

# Tight at the Top



Rigby Taylor 1 battled though to claim a narrow victory in the second Neil Thomas Memorial Golf Day.

30 teams, 120 players and a scorching hot day meant only one thing - the Neil Thomas Memorial Golf Day. Hosted, as always, at Aldwark Manor Hotel, the base of BIGGA HOUSE, this was the second such event since the passing of the Association's Executive Director, Neil Thomas, in 2004.

Running since 1997 in various guises, the competition's 2005 format was changed from previous years to a four ball best two to count on each hole, best three to count on par 3 holes. All eyes were on the defending champions, the Surrey Section, but it was the Rigby Taylor 1 team who adapted to the new format the quickest as they fought though to claim a narrow victory.

How narrow? Very narrow indeed. Rigby Taylor 1 finished their 18 hole round on 100pts, edging out Lincsgreen 1 by a solitary point with the Chief Executive's side forced into the bronze medal position with 97pts.

But the amenity supplier team were not the only winners of the day. Nearest the Pin, sponsored by Scotts, was won by Kevin Kinzer, of Alpha Amenity, with Antony Freeman making sure the Surrey Section kept their name on the winners' parchment, as he claimed the Longest Drive, sponsored by Hayter. This was the second year in succession that the Roehampton Course Manager has won the prize.

The Putting Competition was another dramatically close affair. Former BIGGA Chairman, Richard Barker, and Andrew Corns, Acorn Golf, needed to endure a sudden death playoff to determine the winner. Eventually it was Richard who held his nerve to come out on top and lift the prize.

The evening witnessed sun kissed golfers enjoying a delicious BBQ and the presentation of prizes. Neil's widow, Elaine, was again in attendance with two of their four children Adam and Natalie, and she awarded the prizes to the jubilant winners.

In another change to the BIGGA competition, the 18 holes were individually sponsored and the Association gratefully thanks all who supported the Golf Day and Aldwark Manor for hosting the event. The money raised from the event was donated to Macmillan Cancer Relief.

## RESULTS

1. Rigby Taylor 1. Mike Brear, Ian Whitehead, Paul Dockerty & Kim Kirkham, 100pts.
2. Lincsgreen 1. Graeme MacDonald, Rob Welford, Les Howkins & Phil Wilkinson, 99pts.
3. Chief Executive Team. John Pemberton, Gerrit van Nieuwnhuize, Alan Russell & Mark Dobell, 97pts.

**Longest Drive**, sponsored by Hayter. Andy Freeman, Surrey Section.  
**Nearest the Pin**, sponsored by Scotts. Kevin Kinzer, Alpha Amenity.  
**Putting Competition**: Richard Barker.



Players putt on the 14th, besides the River Ouse, on a scorching day at Aldwark Manor



The Greenkeeper International team, led by the Editor, didn't have the best of days



The Putting Competition was a real test of golfers' nerves



Anthony Freeman, of the Surrey Section, receives his Longest Drive Prize for the second successive year



The Lincsgreen 1 team of, L-R, Rob Welford, Graeme MacDonald, Phil Wilkinson and Les Howkins were piped into second place



Elaine Thomas presents Rigby Taylor 1 with the Neil Thomas Memorial Cup



Richard Barker grabbed the Putting Competition award after a dramatic playoff against Andrew Corns



Nearest the Pin went to Kevin Kinzer of Alpha Amenity



John Pemberton and BIGGA Guardian Mark Dobell collect third prize for the Chief Executive team