

## **63<sup>rd</sup> Annual NZVGA National Championships held at Bay of Islands-Kerikeri Golf club 4-8<sup>th</sup> December 2017.**

A total of 92 men (55 and over) took part in the men's division which was comprised of one day for a medal round to sort out the positions then four days of matchplay over six divisions; while the field of 40 women (aged 50-plus) played over four days - enjoying a rest day on Wednesday - in gross, nett and stableford divisions.

The event attracted players came from as far south as Ashburton, Castlecliff, Taupo and Whakatane. The campervans started arriving on the Saturday prior, 25 in all, they parked at the club while players enjoyed absolutely ideal summer conditions during the week.

The staff and volunteers at the club presented a course in wonderful playing conditions. It was shaping up to be a great week for the NZVGA 63rd Nationals.

A wonderful array of finger food and a drink was much appreciated and enjoyed by the players at the 'meet and great' on Monday evening. This gave everyone a chance to relax and catch up with friends and consolidate new friendships.

By the end of day two the field is on the move for both the Ladies and the Men. The weather turned it on and was good for the whole week., or just another gorgeous time in Kerikeri.

The Ladies had a day off on Wednesday, the Club arranged a free guided tour of Kerikeri. Pick-up at the golf club, first stop the iconic Stone Store, followed by a visit to the wonderful Quail Ridge, then onto Puketī kauri forest and a stop at Makana Chocolates and The Little Black Gallery on the return journey. Sounds awful!! The men kept playing golf!!

By Thursday the winners were emerging, and some great scoring was to be had.

Finally on Friday, the home advantage paid off for a couple of local players. The overall standouts were Hugh McKechnie of Kerikeri, while Ann Hathaway topped the women's' field. Tournament director Morris 'Muddy' Waters noted McKechnie shot 75 on a par round of 73 to indicate the standard of golf on display in the event. McKechnie was presented with his trophy by Bruce McDonald who won this tournament in 1994 when it was held at Waitangi at the age of 69. "Bruce is now 92 and has shot his age every year since he was 67," Waters said.

"[The event was ] Played in great spirit, everyone loved the course, it's such a brilliant course."

Running the event proved a major operation but the 10-or-so-strong organising committee coped admirably well and also secured strong support from the local business community which was much appreciated.

"Feedback from the week was brilliant. People loved it. Positive comments right through," said Waters, adding last year's nationals took place at Mt Maunganui, next year it will be played in Cambridge.

RESULTS were as follows.

**Championship Winner – Senior Men:** Hugh McKecknie - Bay of Islands (BOI)

**Senior Reserve** - Grant Schweiters - BOI

**Intermediate** - Peter Greer - Kaitake

**Intermediate Reserve** - Warwick Radonich - Wainui

**Junior** - Conway Lewis - BOI

**Junior Reserve** - Alan Bates - Matamata

Women Winners

**Best Gross** - Ann Hathaway - BOI

Runner up - Susie Hikairo - Omanu

**Best Nett** - Lynette Bristol - Castlecliff

Runner up - Judy Lewer - Omokoroa

**Best Stableford** - Meralyn Radonich - Wainui

Runner up - Reina Mellar - Horsham Downs

#### TROPHY LIST

<b>PAST PRESIDENT'S TROPHY – Best Gross of Day</b>	- Darryl Baird	73
<b>DON STUBBINGS TROPHY – Best Net of Day (After BG)</b>	- Dick Fraser	65
<b>PATRON'S TROPHY – Best S/F of Day (After Best Net)</b>	- Conway Lewis	43
<b>REX BRIDGE TROPHY – Diehards – Best Gross Over 70</b>	– Brian Ducker	80
<b>HENRY AHREN'S TROPHY – Diehards – Best Net over 70</b>	- Mick Tee	67
<b>TRUST BANK TROPHY - Team Competition</b>		
	– Joshua Yang, Warwick Radonich and Mick Tee	- 209 nett