

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BOWLS NEWS REPORTS

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11th April, 2010.

PRESS REPORT

1. NATIONAL FINALS AT NOTTINGHAM – KINGSTHORPE PLAYERS COMPETING.

The last full week of National Indoor Championships started at Nottingham IBC on Friday, 9th April, 2010, with a full programmes scheduled every day, including the men's singles, pairs, triples, fours, and the men's Inter County Liberty Trophy Final, and the ladies Over 50 2 Wood Triples, Unbadged Pairs, Yetton Trophy, Yetton Plate competitions, and the Inter County Ladies Atherley Trophy Final. The Championships conclude on the 18th April, 2010.

Northamptonshire had interest only in the Men's Championship finals, with the Area winners competing in the Fours on the first day, quickly followed by the Triples, Pairs and Singles, so first up were the Fours.

FOURS.

Northamptonshire's players were **Jason Bryan, John Baggat, Vernon Gearey, and Jim McKee, from Kingsthorpe IBC**, and in the first round on Friday, 9th April, 2010, they met up with a quartet from Acle IBC, Norfolk, skipped by Tim Stone, a current International and former Junior International.

The County players took the first end by 1 shot, and then dropped a count of 5 on the second end, but with a run of 12 shots without reply over the next 7 ends they forged ahead to 13-5. As a result of Acle picking up 7 shots to 3 against over the next 5 ends, the Kingsthorpe lead was cut to 4 shots, and further cut to just 3 shots after 19 ends. After surrounding the jack with some excellent bowls by the County men on the 20th end, the Norfolk skip successfully forced a replay of the end by killing it, but with the County picking up a count of 2 shots on the replayed end, the last end was almost a formality as Acle required 5 shots to force an extra end. With Vernon Gearey striking the jack into the ditch the task was impossible for the Norfolk four and they dropped a count of 5 on that last end to give Kingsthorpe the win 26-16.

This brought them against another Norfolk rink, this time from Gallow IBC, Fakenham, skipped by Richard Mason. This rink had totally destroyed their opponents (Watford) by 33-1 in the first round, and against the Kingsthorpe players it was very evident how they had managed that. The whole Norfolk rink bowled magnificently and had scored 14 shots without reply from the County rink over the first 8 ends, and no matter how well each of the Kingsthorpe four played, their opponents were on the top of the game throughout and took the match 22-7.

(Please find attached a photograph of the Kingsthorpe rink l – r Jim McKee, Vernon Gearey, John Baggatt, Jason Bryan)

TRIPLES.

The **Kingsthorpe IBC** triple of Andrew Manton, Mick Sharpe & Neil McKee, winners of the Area Final which qualified them for the National Finals, played an Isle of Wight IBC triple skipped by Mark Griffith, on Sunday, 11th April, 2010.

Unfortunately, they lost 12-23 shots. No further details at this stage.

2. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE MEN'S FINALS AT RUSHDEN IBC 11.4.10. – RESULTS

During the week-end 10/11.4.10. the County held the men's finals, with the exception of the Triples, at Rushden IBC, details as follows:

Singles

On Saturday, 10th April, this matched together two Desborough players, with Matt Pownall competing against David Flippance. Matt took first blood, picking up the first 2 shots scored, but after 7 ends the score was level at 6 shots each. A very tight period of play ensued where only the odd single shot separated the two players until Flippance found his form and gradually pulled ahead, and with his opponent unable to shake him he finally took the match 21-10 to become the County Singles Champion.

Under 25 Singles

Matt Pownall, Desborough, returned on the 11th April to do battle with Sam Gamble, Kettering Lodge IBC, in the Under 25 singles. Sam, just 16 years of age, started very well indeed against his much more experienced opponent, and in a very close first 8 ends he lead 7-1. The next 3 ends saw Matt get on terms at 7-7 but at 14 ends Sam had gone ahead again to 11-9. Disaster then struck for Sam as he dropped a count of 4 to relinquish the lead for the first time, and another count of 4 a couple of ends later to open the gap 13-18. Matt looked to be heading for the winning post but despite bowling several inch close bowls on what was to be the last end, firstly Sam took Matt's bowl out with a drive, and as Matt replaced it so Sam took it out again and 'killed' the end. When it was replayed, Matt managed another set of good bowls which, despite Sam's excellent efforts to dislodge, ultimately gave him the game, and the title of County Under 25 Champion.

