

BRITISH INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

PREMIER DIVISION

KENT VS ESSEX

Essex made the short trip over the Dartford crossing looking to maintain their lead at the top of the Premier Division in the BICC. The match couldn't have started better for Essex as Braintree's Lynn Kelly won the opener 3-2 and this was quickly followed by the Chelmsford couple of Nicky Mynard and Sue Baker with 3-1 wins. A further win and a Lady of the match performance by Braintree's Carol Pinfold ensured Essex Ladies 'B' came away with a 4-2 win.

The men's 'B' had won 10-2 last month and they repeated the performance again. The Essex Mens Superleague has gone from strength to strength over the past few years and this was proven as there were no more than eight teams represented in the winner's column. Hockley's Steve Smith (80.52) got the ball rolling with a 108 checkout in a 3-0 first set win whilst his team mate Gary Phipps (77.46) completed the victory with a 3-1 win which included a maximum. In between it was youngest against oldest as Southend's Paul Barham (82.68) overcame the evergreen Mick Norris 3-1. Basildon's Phil Halls (77.76) with a maximum and Rainham's Richard Howson (73.92) both had 3-1 wins. Thurrock's Mick McCombe (75.09) picked up a hard fought 3-2 win before Harwich's Simon Cook (82.32) came up against former Essex player Terry Rose (75.36). Rose took the first leg and was sitting on tops in the second as Cook checked out on 148. Cook then accelerated away to a 3-1 win which also included a maximum in the final leg.

The Springfield pair of man of the match Wayne Gleed (83.88) and Phil Brewster (65.37) were also winners as was Barry Adlam (76.41) of Riverside on his return from illness. The Sunday saw Essex and Kent battle out two 'A' team draws. Southend's Sue Waterman (64.74) and Lady of the match Donna Russell (66.30) together with Clacton's Viv Dundon (62.64) who overcame her England team mate Sally Rose, was the Essex victors.

Essex mens 'A' team took an early 2-1 lead with Harwich's Kevin Edwards (79.98) aided by a maximum and Springfield's Essex Captain and man of the match Darren Peetoom (81.63) the Essex winners.

The next six sets saw plenty of quality which included a 4-3 defeat for Brentwood's Steve Johnson (79.80) against England International Pip Blackwell (83.64) in a set which included 5 maximums, however the only winner from the six sets was Colchester's Coen Wicamp (78.09) which meant that Essex were 6-3 adrift going into the final three sets of the weekend.

Scott Lawrie (77.40) started the Essex fight back; the Harwich man who topped the Essex Superleague averages last season hit 2 maximums and a 122 checkout in the deciding leg in overcoming Terry Dunford. Basildon's Dave Orton (77.52) continued the good work and when Colchester's Jamie Robinson (74.52) held his nerve to win the final set Essex had produced an excellent 23-13 win which kept them top of the Premier Division table.