



ORIGINS OF THE PROFESSIONAL GOLFERS' ASSOCIATION

(reviewed May 2012)

Introduction

The professional golfer has been part of the golf scene for more than 160 years, during which time he has climbed from obscurity to prominence, from a state of servility to a position of independence.

The formation in 1901 of The Professional Golfers' Association gave him the power of organisation and thus he began the march toward his present day eminence as guide, mentor and purveyor for golfers and, above all, many have become entertainers in the realm of sport.

*Geoffrey Cousins
(Lords of the Links)*

The Early Years

- ⌘ The forerunners of the present day professionals were artisans, members of the working class.
- ⌘ 1603, James I appointed William Mayne official Clubmaker to the King.
- ⌘ 1618, James Melville was granted a ballmaking monopoly by the same monarch, James I.
- ⌘ 150 years later, a number of craftsmen were employed, expanding the clubmaking and ballmaking trades as the game grew in popularity in Scotland.
- ⌘ In 1853, Tom Morris, a prominent artisan golfer, was engaged by the Prestwick Club to maintain the links. In addition, he supplemented his income by making and selling balls and clubs, coaching beginners and playing with members. The beginning of the Club Professional?
- ⌘ 1863 saw Tom Morris appointed the first and official Club Professional to the R&A Club at St Andrews. A post he held for 40 years.
- ⌘ About the same time, the first competition was launched and titled 'Open to the World' with ten professionals and eight amateurs (all of them Scots!)
- ⌘ Prize money was linked in 1864, with a first prize, taken by Tom Morris, of £6.
- ⌘ Horace Hutchinson, a social commentator at the turn of the century writes:

"One can divide into three classes those who derive a precarious subsistence from the game of golf; professional clubmakers, professional players who eke out existence by work in the clubmakers' shops, and professional caddies who would be professional players if they played well enough ... The professional, ... is a feckless, reckless creature ... He works at odd times, job work or time work, in the shops; but he only does it when reduced to an extremity. If he were ordinarily thrifty he would lay by in the autumn sufficient to carry him through the season of his discontent, when no golf is. He can lightly earn seven and sixpence a day by playing two rounds of golf, or, if he does not get an engagement, three and sixpence a day by carrying clubs ... Many are engaged in a kind of body-service to their masters at a pound a week, which usually includes the advantage of a breakfast at their masters' house and the disadvantage of having to black his boots. Occasionally they combine with golf-playing more general branches of industry which they pursue in a spasmodic fashion. Thus, when we asked one of them whether a brother professional had no other trade than that of golf, he replied: 'Oh aye! He has that - he breaks stanes."

- ✉ The Open Championship was the catalyst for the development of the professionals and their playing skills.
- ✉ The end of the nineteenth century saw the status of the professional rising largely due to the efforts of one man, Willie Park Junior.
- ✉ Willie crusaded for better things. Being better educated, he was able to have close contact with the amateur and the development of the game. He won the Open in 1889 and also became a course designer of merit. The Old Course at Sunningdale, Huntercombe and several in the USA stand as monuments of his skill.
- ✉ By this time, growth of the game had come in many aspects. Not only equipment but also in golf courses which numbered 1,300 at the end of the decade.
- ✉ 1894, John Henry Taylor won the Open at Sandwich, the first non Scottish pro to take the title.

1901 and the Great Triumvirate

- ✉ By 1900, English golf was growing and finding a life of its own. 300 professionals were attached to English clubs and more than half were English.
- ✉ The turn of the century also saw the emergence of three golfers, later to be known as the Great Triumvirate, Harry Vardon, J H Taylor and James Braid, who were soon to be so instrumental in the establishment of The Professional Golfers' Association.
- ✉ Golf and the Scottish professionals were very active in America at this time. When not winning Championships, they were busy laying out new courses.
- ✉ Whilst the reputation and general esteem of these few professionals was enhanced, many of the other professionals lacked the drive, ambition and ability to improve themselves and as a consequence, lacked respect.

