



Bad lies

Alfred Dunhill Championship...

After an incredibly hot weekend, David Lipsky sank the last tournament putt late yesterday afternoon. He made birdie at the final hole to win the Alfred Dunhill Championship at Leopard Creek, giving him a two-shot win over David Drysdale (whose final round of 67 got him to 12-under).

The final round had loads of drama. Brandon Stone got off to a flying start with two birdies in the first two holes, and then let it slip. Scott Jameson was the leader going into the final round but he dropped a few shots mid-way through his round and eventually fought back gallantly to finish in joint 3rd place with Zander Lombard, on 11-under.

Zander made the biggest move but he found the water at the par 3, 16th and made a six. On the same hole the leader, David Lipsky made a five. The pin was put into the very right corner of the green – if you missed the green, especially into the back bunker, you often weren't even able to aim your bunker shot at the hole.

Louis Oosthuizen was the man that many thought would do something special on Sunday but he could only manage a 71 to finish in 7th place. Oliver Bekker was the other South African in the Top 10 – he finished on 6-under.

Raphael Jacquelin had two great rounds and two bad rounds. His 68-75-66-76 left him in 18th position on 3-under.

Deven Lawson made a hole in one on the 16th hole and won a BMW 850M.

I would say that the new grasses that have been put onto the entire golf course were generally popular amongst the players. They have made the golf course far more playable for the amateur golfer, but it's still an excellent test for the pro's. The bunkers are mostly shallower than before and possibly less visually appealing.

My Awards for 2018...

- **Golfer of the Year Award** – Without question goes to Francesco Molinari. His play all over the World was amazing in 2018. He won in America for the first time, won the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth; won the Open Championship with a flawless display of golf and then demolished the American team in the Ryder Cup. Brilliant.
- **Dogged Determination Award** – This goes to Brooks Koepka who also had a wonderful year, winning his

second US Open title in a row and the PGA Championship. He had two second place finishes, and ten Top 25's. He seems to have ice running through his veins. He reminds me a little of a young Retief Goosen.

- **Comeback Award** – No contest here – it has to go to Tiger Woods whose comeback was nothing short of sensational. A year ago, few including Tiger, thought he would win again. In fact, Tiger had thought of never playing again. He featured in a few tournaments but faltered down the last few holes. He didn't falter at the Tour Championship though, and there were record crowds in attendance to watch him win. He certainly is not the "Tiger of old", but one must remember that he is nearly 42 years old and his body is not nearly as strong as it was 10 to 15 years ago. I'm sure Tiger will win again next year but I'm not sure the majors will be that easy for him.

- **The Chameleon Award** - Phil Mickelson showed his true colours in 2018 with a silly display at the US Open for which he should have been disqualified. Then at the Ryder Cup he behaved like a little child, much like he did with Tom Watson after the US lost in 2014 at Gleneagles. I've always felt that Mickelson was insincere and in 2018 I was proven correct.

- **The Golden Oldies Award** – Definitely goes to Tom Watson for his win in the Par 3 event at Augusta at the age of 68. It was nothing short of amazing. He shot a 6-under par score of 21! Watson last won the par 3 contest in 1982, 36 years before! Show me another sport where that could happen... He played in a 3-ball with legends Gary Player and Jack Nicklaus. Not only did Nicklaus shoot 4-under to finish tied for third at the age of 78, but on the final hole he allowed his fifteen-year-old grandson, GT, to take a shot and he promptly holed out. It brought golf's greatest Nicklaus to tears.

- **The Asian Swing Award** - Will be shared by Shaun Norris and Justin Harding. Shaun played some terrific golf on the Japanese Tour and finished second on their Order of Merit while Justin Harding finished third on the Asian Tour's Order of Merit.

- **The Great Timing Award** - Brandon Stone was having a very iffy year before notching up a great win in the Scottish Open. It also just happened to be a Rolex Series event, which catapulted him back up the Order of Merit.

- **The Rise of the Amateur Award** - shared by Jovan Rebula and Martin Vorster. Jovan won the Freddie Tait Trophy at the SA Open and the Amateur Championship, becoming only the second South African amateur to achieve that. Martin won the Junior Open Championship, which was a first for a South African junior. A name to watch out for in future is fifteen-year-old Yurav Premhlall, who finished as the second low amateur in the SA Open. He is a special talent.

And looking forward to 2019, I predict....

