



IADC stalwarts McGeachy, Ng and Kiernan share vision for golf

NO MATTER HOW busy he is with his golf, **Gordon McGeachy** always finds time for work. And he never just putts around. For Gordon, other people's golf is no handicap. His avocation is organizing what has evolved to the largest corporate, amateur golf tournament in the Middle East—the Annual IADC Southern Arabian Peninsula Chapter Golf Tournament, drawing 256 avid oilfield golfers.

He and friends **Thomas Ng** of **Weatherford** and **David Kiernan** of **Anson** assumed management of a modest one-day IADC golf tournament that, a dozen years ago, drew fewer than 80 players.

"We saw the scope to increase the event and give added value to both the sponsors and the players," said Mr McGeachy, now in his 20th year in Dubai. "We enjoy developing it, we enjoy the challenge, and we enjoy the buzz of success afterward."

The tournament now draws 256 players in 4 shotgun scrambles played over 2 days, 2 scrambles each day. In 2006, the tentative tournament plans are to pack in 3 shotgun scrambles each day simultaneously over 2 courses.

This good news accrues to the benefit of golf-loving IADC members not only in the UAE, but around the world. So popular is the event that players fly in from Europe, the US and Southeast Asia, often with customers in tow.

"That says something for the stature of the tournament, as well," he said.

The bad news descends on the hard-working organizers, notably Gordon McGeachy, who observed wryly that the tourney is something of a "victim of its own success". Without the least hint of self-pity, Gordon noted that he and his co-organizers must work 12-14 months ahead, with the **Emirates Golf Club** booked at least a year in advance.

And what a club Emirates is. The tourna-

ment plays out on the club's two courses, the Wadi and Majlis. The Majlis is particularly awesome.

"The Majlis is a championship course used for the European PGA Desert Classic Golf Tournament," Mr McGeachy said. "It's a marvelous course and reasonably forgiving."



Left: Gordon McGeachy shares a laugh at the awards ceremony for the 2004 IADC Southern Arabian Peninsula Chapter Golf Tournament. Bottom right: Peter Sedgley, Senior VP of Emirates SkyCargo and staunch tourney sponsor (left), presents 2 round-trip Emirates Air business-class tickets to winner David Deans of National Oilwell. Top right: Thomas Ng, Weatherford (left), and David Kiernan, Anson, who, with McGeachy, have made their shared vision of top-flight IADC chapter golf a reality.

This year, Gordon and his team developed Platinum and Gold sponsors for the tournament. The event was blessed with 4 Platinum sponsors (contribution levels exceeding \$15,000)—Emirates Golf Club itself, which pays for half the professional video of the tournament; **Emirates SkyCargo**; **Smith International**; and **Brandt/Tuboscope**.

"The tournament has become a powerful marketing tool for our sponsors," Mr McGeachy said.

The tournament has grown exponentially. 2004's budget, for instance is 43% higher 2003's. On the Friday night after the tournament, some 500 players and guests enjoyed a post-tournament extravaganza. The top-flight entertainment includes, for instance, a 5-minute fireworks display costing some \$10,000. Door prizes are distributed generously, too. On average, 60% of the players will depart with a pro-shop voucher gift.

"Our tournament and its development has been strongly supported by our soon-to-leave regional IADC representative, **Norman Edwards**," Mr McGeachy said. "His support will be missed"

Gordon is a longtime drilling hand, who began his career in his home waters of the North Sea, going offshore for the legendary contractors **Zapata** and **Sedco**, then moving to South America—getting the ex-pat flavor in his blood.

He went entrepreneurial in 1995, launching **Top Oilfield Engineering Services** with a partner. Mr McGeachy sold his share in the company to his partner less than 2 years ago and set about devoting himself a life of leisure. It didn't last. Even Gordon can play only so much golf.

So he tied up with partners **Scott Frampton** and **Ed Abernathy** to found **First Safety Solutions**. Training is a big focus with FSS, as well as marketing gas monitoring equipment and other safety-related equipment. FSS's training efforts include H2S, Medic First Aid, confined space rescue, and HAZMAT.

The company, as part of its planned development and expansion, is opening a facility in Doha, Qatar early this year that Gordon anticipates will become OPITA certified.

"Our industry must continue to develop safety at all levels, thus protecting its great asset, 'its personnel' he said."

And Gordon has other ventures in the works. "I have a dream and I'm trying very hard to fulfill it," he said.

Nevertheless, golf, and most certainly the IADC SAPC Tournament will not fall victim to the McGeachy action plan.

"If you can't be organized enough to take 'a little' time for golf, you're messing up," Mr McGeachy quipped. "This is actually a quote from my partner Ed and who am I to disagree!"

At last report, Gordon McGeachy, IADC's eagle in Dubai, had yet to mess up that badly. ■