

BRITISH INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS PREMIER DIVISION

LINCOLNSHIRE vs ESSEX

A busy April saw Essex complete their BICC fixtures early with an away game at Lincolnshire and home verses Warwickshire. First up was a visit to the Blues Club in Gainsborough, where Essex wanted to cement third place.

The **Ladies 'B'** started poorly, with Chelmsford's Pauline Donat (17.90) winning the 2nd set, with a lady of the match performance, the only victor in the opening 4-sets; although Southend's Charlotte Halls was unlucky to lose out 3-2 in the 4th set. Kelvedon's Jenny Powell won 3-1 in a scruffy battle and Chelmsford's Wendy Reader (16.70) secured the draw with a 3-0 victory.

The **Men's 'B'** got off to a flyer with Colchester's Wayne Bloomfield winning 4-0 and Basildon's Craig Vickers (27.40) winning 4-3 and claiming the man of the match award. Springfield's Wayne Gleed (25.12) was the only other victor in the first half with the scores all level. Springfield's Shaun Walsh (25.00), Chelmsford's Andrew Kateley (25.39) and Tilbury's Liam Pender pulled Essex three ahead; but it was left to the twelfth man, Tilbury's Michael McCombe (25.37) to secure the 7-5 win; and giving Essex an overnight 10-8 lead.

The **Ladies 'A'** didn't fair-well going down 4-2, with Chelmsford's Sue Baker (18.57) and Southend's Donna Gleed (20.04) the two triumphant ladies.

With the captain, Darren Peetoom, playing superbly for England in the British Home Internationals in Wales, the **Men's 'A'** needed to promote another from the 'B' having already deciding to give Craig Vickers a well-deserved chance, and it was Wayne Gleed given the opportunity. Basildon's Phil Halls lost out 4-3 in a close-fought opening clash; Riverside's Barry Adlam (28.46) pulled the score level with man of the match performance; Brentwood's Steve Johnson win 4-1 and Brightlingsea's Darren O'Neill (26.29) also winning in the first half for the match to remain all-level. Craig Vickers (27.57) put in another great performance and Walton's Scott Lawrie (27.23) gave Essex a slim advantage; but it was Springfield's Wayne Gleed (26.70) that rescued the match and weekend winning the final set 4-1 to give Essex a hard-fought draw. This was probably a fair result with 19-points being awarded to both teams and putting Essex top of the overall table for a fortnight, and making some new friends with the superb Lincolnshire people.