

Derbyshire Squash & Racketball

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Derbyshire Men's League Round 11

Division 1

	P	W	L	F	A	D	Pts.
The Manor 1	11	9	2	166	96	0	166
Burton 1	11	8	3	160	87	0	160
Repton 1	11	8	3	160	87	0	160
LA Fitness 1	11	7	4	146	107	0	146
Duffield 1	11	6	5	128	116	0	128
Brampton Manor 1	11	3	8	101	155	0	101
Lumb Farm 1	11	2	9	73	177	0	73
Hood Park 1	11	1	10	70	179	0	70

Round 11 of the Derbyshire Men's League saw Repton draw a little closer to level with Burton in 2nd place while The Manor retain a slender 6 point advantage after a tense win at Duffield. Lumb Farm eventually manage to get themselves off the bottom leaving Hood Park to prop up the division.

Duffield (8) 1-4 The Manor (18)

The Manor were mighty relieved to find Paul Hargrave absent from Duffield's line up even more so as Chris Alcock proved too agile for Dave Stones at no.5 in a well earned 3-1 win. Felix Frixou fought incredibly hard against the normally clean hitting Craig Walsh. Having surrendered only 1 point to Frixou in the 1st half, the Duffield man was after revenge. Time and again Derbyshire O45 Frixou stunned Walsh by retrievals the younger man could only dream of, countering with some deft drop shots. The first two games were shared 9-6 6-9. Walsh looked to take control at 7-2 in the 3rd, but Frixou kept at it pressuring Walsh into mistakes, however, a series of dreadful serves prevent Frixou from passing 7 as Walsh went 2-1 up. A nervy 4th again saw Walsh take the lead only for Frixou to close in. Match point to Walsh saw a loose drop shot hit the tin and allow Frixou another chance, and how well that was taken with a delicate volley and another welcome error from Walsh levelled the match at 2-2. Walsh recalibrated his sights in the 5th and produced error free squash to end Frixou's brave effort 9-3.

Meanwhile Millie Tomlinson was testing Jason Walsh almost to the limit. Tomlinson hot off winning the

French Junior Open was in good form, giving Walsh little time to play his normally inventive game. The 1st went to Tomlinson 10-8, but Walsh then found a little more consistency and frequently the dead nick to take the next two 6-9 7-9. It was nip and tuck in the 4th as the pair exchanged points, Walsh having first crack at game point, before Tomlinson levelled at 8-8. Walsh then conjured up a couple of delightful delayed cross courts, each finding that dead nick again to take the 4th 10-8.

Neil Rossin, good enough to play at 1 in most sides, cruised through against Kyle McBride 3-9 3-9 6-9. Kevin White and John Underhill continued their friendly rivalry, but White was in no mood to extend the match beyond 3 games. After securing the 1st 9-6, White came back very strongly from 2-7 to take the 2nd 9-7 and lead 6-5 in the 3rd, but a twinge to calf muscle saw him retire soon after. As it turned out it would be a most welcome 3 points for the Manor.

Lumb Farm 1 (8) 2-3 Burton (14)

Burton squandered a chance to pull level on points with a no show at no.5 and then Phil Brailsford being taken out 3-0 by Tom Gregory at no.2. Lee Stanbury was made to work hard by Neil Nightingale for his 3-1 and Carl Timms succeeded 3-0 against Barry Marshall. At 2-2 in matches Rich Davis 10-9 win in the 1st game could have been a defining moment in hindsight. Another closely fought 9-7 gave the second to Davis also. Whitehead struck back to take the 3rd 9-5, but at 6-6 in the 4th had had enough running as Davis eased through 3-0 to keep Burton in the title frame.

Repton (18) 4-1 Hood Park (4)

Its matches like this one that define championships and Repton's strength in depth came to the fore as they chiselled out a difficult win without their upper order present. The hard work was done early on as the thought of a title for the first time in 3 decades; Lee Watson, Simon Price and Ben Smith all got through 3-0. Mitch Cook's only stuttered briefly in the 3rd before wrapping up a 3-1 win over Mick Burton. Ian Duffy's steady improvement, with all those matches at no.1 to sharpen him finally paid off with a 3-1 win over Richard Woodroffe.

Brampton (3) 0-5 LA Fitness (20)

With the Manor and Repton still to play LA Fitness will still have a big part to play in deciding the title if they aren't in the mix themselves, but 20 points is a lot to catch up on the Manor with only 60 points at stake. Sadly Ian Hilton had to retire with a dislocated shoulder, gifting Paul Howell a 3-1. Neil Thorpe dispatched Phil Delaney 3-0 and Greg Loach wrapped up the bonus points with another 3-0. Mike Lambert's good form continued as he fended off Jason Fearn's comeback eventually winning in the 5th after a 2-0 lead; 6-9 6-9 9-7 9-7 6-9. Derbyshire's top junior, Ashley Davies also showed signs of being able to compete at senior level and just missed taking Ryan Loska in to a 4th game.

