



SHAKEN AND STIRRED

The Man with the Golden Putter. Birdies are Forever. Thunderball. With **Roger Moore** leading us into battle for our belated opening fixture of the year at Berkhamsted Knights, all the usual James Bond puns were poised for use here.

Sadly, a defeat by 5 ½-2 ½ means that it might be most appropriate to say that we had the Living Daylights knocked out of us.

At least we are now up and running after the postponement of the games at Hadley Wood (snow) and home to Harpenden (heavy rain and 50 mph winds). For your information, the first of those has been rescheduled for October 18, but the Harpenden match is coming up shortly on Wednesday April 12.

No blame for our loss can be placed at the door of match organiser and captain for the day Roger. He and **Alan Sallis** were first out and also first to finish, winners by a

handsome 5&4 margin in a match also memorable for one of Roger's shots getting stuck in a tree.

Behind them **Jim McBride and Mark Garrod** were involved in a much tighter tussle – never more than one hole in it and all square on the last, where they were mightily relieved to see 10-handicap opponent Tony Ayles carve his drive onto the practice ground amid thousands of discarded balls and then, after failing to find it and dropping out of the hole, his partner David Dalton follow Jim into the heather and, unlike Jim, losing that as well. He too conceded and neither of us even needed to putt. Two games, two wins. All looking good. But out on the course the picture changed.

There was a battling half from **Simon Newell and Keith Embleton** from four down after eight – Simon's closing par squared matters – but our hosts came out on top in the other five games, which meant that our debutants **Len Pryor and Jim McGregor** could not make the starts they were hoping for.

Both came close, though. Playing with **Stephen Hardy** Jim stood three down with four to go and did well to take it to the last, while Len and **Clive Parnell** also went the distance, as did **Byron Davies and Mitchell Walters**. **Paresh Kotecha** could not match the form which won him both the winter 4-ball and Texas scramble. Playing with **Richard Stell** they came up against two steady players and were resoundingly beaten. **Toni Manzi and Kevin Bishop** were the other losers.

Next up is away to Welwyn Garden City on March 29.