

English Champion of Champions

Stanley Indoor Bowls Centre, Durham – Saturday 7th-Sunday 8th June

This event sees the Hertfordshire County champions for each discipline play against the champions from the other member counties of the English carpet bowls association (Cambridgeshire, Durham Essex, Norfolk, Northumberland, Suffolk and Sunderland) on a round robin league basis to determine the English Champion of Champions. The team representing Hertfordshire in this event was as follows:

Singles	Pairs	Triples	Fours
Pete Cook	Jason Ellis Jack Smalley	Sandra Gammage Rebecca Hearn Craig Hearn	Emma Thurley Amy Missing Simon Missing Matt Thurley

Singles

Pete started his weekend with a game against Northumberland. From 6-1 down he managed to drag himself back to 7-7, before dropping a full house on the 8th end. He never looked likely picking up a count on the final end and finished with a 13-7 loss.

Suffolk were the next opposition and Pete again found himself 6-1 behind. He rallied in the middle part of the game and picked up 8 unanswered shots to take a 9-6 lead into the final end which he defended to win 9-7.

Durham would be his next opponent, who had won his first two matches, a defeat even at this early stage would likely end his hopes of winning the title. Pete got in front early and managed to take a 9-5 lead into the final end, which he defended dropping just a single shot to take a 9-6 win.

Pete would finish the first day against Essex. Both had won 2 and lost 1 of their first three games, a win for either would put them in contention for tomorrow whereas defeat would likely end any hope of victory. Pete started slowly and found himself 4-0 behind after just two ends, he responded well, turning the game round to take a lead into the final end which was enough to come away with an 8-6 win.

At the end of the first days play Pete sat in 3rd place on 6 points, two points behind the leader (Sunderland) who he would play in the final game. Durham and Northumberland also had 6 points and were still very much in the running.

A match with Cambridgeshire would start of proceedings on Sunday. A very strange game where the lead was exchanged a number of times. Pere eventually did enough to take an 11-8 lead into the final end, he managed to secure a single on the final end to secure a 12-8 win.

The defending champion (Matt Frost) from Norfolk was Pete's next opponent. Pete found himself 3-0 and 5-2 behind but again rallied to take a 7-5 lead into the final end. He was somewhat fortunate to drop just a single shot as his opponent very nearly took his shot wood out of the head with his final bowl. Pete come away with a 7-6 win.

Sunderland would be the opposition in the final match, they had lost to Durham in their penultimate game meaning that Pete now led the standings. He had three more shots than Sunderland and seven more shots than Durham, all three players were on the same points. Pete would win the title with victory over Sunderland as long as Durham did not win and score 7 more shots than Pete in the process.

Pete started well and established an early lead. The Durham player had raced into a 7-0 lead, so the pressure was still very much on. The game was low scoring, and Pete did enough to take a 6-4 lead into the final end. Durham had finished and secured a 10-5 win. If Pete won the final end or dropped just a single shot, he would take the title. If Sunderland scored two on the final end they would hand the title to Durham. If they scored 3 or 4 shots on the final end, they would take the match and the title themselves. Pete played a good 3rd wood but Sunderland were still holding a single shot, they were unable to add a second meaning Pete had the luxury of not bowling his final wood as the 6-5 victory was enough to secure the title by 3 shots.

The final standings and results are below:

Pos	Team	Played	Points	SF	SA
1	Hertfordshire	7	12	58	51
2	Durham	7	12	55	41
3	Sunderland	7	10	54	40
4	Norfolk	7	6	56	47
5	Northumberland	7	6	55	55
6	Essex	7	6	46	53
7	Cambridgeshire	7	4	44	58
8	Suffolk	7	0	40	63

	Cambs	Durham	Essex	Herts	Norfolk	N'Land	Suffolk	S'Land	PI	Pts	SF	SA
Cambs		7-8	6-8	8-12	2-12	10-3	7-6	4-9	7	4	44	58
Durham	8-7		8-4	6-9	8-7	10-5	6-5	9-4	7	12	55	41
Essex	8-6	4-8		6-8	6-8	8-6	9-8	5-9	7	6	46	53
Herts	12-8	9-6	8-6		7-6	7-13	9-7	6-5	7	12	58	51
Norfolk	12-2	7-8	8-6	6-7		5-13	15-2	3-9	7	6	56	47
N'Land	3-10	5-10	6-8	13-7	13-5		8-6	7-9	7	6	55	55
Suffolk	6-7	5-6	8-9	7-9	2-15	6-8		6-9	7	0	40	63
S'Land	9-4	4-9	9-5	5-6	9-3	9-7	9-6		7	10	54	40

Pairs

Jason and Jack started their weekend with a game against Northumberland. They started slowly and found themselves behind early in the game. A fightback in the second part of the game saw them secure an important 10-8 win.

