



County Championships: Leics take title in dramatic style

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Leicestershire regained the Veterans' Premier Division of the County Championships as they overtook reigning champions Sussex at the death and scored a narrow superior sets title winning success over the south coast team as both teams ended the season on 11 points with four wins and three draws from their campaign.

Leicestershire started the weekend in fourth spot behind leaders Sussex, Kent and Nottinghamshire and after a first match draw between Notts and Leicester and a win by Sussex 6-4 over Kent, it was Sussex who established daylight between themselves and the chasing pack. They stood on seven points with their three rivals two points behind.

Leicestershire won their next match with a thumping 9-1 win over South Yorkshire and Sussex dropped what proved to be a pivotal point as they drew their next clash, held by a spirited effort from Hertfordshire who themselves were scrapping to avoid relegation.

Sussex still led at the end of Saturday night on eight points but only by one point ahead of Leicestershire, and their rivals were now joined by Yorkshire who had moved up to be level with Notts and Kent, one point behind Leicestershire.

The penultimate round of fixtures saw both Sussex and Leicestershire record 7-3 wins against Berkshire and Kent respectively so both teams faced final matches with the title still up for grabs, but with Sussex still favourites as they held a one-point lead.

Leicestershire faced Hertfordshire and despite being level early on it was Leicestershire who pulled away to record an 8-2 win.

Now attention was focused on the clash between Sussex and Yorkshire and despite Sussex being in the ascendency most of the match they could not put the determined northerners away. With Sussex leading 5-4

going into the final mixed doubles, a five-game win by Janet Adams and Simon Pugh over Rose Rainton and Nigel Eckersley (11-6, 7-11, 11-7, 6-11, 11-4) saw the match end in a draw which was enough to see Leicestershire leapfrog Sussex and take the title

We say goodbye to South Yorkshire and Berkshire who were relegated and one notable achievement this season was the unbeaten performance of Leicestershire's Chris Rogers who recorded a 100% record of 14 wins from 14 starts playing at No 1.

Final standings (subject to verification)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leicestershire	7	4	3	0	46	24	11
Sussex	7	4	3	0	44	26	11
Nottinghamshire	7	4	2	1	43	27	10
Yorkshire	7	3	3	1	41	29	9
Kent	7	2	3	2	36	34	7
Hertfordshire	7	1	1	5	23	47	3
South Yorkshire	7	1	1	5	17	53	3
Berkshire	7	1	0	6	30	40	2

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