

Derbyshire Squash Rackets Association

Press Release - 8 April 2008

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Derbyshire Men's Leagues Round 14

Division 1

Champions LA Fitness showed no signs of a title hangover as they demolished home side **Duffield** 5-0 to cap off an unbeaten season.



Champions LA Fitness

**Eddie Charlton, Joel Hinds, Mark Tomlinson,
Lee Watson, Neil Thorpe, Greg Loach**

Neil Thorpe showed good patience to put away a returning-to-form Felix Frixou 3-0 and another returning to some form was Mark Tomlinson, who made it 2-0 to LA Fitness as he over-powered Millie Tomlinson 0-9 4-9 5-9 although had the Duffield player capitalised on her 5-1 advantage in the 3rd things might have got tight. Kyle McBride was given a lesson in the art of tight tactical play by England O45 Greg Loach as LA Fitness took the tie. Kevin White kept Joel Hinds 'honest', but the England No. 30 was too sharp, picking up numerous 'winners' and putting White under

extreme pressure as he took the match 5-9 6-9 2-9. Mitch Cook also made Eddie Charlton work for his win, but like White found his full time opponent was simply too consistent in every department.

Brampton Manor finished the season with an excellent win over **Hood Park** showing their early season running in 2nd place was no fluke. Steve Barker turned things around after losing the 1st game beating Ian Duffy 1-9 10-8 9-5 9-5, but the score was soon level as Leon Armston took out Ina Hilton 3-1. Jason Fearn scored an impressive win over Derbyshire O35 Richard Woodroffe 9-7 9-3 7-9 10-8. James Hodson hit back for Hood beating Phil Scully to set up a show down between Brendan Hickerman and John Freeman. Freeman had outran and out-hit Hickerman in the first half, but Hickerman responded in convincing fashion dominating the tie, blasted to a 9-6 9-4 9-0 victory.

Lumb Farm were in good fighting spirit against **The Manor**, but went down 5-0. Tom Gregory showed some mettle to go with his undoubted talent as he came back from 2-0 to level at 2-2, before Jason Walsh's experience saw him through in the 5th. John Beastall took the first game off Dave Stone, but the Manor stalwart is hard to shift and came back strongly to take the match 3-1. John Underhill was

too quick for Matt Whitehead and Steve Smith just managed to hold off Sam Brown 6-9 7-9 8-10. The Manor finished strongly in third, but will miss Underhill next season. Lumb Farm are looking to strengthen their team and are saved from the drop by virtue of Duffield and LA Fitness' 2nd teams who are barred from Division 1.

Ashbourne were agonisingly close to taking their 1st win this season against **Burton**. James Archer was seriously outplayed in the first two games, before his tight boasts began to take their toll on Simon Barnett in the third; Archer going on to a fine 5-9 2-9 9-3 9-6 9-4 victory. Neil Cuthbert was controlled his match well not letting Colin Morris in front and notched up Ashbourne's 2nd win. Tom Matchell's usual resilience deserted him against the speed of Mark Pinkerton. Grant Nicholson showed how much Ashbourne had missed him, fighting back from 2-0 down to take the 3rd and to lead 7-6, but a couple of errors let Carl Timms back in to take the match 3-1. Mike Herridge lost 10-8 in the 5th in his last meeting with Phil Brailsford and was in determined mood this time with added bonus of Ashbourne's first win. Herridge pushed the ball deep and volley with authority to take the first two, but fatigue set in, letting the 3rd slip by quickly. Herridge started well in the 4th, but Brailsford's languid style belies some good racket work and he proved effective around the front reeling off six points to take the 4th, the 5th went similarly much to the frustration of Herridge. Ashbourne, like Lumb Farm will be reprieved, but will need to bolster their squad next season.

Division 1	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts.
<u>LA Fitness</u>	14	14	0	0	259	52	259
<u>Hood Park</u>	14	10	4	0	212	100	212
<u>The Manor</u>	14	11	3	0	197	121	197
<u>Brampton</u>	14	7	7	0	169	150	169
<u>Burton</u>	14	6	8	0	152	181	152
<u>Duffield</u>	14	5	9	0	147	170	147
<u>Lumb Farm</u>	14	3	11	0	91	229	91
<u>Ashbourne</u>	14	0	14	0	37	261	37

Division 3

A weakened **Draycott** side showed they have strength in depth and should do well in Division 2 next season, while their opponents **Burton 4** will be playing in Division 4. Draycott breezed to a 4-1 win condemning Burton 4 to a win-less season.

Queens Park 1 looked good all season to gain promotion, but fell at the final hurdle in a 'cup final' clash with **LA Fitness 3**. John Holmes got LA Fitness off to good start beating Tim May 10-9 9-2 2-9 1-9 9-2, but Dave Green hit back for Queens taking out Dave Taylor 6-9 5-9 2-9. Ian Mackinnon was on song in a one sided 3-0 against John Pearson. Paul Howell saved a 4th game match ball to break Queens hearts as he beat Robert Essex 9-10 9-5 1-9 10-8 9-0. Charles Noble fought all the way, but missed out on two setted games as Steve Hossent's finishing was the difference between them.

