

COUNTY OVER 60s

This was the 3rd season for the county over 60s and we are now in the Premier division after back-to-back promotions. We had won every match to date and in the premier division we knew this would be our biggest test to date.

We had the first round over the weekend of 5/6 November.

3 matches with a further 4 over the 9/10th March to complete the division with 8 teams in it.

With injuries etc our team was Chris Rogers, Dave Gannon, Tony Smith and Karen Smith.

The first match was Kent who had been champions the previous 2 years. We fought extremely hard and with it being cold and us not totally climatized to the conditions we were on the wrong end of a 6-4 defeat.

Chris winning 1 and the mixed plus Karens singles and Tony/Karen winning the other mixed.

We then regrouped for the second match Bedfordshire and went 4-0 up in sets and then 5-1 with everyone winning 1 singles plus Chris and Karen the mixed.

We then lost the next 2 juice in the 5th which was the men's doubles and Tony's other singles. Chris secured the win against their number 1 to make it 6-3 and our first win and 2 points on the board.

On to a fresh day Sunday and just the 1 match against Essex.

We went 2/0 down with Dave losing in 4 and Tony losing in 5.

Chris got us started cruising to a 3-0 win and we never looked back winning 5 on the trot to go 5-2 up.

It went 5-3 but Chris made it 6-3 and Tony/Karen rounded off the weekend winning the mixed to end up with a 7-3 win.

2 wins out of 3 for the weekend and 4 points.

We were 3rd behind Kent and Cheshire who both had 3 wins.

4 months later and the second weekend of 4 matches.

We had Richard Hayes out first half with injury and although Richard was now back playing Dave picked up an injury so a straight swop.

First match up Saturday morning against Sussex and Chris got us off to a flying start winning 3-0 so 1 set up.

Tony and Richard both lost their singles in 5 so now 2-1 down.

We then went on to win the next six very convincingly so 7-2 up and eventually a 7/3 win.

Great start to the weekend.

Second match against Lancashire which was always going to be a tough game which it proved to be.

We went 2-0 down with Richard and Tony losing their singles. We rallied round again (Chris and Karen) to win the next 4 so 4-2 up.

Richard and Chris lost the doubles in 5 very close to put the match score to 4-3.

Tony then went on to lose the 8th set so now 4-4 and needing the last 2 too keep our challenge for the title alive.

Chris secured his singles against their number 1 3/0 so now 5-4 and over to Karen and Tony for the mixed.

We scrapped the first game 12-10 but lost the second 11-7.

We knew we were up against it, but we got our game together to win 11-4 and 11-6 so 3 games to 1 win and match score of 6-4.

This meant we had won 4 now and lost 1.

On to Sunday and Cheshire who were still on 100% to play first off.

Chris got us off to a flying start again winning 3-1 in games so 1 nil in sets.

Tony against John Hilton who previously had been a European Champion.

Tony managed to take the first game 12-10 but couldn't maintain that and lost 3-1.

Richard lost his singles 3-1 so we were 2-1 down again.

Chris and Karen had their closest match yet in the mixed but came through it to win in 5.

Match score 2-2.

Tony lost his second singles to put us 3-2 down.

Karen made it 3-3 with the lady's singles win.

Chris and Richard went 2 games to 0 down in the Men's doubles to fight back and win a nail-biting match 12-10 in the fifth.

4-3 up now with Richard playing John Hilton and going 2-1 down in games to eventually get a great win 3-2 to put us 5-3 up.

Chris went 1-0 down in the singles but came back magnificently to win 11-1 in the 4th game and seal a win 6-3.

Tony and Karen put the icing on the cake by winning 3-0 to secure a 7-3 win which would help our sets difference.

Cheshire were now playing Kent who were still on 100%.

We were playing Hertfordshire who were fighting relegation, and we knew we needed to win convincingly and hope for Kent to lose.

Richard after his tremendous win against the ex European Champion lost a bit of concentration to lose 3-0 in his singles.

Tony then won his singles 3-1 to put us 1-1.

Chris won his singles and his mixed with Karen to put us 3-1 up in sets.

Richard lost his singles 3-0 so match score 3-2.

Although they were bottom of the league, we still had work to do.

Karen made it 4-2 in her singles which was a good job as Richard and Chris lost the Men's Doubles to make it 4-3.

Tony and Chris both won their singles with Karen and Tony winning the mixed to secure a 7-3 win.

Kent and Cheshire drew 5-5 so we ended up 1 point behind Kent and 1 point in front of Cheshire.

We just needed to turn that 6-4 loss to Kent into a 5-5 draw and the title would have been ours.

We were runners up but a great effort winning 6 losing 1.

A special mention to both Chris and Karen winning 7 out of 7 in the mixed.

Karen winning 7 out of 7 100% in the Lady's singles.

Chris joint top of the men's averages losing just 1 and having 6 out of 7 man of the match a brilliant achievement.

Thanks to Richard and Dave for their part and a great team spirit over all the matches and it has been an honour to be Captain of such a talented and friendly team.

Singles

Karen Smith 7/7 100%.

Chris Rogers 13/14 92.86%.

Richard Hayes 3/8 37.5%

David Gannon 2/6 33.3%

Tony Smith 4/14 28.57%

Men's Doubles

Chris and Dave 1/3 33.3%

Chris and Richard 2/4 50%

Mixed Doubles

Chris and Karen 7/7 100%

Tony and Karen 5/7 71.4%

Tony Smith Captain Leicestershire Over 60s.