

## THE 2024 WAIHI GOLF SEASON GETS UNDERWAY

The start of the Waihi Golf Club season could not have started off any better this week with the Expol Legends Pro-Am Tournament on Thursday being a huge success, but however the official opening of the 2024 season on Saturday was disappointingly curtailed by wet weather

The Expol Legends Pro-Am tournament had a big field of 115 players, and the organisers were thrilled to include 43 professional golfers, including 23 coming from Australia, and 2 from the USA. Most of the pro golfers had never played Waihi before, and all were in high praise of the layout and playing conditions. The weather with a cooling westerly breeze couldn't have been better, and the organisers and staff had left no stone unturned to make this inaugural event a success.

The players played in groups of 2 pro's and three club players for a team's competition. And there was an overall stableford competition for the Maureen Murray Cup. As well the pro's played for a gross prize. The winner of the Professionals Best Gross was Chris Taylor from Australia, with a great 6 under 66. It was the first time Chris had been to the course, so it was a great result, as it was for Bradley Burns also of Australia who was second with 69. The winner of the overall stableford, and the Maureen Murray Cup was our own Life Member, Avon Gordon with a wonderful 43 points. She Headed off Chris Taylor on 42, with Rex Knight, Shoneen Dunning, and Glenn Ross on 41. The Top Teams prize went to Andy Roche, Ron Arthur, and Glenn Ross, and their pro Paul Parlane (NZ)., while in second place 2 shots adrift were Gary Dunning, Daniel Oliver, Rex Knight, and their pro Gregory Rix (Aust).

A lively and fun prizegiving hosted by the Club comedian Frank Van Hattum, concluded this event which is planned to become an annual event thanks to the generous sponsorship of Expol.

The official Club opening was expected to be the usual well attended day by a large number of members, but after an extended period of sunny weather, the day started with continuous heavy showers and a strong wind. A large number of members who had booked in, withdrew their names, and it was a small group who gathered at the appointed start time. It was decided to proceed, and with the showers easing more members started to join the field. In the end 32 players made up the field. The opening day competition is for the Don Browne Memorial Shield for teams of 4. The teams were computer selected at random from the entries. By a strange coincidence the organiser of the day John Libby found himself in the winning team, along with Vaughn Meads, Craig Sandlant, and Glen Braddock. In second was Logan Phillips, Graeme Parkinson, Craig Pooley, and Ian Diver.

*Rodger Bagshaw*