

## **JUNIOR COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS DIVISION 2D, 20 FEBRUARY 2010**

Five rounds of Junior County Championship Division 2D matches were played at Cippenham on 20 February to complete the Division's fixtures with each match played on three tables. After the first round of matches back in November Sussex 2 led the Table by four points over the five chasing teams but they had to play both Surrey 2 and Berkshire who both had a match in hand. Also the whole of that team were needed for the Premier Cadet weekend so not only did the second team show a complete change of personnel their third team did as well.

In the opening round of matches Kent's boys won all their six matches 3-0 against Essex 4 whilst Essex's girls took their four, Kent's Megan Sullivan putting up most resistance losing 3-2 and 3-1 respectively to Connie Hodges and Emily Godfrey. Surrey 2 had a narrow victory over Sussex 2; they started with two nine in the fifth wins which swung the result. Simeon Giles and Fei Fei Pei unbeaten for them with Carl Haines replying similarly for Sussex. Sussex 3 went down 8-2 to Essex 3, Michael Barthee with two late in the fifth wins and Essex's girls Estelle Purkis and Lucie Collier unbeaten. Berkshire had a clean sweep over neighbours Buckinghamshire 2 and looked the main threat to Sussex's hopes for the title.

In the second round of matches Bucks 2 were on the end of another clean sweep, this time by Kent 2 with Kent being gifted the four girls matches. Surrey 2 beat Sussex 3 7-3 despite conceding two girls matches, Finney Wilson claiming Sussex's last match win 10, -8, 7, -12, 8 over Alex Kwaskowski. Essex 3 beat bottom team Cambridgeshire 9-1. Cambs one point coming from Patrick Mohan's fifth set 12-10 win over Scott Dowsett. In the top of the table clash between Sussex 2 and Berkshire, Berks Daniel Moses, ranked 130 places above his opponent, scraped the last match played on the table against Michael Rutherford 5, -8, 9, -13, 12 for his team's narrow 6-4 win. His sister Helen beat both Megan Knowles, ranked one place above her, and Maria Tsapsinos with Berks Liam McTiernan also unbeaten. Berkshire now took over leadership of the table, but only on sets difference from Sussex 2, Kent 2, Surrey 2 and Essex 3, all teams having 8 points.

After the lunch break Berkshire showed their aspirations for the Title with a 10-0 win over Essex 4. Essex players Emily Godfrey and Tim Hunt did their best to try and avoid the whitewash in the last two matches both losing 11-8 in the fifth set to Megan Knowles and Hanson Xu respectively. Kent 2 kept their hopes alive with an 8-2 win over Sussex 3, Dan Lawrence, Sam and Aaron Smith and Megan Sullivan all unbeaten. Essex 3 kept in the race for honours with a 7-3 win over Surrey 2. Win of the day must be Ella Patel's 3, 6, 8 victory over Fei Fei Pei, ranked 605 points above her, 3, 6, 8 with a series of backhand smashes that Fei Fei could hardly have seen. Michael Barthee was also unbeaten which included a 13, 7, -6, -7, 14 win over Alex Kwaskowski. In the battle of the bottom two teams Bucks 2 emerged victorious with a 6-3 win over Cambs. Both sides only had one girl with Keighleigh Hubbard the victorious young lady over Bucks Amanda Williamson but it was unbeaten performances from Bucks Jason Zhao and Conor McManus that swung the match their way. Berks, Kent 2 and Essex 3 now topped the table with 10 points each with Sussex 2 slipping down to fifth position after sitting this round out.

In the fourth round of matches Kent 2 completed their fixtures with a narrow 6-4 victory over Surrey 2. Kent's Aaron Smith's 10, 7, 9 win over Alex Kwasowski and a last match gasp -9, 4, -9, 3, 14 win over Simeon Giles went a long way to the victory. Anthony Patten and Fei Fei Pei won the four for Surrey 2. Sussex 3 stormed into a 5-1 lead over Essex 4 but in the end had to be satisfied with a 6-4 win. Garrett Scammell and Finney Wilson were unbeaten for Sussex 3 whilst Emily Godfrey won her two matches for Essex 4. Sussex 2 kept their hopes alive with an 8-2 victory over Bucks 2, Carl Haines unbeaten and Jason Zhao winning his two for Bucks. Berkshire sealed their hands on the Title with a 9-1 victory over bottom team Cambs. Maria Shazard made her debut for Berks but lost agonisingly 8, -8, -8, 6, 10 to Keighleigh Hubbard for the only Cambs set. With the title in Berkshire hands, albeit on sets difference at this stage, Kent 2 had to wait to see whether they could hold on to the runners up spot or whether Sussex 2 could overtake them on sets difference.

In the last round of matches Berkshire finished their unbeaten day with an 8-2 victory over Sussex 3, Daniel Moses, Liam McTiernan and Maria Tsapsinos all unbeaten. After her debut in the previous match Maria Shazard learned the ups and downs of Championship play winning 14-12 in the fifth set over Sussex's Bethany Pemberton-Hill and losing 16-14 in the fifth set to Emma Sheen. Surrey 2 beat Essex 4 7-3 despite Simeon Giles having to concede his last match to Sam Langton after he had been hit in the eye by a table tennis ball, Anthony Patten, Alex Kwasowski and Fei Fei Pei all unbeaten. Essex's three came from concessions. Essex 3 finished their day unbeaten after a 9-1 win over Bucks 2; Michael Barthee lost his only match of the day 3-1 to Conor McManus. Sussex 2 made sure of the runners up position on sets difference with a 9-1 win over bottom team Cambs, Ellie Stringer losing the one to Keighleigh Hubbard 9, 6, 9.

So Berkshire take the Title with 14 points with three teams on 12 points. Sussex 2 are runners up with 55 sets to 25, Kent 2 third 51-28 and Essex 3 fourth 48-31. Berkshire's Daniel Moses, losing only once in sixteen matches and Surrey's Fei Fei Pei losing once in fifteen matches having the best percentages of the seven players who played in all eight matches for their team.

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