

RILEYS BRITISH INTERCOUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

PREMIER DIVISION

WARWICKSHIRE VS ESSEX

Relegation threatened Warwickshire were the hosts as Essex looked to put some pressure on Yorkshire for third place in the Rileys British Inter County Championship Premier Division. However it ended up looking like the league places should have been reversed as Essex took a woeful thrashing, one which leaves them alone in fourth place but has pushed Warwickshire up three places to fifth.

The Ladies 'B' match set the tone as Essex struggled to find any rhythm with only Braintree's Lynn Kelly managing a win. The Mens 'B' match started on a similar vein with Essex going down in the first three sets all of which were decided on the final leg. Essex then reeled four sets off their own with Cressings Tim Franklin (66.57) Harwich's Kevin Edwards (78.66) the maximum hitting Paul Walker (76.41) (Colchester) and Hockley's Shaun Walsh (71.22) getting the wins. However the momentum gained couldn't be sustained as only Thurrock's Mick McCombe (77.71) and man of the match Phil Brewster (82.23) (Springfield) tasting victory as the match ended 6 sets apiece. Sunday morning saw table topping Essex Ladies 'A' taking on their Warwickshire counterparts who were without a win in their first seven matches. However in keeping with the weekend a plethora of missed doubles together with some clinical finishing from the home team left Essex needing a big win in their final fixture to secure the title. By the time Braintree's Sue Waterman (66.06) had checked out on 102 to secure the set Essex had lost the first three sets. Clacton's Viv Dundon (68.31) then won the final set to leave Essex 4-2 adrift.

The Mens 'A' match saw the as yet winless Essex needing to win nine sets to claim an overall draw. Harwich's Simon Cook (85.08) took the first set and this was quickly followed by the Colchester pair of Eddie Gosling (86.70) and Coen Wicamp (77.97) who checked out on 120 and 116. Once again momentum was lost and only wins for Essex Captain Springfield's Darren Peetoom (83.49) and the ever trustworthy Barry Adlam (80.52) managed to salvage some respectability in a 7-5 defeat.

This left the overall scoreline Warwickshire 22 Essex 14.