

BRITISH INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

PREMIER DIVISION

ESSEX vs. GLAMORGAN

Essex hosted Glamorgan in their opening BICC fixture of the season at Chelmsford in a tightly fought contest.

The **Ladies 'B'** got Essex off to a flying start with Carol Pinfold (Kelvedon) and Sharon Hawkins (Southend) both winning 3-0. The Kelvedon trio of Jenny Powell, Lynne Kelly and Nicky Bewick all lost out before Essex's Steph Hewson (17.54) battled out a 3-2 victory to secure a drawn game and claim the match award.

The **Men's 'B'** started just as well, winning the first two sets from Tilbury's Michael McCombe (27.83) and Southend's Stephen Hardy. However Essex found themselves very quickly 5-2 down. It was Mick Peel (Rayleigh Rascals) who stopped the rot with a 4-2 win and got Essex back on track; this was followed by Southend's Paul Barham (25.89) on his return to the team winning 4-1; Springfield's Robbie Turner (28.10) pulled the scores level. The Basildon pair of Craig Vickers (25.51) and man of the match Andy Fordham (29.04) both won to give Essex a 7-5 victory and a slender lead to go into Sunday.

The **Ladies 'A'** are after the title they let slip last season, and Sue Baker (Chelmsford) got Essex off to a winning start. Sue Waterman (Southend) was unlucky to lose the next set; Amanda Dodd (Kelvedon) gave Essex the lead back but Wendy Reader (Chelmsford) couldn't find those elusive doubles. However Kelvedon's Stacey Ellis (21.17) and Southend's Donna Gleed (21.78) both won 3-0 to secure the 4-2 win, Donna winning the match award.

The **Men's 'A'** were much changed through injuries and work commitments but gave a good performance against a strong Glamorgan. Riverside's Rhys Hayden and Barry Adlam were the first two set, with Rhys losing out 4-2 in the opening set and Barry (29.12) laying claim to the match award with a 4-1 triumph. Springfield's Phil Brewster lost a 7-leg battle, and Darren Peetoom is probably wondering how he didn't take his set to the final leg, wiring 5-dart at Tops. Brentwood's Steve Johnson (28.06) went the distance winning a nervy 7th leg; and a confident Basildon Q-Ball's Ritchie Edhouse (28.63) pulled Essex level with an emphatic 4-0 victory. Colchester's Lee Woods (26.11) put the Men's 'A' in front for the first time and Springfield's Alan Collins secured the three bonus points for the weekend. Unfortunately that was the last win, as the Men's 'A' lost the final four sets, losing out 7-5. In the final set, Brightlingsea's Darren O'Neill was unlucky to lose out in a 7-leg thriller on his 'A' team debut.

Essex won the match 22-17 and face a tricky away game against Kent is the next fixture.