

BRITISH INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

PREMIER DIVISION

ESSEX VS SURREY

Top of the table Essex hosted newly promoted Surrey for their third fixture of the season in the British Inter County Championship. The Ladies 'B' fixture was an evenly contested affair with five of the six sets going to a deciding leg. Chelmsford's Wendy Johnson and Nicky Mynard won the first and last set for Essex whilst sandwiched in between was Southend's Lady of the Match Nicky Bradley as the match ended all square at three sets apiece.

Essex continue to impress in the Mens 'B' and this match was to be no exception, although as with their Lady counterparts only one set was won 3-0. Essex dominated proceedings early on as Hockley's Shaun Walsh (26.40), Thurrock's Mick McCombe (23.74) and Southend's Paul Barham (28.46) all eased home 3-1. Rainham's Richie Howson (27.01) hit a maximum as did Harwich's Simon Cook (28.57) who also checked out on 124 to win the match in their 3-2 wins. Hockley's Man of the match Gary Phipps (30.06) picked up the only whitewash whilst his Superleague team mate Steve Smith (25.16) hit a 102 checkout in winning 3-1. Basildon's Phil Halls (28.13) and Springfield's Phil Brewster (23.38) also picked up 3-2 wins as Essex won 9-3 giving them a 12-6 overnight lead.

Essex Ladies 'A' team got off to the best possible start as Clacton's Viv Dundon and then Braintree's Lady of the Match Lucy Ward-Geddes took the first two sets, but back came Surrey taking the next three sets on the bounce. Essex Ladies had finally picked up their championship trophy before the match and they weren't about to let go of it lightly so when Braintree's Carol Pinfold won the last set to level the match it came as no surprise.

Essex Mens 'A' team have had an unbeaten start to the season and they looked confident as they took an early foothold on the match. Brentwood's Steve Johnson (27.10) picked up the first set 4-2 aided by a couple of maximums and he was shortly followed in the winners enclosure by Hockley's evergreen John McFall (28.41) another to hit a maximum. The next four sets were shared with Harwich's Scott Lawrie (25.68) and Springfield's Essex Captain Darren Peetoom (25.51) becoming the Essex winners with both hitting maximums.

Riverside's Barry Adlam (27.74) on his 'A' team return and Southend's Mick Peel (27.79) helped Essex to a 6-4 lead, but once again the strength of the Premier Division 'A' teams was shown as Surrey picked up the final two sets to leave the match all square, which mean't Essex, courtesy of their Mens 'B' team had picked up a 24-15 overall win keeping them top of the table.