

2022 MASTER HOME INTERNATIONAL ENGLAND

Event Dates:	Friday 13 th - Saturday 14 th May 2022		
Address:	Nottingham Squash Club		
England Teams:	Men's O35	Men's O55	Women's O55
	Phil Nightingale (Captain) Rory Pennell Jason Pike Phil Rushworth Nick Sutcliffe Tony Webb	Ray Burke MBE (Captain) Alex Betts Peter Gunter Eamonn Price Simon Spencer Nigel Stiles	Mandy Akin (Captain) Karen Hume Lisa Tolhurst Bev Vatcher Fran Wallis Karen Webb
	Men's O75		
	James Dubois (Captain) Chris Ansell Thomas Elves David Hardern Martin Pearce Adrian Wright		

MENS OVER 35 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		20	20	17	57	1
	0		6	4	10	4
	1	18		7	26	3
	4	19	18		41	2

MENS OVER 35 REPORT

After a three-year hiatus the England over 35 team regathered to defend their home international title, this time as hosts at Nottingham Squash Club. It was a privilege to be selected to captain having previously been part of the over 35's in 2018 and 2019 where we won in Wales and Ireland respectively.

The squad this year was the strongest I've been part of and had incredible depth the whole way through Home Internationals 2022. However, we were taking nothing to chance knowing that our first match against Wales on the Friday would in many ways decide the title.

First up at number five was Jason Pike who has had a good first season in the Masters. He dealt well with Joe Preece who is an ex-Welsh International Junior and despite some tight ends in some of the games he managed to convert a 3-0 win. Next up at three was one of the most entertaining matches of the weekend between Rory Pennell and Steve Colaruso. The combination of Rory attacking the nick from all areas and Steve's relentless retrieving and diving made quite a spectacle. Rory managed to get the 3-1 win to take us 2-0 up.



Coming at number one Nick Sutcliffe (who flew in from the USA) was facing a current PSA player and Welsh International Peter Creed. Nick fought valiantly but lost three nil in a tight match where he showed his athleticism and ability.

Captain Phil Nightingale came in at number four seeking to close out the match for England. He faced a strong opponent in Alexis Cole but managed to control the first two games. The third was tight, however a missed opportunity on a volley from Alexis saw Phil win the match 12-10 in the third and thereby the match overall. Phil Rushworth (one of the England Academy coaches who had his cap for England delayed from 2020 due to Covid) returned to the team after reaching the O35 National Closed final. He showed his full range of skills to win against another ex-Welsh International Junior Jamie Tthopi in three games.

We went into the Ireland match on Saturday morning feeling confident as we had good points from our win against Wales. Ireland were unable to bring some of their stronger players over however, as always, it was a good and fun match with them but was a relatively straightforward affair with all players winning three nil.



Notable mention is to be made of Tony Webb who made his debut England cap (having also had it delayed from 2020). He played brilliantly at number 5 to set us up with the first victory in the match going through his opponent three nil. This was followed by victory for all remaining strings for England as we took a five-nil win.

We were in a strong position to close out the title by the time we came to play Scotland on Saturday afternoon. Scotland had a good squad but ultimately, we were all too strong for them and all players won their matches to give us a five nil win and a conclusive point score to take the overall Home Internationals trophy.



It was a great weekend had by all that had been long awaited after the Covid interruptions and it was fantastic to win the gold on home soil.

Many thanks to the England Squash Masters team, (especially Brian Brock) for organising everything and to Allen Barwise for overseeing the event.

Phil Nightingale
Team Captain

MENS OVER 55 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		20	18	19	57	1
	3		7	9	19	4
	4	16		14	34	2
	3	16	7		26	3

MENS OVER 55 REPORT



The over 55 team was certainly a very strong team selection and playing order was going to be key. The players met up at the Nottingham Squash Club and got off to a bad start with the potential number 2 Alex Betts on the day of the event tweaking his calf however, with the first and potentially the hardest match against Wales, I had no option but to leave him out of the squad.

