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**Table tennis notes by Chris Blake**

Sacriston St Bedes C are the new Team Handicap Cup champions following their 5 – 2 win over Mortimer CA in a very entertaining final held at Silksworth IM Church Hall.

Sacriston were represented by Ian McPherson, Lee Maher and Chris Grant whilst Mortimer were represented by Matty Hampton, Dave Cutler and Ian Moore.

Cutler got Mortimer off to an excellent start with a fine win over Ian McPherson despite having to give his opponent a 4 point start.

But Sacriston stormed back to take the next 3 sets to take a commanding 3 – 1 lead following Chris Grants (+7) 21 – 13, 21 – 19 win over Matty Hampton, Lee Maher (+4) 21 – 18, 21 – 9 win over Ian Moore and Chris Grants (+10) 21 – 16, 21 – 8 victory over Dave Cutler.

Ian Moore (+3) clawed a setback for Mortimer with a great 21 – 13, 21 – 14 win over Ian McPherson to make the match score 3 – 2 in favour of Sacriston.

But Sacriston stormed back to win the next 2 sets to win the match 5 – 2 and the cup following victories by Maher and Grant over Hampton and Moore respectively.

Despite the 5 – 2 scoreline this was an excellent match and a great effort from Mortimer who because of their higher league position had to give their opponents anything between a 4 and 10 point lead in each of their sets – this is an extremely tough ask and Mortimer should be proud of their performance.

**Team Handicap Cup – Final Result:**

Sacriston St Bedes C 5 vs. Mortimer CA 2

Jimmy Scope (St Chads) is the winner of the Singles Handicap Cup following an outstanding individual performance in the semi-final and final of the competition.

In the semi-final he gave his opponent Graham Merden a 13 point lead and played some excellent controlled table tennis to win 21 – 16, 21 – 18 and 21 – 17 to set up a place in the final against Sean Gleghorn (St Johns C) (+13) who came from 2 sets to 1 down to win 3 – 2 in his match against Ian McAllister (Sacriston St Bedes B) 21 – 10, 19 – 21, 18 – 21, 21 – 14 & 21 – 12. McAllister performed valiantly and was unlucky not to progress to the final despite having to give his opponent a 13 point lead.

The long awaited final wasn’t to disappoint – Scope who plays for St Chads (3rd in Division 1) was forced to provide his opponent Gleghorn a **16** point lead (to the first to 21).

This was a massive head-start to overcome but incredibly he did – winning 21 – 17, 21 – 19 and 22 – 20. In typical fashion Scope ground his opponent down with his impressive defence and backhand attack (when appropriate) – but Gleghorn should not be disappointed with his performance on the night. He could not have tried any harder or played any better – sometimes you just have to say well done and congratulations to his opponent who overcame all obstacles in front of him and was deservedly crowned champion.

**Singles Handicap Cup - Semi-final & Final Results:**

**Semi-final:**

Jimmy Scope beat Graham Merden (+13)

21 – 16, 21 – 18 & 21 - 17

Sean Gleghorn (+13) beat Ian McAllister

21 – 10, 19 – 21, 18 – 21, 21 – 14 & 21 – 12

**Final:**

Jimmy Scope beat Sean Gleghorn (+16)

21 – 17, 21 – 19 & 22 - 20

Silksworth IM A are guaranteed at least the runners-up spot in Division 1 following 2 victories against Redby CA (8 – 2) and Thompson Insurance B (9 – 1).

The victories mean Silksworth move within 2 points of Thompson Insurance A with both team having only 2 matches remaining – one of which is against each other.

This is by far the closest finish in recent years to the division 1 championship. Thompson have won the league for the past 6 seasons and are looking to make this a lucky 7 – but the youthful Silksworth side represented by the Barella brothers (Graeme and Anthony) and Ryan Richardson may well put a halt to this impressive league record.

**Results:**

Redby CA A 2 vs. Silksworth IM A 8

Thompson Insurance B 1 vs. Silksworth IM A 9

Mortimer CA made up for their Team Handicap Cup final defeat by beating Redby CA 7 – 3 to guarantee promotion to the top flight.

This was an excellent team performance from Mortimer who were represented by Dave Cutler (3), Matty Hampton (2) and Ian Moore (2).

Silksworth IM B finished their season off with a disappointing 7 – 3 defeat to Redby CA.

**Results:**

Mortimer CA 7 vs. Redby CA 3

Silksworth IM B 3 vs. Redby CA 7

**The Sunderland & District Table Tennis Closed Championships will be taking place this Sunday (22nd April 2012 @ 9am) and will be held at:**

**Sandhill Centre, Grindon Lane, Grindon, Sunderland, SR3 4EW**.

All spectators are welcome.

**Results:**

Mortimer CA 7 vs. Redby CA 3

Silksworth IM B 3 vs. Redby CA 7