

Edition 1 • 2021

The Approach

Australia & New Zealand Edition



JOHN DEERE

State of play: Golfer numbers on the rise

Arrowtown Golf Course

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Arrowtown
Golf Course

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about John Deere Golf

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John Deere Australia and New Zealand Managing Director, Luke Chandler, with his father Wayne, daughter Camilla and sons Teddy and George at the Crow Valley Country Club.

Top of his game: Luke Chandler

Playing off a handicap of just seven, John Deere’s recently appointed Managing Director for Australia and New Zealand, Luke Chandler, knows the satisfaction golf brings to those who play it and what it takes to build and maintain a good course.

Luke Chandler not only heads a brand committed to supporting the golf industry and leading technology, connectivity and automation across turf management, he also has a genuine and longstanding love of the sport.

“I love the challenge (of golf).” Mr Chandler said.

“The feeling that you can continue to grow and improve with each game and push to better yourself with every swing of the club.

“I started playing golf when I was eight with my dad who shared a love for the sport that he has instilled in me.

“One of those ‘magic moments’ in my life was when I was able to give a little back to my father (Wayne) in 2019, when we took him to the Masters in the USA and spent four weeks travelling the country playing on all those courses we often spoke about growing up, including Hilton Head Island.

“Meeting new people, making new friends, and most importantly to me now that I’m a father, is sharing that passion with my children in the same way that my father did with me.”



Mr Chandler’s love of golf is shared by his sons, Teddy and George.

Having lived in the United States, most recently as the chief economist for John Deere at its Illinois headquarters, Luke has teed off at some of the best courses in North America.

“I’ve experienced some great pro-ams and was fortunate enough to play with Australia’s former US Open winner Geoff Ogilvy one year,” he said.

While Mr Chandler has fond memories playing at his local course in the US, Crow Valley Country Club, he is enjoying the game conditions here, at home in Australia.

“Since being back, I have joined the Indooroopilly Golf Club, and I am excited to have returned to a climate where it is possible to play golf 12 months of the year,” he said.

Mr Chandler says growth in the golf and turf management sector will be a key focus for him now he has taken on the Managing Director role.

“As a game played in over 208 countries, John Deere’s involvement in golf drives our sustainability efforts, charity, volunteerism and sense of community,” he said.

“We have been able to leverage our agricultural technology to build a precision turf strategy encompassing robotics, automation, connectivity and hybrid technology.”

On the global stage, John Deere continues to invest in golf.

After a hiatus due to COVID-19, the John Deere Classic returns to the PGA Tour schedule in 2021.

“I’m extremely excited to see this event back,” Mr Chandler said.

“It is not only an important event on the golf scene, it also

makes a real contribution to the local community by raising funds for a range of important charities, and builds a sense of excitement around seeing world-class athletes in action at the tournament.”

John Deere has also taken proactive steps to put greater focus on women’s golf this year and will support a number of key events and initiatives.

“We want to help ensure the women’s game receives the attention and resources it deserves, and that the next generation of female players feel encouraged to pursue the sport,” Mr Chandler said.

John Deere is determined to give back to the industry and continues to work on participation programs that drive diversity, equity and inclusion in the game.

The best courses in the world use John Deere equipment and the challenge for the brand’s new Managing Director is going to be finding time to play some of those courses.

“We are fortunate to have world class golf courses around Australia and New Zealand so there are a few that are on my ‘to play’ list,” Mr Chandler said.

“If I had to choose one to play tomorrow, it would have to be Tara Iti which overlooks the Te Arai coast, just south of Mangawhai on the North Island of New Zealand.”

“It’s one of the most spectacular courses in the world and also uses a fleet of John Deere equipment.”



Tara Iti Golf Course Te Arai coast New Zealand.

“It’s one of the most
spectacular courses in the
world and also uses a fleet
of John Deere equipment.”



Tieke Golf Estate is set to become a premium golf destination in New Zealand's Waikato region.

