

Seesaw battle sees Woodvale pip Ormskirk to win the Shield

BADMINTON

THE final of the Frank Simpson Shield in the Southport and District League saw Ormskirk III from Division 6 taking on Woodvale VIII from Division 7. The handicapping process resulted in Ormskirk giving Woodvale a 10 point lead in all games which were played up to 30, but which resulted in a fantastically close match.

Ormskirk were looking to win a second trophy of the season following their success in the Frank Simpson Cup earlier in the season but they came across a team largely made up of youngsters who are destined

for greater things and who played some outstanding badminton.

The first team to seven points would win the match with a total of 12 games played, each up to 30 points.

The mixed events were best of two with the mens and ladies being one straight game.

The match started with a men's doubles which saw Ormskirk's Chris McGowan and Mark Lang-Yates narrowly beat Woodvale's Danny Hyde and Manu Teague-Sharpe 30-25.

Next came the first ladies of the evening where Woodvale's Rachel Newnham and Shauna Jones beat Ormskirk's Lelia

Edwards and Louise Symes 30-14. An even start to the match with the score 1-1.

The third game saw a fascinating duel between Ormskirk's Jack Kinsey and Julie Hill and Woodvale's Andy Sweetenham and Kayla Shandley.

After the Ormskirk pair won the first game by a solitary point 30-29, they were 28-25 up in the final game but in a dramatic recovery, Woodvale dragged themselves back into it and ran out 30-28 winners gaining a crucial point.

Match score 2-2.

Ormskirk's Chris McGowan and Mike Kirby then made the

match score 3-2 to Ormskirk by beating Danny Hyde and Andy Sweetenham 30-24, before Mike Kirby and Louise Symes extended the Ormskirk lead by a further two points when they defeated Woodvale's Lewis Parry and Millie Hyde 30-22, 30-27.

Match score 5-2 to Ormskirk.

But Woodvale's Manu Teague-Sharpe and Shauna Jones turned things right around when they beat Mark Lang-Yates and Bernadette Montague in straight games 30-26, 30-24 to make the score line 5-4 to Ormskirk.

A few minutes later the

scores were level at 5-5 when Rachel Newnham and Kayla Shandley ran out easy 30-14 winners against Lelia Edwards and Julie Hill.

With games running out Ormskirk took a 6-5 lead when Chris and Jack beat Woodvale's Danny and Andy 30-24, with one more needed to make Ormskirk champions but Woodvale's Rachel and Kayla had other plans by convincingly beating Ormskirk's Lelia and Bernadette 30-15.

With the match drawn at 6-6 the rules stated that a tie break game to 30 points, with the same 10 point handicap, would take place to decide the title.

In a dramatic and tense game the Woodvale pair of Danny and Rachel led all the way until the final stages, when Chris and Lelia from Ormskirk finally overcame the handicap and drew level.

But the effort of battling back proved too much and Woodvale edged closer to the finishing line yet again taking a 29-28 lead which seconds later became 30-28 and the title went to Woodvale.

A tremendous match played by two determined teams with Woodvale VIII crowned champions but where the game of badminton was the ultimate winner.

Defeat drops Hesketh into deeper relegation trouble

FOOTBALL

BY PAUL SERGEANT

HESKETH Bank's battle to avoid relegation took a turn for the worse last week as they lost 3-1 at home to Longridge Town and bottom side Thornton Cleveleys took advantage as they won to reduce the difference to just three points and they have a game in hand.

The day didn't start well with a couple of late cry-offs which meant that seven of last week's squad that played at the champions Charnock Richard were missing.

Manager Evergreen drafted in Josh Brierley and Matthew Bowers from the reserves and welcomed striker David Hogg back after a rib injury.

On a bright day and with the pitch in excellent condition so late in the season, a good sized crowd saw Longridge enjoy long spells of possession without really creating any chances.

Heighton was forced into action on 14 minutes but it was 29 minutes before the home side made any attempt on the visitor's goal when left back Dickinson shot wide from 25 yards.

The deadlock was broken in the 37th minute when a long ball from Longridge's back line found player manager Lee Ashcroft with the ex Preston North Ender making no mis-

take from 10 yards out.

Tommy Toth saw his free kick go just wide on 43 minutes as Hesketh Bank tried to draw level before the interval.

Any aspirations of drawing level were blown out of the water within five minutes of the restart.

Ashcroft headed home a second goal 90 seconds into the start and then just three minutes later centre half Jamie Wynne gave away a penalty and was sent off for trying to throw a punch at Ashcroft who duly fired home for his hat trick from the spot.

The ten men gave a brace display and with substitute Aamir Toowara coming off the bench to replace Bowers for a while it looked as though Hesketh Bank could get a foothold back in the game.

Indeed on 74 minutes a spectacular overhead kick by Toowara from close range gave them a lifeline.

With five minutes left Hogg had a great chance to add a second but he shot wide.

With just three matches remaining the pressure is now back on as they travel to Lostock St. Gerards this Saturday for the first of these games.

The reserves return to action when they entertain Hurst Green in the quarter finals of the Reserve Cup. Both games kick off at 3pm.

● For up to date information or the book a 3g pitch visit the website at www.heskethbankafc.co.uk



● Hesketh Bank's Centre Half Jamie Wynne who saw red last Saturday against Longridge Town

I'll never play for England with a job

GOLF

BY DAVID BIRTILL

CIARAN Doherty accepts that he will never be called up for England duty while he has to work for a living.

"I'd have to make it a full-time commitment and I can't afford that," said the 25-year-old Lancashire County player and Bury member.

"But I'll still compete in all the national events such as the British Amateur, English

Strokeplay and the Lytham Trophy."

And there's one target he's firmly set his sights on - defending the Northern Order of Merit he won for the first time last year.

That would put him on course to try to equal the record of five titles matched two years ago by his pal Mark Young, who has since turned professional, and established by Garry Boardman in 1999.

"I won't be able to play in all 29 fixtures but certainly the main ones including those qualifying for word ranking

points," pledged plus three ranked Doherty, who will again be a key player in the Lancashire side.

"I hope we can win the league again and qualify for the English County Finals," he added.

He's worked hard on sharpening his short game with Gareth Benson, one of the county coaches, at Astley Golf Academy during the winter and more recently with the Red Rose squad at Woodhall Spa.

This will be the first sponsorship of its kind in the UK by the Galvin Green brand that pio-

neered multi-layer golf clothing a decade ago and has strong commercial links with clubs on the Northern Order of Merit fixture list such as Royal Birkdale, Southport & Ainsdale, Formby and Mere.

The Swedish company are introducing a free App for the start of the season which opens with the Crosby Challenge Plate at West Lincs on April 12.

Meanwhile, the number of events qualifying for World Ranking points has increased to 10 with Stockport and Wilmslow joining the fold.



● 2015 Northern Order of Merit - Ciaran Doherty