

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

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Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 5th September, 2019

The brand-new season for the Hinckley & District Air Rifle League started this week, but barely. With the league's recent reduction to nine teams the first round of the Norman Illiffe Cup required just one match to be shot, the two lucky teams drawn being the Sporting Lions and the New Plough with the venue being the Hinckley Working Men's Club, home turf to the Lions.

The Lions won the toss but elected to put their guests into shoot first, a decision that appeared justified as the Plough's first half struggled. Daniel Lakin did best for them with his 26.1; Glen Foxon managed a 25; there were 24s from Paul Barwell and John Orton; whilst Darren Statham showed the effects of the long summer break with a 23 that was well short of the previous season's excellent form.

The response from the home side was much more accomplished with skipper Glen Dainter kicking things off with an outstanding 29.4. Todd Astill's 28.2 came next, followed by Karl Bunting's 29.1, and the 27s of Jeanette Mulkeirins and new recruit, Alison Smith.

The Plough's second half started slowly with a 24.1 from Adam Bray but after this they improved markedly as John Bray's 29.4 preceded Tom Bray's 27.1 and Nigel Hill's 28.2. Sadly, the resulting 183.9 total was never going to be enough against a rampant Lions team whose second half scores were a Melanie Jenkins 29.2, Taryn Cockerill's 27.1, and Ken Paulley's 26.1. This gave them a comfortable passage into the second round thanks to their total of 197.0.

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 12th September, 2019

The first full week of matches in the Hinckley Air Rifle League's new season wasn't distinguished by particularly high scoring, only one of the eight teams scoring more than 190. Surprisingly the defending league champions, the Trojans, weren't the team to achieve this but they did at least win their match against the visiting Smallshaws. The two first halves were relatively evenly matched, the visitors scoring three 27s courtesy of Simon Grewcock, Jamie Slimm and Tom Williams whilst the Trojans countered with Nigel Jackson's 26 plus the 27s of Rebecca Horsler and Phil Hood. However, the visitors suffered after the break largely due to their second half consisting of a solitary shooter. Chris Rose did reasonably well for his new team with a 26 but the resulting 180 proved too little as the home side achieved their 185 reply thanks to the 26s of Rob Forman and Mark Smith, plus Chris Sills' match closing 28.

The closest result of the night came at Bedworth Ex Servicemen's Club where the six-strong home team played host to the eight-strong Ashby Road 'B'. The home side's first half put in a strong performance, starting with Andrew Cryer's 28 followed by Mick Cryer's 27 and the 29s of Bill Bend and James Bend. The reply from the visitors was far more muted, the only notable scores being Martyn Wood's 26 and Jon Storer's 28, leaving them well behind at the break. In fact, Bedworth's lead was so strong that they held on for the win even though their second half shooter scored just 25 and Ashby Road improved markedly thanks to Mike Sansome's 28, Alf Shore's 27, and Jeff Goodyer's 26, leaving the final scores at 186 to 184 in Bedworth's favour.

The New Plough began their league campaign with a comfortable win over the visiting Hounds. Daniel Lakin 26 got the home side's match off to a reasonable start and Glen Foxon scored a strong 28 but the visitors had the slightly better first half thanks to Roy Pritchard's 27 and the 26s of Lee Foskett and Adam Padamsey. Thankfully for the home side they managed a massive improvement in the second half, Nigel Hill's 28 together with the 29s of John Bray and Tom Bray took them to a challenging 190 total. The Hounds' second half responded reasonably well but despite a 26 from Claire Barnes and Paul Huddleston's closing 30 they still finished six behind on 184.

Hinckley Phoenix short first in the final match of the night at Ashby Road Sports Club. Roxy Ratheram gave them a strong start with her 28 and a trio of 26s from Tony Overton, Fred Knowles and Kurt Challifour added to reasonable first half performance. However, the reply from the home side was a step up from this with three 26s of their own from the rifles of Richard White, Lewis Raine and Innes Droomer preceding the 29s of Seamus Moore and Pete Finney. Ian Ratheram's closing 29 was the only highlight of the Phoenix second half, the resulting 183 leaving them well adrift of Ashby Road who finished on 192 thanks to Lorraine White's 26, Jennifer White's 27, and David White's 29.

