

# The Senior Golfers' Union of South Africa Tour of Chile

13-28<sup>th</sup> March 2024



## **TOUR REPORT**



**SANTIAGO DE CHILE**

## Introduction

This tour was another affected by the Covid pandemic which meant that there was more work for the Tour Committee over a longer period before the final date was set. Finally, March 2024 at the end of the Chilean summer was agreed upon.

Santiago de Chile, situated in a basin between the towering Andes and the coastal mountain range, experiences very high summer temperatures with many residents leaving the city for the coast or the southern region of lakes and forests.

We were very thankful that the temperature had dropped somewhat by the time we arrived at the Santiago Marriott Hotel in Las Condes, our home for the next two weeks, on 13th March.



**The Team and Partners**

**Back:** Jack Derman, John Beron, Grant Meikle, E Jacot Guillarmod, David Horak.

**Middle:** Magda Bailey, Ray Ramandh, Peter Bailey, Chris Campbell, Rob Wassenaar, Geoff Ferreira, Wessel Theron.

**Front:** Melinda Meikle, Irene Campbell, Jill Balcomb, Elaine Grant, Barbara Wassenaar, Jenny Beron, and Helen Theron.



### **13<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2024 - ARRIVAL    Meet in Santiago de Chile**

The tour party had travelled via various routes and airlines and finally arrived complete with luggage and clubs, ready to start the tour. Geoff's driver was the only casualty and a replacement had to be sourced, no easy task.

After welcoming drinks with José Lavin (President of Agosech), Jorge Bebin and Gert Schon (tour organisers) in the hotel bar and introductions to our team a casual dinner was arranged at a nearby restaurant. Not all tour members had read the group WhatsApp messages, a pattern set for the rest of the tour, and those who didn't appeared in their jackets and ties. A quick about turn and change to casual dress was required.

Once everyone was sorted we headed to the restaurant, a five minute walk away, and thoroughly enjoyed a very good evening at Tip y Tap.

### **14<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2024 - DAY 2        Hacienda Chicureo**



Our first match day was a later start at Hacienda Chicureo. Three people carriers took the players from the hotel to the course in the foothills on the northern outskirts of the city. Our hosts welcomed us with some lovely snacks and drinks and introduced themselves before we played.



Three of the ladies, Melinda, Magda and Irene joined us to play with the Chilean ladies. Thanks to Fanny for organizing an enjoyable day with six Chilean ladies.

After a closely contested match, the touring side started the tour with a 3½ to 2½ win. Our thanks to the AGOSECH Captain, Gert Schon, and our inspiring Captain of the Day, the evergreen and dependable reserve, David Horak.



## **15<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2024 - DAY 3      Prince of Wales Country Club (PWCC)**

An earlier tee-off today at the Prince of Wales Country Club, but fortunately it was very close to the hotel.

Rodrigo welcomed us and announced that this was a walking course as it was very flat and they didn't have any carts.

Fortunately, our hosts managed to requisition a couple of carts from local members for those of us who can no longer walk the course.

As we were only 11 players our hosts provided a partner for Ray to complete our team of six pairs.

PWCC is one of the oldest clubs and celebrates its centenary next year (2025). Chris and Jacot played against the club President Anthony Dawes and Jorge Spencer. Anthony explained that the club had been visited by not one, but two Princes of Wales. The adjacent international school is on land donated by the club when it was first formed and the pupils enjoy an arrangement that enables them to use a number of the club's facilities. This was quite apparent when many of the pupils appeared, thoroughly enjoying themselves, as we were taking lunch.



Another closely fought game with a 3½ to 2½ win for the visitors, enabled by Ray's Chilean partner Eduardo Magri sinking a good putt on the last for a half!







John Beron, Captain of the Day presented a mounted statue of a buffalo to the club as a token of our appreciation.

The ladies joined us for a lovely lunch with English fish and chips, offered as part of a comprehensive menu. These were even served with mushy peas and an imitation English newspaper!

