2019 AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am

Pebble Beach, CA

GEO Certified® Tournament Report

February 2020
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1. Introduction

GEO Foundation is delighted to recognize the 2019 AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am as a GEO Certified® Tournament. The tournament was hosted by Monterey Peninsula Foundation, taking place between the 4th and the 10th of February 2019.

As a result of a concerted team effort and with concrete commitments to the future, the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am has:

- Undergone an official verification process, undertaken by the Council for Responsible Sport (CRS)
- Successfully passed the GEO Certified® evaluation
- Met all the required criteria of golf’s voluntary standard for sustainable golf tournaments.

GEO concurs with the Council for Responsible Sport’s verification assessment that, having achieved 46 out of the 49 credits sought, and with Continual Improvement Points set for the future, the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am should be awarded GEO Certified® Tournament status for the 2019 event.

This certification recognizes the organizers’ credible and important leadership in advancing sustainability - in and through golf – helping foster nature, conserve resources, take climate action and strengthen communities.

The tournament has also helped to raise awareness and influence a large broader audience.

This official GEO Certified® Tournament Report summarises the commitments made, actions undertaken, results generated, and continual improvement points accepted for future editions of the tournament.

"Building on a strong track record of responsible management of the Pebble Beach Resort and the Monterey Peninsula, we commend the partners for taking such determined steps to make the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am a leader in sustainable golf tournaments, sport and events."

Jonathan Smith,
Executive Director,
GEO Foundation
2. Verification process

The official tournament audit was carried out by the independent verification body, The Council for Responsible Sport, accredited by GEO Foundation for golf tournament verification in North America.

Verification involved the following activities, using the International Sustainable Tournament Standard as the guide to ensure comprehensive and consistent evaluation of performance:

- Pre-event assessment of submitted tournament documents
- On-site, event-time verification of policies in practice and results
- Post-event evaluation of 2019 tournament data and results

The Council then submitted a full verification report for evaluation by GEO Foundation.

About the Council for Responsible Sport

The Council’s vision is for a world where responsibly produced sports events are the norm and its mission is to provide objective, independent verification of the socially and environmentally responsible work event organisers are doing, and to actively support event organizers who strive to make a difference in their communities.

The Council first offered third-party certification of event production practices according to a stakeholder-reviewed collection of sport-industry best practice standards in 2007. As of October 2019, 175 individual events have achieved certification in eight countries and 27 U.S. States.

Find out more about the Council at [http://www.councilforresponsiblesport.org](http://www.councilforresponsiblesport.org)

GEO Certification review

GEO undertook a full review of all tournament and verification materials and evidence, ensuring:

- **Comprehensiveness** – that activities undertaken touched on all elements of the Tournaments Standard
- **Consistency** – that the verification approach was balanced, well-weighted and with consistent depth of evaluation across criteria
- **Accuracy** - matching the verification report with evidence submitted by the tournament to ensure statements and claims were accurate.

“For years now, this tournament’s key partners have taken initiative to exemplify industry best practices in responsible tournament management. It’s terrific to see this hard-earned certificate give testament to the intentional planning and leadership demonstrated consistently by this special event.”

Shelley Villalobos, Managing Director, Council for Responsible Sport
3. **Best practices and highlights**

Sustainability was implemented in a planned and coordinated way across all key elements of event staging, and in line with the GEO tournament certification criteria.

A wide range of actions spanned the following sustainability action areas:

1. Planning
2. Site protection
3. Procurement
4. Resource management
5. Access and equity
6. Communications
7. Legacy

The highlights and best practices that were carried out across each of these areas are summarized below.
3.1 Planning

The tournament’s sustainability commitments have high-level support from all the organizers and stakeholders.

The collective leadership commitments mean that sustainability is integrated comprehensively across the planning and staging of the tournament, and that sufficient resources are allocated to ensure depth of delivery.

A comprehensive Sustainability Action Plan sets out goals, targets and implementation responsibilities. The plan is overseen by a dedicated tournament sustainability coordinator, working in close conjunction with a dedicated venue sustainability coordinator and operations director.

“Our Sustainability Action Plan lay at the heart of everything we did in 2019, and from lessons learned, is evolving for the 2020 and other future editions of the event. We covered all aspects of sustainable event management, focussing on practical actions and real outcomes.”

Tim Heitmann, Operations Manager
AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am
3.2 Site protection

The tournament took place on three world famous courses: Pebble Beach Golf Links, Spyglass Hill Golf Course, and Monterey Peninsula Country Club Shore Course.

At these courses, policies, practices and initiatives are in place across operations to reduce environmental impact and protect the beautiful landscapes of the peninsula, which include the Del Monte Forest and the stunning coastline along '17-Mile Drive.'

Besides protecting the ecology of the 5,300-acre site, initiatives are in place to conserve resources and maintain the courses and wider landscape in a sustainable manner.

