



## NATIONAL INDOOR BOWLS CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS AT MELTON MOWBRAY

8-17 April, 2016

### DAY THREE - SUNDAY, 10 APRIL

## 'DEVON' WIN THREE NATIONAL TITLES



The name Devon was on everyone's lips at Melton Mowbray today (SUN), when three national titles were decided, and, in a manner of speaking, they all went to Devon. Eight young men from that county won the under 25 team event, while two 26-year-olds Sam Tolchard and Louis Ridout, from the Torquay United club, pocketed the men's pairs. And, although it was a pair from the Hitchin-based Riverain club who won the women's pairs, it was the Riverain lead who became the youngest ever national bowls champion in England - and her name was **Devon** Cooper. With Rachel Tremlett at skip, the talented duo's ages added up to an astonishing 31 years.

## TORQUAY DUO TAKE MEN'S PAIRS TITLE



Sam Tolchard (L) and Louis Ridout (R) won the men's pairs title for Torquay United

### Men's Pairs

There's no doubt that Devon is one of the strongest bowling counties, so it is surprising this is the first time the national men's indoor pairs title has been won by players from that county - but Louis Ridout and Sam Tolchard were worthy winners.

They encountered tough opposition in the semi final and final, but ground out fine wins through consistent play, and a great understanding. After reaching the final with a 24-15 win over City of Ely brothers Ed and Rob Elmore, they pressed on to a 25-15 final victory over Taylor Monk and Martyn Sekjer, from the Cyphers club in Beckenham.

The men's and women's finals were played simultaneously, along with the final of the men's Under 25 inter-county Double Rink championship - so there were 24 players in action on the Melton green. At 58, Sekjer, who has won the fours title seven times in an illustrious career, was fully 32 years older than any of the other 23 players he shared the green with.

In the final, the scores were level at 4-4 after five ends, and the Cyphers duo edged ahead with a double to lead 6-4 after six ends, suggested that the contest would be a close one..

A count of five on the seventh end put the Torquay duo in front, 9-6, and, although they dropped a five on the fifteenth end, they never really looked back. From 17-14 after 15 ends, Ridout and Tolchard, who are both 26, allowed their opponents only one more shot as they pressed for home, and won, 25-15.

## Men's Pairs - semi finals

Taylor Monk & Martyn Sekjer (Cyphers) bt Rob Elmore & Ed Elmore (City of Ely) 24-15;  
Louis Ridout & Sam Tolchard (Torquay United) bt Duncan Heard & Jon Wilson (Wey Valley) 21-7.

## Final

Ridout & Tolchard bt Monk & Sekjer 25-15.

# RECORDS TUMBLE - IN ASTONISHING FINAL



Devon Cooper (14) and Rachel Tremlett (17), broke records and raised eyebrows as they lifted the women's pairs title

## Women's Pairs

"I just can't help smiling," said Rachel Tremlett as she left the green at the end of the women's pairs final. Records had tumbled as Tremlett and her lead Devon Cooper, who is only 14, turned on a prodigious performance to topple the hotly-tipped favourites, Anna Chalk and Katherine Rednall, from Ipswich, who themselves are both only 20.

Cooper made history as the youngest English player to win a national bowls title, while the pair are unquestionably the youngest duo to do so. Another statistic that astonished spectators? The combined ages of the four finalists added up to 71 - an average age of something less than 18 years.

It was the first time that this title has been won by players from a Hertfordshire club.

There was absolutely no fluke about their victory. Both Cooper and Tremlett played superbly throughout the campaign, but no-one expected them to run away with the final as they did.

Chalk and Rednall (who won the triples with Rednall's mum last year) had won their two previous matches 34-9 and 31-9 respectively, their semi final win coming against the 2011 and 2014 champions Sarah Seymour and Ellen Falkner, from the City of Ely.

Seymour and Falkner opened with a four, and were 5-0 up after two ends, but the Ipswich pair hardly allowed them a look-in after that, responding with a four and a five in successive ends, and opening up a 21-12 lead after 14 ends.

They even dropped a five on the 15th end, and regained their composure to win comfortably, 29-19, sealing victory with a count of four on the very last end.

"When we arrived here yesterday, I just hoped that we could do ourselves justice in our first game, and that we wouldn't be outclassed." smiled Tremlett. "I can't believe we've won!"

## Women's Pairs - semi finals

Devon Cooper & Rachel Tremlett (Riverain) bt Laura Holden & Stef Branfield (Clevedon) 27-14;  
Anna Chalk & Katherine Rednall (Ipswich) bt Sarah Seymour & Ellen Falkner (City of Ely) 31-9.

## Final

Cooper & Tremlett bt Chalk & Rednall 29-19.

# RECORD FOURTH TITLE FOR DEVON



Devon's young men won the national under 25 Double Rink title for the fourth time

## Men's Under 25 inter-county championship - Final

Devon were the very first winners of this national men's Und25 inter-county Double Rink title in 1998, since when they have won it in 2012 and 2014, and their fourth victory achieved today constitutes a record. And they took charge of the 2016 final from the start, beating Suffolk bt 46 shots to 30.

At first, it was the Devon rink skipped by Joe Melmore, well supported by Dominic Tuckett, Will Stevens and James Hampton, who surged ahead to lead Suffolk's Ryan Claxton, Liam Harris, Eliot Last and Ben Harber, 13-2 after six ends, and 24-6 after 13.

On the next rink, Kieron Kniveton, Harry Goodwin, Zach Kidd and Ryan Whitlock found the going tough against Suffolk quartet Lee Calver, Hogan Cobbald, Phil Gregory and Martin Heitzman, but stuck to their guns, and scored two late fours to sneak home, 19-18.

As an interesting aside, two high profile Devon players who helped the county to victory two years ago, but who are now too old for this age group, were playing a few yards away across the green - and were winning the national men's pairs title - none other than Louis Ridout and Sam Tolchard.

## Result...

Devon bt Suffolk 46-30 - Rink scores (Devon names first):

Kieron Kniveton, Harry Goodwin, Zach Kidd, Ryan Whitlock 19, Lee Calver, Hogan Cobbald, Phil Gregory, Martin Heitzman 18;  
Dominic Tuckett, Will Stevens, James Hampton, Joe Melmore 27, Ryan Claxton, Liam Harris, Eliot Last, Ben Harber 12.