I Tieke Golf Estate: New Zealand's newest 'must-play' course

Tieke Golf Estate, poised to become one of New Zealand's must-play courses when it opens in 2022. Located alongside the Waikato River, half-way between Auckland and Lake Taupo, Brett Thomson and Phil Tataurangi have designed a spectacular course that captures the natural disposition of the land.

President Craig Meinsmith said with layers of ash, gravels and sandy pumice as the base, the course features some unique characteristics.

"Tieke Golf Estate is a new golf course that is made up of river valleys, terraces and steep escarpments," Mr Meinsmith said.



Tieke Golf Estate had one of the most comprehensive John Deere fleets in Waikato.

"With 24 hectares of fescue fairways, 1.5 hectares of creeping bentgrass putting greens and 13 hectares of sandy waste areas and bunkers, we recognised early we required a large and diverse range of turf and sand maintenance equipment."

Superintendent Jason Laing said he was confident that he had assembled one of the best fleets in the country, in consultation with Agrowquip and John Deere.

"I'm fairly confident that we've got the most comprehensive John Deere fleet in the Waikato, if not the nation," Mr Laing said.

"I'm impressed with the features that come standard with the John Deere equipment and their commitment to product sustainability, including their dedication to reduce emissions.

"I've been most impressed with the 8000A E-Cut Hybrid Fairway Mower.

"These are powerful machines, and with their electric reel drive system, worrying about hydraulic leaks is a thing of the past.

"They are also lightweight enough so that I can take them on to some of the newer sown out areas without hesitation.

"The hybrids have reduced fuel consumption and emissions which works well with the philosophy of Tieke Golf Estate."

"Once the course opens, I hope to have it playing quite firm but not too difficult for our regular members.

I hope to have the greens cut at around 3.5 mm and the remainder of the course at 16 mm."

Aside from meeting the needs of the unique course, Tieke's President said the decision to buy John Deere equipment was also based on the support offered.

"I don't think there was ever any doubt John Deere had the range and diversity of machinery to meet our needs, but that's just the beginning," Mr Meinsmith said.

"The even more important part of the partnership is in the back up, tech and mechanical support.

"Agrowquip gave us great assurances and comfort around the support package."

Lyndon Baird, Agrowquip's North Island Golf and Turf Sales Manager, said his team was excited to work with Tieke Golf Estate.

"We see this as not only the supply of quality equipment, but the building blocks to set up a strong long-term partnership with the club and greenkeeping staff," Mr Baird said.

"The board intends for Tieke Golf Estate to be home to a number of prestigious tournaments and special events both amateur and professional,"

Craig Meinsmith, President

Tieke Golf Estate is set to become a premium golf destination in the Waikato region, with the first tee less than a kilometre from Hamilton Airport.

The mixed member or green fee course will cater to approximately 800 local members and around 7000 visitors each year.

While the initial focus will be on making the course a golfing destination, the board has big plans for the future.

"The board intends for Tieke Golf Estate to be home to a number of prestigious tournaments and special events both amateur and professional," Mr Meinsmith said.

"We plan to become a highly respected and valued part of the wider Waikato community and regional economy."

From January 2022, you'll be able to book yourself a tee time at one of New Zealand's best courses. ■

"I'm feeling very confident that we've got the most comprehensive John Deere fleets in the Waikato if not the nation."

Jason Laing, Superintendent, Tieke Golf Estate





Arrowtown Golf Course has seen member and golfer numbers rise in the past twelve months.

I State of play

Whether they're first-time players or pulling the clubs out of the shed after a hiatus, golf enthusiasts headed back to their local turf in droves over the last 12 months, with industry bodies and golf courses alike reporting a spike in the number of people lining up to tee off.

"Golf participation has flourished in the last year," Australian Sports Turf Managers Association (ASTMA) Chief Executive, Mark Unwin, said.

"It is great for the game and for clubs as memberships are also up."

Arrowtown Golf Club, 25 kilometres east of Queenstown in the heart of the Southern Alps on the South Island of New Zealand, is one course reaping the benefits of the surge in golf participation.