Environmental action across the estate and golf courses:

- Full-time environmental stewardship manager heads a 10-person ecology-oriented team
- Waste Water Reclamation project has saved over 6.4 billion gallons of potable water for the community, by converting locally generated wastewater to high-quality recycled water for course irrigation
- Golf ball recovery program
- Energy conservation and carbon reduction
- Reduction, reuse, recycling and composting of materials
- Local, organic and sustainable produce
- Chemical-use reduction activities
- Community outreach and education programs
- The Resort has received multiple State and Federal environmental awards for its efforts.
- Find out more about the Pebble Beach Resort Green Initiatives here [https://www.pebblebeach.com/green-initiatives/](https://www.pebblebeach.com/green-initiatives/)

Additional site protection highlights

- Documented and approved site protection policies are promoted to partners and vendors
- Only one grandstand is sited in an area of native grassland, the others are all carefully located on areas occupied by less ecologically sensitive turfgrass or hard standings.
The tournament utilises an extensive permanent infrastructure for all contractor, spectator and hospitality transport, grandstands and servicing, resulting in minimal direct impact or disturbance on the coastal landscape.
### 3.3 Procurement

Dedicated efforts were made to integrate environmental and social responsibility criteria across the procurement of materials, products and services at the tournament.

Policies and goals were framed in the official Sustainable Procurement Policy which was communicated to all suppliers and contractors during tendering, and with each vendor required to sign the policy.

Key elements of the policy included:

- **All items used during the event should comply with our zero-waste commitment**
- **Only compostable and other certified compostable or recyclable products should be used**
- **We should avoid the use of all single-use, disposable items such as condiment packets, non-compostable straws, plastic toothpicks and juice boxes**
- **Styrofoam is banned from the event and the Pebble Beach community**
- **All sponsorship and marketing materials should comply with the use of environmental products.**

The image shows an example of how single-use condiment packaging was replaced with refillable and reusable dispensers.
3.4 Resource management

As a major sporting event attracting thousands of spectators, the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am is aware of the potential negative impacts that can arise through the range of activities undertaken to stage the event. A comprehensive plan is in place covering all aspects of waste, energy, procurement and water conservation.

Best Practices

The AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am Sustainability Plan sets a strong commitment to reduce the tournament’s environmental footprint and increase social value, both in the short and long-term. Here are some of the best practices undertaken during the 2019 event:

Waste
88% of waste diverted from landfill, through composting, recycling and reuse strategies.

Energy and Carbon
Energy and Carbon Management Plan: all energy use and carbon emissions associated with the tournament were measured and calculated, to identify major sources of energy use and key areas of emissions.

Alternative transport was available, including public transit, walking and cycling access, park and ride, shuttles and ride shares.

Water
The tournament venue is irrigated with water from Monterey Peninsula Foundation’s Waste Water Reclamation project. Irrigation is kept to an absolute minimum using state-of-the-art technology to monitor conditions on the course.

All bottled water and mains water use during the tournament was measured and recorded.

Highlights

- ‘From banners to backpacks’: Signage from the tournament that can’t be reused was ‘upcycled’ into backpacks for local students
- Cooperation with Last Chance Mercantile in Marina, CA, to donate carpet, mesh and wood to local organisations after the tournament
- Partnership with TerraCycle to separately collect chip bags from the waste stream, a popular item that is difficult to recycle.
3.5 Access and equity

The 2019 AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am was an engaging and accessible event for the entire local community. Efforts were made to ensure that underrepresented and underprivileged groups had the opportunity to attend and enjoy the tournament.

- Special facilities were in place for disabled spectators, including a shuttle service and elevator access to grandstands
- Almost 4,000 complimentary tickets were donated to active military personnel and veterans, who also had access to a special ‘Patriots Outpost’ on the course.

Highlight

The Chevron STEM Zone provided an engaging and fun learning experience for children from local schools and community projects, with hands-on, golf-themed activities focussing on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The children also got to enjoy some of the action at the tournament, creating positive exposure to golf.
3.6 Communications

A comprehensive sustainability communications strategy was used to ensure multiple levels of interaction with the public about sustainability. Communications covered a range of themes and initiatives and aimed to inform and inspire the public to get involved in sustainability.

The 2019 AT&T Pebble Beach tournament’s sustainability commitments and information were publicly communicated through a range of media and channels, including web, press, social media, television, print and on-site signage. This ensured exposure and accessibility to all interested groups (local community, general public, attendees, NGO’s, residents, businesses, etc.)

Highlights

- Strong partnerships with other organisations to create multiple layers of sustainability messaging
- Tournament Spectator Guide included messaging about sustainability commitments
- Local CBS news station aired a piece highlighting sustainability efforts at the tournament.

Best Practices

- Fan signage and information about sustainability efforts and certification
- Web and social media presence about sustainability
- Prioritizing online communications to reduce paper use
- Sustainability report: the tournament produced a sustainability report in 2017 and has committed to another for the 2019 event
- Sustainability commitments and policies communicated to all delivery vendors and procurement partners.
3.7 Legacy

The hosts of the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am are committed to leaving a wide range of lasting legacies for the local community in Monterey County and its surroundings.

This is put into practice through community engagement and education during the event, as well as significant charitable donations throughout the year.

