

## **Foursomes Champions Decided**

*(contributed by Short Putt)*

Last weekend was set to be a test of golf, with the Foursomes Championships for men and Ladies scheduled for play. What made it more challenging was the forecast of some very cool weather to start each day. But once again the Forbes golfers showed that they have a strong fortitude as well as high golf skills.

The Ladies played their 27-hole foursomes on Saturday, with a thoroughbred pairing of Heather Davidson and Kerry Stirling declared Scratch winners. Refer to the separate report for detail on the event in whole.

The Men played a 36-hole event over the two days of the weekend. Numbers on each day were good with the field strong throughout. The sponsors, AAA Septic Services, were pleased to see the easy flow of play throughout the course, and that deleterious play was at a minimum among the 72 starters.

The Foursomes event requires individual concentration, as the alternate shot format results in many players not establishing a personal rhythm. On Day 1 the Scratch scores were all above par, with each player in a pair not in command of their own destiny. In the Handicap event the nett scores were also unsurprising although a few pairs did manage to slip below par by a margin.

After Day 1 the Scratch was led by John Betland and Andrew Dukes on 78, with a handy margin over Peter Dawson and Dan Bayley on 83. The Handicap was led by Hamish Steele-Park and Tony Cogswell on 66.5 nett, with a healthy margin over Randall Grayson and Tony Wallace on 71 nett.

The Day 1 ball sweep went to 75.5 nett: 71 - R Grayson/T Wallace; 73.5 – B Slack-Smith/A McDonald, T Morgan/ J Ridley, K Sanderson/S Grallelis; 74 – M Simmonds/L Whitfield; 74.5 – G Falvey/D Kennedy, R Morris/S Kirkman; 75 – A Hogan/B Coles; 75.5 L O'Connor/N McMillan, N Ryan/A Grogan.

The NTP's went to: 9<sup>th</sup> – John Zannes, 18<sup>th</sup> – Hamish Steele-Park. Rob Webb converted John's shot for a '2', but Brett was astray with Hamish's shot. There were only four 2's all day, perhaps due to each player not putting the ball at their partner's preferred distance.

Amongst all the action there is an array of good shot stories and bad shot stories. But nothing can replace the need to know the rules, especially when going OB on the 1<sup>st</sup> tee, or any other hole. But, lessons learnt the hard way.

By far the best '2' of the day goes to Peter Grayson. His partner Stephen Uphill under-clubbed on the tee shot, leaving the ball barely on the very front of the green. Undaunted, Peter was unerringly accurate in his putt, and with confidence sending ball towards the hole some 25 feet away, then showing no surprise when it dropped into the hole.

The predilection to play the wrong ball afflicted a number of players. The McGroder/Bernardi pairing used a ball with 'soccer ball panel' logos to guard against any faults. They played the 16<sup>th</sup>, and realised after putting out that they had played a practice ball from down the fairway, thus resulting in a '10'.

Les Little and Barry Parker seemed to play 'pay-back' all day, as they put each other into the trees. And Dave Sly mishandles Geoff Drane's excellent drive on the 7<sup>th</sup>. From the middle of the fairway David put their 2<sup>nd</sup> shot OB, and Geoff had to carry the burden from the 3<sup>rd</sup> shot onwards. The result was a double-bogey.

Out of Bounds was also a curse for a fancied pairing. An OB with unplayable on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and an OB on the 6<sup>th</sup> pushed them to near the end of the field, with a lot to do on Day 2.

David Sly did play some wonderful golf. His tee shot on the 4<sup>th</sup> went among the trees. But Geoff Drane was well used to that position, and punched out well, across the elbow of the fairway. Dave then played a great recovery over the left hand trees onto the green. From there they comfortably three-putted for a '6'.

And the water snared a number of players. After Ken Sanderson had laid up before the creek on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Stevie G promptly lost his head in an endeavour to find the green, putting the ball into the water. Luckily it was Stevie's own ball, but it cost a shot.

Day 2 saw a good number of pairs back up, with many close enough to be contenders if they put in a good round. The overwhelming story was one of players improving slightly but not enough. The Betland/West pair did 11 shots better to jump into Scratch contention. But most pairs only improved by 2 to 3 shots.

However, the Randal Grayson Tony Wallace pairing had a day to forget, dropping out of contention for Handicap honours with a score that was 14 shots higher than day 1. The Day 1 front-runners, Steele-Parl/T Cogswell, also went backwards with a score 10 shots worse.

The Day 2 Nett winners were G Falvey/D Kennedy who improved by 6 shots on the day. This was two shots better than the Morgan/J Ridley pairing, and 8 shots better than Steele-Park/Cogswell

The Day 2 ball sweep went to 74 nett: 70.5 – T Morgan/ J Ridley; 72 – West/S Betland, Whitfield/Simmonds; 73 – French/Herbert, C Dwyer/ T Howe; 74 – J Betland/A Dukes.

The NTP's went to: 9<sup>th</sup> – N McMillan; 18<sup>th</sup> – C Hurford, with no 2's scored. There was only one all day. The closest NTP over the two days goes to John Zannes, on day 1.

The tension on Day 2 affected some players. There were 9's scored on the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> holes by individual pairs, which shot them out of contention. And two experienced gents (Taylor/Duncan) managed to play the wrong ball on the 17<sup>th</sup>, ending their title tilt.

The overall results and Championship winners were both surprising and unexpected.

The Scratch Champions were J Betland/A Dukes, who had a strong lead and finished on 154. Runners-up were T West/S Betland on 165 and on count back from P Dawson/D Bayley. It was a consistent performance by the winners, and a thrilling turn-around by the runners-up, who improved by 11 shots.

The Handicap Champions were a real surprise. The Falvey/Kennedy pairing stormed home to finish on 143 nett, tied with the Steele-Park/Cogswell pair who faltered badly. On a very, very close count back the Champions were George Falvey and Damien Kennedy. Their front-9 of 41 set them up well, while Hamish and Tony could only manage 50 on the front-9 and not much better on the back.

There was no Sunday Stableford Medley, due to the Mens Foursomes being played and the Ladies resting after their efforts on Saturday.

**Here is the news:**

The farewell to Ben Gear and Som, scheduled for July 4, should have higher numbers with the relaxation of social-distancing rules. This will be held immediately following the Mens comp presentation. Please provide donations for a gift to Ladies Captain Heather Davidson or Mens Captain Steve Grallelis.

The Mens Wallace Cup draw will be made this weekend, so if you are keen to play then contact Captain Steve immediately.

Remember, be mindful of your social distancing, even in the 'Golfie' where you must sign in if you intend to stay for a little while.

**Crystal ball:**

Saturday 4 July is a Monthly Medal, sponsored by Walkers Ag-n-Vet. Sunday 5 July has a Stableford Medley, and an event at Caragabal.

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