

Derbyshire Squash Rackets Association

Press Release – 10 March 2009

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Derbyshire Squash Men's Leagues Rnd 11

Division 1

| | P | W | L | D | F | A | Pts. |
|------------------|----|---|---|---|-----|-----|------|
| LA Fitness 1 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 151 | 47 | 151 |
| Duffield 1 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 151 | 52 | 148 |
| The Manor 1 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 118 | 105 | 118 |
| Lumb Farm 1 | 10 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 109 | 131 | 109 |
| Burton 1 | 10 | 3 | 7 | 0 | 96 | 135 | 96 |
| Brampton Manor 1 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 83 | 123 | 83 |
| Duffield 2 | 10 | 1 | 9 | 0 | 58 | 173 | 58 |

*Deducted 3 points for ineligible player

Duffield 1's gap week meant they surrendered top spot in Division 1 to **LA Fitness**, who collected 20 points at **Burton**. Mike Maratheftis grabbed Burton's only point off Mike Lambert at 5th string, but other than that the defending champions were untouchable. Greg Loach and Ryan Loska were frugal with lost rallies in their matches, while Joel Hinds completed a devastating clean sweep against the unfortunate Mark Pinkerton, playing 3 places up, 9-0 9-0 9-0.

With Duffield 2 having a rare victory against Lumb Farm 1, **Brampton Manor** were more than happy to take advantage of the absence of **The Manor's** no.1 John Underhill and beat them 3-2. Ian Hilton was the toast of his Brampton team mates when he held off a match ball in the 5th to beat Andy Roulston 9-7 6-9 9-2 7-9 10-9. Jason Fearn's impeccable line and length was too much for James Healey in a one-sided 3-0. Steve Smith's quick footwork was too much for a very slow starting Charlie Wall to get one back for the manor - 0-9 1-9 9-7 5-9. Alex Cutts showed no signs of the previous weeks' disappointment losing to Duffield's Jason Foster, as he beat Jason Walsh 3-0. The match of the evening week was between the no.1s Brendan Hickerman and Neil Rossin.

Hickerman's was fast out the blocks drawing first blood 9-2. Hickerman took the lead in the 2nd, but Rossin begin to get into the match and slowly clawed his way to parity at 5-5, Hickerman got to game point first, but then Rossin levelled 8-8, Hickerman had another game ball, but Rossin captured his own game

point at 9-9. Hickerman's deft backhand drops got the serve back and then the game 10-9. The third game was also settled on a tie-break, but after Hickerman had had a match point. Rossin eventually took the game 10-8. The 4th was a repeat of the third, Rossin taking it 10-8 to level the match at 2-2. The 5th sapped what little strength the two had left and little separated them. Rossin's slightly better shot selection held sway though as he completed a memorable victory 9-7.

Duffield 2 produced a sparking performance to defeat **Lumb Farm 1** 5-0. Veterans John Beastall and Neil Nightingale put up good resistance each winning the 1st game before Felix Frixou and Adam Armiger won through. Kyle McBride managed to keep on top of Sam Brown for a 3-0 win in a much improved performance after their close 3-2 in the previous week's County Cup match. James Barry decisive shot making pulled a recuperating Marcus Thomas around the court too much and Mitchell Cook's powerful hitting on the fast courts resulted in a similar 3-0 score line. Duffield 2 will be pleased that they broke their duck as they are likely to return to Division 2 next season.

Division 3

| | P | W | L | D | F | A | Pts. |
|---------------|----|----|----|---|-----|-----|------|
| Duffield 3 | 12 | 10 | 2 | 0 | 192 | 82 | 192 |
| David Lloyd | 12 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 183 | 111 | 183 |
| Rolls-Royce 1 | 11 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 172 | 95 | 172 |
| Queens Park 1 | 11 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 153 | 116 | 153 |
| LA Fitness 3 | 11 | 5 | 6 | 0 | 125 | 137 | 125 |
| Hood Park 2 | 12 | 3 | 9 | 0 | 109 | 180 | 109 |
| Duffield 4 | 12 | 3 | 9 | 0 | 95 | 189 | 95 |
| Sandiacre | 11 | 1 | 10 | 0 | 77 | 196 | 77 |

An intriguing 3-way promotion battle is hotting up nicely with current League leaders Duffield winning 3-2 at Queens Park, David Lloyd recording a 4-1 and Rolls-Royce also scoring a 4-1 win. At the foot of the table Sandiacre will really be needing their game in hand over Duffield 4 and Hood Park 2, but the real

crunch will come when they each play one another in the last few matches.

