The 18th green after a hour of rain which would have got Noah a little twitchy and searching through his tool box

WINNING in the rain

The preview for the National Tournament in association with Miracle Professional carried the phrase "Up Periscope". It was based on the fact that much of Cooden Beach Golf Club is below sea level. On the afternoon of what should have been the final round of the 54 hole tournament a periscope was exactly what Head Greenkeeper, Stefan Antolik, needed as he sped off on a three wheeler to consider the future playability of the back nine after the thunder plump to end all thunder plumps.

As it was, just as he disappeared down the 18th fairway the rain started again and even the option of a 45 hole event disappeared. Indeed the only way any golf could have been played on the Wednesday afternoon was if the Man from Atlantis, Captain Nemo and Jacques Cousteau had all donned waterproofs and teed it up.

A total of 51 millimetres of rain fell between 11.45pm and 3.30pm which added to the 15 millimetres which fell after the first round giving added credence to the views of Stefan in June's preview that he wouldn't mind the then drought continuing.

The golf itself was of a remarkable standard. Before the first round the Club Secretary, Terry Hawes, expressed his reservations about the ability of any of the competitors to get near par.

Steve Sullivan may have been forgiven for agreeing with him. He included a fresh air shot in an attempt to dislodge the ball from an awkward spot behind the green on his way to an 8. Channelled his anger in the most positive way possible the 3 handicapper from Craigie Hill GC in Perth retorted by birdieing the next three holes.

Gordon Child, BIGGA's Vice Chairman, and a fine golfer in his own right (although not this particular week), was the man marking Steve's card. Gordon's view was that the round was made on the back nine, playing at its toughest, when Steve produced a string of fine pars. The gross 73 was the round of the week and drew admiration from the Secretary, particularly as it contained that unwelcomed snowman.

Mike Hughes was not far behind after a 75 but the defending Champion, John Berry, struggled in the first round and his name did not appear among the prize winners at the end of the week.

A familiar figure walking the beach on the morning of the second day was Roger Willars, former Midland Regional Administrator. Roger has shot a fine opening round and was either seeking inspiration from the English Channel or harking back to his days in the Home Guard. Only kidding, Roger.

Steve Sullivan, unhappy with his driving, shot a 78 in the second round, again with an 8 on his card. The gross prize for the day went to Richard Barker, who later...
saw his blazer used as a prop by comedian Barry (Harvest) Moon in the excellent post Tournament Dinner cabaret. I'm sure a darning needle will repair the damage.

The final day wash out left Steve Sullivan high, if not dry, as champion over the curtailed 36 hole distance.

It was perhaps fitting that he took the honours as he had featured in Greenkeeper International last year by saying that his favourite holiday destination was "Wherever the venue is for the National Tournament".

It was the fifth successive year that Steve his wife and, apprentice photographer son, Kevin, had visited the National Tournament but by far his biggest haul of prizes. He became the proud winner of four trophies, a framed picture of Cooden Beach GC donated by Stefan Antolik, a watch and a television set.

In fact the presentation resembled an episode of The Sullivans complete with repeats.

One man who had more time on his hands than he perhaps wanted on the final day was David Luxford, of Sisis, who had travelled down to present the SISIS Trophy for the best nett score on the final day. Alas no takers!
The presentation also had one final drama. Richard Minton, of Miracle Professional, was deputising for Roger Mossop who was unable to attend due to business pressures. It was Richard's big moment - his one chance to get himself onto the cover of the magazine. Having geared up and beautified himself in preparation the camera decided to pack up just as his big moment arrived. Fortunately a new battery solved the problem and Richard had his moment. I hope you think it was worth it!

David Luxford, of Silas, with the forgotten trophy

Barry Moon - no dark side to him!

Mark Wild keeps the Chairman's grandson and son, Lee and Ian, transfixed

RESULTS

Tournament restricted to 36 holes due to rain on the final day.

Overall
Miracle Trophy (Best Nett) - Steve Sullivan
Hardi Trophy (Best Gross) - Steve Sullivan

36 Hole
David Royale Trophy (Best Nett) - Steve Sullivan -15-146
Pattisson Trophy (Best Nett) - Paul Neve - 153

Toro Trophy (Best Gross) - Steve Sullivan -151; 2. Mike Hughes - 152
2. (Nett -1-14) Peter Holtham - 148
Best Nett (55 and over) - Peter Bisce 152

Jubilee Cup (Section Team) - Midland

Daily Prizes
Day 1
Fisons Trophy (Best Nett) Steve Sullivan - 73 (3) - 70
Best Gross - Mike Hughes - 75
2. (Nett -1-14) Peter Holtham - 148
Best Nett (55 and over) - Petar Bisce 152

Nearest the Pin
Maurice Hume

Day 2
Standard Golf Trophy (Best Nett) Alan Roberts - 81 -11- 70
Best Gross - Richard Barker - 77
2. Nett - Peter Hotham - 81-10 - 71
3. Nett - Steve Wood - 85-12 -73

Longest Drive
1st. Thorbjorn Raun. 18th Richard Pride.

Nearest the Pin
Thorbjorn Raun.

Vitax Putting Competition