



PRESS RELEASE

03 OCTOBER 2016

The Members of Royal Johannesburg & Kensington Golf Club have approved major upgrades, which will take place over the next 5 years

At the 125th Annual General Meeting of Royal Johannesburg & Kensington Golf Club the members approved the Special Resolution to implement a 5-year plan for the Club. The Vision will deliver a beautiful property development of some 430 plus upmarket apartments and retirement units through surplus land tranches on the outskirts of each course, a state of the art Boutique Spa, Fitness Centre, Kids Club, along with several other replacements and upgrades like new lockerooms and car park. Additionally both of these wonderful Courses will be revamped in 2017 (East Course) & 2018 (West Course).

“The Board & Management have spent endless hours and nearly 2 years developing this detailed plan and we are ecstatic with the approval, the response from members and the golf community. It is the enthusiasm, passion and support of our members, which enabled us to make the commitment to this plan for our great Club. We have needed to upgrade our courses and implement a vision for a while, developing the right plan for approval had its set backs but has led us to a better plan for the future. Knowing that the times of dictating terms and conditions in a sellers market are long gone. The consumer has more choices than ever before, golf and non-golf, to decide where they will spend their money and time. It’s a buyer’s market and we needed to implement a plan that would compliment our great course layouts, put us back on the map as a destination and most importantly be sustainable long into the future” *Said Christopher Bentley, CEO of the Club.*

The Course upgrades will include new bunkers and resurfaced bent grass greens, the Club will also take the opportunity to make some adjustments where needed, include additional water storage, adding new tees to make the East Course easier for the amateur while still maintaining its championship challenge for the professional Golfer. The new bunkers will include the necessary drainage work with state of the art liners to prevent contamination of the sand, be more aesthetically pleasing on the eye by having slightly rolled down grass faces and making them shallower while not losing the integrity of the design, at the same time the Club will endeavor to make these changes with lower maintenance costs.

Its planned for the East Course to be closed for a period of 5 months in 2017 starting in July and then the same timing will be followed for the West Course in 2018.

While the upgrades of the courses are vitally important, and the Club wants to remain predominantly about Golf, the plan has also taken advantage to include additional facilities to better suit the modern day golfer.



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Est. 1890

Lifestyles have changed and continue to do so; we have entered an era where golf is not enough. Men are not the only breadwinners and spending quality time with one's children is more important. Families want to do things together, visit destinations and have something that appeals to them all. We have taken the steps to implement facilities that will hopefully attract and satisfy the far more discerning and lifestyle-orientated consumer with a Boutique Spa, Fitness Centre and Kids Club which will also be part of the offering to those purchasing apartments in the development.

There is no doubt that Royal Johannesburg & Kensington Golf Club's courses are wonderful layout's, especially the East Course which has hosted numerous Championships over the years. Nestled in the heart of Johannesburg, the Club will protect its "grand old lady" parkland design, which there is no question is one of the best in the Country, and now with approximately R40m in value to be spent in its upgrades, the courses are marked to set new benchmarks within Gauteng Golf and be replaced into the top South African Courses.

"We will work hard to ensure the products remain cost friendly to the consumer once complete and strongly believe the upgrades on our courses with the additional facilities will put our Club back into the top echelon of Clubs in our country, and hopefully attract more members, rounds and families to enjoy this wonderful Club" *Said John Hare, Club Chairman.*



~ *A New Royal Awaits* ~



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The Team

Christopher Bentley	Club CEO & Project Director
Gordon Odgers	5-Year Project Team Leader
Shaun Brits	Course & Project Manager
Jayde Rademeyer	Club Operations Director
Robbie Marshal	Golf Data – Course Construction & Design
Tim Kloeck & David Nagle	Property Developers
Ricci Davidoff	Property Development Leader
John Hare	Club Chairman
Alan Field	Vice Chairman
Marc Kourie	Club Captain
Marian Ledingham	Ladies Club Captain

About: Royal Johannesburg & Kensington Golf Club

Over a century of South African golfing history, few clubs, if any, are able to claim a heritage like that of the Royal Johannesburg & Kensington Golf Club, which celebrates its 125 year existence. The Club is the product of a merger of the former Royal Johannesburg Golf Club and the former Kensington Golf Club in 1998. Possibly the first merger of its kind in South Africa, it has produced a financially sound Club with modernised facilities and a strong and supportive membership base.

