



Wizards are Bowled over by Young Ones

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The four-a-side handicap competition organised by the Leicestershire County Association for the Rose Johnson Challenge Bowl has been running for much longer than any of the current players have been playing in the Leicester League, the only league in the county who actually enter teams these days.

It is a unique event in that the four players face each of the opponents for one game up to 21 points, with the teams having handicaps rather than individuals. As such, every point counts.

Ian's Wizards, Winstanley's first venture into the competition, faced KP Young Ones from Knighton Park, an established club but all four players in this for the first time. The Wizards received 84 points over the 16 games, easy to keep track at 21 points for each set of four.

The Young Ones started well when both Brajesh Patel and Zia Malik won 21-10 against Ben Cooke and Kelsey Andrews respectively – 22 points gained in two games. Dan Andrews fought back for the Wizards by defeating Oscar Bentley, the youngest competitor in the whole competition at 12, 21-14 before Vishaal Sharda beat Ian Knight 21-16 for KP.

With Malik and, in particular, Patel in good form the Young Ones kept marginally ahead of the target after eight games with 43 of the 84 pulled back, Dan Andrews still fighting having beaten Sharda. Both Bentley and Sharma threw in good results in the third set of four while Patel just squeezed home in deuce against Dan Andrews. With four games left KP needed eight points to win, seemingly well ahead of the game.

Cooke scored an excellent win over Sharda to make that 12 points before Bentley beat Knight 21-15. Then Patel produced the match-winning performance in defeating Kelsey Andrews 21-4 to put his team 12 points to the good.

But all was not lost as Dan Andrews faced Malik in the final game needing to stop his opponent scoring more than 9 points. In a tense finale he almost achieved the impossible but Malik managed to rack up 11 points to give his team victory by just two points at 308-306. Handicapping at its very best.

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