THAT'S THE

Three and a half inches of rain dumped on Sand Moor’s eighteen holes in twelve hours or less adds up to an awful lot of wet stuff – enough, I fancy, to fill a fair-sized lake. Also, it occurred to me that if the Great Controller In The Sky bore a grudge on Yorkshire, which of course was a ridiculous thought, the spot chosen for his Extra irrigation must have been Leeds. Dire warnings predicting floods, pestilence, doom and disaster, in Leeds above all other places, frequently interrupted every radio station as I travelled to Sand Moor, and though I may have swum through deeper rivers, there seemed a distinct possibility that sixty three golfing greenkeepers, along with their team managers and cheer-leaders, would soon be opting for an early bath and a return to base. As it poured and poured, playing the Hayter Challenge Tournament seemed less and less likely.

Thankfully, the deluge abated, at least the heavy stuff, and though players would experience the odd puddle of ‘casual water’, the stout-hearted green staff of Sand Moor, managed so capably by Bobby Barnes, were able to enact their game-plan according to King Canute, keeping most of the waters at bay on this free-draining golf course. That stated, even Bobby and his crew were powerless to repair all of the damage wrought by such liquid ferocity, for though many bunkers were washed thin of sand, there was no room for replenishment; the game had to continue!

Greenkeepers love the Hayter and Hayer’s love greenkeepers. In fact, there is no argument amongst the cognoscenti, the most eagerly anticipated event of the calendar is that which is now titled the Hayter Challenge Tournament. After all, players in the Hayter don’t get to compete with the best left to wild beasts. On two holes I watched him poke his tee shot into the boondocks, twice marvelling as he recovered with consummate ease. It says something for Mike that he’s not given to panic, but it is not fair for an editor to hover at such moments of stress, so I pushed off elsewhere. Later I learned that my hunch was correct again, Bill’s score of 107 in category one leading the class by 4.5 shots from Northern Ireland’s Jonathan Guest (nice chap, full of strong, vibrant feelings for the occasion) and five less than Jon Moorhouse, the Midlands cornerstone.

Predicting winners in the second category isn’t so easy, even practice rounds make ‘em edgy, they’re the ‘anything’ brigade. Well, I’m telling you, when I spotted Chris Hulme early in the round, spied him through a camera lens, I couldn’t believe my eyes. He has a ten handicap, swings like a three, hits the ball a country mile and is so tidy around the greens. Not surprising, then, that he should romp home, leading second placed Mathew Blake (S.W & S Wales) and the ever grinning Owen O’Connor (Fire), by eight glorious shots.

The seasoned reporter (for that matter, the seasoned golfer) must never write off those dark horses in category three, for with literally bar Paul of shots, they often can prove an enormous upset. Whilst it’s easy to kid oneself, it’s tough to pick a ‘banker’ from these ranks. Paul Jackson hails from Bournemouth, working and playing at Ferndown, which by anyone’s reckoning is a tough old test of nerve. A player holding 19 handicap at Ferndown might easily be a 14 elsewhere, such is its test of severity.

So, was Paul Jackson one of my bunkers? I’m sorry to say that he was not, though around the turn at Sand Moor he revealed how lacking my powers of observation had been to miss him – this guy is really hot mustard, he hits the ball with mean power, kid myself I can spot a champ with envy for the fluidity and suppleness of Martin Scothern and his soft wedge that could so easily have found the green into the greenside bunker, splashing out, and ferreting the putt, I knew this was to be his day. That he went on to fire a cluster of birdies spoke volumes for Mike’s power of concentration – even he began to fancy his chances whilst Midlands team captain, Dean Cleaver, was often at his side, whispering words of encouragement.

Playing the hunch again, I nipped back a couple of holes to watch Bill Francis, a ‘banker’ for the South East if ever I saw one, finding him well out of character in shooting the rapids, visiting parts of the course best left to wild beasts. On two holes I watched him poke his tee shot into the boondocks, twice marvelling as he recovered with consummate ease. It says something for Mike that he’s not given to panic, but it is not fair for an editor to hover at such moments of stress, so I pushed off elsewhere. Later I learned that my hunch was correct again, Bill’s score of 107 in category one leading the class by 4.5 shots from Northern Ireland’s Jonathan Guest (nice chap, full of strong, vibrant feelings for the occasion) and five less than Jon Moorhouse, the Midlands cornerstone.

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In the swing: Martin Scothern, left, achieved lowest gross score and William McMeikan, under 21s winner

such and such a shot... but such is the agony of golf. Suffice to say Paul's 104.5 was streets ahead of the second placed 112 of Toney Livingstone, and 7.5 strokes to the good of third man, Chris Powley. Chris also collected a nice award for being closest to the pin on a selected hole, whilst for the longest drive of the day we turned to the incredible Brian Mulholland, Northern Ireland's answer to John Daly and of not dissimilar stature. Brian is huge fun to be around, has a reputation for wicked humour - and we know he has a deft touch equal to Daly regarding the right elbow!

