

# Derbyshire Squash Rackets Association

Press Release - 03 December 2007

## Derbyshire Men's Leagues 2 & 4 - Round 6 - 29 November 2007

Please see tables and full results on <http://www.derbyshiresquash.co.uk>

### Division 2

Last round's matches saw Dragons' cling on to the top of Division 2 after a gritty display against Burton 2. This week they headed off to a resurgent Repton side and suffered their first loss of the season 1-4. Dragons' only win came from Craig Simpson who was too consistent for an out-of-sorts Simon Evans in a one-sided 3-0. Repton stalwart John Kirtland immediately hit back, but nearly came unstuck after taking a 2-0 lead as Paul Howell dominated the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> games; Kirtland showing good fitness and strength to win the 5<sup>th</sup> 9-5. Repton old boys Mike Lambert and Andy Clarke didn't enjoy returning to their former club as Repton's Adrian Oldbury and Simon Price won through 3-0 and 3-1 respectively. The 1<sup>st</sup> string match saw Ben Smith gaining a notable victory over the in-form Lee Watson 9-1 7-9 9-2 9-4. Repton move into 4<sup>th</sup> place and if they can continue this good form could yet make a promotion place.

Duffield 2 fielded a full side and took full advantage of Dragons loss as they overwhelmed Lumb Farm 2 5-0. Lumb Farm's only team point came from Sam Brown as he took the 3<sup>rd</sup> game off James Barry at no. 2. Hood Park 2 kept up their good run with a win over The Manor 2. The Manor's lower order gave them a great start with Andy Rolston and Paul Hodgkinson recording 3-1 wins over John Books and Ray Patrick. Hood's top three all eased through dropping only one game between them.

Burton 2 narrowly fended off their club's 3<sup>rd</sup> team in 3-2 thriller. Burton 2's Vince Dolman beat Paul Harris 3-1, but Burton 3's Doug Whitfield hit back for the underdogs with a fine 3-2 win over Jason Harper, Whitfield edging the 5<sup>th</sup> 9-6. Simon Barnett ambushed Guy Litherland taking the first game 9-0, but Litherland was ready in the 2<sup>nd</sup> to level at 1-1. Litherland took the next in what looked to be a pivotal 3<sup>rd</sup> 9-7, but Barnett dug in, put the ball in good areas and took the 4<sup>th</sup> 9-6. However, Burton 3's chances slipped away quickly in 5<sup>th</sup> as Litherland started too well for Barnett and kept the pressure up to see out the game 9-1. Adrian Murphy and Greg Watkins were battling for who would be the best No.1; Murphy took the 1<sup>st</sup> 9-0, Watkins the next two 10-8, 9-6, Murphy then levelled in the 4<sup>th</sup> 9-4, only for the determined Watkins to outlast his opponent winning the 5<sup>th</sup> 9-1. Meanwhile on an adjacent court, Burton 2's Captain Tom

Comb won an important 1<sup>st</sup> game 10-9 against Matthew Maclachlan and went on to take the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> easily to wrap up Burton 2's victory and an important 18-9 points win.

## Division 4

Dragons 4 continue to dominate Division 4, but must be looking over their shoulders to the fast advancing Sandiacre team. Earlier in their first season in Division 4, Sandiacre lost their first match to Duffield 4 3-2 and were rock bottom, but have since clawed their way into 2<sup>nd</sup> place and stand only 9 points behind Dragons.

Dragons dominated in their tie against Repton 2, winning 4-1 and picking up 19 points. It was left to an excellent effort from Repton's Martin Allen at 2<sup>nd</sup> string to save their blushes with a fine 3-2 win over John Holmes. Holmes looked good to equal his team mates as he went 2-0 up, but Allen dug deep winning the 3<sup>rd</sup> 9-6, the 4<sup>th</sup> by the same margin and 5<sup>th</sup> 9-5.

Sandiacre dispatched Hood Park 4 comfortably 4-1, with only Bill Murray failing to capitalise on his 2-0 lead over Jim Lockhart, and eventually lost 10-8 in the 5<sup>th</sup> despite a match ball. Duffield 4 had a tough match against Rolls-Royce 2 and their 4-1 win belied the closeness of the match. Duffield won 154 game points to RR's 141. RR's Hashard Mistry only won five points more than Paul Hansgate, but recorded a 3-0 win 10-9, 10-8, 9-7. Keith Elson persevered for Duffield to beat Phil Robinson 3-2 and Paul Harrison, Simon Law and Dave Yallop all won close 3-1 matches.