- ⌘ Professionals as a body were not regarded as socially acceptable and whilst they might have contact with members of clubs as customers, as pupils and as playing partners, there was no question of their being admitted to the Clubhouse.
- ⌘ In 1901, J H Taylor's growing concern for the recognition and welfare of his profession was becoming a burning obsession. On March 22nd, Golf Illustrated printed a leading article appealing for better treatment by golf clubs of their professionals.
- ⌘ The following week, J H Taylor had a letter supporting this theme printed. He called for other professionals 'to come forward and state their views on this important subject'.
- ⌘ Many did just that, albeit anonymously and, by April of that year, there was a call 'to band together and form an Association'. J H Taylor was implored by his fellow professionals to be their leader and take up the cudgels on their behalf. Braid and Vardon were well to the fore in publicly advocating a new beginning.
- ⌘ J H Taylor preached the value of organisation whenever he had the chance and to whoever he believed would listen with interest.
- ⌘ In the July of 1901 at a meeting in London, it was agreed to form "The London and Counties' Professional Golfers' Association" with membership open to professionals in London and the south eastern counties.
- ⌘ Fifty professionals were present at the inaugural gathering on September 9th 1901 and they duly elected Taylor as Chairman James Braid as Captain before forming a committee who they charged with the task of drafting a constitution.
- ⌘ On December 2nd 1901 saw the first Annual General Meeting when the constitution was accepted, the Rt. Hon Arthur James Balfour, soon to be Prime Minister, was elected President and Frank Johnson, a Londoner who sold golf goods to professionals, elected Secretary.
- ⌘ The first PGA Tournament was arranged. It was played at Tooting Bec, South London on October 15th 1901. Forty-six players competed and significantly perhaps, the first winner was their hero, J H Taylor and a princely purse of £5.
- ⌘ The Tooting Bec Cup survives to this day and is presented to the PGA member with the lowest single round in the Open Championship.
- ⌘ Before the end of 1901, the name of the Association was changed to "The Professional Golfers' Association." 59 Professionals and 11 Assistants were the original members.
- ⌘ 25th March 1902, the Midland section of the PGA was formed and contributed 37 members.
- ⌘ 18th April 1902, the Northern section was formed with 38 members joining the Association.
- ⌘ By the end of 1902, there were 300 members and an Irish section with 13 members. The PGA was nationwide and had truly 'arrived'.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION

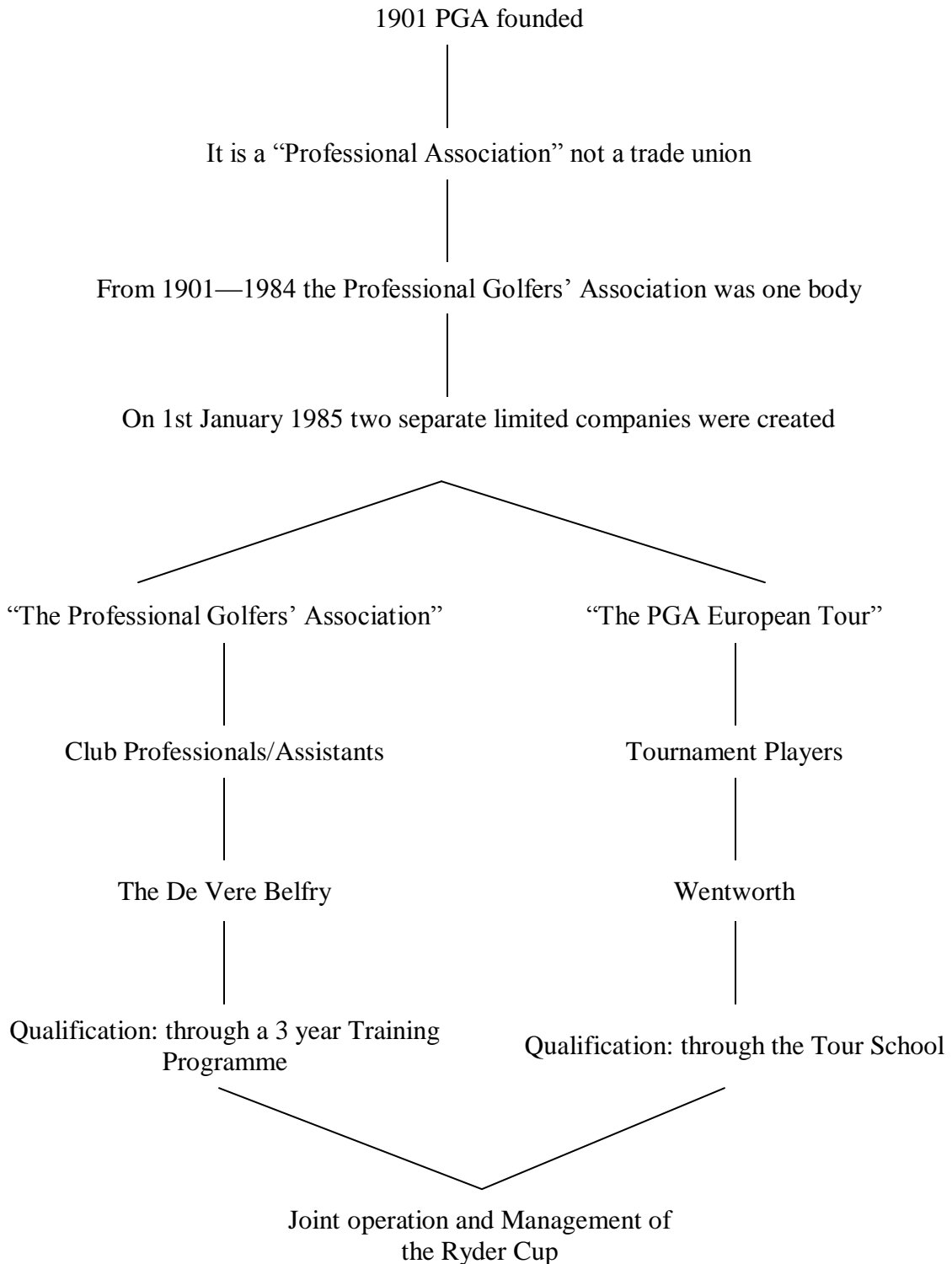
Inaugural Meeting of the Association - 9th September 1901

1. To promote interest in the game of golf
2. To protect and advance the mutual and trade interests of the members
3. To arrange and hold meetings and tournaments for the members
4. To institute and operate funds for the benefit of members
5. To assist members to obtain employment

