

So long, Farewell

Superintendent: Steven Burchett

Golf Course: Portarlington Golf Club

Association involvement: VGCSA Member since 1999

Time on committee: Commenced in 2013. Treasurer since 2015

Steve's turf career

- Started apprenticeship in 1989 at Commonwealth Golf Club.
- Went on to spend some time on staff at Capricorn International Resort at Yeppoon QLD.
- Returned to Victoria to be involved with the construction of Capital Golf Club.
- Took up the position of Superintendent at Chalambar Golf Club, Ararat.
- Travelled around Australia for 12 months with my wife and family. Can recommend!
- Came back to take up my current position of Golf Course Superintendent at Portarlington Golf Club and have now been here 15 years. Wow! Time does get away.

Course overview

Portarlington Golf Club sits on the northern tip of the Bellarine Peninsula, overlooking Port Phillip and Melbourne city skyline. We have Santa Ana couch turf fairways and tees with Bent/*Poa* turf on the greens. We average about 450mm of rain per year. The last few years have seen us introduce finer cut turf from green to tee, creating a seamless look. This is about as unique as we get.

Take us through your turf management operations and how have you fine-tuned them during your time as Superintendent?

We dust our greens on a regular basis and mini tyne them four times per year. Growth regulator is used on greens all year 'round, every two to three weeks, but I haven't managed to catch on to the growing degree day concept yet. Our focus is good plant health and always trying to produce the best surfaces possible.

Describe your management style.

I've found with this job that having a supportive team is extremely important. So, fostering teamwork and encouraging people to be their best is high on my agenda.



What inspired you to join the VGCSA Committee?

Mat Poultney asked me one day and I said yes. Thanks Matty. I have always enjoyed the support and networking opportunities that come with being a golf turfie. Being on the VGCSA committee enabled me in a small way to continue to foster this.



Most pleasing/rewarding moment during your time as a committee member

Spending time with fellow committee members. They have inspired me and encouraged me to always want to grow and learn. The companionship is brilliant.

Life after committee. What are your future plans?

We are just completing a master planning process undertaken by Mogford and Crafter. I'm sure this will keep us out of trouble, or in, over the next 5 to 10 years.

I'll probably continue to search for the perfect wave along our magic coastline as well.

Favourite spot on your course?

Anywhere where I can catch a glimpse of a sunrise or set. As with most golf course staff, we've seen plenty over the years but I'm not tired of them yet. It's a pretty cool part of the job. I'm still amazed by turf as a product and love seeing it at its finest, whether that's here or at another site.

