



**English Indoor Bowling Association Ltd**

The National Governing Body for Indoor Level Green Bowls in England

# CO-OP FUNERALCARE TEST MATCHES 2016

**WOMEN'S TEST MATCH - ENGLAND v SCOTLAND**

**at New Earswick Indoor Bowls Club**

**13/14 October, 2016**

## **ENGLAND IN THE DRIVING SEAT**

***BUT PLENTY OF ENTERTAINMENT IN YORK ON DAY ONE***



**England v Scotland clashed at New Earswick indoor bowls club today**

*There's always a special atmosphere when England take on Scotland at bowls - or, probably, at any sport! There was certainly no quarter asked or given when a women's Test Match between the Auld Enemies got underway at the New Earswick club in York yesterday (THU). Co-op Funeralcare, who are loyal and generous sponsors of bowls at a local level, have pinned their name to this international event, which brings bowls back to ITV after a long gap since the days of the Granada Superbowl.*

*Triples was the name of the game in the first two sessions, and there was very little to choose between the teams. England and Scotland won one apiece, before the players regrouped to compete in the pairs after lunch. England dominated the pairs, winning all three matches, and need to win only two of today's singles encounters. This is how yesterday's games went...*

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## TRIPLES

### *Game 1...*

***Amy Stanton, Sandy Hazell, Wendy King (Eng) lost to  
Claire Walker, Margaret Letham, Caroline Brown (Scot) 9-8, 7-6, 0-1***

What a match! In the first set, Scotland led by a shot when the last end got underway, but England scored two to win, 9-8, and Scotland notched up a double to win the second set, with the Scots taking the vital shot on the sudden death shoot-out.

When all-Blantyre trio Walker, Letham and Brown opened up an 8-1 lead after four ends, it seemed all over for Stanton, Hazell and King, but a loose end from the Scots enabled England to pick up four shots on the fifth end to keep their hopes alive.

The shell-shocked Scottish trio got their heads down, and played two good ends - but an inspired spell from King, who conjured up some magical bowls, helped England score two consecutive doubles to get home, 9-8.

England, suddenly in the driving seat, led, 6-3, with two ends to play in the second set, but this time it was the Scots who scores two doubles on the trot to win the set, 7-6, helped in no small measure by a miscued shot from King that gifted them two shots on the last end.

The tiebreak went Scotland's way - but the match kept everyone on the edge of their seats from start to finish.

### *Game 2...*

***Bex Field, Annie Dunham, Ellen Falkner (Eng) bt  
Leanne Furye, Lorna Cameron, Claire Johnston (Scot) 8-6, 6-6.***

This, too, was a cracking triples encounter, in which all six players found their touch, and played with finesse, but the most remarkable feature of the first set was that all seven ends yielded a double.

On the whole, England always seemed to have things in hand, leading 6-2 in the first set, and 4-1 in the second, but Furye, Cameron and Johnston never gave up, and actually scored two shots to draw level at 6-6 - in both sets.

In the first set, there was another end to play - and Field, Dunham and Falkner contrived to get home with a double. However, in the second set, the England trio were content to drop two shots, because a tie gave them a nail-biting 8-6, 6-6 victory.

## PAIRS

***Game 3 - Field & Falkner (Eng) bt Walker & Letham (Sco) 7-2, 9-1.***

No - Field and Falkner is not the name of a high society journal for upper class rural communities - though the performance yesterday (THU) of Bex Field and Ellen Falkner - who actually met in the final of the WBT women's world indoor singles championship in January - was certainly out of the top draw.

The England pair dominated their Scottish opponents Claire Walker and Margaret Letham to such an extent that they allowed them only two scoring ends - a double on the fourth end of the first set, and a single on the third end of the second

The first set was all over in six ends, and the second, in which England scored a full house of four shots on the second end, took only five, before they shook hands, and Field and Falkner returned an indecently convincing 7-2, 9-1 scorecard.

## ***Game 4 - Stanton & Dunham (Eng) bt Cameron & Johnston (Sco) 7-1, 7-2.***

This, too, was an exhibition match in which the result was never in doubt. Amy Stanton and Annie Dunham starred in a brilliant England singles final in Melton Mowbray in April, when Dunham clawed back from 11-17 to win, 21-19 - but here they were in tandem - and both of them were in great form.

No doubt Lorna Cameron and Claire Johnston would have liked to (and possibly could) have played better, but, in truth, they simply were not allowed to: Stanton consistently built up good positions, and Dunham provided the finishing touches with aplomb.

The struggling Scots were restricted to a measly single in the first set, and, after Dunham saved a three with a wonder bowl on the first end of the second set, two more singles before signing a 7-1, 7-2 scorecard. Both sets needed only six ends.

## ***Game 5 - Hazell & King (Eng) bt Furrye & Brown (Sco) 8-7, 4-5, 1-0.***

There was a lot of pressure on both pairs in this, the final match of a fantastic day of bowls.

Leanne Furrye and Caroline Brown, aware that Scotland were 1-3 adrift, were keen to keep their nation in the hunt. Meanwhile Sandy Hazell and Wendy King were aware that a loss would halt England's momentum.

But they still provided the most entertaining match of the day, with the jack moving around as if the rink was a bagatelle table. Nothing, it seemed, was safe, and the skill of all four players shone through.

Take the audacious shot played by King to turn three or four down into two up on the fifth end of the first set. Or the saving shot she played to score the single that won England the set, after the scores were tied, 7-7, after six ends.

As the pressure cranked up in the second set, the standard of play remained high, and shots were hard to come by. All square at 4-4 after six ends, Brown drew the winner to break the deadlock, and the match moved almost inevitably into tiebreak territory.

No-one nailed the jack on the sudden death extra end - but Brown seemed to draw the shot with her first bowl, before King nudged Brown's bowl and brought Hazell's bowl back into contention.

Neither skip could improve on things with their final deliveries, so Umpire Alan Thornhill was called on to adjudicate - and he established beyond doubt that England's bowl was closer than Scotland's - albeit by a fraction of an inch. England therefore won, 8-7, 4-5, 1-0.

## **DRAW FOR TOMORROW'S SINGLES**

***Note - England have to win two of the six matches to take the title.***

**Field v Johnston**

**Dunham v Furrye**

**Stanton v Letham**

**King v Walker**

**Hazell v Cameron**

**Falkner v Brown**

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