



April 2019

### **SENIOR COUNTY**

London rounded off their home fixtures as Cornwall made the long journey to the capital. With the visitors top of the BICC Division One table, a tough task was in prospect as the Cornish sought as many points as possible to keep ahead of the four other counties who are also in the promotion race.

The Ladies B came into the weekend full of confidence, having recorded whitewashes in their last two fixtures. Lynne Biondini (14.18) lost the opening leg, but promptly drew level despite struggling on the doubles in leg two. It gave her the platform and two legs of assured darts followed to give her the win in fourth for the first point of the weekend's action. Su Holt (16.64) got off to a fine start, taking an early 2-0 lead. She was then pegged back to all square and couldn't halt the momentum despite having throw in the decider.

The next two matches both saw London wins. Carly Townsend (18.11) was making her 50<sup>th</sup> appearance in the black shirt, and after taking the opening two legs totally dominated the next for a win in minimum time. Dee Belcher (18.36) added to the lead with a sparkling display of finishing. After trading the first two legs, she edged ahead with a fine 94 finish before going out with a flourish, courtesy of a sublime 108 checkout.

Cornwall reduced the arrears in the penultimate contest. Jane Biggs (15.31) missed chances in legs one and two but wasn't given the chance at the double in the third. Mandy Solomons (18.74) had to go all the way in the finale, where she cracked in a classy 113 out shot to take the win and the match award to send London into the second session 4-2 ahead.

Cornwall started the Men's B with four straight victories. Danny Brown (21.28) was three down before a 76 finish in the fourth leg brought hopes of a comeback. The fifth went on throw however as Cornwall claimed the point. Chris Hogg (23.88) had his finishing boots on but couldn't hold throw in the last leg. Will Blackwell (25.15) was one leg away from the win, but he was broken in the sixth and couldn't return the favour in the seventh.

Tony Hamit (25.71) hasn't had much luck in the draw recently, and the trend continued with a loss in straight legs in a fairly even game where doubles were critical. London were now in need of a win to stop the rot, and Matt Winzar (24.02) duly obliged, reeling off four on the spin after losing the opener. The next game only needed four legs, Shane Wilson (25.69) producing perhaps his best performance for London with some very consistent scoring.

Dean Coughlan (19.09) struggled throughout and didn't look like getting a leg on the board. Matt Crowley (26.24) remained unbeaten since coming into the side. An early two leg deficit was erased with him getting better the longer the game went on before closing it out in the sixth. Darren Irving (24.28) was another who battled until the seventh but couldn't quite get over the winning line.

London ended the day in style as they took the last three points on offer. Liam Hill (20.91) had match darts against him in the sixth leg but hung in to send it into the last where he held on throw. Sean Lahiff (23.79) was behind early on but dominated from there, an 86 finish in the fourth was backed up with a match winning 66 one leg later. The final game of the day also required the full complement of legs, Steve Holt (20.46) showing real grit to come back from 3-2 down before hitting the winning double. A 6-6 sectional result was probably about right and the Londoners went into day two with a 10-8 lead.

Steph Stutley (18.33) got Sunday's play off to a flier, only needing the minimum three legs to get the Ladies A the first point of the day. Jo Deamer (17.98) was never in touch in the three legs she spent at the oche. Kerry Killick (20.36) had to go all the way, but a fine last leg saw her take the point and match award.

Cornwall then hit back, as they took the remaining three points. Nikki Patten (20.35) battled well but missed match darts in the last which proved costly. Shaz Deboo Costello (17.38) took out 74 in the third as she came back from two down to force a finale but throwing first proved the deciding factor. The last tie was the fourth in succession that went the full five legs. Debs Watling (18.18) looked to hold sway at 2-1 up, but never had the chance to finish it off which gave Cornwall a 4-2 win.

With the scores locked at 12 apiece, it was all to play for in the Men's A but Cornwall scuppered the prospect of a grandstand finish with a clinical and ruthless display.

There was no sign of what was to come as London started off with a win. Despite struggling on the outer ring, Nick Cocks (23.23) had no trouble at all on the big trebles and this was the foundation for a much-needed win which came in the sixth leg.

