

## **Royal Lytham & St. Annes Golf Club**

### **The 2001 Open Championship**

*“This championship is different from the other majors. I find that when you play a course like this one, if you make any small mistake it is compounded. There are no ifs and buts. You can’t play out of all of the bunkers and you can’t play much out of the rough unless you get lucky.”*

This was how the American David Duval described the Open in 2001 when the 130<sup>th</sup> championship was held over the links of Royal Lytham & St. Anne’s. He was the only player between 1998 and 2004 to have usurped Tiger Woods from his stronghold as world number one. He had run Tiger so very close in the Open the year before at St. Andrews until he buried his ball in the greenside bunker of the infamous road hole. He took four strokes to escape and in that moment his challenge was gone. The 29-year-old had come close before to claiming golf’s other major titles. In 1998 a remarkable finish by Mark O’Meara in the Masters, with birdies on three of the last four holes, had ruined Duval who finished strongly with a 67. In the Masters earlier in this year Duval had finished second to Woods by two strokes. He had a final round of 67 but a weak finish with a bogey on the 16<sup>th</sup> and a missed four foot putt on the 18<sup>th</sup> finished his chance to become a major champion.

The last Open at Royal Lytham in 1996 had provided the venue’s first American professional winner in Tom Lehman. In recent times it was the Americans who had dominated the Open. Duval became the sixth American in seven years to win the claret jug and rid himself of the tag ‘the best golfer never to have won a major’. In the previous 18 months Tiger Woods had held all four majors at the same time. Despite the recent American dominance, bolstered by Tigers consistent supremacy, this Open provided plenty of surprises and excitement.

#### **Round 1**

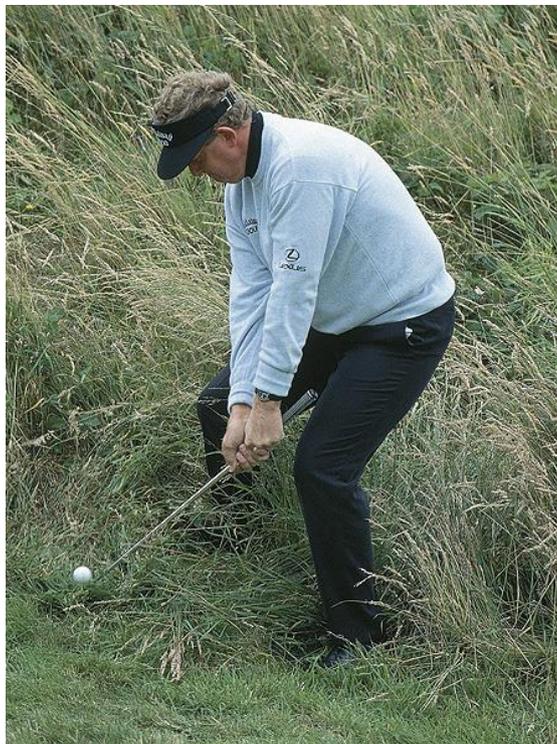
The first round began with cool and overcast weather with a 10mph wind blowing off the Irish Sea. Playing early in dull conditions Colin Montgomerie set the course and crowds alights with some sparkling golf. An outward nine of 30, including four birdies and an eagle, then an inward nine of 35 he carded a 65. He became the first round leader by two strokes. A forty foot birdie putt on the 18<sup>th</sup> was cheered on by the appreciative crowds and his normally intense expression split into a wide grin.

The field remained tightly packed behind him with Brad Faxon, Mikko Ilonen and Chris DiMarco in second place on 67. One shot further back was Duval, Jose Maria Olazabal and

Jesper Parnevik. Shot of the day came from Jeff Maggert when he holed his six iron second shot on the par-five 6<sup>th</sup> for an albatross. Sadly he then dropped five shots and carded a 72. Playing with Montgomerie was Fred Couples who had played well in previous Open championships at Lytham. He stood on the 14<sup>th</sup> tee at three under par but found a deep greenside bunker in two. In a difficult lie he flailed at the ball four times until his ball eventually found the green and he made a seven. This score was not the worst of the day. On the par-five 11<sup>th</sup> Jim Furyk found deep rough from the left hand fairway bunker and was forced to take a drop from an unplayable lie. His five iron recovery found a greenside bunker and his attempted escape rebounded off the steep face and hit the hapless Furyk, resulting in a two shot penalty. He eventually carded a ten.