League Table	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Ashby Road	1	1	0	0	2	192.00
New Plough	1	1	0	0	2	190.00
Bedworth Ex Service	1	1	0	0	2	186.00
Trojans	1	1	0	0	2	185.00
Hounds	1	0	0	1	0	184.00
Ashby Road B	1	0	0	1	0	184.00
Hinckley Phoenix	1	0	0	1	0	183.00
Smallshaws	1	0	0	1	0	180.00
Sporting Lions	0	0	0	0	0	0.00

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 19th September, 2019

To call this week a momentous one in the history of the Hinckley Air Rifle League may be overstating the case somewhat but the implications of the week's events will last a long while.

The week started with the Sporting Lions shooting their first league match of the season, after sitting out the previous week with a bye. Their opponents for this meeting were Bedworth Ex Servicemen's Club who, despite having just five shooters, elected to shoot first on winning the toss. Mick Cryer's 25 was followed by four successive 28s from Andrew Cryer, Jackie Bend, James Bend and Bill Bend, taking them to a total of just 137, a reasonable score for five shooters but not at all competitive against any team that could count seven scores. The response from the Lions could have finished after the first half as Todd Astill's 30; the 29s of Jeanette Mulkeirins and Mel Jenkins; Lee Johnson's 28; and a 24 meant that they had already outscored their guests. Their second half may not have needed to shoot but that didn't stop them with the pick of the scores being Alison Smith's 30 and Darren Hicks' 29, helping them to 200 and a massive 63 shot win.

All seemed settled until the following day when the League's General Secretary received notification from Bedworth's representative that they felt it unfair to the rest of the league's teams that their lack of numbers deprived those other teams of the opportunity for a truly competitive match when facing Bedworth. And that consequently they had decided as a team to withdraw from the Hinckley League. The first effects of this will be felt by the Sporting Lions and Ashby Road 'B' teams, their opponents from last week, as the scores from their matches against Bedworth will now all be expunged from the record. The long-term implications are less clear and will have to be considered by the League as a whole.

The Trojans also scored 200 but this will actually count for something as the hosting Hounds, after membership struggles of their own, now seem to be in a position to put out at least seven shooters every week. The visitors started the match in the strongest possible manner with consecutive 30s from Leigh Hall and Dave Brown, and whilst they couldn't keep up this pace the subsequent 29s from Rebecca Horsler and Rob Forman, Phil Hood's 28, the 27s of Max Horsler and Mark Smith, and the 26 of Roger Sills helped them to their outstanding total. The home side also shot well, gaining the third highest team score of the week, but still finished well behind as Paul Hufddlestone's 29; Adam Padamsey's 28; the 27s of Steven Rothwell, Roy Pritchard and Claire Barnes; and the 26 of Susan Edwards and Chris Allen combined to give them 190.

The match between Smallshaws and their guests from Ashby Road ended with the home suffering a 185-180 defeat for the second successive week. Had they had more than a bare seven the performance of Smallshaws' first half, containing as it did Tom Williams' 29, and the 27s of Rob Wainwright and Simon Grewcock, may well have set the stage for a much more competitive total but with the next best scores being a couple of 25s they had to be satisfied with their 180. Ashby Road's reply suffered a little from the absence of two of their better shooters but Alison Finney's opening 28, the 27s of Seamus Moore and Richard White, and the 26s of Innes Droomer, Bertie Bugden and Pete Finney helped them to 185 and a relatively comfortable win.

Ashby Road 'B' also won, their victory coming against the visiting New Plough. Invited to shoot first by their guests, the home side were admirably consistent. Jon Storer top-scored for them with his 28, whilst the remainder of their total of 188 coming from the 27s of Neil Price, Alf Shore, John Palk and Mike Sansome; and the 26s of Craig Shuttleworth, Kim Baker, and Jeff Goodyer. The Plough did better on the top score front thanks to Tom Bray's 29 and Nigel Hill's 28 but with the next best scores being the 26s of Glen Foxon and Paul Barwell, plus having to count scores as low as 22 and 23, they eventually finished well behind on 177.

League Table	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Trojans	2	2	0	0	4	192.50
Ashby Road	2	2	0	0	4	188.50
Ashby Road B	1	1	0	0	2	188.00
New Plough	2	1	0	1	2	183.50
Hounds	2	0	0	2	0	187.00
Hinckley Phoenix	1	0	0	1	0	183.00
Smallshaws	2	0	0	2	0	180.00
Sporting Lions	0	0	0	0	0	0.00

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 26th September, 2019

Following last week's troubles, the competitive side of the Hinckley Air Rifle League returned to prominence this week with six of the remaining eight teams battling for league points.

