

DIVOTS



The Albatross boys and girls at the junior event in Rayong.

For the experience

Rayong (Thailand): Eight juniors—Smarth Dwivedi, Gurbaaz Takkar, Tavleen Batra, Feroz Grewal, Jairaj Sandhu, Aditi Ashok, Saptak Talwar and Suchitra Ramesh—were in the field for the 8th True Vision International Tournament, which was held here at the St. Andrews 2000 layout, and Rayong Green Valley golf course. These boys and girls were representing Albatross, the parents-run tour that has done so much for the children over the past 20 months.

Juniors from 18 countries—among them Thailand, Indonesia, Hong Kong, China, Singapore, U.S.A., Malaysia, Brunei and Australia—took part. India's young participants, said Rajiv Talwar, an Albatross Tour coordinator, were adorned in TaylorMade-adidas sponsored 'mock-turtle shirts,' and proudly carried the Indian Tricolor in the

parade. Takkar, from Delhi, had the honor of carrying the flag. It was an experience none will forget in a hurry.

The category 'A' and 'B' players teed it up at the magnificent par 74 St. Andrews 2000 course, said to be a replica of the original St. Andrews, while those in categories 'C', 'D' and 'E' played the Rayong course, also a par 74. Not surprisingly, the two par six holes at St. Andrews 2000 were something the players were not used to—still, it was a learning experience for them! Overall, course conditions were extremely challenging, and the greens were lightning fast.

The Indian junior team, under the captaincy of Feroz Grewal, and also including Sandhu, Ashok and Talwar, came eighth overall. Amongst the senior players, Dwivedi played fabulous golf all four days to finish eighth, with an aggregate of three-

over par 299. The overall winner was Malaysia's Abel Tam Kwang Yuan, with a score of 292.

LUCKY 13th

Gurgaon: Albatross, the tour for juniors and sub-juniors, successfully held its 13th event at the ITC Classic Golf Resort here. This was Albatross's first visit to the Jack Nicklaus design, and the management at the ITC was gracious enough to extend its facilities to the country's budding talents.

Despite a recent Asian Tour event that saw scores take a tumble, the Ridge-Valley layout at the Classic is not an easy one for the pros, let alone the young ones (especially when the wind blows), which makes the achievement of Abhijit Chadha all the more impressive. Chadha, topper in category 'A' and overall winner, shot a superb one-

under 71. The youngster from Chandigarh G.C. played the front nine in three-under with three birdies, and though he did drop a couple of shots coming home, Chadha did well to remain under par.

With a score of two-over 74, the category 'B' winner was Arjun Singh of AEPTA (Army G.C., Delhi), while Kartikey Vashist, of DLF Golf and Country Club (Gurgaon), brought in a similar card to emerge on top in category 'C'.

Meanwhile, Prakhar Asawa of Jaipur maintained his domination in category 'D', though this time around he was made to fight all the way by the Chandigarh duo of Jaiveer Singh and Karandeep Singh Kochhar. In category 'E', 12 competitors teed it up at the nine-hole Canyon course, and it was seven-year-old Digraj Gill who took the honors—and by some distance. It was a treat to see Gill, from Ludhiana, win with a score of three-over 39, seven shots clear of his nearest challenger, Lakshya Loomba.

The Albatross tour keeps on growing in popularity and reach. At tournament No. 13, the total number of entries in all categories, 187, created a new mark. The kids can't seem to get enough! ■

ALBATROSS

LEADING SCORES

CATEGORY A

71: ABHIJIT CHADHA; 75: AINESH AHLUWALIA; 79: KUNAL BHATIA

CATEGORY B

74: ARJUN SINGH; 76: HEMENDRA CHOUDHARY; 77: TARUNDEEP SINGH CHADHA

CATEGORY C

74: KARTIKEY VASHIST; 76: MOHD. WASIL; 77: YUVRAJ S. SANDHU

CATEGORY D

80: PRAKHAR ASAWA; 81: JAIVEER SINGH; 83: KARANDEEP SINGH KOCHHAR

CATEGORY E

39: DIGRAJ GILL; 46: LAKSHYA LOOMBA; 48: ISHAAN SINGH