



PGA OF SWITZERLAND

The 28th instalment of a series that takes a random look at each member PGA.

# The Only Way is Up for Swiss Golf

One day, perhaps, it is possible that the nation responsible for Roger Federer, will unearth a golfing equivalent of its world tennis icon... though the more likely scenario is that Switzerland will be rewarded rather differently for their extensive efforts of recent years to expand the smaller ball game.

Facts and statistics diligently supplied to Working Together by the Swiss PGA's Executive Director André Glauser, setting out the association's story of growth since the millennium, combine to suggest that this small but prosperous country has laid down the firm foundations for an all-round boom in the sport.

André is now, more accurately, the former Executive Director of the PGAS having, on November 1, relinquished the post to become Director of Golf at GC Limpachtal. Succeeding him at the helm is Peter Schwager who inherits a comprehensive package of educational and tournament activities part-funded by an enviable sponsorship programme.

Volker Krajewski has been president of the Swiss PGA for the past eight years and declares himself 'very proud of the inroads and progress we have made in helping to establish a new and positive direction'.

"André has been an integral and important part of this for the past 6 years, and we are grateful for his service to professional golf in Switzerland," he added.



André Glauser and Volker Krajewski.

"Also, several other important individuals have played their part in our progress including our Vice President and Treasurer, Stefan Gort & our Honorary Secretary Gavin Healey."

Since finance is inevitably the priority, especially in the current economical climate, the situation at the Swiss PGA looks extremely healthy. "Compared to 2003, our business volume has more than doubled to more than one million Swiss francs," André explained.

While the main escalation of Switzerland's fortunes has taken place in the last five years or so the facts and figures of growth in the

country's golfing community tell a story of an increasing progress since the turn of the century.

The number of facilities created among the peaks and valleys of the location's spectacular terrain has grown from 72 to 94 while the number of amateur players, from a national population of 7.6 million, has leapt by 45,000 to 86,600.

In order for this expansion in demand to be professionally serviced, there are now 334 PGA professionals from 24 different countries working at those 94 facilities and this has been made possible by an ever-improving structure of 'Education' and 'Further Education' for members.

Reports on the tournament schedule are equally encouraging. In 2003 there was one Order of Merit event organised by the PGAS and three more staged jointly with the Federation. Now there are nine, and 'lots of programs', all under the umbrella of The Swiss PGA.

As André points out: "The Swiss PGA has become a co-organiser with the Golf Federation (ASG) of the Credit Suisse Challenge in 2008 and 2009. The tournament helps the Swiss PGA and its members to exchange 35 invitations with other Challenge Tour promoters and become more experienced at international level."

While Switzerland is a small country, it is the host of an impressive quality of international tournaments: the Omega European Masters (European Tour), the Bad Ragaz PGA Senior Open (Seniors Tour), the Deutsche Bank Ladies Swiss Open (Ladies European Tour), the Credit

## Marching into the Future, Step by Step

The Education and Further Education programmes have made big strides under the supervision of Steve Rey and Paris Buckingham:

### Further Education:

- In 2002, the Swiss PGA had one Further Education Day per year. In 2009 there were twelve.

- In 2005, the Swiss PGA revised its Re-Certification system by implementing a very detailed structure. Fully Qualified PGA Members are classified in four categories (A/B/C/D) with an Advanced Membership and a Master Professional Category en route.

- Members earn points for participating in PGA courses (worldwide) or courses by an official and recognised institute.

- Thanks to the very good connections of

Volker Krajewski (also member of the PGA of America), and Paris Buckingham (also member of the PGA of Australia), several well known speakers have featured in Further Education Days.

- Next year Martin Hall, PGA of America's Teacher of the Year in 2008, is expected to give a two-day seminar.

### Education:

An excellent collaboration has been forged jointly with the Golf Federation whereby Junior Monitoring Courses for professionals, as well as for amateurs who support the junior movement in the golf clubs, are staged.

The Swiss PGA and ASG (Association Suisse de Golf) are backed by the Federal Office for Sport together with the Federal School of Sport in Magglingen.

This collaboration has proved to be very successful.

These two bodies also work together regarding subsidies for Junior Golf. Only clubs with at least one Swiss PGA Member gets financial support in their junior programme.

### Tournaments:

When the Swiss PGA Tour began in 2003 it had three tournaments. By 2008, as it became the "Swiss PGA Tour presented by Infrasolution" it had six tournaments and more than CHF100,000 in prize money.

In 2005 the Ernst & Young PGA Matchplay was launched with the top 16 men and top four Seniors. The Swiss PGA Championship became the Credit Suisse PGA Championship in 2009 with a prize fund of a Satellite Tour level.

## PGA of Switzerland The Facts

President: **Volker Krajewski**.  
 Vice President & Treasurer: **Stefan Gort**.  
 Executive Director: **André Glauser** (2003 - 2009), **Peter Schwager** (from 1st November 2009)  
 Hon. Secretary: **Gavin Healy**.  
 President Training Commission: **Steve Rey**  
 President of Further Education: **Paris Buckingham**  
 Captain: **André Bossert**  
 Website: **www.swisspga.ch**  
 Contact: **info@swisspga.ch**

	2000	2009
Facilities	72	94
Amateur Players*	41,700	86,600
PGA Professionals**	202	334

\*incl. the members of the Association of Independent Golfers (ASGI), which numbered 5000 in 2000 and 14000 in 2009.

\*\* incl. Trainees and Tournament Players

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Suisse Challenge (Challenge Tour) and the Sempachersee Classic (EPD Tour)."

So much for the past and the present. So now what are the challenges facing Peter Schwager as he takes up his new duties? Here's how association President Krajewski sees it: "To maintain the service to the members established over recent years, create a new and effective platform for the partners and make people more aware of the Swiss PGA as a driving force in the development of golf in Switzerland.

"It is important to introduce the Swiss PGA brand more effectively to amateur golfers, establish the approval of the Training Programme by the Federal Office and establish Swiss professionals on the European Tour. In other words: Create more winners!

"André Bossert is our only winner on the European Tour, in the 2005 Cannes Open, but we have had other very good ambassadors in Paolo Quirici and Julien Clément on the European Tour," the President added.

"Also we are proud to have Caroline Rominger on the Ladies European Tour."

No golfing Federer on the horizon yet, then. But who knows..?