Ladies Pennant – compiled by Jan Balgowan in 20??

HGC Ladies have won ten Pennant Flags

Heidelberg Golf Club Ladies first entered pennant teams in the VLGU Pennant competition in 1931. In March 1931, it was proposed by Mrs Ayteo that the Ladies Committee write to the VLGU to enquire about being “included in Pennant matches”. By then, the 18 holes had been opened and the VLGU had to come out to “inspect the new 18 holes and give us a par for the course>” In April the Associates were informed by the VLGI that they “were eligible to enter a team in the coming Pennant matches,” and the SS would be 68. At the time each club “would decide for itself what hospitality would be extended to visiting Pennant Teams.” The Committee subsequently decided to enter a B Pennant Team. Two of the teams in that Section were Yarra Yarra and Albert Park and they wrote letters thanking HGC for their hospitality.

The following year, 1932, the ladies arranged that “there be a Selection Committee of three to arrange the team for the Pennant Matches and that the Captain be one of the Committee with one Committee members and one Associate from outside the Committee” to choose the team. In March, they decided to enter two teams, Junior B (19-28) (19-36?) Jan B. queried handicaps and Junior C (29-36) (30-36? ) Jan B. queried handicaps and that visiting teams would be “entertained at luncheon.” The B team reached the final of their division. One member, Mrs Binks gave a trophy for Pennant players – they were to play off against drawn partners. However in 1933, HGC could only field a Junior B team. By 1935, Pennant was “left in the hands of the Match Committee.”

Every year since thank HGC has entered teams in pennant. Some years they found it difficult to field a team and as has often been the case, players from HGC were playing ladies on much lower handicaps. The 1937 team of 7 players were Mrs Shaw, Mrs Taylor, Mrs Cook, Mrs Balfour, Mrs Edwards, Mrs Lingford and Miss Day. But it was soon changed to 5 players as in 1939 HGC voted in favour of continuing with 5 players. In 1938, HGC was able to field a Silver Division Team for the first time so “each members of committee offered to donate a silver spoon to be presented to the members of the first Junior A Team>” In 1940 HGC again entered two teams and all those eligible had to play matches against each other to determine the teams. Two teams entered, 1-18 handicaps Silver Division and 19-36 handicaps Bronze Division

The 1964 B Team was Mrs Kabat, (in 1947 had Union handicap of 18) Mrs C Ferguson, Mrs McCann, (in 1956 won Veteran’s State Championship) Mrs Hawkins and Mrs O’Connor and in July they “were entertained to afternoon tea” by the Committee. But by 1947, HGC must have been short of qualified players and inquired whether they could enter 4 players in A Division and give a walk over in the 5th match – they were allowed to do so. The Committee noted in 1948 that other teams had commented on the “high standard of play from Heidelberg.”

When pennant was played at Heidelberg in 1949, 90 players were in the field. At that time the teams were in Silver and Bronze Division and HGC had teams in both. The Silver Team was Mesdames Baker, Hawkins, Gurner, Brazenor and Cookes. In Silver Division there were semi-finals and finals but Bronze was a knockout competition, so a loss in the first round put the team out of the competition. Matches were also played out, no squared. HGC was able to field a team in Silver Division. The Bronze team however, was knocked out by Metropolitan in their first match, but when HGC hosted the pennant matches the B Team caddied for Metro. This prompted the President to suggest that the B team have caddies. That year, the committee ruled that if a player was beaten in two consecutive matches she would be automatically dropped and if players did not play their practice matches they would not be eligible to play.

When HGC was to play at Kew in 1951, pennant had to be cancelled “owing to course being under water along the river.” That same year Medway sent a letter of apology for not turning up for their match at Peninsula.

The teams were usually “entertained to afternoon tea,” by the Committee. Sometimes they played nine hole of golf before having a cocktail party. In 1953”new golf balls” were given to the B team who were playing in the finals. The team went close to winning the flag but was “Knocked out by Kew” – 2 matches went to the 19th and one to the 20th. Instead of “entertaining the team” they were presented with a silver spoon. In 1955 they reached the final, only to be again beaten by Kew. As was so often the case, HGC ladies were playing people on lower handicaps, sometimes on single figures. In 1957, HGC for the third time narrowly missed winning a flag but were bean in the final by Paterson River. That year Pennant players were permitted to use the Men’s Locker Room on Pennant Day.

