

Inaugural Finna Challenge

July 20-22, 2018



What a fantastic weekend!! 18 players and some of their better halves took part in a great trip away up in the hills of East Java between Surabaya and Malang. Those arriving on Friday played one round at the excellent and challenging Taman Dayu courses – David (Bags) Baglivo starred with 40 stableford points. We all then proceeded to Prego Italian Restaurant in an amazing modern building with beautiful gardens and delicious pizza and pasta. Too bad they ran out of wine, they missed a very profitable evening. The Open telecast provided entertainment each night.

Saturday at Finna Golf and Country Club started with a Nearest to the Pin from the elevated driving range – the caddies below marking the shots having no idea where to stand given the erratic attempts from above. Eventually, Efsi hit closest, followed by Rudie, Pieter and Ross.

The competition was a two day eclectic, the first day being a normal stroke round. Leaders after Day One were co-hosts Simon Reynolds from Finna and the Singing ex-President at 4 Under. Scores were spread throughout the field as some struggled with the mountain layout and excellent fast greens.

Pairings on the second day were organised based on overnight scores. Live scoring on the second day through the whatsapp group created excitement as everyone could track changes in the leaderboard. In this format, there can be a four stroke improvement on your score in one hole. So, as the leaders struggled to improve on good Saturday rounds, those who could make amends for their blow out holes, quickly rose through the pack. The biggest mover was Tom Grace, who jumped from 16 Over to 6 Under, with Simon Oxley, Len Ogembo, Chris and Rita Bruderlin, Cucu Chandra, Rudie Basson, Mike Webb and David Baglivo also making big gains.

But the first Finna Challenge Trophy went to Fernando “El Guapo” Gaggino at 12 Under, after starting at Even Par. The Champ confidently predicted his victory several days before, creating some expectations he would be anything but a humble winner. Most of these expectations were realised, although The Champ did thank his suffering playing partners for their inspiration and support, especially Len Ogembo who had two days of him. No photo is provided here – we are over it!

Thanks to Simon and the team at Finna for a wonderful weekend of great golf and camaraderie, timed perfectly to enjoy the drama of The Open together. The Saturday buffet BBQ at the Finna Pool Café was enjoyed by all. It was not a super boozy weekend, except for one cart of brave soldiers who managed to score well with the help of a bottle of vodka and a bottle of Jack, and maybe some reds over dinner. The rest of us returned to work fresh and better off for the break. A successful experiment and one we hope to repeat next year over The Open weekend, which is 18-21 July 2019 at Royal Portrush, Northern Ireland. Lock it in to your calendars!!!



A message from Simon Reynolds:

“A big thank you to the Tee Set Community for coming to Finna, it was a pleasure to host you all. Already looking for the next event and great work and appreciation for Craig Ewers for planting a new annual event in the Tee Set Calendar. For all those Jakarta based golfers looking for a golfing getaway from the Big Durian do not hesitate to contact me, I will ensure you get a special rate as a Teeset member in both our resort accommodation and on the golf course. Cheers!”