After lunch and a return to the hotel we had a free evening followed by a free weekend.

### **16 & 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024 - DAYS 3 & 4    Free Weekend**

Saturday brought a two day break from golf and a chance to explore Santiago.

We were fortunate to have the start point for the Hop-On Hop-Off bus tours just a short walk from the hotel and many used this to familiarise themselves with the sights and some of the history of Santiago, a fascinating city.



**View from Cerro San Cristobal**



**Santiago Cathedral.**



**The Funicular Train**



**The Madonna**



**The Cable Car**



Another early start with arrival at the club at 08:15 for tee times from 09:00.



The Baggage Master (Wessel) organizing our cars



View of 9<sup>th</sup> /18<sup>th</sup> hole from the Clubhouse.



Preparing to start



The Clubhouse from the 18<sup>th</sup> Tee

This is a hilly 9 hole course in an exclusive residential estate in the Andean foothills on the eastern edge of Santiago. Golf carts were the order of the day, but with the carts to stay on the paths. As a result there was a lot of walking, particularly when you finished your shot on the other side of the fairway. A lot of ground water in places also made it quite heavy going at times.



While the men played 18 holes, the ladies only managed nine. Another lovely day with good company and a fine meal was enjoyed at the club after the golf. Captain of the Day, Ray, then presented an elephant sculpture to the Chilean Seniors. Another victory for the touring team who managed a win by 4 to 2.





A slightly later start today for the game at La Dehesa. Again, this club is nestled in the Andean foothills, this time with some

wonderful views of the city. Luckily our hosts managed to rustle up a couple of carts from members so that Rob, Chris, and Jacot could play.



Rob & Chris with their opponents Darwin & Camilo



The ladies joined us at the Club for lunch after the match.



Grant and Rolf, the day's captains



Grant presenting a Rhino sculpture to the club

The day finished with a 3-3 draw so either the visitors were fading or the hosts were bringing out their 'big guns'!





Wednesday dawned and another early start for the third consecutive day of golf. Today was our chance to play at Los Leones situated very close to the hotel and in the Barrio El Golf. This is a very old established club and reckoned to be one of the top clubs in Chile. The land was originally a farm called Los Leones outside the city although the city eventually engulfed area and is now named El Golf!



**Geoff & Grant with their opponents**



**Ray & Chris with their opponents**



**Ray in action**



**Louis and his Caddie Sancho**

Ray and Chris thought that the Chileans had certainly brought out their top players and were given a golfing demonstration over the first few difficult holes by Louis Edwards, a 5 handicap member, his trusty caddie Sancho, and partner. Starting with the initial loss of a few holes they stabilised after the first nine and after which Ray brought out his A game and managed to salvage a halve. Unfortunately, the hosts had decided that enough was enough and won this match 3½ to 1½ to pull back the deficit a little.



Following the match we nearly lost Rob in the clubhouse which he described as a bit like a rabbit warren as he searched for where he had left his clubs only to struggle to find his way back to where he had left his kit bag. We understood his difficulties as there were stairs to different levels tucked just round corners etc.



**Captain of the Day, Peter**



**The Los Leones Dining Room**



Following the match, we were treated to a wonderful lunch in the old clubhouse and Peter, our Captain of the Day, presented a sculpture of a rhino to the club in appreciation and as a memory of the visit.

## **21<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2024 - DAY 8**

## **Wine Tour to Matetic Vineyards**

After three consecutive days of golf it was time for a coach trip to the countryside and a wine tour and we set off for Matetic Vineyards in the Valle del Rosario near Casablanca.





There we wandered through the gardens and their shop, tried some of their wines, and bought a few souvenirs. Then it was off to a vineyard with a guide before exploring their museum which contained some fascinating old wine making equipment.



The grounds also sported an old Chilean Palm, which are only found in a small area of Chile and are now endangered. The fruit is similar to a miniature coconut but the palm itself, also known as the Wine Palm, has to be chopped down to extract the juice. Unsurprisingly the practice is now banned.







