

Sussex win Cadet County Champs Premier

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Helshan Weerasinghe registered the title-clinching victory for Sussex

SUSSEX REGAIN CADETS PREMIER

Sussex and Middlesex once more dominated the County Championships Cadets Premier Division which was played over one weekend at Weavers Leisure Centre, Wellingborough, as the two former winners completed the weekend in the top two positions with Sussex on this occasion coming out on top.

There was nothing to choose between the teams when they met during the last round of fixtures but a second round loss by Middlesex to Lincolnshire during Saturday's play gave Middlesex an uphill task from early in the campaign.

Round 1

The top two counties began their campaign with straightforward 9-1 victories as Middlesex beat newcomers Staffordshire and another new team to the Premier Division, Lincolnshire, found Sussex too hot to handle. There was also wins for Glamorgan who beat Cleveland 6-4 while Yorkshire beat Worcestershire 7-3.

Round 2

Sussex continued on their way with a 7-3 win over Cleveland but the shock of the round saw Lincolnshire record a 6-4 win over Middlesex with Tom Jarvis leading the way for Lincolnshire with two wins and all his team mates; Matt Leete, Will Ross, Olivia Churchill and Hannah Noutch, pitching in to take one win apiece to secure the victory.

Staffordshire got off the mark with an 8-2 win over Worcestershire whilst Yorkshire and Glamorgan fought out a tough draw.

Round 3

Sussex thumped Yorkshire 9-1 whilst Middlesex just beat Cleveland in a hard fought 6-4 victory while the round and day was completed with a couple of 9-1 wins as Glamorgan consolidated their overnight second spot by beating Worcestershire and Lincolnshire soundly beat Staffordshire.

End of day 1

County Team	Matches Played	Points
Sussex	3	6
Glamorgan	3	5
Middlesex	3	4
Lincolnshire	3	4
Yorkshire	3	3
Staffordshire	3	2
Cleveland	3	0

Round 4

Sunday morning saw Sussex tighten their grip with a 10-0 victory against Worcestershire, who were struggling to keep up with the pace meaning they looked favourites for the drop.

Middlesex beat Yorkshire 8-2 and Glamorgan continued their fine run of form with another win as they beat Staffordshire 7-3. The round of matches finished with a 6-4 victory by Cleveland over Lincolnshire.

Round 5

Middlesex and Sussex both recorded 9-1 victories against Worcestershire and Glamorgan respectively and Cleveland leap frogged about Yorkshire by virtue of a 7-3 victory over Staffordshire with Yorkshire and Lincolnshire sharing the spoils at 5 all.

Round 6

Round six saw wins again once more for Sussex and Middlesex as Sussex beat Staffordshire 9-1 which relegated the Potteries side and Middlesex beating Glamorgan 7-3 which left the top two still in contention with each other to face in the final match but with Sussex having a massive sets advantage.

Lincolnshire beat already relegated Worcestershire 10-0 and the quartet of matches was completed by the clash between Yorkshire and Cleveland which made no change to the table.

Round 7

Although there was a slight mathematical chance that Middlesex could overhaul Sussex, due to their shock loss to Lincolnshire, Middlesex were two points behind going into the final round of matches as the two foes faced each other.

In reality due to a hugely superior sets advantage Sussex only needed one more rubber to take the title and this was taken care of in the very first match as Helshan Weerasinghe sealed the championship with an 3-1 (11-7, 10-12, 11-9, 11-7) victory over Daniel Wright.

With the title now decided an air of relaxation descended over the match and the counties fought out a thrilling battle with never more than one set between the teams, and it took a final set victory by Jack Bennett over Omar Khassal 11-5 11-5 8-11 11-7 to give Sussex a draw.

Lincolnshire and Glamorgan also fought out a thrilling draw in their last match to consolidate their respectable third and fourth spots, and with the fate of Staffordshire and Worcestershire already determined, the only remaining issue was the county who would join them in being relegated.

On this occasion it was Yorkshire who, despite a 6-4 victory against Staffordshire, were just headed by Cleveland who beat Worcestershire 8-2 in their final match and kept their premiership place on a superior sets advantage. Yorkshire may consider themselves slightly unfortunate being relegated on seven points but they must now look forward to life in Division One for at least one season.

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