



2017 MASTER HOME INTERNATIONAL WALES

Event Dates:	Friday 21 st - Saturday 22 nd Apr 2017		
Address:	Sport Wales National Centre (SWNC), Sophia Gardens, Cardiff, and Cardiff Squash Rackets Club, Ryder Street, Cardiff		
England Teams:	Men's O50	Men's O70	Women's O35/O45
	Eamonn Price (Captain) Jonathan Foster Duane Harrison Peter Lonsdale Steve Martin Steve McLoughlin	Martin Pearse (Captain) Roger Booker Christopher Goodbourn John Robertson David Scurlock Russell Shipton Adrian Wright	Rachel Woolford (Captain) Mandy Akin Rose Bamber Hilary Kenyon Fran Wallis Shelley Walsh

MENS OVER 50 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		20	20	20	60	1
	4		5	2	11	4
	1	18		0	19	3
	3	20	20		43	2

MENS OVER 50 REPORT

Following the lengthy qualifying season and a tricky selection process, the England Mens Over 50 squad was chosen. Given the age category, maybe it was not surprising that this was not the end of the story. First of all, Darren Withey withdrew from the reserve slot, and then Marc Aldridge succumbed to an elbow injury in early April. This resulted in Steve Martin first taking on the reserve position and then joining the team. Finally, during the week of the event, Jon Foster suffered a shoulder injury which rendered him unable to play, but he made the trip to Cardiff with his wife, Helen, and son, Ben, and they all provided valuable support along with Steve's wife, Alison....although sightings of Alison were constrained by the lure of Cardiff's boutiques and fine dining....

Four of the five fit team members assembled at 4pm at the traditional Cardiff SC and then Steve McLoughlin arrived minutes before kick-off muttering about road works.....

After a couple of hasty photos sporting our wristbands provided by Duane and the new, flashy England gear, the first fixture against Ireland commenced. First on, making his England debut, was Yorkshire's Steve Martin at 5. After losing an edgy first game 11/6, Steve came though 3/1, winning a tight fourth 11/9. At 3, Kent's Duane Harrison followed, but found himself 2/1 down against the shot-maker Shaun McKee. This was partly due to a loss of concentration following an extended and unwelcome grope from Shaun, who was trying everything! Duane regained his composure and came through in 5. McLoughlin, Lonsdale and Price then completed a 5/0 victory, although Peter, as usual, threatened to get his 5 games' money's worth, but came home in 4.

Following dinner at the Club, we checked in at the Copthorne for a quick beer in the bar before a good night's sleep ahead of Scotland on Saturday morning. Unfortunately, we encountered the Scottish advance party of (non-playing) Frank and Jan Ellis. Despite their efforts, the team survived relatively unscathed and followed the Captain to bed shortly after midnight.....or did they....?

The main Scottish forces awaited us at 930 on Saturday morning, and, despite some competitive games, the team won 5/0 looking more relaxed and surprisingly sharp, with only Peter Lonsdale extending his court time by being taken to four games.



Following an extensive buffet, our final and deciding match was against well supported home team Wales, who had only dropped 2 games in their two 5/0 victories thus far. Showing great determination and concentration, Martin, Harrison and McLoughlin sealed the title retention with tight, competitive 3/0 victories at 5, 1 and 3. McLoughlin's win came despite a head butt and possible broken cheekbone from Jon Evans, but this should only add to his craggy, good looks. Keen supporter Alison had reappeared just in time to catch this on camera and was immediately roped in for photo and video duty, which resulted in some interesting, unintended voice overs preventing wider dissemination..... Playing accurate squash, Lonsdale then overcame the talented ex number 1, Steve Evans in 4 close games, leaving the skipper for the last match of the weekend. The Welsh number 2, Richard Murphy, played attacking, almost error-free squash and was looking good at 10/8 up in the fifth. Price saved those 2 match balls and a couple more, before sneaking home with a very lucky 15/13 victory to preserve the undefeated record.

A couple of beers and Chelsea 4, Spurs 2 in the FA Cup semi-final slightly delayed the team before dinner at 730. A feast of beef (!) followed with Jon's extra helping, and we were then entertained by Welsh MC, Mike Workman, who conducted the presentations with his usual extended witticisms. The Captain's joke free speech was well(ish) received and the trophy was left in Steve McLoughlin's capable hands (for hard-working Dave Hardern's records - thanks, Dave). A moment was taken to remember the greatly-missed ex-England Captain, Colin Payne, who passed away in 2016. RIP Colin.