The match between Hinckley Phoenix and the visiting Trojans started in less than ideal fashion for the home side as Tony Overton hit a three with his first shot. However, he recovered well to finish with a highly creditable 27. A 28 from their next shooter, Samantha Haskins, could easily have led to a strong first half but this proved to be not the case, with their next best score being a 25. The Trojans' first half followed a similar pattern with a few notable scores plus a couple of more forgettable one but those notable scores were all one more than the Phoenix equivalents; Phil Hood's 29, Rebecca Horsler's 28, and Dave Brown's 26 giving them the visitors a slight lead at the half way stage. Ian Ratheram's closing 27 was the best that the Phoenix second half had to offer and the subsequent 180 target proved much too small as the Trojans gained their third successive win of the season thanks to a 189 total completed by Will Chambers' 26, Leigh Hall's 27, and Chris Sills' 28.

By contrast Smallshaws suffered their third successive defeat, this time at the hands of their guests from the New Plough Inn. The home side had a mixed first half, Rob Wainwright top-scoring with his 29, ahead of Jamie Slimm's 26 and a couple of 25s but this was good enough to keep them in contention at the half way stage as the Plough shooters responded with a 28 from Glenn Foxon and a couple of 26s from Daniel Lakin and Darren Statham. The hosts did better in the second half thanks to Tom Williams' 28 plus the 27s of John Stevenson and Simon Grewcock but the resulting 187, though an improvement on their previous matches, proved just inadequate as John Bray's 29 together with the 27s of Nigel Hill and Tom Bray took the visitors to 188.

Following a bye and a match against a now defunct team the Sporting Lions finally managed to shoot a match that would count towards a position in the league. Their hosts, Ashby Road 'B', shot reasonably well in their first half with Kim Baker's 27 and the 26s of Neil Price and Mike Sansome setting the stage for Jon Storer's 30 but good as this was it was soon eclipsed by their guests who opened with a Glen Dainter 30 that was followed by Karl Bunting's 29, Jeanette Mulkeirins' 28, Todd Astill's 27, and Lee Johnson's 26. The home side managed a Martyn Wood 26 and a Jeff Goodyer 28 in an otherwise forgettable second half, resulting in a total of 188 that ultimately proved too little as the Lions moved onto 193 thanks to Taryn Cockeril's 27 and Pete Dainter's 26.

League Table	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Trojans	3	3	0	0	6	191.33
Ashby Road	2	2	0	0	4	188.50
New Plough	3	2	0	1	4	185.00
Sporting Lions	1	1	0	0	2	193.00
Ashby Road B	2	1	0	1	2	188.00
Hounds	2	0	0	2	0	187.00
Smallshaws	3	0	0	3	0	182.33
Hinckley Phoenix	2	0	0	2	0	181.50

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 3rd October, 2019

The two teams occupying the top positions in the Hinckley Air Rifle League's table, the Trojans and Ashby Road, met at the Greyhound, home of the former, each hoping to maintain their unbeaten records. The visitors opened the match in unspectacular manner with successive 26s from Alison Finney, Innes Droomer and Bertie Bugden but closed their first half strongly thanks to Pete Finney's 29. The response from the home side was even less impressive, the only noteworthy score being Rebecca Horsler's 27, leaving them behind at half way stage. Ashby Road's second half improved slightly on their first thanks to 27s from Paul Holyland, Seamus Moore and David White but the resulting 188 total immediately began to look inadequate as the home side's reply started with Rob Forman's 27 and Leigh Hall's 28. However, consecutive 26s from Mark Smith and Will Chambers left the last shooter, Chris Sills, needing a 30 to win the match. Unfortunately for him and the Trojans, his second and fourth shots weren't quite close enough to the centre of the target and the ensuing 28 left his team one shy of their guests with 187.

