



[The story of the 2020 Red Hoffman Cup Matches follows, based heavily on the content presented during the event on [www.hoffmancup.org](http://www.hoffmancup.org). The article below covers the Finals, then jumps to a chronological description of what happened in the 2020 Matches leading up to the Final. Team vs team results are listed in the Appendix.]

## **The 2020 Hoffman Cup: Hamilton Farm Brings It Home!**



**The 2020 Red Hoffman Cup Champions, from Hamilton Farm GC (L to R):  
Zach Koerbel, Erik Davis, Chester Patterson, Erik Stevens, Mark Costanza,  
Captain Drew Jordan, Jackson Kramer, Ira Flood**

The four 2020 Red Hoffman Cup finalists met at beautiful Hamilton Farm Golf Club on October 18, and a squad that seemed to be on a mission the whole season took home the Red Hoffman Cup for the first time.

Playing its home track, Hamilton Farm wrested the title from three-time defender Arcola Country Club by merely one shot (280 to 281) to mark a meteoric rise to the top of the competition

The Hoffman Cup Finals was the culmination of a covid-influenced, season-long interclub competition that started 2020 with 36 clubs. By the time Finals Sunday came along, only four teams were left standing after several matches apiece: Arcola, the odds-on favorite based on four championships in the last five years; Hamilton Farm, which made the playoffs this year for the first time since 2011, but who had some new faces and a new strategy to win; Manasquan River Golf Club, which has always been in the Hoffman Cup's top tier of teams; and Montclair Golf Club, which came to the Finals with the clear intent to win it all – something it has done five times already.

The format was 18 holes of medal-play, two-man better-ball sides, no handicaps. Each club was represented by four sides and all four scores would count on the lush, visually stunning par-72, 6850-yard Hamilton Farm layout.

The finals looked to some observers all afternoon long like the prelude to a sudden-death playoff, but Hamilton Farm won the day behind the sterling play of two sides that carded a four-under par 68, the low score in this better-ball competition. One 68 was almost expected – the side of Hoffman Cup captain Drew Jordan and teammate Mark Costanza, the 2020 New Jersey Open champion, seemed almost disappointed with its total. However, it was the 68 by their much less-heralded Hamilton Farm teammates Ira Flood and Erik Stevens that excited the home club gallery. Rounding out Hamilton Farm's scoring, the side of Eric Davis and Zach Koerbel turned in a steady 71 followed by Jackson Kramer and Chester Patterson teaming for a 73. It was a balanced team effort that took home the Hoffman Cup at eight under par.

At the last putt, defending champion club Arcola was one stroke shy. Losing by one shot is never easy, but Arcola can take solace in the idea that they defended with a balanced, collective grace. The side of Lucas Farmer / Trevor Randolph led Arcola's scoring with 69, followed by Ryan Chin / Grant Sturgeon's hard-fought 70, which tied teammates Brendan Jonland / Chris DeJohn. An even-par 72 by the side of Brian Celiberti / Michael O'Connell completed the seven-under 281 total.

Montclair, which won an impressive five consecutive Hoffman Cup titles in the competition's first decade, made a commitment this year to win the Cup again. Its high-spirited, (mostly) young team seemed ready to follow new Captain Rob Scalzo's direction, and the squad nearly pulled it off. With three sides shooting 72 (Tyler Galantini / Max Sorger, A.J. Karanikolas / John Kovacs and Kevin Pfeffer / Ty Zebrowski) and the fourth (Alex Smith / Jeff Maines) shooting 73, they needed a little less balance and maybe a 64 to be part of the title conversation. The fact that

several of their fellow members made the trip to Hamilton Farm to be part of the gallery added an extra zest to the proceedings. Look out for Montclair in 2021.

Manasquan River, led by Captain Chris Dymek, is always in the mix, it seems, capturing a spot in the Finals seemingly every other year. This year's team was a dangerous combination of youth and experience, with the talented young Wall brothers, Ethan and Jerry, combining for a squad-low 70. The Old Guard was represented by Chris Farren and Chris Housen at (73). The side of Richard Fitzsimmons / Andrew Kelly shot 76, while Captain Dymek and veteran Tom Hassel shot an uncharacteristic 78. Manasquan River's 297 total will only whet its appetite to make the Finals again next year.

Hamilton Farm was a wonderful host, with its only blemish not allowing one of their guests to take the Cup. With a memorable view seemingly in every direction, the course provides great elevations, wide fairways, heaving greens and memorable bunkering, all in pristine condition. The clubhouse, which dates back over 100 years, and grounds are similarly breathtaking, evoking an earlier era with every turn on its mile-long driveway.

