



President's Report 2016

As the year comes to a close, we can look back on what may be the most successful year in golf that we have ever experienced. We had exceptional results in National and Atlantic competitions in levels from Junior to Professional.

I want to thank all the Volunteers, Board Directors, Executive and Committee Members, for the time you give to GNL. I also want to thank our Member Clubs and their Members for your continued support for our Association and your efforts to grow the game are very much appreciated, we could not achieve our goals without your help.

The season began with our Member courses and Association finances in good shape and both continued to improve as the year progressed. Fears of grant and funding declines did not fully materialize and continued support from Sponsors and successful Fundraising efforts were welcomed.

Continued participation at the Provincial Council level has allowed our relationship with Golf Canada to continue to grow stronger and our participation in shaping the Golf Canada Strategic Plan has allowed us to focus our efforts of growing the game in Newfoundland and Labrador. More work is being done on the new Golf Canada Membership Model and its amendments over the past two years have resulted in growing success in the test markets.

Highlights of 2016 include:

Nash Denic Jr.'s Provincial High School title in early June. Thank you to Bally Haly for allowing us to hold this event, we appreciate your help in our efforts to grow the game at this level.

Evan D'Angelo's Medalist title at the AJGA Spring Valley qualifier event in Columbia, SC in mid-June was a delight that had media in the province buzzing and foreshadowed more good results to follow.

The Raising Champions fundraiser at Glendenning was a success in the early part of the season and helped us achieve our goals of improving both our Junior and Adult programs.

The Competitions Committee must be praised for their work on the successful Provincial Championships at all levels of competition which crowned excellent Champions in each division. I would like to offer a sincere "Thank You" to Terra Nova Resort and Gander Golf Club, their Volunteers, Management, Staff and Organizing Committees for being such wonderful hosts to all Competitors during the Provincial Championships.

Another "Thank you" goes to Clovelly Golf Club for their hosting of the Canadian Junior Boys Championship in early August. The event was a tremendous success and had a number of highlights. We witnessed brilliant play from an incredibly skilled International field and saw our Provincial Team finish in 4th Place overall, one shot off the podium and 4 shots out of Second Place. Our Talented Juniors were led by Andrew Bruce, our lone Competitor to play all four rounds and Evan D'Angelo who missed the cut by a single shot. A 15 year old Texan with Newfoundland roots, Thomas Critch, made the competition exciting right up to the final hole, by nearly holding off the eventual Champion Sam Meeks and finishing second overall while claiming the National Juvenile crown. The home grown organizing Committee put off a World Class event which received compliments from visitors, spectators, Competitors, Coaches and Golf Canada's President and his Staff. The tireless volunteers led by GERALYN HANSFORD, were the secret to the success of the Championship. A huge "Thank You!" goes out to them.

Our Junior Girls represented us well at the National Championship this summer. The highlight if the event for us may have been a round of 86 for Paige Hickey, one of the best scores of the day in the second round, showing great resilience to bounce back after a tough first day.

Congratulations to our Junior Committee and the Junior Development Program for their continued success helping to grow our talented young players' potential.

Blair Bursey has had a truly amazing golf season and for those who have not followed his successes, some accomplishments include:

Bandon Dunes Championship NCAA, Individual Medalist Honors

Voted First Team ALL-WAC by the Coaches in the NCAA's Division I Western Athletic Conference

WAC Player of the Week

WAC Player of the Month

Idaho State Championship 4th place finish

Provincial Amateur Champion

Opening round of 64 at Canadian Am Championship

National Willingdon Cup Team Championship with teammates Nathan Peters and Chuck Conley

National Am Championship Leader for 3 days

Top 5 finish in Canadian Amateur Championship

Golf Canada National Order of Merit 8th ranked player

And his successes are continuing right now with strong showings in his College events in the current NCAA College Season

The 2016 Willingdon Cup title is really something for Blair, Nathan and Chuck and all our Golf NL Members to be proud of. It is our first National Team Championship... an AMAZING accomplishment, and we should look forward to more in the future, based on the talent that is developing among our young players.

The Atlantic Championships proved to be an abundance of outstanding performances by GNL Competitors. After a 5 year break from golf, Nikashantess Penashue finished 8 shots ahead of the second place finisher with a 6 under par total of 210 to claim the Atlantic Amateur Title. Howie Hansford had a magical final day at 69 to finish even par 216 to claim the Atlantic Senior Championship and Don Boland led wire to wire in the Super Senior division, cruising to victory with a final round 71. Phenomenal golf by our competitors in a very talented field represented by all four Atlantic Provinces.

Just for good measure, to cap off the year in style, our Provincial Junior Director and Bally Haly GM, Jamie Moran CPGA, decided he needed to make a contribution in the area of Competition as a Newfoundland golfer. So, in September he went to Nova Scotia and won the Taylor Made Adidas Players Championship at Penn Hills Golf Club. Congratulations on your great win.

I would like to thank our Marketing Committee for their efforts this past year, especially out going Committee Chair Paul Kelly of Glendenning for all his guidance and work for the Association while on the Board. The Marketing Committee worked tirelessly in keeping things up to date, marketing ourselves and keeping us informed.

Many thanks to everyone involved in the Rules Committee for their many hours of generous service during the Championship Season, their efforts were stellar as always. Jim Sloan and his team had done an incredible job for us and we are reaping the rewards of this. The on-line rules seminars were the talk of the Golf Canada meetings in February. I was complimented by several of the other Presidents who either took advantage of the seminars or had members do so and enjoyed the discussions and education. It is helping to grow the game through new officials in the Atlantic region. I would encourage all Competitors and Volunteers to participate in these beneficial seminars, on-line or in-person.

The Rating/Handicap Committee are doing a great job, in spite of the miles between courses, course alterations, re-routings and renovations, along with the constant upgrades and technology issues with the USGA and Golf Canada that occasionally crop up. Among other things, your work allows us to carry accurate handicaps in Provincial, Club and Friendly competitions which enhance our experience and enjoyment on the course.

Now that it is fully up and running, the Membership committee has made great strides in building up the offerings and promoting the benefits of membership, with a focus on promoting inter-regional participation this year. Thanks for your efforts and we look forward to future innovations.

Thanks also to VP Adam Stanley, Treasurer Ken Casey and Secretary Eddie Bearn for all their extra efforts and time sharing in Executive meetings, weekly discussions and thoughtful advice. This year has been interesting, eventful and successful

As in the past, our Executive Director, Greg Hillier is also to be commended for his dedication to our Association. We appreciate his input and his incredible work ethic.

Respectfully submitted

Steve Wedgwood
President, Golf Newfoundland Labrador