

Hazardous Cannons!

News and reports of matches in the Midland Counties Billiards League.

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SEASON 2012/13 – REPORT No 1 – MATCHES UP TO 23rd SEPTEMBER 2012

16th September

WORCESTER 3 E.Haughtey (+250) 2; G.Mayor (+160) 0; J.Smith (+125) 1.

EVESHAM 6 N.Parker (+210) 1; D.Powell (+175) 2; M.Parker (+300) 3.

(1-2) E.Haughtey 428 N.Parker 423; G.Mayor 341 D.Powell 343; J.Smith 382 M.Parker 432.

(2-1) G.Mayor 425 M.Parker 437; J.Smith 433(56) N.Parker 310; E.Haughtey 445 D.Powell 422.

(0-3) J.Smith 336 D.Powell 357; E.Haughtey 458 M.Parker 482; G.Mayor 367 N.Parker 386.

A great first Midland League result for the newcomers from Evesham as the Vale Warriors claimed the honours in the war of Worcestershire by sweeping up the third round of games. Evesham made a solid start with a 2-1 opening round success, clinched by visiting captain Dean Powell making the winning shot on the bell to edge out Geoff Mayor by two points. Ted Haughtey eased past Neil Parker by just five and John Smith made good early inroads into the start conceded to Mick Parker and was closing rapidly at the end, but a barren mid-game spell from the home captain saw Parker accumulate enough advantage to ensure his win. Clearly intent on not being double-Parkered, Smith came out of the blocks in game two with a run of 56 and a brace of 45's, all within the first half-dozen visits, and continuing to score freely he put the younger Parker very much to the sword as he raced to the most comfortable win of the day. Elsewhere the nerves were still being frayed as Geoff Mayor stroked in three runs of around 40 but even so just failed to catch Mick Parker, while Dean Powell did overhaul Ted Haughtey but was stunned when Haughtey hit a very late 37 to snatch victory.

So round three and it was Evesham all the way! Well, not quite as all three games were hotly contested and the twenty-four points that Mick Parker had in hand, as he downed Ted Haughtey for his third win of the day, was the biggest winning margin. Neil Parker had a twenty-one advantage over Geoff Mayor as he claimed his maiden Midland League success and Dean Powell finished the same difference in front of John Smith in the captain's shoot-out. It could be claimed that the match was a triumph for the handicapper, as in seven of the games the points difference was 24 or less, and Geoff Mayor is perhaps entitled to feel rather aggrieved to have endured a fruitless day with defeats by the narrow margins of 21, 12 and 2!

16th September

NUNEATON ATTACK 6 G.Barrett (+125) 2; C.Hudson (+300) 3; G.Morris (+175) 1.

STAFF. UNIVERSAL 3 N.Routledge (+110) 2; W.Holbrook (+200) 0; P.Stanyer (+200) 1.

(1-2) G.Barrett 253 N.Routledge 341(51); C.Hudson 493 W.Holbrook 408; G.Morris 281 P.Stanyer 375

(2-1) C.Hudson 442 P.Stanyer 414; G.Morris 355(68) N.Routledge 365;

G.Barrett 360(68,55) W.Holbrook 308(55).

(3-0) G.Morris 478 W.Holbrook 358; G.Barrett 372(52) P.Stanyer 301; C.Hudson 390 N.Routledge 383

Ten years have passed since we last had a team playing out of the Attack at Nuneaton; it is good to have it back as a venue as it is convenient to reach and was always a comfortable and friendly club with well maintained tables. Chris Hudson has commented in his match report that the tables played well on the day and that manager Ian White made them feel very welcome.

The match developed along very similar lines to the other game played on this day, described above, as a 3-3 score line was converted into a substantial victory by a third stage whitewash, but on this occasion it was the home team that claimed the spoils. No new teams in this encounter, but each side had a new recruit to Midland League action, posing the inherent problem of trying to judge an appropriate handicap without any records to back up the chosen figure. The new boys clashed in the initial game and the visiting Peter Stanyer got home in some comfort over Gary Morris – handicap alarm bells ringing? Maybe for a while, but this proved to be the only success for Stanyer, while Morris went on to win one game and very nearly took a second, so I guess that we not too far out.

