The 31st Bad Etiquette Classic

27 - 30 July 2024

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME

Cradle of timeless tradition, the Bad Etiquette Classic upholds the noblest of values. Whilst most would crumble under the weight of expectation, for over 30 years BEC participants have embraced adversity. Rather than yield to its history, they have found a way to make it.

 # Perpetual

ROLEX

Passionate about paragraphs of complete bollocks beside pictures of wristwatches

ROLEX

31
Years

117
Courses

1,238
Rounds

22,306
Holes

118,116
Shots

7,646,829
Yards

Scotland

Years that Scotland has hosted the BEC

- East Lothian (BEC10, 2003)
- Ayrshire (BEC13, 2006)
- Fife (BEC15, 2008)
- Inverness (BEC20, 2013)
- Angus (BEC31, 2024)

Green fees of the top courses in many parts of the UK now exceed £250. With or without Universal Credit, that's quite an outgoing in your weekly shopping basket. Thus, having chosen Scotland as the host nation for BEC31, this year's Championship Committee wisely elected to stage the event at the very excellent Scotscraig, Montrose, Monifieth and Carnoustie Burnside rather than the more expensive courses in the Southwest. Six rounds of golf on 6 different courses for the first time since the heady days of 2003, 2004 and 2006. Who said we were getting too old for such exploits?

So to Scotland, with an identical eight to the prior year ... a feat achieved only once previously when Andy & Jez made up our numbers in 2000 and 2001. This year we were joined by Steve Buck (putting in a third consecutive appearance) and James Powderham back to defend the Tea Pot on behalf of an expectant Millennial generation.

What were we to expect during this, the Tour's, 31st rendition? Would David be refused hire of the Mercedes-Benz Vito Pro Tourer once Holiday Autos had inspected our handicap certificates? Would Pete, driving the Renault Trafic dCi 9-seater, be stopped and searched by the police whilst seeking relief from local traffic management measures on the outskirts of Edinburgh? Which of the two of them would claim Longest Vehicle (LV)? Would we be driven mad by the incessant singing of sea shanties by Pete or other revelers at the Fisherman's Tavern in Dundee? Might we imbibe too much Belhaven and fail to make an early tee time? … or worse, wake to find ourselves conscripted as deck hands on a barque-rigged auxiliary steamship? Would the lunchtime barman at Monifieth turn out to be a complete imbecile? How would Richard cope with his 14 handicap? Would David L finish in the black for the first time in 16 years? Would James triumph again setting records tumbling, and would Pete need to get away early to compete in the Paris Olympics? Answers to these questions and more would be revealed during the 31st Bad Etiquette Classic.

How much? It didn't cost that much in our day

North Berwick now charges £240 per round. We paid Just £45 for our final round during BEC10.

Kingsbarns now charges £411 … 'And if we wanted to play two rounds?' … 'Well that would be, let me see, £822' … 'Ah, yes, of course, silly of me, thank you'.

Royal Lytham now charges £380. In 2007, 36 holes including dormy house accommodation and snooker cost us £279.

Royal Troon now charges £340. In 2006, we played Royal Troon and 5 other courses for £349.

When the competition is fierce and the stakes are high, ensure the optimum flight and a precision approach

Wing it with BecJets

Investments can go up and down
Long drives may be adversely affected

Friday 26 July

The BEC receives its first ever radio dedication when, on Greatest Hits Radio, Simon Mayo wishes Mark, Julian, Pete, David, Dave, Richard, Steve and James well as they head to Scotland for the 31st Bad Etiquette Classic.

Sunday AM - Montrose Medal

- Otherwise known as the Montrose 1562 course, this is the 5th oldest golf course in the world
- David L & James win their game 5&3 against Steve & Dave G in a match with a very healthy spattering of positive extras including a net eagle and 16 net birdies
- In a rare display of golfing competence, Mark, Julian, Richard and Pete each find the green in regulation at the 272 yards 5th and record pars across the board
- Mark feels distinctly sorry for himself when his driver into the teeth of a howling wind comes up 12 inches short at the 226 yards 16th

At the halfway mark, it appears to be a one horse race. James leads on £58, ahead of Julian on £8 and David L on £6 … but it's not over, as they say, until the well built chap with five BEC titles sings

Saturday - Scotscraig

- Richard gets the 31st BEC off to an inauspicious start with an air shot. Not only is the ball missed, but by some mystery of aerodynamics, it rolls backwards resulting in a record shortest drive of minus 6 inches
- The opening holes are not for the faint-hearted; at the par 4 first we record 9 7 ● 7 ● 6 6 7 …. but the weather is sizzling even if the golf is not
- It's not long before some Longest Drive Drama (LDD) unfolds. At the 14th, Richard's fairway-piercing LD is disallowed when it comes to rest on the tufty fringe of a fairway-crossing track, and at the 16th, Steve's LD finds the equally tufty fringe of a fairway bunker
- Both matches are hard fought and halved; the half in Match 1A (David L & Steve versus Julian & Richard) is described as 'gentlemanly' meaning that there was no ill feeling, swearing, fighting or damage to property

Sunday PM - Montrose Broomfield

- At 4,771 yards the Broomfield course is 74 yards shorter per hole than the Medal course
- Scoring is suitably impressive; James shoots 77 gross, and between us we record 2 NEs and 44 NBs
- The course is plain, but not always easy; on the par 3s, we record just one Nearest Pin in 40 attempts
- Four down after 7, Dave G & Julian look to be heading for a 14th loss in 16 outings, but they return 4 over par better-ball and salvage a match half
- Complaints are voiced later about 'rash shots' into the wispy rough which, when pursued in shorts, resulted in a variety of dermatological complaints
- In another display of golfing competence, David L, Pete, James and Richard record 3, 3, 2, 2 at the 150 yards 5th
- There's some quality driving on show too, with James driving through the green at the 325 yards 12th, and Richard hitting the roof of the groundsman's shed with a satisfying clatter at the 17th

