

Lightning Strikes Twice

for Rigby Taylor

A lightning storm caused the competition to be stopped early, but it didn't prevent Rigby Taylor **winning for the second time**

The Neil Thomas Memorial Golf Day has experienced a huge range of weather over the last few years, including hail storms, high winds and two years ago it was postponed because of flooding, but now it can add a thunder and lightning storm to the list.

Aldwark Manor had rarely looked in better shape when the newly-introduced Shotgun format had all 20 teams tee off at noon in glorious sunshine.

However, black clouds began to gather a couple of hours later and before long a spectacular lightning

storm could be seen several miles to the west of the course.

With safety very much to the forefront, a cautionary eye was kept on it and when the lightning started to hit a little closer, the klaxon went off and everyone returned to the hotel.

At that stage it was still hoped that the golf would restart but after three quarters of an hour, and heavy rain outside, the decision was taken to call it a day and the results were based on the final nine holes that everyone had played.

Winners of the 2009 event were Rigby Taylor 1 - taking the title for the second time - comprising Ian White-

head, Mike Brear, Paul Doherty and Kim Kirkham, who just edged the Northern Region team of Jeremy Hughes, Ian Holoran, Jonny Evans and David Golding on a last six countback with a score of 43, based on two scores of the four counting.

Third place was the BIGGA HQ guest team lead by Chief Executive, John Pemberton; Craig Manson and Russ Grimshaw, with 41 points.

Q Hotels made a superb job of organising the event and brought the buffet forward by an hour to enable everyone to enjoy their meal and make a slightly earlier journey home.

INSET ABOVE: The victorious Rigby Taylor quartet show off the trophy

BELOW: Aldwark Manor and the course viewed from bridge - in the sunshine before the storm

Golf Day Tee Sponsors:





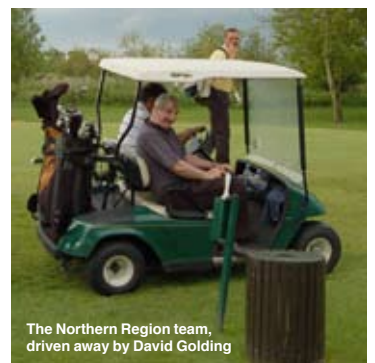
BIGGA Board Team One; Paul Worster anticipates the putt by Duncan Bagshaw, clearly unphased by the pressure of the camera



The pleasant surroundings at Aldwark GC, with the departing Scotts team in the distance



Clive Higginbotham shows the Scotts team how to tee-off!



The Northern Region team, driven away by David Golding



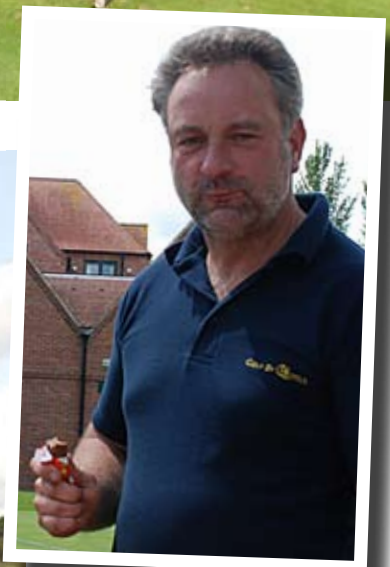
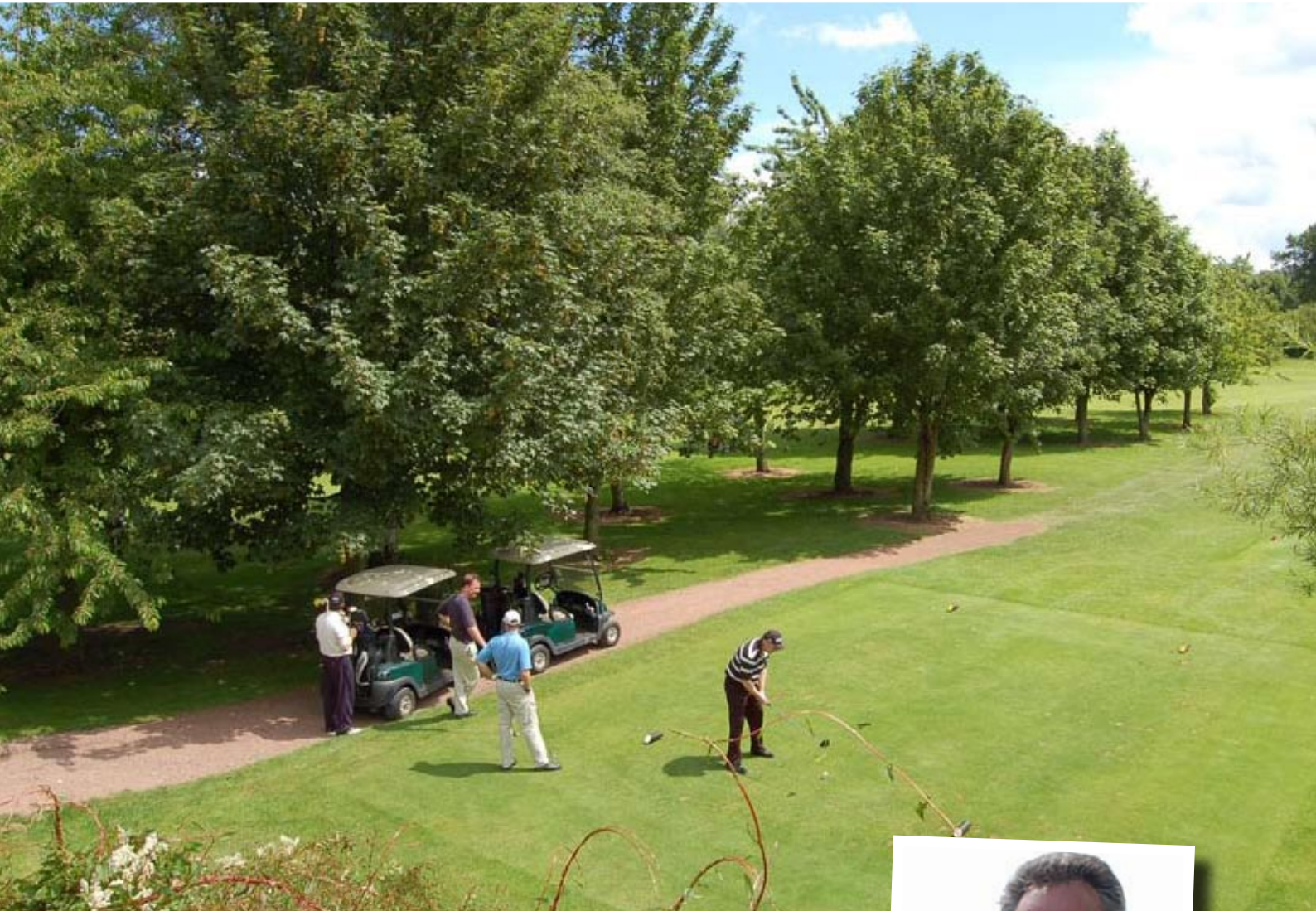
The Northern Region team, runners up overall



The team at Warners crouch for a shot as professional as the magazine they print, Greenkeeper International!



Swinging in the rain...BIGGA Chief Executive, John Pemberton, tees off just before the storm



MAIN ABOVE: The tricky par-5 14th welcomes some more potential victims

INSET ABOVE: Aldwark Manor Course Manager, Richard Gamble, chomping at the bit

LEFT: The John Deere team display fine-form off the tee