**NALGA AWARENESS RAISING PLAN**

**Introduction**

At the 2014 Delegates meeting, held in conjunction with the 2014 National Championships, Delegates recognised that action needed to be taken to address the decline in membership that had occurred during the last 5 years. A Committee was elected to develop a plan aimed at developing strategies to address the decline. The Committee is chaired by Bob Murphy. Members are Sid Farrell, Chris Morris and Trevor Golding. Delegates allocated up to $6000 to underwrite strategies identified.

A key initial action was for the Chair to write to all Divisions requesting them to submit ideas to be considered in the development of the plan. The committee convened via a teleconference on February 26th, 2015 to consider Division submissions, as well as discuss the development of an overall plan.

**Guiding Principles and Issues**

To develop a coherent strategic plan, it is important to:

* + - Define NALGA's unique offering that is likely to attract new members.
    - Define the target audience to which the strategy should be directed.
    - Take into account the changing environment in which golf is played, as well as general changes in society that are relevant to the awareness, and promotion, of NALGA
    - Develop an up to date data base of members to enable NALGA to have key information available to underpin initiatives, and enable effective communication within NALGA and Divisions of NALG.

**Unique Offering**

* + - Opportunity to play with other left-handed golfers at a variety of courses they may not have the chance to play on.
    - National and World Championship events.

**Target Market**

The NALGA constitution specifies that to become a member of NALGA, left handed golfers must be a member of a golf club, and have an AGU handicap.

Due to the difficulty of accessing courses on weekends, and the strong desire of most golfers to play regularly at the club to which they pay substantial fees to become members, the majority of NALGA events are played midweek.

Consequently, left-handed golfers who are members of a club, with the ability to play in events mid-week, will be the major source of members. Generally this will mean, as is the case with current membership, the majority are either retired or semi-retired.

Taking NALG events to members clubs, and giving these clubs an incentive to host a NALGA event, meets twin objectives of NALGA members and their clubs. If a club hosts an event, publicising the event through the clubs newsletter or website is an important method of raising the awareness level of NALGA.

While it is imperative that NALGA continues to cater for this cohort, and to develop strategies to encourage more golfers in this group to join NALGA and play in NALGA events, it is also important to broaden our perspective to other groups. For example, 40 - 60 yr. old left handers, who are still working, will be valuable members even if they play a very limited number of events. Inevitably they will work less, and become more involved, as time goes by. They are the source of future committee members, whose work related skills are extremely valuable to NALGA.

In the current environment, where recreational time is limited, to some extent NALGA competes for a members time with the member's Golf Club. It is worth noting that members of social clubs can now obtain an official handicap through Golf Link. Consequently, it may be a viable option for NALGA to also carry social club status, and therefore left hand golfers could become members of NALGA, and obtain their handicap through playing in NALGA events.

**Changing Information Environment**

Given the nature of the current membership, word of mouth and direct contact from members to prospective members has been, and will continue to be, an important strategy to attract new membership. Initiatives currently employed such as providing current members with business cards to give to any left hand golfer they come in contact with should be continued. Obtaining email addresses of such prospective members, adding them to NALGA data bases, and including them in ongoing communication is also important.

In today's world, and most likely increasingly in the future, the Internet is an important mode of communication. Using the Internet to source information is the default method for most people. While all Divisions have websites, up until recently NALG Australia didn't (the web site was developed as a key first initiative of the awareness raising strategy). Keeping websites up to date is very important. Linking sources of information is also important. While most of the current NALGA websites provide a link to relevant Golf associations such as Golf Australia and State Golf Associations, currently there is no linkage from these associations' websites to either the NALGA or Divisional websites.

Social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, are two relatively new ways people communicate. However, use of social media to raise the awareness level of NALGA among left handed golfers is currently very limited.

Golflink has been a key initiative of Golf Australia. It is probably one of the most visited sites by golfers in Australia. Establishing a presence on Golflink, and/ or using Golflink information to stage a competition between members playing on different course concurrently, are two strategies that should be investigated. For example, ACT NALG ran a very successful ongoing event where members scores achieved in their club events were used in an ongoing competition run by ACT NALG. The competition ran for 4 months, culminating in a presentation of a major prize at the last event of the year. This enabled ACT NALG members to play at their home club, concurrently with an ACT NALG sponsored event. The event was publicised directly to all member clubs in the ACT.

Traditional advertising in newspapers and magazines has been used in the past, particularly to publicise National Championships. However, not only is it expensive compared to alternate electronic advertising, it has been unsuccessful in attracting new members or increased entries to National Championships.

