2024 MASTER HOME INTERNATIONAL WALES

Event Dates:	Friday 3rd - Saturday 4th May 2024		
Address:	Sport Wales National Centre Cardiff and Cardiff Squash Club		
England Teams:	**Men's O35**	**Men's O55**	**Women's O55**
	David Palmer (Captain) James Snell Jamie Douglas John Welton Chris Hall Daniel West	Sam Hanbury (Captain) Stephen McLoughlin Andrew Eilfield Raymond Burke MBE Simon Spencer Martin Geear	Rose Bamber (Captain) Fran Wallis Izzy Bramhall Jillian Lilico Karen Webb Sue Smith
	Men's O75		
	Larry Grover (Captain) Barry Featherstone Robert Smith Martin Day		

MENS OVER 35 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		20	20	20	60	1
	0		6	14	20	3
	0	19		14	33	2
	0	8	9		17	4

MENS OVER 35 REPORT

The England Over 35's team arrived in Cardiff with no intentions of opening the door for their opponents. With families and supporters in tow, the team crossed the bridge with a point to prove.

The English team were feeling strong with the introduction of 4 new players James Snell, Chris Hall, Dan West and John Welton. Jamie Douglas and David Palmer were in their second year wearing the flag on their chest.

The first opponents in the firing line were the Irish. The Irish were missing their No.2 so the English took full advantage and were very unforgiving. The match score was 5-0 in matches, 20-0 in games, 165 points to 51 points.

As many took to Cardiff squash club for dinner, the English team took this time, like true professionals, to head home early, stretch, recover and prepare for the following days battles.

Saturday morning saw a warming sunshine on the National Sports Centre. The Scottish team made it to the courts nice and early to avoid the Southern suns rays; but on arrival they found 5 Englishmen warmed up and raring to go. Once again, the English 35's team were not here to build alliances and won the fixture 5-0 in matches, 20-0 in games, 165 points to 59 points.

Whilst the English fixtures had been fairly one-sided affairs, the Welsh were still slogging out their battle with the Irish. The Welsh legs had 2 hard battles for the first 2 fixtures on the Friday night and the Saturday morning; unfortunately for them they had narrowly lost both to Ireland and Scotland 3-2 in both ties. As they entered the final round, their legs were heavy and now had to summon the energy to compete with the relatively fresh English side. The English team were too lively and completed the weekend with another 5-0 win in matches, 20-0 in games, 165 points to 50 points.

The Saturday night celebrations began early for the players and their families but carried on late into the evening showing a great team spirit.

A special captains pick for player of the weekend goes to Jamie Douglas at No.3. Jamie has now earnt the nickname 'the terminator' after only dropping 28 points in 3 matches over the entire weekend.

David Palmer
Team Captain

MENS OVER 55 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		20	18	18	56	1
	1		6	5	12	4
	5	18		9	32	3
	4	17	14		35	2

MENS OVER 55 REPORT

It was an honour to be asked to Captain the England team for the first time and I was very much looking forward to the experience, although I made somewhat of a schoolboy error in checking the trophy pre-tournament to see that the O55 age group are unbeaten thus far so the pressure to win went up an extra notch….a fact of which I was duly reminded of by fellow team member Andrew Eilfield just in case I missed it!

Session1 vs Ireland

First up was the experienced Ray Burke MBE at #5 against Geoff Wales, both players took a few points to settle into the game with the all-important first point at stake, having said that it took Ray all of three rallies before the infamous Burke "reverse boast" came into play! Ray took the first game 11/8 in a tight affair before then hitting his stride with some solid hitting, gradually getting stronger as the match went on to win the next two games 11/6 11/4 to get the first point on the board and settle the team.

Up next at #3 was Martin Geear vs the flamboyant shot maker Andre Maur, the first game was very close with Martin initially struggling with the deception and unpredictable shots of the Irishman to narrowly lose the first game 11/9, Martin then came in to his own and started to impose his precise line and length hitting before then playing short to catch Andre at the back of the court, Martin never looked back, going on to take next three games to win 3-1, a great comeback!