We extend our grateful thank you to General Manager Michael Ferguson, Director of Golf Drew Jordan (when he's not captaining the Hoffman Cup team), Head Professional Jenna Apple and talented Green Superintendent Jason Harrison, each of whom could not have done more to make us feel welcome.

## 2020 Finals, October 19 at Hamilton Farm GC

**Hamilton Farm GC – 280**

Arcola CC – 281

Montclair GC – 289

Manasquan River GC – 297

Club	Teams; Players	Score
<b>Hamilton Farm GC</b>	Ira Flood / Erik Stevens	34-34 = 68
	Mark Costanza / Drew Jordan	34-34 = 68
	Erik Davis / Zach Koerbel	38-33 = 71
	Jackson Kramer / Chester Patterson	36-37 = 73
	<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>
<b>Arcola CC</b>	Lucas Farmer / Trevor Randolph	34-35 = 69
	Chris DeJohn / Brendan Jonland	37-33 = 70
	Ryan Chin / Grant Sturgeon	37-33 = 70
	Brian Celiberti / Mike O'Connell	36-36 = 72
	<b>Total</b>	<b>281</b>
	Tyler Galantini / Max Sorger	36-36 = 72
	AJ Karanikolas / John Kovacs	36-36 = 72

<b>Montclair GC</b>	Kevin Pfeffer / Ty Zebrowski	35-37 = 72
	Jeff Maines / Alex Smith	39-34 = 73
	<b>Total</b>	<b>289</b>
<b>Manasquan River GC</b>	Ethan Wall / Jerry Wall	36-34 = 70
	Chris Farren / Chris Housen	39-34 = 73
	Richard Fitzsimmons / Andrew Kelly	37-39 = 76
	Chris Dymek / Tom Hassel	40-38 = 78
	<b>Total</b>	<b>297</b>



## 2020 Hoffman Cup Intragroup Play

The 2020 Hoffman Cup's normal early spring play with 36 clubs was thrown out the window by the Covid-19 pandemic. Flexibility was required as some clubs, understandably, felt they would not be able to participate at all. Reflecting this less-than-full participation, clubs were divided into eight four or five-club groups. Intragroup play in 2020 started in early July and commenced through September. Also, scheduling was left to the team captains to complete.

As always, though, to make it to the playoffs, a club had to win more points than any other club in its group. The 2020 Hoffman Cup Groups were:

Group A	Group B	Group C
<b>Arcola CC #1</b>	<b>Black Oak GC</b>	<b>Rockaway River GC</b>
<b>Plainfield CC</b>	<b>Rumson CC</b>	<b>Montclair GC</b>
<b>Fiddler's Elbow CC</b>	<b>Knickerbocker CC</b>	<b>Trump National GC Bedminster</b>
<b>Roxiticus GC</b>	<b>Morris County GC</b>	<b>Spring Lake GC</b>

Group D	Group E	Group F
<b>Essex County CC</b>	<b>Somerset Hills CC</b>	<b>Forest Hill FC</b>
<b>Hamilton Farm GC</b>	<b>Fairmont CC</b>	<b>Baltusrol GC</b>

Spring Brook CC	Liberty National GC	Metedeconk National GC
Canoe Brook CC	Navesink CC	Essex Fells CC
Deal G&CC		
<b>Group G</b>	<b>Group H</b>	<b>Group I</b>
Bedens Brook C		Echo Lake CC
Manasquan River GC		Hollywood GC
Mendham G&TC		Ridgewood CC
Hackensack GC		Arcola CC#2
North Jersey CC		

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## 2020 Intragroup Results:

**Group A: Arcola#1 (16.5)**, Plainfield (11), Fiddler's Elbow (8.5), Roxiticus (NA)

**Group B: Black Oak (23.5)**, Rumson (23), Morris County (14.5), Knickerbocker (11)

**Group C: Montclair (21.5)**, Rockaway River (19.5), Trump National (16), Spring Lake (15)

**Group D: Hamilton Farm (36.5)**, Deal (27.5), Canoe Brook (26), Essex County (20.5), Spring Brook (9.5)

**Group E: Fairmount (26.5)**, Somerset Hills (18.5) Navesink (16.5), Liberty National (10.5)

**Group F: Baltusrol (24)**, Forest Hill (22.5), Metedeconk National (13.5), Essex Fells (12)

**Group G: Manasquan River (33)**, North Jersey (28.5), Bedens Brook (26.5), Hackensack (19), Mendham (13)

**Group H: Not Played**

**Group I: Ridgewood (24)**, Echo Lake (19.5), Hollywood (15), Arcola#2 (13.5)

## The 2020 Hoffman Cup Semis – Only One Newbie

The heart and soul of the Hoffman Cup Matches – the intragroup matches – were in the books, and only eight teams survived. By the time the semifinals concluded, only one club advanced out of the semis that didn't have considerable Finals experience – Hamilton Farm GC put the hammer to an impressive Ridgewood CC squad.