Essentially, the improvements to the Clubhouse and the two courses at Royal Johannesburg were funded from the sale of the Kensington property. The result is a superb facility, with two outstanding parkland golf courses ideally suited to preserve the value of both clubs, and meet the challenges of the 21st Century. The Johannesburg Golf Club was founded in 1891 and was located on the current premises as far back as 1909. It received its Royal Charter in 1931. On the occasion of the Club's Centenary celebrations in 1991, the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews sent both its Captain and Chairman of its Rules Committee as official representatives.

The Club was instrumental in forming the Transvaal Golf Union in 1908 and from its membership provided the first President of the South African Golf Union in 1910. The Club has been the home of the Gauteng Senior Golfer's Society for over 60 years. The PGA of South Africa also relocated to the Club in 2005.

The Royal Johannesburg Golf Club was founded in 1890, members of the Johannesburg Golf Club first began playing "behind Hospital Hill", in the area that later became known as Clarendon Circle and Empire Road. The search for more suitable land, and the rapid development of the city, caused the club to move no less than four times, before finally being established in 1909 on the land it still occupies today. During a visit to Johannesburg in 1930, the Prince of Wales, later to become King Edward VIII, played the course. Some six months later, he agreed to become its patron. In July 1931, a letter was received confirming that King George V had graciously consented to adding the "Royal" prefix to the club's name.



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In 1933, the founding fathers recognised the need for a second course, resulting in the purchase of a suitable farm to the east. Just two years later, the club professional, Robert Grimsdell, had constructed 21 new holes, and both courses were in play. No sooner had he completed this onerous task, than he was asked what alterations would be required to accommodate a new clubhouse to be built in more central position. By the third Saturday of March 1939, the present clubhouse, and the “East” and “West” courses, were officially taken into use.

The Royal Johannesburg can claim to have led the development of golf in the former Transvaal. Almost single-handedly, its members founded the Transvaal Golf Union, and ably administered it for the first 25 years.

A standing trophy, first presented in 1895 to the winning amateur of its “Christmas Tournament”, is still in use today as the “Challenge Cup”: won by the top regional amateur golfer.

Kensington Golf Club will be fondly remembered by a host of South African golfers as the venue where many significant tournaments and competitions were played, particularly in the 60s, 70s and 80s. It will also be long remembered as one of the finest recreational golf courses of its time. It seems natural then that the name should live on in the equally prestigious surroundings of the Royal Johannesburg and Kensington Golf Club of today.

Little is known of the original Kensington Golf Club that closed its doors in 1918, after fighting valiantly to overcome difficult times and frequent setbacks. It is said that the majority of members migrated to Parkview. But within a relatively short space of time, certain residents in the area threw in their lot with another Kensington Club; one more devoted to tennis and bowls, and established a 9-hole course. The late T.P. Gray, then captain of the golfing section of the Club, almost single-handedly acquired the site on which the Kensington course was to be situated. Having identified a piece of land described as a wilderness of “sluit”, “donga”, bog and coarse grass, he negotiated its price down from £100 to £15 per acre. Gray then had the further audacity to borrow the full purchase price from the seller, Mr. Oliver, who appears by far to have been the club’s most generous benefactor.

A company was then formed which sold shares to a fast growing body of members. The proceeds were used to establish the new layout. At their first independent meeting it was agreed that, as a mark of appreciation for all the help that they had received from the Kensington Estates, they should call themselves the Kensington Golf Club.