At #1 was the veteran of many Home Internationals Steve Mcloughlin vs Brian Lalor, Steve took a bit of time to get going (probably due to only doing 50k on the bike as a warm up rather than the usual 100!), and with some crisp hitting by the Irishman the first game was tight, Steve showed his experience though, playing solid squash with very few errors, taking the first game11/8, the usual strong movement and retrieval around the court began put more pressure on Brian to hit winners and subsequent errors crept in, Steve winning the next two comfortably to take the first session for England.

At #4 was Andrew Eilfield whose last International outing was in the O45s category, a welcome return to the international fold in the O55's saw Andrew vs Gerry Callahan, the Englishman was a man on a mission, the ten year sabbatical clearly not hindering his competitive instincts, taking the first game 11/0 and only allowing his opponent a further eight points in the remaining two games, enough said! Although the Englishman did receive a warning in game two for bouncing the ball a whole six times before serving! I think "six bounces" Eilfield may well stick Andrew!

To end the first session at the # 2 string was Simon Spencer vs Adrian Leeson, both players know how to strike a ball and there was some seriously hard hitting on display, Simon took the first game 11/6, as the second game went on it was clear this was an important game in the match, a very closely fought long game saw Simon sneak it 11/9 to go 2-0 up, a crucial one to win, in the third game Simon started to mix the pace up really well following up hard hitting with some lovely short volley and straight drops to win 11/4 and secure maximum points.

5-0 session win

Session 2 vs Scotland

On paper a tricky morning session was on the cards against Scotland, having had the previous night off, Captain Sam Hanbury came in at #5 vs Brain Robertson giving Ray Burke a well deserved lie in! The early start of 9:30 showed in the first few rallies but the game soon got going, Sam won the first game fairly comfortably 11/5 with some solid hitting, he also took the second game although that was trickier, winning it 11/8 working hard to the front of the court, Brian took the third game 11/8 playing some deft volley and straight drops, however, Sam came back strongly in the fourth keeping the ball away from the formidable Scottish backhand, digging in to win the match 3-1, first point on the board.

Next up at #3 Martin Geear vs Colin Grant, this looked a very difficult match that was very hard to call before the action started, from the outset Martin went about his business with quiet aplomb, in a great match to watch, Martin showed some very precise shot making keeping everything tight and moving the Scotsman around for which he could find no answer, Martin kept Colin at arms length all match which is no easy task against such a tough competitor to win 3-0, 11/9 11/4 11/7 for his best performance of the weekend.

At #1 Steve Mcloughlin vs Barry Sutherland, two very different players with contrasting styles, Steve more traditional with Barry very tricky to read with lots of holds and unorthodox shot making. Barry took the first game 13/11 with Steve struggling to read the Scotsman, the next two games were very tight, Steve taking them both 12/10 as he really dug in with some hard movements front and back and also coming out with some great shots of his own to start moving his bigger opponent around with some great boasts. At 2-1 up Steve started to play some

lovely counter drops as Barry tired taking the final game 11/5 to win 3-1, a great effort against a tricky opponent and securing the session win.

At #4 Andrew Eilfield vs Andy Meldrum, Andrew showed the same fierce intensity in this match as he had the previous day, clearly a man looking for an early shower as again he took the first game 11/0, this took the wind out of the sales of the Scotsman of which Andy never recovered, struggling with his movement to the front only winning another 9 points in the match, both opponents of Andrew coming up against a man in form this weekend after playing pretty much fault free squash

The final match saw #2 Simon Spencer vs Paul Jenkins, another tough match to call that went back and forth throughout, the first game was tight, Simon showing his trademark hard aggressive hitting with Paul trying to take it early and hitting plenty of short drop volleys straight and cross court to turn Simon. Paul took the first game 11/9 which seemed to fire Simon up and he came fast out of the blocks to take the second 11/3. The third game was crucial and very tense, both players trying to get an edge before the Scotsman took it 13/11, in the fourth game Paul went for everything and it appeared to come off as he took the match 3-1.

Session win 4-1

Session 3 vs Wales

This was the weekend decider, both teams winning their previous two matches so it was all the play for!

Ray in his pre-match warm-up!

