



Kevin Gould Course Manager of Hesketh



Hesketh Greenkeeping Team



Hillside Greenkeeping Team



Martin Twist Course Manager of Hillside

National Championship

So Simple for Mr Semple

Ian Semple came close to winning the BIGGA National Championship last year. This year he made sure.

Shirtsleeve weather in October! That's what the competitors in the 2002 BIGGA National Championship were treated to at the wonderful Hillside and Hesketh courses in the north west of the country.

And the quality of golf played more than lived up to the conditions up above and the condition of the two famous golf courses.

Inspired by Sam Torrance and his 12 heroes who clinched the Ryder Cup on the eve of the Championship the entrants in the Championship could not fail to raise their games, especially given the quality of the venues selected for this year's event.

Hillside has long been regarded as one of the finest links never to have hosted an Open Championship while the history at Hesketh, where the English Golf Union was formed, is the equal of any in the land.

It was BIGGA National Board member, Ian Semple, Course Manager at Old Folds Manor who lifted the major spoils and was acclaimed BIGGA's Champion Golfer - an exceptional feat given that he is a 2 handicapper. Indeed he went one better than he did the previous year when he won the Best Gross prize. Ian had endured a slow start, taking three to get out of a bunker on Hillside's 5th, he bounced back on the back nine with birdies at the 14th and two of the last three holes to post a score of 75. He followed that up with a round of 77 at Hesketh for a nett score of 148 over the two days.

"I'm absolutely delighted to win, especially after coming so close last year at Royal Birkdale and Southport and Ainsdale," said the man who won the South of Scotland Championship in 1986 and who was a regular county player for Kirkcudbrightshire before moving south.

A talented long hitter Ian's other golfing claim to fame is a tied fourth finish in the Scottish Champion of Champions at Leven in 1987, on the most prestigious events on the Scottish amateur golfing calendar.

"I don't play as much as I used to now and certainly don't win much in handicap competitions so winning this is fantastic," said Ian, who was playing in the event for the fourth consecutive year.

"I'll certainly be back next year to defend," he said.

Last year's winner, Chris Ball, was on home soil this year. As an assistant at Hillside he used his local knowledge to good effect to put himself in with a chance of defending his title but a poor second day's performance put paid to his chances.

Winner of the Gross prize was Noel Crawford, of Royal County Down GC, a +1 golfer.

He was delighted to pick up the prize but a little embarrassed to do so as Ian's score, as well as being the best Nett score, was also the best gross. As it was a nett competition the nett prize took the top slot and Noel's score of 157 was promoted to best gross.

Martin Twist at Hillside and Kevin Gould at Hesketh and their respective teams worked hard to produce wonderful tests of golf for the two days and they must be congratulated on their efforts.

The team prize went to the South East Region to prove that their policy of investing the prize money in sponsoring members to attend the Championship, and thus strengthen the Region's team, had paid off yet again.

BIGGA National Chairman, Richard Barker, a 1 handicapper, was one over after the first round. Not bad you might think but in fact it was one over fives! His round started ignominiously with a trudge back to the 1st tee when his drive drifted into the right rough never to be seen again. Perhaps it was the fact that he was partnered by the Editor, invited to turn a twoball into a threeball, who brought him down to his more moderate level. That looked a more likely possibility when without Mr MacCallum to drag him down he improved by 12 shots the following day at Hesketh.

THANKS

Alan Birch was again the official photographer at the event. The quality of his photographs is first rate and all at BIGGA thank him for the excellent work he does.

NEXT YEAR

Next year's National Championship will be played at Coxmoor GC, on October 6 and Hollinwell (Notts GC) on October 7, 2003. Keeping up the tradition of only playing the BIGGA National Championship on the finest courses.



The full cast of winners



Hesketh Captain, Malcolm Cruickshank, presents Noel Crawford with the Best Gross Trophy



Malcolm presents Ian with his prize



The victorious South East team with non-playing Captain Derek Farrington (on left)



Some of the Championship Sponsors enjoying the dinner



The top table



The Irish Contingent



Past Chairman Barry Heaney



Sid Arrowsmith drives off



The start of a successful round

BIGGA National Champion Best Nett Score/BIGGA Challenge Trophy
 Ian Semple, The Old Fold Manor GC, 148

BIGGA Scratch Champion / BIGGA Challenge Cup
 Noel Crawford Royal County Down, 157

Gross/36 holes
 2. Dave Goddard, Sunningdale, 157 (B. 2nd round)
 3. Gareth Roberts, Hankley Common, 157

Handicap/36 holes
 2. Kevin Humphreys, Croham Hurst, 149
 3. George Brown, Turnberry, 150

Hillside
 Scr to 7
 Chris Ball, Hillside, 73

8 to 15
 Tony Bremer, Dorking, 69

16 to 28
 Charles Tadge, International Member, (retired), 76

Hesketh
 Scr to 7
 David Murdoch, Liphook, 74

8 to 15
 Dan Wheeler, Roehampton, 72

16 to 28
 Gary Crawford, Royal Co Down, 71

Nearest the Pin
 Sid Arrowsmith, Frilford Heath

Longest Drive
 Dave Blank, Newcastle Under Lyme

Regional Trophy
 Winners South East Region, 601
 Tony Bremer
 Ian Semple
 Gareth Roberts
 Kevin Humphreys
 Raymond Day
 Dave Goddard
 Adrian Locke
 Chris Wells

Runners-Up Midland Region Total 619
 Mark Whittle
 Jamie Bedford
 Ian Needham
 Barry Holt
 Sid Arrowsmith
 Antony Bindley
 Mike Hughes
 Mark Ellis

Sponsors
 TurfTrax Ground Management
 European Turf Technology
 Evenproducts
 Textron
 Gem Professional
 Roger Barker
 VIPs - George Charnock, Captain of Hillside & John Graham, Secretary of Hillside

Scotts UK Professional
 Hunter Grinders
 Rufford Soil Technology
 Toro/Lely
 Jim Fry



Defending champion, Chris Ball, started well



Vice Chairman, George Brown, launches one



Chairman Richard Barker booms one down the 1st at Hesketh