The Sporting Lions moved into third place in the table thanks to a comfortable win against the visiting Hounds. The Hounds won the toss and decided to shoot first but they couldn't take advantage of the opportunity to pressurise their opponents, the best scores in their first half being a trio of 26s from Roy Pritchard, Leanne Simpson, and Adam Padamsey. The rejoinder from the Lions was emphatically better as Glen Dainter's opening 30 was followed in quick succession by Todd Astill's 28, Karl Bunting's 30, and Jeanette Mulkeirins' 29. Paul Huddlestone gave the Hounds' score a fillip as he closed their second half with his own 30 but this was only enough to take them to 180, woefully inadequate against the Lions who reached 194 despite the best scores in their second half being the 26s of Taryn Cockerill and Mollie Harris.

The highest team score of the week came at the New Plough Inn where the visiting Hinckley Phoenix were put into shoot first by their hosts. Phoenix had a good first half made up of the 26s of Tony Overton and Craig Bown, Luke Bown's 27, Samantha Haskins' 29, and Karen Bown's 30 but the reply from the Plough wasn't nearly as accomplished with the best scores being Paul Barwell's 29 and Glen Foxon's 26. The visitors' second half maintained the standard set by the first with Geoff Herbert's 26, Kurt Challifour's 27, and the 28s of Colin Rusted and Ian Ratheram helping them to an excellent 195. The home side improved in their second half as John Bray's 30 was joined by Tom Bray's 28 and Nigel Hill's 27 but the damage but these weren't enough to close the gap, leaving them six short with 189.

League Table	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Trojans	4	3	0	1	6	190.25
Ashby Road	3	3	0	0	6	188.33
Sporting Lions	2	2	0	0	4	193.50
New Plough	4	2	0	2	4	186.00
Ashby Road B	2	1	0	1	2	188.00
Hinckley Phoenix	3	1	0	2	2	186.00
Hounds	3	0	0	3	0	184.67
Smallshaws	3	0	0	3	0	182.33

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 10th October, 2019

The widest victory margin in the Hinckley Air Rifle League's latest round of matches came at the Greyhound where the Hounds were visited by Ashby Road 'B'. The home side shot first and whilst they did not get off to a great start their efforts were bolstered by Paul Huddleston's 28 and a closing 27 from Roy Pritchard. In reply the best that the Ashby Road first half had to offer was Neil Price's opening 26 and a 27 from their fourth shooter, Martyn Wood. The Hounds' second half shot consistently well throughout, opening with Adam Padamsey's 26, followed by the 27s of Chris Allen and new recruit Paul Griffin, Richard Green's 28, and a 29 from another new recruit, Giles Headley. This excellent second half took the home side to a highly respectable 192, a total that was immediately unbeatable, as Ashby Road's three remaining shooters would each need to score a maximum 30 to tie the match. Unsurprisingly they came nowhere near to achieving this level of shooter, their best scores being Mike Sansome's 26 and Jeff Goodyer's 27, taking their final team score to 177, a fifteen shot deficit.

Ashby Road's match against the visiting New Plough Inn started well for the home side with a 28 from Alison Finney and though the next two shooters did less well, a decent first half was achieved thanks to Richard White's 27 and Pete Finney's 29. The visitors had the same good start, their team's 28 coming courtesy of Daniel Lakin, but with their next best first half score being Glen Foxon's 26, the break was reached with the home side having a distinct advantage. Ashby Road's second half didn't do quite as well as the first, David White's 27 being the top score ahead of a trio of 26s from Seamus Moore, Lorraine White, and Paul Holyland, taking them to a potentially vulnerable total of 189. This left the Plough's second half needing to shoot really well but having the quality of shooter to make this a real possibility. However, they failed to reach their full potential with a couple of 25s, and the 27s of John Bray and Tom Bray, taking them to just 183.

The visit of the unbeaten Sporting Lions side to the Barwell home of a winless Smallshaws team went pretty much as one would have expected, the visitors enjoying an easy victory over their struggling hosts. The toss went the way of the home side but this was their last success with the best score in their otherwise undistinguished first half being Jackie West's 28 whereas the Lions started with successive 30s from Glen Dainter and Todd Astill before adding a 27 from Melanie Jenkins and a 29 from Jeanette Mulkeirins. Smallshaws improved slightly in the second half thanks to Tom Williams' 27, and the 26s of Simon Grewcock and Chris Rose, but an unprecedented collapse from the visitors would have been required for the resulting 182 to give them any sort of positive result. The Lions' second half did score much less readily than the first, Taryn Cockerill's 26 being their best individual effort, but disappointing as this may have been, it was still enough to take them to 191.