Up first #5 Ray Burke vs Ian Howarth, I think Ray's pre-match warm up routine may well take on as it was imperative to get the first point on the board in this crucial tie and Ray duly obliged, it was no easy task though as the Welshman was a very tricky opponent with the ability to hit unorthodox shots and liked a joke with the referee! It would have been easy for Ray to lose focus but he was not fazed and took the all-important first game 13/11, Ray stayed on the

job in hand to comfortably win the second, the final game was tighter but Ray played the big points really well to take it 11/9…a great win to set the tone for the rest of the team.

3 next, Martin Geear vs Ian Fenner-Evans, A tight first game with both players pushing the ball around nicely and making each other work hard, there was nothing in it with Martin eventually taking it 14/12, The Englishman took control in the next two games though with his usual precision and some great straight drops to come through 3-0, leaving Martin unbeaten throughout the tournament at #3, no mean feat.

The #1 string was Steve Mcloughlin vs Steve Evans, this was always going to be a brutal match up, both unbeaten and 0 pct body fat between them! The first two games had some lung busting rallies of real quality, Mcloughlin taking the first 12/10 before Evans came back and took the important second game 17/15 in a real ding dong. This took it out of Mcloughlin following his exertions in the morning session with the Welshman taking next two games to win the match.

At #4 and with the match finely balanced at 2-1 to England, it was Sam Hanbury vs Mark Jones, a win needed to take the tie. Sam came out like a man possessed, with his hard hitting and quick movement proving to much for his opponent taking the first game11/6, it was more of the same in the next two games with Sam keen not to give Mark any chance to get into the match eventually prevailing 3-0 to take the match. England retain the trophy for another year!

Last but by no means least at #2 Simon Spencer vs Richard Murphy. The first game was close with the impressive court coverage of the Welshman enough to take the spoils 11/8, Simon then turned things up a notch and with a steely determination following his earlier loss and some aggressive hitting mixed with a subtle short game Simon took the next three games 11/9 11/9 11/5 to win the match.

Session win 4-1

Finally, I would personally like to thank the team, not only for playing some great squash to retain the cup, but for making my debut as Captain such a pleasure and thanks to the Scottish, Irish and Welsh teams for a great competitive tournament with some very high-quality squash played in the best of spirits.

Thanks to CSRC for their hospitality in hosting all three of our matches, Russell the tournament Director and to the markers for their hard work in what can be a difficult job at times!

Thanks also to Allen Barwise and Brian Brock for organising these excellent events.
A mention also for Gavin Roger-lund who was due to make his debut this weekend but sadly had to pull out injured. Get well soon Gavin!

Sam Hanbury
Team Captain

WOMENS OVER 55 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		20	20	20	60	1
	2		4	2	8	4
	0	18		3	21	3
	2	20	20		42	2

WOMENS OVER 55 REPORT

It was a great honour to be given the opportunity to captain the team this Year in Cardiff, and having played in the team last year, I was aware of the challenge ahead. Our team bonded well early on, supported each other on and off court which resulted in a wonderful team spirit throughout the tournament.

Our Friday evening match was on a very warm court at the Cardiff Squash Club against Ireland. Sue #5 was first up winning comfortably 3-0. Her opposition was ambidextrous and constantly swapped hands in the rally really testing the focus. Fran #3 had a tough 3-2 match against a tricky player. She won the first and was 2-1 down and getting rattled but controlled the rallies in the 4th & 5th game to turn the match back in her favour. Rose #1 looked fairly comfortable in the 3-0 win, although faced some unpredictable shots from the opponent. Karen #4 won 3-0 although played too many unforced errors in the first game and battled to feel comfortable with the serve. Once she got the serve under control you could visibly see her confidence grow, winning easily from there on. Izzy #2 also won 3-0 controlling the game well from the start against another unorthodox and tricky player.

WELSH and COUNTY SQUASH LEAGUES

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03/05/24 DATE

MH1 DIVISION

PLAYED AT Cardiff SC

START TIME 4pm

- Incorrectly entered detail will result in PENALTY POINTS being deducted from guilty team's score.
- Referees must be registered to gain bonus point.

