



NEW SOUTH WALES GOLF CLUB

APCD Version by Colin Jones

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Acknowledgements

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Ian Wells and Sage Vanni	Always just lovely to get such generous feedback at LC from these two designers.

The NSW Golf Club – a brief history

NSW Golf Club is a links-style course designed by Alister McKenzie which opened in 1928.

It is located in La Perouse (called "Lapa" by the locals) a coastal suburb about 15 kilometers south-east of the Sydney CBD. Situated on rugged cliffs at Botany Bay, it is renowned for its dramatic ocean views and strategic and challenging layout.

The course is part of Kamay Botany Bay National Park, which protects heritage-listed and Aboriginal cultural sites, popular walking tracks, and a rich biodiversity of flora and fauna.

The course is consistently ranked in the top 50 golf courses in the world. It hosted the 2009 Australian Open (won by Adam Scott).

MacKenzie, on designing the course, stated:^[2]

"At Sydney, I made an entirely new course for the New South Wales Golf Club at a place called La Perouse. This presents, I think, more spectacular views than any place I know with the possible exception of the new Cypress Point golf course in California."

—Alister MacKenzie, May 1927

The course has undergone revisions by Thomson Wolveridge & Perrett, Greg Norman & Bob Harrison, and by Tom Doak, who redesigned the famous 6th hole in 2019. A major refurbishment was recently completed in 2025.

The NSW Golf Club today

NSW Golf Club is a private club and it provides for limited guest access during weekdays only. Membership costs about \$35,000 AUD (\$25,000 US) to join with an annual fee of \$6,300. Guests will pay about \$350 for 18 holes.

The identity of members are maintained in confidence, but the list of members is known to include James Packer, Ricky Ponting and Greg Norman.

FUNFACT #1. The NSW Golf Club, despite being valued at \$32 million and having an annual turnover in excess of \$1 million, pays less in Council rates than any of its (furious) residential and commercial neighbours. In a 2020 Supreme Court case, it was ruled that the existence of a law that allows the Government to evict the Club with 90 days' notice, renders the Club worthless. Therefore the Club only pays \$990 in Council rates each year, the lowest possible amount payable by any commercial tenant in the Randwick Council area.

Kamay Botany Bay



On April 29, 1770 Captain James Cook landed the HMS Endeavour at (what he named) Botany Bay, marking a foundational moment in modern Australian history. Botany Bay was initially considered to be the site of a British penal colony, however the nearby Sydney Cove was ultimately selected as the site of the first European settlement.

The bay is a 39.6 km² body of water fed by the Georges and Cooks Rivers. It is now home to Port Botany, a major international container port and terminal, and the Sydney International Airport. Two of the airport's runways extend into the Bay.

For Aboriginal people, Kamay Botany Bay is a special place. The Kameygal people have been in the La Perouse headland area for more than 7,500 years. Following European settlement in 1788, local Aboriginal populations were decimated by introduced diseases, such as influenza and smallpox. However they maintained a presence around the La Perouse area. In fact, Kamay is the only area of Sydney where Aboriginal Australians have kept their connection to the land from European settlement until today.

The Aboriginal community has a long history of self-sufficiency through fishing and a tourist economy.

Since the day two Kameygal men challenged Cook on his arrival, La Perouse has been a centre of Aboriginal defiance and activism. It was the scene of early civil rights protests and the site of the 1938 Day of Mourning. Kamay was the site of the major protests in 1988 against the celebratory reenactment of the first fleet's arrival 200 years earlier.



That day of protest in 1988 is now commemorated every year in La Perouse by Aboriginal people. The day is known as the Survival Day Concert, and it has become the largest celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture in the country.

“Many different memories and meanings are associated with La Perouse. The monuments and buildings built by the European settlers are visual reminders of its post-settlement history. Its pre-settlement history is not as obvious. The rock engravings of a whale and its calf, as well as one of a shark, are faded and will continue to wear away. Yet unlike the engravings, the connection that Aboriginal people living at La Perouse have with the land has not faded. Their stories provide a rich and diverse history of La Perouse and are testament to the cultural continuity of the Aboriginal community.”

