

The 9th Bad Etiquette Classic

Introduction

Sincerest apologies for the even-later-than-usual issue of the Bad Etiquette Classic write-up. No lame excuses other than to say that I lost my job I can already hear the sympathetic response from regular readers "No job! And it still takes you six months to write four pages!?"

Considering the difficulty that the Founding Members had agreeing a date for the 9th BEC, it is fortunate that the event took place at all. I will comment only that the date selection process defined in the Constitution was blatantly disregarded in the BEC's darkest ever hour.

In its ninth year the BEC headed to Yorkshire where we enjoyed some marvelous courses, welcomed Richard P back after an absence of 5 years and witnessed a seismic shake-up of the hitherto rock-solid BEC sponsorship arrangements when, through a display of previously unheard of competence, Richard R and Dave G defaulted on their customary £60/head donations and lost just £10 between them.

And as if further proof were required of the fact that we live in a changing and volatile world, the 9th BEC was not blessed with perfect weather but experienced a severe hail storm en route and a number of unwelcome showers during the course of play.

The Crown Hotel

Accommodation this year was ably provided by the Crown Hotel which, with the exception of some dodgy grapefruit and some rather inconveniently positioned keyboards, looked after us in fine style. Positioned high on the Scarborough cliff tops participants were thankfully distanced from the tacky seafront arcades which have provided such an irresistible lure to BEC hopefuls (desperate to recoup early losses) in years gone by.

Ganton Golf Club

First impressions of Ganton did not disappoint although it was so quiet that one might have thought that the course was closed. On arrival we were welcomed by the House Manager and were courteously advised that, in the absence of jackets and ties, we'd have to lunch in the locker-room. We were also informed of the club's strict "no nibbles" policy. Naturally, we assured him that whilst good friends, there was little likelihood of unauthorized nibbling in the locker-room.

Match 1A might have teed-off early (a BEC first surely?) had the House Manager not doubled as the Course Starter and given a 15 minute

eagle and a spattering of positive extras (including a holed pitch from 45yds) earning him £20.

Meanwhile, the following match was no real contest with Richard P starting poorly and deteriorating leading to the worst round in BEC history (107 gross, 92 net, +20). Reportedly even his one bogie included a 5ft 'gimme' at the 17th. Despite a promising opening six holes David L faded badly (as the implication of his partner's lack of form dawned) allowing Mark and Peter to romp home comfortably 7&5 in a match of Pentagon-like accuracy (not one NP recorded).

In the afternoon, Richard P's form improved, losing with his partner Julian by the much improved margin of only 6&5 against David L & Richard R thereby enabling David L to fully recoup his AM losses.

In match 2B, despite an ominous 7, 7, 7, 7 start at the par 4 1st, some excellent golf transpired in an encounter between Mark & Andy and Peter & Dave G. At the 6th Andy hit an immaculate 2-iron to the back of the par 5 sixth setting-up a very makeable eagle net albatross putt only to

then 3 putt. All square after 7, Mark turned up the heat dramatically with an impressive run from 8 thru 13 winning all 6 holes and the match 6&5. Unperturbed (as you can imagine!) Peter & Dave G staged a worthy fight-back for the back nine winning 14, 15 and 16 but then blew it at the 17th when after a magnificent tee-shot to the fringe of the 240yds par 3 green and with a shot in hand, Dave four-putted their chances into oblivion.

So, at 8pm, as a small gallery at Muirfield (a little up the coast) watched Ernie Els toss his cap high in the sky having won the British Open and £700,000, billions across the globe watched the BEC's final match leave Ganton's 18th green with Mark at the top of the leader board on £45.



Participants at the 9th Bad Etiquette Classic, Ganton (2002)

monologue on the 1st tee providing both important tips for each hole (presumably under the misconception that we were capable golfers) and a critique of clubs within a 200 mile radius. After a further 5 minute oratory regarding the perfect spot on which to land one's opening drive it is a miracle that Julian hit his ball at all, but hit it he did, striking a very creditable iron (!?) down the left of the fairway to get the BEC off to its traditional quality start.

The match itself was a tight affair with Julian and his partner Richard R narrowly ahead on the front nine but behind on the back against Andy & Dave G. Ultimately both nines and the match were halved with only Julian emerging with any real credit literally or metaphorically, 3 net birdies, a net

Scarborough NC

Day two's golf was due to take place at Scarborough North Cliff which the Bad Etiquette Classic convoy (led by Pete) sought to the south of the town before the longest ever curb-side exchange with a dog-walker determined that it lay to the north. Like it or not, we are clearly destined to screech into the car park of every golf club we ever visit one minute before our appointed tee-off time.

