 

10th August to 27th August 2023 – Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

**Day 8 Review**

Day 7 was quite the day, how would day 8 go?

Ladies Pairs

The success of both Middlesex Pairs was not rewarded by the new “Open” draw format when they found they had to play each other in the 3rd round at 0930 on B1. Initially it had looked like this internal battle would be on the streamed rink A1 but our Ladies got bumped.

Sandra Wright and Pam Waller of Winchmore Hill had lost to Elaine Putnam and Kerry Payne of Ashford 11-16 when they had met in the County Final, so they were out for revenge on the National Stage!

Elaine and Kerry were equally determined that was not going to be on the cards and were ruthless from the off. 4-0 after just 2 ends rapidly became 11-0 at 5 and it was already looking an uphill battle for the Winchmore Ladies. They got onto the scoreboard but by 11 ends had only narrowed the gap to 9 and still trailed 7-16. The Ashford Ladies did not let up on the pressure and by 14 ends had a 12 shot lead, 20-8 and they eventually sealed the game 22-9 to progress into the Quarters.

Elsewhere in round 3 both Oxfordshire Pairs got through, Carol Gaskins and Donna Knight 13-10 with Katherine Hawes-Watts and Lorraine Kuhler dispatching the young Kent pair Emily Ferguson and Paige Dennis 21-3. The game that bumped our Ladies off A1 saw Ruby Hill and Chelsea Spencer from Burton House BC in Lincolnshire battle back from behind to beat Kacee Sultman and Jess Weir from Forest Hall, Northumberland, 20-18 after an extra end

So onto the quarters. On A5 Elaine and Kerry would play Julie Howell and Alison Cartwright of Pershore BC, Worcestershire. The Worcestershire ladies had battled through their games beating Berkshire 21-12, Norfolk 20-17 and finally Northumberland 19-16. Julie and Alison have also qualified in the Senior fours.

The game started tightly but Elaine and Kerry nudged in front 7-5 at 6 ends. The Pershore Ladies then had a good spell and were 8-10 up at halfway. It remained nip and tuck until it reached the 16th end at 14 all. Worcestershire scored a single on the 17th end meaning Elaine and Kerry had to win the last end. Elaine had Middlesex holding one after her 4 woods and then Kerry turned the nearest Worcester wood out to lie 3. The Worcestershire skip drew 2nd with her 2nd bowl. Kerry drew her next wood in and it looked a measure for 2nd. With bowl 3 Worcestershire wrecked on their own short wood but Kerry could not step in to guarantee a lie of 2. With her last bowl Alison took out the Middlesex shot leaving Kerry the last bowl of the game to save the match. She played heavy but was fractionally under the line and Worcestershire were into the Semis 14-16.

A great effort from Elaine and Kerry, indeed both the Ladies Pairs, over 2 days.

In the other quarter final ties Carol Gaskins and Donna Knight of Oxford City and County ended the run of Val Newton and Gay Allen from the Bembridge Club on the Isle of Wight. Youngsters Ruby Hill and Chelsea Spencer had their hopes dashed as they lost 14-17 to A Spreadborough and Gill Grantham of Plymouth Sir Francis Drake BC, Devon. Finally Katie Sturtridge and Michelle Moore of Stenalees, Cornwall put out Katherine Hawes-Watts and Lorraine Kuhler 19-13.

Men’s Triples

Broomfield’s reward for their extra end win yesterday was a 2nd round tie against Dylan Martin, Mark Yelland and Steve Horwood from Garston, Hertfordshire on Rink C3.

Dave Smith, Tim Beedon and Nick Waker got off to a nice steady start and it was 3-3 at ends, at 10 ends it was still evenly matched and tight at 6-6. At 14 ends the lads trailed by 1 but then 2 great ends, putting Garston under a lot of pressure, saw them jump to a 15-11 lead. Disaster, however struck and they lost a 4 to go down the last end all square. After yesterday evening they certainly like to put their supporters through the proverbial wringer. This time, though, the winning shot went to Herts and the Broomfield boys were out 15-16. Great effort though and superb entertainment for those who had followed them up to cheer them on.

Bounds Green’s Keith Cooper, Geoff Lawrence and Nick Edwards were on C1 against Chris Elliott, David Culmer and Shaun Willis from Portslade BC, Sussex. Again it was a cagey start and it was 5-5 at 5 ends. Then though the Bounds Green lads found their form and stormed away. 11-6 up ay 9 ends they won end after end moving out to 19-7 at 13 and eventually at 16 ends they were 25-7 in front. Clearly Sussex saw something no one else had as they played on looking for back to back full houses but all they actually did was drop another single and Keith, Geoff and Nick were through 26-7. Wonderful stuff.