--DictionaryofSydney.com

Wildlife (on the ground)

Kamay Botany Bay is a thriving biodiversity hotspot, home to over 270 fish species and nearly 100 recorded bird species. Its ecosystems range from endangered seagrass meadows to coastal heathlands.

During a round of this APCD rendition of NSW Golf Club, you could see some of the following uniquely Australian animals.



The **eastern water dragon** is a medium-sized lizard which is olive to brown in colour with a dark stripe behind its eye and a reddish tinge at its throat. Water dragons are one of the oldest Australian reptiles, remaining virtually unchanged for the past 50,000 years. It is a shy creature which is able to spend large amounts of time under-water. It is harmless and will only bite or scratch if handled.

Bandicoots are marsupials known for their long snouts and rabbit-shaped bodies. They are nocturnal so rarely seen during the day. However, you might be able to spot one of these shy marsupials foraging for worms and insects in the long grasses around the NSW Golf Club.



The **red-bellied black snake** is a venomous native snake commonly found in the national park and in most parts of the eastern seaboard. Due to the availability of anti-venom, it has not been responsible for the death of any Australian (or

tourist) for more than 50 years. But a bite will make you very ill and will cause extreme pain. Snake catchers like to say that when you get bitten by a brown snake, you know that you could die. But when you get bitten by a red-bellied black, you just wish you had.

(NOT-SO) FUNFACT#2 – the Eastern Brown Snake, one of the world’s most dangerous snakes, has been sighted at Kamay. Once bitten, death can come quickly for some people (within 30 minutes). The blue-ringed octopus also frequents the water around the La Perouse headlands. It will generally only bite when provoked, but this small and delightful creature carries enough toxins to kills 26 adults in just a matter of minutes (not that it ever has). Yet the leading cause of death in these parts is not from extreme creatures such as these, but from the pastime of rock fishing. In the past 2 decades, 17 fishermen are known to have been swept off the rocks and lost around this part of the Sydney coast.

Wildlife (In the air)

Birds you might see and hear on a round at the NSW Golf Club include:



The Magpie is a common and conspicuous Australian bird. They are found throughout the country and generally only absent in arid areas and heavily planted forests. You will hear a small sample of the range of their different calls during your round.

The **Kookaburra** is native to eastern Australian (although it has been introduced to other regions). It is a large kingfisher predator of lizards, snakes, mice and fish. It has a loud “laughing” call, often involving multiple birds calling to each other. The laugh is a uniquely Australian sound which is ingrained in our culture. You will certainly see and hear our laughing kookaburras throughout the course, commencing from the very first hole.



FUN FACT #3 - In 2010, the Australian Federal Court ruled that the flute riff in Men at Work's 1981 international hit "Down Under" infringed the copyright of the iconic Australian children's song "Kookaburra Sits in the Old Gum Tree". Larrikin Music, holding the rights to the 1934 tune, successfully sued, resulting in the band paying 5% of royalties from the song's proceeds.



The **Yellow-Tail Black Cockatoo** is a large black cockatoo, easily identified by its yellow cheek patch, and is common in south-eastern Australia. They feed in larger groups and have a distinctive and very loud and noisy squawk. You won't miss seeing and hearing these screechers (with the sound turned way down low of course) during your round.

The **Rainbow Lorikeet** – is an extraordinarily colourful parrot found on the eastern Australian seaboard. They are often found in large groups and semi-tame lorikeets are common daily visitors in many Sydney backyards. They have been introduced into many areas throughout Australia and New Zealand, invariably having a negative impact on local birdlife and agriculture. In some areas, they are now considered to be pests.



Flocks of seagulls will be found around the ocean areas of the course. Raptors such as **Whistling Kites** and **White-Tailed Eagles** will also be found around the course hunting fish and small native animals, such as possums, rodents and snakes.

Not surprisingly, you will need to look up into the trees to see most of these birds during your round at NSW Golf Club.