Scarborough proved to be an unusual course with holes 1, 2, 16, 17 and 18 beside the sea (the 1st a 240yds par 3 along the cliff edge!) and the others with a parkland feel on the other side of the road.

First up were the two David's against Peter (in shorts and shades) & Richard R. David L's opening furthest-from-the-pin double-bogie 5 proved a costly (£7) start to the round when compared to the 2 net birdie's and a net eagle made by the others in his 4-ball, but even this could not have prepared him or his partner for the onslaught that Richard R was about to unleash upon them. With 4 net birdies and a net eagle on the front nine Richard put he and Pete 4up at the turn and, when others might have anticipated some respite, he knocked in a further 6 net birdies on the back nine for an incredible round of 88 net 61! It is to the two Davids' credit that they didn't fold in the face of such unrelenting pressure but took the match to the 17th hole (and stole the back nine) with 10 net birdies and 3 net eagles between them limiting total losses to just £10.

And if match 3A was for bird lovers (5 net eagles and 23 net birdies), then match 3B was a twitcher's paradise (2 net eagles, 27 net birdies) as Mark & Julian's 6 over gross better-ball was astonishingly and brutally outgunned by Andy & Richard P's 2 over gross better-ball! The BEC had never witnessed a morning like it and Richard P's game simply bore no resemblance to that of the day before.

green at the par 5 9th and won the hole in 4. After that (despite Mark returning in 38) Julian and Mark never won another hole as Andy returned in gross 36 dovetailing his 6 net birdies perfectly with 2 more from his partner to win the match 3&2.

With handicaps slashed across the board over lunch, net birdies were harder to come by PM and remarkably the matches were even tighter.

Chipping-in for a net eagle 2 at the first, Richard R (partnering Mark) set the stage for a humdinger of a match with only 4 holes shared all the way round against Julian & Pete. 1 down after 7, Mark birdied the 8th to square the match and then hit a 3-wood second to 15ft at the 9th appearing to secure the front nine. But how wrong can you be? Having found the fringe in three, Pete rolled his 20ft birdie putt into the hole, generously leaving Mark with an eagle putt for the half! Not surprisingly, Mark's putt slid by the hole and the front 9 slipped away with it



Mark receives the Tea Pot from Incognito Pete

To their credit, however, following their dramatic loss of the front nine, Mark and

Richard R wobbled only briefly and fought back for a handsome 3&1 victory.

In complete contrast match 4B got off to a low key start (5, 5, 5, 5 halving the 1st hole) but came to the boil when, from 5 down after 12, Richard P & Dave G fought back to dormy 2 against Andy & David L. At the 17th Dave G holed from off the green for a par 4 net eagle which (under more normal circumstances) might have forced the match down the 18th but the circumstances were far from normal with Andy having already damaged the edge of the hole with his second leaving only a 6 inch putt for a birdie 3, the half and the match.

Asked for highlights later, a disgruntled David L hissed "none", somehow having lost £17 during the course of his 2&1 victory.

Overnight Mark retained the Yellow Cashmere on £57 with Andy (who'd risen through the field from nowhere) in second place on £35.

Three down after 6, Julian & Mark knew that they were going to have to pull out ~~of the match~~ all the stops if they were to avoid heavy defeat and Mark's lapses of concentration at the 7th (when he back-handed a 5ft putt into the cup for a win) and the 8th (splitting the fairway with a 3-wood not realizing it was "longest drive") were therefore all the more extra-ordinary.

Back at all-square after 8, Andy hit a magnificent 3-iron second shot to the

Records set during the 9th BEC

- First ever en route stop-over at the house of a previously unmet internet games player
- Lowest gross - 76, Andy, AM Scarborough
- Lowest net - 61, both Andy and Richard R, AM Scarborough
- Most NB's in a round - 10, Richard R
- Most NE's in a year - 6, Dave G
- Most days to issue the BEC write-up - 214, Mark

Rotherham GC



In the run-up to the event eyebrows were oft raised at the choice of Rotherham Golf Club for the final round of the 9th BEC. But, described in the Founder Member's book of Golfing Gems (The Connoisseurs Guide to Golf Courses in Britain & Ireland) as having "no weak holes" and "the most characterful clubhouse in Yorkshire", (on paper) it seemed worth a visit. And it was.

