



GEO Certified®
TOURNAMENT



2017

RBC Heritage Presented by Boeing

Harbour Town Golf Links,
Hilton Head Island,
South Carolina

GEO Certified® Report



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1. Statement of Commitments

Morgan Hyde
Assistant Tournament Director,
RBC Heritage

"Building on a strong history of positive local community impact and strong commitment to protecting the environment throughout the event, we are pleased to be one of the first tournaments recognized as Certified by GEO Foundation"



Tony Wartko
Director of Facility Services,
Sea Pines Resort

"From wetlands and biodiversity protection, to how we manage our facility and resources; we have built year on year on our sustainability programs and are proud of the positive impact we have inspiring the fans who come to enjoy the tournament and other clubs and tournaments."



Jonathan Smith
GEO Foundation

"The RBC Heritage Presented by Boeing event continues to build and excel in its commitment to sustainability and actions to increase positive social and economic impacts. As the second PGA TOUR event to be certified by GEO Foundation we are beginning to see the strong positive sustainable impacts and legacies that can be realized in and through golf tournaments."



Teresa Wade
Founder, Experience Green

"Being able to measure and communicate the impacts of sustainability efforts through the GEO framework is a tremendous value for continued investment in these important initiatives."





'demonstrating fast and effective integration of sustainability across all key aspects of venue management, staging, communications and legacies.'



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2. Introduction

The GEO Foundation is delighted to recognize the 2017 RBC Heritage Presented by Boeing as a GEO Certified® Tournament.

The tournament organizers have rapidly upscaled their approach to social and environmental issues in recent years, in particular bringing together a dedicated team of expert advisors and on-site staff to make sure that solid measures are defined and implemented.

The 2017 RBC Heritage Presented by Boeing:

- met all the required criteria of golf's voluntary standard for sustainable golf tournaments
- successfully passed through the official verification process undertaken by the Council for Responsible Sport (CRS)
- successfully passed the GEO Certified® evaluation

GEO concurs with the Council for Responsible Sport verification assessment and opinion that, having achieved 46 out of a possible 49 credits sought, and with Continual Improvement Points set for the future, the RBC Heritage should be awarded GEO Certified® Tournament status for the 2017 event.

The 2017 RBC Heritage can therefore claim a position as a credible and important leader in advancing sustainability in and through golf – helping foster nature, conserve resources and strengthen communities; while also supporting and showcasing sustainability in front of a large international audience.



Jonathan Smith
Executive Director,
GEO Foundation



Mona Karraoui
Credibility Manager,
GEO Certification Ltd



Gordon Shepherd
Board Member,
GEO Certification Ltd

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



"This tournament has always taken tremendous pride in its host setting and the positive impact it delivers to the region," said RBC Heritage's Vice President of Operations Morgan Hyde. "Pursuing a more sustainable event is a natural fit given the history surrounding this great tournament."



3. Tournament approach to sustainability

The RBC Heritage sustainability programmes are led by the highest-level of commitment, emanating from the Heritage Classic Foundation, and fully supported by the tournament staging and organizing teams, which include:

- Harbour Town Golf Links on Hilton Head Island, at the Sea Pines Resort
- PGA TOUR
- Experience Green

The 2017 RBC Heritage was held in the Sea Pines Resort, in South Carolina on 10 – 16th April 2017; it was the 49th year the event was held at this venue.

The RBC Heritage sustainability programme built on the baseline activities reported on for the 2016 event and set a strong plan to reduce the tournament's environmental footprint and increase positive social impact with the following top-line objectives for the 2017 event:

- 2017 RBC Heritage achieves GEO Certified®
- RBC, RBC Heritage, and Sea Pines Resort sustainability values are conveyed through effectively messaged "Keeping it Green" sustainability initiative
- Achieve 40% waste diversion to landfill
- Deliver a Carbon Neutral Event
- Increase bicycle transportation by 10% over 2016 success to reduce carbon emissions

Although not all of the targets were fully met, the tournament team showed strong planning and actions to deliver across all the targets, and met the mandatory credits required by the GEO Certified® for Tournaments criteria.

KEEPING IT GREEN AT THE 2017 RBC HERITAGE

RBC, Heritage Classic Foundation and other event suppliers are employing numerous environmental best practices again at this year's tournament.



