

MIDDLETON CUP FINAL GROUP MATCH

Unfortunately Colin Thresher had been forced to withdraw from the team a few days ago so a couple of positional changes were needed but Bowls Hampshire were starting the day in a strong position at the top of the Group 2 Section B (South) league and needing just 6 points to secure a place in the Quarter finals.

This however was not a time to think about anything other than another win and the match started well for Hampshire who picked up a couple of big scores to lead by 8 shots overall at the 5 end stage.

The lead fluctuated between 8 and 12 shots over the next 5 ends with the end rink skipped by Chris Daniels comfortably ahead by 7 shots and helping Hampshire to a score of 59 shots to 52.

Over the next few ends the lead reduced and soon the scores were level with 40 ends left across the green. 3 rinks were very close, with Hampshire ahead in two but Peter Ward's rink were struggling so it was all to play for

The next couple of ends went Hampshire's way and the noise increased with 2 big scores from the May Brothers helped put Hampshire up by 8 at 15 ends.

The match could still have gone either way and it was only Russell Morgan's rink that looked comfortable but we were up in 4 and level on another. Middlesex were still hanging in there and still in with a chance of taking the points they needed to put us out but a further push by Hampshire increased our lead to double figures and we stayed ahead to the finish to win by 121 shots to 105, winning on 4 rinks to get 18 points for the third time this season.

Skip's scores were as follows:

Leo May	17 - 15
Peter Ward	14 - 23
Chris Daniels	20 - 18
Richard Shelley	20 - 21
Paul May	24 - 15
Russell Morgan	26 - 13

So a good season so far in winning the Group and setting up the Quarter final next against Devon which will be played at Dorchester BC in Dorset in a fortnight on Saturday 23 July. Revenge for previous defeats would be a great tonic and put us into the National Championship Finals again next month.

There was a good crowd at Atherley today and the noise generated was a real boost – it would be good to have that same level of support at Dorchester....