

Crunchie's Blog

Stage 2

Day 1

Travel and practice

Hello again readers, how are you all. Back on the road, so to speak, after quick turn around, I was home for 2 and a half days, this week I am back on the bag for Jacko for stage 2 European tour qualifying school at Alenda golf club, near Alicante, Spain. Today my flight from Bristol was departing at a reasonable hour, 10.05am. My dear wife came with me to drop me off at 7.30am and she went back to Newport to work, well someone has got to earn a living and keep our family in food. Go on girl get the hours in!!!! Another short delay on my flight but eventually we were airborne at 10.30am. Bristol Airport was rather quiet this morning and it was quite enjoyable. I had my usual eggs benedict and coffee in the Brunel lounge and had a little wander around. Flight wasn't full again so for the second outward-bound flight I had 3 seats to myself. Nice, I could stretch out and relax a bit. Can't sleep on a plane though and I do get jealous of people who can nod off during a flight. Anyway flight is done and I head into Alicante airport. As I am wandering through to passport control I hear "Jonathan" called. Can't be me, only my mum and wife call me that and that's when they are annoyed. "Jonathan" is called again, I hesitantly stop and look around, bugger me it's my oldest brother, Andrew, and his family. They are on their way home from holiday. Blimey, I didn't even know they were away. Nice to catch up for a few mins. So I say goodbye go get my bag and Jack is waiting in arrival lounge. We get outside and it's bloody raining. I mean raining. Lashing down. We head for golf club, it's only 10mins from airport. It's still raining. Jack wants to play 9 holes. The tournament office is not set up yet so we have to go through the pro shop. He wants to charge Jack for his 9 holes but Jack refused. We walked it instead. The club house is strange, new looking and modern but not a pretty building. It's posh but different. 2 storey car park, tennis courts and an outdoor workout area, ropes wall climbing etc. Restaurant, gym, physio etc inside, but it just doesn't look quite right to me. Anyway the front nine is like a resort course, lots of birdie chances and 2 good par 3s. The greens are not good, which could be a blessing as the scores will be very very low if the greens are good. It's still raining. After 9 holes walking Jack decides he has had enough so we head back to car. We now have a 45min drive to our home for the week. Jack's girlfriends grandparents have a villa near Benidorm and they have very kindly allowed us to stay with them this week. We arrive and I meet Peter and Brenda, very nice people and very accommodating. They have a lovely villa up in the hillside above Benidorm. Peter is a mad Newport County fan and there is plenty of county memorabilia around the villa. We have dinner, a few beers and have a good chat. It's a very small world we live in. It seems we have a few friends in common and we enjoyed our chat and beer, followed by a nice gin and tonic. Anyway soon the day caught up with me and it was time for bed. Just to finish it's still raining. It hasn't stopped since I landed in this bloody country.

Day 2

Practice day

Relaxed morning really. Jack was up and off to gym by 7.30am I stayed in bed and was ready to go when Jack returned at 8.30am. We had breakfast and we were on the road by 9.30. After a quick stop for fuel and food for the course we arrived at Alenda golf at 10.30am. Perfect. Jack registered and we got our yardage books, free of charge this week, which is

nice. We head to the range to warm up. Place is a lot busier today, European tour flags and signs going up and it's starting to look like a tournament now. We meet Marco Penge on the range, we having a practice round together today. Marco and Jack were competitors all through junior golf and are good friends. They both have the same manager now as Marco joined recently, also Marco's girlfriend, Sophie Lamb, she has just turned pro and is also attached to Wasserman. She is caddying for Marco this week so it's quite a friendly group. Also joining us on the first tee is Sam Forgan, Sam played with Jack at stage 1 and we practiced with him at Desert Springs last week. Nice lad. His caddy Tom is a bit of a fruit cake, OK but a little strange. Should be a fun practice round. Front nine is wide open and the 2 par threes are decent. Back nine is a little tighter and a few irons needed from tees. Two par 3s on back nine are both over 200yds so good holes. Greens are not great but should get better. I think scoring will be low and maybe someone will shoot 10 under in one round. The practice round took us nearly 5 hours but it didn't seem that long. Maybe it would have been quicker if caddy Tom wasn't chipping and putting on most holes. Even after I told him his player would be fined if he was caught. Bloody idiot. Apart from that we had a bit of fun with Marco and I enjoyed it. Jack played quite nicely so feeling good. We head into clubhouse and have a sandwich. The others then go to do some more practice but Jack is happy enough and wants to head back home, so we do as the boss requires. The journey home was quite subdued, think we may have both been a little tired. Brenda and Peter were home and after a quick coffee I headed for a shower. We are all popping to the local bar tonight for a quiet drink. To be fair it's a lovely little bar, not that big but very clean and well stocked, had a bit of class about it. We met some more locals and friends of our hosts and after 3 pints Jack and I headed back. Nice place and a nice beer. If things work to plan I will be back Saturday to hopefully watch Wales v Scotland in the autumn test. It's either that or I have to watch the county with Peter. He is a massive Newport County fan and has the games streamed each week so doesn't miss a game. Should be a fun Saturday.