What else might you see?



The **Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service** is a helicopter surf lifesaving service that operates throughout Australia and has a large base in La Perouse. Its aircraft

and medical crews respond to emergencies threatening the life and safety of people caused through medical emergency, illness, natural disaster, accidents or mishap.

The large domed roof of its hangar is visible from most areas of the course.

(Westpac is one of Australia's largest financial institutions and is the naming rights sponsor of the service)

FUN FACT #4. Since its foundation in 1973, the helicopter rescue service has carried out more than 80,000 flights ranging from aeromedical to search and rescue missions.

Cape Solander in Kamay Botany Bay National Park is one of Sydney's premier land-based **whale-watching** spots. June and July are peak times for viewing migrating humpback whales, which often pass within 200 meters of the coast, providing a spectacular close-up view for the thousands of spectators who gather on the Cape (the Cape headland is visible from the 14th green).

You will see the **nearby transport activity** that players experience during every round at the NSW Golf Club, i.e. international flights approaching the busy Sydney international airport and container ships making their way to and from the port terminal (you can't miss the huge Spirit of Sydney cargo ship heading out to sea).



Some people are seen risking their lives **rock-fishing** around the headlands for bream, tailor, kingfish and snapper (see Not-So Fun Fact #2).

The flags flying over the clubhouse are (left-to-right) - the Aboriginal flag, the national flag and the Torres Strait Islander flag.

Course layout

The layout of the NSW Golf Club has been modified over the years. The course was renovated again recently (with changes being made to some of the green complexes) and was reopened in May 2025.

The APCD version is circa 2022, which is the date of the DEM data. I am very confident that the course I have designed is an accurate and fair reflection of the course as it stood around that time.

The course was built using a highly accurate 2M DEM, supplied by the Linkster.

I was extremely fortunate to find detailed to-scale plans of the NSW Golf Club clubhouse and also of the building situated on the undercover driving range. The club house has been built to-scale and so I felt extra-obliged to then make it as faithfully accurate as the APCD would allow me (and as far as my APCD skill level would allow me). The windows and doors (including the arches) are taken from close-up Google 3D imagery that is available of the clubhouse itself.

Fair play

The course is **heavily planted**. In particular there are many bushes and grasses, which is quite dense in parts. The smaller bushes and grasses and have been set as "play through". The penalty for landing in these areas will generally be in the texture properties – dirt, sand and tall grass.

All 2D objects on the course (e.g buggies) have been also set to play-through.

The heavy planting means I have needed to set some strict OOB boundaries.

The pot bunkers at NSW are steep. Well aware that there will be times, particularly where a ball lands against the face of the bunker, when extracting your ball will not be easy. You may need to get out sideways or even backwards. You may even need to throw caution to the wind and slam your ball into the sod wall and hope for a favourable rebound.

Pins have been planted carefully to ensure you will always be faced with a playable. But you will be penalized for landing in the "wrong " spot on a green.

Sprinkler heads are there for visual purposes only. If you land on a sprinkler head near a green, it will simply play as "fairway". In rough areas, your lie will be "rough".

There are no crowds. Planting crowds would have meant that I would need to remove much of the course wildlife.

Key textures

- Patchy/sandy rough areas (Dirt), particularly in proximity to the waste sand area but exist in many areas of general rough
- Waste sand (Sand) - NSWGC was built on sand dunes, so there are large sand waste areas throughout the course. These areas generally will contain smaller dune bushes and a moderate concentration of taller grass and weeds only.
- Tall grass – heavier concentrations of weeds/grasses throughout the course.

Australia uses the metric system

I acknowledge that the majority of Links players are from one of the 3 countries that still uses an Imperial Measurement System (I am not referring to Liberia or Myanmar). But feel I had no choice but to design the Hole Previews using the local metric system.

A guide for our American, Liberian and Burmese friends:

1 metre = 39 inches = 3.3 feet = 1.1 yard

Metres	Feet	Yards
1	3.3	1.1
50	164	54
100	327	109
200	655	218
250	825	274