Course Superintendent, Rick Machray, said he has been thrilled to see more people tackling the picturesque layout which has also been listed by Golf.com as one of the top 25 short courses in the world.

"This past COVID-19 year has been hard on everybody but we have seen member and golfer numbers rise which has been great for the club and course," Mr Machray said.

"Things are well and truly on the up and I think the golf courses are certainly playing their part in that.

"The increase of people travelling to play golf here has provided a boost to the local economy and helped many businesses get back 'up and running'."

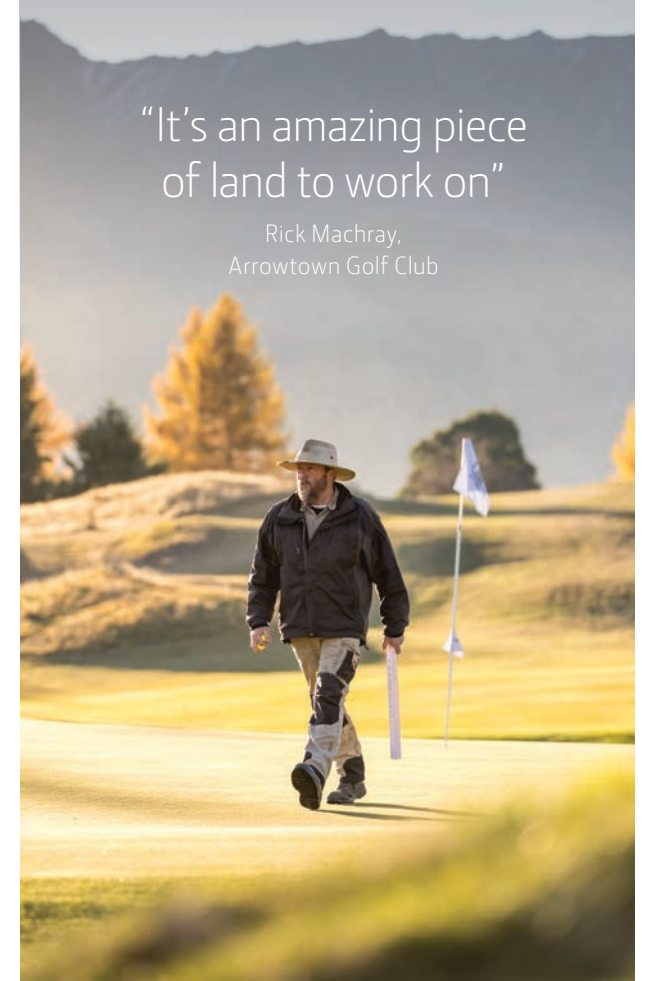
Set amid spectacular rolling mountain views, Arrowtown Golf Club not only offers its players an inspiring golfing experience but also pushes its greenkeepers to find new ways to work with its diverse landscape and unique heritage.

"It's an amazing piece of land to work on," Mr Machray said.

"Although it is challenging in respect to the nature of the environment, the course seems to possess that little bit of magic that gets golfers talking and coming back for more.

"It's an amazing piece of land to work on"

Rick Machray,
Arrowtown Golf Club



"The course itself weaves a path through rocky outcrops down the remnants of old riverbeds on the front nine, and ends up running alongside the more fertile flood plains of the Arrow River on the back nine.

"The Arrow River was once one of the richest gold bearing rivers in New Zealand and you can still find evidence of this throughout the town and indeed there are still ruins on the course."

ASTMA's Mark Unwin said the story at Arrowtown Golf Club is one that is being replicated at courses right across the globe.

"I'm hearing very similar stories from most parts of the world," Mr Unwin said.

"We are regularly in contact with peers in the United Kingdom, United States and Canada who are all experiencing similar trends in participation."

While more tees in the ground and more carts in motion is a good thing for the industry, it also presents its challenges for those preparing the courses.

"Increases in numbers mean increased wear and tear to the course and much longer hours for the course management teams preparing the course to cope with the volume of increased rounds," Mr Unwin said.