Burton 5 stayed in contact with RR 2 when they beat Brampton Manor 2 3-2. Sam Marsden clinched the match for Burton beating John Plummer 9-3 10-8 5-9 9-4 9-7.

## Inter-Counties Championship

See <http://www.englishsquash.com/competitions/evitem.cfm?ID=6355>

This weekend saw the turn of the **Men's O45 Team** as they faced Staffordshire, Shropshire and Leicestershire in Division 2 North. The tournament was hosted at the Dragons Club in Derby. The home venue was certainly taken advantage of as Derbyshire topped the group and go forward to the promotion group in March. Derbyshire have recently been strengthened by the presence of Dragon's men Greg Loach and Lee Watson at nos. 1 and 2 respectively. Loach was particularly dominant winning all his matches at no.1 3-0.

The first match on Saturday morning against Staffordshire proved the toughest challenge. Dave Yallop and Simon Barnett were each undone 3-1, but with Loach and

Watson certain winners the match hinged on another Dragons' man Doug Whitfield who was representing Derbyshire for the first time. Some people rise to new challenges and pressures, and this was certainly the case for Whitfield as he won debut match 10-9 in the 5<sup>th</sup> to effectively beat Staffordshire 3-2.

Shropshire were swept aside by Derbyshire on Saturday afternoon 5-0 ensuring Derbyshire would at least qualify for the promotion group. Brampton Manor's Ian Hilton was an excellent addition at No. 3, allowing Simon Barnett and Tom Matchell to win at Nos.4 and 5. Leicestershire gave Derbyshire an early scare as Tom Matchell was beaten at no. 5, and Whitfield seemed to be going down also. However, Whitfield summoned extra inner strength and that winning edge to once again win by the narrowest of margin 10-9 in the 5<sup>th</sup>. Yallop, Watson and Loach ensured Leicestershire were condemned to 4<sup>th</sup> place.

### **Racketball**

For table see: <http://www.derbyshiresquash.co.uk/division/7>

The Manor 1 top the league, but Brampton 1 and Duffield 1 tail them closely in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> positions and both should usurp The Manor 2 who have played one more fixture. In the inter-club tie between Manor 2's Chris Charlton overturned the rankings win a fine 3-0 win over Andy Rolston. Greg Kingston put his long reach to good effect and ran Jason Walsh to a 5<sup>th</sup> game. Duffield 1 also managed to subdue their 2<sup>nd</sup> team 4-0, but a few points the other way could have seen the top team in trouble. Bob Ilic scraped through 17-15 in the 5<sup>th</sup> against Neil Shorrocks, Andy Fairhurst was equally lucky to beat Andy Bird 15-13 in the 5<sup>th</sup> and James Foulk was 2-1 down to Pete Radford before taking the last two games 15-8, 15-9.

### **Master's Squash**

The Master's Series comes much closer to home when the tour assembles in Coventry this weekend. In the O35 event Kevin White is seeded No. 1, while his Derbyshire County colleagues Jason Foster (Duffield) and Brendan Hickerman (Brampton Manor) are 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> seeds respectively. Foster should meet England and Lancashire's Glen Ragou on Saturday morning the winner likely to play White. An eagerly anticipated semi-final is scheduled between Hickerman and England and Norfolk's Jamie Goodrich. This pair of hard hitting speed merchants should serve up a testy battle.

In the O45s, Greg Loach has got himself noticed and is 3<sup>rd</sup> seed, scheduled to meet James Ockwell in the semi-final. Loach is a little down on ranking points, but a repeat of his West of England win over Ockwell should get him ahead of the field.

The O55's sees John Beastall in the top half of the draw where his second round opponent is John Goodrich, the No.1 seed. This is good draw for Beastall as his late start to the season means he is unlikely to get enough points to qualify for an England spot, but a few notable wins might see him take a discretionary place. No such worries for Neil Nightingale who tops the O55's points table, although a few good results would be welcome.

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