Day 1 England v Wales

Number 5's - Nigel Stiles on his first England appearance went on first against Paul Murphy however, Nigel showed no signs of nerves and had no problem with his unique style comfortably winning 3-0.

Number 3's - Simon Spencer the second player with his first England cap (no relation to Frank) was on next against a very experienced Gary Hales but once again showing no signs of nerves won 3-0 in under 20 minutes - great effort!

Number 1's - No 1's Eamonn Price came up against Jon Evans. This game on paper looked to be an exciting game however, Jon not having played much prior to the event was totally outplayed and outclassed by Eamonn, who won very comfortably in 21 minutes.

Number 4's - Peter Gunter up against Mike Logan. This game was all one sided from start to finish and Peter used his experience and dominated this quick game, finishing 3-0.

Number 2's - Ray Burke MBE vs Richard Murphy. Although the match was won at this stage Ray wanted to make it a clean sweep. This was the string of the session. Ray took the first with some outstanding long rallies, the second game then went to Richard in what was a cat and mouse game. Ray then took the 3rd and Richard the 4th with some brutal rallies. It was all down to the 5th. Again, the rallies were long and hard, however Ray got to 10/7 match ball, but it was not meant to be with a brilliant come back Richard won 12/10 England 4 - Wales 1.



Day 2 Morning Session England vs Ireland

No 5's - Nigel Stiles up against David Nolan and once again Nigel showed no sign of nerves cruising his first game 11/1 a little more difficult after that, but a comfortable 3-0.

No 3's - In the first game Simon Spencer, who was playing a very experienced Tom Crow, came out on top winning 11/7. The 2nd game was completely different Simon cruised an 11/1 game almost thinking that was that. Simon eased off and was taken by surprise and was beaten easily 4/11. Was this going to be a 5 setter? After some comforting words from the Captain, Simon went on to win and take the match 3-1.

No 1's - After 2 games of superb rallying and unbelievable shots Eamonn Price found himself 2-0 up against the very dynamic Andre Maur. However, Andre came out fighting and took the 3rd. The 4th game showed why Eamonn has not lost in 10 years and dominated the 4th to win the match.

No 4's - A fresh looking Peter Gunter was against David Hazard to say that this game had Peter in total control from start to finish would be an understatement. He rarely gave David a chance taking the match 3-0 in 15 minutes.

No 2's - Ray Burke MBE up against Gerry Callahan at the same stage with the session in the bag. Ray wanted a clean sweep and that's what he got, all but dropping a game, the match was over in 21 minutes to take the 5-0 win.

Day 2 Afternoon Session England vs Scotland

After a long consultation with Alex Betts it was decided not to risk further injury so yet again the debut boy was first up.

No 5's - Nigel Stiles last match of the day up against Billy Gregor. This game was all one-way, Nigel took his last match 3-0 not dropping a game in the tournament.

No 3's - Simon Spencer up against a very athletic looking Ian Green. The start of the game had some great rallies and fantastic pick-ups, however Simon took the game. This set the bar and Simon kept up the phenomenal pressure to once again win 3-0.

No 1's - Eamonn Price against Paul Jenkins, a player of unknown quality to the English. If England win this match they would take the title. However, the first game did not go to plan with Paul taking every volley opportunity he could to win 11/6. The 2nd game Eamonn tried everything to pick up pinpoint accuracy shots from Paul and succeeded and Paul had no comeback 1-1 in games. A thrilling 3rd game with shots and rallies coming in abundance, but Paul took the third. The 4th game Eamonn gave everything he had only to lose 11/3 in the 4th his first loss in ten years of Home Internationals (not a bad record to have).

No 4's - Peter Gunter up against David Legge again a player of unknown qualities. Peter had one thing in mind and that was to show why he was selected to play for England. He totally outclassed his opponent from start to finish winning 3-0 in 13 minutes.

No 2's - Ray Burke MBE against Collin Grant who had previously beaten the Welsh Number 2 comfortably. However, as Ray's last match as captain was about to start, he was not about to give up lightly and dropping only one game came through a match that had everything from great nicks, long rallies, and the unusual shots to win 3-1. As his first year as captain the team win the Home Internationals Champions 2022.