In match 5A the two Richard's appeared to cope best with the brief but unwelcome downpours, taking an early lead against Andy & Pete. But from 2up after 7 they slumped to 3 down after 13 and never recovered, eventually losing 4&3.

Meanwhile, a real dog-fight was in progress behind with Mark (partnering Dave G) holing 15 footers at the 2nd and 4th and David L (partnering Julian) holing from similar distances at the 7th and 8th to level the match. At the 188yds 9th Mark's 3-wood into the stiff breeze and heart of the green looked certain to win the front 9 until Julian chipped to 6 inches and secured the half.

During the early part of the back 9 Julian & David L combined well and capitalized on a couple of nervy putts from Mark at 12 and 14 to reach 2up. But Dave G, having been subdued for some time, struck back with net birdies at 15 & 16 to level the match once more. With David L safely on the 321yds 17th in two, Mark pulled his 40yd chip horribly into a greenside bunker and (cursing all the while) splashed out to 15ft. David's lag to 2ft looked certain to take Julian & himself down the 18th dormy 1up, but the next two minutes were BEC high drama at its most extraordinary. Having stood over his putt for an interminable time and resettled twice, Mark stroked his putt down the hill and into the hole and then looked on as David pulled his putt sending Mark & Dave G down the 18th dormy 1up!

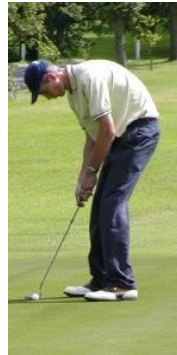
At the 18th all 4 players overshot the dogleg leaving difficult second shots, but Mark saved his best till last hitting a 6-iron to 10ft and although David L chipped to a similar distance, it was too little too late and Mark's 4

and his partner's 5 were both good enough for the half and match win.



Julian & David enjoy the 18th

BEC's Golfing Greats



Mark Powderham

Mark's two opening rounds of 90 at Ganton, whilst not exceptional, at least demonstrated his ability to play BEC golf (9 net birdies and 12 blobs) and provided a firm foundation upon which to construct his 2nd Tour victory.

Subsequent rounds of 82, 79 and 79, whilst more impressive on paper, maintained (rather than increased) his lead and fended-off a number of other serious contenders. Mark struck the ball well throughout the event and can be particularly proud of his 25 NB's, 6 NP's, 6 LD's, 39 gross pars and 14 positive extras, the latter two being BEC records. But none of these will give Mark as much pleasure as attaining the no. 1 position in the Order of Merit for the first time and winning the BEC for the second time.

David Law



Finishing in 8th place with losses of £35, David will no doubt be very disappointed. As for the cause ... well, rounds 4 & 5 seem to be where he came unstuck; outgunned PM at Scarborough in terms of net birdies and positive

extras, and losing 1 down at Rotherham again short of net birdies. But overall, his losses are probably best attributed to 3 match losses and an extreme shortage of net eagles (0). With the highest partner result (+28) of the event, David can legitimately (lift and) place much of the blame with his partners who evidently (free) dropped him in it.

He can also take consolation from the fact that his win with Andy made the

partnership the most prolific unbeaten pair of all time (played 5, lost 0).

Off the course David at last came up with the goods, unveiling the BEC song sheets. Thanks David.



Julian Malton

A steady iron from Ganton's 1st tee signaled Julian's intent to make a serious impression this year, and arriving back at the clubhouse some hours later with a net 74 he was well pleased to find himself in pole (dancing) position

with £20 (tucked in his G-string). But the G-string Yellow Jersey proved too tight, and Julian lost money in the next four rounds to trail home in a disappointing 6th, £27 down.

Julian may justifiably have felt hard done by AM at Scarborough when his 88 net 65 (containing no fewer than 6 NB's and an NE) lost him 9 quid. A partner result of +22 might also suggest that he did not have the best of draws, but a win rate of only 0.1 and his disappearance from the top 4 all-time pairings must lead to the conclusion that winning more would greatly assist his cause.

Off the course Julian produced some moving moments with the keyboards shifting them single-handedly from the stairwell to the lounge bar.



Peter Jacobs

As holder of the Tea Pot, Peter might have hoped for a very strong (no milk or sugar) performance at the 9th BEC to become the first player in history to successfully Retain the

Fragments. But after an impressive 7&5 win AM at Ganton got him off to his usual cracking start (few BEC participants are faster out of the blocks than Pete), things didn't go all his way, with severe losses (£23) that same afternoon, further collateral damage at Scarborough Fair and a serious incursion into the Simply Red avoided only by a solid 4&3 victory at Rotherham with a good spread bet of positive extras.

