

PLAYER FORM GUIDE

THE MURRAY RIVER TOUR 2001

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Phil Cavanough : First tour last year and performed well for the early part of the week but collapsed badly in the last two rounds after the best score of the week on Thursday night. Has been playing well this year and is normally consistent but can be distracted. Will benefit from last year's experience but will need to be "on" for the whole week to hold up the cup. Good chance. 10/1

Ron Dewar : Another maiden last year who will pace himself better this time around. Is capable of better scores and expected to improve on last outing. Regularly in training and claims to lack consistency lately but must be taken on trust. He won't mind being taken on trust as long as he is taken. Will enjoy and he stays out late. Is a good stayer but each way prospects only on history. 25/1

Stewart Downing : On sixth tour and always threatens. Had best result yet last year in finishing 1.38 points behind the winner and had just one bad round on Thursday. Does not disadvantage himself with night activity and has been in good form this year. Has the game and temperament to win and will be hard to beat if sleep not too disrupted by Killer's "Z" throwing. Big chance. 5/1.

Barry Dunn : Old man of the field but fitter than most and keen to do well. A good ball striking lefty, has not previously produced best form on the tour but tipped to finish full of running and escape the dreaded NAGA. Has plenty of experience with six tours behind him and knows how to pace himself (and how to pinch a dog.) Sneaky long and could threaten if on his game. Rough chance. 20/1

Col Dunn : Mr consistency and Tour Champion in '98. Has toured on seven occasions and has the excellent tour average of 32.09 and will again be a strong chance. Particularly accurate off the tee, has very good technique and temperament and the game to win again. Trains regularly although he doesn't get the hard competition games in as often as he would like. Very fit and hard to beat. 6/1

Dennis Flood : Second tour and has already established a reputation for playing hard and sleeping loud. A non-golfer for most of the year showed some good form between 'black' bouts of illness on maiden trip. Hung in back in '99 but tired badly at Gold Creek and not the first to be brought undone in the nation's capital. More chance of a skin or two than a win in the Cup. 50/1

Graham Harrison : Current Tour Champion after first up win last year and hoping to write history and be the first ever to win back-to-back titles. A close examination of the record however, reveals that the NAGA once went to the same person in successive years. Good scrambler with moderate night-time habits. Can be expected to again be consistent and will take beating. Favoured 5/1.

Jim Hokin : Still wearing the same hat he wore on his first tour in '93 and now on sixth tour. Has not managed to produce best form on previous tours but handles the night time weight for age events very well. Blitzed the field in the second round of the championships at Antill recently with a net 62 and will win share of skins but might struggle to threaten the leaders in the Cup. 20/1

John Killin : Veteran tourist who hasn't missed a trip since we started in '93. Has seen it all in those years and developed a reputation for snoring that was undisputed until "Floody" arrived. Was once known as an intrepid explorer in the early hours and was everyone's alarm clock. Best score last year since switching to right handed in '98 and has new clubs. Will win many skins. Chance 12/1

Keith McLaren : One of only three not to have missed a tour. Was thought to have best chance last year when Rogers didn't tour, but was well beaten. Had a shocker in Club Championships but has the game to win this and is suited by the Murray courses. Long hitter with an 'iffy' putter but if it works, look out! Quiet, unobtrusive and very deceptive. Will rage throughout the week. Chance 15/1

Peter McLoughlin : Has not played much recently after injury. Blamed wife for moving the ladder when he fell off the roof but come November there is nowhere to hide. Has the game to win this but form on three previous tours has not been impressive. Showed a liking for these tracks in '99 and blitzed Gold Creek on day excursion last year. Behaves and wakes up better than most. Chance. 12/1

John Medland : Natural sportsman and good striker. Narrowly lost to Trent in '99 when he hit the wrong ball twice on his maiden voyage and last year retired hurt when a painful hand condition prevented him holding the club. Recent form unknown but will have to battle with the dreaded "Z" throwing from "Chain Saw" this year. Enjoys a night-cap and will finish on. Good prospects 8/1

Dean Nicholls : One of two maiden performers this year and in with a big chance. Has the game and the length necessary to do well and good level of concentration, but inexperienced at these type of event. Has not played the Murray before and will need to be wary of some of the training tactics of the more battle hardened veterans. A win first up would not surprise. Keep safe. 6/1