David Lloyd's new no.1 Richard Underhill might just be deciding factor in the promotion group, leading from the front and securing himself a 3-0 win over **Hood Park 2's** Pete Wood. Matthew Stone had also won 3-0, but it was the lower order that earned their crust, Darren Crowshaw and Ben Arnold each winning 3-2 against John Brooks and Jim Rosborough. Kenny Grant grabbed a hand 3 points for Hood Park in a quick win over Lisa McKenna.

Sandiacre didn't get much return from the visit by **Rolls-Royce**. John Ockenden gave some early hope defeating Richard Tuck 3-1, but then it was all RR's way for an 18 point haul. **Duffield 4**, almost certain for the drop before this match, refused to go without a fight and gave themselves a great fillip beating **LA Fitness 3** 4-1. Dick Vasey beat Duffield's Simon Law 3-0, but resilient wins from Dave Yallop and Paul Harrison saw them 2-1 up. James Russell's experience and excellent array of shots carved Rob Sillet up 9-1 9-0 9-3 and Qam Yaqoob kept his mending nose ahead of Martin Edwards for another fine 3-0.

Duffield 3 kept their promotion fight going after staring defeat in the eyes at 2-0 down to **Queens Park 1**. John Pearson and Martin Slack both recorded 3-1 wins over Lesley Sturgess and John Wright respectively. Chris Alcock and Adrian Watts got the match level before Phil Bond played a great match to defeated Charles Noble 3-0.

Division 5

| | P | W | L | D | F | A | Pts. |
|-----------------|----|----|---|---|-----|-----|------|
| Burton 4 | 11 | 10 | 1 | 0 | 183 | 77 | 183 |
| Hood Park 4 | 11 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 169 | 87 | 169 |
| LA Fitness 5 | 12 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 157 | 122 | 157 |
| Burton 5 | 11 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 135 | 130 | 135 |
| Lumb Farm 3 | 11 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 122 | 141 | 122 |
| Kimberley Manor | 12 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 114 | 177 | 114 |
| Bradley House | 12 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 113 | 172 | 113 |
| Repton 3 | 12 | 3 | 9 | 0 | 99 | 186 | 99 |

Hood Park 4 showed no sympathy to league newcomers **Bradley House** in their promotion quest. Only Alan Rowe extended his match against Tony Parker going down 3-1. **Kimberley Manor** ran **LA Fitness 5** tantalisingly close, but Jim Hope steadied himself well in the 5th to give the bonus points to LA. Gavin Bexton had a good win at no.1 string defeating Garry Smith 4-9 10-9 6-9 9-6 9-7. **Burton 4** further secured themselves at the top of Division 5 defeating bottom team **Repton 3** 4-1. John Moore scoring a notable 3-1 win over Andy Rowley at 3rd string.

England Colours for Derbyshire's finest

Duffield's star junior **Millie Tomlinson** has received another call up to represent England in the European U19 Championships to be held in Munich, Germany in April. Tomlinson, who won the Irish Junior Open last November is still only 16 years old and is the youngest player of the squad of 4 boys and 4 girls that will represent England in the Championships.

Tomlinson, currently ranked no.1 in the English U17 rankings, previously represented England in 2008 in Lyon, France at the European U17 Championships and has played for England in 2006 in Tel Aviv, Israel, Szged, Hungary and in 2007, and Stavanger, Norway in 2008. Tomlinson hopes to use her recent Premier Squash League experience to take on and beat Europe's best U19 players. Tomlinson's coach, Paul Hargrave of Duffield Squash Club was delighted to hear the news having helped Tomlinson develop her game considerably over the last year and continues to work and train hard at the Club.

Brampton Manor's **Ashley Davies** has been selected for the U15 England Team to play in the Home Internationals in Dublin at the end of March.

Confirmation of England selection also came recently for Duffield's **Kevin White** for the England O35 Team, and will captain the side for the 3rd year, this time in Dublin for the Home Internationals. LA Fitness' **Greg Loach** picks up his second call up for the O45 England Team, this time in Edinburgh. Duffield coach **Lesley Sturgess** picks up yet another cap and will join Loach in Edinburgh for the Ladies O45 England Team.

Harris Inter-Counties Championship Mens' and Ladies' Senior Teams

Derbyshire's Mens' and Ladies' Senior Harris Inter-county sides both had similar fates at the weekend,

each finishing in 3rd place and suffering relegation for the first time in 25 years.

