

## HALFORD HEWITT CUP 2019

Now the dust has just about settled and I managed to hold back from doing an impression of Reginald Perrin and the English Channel on a cold Sunday April evening at Deal here's the Captain's post Hewitt 2019 summary:

First of all I would like to particularly thank the following:

- All the OAGS Hewitt supporters that were avidly following the progress of the team during the week. The support and encouragement the team received from supporters both physically present at Deal and/or via the What's App chat/social media forums meant so very much to all the team. Thankyou!
- All the personal messages of support each one of the team members received from friends, family, society members and even from other fellow schools and competitors. Thankyou!
- All the actual hands-on help provided to the team during the week, you know who you are, including but not limited to caddying, media, lunches, hot dogs, teas, coffees and sausages at the hut, encouragement, but most of all simply for just being there, having fun and providing your support. We simply would not have performed to the same level without you. Thankyou!
- To Natasha and Anita at The Bell Hotel for all the help and attention they gave to everyone during our stay and especially to the requested eating arrangements within the "newly adopted" Ampleforth private dining room. Whilst they are not on this circulation email it would be remiss not to mention them, on behalf of the society I have organised for some flowers to be sent to them both.
- Finally.....**The 2019 Ampleforth Hewitt Team of 12 talented golfers** ....more importantly the finest group of men to be part of a team with. Thankyou!!

I will forever be sorry in not getting us over the finishing line in 2019 and getting our hands on that trophy, I take that responsibility head on with no hiding place. We were just 1 putt away from winning the tournament, the smallest yet cruelest of margins possible, we all but won it!

However, we play as a team and we will learn and grow from this experience. In contrast to the previous two finals we can take massive comfort and confidence from the way we collectively played in the final against Malvern, we performed as we had done in every match during the week. In the final we lost only one game over 18 holes and in that match our pair were no more than 4 over par after 17 holes. With three matches going into a play-off anything can happen, although we eventually came unstuck on the 23rd hole with the match poised at 2-2, we had, under the fiercest pressure of winning the tournament played extremely well and deserved to win it.

We simply must remember and take inspiration from all the positives, there are so many of them. Ampleforth is now the most feared and in-form team within the Hewitt, we have created something special, no flash in the pan, a legacy that will carry us into the future and something we should all be proud of. Over the last 4 years we have beaten four of the top five Anderson Scale rated teams including:

Charterhouse (twice)

Epsom

Tonbridge

Merchiston

This year we lost only 3 games from 30 games played over 18 holes (just 10% of all games) we won 20 and halved 7. Compare that to Malvern who lost 6 and last year when we lost 6. This tells you everything, consistency and continuous improvement being the key!! Awesome stats which we should all absorb and be aware of giving us huge confidence to further build on.

On that darkest hour on the 23rd hole I took solace in knowing that each member of the team had given it everything we possibly had, we gave it 100% leaving no stone unturned, in both preparation and application during the week. Part of the preparation being the Spain trip which not only provides the opportunity to further develop a wonderful and unique team spirit but also early season competitive golf on challenging courses.

Whilst fate went against us in the play-off we need not worry about winning the Hewitt, instead we will just have to wait one more year to get our name on the left side of the honours board and on that trophy. The OAGS and Hewitt squad is continuing to grow in strength each year, we will continue to get stronger, sustained over years and create one of the finest Hewitt teams in history. The real challenge is not who gets there first, it's who gets there and stays there that are the strongest. We are now firmly in that arena.

As we all know, a team is all about teamwork without singling anyone out, working and performing together as a team, with good old fashioned DPP (determination, perseverance and patience). Having said that I would like to congratulate Hugh Jackson on making his 50th Hewitt match appearance this year and also Leo Moreno de la Cova Ybarra on making his debut.

In addition to all the above, the Hewitt team is so very lucky on many fronts...

- To be part of a wonderful supportive society, with a vast array of events overseen and put together by the President, Captain, Hon Sec and the various match managers the OAGS is growing in numbers and popularity every year.
- To have the best yet also the most humble player in the Hewitt in our team.
- To have had all the hard work and dedication done by former Hewitt captains in previous years in developing the team to where we are today.
- To have a truly unique team spirit, camaraderie and humble friendship in the Amplefordian way.

We are in this together, a collective team of talent and determination with a fantastic support network around us. We must go on, pick ourselves back up and carry on with this journey that we are all on together. We must all continue to seek to improve, those small margins collectively making a huge impact as a team.

Finally, we should all take heart from Malvern, losing finalists 9 times, if ever another team deserved to win it, it was them. Our time will come!

Thank you one and all, let's carry on with this journey and let's rewrite those record books!!

The preparation for the 2020 Hewitt starts now!!!

Mark Whittaker (J87)

Note: The Hewitt team of 2019 consisted of the following;

*Mark Whittaker*

*Christian Minchella*

*Simon Hardy*

*George Hattrell*

*David Hague*

*Hugh Jackson*

*Matthew Camacho*

*Tom Davies*

*James Faulkner*

*Alex Faulkner*

*Luca Gerolla*

*Leo Moreno de la Cova Ybarra*