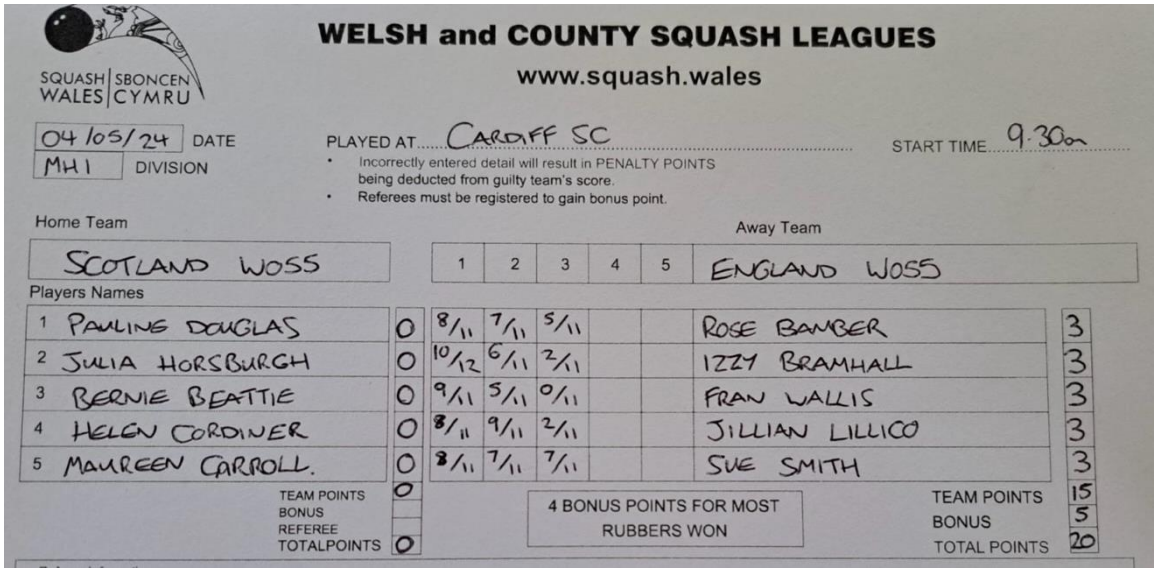
Home Team: ENGLAND W055		1	2	3	4	5	Away Team: IRELAND W055	
Players Names								
1 ROSE BAMBER	3	11/3	11/1	11/2			BEVERLY SCOTT	0
2 IZZY BRAMHALL	3	11/4	11/5	11/8			MAUREEN DUKE	0
3 FRAN WALLIS	3	11/5	7/11	10/12	11/5	11/6	DYMPNA RIORDAN	2
4 KAREN WEBB	3	11/7	11/1	11/2			JOSIE GROGAN	0
5 SUE SMITH.	3	11/1	11/2	11/0			SUZANNE DOYLE	0
TEAM POINTS	15						TEAM POINTS	2
BONUS	5						BONUS	
REFEREE								
TOTALPOINTS	20						TOTAL POINTS	2

4 BONUS POINTS FOR MOST RUBBERS WON

Referee Information Names ..... Reg No .....

Comments .....

We had an early start on Saturday morning at the same venue as the previous evening. This time we knew to ask for the on-court heating to be turned off as it was also a sunny day, and the light was streaming through the glass ceiling above. Sue #5 got us off to a good start with some clean hitting in a 3-0 win. Despite nerves at the start and professing to hate running to the front, she demonstrated how well she could do it to win a closer match than the score reflected. Fran #3 played with much more assurance after day one nerves. A comfortable 3-0 win, even winning match point with her first straight drop. Rose #1 played with good control against a very experienced player taking the match 3-0. As her confidence grew so too did her ability to play some attacking shots, adding variety to the rallies. Jillian #4 also won 3-0 with a solid performance and a structured game plan. Foot-fault calls against her helped focus the mind, and by game 3 the serve became the weapon, and her opponent was struggling to make a tight enough return. Izzy #2 had an unsettled first game 10/8 whilst assessing her opponents' skills and game plan. Thereafter, she settled and cruised through the next two games winning 3-0.



SQUASH WALES | SBONCEN CYMRU

WELSH and COUNTY SQUASH LEAGUES

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04/05/24 DATE

MH1 DIVISION

PLAYED AT Cardiff SC

START TIME 9.30am

- Incorrectly entered detail will result in PENALTY POINTS being deducted from guilty team's score.
- Referees must be registered to gain bonus point.

