



Tony McLure, Challenge Trophy winner for Best Gross score

BIGGA National Championship 2006

FOR THE BIGGA CHALLENGE TROPHY



Spectator at this year's National Championship, Assistant Editor, Melissa Toombs, gives her take on the two-day event and chats to the 2006 winner.

As we approached Burton-on-Trent GC, panicked by our late arrival - a three-hour drive to travel 85 miles! - It seemed we weren't the only ones who had been caught in the jam. Board of Management member, Bert Cross, was furiously scribbling over the pre-planned tee off times, adjusting them accordingly to cater for the players late and early arrivals.

Frustrated by their delay but enthusiastic about starting the tournament, the weather improved throughout day one for our competitors. A pleasant afternoon followed a brisk and drizzly morning, as the clouds dissolved to make way for a spell of sunshine.

This year's BIGGA National Champion, Tony McLure, Head Greenkeeper at Whickham GC, felt that the weather during the Championship helped everyone, "it softened the course up and stopped the ball bouncing as much," he said.

This was much the case on day two, the temperature stayed moderate, the course remained softened and sunshine and showers created a rainbow.

Tony, who won the 36 Hole Aggregate, Gross and was part of the Regional winning team (Northern), at the 1999 National Championship held at Carden Park GC, has entered the competition only three times.

So what did this year's winner think of Burton-on-Trent's course managed by BIGGA Board of Management member, Gavin Robson?

"The course was quite tight and you were able to plot your route. I thought the greens were in excellent condition," said Tony. "It was quick with some demanding pin positions, a well prepared course."

Tony, who has been working at Whickham GC since 1990, when he took up the position of Assistant Greenkeeper, felt that the greenstaff at Burton-on-Trent would have liked to have done more but, although the weather helped the competitors, it prohibited the greenstaff from getting more involved throughout the Championship.

Winner of the prestigious National Lytham Trophy in 1993, Tony was pleased with his overall performance at this year's competition. "I played within myself, kept the ball in play and out of the trees, and I remained patient. I think I'll definitely come back next year."

BIGGA National Championship 2006



Nick Gates, Challenge Cup winner for Best Nett score

The annual event, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen and held, this year, at Burton-on-Trent GC on October 2 and 3, attracted over 60 greenkeepers from all over Britain.

A LITTLE BIRDIE TOLD ME...

Grafter greenkeepers Frank Kempster and Graham Bloom spent the Monday night cuddled up with Course Manager, Gavin Robson's coat in the Burton-on-Trent work sheds, ready for an early rise on the Tuesday!

THE WINNERS:

BIGGA National Champion
Challenge Trophy Winner Best Gross Score
Tony McLure Total 147

Challenge Cup Winner Best Nett Score
Nick Gates 141

Gross over 36 holes
2nd Mike Hughes 148
3rd Adam Jones 152

Nett over 36 holes
2nd Simon Dye 142
3rd Nigel Broadwith 148

Monday, October 2
1st class Scr to 6 Handicap category
Brian Turner 73

2nd class 7 to 12 handicap
David Goodchild 74

3rd class 13 to 24
Ross McCarthy 73

Tuesday, October 3
1st class Scr to 6 Handicap category
Craig Wroughton 72

2nd class 7 to 12 handicap
Carl Small 73



3rd class 13 to 24
John Harrison 71

Nearest the Pin Day 1
Adam Jones

Longest Drive Day 1
John Harrison

Nearest the Pin Day 2
Mike Hughes

Longest Drive Day 2
Wayne Sewell



Regional Trophy Day One only 8 best nett scores

Winners - Midland Region total 592:

- Nigel Broadwith
- David Goodchild
- Paul Frith
- Barry Holt
- Mike Hughes
- Adam Jones
- Ross McCarthy
- Simon Woolley

Runners up - South East Region 625:

- David Badham
- Tony Barker
- Nick Gates
- Paul Larsen
- Dylan Rennick
- Paul Robinson
- Wayne Sewell
- Brian Turner



A busy Burton-on-Trent GC



Tony McLure (left) ends the tournament on a high



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