The round one battle of the big guns saw Norman Routledge shoot down Geoff Barrett aided by a run of 51, and with Peter Stanyer also victorious it was left to captain Chris Hudson to preserve home honour – Hudson raced to a total of 493 points; adding 193 points is a big score for a +300 player, better be careful Chris!! Hudson was successful again in stage two, while Gary Morris, a very good snooker player, made his mark with a run of 68 but was still defeated by Norman Routledge coolly playing out time with a 45 unfinished. Wayne Holbrooke also made a decent break (55) but even so a win eluded him as Geoff Barrett struck back with 68 and 55 to square the match at 3-3. After a very promising first season, Holbrook had a tough time last year and really needs a win or two to boost his confidence level.

The unbeaten men clashed in round three, and it was Chris Hudson who claimed the 100% record, easing out Norman Routledge by just seven, while Gary Morris notched his first Midland League success with a rather more comfortable win over Holbrook, and Geoff Barrett completed the Attack stage clean sweep as a run of 52 put Peter Stanyer away.

23rd September

STAFF INSTITUTE 6 J.Cummings(+200) 3; R.Wharne (+90) 3; M.Wharne (+170) 0.

COV PARKSTONE 3 R.Evans (+200) 1; D.Egginton (+220) 1; A.Orton (+125) 1.

(2-1) J.Cummings 394 R.Evans 357(55); R.Wharne 502(79,52) D Egginton 349;
M Wharne 293 A Orton 349.

(2-1) R Wharne 426(51,66) A.Orton 330(51); M Wharne 334 R Evans 372;
J Cummings 392 D Egginton 374.

(2-1) M Wharne 300 D Egginton 428; J Cummings 384 A Orton 289(63);
R Wharne 505(94,96) R Evans 341.

Another match brings forth another Midland League debut as David Egginton queues up to make his mark; Egginton was playing around the Midlands in the 1960's at a time when some fine billiards players were active, including the Wright brothers (no, not Orville and Wilbur, the slightly less esteemed Reg and Jack) and the incomparable Norman Dagley. Even so one wonders if he has ever seen anything quite like Robert Wharne, the Stafford potting machine ensuring a very warm welcome indeed to the league for the veteran. Wharne the younger rattled up a five hundred point haul to demolish Egginton, was slightly more restrained against Alan Orton, but cut loose again in the final third as two runs in excess of ninety brought up another five hundred plus total to leave last season's most successful player, Richie Evans, trailing in the distance. This most emphatic clean sweep was mirrored in a considerably more restrained manner by Jim Cummings, Cummings also ending the day unbeaten after easing out Evans and fending off Egginton in good battles, before accounting for Orton in a rather more comfortable fashion, even though Orton, like Evans before him, hit a run of over fifty against the Stafford man.

The Coventry side, winners of the league last season, would certainly have been hoping for a more productive start to the new campaign, but they managed to ward off a more severe mauling by ensuring that home captain Malcolm Wharne, clearly out of sorts, endured an unproductive day. Wharne was by no means out of it against either Orton or Evans, but stage three saw Egginton roll back the years as he raced to a pretty comprehensive maiden Midland League victory.

An interesting first round of matches as three teams set the early pace on six points each – the next round of games, scheduled for 21st October, is likely to shed some light on who is hot, as the three beaten teams are at home to the trio of pace-setters.

Individually a quartet of players has a perfect three wins from three, Robert Wharne (also early season high break leader on 96), Jim Cummings, Chris Hudson and Mick Parker, while those waiting for their first success this season are Geoff Mayor, Malcolm Wharne and Wayne Holbrook, all good players who will surely soon be making their mark.

Team captains are reminded to give some thought to the 'floating' game, this being the round of matches that has no scheduled date but needs to be played before 31st December – Stafford Universal v Worcester; Coventry Parkstone v Nuneaton Attack; Evesham v Stafford Institute. It would surely be prudent to play these games in October or November, as leaving them to the last minute could certainly result in problems as Christmas approaches.