Day 3

Practice day

Up and on the road by 8.30am, very cold this morning but it's supposed to warm up later. We try a slightly different route today to golf club. As strange as this may seem, but we haven't gone the same way to and from the club once yet, obviously we on different roads but it's costing us 3.50euros to the club and 6.50euros from the club, but it's at least 5mins quicker home. Anyway we head off and sure enough we seem to be on the road we come home on, perfect. Only issue is we don't know the junction to get off, we'll I spotted it, as we drove passed it. Jack was not happy and after a short 15min detour to get back on track we eventually arrived at the club. Not bad really, could have been a lot worse. No warm up and straight onto the 10th tee, Jack only wants to play the back nine and he is eager to get going. Like I said it's cold and the course is playing a little longer. An early tee time tomorrow will mean cold and ball not flying as far so some adjustments needed early doors. So teeing off early today will help us gauge the conditions for tomorrow. OK it was a little quiet between us this morning, some general notes made but no real chit chat. When it's just 2 of us and we spent most of last night and this morning together you sort of run out of conversation. This is why I like to stay away from my player. Yes I am very very grateful for the accommodation sorted by Jack with his grand parents in law to be (so to speak) but for me to do my job properly I have to have conversation topics to distract the player or communicate with the player when required. It's hard enough he is my son (some topics can't

be spoken about) so I need help. Where did you eat last night, how's your hotel, any lively ladies around???? That type of thing has gone out the window, what else is there to discuss. We can't talk golf all the time can we. Don't even think about politics, Jack is not really into that type of thing. Anyway we get by 9 holes but we did have a small issue. A Marshall approached Jack on the 17th and asked him to report to the office after he had finished because he started on the 10th tee. We didn't think much about it but when we came off 18, (by the way an awful finishing hole) the same Marshall asked Jack for his name and told him to go to the office. Mmm mm this could be a little serious, so Jack heads for the office and sends me to the range. I get to range and see Sam and his dodgy caddy Tom from yesterday. They don't look too good, (more on that later) Jack comes back about 10mins later. He has had a good telling off for teeing off the tenth. Apparently all practice rounds must tee from the first. It's a European tour rule and a fine is imposed on players who don't abide. They let Jack off because he was the only one who went to the office after being asked by the Marshall, everyone else, and there were about 20 players on the course, didn't bother and ran away, Jack owned up and got his bollocking but no fine. For those of you who, like me questioned this action, this answer is clear, course prep by the green keepers is still in progress, they have a tough job and need all the time they can get so teeing off 1 at 8.00am gives them till 10 approx to work on back nine. Fair enough, slapped wrist, don't do it again. Strange I hadn't heard this before, I should know, I have done a few main tour events but didn't know that rule. Lesson learnt and logged. Anyway Jack then has a good iron range session. I stress iron session because only irons are allowed to be hit on the practice area. Now if you want to hit woods well let me say it's fun real fun. We had to get a buggy, drive the buggy passed the range, out of the course, over 2 roads and approx 200yards over the back of the fence behind the range we found 4 astro turf mats placed on the road side. This is where you hit your woods, back over the fence back to the range. Awesome fun!!!! Strange but good fun, hand on heart probably hard to fully concentrate but it looked great fun. So we finish with the range and head to putting green, I drove the buggy back and didn't notice a small tree overhanging our route. I just drove straight through it, but the branches rebounded back and slapped Jack straight in his face. "oh daddy please be careful" is pretty much what he wanted to say BUT "oh Jonno you ****, watch the *****g tree, you b*** end" was what actually came out of his mouth. Didn't stop me laughing though. I drop Jack at putting green and return the buggy. I head back and Tom is there on the putting green, putting. Jesus he doesn't get the hint this buffoon. Jack looks at me and shakes his head. I ask Tom where his player Sam is, he explains he is in the bathroom. I tell Tom again he is not allowed to practice. He just carries on and is starting to annoy Jack because he is talking utter crap. I have now nicknamed him "Tom the tit". Anyway Sam is ages and Tom is being an arse, so I ask again where is Sam is he OK. "probably not, we were out till 4am yesterday" came Tom's reply. I wish I didn't ask, because now I got the whole story of his night. Clubs bars casino etc etc. Now yes I was a little jealous, won't deny that but also now wasn't the time to be clubbing. After the event fine, not a day before. It surprised me about Sam, but he was probs dragged by Tom the tit. Sam eventually returned and looked better. I didn't ask just nodded, Sam was OK with that. So we did more short game practice and went for lunch about 2pm. It was OK but for 15 euros not great. Salad and burger with a drink. It's like a set menu all week for players and caddies. We shall see how that goes, maybe go look for a little taverna else where. After lunch it's back on the range. Jack is playing OK but he is trying hard to hit the hold off fade. He feels very comfortable playing with a fade, but currently he's playing with a little draw. Like I said he's playing fine but

