



County Champs: Notts Vets make strong start to defence

Author: Paul Stimpson

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The first weekend of this season's Veterans' Premier Division was held at Ashford TTC with all county teams playing three matches and it was reigning champions Nottinghamshire who were once again the form team.

They already have established a two-point cushion at the top of the division with three wins from three as they thumped Kent 10-0 and recorded an 8-2 win over Dorset and a 7-3 victory over newcomers Avon.

With a very strong squad of Mark Short, Jason Ramage, Lee Neil and Sarah Short they were always going to be the team to beat and started their title defence with a comfortable 8-2 win over Dorset and it wasn't until the sixth set, the ladies' singles that Dorset were able to get off the mark as Sanja Clements beat Sarah Short 3-0 (11-3, 11-6, 11-8). It wasn't until the final set mixed doubles that Dorset picked up their other victory as Clements and Mark Butler beat Ramage and Sarah Short 3-1 (11-9, 12-10, 8-11, 12-10).

Kent must have been feeling quietly confident for their match with Notts as they had scored an impressive 6-4 victory over multi divisional winners Leicestershire but they came down to earth with a bang as Notts whalloped the south coast team 10-0 as the reigning champions moved into gear.

Each county played one match on Sunday morning as Notts face newcomers Avon and despite Avon No 1 Martin Gunn having a top match as he partnered Michelle Reeves to a thrilling mixed doubles win over Mark and Sarah Short 3-2 (11-8 10-12, 11-8, 9-11, 11-9) and an impressive 3-1 singles win over Mark Short (6-11, 13-11, 11-5, 11-7) he alone could not prevent Notts from recording a 7-3 win and a place at the top of the table going into the second weekend.

Warwickshire, Kent and Leicestershire are all on four points after the first weekend with Yorkshire a further point adrift and, with Notts still having to play three of those sides, the division has still a long way to go – but Notts are still the favourites to record back-to-back titles when the sides meet up again in January at Draycott & Long Eaton TTC.

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