By this time, we had worked up a healthy appetite and enjoyed a wonderful lunch in their bright and airy restaurant before heading back to Santiago.

## **22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> MARCH 2024 - DAYS 9 & 10      Santo Domingo**

On Friday morning we packed our bags and headed for Santo Domingo for the weekend. The trip took less than two hours and we arrived at Las Rocas Golf Club, one of the premier courses in Chile. On arrival we were served coffee and cookies before we playing a great parkland course nestling among pine trees.



**Las Rocas Clubhouse**



**John & Peter with their match partners**



**Chris & Jacot with their match partners**



**Jacot approaching the Clubhouse**

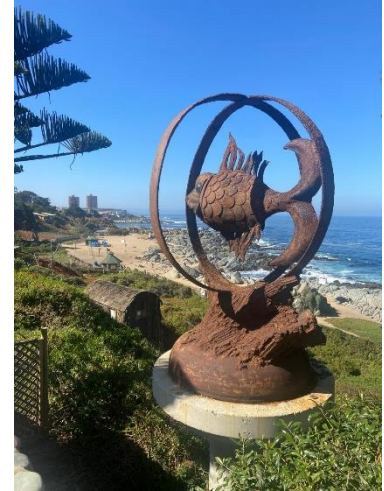


**A picturesque Par 3 with a pond to navigate**





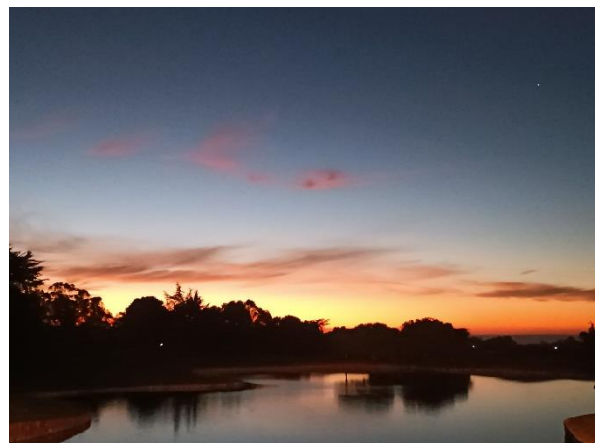
Our hosts had arranged a tour for the ladies to the famous Chilean poet Pablo Neruda's house and museum in Isla Negra, a little further up the coast. This was his favourite of several houses, the others being in Valparaiso and Santiago. He had eccentric tastes, evidenced by an eclectic collection in and around the house. After the visit the ladies rejoined the group for tapas, including empanadas, and drinks at the Club.



We then went to our allocated host's houses to change for the evening at the Las Brisas Clubhouse. It was a beautiful evening with the sun setting over the Pacific Ocean providing a magnificent backdrop.



Sunset from one of our host's houses



The sunset from the Las Brisas Clubhouse





At the end of another full day and wonderful evening, our Captain of the Day, Geoff, presented our hosts with an elephant sculpture as a memento of our visit and in turn was presented with a book on Las Rocas de Santo Domingo.

On Saturday morning we arrived at the Las Brisas clubhouse on the estate to play our last match in Santo Domingo.



**Morning on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tee**



**Ray & Grant with their partners**



**Chris & Jack with their partners**



**Wessel & Rob with their partners**

This is mostly parkland with some links type holes and some dramatic, scenic holes. The views of the Pacific are truly awesome as long as the Pacific mist doesn't roll in! At weekends a tractor and trailer are supplied to ferry the walkers and their clubs up and down the cliffs (take a cart if you play during the week!).





**Jack on the Tee with the Green well below**



**The Tractor & trailer for walkers**



**Peter with the Pacific mist building in the distance**



**John approaching the 18<sup>th</sup>**

After the golf, refreshments, empanadas and tapas our Captain of the Day, Jack, presented our Tour Memento to our hosts and after fond farewells we headed to our next destination – an aviary.



