

## **County Teams Report 2016**

This is my third report as County Match Secretary. The role and functions of this post have been discussed previously so I won't repeat them; however I'll happily send a copy of the 2015 & 2014 reports to anyone who didn't receive one.

Anyway on to Season 2015-16. We entered the same teams as last year namely Minor Counties, Under 160, Under 140, Under 120 and Under 100 plus having an Under 180 team held in reserve. Our teams swept everything before them in the Midlands. We drew our opening match against Leicestershire in the Minor Counties followed by 14 successive wins. Consequently we won all five Midland titles – the Under 160, Under 140, Under 120 and Under 100 all with 100% scores. We even had the luxury of playing an Under 180 match which, as we'd qualified by winning the Minor, we fielded a weakened team and suffered a rare loss.

It might be thought that with this in mind we might march into the National qualifiers with a repeat performance to the finals. Not to be I'm afraid.

Our Minor team is simply not strong enough to play competitively. The strongest possible team we could field (average grade 175) lost narrowly to Norfolk by 9-7. The county's strongest players will not represent the county and that is why Lincolnshire, with 10 players graded 180+ in their side, are in the final and not us. Our 160s lost narrowly in the quarter-finals to Surrey – to date our second string side has simply never found form at this stage. Our Under 140s, our most successful team, had reached the national final in both 2014 & 2015. After beating Hertfordshire convincingly in the quarters we faced Worcestershire, the Midlands 3<sup>rd</sup> qualifier in the semi-finals having beaten them 10-6 in the regional round. Notts were described as "firm favourites" especially as the team-sheet showed we outgraded them on every board by an average of some seven points. The match finished with a disastrous reversal of the original score; we lost the top eight boards 6-2 scoring just four draws. The Under 100s had a bye to the semi-finals but lost to Essex. However our Under 120s, national champions in 2014, progressed to the final by beating Surrey and Norfolk. We now face Warwickshire who, of course, we have already beaten this season – let's hope that they don't follow Worcestershire's example!

I have explained at some length in an e-mail how difficult it is to maintain the high standard that we have set. Problems include people who don't/won't answer e-mails; players who withdraw with days or in some cases hours of a match; this year we've had defaults as well which we will incur fines for.

Finally a cautionary note. I cannot do this job forever and indeed I am cutting back on my admin jobs. I intend to put in another three years should the Association wish me to continue and should I be fit enough to carry on. So please note this for the future!

Neil Graham

19 June 2016

## MCCU County Fixtures 2015-2016

Oct 10 <sup>th</sup>	Counties	Leicestershire	(away)	Drew	8-8	
Oct 17 <sup>th</sup>	Under 120	Warwickshire	(home)	Won	7-5	
Oct 24 <sup>th</sup>	Under 100	Leicestershire	(away)	Won	8½-3½	
Oct 31 <sup>st</sup>	Counties	Lincolnshire	(home)	Won	11-5	
Nov 7 <sup>th</sup>	Under 160	Manchester	(away)	Won	9-7	
Nov 7 <sup>th</sup>	Under 120	Lincolnshire	(away)	Won	7-5	
Dec 5 <sup>th</sup>	Counties	Warwickshire	(home)	Won	12½-3½	
Dec 5 <sup>th</sup>	Under 120	Staffordshire	(home)	Won	6-5	
Jan 9 <sup>th</sup>	Under 140	Lincolnshire	(away)	Won	11-5	
Jan 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Under 160	Warwickshire	(home)	Won	10-6	
Feb 6 <sup>th</sup>	Under 140	Worcestershire	(away)	Won	10-6	
Feb 13 <sup>th</sup>	Under 120	Worcestershire	(away)	Won	8½-3½	
Feb 20 <sup>th</sup>	Under 140	Derbyshire	(home)	Won	10-6	
Feb 20 <sup>th</sup>	Under 100	Warwickshire	(home)	Won	6½-5½	
Feb 27 <sup>th</sup>	Counties	Worcestershire	(away)	Won	9-7	
Mar 05 <sup>th</sup>	Under 180	Warwickshire	(away)	Lost	9-7	
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Counties QF	Norfolk	(intermediate)	Lost	9-7	
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Under 160 QF	Surrey	(intermediate)	Lost	8½-7½	
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Under 140 QF	Hertfordshire	(intermediate)	Won	9½-6½	
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Under 120 QF	Surrey	(intermediate)	Won	8-4	
June 11 <sup>th</sup>	Under 140 SF	Worcestershire	(home)	Lost	10-6	
June 11 <sup>th</sup>	Under 120 SF	Norfolk	(intermediate)	Won	7½-4½	
June 11 <sup>th</sup>	Under 100 SF	Essex	(intermediate)	Lost	7-5	
July 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Under 120 Final					

Players represented the county as follows:-

118 players (110M, 8F) represented the county as follows:-

West Notts 18, Gambit 17, Ashfield 16, Unattached 12, West Bridgford 10, Radcliffe & Bingham 10, Central 10, University 8, Nomads 7; Newark 7, Long Eaton 1, Mansfield 0