

Derbyshire Squash Rackets Association

Press Release - 29 April 2008

<http://www.derbyshiresquash.co.uk>

Derbyshire Squash AGM 7.30pm 13 May 2008 @ LA Fitness all clubs to send a representative (-5 points if not) & presentation of League Trophies.

Peter Nicol (Former WR 1) vs John White (WR10) - Prince Exhibition Match at Duffield SC Wed 7th May - FREE ENTRY

Derbyshire County Knock-Out Cup Section A

This event saw a successful reformat with the semi-finals and finals played on consecutive days at LA Fitness. There was one surprise in the early rounds of Section A when Lumb Farm beat a woeful Duffield side 4-1 to complete their dreadful season as they finished in their lowest League position in memory. Lumb Farm took on League Champions and home side LA Fitness, who were resting their stars. Lumb Farm's Sam Brown nearly took Craig Simpson to five, and Barry Marshall showed he was getting back to some form as he did take Lee Watson into the 5th, only to lose it 9-2 to the experienced shot play of Watson. John Beastall rued his luck as he missed out on the first game 10-9 for any real chance of beating Karl Murray, but fought hard taking the 3rd before going down 3-1 to complete LA Fitness' victory. Greg Loach was too accurate for Marcus Thomas and Ryan Loska's powers of retrieval was too much for Tom Gregory as both won 3-0 for a 5-0 victory for LA.

In the 2nd Semi-Final, The Manor's recent League victory over Hood Park had given them hope of reaching their first KO Cup final, but those thoughts were quickly swept away as Hood Park motored to a 5-0 victory without losing a game. Leon Armston and Rich Woodroofe dismissed Steve Smith and Ant Walsh for totals of 5 and 7 points respectively, but hot behind

them was James Hodson who beat Craig Walsh without dropping a single point. John Freeman and Darren Lewis completed the 5-0 win to leave Hood Park looking in serious contention for the final.

LA Fitness brought in Joel Hinds and Eddie Charlton to the top of their order, but were now missing Greg Loach. Hood Park played their same side and again got off to the best possible start as Leon Armston never looked troubled against Lee Watson taking the match 5-9 3-9 5-9. Rich Woodroofe was harried by and made to work hard by Karl Murray, the LA man clearly up for this one in front of the full home crowd. Woodroofe held firm in the first to take that 6-9 and was pushed all the way in the second scrapping through 8-10. It was only in the 3rd that Woodroofe's range of shot told as he ran out 4-9 to give Hood Park a 2-0 lead. Things were looking seriously ominous for LA as James Hodson looked in fine touch taking a 2-0 lead over Ryan Loska. Loska is hard to put away and Hodson clearly took a breather early in the 3rd, but was unable to get back in front and dominate the T as he had done in the first two. Loska's tail was up and zipped through the 3rd 9-1. The fourth was the defining game of the whole event. Loska took the early points, but was pegged back by Hodson and at 5-5 the match looked in the balance. Loska went to 7-5 only for Hodson to draw level, just two points from a great victory, but Loska stole the serve with a

punishingly long rally and then led 8-7. Hodson levelled at 8-8, Loska 'set-two'. Another punishing rally gave Loska the initiative and he took the game 10-8 from the clearly exhausted Hodson. Loska, cheered on by the partisan crowd, made short work of the 5th; 9-1 for a great comeback and to give LA the chance of the coveted League and Cup double. Meanwhile, Eddie Charlton showed the difference between a full and part time squash beating John Freeman 9-5 9-2 9-3. Down to the wire for yet another Hind versus Lewis epic clash. However, this time Hinds showed how his game has really come on in the last few months being to sharp on the ball for Lewis in the first two games taking them 9-5 9-3. Hinds will have to eradicate his loses of concentration to advance further and Lewis gratefully took the 3rd without much resistance. Hinds got back on with the job and after some scintillating rallies at the start of the 4th, pulled away to take the game 9-4, the match 3-2 and the KO Cup to make it a double with their League title.