Jeff Pearson : Been in scintillating form of late and opened his club championship campaign with a seventy eight off the stick. Faded a little after that but hung in to become 2001 "B" Grade Champion at Mona Vale Golf Club. Congratulations Jeffery, well done! However the Tour Champion is very different and reputations mean nothing. Devotee of the 'black experience'. Hard to beat. 8/1

Ken Rogers : Just 2 years ago was 50/1 and comment was as follows "*Brave and intrepid though he most certainly is, a championship contender he is not!*". Now on sixth tour and two weeks ago won "C" Grade Championship at Antill. Missed last year and is the big improver in the field. Will win the staying award and probably ruin Keith's chances in the Cup. Chance. 12/1

Ray Rutledge : Had a shocker at 'The Creek' last year to grab defeat from the jaws of victory and acquire temporary title to the NAGA. Keen to avoid back to back titles and will go better this year. Lining up for fourth consecutive tour and will have trained solidly for his legendary 'black' experience, but previous form would suggest he is a 'bolter' for the big one. Rough chance 25/1

Rod Short : Missed last year when the rellies chose the only week of the year worth talking about to arrive from Holland. A veteran of 6 tours, Shorty has a tour average of 30.58. Has been known to destroy the unwary after dark and can sleep sitting up with schooner in hand. Has great staying power and now trains at Camden Valley. Has been consistent on previous tours. Good each way chance. 12/1

Trevor Thomas : Maiden performer and emergency acceptor when Steve Snell was forced out of the field. Not much known on form except for a brief exposure to the Hackers on Gold Creek day excursion last year when he snuck into third place and grabbed most of the skins. On that form will be a chance but inexperience in this type of event may prove crucial. Drinks 'black' and should fit in. 15/1

Des Thompson : First tour last year and started poorly at Moruya and Batemans Bay. Improved steadily as the week progressed and picked up third at Gold Creek on the final day suggesting that he will be improved by the run. Good striker and member of Cumberland and should be suited by the Murray. Training interrupted by overseas trip and then illness but fit now. Go well. 10/1

John Vallins : Danger man! Ran Col Dunn right down to the wire in '98 and was again up there in '99 before finishing well back last year. Another lefty who is usually consistent and a good scrambler. Backing up for 5th trip and knows the pressures of the tour and applies as much as anyone. Another one to be wary of as the day rolls into 'black' and stayers come into their own. Big chance. 10/1

John Vincent : Has been consistent most of the year and currently in good form. Past two or three years has battled with the yips when chipping and if this debilitating illness doesn't dominate, will be in with a show. Strongly favoured to relieve a certain north-side veteran of a couple of slabs of 'black' after being run down at 'The Creek' on the final day last year. Best chance for some time. 8/1.

Bill Williams : 2nd last year just .25 of a point behind the winner with a very strong finish at Gold Creek. Plays a lot of golf and regularly travels with veterans and others and so is used to the rigours on tour. One of the most consistent players in the field and very fit. Has toured twice before and expected to perform well. Will be up there at the business end of the week. Favoured. 5/1

Des Williams : Coming up for sixth consecutive tour but has not previously managed to maintain consistency over the full week. Capable striker and long hitter whose strong and aggressive play makes him dangerous at all times. Favours these tracks as scoring record on the Murray is better than on the South Coast. Will enjoy the week whatever happens and a win would not surprise. 10/1

Trent Wilson : Tour champion on the last visit to the Murray, but recent form is unknown. Remains on 10 handicap but said to have played sparingly over the past few months and may have been distracted by other interests. Finished well off the pace last year on a very wet track (every day) but is a very long hitter who is suited by these courses. Fifth consecutive tour and should go well. 6/1

10/1 Liberty, Des, Des, Phil,
20/1 Jimmy, Barry,

12/1 Peter, Killer, Shorty, Kenny
25/1 Ray, Ron,

15/1 Trevor, Keith,
50/1 Chainsaw,

Good luck and I hope everyone has a wonderful week of golf and fine weather.

Gogettitoutthereandenjoy!!!!

Wobbie Rorterhouse