

# THE 2006 **golf** AUSTRALIA READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

## THE WINNERS ARE...



### EQUIPMENT

#### FAVOURITE FAIRWAY WOOD

**WINNERS:** Callaway Big Bertha Warbird.

The Callaway Warbird series has been a favourite amongst golfers of all levels for years and it seems our readers still can't get enough of them. The Fusion also polled well, tying with the Cleveland Launcher as one of the more popular fairway metals for 2006.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Callaway Fusion; Cleveland Launcher.

#### FAVOURITE DRIVER

**WINNER:** TaylorMade r7 Quad Driver.

The TaylorMade r7 Quad has taken out the most popular driver gong for the third time in a row. The r7 Quad's moveable weight cartridge system club sparked a major change in driver design, to the point where virtually every new driver release this year had either movable weights or immovable weighting to help reduce the effect of your distance robbing slice or hook.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Callaway FT3 Fusion; PING G5.



Now in its third year, the *Golf Australia* Readers' Choice Awards gives our loyal readers a chance to let everyone know what is working for them in the world of golf. Responses were many and varied for this year's awards, with votes for everything from favourite putter, to most popular amateur and best presented course.

Several categories were dominated by one model or golf course, while others went down to the wire. Categories introduced for the first time in 2005 such as best hybrid club are now a firmly established entity, while some new categories may

not be seen next year.

Reflecting the influence golf has on our leisure and working lives, sections such as Best On-Course Accommodation and Best Corporate Venue attracted some interesting responses.

Sections introduced for this year's poll include categories such as favourite course and best presented course, which provide an indication of your personal experience, rather than what appears to be the popular perception.

So read on and discover what's working for you and your fellow golfers.



#### FAVOURITE VALUE GOLF BALL

**WINNER:** Callaway Warbird

The Callaway Warbird has swooped from the sky to dethrone such stalwarts as the Optima TS and Maxfli Noodle ball to win its first Readers' Choice Award. The Titleist NXT polled extremely well to finish in second place.

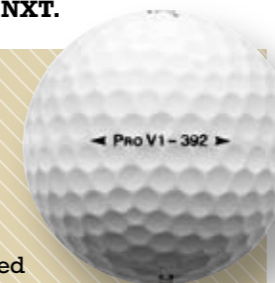
**HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Titleist NXT.

#### FAVOURITE PREMIUM GOLF BALL

**WINNER:** Titleist Pro V1

The Titleist Pro V1 backed up for a second consecutive win, while its sister ball, the Pro V1X, dropped back to third place. However, the popularity of Callaway's HX Tour 56 and the continued efforts of Bridgestone and Srixon, together with a hot new release from TaylorMade, will ensure Titleist won't rest on its laurels.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Callaway HX Tour 56.



#### FAVOURITE HYBRIDS/UTILITY CLUBS

**WINNER:** TaylorMade Rescue Mid.

TaylorMade helped define the hybrid market a few years ago as an alternative to hard to hit long irons. But with hybrids now finding their way into the bags of professionals such as Ernie Els and Sergio Garcia, Hybrid need no longer means 'hacker's club'. The Callaway Fusion, released after Michael Campbell's 2005 US Open victory, also proved popular among voters.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Callaway FT3 Fusion.

#### BEST EQUIPMENT INNOVATION

**WINNER:** Hybrid/Utility clubs

According to *Golf Australia* readers, innovation is all about making the game easier and it seems most of us want something that allows us to keep the long irons in the cupboard.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Oversized head drivers.

#### FAVOURITE GOLF SHOE

**WINNER:** Footjoy

Footjoy enjoy a satisfaction rating among our readers that is making it very difficult for other companies to get their foot in the door, pun intended. Nike polled well, no doubt due to the success of Tiger Woods and his undeniable skills in making golf footwear look cool.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Nike.

#### FAVOURITE RAINWEAR

**WINNER:** Sportè Leisure

Sportè Leisure has become a major operator in the corporate golf circuit by providing well made, attractive gear for their clients, but it is their colourful and affordable rainwear that has our readers enthused.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Footjoy; Nike.

#### FAVOURITE CLOTHING

**WINNER:** Adidas

An extensive range of golf wear has installed Adidas at the top of our readers' list of clothes to be seen in. The affordable quality of Sportè Leisure struck a cord with some of our readers, but it seems we all want to look like Sergio Garcia (pictured) out on the golf course.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Sportè Leisure.



#### FAVOURITE IRONS

**WINNER:** Callaway X-18.

Our readers were extremely divided as to their favourite irons, with many makes and models represented to appeal to everyone from the casual golfer to the single handicap player. However, the extremely forgiving Callaway X-18 stood out this year.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Callaway X-16.



#### FAVOURITE WEDGE

**WINNER:** Callaway X-Tour.

Renowned club designer, Roger Cleveland has helped to bring a more Tour inspired look and feel to the Callaway line of wedges and it seems to have struck a cord with readers. All Cleveland Golf wedges scored highly, with the CG10 ahead of the pack, tied with the Titleist Spin Milled wedge.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Cleveland CG10; Titleist Spin Milled.