Retief Goosen, the smooth swinging South African and recent US open champion, could do no better than a 74. Nick Faldo had a promising start and was three under after seven holes. His troubles began with a double bogey on the 8<sup>th</sup> and shots began leaking away with bogeys on the next three holes. He eventually finished with a 75, ten strokes more than Monty. World number one Woods was looking to improve after a rather shoddy showing at the US Open. His form did not improve and he struggled but scrambled well to make a commendable 71. He had won the Open at St Andrews in 2000 without finding a single bunker. During that week he used a long iron for most tee shots with accurate success. This tactic did not succeed on Lytham's 4<sup>th</sup> hole. From the raised teeing ground his iron shot found a deep bunker in a grassy mound to the right of the fairway and he could only splash it out sideways. This led to a bogey five. Two more bogeys followed at the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup>. After three quarters of his first round he had matched the total number of bogeys in all of his four rounds at the Open last year.

It was a day that belonged to the Scot Montgomerie. He had come so close to winning three US Opens and one USPGA but someone had always played better. His form in the Open however had always been pretty miserable. He had only finished in the top ten once in eleven previous attempts and had missed five of the last nine cuts. His best previous opening score was 71. After his round he remarked: *"All this is a good start.....I will start out tomorrow as if nothing has happened.....the one thing I must not do is defend."*



**Montgomerie escapes from the hay in round one**

## **Round 2**

As play on Friday began the wind died down, the sun started to shine and scores tumbled. Thirty players scored in the 60s and Frank Licklitter holed in one with a five iron on the 5<sup>th</sup> and claimed later: *"I just hit it super-solid on a perfect trajectory."* – simple really. Montgomerie still held the lead at the end of the day with a solid 70 for 135 but his grin had turned back into a furrowed brow. The lowest score came from an Irishman, Des Smyth – with another 65. It was a Swede Pierre Fulke who was closest to Montgomerie, adding a 67 to his opening 69 to finish in second place on 136. Fellow Swede Jesper Parnevik, and the little known Englishman Greg Owen and lesser known American Joe Ogilvie shared third, one shot further back.

Tiger improved with a 68 and was now only four strokes back on 139. His driving remained haphazard but he birdied all three of the par-fives and his short game again saved him. A stunning birdie at the 14th brought back memories of Seve Ballesteros' first Lytham victory in 1979. Woods went so far right that his ball cleared the crowds and landed on a path, allowing him to get up and down for a remarkable three. *"It was a car park birdie, just like Seve's!"* Woods said with a grin. *"He did it at 16, I did it at 14 and I knew I'd got lucky. My approach came up a bit short but I felt really good about the putt."* This major slice of luck provided a real suggestion that Tiger's name could once again be on the claret jug, but he said later: *"Right now, it's all about getting in a position to challenge."*



### **Tiger plays his approach to 18 as the balcony look on**

Alongside him were Mark O'Meara, the 1998 Open champion, Ulsterman Darren Clark and five others. Lurking one shot further back were three old warriors: Bernhard Langer, Ian Woosnam and Nick Price. Woosie revealed the secret behind his second-round 68, which left him two under for the tournament. *"I had a few pints last night and it seemed to do the trick, so I will have a few again tonight,"* explained the pint-sized Welshman. *"I felt a lot looser and a lot happier."*

David Duval was back in 35<sup>th</sup> after a lacklustre 73 left him on a total of 142. Montgomerie was also lacking the lustre of his first round heroics. He seemed tentative but although his ball striking was uncharacteristically poor his putting remained positive and this kept his score going. He scrambled to an outward half of 35 and birdies at the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> would give him the same score coming home. Pierre Fulke, an unknown quantity, had won the Volvo Masters and Scottish PGA a year earlier, but 2001 had been a year of missed cuts and poor finishes. His two round total of 136 had consisted of only two bogeys.

The 36-hole cut came at 144, two over par. David Dixon was the only amateur to survive. He had won here claiming the Lytham Trophy the year before and in making it to the weekend was assured of the silver medal. Casualties included previous Open champions Justin Leonard (1997), Seve Ballesteros (1979, 1984 & 1988), Nick Faldo (1987, 1990 & 1992), Tom Lehman (1996), John Daly (1995) and Tom Watson (1975, 1977, 1980, 1982 & 1983). Another legend who would not be playing at the weekend was Sir Bob Charles who confirmed his retirement after missing the cut. He confessed he now has some different cuts to attend to. *"I'm going back to the farm in New Zealand to shear some sheep and bale some hay,"* said the 65-year-old, who won The Open at Lytham in 1963. *"I was just 22 when I first came to Lytham and a lot has happened in the meantime but this is my very last swing around the Royal Lytham St Anne's course in the Open Championship. I have enjoyed every one of them, but my game wasn't great this week. I'm no longer competitive against these younger players and that is why I won't miss it."*

### Round 3

The weather reverted back to grey and overcast. A freshening breeze and the clouds lowering temperatures plummeted to 15 degrees Celsius. The golf was anything but dull with twenty five players under par and the lead forever shifting. Ten golfers shared or held the lead throughout the day's play. The best shot of the day came from Greg Owen who holed a three iron second shot to the par-five 11<sup>th</sup> for an albatross two. It was Duval, an early starter, who made the running and with a superb 65 finished as clubhouse leader on 207. Ian Woosnam and Bernard Langer both posted 67 and ended the day on the same score as Duval. The other co-leader was the German Alex Cejka who, with a 69, also finished on a 54 hole total of six under par.

