



NATIONAL PAIRS 2021 REPORT

After an extraordinary year and another cancelled event, we all crossed our fingers and prayed for Boris to open up the country. Unfortunately, this was not the case, but with backup plans brought in to place and a dedicated team of organisers, the National Pairs was able to go ahead with a few minor tweaks.

With a week of rain and warmth building up to the competition the course had a chance to flourish. Fortunately, the rain subsided and the sun emerged to the players' delight. The Porters Park green staff excelled themselves with everyone commenting on how well the course was presented.

Whilst the first teams teed off and others enjoyed the warm up facilities, the players lined up to take on the nearest the pin challenge in the swing studio. With a pin set at 165 yards, everyone had three shots to aim as close as possible and walk away with a top prize. There were some great shots throughout the morning, but eventually Bryn Jones (representing Nottinghamshire) stepped up and hit to a very impressive 2.1ft from the hole.

This challenge, as well as a raffle, enabled us to raise £2500 for the FF Charity. Thank you and well done to all that donated and took part.

Day 1 of the competition saw some good scoring on a difficult course. The conditions were perfect with little to no wind and a warm 21 degrees. Home advantage seemed to pay off for Nick Weaver and Steve Rogers who were top of the gross leader board with an impressive 71 (1 over par). However, with several 72's recorded there was all to play for. Pete Ballard and Nick Rate were top of the Nett results with 62, a very impressive opening round but with a 63 and six 64's day 2 was set up for a team to step up and claim the prize.

Day 2 also brought us a dry day but with a slightly stronger wind. The greens had been freshly cut and the being pins slightly harder made for an exciting finish to the competition. Due to a two tee start, the results started coming in thick and fast. Some teams were unable to maintain the pace, but two teams stepped up to the plate and delivered exceptional scores. The day 2 prize winners were Kev Newbold and Terry Scott with a very impressive Nett 62, and Neill Spratt and Billy Jarrett with a Gross 73.

After two days' battle with the course, the time came to see who had succeeded. With 4 nearest the pins, and one nearest the pin in two per day, congratulations to all those who won a prize.

The main competition saw two teams stand above the rest and deliver. The 1st place Gross went to Sean Dolton and Chris Allen (Essex). After a Gross 72 on the first day the pair were able to better that score and shot a very impressive 69 (-1) to hold off second place by just one shot.

The National Pairs Winners 2021

Paul Hesford and Mark Riley (GMC)

Paul and Mark shot a Nett 64 on the first day and sat tied with a handful of teams. The pair stepped out on to the second day and had the dream start. They shot -7 through the first 9 holes went on to shoot the lowest score of the tournament with a Nett 61 and a combined total of 125.

Congratulations to Paul and Mark who have sent me their winner's speech which was unfortunately unable to be given at the presentation.

"On behalf of Paul and Myself I'd like to say a massive thank you to Lee and his team from Hertfordshire fire and rescue for their efforts in organizing such a fantastic event. To all the staff and

members at Porters Park you have an absolutely amazing golf course and thank you so much for your hospitality and for letting us take over for the two days it's appreciated so much. To the sponsors for their continued support, without you these events could not be what they are, thank you. I'd also like to thank our playing partners over the two days, Warren and Paul from Durham and Darlington who finished a close second, well played and it was a pleasure and to Nick and Alan from West Mids thanks for your company and it was good to see you improve on your first round. Finally, I'd just like to say it's great to get back to playing national events after everything that's happened in the last 18 months or so and can't wait to see you all again very soon, Have a fantastic golfing summer. Paul and Mark"

On behalf of Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and the FSSAA, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone that either organised, sponsored or participated in the event. Despite adhering to strict Covid 19 guidance, the competition was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Full results can be found on Handicap Master and the FSSAA Golf Section web site (to follow).

Lee Digweed
Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue GS Secretary



The National Pairs Winners 2021
Paul Hesford and Mark Riley (GMC)



Best Gross Sean Dolton and Chris Allen
(Essex)