

DNA Correspondent •
AHMEDABAD

Andrew McArthur may not have got many birdies, but he made sure he did not drop any shots either, as he came back with a bogey free three-under and took a two-shot into the weekend at the Gujarat Kensville Challenge here on Friday.

The 32-year-old Scotsman, with one Challenge Tour win dating back to 2008 against

his name, is now eight-under 136 for two rounds and two shots clear of Shiv Kapur (71) and three ahead of overnight leader Spain's Agustin Domingo (73), Dutchman Tim Sluiter (69) and another Scot Booth Wallace (71).

McArthur said, "I hit it better today. I hit it closer and more often and didn't hole as many putts though I still holed a couple of nice ones. It was really solid. I hit two bad

shots all day at the 14th and 15th tees and managed to get away with pars (on them). I had tonnes of chances but you can't expect to hole them all but I'm not missing by much at any point either."

Last year's runner-up Rahil Gangjee (72-69) and 2011 Kensville champion Gaganjeet Bhullar (71-70) were tied sixth at three-under 141 as 19 Indians made the cut which fell at three-over. Young guns

MCARTHUR IN LEAD, KAPUR SECOND

S Chikkarangappa (74-73) and Shubhankar Sharma (75-72) who were making their pro debut this week were among those making the cut, alongside veterans Mukesh Kumar 73-71) and Ali Sher (73-73).

Going out early in morning, the 30-year-old Kapur, who had led at the halfway stage last year, too, came back as the clubhouse leader, even as most of the field was still on the course. After his flawless five-under 67, his one-under 71 in second round gave him a total of six-under. But as the day wore on McArthur overtook him by two shots. Kapur, who narrowly missed keeping his European Tour card, but will still get around a dozen starts in 2013, started strongly from the 10th. He had birdies at the 12th and 14th holes but came unstuck with a bogey at the par five 17th to reach the turn in one under. "I did not really have my A game today," said Kapur. "I didn't play as well as I did on the first day. It was a bit scrappy and didn't hit it as close and made some soft bogeys. It (the round) was blemish free until the 17th and I was playing steady but nothing flashy. It was one of those days where I had to make the best of what I had." Bhullar was another Indian making a good upward move. After a 71 on first day, he added a two-under 70 that had two bogeys on sixth and eighth but he also had four birdies.



Andrew McArthur



Gaganjeet Bhullar



Sachin basks in Amdavadis' love for him

The icon was all praise for the hospitality he was accorded when he was in city on Friday to perform pooja at his plot of land located on the periphery of the city

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If you think that Amdavadis are still going strong with their 'selfish' tag, think again. The legendary cricketer, Sachin Tendulkar, has himself sent the age-old notion for a six. The batting maestro lauded warmth and hospitality of Amdavadis, when he was in city on Friday, to perform a small pooja at his plot of land, and also get a first-hand feel of the ongoing Gujarat Kensville Challenge tournament.

"Amdavadis' warmth and hospitality has touched me. I have fond memories of this city, that is one of the biggest reason I have associated myself with it," said Sachin, when asked about the special bond he nurtures with the city. Tendulkar not only struck his first competitive century here at the Gujarat College ground, but also his first double hundred in Tests at Motera ground. Sachin has a plot of land at the Kensville Golf and Country course where he performed a small pooja on Friday. Thereafter, the master batsman also tried his hand at driving and putting too, alongside many of the internationals, like Shiv Kapur, Gaganjeet Bhullar, Rich Beem, Rahil Gangjee and Rhys Davies, who are participating at the tourney this week.

"I have been to many golf courses and even made an occasional attempt at the driving range, but visiting a golf course while a tournament is in progress is a new experience. I really enjoyed and the golf course is a lovely one. I have seen other courses, but I really liked this one," said

Master blaster Tendulkar hit about 25-30 balls on the driving range and there wasn't one mis-hit! A good number of drives sailed past the 200 and 250 yards when he teed up a bit high

Tendulkar.

According to Tendulkar, the silence of the vast greens is what endears him most. "Unlike cricket where the whole stadium is roaring, in golf or even in tennis, it is the pin-drop silence that appeals me most," said Sachin, while sharing the reason of his affection towards other ball games.

Tendulkar hit about 25-30 balls on the driving range and there wasn't one mis-hit! "I enjoy hitting balls, whether it is cricket or golf. It is because I like the sound of some of the shots," he said of the ones, which hit the sweet spot. A good number of drives sailed past the 200 and 250 yards when he teed up a bit high. But after adjusting the height of the tee, his shots went past 250 and some even touched 300 yards.

Interestingly, Tendulkar's son, Arjun, is part of U-14 Mumbai team competing in the West Zone League here at Motera. However, he avoided meeting his son.

"I want to leave him alone. Let him enjoy his game. He also needs freedom," said Sachin when asked if he will meet Arjun.



Sachin Tendulkar poses for a photo after receiving the cheque of Rs1 lakh which was presented by Kensville Golf Living to his Charitable Trust

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— Sachin Tendulkar

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