



DUNCAN DIGS DEEP TO DELIVER DRAMATIC DISABLED DOUBLE

Surrey's Duncan Hamilton-Martin recovered from an opening hole quadruple bogey eight to win the 2011 Disabled British Open, at East Sussex National, with 35 holes of outstanding golf.

The 54-year-old independent financial advisor, from Esher, plays off a three-handicap and fought back to record a remarkable first round gross 74, two over par. And his title-clinching second round one-under-par 71 was enough to give him the championship by an impressive nine shots from second-placed Robert Paul, from Kent.

It is the second time Hamilton-Martin, a member at St George's Hill, Weybridge, has won the title, following his success at Old Thorns, in Hampshire, in 2009. And his poor start did not prey too long on his mind, as he explained.

"My daughter got into university on the Thursday and that was such a stressful period that I said to myself 'if I take 100, 100 at the weekend, it's not a problem'," he said. "On the first I hit a pretty good drive, a bit left; I hit a good second shot at the pin but it was just a bit short and spun back into the hazard. Then I hit it a bit long and it was impossible in the long grass. I eventually hacked it out, chipped and two-putted and it was an eight – but I hadn't played really badly. "I thought I would just aim to break 80 and ended up two under for the rest of the first round. Nothing fazes me on the golf course. I adopted the pros' approach: I played it one shot at a time, not getting too excited or depressed about it – it's gone. It's about the next shot. I also had my wife, Frances, on the bag on the final round which was very calming. "I was emotional at the end though. I struggled to get through the speeches without a bit of a break-up. When it comes to the end and you've won it, it is a bit of a relief."

Hamilton-Martin, who aims to have a crack at next year's "able-bodied" English seniors' title, was full of praise for both the golf course and the overall event.

He said: "It was great. The course was set up superbly; the greens were quick, but not scarily quick, which made it very playable. They still put the pins in some tasty places though... It was absolutely magnificent.

"On that course a five shot-lead with three to play is not something you feel comfortable about. I dropped 10 shots there last year – it's a fantastic golf course and the last four holes can really get into your head.

"The Disabled British Open is a brilliant all-inclusive event. The guy who came over from America, Jason Faircloth – he has cerebral palsy, a lovely bloke – he can't play in the championships in the USA because he's not an amputee. How crazy is that? "I've only lost a leg, below the knee; I don't consider myself disabled – it's only a scratch in disabled terms. But this is a brilliant all-inclusive event; everyone can play and everybody has a great time. "I watched a bit of the junior event too – it was fantastic. That's the future. Hopefully that will be bigger and bigger. "I'll certainly be back next year, if, as Henry Longhurst used to say, 'I should be spared...'"

The tournament is also divided into three golfing handicap categories: up to 12, in category one; 13-20 in category two; and 21 to 28 in category three, with prizes awarded to the winners of each category.

The inaugural Junior Disabled British Open, also played over two days, was won by 13-year-old Frankie Jones, from Welshpool, who has cerebral palsy. The 28-handicapper recorded Stableford scores of 42 and 41 points for a two-round total of 83, one point ahead of his nearest rival, Kent's Jack Holland, aged 12.

Sue Saville, managing director of Tourism South East, owner of the event, said: "It was a fantastic three days of golf and we'd like to thank Accentuate, for supporting the event; East Sussex National, for its professionalism, support and outstanding infrastructure; all our sponsors; the players; and the volunteers – who acted as caddies, marshals, ball spotters and everything else. Without all of these people this outstanding event would not be possible. "It goes from strength to strength every year and to be able to launch the Junior Disabled British Open this year was a great thrill for everybody involved. I'm sure that when other youngsters see they have nothing to fear we will soon have a field for the junior event as large as the adult version."





Andy Barwell, a director of event organiser the Azalea Group, added: “There aren’t many things in sport that bring a lump to the throat, but seeing 13-year-old Frankie Jones take the microphone after the presentation and deliver a thank-you speech that would not have been out of place at an Open Championship award ceremony, certainly had that effect on many of us.”

This year the DBO received support from far and wide including the UK Government – both the Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport, Jeremy Hunt MP, and the Minister for Disabled People, Maria Miller MP, praised it for its inclusivity and legacy – the sport’s governing body, the R&A, the European Tour and Wealden District Council.

And, for the second successive year, the championship received sponsorship support from IMSM, the leading ISO standard implementation consultant.

The Sky Sports-broadcast event is delivered through Tourism South East, and is part of Accentuate, a transformational programme of 15 projects, inspired by the Paralympic Movement, which seeks to change perceptions and offer opportunities to showcase the talents of deaf and disabled people. Accentuate is funded by Legacy Trust UK, creating a lasting legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games across the UK, SEEDA and the regional cultural agencies.