Montgomerie again struggled to find the form he showed in the first round. His putter also misbehaved which led to a disappointing 73 and he ended tied fifth on 208. Alongside him were Pierre Fulke, Jesper Parnevik and Nick Price. Despite his troubles Monty had not lost his sense of humour. On the 13<sup>th</sup> his ball nestled tight to the sheer face of a tiny pot bunker. Contorting himself into a muscle stretching stance, his left foot snuggled into sand and no room for his right, he bent his right leg at an odd angle over the bank outside the bunker. Believing the seams of his trousers were about to split Monty began to giggle and backed off. It took him two to get out and he double bogeyed the hole.

Woods never really got started and after taking a seven at the 7<sup>th</sup> his round came unstuck and he finished on 212 in 28<sup>th</sup> place. He was tight lipped afterwards and commented: *"Today was a frustrating round because I had it going for a little while and got to five under par, but I hit a couple of squirrely shots and had a couple of unplayable lies today and really didn't drive the ball well."*

Duval teed off at 11:25 with Paul Lawrie, the 1999 Open champion. Wearing black trousers, a dark long sleeved top, black cap and his customary wrap around shades his expression remained grim. Tight lipped and unsmiling he went about his business in menacing fashion. An up and down par on the first then a birdie at the second seemed a steady start. Six birdies in eight holes from the 7<sup>th</sup> saw him reach seven under par. He was putting beautifully and he made a delightful save on the 12<sup>th</sup> with a chip from long grass thirty-five feet from the green. A bogey on the 15<sup>th</sup> was the only blight on an otherwise flawless display and a round of 65. Despite his efforts there seemed mild apathy from the crowds and they showed little enthusiasm for the American. This would change.

Alex Cejka was used to adventure. He had escaped communist Czechoslovakia with his father aged 10. Whilst on holiday in Yugoslavia they had swam across a river, boarded a train, travelled through Italy and Switzerland and settled in Munich. His adventures on day three started on the 5<sup>th</sup> and he made six birdies in seven holes to reach nine under par and the outright lead. However he faltered down the stretch and with three bogeys in a row finished with a 69.



### **The man in black**

Woosnam and Langer, wielding broom-handle putters, played together in round three. They inspired each other and with an exchange of early birdies they turned for home at three under and four under par respectively. At this stage in the round Monty had been caught by both Fulke and Darren Clark. Bogeying the second Monty slipped into second place for the first time in the championship. Up ahead Langer birdied the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> and, not to be outdone, Woosnam eagled the 11<sup>th</sup>. Another birdie for Langer at the 14<sup>th</sup> took him into the lead with Fulke at seven under par. This is when Cejka's two birdies after the turn took him two shots into the lead. At this stage there were six players at six under par, five at five under and four at four under. With the pack closing in both the Germans faltered. Cejka's poor finish and a bogey on the last by Langer saw them finish together on six under. Birdies on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> saw Woosnam join them in the overnight lead. Darren Clark bogeyed the 18<sup>th</sup> to finish one shot back alongside Parnevik. The enigmatic Swede had four putted the 8<sup>th</sup> for double bogey but followed this with four birdies on the bounce. Another double bogey on the 17<sup>th</sup> meant he eventually finished with a 71 and 208. Also on 208 were Miguel Angel Jimenez and Billy Mayfair after rounds of 67. Also with a 67 was the South African Ernie Els who, after two opening rounds of level par, was now on 209. Another Swede Niclas Fasth was one further adrift on 210.

### **Round 4**

When the day began there were nineteen men within two strokes of the lead. By the end one man had proved himself head and shoulders above the rest of the field and won the tournament by three shots. He held his composure, played the shots required at the time when the pressure was on. While other surrendered to the harshness of one of toughest

finishing stretches on the Open championship rota his golf was at times blistering and always unyielding. Closing rounds of 67-67 and a final 36-hole total of 134 was two strokes more than the Open record but it bettered by three the previous record for Opens at Lytham (137 by Ballesteros and Payne Stewart in 1988). Only Fasth threatened and a closing 67 left him three back. Six men shared third on 278 including Woosnam, Jimenez, Clarke, Mayfair, Langer and Els. Montgomerie finished with a 72 and 145 and a share for 13<sup>th</sup> alongside Goosen and Cejka. Woods again fought hard and with a final round 71 ended in a tie for 25<sup>th</sup>. This was his worst finish in a major since the 1997 USPGA championship. Pierre Fulke collapsed, starting with four consecutive bogeys then an eight on the par-three 12<sup>th</sup> he finished with an 83.

