

Isis C.C. FFTMCC Golf Challenge Cup

After a 9-year hiatus, 2020 saw the return of an end of season inter-club match-play golf tournament for the very occasional Isis C.C. golf society. Whereas in the dim and distant past Isis had traditionally played local rivals Wytham (and were winners of the last of that competition in 2011 in a day every bit as miraculous as the European's win in the *real* Ryder Cup a year later), the rekindling of this old favourite was achieved with the kind participation of our great friends and rivals Far From The MCC C.C.

Of course, with that 9-year gap a few of our aging ranks have become even more decrepit over time and the 27-hole marathon of old was this year replaced by a more gentle 18-hole walkabout to allow the old and infirm to participate. Regardless of the result, it was a good day and the weather was kind (apart from a squall near the end of the event). The competition will hopefully now become an annual fixture, with the teams competing for the coveted Claret Jug.

As with all such ventures, players from both teams dropped in and out of the starting line-ups right up until the last minute. And so, there was much relief when 22 golfers arrived at Waterstock Golf Club on-time and ready for a 10:30 tee-off on Saturday 10th October 2020. The agreed format for the day was 9-hole better-ball pairs matches over the front 9 and 9-hole singles over the back 9.

With Isis fielding 12 men, Joe Walter and Damian Todd played a friendly game over the front 9 and allowed Nick Hardy and Ravi Kella to compete in the pairs, before they swapped over and Joe and Damian played the singles while Nick and Ravi played the back 9 as a friendly. Geddit? Whatever, everybody who turned up had the chance to contribute, that is the essence of it.



And so, after a bit of briefing on the format of the day, some hints and tips about out of bounds, which holes would see the competition for the Nearest-the-Pin and Longest Drive trophies and distribution of the scorecards, the tournament got under way. Yours truly and Russ Turner set the standard by duffing our tee-shots and left Jonathan Ponsford and Chris "Tall Bob" Roberts to play out the first hole, and as this four-ball began hacking around the early holes, a succession of pairs matches followed.

Regardless of the standard of golf, the matches were certainly competitive and while the overall picture was not clear until the end of the tournament, it turned out that by the half-way point it was

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pretty close with Isis 3-2 up after 9-holes. A special mention to Nick and Ravi who won the last of these 4 up with 2 to play to give Isis the edge.

The singles matches went the way of Isis, with only Paddy Mellor and Corne Vermack taking full points for FFTMCC, although Chris “Pops” Williams nearly pipped Felix Roper, the latter winning the last hole in their match to secure a half having remarkably pulled back Chris’s four-point lead. In every other match Isis came out on top to take the singles $7\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$, and thus win the overall tournament $10\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$. Along the way, Jonathon Ponsford hit a magnificent tee-shot to both set the pace for and win the nearest-the-pin hole, the seventh, and to Damian Todd also, who despite being the loser in his singles match smashed a massive drive down the twelfth fairway to secure the Longest Drive trophy. An Isis clean sweep then.



Future events will surely see a different outcome, but I hope and trust that the Mad enjoyed the event, so much so that we look forward to the 2021 event which they by return will organise and host. And as I always say, it's not the winning, it's the taking part that counts (yeah, right!).

Our thanks to Ian Howarth for bravely taking the reins of captaincy and trawling the rank and file of Madmen past and present to field a worthy team. My thanks too to the Isis boys who stood up to the task at hand and carried home the silverware.



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PAIRS		Result and Margin	
Isis C.C.	FFTMCC CC		
Jon Ponsford (23)	V	Chris Roberts (26)	Isis
Keith Whiter (25)		Russ Turner (26)	4 & 2
Julian Francis (26)	V	Paddy Mellor (26)	FFTMCC
Felix Roper (26)		Chris Williams (28)	4 & 3
Dave Penhallurick (26)	V	Thornton Smith (26)	Isis
Dave Lawrence (28)		John Harris (26)	3 & 2
Allan East (28)	V	Ian Howarth (26)	FFTMCC
Keith Ponsford (28)		Geoff Carter (28)	2 & 1
Nick Hardy (28)	V	David Emerson (28)	Isis
Ravi Kella (32)		Corne Vermaak (30)	4 & 2

SINGLES

Isis C.C.	FFTMCC CC	
Jon Ponsford (23)	V	Chris Roberts (26)
Keith Whiter (25)	V	Russ Turner (26)
Julian Francis (26)	V	Paddy Mellor (26)
Felix Roper (26)	V	Chris Williams (28)
Dave Penhallurick (26)	V	Thornton Smith (26)
Dave Lawrence (28)	V	John Harris (26)
Allan East (28)	V	Ian Howarth (26)
Keith Ponsford (28)	V	Geoff Carter (28)
Joe Wallter (28)	V	David Emerson (28)
Damian Todd (28)	V	Corne Vermaak (30)

Isis C.C. 10.5, FFTMCC 4.5