

Trio bounce back to Cadet Premier Division

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Posted On: **April 23, 2013**



Finn Morgan-Bayliss was unable to help Dorset to promotion

Yorkshire, Warwickshire & Surrey promoted to Cadet Premier Division

Cadets County Championship

As the Cadets Premier Division says goodbye to relegated Glamorgan, Kent and Leicestershire, they will be replaced next season by Yorkshire, Warwickshire and Surrey who are all former premier teams.

Whilst Yorkshire and Warwickshire eased to their divisional titles (1A and 1B) respectively on maximum points, it was 1C which produced the tightest finish as Surrey, Hampshire and Dorset all ended the campaign on 12 match points, Surrey only emerging victorious due to a superior sets advantage.

With Surrey, Hampshire and Dorset head and shoulders above all the other counties in the division, the match ups between the three counties was going to be crucial in determining the outcome of the division, and it seemed like Dorset had gained the upper hand when they met Surrey at Waterside TTC and recorded a narrow 6-4 victory.

It was Finn Morgan-Bayliss and Ruth Pickering who stole the show for Dorset as both players won two sets each. Morgan-Bayliss got his side off to the best possible start as he took the opening set with a thrilling 3-2 (7-11, 11-8, 7-11, 11-9, 11-9) win over Shaquille Webb-Dixon.

Dorset took another narrow victory when the match score stood at 3-3 when Snigdha Maganti beat Medha Verma from 2-0 behind 3-2 (8-11, 9-11, 11-6, 11-9, 11-9) which was followed by another five-game win by Morgan-Bayliss over Alexander Gillen 3-2 (12-14, 11-7, 10-12, 11-8, 11-6) as they established an unbeatable 5-3 lead.

Pickering completed her maximum in the penultimate set with a straight games win over Juliette Moussarie 3-0 (12-10, 11-9, 11-4) to complete victory for Dorset.

The teams all returned to Waterside three months later and it became clear that Hampshire's matches against both Surrey and Dorset would determine the outcome of the division.

First up was the clash between Hampshire and Dorset and, although Dorset only made one change with Chloe Class coming in to replace Snigdha Maganti, they were no match for Hampshire who overwhelmed their opponents 8-2.

Things started brightly enough for Dorset as Morgan-Bayliss beat Jonathan McMullan 3-0 (11-6, 11-7, 11-6) but

they had to wait until the final set before they picked up another win when Zac Dowling beat Matthew Daish 3-0 (11-6, 11-4, 11-5). However, Jimmy Yeung, Amy Blagbrough and Kate Holt all recorded unbeaten performances for Hampshire.

Hampshire faced Surrey in the last match of the campaign and with both counties having a superior sets advantage over Dorset, it was a simple case of whoever won the match would win the division, although interestingly, a draw between the two counties would hand the title to Dorset.

As it turned out, the match did not prove to be much of a contest as Surrey steamrolled their way to the title and were 7-0 ahead before Hampshire knew what had hit them. Although Hampshire picked up two of the last three sets the match ended in an 8-2 win and the title for Surrey.

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