



The 7th Bad Etiquette Classic

Introduction

Following six years of strong campaigning to take the BEC Ooup North, the Bad Etiquette Classic celebrated its seventh year and second millennium of competition in Southport. There, the courses we played (Hesketh, Royal Birkdale and Formby) were nothing short putt of magnificent yet only standard scratched the putting surface of fine courses in the circle and district. Clearly we have no option but to free drop by again another year to savour the angel delights of Lytham St Anne's, Hillside, Royal Southport & Ainsdale and so on.

Highlights this year included the successful deployment of a new handicap system, forgery and impersonation on an unprecedented scale, a worthy new Champion (a heart-wrenching tale of laundry boy turned golfing legend) and a genuinely smashing BEC Tea Pot presentation ceremony.

"Comfort and Elegance in the Heart of Southport"

Accommodation, meals, après-golf, complimentary umbrellas and a cheap trophy depicting an undernourished golfer brandishing a large cheese-board were generously provided this year by the Scarisbrick Hotel. There we assembled in the early evening on Saturday 15th July; Peter having squeezed in a number of AM business meetings and domestic engagements before the brief excursion from Henley, and Mark having squeezed in Richard and Julian for 6 hours of untold suffering from Tunbridge Wells. On that note, particular and heart-felt thanks to Richard for persuading the Founder Member to drive 3 hours across Greater London and for generously allowing Julian & Mark 30 minutes to imbibe the mid-morning ambience of Gloucester Terrace whilst he made ready.

Evidently, the Scarisbrick like the Anglia Court Hotel and Smugglers Inn before it, was selected by our illustrious Logistics Manager (see BEC's Golfing Greats) with our reputation for wild nightlife and extreme partying in mind. With facilities ranging from the Knightsbridge Restaurant (appealing to the extended family) to Maloney's Cocktail Bar (appealing to the typical toga-clad serviceman), clearly the Scarisbrick was the place to be and be seen.

The Hesketh Golf Club

After so many weeks of dismal weather, it was nothing short of a miracle that the sun deigned to shine at Hesketh GC on Sunday morning. In what has rapidly become tradition, the first shot of the 7th BEC was struck supremely straight down the middle; this year by Mark and in stark contrast to his afternoon shot from the same tee, heeled hard and low narrowly missing a large Audi and thudding into the bank below a putting green packed with society members.



AM Mark & Richard R found themselves 4 down after 4 to Julian & Jez and never recovered; Jez doing the damage with 9 positive extras and 10 hole wins and Julian limiting his involvement to applauding his partner at the right moments. Meanwhile, in an amazing encounter, Pete & Dave G stared into the jaws of defeat at dormy 4 only to play the last 4 holes in one under gross par (better-ball) for the match half with Andy & David L. Pete's efforts were particularly incredible; 14 lost balls in 14 holes and the final four holes in gross par including an awesome two-putt birdie 4 at the 479yds 17th.

Records set during the 7th BEC

- First year on year reduction in MLI (£70 to £60)
- Greatest margin of victory (£53)
- First year that no participant called upon their MLI
- First adjustment to David L's handicap (16 to 17)
- 5th consecutive match loss for Dave G & Julian (played 5 lost 5)

In the afternoon, despite an 80 gross from Mark, he and David L were unable to fend off the onslaught from Andy and Richard who seamlessly combined 9 nett birdies and 2 nett eagles to romp home 3&2. And in the other match, Jez continued his startling form with 4 more nett birdies and a nett eagle which, combined with a solid round from Pete, proved too much for Dave G and Julian who went down by the same margin.

A Right Royal Caper

Greeted by more blue sky on Monday morning and with high hopes for a great day's golf at Royal Birkdale, little inkling did we have of the trials and tribulations that lay ahead. Sure, in years gone by we've presented our fair share of borrowed handicap certificates and impersonated an extensive range of friends and colleagues, but that was mere child's play compared to the escapade that we were about to embark upon at Royal Birkdale.

"If I could just see your handicap certificates, then you can sign in" "Yup, no problem, fine and if one or two of the party are momentarily without them?". "Oh, no problem if they would just call their Clubs and ask for a copy to be faxed through, we can get you on your way".
Rapid exit stage left to car park.