At Arrowtown Golf Club, Rick Machray said the course is showing more signs of wear.



Arrowtown Golf Club is located 25 km east of Queenstown, New Zealand.

“With the increase in traffic at the club, there is certainly more impact out on the course,” he said.

“The course is a very fragile environment at times, especially during the winter months when the grasses go dormant and the ground semi permafrosts creating little or no growth recovery.

“In saying that, that’s the charm of Arrowtown – sunny one day and snowy the next.”

With more traffic on the course, Mr Machray said more focus is on clubs having equipment that can handle the challenge.

“We run a small fleet of course machinery as you would expect at a small club,” he said.

“Golf participation has flourished in the last year.”

Australian Sports Turf Managers Association (ASTMA) chief executive, Mark Unwin

“We need reliability and for us the two John Deere Tractors, along with a John Deere 8700A Fairway Mower and 1580 TerrianCut™ Front Mower fit that bill.

“We have just purchased a John Deere Aercore™ 1000 which is also playing a vital role in assisting with compaction due to the higher traffic numbers.

“John Deere’s GPS and electric options will be something we will seriously consider over the coming years as we look at different equipment to cope with changing trends.”

The ASTMA is expecting new and returning players to continue to find their way back to their local course over the coming months.

“From the course perspective, I’d say the teams will remain busy right throughout the year and into next,” Mr Unwin said.

“Where people perhaps have more time with limited travel, flexible working options and those sorts of things, I think they’ll continue to find the appeal of golf in being outside, in nature and enjoying the benefits that the sport provides for mental and physical health and wellbeing.” ■

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It’s your job to deliver the very best golfing experience. It’s ours to support you to do it. That’s why John Deere Golf has a dedicated nationwide team whose focus is to give you the technology and expertise you need to keep your course in superb playing condition. Because when you’re as passionate about the game as we are, keeping New Zealand courses among the world’s best is a goal we’re 100% committed to.

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“As Sportspark grows and develops we will continue to grow our investment in top quality machinery, we see GPS and autonomy as a growth equipment area.

Matthew Cairns , Grounds
and Operations Coordinator

GPS technology drives performance at Blacktown International Sportspark

Turf managers are increasingly embracing the power of data to help make high-impact decisions to ensure their venues are in peak condition and ready for elite competition.

At the Blacktown International Sportspark (BISP) in Western Sydney, Grounds and Operations Coordinator Matthew Cairns has invested in John Deere’s GPS-guided equipment to help prepare the multi-sport venue.

“Moving with the times of 2021, my favourite piece of machinery has to be either the GPS-driven ProGator™ PrecisionSprayer or the fairway mower,” Mr Cairns said.

“The ability to track work and minimise human error is already outstanding and once these machines transition to becoming fully autonomous, it will make the grounds team even more efficient than it already is.”

BISP is a unique sporting complex that caters for multiple sports, meaning the team relies on an array of John Deere equipment, including sprayers, a range of mowers, tractors, Gator™ Utility Vehicles and a front-end loader.

Constructed for the 2000 Sydney Olympics, BISP is also the administration base of the Western Sydney Wanderers, and regularly hosts elite sporting events including the AFL and AFLW, WBBL, W-League and state league cricket.



Blacktown International Sports Park.

It makes the facility one of the most versatile in Australian sport.

“In terms of game preparation, it changes drastically from 10-day cricket pitch preparation which involves rolling clay wickets with two tonne rollers and being able to then gain turf recovery after being under that intense stress,” Mr Cairns said.

“Then you’ve got the mowing and marking the day of a game for fixtures like W-League and AFLW.

“In the middle, you have the intricacies of building and maintaining baseball pitchers’ mounds and diamonds as well as the maintenance and preparation of a softball diamond.”

Mr Cairns says building a fleet for the unique demands of a multi-sport venue has seen the John Deere equipment come into its own.

“John Deere equipment is reliable,” he said.

“We find the equipment flexible in preparing multiple surface types and we use John Deere machinery across all BISP fields – whether it be a cricket oval cut at 10 mm or the Wanderers A-League fields cut at 21 mm.”

