



Celebrating our champions



L-R 11 times champions: Mrs Eden 1902-1919; Dot Hood 1921-1948; Lyn Conroy 2003-2016

The BGC Club Championship is the premier golfing event of the year. It is an opportunity to compete against the best players in A, B & C grades. Players test their determination, resilience, and expertise across several days in pursuit of the number one honour. Many plan their year around the Championships to peak at just the right time to be competitive and successful.

Women's Championships have been played in a variety of formats since the first championship in 1901 was won by Mrs Innes-Noad. The Championship initially comprised of 2 gross stroke rounds and in the following years it was often not held at all, relying on the Queensland State Championships to determine the Club Champion.

The war years of 1916-1918 and 1940-1945 resulted in the cancellation of the event. In 1927, the Club Championships comprised of 2 qualifying rounds of stroke followed by match play, played in one week between Monday and Friday.

From 1946, the Club Championship settled into 2 qualifying rounds of stroke, followed by match play. The qualifying rounds took place on Monday and Tuesday, with match play on Thursday and Friday, with the finals played on the following Monday.

Joan Fletcher, BGC associate from 1950 to 1980's shared with Bruce Richter that she *"was only able to play in one Club Championship which is, of course, is played during the week. I had to save my holidays and whatever other days I could get off for the major events!"* Joan won 8 Queensland Titles from 1948-1964 and was part of the State Team 15 times between 1948 and 1968, entering and winning her only BGC Club Championships in 1952.



From 1971-1973, the women's final was played on a Sunday alongside the men, and then again in 1978 and 1979, followed by a "Championship Night Balcony Barbecue". However, in 1980, the women returned to playing their finals during the week.

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In 1986, under the Captaincy of Jill Hughes, a dual Club Championship format was introduced alternating from year to year. Four rounds of stroke in one year followed by 2 qualifying rounds of stroke and match play in the next. Both these formats were played exclusively between Monday and Friday.

In 1996, the women once again joined the men in playing their match play finals on a Sunday. A 54-hole stroke event was also introduced in 1996, to be played in the years that Championships format was one of qualifying rounds and match play.

From 2012, the Women's final was played once again on a Sunday in conjunction with the men's Club Championship then reverted to a mid-week stroke event the following year.

By 2016, some women members were unhappy that the Club Championships were played exclusively during the week, excluding them from competing, some of whom had never competed in the Club Championships due to work commitments, despite being full members of the Club.

In response, during the match play format year, a trial was initiated, offering one qualifying round on both Saturday and Tuesday, with the second round being played on a Thursday, and all ensuing match play rounds being played on a Sunday. In 2018, a second change was trialled with the match play format being used two years in a row, with the view that if acceptable, would become the single format for the Club Championships in the future. This idea was not pursued after 2018.

In 2021, both qualifying rounds were offered during both the week and weekend, with ensuing match play rounds being played on a Sunday alongside the men. This format was inclusive of all categories of women's membership. However, the Championships still rotated in alternate years with 4 rounds of stroke being played exclusively between Monday and Friday.



L-R champions: Lesa Lambert 2021; Aspen Sugars 2022; Safina Kyprianou 2023

In 2022, the Women's Club Championships changed again, with 3 of the 4 stroke rounds being offered both during the week, and weekend, however the final round had to be played during the week.

In 2023, the match play Club Championship format was played, with multiday qualifying rounds. The match play rounds were scheduled concurrently with the men's Club Championship on a Sunday, created a gala event, open to all women of all ages. No longer did our juniors need to take time off school to participate, nor did any women need to miss out because of scheduling clashes between

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mid-week and weekend players. All women members could now test themselves in the championship format to determine our top-grade players.

This progressive approach to Club Championships was celebrated by Golf Australia in the awarding of the March 2023 Visionary of the Year. The award followed our signing of the R&A Women in Golf Charter, publicly committing to advance the standing and inclusiveness of women's golf.

Looking ahead towards the 115th annual Club Championships in 2024, we continue to embrace the more inclusive approach to Club championships, creating a signature event recognised as progressive within and beyond our Club.

Janet Nathanson
Women's Captain

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