

## Slightly under par

**Bernhard Langer – My Autobiography** (Hodder & Stoughton, £17.99) ISBN 0-340-78715-5

One of the heroes of Europe's stunning Ryder Cup win over the USA at *The Belfry* recently, Bernhard Langer is still at 45, a formidable golfer whose competitive edge remains as strong as ever.

He is also – hence a review in these pages – one of European golf's most prominent Christians. And Langer's story in this 186-page hardback is told with the attention to detail and efficiency that the German former Masters champion has so often shown on the golf course.

He covers his childhood, introduction to the game as a caddy, turning professional, and his progress as a tournament pro to the heady heights of being ranked world number one, and winning the US Masters. Woven into the narrative, you'll discover his journey as a Christian, and his thoughts on everything from success, wealth and materialism to how the team for the Ryder Cup should be selected.

It is primarily a book for the golf fan, however. While Langer's testimony is strong and there is plenty to think about for those who share his faith – or are at least interested in it – you'd struggle to reach the end if you weren't a golf nut.

And I mean nut. The at times wearisome detail that the book provides, from round to round, stroke to stroke, and the extensive Appendix with statistics and records, were a bit much for me.

The writing style is rather too dry at times, and while Langer has a few anecdotes to tell, they're not as captivating or amusing as you might hope.

This isn't to diminish the considerable talents and faith of the man – it's just a pity the book, written with Stuart Weir from *Christians in Sport*, doesn't sparkle a little more.

One for the enthusiast.

■ **Russ Bravo is editor of Christian Herald and a former single handicap golfer**

