / or the problems that may have crept in your work situation). When I close for the day, it is over. I don't think of a single patient when I go home. The next day is another day.





Second, spend time with family and develop a hobby. There are so many things you can do together / on your own, be it photography, watching programmes on OTT platforms, singing or listening to music, reading, travelling, games, bird watching... the list of possible things to do is endless. Remember, you need time for yourself and your family. Spend time doing things you enjoy.

Finally, have a sense of humour. Laugh at things, and laugh at yourself because, if you don't have a sense of humour, life can become serious and boring, not just for yourself, but also for people around you! Have a good combination of all this, and mental health will be your friend.

Now, why I consider golf my best therapist, you can relate to it very well if you have played golf.

On a golf course, on an average, you spend a good five hours playing with your friends. Here, you can crack a few jokes, win, or lose, but have the satisfaction of having played the game. There are rewards at the end of the day if you look at things positively. Ultimately, it is your attitude that matters. If you have a bad round, the only thing that can happen is that the next round will be better. Or, maybe, it could be worse! Isn't this the same with life too? I go to the golf course to be myself, and to be consciously away from the myriad mental health issues I am confronted with, day in and day out, as a psychiatrist.

You may find this interesting – 'As golf can provide moderate-intensity physical activity – you can reap the rewards and outpace the grim reaper. A Swedish study found a 40% lower mortality rate amongst golfers, relative to non-golfers. That means a potential extra 5-years of life – regardless of age, or gender! Golfers live longer than non-golfers.'

As for me, golf is my therapist and the one I turn to at the end of each week to let down my hair and be myself.

I sign off with this suggestion – do not take life or golf too seriously. It's not worth it since either or both can and will affect your mental health!

Dr. S. Kalyanasundaram
Sr. Consultant Psychiatrist and a keen golfer





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