

BRITISH INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS PREMIER DIVISION

CAMBRIDGESHIRE vs ESSEX

A year after our **Ladies 'B'** lost 6-0 at home against Cambridgeshire B; our girls were unlucky to only draw. Karen Breen (Clacton) won the opening set 3-1; missed doubles cost Dawn Kennedy victory; and with both Nicky Bradley and Pauline Donat losing out 3-2; it looked like another unlucky day, but new appointed Captain, Lynn Kelly (18.56) won 3-0; and securing the draw and the Lady of the Match award was Chelmsford's Sue Baker (21.91).

The **Men's 'B'** got back to winning ways with a well-deserved 8-4 win; Tilbury's Michael McCombe lost the opening set 4-2; Brightlingsea's Tony Osborne (28.73) laid claim to the match award, followed by a double triumph from Chelmsford's Matt Garrett and Andrew Kateley (26.61). Colchester's Eddie Gosling lost out, Laindon's Shaun Walsh won 4-2 and Tilbury's Richie Howson lost out 4-3. Essex won the next four-sets with a 4-3 debut win from Basildon's Malcolm Clark (26.11); Southend's John Costigan won 4-1 comfortably, Brightlingsea's Bryan Margerison (28.45) won a great game 4-3 and Southend's Steve Haggerty (28.26) winning 4-1. Last month's man of the match, Brentwood's Tommy Wilson, lost 4-3.

So going into Sunday with a lead, the **Ladies 'A'** started well with Stacey Ellis (24.51) winning 3-1; but missed doubles cost Essex dearly, with Leanne Peetoom, Donna Gleed, Steph Hewson, Wendy Reader and Rebecca Farmer all unlucky and suffering.

The match was now level at 12 apiece, so enter the **Men's 'A'** and this was a terrific tussle which Essex lost out 7-5; Essex lost the opening 3-sets by Springfield's Craig Vickers; as unlucky 4-3 loss by Wayne Bloomfield (30.03) to Martin Adams (30.23) and another 4-3 loss by Robbie Turner. Southend's Daniel Day (31.89) won 4-1, the man of the match award and shared the premier's highest average, winning £350. Southend's Barry Lynn on his return lost out 4-1 before Brentwood's Steve Johnson (24.08) and Southend's Paul Barham (29.65) won the next 2-sets. Rayleigh Rascal's Micky Peel and Brightlingsea's Alan Collins both lost out 4-1 and 4-3 respectively, followed by a 4-2 win by Southend's Paul Marsh (26.88). Unfortunately Canvey's Phil Hall lost out in a closely fought battle before Captain Darren Peetoom (25.07) won the final-set 4-2.

This gave Cambridgeshire a 22-17 weekend win and leaving Essex rock bottom and in real trouble, facing relegation for the first time in 26 seasons; however Essex have two matches to survive the drop, 12-points behind Devon with Warwickshire at Chelmsford and Lincolnshire at Gainsborough to play.