he is not happy so he is constantly working to hit this little fade. He works at this for an hour or so and it's just about getting there, he is quite happy so we are done for golf today. We head back to the villa. Jack shows me round the town of Benidorm. He has been here a few times before so he drove me round for half hour to see the better areas of town, not the drinking partying side of Benidorm. A lot of tower blocks here, it's a big place. We get back to villa and Peter our host needs a hand to get a sofa out of his mates villa. I volunteer and we walk down to take the sofa out. On the way back we have a little walk around the complex and pop in the bar for a nice relaxing beer. Well we earned a reward didn't we. An hour later Peter and I trundle home. Jack and I then pop back to the bar for dinner whilst Peter and Brenda go out with friends. Back to villa and tucked up in bed by 9.30pm, early start tomorrow.

Day 4

Tournament round 1

So up and on the road by 7am. It's bloody freezing and dark. Can't believe how bloody cold it is. It's Spain, it's always warm in Spain isn't it??? Anyway we head to course and arrive at 7.45am, I go in and get pin sheet and Jack heads to the range. I am jumping up and down and trying to get warm, then it starts to bloody rain. Honestly rain, wind and cold, where are we, Wales???? So Jack goes through his warm up and all is good, he feels good. He looks good to be fair, good and confident. We get the call to the tee and it's slowly warming up, not much but a little. We are playing with a nice French chap called Robin, left hander and good player. The first is a par 5, not in reach as it's into wind and cold but still a decent chance. Jack hit a lovely drive and a fair 3 wood, which left a decent chip and he holed a 10ft birdie putt. Yes son good start, he also birdied the 2nd with a nice 15ft birdie putt. OK here we go 59 watch!!!!!! Well not exactly, a solid par on 3rd was followed by a run of average approach shots that either just missed the green or finished 40 or so feet away. He just wasn't quite right, timing was out and he looked lethargic. Still he kept making pars until the 8th. A pushed drive left him only 99 yards to the flag but he had a small tree in front of him. No issues just pitch it lower and take anything around 20ft away. Um no, let's hit the branch watch it puff up and land in another big tree, at first we thought it may have stuck in the tree because we didn't see it come down but we found it and a bogey was the result. Never mind he did manage a birdie on 9th but from a very wayward drive, so that put him - 2 for the front nine. OK move on let's find a swing. He missed the green on 10 from 100 yards but made par, 11 was OK a two putt par, 12 he was 15 yards short on the par 5 and had to hole a 6ft par putt, so you can see he was just not himself. Somehow he managed to make a birdie on the 14th with an easy chip and putt but he immediately bogeyed the 15th after 3 putting. Well I say 3 putt but technically it was a 2 putt because he hit his first putt off the green, so his second putt is classed as a shot not a putt, (silly boy) a good 2 putt par on 16 was followed by an incredible 4 on 17. He hit a fairly decent tee shot and he had 171 yards left to flag. Playing into the wind so it was a 185 golf shot. Coming from the rough we were expecting a little flier, it wasn't a great shot and went right, with a little fade as well, as it fell it disappeared. "what's over there" he asked me, I looked at my yardage book and all on the right side I had out big Xs meaning don't go there. I give him another ball and he plays the provisional, a great shot as it happened to 3ft, so if we can find the first one we could make bogey. Anyway we find the first one, it's on the cart path just short of all the crap but he is at least 30ft below the green and only drop is on a down slope in rough. We call a ref and yes

