

QUESTIONNAIRE-

**Darren Millington
CEO**

Benoni Country Club

1. What led you to becoming a PGA Professional?

My passion for golf, I have always loved the game and although I played other sports professionally (football / baseball) in my younger days, golf was always in my heart.

2. What is your current job title?

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

3. How long have you been in your current position?

Six Years

4. What does your job entail?

I am responsible for managing the entire Country Club. Finance, Membership, HR, POS, Food & Beverage, Green Keeping, Functions, Golf Days, Socials and Marketing are all covered under my portfolio, with the main focus being on ensuring the financial stability of our business by implementing systems, controls and procedures.

The Club is home to sporting codes such as Golf (Championship 18 Holes + Driving Range and Academy), Bowls (3 Greens), MTB / Cycling (3 Tracks), Tennis (6 Courts), Squash (4 Courts), Indoor football (2 courts) and a Running Section. I manage all of these, oversee their budgets and see to it that the various sub committees have actively provided for the needs of all members and guests.

I look after over 1800 members within these sporting codes. It is my responsibility to ensure there is constant growth within the membership, by working with the community and marketing the club through various media platforms. Structuring subscription policies, benefits and pre-paid options. Manage the invoicing of the same, ensuring the collections of subscriptions and administrating the debit order systems.

I am actively involved in all green keeping activities both golf course and bowling greens. I have sound knowledge of all fertilizer and fungicides programs. I am able to operate any machinery on golf course Toro, John Deer, Jacobson etc. I am fully responsible for all budgets and maintenance programs in this area. 2017, 2018, 2019 were fantastic years for the Club, with Benoni Country Club winning both the "Golf Course of the Year" and the "Best Golf Course in the Reader's Choice Awards in Ekurhuleni."

We have 126 houses that surround the course, although a small estate I assist with the collection of levies and day to day concerns of the residents which have access to the course for general purposes such as walking, exercise, cycling and social activities.

I own and manage the Pro-Shop facilities as a separate entity, of which I am the sole member of the CC. Stock controls, to merchandising, sales, accounts, suppliers, purchasing etc.: is all handled by myself. I also employ two PGA Professionals in the shop and operate a fleet of 40 golf carts of which the golf shop owns and maintains.

I manage the Daveyton Golf Club and all their greenkeeping needs this is part of mine and the clubs commitment to golf development within our community.

Day to Day Functions:

- **Oversee company needs, handle daily business issues, manage membership and finances, develop and constantly communicate with the membership and negotiate with business associates, sponsors and suppliers.**
- **Continuously working to strategically expand business, preserve and improve the company's procedures, standards or policies while constantly looking after the customer's needs.**
- **Oversee all members accounts and ensuring that these are up to date and accurate at all times.**
- **Produce reports and stats for the Executive Committee.**
- **Develop, oversee and approve all agreements, contracts and documentation with suppliers, business associates and Council. Liaise with Council for future property leases etc.**
- **Manage all activities and provide a clear strategic direction of the corporates, membership, sports and F&B functions.**
- **Maximize revenue through making innovative decisions to enhance the business.**
- **Identify ways to save costs, shift direction of initiatives where needed, develop relationships with suppliers in order to achieve cost cutting measures.**
- **Responsible for ensuring the departments have a clear understanding of budgets, set revenue targets and are supported through performance management, training and development.**
- **Develop marketing campaigns alongside the marketing team and ensure implementation of the same.**
- **Oversee all functions of the various sporting codes and their committees.**
- **Develop and implement strategic marketing plans to ensure the growth in membership and revenue in the various sporting codes.**
- **Human Resources, responsible for the employment of all staff and the disciplinary measures.**
- **Analysis of statistics**
- **Increase revenue within the Club**
- **Manage the 16 Course Staff**
- **Manage the 43 Club House and F&B Staff**
- **Manage the 4 Administration Staff**

5. Do you have any environmental or sustainability goals that you have met and would like to share?

6. Please share your social media platforms with us, if you would like to

I try to stay away from social media on a personal basis

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

I started my apprenticeship under Rob Van Velzen at a club in Brakpan called Royal Oak CC. There I managed the shop for him and was actively involved in the green keeping and maintaining the buildings etc. after a two year stint at the club it became important for me to expand and I was offered the shop at Pollock Park GC which is situated in Springs. I took up the offer and managed my own shop and worked with the club as Golf Director. After the first two years the manager left the club and the committee asked me to take over the entire facility as the GM. I spent six more year in this position until I was approached to take over the role as Golf Director / GM of Germiston GC. I took on this position following on from Paul Marks and I spent a further 9 years at Germiston until Benoni Country Club approached me to take over as CEO of the Country Club.

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

I set targets and lead by example. I have a desire to engage, motivate and encourage others through change. I am highly focused with a consistent track record of successfully delivering full turn around within budget. I have been in the golf industry for the past 20 years, managing and driving revenues that bring golf clubs to their true potential.

The experience gained in the club industry, has enabled me to develop a sound understanding of the different processes needed within clubs, which enables me to understand customer needs.

I am well organized, self-driven, hardworking, dedicated, and extremely focused on gaining market share, I ensure this by delivering customer service, achieving budgets and exceeding goals.

9. Would you like the PGA to share your profile via our social media platforms?

If my experiences can assist in developing or will inspire future PGA professionals then yes you are welcome.