**Data Base**

When approaching organisations for support, it is important that up to date statistical information is available on the membership. At the same time, the data base can be used to promote events or activities to the NALGA membership. While Divisions in most cases have extensive data available to them, this is not the case at the National level. Building a substantial NALGA data base which can be accessed by Divisions, is an important component of any future awareness raising strategy.

**Strategies to be investigated, and where appropriate implemented, to raise awareness level of NALGA as an organisation**

The following table sets out strategies consistent with the overall principles and issues listed above. These strategies will form the basis of ongoing strategic initiatives aimed at promoting and growing NALGA as an organisation. The plan should be regarded as ongoing. Many of the strategies need further investigation. Sharing the outcome of these investigations with the NALGA Executive and other Divisions is important if NALGA is to be an organisation that continues to grow and meet the challenges it faces. Consistent with this, it is intended to have the plan as a key ongoing item on the Agenda for future Delegates meetings.

| Key group Responsible for Implementation | Strategy | Status |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **NALG AUSTRALIA** | Establish a National Website | Completed |
|  | Establish a National Data Base:  Purchase File Maker Pro  Purchase laptop computer  Transfer NSW developed data base to National Data Base    Explore method of Divisions obtaining remote access to data base | In process  Completed  Will be completed after File Maker Pro installed on NALGA computer  Demonstration at 2015 Delegates Meeting |
|  | Approach Golf Australia to:  Explore gaining official status with NALGA  Gaining Link on GA website to NALGA | To be investigated by Bob Murphy  To be investigated by Bob Murphy |
| **NALG AUSTRALIA** | Approach Golf Link to:   * + Investigate establishing a presence on Golf Link website   + Investigate possibilities for using Golf Link data to conduct NALGA endorsed competitions for left handed golfers who play rounds at their own club   + Explore option of NALG being registered with Golf Link as a social club for handicap allocation for non-club members | To be investigated by Bob Murphy  To be investigated by Bob Murphy  To be investigated by Bob Murphy |
|  | Agenda item for 2015 Delegates meeting to amend constitution re requiring membership of a golf club for NALG membership. | To be included in Agenda by Trevor Golding |
|  | Establish a presence on social media:   * + Facebook site linked to NALGA website   + Investigate establishing a National Facebook site that includes regular Division news, and information on performances of left hand golfers at National and International events | To be established by Bob Murphy  To be investigated by Chris Morris |
|  |  |  |
| **NALG DIVISIONS** | Develop business cards containing NALG contact information. Distribute to all current members. | Completed in various forms by all Divisions |
|  | Encourage current members to source email addresses of potential new members. | ACT, Sth Australia, and Tasmania have adopted strategies |
| **NALG DIVISIONS** | Approach golf clubs to put a link to NALG Division website on golf club website. Division to play an event at those clubs that agree. | To be investigated and actioned where possible by Division Secretaries |
|  | Introduce a Lefties v Righties day into Calendar of events. Establish event as an annual event at one selected club. Where agreed include in Calendar of events for that club. | ACT has held a very successful event for 3 years. Being actively investigated by Tasmania |
|  | Appoint a committee member to have primary responsibility to initiative NALG promotional activities within the Division. | To be considered by Divisional Secretaries |
|  | Divisions organise a brochure outlining the State, National and World Events, organised for left handed golfers only. Division to nominate 1, 2 or 3 members to participate in these events. The responsibility of these members would be to try to contact prospective members and to supply the above information brochure. Divisions to consider providing a suitable prize for the best left handed golfer on the day. | To be considered by Divisions and actioned where feasible |
|  | Establish a presence on social media:   * Facebook site linked to NALG Division website | Completed and regular posts done by Qld.  To be investigated and actioned by Divisions where feasible |
|  | Free guest days (or promote no joining fee) for new members. This can be very successful if promoted directly by the club to the members of the club hosting the event. | Done annually by ACT - very successful  To be investigated by other Divisions |
| **NALG DIVISIONS** | Introduce ‘ongoing’ competitions:   * Establish an ongoing cumulative score event to encourage members to enter multiple events. * Introduce a National or state competition held on a monthly basis, where left handed golfers are encouraged to put in their competition scores (for a small fee) and winners announced each month and an appropriate prize given. * Monthly winners could then be invited to play in a “winner of the winners” competition at each state’s state championship. National winner decided at the national championships. | Established in ACT and NSW. Other Divisions to consider.  To be investigated by Bob Murphy with Golf Link. Report to Divisions at 2015 Delegates Meeting |
|  | Display NALG Banner:   * Display a Division NALG banner at all Divisional events * Display information poster in golf clubs * Display information poster at golf facilities such as driving ranges | To be considered by Divisions.  Completed by ACT. Other Divisions to investigate  Completed by ACT. Other Divisions to investigate |

[[1]](#footnote-2)

1. NALGA Awareness Raising Plan - April 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)