- It wasn't the best year for South Africans in the majors but judging by the way Louis Oosthuizen, Charl Schwartzel and Branden Grace are playing, we might see one in 2019. I also think Justin Rose will win again – as will Brooks Koepka...

- This may be wishful thinking but I really do hope we have an International win in the Presidents Cup

This is my final "full" newsletter for the year. If anything of interest happens over the next couple of weeks, I will keep you in the loop via my broadcast messages, but in the meantime, I wish you a wonderful festive season. Travel safely if you are going away and I wish you rich blessings - in life, in work and on the golf course!

When the Ball Hits Back...

If you play golf like this then you will be happy to know that the year is nearly at an end and you can add "*I promise to behave better on the golf course*" to your list of New Year's resolutions...



Players of the month

• Fresh from Q-School, **Kurt Kitayama** won the **AfrAsia Bank Mauritius Open** (29th Nov to 2nd Dec) at the Four Seasons GC Anahita: - *"It's an unbelievable moment for me, I'm just so happy I was able to pull it off...This whole year has been, well, what a great year. I still have two more events but to win on one of the last events of the year is just great...It's been really exciting, being able to travel all over the globe and I'm going to continue to travel more. I'm really looking forward to it."*

• **Jon Rahm** shot a 7-under 65 in the final round to win the **Hero World Challenge** (29th Nov to 2nd Dec) in the Bahamas: - *"Ball-striking wise, it's pretty much about where I want it to be. It was about as perfect as it could have been today. I played so solid tee to green. I didn't make any mistakes. If you can capitalize on the five par-5s and the two drivable par-4s, which I did on all of them today, you're going to have a good chance."*

• **Louis Oosthuizen** finally added a **South African Open** (6th to 9th Dec) title to his resume: - *"I wish the family was here... I knew today was either going to be very special or heartbreaking. I know there's only a few that have won The Open and the SA Open so I'm very chuffed to have my name on this..This feels very special. This is perfect."*

• **David Lipsky** won his second European Tour title at the **Alfred Dunhill Championship** (13th to 16th Dec) at Leopard Creek CC: - *"It's indescribable actually. Winning is what we all hope to do, it's what we practise for, it's what we all put the time in for - the blood, sweat and tears. This was a tough year for me. I haven't played that well and have really struggled. To cap it off with a win at the end of the year is so special and I'm really looking forward to big things in 2019."*

Around the world

• Davis Love III and Dru Love won the **PNC Father Challenge** at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Club in Orlando. They finished at 26-under 118, which broke the record in the scramble format by one. They had a 16-under 56 on Sunday which was also a record, which was previously held by Raymond Floyd and his son in 1995, and by Bob Charles and his son in 1998. They won by three shots over John and Little John Daly; Retief and Leo Goosen, and Stewart and Connor Cink.

• Thailand's **Poom Saksansin** won the Asian Tour's season ending **BNI Indonesian Masters** at the Royal Jakarta GC. He shot a 4-under 68 on Sunday to win by three on 20-under 268. Jazz Janewattananond finished second on 17-under after shooting a 65 and Panuphol Pittayarat finished third a further two shots back. Henrik Stenson was fourth on 14-under. Jbe Kruger tied for 24th on 4-under and Keith Horne tied for 28th on 3-under. Sadly Justin Harding missed the cut but he finished the season well, in third place on the Habitat for Humanity Standings behind India's Shubhankar Sharma and Korea's Sanghyun Park.

· **Roger Chapman** won his first Staysure Tour title in more than six years when he beat Phillip Price in a play-off at the season ending **MCB Tour Championship – Seychelles**. Price shot a 5-under 63 to set the clubhouse target while Chapman, who started the final round seven shots off the lead of Miguel Angel Martín, shot a 65. They tied on 6-under 175. Roger Chapman made eagle on the first play-off hole to win. Tom Lehman bogeyed the last hole to finish third on 5-under while James Kingston tied for fourth alongside Miguel Angel Martín on 3-under. Paul Broadhurst won the John Jacobs Trophy for finishing top of the Staysure Tour Order of Merit for the second time in three years.

· **Luke Brown** won the **Big Easy Tour Championship** at Centurion CC when he beat Dylan Kok in a play-off. Brown set the clubhouse target at 13-under 203 after a final round 4-under 68, while Kok missed a birdie at the last to win and forced a play-off instead. Brown won with an eagle on the play-off hole. Hayden Griffiths finished third two shots back. Kok will still be celebrating though after he finished on top of the Road to Sunshine Tour rankings. The top 10 players on the Road to Sunshine Tour have earned cards for the 2019/2020 Sunshine Tour – congrats to Luke Brown; Matt Bright; Juran Dreyer; Dylan Mostert; Ruan Korb; DK Kim; Cameron Moralee; Paul Boshoff and Hendrikus Stoop who close out the top ten.