League Table	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Ashby Road	4	4	0	0	8	188.50
Sporting Lions	3	3	0	0	6	192.67
Trojans	4	3	0	1	6	190.25
New Plough	5	2	0	3	4	185.40
Hounds	4	1	0	3	2	186.50
Hinckley Phoenix	3	1	0	2	2	186.00
Ashby Road B	3	1	0	2	2	184.33
Smallshaws	4	0	0	4	0	182.25

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 17th October, 2019

Hinckley Phoenix made the short journey to the Greyhound home of the Trojans knowing that a win in the second round of the Norman Illiffe Cup would be rewarded by a trip to the same venue in the semi-final, the Hounds having already gained a place in the next round, beneficiaries of the withdrawal of the Bedworth team from the Hinckley Air Rifle League.

The visitors won the toss and decided to open the shooting, proceeding to put together a decent first half performance with Tony Overton's opening 26.1 followed successively by a 28.1 from Samantha Haskins, Karen Bown's 27.1, Luke Bown's 26, and Craig Bown's 27. The response from the Trojans was marginally lower with Nigel Jackson's opening 25 preceding Dave Brown's 26, the 27.1s of Richard Sanders and Rob Forman, and Leigh Hall's 28.3 but the visitors failed to capitalise on the slight advantage with the best scores in their second half being Geoff Herbert's 26.1, and the 25.1s of Kurt Challifour and Colin Rusted. The second half shooting from the Trojans started strongly thanks to Mark Smith's 29.3 but whilst the remaining shooters scored a little less than normal, the 25.1 of Roger Sills, Chris Sills' 26.2, and the 27.2 of Will Chambers took the Trojans to a comfortable 191.2 to 185.5 victory.

The visitors opened in the match between the Sporting Lions and the travelling Ashby Road and got off to a decent start thanks to Alison Finney's 28.2 but even though this was backed up by the 27.1s of David White and Pete Finney the response from the home side's first half very much put the writing on the wall. Glen Dainter's opening 29.3 was followed by Todd Astill's 29.5 and a near flawless 30.5 from Karl Bunting. The pace dropped a little over their remaining first half shooters as Jeanette Mulkeirins added a 26 and Alison Smith closed the half with her 28.2 but even this was too good for Ashby Road who's second half included a 27.3 from Lewis Raine and Seamus Moore's 27.2. This took them to an uncompetitive total of 187.0, well short of their hosts who finished on 197.9 thanks to the 26.2 of Melanie Jenkins and Taryn Cockerill's closing 28.2.

Their reward for this fine performance will be a semi-final meeting against Ashby Road 'B' who easily won their match against the visiting Smallshaws team. Ashby Road's first half was something of a mixed bag with a couple of 24.1s at the low end; a Craig Shuttleworth 26.2 in the middle; and the 28.2s of Neil Price and Jon Storer at the high end. There was a similar pattern to the reply from Smallshaws, the major difference being that their scores were lower across the board. Simon Grewcock's 27.1 and Tom Williams' 27.2 occupied the high-score slots but with a 22 and a couple of 24s from the remaining shooters, the break was reached with the home side with a strong advantage. They built on this with a second half that included Martyn Wood's 26.3 and Mike Sansome's 28.2, the resulting 186.3 being far too good for the visitors who, despite a second half 26.1 from Chris Rose, finished on just 172.4.

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 24th October, 2019

It was a quiet week in the Hinckley Air Rifle League with just two matches shot, but the shortfall in quantity didn't result in a lack of in quality, with the match between the New Plough Inn and the travelling Trojans producing the highest team score of the week. The home side kicked the match off well enough thanks to Daniel Lakin's 27 but the remainder of the first half struggled to match this, Glen Foxon coming closest with his 26, and so the break was reached with the visitors well ahead thanks to Nigel Jackson's 27; the 28s of Dave Brown and Rebecca Horsler; and Phil Hood's 30. The home side improved a little in the second half thanks to Nigel Hill's 26, John Bray's 27, and Tom Bray's 28, but the resulting 183 was nowhere near enough as the Trojans responded with an outstanding 200 thanks a second half made up of the 30s of Rob Forman and Leigh Hall; the 27s of Mark Smith, Will Chambers and Roger Sills; and Mark Horsler's 26.

