

Palm Island Inter-Club Challenge

**Palm Island Resort,
Friday 30th October**

There are some events where the golf is the most competitive aspect and there are other events when the thing most keenly contested is the Pig, the Golf Society equivalent of the dunce's cap!

As we gathered at the bus station for the trip to Guangdong, **Ian "Jumbo" Petersen** put in a very competitive early marker when he scurried back from the Coffee Shop having found that he had set out without his passport. He was immediately dispatched to Happy Valley to retrieve the missing ID and remarkably reached the bus stop at the border before we got there. Had he redeemed himself?

Well, **Captain Spooner**, was keen not to be outdone and immediately countered with a 'missing shirts' bid. This was to be the debut of the new GS match shirts but when it came to handing out the 10 shirts he proved not to be 1 short but a massive 3 short! I wonder where the other ones went? If you see a taxi driver wearing one, do let me know as it will solve that little mystery! Anyway, suffice to say that for sapping team spirit and sense of unity, El Capitano had thrown his hat in the ring.

The competition was an aggregate gross strokeplay format with the best 6 scores counting (from a team of 10). We knew a little about the other visiting clubs and immediately identified our hosts, with their local knowledge, as potentially our biggest competition. The course was known to few but accurately described by one as a 'long Lotus Hill'.

We played in pairs and when news of the scores started to trickle in, it was clear we had a solid base. **Terry Wright** shot the lights out with a gross 74. Partnering him the skipper didn't play to his best but



somehow muddled round in 82. In the next group, **Jonny Brock** came in with an impressive 77 and **Dallas Reid** had a solid 80. So with 4 good scores in the bank, we needed another couple of solid performances to seal the team score.

Taylor Hui and **Ivan Ng** had some good holes but gross strokeplay is a tough format in which a couple of bad holes can really make a mess of your card. We wouldn't be taking their scores today. In the next flight, Ian had had one bad hole too many but **Andrew Wood** had creditably scraped into the high 80s. One more good score needed, could our final pairing of **Nick Allen** and **Warren Weener** deliver?

Nick hadn't done badly but didn't register his best score. Warren? Well, we did end up taking Warren's 93 but in the post-match debrief it became clear that Warren might have scored rather less had he not 'given up' and taken the maximum 'double par + 1' 11 on a par 5! This was a heinous admission. For the non golfers, you NEVER give up in a gross competition. No matter how badly you think you are doing, your competition could be doing worse! Let's hope it didn't come down to fine margins. If it did, the recipient of the Pig was now clear.

In practice, Warren was saved on 2 counts. Firstly, his extra shots cost us nothing. Secondly, we were then regaled with the tale of the ultimate



Pig-clinching performance of Dallas Reid. Increasingly frustrated with his golf, in the latter stages of his round, he sank to his knees and proceeded to pound his 3-wood into the ground in an axe-wielding fashion until the inevitable happened (*see above*). Dallas was truly shafted and the Pig was his!!

And so the (official) prize-giving ceremony began. Terry's stellar round had duly made him the individual gross champion. He also took 2 of the near pin prizes and a long drive prize, with other long drives won by Duncan and Warren. Jonny bagged the individual gross runners-up prize and Duncan the net. And so, with all this silverware already awarded it was little surprise when we were then declared the overall winning team. A generous lucky draw meant that no-one went home empty handed and so it proved a bountiful outing to China, celebrated long and hard with a sack full of roadies for the journey home. ■

Duncan Spooner, Captain



Yinli Golf Outing, Monday 2nd November

This was my 2nd trip to this gem of a golf course in Dongguan and again it proved itself to be a fantastic day trip into China.

With only 6 players participating in this event we decided to play a 3 player team stableford challenge.

My team consisted of **Quentin Burrows** and **Alex Mackintosh (Sandy)** and we were taking on **Terry Wright, Gilles Bonnier** and **Mike McSweeney**.

With our handicaps fairly evenly matched we thought we were all set for a thrilling game. But with myself struggling with a back injury and my team mates unable to find their form, our stableford score was pitiful to say the least. Just a glance at the scores and no adding up was necessary, a sound victory to Terry, Gilles and Mike.

Nearest the pins were still in play and were very tough off the blue tees, with nobody finding the green on Hole 12. Gilles took Hole 15; Mike, Hole 3 and Terry Hole. 8. We all joined together as a 6 ball on the last hole for the longest drive competition and Gilles just rolled it past Terry's drive to claim the sleeve of balls.

The package included a set lunch which was all in Chinese and with no one in the group speaking any Chinese, it was pot luck when we ordered and it turned out great.

There was a slight delay when we took the bus back to Wanchai as there was a 10-car pile up on the motorway which caused us to be stranded for an hour, but even this wasn't going to spoil a fantastic day out in China.

Look forward to coming back again next year. ■

Phil Head, Golf Event Organiser

Reunification Cup Lotus Hill Golf Resort, Saturday 7th – Sunday 8th November

As back-to-back runners-up in this 4-way competition against the American Club, the Chinese Recreation Club and the Country Club, arguably the highlight of the HKFC golfing calendar, we were determined this year to go one better. Once again we had the lowest handicaps of the 4 teams, but in this net stableford competition would that be an advantage or disadvantage?

Everyone likes to come in with more than 36 points having played their best but this format is determined not by how many scores you have in the high-30s but by how many you have in the mid-20s. On the Saturday, we delivered a strong all-round team performance with no-one scoring lower than high-20s. **Lee Wainwright's** far-from-disastrous 27 took the Duffer's Cap by a fine margin from **Duncan Spooner's** 28, unable as he was to reproduce the fine form of his warm-up round (see Tennis/Squash write up). **Anatole Le** grabbed the headlines with a whopping 40 points. If only we had all been to Lotus Hill the previous 2 weekends to practice! **Jonny Brock** and **Nick Allen** also beat their handicaps.

Overall, this solid team effort translated into a 13-point overnight lead, with a rather larger margin to the 3rd and 4th place teams. Would it be enough? Last year we had led by 5 only to be overhauled on Day 2 by a 10-point swing. HKFC has the reputation amongst the other teams for 'having the most fun'. This year there was no Phil Head on the team to drag us seriously astray and so despite a mildly bacchanalian dinner everyone was tucked up at a sensible hour.

Anatole was rewarded for his great scoring on Day 1 with the 1st tee time on Day 2 at 6.45am (although he moaned about it a lot less than Mr Brock). Clearly the lack of pre-match preparation time didn't suit him and he failed to reproduce his magical form from Day 1. Brocky came in with another solid score but Nick Allen was another who struggled to come up with back-to-back brilliance. Would this be the theme for the weekend as we again snatched defeat from the jaws of victory?

NO IT WOULD NOT! Once more, a very solid team performance left our opponents with an awful lot to do to close the gap. Capt Spooner bounced back with a strong score, **Dallas Reid** shot 37 points on Day 2 and **Jim Suttie** also scored well. And our francophones, **JP Cuvelier** and **Eric Desgouttes**, were very steady throughout. Crucially, we only