that's where he has to drop. Now somehow he managed to play a brilliant pitch to 18ft and he casually holed that putt to save his par. Some save that kiddo, fair play at this point I should add that Jack's playing partner Robin had made birdie on 17 to get to 6 under for his round and was going nicely. So last hole let's try making par and somehow get in under par. An OK drive left him a 125-yard shot to the 18th green, he has a 125 shot with his 50-degree wedge, which he played, but it went 137 yards and long into the rough. Luckily he had a great lie and nearly holed his chip. Finally he finished his round at 2 under and I think we were both somewhat relieved at that score. Again I will say that's how he has improved as a professional, 12 months ago that round could have been 76 or worse but he got it round in under par and all credit to him for that. In we go for food and a chill, set menu 15 euros, not great but it fills you up. Then he spends 2 hours on the range hitting balls. I take videos and pictures, he sends them to his coach Neil Mathew's and they have a quick chat about what's going wrong, basically not alot, it all looks good just a small bit of timing. Jack was getting frustrated and we did have a bit of a moment so I left the practice area to go and have a shower and let the situation diffuse itself. It worked as when I returned to the range we spoke to each other alot better. Sometimes things can get strained between caddy and player. Obviously this is worse when it's father and son. This is something I have had to learn how to deal with over the years. Obviously it's easier for me to understand as I am older and been around lot more. So I tend to back down alot but every now and then I disagree with how he speaks to me and that's when it's time to have a wee break. This week we have literally spent all our time together. Usually I stay away from my players especially Jacko that allows time away from each other and gives more conversation topics to use during the golf. We have travelled together every day, staying together and maybe too much time together but we can't do alot about that this week. Never mind we will battle through it. Anyway he finishes his practice and we head home. Quick shower and pop up the bar for a bite to eat and back to bed at a very reasonable hour. Let's hope for better tomorrow.

Day 5

Tournament round 2

Nice and refreshed and a new day. Yoghurt and granola for breakfast and off we go. Jack is not feeling great bit achey but we plow on. Get to club sort the pin sheet and off to warm up. Jack looks good on the range and feels better with his swing, all is on the up today. We starting on the tenth today so few tricky holes to start but he negotiates them very solidly and he is nicely positioned after the 12th to start attacking the course. Which he does well with an easy birdie on 14 and a good 10ft birdie on 16, nice son. Now for some reason we had a small blip on 17 we had a good yardage and Jack hit the perfect club but it just didn't fly and came up 10 yards short, can't really explain why it just happens sometimes. He made bogey. This cheesed him off a little and killed his momentum. So when we get to the first a par five into wind I am expecting no worries should be drive, 3 wood and a pitch. We'll it was a drive and a 3 wood but he pushed it a little and left a tricky pitch which went into the green side bunker, he then thinned it out of the bunker bounced back from the boundary wall, bounced a few times on the cart path and finished in play but not good. After a free drop from the path Jack played a brilliant chip to inches and scrambled a bogey. He is now back to level par from nowhere really and a trifle miffed. He decides he wants to hit driver on the next, which is not the shot but I felt he needed to let one go and release some anger. He did this and was some 40 yards off line but perfectly safe and got it out of his system. He played a nice pitch and holed the putt for birdie. Time to get back to the game plan. A good

