



## COVID STRIKES BEFORE WE BATTLE TO A DRAW

It was more a case of “What’s Up?” than “WhatsApp” as we staged our first home match of the season against the South Herts Vardons.

A 4-4 draw in the first leg of our “Battle of Barnet” clash told only a small part of the story – and, almost inevitably, the dreaded Covid-19 was central to the tale.

Two days before the fixture our ex-president [Robin Loader](#) was called in to replace Antony Manzi, yet another sufferer from the virus, and then on the morning of the match Kevin Bishop had to withdraw because he had also tested positive.

Captain Richard Stell’s wise decision to form a WhatsApp group amongst us was activated and to his immense credit [David Benaim](#), still in bed and doubtless glad he wasn’t needed on a cold, wet and windy morning, answered the SOS.

The drama was not over. On arriving at the club and opening his car boot David discovered that his three-wood was in two pieces rather than one. Determined to carry on regardless, however, he joined partner [Mitchell Walters](#) on the third tee and was greeted with the news that they were already two down. When they turned that into a one-hole advantage with four to play we looked set for a happy ending, but sadly the momentum switched again and it ended as a two-up victory for the Vardons. David could claim obviously that at least he drew his 16 holes.

Our other Supersub **Robin** did do the business, though, combining with **Richard Bridges** for a 3&2 success, the same margin that was recorded by **Eugene Billeter and Nigel Whiteley**. Highlight of that was Eugene finding the green in two at the difficult uphill 12<sup>th</sup> – not good news for his opponents since he was getting one of his five strokes on the hole.

Biggest winners of the day were **Stephen Hardy and Tony Blackhurst**. They did not lose a hole in triumphing 6&4, Stephen making a 12-foot birdie two on the seventh, while **Keith Embleton** registered his fourth straight point of the year, this time by 4&2 alongside **Richard Pacey**, whose main memory of the encounter might well be the sight of his trolley rolling into a bunker on the 12<sup>th</sup> just as he was putting on the 10<sup>th</sup>. One suspects there might be a mention of that at the end-of-season dinner.

**Jim McBride and Alan Sallis** did not know what was about to hit them when they led by one with five to go. Vardon Peter Krase made a ridiculous 50-foot putt on the short 14<sup>th</sup> and his partner John North holed from off the green at the 17<sup>th</sup> to wrap up a 2&1 win, while **Richard Stell and Mark Garrod** led by one after 10, but lost three of the next four and were beaten 3&2.

**Byron Davies and Richard Davison** took their game to the 17<sup>th</sup> only to lose 3&1, Richard then reporting that his pre-match preparations were badly affected. He was held up en route by a dustbin lorry, which as excuses go is a pretty rubbish one.

All to play for therefore in the return match at South Herts on July 25.