Pete ended the event in an uncharac-

teristic 4th place and slipped from 1st to 3rd in the Order of Merit. He can however once again take satisfaction from his Tour lead in terms of net birdies (151), longest drives (35) and match wins (26).

[copy] Thanks yet again to Pete for his outstanding organization in the run up to the event. [paste]



Richard Reeves

After last year's widely reported win rate of 0.00 Richard answered his critics with 3 match victories and his highest ever win rate (0.7) on the Tour. And the good news didn't end there. Having survived the treacherous

links of Ganton relatively unscathed, Richard moved up into gears not seen since Euro '98, ruthlessly dismantling Scarborough on the Monday with a clinical net 61 in the morning (containing a record 10 NB's and an NE) and a net 67 in the afternoon, both leading to convincing match victories and positioning him 3rd. A disappointing defeat at Rotherham however dashed Richard's unbeaten match-play run and tipped him narrowly into the red (£2) once more, but he will no doubt take enormous pride in his overall 3rd place (smashing his previous best of 6th).



Andy Slamin

Last victorious in Ireland ('99), Andy might well have wondered whether this would be his year. At Ganton that likelihood looked remote as he got off to an unusually poor start. But on day two at Scarborough North Cliff

Andy excelled, hitting innumerable outstanding shots and carding a record 76 gross AM (containing no less than 9 NB's and an NE) and 84 net 71 PM to pocket £38 and propel himself into contention in 2nd place

(although still some distance behind the leader). But, alas, at Rotherham, despite recording a straight-forward 4&3 match win, Andy couldn't find his day two form and made insufficient extras to challenge for the title.

Andy did however retain his 2nd place in the Order of Merit and enhanced significantly his standing in the list of all-time BEC pairings where he now occupies 5 out of the top 7 places thanks to wins this year with David L, Mark and Peter.



Dave Grimbley

2002 was one of Dave's more successful years on the Tour. Lowest net score in 4 out of 5 rounds, 6 net eagles and his highest ever number of net birdies (17) reduced Dave's sponsorship of

the event to a mere £8 and rewarded him with 5th place, his best ever finish.

In match play Dave managed just one victory which he might well attribute to the lackluster performance of his partners (+25). But his contribution to the already legendary 1up victory at Rotherham was magnificent, winning the 15th and 16th holes to square the match and, more importantly, bring him back in 47 net 34 to win the Skarisbrick Cheese Board (on count back) for a record 3rd successive time. Achievements come no greater.



Richard Powderham

Never has anyone had quite such a torrid start to the BEC. Shooting 107 off of a 15 handicap is rarely rewarded on any course and at Ganton earned Richard no less than 3 BEC records (highest gross, highest net and worst result).

Into the bargain it lost him the match 7&5 and twenty quid. By the look on his face as he downed a quick pint

before heading to the practice ground, Richard was wondering why the hell he'd accepted an invitation to the event at all.

Lesser players might have thrown in the towel (with a full set of irons) there and then, but to Richard's credit he followed his 107 with rounds of 97 and 87 (imitating Colin Montgomerie's simultaneous feat at Muirfield) to restore self-respect.

Regrettably, however, despite the lowest partner result (+6), Richard lost 4 out of 5 matches and money in all 5 rounds, struggling home in 7th place with losses of £34. We can only hope that the scars will heal quickly and that Richard will not wait another 5 years before next making an appearance on the Tour.



Jez Ellison

Absent following his disappointing 6th place in 2001, Jez is reportedly playing a number of events on the

BEC qualifying circuit and hopes to make a return to the big time at the 10th Bad Etiquette Classic.

Correction

The Editor wishes to apologise for the serious typographical error in the write-up of the 8th BEC; Dave G (of course) won the Skarisbrick Cheese Board on count back.

BEC Records

The Editor is proud to announce the completion and publication of the "Official Guide to All Time Records Established on the Bad Etiquette Classic Golfing Tour (Unabridged and Unexpurgated version, 1st Edition, 2003) now available from sad publishers near you (and attached).

2003

The 10th Bad Etiquette Classic will take place between Saturday 13th and Tuesday 16th September 2003 inclusive in the vicinity of North Berwick (near Edinburgh). Please contact the Founder Members for full details.

See you at the 10th Bad Etiquette Classic