A CARBON-NEUTRAL EVENT

We are taking responsibility for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions where possible through the following initiatives:



HOW YOU CAN HELP



DIVERTING WASTE FROM LANDFILL

We are diverting waste from landfill through the following initiatives:



ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE GOLF COURSE

We are measuring our progress by leading international standards



SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Sustainable transportation options are available for ticket holders and tournament volunteers.



4. Verification

The official tournament audit and verification process was carried out by the independent verification body The Council for Responsible Sport, accredited by GEO 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 2017 tournament data and results

The Council then submitted a full verification report for evaluation by GEO Certification Ltd, a subsidiary of GEO Foundation.

About the Council for Responsible Sport

The Council's vision is 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 organizers 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 September 2017, 140 individual events have achieved certification in eight countries and 27 U.S. States.

GEO is proud to work with the Council for Responsible Sport. We have a shared vision and mission, which combines to offer golf tournaments the most effective pathway to credible recognition.

Find out more about the Council at
<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.



"We verify that the 2017 RBC Heritage has achieved the necessary number of credits contained in the Golf Tournament Sustainability Standard, to achieve GEO Certified® status."

5. Summary of practices, highlights and key performance indicators

A comprehensive audit of all key elements of the event was undertaken:

- **Venue**
- **Legacy**
- **Staging**
- **Communications**

Performance has been assessed across three key sustainability themes: Nature, Resources and Community.



Protecting nature



Conserving resources



Supporting communities



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**COUNCIL for
RESPONSIBLE
SPORT**
CHAMPIONS FOR A HEALTHIER WORLD



RBC
Heritage

PRESENTED BY BOEING

Venue

Opened in 1969, Harbour Town Golf Links is part of the Sea Pines golf community and resort on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. 230 acres fully maintained, with 14 acres designated as natural woodland, and natural wetlands surrounding parts of the course, providing habitat for wildlife.



Best Practices

- A comprehensive management program covering the golf course, the maintenance facility and the clubhouse.
- Wildlife and habitat preservation.
- Integrated Pest Management.
- Chemical-use reduction activities.
- Resource conservation.
- Water management.
- Materials and supply chain.
- Extensive planning and coordination for the security and safety of all participants.

Venue



Highlights

- Wildlife and plant species inventoried and mapped, especially Blue Heron.
- Strong light-pollution avoidance/reduction practices at the venue.
- Potential turf and landscape impacts from infrastructure and heavy machinery minimized through use of plywood and 'rubber road' solutions.
- Water use minimised through: use of Celebration and Tif Eagle bermuda grasses; state of art irrigation system and water tracking; use of low flush and dual flush cisterns.
- Weather station information used for pesticide application decision-making and irrigation scheduling to minimize pollution and water use.
- All irrigation water is recycled and treated effluent.
- Strong procurement and waste management procedures focus on responsible sourcing; circular resource management; use of healthy and recycled materials; minimizing embedded carbon.
- Sea Pines resort has been GEO Certified® Golf Facility since 2015.
- Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary.
- Hilton Head Island inaugural winners of the IAGTO Sustainable Golf Destination Award for 2017.
- Security and safety of all participants included a collaboration of local and federal agencies, bomb sniffing dogs on the site daily and detailed calculation evacuation plans.

230 acres are fully maintained with a
additional **14** acres designated as natural
woodland



Staging

Coming into its 50th year, the RBC Heritage has a long history as a leading professional event on the PGA TOUR, at the same venue each year, enabling the organizers to build on previous sustainability efforts year on year. Held at a GEO Certified® facility and with comprehensive staging, resource management, nature protection and waste plans, the organizers are committed to continually improving their positive sustainability impacts.

The RBC Heritage sustainability program sets a strong plan to reduce the tournament's environmental footprint and increase social value, including these initiatives:



Best Practices

Water

- The Sea Pines Resort sources 100% of its irrigation water from treated waste water.
- Strong waterway protection plan for Calibogue Sound, including preventing run-off, mowing buffer zones, walkways and transportation on maps.
- Site protection plan to ensure no accidents or adverse impacts during set-up, staging or take-down.

