

## TUSKER KENYA OPEN

BEHIND EVERY SUCCESSFUL GOLFER...



Martin Rominger of Switzerland with his German caddy Simona Candrea during yesterday's opening round of the Kenya Open at the Muthaiga Golf Club. Photos/ CHRIS OMOLLO

## OPEN NOTEBOOK

## TAILOR MADE

## Early pacesetter opts to fly in own caddy

The question do you know Simona Candrea? would understandably draw a blank in Kenya. She is a caddy at the Tusker Kenya Open. That may raise another blank look. Well, she is the caddy for Martin Rominger, who was prominent on the leaderboard yesterday with a score of four under par 67. Candrea is also a woman caddy, uncommon on Kenyan golf courses. The other distinction is that Rominger, unlike most other competitors at the Muthaiga Golf Club, opted to fly in his caddy. Candrea a German, has been Rominger's caddy for three years now. "I usually travel with her in competitions I participate in," Rominger said yesterday.

## Dane lays down the gauntlet

By LARRY NGALA and CHARLES GACHERU at Muthaiga

Kenyan players at this year's Tusker Kenya Open once more registered a poor start after yesterday's opening round of the tournament at the Muthaiga Golf Club.

Meanwhile, Denmark's Soren Juul dropped his only shot of the day at the eighth hole but his five under par 66 was still good enough to head the leader board at the close of round one. Starting at the back nine, Juul had a fantastic run hitting four birdies at the 10th, 14th, 15th and at the 18th for the lowest back nine score of four under par 31.

He remained firm and steady picking up a birdie at the third hole on his way to one under par 35 which was only spoiled by a five at the eighth for his 66 that left a group of four a shot behind.

England's Andrew Marshall was the first leader from the morning group where recorded a clean four under 32 with birdies at the second, fourth, fifth and at the ninth but bogeyed the 10th though recovered his only lost shot at the home green for the day's first 67.

He was later joined by Switzerland's Martin Rominger, Gary Boyd and Andrew Butterfield from England. A new face in the Tusker Kenya Open, Rominger made his 67 without a single bogey with all the birdies coming from the front nine.

Sweden's Johan Skold was, meanwhile, leading another group of five all with three under par 68.

That group included South Africa's Louis Moolman, Argentina's Alan Wagner, who leads the European



Left: Rwanda's John Baptista (left) gets tips from his caddy as former Kenya Open champion Lee James of England checks his line on the opening day of play at the Kenya Open golf tournament at the Muthaiga Golf Club yesterday. Right: Marshalls update the group's score. Photos/MOHAMMED AMIN

Challenge Tour Order of Merit after winning the Club Colombia Masters, was not too far from the pace setters as he fired two under par 69 leading even a bigger group of 10 and still in with a great chance depending on how he fares in today's second round which will determine those who will be left to go for the big cheque of Euro 28,800.

Of the four past winners, Lee James who was the last person to win the Tusker Kenya Open trophy before the tournament moved to Karen, shot one under par 70 to leave de-

fending champion Ian Pyman, Italian Edoardo Molinari and Sweden's Johan Axgren a shot behind.

Also with 71 was Nigeria's Andrew Ordoh, a regular in the Sunshine Tour but making his debut in the Kenyan event which marks its 17th year as a European Challenge Tour round.

The hope that the 1998 Kenya Open runner up Jacob Okello would find the form that inspired him in 1998 or the swing that propelled him to a 10-under par course record performance in 2007, blew up in a cloud of bogeys and worse. Okello made bogeys on



the 11th, 12th and 13th. Worse was to come on the 18th hole where he found trouble finishing with a disastrous nine on that single hole.

On the front nine, Okello dropped more shots on the first, fifth and sixth to eventually finish 10-over par after the first round.

The PGK Chairman, Charan Thethy, finished on nine over par where he was joined by Ken Abuto and Simon Ngigi. With the "cut" projected at level par to one-over par, these players are unlikely to make it into the weekend.

## DAY ONE LEADER BOARD

1-Jul Soren -5  
T2-Martin Rominger -4  
T3-Andrew Marshall -4  
T7-Gary Boyd -4  
T2-Andrew Butterfield -4  
T6-Johan Skold -3  
T6-Peter Skold -3  
T6-Max Kramer -3  
T6-Louis Moolman -3  
T6-Grant Jackson -3

## Top Kenyans:

T21 John Kagiri -1  
T21 Ajay Shah -1  
T34 Peter Njiru PAR  
T34 Dismas Indiza +1  
T55 David Wakhu +1

## Muthaiga greens too soft, says champ Pyman

By LARRY NGALA at Muthaiga

Tusker Kenya Open champion Ian Pyman said yesterday that the greens at Muthaiga, though smooth and good for putting, were still too soft compared to the Karen greens during last year's tournament where he fired 12 under par 72 to claim the title. At the same time, Pyman, who is seeking to equal compatriot

Maurice Bembridge's back-to-back victories said the course was difficult for one to shoot scores like eight under par or so. Speaking to journalists after firing level par 71 in yesterday's opening round, the champion said he was very happy with his round and that he was looking forward to moving closer to the leaders from today. "At Karen, particularly in last year's round, the greens were

a bit bumpy but firm. I'm sure the greens here can be as firm as those at Karen as long as they do not keep on watering them," he said. "There are some holes like the 17th where one can easily hit the green from the front tee while the 18th where one can easily get onto the greens comfortably with two, but others are very restrictive and you really have to plan and manage your shots well."