Suffolk were the next opposition. Our pair got the better of their opponents in a low scoring game, taking a 7-3 win.

The third game was against the defending champions Durham. They had also won their first two games and had secured a high number of shots. Therefore, even though this was the very early stages of the weekend, the match felt crucial. The match was tight and going into the final end Jason and Jack trailed just 6-5. Unfortunately, they were not able to win the final end, dropping two shots and losing the match 8-5.

Our pair finished with a game against Essex. They saved their best performance of the day till the end. Taking a convincing 13-3 win.

At the end of the first day's play Jack and Jason sat in 2nd place on six points. Two points behind Durham, but significantly also 16 shots behind them. Meaning they would likely need Durham to drop points in two of their three games on Sunday.

A game against Cambridgeshire was first up for our pair on Sunday morning. A tight low scoring game that they just got the better in securing a 6-5 win. Durham also won their first game of the day, so it's as we were at the top of the standings.

Our pair secured an 8-4 win over Norfolk in their penultimate game to keep themselves in with a mathematical chance of taking the title. Unfortunately, a mathematical chance is all it would be. Durham won their 6th straight match to stay two points clear they also held a 22 shot advantage which made them all but certain to take the title.

Durham did indeed win their final game to take the title. With second place already secured, the final session defeat to Sunderland (5-8) had no change to their final placing as Jason and Jack finished in 2nd place, 4 points behind Durham.

Pos	Team	Played	Points	SF	SA
1	Durham	7	14	80	29
2	Hertfordshire	7	10	54	39
3	Sunderland	7	9	58	45
4	Suffolk	7	7	50	44
5	Northumberland	7	6	53	49
6	Essex	7	6	47	60
7	Norfolk	7	2	35	75
8	Cambridgeshire	7	2	34	70

	Cambs	Durham	Essex	Herts	Norfolk	N'Land	Suffolk	S'Land	PI	Pts	SF	SA
Cambs		1-13	6-15	5-6	3-10	4-9	5-10	10-7	7	2	34	70
Durham	13-1		8-4	8-5	19-2	9-6	11-5	12-6	7	14	80	29
Essex	15-6	4-8		3-13	10-8	8-4	4-12	3-9	7	6	47	60
Herts	6-5	5-8	13-3		8-4	10-8	7-3	5-8	7	10	54	39
Norfolk	10-3	2-19	8-10	4-8		5-12	3-8	3-15	7	2	35	75
N'Land	9-4	6-9	4-8	8-10	12-5		8-6	6-7	7	6	53	49
Suffolk	10-5	5-11	12-4	3-7	8-3	6-8		6-6	7	7	50	44
S'Land	7-10	6-12	9-3	8-5	15-3	7-6	6-6		7	9	58	45

Triples

Sandra, Bec & Craig started their weekend with a game against Northumberland. A strong start to the game established an early lead that they were able to maintain throughout easing away to an 11-3 win.

A slow start in their second game against Suffolk saw them fall behind early on. They were never able to get a foothold in the game and fell to 14-4 loss.

The third game against Durham was an important one as they had won their first two matches. With the defeat in the previous game, another one here would leave them with an uphill task to get themselves back in the running. The match was close in the early stages, but Durham just did enough in the later part of the game winning it 8-5.

A win in the final match of the day would be needed to retain any faint hopes of taking the title. It was close in the early part of the game, but our team found themselves trailing 8-4 going into the final end. They picked up four shots on the final end to secure an unlikely draw.

Our team found themselves in 6th place overnight on 3 points. The individual title was out of reach, our triples would be looking to pick up some from on Sunday to help the team.

Cambridgeshire were the first opponents on Sunday morning. A good team performance securing a fairly comfortable 12-6 win.

They followed that up with arguably their best performance of the weekend as they easily dispatched the Norfolk triple with a 16-4 win.

Durham had already secured the title, but with their stronger showing on Sunday our triple could secure the runner up spot with a win in their final game against Sunderland. Always ahead in the game, a good performance secured a 9-6 win and the runners up spot, 3 points behind Durham.