The evening's celebrations continued with the highlight being the Welsh rendition of Tom Jones' Delilah, starring Richard Murphy, Steve Evans and Lynne Davies.....and with the lowlight bring the dodgy Welsh rendition of the hokey-kokey starring Richard Murphy, Steve Evans, Lynne Davies and Peter Lonsdale....

This concluded a very successful and enjoyable weekend for the England team, with thanks to Wales Squash, the 2 clubs, organisers Lynne Davies and Mike Workman, the refs and, very importantly, our opponents with whom we look forward to future battles in the coming years.

MENS OVER 70 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		20	20	20	60	1
	1		8	15	24	4
	0	16		8	24	3
	1	8	16		25	2

MENS OVER 70 REPORT



England Over 70's congregated in the Cophorne Hotel, some meeting for the first time!

The original six, Chris Goodbourn, Adrian Wright, Martin Pearse, David Scurlock, Russ Shipton and Roger Booker were joined by John Robertson who coached for years at Cardiff Squash Club and whose son has represented Wales!

Match v Ireland: Cardiff SRC, Friday 5pm

First match was Roger Booker who was on a mission and it was obvious his power and reverse angles were too much, but Myron Evans did have game ball in the third! Martin Pearse made it 2-0 with a 3-1 win over old adversary and fellow Chairman, Ciaran Roche and Chris Goodbourn sealed the victory: 15/11 15/6 15/8 over Frank Fahey.

Russell Shipton then recorded a 3-0 on his debut v Clive Gilmour and a patient Adrian Wright took out Harry Cullen, 3, 11 and 7.

England 5 v Ireland 0

With Wales beating Scotland 3-2, we played the latter first up on the Saturday. Roger immediately put his opponent to the sword, trust me, that reverse angle is a devastating shot as Rod Boswell found out in The World's when Norbert Kornyei exclusively employed it. Rarely seen but always a winner.

Dave Scurlock made his debut at no 3 and took out 80-year-old Tom Kane, but in a competitive match. Kane, if he enters the O80 British Open, would easily be favourite.

Goodbourn eased through at no 1 against Bernard Starkey, as did his Middlesex team mate, Russell Shipton over Chris Jeffery. Finally, Adrian Wright saw off the difficult Ken Reid, more easily than anticipated: 15/9 15/7 15/12.

England 5 v Scotland 0

Finally, Wales were the last, Sat, 2.30pm at the Welsh Institute of Sport

Debut was given to John Robertson against Duncan Jones. A nip and Tuck match, but in the end Robertson came through: 15/11 12/15 15/11 15/10. Martin Pearse at 3, then won 3-0 over the talented (but lazy, as he will himself admit) Gary Williams and Chris Goodbourn won 3-0 over Leighton Jenkins. Finally, Dave Scurlock and Adrian Wright wrapped up a 5-0 with a brace of 3-0's versus Peter Kerry and evergreen 78-year-old Brian Phillips.

England 5 v Wales 0

Thanks to Lynne Davies, Mike Workman, Roy Gingell and all the Refs, Cardiff SRC for all the food and hospitality. The weekend concluded with a Dinner Dance at The Copthorne and was very convivial. Suffice to say, when the music started, all the 70's were back in the bar where they could understand what was being said!



WOMENS OVER 50 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		20	14	20	54	1
	0		2	2	4	4
	6	20		11	37	2
	0	20	16		36	3

WOMENS OVER 50 REPORT



The first of the 2017 Home Internationals was in Cardiff, with matches taking place at both Cardiff Squash Club and the Welsh National Sports Centre. What a centre that is - a wonderful multi-sport facility where a proud nation celebrates past glories and nurtures future success. The perfect venue for us! So, onto the event:

Task 1 Assemble the squad at the right venue. Tick!

Task 2 Assess ailments, current form and agree playing order. Not quite as straightforward as task 1 but an eventual Tick!

Task 3 Photoshoot - how many pictures?? Tick!

Task 4 5pm play starts. No tick!

