

# Internet society links up at St. Andrews

## OUTING PROVIDES CHANCE FOR RULES GROUP TO FINALLY MEET

Maybe it was appropriate that an international Internet group known as The Leith Society had its first official "Gathering" in Scotland. For the past six years, cyberspace has provided a forum for these rules buffs (members range from amateur rules aficionados to experts who serve as rules officials in their home countries) to discuss various situations within the game.

Members of the society had used a variety of Web sites until Dick Groff of Bradenton, Fla., joined forces in January 2001 with Hans Paul Griesser of Italy to launch *leithsociety.com*. The name is derived from the Leith Code, which was written in 1744 for a competition among the members of The Company of Gentlemen Golfers of Leith (later known as The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers) and became the genesis of the modern rules of the game.

Yet the group had never met until late July, when a trip two years in the making finally came to fruition. Groff had planted the seed upon returning from the 2000 British Open at St. Andrews, and the trip evolved into an opportunity to match faces with e-mail addresses.

"Only a couple of people had met each other before," said Groff, one of 28 people from 10 nations to attend the outing known simply as "The Gathering."

Teams were divided up — Great Britain and its former commonwealth (Empire) vs. The Rest of the World — for a three-day, Ryder Cup-style competition

played at Carnoustie and the Old and New Courses at St. Andrews. The Empire won, 18½-15½, but competition became secondary to the camaraderie and new friendships that were born.

"People had smiles all week," said Wendy Dominick, a kindergarten teacher from Newburgh, N.Y., who has attained a perfect score on *Golf Journal's* annual Rules of Golf test each of the past three years. "Everybody had the time of their lives." — **D.S.**