Resources

- The well communicated "Keeping it Green" initiative focused on a strong procurement code, waste reduction and diversion from landfill, carbon neutrality and sustainable transportation.
- With 15,000 more visitors in 2017, total waste was reduced by 11.71 tons, 15.09 tons in solid waste reduced, 3.37 tons more waste was recycled (i2recycle year-on-year audit results report).
- By working with Palmetto Electric Cooperative and Santee Cooper, the 2017 RBC Heritage tournament was powered by 100% renewably generated electricity.
- Carbon emissions produced by Tournament Operations, Player Travel, and Spectator Travel were calculated, including emissions from delivery vehicles, fuel generators, waste disposal, the courtesy car fleet, trolleys, catering, etc. to determine the overall carbon footprint of the event.
- High quality carbon offsets purchased to help neutralize Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

Social

- The Heritage Classic Foundation raises and distributes funds to a wide variety of local charities, totaling more than \$38 million since 1987.
- All active military personnel are granted complimentary admission to the event.
- Unused food donated to Second Helpings, a local organization that collects and distributes food to agencies serving the disadvantaged.
- Each year the Tournament generates more than \$96 million for the South Carolina economy.
- Proceeds from event concessions go to support local causes.
- More than 1,200 volunteers work throughout Tournament week.

Staging



Highlights

Carbon tracking and offset for the RBC Heritage is extensive and covers not only tournament operations, but also player and spectator carbon impacts. 227 metric tonnes of carbon credits were retired from its offset pool for the 2017 event.

227 metric tons of carbon emissions offset through retirement of RBC carbon credits



Legacy

For many years, the RBC Heritage event takes its social impact and community legacy as a strong focus, conducting a full economic impact study every five years. With numerous events, campaigns and trainings offered by the tournament and the Heritage Classic Foundation (HCF), the positive social impact and legacy of the event is broadened. Preferential access was also provided to local people to ensure maximum benefit was derived by the community.



Best Practices

Strong communications and local community outreach around the event, online, through trainings, face to face meetings and community news publications to inform local residents on event initiatives and access.



Legacy



Highlights

The Heritage Classic Foundation (HCF) builds on ticket sales and generosity of donors through the Heritage Champions Fore Charity Program. Through this program, HCF matches the first \$150,000 from registered charities per cycle.

- The Heritage Fore Champions charity program has raised \$7.2 million.
- Through the Heritage scholars program, \$4.1 million in scholarships have been awarded since 1993 and \$4.7 has been raised for local charities via concession stand profit.

HCF matches the first **\$150,000** from registered charities per cycle



Communications



Best Practices

- Fan signage and information on walkways to protect habitats etc.
- Press releases disseminated.
- Sustainability report published.
- Prioritizing online communications to reduce paper use, including developing a mobile app.
- Charity partnerships and promotions to fans.

more than **100** spectator and contractor
recycle bins placed across the site

Communications

A comprehensive pre, during and post event communications strategy was used. Communications addressed the key elements of sustainability, covering topics including nature conservation, recycling, charitable and community support, transport, water conservation and more.

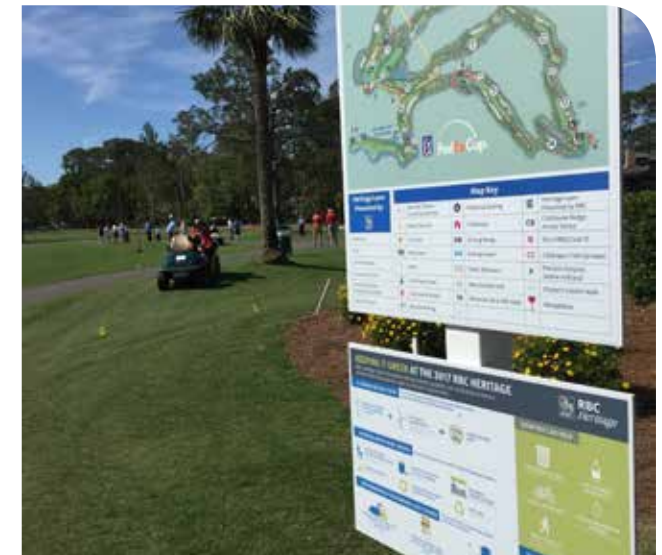
Communications ensured multiple levels of interaction with the public, some to **inform**, others to **involve** and others to **inspire**.

Using a range of media: web, press, social, print, and on-site signage and face-to-face outreach/trainings, to ensure exposure and accessibility to all interested groups (local community, general public, attendees, suppliers, residents, etc.).