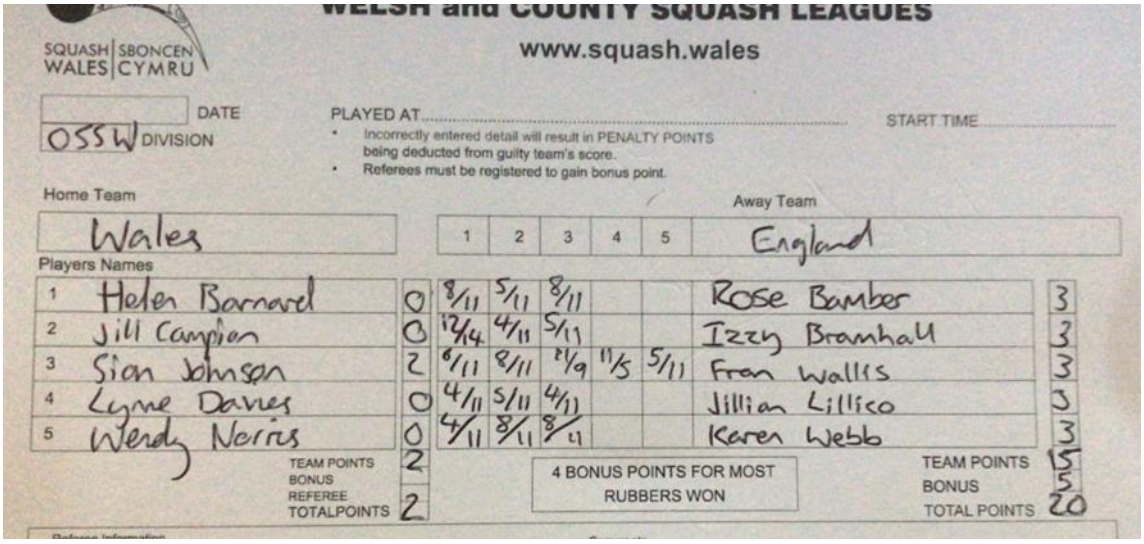
Home Team		1	2	3	4	5	Away Team	
Scotland W055							England W055	
Players Names								
1 Pauline Douglas	0	8/11	7/11	5/11			Rose Barber	3
2 Julia Horsburgh	0	10/12	6/11	2/11			Izzy Bramhall	3
3 Bernie Beattie	0	9/11	5/11	0/11			Fran Wallis	3
4 Helen Cordiner	0	8/11	9/11	2/11			Jillian Lillico	3
5 Maureen Carroll.	0	8/11	7/11	7/11			Sue Smith	3
TEAM POINTS	0						TEAM POINTS	15
BONUS							BONUS	5
REFEREE								
TOTALPOINTS	0						TOTAL POINTS	20

4 BONUS POINTS FOR MOST RUBBERS WON

We then moved on to the glass court at Sport Wales National Centre to play our final round against Team Wales. On paper, we were unsure how this would turn out as our opposition had also won their previous two matches.

Karen #5 made a strong confident start playing all around the court. A few tins in the 2nd game allowed a brief show of resistance by Wales, but Karen prevailed. A ding-dong third game saw Karen take it 3-0. Fran #3 was very determined and focused against an experienced Welsh player. She made use of a variety of shots and tactical play. A nail biting third game, finished with a dubious, debatable & unfavourable decision. (Well, that's what we thought anyway!) A loss of focus in 4th took us to 5 games which she claimed in style.

Rose #1 was determined to reverse the result of the previous Home Internationals where she had lost to Helen Barnard. Helen took the lead, but Rose came back with some smart shots to take the 1st game. A sound 2nd game with top quality play and holding her nerve for the last game saw Rose win 3-0 sealing the victory for Team England.



WELSH and COUNTY SQUASH LEAGUES

SQUASH WALES | SBONCEN CYMRU

www.squash.wales

DATE

OSSW DIVISION

PLAYED AT ..... START TIME .....

- Incorrectly entered detail will result in PENALTY POINTS being deducted from guilty team's score.
- Referees must be registered to gain bonus point.

