

BRITISH INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

FIRST DIVISION

ESSEX vs NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

In our first ever meeting against Northamptonshire ended in defeat in what was a very closely fought contest.

The **Ladies ‘B’** lost out 5-1 with Karen Breen (17.28) Essex’s only success; Wendy Reader and Sharon Wakeling lost out 3-2; Dawn Kennedy and Zara Rose lost out 3-1; and Pauline Donat 3-0, but all had chances.

The **Men’s ‘B’** were up against it, trying to get Essex back into the match, and Southend’s John Costigan (27.33) got us off to a winning start; but Springfield’s trio of Phil Brewster (1-3), Robbie Turner (2-3) and Joe Russell (2-3) all lost out in very tight games; Colchester Town’s Eddie Gosling won the 3rd set in amongst it the loses. Brightlingsea’s Bryan Margerison (28.92) got Essex back on-track with a man of the match performance; followed by wins from Chelmsford’s Matt Garrett (27.83); Springfield’s Jamie Peetoom and Tilbury’s Matt Barnard (26.41). Mike Hancock (Brightlingsea) and Mick McCombe (Tilbury) suffered 3-2 losses, before Chelmsford’s Andrew Kateley (28.06) secured a ‘B’ team 7-5 win.

Going into Sunday’s games, Essex were 10-8 down and the **Ladies ‘A’** tried their utmost but couldn’t find those winning doubles, as Steph Hewson (1-3), Leanne Peetoom (2-3), Sue Baker (2-3) and Lynn Kelly (1-3) all missed vital doubles and so easily could have been 4-up instead of 4-down. Donna Gleed (19.22) and lady of the match, Stacey Ellis (22.68) got 2-points giving the men a target of 9 to avoid defeat.

The **Men’s ‘A’** started well with Canvey Starr’s Phil Hall (27.08) winning 4-0; but double trouble stuck Tilbury’s Richie Howson (3-4) and Wayne Gleed (2-4) and captain Darren Peetoom (3-4) leaving Essex needing the remaining 8-sets to avoid defeat. Brentwood’s Steve Johnson (25.21) won 4-3, however Southend’s Dan Day lost out 3-4 in the next set; Southend’s Tommy Wilson (27.46) won 4-1, before Alan Collins (Brightlingsea) came-up against Northamptonshire’s man of the match, Kevin McDine (31.81) who secured Northamptonshire’s win with a 4-0 triumph. Essex rattled off the final 4-sets with wins from Springfield’s Craig Vickers (25.68), Brightlingsea’s Tony Osborne and Southend’s pair of Paul March (27.69) and Wayne Bloomfield (26.37).

Therefore an unlucky 17-22 defeat with a visit to table topping Oxfordshire coming next.