



and betting market for the championship events conducted over the full week in

## THE TOUR OF THE MURRAY RIVER 1999

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**Ron Childs** - First tour last year and finished full of running to end up in the top half of the order of merit. Hasn't played the Murray Courses before but could be suited by the style and length. Has good even temperament and will not over indulge in off course activity. Good each way prospects. 10/1

**Stuart Downing** - Backing up for 4<sup>th</sup> successive tour. Has always been favoured by the bookmaking fraternity but yet to break through for a win. Finished a disappointing sixth last year after threatening early. Long hitter who has a big wind-up and capable of tearing these courses apart if he is on his game. Uses coke (of the cola variety) as liquid replacement and eats too healthily for most of the troupe. Maybe that's the problem but should be up there and will be fit. 6/1

**Michael Dunn** - Did not enjoy the best of form last year and is up in the weights this year (single figures now) and very confident. Known as "The Burglar" after racing away with the championship on his first tour, Michael is determined to tough it out this year and take the title from his unrelated namesake. Will need to be on song off this lower mark, but very capable and he doesn't drink. 7/1

**Barry Dunn** - Former regular tourist returning from injury and a long spell. A "sneaky long" left hander he has never managed to put it together on tour but could lead us a merry dance if he gets the putter working. Two years ago on the Murray he was hitting the driver in a semi-circle but is reported to have straightened out the generic slice and has been training well. May need the run. 20/1

**Col Dunn** - Current champion keen to defend his title and become the first to achieve back to back victories. Cool and very disciplined, Col deserves favouritism and will be very hard to beat. Also up in the weights with a single figure handicap, but probably the hardest worker on tour at his game and very fit. Will go well. 4/1

**Dennis Flood** - Newcomer who has not played regularly over the past couple of years. Will find the going tough in this first tour and is very easily led. Cannot resist any form of temptation and works well after dark. Not likely to challenge the established front runners during the daylight events. A win would surprise even Dennis and may pick up the NAGA Award. 100/1

**John Killin** - Veteran lining up for seventh tour and keen to hand back his award from last year. A most confused golfer who made the switch with limited success a couple of years ago from standing on the "natural" side of the ball to playing right handed. Prior to the switch was always on the pace and usually made heaps playing skins. Later form has not been too exciting and always struggles with the distance on these courses. Rough chance. 33/1

**Keith McLaren** - One of only three tourists not to have missed a tour since '93. Finished runner up in '97 when we played Harden on the last day in an Ambrose and may have been unlucky the championship was run over 7 days and not 8 as it is this year. Big hitter who attacks all the time and strikes the ball very consistently. Putting has been a weakness, but if that works and he doesn't get too much sleep to upset his routine he could get the money. Good chance. 12/1

**Peter McLoughlin** - Will be better for the experience of last year's maiden tour and likely to be closer to the money this year. Despite exemplary behaviour and total resistance to the temptations of the demon drink, spoiled his chances last year when he failed to finish one event when a little moisture caused a misfire or two and up went the white hankie. Claims to have overcome tendency to submit to damp influences with sophisticated wet weather protection equipment but still unproven over the full distance of this event. Has ability and will threaten if able to maintain consistency. Big chance 5/1

**John Medland** – Emergency runner and first time tourist who gets a start due to the late scratching of Bill Williams. Member and former vice-captain of the prestigious Oatlands Club, this former first grade and Lancashire League cricketer possesses the usual ball striking ability of most top sportsmen. Has a little excess baggage to carry around these days but remains strong. Could need the run at this distance and does not know the courses. Capable. 16/1

**Jeff Pearson** – Second time tourist with an insatiable thirst for black ale. In semi-retirement and fitter this year. Training regularly during the week but does not like a wet track. Last year followed (or led) McLoughlin to the sheds and failed to finish after a drenching at Merimbula. Claims to be in good form and has backed himself to beat the “Silver Fox” home in the championship. Good chance if the tracks stay dry. 8/1

**Ken Rogers** – Brave and intrepid though he most certainly is, a championship contender he is not! Has traveled the world extensively in search of the antidote to his terrible affliction of “ballus directus arseopus”. His propensity to acquire balls with a mind of their own is legendary. Recently counselled ancient chinese philosopher in an attempt to learn the “barrus ronger straightus rine” skills of Fu. But alas we hear he has spent in vain. More competitive last trip but not fancied over this distance. 50/1

**Kevin Ross** – Was hot at recent Camden start with 48 individual points coming in one over the card. Has dropped to 10 and confident of good showing. Trains regularly and fitter and more healthy than last year. Good striker with good distance, has the ability to play very well and a win would not surprise. Will not digress from straight and narrow and is an excellent housekeeper on tour. Will go well over these courses. 10/1

**Ray Rutledge** – First tour last year and seemed to tire towards the end of the week. Finished with only 18 points at Gold Creek (6 on the last 9) as he faded badly on the last day of the tour. Will undoubtedly be a better judge of pace this year and has been training consistently. Good striker but suspect at this distance and may need this year to get the conditioning right. Each way bet. 16/1

**Rod Short** – Backing up for 6<sup>th</sup> tour and always close to the money. Solid performer who usually wins at least once during the week and knows the courses and rigours of the tour. Very consistent and a good judge of the pace. Can stay all night and sometimes does. Due for a win and cannot be discarded. 10/1

**John Vallins** – Another left hander who just failed to hold out a fast finishing Col Dunn in the final round at Gold Creek last year to finish with the championship runner-up trophy. Big improver who has foresaken woods off the tee and reaped the benefits. Down in the handicap on last year but too consistent to discard. Stays on until close every night and appears impervious to the effects on black ale. Will keep the bastards honest – day and night. 12/1

**John Vincent** – Experienced left hander who knows these courses and has been freshened up with a very light preparation. Has won the championship three times previously (all on the Murray courses) and will be hard to beat. Although carrying a little extra weight, the handicapper has let him out a touch and he has been striking the ball well. Confident of good showing. 8/1

**Des Williams** – Fourth successive tour and has not threatened the front runners on previous trips. Powerful striker who should be suited by these tracks but is easily distracted from the main events. Always keen to get to the tee but even keener to get to the bar where his performances are both consistent and substantial. Out to enjoy and will do so again this year. Rough chance. 12/1

**Trent Wilson** – Seems like unlimited potential in this long hitting young lion. Suffered an ankle injury skate-boarding just before departing last year and played the whole week in pain. Forced to use carts for every round Trent finished with a credible average of 28 points in a generally low scoring year. Does little damage to himself after dark and has the game to dominate this event if able to put it together. Definite prospect. 7/1

**The management of Middle Bet Australia has published this comment on the 1999 field of Murray River tourists for the information of anybody intrepid enough to want to try and pick the winner of the Average, the prestige event of the week.**

**Before tee-off in Wagga, every tourist is invited to give their selections to John Vincent for the winners of the Best Average over the full week and the NAGA Award. A mystery prize is offered to the successful tipsters and, in the event of more than one successful tipster, the winner will be decided by a draw from a hat.**

**Our scribe accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or otherwise of comment but will accept accolades if there are any.**

**Good Luck and we hope everybody enjoys a wonderful week with much laughter, golf and fine weather.**

**Wobbie Rortterhouse  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

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