



County Championships: Yorkshire hold slim lead

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The first weekend's play saw the introduction of a new organiser in the form of Tony Dias from Middlesex, quite a daunting prospect for a first-time organiser, no doubt he would have been glad of the support that Ken Eliot was able to provide.

Things have changed somewhat since I was last involved in writing the reports on County Championships affairs some 25 years ago, though the format remains much the same and there are even some players I remember from that distant past.

The format for this weekend required all of the teams to play three matches over the two days, the first round paired Yorkshire against Derbyshire, result 6-4 to Yorkshire, Nottingham against Northumberland (9-1 to Nottinghamshire), Middlesex against Surrey, which saw a win for Middlesex 6-4, and Sussex against Berkshire also finished at 6-4 in favour of Sussex.

At the end of the first round of matches Nottingham, Yorkshire, Sussex, and Middlesex were all on two points with Surrey, Berkshire, Derbyshire and Northumberland yet to register a point.

On the Sunday there were two matches scheduled per team, the morning round of matches paired Middlesex and Sussex and was won by Sussex 7-3 thanks in no small measure to Josh and Jack Bennett, who were both undefeated.

Surrey were drawn against Nottinghamshire and a close fought match resulted in a draw, Adam Laws playing John Taylor with Surrey 4-5 down and despite being 2-1 down won the next two games to win the set and draw the match.

Northumberland played Yorkshire and lost 2-8 with only Andy Wilkinson winning for the home team with wins over Simon Nutch and James Hobson, the only set Simon was too lose over the weekend.

In the remaining match Derbyshire lost 3-7 to Berkshire, Dave Barr maintaining his so far undefeated record over the two matches played.

After the second round of matches Yorkshire were on four points along with Sussex and only Derbyshire and Northumberland remained pointless.

The final round of matches saw Yorkshire maintain their position at the top of the division on six points, level with Sussex but with a lead on countback of just four games.

Results were Yorkshire beating Surrey 7-3, Sussex beating Derbyshire 6-4, Berkshire defeating Northumberland 8-2 and Nottingham losing to Middlesex 4-6.

The position after the final round of matches of the weekend was:

- 1st Yorkshire
- 2nd Sussex
- 3rd Berkshire
- 4th Middlesex
- 5th Nottinghamshire
- 6th Surrey
- 7th Derbyshire
- 8th Northumberland.

I said at the start of this report that it was over 25 years since I was last involved with writing C.C. reports, and at the time I was non playing captain of Lancashire and at that time there was one player who was a constant source of problems in the Premier Division and it would appear that he is still a thorn in the side of his opponents and on this occasion was the only male player to win all of his matches – incredible, unless of course it is his grandson playing under his name!

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