Pos	Team	Played	Points	SF	SA
1	Durham	7	12	65	41
2	Hertfordshire	7	9	65	50
3	Suffolk	7	8	55	46
4	Sunderland	7	8	55	46
5	Cambridgeshire	7	6	43	54
6	Essex	7	5	48	57
7	Norfolk	7	5	42	63
8	Northumberland	7	3	44	60

	Cambs	Durham	Essex	Herts	Norfolk	N'Land	Suffolk	S'Land	PI	Pts	SF	SA
Cambs		6-9	4-12	6-12	6-5	10-4	4-6	7-6	7	6	43	54
Durham	9-6		12-6	9-5	14-4	5-10	8-4	8-6	7	12	65	41
Essex	12-4	6-12		8-8	3-8	9-7	4-11	6-7	7	5	48	57
Herts	12-6	5-9	8-8		16-4	11-3	4-14	9-6	7	9	65	50
Norfolk	5-6	4-14	8-3	4-16		7-6	7-7	7-11	7	5	42	63
N'Land	4-10	10-5	7-9	3-11	6-7		9-9	5-9	7	3	44	60
Suffolk	6-4	4-8	11-4	14-4	7-7	9-9		4-10	7	8	55	46
S'Land	6-7	6-8	7-6	6-9	11-7	9-5	10-4		7	8	55	46

Fours

Emma, Amy, Simon & Matt started their weekend with a game against Northumberland. They never completely got away from their opponents but always had a lead that looked like they wouldn't be caught. They ended up securing a good 10-3 win.

A poor start in their second game saw them fall 7-2 behind. They managed to reduce those arrears to 6-7 playing the final end. With his last bowl Matt was able to spring the jack to hold one and secure an important 7-7 draw.

An important match against Durham next, who had won their first two games. Our team managed to come out on top in a low scoring match as they secured a 7-5 win.

Essex were the final opposition of the day. Our team had their most comfortable win of the day as they secured a good 15-5 win.

At the end of the first day's play our team sat in second place on 7 points. A single point behind the leaders (Sunderland) who they would play in the final game on Sunday.

Cambridgeshire were the first opponents on Sunday. Our team looked in command as they opened an 8-1 lead with three ends to play. However, a dropped four on the

7th end and a single on the 8th meant the lead was reduced to 8-6 playing the final end. The jack was moved to the end of the carpet and Simon trying to sit one right on it was just a little heavy, as the jack trickled off the end of the mat and the game was drawn 8-8. The good news was that Sunderland lost their game, and the point was enough to take our team to the top of the standings.

Norfolk were the penultimate opponents for our fours. A good solid team performance was enough to come away with a 10-6 win.

Coming into the final game, our fours were top on shots from Northumberland with Durham and Sunderland 2 points behind. A win would very likely secure the title, a defeat would that it would very likely be lost. A great performance in the final game saw our team open an early lead and extend it through most of the game, they secured a great 12-2 win and with it took the title.

Pos	Team	Played	Points	SF	SA
1	Hertfordshire	7	12	69	36
2	Durham	7	10	67	40
3	Northumberland	7	10	55	47
4	Sunderland	7	8	43	56
5	Cambridgeshire	7	5	42	48
6	Suffolk	7	5	41	55
7	Essex	7	4	43	61
8	Norfolk	7	2	44	61

	Cambs	Durham	Essex	Herts	Norfolk	N'Land	Suffolk	S'Land	PI	Pts	SF	SA
Cambs		5-7	5-7	8-8	8-3	6-7	7-6	3-10	7	5	42	48
Durham	7-5		6-8	5-7	9-7	10-8	16-2	14-3	7	10	67	40
Essex	7-5	8-6		5-15	9-12	6-7	2-9	6-7	7	4	43	61
Herts	8-8	7-5	15-5		10-6	10-3	7-7	12-2	7	12	69	36
Norfolk	3-8	7-9	12-9	6-10		7-9	3-9	6-7	7	2	44	61
N'Land	7-6	8-10	7-6	3-10	9-7		12-2	9-6	7	10	55	47
Suffolk	6-7	2-16	9-2	7-7	9-3	2-12		6-8	7	5	41	55
S'Land	10-3	3-14	7-6	2-12	7-6	6-9	8-6		7	8	43	56

Team

The first session saw us take 6/8 points on offer against Northumberland. Not quite as good in the second session as we took 5/8 against Suffolk. Durham, who had also made a strong start were the opposition in the 3rd session as we split it 4/4 with them. Essex were the last opponents of the day, and our best session saw us take 7/8 points.

At the halfway stage we were in 3rd place on 22 points. Five points behind Sunderland in 2nd and six points behind the leaders Durham.

We started the final day taking 7/8 points against Cambridgeshire and followed that up with all 8 points against Norfolk. We won the final session 6-2 against Sunderland to secure 2nd place on 43 points but were five points behind Durham who finished their weekend on 48 points (out of 56).

Team final standings.

Pos	Team	Played	Points	SF	SA
1	Durham	28	48	267	151
2	Hertfordshire	28	43	246	176
3	Sunderland	28	35	210	187
4	Northumberland	28	25	207	211
5	Essex	28	21	184	231
6	Suffolk	28	20	186	208
7	Cambridgeshire	28	17	163	230
8	Norfolk	28	15	177	246