

Winter County Cup 2015

Ladies Division 4b: Barnstaple

Friday 27th November 2015 – Devon versus Hampshire and the IOW: (Devon lose 3-6)

Team (in playing order): Emma Hurst, Kate Brown, Lucy Gill, Kendal Brown, Emily Staddon, Abbi Skelley. Reserve: Rachel Williams

Unfortunately, Devon ladies weren't to have the best starts to the competition this year, as the opposition were strong on the opening day. Abbi Skelley and Emily Staddon played exceptionally well on their debuts for Devon ladies and were unlucky to lose their singles matches, Abbi particularly, having a long three set match at number 6, eventually going down 7-5 in the third set. Devon however, did get themselves on the scoreboard with the likes of Kendal Brown and Emma Hurst winning their doubles match and singles matches respectively, giving the Devon team some well-deserved rubbers at the end of the day.

Saturday 28th November 2015 – Devon versus Staffordshire: (Devon lose 2-7)

Team (in playing order): Emma Hurst, Kate Brown, Lucy Gill, Kendal brown, Abbi Skelley, Rachel Williams. Reserve: Lucy Gill

The second day of County Cup proved to be exciting and nerve racking! Kendal had a fantastic win at number 4 singles, playing absolutely brilliantly to add a rubber to the Devon board! Kate Brown also played well but was unlucky to lose 6-4 6-2 to the Staffs number 2 (a very spritely 15 year old!!) and Emma was unfortunately out played on this occasion against the Staffordshire number 1 player. Abbi Skelley was unlucky to be on the losing end of a long three setter (again), however Rachel Williams pulled a fantastic win out of the bag after being 4-1 down in the third set to claim victory at number 6. The doubles proved just as thrilling, however Emma Hurst sustained a back injury in the singles, so was unable to continue playing. This meant that Emily Staddon stepped in and teamed up with Kendal to make up Devon's first doubles pairing, however the three doubles matches didn't go Devon's way. It came down to the last pairing still on court with the overall score being 6-2 to Staffs. Although Devon had lost on day 2, every rubber counted and Kate and Rachel were into the third set championship tie break – winning it would gain an extra rubber for Devon ladies on day 2. As sad as it was, the Devon pair couldn't do it and lost the tie break.

Sunday 29th November 2014 – Devon versus Avon: (Devon lose 4-5)

Team (in playing order): Kate Brown, Lucy Gill, Kendal Brown, Emily Staddon, Abbi Skelley, Rachel Williams. Emma Hurst (injured).

So, to the third and final day. Devon had no wins, Avon had no wins, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight had 2 wins and Staffs had 2 wins. Devon ladies needed to get 5 rubbers to beat Avon and secure their position in Division 4b. The day started off with Rachel Williams, Abbi Skelley and Emily Staddon all involved in three set matches. As the captain, I could hardly watch and spent a lot of the time behind a pillar, however, when I did look, all players were giving it their all and giving 100% to try and get the wins that Devon really did need and deserve. Unfortunately, even though all players

did their best, we managed only one win from the first round. Emily Staddon finding her form when it counted, coming through her long three setter victorious. Devon 2-1 down. Could we turn it around??? Kendal started the comeback producing magnificent tennis yet again and got a win at number 3, Lucy Gill also played absolutely amazingly and beat an extremely solid player at number 2: Devon 3-3. Kate then ventured out at number 1, to play a match tight junior (yes.....a 14 year old!!) and lost 6-4 6-2. Going into the doubles, Devon needed 2 out of 3 wins. Kendal and Kate teamed up again at number 1 pair to produce a convincing win against the Avon first pair, Emily and Abbi were unable to get a victory at number 3. It was down to Rachel Williams and Lucy Gill to bring home the win for Devon ladies and sure enough, it went to a third set championship tie break (what a surprise!) Again, I could hardly watch, so was relying on my team mates to keep me informed on what was happening, as I was hiding behind my hands! The tie break seemed to go on forever with both sets of players remaining calm and collected on court (although I am sure they didn't feel it). In the end, it wasn't meant to be. Devon gave it their all but were out played in the end by the pair from Avon. Devon lost 5-4.

Final positions in Division 4b:

Staffordshire

Hampshire and the IOW

Avon

Devon

Not such a successful weekend of tennis this time, however, the girls were a pleasure to be with (as always).

Kate Brown (Captain)