“The innovative nature of the equipment as technology evolves is also a positive.

“We find the equipment flexible in preparing multiple surface types and we use John Deere machinery across all BISP fields – whether it be a cricket oval cut at 10 mm or the Wanderers A-League fields cut at 21 mm.”

“The ability to track work and minimise human error is already outstanding and once these machines transition to becoming fully autonomous, it will make the grounds team even more efficient than it already is.”

“We just received the fairway (GPS) unit and the new base station has been installed.

“We are excited to put them into action and see how our work methods can be adjusted to make us more effective and efficient.”

The BISP team has fully embraced their GPS ProGator Precision Sprayer, with the technology aiding their operations.

“It (the GPS unit) removes human error in terms of overlapping or missing and has the added bonus of being able to track rates of application through the ‘my operations’ platform,” he said.

Already heavily invested in GPS technology, Mr Cairns says BISP will further grow its fleet with a focus on autonomy over the coming years.

“As Sportspark grows and develops we will continue to grow our investment in top quality machinery,” he said.

“We see GPS and autonomy as a growth equipment area.

“The equipment already purchased has been a great addition and I can see this being a huge game changer in the sports turf world.” ■

| Grace Kim: on course to be a star of Australian golf



Grace Kim's goal is to become the number one female golfer in the world.



After dominating the amateur ranks, Grace Kim is on track to make her professional debut.

Grace Kim is a star on the rise.

The 20-year-old Australian golfer has set herself lofty career goals but, given her progression to date, they seem far from out of reach.

"My goal is to make my home country, parents, team and myself proud by becoming the number one female golfer in the world," Kim said.

Playing out of Avondale in Sydney, it's a long road ahead to reach that ranking but, even at this early point in her career, she has a proven track record of performing, with achievements including being named best junior player in the country in 2017 and taking out the Youth Olympic Championship in Buenos Aires a year later.

In 2021, Kim is considered Australia's best amateur golfer after winning the prestigious Australian Amateur title in February.

The tournament, played at Kooyonga Golf Club, saw Kim shoot a final round 68 to finish three under for the tournament – seven shots clear of her nearest competitor.

"It was definitely a title I wanted to achieve," Kim said.

"Even more so after Golf Australia announced that it would be a four-day stroke play event.

"Don't get me wrong, match play is great to get the blood pumping, but I enjoy the individual challenges you face during a stroke play tournament."

Kim started playing the game when she was 10-years-old, when she would finish school each day, head to the driving range, and practice with her father. After a year or so of playing, she found her love for the game.

"I am so blessed to have who I have beside me"

Kim credits seven-time major champion and World Golf Hall of Fame player, Karrie Webb, as the golfer she would most like to emulate.

Webb is well-known for her generosity in mentoring the next generation of Australian golfing talent, which Kim has been a beneficiary of.

"I have a list of people that I look up to, but number one is definitely Karrie Webb," she said.

"It's not just how successful she was during her time, but it is her heart and generosity to give back to Australian female amateur golfers, like me, that stands out.

"It inspires me to go out there, win tournaments, majors included, and be able to give back to people in need."

After dominating the amateur ranks, 2021 sees Kim contemplating a move into the professional arena.

"I believe it'll be a mixed bag of emotions," she said.

"It's definitely a big move from amateur to professional and becoming your own business, but I know it's all going to be all worth it in the end.

"My goal is to make my home country, parents, team and myself proud by becoming the number one female golfer in the world."

To be able to compete with the best on the finest courses in the world, Kim knows she'll have to continue to develop her game.

She's had a taste of international golf already, with a trip to the famed Augusta National course in America where she was finally able to play the iconic course after having to abandon plans to be at the National Women's Amateur event in 2021 which was cancelled due to COVID-19.

Kim will head back to the United States later in the year, with plans to play the Ladies Professional Golf Association's Q-school, and a hope of qualifying for the tour next season.

