

BRITISH INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

FIRST DIVISION

ESSEX vs CORNWALL

Chelmsford Social Club hosted Essex's first home game of 2018 against promotion rivals Cornwall and gave themselves a fantastic chance of returning to the Premier after only one season.

The **Ladies 'B'**, who've struggled all season lost out 4-2, but so easily have been a victory as vital doubles were missed; Nicky Bewick recorded her first win of the season with a 3-1 victory; Steph Hewson (23.48) laid claim to the lady of the match and highest average cash reward, winning 3-0.

The **Men's 'B'** were dominant as they won 10-2; Paul Barham (23.94) won the opening set 3-1; Andrew Kateley (27.66) also winning 3-1, which was his 8th straight win and 4th man of the match award this season. John Costigan lost out 3-2, before Eddie Gosling (26.37), Robbie Turner (25.05) and Steve Haggerty (26.14) were triumphant. Matt Garrett was unlucky to lose out 3-2 to Cornwall's man of the match Martin Smith; however, this blip did not stop Essex taking control and winning the last 5-sets with wins from Michael McCombe (23.31), Michael Peel (23.36), Joe Russell (23.48), Matt Barnard (22.74) and Phil Brewster (26.75). The 'B' team only need 3-points in their final game to win the section.

Leading 12-6 going into Sunday's **Ladies 'A'** match; Pauline Donat (17.87) won her first 'A' team game winning 3-2; Karen Breen lost out 3-0 despite having darts at doubles in all legs; Leanne Peetoom was also beaten, having darts to win 3-0 but lost out 3-1. Sue Baker (18.77) won an entertaining game 3-1 against Sue Shepherd; Stacey Ellis (21.78) won 3-0 and claimed the match award, and finally, Donna Gleed (17.67) won a titanic last set 3-2; this leaves the girl's 4-points behind Cornwall and therefore need 4-point minimum to win the title.

The **Men's 'A'** were in fine form, but started slowly; Tommy Wilson (25.75) won the opening set; however Essex lost the next 3-sets with Phil Halls, Wayne Gleed and captain Darren Peetoom all suffering defeats. This however was short lived as Essex won the next 6-sets, with wins from Tony Osborne (26.92), Wayne Bloomfield (28.47), Paul Marsh (26.71), Steve Johnson (29.04) who won 4-0, the man of the match award and the highest average cash; then Jamie Peetoom (24.46) and Daniel Day (26.96) with solid wins. Alan Collins was unfortunate to lose 4-3, before Craig Vickers (27.08) won the 12th set to give the 'A' team an 8-4 victory; leaving Essex 5-points behind Cornwall with a game to play.

The overall win of 27-12 leaves Essex lying in 3rd place in the promotion table, 13-points behind Oxfordshire and 11-point adrift of 2nd place Cornwall.

Essex have Surrey to play; also, Northamptonshire who are 5-pints behind Essex, will play Dorset on the same weekend; these are the only 2-outstanding fixtures to be played.