

BRITISH INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

FIRST DIVISION

OXFORDSHIRE vs ESSEX

Our trip to Bicester over fireworks weekend saw Essex get back to winning ways, April 2016 was the last time Essex recorded a weekend win and this victory was greatly needed in our quest to get back to the Premier Division.

The **Ladies 'B'** started well winning two of the first three sets; Chelmsford's Pauline Donat (16.31) won the opening set 3-1 plus the lady of the match award; Canvey's Steph Hewson (15.97) won the third-set 3-2. Braintree's Ann Farmer lost out 3-0 on her debut; both Wendy Reader and Zara Rose lost out 3-1 and Sharon Wakeling lost the final set 3-0.

The **Men's 'B'** got off to a great start with Phil Brewster winning 3-2 and debutant Mark Chapman (Chelmsford) winning 3-1; Rayleigh Rascal's Lennie Holmes lost out 3-2 before Chelmsford's Andrew Kateley (28.00) laid claim to the match award winning 3-1. Brightlingsea's Mike Hancocks lost 3-1; then Tilbury's Matt Barnard and Michael McCombe both won 3-2. An unlucky 3-2 defeat for Chelmsford's Matt Garrett in the 8th set was followed by a straight 4-set winning run from Joe Russell (Springfield) 3-2; Bryan Margerison (Brightlingsea) 3-2; Springfield's Jamie Peetoom (25.54) and Eddie Gosling (Colchester Town) 3-2 to give the 'B' team a well fought 9-3 success.

This gave Essex an 11-7 lead going into Sunday's 'A' games, and the **Ladies 'A'** didn't disappoint despite losing the opening set from Karen Breen (Clacton). Canvey's Donna Gleed won 3-2 before Kelvedon's Stacey Ellis (30.06) produced a fantastic 3-0 lady of the match performance; then Canvey's Leanne Peetoom followed it up winning 3-1. Chelmsford's Sue Baker was unlucky to lose out 3-2 prior to Kelvedon's Lynn Kelly winning 3-1 to wrap up a welcome 4-2 victory.

Captain Darren Peetoom (25.42) got the **Men's 'A'** off to a winning start with a 4-1 victory; Steve Johnson (Brentwood) lost 4-2, then Brightlingsea's Alan Collins battled out a 4-3 triumph. Essex lost the next 3-sets with John Costigan (Southend) and Wayne Gleed (Tilbury) losing 4-1 and Phil Brewster losing out 4-3. Southend's Paul Marsh (27.59) and Tilbury's Richie Howson (26.37) got Essex back on-track; Tony Osborne (Brightlingsea) was a 4-3 unlucky loser, before Essex won the final 3-sets from Craig Vickers (Springfield), man of the match, Southend's Wayne Bloomfield (28.09) and Canvey Starr's Phil Halls, giving the 'A' team a 7-5 win and Essex a 25-14 weekend victory leaving Essex 7th in the promotion table, 12-points adrift of Cornwall who sit on top.

Our next game is home to County Durham.