"I am quite keen to turn professional and start earning some money of my own, travelling the world, and playing different tournaments.

"I know there are a lot of little boxes to tick first before becoming number one, so I'm excited to face whatever is coming along the way of my journey." ■



FMG Stadium Waikato Turf Manager, Karl Johnson, with his team.

I Stadium Spotlight: FMG Stadium Waikato

The world's toughest players, on a world-class field

There is arguably no greater test for a sporting surface than a game of rugby union.

"Having two 800kg-plus groups of athletes pushing against each other means massive pressure through their boots," Karl Johnson, Turf Manager for FMG Stadium Waikato, said.

Home to the Waikato Chiefs in the Super Rugby Competition and a regular host to the All Blacks in test matches, FMG Stadium Waikato is an important spiritual home to the sport in the rugby-loving nation.

"From my experience, rugby union scrums are the most demanding of any code and is the part of any match I look at very closely," Mr Johnson said.

To ensure the field is presented to the best possible standard for every match, the FMG Stadium team worked with Agrowquip New Zealand to purpose build a fleet to handle the challenge.

"We run a range of John Deere equipment that has been chosen specially for that venue," Mr Johnson said.

"Our venue hosts many televised events, which means for us the turf presentation is extremely important.

"In my 33 years of industry experience in turf, I have been using John Deere for 21 of them. I am proud of the relationship formed with John Deere and look to many more years ahead."

The FMG Stadium fleet features a range of equipment including specialist mowers, compact utility tractors and a Gator™ Utility Vehicle.

"We see the turf being the 'stage' for the show. Our events are beamed all over the globe so ensuring our fleet is world-class assists us in maintaining and presenting the turf in the same way, and we can't do this unless our equipment performs," Mr Johnson said.

"In Hamilton we are very lucky to have Agrowquip, the John Deere Service Agents, just around the corner, who look after our servicing and any repairs.

"My most valuable piece of machinery is actually the aftersales and parts service we receive."

Agrowquip CEO Boun Khamwanthong said his team understands the importance of FMG Stadium Waikato to the New Zealand sporting landscape.

"In my 33 years of industry experience in turf, I have been using John Deere for 21 of them. I am proud of the relationship formed with John Deere and look to many more years ahead."

"FMG Stadium Waikato is more than a stadium, it is a community centre for the region," Mr Khamwanthong said.

"We are aware of the pressure Karl and his team are under to keep the stadium in top condition for a national and international audience, and we're pleased to be able to help him achieve this."

While there is plenty of repetition during the season in preparing the surface, Mr Johnson said no two weeks are the same as a turf manager.

"The weather is the number one thing that will dictate what and when we will do things and, leading into any event, we are monitoring the weather right up to the last minute," he said.

"We are currently mowing the ryegrass pitch at 28 mm, but we are also fortunate that we have a Desso Hybrid turf system installed in our pitch at FMG Stadium Waikato.

"This turf system is made up of 95 % natural turf and 5 % artificial fibres. These fibres are stitched 180 mm into our 300 mm sand profile and are 20 mm above the surface. This hybrid system is extremely tough and ensures we have very minimal wear and tear from any event."

In the week leading up to match-day, the FMG Stadium team will mow the pitch every day and remove the clippings, complete aeration depending on the weather, monitor moisture contents for irrigation management, apply liquid fertiliser, apply dew control product, add any logos and sideline advertising, prepare for any training sessions that may occur and complete the line markings.

"I have a saying: I want to be able to see the lines from the moon," Mr Johnson laughed.

New Zealand has long been known as the world's best rugby-playing nation. The country's turf managers, in particular the team at FMG Stadium Waikato, also want to ensure the world's best players are playing on the world's best fields. ■



FMG Stadium Waikato Turf Manager, Karl Johnson.

"We see the turf being the 'stage' for the show. Our events are beamed all over the globe so ensuring our fleet is world-class assists us in maintaining and presenting the turf in the same way, and we can't do this unless our equipment performs,"

Karl Johnson, Turf Manager,
FMG Stadium Waikato



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