

Halford Hewitt 2023

The Hewitt team secured a record fourth consecutive first round win when it beat The Leys on the opening day of the Halford Hewitt at Royal St George's. This was the first time in 5 years we had played at RSG and it was an early tee off at 8.20am on 30 March. The weather conditions were wet and windy. The team, similar to last year, with the addition of Matthew Pennock, a scratch golfer joining the ranks. Matthew is the son of Tony Pennock who was Head Pro at Thorpeness and now Seckford hall. He paired up with John Wybar, which brought back memories of the two playing together at school all those years ago. Lottie Whyman was a late withdrawal due to injury.

The match was close and went down to the 18th in the final match. Harry Bush and Harvey Finbow went out first and won comfortably 4/3 against a strong pair. Hugh Curle and Richard Graves lost to a decent second pair, as did Rob Atton and Peter Watts who played the last match. With Wybar and Pennock winning with ease 4/3, it was left to Jonny Newton and Archie Winter in the final game playing to win. All matches, apart from this one, had finished as Newton teed off on the 17th with their game level. It had been a tight match up until now and Newton's drive was in the rough down the left and their opposition down the right in the rough. Decent shots into the greens saw both teams 3 putt for a nervy half. From the tee on the 456 yard 18th Winter smashed a beauty down the middle of the fairway putting pressure on the opposition who pushed their drive right into the rough. Newton's approach was pin high, but left of the green and Winter chipped beautifully to the top tier pin placement. The Leys missed the green and after a poor chip, Newton simply lagged a 20ft putt to win the match. Lots of players and spectators watched the final few holes and a decent celebratory lunch was then eaten in the beautiful George's dining room.

The second round was against Loretto, played in atrocious conditions. It was wet, windy and cold, with a 4 club wind at times. Loretto had won the last two Hewitts and the team was exceptional. We lost 4.5/0.5 with Wybar and Pennock securing a half. Loretto went on to win the tournament again on the Sunday. Not only were they exceptional golfers but all the team were good guys and good fun to play with. Our minds race to next year now when we have 3 graduates from the Golf College available for selection, George Jackson, Callum Pearce and Fraser Johnson who are all around scratch. If Spraggs can be enticed back from the USA, it's a brilliant squad to pick 10 from. Thanks to Andy Towler for supporting and organising the admin this year.

Jonny Newton

Team picture on 18th, left to right; Bush, Winter, Finbow, Graves, Newton, Wybar, Curle, Atton, Swinburn, Pennock (missing, already in the bar!)



