

Surrey I & II Seniors, Crippenham, 26th March 2011

With not one of Surrey's top 20 men available for this round of matches the county had to dig deep indeed to turn out two teams. Both teams had to play against Sussex II, Sussex III and Hampshire I. The four Surrey ladies led the way steering the 1st team to two victories and the 2nd team to two draws.

Our players for the day were Steve Davis, Phil Snelson, Andreas Pusch, Keith Falconer, Chris Hazlehurst, Michael Loveder, Martin Rozario, Feifei Pei, Lucy Burks, Sally Cimiotti and Diane Melville.

Surrey I v Sussex II (3-7)

Andreas Pusch put Surrey in the lead with an 8, 9, -6, 9 win over Rory Scott. But, alas, Sussex rattled off the next 6 sets as Steve Davis and Keith Falconer found Mat Porter and Fredrik Nilsson unstoppable. Andreas managed to stretch Fredrik to a 5th game only to be beaten -7, 8, -7, 11, -6. One other went the distance in which Steve Davis overcame Rory Scott 7, 9, -9, -5, 5. Sheila King's wealth of experience proved too much for Lucy Burks & Diane Melville and Rachel Greener played well to beat both of them too. Keith Falconer took consolation in beating Mat Porter in straight games.

Hampshire I v Surrey I (6-4)

Jonathan Evans and Julian Walton put Hants 2-0 ahead with wins over Steve Davis and Andreas Pusch respectively. However the tide turned as Lucy Burks beat Becky House 11-3 in the 5th. Phil Snelson put on a mature display against Hants No 1 Alex Rorke. Alex defended well to take the 1st game but Phil stepped up a gear to rattle off the next 3 games. Fei Fei Pei did well to beat Katie Cleary with two deuces 3, -6, 10, 13. It was not Katie's day as Lucy Burks gave her similar treatment winning -9, 12, 12, 8. Alex's combination bat defence made short work of Steve and so Fei Fei was back at the table with two more deuces, beating Becky House 11, 7, 17. Phil rounded off the match with a straight games win over Julian Walton for a 6-4 win.

Surrey I v Sussex III (9-1)

This was one of those few occasions when one might say the result was never in doubt (once Surrey got going)! A slightly slow start saw Andreas beat Terry Dean 14-12 in the 4th. Keith Falconer was 2-0 up against Martin Kellaway but lost the 3rd 12-14 to see his set slip away. Fei Fei was having no nonsense by this time and she beat Sian Cummins and Stacey Furnival in straight games. Lucy beat Sian and Stacey conceded to Lucy. Phil Snelson had no trouble with Andy Furnival and beat Terry Dean 3-1. Keith finished with a convincing win over Andy for a healthy 9-1 victory.

Surrey II v Sussex III (5-5)

Michael Loveder opened for Surrey II against Terry Dean and was disappointed to miss out -8, -9, 7, -11. Martin Rozario also tried hard against Martin Kellaway in a see-saw match but lost out 8, -2, 8, -6, -3. Feifei ('borrowed' from the 1st team!) beat Stacey Furnival 3-1 and later beat Sian Cummins 5, 1 & 6. Sally Cimiotti also beat Sian but could not quite contain Stacey. Chris Hazlehurst demonstrated why he was at No 1 for the Surrey team with 3-straight victories against Andy Furnival and Terry Dean. With Michael's loss to Martin Kellaway it was left to Martin Rozario to decide the match against Andy Furnival with the match poised at 5-4 to Surrey. Martin battled as hard as he could only to be beaten by one of the narrowest of margins -9, -9, -9. So the points were shared and both teams fairly content in the circumstances.

Sussex II v Surrey II (1-9)

Sussex got the bit between their teeth in this match and 8 sets were decided in straight games. The closest of these 8 was Rory Scott against Michael Loveder which Rory scraped through 12-10, 12-10, 13-11 ! Diane Melville battled long and hard against Rachel Greener. Diane was 0-2 down and leveled to 2-2 before bowing out 6-11 in the 5th. It was Sally Cimiotti who recorded Surrey's sole win over Rachel. Sheila King stubbornly pushed, blocked and hit her way to two impressive wins. Fredrik Nilsson conceded only 16 points to both Martin and Michael. Chris Hazlehurst found Rory "awkward" but fared better against Mat Porter with two close games but denied with scores of -5, 9, -11, -3.

Surrey II v Hants I (5-5)

One of the highlights of this match was Alex Rorke's 2nd encounter of the day against Phil Snelson. Phil won the 1st game 11-0 in a stunning display and took the next two games despite getting tired.

This was another match where 8 sets were won 3-0. Hampshire took a 3-1 lead which drifted away from them. Fei Fei and Sally won their 4 against Becky House and Katie Cleary. Sally demonstrated true fighting qualities as she beat Becky -6, -16, 5, 12, 12. Michael Loveder had hoped to have a go at Alex Rorke's defence but had to settle for a bit of a drubbing from Jonathan and Julian instead! Keith also had no joy at the hands of Alex and Julian but Surrey II were content with another 5-5 draw.

Conclusion

A good team spirit and effort on the day saw Surrey teams salvage 6 points from what could have been a disaster. Particular congratulations go to Feifei Pei for winning 8/8 (100%). Others worthy of special mention include Sally Cimiotti's 66% and Lucy Burk's 60%. Well played ladies! Our mens leading performances were Phil Snelson 5/6 (83.3%), Andreas Pusch and Chris Hazlehurst 3/6 (50%).