Elsewhere in round 2 the biggest shock was the Kent trio of Isaac Jenner, Lewis King and Harry Goodwin going out 12-17 to Wiltshire. Howard Watt’s Oxfordshire trio went out to Nicky Brett and his Huntingdonshire teammates. Ed Morris’s Essex trio went through as did Scott Walton’s Cambridgeshire trio who knocked out the kids from Lancashire.

So round 3 and Bounds Green would face Hayden Moorbey, Jamie Barker and Scott Walton from St Neot’s BC, Cambridgeshire.

They had got to this stage with wins over Nott’s 15-14 and the young Lancashire trio, 17-10. Jamie Barker is a former Junior International who this season played in the family pairs. In 2015 he won the Junior Singles and in 2017 the Junior Pairs. With Scott he was runner up in the mixed fours in 2021. Scott himself was runner up in the Champion of Champion Singles in 2021 but did win the family Pairs with his Yorkshire based father Mark the same year.

The game started badly for the lads and at 6 ends they were 0-13 down. Broomfield had shown yesterday that you could recover from a “slow” start but by 10 ends, although they were on the board they were 2-17 down. Over the next 4 ends they only picked up another single and at 14 ends they did what Sussex should have done and called it a day. Despite the heavy 3rd rd defeat Keith, Geoff and Nick can be proud of their efforts in getting to that stage.

Mixed Pairs

This Competition was played to a conclusion today. In the Quarters finals Alan Morton and Erika White from Kent ended the hopes of Jamie Lea Marshall and Joe Dawson from Leicestershire 14-9. Maddie and Grant Burgess from Worcestershire pipped Linda Rose and Ryan Prince from Cumbria 15-12. It was even tighter for the conquerors of Paul Wilsher and Karen Ryan but this time Chris Moore and Sue Cooke from Wiltshire were not on the right side of the result as they lost 14-15 to Pauline Tuckey and Peter Stinchcombe of Gloucestershire. In the final quarter final Rebecca and Wayne Wilgress from Norfolk progressed comfortably beating Janet Eames and Tony Lee from Notts 20-10.

So onto the Semis and Kent pairing faced Worcestershire. Grant Burgess is a former Senior International whilst Maddie has this season qualified in the 2 woods, Junior Singles and Junior Pairs in which she lost in the quarters. On this occasions the Burgess’s proved to strong winning 24-8

The 2nd Semi looked a mismatch on paper with Gloucestershire facing Norfolk. Rebecca Wilgress is both a Junior and Senior International and this season alone has qualified in the mixed fours, 2 woods, singles, triples where she made the quarters and fours where she lost 2nd rd. Husband Wayne is surprisingly only a Junior International and this season has “only” qualified in the mixed fours. Historically Rebecca has won the Junior Pairs and 2 woods (both 2014) and been runner up in the fours. Wayne has won the triples (2007) and pairs (2021).

The game was tighter than many had predicted but eventually the Norfolk couple got their noses in front to win 19-10.

So onto the final and the Wilgress’s fourth game of the day against the Burgess’s 3. A tight tussle ensued with some great bowls played but in the end the Norfolk pairs shone through to take the title 18-13. Can they double up with the mixed fours?

Mixed Fours

The mixed fours started with the last 16 ties. Chris Yeomans, Kayleigh Proctor, Rachel Cartwright and Simon Richardson from Northumberland put down a marker getting through to the quarters 28-5. Oxfordshire’s Andrew Docherty and Howard Watts fell foul of the new, ridiculous, rulings over fixture clashes. With their female teammates Katherine Hawes – Watts and Lorraine Kuhler still playing in the Ladies Pairs they were forced to concede as you can’t have 2 subs of the same sex. So having got to the last 16, they couldn’t play because of the way the Nationals are scheduled, pathetic, unfair on them, unfair on all the teams they had beaten and a penalty for being successful. No wonder bowls is in decline.

Anyway the Defending Champions from Surrey got through as did Glenn William’s Hertfordshire four. Already playing their 3rd game of the day Rebecca and Wayne Wilgress made it through to the quarters alongside their teammates Ian Catchpole and Jackie Devitt. In the star studded clash Chloe Brett, Rebecca Moorbey, Lewis Baker and Nick Brett from Hunts beat Emily Ferguson, Josh Pounds, Lewis King and Wendy King 20-6.