Player numbers must have again become a problem because in 1958, HGC cold only enter one team and the Club asked the VLGU to revert to the old system of Pennant. However, the next year they again had two teams and the A Team finished second in their division. The club continued to have problems over the next few years with finding enough players for Silver Division, in 1964 they only had 6 players in Silver. The VLGU eventually change the Pennant Rules in 1964 which enabled HGC to have two teams again.

The club Pro by this time often gave clinics, for which the Committee had to play. In 1948, the B Team had been told that “if they were keen enough they could pay Mr Wykes for lessons.” Competition in Pennant Matches was fierce – on one occasion two ball on the green were 2” (inches) apart and one player asked another to mark her ball, she refused. The players who asked for the ball to be marked lost the hole and was not too happy!” The matter was later taken to the VLGU for a ruling. Some matters were not directed by the VLGU eg 1960 they refused to give a directive re caddies, it was to be left to the Captains and Teams to work out what caddies should be allowed to do.

HGC won their first Pennant flag in 1968 when they had Teams in 1st and 2nd Divisions. The Pro, Mr Kennedy had given clinics for all the players – “although he only charged for one hour, he sometimes spent three hours with the ladies!” After four matches, the 1st team had won 4 and 2nd team lost 4 so it was decided to give other players a match in 2nd Division. The 1st Team went on to win the flag at Kingswood by defeating Croydon 4 and 3 and “the flag was raised last Tuesday for the first time.” The team had a “Lovely celebration that same night at the home of our President Mrs Mathias.”

The members of this Team were – Denise Stuart (C), Audrey Howard, Norma Brown, Lola Welch, Betty McPherson, Connie Guille, Jean Sunborn and Mavis Lennox.

The team was given a lunch at the Club where they were presented with a spoon and a photo of the team with the flag; Mrs Guille was presented with a trophy for “her unbeaten record in Pennant series.” The winning team were also entertained at a cocktail party by the Club President and Captain. The Committee was also pleased to receive lots of congratulatory telegrams from other clubs.

The following year, 1969 was not too successful for the Pennant Teams, the 1st team was relegated back to Section D after “not going too well.” But they did have enough players with the required handicaps to field a Silver Division Team. In this year the Pennant players from all clubs voted in favour of halved matches instead of playing them out.

In April, 1970, the 2nd team was relegated to the newly formed Section E. With only 6 players in their team, the 1st team put in “a terrific effort” and managed a win in their final match to finish 3rd in their section. A luncheon of soup, salmon patties, apple slice and cream and tea and coffee was provided for the Pennant players and caddies. (95c per head)

The VLGU reorganised the pennant season and in 1971 the divisions were discontinued and 9 sections with no divisions were introduced. The 1st teams was to be Scratch – 18 and 2nd, Scratch – 25. HGC often had trouble in finding enough players for a silver division team but did field two teams.

Over the next thirty odd years, HGC continued to have two teams in Town Pennant and the two teams moved up and down through the different sections. They were not successful in winning another flag until 1982 when they won Section 7. Four years later, HGC Ladies won another Flag in Section 8 and in 1994 they won Section 9. Soon after that, the Teams began to become more competitive in the Pennant Competition.

The pennant teams of the late 1990’s – early 2000’s have had a great deal of success winning another seven flags. There is no single reason for this success, but the return of Barbara Aylen and Janette Borgolotto has been a major contribution. However, there have been other important factors behind these successes. There are now more players with single figure handicaps than at any other time at the club. Two outstanding Juniors, Grace Lennon and Lauren Sinclair have joined the club and reach single figure handicaps. These four players have added much depth and experience to the Pennant teams Barbara and Janette having played Section1 pennant at Huntingdale and Yarra Yarra. Grace and Lauren, although young, have played in many state events and have experience in tough competitions.

Whilst these four players form the nucleus of the first team, others in the teams have benefited from their playing. Their presence has meant that there are now stronger players in both teams and this has been reflected in both teams winning flags in 2001. Section 4 and Section 7.

