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Press Release

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Englishman Barry Lane Turns the Clock Back, Gangjee Best Indian

GURGAON, Feb 12: Barry Lane, the 49-year-old Englishman turned the clock with a second successive 67 to take the clubhouse lead at 10-under 134. Also at 10-under was young rookie John Parry, 23, and Chan Yih-shin of the Chinese Taipei. But both Parry and Chan had one more hole to play – Parry the 18th and Chan the ninth.

When rain and threat of lightning stopped play at 4.28 pm, there were 36 players still to complete their second round. They will come back at 7.15 am and the third round draw will be made immediately after that and the earliest the third round will start will be at 9 am.

It was not a great day for the Indians, as the cut was poised to come at one-under. Only a handful of Indians were at one-under or better. Leading them was Rahil Gangjee (69) at eight-under and in eighth place. Jyoti Randhawa (67) at five-under, Arjun Atwal (69) at three-under, Digvijay Singh (71) and Ashok Kumar (72) at two-under, amateur Rashid Khan at one-under looked like making the cut. Khan had four more holes to play.

It was a day of challenges for the golfers, who during the course of the day saw the weather fluctuate between hot and sunny to windy and finally cold, windy and rainy.

“I have actually started off the year all right but my problem for the past two years has been my putting,” said Lane. “I have managed to post a couple of 68s here and there and then I have had a nice couple of 67s to start the week here.

Jyoti Randhawa, who lives a stone’s throw away from the DLF Golf and Country Club, Gurgaon must have heaved a sigh of relief after finishing his second round at the Euro 1.5 million Avantha Masters golf. One of India’s most successful golfers, Randhawa has had a slow start this season, so the round of five-under 67 that brought him to provisional 20th place – the second round is yet to be completed, though – would do his confidence a world of good.

Meanwhile, the honour of being the leading Indian at the midway mark is Rahil Gangjee, who added a bogey-free 69 to his first round 67 to come to eight-under, just two shots off the lead.

It was not a great day for many of the leading Indians as the cut seemed likely at even par or one-under. Jeev Milkha Singh (72-73) at one-over was sure to miss the cut, as were SSP Chowrasia (73-73), Gaurav Ghei (78-67), Anirban Lahiri (71-74), Gaganjeet Bhullar (69-76) and Shiv Kapur (76-70).

C Muniyappa needed a birdie on 18th to come to one-under, while Harendra Gupta (73-71) and Mukesh Kumar (72-72), both par for 36 holes, would be hoping for the cut to fall to even par. So far exactly 65 players are one-under or better.

“I felt good from the very outset today even though I was a little nervous to begin with. I was reading the putts to perfection and my long game was solid. I was picking targets and just hitting them. I had a little problem with my driving till yesterday but fortunately found my rhythm with the driver in the second round. I’m happy with my overall score,” said Gangjee, whose lone win on Asian Tour came in his Rookie Year 2004.

“I made some good putts initially. I was not as aggressive as it might have seemed as some shots came off and were upto my expectations while some others were not,” added Gangjee,



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whose longest putt for a birdie came on the seventh, where he sank a 15-footer. His other birdies came on 14th and 18th.

Jyoti was all smiles as he said, "I think I managed to capitalize on my opportunities today. It was a much better round than yesterday. I focused too much on the results during round one but today I just wanted to play to my potential."

On his putting, he added, "I putted well and was in a better frame of mind as compared to yesterday. I handled the pressure very well in round two. I want to work on my driving now. I made a great chip to within two inches for birdie on the ninth and sank a couple of 12 footers for birdies on the 10th and 16th."

As for the course that is his home course, he said, "On this golf course it pays to be aggressive. It is soft in the morning. However, the greens seem to be quicker today."

Randhawa starting on tenth, had birdies on tenth, 16th, 18th, first and ninth.

Earlier Andrew Dodt of Australia completed a great card of 68 despite a double bogey on the 16th and was placed at nine-under 135. Sharing the tied fourth spot with Dodt, were David Drysdale (67), Lam Chih-Bing (68) and South African-born Australian Darren Beck, who with a stunning 65, revived memories of his runner-up finish at the 2008 Indian Open.

Parry, who turned professional only in 2007 after an impressive amateur career, is in his Rookie Year, though he has won on the Challenge Tour in 2009. The former Walker Cup player – his teammates were Welshman Rhys Davies, Northern Ireland's Rory McIlroy, and the English pair of David Horsey and Danny Willett – was five-under through 17 holes. He will come back in the morning to complete his second round.

Overnight leader Marcel Siem was two-under for the front nine and at 10-under for the tournament. But he dropped three shots in a row from 12th to 14th.

Northern Irishman Darren Clarke climbed back into contention with one of the best rounds of the day, a six under par 66 that featured nine birdies, seven of which came in his last seven holes.

"I started off a bit out of sorts – I couldn't quite figure the swing out and then it clicked into place about the 14th and I hit some really nice shots after that," he said after reaching seven under par for the tournament. I needed to do something after yesterday and I managed to do it.

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