

## Royal Norwich pair are the perfect partners

Royal Norwich's let Cuppens and Nicky Wylie underlined their successful partnership with a one-point win in the Norfolk Ladies' County Foursomes at King's Lynn.

They have played together all season in the Norfolk second team and won every match and their good form continued into this 36-hole event, which they won for the second time.

They played some cracking golf, including one shot from Cuppens which proved to be a £50 earner for charity.

She explained: "On the par five 13th Nicky hit a corker of a drive and left me about 200 yards to the green. I was undecided about whether or not to go for it when Alex Cowie, one of our playing partners, said 'I'll give you £50 if you can get there!'"

"I hit a corker of a shot which finished an arm's length from the hole - and the others were all jumping in the air!"

Cowie insisted on paying up but Cuppens wouldn't accept it. The solution? Cowie is to be the next ladies' captain at Barnham Broom and the money is destined for her charity fund.

Cuppen, who is to be the next captain of the Norfolk ladies' second team, added: "We really enjoyed it. The weather was fantastic, the company was good, the organisation was good. It was fun."

Eaton teenagers Edwina Lowrey-Gold and Emma Davies successfully defended the scratch salver.

**Results - Earlham Handicap Cup:** Nicky Wylie and let Cuppens (Royal Norwich) 66pts. Nicky Clarke and Jean Johnson (Royal Norwich and Hunstanton), 65, on count back on the last 6 holes from Betsy Brooks-Cooper and Sammy Martin (Barnham Broom and Royal Norwich). **Best handicap AM:** Sarah Steventon and Julia Smith (Royal Cromer), 37. **Best handicap PM:** Barbara Cook and Diane Prewer (Royal Cromer), 32, on countback from S. Hindell and M. Barter and E. Edwards and G. Adams. **Johnson Scratch Salver:** Edwina Lowrey-Gold and Emma Davies (Eaton) 57pts.

## GOLF

Picture: SIMON FINLAY



SPANISH DATE: Weston Park professional Ian Ellis is heading for the continent as he bids to gain his card on the full European Tour.

# Steady Ian continues journey to Euro Tour

By LYNDESEY HEWISON

East Anglia's number one professional Ian Ellis has cleared the first hurdle to winning a place on the European Tour.

Ellis, from Weston Park, eased through the first stage of qualifying in a share 17th place at St Annes Old Links, Lancashire. He was two under par with rounds of 70, 73, 72, 71.

The top 36 players qualified and will join another 162 golfers from other venues who will play in the second stage in Spain from November 7-10. At stake is a place in final qualifying at San Roque in Spain later in the month.

Ellis's qualifier was played in wet and windy weather, with a five hour 20 minute delay on the final day. But he played well throughout the event, dropping shots on just nine holes.

"I birdied the first three holes of the tournament which was nice," said Ellis. "But I was steady rather than spectacular."

"I'm very pleased to get through to the next stage - and we'll just see what happens."

Ellis is in fine form, having won the PGA East region order of merit already this season. This week he has also just scored his fourth win in an East Region pro-am with a three-under par 68 at Maldon, one ahead of Ryan Pudney of Royal Cromer.

He's also got plenty of competition coming up. Next week he's in the final of the PGA Fourball Championship at Fulford. Later in October he will join other leading players from

the seven regional orders of merit at Holinwell to play-off for a host of privileges next season.

Among them are starts in next year's Scottish Open at Loch Lomond, the European Open at the K Club, the Wales Open at Celtic Manor and invitations to compete on the Challenge Tour.

"I've got six seven weeks to get ready for the next stage of Tour School and hopefully I will be fully firing and shooting some low scores," said Ellis.

Meanwhile, Norfolk's current European Tour player Andrew Marshall is hoping for a big performance in the Dunhill Links championship which begins next Thursday at St Andrews, Carnoustie and Kingsbarns in Scotland.

Marshall won 20,000 Euros after a good showing at the British Masters last week but still needs some good finishes if he is to retain his card for next season. He is currently 158th on the money list and needs to climb about 40 places in order to be back on the tour.

And he said: "There is no question that I have to fire out of the blocks come the Dunhill Links championship."

"Some of the big names will be giving it a miss after the Seve Trophy so I must be ready to take my chance."

"If, and I know it's a big if, I can manage a top 10 position then that would certainly take a lot of the pressure off going into the remaining three tournaments of the season."

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## Monty issues plea to stay-away fans

Colin Montgomerie last night made an appeal for Ireland's farming community to switch their attentions from the National Ploughing Championship to the Seve Trophy golf at the nearby Heritage course.

While a crowd in excess of 80,000 were at one of Europe's biggest agricultural shows only a tiny fraction of that figure watched Nick Faldo's Britain and Ireland - a team with no Irish in it - lose the opening fourballs 3-2 to Continental Europe.

"The sooner they finish the better - they can come round and support us," said Montgomerie after he and fellow Scot Marc Warren lost the top game three and one to Swedish pair Robert Karlsson and Peter Hanson.

Montgomerie, aware of the impact that a bigger gallery could have, added: "I'm serious. The atmosphere is limited. I get that size of crowd in a practice round in the evening and it's a shame. It's good quality golf and a great golf course, but we need the farmers to bring their wellies and get over here. This event has all the

### FOURBALLS DETAILS

**Great Britain and Ireland 2 Continental Europe 3:** Colin Montgomerie and Marc Warren lost to Peter Hanson and Robert Karlsson 2 and 1, Bradley Dredge and Phillip Archer bt Miguel Angel Jimenez and Gonzalo Fernandez-Castano 2 and 1, Paul Casey and Simon Dyson lost to Raphael Jacquelin and Gregory Havret 4 and 3, Nick Dougherty and Graeme Storm bt Thomas Bjorn and Soren Hansen 1 hole, Justin Rose and Oliver Wilson lost to Markus Brier and Mikko Ilonen 3 and 2.

potential provided people show up." The Scot, referring to the number of top players eligible but unavailable for one reason or another, said: "Eleven alternates is clearly far too many. Two or three you can get away with."

Faldo's side is lacking Open champion Pdraig Harrington, Luke Donald, Lee Westwood and Ian Poulter, while Ballesteros had seven players turn down the chance to play for him, including top four Sergio Garcia, Henrik Stenson, Niclas Fasth and Anders Hansen.

Nevertheless, they edged the opening exchanges and might have been further ahead but for England's Graeme Storm sinking an 18-foot

birdie putt on the final green of the final game. That gave Storm and Nick Dougherty a one-hole victory over Thomas Bjorn and Soren Hansen.

"It feels marvellous," said French Open champion Storm. "We dovetailed well and to be only one point behind helps our confidence."

Paul Casey for one certainly needed his confidence boosting after the way he started. Britain and Ireland's second highest-ranked player behind Justin Rose was in water three times in the first six holes and captain Faldo felt the need to intervene with some swing thoughts at that point. Some players might not have liked that but although Casey and Simon Dyson went on to lose four and three to Raphael Jacquelin and Gregory Havret he said later: "Not an issue - it was confirmation of a fault I've got."

Rose and Oliver Wilson lost three and two to Markus Brier and Mikko Ilonen, but Bradley Dredge and Phillip Archer were two and one winners over Miguel Angel Jimenez and Gonzalo Fernandez-Castano.