

ECCBA League Fixture 4

Essex v Hertfordshire

The Sailing Millenium Hall, Piccotts Lane, Gt Sailing, Essex, CM7 5DW

Our 4th league fixture of the season was a top of the table away fixture against Essex. The team chosen to represent us was as follows.

H1	H2	H3
1. Amy Missing 2. Gary Young 3. Ollie Mercer-Smith 4. Matt Thurley	1. Dave Smith 2. Gill Barraclough 3. Lisa Edmead 4. Neil Tuckey	1. Sandra Gammage 2. Paul Harris 3. Jack Smalley 4. Jason Ellis
H4	H5	H6
1. Emma Thurley 2. Mick Cook 3. Stuart Mcneil 4. Craig Hearn	1. Marilyn Cook 2. Jacqui Harris 3. Simon Missing 4. Pete Cook	1. Mike Bennett 2. Stuart Palmer 3. Thomas Ellis 4. Rebecca Hearn

During the day, the odd numbered teams would play at the same time and the even numbered teams would play at the same time.

Session 1

H1 got off to a poor start and didn't score till they picked up a single on the 6th. By that point they were already 9-0 behind. They won two of the three remaining ends but could not eat into that deficit in any meaningful way, falling to a 10-4 loss. H3 were involved in a tight game, 2-2 after four ends, was 5-5 after six ends after exchanging threes. They managed to pick up singles on the three remaining ends to secure a crucial 8-5 win. H5 were a little unfortunate to find themselves 5-1 behind after four ends. They rallied to get back to 5-4 two ends later and they remained just the one shot behind at 6-5 playing the last end. Despite having good opportunities to win the final end they were unable to do so and fell to a 7-5 loss.

Session Score
Essex 4-2 Herts

Match Score
Essex 4-2 Herts

Session 2

H2 dropped a single on the first end but found themselves 6-1 up after four. They managed the game thereafter, and whilst their opponents narrowed the game our team did enough to secure the win 8-5. H4 got off to a terrible start, dropping two threes in the first three ends to trail 7-0. They chipped away at that lead and managed to get back to within one playing the final end. A great final end saw them pick up three shots and secure an unlikely 10-8 win. H6 were well in their match in the early-mid stages, with the score at 3-3 after five ends. The 7th

end proved to be critical as they dropped five shots and didn't have time to recover, eventually losing 12-3.

Session Score
Essex 2-4 Herts

Match Score
Essex 6-6 Herts

Session 3

The first half of H1's second game seesawed. They led 1-0, trailed 3-1, before establishing a 4-3 lead after five ends. The 6th end proved to be costly, they dropped four shots and were not able to recover, eventually losing 8-6. H3 looked like they were going to be involved in a very tight game, they trailed by one at 6-5 after six ends. They played some great bowls over the last three ends, securing two shots on each on of them to ease away to an 11-6 victory. H3 picked up a three on the 3rd end to move into a 3-2 lead. That lead was one they never relinquished as they slowly but surely edged away from their opponents, taking an 11-5 win.

At the halfway stage it was, as expected, a close game. We led 10-8 and would need to keep pushing to earn the victory.

Session Score
Essex 2-4 Herts

Match Score
Essex 8-10 Herts

Session 4

H2 were exchanging ones and twos with their opponents over the first six ends, trailing 5-4 at that stage. The 7th end was the critical one in the game, a count of four against that meant they now trailed 9-4. They managed to win the last two ends but could only pick up singles resulting in a 9-6 loss. A complete disaster for H4, dropping a seven on the first end, giving them an awful lot of work to do. The only encouragement they could take is that they had come from 7-0 down in their first game to win. Incredibly, as the ends passed by, they were clawing their way back into it, a five on the 8th end meant that trailed 12-11 playing the last. Unfortunately, they couldn't repeat their first game heroics. They dropped a two on the final end to lose 14-11. H6's start was only marginally better, a six dropped on the second end meant they were 6-1 behind. Like H4, they battled hard to get back into the game and reduced the deficit to 8-6 after the 7th end. They couldn't get any closer that that and succumbed to a 10-7 loss.