**Gathering in the Clubhouse**



**Jack presenting our Memento Sculpture**

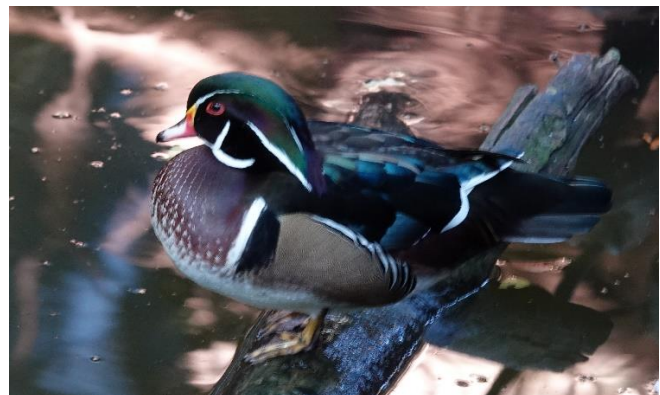


## Visit to Tricao Park Aviary

Tricao Park is the second largest aviary in the Southern Hemisphere (the largest is outside Plettenberg Bay) where they have birds from all over the world, but none from South America.



The map of the Park and the walking trails



There were some spectacular birds there including Crimson Ibis, Chinese Golden Pheasant and Mandarin Ducks.

After a very long enjoyable day we got on our bus and, with lively entertainment supplied by Wessel, finally arrived back in Santiago at 8:00 pm.



## **24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2024 - DAYS 11 & 12      Free Days**

A lovely free day on Sunday with most of us enjoying a late breakfast. People relaxed while John Beron investigated a trip to Valparaíso on Monday. The group decided on a trip to the coast to see the famous street art and graffiti in the coastal port that also used to house the Chilean Parliament.

An early start on the bus, but with the city traffic and a few other pick-ups it took an hour to clear the city. The rest of the journey was pleasant on good roads with changing scenery.

As Valparaíso was very hilly and there would be a lot of climbing up and down the streets, after the rest of the group were dropped off Jacot, Elaine and Chris were taken down to the port and found a convenient bar to wait for the others.



Even a Ministry building has graffiti on it.



Villa Atkinson



The group playing the piano steps



Doorway murals





Valparaíso transport depicted



Historic depiction of the Spanish invasion

## Vina Del Mar

Next, a visit to the resort of Vina Del Mar for lunch. We parked the bus and strolled along the front passing gardens with a flower clock and one of two Moai taken from Easter Island (the other one is in London). A great walk along the sand to the restaurant by some served to whet our appetites. After a wonderful lunch on the edge of the sea we boarded the bus for home. A lovely day out thanks to John.



The Flower Clock



A Moai from Rapa Nui (Easter Island)



A walk along the beach to the restaurant



**Las Brisas de Chicureo (Valle)**

Tuesday and the final day of the tour. Originally, we were scheduled to play at Sport Frances and later have our end of tour dinner there. The Club had, however, decided to hollow tine the greens and the game was switched to Las Brisas de Chicureo, a golf estate on the Northern outskirts of the city and close to Hacienda Chicureo where we had started the tour.



**Peter, Fernando, Chris & Arturo**



This time the hosts won but the result had already been decided and the visitors were going home as the victors. After the match we enjoyed a light lunch and refreshments without any speeches as they would all be done on the night. We returned to the hotel to prepare for the farewell dinner at Sport Frances.



## FINAL EVENING - Formal Dinner at Sport Frances

We all arrived at Sport Frances for the formal dinner and were welcomed by our hosts. A most enjoyable start to the evening.



Marcela with Rob & Barbara



The two Davids, David Tullo and David Horak



Pre-dinner drinks, empanadas, and karaoke entertainment by Marcela and David.







After the meal it was time to say our farewells and extend our gratitude to our magnificent hosts. Before we could make our presentations, Rob was presented with a splendid book on Chile to commemorate the tour. It was then Rob's turn to propose a toast of thanks to our hosts and present mementos to the tour organisers.