Winning Section 2 Pennant – 2005

For the first time in the 77 year history of the Club the HGC ladies won the Section 2 Pennant Flag in 2005 and will now play in Section 1. This was a great achievement, not just because they won the flag, but that a club with a relatively small number of women players was able to achieve such a success. They had to compete against clubs with many more women players and with more players with low handicaps to choose from.

The teams they competed against were: - Kew, Eastern, Metropolitan, Royal Melbourne, Commonwealth, Sunshine and Spring Valley. The competition was very keen and the result was not decided until the last day. After five matches there were 5 teams still with a chance of winning the Flag. HGC had 4 wins and 1 loss as did Kew. Metropolitan, who eventually finished second, had 3 wins and 2 losses. Eastern and Commonwealth both had 3 wins 2 losses. So the competition was very close and the result hinged on the last match when HGC played Kew.

HGC had to defeat Kew to win the flag, a ½ was good enough. Although HGC had won more games they had had another loss and had 8 points. Kew who had had a ½, had 9 points. HGC defeated Kew 4 ½ - 2 ½. There were three halved matched in that result and as is often the case in Pennant matches the result came down to the final two games.

As with all team events, all members of the team have to contribute so it was very much a team effort. Congratulations to the Section 2 Pennant Team.

Section 2 Pennant Team – Janette Borgolotto, Barbara Aylen, Grace Lennon, Lauren Sinclair, Bev Murray, Adele Huggard, Elizabeth Sinclair, and Maree Ciavarella. Team Manager – Heather Bell.

**Thank you to Jan Balgowan for writing the above history.**

**Elizabeth Sinclair has continued the history from 2006 with Heidelberg playing in Section 1 of WGV Pennant.**

2006 – HGC retains Section 1 One of the biggest challenges is to retain Section 1 and not be relegated straight back to Section 2. It came down to the last round where Heidelberg squared with Kingston Heath meaning they had retained their spot in Section 1.

2007 – More history made by our Section 1 Pennant Team. The team had settled into Section 1 the previous year and proved they could match the other teams in this section. The team put together a wonderful season, winning 5 and losing two matches. This put them into the final against Sunshine to be played at Commonwealth. Team was Janette Borgolotto, Grace Lennon, Lauren Sinclair, Adele Huggard, Barb Aylen, Bev Murray, Elaine Dunk and Elizabeth Sinclair. The team in the final were Grace, Lauren, Barb and Bev - Won, Adele – Squared, Elaine – Lost with Janette’s game being stopped as a result had been achieved. Elizabeth Sinclair was the emergency player. Team Manager – Heather Bell. The team defeated Sunshine 4 ½ - 2 ½ to be the first Club north of the Yarra to have even won the Section 1 Flag. It was also the 100th year of Women’s Pennant to make it even a more significant year to win. This HGC team was also made up of “home grown” players with no player imports from other clubs.

Heidelberg again made the finals in 2008 winning 4 matches, losing 2 and squaring 1 and finished second on the ladder. The final was contested at Long Island against Yarra Yarra. Yarra Yarra was victorious 4-3. Janette, Adele, Bev won, Grace, Lauren, Barb and Elizabeth lost. It should be noted that Grace lost on the 19th hole and Bev won on the 21st hole so the teams were very evenly matched and it went down to the last match between the top two team players. Grace and her opponent being square at the 18th hole, having to continue their match down the 1st hole again, being their 19th hole. Grace’s opponent won that hole to give Yarra Yarra the Section 1 Flag for 2008.

HGC’s 1st Team won Flags every two years from 1999 – 2007 win Section 5 in 1999, Section 4 in 2001, Section 3 in 2003, Section 2 in 2005 and Section 1 in 2007! HGC contested the final on two other occasions 2008/2012 but were unsuccessful in winning a second flag in Section/Division 1.

2012 – Division 1 Pennant Team Secures Place in 2012 Final – A fantastic team effort by our “flagship” Ladies Pennant Team secured a place in the 2012 Division One Final by defeating highly fancied Yarra Yarra by a convincing 5/2 margin today at Commonwealth GC.

The team got off to a great start with the first 3 matches going to Heidelberg after convincing wins to Liz Sinclair (2/1), Stephanie Robinson (5/4) and Kirsty Hodgkins (5/3). The 2 matches in the middle went to Yarra Yarra, so it was left to the final 2 matches out on the course to try and secure the 1 point needed for a win.