A special thank you has to go to Allen Barwise and his team for a professionally run event from start to finish - fantastic job well done!

Ray Burke MBE
Team Captain

MENS OVER 75 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		12	12	9	33	1
	2		9	3	14	3
	2	5		4	11	4
	3	11	11		25	2

MENS OVER 75 REPORT

James Dubois was in his debut International and had been appointed Captain despite not knowing what he was doing. How fortunate then to have three experienced team players in Adrian Wright, Martin Pearse and Chris Ansell who have won countless events at all levels and Captained numerous Teams. They were supported by Dave Hardern and Tommy Elves as potential players but in the event they were not called upon to play. However, with a four-man squad and a combined age in excess of 300 years you have to plan for all eventualities.



First up was Wales. Our 3rd string was Chris Ansell who looked very comfortable as he disposed of Peter Kerry 3/0. Then James Dubois outplayed their Number 1, Duncan Jones, also 3/0. In each match we had conceded 11 points. Finally, our Number 2, Adrian Wright was up against the experienced Leighton Jenkins. Adrian is 81 years' young and had some trouble with his breathing as he just lost the opener 13/11. Sadly, he could not quite get into his stride and then went down 11/9 and 11/8. So, an overall team win 2/1.

Next day saw Adrian take a late nap to be replaced by the legendary Martin Pearse who had just celebrated his 76th birthday the previous day. Ireland had also won their first match 2/1 so this looked like the most important event. Martin took the first 11/5 against Barry Cullinane who promptly levelled the match at 1-1. However, Martin's years of experience showed as he swept through the last two games 11/8, 11/8 to win 3/1.

James, playing their Number 1, Ciaran Roche started impressively 11/3 and then dozed off while Ciaran took control of the second game with possible game points. However, Lucky Jim squeezed through 12/10 and then took the third.

Finally, Chris playing at 2 against Frank Fahey had a splendid battle in the first game, just losing it 15/13. However, he seemed to have worn-out his opponent as he swept through the next three games for an overall match result of 3/0.

In the afternoon, Chris opened for us against Scotland's Number 3 Ken Reid. Some were surprised to see Ken at 3 rather than 1 but he had recently had some surgery on his playing arm and Chris had a good 3/0 win. James was too strong for Andrew Duff with another 3/0 result and then a revived Adrian returned at Number 2 to play Bernard Starkey. Adrian had clearly decided to get his money's worth and keep the crowds on the edge of their seats as he dropped the first and third games to be trailing 2/1. However, his experience saw him take the final games 11/3 and 11/4 for an overall team win of 3/0.

So, a clear win for England this weekend and also for good humour and sportsmanship across all the teams.

It is no exaggeration when I say that I have just participated in a really memorable weekend in Nottingham. The honour of representing England as both a player and Team Captain will remain with me for the rest of my life. I have really enjoyed it all and so appreciated the warmth and support from all the other players irrespective of their age or origin. Once the combat ceased, played in true sporting fashion, all were united in our shared love of our sport.

I have participated in many tournaments and celebrations in the past 75 years and this was up there with the very best.



A massive thank you to the organisers, England Squash Masters, for a fantastic weekend of squash. Leading the O75s has been a humbling task when surrounded by the experience of my team members and entertaining squash legends Adrian Wright, Chris Ansell and Martin Pearse who all seem to have been round the block again and again.

James Dubois
Team Captain

WOMENS OVER 55 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		20	19	20	59	1
	2		2	6	10	4
	7	20		18	45	2
	2	17	5		24	3

WOMENS OVER 55 REPORT

After a few weeks of nervous conversations and team changes due to injuries, we arrived at Nottingham to start our campaign!