(Please find attached a photograph of Matt Pownall with his trophy and one of Matt and Sam together)

Pairs

A home draw at Rushden for Mick Malins and Matthew Wordingham against Jim Diver and Carl Haines, Desborough IBC, in the Final of the Men's County Pairs. With his recent County NBYDS Singles win under his belt, Matthew was very much on form throughout this match and with his partner Mick Malins playing some of his best bowls of the season, the duo cruised through to a 17-2 lead after 8 ends, having picked up a count of 4 in the first end, and two counts of 3 en route. Their opponents stuck to their task and picked up a hefty count of 6 shots on the 11th end to reduce the deficit to 10 shots, but despite their best efforts the Rushden pair kept that advantage right to the end and took the County Pairs title 31-10, after 20 ends of high class bowls.

(I understand the ET has photographs of the Pairs finalists a photographer having visited the Club.)

Fours

Fresh from their efforts in the National Finals at Nottingham, three of the Kingsthorpe IBC rink of Jason Bryan, Vernon Gearey, & Jim McKee, with Darren Lewis at No 2 instead of John Baggat, faced the Wellingborough IBC rink of Dave Love, Dennis Collins, Graham Maddams & Wayne Gregory, in the County Final. A tremendous match followed with bowls of the highest standard from both rinks. Wellingborough had the better of the first few ends leading 10-2 after 7 ends, but the experience of the Kingsthorpe players stood them in good stead and they came back at 11-11 after 12 ends, and then grabbed a huge count of 6 shots on the 14th end followed by a 3 to lead 20-12 after 15 ends.

Wellingborough, however, fought back to within 1 shot at 19-20 after 18 ends, and in a very tense last couple of ends, some very high class bowls kept it tight for Kingsthorpe to go into the last end with a 4 shots cushion. Until Vernon Gearey bowled his second bowl the Wellingborough quartet were holding a possible 4 shots, but that last bowl from Vernon nestled against the jack which was itself nestling against a Wellingborough bowl in such a position that, despite his best efforts, Wayne Gregory could not dislodge it. The last end was deemed to be a tied end and Kingsthorpe won 23-19 and with it the title of County Fours Champions.

Tipler Rose Bowl

This competition is for rinks aged 60 and over, and is named after the late Ernie Tipler, a former County Indoor and Outdoor President, and this year's final was between the Daventry IBC rink of Tony Dicks, Mick Richardson, Doug Mitchell, & Mick Worthington and that from Desborough IBC comprising Alan Wright, Arnie Fox, George Warren & Ron Chambers.

Desborough had 10 shots on the board before Daventry could register a score and at the half-way mark they were still 6-13 down. Over the next few ends Daventry did not make more than a single shot inroad into their opponents' lead, although had one end not been 'killed' twice the deficit might have been much greater. At 15 ends the score was 16-10 to Desborough but at this point it was all Daventry because over the next few ends they took the lead for the first time on the 20th end, and by picking up a 4 on the last end when Ron Chambers tried to kill it, they ran out 21-16 shots winners.

3. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE LADIES COUNTY FINALS 17.4.10.

A reminder for anyone wishing to watch the **Northamptonshire Ladies County Finals**, they are being held at **Wellingborough IBC** on Saturday, **17th April, 2010**, commencing at 9.45 a.m.

4. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE MEN versus OXFORDSHIRE 6.4.10. – RESULT

On Tuesday, 6th April, **Northamptonshire Men** visited Oxford & District IBC to play a friendly match against their counterparts from Oxfordshire, and after a tremendous battle where the result was in doubt right to the end, the County managed to win by the smallest margin possible, just 1 shot. 3 winning rinks for each County indicates how close it was, and great credit should go to the rink skipped by David Williamson which came from behind 13-14 to win 30-14, quite a turn round of fortunes. The final score was Northamptonshire 127 shots – Oxfordshire 126 shots. Rink scores, Oxon skips only, as follows:

Rink 1.	Peter Maloy/Don Scott/John Smith/David Williamson 30 – Arthur Hall 14 shots
Rink 2.	Jim Diver/Gordon Morris/Walter Stoddard/Geoff Hunt 30 – Mick Major 14 shots
Rink 3.	Mick Hall/Mick York/Mick Pullen/Richard Somerton 18 – Mike Andrew 22 shots
Rink 4.	Pete Woodhams/Peter Byworth/Tony Warren/Brian Langton 13 – P Woodville 39 shots
Rink 5.	Stuart Lowe/Roly Smith/Harvey Fruish/Brian Diver 16 – Henry Franklin 13 shots
Rink 6.	John Whiting/Ron Drage/Eddie Chapman/Keith Howlett 20 – Bill Turner 24 shots

5. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE VP'S versus CAVALIERS 7.4.10. – RESULT