two putt par on 3 was followed by a very nice birdie on 4 and we back on track. He missed from 8ft on 5 for birdie but hit it off the planet on 6 completely down the wrong fairway. This is a caddy nightmare because there are no yardages from other fairways. So I pace it, every single yard I pace to the edge of the green and add the pin yardage on, I get 123 yards. Jack has a perfect 125 shot with his 50 degree wedge. So he hit it and we watching and waiting for the ball to finish by the hole. Um no not exactly, it finished in a hole, but a bloody big one with sand in it. Some 15 yards short of the flag. As you can imagine my name was mud, you told me 125 shot I hit a 125 shot!!!! What the f***, was that yardage??? To say I was not happy with myself was an understatement, yes you could say Jack didn't hit it 125 but I think he did, it was a perfect shot and club, somehow the yardage was wrong. I suppose over 100 yards you can miss a step or two but I was 15 yards out really. Devastated was not the word. Luckily he holed a good 10ft par putt and my blushes were saved. He missed a good chance on 7th from 8ft and another 10ft birdie on 8 slipped by. But a very solid two putt birdie on 9 finished the round off nicely and a 3 under return for the day was decent. I will add here that Jack mentioned to me just before we teed off that he hadn't gone to the toilet before play, and I don't mean a pee, to add to that he didn't have chance on the course to go. So you can imagine how he was feeling with 4 holes to go. It wasn't pretty, so I will give him credit for holding it together so to speak to get the round finished. I did have to wait for him in the car after golf though, he had some "me time" in the lavatory straight after the round. We didn't hang around after the golf as Wales were playing Scotland in the autumn series opener so I had to get back to watch that and Jack didn't mind so off we went and just got home ready for kick off. Peter our host is a massive Newport County fan so he is upstairs watching the county and we are downstairs with the rugby. All good. In the evening we took Peter and Brenda out for dinner. It's the least we can do for putting us up this week. We went to a very nice restaurant nearby Alcazar, steak and fish, very nice. A good white wine to accompany the meal and all was good. Only downside was Jack was not feeling great, think he coming down with something. So Jack went home and I pop to the local bar for a nightcap with our hosts. Only one though, back in bed by 10.15pm cushty!!!!!!

Day 6

Tournament round 3.

Ok so up and at em again this morning but Jack not himself, he wasn't great lady night and he doesn't look brilliant this morning. Anyway breakfast done and off we go. We arrive in fair time and pin sheet is done while Jack attends the lavatory, not his first trip today. We meet again on range, it's bloody freezing again and I am debating waterproofs, while Jack on the other hand is nicely warm. Mmm players around us are wearing bobble hats!!!! So warm up done, Jack needs the toilet again. That's not right!!!! We tee off and all is OK, well I say OK, it was fine for first two shots then Jack pulled a 60yard pitch bouncing around the cart path (again) and lucky to be in play. A free drop later and a slightly duffed chip ended in a tap in par, somehow. Maybe it's nerves I thought. He played the second lovely and knocked in a nice 8ft putt for birdie. He had an awful bounce on the 3rd and made bogey, but a tap in birdie on 4 made up for that. The fifth was my first sign Jack wasn't right, we agreed a 7 iron and yes he did puff it into wind a little but it came up 20yards short and resulted in bogey. But straight away he birdied the 6th and all is good again. Now may the Lord strike me down if I am lying, but from the 7th to the 14th Jack had 7 birdie putts the longest being 12ft the shorted 4ft. He missed each one. The frustration was building, but in those holes Jack was

showing signs he was not well. He was freezing and it was 22 degrees. He was slow, lethargic and lacking energy. On 15 he missed the green from 76 yards, made bogey, 17 he missed the flag from 110 yards by 40 yards and made bogey and then on 18 he missed another 8ft birdie chance. All that resulted in a level par round and kept Jack at 5 under for the tournament. He is now tied 24th and we have been told there are 23 qualifying spots available for final stage. Its going to be a nail biter. After the round Jack was still cold and needed the toilet again. He was not a happy bunny but he obviously wasn't well either. I decided to drive home and Jack was fast asleep after 5 mins. When we get back to villa Jack goes straight to the toilet again and then to bed. About an hour later he is sweating buckets and aching all over. No no no this is not good, he really was very unwell. Between Brenda myself and Peter, we try to look after him, dose him up and keep him hydrated but it's not working. He can't sleep and is really struggling. It's looking like he will have to withdraw from the tournament at this rate. Well I couldn't do alot more to help him and I was getting hungry so I popped to the bar, Brenda though was cooking food as her and Peter are going back to Newport tomorrow so she wanted to cook up what was left in the villa. OK no probs I will just have a few beers then and come back for food. Nice idea Jonno!!! So we ate and we can hear Jack is rough upstairs. I check on him and he looked like shit if I am honest. I debate emailing the European tour and pulling him out, but I decide to wait to the morning. Fingers crossed for a small miracle.

