

County Championship round up

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Veterans division 2a

Lincolnshire veterans who just missed out on promotion last season from division 2a when they finished runners up to Cleveland were in no mood to miss out on this occasion as when the division was played this season they took the campaign with gusto to spare as they completed the season on a maximum 14 points which was 5 clear of runners up Durham.

It was in the first round of matches in which Lincs put down their marker as after a comfortable 2-2 victory over Cambridgeshire they had to battle in their next three contests, all of which they won by the narrowest of margins, gaining 6-4 victories over Norfolk, Notts and Durham.

It was a solid all round team effort in these matches with the same quartet featuring in each match with number 1 Andy Wignall leading the way with six wins from eight, supported by Mark Donoghue (4/8), Jim Brewster (2/8) and Lesley Kent recording four straight wins from her ladies singles.

The matches against Norfolk and Notts in particular showed the all round strength of the team as they were both won with only three singles victories but by being able to pack in and take all three doubles shows the beauty of the county championship team formula and how this contributed to the team's success.

With all the hard work done in the first round Lincs eased to the title with 2-2 victories against the second teams of Cheshire and Leicestershire followed by a 7-3 victory against Northumberland.

John Malaone replaced Donoghue for the second phase but with Wignall and Kent recording 100% performances during this round the initiative was always going to stay with Lincolnshire who eased to the league title with matches to spare.

Veterans division 3a

Strengthened by the inclusion of "new vet" Andrew Horsfield, South Yorkshire were always going to be the team to beat in veterans division 3a this term as Horsfield's inclusion made the already solid team which included Bill Grant, Shaun Bibby and Pat Thorley look very strong.

As expected South Yorkshire looked the form team winning all four clashes when the division played its first round at Draycott and Long Eaton TTC in November but were joined on top spot by Lancashire and were even level on sets after the initial stages.

The division recommenced at Halifax for one day in January to complete with three matches each and after the first round the sides were still locked together but a comprehensive 7-3 victory between the teams was enough to put South Yorkshire in touching distance of the title which they secured in the last match by easing past Worcestershire seconds and taking the title by two points from Lancashire who also won their last match to finish three points clear of Yorkshire No 4.

Veterans division 4a

The veterans division 4a was concluded in an unusual fashion at Pudsey TTC, Leeds in early February as the division had played all the matches with the exception of one before Christmas and left Yorkshire No 5 to face Cheshire No 4 in a one off fixture which proved fitting as both sides had both recorded 4 wins each in this six team division and their clash was a title shoot out.

It was Cheshire who took the title as they recorded a narrow 6-4 victory which went to a deciding set mixed doubles.

Cheshire started the stronger but there was never more than a set between the teams and Yorkshire almost took the title in the ninth set which saw Rob Wylie record a 9-11 11-6 9-11 11-5 11-9 victory over Phil Cawser when the match score stood at 4 all and with a superior sets difference, all Yorkshire required was a draw to take the title.

With Cheshire 5-4 up their fate lay in the final mixed doubles and it was T Halucha and Sue Burgess who recorded an 11-2 9-11 11-4

11-6 victory over Steve Kosmowsky and Linda Sanderson to take victory and the title.

By Barry Snowden

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