Ashby Road 'B' hadn't won a match since the first week of the season so they must have hoped that the visit of the winless Smallshaws would allow them to correct this, particularly as they were at full strength for the first time this season. Neil Price's 27 got them off to a reasonable start but the next two shooters did less well, scoring a 24 and a 25. However, their first half finished strongly with 29s from new recruit Andrew Cryer and the long-standing Jon Storer. The reply from the visitors started slowly and didn't really pick up until their last two first half shooters, Jamie Slimm scoring a 26 and Tom Williams a 29, to leave them well behind at the half way point of the match. Ashby Road tailed off a little in the second half but Mike Sansome's 29 together with the 26s of Martyn Wood and Alf Shore helped them to set their guests a competitive 191 target. On their very best form the Smallshaws second half could have overhauled this but, unfortunately, they were some distance from their best form, the 26s of Jackie West, Simon Grewcock and Bob West being the best they had to offer, leaving them eight adrift on 183.

League Table	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Trojans	5	4	0	1	8	192.20
Ashby Road	4	4	0	0	8	188.50
Sporting Lions	3	3	0	0	6	192.67
Ashby Road B	4	2	0	2	4	186.00
New Plough	6	2	0	4	4	185.00
Hounds	4	1	0	3	2	186.50
Hinckley Phoenix	3	1	0	2	2	186.00
Smallshaws	5	0	0	5	0	182.40

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 31st October, 2019

The consistency of a team, or lack thereof, is often mentioned in reports for the Hinckley Airt Rifle League but in the past this has generally indicated several equal scores, plus a few lower or higher. However, the standard for consistency will have to be recalibrated following the match between Ashby Road and the travelling Sporting Lions.

The visitors won the toss and decided to shoot first, Glen Dainter giving them a reasonable start with his 28. This was followed by another 28 from Todd Astill before Karl Bunting contributed a 28 of his own. Jeanette Mulkeirins and Melanie Jenkins then proceeded to close the Lions' first half with another couple of 28s. Ashby Road's reply was competent but only once reached the level set by their opponents with Innes Droomer's 28 top-scoring ahead of the 27s of Alison Finney and Lewis Raine; and the 26s of Bertie Bugden and Pete Finney.

Alison Smith started the second half for the Lions with yet another 28, and whilst Taryn Cockerill bucked the trend by scoring 26, Darren Hicks closed their efforts with a seventh 28 to take his team's score to an easily calculable 196. The home side again struggled to match their guests' and they eventually finished seven points short of the target, with a 189 total that came thanks to the 26s of Lorraine White and David White; Richard White's 27; and Seamus Moore's 28.

Neither team in the meeting between Smallshaws and their Hounds guests enjoyed a particularly good first half, the home side counting a 28 from Tom Williams plus the 26s of Rob Wainwright and Robert Good, whilst the only notable scores from the Hounds were the 30 of Giles Headley and Adam Padamsey's 26. However, the fortunes of the teams diverged markedly after the break for whilst Smallshaws had to be content with Bob West's 27, and the 26s of Michael Stephens and Jackie West, the visitors could boast 27s from Leanne Simpson and Richard Allen; Richard Green's 28; and Paul Huddleston's match closing 30, all of this which gave the Hounds a comfortable nine shot victory, 193 to 184.

The final match of the night, between Hinckley Phoenix and the travelling Ashby Road 'B', resulted in the largest victory margin, with the visitors eventually winning by ten shots. The home side had a reasonable first half thanks to Tony Overton's 26, the 27 of Samantha Haskins, and Karen Bowns' 28 but they were comprehensively out-scored by their guests who started with Neil Price's 26 before going on to add a 28 from Rikki Hammersly and the 29s of Andrew Cryer and Jon Storer. The home side's second half largely performed poorly, with only Ian Ratheram's closing 28 to lift the gloom and the resulting 183 never looked to be enough. Ashby Road beat this easily, their total of 193 being completed by John Palk's 26, Alf Shore's 27, and Mike Sansome's 28.