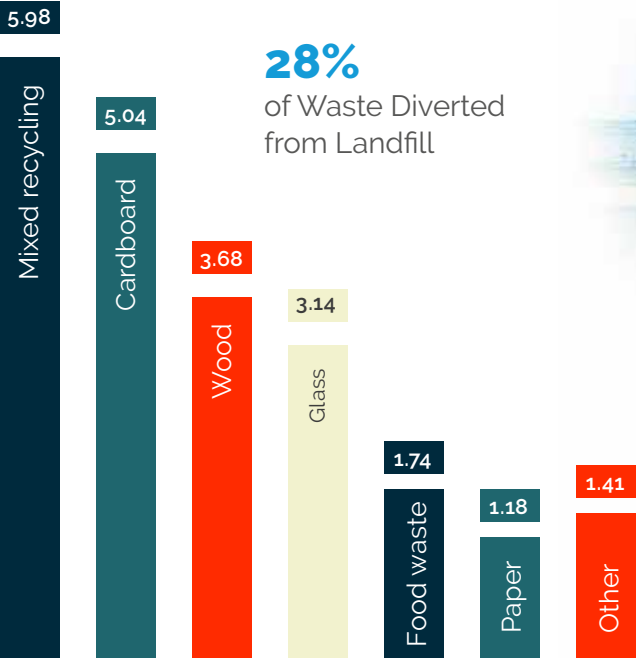
Highlights

- Communication with local residents through local magazines and media.
- Volunteer and supplier training courses.
- Fan involvement in charitable giving – e.g. children in local elementary schools participate in "Plaid About Reading" Program. Winning classes get the opportunity to meet a PGA TOUR professional and attend the RBC Heritage.
- Extensive waste-management communications, with more than 100 recycle bins strategically placed throughout the golf course and facilities.
- Waste bins clearly marked for separation of food, recyclables, and landfill waste.
- Zero Waste stations staffed with trained volunteers from Experience Green's Master Recycling program to educate patrons and ensure proper sorting for optimal reductions.
- Volunteers from Bluffton High School football team were responsible for on-course collection.



6. Tournament Operations

The following page provides a summary of carbon emissions resulting from tournament operations. 100% of the operational footprint was neutralized by carbon offsets procured on the RBC voluntary carbon markets.



Waste breakdown (tons)





52%
Resort
Facilities

23%
Hospitality
Tents



100%
of energy used to power tournament operations was sourced through the Palmetto Electric Cooperative Green Power for the 9th consecutive year. The image shows a graphical breakdown of the main energy demands required to power operations.



90,901
Gallons

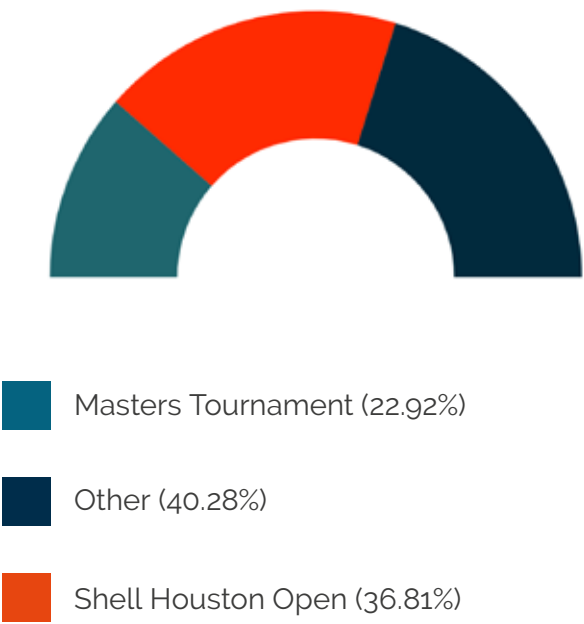
2%
Other



13 South Carolina homes could be powered for an entire year on the fossil fuels saved through the green power program.

7. Player Travel

Origins of Travel



Total Player Travel Emissions (tCO₂e)

The Masters Tournament	33 players - 3 tCO ₂ e
Shell Houston Open	81 players - 89 tCO ₂ e
Other	18 players - 11 tCO ₂ e
Total	132 players - 103 tCO ₂ e



8. Spectator Travel



70%
of total carbon emissions



14,000
spectators used the shuttle service



5,145
bikes were counted for this year between
3 locations (tennis courts, 13 Green,
Plantation Drive)





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9. Continual Improvement Points

The concept of continual improvement, innovation and setting new and higher targets is an important aspect of GEO Certified® Tournaments and reflects the tournament's commitment to continue to extend on a year by year basis.

