

RILEYS BRITISH INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

PREMIER DIVISION

ESSEX VS CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Essex concluded their 35th season in the British Inter County Championship with a visit from their very first opponents Cambridgeshire. At the start of play Essex were sitting comfortably in fourth place however Cambridgeshire were just four points above the relegation zone. To commemorate the fixture Essex invited the players and officials who represented the County in the first season to reunite. This brought a favourable response as some 20 members took up the opportunity travelling from afar afield as Devon.

This was the 27th time the two counties had met and the two 'B' teams produced two results which had never been seen before. The Ladies match went totally the way of Cambridgeshire as Essex failed to register a single set, going down 6-0 and at the same point catapulting Cambridgeshire into 3rd place in the division.

If the ladies result was surprising the mens 'B' fixture was beyond belief. Before the start of the match Cambridgeshire with their ladies result had given themselves a good platform to ensure Premier Division survival, by the end of it they were staring Division 1 full in the face. Essex came out of the blocks with intent, rode their luck in places and ultimately destroyed the confidence of their visitors with an 11-1 win. To mention everybody would take too long but the stand out performances came from Colchester's Paul Walker (78.54), Thurrock's Mick McCombe (80.34) who won an enthralling last set and Maldon's Man of the Match Kevin Cottis (83.31).

Sunday started with the Ladies 'A' team level on points with Gwent, wins for Southend's Donna Russell (62.04), Clacton's England International Viv Dundon (62.64) and Braintree's Amanda Dodd (54.99) meant that the last set was going to decide where the championship was destined to go. In a nervy encounter Braintree's Sue Waterman clinched the set and with it the Ladies 'A' team title.

A short presentation ceremony took place to honour the players and officials who represented Essex in their inaugural season. The presentations of commemorative medals were undertaken by England team manager Peter Melton, World Champion Martin Adams and both Cambridgeshire captains Shaun and Sandra Greatbatch.

The mens 'A' match saw Essex blasted away in the first five sets with Martin Adams averaging 103.14 in his victory over Colchester's Eddie Gosling (80.37).

Essex did stage a minor comeback with wins for the maximum hitting man of the match Riverside's Barry Adlam (80.55), another maximum man in Southend's Mick Peel (73.92) and the Harwich pair of Scott Lawrie (71.58) and Alan Collins (72.72). This left Essex 8-4 adrift in the Mens match but 19-17 overall winners, whilst at the same time Cambridgeshire remained safe from relegation.