

European Seniors Tour player George Ryall shrugged off a late flight home from Spain to record another G&S PGA Pro Am victory. Hot on the heels of his recent win at Cleeve Hill he was again at the head of the field in the 4th staging of the popular Pro Am at Burnham and Berrow.



Ryall, returning from a successful week in Spain where he finished in a tie for 15th, only managed a few hours sleep before setting off for Burnham to join up with his amateur team. As soon as he stepped onto what must be one of his favourite courses he forgot all about his tiredness and raced to 4 under par after just 5 holes. Birdies at the third and fourth preceded the shot of the day. One of his amateurs had hit it in close to around 4ft and challenged Ryall to get inside it. Never one to shirk a challenge Ryall then duly stepped up with his 8 iron in hand and proceeded to hole his tee shot for his 14th career hole in one. Another birdie followed at the 8th but his turn for home proved much tougher as was the case for many players as the Burnham breeze increased as the day passed making the back nine play quite tough. His gave shots back at the 9th, 13th and 17th but a lengthy par putt dropped at the last to ensure he broke the 70 barrier. Second place went to Simon Stevenson from Taunton and Pickeridge who signalled his intention to play more this season with a level par 71. A rollercoaster front nine included 3 birdies, 3 pars and 3 bogies before back to back gains came at the 13th and 14th. These unfortunately were claimed back by the tough finish at Burnham and he had to settle for a very respectable level par return. Third position on a score of 72 went to the recently crowned Matchplay Champion Trevor Jones from Hambrook. He was another to suffer on the homeward run but he just managed to hold off G&S PGA Chairman and former Burnham amateur David Haines and Farrington's Steve Ritchie who handed in 73's.

In the team event the 23 team strong field were headed by one of the earlier starters. In the third match on the course Woodspring's Kevin Pitts led his team of Sam Sullivan, John Pickett and Roger Scarrett to an outstanding 14 under par score. This was aided by some superb play on the tricky short holes at Burnham with no less than 4 two's scored between the amateurs. Along with this Sam Sullivan, a 1 handicap player, also helped the team's cause by adding an impressive 4 birdies and an eagle during the round. This total stayed as the leading score throughout the day and only came under any kind of threat from the penultimate match. Filton Pro Daryl Kelley's team of Paul Hotchkiss, James Parker and Rich Collins only came up 2 shy of the winners after a score of 130, 12 under par. In third place were some past winners of the event. James

Symons, Mark Popham and Stuart Sully were accompanied by European Tour star David Dixon as they posted a 10 under score with all the team contributing through the round despite having an earlier than planned start due to Dixon's flight arrangements for this weeks tournament in Spain being changed at short notice. Pitts' team member Roger Scarrett added to their haul of prizes by taking the amateur nearest the pin prize at the 5th whilst Burnham member Jon White almost increased the day's hole in one tally as his tee shot at the 17th hole finished just inches away as he collected that nearest the pin award.



The winning team (minus Sam Sullivan)

All in all it was another successful G&S PGA Pro Am and it is hoped that they we will be able to return to the Somerset Links course next year to continue the popular event. Thanks must go the Club Staff for their hospitality on the day and especially to Greenkeeper Richard Whyman and his team who produced an excellent course for the players to test their skills on even though he felt it was set up too easy!