England vs Wales

We kicked off on Friday with what looked like being a tough match against Wales. First on court was Lisa Tolhurst playing her debut match for England, she was up against seasoned campaigner Kath Horler, a nervous start by Lisa saw Kath take the first game, but a different, more determined 'Lisa' came on court for the next 3 games, which gave us our first win. Next up was our seasoned campaigner, Karen Hume, who we pulled in at the last minute to replace the injured Hilary Kenyon. Karen used her power and experience to overcome Wales Captain Lynne Davies 3/0. Next up the Captain, Mandy Akin vs Jill Champion, Wales new No.1 who has previously played for England for around 22 years! A close first game saw Mandy game ball down but she used her skill, speed and experience to pull it back to take the game 13/11, after that Mandy continued to stay ahead through the next two games to take the match 3/0. This took the pressure off the last two players as Karen Webb stepped on court for her debut England match against the very experienced Wendy Norris. A nervous start by Karen saw the first game go to the wire but she managed to push through and take the game 13/11, after that she settled down to take the next two games with a little breathing space. Finally, on court was our very own Fran Wallis against the formidable Sian Johnson. Fran was a little out of practice having been suffering with a knee injury and had very little court time recently and Sian used her skill and experience to take the first game 11/6. Fran started to get into her stride and settled in to her hard-hitting game and took the next 3 games, improving in each game. As expected, it was a tough match, but we finally took the match 5-0 which was a great result.



England vs Ireland

Saturday morning and Ireland were our opponents and Lisa kicked us off with a very convincing 3/0 win. Next on court was Bev Vatcher having been out for a couple of months with a knee injury, so she was a little tentative with her movement to start with but gradually became more confident to secure another good 3/0 win. Next up Mandy Akin, winning a tight first game against Rosie Barry, but then going on to lose the second game, not being able to reproduce the form of Friday night, but she then got stuck in and took the next 2 games to take the match 3/1. Next up Karen Webb, again a nervous start saw her just drop the first game 12/14 after a hard battle. She came back on court and settled into her game and took the next 3 games to take the match 3/1, getting better and better as the match went on. Finally, Fran took to court against a very experienced Maureen Duke. The style of play between these two was so different, with Fran's hard hitting and Maureen's lob, drop game, it was a battle, but Fran used all of her skill and experience to take the match 3/0.

Another 5/0 win for England.

England vs Scotland

Finally, Scotland. It was all on this match as Scotland had also beaten both Wales and Ireland and the points difference was 2 in favour of England – Pressure!!!

First up Karen Webb up against Helen Cordinor, who was very fast and looked like she should be in the over 35's and not over 55's! Karen took the first two games which were hard fought by both players and then Helen came

back to take the third. Karen kept her cool and worked really hard to take the 4th game and the match 3/1. Next up was Karen Hume, having had a rest in the morning and ready to take on the experienced Claire Thompson. Karen took the first game comfortably 11/6, the next game didn't go to plan and Claire fought back to take that game. The next two games were tough with Karen taking the third but then Claire fighting back to take the fourth! The pressure was on but not seemingly for Karen in the fifth as she came back with a strong performance to take the game 11/2 and the match 3/2 – Phew! Next up Mandy Akin against Fiona McLean – many battles have been fought over the years with the majority of matches going to 5 and this was no exception. First game was tight with Fiona clinching it at 11/9. Mandy came back to take the second and Fiona took the third. In the fourth game Fiona decided to hit at least 7 balls straight into the tin off Mandy's serve, which was very welcome and allowed Mandy to take that game 11/1. In the fifth Fiona played the better squash and took the game 11/7. England 2 – Scotland 1. Next up Bev Vatcher, with the pressure on now and Bev showing a few nerves and still being a little tentative with her movement a tight first game saw Bev take it 13/11. Bev then showed her skill and took the next two games comfortably to win 3/0 and give England the Home Internationals title! Final match on court was Fran Wallis against Eunice Bond and a dead rubber but the way these two battled you'd never have known, so great to see. Eunice took a tight first game 14/12, but then Fran gradually found her form again and although the match was tough Fran's skill and experience showed through and she took the next three games to give England an overall 4/1 win.

Fantastic effort from a team who only had two good pairs of knees between the top four players and with those four players having very little court time over the past 2 months.

Also, fantastic effort from Lisa Tolhurst and Karen Webb on their debut for England.



Mandy Akin
Team Captain