Northamptonshire Honorary Vice Presidents Association took on the Cavaliers BA for the first time on Wednesday, 7th April, 2010, at Wellingborough IBC, and found their opponents just a bit too hot to handle on the day, losing by 19 shots, despite having 2 winning rinks. The Cavaliers exist for the purpose of raising money for charity, but certainly the rink for them skipped by Alan Spencer 'showed no charity' in taking a big win by 22 shots! Final score was VP's 99 shots – Cavaliers 118 shots. Rink scores, Cavaliers skips names only, as follows:

Rink 1.	Pete Woodhams/Geoff Care/Peter Saunders/Peter Wood 19 – Mick Hall 21 shots
Rink 2.	John Broderick/Ken Friend/Tony Hancock/Ken Legan 17– Keith Forbes 12 shots
Rink 3.	Graham Cashmore/Ollie Pearson/Peter Byworth/David Williamson 11 – Alan Spencer 33 shots
Rink 4.	Len Smith/Harry Bell/Tony Essam/Geoff Harris 11 – Roy Cave 21 shots
Rink 5.	Jim Diver/Derek Cooper/John Watson/Tony Buckmaster 19 – Keith Fox 21 shots
Rink 6.	Ray Timson/Clyde Hulbert/Bryan Audis/Dick Howell 22 – Peter Kneeshaw 10 shots

6. BOWLS ENGLAND NEWS

Annual Conference 7.4.10.

Bowls England held its 3rd Annual Conference on Wednesday, 7th April, 2010, at Royal Leamington Spa Town Hall and more than 300 bowlers representing Clubs and Associations from across the length and breadth of the country attended.

Alistair Hollis, Bowls England's Development Officer gave two presentations, firstly on Club Funding, in which he urged Clubs to take advantage of the various pockets of funding that is available to our sport to assist Clubs in various ways. This is in addition to the Bowls England Loan Scheme. To assist Clubs around the country to access these potential sources of funding Bowls England has engaged 'Grant Advisor' to search databases of funding opportunities, produce a report targeted on requirements and support the Club during the application process. Since its launch in September 2009, it has responded to more than 500 requests from Clubs. For further information contact Alistair on alistair.hollis@bowlsengland.com

Alistair's second presentation was about the development of the Sport of Bowls, and he was joined in part of this presentation by Bowls England Chief Executive, Tony Allcock MBE, who spoke about the newly launched Bowls Development Alliance which I referred to in my report dated 4.4.10. Alistair talked about how best to 'Promote the Sport' how to 'Recruit new Participants' and how to 'Retain their Involvement' Recruitment packs are being sent out to Clubs during April, and it is planned to run five targeted recruitment **pilot** projects with clubs and counties, targeting minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities, people who have 'retired' from the more active sports, women, and young people. He urged that County Associations appoint a Development Officer responsible for promotion, development, support for Club initiatives, developing links with local partners including County sports, NHS Trusts and Local Authorities.

A very interesting and witty presentation was given by Mel Beck, Editor of Bowls International, who spoke about Bowls press coverage, Nationally; Regionally; and Locally. He informed the meeting what our sport has regrettably seen as a loss of national coverage by newspapers some of which (The Times & the Daily Telegraph) for many years used to give good national coverage but have not done so for some time now, and the loss of bowls on TV has not helped. He urged Counties to appoint effective Press and Publicity Officers who regularly submit information to the media in their area because if the sport does not itself provide the information the reporting staff members are not going to seek it out. He urged Clubs to support publicity, and when providing information to give first names.

Ruth Howes, who chaired the conference, gave some interesting information on 'Surveys' and stated that there were almost a quarter of a million people who participated in the sport at least once per week, and there was an 83% satisfaction rate from those participants. It was also reported that bowls was the third most popular pursuit by women over the age of 55 years.

Further reports on finance were given, and that included much discussion on the financial support for players travelling to and participating in the National Championships, and there was much discussion on the issue of Affiliated Clubs and Members playing against non-affiliated Clubs. This has a potential insurance problem, and all affiliated Clubs are urged to closely examine their own situations.

Full details of all the subjects discussed are available on the Bowls England Website.

7. DARLINGTON TOP TEN TOURNAMENT – EASTER LONG WEEK-END – RESULT

Two teams from Northamptonshire entered the Darlington 'Top Ten' Tournament, which is held annually, and which attracts rinks from quite a wide area. It is organised by Andy Kirtland, Darlington IBC, (who incidentally on Sunday 11th April, 2010, with club mates, won the National Fours Championship at Nottingham) and he had a total of 12 rinks participating including his own Club; Durham; Blackpool Newton Hall; Stanley; Nottingham; Newcastle, plus, of course Northampton and Desborough, whose fortunes were as follows:

Northampton & District IBC – Team.