There seemed to be only two possible options; be honest and hope that £800's worth of green fees might generate a modicum of leniency or take the opportunity to push back the boundaries of bad etiquette and go for dishonesty on a grand scale. With the reputation of the BEC on the line, there was simply no choice and with no further ado a bewildering array of mobile phones were produced to begin the search for the 2 much needed certificates.

Within minutes a fax was rolling off in the Secretary's office from Hadley Wood, Mark's old club. Meanwhile, Dave G was on to his city mate, Ed Britton; "Shit, voicemail Hi Ed, Dave here, just a quick message to say that I'm about to call your golf club and impersonate you hope that's ok, bye". *Redials* "Hello, Austin Lodge? Can I speak to the Secretary? ... Thank you Ah hello, this is Ed Britton Yes, Britton Ha, yes, well I've got a sore throat Anyway, I'm at Royal Birkdale and haven't got my Yes, that's right Yes, isn't it Would it be possible for you to fax it through? Lovely, many thanks Yes I'll do that Yes, thank you Bye".

Thirty minutes later and 45 minutes after our originally assigned tee-off times, we stood on Royal Birkdale's immaculate first tee and prepared for the second great challenge of the day.

The Royal Birkdale Golf Club

Although Julian & Andy were not gracious enough to report any notable highlights, Richard & Dave G's morning win at Royal Birkdale was highlight enough, simultaneously defeating their opponents and coming to terms with the 1999 Open Championship course largely thanks to Richard who chose Birkdale for his equal lowest BEC gross (95) and 3 nett birdies and a nett eagle in the first 5 holes.



In the other morning match, Jez showed no sign of abating with 6 more nett birdies inspiring even David L to play better, and proving too strong for Mark and Pete who succumbed 5&4.

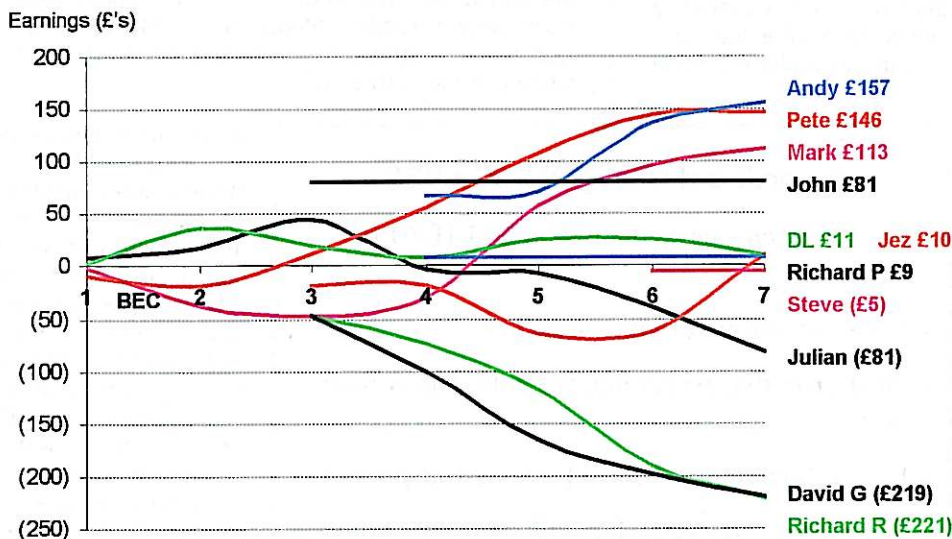
Only 40 minutes between rounds gave us time for just the one serious breach of etiquette (Richard's trainers in the bar), a sandwich and an awkward moment when a steward enquired whether there was a "Mr Walsh" in our party. Not being entirely confident of the exact details of each other's bogus identities, we just looked each other nervously and gestured unintelligibly.

In the afternoon Mark and Dave G found themselves 3 down at the turn against Pete and Richard, but were so incensed by Richard's lengthy mobile call to his girlfriend on the 9th that they took the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th and went on to win the match 2&1. The encounter at the 159yds 12th was perhaps one of the most remarkable in

BEC history with Mark and David both stuffing their drives and leaving the green wide open, only to watch both opponents find deep greenside bunkers. Seeing a glimmer of hope Mark slapped a 6 iron to 6 ft for a certain 5 and then looked on (with nothing but sympathy you'll understand) as Pete and Richard each took 7 to dig themselves out.

