



Chris Ball is presented with the trophy last year

# NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

**30 September - Hillside Golf Club**

**1 October - Hesketh Golf Club**

**Exciting Times Ahead at the Two Hs**

**This year's National Championship will be played at Hillside and Hesketh Golf Clubs, two courses guaranteed to serve up some wonderful golf.**

Last year's National Championship was a superb occasion. Two superb golf courses in Royal Birkdale and Southport & Ainsdale and an exciting competition, ending with a local man holding his nerve over the second round to clinch the major silverware.

Going by the old adage "If you've got a winning formula, stick with it" the 2002 National Championship will be played over two superb golf courses, Hillside and Hesketh virtually guaranteeing an exciting competition and the local man who won last year will be even more local!

Chris Ball, who lifted the superb trophy last year, is an assistant at Hillside and was the only man who could go home and get changed before the presentation last year. He may be in a position to do so again this year because, as well as having the knowledge that he has what it takes to win, he might also be able to persuade his boss, Course Manager, Martin Twist, to give him a few of his favourite pin placements!



It is generally regarded as one of the best link golf courses never to have hosted The Open.

Greg Norman wrote to Hillside saying its back nine holes were the best in Britain.

Peter Alliss has said that "Hillside's first few holes with the railway on the left are frightening, particularly when the (prevailing South Westerly) wind blows from right to left. But, even if you safely negotiate the start, there are plenty of testing and scenic holes to come."

Hesketh Golf Club, is Southport's oldest golf club, founded in 1885. Standing alone on the crest of a tall sandhill, the clubhouse dominates the golf course and the surrounding district. The course is at the northern end of south-west Lancashire's sand dune system, which is the home of so many great golf courses. Professional championship golf has been played on these famous old links from the club's earliest days, and the course is regularly used as a final qualifying course when The Open is played at Royal Birkdale.

The course sets a unique challenge with half of the holes threaded through tall sand dunes; while the other holes border the Ribble estuary. Here the course's neighbour is a nationally renowned bird reserve, where winter visitors are rewarded by seeing great flocks of migrant geese, swans and waders.

The drive up to the clubhouse is alongside a short hole that Henry Cotton described as the best short hole in Lancashire. What is beyond doubt is that emerging from Southport's urban landscape and driving alongside this picturesque hole to approach the clubhouse will fill a visitor with anticipation at the prospect of playing on these fine links. The Club is renowned for its friendly welcome of visitors.

Information on the two golf clubs was obtained from [www.ukgolfer.org](http://www.ukgolfer.org)

There are still a few places available in what is already a very strong field so if you want to reserve one do so quickly by contacting Sarah Sowerby at BIGGA HOUSE Tel: 01347 833800



In fairness to Chris, who declared his intention to defend his title almost as soon as he was crowned last year, he did admit that there would be more pressure on him on his own course and that he never played well round Hillside.

The two "Hs" are among the finest golf courses to be found anywhere in the North West of England.

Hillside, is a near neighbour of Royal Birkdale, but suffers little, if at all, in comparison. As such, it has hosted many tournaments including the 1982 PGA Championship, before it found a permanent home at Wentworth, which was notable as being Tony Jacklin's last big win - defeating Bernhard Langer in a play-off.

