



## A Fine US Showing by Whickham



Whickham Golf Club put up a fine showing as the second British team to play in the John Deere World Golf Championship, in Arizona.

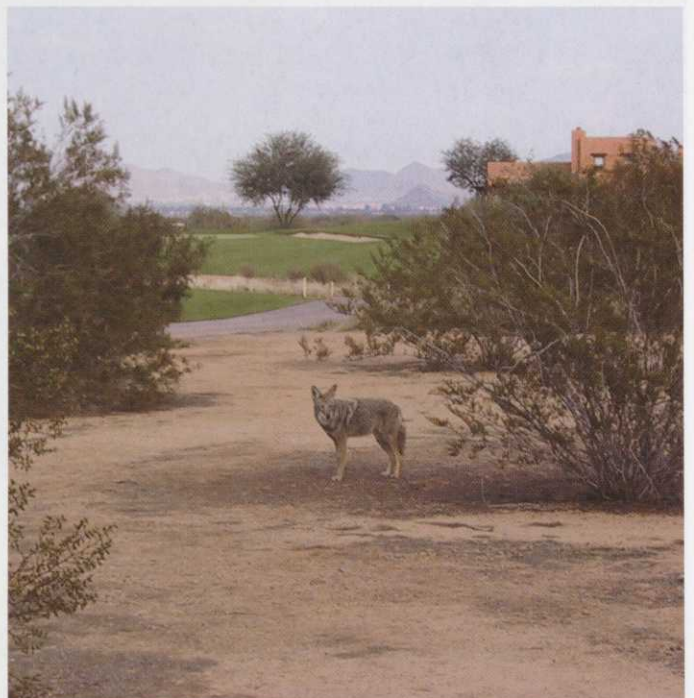
The team comprising Head Greenkeeper, Tony McLure; Club Professional, Andy Hall; Club Vice Captain, Bill Hopper; Competitions Secretary, Gary MacDonald and Roger Stewart of John Deere shot a respectable two round total of 115 leaving them halfway up the leader board in conditions most of the team hadn't faced before.

BIGGA National Chairman, George Brown, travelled to the Grayhawk Golf Club to support the team and also accept a cheque on behalf of the Association.

John Deere is committed to supporting professional greenkeeping associations worldwide and since the Team Championship started in 1987 the company has donated \$270,000 to such associations.

"John Deere agreed to donate £25 for each UK team participating in local qualifying tournaments and while I was in Arizona I was presented with a cheque for nearly £10,000 as John Deere's contribution to BIGGA's on-going professional development programme.

"This money was used to support Bigga's Education Conference at Harrogate which allowed the maximum number of people to benefit from John Deere's generosity." Whickham Golf Club won the right to go to Arizona with a win in their dealer's local event and then with another superb performance at the National Final held at De Vere The Belfry last July.





Our John Deere Team Championship representatives Whickham GC, many not have collected any silverware but they certainly did us proud.



"We had a fabulous time and it was a fantastic experience. From the moment we got off the plane people couldn't have been friendlier or done any more for us," said Tony, a +1 golfer.

"The standard of the golf course we played was out of this world and totally beyond anything I've ever played before and I've been lucky enough to play some of the finest courses in Europe," he explained.

And it wasn't just the competition courses that impressed Tony.

"We owe a great deal to George Brown who organised another couple of games for us during the trip and these courses were great as well. George is a wonderful guy and he wouldn't even let us buy him a drink!"

"I've still got the \$5 bill I won off him in what he said was the worst game of golf he'd ever played. He's signed it and I'm going to frame it," said Tony, adding that they played golf every day, six rounds on four different courses.

"Thanks to John Deere for making it possible and to George Brown for being such a great guy... and for that \$5 bill."

The winners of the event were Oak Terrace GC for Illinois with a score of 105 but John Deere ensure that the event is not just about golf.

It is designed as an event to bring the major decision-makers from a golf club together on common ground to enable them to get to know each other better and each team comprised a member of the greenkeeping staff, a member of the pro staff, the Secretary and Captain or Chairman of Green.