Duval had changed his approach to the Open this year following St. Andrews. Instead of playing and practising he had taken two weeks off relaxing in Sun Valley, Idaho, running, fishing and mountain biking. Whether this was the reason he played so well is hard to say but in his final two rounds he played the game as well as it can be played. He birdied twelve holes, one in three, and only made two bogeys. Combining strength and accuracy off the tee with a sure and delicate touch around the greens he was untouchable. These skills were put to the ultimate test on the long 15<sup>th</sup>. Driving into the deep rough on the left, he slashed a six iron 210 yards onto the green to fifteen feet from the pin. He called it: "one of the best shots I've ever hit."



### **Another raking recovery from Lytham's long punishing rough**

Fasth had started in remarkable fashion in his first Open. He birdied the first, third, sixth and seventh and went out in 31 to reach seven under par. Another birdie at the 11<sup>th</sup> and at eight under par he briefly held the lead. At the same time Woosnam was teeing off on the first. He hit a perfect shot which almost went in and settled 5 inches from the cup. After tapping in for birdie he strode to the second tee feeling confident. As he asked his caddie Miles Byrne for his driver a disaster suddenly became apparent. Testing two drivers on the practice round before the round began neither Woosnam or his caddie had removed the extra driver from the bag. On the second tee Byrne was heard to say: "You're going to go ballistic!" Woosnam quizzically asked why and the extra club in the bag was painfully revealed. This meant two

penalty strokes and a two on the first immediately became a bogey four. Glaring at his caddie Woosnam snatched the offending club from his bag and threw it into the nearby gorse bushes.



**Woosnam launches his extra club into the bushes as referee Paramour looks on**

After stumbling through the next few holes in three over Woosnam started playing wonderful golf. He eagled the 6<sup>th</sup>, birdied the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> to get to seven under par. Duval made his first birdie on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and also went to seven under par and was at this time one behind Fasth who stood on the 13<sup>th</sup> tee. A solid up and down on the 4<sup>th</sup> for par followed for Duval. On the par-five 6<sup>th</sup> his drive found deep rough, but he only needed a sand-wedge recovery to reach the green and a two putt birdie followed. On the 7<sup>th</sup> another short iron onto the green led to a birdie four and he stood at nine under. Fasth then bogeyed the 14<sup>th</sup> and suddenly Duval was two clear. Billy Mayfair went out in 33 and had caught Fasth and when Duval parred the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> he had reached the turn in 32. Vijay Singh, Darren Clarke, Langer and Jimenez all stood at six under par.

On the par-five 11<sup>th</sup> Duval showed the galleries that he was not about crumble under the pressure. Finding a greenside bunker in two he had to lift his ball out of a tricky lie over another sand trap that lay between him and the hole, which was set back on a sloping green. He hit a majestic shot which nestled four feet from the pin. Rolling in another birdie putt he reached ten under par. A Jimenez birdie at the 11<sup>th</sup> took him to within two of Duval. A bogey at the short 12<sup>th</sup> and birdie at the 13<sup>th</sup> followed. He was now one shot back but as Duval matched his birdie at the 13<sup>th</sup> Jimenez found the fairway bunker on the 14<sup>th</sup> and made bogey. His challenge was over. Clarke briefly featured with a birdie at the 16<sup>th</sup> but a double bogey at the 17<sup>th</sup> meant he fell four strokes back. Woosnam had run out of steam on the back nine and with a dropped shot on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> fell back to six under.

The championship was now Duval's to lose. The final five par fours at Lytham had put paid to many golfer's dreams of glory in the past. This time the dream became a reality. He made fabulous pars from the rough on both the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> and hit two fine shots on the 17<sup>th</sup> onto the green for a two putt par. The final hole was his masterpiece. A monstrous drive was followed by a glorious pitch to twelve feet. He nearly holed the putt but he had won the Open.



**Duval plays his final approach to the 18<sup>th</sup>**

He whipped off his cap and sunglasses and waved to the crowd and for the first time in public that week he smiled. His acceptance speech matched the quality of his golf that week. Humble, honest and respectful. Royal Lytham and the Open had another worthy champion.



**The grin says it all**

*“You know what, it is a silly old game. I was just trying to hit it solid and move it forward, then I was going to hit it again and I was going to count on making the putts. It sounds stupid, but I found myself thinking at times how much is made about it, because we are playing a game. At times I’ve made it a lot bigger than it is, too. Maybe that is some of the reason I felt so good today. I finally realised it is just a game.”*