

# SOUTHERN & EASTERN CAPE ANNUAL AWARDS

## CLUB PROFESSIONAL

Christopher Dixon

Knysna Golf Club.

**1. What is your current job title?**

Head PGA Professional and Pro Shop Manager.

**2. How long have you been in your current position?**

9 years as Head Professional.

7 months as Pro Shop Manager (Knysna Golf Club has recently taken over the Pro Shop).

**3. What have been the key deliverables of your position the past 12 months?**

Our approach at Knysna Golf Club in the last 12 months is to become for family orientated and getting more players and their families to stay longer at the club.

- We have noticed that there are more and more younger families moving to Knysna. We need them in our club.
- New members under the age of 35.

We have built a children's play area as well as a pizza oven. We have upgraded the patio to feel more relaxed. We organise live music in the season time to make our club feel more friendly and a place that you want to visit even if you are not a golfer.

We recently had an easter egg hunt for the kids and had over 50 kids and their parents at the club.

All the events have brought more people to our Club boosting sales, especially in the food and beverage department.

**4. How do you see the implementation of Safeguarding on your position and the industry?**

The implementation of Safeguarding for me and my position is extremely important. The protection and knowledge of harmful acts towards children and women is highly important in all sporting industries.

My staff play a big role in safeguarding in the golfing industry and teaching them how to identify any harmful acts is important to me and the business. I encourage all my

staff to come to me if they notice anything that will be harmful before anything happens. In most cases, rather safe than sorry.

Safeguarding has always been part of my position; my staff understand the importance of safeguarding and what it means to me and our club.

**5. Please give us a brief outline of the path you took to lead you to your current position?**

Growing up and playing golf at Knysna Golf Club since 1996 has been an amazing journey. The time I have spent in Knysna and loving the game of golf has helped me to really want to grow golf in Knysna and specially at Knysna Golf Club. Helping Knysna Golf Club grow through what I learnt through the PGA, Knysna Golf Club is thriving, and I can positively say I contributed to the success.

**6. Why do you feel that you would be a good candidate to win this award?**

Over the past two years I have worked alongside Meyer du Toit who has taught me so much about customer/staff relationships and how to run a great golf club but still having a great time at work. I feel I have grown in the senior management side of Knysna Golf Club.

The way Knysna Golf Club is growing in such a positive way, I feel my contribution has been a huge part of the change. I now also manage the Pro Shop on behalf of the Knysna Golf Club which has added an extra role and responsibility.

I have a very personalized approach to staff and golfers. Quick on my feet at problem solving. I enjoy working in a club environment. I'm able to learn from my mistakes. I focus not only on myself but on helping/motivating others (co-workers) to improve themselves as well – for the most efficient work environment.

**7. How do you promote a career in golf and the PGA to people who aspire to a career within the industry?**

The nice thing about a career in golf is that there are so many options.

I have often been asked why and how I got into golf by members and younger players. Its pretty simple, since a young sports person golf has always been the greatest test of my ability and taught me a lot about myself.

This is how I promote it, golf as a game that teaches you a lot about yourself and respect towards others.

- As a young golfer there are many paths to take in golf. With your ability you are able to help other golfers through what the PGA teaches you but lucky enough, golfers require all sorts of guidance/help and not only golf lessons.

- Golf is psychological and this is the side of the game that I have really enjoyed talking about. What I learnt through the PGA on the psychological side of golf has help me in my day-to-day life.
- I have also been very involved with the financial side of Knysna Golf Club. The PGA program teaches you about running businesses so if the teaching side of golf isn't your place in golf there are still plenty other opportunities in golf.

These are just the main things that have really helped me and where I am involved with golf. There is still so much that one can do in golf and through the PGA which makes the PGA an exceptional program to be part of.