**Jose presenting the book of Chile to Rob**

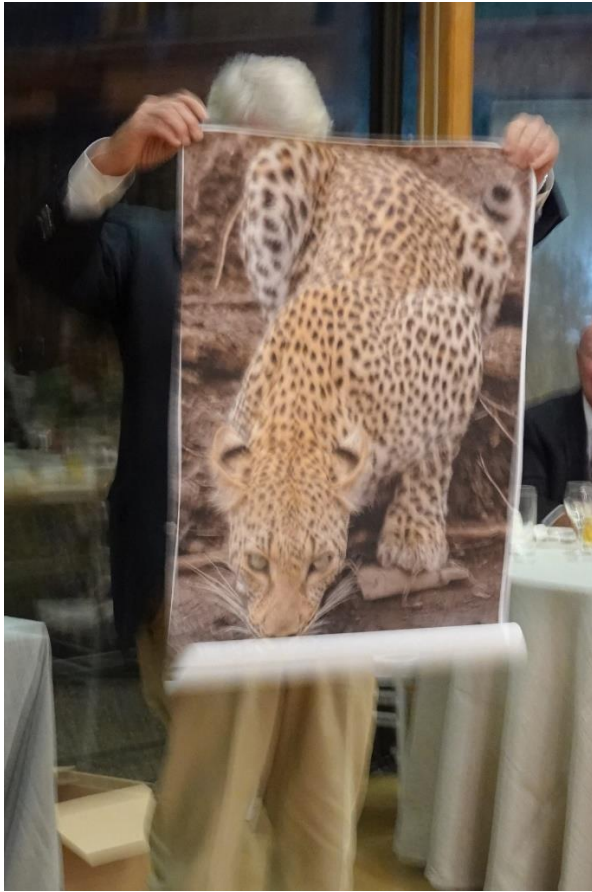


**Rob presenting the Buffalo Sculpture**



**Jose receiving his Standing Leopard signed print.**





**Jorge Bebin with his Leopard at a waterhole**



**Rolf with his Elephant at Sunset**



Rob presented animal prints, signed by Trevor Barnett, a renowned South African wildlife photographer, to Jose, Jorge, Rolf, and Gert Schon [who was sadly unable to attend]. Marcela, who had been the South Africans' invaluable intermediary, and a marvelous entertainer, was also presented with a traditional African memento.

The evening extended until late with everyone enjoying the old and new friendships and as most of us had a free day before our flights home time was not important. That is, apart from David Horak who had to catch a night flight back to Perth. He had fortunately arranged with a friend to pick him up and deliver him to the airport in time.

Wednesday morning and most of us had a free day to pack and prepare for our flights home the following day.

A big thank you to everyone involved with the organisation of the tour, another unbelievable experience with old friends reunited and new friends made.



## Time Sheets for Fixtures

CAPITAN GERT SCHON		CAPITAN RODRIGO SANCHEZ	
JUEVES 14 MARZO HACIENDA TEE TIME 14:00		VIERNES 15 MARZO PWCC TEE TIME 10:00	
SGUSA	CHILE	SGUSA	CHILE
Bailey 18 & Guillardmod 18	Menzel 14 & Orellana 19	Bailey 23 & Horak 18	Tullo 13 & Sanchez 13
Beron 18 & Horak 14	Rodriguez 12 & Schon 13	Beron 23 & Meikle 31	Cable 16 & Brauchtle 17
Campbell 18 & Meikle 25	Cruz 10 & Bannura 23	Campbell 23 & Ramandh 20	Dawes 27 & Spencer 21
Derman 8 & Ramandh 16	Tomic 19 & Wenzel 27	Derman 11 & Theron 7	Almojuela 9 & St Aubin 11
Ferreira 17 & Theron 4	Olavarria 9 & Baeza 10	Ferreira 22 & Wassenaar 16	Stockins 14 & Cibie 12
Wassenaar 12	Ramdohr 18	Guillardmod 23	Magri 20

