

Sinclair reaches the final of champion challenge

PAUL SINCLAIR is the first man to book his place in the final of the Evening Express Champion of Champions finals.

Auchenblae member Paul stormed to a 5&4 victory over Ross Gregory, of Murcar Links, in the handicap semi-finals,

And the 35-year-old admitted he was surprised to have gone so far in the tournament that he describes as "massive." Onshore storage yard worker Paul said "Reaching the champion of champions final is the greatest achievement I have made in golf.

"Anything else will be a bonus as I had a major knee operation last year and hardly played at the beginning of the season.

"It's only over the last month or so that I have been able to swing better."

Paul made a staggering start in his match against Ross and was five up after eight holes.

He lost a ball at the ninth but a winning net birdie three at the 10th restored his five-hole advantage.

Ross, who was giving Paul five shots, bounced back to win the 11th with a birdie two and the 12th with a birdie three to cut his opponent's lead to just three holes.

However, Paul won the next two holes to secure the 5&4 success to book his place in the final.

Paul admitted he was relieved when the match was finally over.

"I felt the pressure was on me as I had played so well early on and did not want to throw it away."

"I knew I probably would never have a better chance."

Paul had earlier defeated Neil Watt (Cullen) 5&4 in the third round before recording comprehensive 6&5 successes over Newburgh's Paul Marshall in the quarter-finals.

Paul will face the winner of the other semi-final between Duncan Lamont (Buckpool) and Kemnay's Gary Lyon.

The finals of this year's champion of champions scratch and handicap tournaments are at Newburgh on Sunday, September 5.

The championship, sponsored by the Evening Express and Aspire Golf Centre, is open to the 2009 scratch and handicap champions of all clubs affiliated to the North-east District.

The scratch and handicap winners will receive trophies and vouchers for £200.

The runners-up in both competitions will receive £125 of vouchers and the semi-finalists £80.