Home Team: Wales		1	2	3	4	5	Away Team: England	
Players Names								
1 Helen Barnard	0	8/11	5/11	8/11			Rose Bamber	3
2 Jill Campion	0	12/4	4/11	5/11			Izzy Bramhall	3
3 Sian Johnson	2	6/11	8/11	21/9	11/5	5/11	Fran Wallis	3
4 Lynne Davies	0	4/11	5/11	4/11			Jillian Lillico	3
5 Wendy Norris	0	4/11	8/11	8/11			Karen Webb	3
TEAM POINTS	2						TEAM POINTS	15
BONUS							BONUS	5
REFEREE								
TOTALPOINTS	2						TOTAL POINTS	20

4 BONUS POINTS FOR MOST RUBBERS WON

Jillian 4 also won 3-0. A fairly comfortable 1st game, built on it with superb lobs and pacey tight drives in 2nd, right choice of shot at the crucial time to take the 3rd game and consolidate the win. Izzy #2 won her match 3-0. She kept focus to take the first game 14/12 with a colourful variety of shots, unphased and kept the pressure on in 2nd reading the play superbly and outplaying her opponent in the 3rd.

Soon after the match we rushed out to enjoy the sunshine and a celebratory drink, before heading back to the hotel to prepare for the evening dinner and Awards Ceremony.

My thanks go to Sue Smith and Steve Bamber for keeping notes regarding the player's performance in the matches to help me compile this report. Thank you too to Shannon Webb for doing the photography all weekend.
It was an outstanding team performance and an enjoyable weekend.

Rose Bamber
Team Captain

MENS OVER 75 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		11	11	12	34	1
	4		4	10	18	3
	4	12		10	26	2
	3	3	6		12	4

MENS OVER 75 REPORT

Our four-man team of Larry Grover Barry Featherstone Martin Day and Robert Smith arrived safely in good time at the Leonardo Hotel on Friday 3rd May. Our first match was to be played at Cardiff Squash Club at 6.30 pm and after a brisk walk to the club and completion of the meetings and photo sessions we were ready. Our first opponents

were Ireland and Martin was to begin against Seamus Daly. Seamus got off to a good start as Martin was adjusting to the low ceiling height. Despite losing the first game and almost the second Martin rallied to win 3-1. Next on was Barry against Ireland's very talented David Gotto. This was an excellent match heavily contested fluctuating one way and the other. After 5 hard fought games Barry arrived at 2 match points only to see David snatch them away and win 3-2. The decider was between Larry and Tim Murphy who was making his international debut. Larry took the initiative from the start not letting Tim into the match winning 3-0. **England 2 Ireland 1**.

The following morning we were to play Scotland at the National Sports Centre at the sensible hour of 12pm. We decided to keep the same team, so Martin was first up against Ken Reid and played extremely well not giving Ken many opportunities taking the match 3-0. The second was between 2 familiar foes Barry and Ian Ross. Somehow Barry managed to take the first 2 games, but Ian fought back to take the third. The fourth was very tight with Barry eventually obtaining a couple of match points. Ian showed his usual resilience and squeezed the fourth and won the match 3-2. The result came down to Larry versus Alex Everingham and despite losing the first game Larry scrambled through 3-1. **England 3 Scotland 1**.

Our final match was against Wales at the National Centre 4pm. Wales had the misfortune of losing their number one player to injury in their first match against Scotland so they played with a weakened team on Saturday. Our new international player Robert Smith made his debut in the first match against David Grant making an impressive start to take a 2-0 lead. But gradually the tide turned and David used his tricky shots to level the match. However, Robert regained the initiative in the fifth earning a well-deserved 3-2 win. At number one Barry was never in and trouble against Steve Evans and cruised to a 3-0 win. Larry started well against Duncan Jones in the final match but then went walkabout somewhere in Anglesey before claiming victory 3-1. **England 3 Wales 0.**

So, England retained the trophy and took great pleasure celebrating their victory at the very enjoyable presentation dinner in the hotel that evening. A huge thank you to all those who organised and participated in the weekend's events. Thanks. To my team for playing so well and being such great company. Finally, a special thank you to our supporters Ros and Kym who thoroughly deserved their trophies.

Larry Grover
Team Captain