Like his namesake, Mr Hoffman, Dustin Houghton proved himself to be a bit of a Rainman when it came to conquering the difficult wet conditions on the second day of the Scotts/Charterhouse BIGGA National Championship. In successfully doing so he went on to become a deserved winner of the splendid trophy.

The 29-year-old Head Greenkeeper from Seaford Head, in East Sussex, shot a nett 69 over St Annes Old Links and then followed it up with a nett 71 at Fairhaven despite the wet conditions.

"I obviously knew I was in with a chance after the first round but tried to put it out of my mind over night," he explained.

"I had a few drinks and my roommate, Richard Clark, gave me a superb talking to which put me in the right mood for the next day." Halfway round Fairhaven he knew that he only had to keep playing consistently and he would have a great chance.

"I don’t use a wood off the tee, only a 3-iron, and this policy served me well. I also holed three or four long putts which made a difference," said the 26-handicapper. "I’m absolutely ecstatic to have won. It is like our Olympics and this is by far the biggest golf event I’ve ever won," added Dustin.

The Competition Scratch Score for each Day of the National Championship was as follows - courtesy of Doug Bell.

1st Day: St Annes Old Links SSS 72 CSS 73
2nd Day: Fairhaven SSS 73 CSS 75

Above: Eventual winner Dustin Houghton starts his campaign at St Annes.
Above: The four Northern Ireland representatives made a huge impact on proceedings over the two days.

Left: Eventual runner-up, Richard Andrews, produced one of his best shots at St Annes' 9th. His 4-iron to three feet left him a tap in birdie but he was still one more than his Highgate GC colleague James Seisun who holed in one at the same hole five years ago in the National Tournament.

Complete Results Overleaf

Above: BIGGA Chairman Elliott Small, Bert Cross and Richard Minton, of Scotts, enjoyed a threeball on the opening day.

Above: Graham Wallace, not only won the longest drive but took the nearest the pin with this effort on Fairhaven's 17th.
THE RAIN MAN

Right: National Championship winner, Dustin Houghton receives his trophy from Richard Minton, UK Sales Manager of Scotts UK Professional and Philip Threadgold, Sales Director of Charterhouse UK

Left: BIGGA Chairman, Elliott Small enjoys a joke from after dinner speaker, John Welch

Below: The victorious South East team

Above: Graham Wallace, longest drive and nearest the pin winner

Above: Noel Crawford - 36 hole gross winner

THE CHARTR House/SCOTTS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS ROUNDUP

36 HOLES AGGREGATE NETT

1st Dustin Houghton 140
2nd Richard Andrews 142
3rd Antony Kirwan (on last 18) 144
4th Richard Barker 144

Putting Competition
Richard Pendlebury (on last 6) 36

Nearest the Pin Competition
and Longest Drive - Graham Wallace

36 HOLES AGGREGATE GROSS

1st Noel Crawford 147
2nd David Leith 149
3rd Michael Wilson 150
4th John Hutton (on last 19) 155

REGIONAL TEAM CUP

Winners - South East Region

Runners Up - Midland Region
Richard Barker, Barry Holt, Lex Howkins, Mike Smith, Michael Hughes, Simon Austin, Graham Wallace, Dave Leatherland

IST Round Prizes - Monday
0-9 Barry Holt 70
10-17 Kevin Irving 69
18-28 Alex Robertson 76

2nd Round Prizes - Tuesday
0-9 Eamonn Crawford (on last 9) 72
10-17 Richard Mullen 74
18-28 Nick Bird 73

3rd Northern Region
4th Scottish Region
5th South West & South Wales Region