Day 7

Final tournament round

So as you can imagine I didnt sleep to much and neither did Jack, he was up and down to toilet most of the night and was in some serious pain aswell. To top it off he fainted this morning. OK no worries I will ring the tournament office and pull him out, he can't play. This is about 6.30am and there is no one in the office. Jack asks me his tee time, 9.10am, he then asks what latest we can leave, 7.50ish. OK he decides to try eat, drink and we give him imodium and paracetamol. He is going to try and play, bloody incredible. We leave at 7.50 and he is asleep in the car. We get to course at 8.45 and Jack jumps straight into the toilet. To be fair so did I, my stomach was not great this morning, could be a fun day. I get out first do my pin sheet and head back to lavatory, Jack and I sitting side by side in the cubicles. Not the best father son experience I have ever had. On the way to the course I had stopped in a garage to get drinks, lucozade and energy drinks, thought that would help. Jack says he wants to try hit a ball before tee off so we go to range. Although it's cloudy this morning it's not cold, so imagine the looks people are giving Jack when he has full waterproofs and a bobble hat on, it's about 17 degrees. Aw bless him, he tried to hit one ball, he thinned the wedge and run back to the toilet. The starter then calls his name, holy crap he gonna miss his tee time, this is going to be tragic. I walk to tee explain he is in toilet but Jack appears behind me with minutes to spare. I suppose the one good thing about today was Jack had a decent 3 ball, Marco penge and nick macarthy. Marco and Jack are mates and nick won the Europro finals last week. So I give Jack a ball and his driver. He pegs it up and makes a swish, "fore" I shout as it heads right but at least it's in play. Somehow he made a par and started drinking the energy drinks. The second was pretty strange he hit a poor 2 iron into a fairway bunker but a very good second and holed the putt, wow, just wow. A par on 3 and 4 had Jack at -6 the tournament and I think that - 7 is the number to qualify. I would pay good money at this point for all pars and one birdie from here. Jack tries some food on the 5th and it stays in,

maybe the imodium is kicking in. By now he is getting warmer, so all the waterproofs are coming off and the bag is getting very heavy but anything to keep the boy on the course. A very good drive on 6 and a lovely pitch leaves Jack with 6ft for birdie which he knocks in. OK Jonno if Jack can keep alive and keep his energy up, I have to do my damndest to help him get round from here. To be fair up to this point he hadn't made a single mistake, probably concentrating so hard on keeping his bowels in order he forgot about the golf. He had a 25ft birdie putt on 7 and missed, he had a 12ft birdie on 8 and just missed and on 9 he hit two great shots to 40ft on the par 5 but three putted for par. That was frustrating. OK so we get to 10th and there is food on the tee, fruit really, bananas and apples, water aswell. Jack decides he wants an apple, I advise him, in my opinion that won't help but he has one anyway. He almost missed his 2 iron tee shot but it did go forward, he didn't hit a very good second shot either but it managed to get 15 yards short. Then he played a brilliant chip the could easily have gone in, tap in par. He has finished his apple by now but he really doesn't look good, suddenly all his colour has gone and he is struggling. He managed to get his drive away on 11 but is walking very slowly and wants to be sick. He takes an age to get to his ball. I told him not to have the apple, he now looks like he is going to throw up any minute. He takes his time, I give him his yardage and he just hit it. He then walked off to throw up. The ball went to 8ft. While the others played Jack was going to the side or the bushes or the trees, he didn't know what to do with himself. The other two were then waiting for him as his ball was on the fringe in the way. Eventually he made it to the green but I thought it was the end of him. I was thinking what a shame he had battled so hard to get this far and he was going to have to call it a day. He stood next to me by the green and could have just hugged him and taken him home to bed. To add to the matter it started to rain but by now Jack was boiling and couldn't put any other clothes on. The others finished the hole and left Jack to try and putt. He managed to get his ball down but as he addressed the putt he had to walk away he was going to vomit all over his ball and the green. Luckily the game behind weren't anywhere near us so there was no rush. Eventually he plucked up the courage to hit his putt but left it 6 inches short but I don't think he cared. He walked off to the bushes and I didn't see him for a little bit. There was a little delay on 12 tee so it was no problem for Jack to do what he had to do. I gave him some water when he returned and he looked a little bit more colourful. The 12th is the hardest tee shot on the course and in my opinion the last hole where Jack could make a balls of it. Luckily he managed to get a straight one off and it bounded down the fairway. It's now start g to rain seriously and the wind has picked up to 25-30 mph. Jack's drive had run so far down the fairway he only had 180 left to the front on this par five and as it was down wind he only needed a 9 iron to get there. This he did well and had 30ft for Eagle, he left it 5ft short but managed to hole for birdie. Come on son now dig deep, 6 holes left let's try our best. A slightly lucky 8 iron on 13, it had a nice bounce forward, left Jack 11ft for birdie which he rolled in nicely. More to the point a few haribo sweets had brought his colour back and he looked reasonable. Bloody hell - 9 for the tournament that's well in the qualifying mark, come on kid. So we get to 14 tee, another slight delay. It's a dogleg par 5 like our 8th but longer and all down hill. First 2 days we hit 4iron lay up from the tee and 3 wood second shot. Yesterday we hit driver and a wedge as it was downwind. The same wind today, and all the group in front hit driver and the two boys we were playing with had driver out. My thinking was this, if Jack got this drive away like he has all day, he would have a wedge left to an easy flag, a birdie and he can coast home and Eagle and he could crawl home. He agreed and driver was the choice. He hit the driver, it went where he wanted and all was good. The other 2 hit driver and well walked

