



Group picture.

ABK HOSTS EXCITING 6TH ANNUAL GOLF CHALLENGE EVENT

KUWAIT: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) yesterday announced the results of its 6th Annual ABK Golf Challenge event held at the Sahara Golf Resort and Spa on 2nd April. Around 80



Nigel Doughty receiving his business class ticket to Dubai.

golfers participated on a warm, sunny day perfect for golf. During the event, participants competed in teams of four for the sought after ABK Golf Challenge trophy. The 2017 winning team, as well as the second and third placed teams were handed their trophies by Hamza Enki -General Manager, Human Resources.

Kim Ki Suk, Sunny Kim, Park Myoung Whan and Seo Hosukwon the challenge with a score of 54.56 points. In addition to the winning team prizes, some extra additional awards were given to individuals. Nigel Doughty won "Beat the Pro" and received a business class return to Dubai, handed over by Khalfan Rashid AlSalami, Commercial Support Manager-Emirates, while "Nearest-the-pin" went to Mahmood Saeed who received a KD 100 ABK Visa Emirates gold prepaid travel card. The "Straightest-Drive" was won by Ahmed Al Sarwai who also received a KD 100 ABK Visa Emirates gold prepaid travel card and finally, in good spirit, the last placed team walked away with a complimentary hour of golf lessons at the Sahara Golf Club.

During the closing ceremony ABK thanked their partners; Emirates Airline, Visa and Sahara Golf Club for their ongoing support. For more information about Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait, please visit eahli.com



The winners

MASTERS LEADER HOFFMAN TEES OFF WITH TOP RIVALS ON HIS HEELS

AUGUSTA: Unheralded American Charley Hoffman teed off yesterday with a three-stroke lead in the second round of the Masters while his nearest rivals were already making a morning charge.

The second round of the year's first major championship opened in cool and breezy conditions at 7,435-yard Augusta National, brisk winds likely to play havoc with top shotmakers as they did for most on day one. "I'll try to make pars but I'm looking for more out there," Hoffman said yesterday.

"This game is put yourself in position-attack when you can, but when you get out of position, be conservative."

Hoffman birdied five of the last seven holes, including four in a row starting at the par-4 14th, in windy conditions to shoot a seven-under par 65 in Thursday's opening round. That gave him a four-stroke edge on fellow American McGirt, the largest 18-hole lead at the Masters since Jack Burke's four-shot margin over Julius Boros in 1955.

McGirt, playing in his first Masters, went off in Friday's first group and was one-under

through nine holes while England's 43-year-old Lee Westwood, third after an opening 70, and Spain's Sergio Garcia, who began on 71, teed off directly after Hoffman's group.

"It's good to know I handled the conditions well yesterday," Westwood said. "It's going to be similar, just another day of grinding and patience. One-under is an excellent score."

McGirt opened Friday with a bogey but answered with birdies at the par-5 second and par-3 fourth on his way to making the turn four-under for the tournament and one-under on the round.

Hoffman, who booked his fourth Masters start by winning last year's PGA Texas Open, shared ninth at Augusta National in 2015 for his best showing in 22 major starts.

"I look forward to the challenge the next three days," Hoffman said. "The putter is going my way now and hopefully I'll keep it going." Westwood, trying to capture his first major title after 75 prior attempts, and Garcia, in his 74th major start without a triumph, hope for a breakthrough title this weekend.

ROSE, MICKELSON START LATE

Late afternoon starters in the pack on 71 included England's Justin Rose, the reigning Olympic champion and 2013 US Open winner, and Phil Mickelson, a five-time major champion. At two months shy of his 47th birthday, the US left-hander would become the oldest winner in Masters history if he captures a fourth green jacket tomorrow.

Big names had their issues on a blustery first day at Augusta, the most stunning being top-ranked Dustin Johnson withdrawing due to a back injury suffered in a Wednesday fall down stairs in a rented home. Second-ranked Rory Mclroy, a four-time major winner seeking a Masters victory to complete a career grand slam, made bogeys on two of his first three holes on day one but birdied three of four holes starting at the par-5 13th to open on 72.

Jordan Spieth, the 2015 Masters champion and two-time Masters runner-up, soared to a 75 Thursday for his worst Augusta National round. He parred the par-3 12th, where a quadruple bogey nightmare in last year's final round doomed his title repeat

hopes, but then made quadruple bogey at the par-5 15th.

WOEFUL START FOR WILLET

Defending champion Danny Willett of England opened Friday's round with a quadruple bogey at the par-4 first, tumbling down the leaderboard to five-over for the tournament.

Four-time major champion Ernie Els of South Africa and Rio Olympic bronze medalist Matt Kuchar of the United States made bogey-birdie starts after opening 72s to stay seven back as Hoffman's round began. World number three Jason Day of Australia, who will be the final player to take to the course Friday, opened on 74.

The cut will be made to the 60 lowest scores and ties and any player within 10 strokes of the lead after yesterday's second round. Among those in jeopardy of not reaching the weekend were Japan's

fourth-ranked Hideki Matsuyama, who opened on 76, and reigning British Open champion Henrik Stenson of Sweden, who began on 77. — AFP