

BRITISH INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHI

PREMIER DIVISION

ESSEX VS CHESHIRE

Fifth placed Essex welcomed fourth placed Cheshire in a match that went one way then the other and it was Essex who eventually came out 20-16 victors.

It was Cheshire that started the Ladies 'B' match on fire reeling off the first three sets, however Essex bounced back with Lady of the Match Lynn Kelly (19.27) and her Braintree colleague Jenny Powell (14.96) but the last set was one too far as Cheshire came out 4-2 winners.

The Mens 'B' match was controlled in the main by Essex; Colchester's Man of the Match Robbie Turner (29.47) and Eddie Gosling (25.25) together with Riverside's Andy Kateley (26.84) pushed Essex into a 3-1 lead and this two set advantage was maintained by the Southend pair of Paul Marsh (26.84) and Mick Peel (25.54). Cheshire then levelled the match at 5-5 before Steve Haggerty (22.74) pushed Essex in front again; the final set went the way of Cheshire which meant the visitors had taken a 10-8 overnight lead.

Sunday started with the Ladies 'A', Southend's Eastbourne Open winner Sue Waterman (21.17) picked up the first set and Braintree's Carol Pinfold (19.98) came from two legs down to win 3-2 in the second. Clacton's Viv Dundon (23.65) was left to rue missed doubles in the first two legs as she went down 3-0 to the Ladies World Champion Anastasia Dobromyslova (26.37), and when Southend's Donna Russell (19.78) lost out in the deciding leg to Emma Pearce (20.80) it was all to play for. Braintree's Essex youth sensation Stacey Ellis (23.86) continued her accomplished start to life in the seniors with an emphatic 3-0 win before her Braintree team mate Amanda Dodd (24.74) came from 2 legs down to earn the Lady of the Match Award and with it give Essex a 4-2 win levelling the overall match scores at 12-12.

The Mens 'A' match was one of the most evenly contested matches for many a year, with seven matches going the distance and three others being 4-2. When Shaun Walsh (26.72) cruised to a 4-0 win in the first set it seemed like any other Inter County 'A' match, however eight sets later and only one leg had not been played. Phil Brewster (25.21) missed darts at a double in the decider to John Brammeld (25.41) before his Springfield team mate Mark Landers (24.72) hit three maximums in the final two legs to wrestle his set away from the evergreen Peter Boughey (24.22). Brentwood's Steve Johnson (30.37) lost out 4-2 to Stuart Kellett (29.86) in a high class encounter before two new England Internationals came head to head. Colchester's Jamie Robinson (26.53) missed the Bulls Eye in the deciding leg as Dave Pallett (27.22) held his nerve in a set where every leg went with the throw.

One way or another Essex managed to reel off four sets in a row all of which went to the deciding leg. Springfield players, Captain Darren Peetoom (26.66) Alan Collins (23.10) and Richie Howson (24.70) were responsible for three of the wins with Basildon's Phil Halls (23.63) taking the other. This put Essex 6-3 ahead needing one more for the victory, Riverside's Mr Essex Barry Adlam (27.81) couldn't manage the required victory in set ten as Ash Khayat (31.42) won 4-1 in another high class encounter. Walton's Scott Lawrie (22.85) did however push Essex over the line in a difficult match against Mark Cairney (22.50) and it was left to Steve Smith (22.55) to wrap the match up 8-4 and in doing so push Essex ahead of Cheshire in the overall table.