Monterey Peninsula Foundation ensures that all proceeds from the tournament are dispersed amongst charities in the three local counties.

In the 2018 fiscal year, $15.6 million was donated to local non-profits.

Highlights
The First Tee of Monterey after-school program, funded by tournament proceeds, provides local youths with the opportunity to learn essential life skills, such as honesty, integrity, and sportsmanship, as well as enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of golf.

Over $1 million was spent on inclusion and education of local community groups during the event, for example through the Chevron Stem Zone and Eagles for Education program.

Best Practices
Proceeds from the tournament go to local charities in Monterey County, Santa Cruz County, and San Benito County.

Supporting local: wherever possible, the tournament sources food locally, partners with local companies and organisations, and recruits local volunteers.

The tournament has committed to publishing an economic impact assessment to determine its economic contribution to the local economy.
4. Continual Improvement Points

The concept of continual improvement, ongoing innovation and setting new and higher targets is an important aspect of GEO Certified® Tournaments.

The following Continual Improvement Points (CIP’s) were identified during certification of the 2019 tournament, and their agreement with the tournament partners as priority areas for delivery and review in 2020 reflects the tournament’s highly credible commitment to continue to extend on a year-by-year basis.

CIP’s from 2019 for 2020 are:

Credit 1.1 — Sustainability Plan
Consider including as an appendix to the sustainability strategy plan a full list of performance measurements (key performance indicators) to be tracked and reported in the sustainability report to create year-over-year consistency against the now-set 2019 baseline.

Credit 1.5 — Promote Sustainability Across all areas of Tournament Operations
In the case that all tournament-related operations staff have a file sharing mechanism, include plans 1.1 & 2.1 (any other educational materials and resources) within that system to ensure ongoing accessibility and visibility.

Credit 2.1 — Site Protection & Restoration Plan
Excellent work reducing environmental impacts while enhancing natural habitats on land. Consider future partnership to get support in recovering the golf balls that end up in the ocean.

Credit 3.4 — Avoid Unnecessary Paper Waste by Prioritising Online Communication
Print the spectator guide on FSC certified paper, and move towards a digital spectator guide/app.

Credit 4.7 — Conserve Water / Energy Impacts Associated with Water
Employed water conservation practices are related to regular course maintenance and facility operations. There could be more attention for tournament specific operations, i.e. water saving technology at toilets, catering facilities, etc, or providing free drinking water.

Credit 4.9 — Energy & Carbon Management Plan
The plan indicates that the carbon footprint will be measured, but it does not ‘outline strategies to reduce and mitigate total carbon footprint’. Measuring is a first step, but needs to be followed up by efforts to reduce the tournaments energy need and footprint (in general, resource management is an area where there is room for improvement).

Credit 4.10 — Calculate Carbon Footprint
Great baseline, clear greenhouse gas impacts report. In future years, seek to collect slightly more detailed evidence on original data sources for the carbon footprint (e.g. data source detailing how many players travelled on short/medium/long haul flights, or, calculation methodologies for supply chain items e.g. paper products.)

Credit 4.11 — Renewable & Alternative Energy Sources
Set a goal to reach 40% renewable energy by a specific event year.
Credit 4.12 — Promote Public Transport & Other Low Carbon Travel
Currently there seem to be good shuttle transit options for car users, but little focus on alternatives, e.g. perhaps there could be a shuttle from the nearest train station.

Credit 4.13 — Mitigate Carbon Footprint
Consider opportunities to engage stakeholders in, for example, tree planting on site or purchase of carbon offsets for the tournament. Could be in partnership with aligned stakeholders.

Credit 5.1 — Access & Equity Plan
Add a public-facing mechanism (e.g. on tournament website) for individuals to request accommodations and be responded to in a timely manner (whether or not accommodations can be met, a communication mechanism is good practice so that people can adequately prepare).

Credit 6.1 — Measure Economic Impact
Local news with the cited economic impact estimate did not respond to request for source of the $50 million impact it reported, nor did the Chamber of Commerce. Recommend connecting with local/regional tourism bureau to calculate or commission an independent economic impact study once every three to five years.
5. About GEO, and sustainability in and through golf

GEO Foundation is an international not-for-profit organisation entirely dedicated to advancing sustainability in and through golf, collaborating with the golf industry worldwide to:

- Strengthen the social and environmental contribution of golf
- Help the sport credibly communicate its commitment and value
- Champion sustainability in front of a large audience.

GEO manages and assures the OnCourse® program for facility and course management, new golf development and tournaments – currently used in 76 countries worldwide.

In addition to the delivery of programs and solutions, GEO’s wider activities include research and innovation, communications and reporting, and support for strategy and policy.

GEO also administers GEO Certified®, the international mark of credible and comprehensive sustainability in golf, and part of an elite group of well-known ecolabels which include Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, and Forest Stewardship Council. After completing OnCourse®, a golf facility, development or tournament can apply for this international distinction.

Join OnCourse® - for sustainability, climate action and golf’s future!
Congratulations to Monterey Peninsula Foundation for making sustainable development such a central part of what they do, and for showcasing action and continual improvement through the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am.