League Table	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Sporting Lions	4	4	0	0	8	193.50
Trojans	5	4	0	1	8	192.20
Ashby Road	5	4	0	1	8	188.60
Ashby Road B	5	3	0	2	6	187.40
Hounds	5	2	0	3	4	187.80
New Plough	6	2	0	4	4	185.00
Hinckley Phoenix	4	1	0	3	2	185.25
Smallshaws	6	0	0	6	0	182.67

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 7th November, 2019

The tightest result of the week in the Hinckley Air Rifle League came at Ashby Road Sports Club where the rejuvenated Hounds were the visitors. Shooting first, the Hounds started slowly before the 27s of Adam Padamsey and Roy Pritchard, together with Leanne Simpson's 26 gave their first half some respectability. However, this was eclipsed by their hosts who started their reply with back-to-back 28s from Alison Finney and Innes Droomer, and then closed the half with a Seamus Moore 26 and Pete Finney's 27. Fortunately for the visitors their second half proved to be higher scoring than their first with the 26s of Richard Allen and Richard Green topped by 29s from Paul Huddlestone and Giles Headley, all combining to set the home side a challenging 190 target. Ashby Road's response started poorly before Richard White's 27 got them back on track but, sadly, their hopes of a win were dented by the following 25, leaving last man, David White, needing a 30 to take both points. His attempt started well with the first four shots ringing the bell but his fifth shot was slightly too far out, the resulting four leaving him needing the final shot to ring the bell to salvage a draw. Fortunately for the home side he demonstrated that he was up to the task, ringing the bell and scoring the 29 that left the teams level on 190 apiece.

The Sporting Lions maintained their position at the top of the league table with a comfortable win at the New Plough Inn. The home side shot first but they totally failed to capitalise on this slight advantage, the only notable score from their first half being Glen Foxon's 26, whilst the visitors opened with a Glen Dainter 30 that was followed by the 29s of Todd Astill and Jeanette Mulkeirins; the 28 of Karl Bunting; and Alison Smith's 27. The New Plough improved markedly after the break with 26s from Steve Reynolds and John Bray preceding Tom Bray's 28 and Nigel Hill's 29 but their total of 184 was never going to be good enough to beat their guests who completed their 196 response thanks to Lee Johnson's 26 and Taryn Cockerill's 27.

The title-chasing Trojans faced a tougher test from their meeting against the travelling Ashby Road 'B', particularly after a first half where Ashby Road dominated. Put in by their hosts, the Trojans managed a trio of 28s from Andrew Cryer, Rikki Hammersley and Jon Storer, whilst the home side had to settle for Nigel Jackson's 26 plus 27s from Rebecca Horsler and Phil Hood. However, the standard of shooting in Ashby Road's second half dipped more than they would have liked with the best individual scores being the 27s of Mike Sansome and Jeff Goodyer, plus Martyn Wood's 26, taking them to a slightly disappointing, especially considering their first half, total of 189. Despite their first half deficit the Trojans overhauled this quite comfortably thanks to a strong second half that counted a 26 from Will Chambers; Mark Smith's 27; and the 29s of Rob Forman, Leigh Hall, and Chris Sills, all combining to take them to their 194 total.

The final match of the night saw the league's bottom placed team, Smallshaws, making the trip to the home of the team sitting just one place above them, Hinckley Phoenix. Electing to shoot first, the visitors struggled with Rob Wainwright's 26 being the only slight bright spot in an otherwise disappointing first half. The home side fared much better, opening with 26s courtesy of Tony Overton and Samantha Haskins, before Karen Bown and Craig Bown's 27, and Luke Bown's 28 gave them a substantial first half advantage. The visitors improved after the break, the 26s of Michael Stephens and Tom Williams topped by Jackie West's 27 and Bob West's 29, but the resulting 183 wasn't quite to give them their first victory of the season as Geoff Herbert and Ian Ratheram closed for the visitors with 26 and 27 respectively to take their team score to 187.

League Table	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Sporting Lions	5	5	0	0	10	194.00
Trojans	6	5	0	1	10	192.50
Ashby Road	6	4	1	1	9	188.83
Ashby Road B	6	3	0	3	6	187.67
Hounds	6	2	1	3	5	188.17
Hinckley Phoenix	5	2	0	3	4	185.60
New Plough	7	2	0	5	4	184.86
Smallshaws	7	0	0	7	0	182.71

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 14th November, 2019

Over recent seasons the top two teams in the Hinckley Air Rifle League have been Sporting Lions and Trojans. The Trojans came out on top last season whilst the season before the Lions had the upper hand. The two teams met this week with table looking as if the tussle would be continued for this season as well, the Lions and the visiting Trojans level on points at the top, the Lions just edging it on average. It therefore came as a surprise to no one when their meeting produced, by far, the best quality shooting of the week.

