

## ECCBA League Fixture 5

### Hertfordshire v Cambridgeshire

#### Applecroft School, Welwyn Garden City – Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Our final league fixture of the season was a home fixture, at Applecroft School, against Cambridgeshire. The team chosen to represent us was as follows;

| <b>H1</b>  | <b>H2</b>   | <b>H3</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Ron Hart<br>2. Mick Cook<br>3. Ollie Mercer-Smith<br>4. Craig Hearn | 1. James Warren<br>2. Gary Young<br>3. Lisa Edmead<br>4. Neil Tuckey  | 1. Sandra Gammage<br>2. Paul Harris<br>3. Jack Smalley<br>4. Jason Ellis   |
| <b>H4</b>  | <b>H5</b>   | <b>H6</b>  |
| 1. Marilyn Cook<br>2. Dave Smith<br>3. Simon Missing<br>4. Pete Cook   | 1. Amy Missing<br>2. Jo Hilson<br>3. Stuart Mcneil<br>4. Matt Thurley | 1. Emma Thurley<br>2. Jacqui Harris<br>3. Thomas Ellis<br>4. Rebecca Hearn |

We went into the game trailing Suffolk by nine points, who entertained Essex (who were level on points with us).

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 made a solid start in their game moving into a 4-0 lead after three ends. However, they lost four of the next five ends to find themselves 6-5 behind playing the last end. A great final bowl from Craig saw him convert one down into two up and take the match 7-6. H3 dropped a two on the first end, but dominated the game thereafter, winning the remaining eight ends and accumulating fifteen shots to take a great 15-2 win. A similar story for H5, they won seven of the nine ends played to ease away to a comfortable 11-3 win. A perfect start as we open a 6-0 lead.

**Session Score**  
**Herts 6–0 Cambs**

**Match Score**  
**Herts 6–0 Cambs**

#### **Session 2**

H2 broke the back of their game with a four on the 7<sup>th</sup> end, which put them into an 8-4 lead. They scored a single on the 8<sup>th</sup> end and controlled the last, dropping just two shots to secure a 9-6 win. H4 won four of the first six ends against their opponents but only led 7-4 at that stage. Singles were exchanged on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> ends to maintain their three-shot advantage. They controlled the last end, dropping just a single to take an 8-6 win.

Having only won three of the nine ends, it would seem unlikely that H6 were able to secure victory. However, they scored seven shots on those three ends and with two of the others being dead ends, they just did enough to secure a 7-5 win.

With news filtering through that Suffolk were tied 6-6 with Essex, we had closed the gap at the top to just three points. We would need to continue to pick up points throughout the day to maintain the pressure on Suffolk.

**Session Score**  
**Herts 6–0 Cambs**

**Match Score**  
**Herts 12–0 Cambs**

### **Session 3**

H1 started slowly in their second match and found themselves 7-1 behind after four ends. They clawed their way back into the match winning the next four ends to trail 7-6 playing the last. They managed to complete the turnaround by picking up two shots and securing a crucial 8-7 win. H3 were also a little slow starting in their match, they trailed 5-2 after four ends. They won three of the next four ends to reduce that deficit to 6-5 playing the last, where they were able to secure a single to take a 6-6 draw. H5 were replicating the other two teams with a slow start, 4-0 behind after three ends. They won four ends in a row to take a 7-4 lead but dropped a two followed by a single to finish 7-7.

Three incredibly tight games, that we managed to do very well to get four points out of. Suffolk had stretched further ahead by taking a 12-6 lead over Essex.

**Session Score**  
**Herts 4–2 Cambs**

**Match Score**  
**Herts 16–2 Cambs**

### **Session 4**

H2 were well in their game and only trailed 4-2 after six ends. A costly three on the 7<sup>th</sup> end meant they had lots of work to do on the final two ends to try and take something from the game. They gave themselves a glimmer of hope with two shots on the 8<sup>th</sup> end but were only able to pick up a single on the last, losing the game 7-5. H4 picked up two shots on the first end, but then did not score again till the 7<sup>th</sup> end and by that point found themselves 8-3 behind. They needed a count on the 8<sup>th</sup> end to give themselves a fighting chance, but their opponents scored a single and then controlled the final end, resulting in a 9-4 loss. H6 were 4-0 down after two ends, but a five followed by a three catapulted them into the lead. They did only lead by three at 10-7 playing the last, but a five on the final end put some gloss on the final score making it 15-7.

