

Orkney Golf Club held its flagship event of the year - The 36 hole J W Gray Kirkwall Open - last Saturday, in perfect conditions with a light westerly breeze and more or less wall to wall sunshine.

The course was in immaculate condition! Although, anyone straying into the rough paid heavily for the slip ups with 18 of the 103 competitors failing to complete the full 36 holes, including a certain greenkeeper!! (Rough cutting may resume very shortly)

With the perfect weather conditions scoring was expected to be low but remarkably, only two players managed to break the par of 69.

Pre-comp favourite Michael Schinkel hit 68 in the first round, although 11 time champion, Steven Rendall, was also on top form and keen to regain his place at the top of the tree. His first round score of 66, included six birdies and saw him out in front after the first round was completed. Others in contention were Ewan Rendall, Lee Findlay, Liam Smart, Stuart Thompson, Wayne Monkman and Kenny Sinclair.

After an excellent burger and chips lunch served up by the Beiting and Brew clan (who stayed on and served food up till around 9.30pm and was much appreciated by this reporter), the second round got underway. With the contenders gradually losing ground, it was Steven who completed another very steady second round of one over 70 for a two round total of 136 to comfortably win his 12th Kirkwall Open. Steven took the win by six shots from Michael, on 142, with Lee taking third on 145. Rounding out the top six were Liam Smart on 148 for fourth, Denis Harvey fifth on 149 and Scott Walls sixth on 153.

First round nett leaders were Calvin Slater and Ryan Sutherland both on 66's, with another 10 or so players within three shots. As it turned out both leaders fell foul of the rough and unsurprisingly it was a couple of lower handicap players who took the top nett prizes. Andrew Reid was second on 138, but winning the nett cup was Stuart Thomson, who's two gross scores of 72 and 72, would have been good enough for third place in that category but his nett total of 136 was good enough to claim the nett trophy for the first time.

In the separate nett section's, the winners were as follows.

+2 to 8 handicaps:

4th - Kenny Sinclair 147

3rd - Jaimie Tulloch 147

2nd - Bruce Moar 144

1st - Ewan Rendall 143

9 to 14 handicaps:

4th - Ryan Sutherland 145

3rd - Connor Crawford 145

2nd - David Henderson 144

1st - Iain Wilkie 143

15 to 28 handicaps:

4th - Nicky Bichan 148

3rd - Scott Bond 147

2nd - Davie Campbell 144

1st - Ian Linklater 143

There were several special prizes:

Most improved second round - Gary Farquhar 14 shots

Best low gross outwith prize list - Wayne Monkman 71

Best low nett outwith prize list - Calvin Slater 66

And finally, nearest the pin on 18 in two shots were Andrew Bonner and Ryan Sutherland.

Club Captain Neil Tait introduced Scott Burns, from sponsors JW Gray, who presented all the prizes and thanked him for the continuing fantastic support of the Open from the company. He also thanked all those involved in the smooth running of the competition throughout the day including the starters, the scoreboard ladies, the bar staff, Beiting and Brew and the Greenstaff.

The previous Wednesday saw the RNL Open Trophy played for with a good entry of 53 taking part. This included four visitors from Shetland who were shocked at the sight of the big glowing orange thing in the sky, which I assured them Orkney golfers had to endure all year round... (aye right)!!

The stableford competition saw Eddie Brown win on countback from Iain Wilkie, with both players scoring 38 points, third place went to Colin Marcus on 37 points.

This Friday, 2 August, has the seniors Work Memorial Cup played for. The following week sees the seniors August medal on Monday 5 August, the RBS Quaich Qualifying round played on Wednesday 7 August and the County Show open sweep on County Show day

PD HOOK

Attached photo, Kirkwall Open winners

Br lr: Jaimie Tulloch, Ryan Sutherland, Iain Wilkie, Bruce Moar, Nicky Bichan, Liam Smart, Connor Crawford.

Mid r lr: Scott Bond, Scott Walls, Dennis Harvey, Michael Schinkel, Lee Findlay, Andrew Reid, David Henderson.

Fr lr: Steven Rendall, Neil Tait, Scott Burns, Stuart Thomson.