Session Score
Essex 6-0 Herts

Match Score
Essex 14-10 Herts

Session 5

H1 opened a 4-1 lead after three ends, but were pegged back to 4-4 a couple of ends later. They won two of the next three ends to open an 8-6 lead, which they were able to protect eventually winning 10-6. H3 led 4-0 after the first two ends. They failed to score for five consecutive ends to fall 8-4 behind. They picked up three shots on the 8th to give them a fighting chance, but couldn't turn it round, losing the last end and the match 10-7. H5 won three of the first five ends but found themselves 4-3 behind. Consecutive twos on the 6th and

7th ends and a single on the 8th meant they now led 8-4, a reasonably well controlled last end saw them drop just a single winning the match 8-5.

Session Score
Essex 2-4 Herts

Match Score
Essex 16-14 Herts

Session 6

Going into the final session we trailed 16-14, we would have to secure a minimum of 5/6 points to win the overall match.

The session was, without question, the least dramatic of the day. As the outcome of all three matches was never in much doubt. H2, while never picking up more than two shots on any one end, largely controlled their game. They kept winning ends and took an unassailable 10-0 lead into the final end; they did drop a three on that final end to finish 10-3 winners. H4 had made a habit of making a poor start and then trying to catch their opponents up. They were doing so again, 8-1 behind after five ends. A five on the 6th end for their opponents eradicated any hope that they would do so again as they fell to a 15-3 loss. H6 scored a three, two, four and single respectively on the first four ends to open a 10-0 lead. They lost the 5th end but won the remaining four to complete a great 18-2 win.

Session Score
Essex 2-4 Herts

Match Score
Essex 18-18 Herts

A scoreline that looked likely from the outset, there was very little to choose between the two sides. No team was ever more than four points in front of the other. It's a result that really only benefits Suffolk who beat Bedfordshire 34-2. That means we now trail Suffolk by nine points entering the final fixtures. We will need to beat Cambridgeshire heavily and hope that Essex can perform as well as they did today and take points off Suffolk.

There are two records that are achievable for us in the final fixture. If we score 21+ points, we will break our point total for a season (112 in 2017/2018), and it will be the first time we have completed a league season without losing a match. Still plenty to play for.

Individual team performances are below.

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	SF	SA	Points
H1	3	1	0	2	20	24	2
H2	3	2	0	1	24	17	4
H3	3	2	0	1	26	21	4
H4	3	1	0	2	24	37	2
H5	3	2	0	1	24	17	4
H6	3	1	0	2	28	24	2
Total	18	9	0	9	146	140	18

League Table

Place	Team	Played	Won	Drew	Lost	For	Agst	Points
1	Suffolk	4	3	1	0	750	443	101
2	Hertfordshire	4	2	2	0	675	523	92
3	Essex	4	3	1	0	627	499	92
4	Cambridgeshire	4	2	0	2	600	589	73
5	Norfolk	4	0	0	4	507	652	50
6	Bedfordshire	4	0	0	4	387	840	24

Fixtures & Results

24 th November 2024		
Essex	23-13	Cambridgeshire
Norfolk	12-24	Suffolk
Bedfordshire	8-28	Hertfordshire
8 th December 2024		
Cambridgeshire	11-25	Suffolk
Essex	28-8	Bedfordshire
19 th January 2025		
Suffolk	18-18	Hertfordshire
Norfolk	13-23	Essex
Bedfordshire	6-30	Cambridgeshire
9 th February 2025		
Hertfordshire	28-8	Norfolk
16 th February 2025		
Essex	18-18	Hertfordshire
Cambridgeshire	19-17	Norfolk
Suffolk	34-2	Bedfordshire
16 th March 2025		
Suffolk	V	Essex
Hertfordshire	V	Cambridgeshire
Norfolk	V	Bedfordshire