The other three semis could not have been much closer. Manasquan River GC upset perennial contender, Baltusrol GC, by the closest of margins, Fairmount CC saw its reentry into the winner's circle just stymied by a

Montclair GC birdie barrage, and defender Arcola CC squeaked by Black Oak GC by one well-timed putt.

October 9: **Manasquan River GC (6.5) vs.** Baltusrol GC (5.5)

October 10: Fairmount CC (5) **vs. #7 Montclair GC (7)**

October 10: **Arcola CC (6.5) vs.** Black Oak GC (5.5)

October 11: **Hamilton Farm GC (9) vs.** Ridgewood CC (3)



## Appendix – 2020 Intragroup Match Results

*July 1 to September 20*

	Results
Group A	Arcola#1 vs Roxiticus (Not Played) Plainfield (7) vs Fiddler's Elbow (5)
Group B	Black Oak (7.5) vs Morris County (4.5) Rumson (6.5) vs Knickerbocker (5.5)
Group C	Rockaway River (8.5) vs Spring Lake (3.5) Montclair (8.5) vs Trump National (3.5)
Group D	Essex County (7.5) vs Canoe Brook (4.5) Hamilton Farm (12) vs Spring Brook (0)
Group E	Somerset Hills (7) vs Navesink (5) Fairmount (10) vs Liberty National (2)
Group F	Forest Hill (9.5) vs Essex Fells (2.5) Baltusrol (6.5) vs Metedeconk National (5.5)
Group G	Bedens Brook (8) vs Hackensack (4) Manasquan River (9.5) vs Mendham (2.5)
Group H	Not played

<b>Group I</b>	Echo Lake (6) vs Arcola#2 (6) Hollywood (4.5) vs Ridgewood (7.5)
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	<b>Results</b>
<b>Group A</b>	Arcola#1 (8) vs Plainfield (4) Fiddler's Elbow vs Roxiticus (Not Played)
<b>Group B</b>	Black Oak (6.5) vs Rumson (5.5) Knickerbocker (3) vs Morris County (9)
<b>Group C</b>	Rockaway River (4.5) vs Montclair (7.5) Trump National (7) vs Spring Lake (5)
<b>Group D</b>	Essex County (3) vs Hamilton Farm (9) Spring Brook (2) vs Canoe Brook (10)
<b>Group E</b>	Somerset Hills (4) vs Fairmount (8) Liberty National (4) vs Navesink (8)
<b>Group F</b>	Forest Hill (4.5) vs Baltusrol (7.5) Metedeconk National (4.5) vs Essex Fells (7.5)
<b>Group G</b>	Bedens Brook (3) vs Manasquan River (9) Mendham (5) vs Hackensack (7)
<b>Group H</b>	Not Played
<b>Group I</b>	Echo Lake (8.5) vs Hollywood (3.5) Ridgewood (9.5) vs Arcola#2 (2.5)

	<b>Results</b>
<b>Group A</b>	Arcola#1 (8.5) vs Fiddler's Elbow (3.5) Plainfield ( ) vs Roxiticus ( ) (Not Played)
<b>Group B</b>	Black Oak (9.5) vs Knickerbocker (2.5) Rumson (11) vs Morris County (1)
<b>Group C</b>	Rockaway River (6.5) vs Trump National(5.5) Montclair (5.5) vs Spring Lake (6.5)
<b>Group D</b>	Essex County (5.5) vs Spring Brook (6.5) Hamilton Farm (6) vs Canoe Brook (6)
<b>Group E</b>	Somerset Hills (7.5) vs Liberty National (4.5) Fairmount (8.5) vs Navesink (3.5)
<b>Group F</b>	Forest Hill (8.5) vs Metedeconk National(3.5) Baltusrol (10) vs Essex Fells (2)
<b>Group G</b>	Bedens Brook (9.5) vs Mendham (2.5) Manasquan River (7.5) vs Hackensack (4.5)
<b>Group H</b>	Not Played
<b>Group I</b>	Echo Lake (5) vs Ridgewood (7) Hollywood (7) vs Arcola#2 (5)

	<b>Five-Club Group Results</b>
<b>Group D</b>	<b>Deal (7.5) vs Essex County (4.5)</b> <b>Deal (2.5) vs Hamilton Farm (9.5)</b> <b>Deal (11) vs Spring Brook (1)</b> <b>Deal (6.5) vs Canoe Brook (5.5)</b>
<b>Group G</b>	<b>North Jersey (6) vs Bedens Brook (6)</b> <b>North Jersey (5) vs Manasquan River (7)</b> <b>North Jersey (9) vs Mendham (3)</b> <b>North Jersey (8.5) vs Hackensack (3.5)</b>