#### FAVOURITE PUTTER

**WINNER:** Odyssey White Hot 2-ball.

Last year's winner, Odyssey's White Hot 2-ball, was the overwhelming victor again this year. It seems if a putter comes from Odyssey and has two white discs on the top, *Golf Australia* readers want it in their bag.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Ping Anser.





## COURSES



### FAVOURITE AUSTRALIAN RESORT

**WINNER: Bonville International Resort, NSW**

If *Golf Australia* readers are anything to go by, the north coast of NSW is the centre of the golfing universe, with Bonville International taking out yet another gong for favourite resort. It is hard to argue considering its ideal placement between Sydney and Brisbane, combined with fantastic pool, tennis and fitness facilities and award winning restaurant.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: Hyatt Regency Coolum; Sanctuary Cove.**

### FAVOURITE PUBLIC COURSE

**WINNER: Bonville International Resort, NSW**

This category highlights the loyalty that golfers show to their local layout, with an extremely wide variety of votes. However, a few courses stood out as popular with visitors as well as club members and Bonville International resort won comfortably as the best public access course amongst *Golf Australia* readers.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: The Dunes.**

### FAVOURITE CORPORATE VENUE

**WINNER: Bonville International Resort, NSW**

Several venues polled well in this category, ranging from Sanctuary Cove in the north down to Concord GC in Sydney and finally Moonah Links on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula. However, it was Bonville International Resort, near Coffs Harbour in NSW, that most readers felt made their corporate day something special.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: Moonah Links.**

### BEST PRESENTED COURSE

**WINNER: Bonville International Resort, NSW.**

A course doesn't win as many gongs as Bonville International Resort has in this year's Readers' Choice

Awards without being in top condition. The gongs speak for themselves.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: Moonah Links.**

### MOST DIFFICULT COURSE

**WINNER: Brookwater Golf Club, Qld.**

Brookwater GC is a challenging layout all Australian golfers should play. However, recent changes have been made to the layout to take some sting out of the layout, so much so Brookwater is unlikely to win this award in 2007.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: The Vintage.**

### FAVOURITE LOCAL DESTINATION

**WINNER: Gold Coast.**

With more than 70 courses within 90 minutes' drive of the centre of the Gold Coast, it makes a compelling destination choice for the avid golfer. Nearly one third of our readers voted Queensland's coast with the most as their top choice.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: Murray River region, NSW north coast.**

### FAVOURITE OVERSEAS DESTINATION

**WINNER: New Zealand**

While it's true that there is no place like home, *Golf Australia* readers feel New Zealand is close enough. With more than double the votes of second placed USA, the land of the long white cloud has world class layouts, is good value for money and best of all, it's just a four hours in a plane from our east coast.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: USA (mainland).**



## OFF THE COURSE

### FAVOURITE RETAIL CHAIN

**WINNER: House Of Golf**

Both the House of Golf and Drummond Golf rated extremely well among *Golf Australia* readers. But the purchasing power of 21 stores located in Queensland, NSW, Victoria and Tasmania, which has been passed on to the golfing consumer, has lead to the House of Golf switching places with Drummond Golf to take out the award for 2006.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: Drummond Golf.**

### FAVOURITE AUSTRALIAN GOLF WEBSITE

**WINNERS TIED: www.golfaustralia.com.au and www.pga.org.au**

Loyal readers plumped for *Golf Australia's* website once again but could not hold off a wave of support for

the informative PGA of Australia website. The PGA site has improved markedly during the past year and is the one stop site if you are looking for golf results or your nearest PGA pro for lessons.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: www.golfink.com.au**

### FAVOURITE DRIVING RANGE

**WINNER: Moore Park Golf Club**

**Driving Range.**

It would seem only fitting that one of Sydney's busiest golf courses would also have the most popular driving range. With three tiers and 60 bays to iron out those swing faults, Moore Park Driving Range attracted five times the votes as its nearest competitor.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: Macquarie University; Victoria Park (Qld).**



## PROS AND AMATUERS

### FAVOURITE TOURING PROFESSIONAL

**WINNER: Adam Scott.**

Geoff Ogilvy's breakthrough US Open saw the Victorian rocket up the rankings, with a stellar year that also included a victory at the World Matchplay Championship. But our highest ranked golfer is still seen by *Golf Australia* readers as our most popular golfing export since Greg Norman.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: Geoff Ogilvy; Stuart Appleby.**



### FAVOURITE AMATEUR

**WINNER: Tim Stewart.**

*Golf Australia* readers are an informed bunch, with the win by Tim Stewart at the Australian Amateur Championship as well as some strong performances on the US Amateur circuit attracting their attention. Jason Day also polled strongly despite his decision to turn pro in July.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: Jason Day.**

### FAVOURITE AUSTRALIAN PGA CLUB PRO

**WINNER: John Zirkler – Kempsey Golf Club.**

While some country golf courses may be doing it tough with the drought, there is no denying the loyalty of their members and John Zirkler is obviously performing above and beyond for his Kempsey members. Gary Edwin, long time *Golf Australia* Teaching Editor and PGA of Australia Teacher of the Year, polled well for second place.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED: Gary Edwin.**