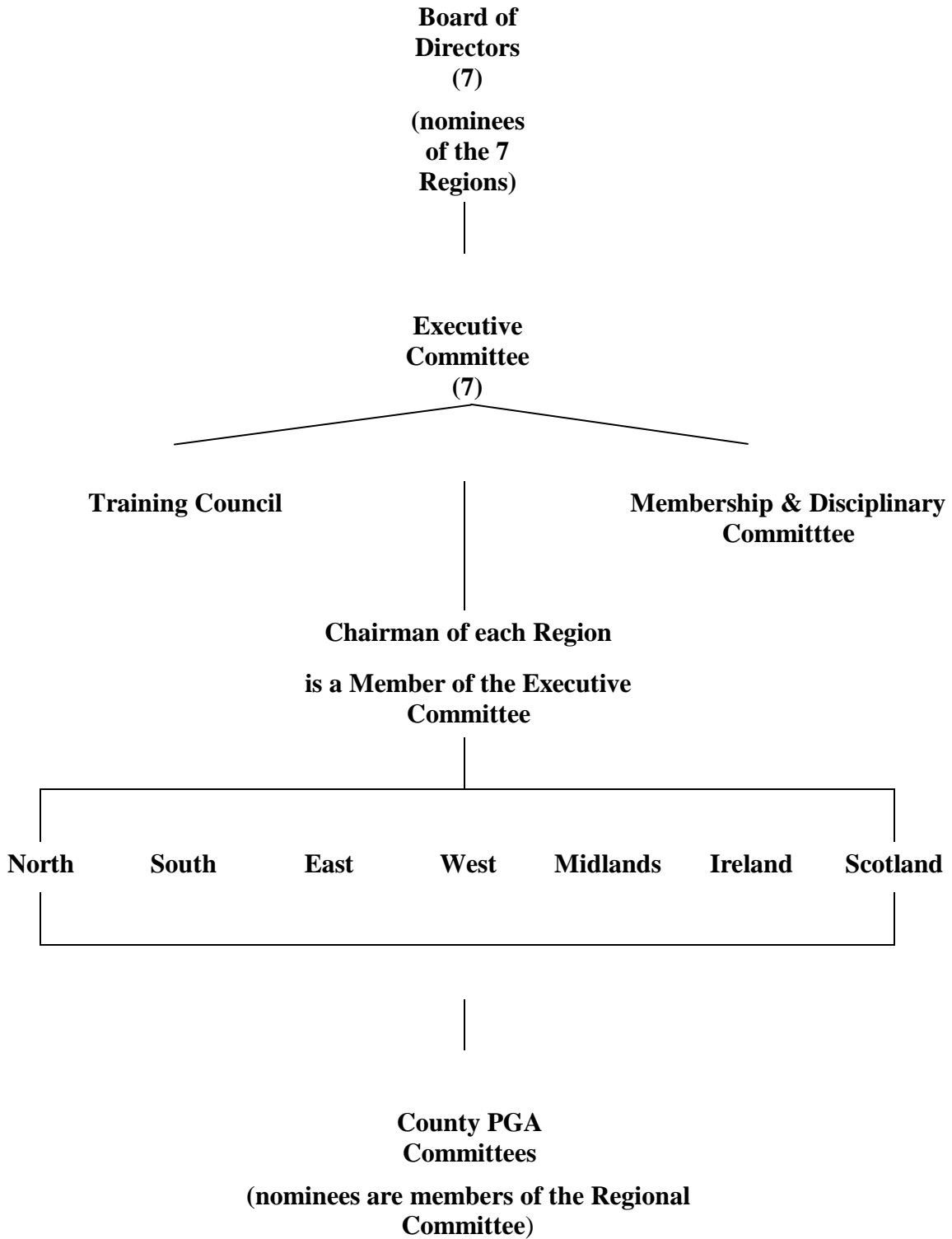
CODE OF ETHICS

Members shall ensure that the words "The Professional Golfers' Association" are and shall remain a hallmark of service, honesty, fair dealings and courtesy.

EVOLUTION OF THE PROFESSIONAL GOLFERS' ASSOCIATION



COMMITTEE STRUCTURE



THE ROLE OF THE HEADQUARTERS

The Chief Executive is the senior officer of the Association and responsible for all Headquarter and Regional Office Functions.

There are six sections of administration in the Headquarters Office:

- ✦ The office of the Chief Executive
- ✦ Finance, membership and office administration
- ✦ Regions, personnel and fiscal
- ✦ Tournaments
- ✦ Commercial
- ✦ Training and Education

THE TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE

<u>(Estimated) National Tournaments</u>	£
Glenmuir Club Professional Championship	78,000
Powerade PGA Assistants Championship	32,500
PGA Seniors Championship	200,000
Super 60's	10,000
Senior Club Professional Championship	35,000
PGA EuroPro Tour	700,000
Glenbrae Fourball Championship	30,000
<u>(Estimated) Regional Tournament Prize Funds</u>	
East	260,000
Ireland	429,134
Midland	240,000
North	386,000
Scotland	720,000
South	270,000
West	275,000

MEMBERSHIP

8060

MEMBERSHIP

(As at December 2006)

<u>REGION</u>	<u>QUALIFIED MEMBERS</u>	<u>ASSISTANT PROFESSIONALS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
East	597	145	742
Ireland	395	116	511
Midland	633	177	810
North	944	230	1,174
Scotland	517	119	636
South	1,117	255	1,372
West	559	121	680
*WPGA	*125	*58	
Overseas	1,289	38	1,327
TOTAL	6,051	1,201	7,252

* also included in Regional figures/totals

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