The **Derbyshire Ladies'** team came 3rd in a very tough tournament held at Northamptonshire last weekend. With 2 players making their debut for the senior team, they were up against it playing Warwickshire, Northumbria and Northants. With their first match against the strongest side, Warwickshire, the team of Laura Hill, Jenny Knibbs, Lesley Sturgess, Nikki Hayward, and Hannah Blythe fought bravely but all struggled and the match was lost 5-0.

However they regrouped and managed to turn the tables in the 2nd match on Saturday by beating Northants 4-1 with a notable win from the 15 year old Hannah Blythe winning her first senior county match 3-0, whilst Nikki Hayward almost made it 2 wins for the debutants narrowly losing in a tough 3-2 battle. The experienced top 3, Laura, Jenny and Lesley each managed to win 3-1.

With aching legs, blisters and more tough opposition, the team again lost on Sunday morning 4-1, with Lesley having a tough battle at no. 3 just missing out 3-2. Laura managed the only win, overpowering the Northumbrian number 1, 3-0.

The **Mens' team** were at hosting Leinster, Buckinghamshire and Cambridge at Lumb Farm Squash Club and came within a whisker of survival. Leinster were clearly the strongest side and Derbyshire had to play them first. Derbyshire were missing Jason Foster for two of the matches and vitally England No. 28 Joel Hinds whose absence was sorely missed. At 3rd string, Steve Strange was in good form after a lengthy break from the game pushing Leinster's Nigel Peyton to 5, but he was unable to recover from a poor start in the 5th eventually losing 9-11 12-10 5-11 11-9 2-11. These were Derbyshire's only 2 games and therefore 2 points. Phil Scully had a game point in the 2nd, but fell to Dan Zilil 3-0. Tom Gregory aggravated a hip injury and went down 3-0 to Ciaran McCoy. Kevin White and Captain Brendan Hickerman were also unable to extend their opponents passed 3 games. In the second match, Derbyshire were now reinforced with Jason Foster playing at 3rd string, this dropped Steve Strange to No.4 where he put in a great performance after the disappointment of the first match, beating Buckinghamshire's Alex Hartley 11-3 11-6 11-8. Foster also collected a vital win as he constantly kept Will Gardener on the move in all but

the 3rd. Foster's excellent line and length together with his renewed fitness levels saw him through comfortably in the 4th to record an 11-8 11-3 10-12 11-3 victory. Greg Loach, at 46 is possibly the oldest player to play for Derbyshire's full Mens' team, and showed the way with a typically dependable victory to seal the match for Derbyshire. Loach recovered from the loss of the 1st against Luke Power to win 8-11 11-7 11-5 11-9. However, points would be precious and again Nos. 1 & 2 Kevin White and Brendan Hickerman were unable to add to Derbyshire's points score.

Meanwhile, Cambridge had beaten Buckinghamshire (17-7) in the morning and then lost to Leinster (17-8) leaving them 10 points clear of Derbyshire. Not only would Derbyshire need to win, but also by a decent margin. Steve Strange's exploits of the previous day had caught up with him and he was unable to shake off severe stiffness in his legs going down to Cambridge's Steffan Morgan 3-0. Greg Loach showed the young 'un how its done beating Ahmed El-Referee 3-2. Loach should have taken the 1st after a good lead, but lost it 12-14. Still annoyed he then lost the 2nd 9-11. Playing more positively Loach hit back with a 11-7 game and then had a game ball to win the 4th. Bent double a 10-10 in the 4th it looked a lost cause, but Loach stood firm and played two solid volley winners to take the 4th 12-10. The 5th went the same way, Loach just a nose in front, 10-10 and then two gutsy rallied to finish. Kevin White was looking in much better shape and quickly dispatched Sammy Chambers 11-7 11-9 11-6 to give the overall win to Derbyshire. But that was not enough and Brendan Hickerman needed to win 3-1 to prevent relegation. Hickerman had played his opponent Neil Rossin in a Derbyshire League match three days earlier losing 3-2, but had had a match point in the 4th. Hickerman started brightly finding good length to take the 1st 11-5. Rossin was slow and errors flowed from his racket. The 2nd was the complete opposite; Hickerman couldn't find the back of the court and Rossin picked off winners and lunged to pick up several tight drops shots. Rossin won the 2nd 11-2. Try though he might, Rossin controlled the 3rd equally well taking it 11-4 and with it sufficient points to stay up. Hickerman found a better length in the 4th, but Rossin was just good enough to hang on the game 15-13. Disappointment for Derbyshire, but with some excellent juniors waiting in the wings they should have a bright future.

Kevin White DSRA Chairman

