Sycamore Are British League Champions

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The 2013/14 season will go down as one of the most blistering, pulsating and memorable for many a year.

British League has a tendency to shock, delight and entertain. This season was no different, with shocks and drama aplenty.

Ultimately, it was Sycamore who prevailed, making up for last season's disappointment as they claimed their maiden crown on mere sets difference over newly promoted Urban TTC.

Sycamore were deemed as title favourites as their team boasted a wealth of talent, with likes of Chris Doran, Paul McCreery and Matt Ware epitomising the quality they possessed.

Meanwhile, Ormesby also provided so much promise pre-season with the ageless Ryan Jenkins leading his troops into battle. Unfortunately for the Middlesbrough outfit, three defeats in the opening weekend saw them playing catch up throughout the season and they never quite managed to pull back the arrears.

It was Urban who were the early season pacesetters, winning their opening three matches to see them perch at the top.

Upon reflection, their first and only defeat was decisive. A 7-1 defeat to Sycamore in the fourth round saw them surrender the lead to their rivals, who didn't move from pole after that.

Urban's rise has been a remarkable one having only arrived on the Premier League scene at the start of the season. The acquisitions of Hungarian trio Adam Pattantyus, Peter Musko and Daniel Schaffer made them instant title contenders. Their eventual second placed finish brought disappointment, but their presence has been recognised and could well culminate in vengeance next year.

The tale of the 2014 season was far more compulsive than the title fight, however.

Despite ending the season pointless, Wymondham illustrated a charming tale of their own. A blend of youth and experience added character to the competition as they picked up shocks along the way; Liam McTiernan beating the imperious Michael O'Driscoll, Callum Evans stunning Jason Sugrue and the charismatic Paul Beck overcoming Lobsang Nyandak Lama to become the oldest ever player to register a Premier British League victory.

No forgetting Barrow, either. After a reprieve from relegation last year the Cumbrian outfit strived for better things this time around. A strong start to the season followed by a steady yet solid end secured their place for another year. The future looks bright too; Danny Lawrence blossomed over the course of the season whilst Joanna Drinkhall performed admirably for the vast majority of the campaign.

They were joined in mid-table by Fusion, who also experienced a less dramatic finale after avoiding relegation with a solitary set to spare last year. The acquisition of Michael O'Driscoll was a major part in that, and alongside Kazeem Adeleke, who picked up a number of outstanding scalps on the way, and Lorestas Trumpauskas, they ended the season in a somewhat unspectacular style.

And so for the relegation battle.

Drumchapel have become a part of the furniture in the British League. A team full of energy, talent and panache. Surely they were too good to go down? For so long that didn't seem the case. Countless narrow defeats left the Scots in a perilous position with a seemingly irretrievable five point deficit going into the final weekend. Yet the evident spirit in their camp proved otherwise on a tense final weekend in Ormesby.

Greenhouse entered the weekend with a somewhat weakened side, unrecognisable to the one that performed valiantly in the opening weekend in Essex.

They failed to replicate that performance, registering just two sets in the final 24 available to open the door for Drumchapel.

The Scottish foot had to force its way through that door. Victory over Greenhouse was followed by defeat to Fusion, before a 7-1 win over Wymondham left Drumchapel needing a point against Barrow to secure safety.

They achieved just that, with Craig Howieson's victory over Sean Doherty sparking joyful scenes in the Drumchapel ranks as their future in the league was secured.

A fantastic ending to a thrilling season, and as the British League strives towards further success, the 2014/15 season will undoubtedly weave its magic once more.

For more reports, interviews and photos from the weekend, click here

Written By Matthew Shaw
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Presentation Photos

Sycamore TTC with Keith Thomas (ETTA Treasurer)

Urban TTC with Keith Thomas (ETTA Treasurer)

Player of the Premier Division – Ryan Jenkins with Keith Thomas (ETTA Treasurer)

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