



Waikato Golf Association

CASE STUDY:

**Female Environment:
Innovative ways of creating a female
friendly environment**

OVERVIEW

This “Getting Women into Golf” initiative was led by Marnie McGuire, Waikato Golf’s SportsForce Golf Development Manager, in partnership with the Raglan Golf Club. Initially, Marnie approached the club and outlined the programme. The club were very interested in both the programme and the potential outcomes.

The objectives of the programme were to introduce new women to golf and allow existing members to improve their own game through coaching. To make the programme work, the club was required to firstly promote the initiative to the local community. They also needed to locate, within their membership, a number of volunteer coaches to assist with the delivery of the programme.

These volunteer coaches would also be the ongoing contacts for the new women attending the clinics. The club identified approachability, friendliness and willingness

to help as three key attributes of the potential coaches. Golfing knowledge came secondary to the ability to engage with people and give them a good experience at the club. 3 key members were identified to lead the coaching.

To alleviate their concerns regarding their relative lack of golf coaching skills Marnie McGuire ran a 45 minute session prior to each clinic. This outlined the programme and taught them the skills required for the day, identifying each of their roles throughout the clinic. Over the course of 4 weeks, Waikato Golf ran 2 hour clinics each Saturday from 1-3 pm. The clinics targeted new golfers and existing members covering all parts of the game. This was followed by the Raglan Golf Club providing a relaxed social event afterwards to create that fun social environment.

CHALLENGES



VOLUNTEER COACHES

Locating coaches within the club environment with the skills required to assist the participants to enjoy the clinic.



LACK OF PRACTISE FACILITIES

The club had a limited amount of practise facilities, insufficient to cope with the numbers engaged in the clinics.



SUFFICIENT PRACTISE EQUIPMENT

With the numbers enrolled, the club lacked suitable practise clubs and equipment.

SOLUTION

After discussions with the club, a number of people were identified as having the important social skills required to interact positively with the new golfers. These skills were seen as very important to make the experience friendly and enjoyable. From there, Marnie McGuire developed a relationship with the volunteer coaches encouraging and supporting them by providing relevant coach training, enabling the volunteer coaches to feel comfortable and knowledgeable. These volunteer coaches were a key part of the initiative to keep up the involvement and development of the new members.

The Raglan Golf Club fully supported the initiative by showing and understanding of the needs of the participants, of which a large number worked during the week. The club identified that a time on the Saturday afternoon would be best. This also allowed the participants full access to the course fairways and greens. With the large number of participants, both new and existing members also involved, Waikato Golf assisted by providing equipment for the clinics. To make the next step easier Waikato Golf then

linked with Pro Drive Hamilton to provide a deal for equipment for the participants to purchase, enabling them to continue on with their golf journey.

PARTNERS

Raglan Golf Club:

Mike Goodison, the President of the Raglan Golf Club, has been very impressed with Waikato Golf initiative and the enthusiasm and passion of Marnie McGuire. He has already noticed significant changes within the club. They have a larger number of couples playing together with trips amongst groups in the club already being planned.

The twilight golf numbers have also improved with a number of the new golfers participating. Existing members are very understanding and supportive of the new golfer's integration into the club. As an aside the club is also looking to diversify their income and their standing in the community with the recent provision of a mini golf facility, a case study in itself for the future.

RESULTS

3

NEW COACHES

3 new club volunteer coaches, responsible for initial coaching and ongoing support and contact of all new female golfers.

11

MEMBERS INCREASED ABILITY

Current members increased their golfing ability by attending the outlined clinics.

19

NEW FEMALES

New women introduced to golf through the clinics. An open dialogue has been generated and any of those who have not become members are still able to contact the club in future.

13

NEW MEMBERS

A total of 13 new members joined the Raglan Golf Club.

KEY LEARNINGS / SUMMARY:

Marnie McGuire identified the key learnings of the project as being that to get women into the game of golf, clubs need to address the current lifestyles of women. From there they must provide relevant opportunities to enter the game that will fit into their busy lives. The majority of the women involved liked a relaxed social environment that is fun but also it is important that they improve their golf.

Therefore when people are learning golf there needs to be an enjoyable successful environment. A big part of that is an initial relaxing of the rules for example: tee it up on fairways, no score necessary.

It was important that the Raglan Golf Club engaged well with the community in promoting the event. Waikato Golf assisted in designing and providing a flyer which was delivered throughout the area by club members. Advertisements were placed in the local paper which was also supportive in promoting the clinics.

Marnie said "The initiative was an overwhelming success due to the partnership between Waikato Golf and the Raglan Golf Club. Each organisation provided resources and passion to achieve this fantastic result" She also went on to say "The Raglan Golf Club executives are to be truly commended for their support of the project. They went above and beyond expectations to provide a fun social environment for the ladies"

With the lessons learned in this project, Waikato Golf are looking to complete another clinic in Raglan at around the same time next year. Waikato Golf are also looking to replicate these throughout the region with clinics to be held at Waikare Golf Club in March 2015. A joint project will be held with the Waiterimu and Tahuna Golf clubs, date yet to be finalised.





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www.golf.co.nz

nzgolf@nzgolf.org.nz

Tel +64 (0)9 485 3230 - Fax +64 (0)9 486 6745