



Leicester & District: County sides off to good starts

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Leicestershire County teams have started the season very well with the Veterans first team bidding to retain their national title, the Veterans second team keen to do well with promotion, while the Junior Firsts have a decent chance of topping their division this term.

The Veteran firsts have been vying for the national title for a number of years, either winning the division or coming very close for much of the time. This season could not have got off to a better start with three victories from their first three matches at Ashford.

Newly promoted Dorset were the first opponents and the first three sets were close as the slow conditions took some adapting to. Eventually, Chris Rogers and Dave Gannon emerged winners, both in five games, while Maurice Newman lost as he did again in the middles of the match, which is unusual. At halfway Leicestershire were 3-2 to the good but then rattled off five in a row to win 8-2, Karen Smith undefeated in all hers.

The usual close encounter with Yorkshire followed and included a rare defeat for brother/sister team of Rogers and Smith in the mixed doubles. Rogers won both his singles, while the other three all won one and a men's doubles by Rogers and Newman sealed the 6-4 success.

The final match of the first session finished 8-2 to the county against Sussex thanks to unbeaten returns by Rogers, Gannon and Smith in their singles while all three doubles were taken.

The Juniors played at Merseyside with a 6-4 win over Lancashire before a 5-5 draw against South Yorkshire, which was a personal triumph for Shreya Mehta who won both singles. Adam Pettitt came back from 2-0 down to win a singles against Lincolnshire in the final match, which was won 6-4. Completing the Leicestershire side were Oscar White, Jack Rogers and Maya Dehnen.

The Veteran seconds also made an unbeaten start at Harlow with a win and a draw featuring Andy LeButt, Reza

Kiani, Ian Brown, who was making his debut, Chris Brewer and Eileen Shaler.

A tough first match saw Leicestershire 2-0 down to Worcestershire but a splendid team performance saw them battle away for every player to do his bit in securing a very good 6-4 victory.

Northampton provided the second opponents and another tough nut to crack with the neither team able to open up more than a one-set lead, the score eventually reaching 4-4 when LeButt could not quite get the better of Richard Elliott. Brewer and Shaler were equal to the task of taking the final mixed doubles to ensure the share of points at 5-5. Eileen Shaler was undefeated in both singles and doubles across the two matches.

* The quarter-final matches in the Leicester League's cup competitions are known:

Rose Johnson Cup (Open): Syston Casuals B v Syston Casuals A, Knighton Park A v Desford Village. Byes: Knighton Park B and Electricity.

Corrall Cup (Gradings U210): Electricity v Knighton Park A, Syston Casuals B v Syston Casuals A. Byes: Great Glen and Knighton Park B.

Saracen Cup (Gradings U170): Great Glen v Syston Casuals B, Knighton Park A v Regent Sports, Electricity v Knighton Park B. Bye: Syston Casuals A.

Frith Trophy (Gradings U140): Syston Casuals v Electricity. Byes: Knighton Park A and B. Regent Sports.

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