· **Lejan Lewthwaite** qualified for the **Finals Lalla Aicha Tour School** after finishing tied for 36th on 3-over at the Pre-Qualifier-B at the Amelkis Golf Club in Morocco. It was won by Sweden's Linnea Ström on 23-under 265 and only thirty-eight players made it through to the final, which is being played this week. Nobuhle Dlamini and Brittny-fay Berger will join Lejan in the final event which is currently underway. We wish them the best of luck.

· South African Golf Development Board member **Tristan Galant** won the **Bridgefund Junior Series** event at Rondebosch last week. He finished with two birdies for a 2-under 70 while his younger brother Jaydon shot 74 to win the Under -13 title.

· Bellville Golf Club's **Samuel Simpson** won the **Joburg Junior Open** at Randpark GC. He shot rounds of 68 & 67 to win by five shots on 9-under 135. Jayden Schaper; Christo Lamprecht Jnr and Cole Stevens tied for second on 4-under.

· Francesco Molinari has been named as the 2018 Hilton European Tour Golfer of the Year by a panel of golf media. He won the BMW PGA, the Open Championship and the Race to Dubai and became the first European player to win five points from five matches against the United States in the Ryder Cup. The European Tour also announced that he has been awarded Honorary Life Membership of the Tour courtesy of his Open Championship win.

Soap box

Frank Thomas is a South African and former technical director of the USGA, inventor of the Frankly Frog Putter and the author of "Just Hit It".

Performance of Scuffed Golf Balls

Dear Frank,

I know the Pros change balls often during a round. I cannot afford to buy balls every month, so I play scuffed balls until they are lost or in the water. Does playing scuffed balls affect my game that much? I'm a 17 handicap.

Ralph



Ralph,

You will certainly see the difference in performance between scuffed golf balls and new, clean, unblemished golf balls.

This obviously depends on how badly they have been scuffed. Many times on the driving range you come across a ball which has been through the ball washer about as many times as we have been misled by politicians. This causes the surface to be less than perfect with worn down dimples. The aerodynamics are

completely ruined and the ball's trajectory is erratic and the distance is significantly shorter than the newer range balls.

A scuffed ball affects the air flow over the ball and it will not perform as designed. In fact if some dimples – five or six on one side of the ball — are shallower than the others, by as little as 0.002 of an inch (the width of a human hair) the ball flight may be affected by as much as 3 to 5 yards off line on a 225 yard drive — a long par three.

For most of us 3 to 5 yards off line will not make too much difference and we may not even notice it, except for that one time when everything comes together and we make absolutely perfect contact. Three to five yards

may be the difference between buying drinks for those in the clubhouse or not. This may save you some money but deprive you of one of the most wonderful experiences in golf. On a side note, the odds of making a hole-in-one are significantly better than winning the lottery.

For the reason above I suggest that you clean your golf ball 'gently' and as often as you can without wearing down the surface — mud in a few dimples will affect the ball flight – and if the ball is scuffed badly then find a place for it in the shag bag.

Normally a hard Surlyn® cover will resist scuffing from a cart path or vicious sand shot but will also reduce your potential to spin the ball on a wedge shot from just off the green.

Frank

On tour with Dale

City Lodge Hotel Group has just launched a Half Price Campaign, for bookings between 14/12/2018 and 13/01/2019. [Click here](#) to access all the details and T&C's.

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Contact Francois Viljoen on (012) 654-1144 / 072 224 2456 / mentor@golfmanagementcampus.co.za or visit www.golfmanagementcampus.co.za.



The Driving Range

This month **Elsabe Hefer** advises you on how to use **your on-course stats** to aid your practice sessions over the festive season.

This week she looks at green in regulation stats and what you need to do to improve yours.



Elsabe Hefer is a Fellow Member of the PGA; a former Gauteng North PGA Teacher of the Year and PGA Top 20 Teacher. She is the Head Teaching Professional at Zwartkop Country Club.

[Get in touch >](#)

And, to finish off...

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The Hole-in-One Club

The Silly Season...

"Ninety percent of all putts which finish short of the hole don't go in." Yogi Berra



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