The second last match saw Lauren Sinclair in an up and down affair on the back nine, but some excellent play over the closing holes gave Lauren a 2-up buffer doing down the penultimate hole, and whilst both players bunkered their approach shots, Lauren blasted out to leave a 10 foot putt under the hole to grab a half and 2/1 win. This was the all-important 4th point the team needed to secure a win and a place in the 2012 Division 1 final.

In the final match it was Heidelberg’s number 1 player Ashlee Dewhurst playing the final hole all square against high quality opposition in Korean player – Rio Watanabe, but after her iron shot to the par three 9th green (Ashlee’s 18th hole) ran over the back of the green, Ashlee played a brilliant chip shot to within 3-4 feet and calmly holed the putt to earn a well-deserved 1-up win and a great 5/2 result for the team.

HGC played Kingston Heath in the Final at Peninsula CC - North course and lost 4/3. Grace Lennon now playing for Kingston Heath defeated Ashlee Dewhurst on the 18th hole to win the flag for Kingston Heath.

2009 – 2014 Heidelberg played in Section 1. They were relegated in 2014 but won Section 2 in 2016 to return to Section 1 in 2017. The team remained in Section 1 till 2021 (the 2020 season was abandon due to COVID19) where they were once again relegated to Section 2.

2021 – HGC again found themselves short of players. A few ladies had moved onto other clubs or no longer wished to play pennant any more. A team was not confirmed until a few weeks prior to the season commencing. Our team of 7 players contested the 2021 season knowing they were very much the underdogs being the team with the longest handicaps in the Division 1. We had no emergency player so everyone committed to every week and turned up every week for the Season. Two Heidelberg women, Mimi Burrows & Simone Mifsud, accepted the challenge of playing Pennant for the very first time for Heidelberg knowing they were also playing in the top division of pennant as well. A member of Rosebud Country Club, Kelly Loudovaris, friend of Ingrid Noack, a long-time pennant player, was recruited for our team and held down our No 2 position for the team over the season. Carolyn Carlos also from Rosebud CC stepped in during one of the rounds where we were short a player. As expected the team was relegated to Section 2 for 2022 without managing one win for the season. Alana Van Grueing only available for last two matches.

2022 – GA Victoria – advised that all pennant players etc had to be vaccinated against COVID19. HCG still struggling for pennant players with the small number of ladies continuing to commit to each match and we welcomed another Rosebud lady, Jade Chapman who played two games for Heidelberg. Coco Chen new member at Heidelberg stepped in to play a couple of games as well. Both Jade and Coco won both games they played. Being in Division 2 didn’t mean we would be competitive, it was just wait and see how we go. Well they managed to retain Division 2 on the last round playing against Kew who were also wanting to win to retain their spot in Division 2. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Heidelberg only had 6 players available with our only emergency player having to pull out late at night the day before we played Kew. The team defeated Kew 4/3 to retain Division 2. It was like winning the flag. Division 2 for 2023 how wonderful!

2010 – Golf Victoria Pennant Clubs voted to play pennant on a Sunday and a Friday. The Sunday Pennant would be for the Club’s in Section 1-5, (to be known as Division 1-5 and not Sections) and Friday Pennant team to be for the Club’s with teams in Section 6 – 9 (to become Division 1 – 5.) Only one team per club to play on a Sunday and a Friday. Some Club’s decided not to submit a team on a Sunday in 2010 as they felt “Friday was women’s pennant day” and they submitted a team only for the Friday Pennant. Golf Victoria felt they should play the top sections on a Sunday to allow juniors and ladies that worked the opportunity to play Pennant for their clubs rather than miss their schooling or have to take annual leave to play pennant. The Friday Pennant was known initially as Women’s Metropolitan Pennant then in 2014 known as Friday Women’s Pennant. In 2016 – Division 10 was dropped due to clubs no longer submitting a Friday team.

2011 – HGC Friday Women’s Pennant Team won the Flag. This win saw HGC have both the Sunday Pennant and Friday Pennant in Division 1 creating more history for our Club’s Pennant. In 2017/18?? HGC did not submit a Friday Pennant team. The numbers of ladies available had again dwindled and HGC was down to only one pennant team.