Division 3

	P	W	L	F	A	D	Pts.
Repton 2	11	9	2	182	74	0	182
Queens Park 1	11	9	2	176	90	0	176
Brampton Manor 2	11	9	2	152	104	0	152
Hood Park 2	11	5	6	123	143	0	123
LA Fitness 2	11	4	7	118	141	0	118
Duffield 3	11	3	8	116	158	0	116
Burton 3	11	4	7	109	156	0	109
Draycott 2	11	1	10	78	188	0	78

Brampton Manor 2 lost some ground to the leading two teams this round, but the match next round between Repton 2 and Queens Park 1 will surely enable Brampton to close the gap. Draycott look doomed short of a miracle, while Burton 3 will have their sights set firmly on Duffield 3 who are just 7 points away from the drop.

Hood Park 2 (7) 2-3 Repton 2 (17)

Despite a healthy 17 points for the league leaders, it was far from one sided as Pete Wood and Richard Wormersley won 3-2 and 3-1 respectively. John Kirtland played the crucial match at 4th string against Mark Northolt, punishing the latter's loose shots in the 3rd and 4th games after sharing the first two.

Queens Park 1 (18) 3-2 Duffield 3 (5)

Richard Grindrod was all smiles as he saved a match point to grasp his 2nd and the match 10-9 in the 5th. However, with Simon Law being brushed aside by Dave Green and Qamran Yaqoob retiring, Queen's were quickly 2-1 up. Dave Yallop raced to a 1-0 lead, but the young legs of Owen Humphries proved a

distinct advantage as he too swept to victory to secure the bonus points for Queen's. Phil Bond played a captain's inning coming back from 2-0 down to beat Charles Noble in 5 tough games, the last two going to tiebreak; 9-4 9-4 3-9 8-10 8-10.

LA Fitness 2 (6) 2-3 Brampton Manor 2 (14)

Keith Howard and John Holmes gave LA an excellent start each winning 3-0 and left Brampton's promotion hopes very precarious. But first Nick Melton and then Jono Lovegrove each produced powerful displays to level the match and allow Danny Busby the privilege of another 3-0 win and to keep their promotion prospects alive.

Burton 3 (17) 4-1 Draycott 2 (7)

Possibly Draycott's last grasp for safety fell just short despite some noble efforts. Nick Drew levelled the match at 1-1 for Draycott after Gary Holmes' 3-1 win over Cliff Martin, but Guy Litherland made it 2-1 to Burton. Stuart Ferguson range of shot was matched early on by Darren Reeves' fine efforts, but the Burton man's class shone through to take the 3rd and 4th games. Undeterred by that loss Steve Reeves battled back from 2-0 down, but couldn't quite hang on in the 5th as Colin Morris took the last 9-6.

Division 5

	P	W	L	F	A	D	Pts.
Queens Park 2	10	7	3	149	82	0	149
Bradley House	9	7	2	127	87	0	127
Burton 5	9	5	4	114	95	0	114
David Lloyd 3	10	5	5	108	127	0	108
LA Fitness 4	9	4	5	99	112	0	99
Duffield 5	10	3	7	99	135	0	99
Lumb Farm 3	9	2	7	74	132	0	74

Duffield 5 (16) 3-2 Queens Park 2 (8)

It is very likely that Queens Park's lead will be cut when Bradley House catch up on games played, after a reversal of the 1st half result. This in part will be because of James Blythe's incredible rate of improvement. Now at no.1 Blythe beat Steve Lambe 3-1 with wins apiece for the two teams, although Perry McKellen just missed out 9-7 in the 5th to Mike Craven. 8 points for Queens isn't all bad as they have a healthy lead from 3rd place.

LA Fitness 4 (17) 3-2 David Lloyd 3 (8)

The mid-table clash between LA Fitness and David Lloyd ended in LA's favour and they now have a chance to overtake David Lloyd 3 by virtue of a game in hand. Overpowered down the order, the crunch match was at no.3 where Mark Steadman ousted Garry Devonish 9-7 in the 4th. Andys Evans and Robinson each won to narrow the points difference for David Lloyds.

Burton 5 (18) 4-1 Lumb Farm 3 (3)

Burton 5 were completely dominant except for a standout performance from Paul Catermole at no.3 who dismissed the other one-sided matches to record a determined 3-1 win over Dave Murkin. 25 points adrift and just 3 matches to play it will be a tall order for Lumb Farm to save themselves.

Inter-County Tournaments

Derbyshire Men's 1st Team

Derbyshire host yet another weekend of Inter-Counties matches in the promotion phase of Group II North. After coming 2nd last November, Derbyshire again take on West Wales and now Staffordshire and Ulster at Brampton Manor Country Club, Chesterfield. The Ulster team have the potential to be very strong, although not on Sunday morning. Derbyshire's team has a youthful glow in the form of host club's Ashley Davies, Jono Lovegrove and Phil Scully, while Duffield's John Slater joins Kevin White who will be hoping to be fit to lead the team. Captain Brendan Hickerman's persistent back injury keeps him out of the side for the first time in nearly two decades.

Derbyshire Ladies 1st Team

Derbyshire Ladies also host the Stage II matches and welcome Merseyside, Northamptonshire and Cambridge. England No.8 Laura Hill and England U19 No.1 Millie Tomlinson will be tough to beat at the top of the order and Derbyshire will be looking for wins from Lesley Sturgess, Heidi Walters, Sue Smith, Nicole Walters and Donna Jackson.

Kevin White

DSR Chairman