Ladies Junior Pairs

There was a stunning conclusion to the Junior Pairs final played this afternoon having been held over from yesterday. Lincolnshire’s Molly Feetham and Ruby Hill went into the last end 19-14 up against Lily Mae Adams and Emily Kernick from Warwickshire. Some people though don’t know when they are beaten and it’s a good job. Lily Mae and Emily promptly picked up a last end 5 and won the extra end to take the title, amid wild scenes 20-19. Congratulations to them but spare a thought for the Lincolnshire youngsters tonight.

**Day 9 Preview**

Mixed Fours

At 0930 we have the quarter finals. Chris Yeomans and his Northumberland team mates play Joyce Wood, Kevin Clarke, Maggie Randall and Martin Wood of Surrey. Defending champions Faye Ludlow, Hayley Halford, Paul Jenkins and Dennis Hennessy, also from Surrey, play James Park, Rachel Forster, Steve Cook and Victoria Forster from Cumbria. Wayne Wilgress and his Norfolk team play Alison Hall, Rhianna Russell, Jerry Rumball and Glenn Williams from Herts and Nicky Brett’s Hunts four will play A Hibbitt, Chris Dolmore, Ella Crouch and N Heath (Surely Bowls England have their first names by now!)

Ladies Pairs

The conclusion of the event as we have the Semis at 10 and the final at 1430.

In Semi one we have Julie Howell and Alison Cartwright who take on Carol Gaskins and Donna Grant.

Carol Gaskins won the National mixed pairs as far back as 1989. She has been runner up in the triples (2009), Senior Singles (2011) and Fours 2022. This season Carol qualified in the mixed pairs but lost in the last 16, the fours where they reached the quarter final and she still has the Senior Singles to come. Donna is a Senior International. She has won the Singles title (2016), pairs 2015 and fours 2014. Add to that triples runner up in 2009 and she almost had the set at National level. This season Donna has qualified in the main singles and 2 woods and has already been a losing quarter finalist in the fours and semi finalist in the triples.

In Semi two we have a local derby miles from home as Cornwall’s Gill Grantham and A Spreadborough take on Devon’s Katie Sturtridge and Michelle Moore.

Katie has qualified in the Junior Singles for this season, Michelle is a Senior International and this year qualified in the fours where she lost in the 3rd rd to the eventual runners up. A Spreadborough was a Junior International in 2005.

Men’s Senior Pairs

At 1000hrs, no 0900 start for the Seniors! on B2 Atillio Ciampini (Uxbridge) and Dave Pitt (Cambridge Park) start their campaign. Atillio, of course has already won this title, in 2005 with Bobby Yeomans of Hayes.

The Middlesex lads take on Simon Varty and Tony Hill of Bucks in the 1st rd. Victory will see them play again at 1300 and then potentially in a quarter final at 1600.

Ladies Senior Pairs

The Ladies Senior start later at 1300 but potentially only play 2 rounds today. Karen Ryan and Sue Butcher of West Ealing start on B3 against Kate Kyle and Diane Hurst of Leicestershire.

Karen, of course, has already played in the mixed pairs at this years championships and the triples with Sue. Kate played in the pairs losing 2nd rd to Kent and has qualified in both the 2 woods and Senior Singles. Diane has not qualified for anything else this season but she is a past fours winner, in 2012 and triples runner up in 2015. Win, as we hope they do and they are straight back on at 4.

Men’s Triples

It’s Quarter final time at 1000.

On A4 Josh Grant, Dan Thornhill and Phillip Broughton from Stute, Derbyshire take on Chris Weekes, Ben Paulley and Perry Martin from Boscombe Cliff, Hampshire. A3 sees Michael Gomme, Matthew Hyde and Andrew Briden from Gerrards Cross, Bucks take on Danny Seabourne, Mathew Carter and David Smith from Freethorpe, Norfolk. A2 sees Bounds Green conquerors take on Broomfield’s Conquerors!

Finally on the show rink we have the big clash between England stars heading for the World Championships. Ed Elmore, Lewis Baker and Nick Brett from Brampton, Hunts take on Simon Kittle, Steve Gunnell and Ed Morris of Essex County BC.

Work permitting I will be present for the 1300 and 1600 sessions today, more later