



Ministerial Statement to the House of Assembly

2013 PGA Grand Slam of Golf

By

**The Hon. Shawn G. Crockwell, JP, MP
Minister of Tourism Development and Transport**

15th November, 2013

Mr. Speaker,

Bermuda recently had the opportunity to shine brightly on the international stage when, over the course of three fantastic days, our island once again played host to the PGA Grand Slam of Golf. Now in its seventh year on our island, I am happy to report that the tournament keeps getting better and better as both a revenue generator for our economy, and a source of invaluable media exposure.

The tournament got off to a rousing start with a Pro-Am match on October 14th, followed by two nationally televised championship rounds on the 15th and 16th, which served to put Bermuda front and centre in the eyes of the world as a premiere destination for golfers and travellers alike.

Throughout the years that Bermuda has hosted this classic exhibition, we have been pleased to see significantly increased visibility and business for our island. I

was particularly pleased with the positive impact on our hotel partners, with the tournament generating more than 1,000 room nights. And despite inclement weather on one of the days, it could not dampen the spirits of the more than 6,000 people who attended the tournament.

Mr. Speaker,

It has been estimated that Bermuda receives in excess of \$1 million in on-island benefits of goods and services as a direct result of the Grand Slam, which virtually matches the current sponsorship fee of \$1.5 million. This figure is even more impressive when one considers that it does not take into account the tremendous media value of the TNT broadcast, which reached more than 4 million homes, as well as additional related coverage before, during, and after the event.

Over the course of the two-day broadcast, viewers got to see stunning images of our island and our unparalleled natural surroundings. Those who tuned in, especially got to see the magnificence of the Port Royal Golf Course itself which, according to David Charles, the PGA's Senior Director, was in "the best shape it has ever been."

Mr. Speaker,

Praise for the course and for Bermuda itself also flowed from the players who participated in the tournament, including the winner, Adam Scott, who shot a course-record 64 and is now a lifetime honorary member of Port Royal. Adam, along with his fellow competitors Jason Dufner, Padraig Harrington and Justin Rose, was effusive in his praise for the course and his island experience, noting

Port Royal's many picturesque holes and the wonderful relaxing atmosphere of our island.

The island also drew the praise of celebrities in attendance, including popular Golf Channel hosts Gary Williams and the lovely and talented Win McMurry. I have no doubt that these endorsements and images will only help to further build our reputation as a world-class destination.

Mr. Speaker,

In addition to the broadcast, the event attracted the attention of the international media who covered the progression of qualifiers leading up to the tournament, as well providing daily news updates during the competition, and recaps upon its exciting completion. Both Premier Cannonier and I had the opportunity to participate in numerous media opportunities that allowed us to sell the destination and let potential visitors know why Bermuda is such a special place.

Mr. Speaker,

We have already seen an incredible amount of positive media coverage surrounding the tournament - not only for the competition, but, more importantly, for the destination. In addition to media covering the tournament itself, we hosted additional golf travel writers from several targeted outlets, among them Golf Magazine, Canadian Golf Traveller, AmateurGolf.com, and CyberGolf. While here, they got to sample other courses across the island as well as our culture and attractions. This helps paint a picture of Bermuda as a convenient and ideal golfer's getaway that also offers So Much More.

I am happy to report that we have received nothing but positive endorsements in resulting coverage thus far with Golf Magazine calling our island one of "the game's biggest playgrounds" and observing that Bermuda "spoils major winners and their families with enough blue water, pink sand and square footage" to keep the PGA coming back for more. AmateurGolf.com noted that golf in Bermuda "is in fact, heavenly" - a notion seconded by Canadian Golf Traveller who noted that, with golf holes like Port Royal's 16th "heaven can wait." Meanwhile CyberGolf stated that "one can't help falling in love with Bermuda." Outlets also covered interesting aspects of the destination, such as John Lennon's famous connection, and attractions such as the Botanical Gardens, Masterworks Museum of Bermuda Art and Gibbs Hill Lighthouse to name a few. This is just a sampling and I believe that this kind of praise is vital to our success.

All told, the media value from the event from worldwide television and press exposure for Bermuda is expected to be more than US \$20 million.

Mr. Speaker,

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the outstanding team of people who helped make this event possible. While too numerous to name them all, I would like to highlight a few for you today. They include, from the PGA, President Ted Bishop, CEO Peter Bevequa, the aforementioned Grand Slam Tournament Director David Charles and his deputy Bob Jeffries. Here in Bermuda: PGA Grand Slam of Golf General Chairman Andy Burrows; for Port Royal, Clement E.F. Talbot, MBE, JP, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Government Golf Courses; and George Terpilowski of Fairmont Southampton Resort which served so well once again as host hotel.

I would also like to thank the team at the Bermuda Department of Tourism and everyone throughout the island who worked so diligently to create a wonderful atmosphere for the players and visitors alike.

Events such as the PGA Grand Slam of Golf highlight what I know to be our island's greatest asset. .. the wonderful Bermudian people. From our taxi drivers to our police officers, our restaurant staffers to our shop owners, and every day citizens from all walks of life who interacted with our guests. They collectively make the difference here and ultimately will be responsible for the success of our efforts to revitalize our tourism industry.

Mr. Speaker,

In closing, I am looking forward to our hosting this event again through 2015 and hopefully beyond. We appreciate the PGA's confidence shown in our island through its commitment to staging the tournament here. They have been an outstanding partner and we hope to continue to build upon this mutually beneficial relationship.

I can promise that we will, in turn, continue to do our best to host an event that can stand with any tournament in the world. We are proud to showcase this magnificent jewel that is our island and we will continue to work diligently to leverage the success of this event and seek others that will help us to grow and prosper.

Thank you Mr. Speaker!