



DARREN ROBERT PLUMB

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To: The Professional Golfers Association of South Africa
Re: Motivation Letter for PGA Club Manager of the year – Gauteng North

Dear Sirs,

I was astounded and slightly embarrassed when I received the call informing me that I have been nominated by my fellow PGA members for the Gauteng North PGA Club Manager award and was required to write a motivational letter.

As a firm believer in the “self-praise is no recommendation” concept and not being one to blow my own trumpet, I found this task to be harder than a chip off a tight lie over a small body of water, but here goes;

Having joined the PGA as a full member in April 2009 I have enjoyed every year being a member of the association and the opportunities it has presented me. From learning the trade under Darren Millington to running my own Pro-Shop and later the Operations Director of Pollak Park to the General Manager and now CEO position at Mbombela Golf Club (Nelspruit) it has been a truly enjoyable journey. My current position saw a move from the gold reef down to the Lowveld region of South Africa and has come with great opportunities to grow the club and my own personal career but at the same time some daunting challenges to overcome.

The past 14 months here saw the hosting of a very successful Nomads Nationals Tournament where Nomad members from all over South Africa and the neighbouring countries of Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Botswana come down for a week of golf. This has got to be the highlight to date of my short career with around 1200 rounds played by some very thirsty golfers demanding a first class experience. Knowing what the Nomads does for furtherance of golf in this country it was a chance for me as a PGA member to give them a tournament in appreciation of their commitment to golf. Andrew Bullen the Nationals convener, now National Chairman, kindly sent the club the following: “*To Club Manager Darren Plumb - You went out of your way to ensure that our guests were given an experience that many of them will never forget. You left no stone unturned in your efforts to ensure that everyone enjoyed their stay in the Lowveld and their games on the magnificent golf course. You are an enormous asset to the club and I know that the club can only go from strength to strength with you at the helm!! Thank you and congratulations on a fantastic job!!*”

Not far behind this was the 50th playing of the Jock of The Bushveld Amateur Tournament, which if I’m not mistaken is one of the largest amateur tournaments in the country with over 1500 rounds being played in 7 days. During this years’ tournament, the 51st playing, we re-introduced the PGA Jock of The Bushveld Pro-Am which saw 17 PGA professionals and their guests come to the club to enjoy two days of Bushveld Golf. This was an enjoyable occasion and with past winners some 30 years ago of Kobie le Grange and Joe Dlamini we are hoping to grow this event and make it an annual fixture on the PGA tournaments calendar.

The club has also seen the building of a restaurant, The Sand Bar and Bistro, which offers great food to the members of the club and residents on the estate, bucked the golf environment trend and increased the annual rounds of golf played, upgraded key areas of the clubhouse and carried out large manicuring projects on the golf course.



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One of the major challenges we overcame was more off the golf course following a racial incident that took place at the club. This saw major political parties march to the club in protest. Following talks and signed agreements with the council and various political parties we successfully implemented a Development and Transformation plan which in return resulted in the club receiving a R1.2 million donation from Robert Gumede and commitment from the Mbombela council to assist the club with growing the game and the people who work in it, from the golf course staff, catering staff down to the caddies.

With the above items on the forefront of the battle my own golf took a back seat with very little time to practice. My recent tied 2nd finish in the Jock of The Bushveld Pro-Am can only be put to “home course advantage” and “none more surprized than the striker himself”. I do occasionally get out on the course with the members which I thoroughly enjoy and whilst there are no fireworks I pride myself in doing enough to win the side bets and buy the drinks afterwards. As in the past I am hoping to attend more of the upcoming Pro-Am tournaments to allow me the opportunity to spend some valuable on course time with my members and sponsors whilst competing against my peers.

In closing I am extremely lucky to have a very supportive family, committee and hardworking team of staff which enables us as Mbombela Golf Club to offer *The Ultimate Bushveld Golfing Experience* and ensures that my members, their guests, visitors and my team afford me the opportunity to “*touch their lives through the game of golf*”.

I am truly proud to be able to use the PGA seal and call myself a member.

Yours faithfully,

Darren Plumb
Class AA PGA Professional
Membership Number: 206