The following Continual Improvement Points were identified:

1.4 - Consider further outreach to house owners, renters and accommodation providers around the course.

1.5, 3.2, 4.5, 5.5 - Operations material selection and partner/vendor procurement should be prioritized to optimize landfill diversion. Incorporating all stakeholders will help make everyone understand the environmental goals of the event and because everyone touches the waste stream, it's a good mechanism to make sure everyone is involved.

1.7 - Enhance and track the reach of the "Keeping it Green" Infographic and campaign.

3.4 - Consider setting up a system to track and see paper use (tracking sheets) can be reduced in the future. Ensure FSC paper is integrated into all purchasing.

3.5 - Improve Sustainable Food & Drinks program with local sourcing, sustainable food procurement focus and stronger comprehensive tracking of food and drink sourcing.

4.1 - Finalize scope and boundaries for waste diversion activities to capture more information on pre-consumer food waste. Engage all vendors and establish material requirements and training. Public-facing paper recycling points should be made available (especially for programmes and pairing sheets).

4.7 - Assess opportunities to use grey-water for operational activities, transition to waterless or sensor-activated, water-saving technology used for toilets, catering, and washing areas.

4.12 - Publicize public transportation more, and work with the local transit authority to make it easier for people to take public buses.

6.1 - Consider including calculations of organizational spending and multiplier effects in addition to visitor spending to assess socio-economic impact.



10. About GEO and Sustainability in and Through Golf



GEO Foundation is an international not-for-profit organization 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 100 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 accredited ecolabels which include Fairtrade, Marine Stewardship Council, and Forest Stewardship Council. After completing OnCourse®, a golf facility, development or tournament can apply for this international distinction.





Appendix

Verification Report Summary

Section 1: Planning & Communications		
1.1	Develop a Sustainability Plan to reduce environmental impacts and increase social benefits (mandatory)	1/1
1.2	Publicise sustainability plans and commitments	2/2
1.3	Choose venues that minimise environmental impacts	3/3
1.4	Consult with stakeholders on sustainability efforts and potential negative impacts	1/1
1.5	Promote sustainability across all areas of tournament operations	1/1
1.6	Publish post-tournament sustainability results	2/2
1.7	Innovation Credit	1/1
	Total	11/11
Section 2: Site Protection		
2.1	Produce a Site Protection & Restoration Plan	1/1
2.2	Safeguard habitats and ecologically sensitive areas	0/1
2.3	Minimise impacts caused by temporary staging infrastructure, and heavy machinery	1/1
2.4	Innovation Credit	0/1
	Total	2/4
Section 3: Procurement		
3.1	Produce a Procurement Policy & Plan	1/1
3.2	Track and monitor sustainability performance of suppliers and contractors	1/1
3.3	Re-use materials	1/1
3.4	Avoid unnecessary paper waste by prioritising online communication	0/1
3.5	Establish a Sustainable Food & Drink Programme	0/2
3.6	Innovation Credit	1/1
	Total	6/7
Section 4: Resource Management		
4.1	Produce Waste Management Plan	1/1
4.2	Track waste diversion rate	2/2

4.3	Strive towards "zero waste"	1/3
4.4	Innovation Credit	1/1
4.5	Produce a Water Conservation Plan	1/1
4.6	Measure total water consumption	1/1
4.7	Conserve water/energy impacts associated with water	1/1
4.8	Innovation Credit	0/1
4.9	Produce Energy & Carbon Management Plan	1/1
4.10	Calculate carbon footprint	2/2
4.11	Supply tournament with renewable or alternative energy sources	3/3
4.12	Promote public transport and other low carbon travel	1/1
4.13	Mitigate Carbon Footprint	2/2
4.14	Innovation Credit	1/1
	Total	18/21
Section 5: Access and Equity Policy		
5.1	Maintain an active Access and Equity Plan	1/1
5.2	Event maintains active Safety Management Plan	1/1
5.3	Site-build accommodates people with access difficulties	1/1
5.4	Outreach to under-represented groups in the community and reduce barriers to attendance	2/2
5.5	Innovation Credit	1/1
	Total	6/6
Section 6: Legacy		
6.1	Measure economic impact	2/2
6.2	Leave lasting legacies for the host community	1/1
6.3	Support local	1/1
6.4	Promote golf and health wellbeing	1/1
6.5	Innovation Credit	1/1
	Total	6/6
	Total	46/55