There was no sign of the Irish ladies team

5.15pm Still no team

5.30pm Ah ha! Finally, the lilting tones of the Irish could be heard muttering reasons such as early flights, oversleeping and unknown start times

Whatever! They were here now so play could start and I'm pleased to report that the English ladies all put in fine performances to take the tie without loss of a single game. Tick!

Friday evening dinner was at Cardiff SC and Fran, wishing to demonstrate her ambition to join the design team at iPROSPORTS, decided to give Hils a tattoo. See photo below and send your feedback to iPRO - the kit in 2018 could be interesting! It was whilst enjoying this relaxing evening and musing over the days events that we received unexpected news of a Wales win over Scotland. Wow! Could it be that Wales would give us the toughest challenge this year, on their home soil? Scheduled to play the Scots at 9.30 am and with our team selection discussed, a relaxing and early night was required. Tick - at least as far as I know!



Saturday am, back at Cardiff SC and feeling confident we were strong enough to get past the Scots, a quick hit and affirmation from players before submitting the team. Shelly was first on against the experienced Christine. Shelly struggled to get a length and gave Christine every opportunity to volley, which she gleefully took and caused all sorts of grief. First game to the Scots 2-15. Time for a Captains chat to settle the nerves and offer a game plan - thump the ball into the back corners. Highly technical! Game two saw a slight improvement but not enough to win - up to 9 nine points now. Shame we weren't playing HiHo!! With two games lost it was time for a qualified coach to go down for a chat. Hm! Seems that it doesn't matter how good the advice, it's down to the player to perform and unfortunately it wasn't to be for Shelly on this occasion. She went down 8-15 in the third to give the Scots the opening fixture

Mandy, an experienced player with somewhere in the region of 19 HI's behind her, understood that nerves needed to be settled and with the loss of just 12 points she soon equalised the tie. So on to the much-anticipated top strings Rose v Fiona. A repeat of the National Championships final in Feb where a heavily taped Rose scraped through 15-13 in the 5th. Feeling slightly unsettled at losing the 5th string, we hoped that a fitter, stronger Rose would provide us with a more comfortable win this time

The match that followed was one of the most competitive Masters matches I've seen since, let me think..... oh yes the finals in Feb between the same two players! Fiona was looking sharp and clearly up for a battle, an error free performance coupled with her incredible speed gave her a 2 game lead. At this stage we'd take a repeat of the Nationals result! Rose was clearly up for it too and the game progressed with neither player able to take a clear lead. Rose had game points, Fiona had match points and the gallery were divided. Finally, an error from Rose followed by a lovely xcourt drop from Fiona and she had the 2 point margin needed to win a fabulous contest. Well done Fiona!

At this stage the 'Ticks' have gone AWOL and things were not going to plan. At 1-2 down nerves were jangling in the English camp but still believed we could win. Mind you, so did the Scots at this stage

With no margin for error, or injury, Fran took to the court. Fran is another highly experienced player with 16 caps to her name and, like Mandy, she knew there was a job to be done and she certainly didn't waste any time doing it. Parity restored at two all and it all hinged on the number 2 strings, Rach v Eunice and with no previous history to go by, this could have turned into a tense encounter. Fortunately, I was able to put in a decent performance to give us the third win. Tick!

A much-deserved break and a bit of recovery time before heading over to the National Sports Centre for our final encounter against the Welsh team who, you will recall had beaten the Scots! We fielded our strongest team which meant Hilary came in at fifth string and got us off to an ideal start with a comprehensive 3 - 0 win. Setting the tone, this score line was to be repeated firstly by Mandy, then Rose, Fran and Rachel. BIG TICK and a sigh of relief as we became Champions again and retained the trophy. Well done ladies - a great team effort

Champagne celebrations preceded an enjoyable presentation dinner. Thanks were extended to our hosts Wales Squash, the clubs for giving up their courts, Lynne for her organisation ensuring the event was a success, the refs who took away the pressure of having to mark and, of course, to our opponents for whom we have the utmost respect and friendship

On a personal note, I would like to say how delighted I am to have been Captain again and, exactly as last year, the camaraderie between all of the players was first class and made the job of Captain a pleasure. So, just the one final Tick for the team!

Rachel Woolford
W05's Captain 2017