

BACK TO ITS BEST

DENNIS BRUYNS RETURNS TO MACCAUVLEI TO FIND AN OLD FAVOURITE LOVINGLY RESTORED

My memories of Maccauvlei date back to the late '60s and my early Playing days as an amateur golfer. Two prominent events (the Vaal Amateur and Oppenheimer Trophy) were played at the course each year, drawing the cream of Transvaal's amateur golfers to Maccauvlei. There were bunkers everywhere, the most famous of which was the giant bunker short of the 17th green. This was most unusual for an inland course and the word was that if they wanted to add a bunker at Maccauvlei all they had to do was dig a hole. This was indeed so then, as it is now, as the course is built on a wonderful strip of sandy soil adjacent to the Vaal River.

Because of the undulations and the proliferation of the bunkers Maccauvlei was called an " inland links ". Certainly today this would be a misnomer as the course is essentially parkland in style.

However, course architect Peter Matkovich, who was briefed by the club to re-style the course, took cognizance of the early links style of the bunkering, restoring them in a rugged coastal style.

The result is a course with a blend of parkland splendor and links-like characteristics.

The club itself, on a very modest budget, carried out all the construction work and both club and architect must be commended on the outcome. Anyone in the Gauteng area who does not take the time to make the short journey (45 minutes) down to the banks of the Vaal to play the course is missing out on a wonderful golfing experience. And the bunker on the 17th ? It's still there, huge and memorable - avoid it if you can.