

BRITISH INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

PREMIER DIVISION

ESSEX VS OXFORDHIRE

Essex welcomed a newly promoted Oxfordshire team who had equipped themselves well in their first two Premier Division matches. Despite having won four consecutive promotions with the base of the same squad they seemed by no means overawed with the task ahead.

Indeed it was Oxfordshire who were first to settle as only Cressings Rob Turner (85.02) managed an Essex win in the first four Mens 'B' match sets. The Ladies 'B' meanwhile were looking to improve following their poor performance against Kent, however despite every lady managing at least one leg in each of the next three sets it was Oxfordshire who took the plaudits in each. Essex managed to regain a foothold in the match as the next section of four mens sets was shared. Hockley's Jimmy Allison (81.99) and Harwich's Jamie Robinson (75.84) producing the Essex wins. The Essex Ladies continued with their woes as Oxfordshire made a clean sweep and in doing so placed the match score at 11-3 however the Essex men returned some fire and wins for Springfield's Andy Burmby (57.48) and the Cressing pair of Tim Franklin (65.29) and Stuart Mortimer (64.23) gave the mens 'B' a credible 6-6 draw.

The Sunday saw Essex dictating the pace for long periods in the respective 'A' team matches however trying to outscore Oxfordshire by more than six sets overall was going to be difficult. Hockley's John McFall (65.79) and Gary Phipps (79.11) together with Riverside's Ben Adams (73.62) sent Essex 3-1 ahead in the first block of mens matches and when Clacton's England International Viv Dundon (66.30) and Witham's Sue Waterman (54.57) picked up two of the three ladies sets available Essex were closing the gap. The middle section of mens matches were shared as Essex man of the match Alan Collins (86.70) (Riverside) and Colchester's Eddie Gosling (71.38) managing the wins. Braintree's Amanda Dodd (59.55) and Clacton's Sheila Busby (57.63) gave Essex Ladies a 4-2 win before Essex snatched an overall draw by winning the three of the last four mens sets. Riverside's Barry Adlam (81.99) aided by a 116 checkout, Basildon's Dave Orton (84.45) with two maximums and Harwich's Adrian Genery all held their nerve to leave Essex with an impressive 8-4 mens win and an overall 18 sets apiece draw.

The match awards were presented by Chalky White one of the founders of the Essex County Darts Organisation and the team manager the last time the two teams met back in 1976.