In the other match Jez clocked-up his fourth straight win, this time sharing the workload with Andy and seeing off the challenge from David L and Julian with a 2&1 win.

BEC Tour Earnings



Formby

Whilst no one claimed to have played Formby previously, a number of us never-the-less harboured fond memories emanating from a particularly riotous 21st birthday party at the club house in 1984. Lying £71 off the lead there was clearly no chance of Mark departing Formby with as much silverware as he had 16 years ago when, according to reliable sources, he left with a large candelabra down his trousers.



To all intents and purposes, Jez had the 7th BEC in the bag; £65 ahead of his nearest rival, there was no chance of anybody catching him. But there was of course the honour to play for, and honour was finally restored in match 5A when despite 6 more nett birdies Jez was finally beaten thanks to some steady scoring from Andy in combination with Pete J's best round of the week.

In the final match, Mark got off to a strong start, enabling he and Julian to reach 3 up at the turn against the two Dave's. But, despite the distraction of an endless procession of apparently stricken light aircraft overhead, Dave G found real form on the way back which unsettled the opposition who began to lose holes from ever greater positions of advantage. At the 408yds 14th Dave G sank a huge putt from off the back of the green for a bogie causing Julian to 3 putt. And at the 486yds 17th, Mark suffered the same fate, watching Dave G chip and putt for a bogie 6 and then taking 4 to get down from 30 yds. Only a brave 5 from Julian at the last saved Julian & Mark from a disastrous back nine and match loss.

BEC's Golfing Greats

Mark Powderham - Statistics & Reports

With less golf in the run up to the BEC than ever before, Mark was going to require good fortune if he was to succeed at this year's BEC. But lucky he was not, earning only £5 for an 80 gross at Hesketh, including 5 nett birdies, a nett eagle, a nearest-the-pin and 2 longest drives, and ending the event with the lowest "partner rating" (see You and Your Partner and the Statistical Summary).

Indeed, Mark was never in the running this year, losing his first 3 matches and recovering only in the latter stages, but he can be well pleased with the lowest total gross, 19 nett birdies, 8 longest drives and his fourth consecutive top three finish taking his career earnings to a healthy £113.

David Law - Real Estate & Vocals

The manner of David's return to the Bad Etiquette Classic provided little reassurance of his purported ongoing commitment to the event. He elected not to attend the Saturday evening reunion in a blatant attempt to get some additional shut-eye, avoid the drinks fine imposed last year and increase per head accommodation costs for the rest of us. This did not go unnoticed and quite justifiably the Committee elected to call late that evening to unsettle Theodore and the Law household for the night.

Despite this David was given a warm welcome at Hesketh, and although he showed occasional signs of his old skills (for example a wonderful chip in for birdie nett eagle at the 8th in the afternoon) his only profitable round came in the morning at Royal Birkdale where Jez helped carried him to a 5&4 victory. Losses of £15 put David in 5th place in the BEC Order of Merit.

Julian Malton - Non-Credit Risk & Keyboards



Following a solid opening round and match win AM at Hesketh and a chip in at the first in the afternoon, Julian briefly dallied with the prospect of enjoying the 7th Bad Etiquette Classic. In hindsight however, this was nothing but a moment of grand delusion as for the next 71 holes Julian failed summarily to keep his ball in play for more than two consecutive shots with the exception of some well controlled 3 putts. A detailed analysis of this year's figures by a newly developed super-computer and a team of forensic statisticians failed to unearth a single positive score, result or trend. And it will certainly come as no consolation to Julian that his losses of £42 were despite his having the best "partner rating" (see the Statistical Summary).

We must therefore turn our attention once again to Julian's après golf capabilities. These were never more clearly demonstrated than on the Monday night when after two minutes of impressive self-constraint in the Knight's Cocktail Bar Julian dislodged "Frank" the resident hotel pianist and entertained one and all with some fine tunes including "Mouldy Old Dough", "Drop out of Casual Water" (to the tune of "Bridge over Troubled Water"), "Jerusalem", and "Fair Way" (that well known Frank Sinatra number).