This session looked to be costly, Suffolk had won their session 6-0 and also led 18-6. So, the margin was back to where it started at nine points, with just twelve points to play for

**Session Score**  
**Herts 2–4 Cambs**

**Match Score**  
**Herts 18–6 Cambs**

## Session 5

H1 were involved in one of the strangest games ever seen in the ECCBA league. They lead 8-2 after four ends and there was no sign of the madness that was about to unravel. They dropped back-to-back fives to fall 12-8 behind, before picking up a five of their own to retake the lead at 13-12. A single on the 8<sup>th</sup> end gave them a two-shot advantage, but they dropped two on the final end which resulted in a 14-14 draw. H3 picked up a single on the first end but were virtually out of the game by the 6<sup>th</sup> end, eleven unanswered shots for their opponents saw them fall 11-1 behind. They never particularly threatened a big count to get back in the game and fell to a 13-3 loss. H5 dropped a three on the first end but recovered nicely to level the scores two ends later. However, they only won one of the remaining six ends and succumbed to a 12-4 loss.

Hope of the title was now extinguished with Suffolk leading 22-8.

**Session Score**  
**Herts 1–5 Cambs**

**Match Score**  
**Herts 19–11 Cambs**

## Session 6

H2 dropped three shots on the first end but dominated their opponents thereafter. Picking up multiple twos and threes to secure a good 15-4 win. H4 picked up a six on the first end and a four on the second end to virtually put the game beyond their opponents. They controlled the remainder of the game and secured a very good 17-1 win. H6 dropped three consecutive twos on the first three ends and never really looked like recovering. They won four of the remaining six ends but couldn't pick up more than singles, eventually losing 9-4.

**Session Score**  
**Herts 4–2 Cambs**

**Match Result**  
**Herts 23–13 Cambs**

In the end, a slightly disappointing result considering we made such a strong start to the game. Suffolk's 28-8 win over Essex, meant that it would have been impossible for us to win the league in any event. However, we were not to know that at the time. Credit to Cambridgeshire for coming back at us so strongly in the second half of the day.

**Individual team performances are below.**

| Team         | Played    | Won       | Drawn    | Lost     | SF         | SA         | Points    |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|------------|-----------|
| H1           | 3         | 2         | 1        | 0        | 29         | 27         | 5         |
| H2           | 3         | 2         | 0        | 1        | 29         | 17         | 4         |
| H3           | 3         | 1         | 1        | 1        | 24         | 21         | 3         |
| H4           | 3         | 2         | 0        | 1        | 29         | 16         | 4         |
| H5           | 3         | 1         | 1        | 1        | 22         | 22         | 3         |
| H6           | 3         | 2         | 0        | 1        | 26         | 21         | 4         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>18</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>159</b> | <b>124</b> | <b>23</b> |

This is the first time we have completed an ECCBA league season undefeated. It is also a new points total record for us beating our previous best of 112 in 2017/2018. We look forward to the 2025/2026 season where we will face our two nearest challengers from this season (Essex and Suffolk) at home.

### Final League Table

| Place | Team           | Played | Won | Drew | Lost | For | Agst  | Points |
|-------|----------------|--------|-----|------|------|-----|-------|--------|
| 1     | Suffolk        | 5      | 4   | 1    | 0    | 935 | 555   | 129    |
| 2     | Hertfordshire  | 5      | 3   | 2    | 0    | 834 | 647   | 115    |
| 3     | Essex          | 5      | 3   | 1    | 1    | 739 | 684   | 100    |
| 4     | Cambridgeshire | 5      | 2   | 0    | 3    | 724 | 748   | 86     |
| 5     | Norfolk        | 5      | 1   | 0    | 4    | 695 | 767   | 74     |
| 6     | Bedfordshire   | 5      | 0   | 0    | 5    | 502 | 1,028 | 36     |

### Results

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