CAPITAN FRANCISCO RUIZ		CAPITAN ROLF KUHLENTAL	
LUNES 18 MARZO VALLE ESCON TEE TIME 9:00		MARTES 19 MARZO LA DEHESA TEE TIME 10:00	
SGUSA	CHILE	SGUSA	CHILE
Campbell 19 & Theron 4	Gana 8 & Eichholz 23	Campbell 19 & Wassenaar 13	Olavarria 10 & Opazo 14
Derman 8 & Wassenaar 12	Bebin 10 & Alemparte 13	Derman 9 & Guillardmod 19	Garcia 2 & Wainstein 17
Ferreira 17 & Guillardmod 19	Menzel 14 & Dib 12	Bailey 19 & Ramandh 17	Kraizel 16 & Loy 9
Bailey 19 & Meikle 26	Orellana 19 & Ruiz 22	Beron 19 & Theron 4	Alonso 0 & Kuhlenthal 8
Beron 19 & Ramandh 16	Spencer 17 & Pereira 22	Ferreira 18 & Horak 15	Campos 22 & Orellana 24
Horak 14	Tullo 10	Meikle 27	Teare 21

CAPITAN CAROLUS BROWN		CAPITAN ERNESTO LABATUT	
MIERCOLES 20 MARZO LOS LEONES TEE TIME 9:00		VIERNES 22 MARZO ROCAS STO DOMINGO TEE TIME 11:00	
SGUSA	CHILE	SGUSA	CHILE
Ferreira 22 & Meikle 32	Arnaboldi 19 & Allende 20	Bailey 21 & Wassenaar 14	Bebin 12 & Schon 15
Bailey 24 & Theron 8	Labatut 12 & Ramdohr 24	Beron 21 & Guillardmod 21	Ramdohr 22 & Reitze 20
Beron 24 & Wassenaar 17	Brown 20 & Vial 26	Campbell 21 & Horak 17	Cabello 12 & Martinez 14
Campbell 24 & Guillardmod 24	Menzel 19 & Sanchez 14	Derman 10 & Meikle 29	Lavin 8 & Valenzuela 28
Derman 12 & Horak 19	Bebin 14 & Urrejola 11	Ferreira 20 & Ramandh 19	Silva 15 & Kuhlenthal 9
Ramandh 21	St Aubin 12	Theron 6	Mingo 11

CAPITAN ROLF KUHLENTAL		CAPITAN JORGE BEBIN	
SABADO 23 MARZO BRISAS STO DOMINGO TEE TIME 10:00		MARTES 26 MARZO BRISAS DE CHICUREO TEE TIME 10:00	
SGUSA	CHILE	SGUSA	CHILE
Bailey 23 & Beron 23	Vial 25 & Eichholz 22	Bailey 19 & Campbell 19	Wenzel 27 & Orellana 20
Campbell 23 & Derman 11	Ramdohr 23 & Mingo 13	Beron 19 & Ferreira 18	Rodriguez 13 & Schon 13
Guillardmod 23 & Horak 18	Schon 17 & Reitze 21	Guillardmod 19 & Ramandh 17	Spencer 19 & Lavin 7
Meikle 31 & Ramandh 20	Valenzuela 30 & Cabello 14	Horak 15 & Wassenaar 13	Olavarria 10 & Miranda 10
Theron 7 & Wassenaar 16	Martinez 16 & Kuhlenthal 10	Meikle 26 & Theron 5	Bebin 10 & Mingo 10
Ferreira 22 & Lavin 9	Bebin 13 & Silva 16	Derman 9	Kuhlenthal 8



## **Results**

Overall scores for the tour:        **South Africa 4½      Chile 3½**

**More importantly, friendships renewed and new friendships made.**

### **List of the courses played on the Tour**

**Hacienda Chicureo Golf Club  
Prince of Wales Country Club  
Valle Escondido Golf Club  
La Dehesa Golf Club  
Los Leones Golf Club  
Las Rocas de Santo Domingo  
Las Brisas de Santo Domingo  
Las Brisas de Chicureo (Valle)**