Peter Jacobs - Logistics & Etiquette

Pete's challenge to become a first-time BEC Tea Pot Holder never really gained momentum and after two days of tireless toil, he found himself £17 down and in 6th place claiming to have lost 32 balls in the process. Despite a brave final round victory containing 5 nett birdies, there was just too much ground to make up and Pete had to settle for a disappointing 4th place and, as a result, finally relinquishing his leadership of the BEC Tour Order of Merit after many years. Nevertheless, Pete continues to retain the honours of most nett birdies (120), most match wins (19) and most longest drives (28).

Had she been a spectator, Zoe would have been proud of the time and energy that her father expended playing in the bunkers at Birkdale with, amongst other examples, 7 attempts to escape greenside in the morning at the 10th and another 7 in the afternoon at the 12th.

But ever the brilliant tactician, Pete took optimal advantage of his 19 handicap, making bogie nett birdie at SI.1 in every round! Thanks as always to Pete for his outstanding organization in the run up to this year's event.

Richard Reeves - Acquisitions & Conquests

This was a volatile BEC for Richard particularly in financial terms, clawing his way back from a dramatic first round loss of £29 to reach +£4 only to crash back to losses of £30 by the end of the event. Richard can however be pleased with two excellent rounds of 95 gross including one at Royal Birkdale where, with a nett eagle, 3 nett birdies and a nearest the pin within the first 5 holes, he had the course on its knees and begging for mercy!

Encounters with maximum liability losses in 1996 and 1999 now clearly despatched to history, Richard will surely be back next year with fresh hopes and, let us hope, more appropriate evening footwear.

Andy Slamin - Marketing & Breakages

The Tea Pot Holder approached this year's BEC knowing that it has never been defended successfully and that to keep the Tea Pot cosy for a second consecutive year would require a super-human effort. But Andy got off to an uncharacteristically poor start, finding himself £4 down after 3 rounds, and match wins at Birkdale and Formy only partly repaired the damage bringing him home in 2nd place. This was, however, good enough to move him up into first place in the BEC all time Order of Merit.



Andy's regrettable smashing of the Tea Pot lid during the trophy presentation (leading to some unfortunate parallels being drawn with the Ashes) blatantly violated of paragraph 12.5 of the Constitution ("The Tea Pot shall be handled with care at all times ..") and he is therefore mandated to buy the first round of drinks at the 8th Bad Etiquette Classic.

David Grimbley - Lead Sponsor

Consecutive nett eagles at 17 and 18 in the morning at Hesketh saved the match, earned him an impressive £1 and came as welcome relief for David having been preceded by 12 double bogies in 15 holes. This set the tone for some of David's steadiest ever golf on the tour with two match wins, two halves and best ever nett result (+10) leading to his lowest sponsorship contribution (£21) in 5 years of competition. So steady in fact was his golf, that on the final day at Formby he won the inaugural Scarisbrick Trophy for lowest nett (73).

Jeze Ellison - Global Positioning & Laundry

It is unlikely that any previous Champion has led the BEC from start to finish by such a comfortable margin. Opening with 7 nett birdies and one of the highest earning rounds of all time (£35) and thereafter increasing his lead at every opportunity, Jez never looked like relinquishing the Yellow Cashmere. Triumphant with a record margin of victory of (£53), 24 nett birdies, 3 nett eagles, 4 match wins, 2 nearest-the-pins, 4 longest drives, and a "Partridge in a Pear Tree", Jez left the rest of the field looking on helplessly.



His stunning victory raises him from 9th to 6th in the BEC all time Order of Merit. Congratulations Jez!

You and Your Partner

Ever wondered how lucky you've been with your partners? Ever partnered a lackluster Reeves AM only to be thrashed by him PM? Well this year with the introduction of the new Partner Performance System[®] (based on your partners' combined nett result), you need wonder no longer. The facts reveal some things we always knew and one or two things we didn't !

- Having the best partners can help you to win the BEC; Julian (1994), Mark (1998)
- but not always, despite the best partners; Mark came last (1995), Dave G hit MLI (1996 & 1997), Julian lost £32 (1999) and £44 (2000).
- Talented golfers can win the BEC despite having the worst partners; Andy (1997)