off the tee. As we are walking down the fairway and man in a buggy approaches and in broken English he says "ball 1 and 3 no good" what does that mean no good, "they not in play" Jack had hit first so that was his ball. We walk down and he is 10 yards out of bounds. Jack's tee shot had hit a tree in play and rebounded back out of bounds, gutted absolutely gutted. Now he had to walk back. He took the 4 iron and hit the lay up, but a double bogey 7 was the result. I was very upset, why didn't I just make him hit iron, a par was fine, why did I think he could make birdie or even eagle. I was so annoyed with myself, but Jack said it was just bad luck, it was a good drive that just got a bad break. It didn't make me feel any better. What made it worse was Jack didn't have a great lie on 15 and his 7 iron can up 10 yards short and he didn't get up and down. Bloody hell he back to - 6 and that is one short in my opinion. He said to me on 16 tee, that he thought we had given it a good try and he was happy we tried. I told him it's not over, 3 holes left to get at least one or even two more birdies but he looked drained. The double bogey had taken all his momentum and the adrenalin he was using to keep him going. I could have cried there and then but we still had a job to do. He very nearly holed a 30ft birdie putt on 16, and after a brilliant approach to 17 he brushed in a lovely 5ft birdie.

Day 7

Final round continued.

Come on kid that's fantastic, one last effort now. I piled more haribo into him and told him par is OK but birdie is definitely in. He hit a decent drive and he had a 110 yard shot left to a very tight flag on 18. He was coming out of the semi rough so controlling the ball was always going to be difficult. He hit the shot and it looked great, right at the flag but it just fell out of the air and it finished 7 yards short of the green. Really don't know what happened to it because we all thought it was a good shot. He played a lovely chip to 3ft just above the hole. At this point I am going to tell you about Jack's playing partner nick McCarthy. He had 30ft for birdie on 18 and was at - 5 for the tournament after he had just holed a 60ft birdie putt on 17 then was going so hard it hit the hole jumped up landed on the back of the hole sat there for 9 seconds and fell in. If it hadn't had hit the hole it was going off the green 20ft passed the hole, but it went in. So nick has 30ft to get to - 6 and Jack has 3ft to stay at - 7. Yes you guessed it nick holed and Jack missed. Unbelievable just f***ING unbelievable, I couldn't believe what I had just seen and how sad Jack looked. He trudged off shaking hands with all players and caddies then coming to me. "thanks dad, we tried our best" he said to me. I couldn't reply because I was so choked up. How I held the tears back I will never know. He gave me his ball, tees, glove etc and we walked slowly to the clubhouse. Jack had to go to the toilet quickly before checking and signing his card. I too needed the toilet as my stomach was now churning. I will be honest here and I will say I was extremely upset in the toilet. I was in there a while trying to contain my emotions and tears. All I kept thinking was why didn't I make him hit iron from 14 tee, Jesus Christ!!!!!! So we meet in the bar and maybe try some food. Jack doesn't think - 6 is good enough and I agree. We didn't speak much we just sat there in silence really. I had a sandwich but Jack couldn't face food. He had given everything and was drained. About 20mins went by and Alfie plant came in from the course. He was his usual chirpy self and offered us a beer. We declined and he said probs good idea if your in the play off. Ooh we checked the scores and yes Jack was currently in a play off position. A second chance son, "no dad I don't want a play off I don't think I can hit a ball." I looked at him hard and yes I could see he had nothing left to give. A play off was the last thing he needed. An hour went by and it was confirmed Jack was in a 6 man play off for 4 spots. Holy

