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Warrnambool becomes signatory to the R&A Women in Golf Charter

Warrnambool Golf Club (WGC) has become a proud signatory of The R&A Women in Golf Charter, showing its commitment to foster an inclusive culture for girls and women.

This announcement comes as Golf Australia and the PGA of Australia launch their inaugural Women and Girls Month this March, which sees Australian golf's peak bodies and affiliated clubs celebrate women and girls through championing their participation and contribution to golf for the entire month.

WGC joins a growing number of golf clubs around Australia to commit to the Charter, which aims to enable more women and girls to maximise their potential at all levels of the sport.

The Women in Golf Charter was launched by the R&A in 2018 to foster a more inclusive culture within golf around the world, and in late 2021, the Charter was launched for clubs in Australia.

Since then, WGC, with the full commitment of its Board and Women's Committee, has implemented a range of initiatives that supports the Charter's intent to drive gender equality within the club.

General Manager, Ashlee Scott, described this latest achievement as a significant milestone, noting that the club has worked hard to implement positive changes across its governance structures as well as the delivery, representation and growth of women's golf.

"In the past two years, our club has made a deliberate effort to ensure that we are representing women equally and creating an inclusive environment within our club. History shows that this has not always been the case within our sport and changes to culture and tradition within clubs can be challenging. I'm so pleased that our club is leading by example and have embraced the movement," said Scott.

With the assistance of Golf Australia, WGC took the opportunity to amalgamate gender specific Committees, remove gender specific roles and ensure more representation of women within various roles and Committees. The club has also implemented a successful women's beginner golf and mentoring program to encourage greater participation and representation of women.

"One of our goals is to encourage and foster new golfers within our club, so we've implemented female-focussed initiatives including an introductory pathway to golf that's social, accessible & affordable for women. We've set some fairly ambitious goals within our

Women In Golf Action Plan, and the opportunity to become a signatory to the Charter further validates the positive change that we hope to achieve moving forward,” said Scott.

“Female representation on our Board and Committees is much more balanced, and we aim to adopt an inclusive approach to the delivery of golf wherever possible. This has included increasing the eligibility for females to participate in major club competitions that were previously reserved for men only as well as appointing our first female Club Co-Captain,”

Former Chair of the WGC Womens Committee, Sandy Hnarakis, reiterated that the signatory status is a wonderful recognition of the achievements the club has made and continues to pursue.

“The Women’s Committee has shifted its focus away from the management of women’s golf, to the development and growth of women’s golf and this has been an integral part of the cultural shift to be more inclusive,” Hnarakis said.

“We are one of a small number of regionally based clubs in Victoria to become a signatory, having met the required criteria, so its notable that our club is leading the way. We are proud to be driving equality in our sport and we hope to leave women’s golf in a better place for our daughters and grand-daughters.”

Currently, there are approximately 25 clubs across Australia that have joined the Women in Golf Charter.

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