Hood Park 3 were already relegated, but **Duffield 3** put the boot in demolishing the home side 20 points to 1. Mark

Northbolt squeezing the first game out of Neil Mitra, but the remainder of the team didn't really threaten to double their points tally.

Division 3	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts.
<u>Draycott</u>	14	13	1	0	235	90	235
<u>LA Fitness 3</u>	14	10	4	0	212	122	212
<u>Queens Park 1</u>	14	8	6	0	192	150	192
<u>Duffield 3</u>	14	8	6	0	182	145	182
<u>Rolls-Royce 1</u>	13	8	5	0	175	129	175
<u>David Lloyd</u>	13	4	9	0	133	183	133
<u>Hood Park 3</u>	14	4	10	0	97	228	97
<u>Burton 4</u>	14	0	14	0	73	252	73

Division 5

Stuart Ferguson's abilities are always a delight when representing **Burton** in Division 1, but LA Fitness's Chris Coe might not have appreciated Ferguson's stylish shot making quite so much in a very one sided lesson. However, **LA Fitness** showed their strength in depth as their lower order brought them through to keep their unbeaten record in tact. **Repton 3** finished with a win over **Kimberley** to record 4 wins to Kimberly's 3, but 18 points still separate them.

Division 5	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts.
<u>LA Fitness 5</u>	10	10	0	0	188	35	188
<u>Queens Park 2</u>	10	8	2	0	153	75	153
<u>Kimberley</u>	10	3	7	0	103	136	103
<u>Burton 6</u>	9	3	6	0	89	128	89
<u>Repton 3</u>	10	4	6	0	85	145	85
<u>Belper</u>	9	1	8	0	56	155	56

Racketball Inter-County Finals

Derbyshire contested the inaugural Inter-County Racketball Finals in Thame, Oxford. Derbyshire played a strong Warwickshire side and quickly found themselves 2-0 down as skipper Lee Watson and county debutant Pete Radford found the slow black ball hard work. Last minute replacement Phil Scully surprised even himself with some fine play, his natural speed really helping to pick up the slow ball. Scully won 3-0, but another late replacement Kevin White found it difficult to adjust to racketball and his opponent Nick Hynes played the ball incredibly tight and dying to a length. Hynes secured the team win for Warwickshire, but racketball regular Mitch Cook fought hard for a well deserved 3-1 win.

Pete Radford started his second match as Cook finished his first, Derbyshire cruelly being required to play back to back matches in the three team pool. Radford found the going tough once again as did Watson. Both these players are tough competitors with the bouncy blue ball, but the black ball made the game seem like squash with short rackets. So Derbyshire were 2-0 down and with Laura Hill's plane delayed at Heathrow this meant that neither she nor Kevin White could make the 5/6th place playoff. Replacement Andy Clarke was stuck in snow, so Derbyshire had effectively lost one tie. Nonetheless, Mitch Cook and Phil Scully both surprised their Merseyside opponents, but each went down 3-2. Valuable experience was had by all and should hold Derbyshire in good stead as racketball continues to expand throughout the county.

Individual Performances

Derbyshire's **Jason Foster** became the British Police Force Champion 2008 last weekend. The event was held at Abbeydale Squash Club in Sheffield and attracted a large entry. After an easy first round, Foster took on Leicestershire's Adam Bagley in the last 16 and was immediately impressing the rest of the field with a straight games win 9-1 9-3 9-0. In the quarters, Suffolk's Stuart Parke, who competes in the England Masters Series, was a much sterner test making Foster work particularly hard in the 2nd and then taking the 3rd, before Foster reasserted himself for a solid 3-1 win 9-1 9-6 7-9 9-4.



Jason Foster 2008 British Police Force Champion

The semi-finals were staged on the all-glass show court where its slow and low bounce suited Foster's elegant game. Ian Cox's good run came to an end as Foster was able to dominate the T and with his excellent volleys and drops had to much in his armoury for the Norfolk man; Foster taking the

match 9-1 9-6 9-4. Defending champion Andy Hynes from Essex, was given no quarter in the final. Foster brimming with confidence and painkillers was simply outstanding as he took Hynes apart in a one sided match, Foster claiming the title in double quick time 9-2 9-0 9-1.

Joel Hinds competed in the BSPA UK Grand Prix event, The Surrey Health & Racquets Open last weekend. Hinds, combining study at Birmingham University and squash, dispatched Alex Ingham 11-5 3-11 11-8 11-5 in his first round. In the last 16, Hinds was up against No.2 seed Adrian Grant (WR14), but was unable to make much impression. Grant was in great touch and full of running after a surprise exit in last week's BSPA event and made amends this time defeating fellow England star Peter Barker in the final.

Laura Hill's (WR45) injury problems continued in Montreal during the \$26,700 Atwater Cup. A long travel in search of World ranking points was frustrated by a similarly unlucky draw to last November's Vasser Classic in New York, where once again her first round opponents was the eventual winner of the tournament.

Unable to play herself into the tournament with an easy first round match, Kasey Brown (WR15) was out of the blocks too quickly and her strong and aggressive game didn't allow Hill to settle in a 9-1 9-2 9-5. Hill is unlikely to appear in next weeks Irish Open, but hopes to defend her Carcassonne Open title in May

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