shit this is our one last chance kid. Jack was not up for it in fact he had to go to toilet again. After that we went to the range Jack hit one ball and ran back to the toilet again. Oh no dejavu here, he returned from the toilet sat on the wall and looked dejected, he had nothing to give. I got him up and dragged him to the tee. Not even haribo could help him now. So in the play off we have 3 European tour player meronk, Baldwin and some portugese fella. Also of course nick Mccarthy the lucky bugger who hole 100ft of putt on last 2 greens. Jack drew 5 for tee position. The portugese fella smashed his drive miles, meronk the same, Baldwin straight but short, Mccarthy right rough, Jack somehow straight but not far. The last guy was Danish and he went miles right. Baldwin laid up with iron poor shot into rough. Jack topped his 3 wood not quite a flat top but a half top but it went straight. Meronk greens side bunker, portugese green side bunker, other 2 short right. So Jack was first to play approach he had 115 to flag, the fact he tried to dink a wedge shows how ill he was he could get a 54degree wedge that far. His pitch came up 40ft short of the flag and not good. All the others hit decent shots but the portugese fella hit the best to 6ft. Jack first to putt left it 10ft short. Holy shit he going out first hole, all the days efforts wasted in one sodding hole. Baldwin 2 putt 5, meronk 2 putt 5, Mccarthy 2 putt 5, dane 2 putt 5. Jack has his par putt before portugese has his birdie putt. Christ sake son!!!! Somehow Jack managed to holes his par putt on the last roll it fell in. Holy christ almighty kid, some balls that. Portugese holes so he through. We all shake his hand. Right 5 left 3 places. All hit good tee shots on 2 even Jack managed to find the middle of his 2 iron. Baldwin meronk and Jack all hit average wedges to 30 to 40 feet. Mccarthy 8ft, dane 15ft. Baldwin left his putt 2ft short, meronk 2 putt 4, Jack hit a great putt I mean it was in all the way till last 3inches and it just lipped the hole. Oh my go my heart rate went up and down to the extreme. Both Mccarthy and dane miss for birdie, but Baldwin missed his par putt and we all shake his hand. 4 left 3 places. The third a par 3 was a 6 iron all day, a fit jack could have hit 7, but for some reason Jack wanted to hit 5, I tried to say hit the 6 but he looked so tired and thought maybe 5 would be OK. I was wrong he slightly pulled it and it went long and left. Other 3 all hit the green. Jack's chip was poor and he left it 15ft short. Dane holed for birdie, meronk 2 putt for par, this left Jack his par attempted before Mccarthy putted for his birdie. Jack hit a good putt but it missed, Mccarthy just lagged up and just like that it was all over the dream had gone. I mean God this game is cruel, all that hard work for what. Nothing!!!! He did have a small bit a semi decent news, as he made the play off he was on the reserve list for stage 3 and he is allowed to go to Barcelona if he likes to practice just in case people drop out. That really didn't cheer him up much I can tell you. We go straight from course back to the villa, after another stop at the toilet. I drive Jack is dead to the world. We arrive and I have a shower a head to the bar, we can get take away food from the bar so I order and have a beer or two whilst I wait. Jack pretty much just crashed on the settee. I return with the food, he has a little then he heads for bed. I am not far behind, it's been a long and stressful day. The next day we travel home, Jack is well enough to fly so that's a bonus and we arrive at airport pretty much stress free. Well as I write this in the airport bar I have some good news, well better news. You know I said Jack got a reserve spot for making playoff, well it turns out he was third reserve, whilst we have been waiting for our plane he has been moved to first reserve, it quite possible he could get it. I am not getting too excited yet but its possible. My beer tastes better now I know that. I shall keep you all informed but for now, cheerio all hopefully get another blog out for final stage qualifying from Barcelona

