



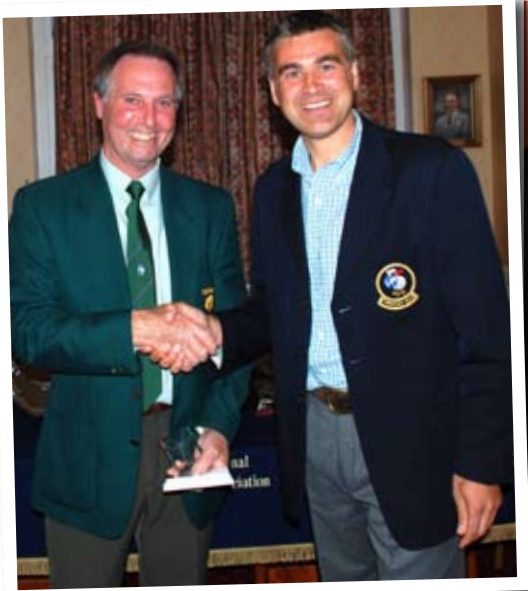
PLEASE GIVE PRIORITY
TO PLAYERS
ON THE 17th TEE



Cream of the Crop

Derek McJannet has been a fine golfer all of his life but his win in the BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and Charterhouse, ranks above all his other achievements





Photographed with BIGGA Chairman, Peter Todd, from top to left to bottom right: Gary Thurman, Associate winner, Regional Winners; Ian Robins, Stableford winner; Gavin Robson, Nett Winner; Derek McJannet with the sponsors, and Richard Whyman, Burnham & Berrow Course Manager, below.

The Association's finest golfers converged on the superb Somerset links of Burnham & Berrow for the BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and Charterhouse.

The field was easily the strongest in the history of the event with a host of plus and scratch handicappers but they all found the course, which had recently hosted The Tillman Trophy, a tough nut to crack, even in the relatively benign conditions.

Winner of the prestigious Challenge Trophy, and BIGGA's Champion Golfer of the year, was scratch handicapper, Derek McJannet, of Matlock GC, who posted a two round total of 148 comprising equal rounds of 74.

The win was all the more meritorious as the 50 year-old Scot, who has been a scratch or better player for 22 years and a +2 player at his peak, had opened up with a double bogey six on the relatively tame par-4 opener.

Indeed, he also tripled bogeyed the 6th on the opening day so his

74 was a very good effort. He also bogeyed the opening two holes on the second day and by his own estimation was five shots off the lead after seven holes. Birdies at the 8th, 10th and 11th brought him back into it and he even had the luxury of a dropped shot at the 36th hole and still won by a single shot.

"I had a 15 footer for par at the last and charged it four feet by, but holed the return," said Derek, who has been Nottinghamshire County Champion twice and Nottinghamshire Open winner once. He is still a county player having represented Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire as well as Ayrshire in his youth where he played at Turnberry and Ballochmyle. He also represented BIGGA and the Rest of the World in the Hayter International in the mid '90s.

"This is a national competition, and there were some excellent players in the field so I'm absolutely delighted. This win is right up there with my best, if not the very best," said Derek, who

was playing in the event for the first time, but he has already set the time aside for his defence next year.

The Challenge Cup for the Best Nett saw a remarkable charge up the field by 19 handicapper, Gavin Robson, whose own club of Burton on Trent had hosted the National Championships four years ago.

Gavin, who was sharing a caravan during the Championship with fellow competitor and BIGGA Board of Management Member Tony Smith, recovered from a middle of the pack nett 79 on the opening round to shoot an astonishing nett 65 on the second day to claim the biggest prize of his golfing career. The round was all the surprising as he had been kept up by his colleague's snoring all night!

To illustrate just how much of a golfing day of a lifetime it was Gavin also nipped in with the Nearest the Pin prize on the 5th hole, getting inside 1 handicapper Oliver Browning's quality effort which had stood for most of the day. Oliver's pain will not be



ABOVE: Myles Wood with his trusty 3-wood

BELOW: Ed Ainsworth tees off on the 17th





reduced when he learns that Gavin's tee shot was topped and bounced along the path before finding its own unorthodox route to the pin. He was shamefaced enough to miss the putt.

His domestic partner didn't fare quite so well being the first man to lose a ball down the opening hole despite the attentions of the ball spotters who were stationed on high mounds on the left of the hole. John Pemberton actually tracked the ball down 24 hours later!

Other highlights on the second day were a holed 3-wood for an eagle 2 on the 11th from fully 197 yards into the wind by the appropriately named Myles Wood, of Berkhamstead GC, and a holed 8-iron on the 3rd by Ian Robins, on his way to winning the Stableford Challenge Plate, from 150 yards.

Among the non-playing visitors to the Championship was Past BIGGA Chairman, Kerran Daily, who was one of the aforementioned ball spotters and Billy Mitchell and Chris Sealey, of the SW&SW Region, who came along to support the event, and in particular, Course Manager, Richard Whyman, who together with his team, had done a superb job in preparing the course for the arrival of their peers. Richard, another Past BIGGA Chairman was in

his element and must have been delighted with the feedback he received from all corners.

Support from the sponsors was excellent. Both Kubota and Charterhouse ensured that no-one could approach the 1st tee without having the opportunity first to admire some of the finest examples of machinery in their respective fields. Colin Hennah, Kubota's Zone Sales Manager South, gave an excellent and lighthearted speech at the dinner having stood in as a last minute replacement for Dave Roberts, who had been taken ill, while Nick Darkin and Richard Charlton, of Charterhouse, were on hand to ensure everything went smoothly. Nick did remarkably well having taken part in a charity 37 mile walk the day before and his feet were a tad delicate during his time at the Championship. Tee sponsors, Ruffords and Groundsman, are also to be thanked for making the event possible.

The club looked after everyone superbly. Club Captain, Stuart Cook, got everyone on side at the dinner by empathising with the assembled gathering with his thoughts on CPD, and how both his profession – Medicine – and the greenkeeping profession were heavily involved with it.



ABOVE: BIGGA Chief Executive, John Pemberton, finds what could have been Tony Smith's molitor