■ For further information, or to enquire about participating in the 2012 Disabled British Open contact championship organiser Andy Barwell on 07961 315520 or visit www.disabledbritishopen.org.

■ **Results:** 1, Duncan Hamilton-Martin (St George’s Hill), 145; 2, Robert Paul (Westgate & Birchington) 154; =3, Alasdair Berry (Irvine Ravenspark), Jeremy Freeman (Newark & Seacroft) 155; =5, Mark Smith (Littlestone), Stefan Mörkholt (Gyttegaard, Denmark) 156; 7, Kevin Harmison (Newbiggin) 159; 8, Andy Gardiner (Banbury) 160; 9, Saleem Raza (Gujranwala, Pakistan) 161; 10, John Eakin (Royal Ashdown Forest) 162; 11, Alan Jackson (Romford) 165; =12, Nick Champness (Royal Ashdown Forest), Pieta Le Roux (Potters Bar) 170; 14, Steve Haxton (Craigie Hill) 173; 15, Tony Lloyd (Horsehay Village) 175; 16, Darren Grey (Darlington) 176; 17, Mike Lincoln (unnatt) 177; =18, Peter Light (Whitchurch), Johnny Reay (Stoneleigh Deer Park) 178; =20, Ian Dixon (Bishopswood), Anthony Forster (Long Ashton), Brendon Slavin (Seaford Head) 180; =23, Ian White (Dullator), Ben Bowen (Trethorne) 181; 25, George Hutchings (Feldon Valley) 182; 26, Mark Helm (Minchinhapton Old Course) 183; 27, Martin Jelley (Pyrford), 184; =29, Derek Rogers (Goodwood), Richard Saunders (Hintlesham) 187; =31, Xavi Rubio Alcantara (unnatt, Spain), James Jowett (Parkstone) 188; 33, Roger Hurcombe (Boars Head) 189; =34, Colin Brock (Balbirmie Park), Jason Faircloth (unnatt, USA) 190; =36, Kevin Reed (Priors Hill), Ben Whitlock (Bramshaw), Chris Foster (Great Hadham) 192; 39, Andrew Sellars (Normaton) 194; =40, Kevin Barby (Shrivenham Park), Gary Gardiner (Marriott Dalmahoy) 197; =42, Paul Cunningham (Thames Ditton & Esher), Steve Bramwell (Cochrane Castle) 199; 44, Kevin Cook (Llanwern) 201; 45, William Savage (Orchardleigh) 203; =46, Gareth Williams (Woodlake Park), Nigel Davis (Deanwood Park) 206; 48, Simon Wilcock (Cottingham Parks) 209; 49, Ian Halliwell (Standish) 212; William Hennessey (Highlands) 223.

Category 1: 1, Andy Gardiner (Banbury); 2, Duncan Hamilton-Martin (St George’s Hill); 3, Robert Paul (Westgate & Birchington). **Category 2:** 1, Alan Jackson (Romford); 2, Tony Lloyd (Horsehay Village); 3, Steve Haxton (Craigie Hill). **Category 3:** 1, David Walker (Westgate & Birchington); 2, Keith Wallace (Forest Hills); 3, Scott Richardson (Stockwood).

Junior Disabled British Open result: 1, Frankie Jones (Welshpool) 83 points; 2, Jack Holland (Prince’s) 82; 3, Ben Jones (Welshpool) 71; 4, Joseph Vanaman (Hollingwell) 70; 5, Alfie Neenan (Prince’s) 69; 6, Matthew Tyne (Ramsdale / Millfield) 68; 7, Rupert Preston (West Sussex) 65; 8, James Gallagher (unnatt) 55; 9, Richard Warren (Mill Ride) 55; 10, Leo Millar (Knighton Heath) 48; 10, Jack Hibbert (Eastbourne Golfing Park) 43.

ENDS

Information for journalists.

Press release written and distributed by the Azalea Group.

- Legacy Trust UK is an independent charity with a mission to support a wide range of innovative cultural and sporting activities which celebrate the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and which will leave a lasting legacy in communities throughout the UK. Legacy Trust UK is funding cultural and sporting activity in each nation and region of the UK, and Accentuate is the Trust’s programme in the south-east of England. The trust is funded by a £40m endowment from the Big Lottery Fund (£29m), Department for Culture Media and Sport (£6m) and Arts Council England (£5m), and is a principal funder of the Cultural Olympiad and London 2012 Festival.

For further information or hi-resolution imagery please contact Andy Barwell on 07961 315520 or email andy@theazaleagroup.com.

