

ESSEX VS GLAMORGAN

Essex welcomed Glamorgan for the first Inter County fixture of the season at Chelmsford Social Club. A new format welcomed the teams with the men playing four sets, and then the ladies playing three sets, this system interchanges throughout the match until all of the sets have been completed. It was the Essex 'B' men who stole a march as they raced into a 4-0 lead. The Basildon pair of Dave Orton (27.26) and Carl Smith, returning after 20 years together with Andy Burmby and man of the match Coen Wicamp (30.81) was the Essex winners. The ladies 'B' kept the ball rolling with lady of the match Wendy Johnson (17.89) and Carol Pinfold helping Essex to a 2-1 advantage. Chelmsford's Andy Kateley and skipper Darren Peetoom (26.33) pushed Essex men into a 6-0 lead, however Glamorgan are not ones to lie down and they stormed back winning the next two sets. Once again it was the turn of the ladies and 3-2 wins for the Clacton pair of Roz Ambrose and Lol Jarrold gave Essex ladies a hard fought 4-2 win. The men needed just one set from the final four to win their match and it was not until the penultimate set that Ashley Evans (25.70) finally put the match to bed as Essex squeezed home 7-5.

The Sunday started with Essex protecting an 11-7 lead and the mens 'A' wasted no time in increasing the advantage. Harwich's Scott Lawrie (29.52) claimed the man of the match award in the first set and wins for John McFall (27.03) and Alan Collins (25.41) eased Essex into a 3-1 lead. The Ladies 'A' saw Sue Waterman (21.47) claim a joint Lady of the match. Whilst Essex lost out 2-1 in the first set of ladies matches the set of the weekend came as Clacton's England International Viv Dundon (22.14) lost out to Welsh International Rhian Edwards (27.33). The Essex men came up against a brick wall in the second set of mens fixtures as Glamorgan claimed a 4-0 whitewash and in doing so left the match evenly balanced at 15-14. Essex ladies however were in no mood to give anything away as Amanda Dodd (21.47) and Clacton's Sheila Busby levelled the ladies 'A' match up at three sets apiece. Essex captain Darren Peetoom (25.57) ensured the home county had at least a draw with three sets still to play and wins for James Noone and Ben Adams (26.77) levelled the mens 'A' match up at 6-6 and left Essex with an invaluable 20-16 overall victory.

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