- Singles:** Andy Smith - won 3 and lost 3
He played steadily throughout, notably beating former International Iain Boyle, and losing narrowly to Desborough's Pete Ward and the Darlington top man Andy Kirtland.
- Pairs:** John Freeman/Phil Reeve – won 0 and lost 6
Some heavy losses were sustained including losing to full Internationals Rob Chisholm. Brett Arkley.

Triples: Mick Spear/Ray Castle/Ollie Kirkwood – won 2, drew 1 and lost 3
After an indifferent display on the first day they changed the order and Ray Castle skipped the last three matches which provided two wins either side of a defeat to a ladies triple, much to the amusement of the large and vociferous crowd.

Fours: Rob White/Tony O’Leary/Dominic Graham/Chris Bland – won 3, drew 1 and lost 2
Hopes were high for a repeat of their unbeaten success from last year, and the first day saw them on course with 2 wins and a draw, and it included a whopping 28-3 demolition of former Junior International Chris Gale, of Blackpool Newton Hall. On the second day a narrow loss to Stanley put paid to their hopes, and Although they had one more win, losing the last match heavily saw them down the order.
Northampton & District finished in 10th place with 18 points.

Reserve: Ashley Linnell was ‘poached’ by a Newcastle team and he played in all 6 matches for them, winning two.

Desborough IBC – Team

Singles: Pete Ward – won 4 and lost 2

Pairs: Malcolm Paul/Phil Exley – won 2, drew 1 and lost 3

Triples: Connor Cinato/Matt Pownall/John Haines – won 2, drew 1 and lost 3

Fours: Carl Wigfield/Martin Cinato/Ross Knox/Bill Brune – won 4 and lost 2

After the first few matches Desborough were in the lead position, with a hope of a share in the £1000 first prize, but those hopes largely disappeared at the end of the first day with Desborough in joint 3rd place overall. The next day saw their hopes rise and fall, and they remained at 3rd, but still with a chance of improving their position.

The last day needed many successes to achieve the top prize, but they did not come in sufficient numbers and Desborough finished overall in 4th place, the highest position they had managed previously, and just out of ‘the money’

8. CHESTERTON ANNUAL UNDER 18 PAIRS COMPETITION – 5.4.10. – RESULT

The annual Cambridge Chesterton IBC Under 18 competition was held on Easter Monday, 5th April, 2010, and it brought more success for Matthew Wordingham, Rushden IBC and Sam Gamble, Kettering Lodge IBC, who paired up for the event.

This competition is one that Northamptonshire young bowlers have entered regularly, and have had quite a lot of success in, and this year was no exception.

3 County pairs got to the Semi Finals, being Danny and Jamie Walker; Curtis Johnson and William Walker; both pairs from Wellingborough IBC, and of course Matthew and Sam.

Danny and Jamie beat Curtis and William in one Semi Final, and in the other Matthew and Sam beat Josh Green and Alex Walton of St. Neots IBC.

This brought two county pairs together and for the first few ends it was very tight with the Walker brothers leading 4-3 after 4 ends. The 5th end, however, saw the Gamble/Wordingham duo take a massive count of 7 shots to give them a 10-4 lead, and they were able to keep in front winning 11-7, after which they were presented with the ‘McCrystal Memorial Trophy’

9. CLUB NEWS AROUND THE COUNTY

DESBOROUGH IBC

Club Events:

13.4.10. Presentation Evening 7.30 p.m.

14.4.10. Annual General Meeting 7.30 p.m.

KETTERING LODGE IBC

Club Events:

13th – 18th April – Club holds its competition Finals

KINGSTHORPE IBC

Fixtures:

- 15.4.10. Members visit Rushden IBC for a mixed match at 2.30 p.m.
- 17.4.10. Northampton & District IBC visit for a men's match at 2.15 p.m.
- 18.4.10. The Club holds its Captains/Presidents Day at 2.15 p.m.

NORTHAMPTON & DISTRICT IBC

Fixtures:

- 15.4.10. Members visit Daventry IBC for a men's match at 2.0 p.m.
- 17.4.10. Members visit Kingsthorpe IBC for a men's match at 2.15 p.m.
- 18.4.10. Wellingborough IBC visits for a mixed match at 2.15 p.m.

RUSHDEN TOWN IBC

Fixture:

- 15.4.10. Members visit Kingsthorpe IBC for a mixed match at 2.30 p.m.

WELLINGBOROUGH IBC

Fixtures:

- 15.4.10. Northamptonshire Police BC visits for a men's match at 2.15 p.m.
- 18.4.10. Members visit Northampton & District IBC for a mixed match at 2.15 p.m.

County Women's Finals being held at the Club on 17th April, 2010, commencing at 9.45 a.m.



John G. Church, MBE – Northamptonshire Bowls Press Officer