Of the Scots, I must report less than perfect results, perhaps explained by the 'entertainments' enjoyed with those wild men of the Emerald Isle the previous night. Whatever, it was left to Alex Wallace and young William McMeikan to bring a smidgen of comfort back to the Scottish team, Alex's 118 taking the 'over 55s' award, William's the 'under 21's' with a score of 116.5.

When the accolades were given, there was a sense of elation in the victorious Northern team.

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**Come with BIGGA to the GCSAA Conference and Show**

**DALLAS 1994**

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America will be holding its 65th International Golf Course Conference and Show in Dallas from 4-7 February.

BIGGA's party attending this major international event will assemble on Sunday, 30 January at the Moat House Gatwick Airport, leaving the next morning on a direct flight to Dallas Fort Worth Airport and arriving back at Gatwick on Wednesday, 9 February.

In over 150 years, Dallas has grown from a cabin on the banks of the Trinity river into an internationally recognised commercial and manufacturing centre thanks to the discovery of Texan oil and the tenacity and spirit of its people. It is a major cultural centre of skyscraper banks and offices; elegant shops, fine restaurants and hotels. Neighbouring Fort Worth, originally a military outpost, retains a 'western' atmosphere and continues to be headquarters for the cattle industry. Fort Worth's clubs feature country and western music whilst its western heritage is most evident at the Historic Stockyards Area where there are frontier-style shops and cafes.

GCSAA will be organising more than 70 educational seminar sessions and forums, a three-day, 190,000 square foot trade show with more than 600 manufacturers and distributors of golf and turf industry products, supplies and services together with a gala banquet featuring performances by the Oak Ridge Boys and country star Crystal Gayle.

An exciting trip is in prospect and bookings with full payment must be received by 19 November.

**ITINERARY**

**Sunday, 30 January**
All participants assemble at the Moat House Gatwick Airport, overnight accommodation with FREE car parking is included.

**Monday, 31 January**
Depart Gatwick for Dallas Fort Worth Airport on British Airways – 10.05 hours – arrive 14.40 hours. Upon arrival transfer to Hotel Loews Anatole, stay 8 nights.

**Tuesday, 8 February**
Return transfer to Dallas Airport and depart on British Airways – 16.40 hours – arrive 07.30 hours on 9 February. Return transfer to Hotel to collect cars and drive home.

**Price**
£724 per person based on twin shares; £1,060 per person based on single room accommodation, plus comprehensive travel insurance for the duration: £35.

Included are: flights UK to Dallas and return; US Airport taxes; Hotel accommodation in the Loews Anatole including taxes, room rate only; Full comprehensive travel insurance for the duration.

Please forward full payment of £799 or £1,095 (unless travel insurance is not required) to BIGGA, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York Y06 2NF. Arrive by Friday 19 November at the latest, together with name, address and contact telephone number.
RESULTS

The Hayter Challenge Trophy: Mike Hughes (Midlands) 102.5
Low gross score: Martin Scothern (Northern) 111.
Over 55's: Alex Wallace (Scotland) 118
Under 21's: William McMeikan (Scotland) 116.5

Category One: (0-9 handicap)
1st: Bill Francis (South East) 107
2nd: Jonathan Guest (Northern Ireland) 111.5
3rd: Jon Moorhouse (Midlands) 112

Category Two (10-18 handicap)
1st: Chris Hulme (Northern) 106
2nd: Mathew Blake (S. West & S. Wales) 114 (countback)
3rd: Owen O'Connor (Eire) 114

Category Three (19-28 handicap)
1st: Paul Jackson (S. West & S. Wales) 104.5
2nd: Toney Livingstone (Midlands) 112
3rd: Chris Powley (Northern) 113

Nearest the pin: Chris Powley
Longest drive: Brian Mulholland (Northern Ireland)
Team Prize:
1st: Northern 916
2nd: Midlands 943.5

The spirit lives - it's called the Hayter Challenge Tournament.

Financial Services to Members

The Association is pleased to announce that with the help of Peter Hoare & Co Ltd., a panel of F.I.M.B.R.A. registered brokers has been set up which is able to give pensions and related advice to members. The panel will consist of a total of 35 brokers across the United Kingdom enabling a local service to be offered. Each broker will be monitored to ensure a high standard of service is maintained.

Initially members' enquiries should be sent to BIGGA Headquarters at Aldwark Manor, to be forwarded to the local contact.

Members' attention is drawn to the enquiry card (postage paid) at the front of this issue of Greenkeeper International and it is proposed to feature this every alternate month.

All brokers in the panel have joined BIGGA as Associate members and will be registered with the Association for the purpose of giving member's independent financial advice.

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