Monday PM - Monifieth Ashludie

- As at Montrose, the afternoon course is very much shorter than the morning course (72 yards per hole), but there the similarities end. Far from plain, Ashludie displays all the features of a classic links
- There's golfing competence on show for a second successive day as Mark, Richard, James & Steve all find the green at the 143 yards 6th and make par
- James hits his provisional ball pin high at the 339 yards 8th; probably the BEC's longest ever drive (LED)
- Dave G retires after 9 holes with a bad back and the format transitions to 3-way singles match-play. In a resultant surge of competitiveness, Pete wins both matches
- There's controversy at the 18th when Julian and David give each other their net birdie putts whilst Pete is distracted in conversation with the other group

Regardless of whether the well built chap with five BEC titles sang or not, after the final round at Carnoustie Burnside, it is all over. James wins on £107 ahead of Julian on £20 and David L on £6

Monday AM - Monifieth Medal

- Pete starts the day with a TPA (Third Party Altercation) when 'Gary' questions his parking of the Renault Trafic across 2 spaces in the Monifieth car park
- Gladly, our 'host club' for the day is Monifieth GC and not The Grange & Broughty GC which shares the facility. According to the literature this 'unique set-up' means visitors are 'spoilt for choice', but actually they are just lost and confused
- David L records a questionable NP at the 5th with an unremarkable 6-iron that disappears from view short of the green and then reemerges suspiciously to settle 2ft from the pin. At the 17th he records an NWP when his tee shot finds the 16th green
- James drives the 273 yards 8th and makes birdie
- At the 13th, James waits for the BEC group ahead to leave the green, then hits his approach. At that moment the group ahead does an abrupt about turn and walks back across the front of the green. Fore!

Tuesday - Carnoustie Burnside

- Partnered with his father, there's no sign of James taking his foot off the gas or the throats of the opposition; he birdies the 1st, plays the front 9 in 36 and is round in 79 gross ...
- … but Julian & David (lying 2nd and 3rd respectively) are not just there to make up the numbers; they reach the turn one up, battle hard on the back nine and narrowly miss a 20ft birdie putt to halve the match at the 18th
- His back apparently well rested, Dave G takes all the money (£17) in the final match
- There are no reported match highlights as Pete is in a very serious hurry to depart for the airport
- James is quickly presented with the Tea Pot and Pink Jacket, there's a squeal of tyres in the car park, and Mark, David & James are left to while away the afternoon with an assortment of wealthy Americans

A GUIDE TO THE PLAYERS

Mark

Following a disappointing 6th place finish in 2023, would the six-time BEC Champion and leading earner on Tour, overcome the challenge of the next generation and raise the Tea Pot once more?

No. Despite making more pars (33) and bogies (48) than he had for 20 years, 3 match wins and 2 match halves proved not enough.

Julian

Unable to follow his 30th BEC Prologue win with a sixth BEC Title last year, would the winner of the first Scottish BEC in 2003 don the Pink Jacket once more on the Angus links?

No. After a slow start at Scotscraig, Julian found form on the links to move into 2nd place, but he was never realistically going to catch the clubhouse leader.

Pete

Would Pete's campaign for a fourth BEC Title be hampered by third-party altercations, the singing of sea shanties and the need to leave early for Paris?

Yes. Whether or not a result of such distractions, Pete lost money in every round and struggled to an 8th place finish losing £49.

David L

Would David claim Longest Vehicle (LV) and finish in the black for the first time in 16 years?

Yes. At 5.14m David's Vito Pro Tourer trumped Pete's Renault Trafic by a full 6cm. At just 3 over his (exorbitant) handicap and carding the most NBs he's ever made on Tour (25), David battled to his best finish for 20 years (3rd) and positive earnings (£6) for the first time since BEC 15 in Fife, 2008.

Dave G

Would Dave's back hold up sufficiently to give him a fighting chance of a 9th Scarisbrick Title?

Yes. Having retired after 9 holes at Monifieth Ashludie, David was reinvigorated for the final round at Carnoustie. There, a match win, 5 NBs, a net eagle and earnings of £17 elevated him to 5th position and ensured the Scarisbrick Trophy once more with 94 net 66.

Richard

Would Richard cope with his 14 handicap and exact revenge for being pipped into 2nd place by James at Manor House last year?

No. Despite an impressive 20 NBs, Richard was 44 over handicap and managed just one match win. Head-to-head against James he lost 5&4 and 2&1 and ultimately struggled home in 7th place with losses of £28.

Steve

Would Steve finesse his 1st (2022) and 8th (2023) finishes to record a tidy 1st / 8th / 1st combo and drive the bus home in the Pink Jacket?

No. Finding himself in 6th place after four rounds, Steve won his final two matches, pocketing just £2 … not enough to lift his position on the leader-board. Without the Pink Jacket and not appointed a named driver, dreams of repeating his 2022 'Wheels on the Bus' rendition were sadly dashed.

James

Would James triumph for a second consecutive year, set records tumbling and amaze one and all with his energy, eyesight and ability to recall every shot played?

Yes. Straight into the lead with earnings of £20 at Scotscraig, there was to be no stopping him. Unbeaten in the match play, James led from start to finish and retained the Tea Pot with earnings of £107. Records indeed tumbled: only the second person to retain the Tea Pot; the Longest Ever Drive (LED) on Tour (339yds); 43 pars (beating the 39 achieved by his father in 1998), and 34 NBs (surpassing the 32 recorded by David L in 2003). Congratulations James!

Together the possibilities are

Expensive

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