The next three games all went the duration, and in a repeat of the morning session, they were all won by the visitors. Graham Rackstraw (25.73) gave as good as he got but had no answer to a superb final leg against the throw. Steve Ferguson (23.68) also played well but couldn't get going in the last leg. Lee Cocks (27.10) looked well in control at 3-1 up, but then lost three on the bounce.

Matt Wood (24.89) was seen off in six as the Cornish momentum was now in full flow. Danny Faulkner (24.35) temporarily halted the bandwagon, quickly going into a three nil lead before sealing the deal in the sixth although he could have closed it out in the fourth.

From that point on, Cornwall asserted total dominance to sweep all before them after the mid-session interval.

David Warzewski (26.19) took it to the sixth leg before coming out on the losing side. Ben Cheeseman (23.17) also went down in six. Conan Whitehead (24.13) struggled throughout the five legs in his game, Wayne Brown (24.03) didn't register a leg despite hitting two maximums. Tommy Sanwell (24.12) went the distance but throwing second ultimately proved decisive. Lewis McGurn (25.31) was another to hit two maximums but succumbed in six to give Cornwall ten points out of twelve and an overall 22-14 victory which sees them remain at the head of affairs and poised to go up to the Premier. The result could have been different with London only winning 4 of the 15 games that went the full duration over the course of the weekend.

London remain safely in mid-table and will be looking to end the season on a high when they travel to take on cellar dwellers Nottinghamshire at the end of April.

### **YOUTH COUNTY**

London's Youth played the first of two games in a three-week span when they travelled the short distance to take on Kent.

The Boys Under 18's only managed the solitary win, which came from Kurtis Hollyhock. The Ladies had the opportunity to clinch the Sectional title with a victory but had to put the celebrations on ice as they went down 2-1, Rosie Gaffney getting the solo point.

The Under 21's edged their section by the odd point, victories came from Albie Rackley, Charlie King and Will Blackwell, which gave a final score of 10-5 to the hosts.

Next up was a home fixture with Sussex the visitors to the capital. The opposition have some fine players in their ranks and again the Under 18's only managed one win. Hayden Robbie was victorious, but the others all battled well and gave their all.

The Ladies have been the dominant force in the division, and the superiority was underlined in grand fashion as they swept aside Sussex with a comprehensive 3-0 win. Rebecca Holt, Rosie Gaffney and Ellie Larsson-Brown have gelled brilliantly as a team this season and they can relax in the final match knowing that the job has already been done.

The Under 21's saw some close matches, but only Will Blackwell and Albie Rackley entered the winner's enclosure as Sussex ran out 3-2 winners in the section and 9-6 overall.

The Youth round off their season with a trip to Essex on 19<sup>th</sup> May.

### **MEN'S SUPER LEAGUE**

Welling A are the new London Super League champions. With only one round remaining, they hold an unassailable lead of nine points and congratulations go to them. There is still a tussle for the minor honours, with Plumstead A ahead of third placed Romford by a single point.

Lee Cocks and Conan Whitehead added another trophy to the Welling A cabinet, as they took the Lew Shannon Pairs with a 4-0 win against the Woolwich Ferry pairing of Paul Amos and Darren Peetoom. The losing semi-finalists were John Hawkins and Ben Cheeseman (Woolwich Ferry), Pip Blackwell and Kevin Smith (Plumstead A).

### **LADIES SUPER LEAGUE**

With four rounds left in the season, it is still anybody's guess as to who will be crowned Champions and an exciting conclusion to the season is guaranteed. Edmonton are currently top with 102 points, with Wanderers just a single point away in second. Panthers are by no means out of the race either, with only four points separating them and the summit. With Edmonton still having to play both their title rivals it may well be that the destination of the title isn't known until after the final round of games have been played.

The Ladies Superleague Singles was won by Steph Stutley, who defeated her Panthers teammate Kerry Killick 5-3 in the final. Jo Deamer (Edmonton) and Su Holt (Wanderers) were the players who went out at the semi-final stage.