Section B

Last years Section B winners Sandiacre were up against it this year as they would have to overcome two teams at the top of the League Division above them. Jordan Skinner got them off to a hopeful start with a 3-0 win over Rolls-Royce's Vic Malysz, but Kevin Britchford pared the match beating Andy Coring 3-0. RR then swept to victory with convincing 3-0 wins for Ian Rigby, Alastair Parsons and Fitz Haye. Repton 2 were already 2-0 down as last minute unavailability hampered their chances. LA Fitness 4 went for the kill early with victory secured by Gareth Birtles 3-0 win over Jeff Smith. Tim Stretton fought hard to give Repton a respectable score line, but fell just short in the 5th to Dave Taylor. Ian McKinnon put the icing on the cake for LA beating Any Drzewiecki 3-1.

And so to the final were a boisterous LA Fitness crowd had assembled to cheer on their two finalist teams. Kevin Britchford took the 1st game off Keith Howard, but the LA man then steamed through the next three games to put LA on the score board. The next two matches were real pitch battles and would decide the contest. Alastair Parsons took the first two tie-break games, but just couldn't mount a serious challenge in the next three as Gareth Birtles hauled LA towards the victory line. Ian Rigby's efforts to win the 3rd and go 2-1 up proved too great as John Holmes accurate play allowed him to take the 4th and 5th easily, each 9-1 and with them the Section B KO Cup title. Fitz Haye showed what could have been for RR with a typically athletic display to beat Ian McKinnon, and the last rubber between Cliff Ransom and Dave Taylor went uncontested.

Individual Performances

Joel Hinds (Eng No. 28) was playing in the Wimbledon Cup BSPA event last weekend and had a great, if a little fortunate, run to the final. Hinds gained a bye in the first round so was fresh to meet Duffield PSL player and No.2 seed Andy Whipp. Hinds impressed with pace both of ball and foot and making less mistakes than Whipp took the first 11-7. Whipp replied by the same score, but again Hinds took the initiative retrieving the impossible and forcing Whipp to make some mistakes to win the 3rd 11-8. All was not well with Whipp as a recurring back injury forced his retirement.

Hinds was now in the semi-final and playing Birmingham University PSL team mate Jon Harford. And what a match. 83 minutes of gruelling retrieving and some excellent shot play culminated in the score being 2-2 and 10-10, each player then needing two clear points. Harford played a divine winner only to slot his match-ball into the tin, and then Hinds finished the gladiatorial semi-final with two gutsy

winners. Hinds beat Harford 6/11, 11/8, 11/6, 3/11, 13/11.

Hinds was through to his first BSPA final, but his semi-final encounter had cost him dear leaving him with blistered feet. His opponent was Steve Meads who had won through his semi-final by virtue of the No.1 seed Scott Handley retiring injured. Meads, a 38 year old, was in good form and didn't allow Hinds any chance to assert himself. Despite a very brave effort from Hinds, but Meads won through 11-7 11-4 11-7 in 31 minutes.

British Open, Liverpool 6-12 May 2008

<http://www.britishopensquash.com/>

O35 **Kevin White** has benefited from the absence of the top four seeds from the National Championships and is a 3/4 seed. White will need to overcome fellow England player *Glen Ragou* before taking on the winner of 5/8 seed and Derbyshire's **Jason Foster** or Irish and No.2 seed **Steve Richardson**.

O45 **Greg Loach** is seeded 5/8 and scheduled to play **Steve Calvert** seeded 3/4 in the quarter finals.

O55 **Neil Nightingale** is also seeded 5/8 and scheduled to play Warwickshire's *Geoff Redfern* a seed 3/4 in the quarter finals.

O45 Ladies; **Lesley Sturgess** is another 5/8 seed and due to meet No. 2 seed **Victoria King** in the quarter finals, a repeat of their first round clash in the National Championships last February.

Kevin White
DSRA Chairman