The Trojans won the toss and decided to shoot first, a decision that was soon justified by an excellent first half performance that included 30s from Rebecca Horsler and Phil Hood; Dave Brown's 28; and Richard Sanders' 27. However, as good as this was, it was beaten by the Lions thanks to Todd Astill's 30, and the 29s of Glen Dainter, Karl Bunting and Jeanette Mulkeirins. The visitors started slowly after the break, with 26s from Rob Forman and Mark Horsler, but they recovered strongly with Chris Sills' 29 and Leigh Hall's 30 taking them to an outstanding 200. A 27 from Melanie Jenkins and Alison Smith's 29 gave the Lions an excellent chance to win but, needing a 28 from any of their remaining shooters, they had to be content with a share of the points as they too finished on 200 thanks to the 27s of Taryn Cockerill and Ken Paulley.

The meeting between the two Ashby Road teams ended almost as close with the home side winning by just one shot. Ashby Road 'B' had the slightly better first half with Neil Price's 27; the 28s of Andrew Cryer and Rikki Hammersley; and Jon Storer's 29 giving them the advantage over their opponents, who counted the 26s of Innes Droomer and Bertie Bugden; Alison Finney's 29; and Pete Finney's 30. ARB's second half couldn't maintain the level of the first but 26s from Alf Shore and Jeff Goodyer, together with Mike Sansome's 28 allowed them to set a reasonably challenging target of 192. Ashby Road's second half all did reasonably well with three of their number; Lewis Raine, Richard White and Lorraine White; all scoring 26s, whilst Seamus Moore and David White did one better with 27 apiece but this wasn't quite enough as they finished on 191, one behind their hosts.

The Hounds versus Hinckley Phoenix started slowly for the home side when, after winning the toss and electing to shoot, they put together a first half containing just one score worthy of note, that being Giles Headley's 28. Phoenix fared slightly better with Karen Bown scoring 28 whilst son Luke Bown managed a 27 but unfortunately for them the home side picked up the pace considerably after the break. A pair of 26s from Richard Allen and Paul Griffin, together with the 27s of Roy Pritchard and Richard Green; Leanne Simpson's 28; and a closing 30 from Paul Huddleston found the Hounds finishing on a highly creditable 192. Phoenix were missing several key shooters and were always up against it, eventually finishing on 185, seven shy of their hosts despite a trio of second half 27s courtesy of Barry Robinson, Geoff Herbert and Ian Ratheram.

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Sporting Lions	6	5	1	0	11	195.00
Trojans	7	5	1	1	11	193.57
Ashby Road	7	4	1	2	9	189.14
Ashby Road B	7	4	0	3	8	188.29
Hounds	7	3	1	3	7	188.71
Hinckley Phoenix	6	2	0	4	4	185.50
New Plough	7	2	0	5	4	184.86
Smallshaws	7	0	0	7	0	182.71

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 21st November, 2019

As has become the norm in recent seasons, the turn-around in the Hinckley Air Rifle League presents the competing teams with the challenge of shooting two matches simultaneously, one in the regular league and the other in the Bernard Yates Trophy. Fortunately, at least from a time point of view, the shooters are required to shoot once, their scores contributing to the regular match in the normal way, with points being scored for the Yates match based on how each individual's score compares with their average-based target score.

Both teams involved in the Hounds versus New Plough match have, over recent seasons, regularly found themselves in the lower half of the table. However, the quality of shooting displayed in this latest meeting ran strongly contrary to that, with some excellent performances from both teams. The visiting Plough won the toss and decided to shoot first, opening with Daniel Lakin's 27, and closing the first half with 28s from Glen Foxon and John Orton. These all added two points to their Yates Trophy tally, as did Darren Statham's 26 but these points were equalled by the Hounds thanks to Paul Griffin's 26; the 27s of Lee Foskett and Roy Pritchard; and the 29s of Giles Headley and Adam Padamsey (a personal best). The Plough's second half also performed well and they finished on excellent totals of 195 and 12 points thanks to John Bray's 30; Nigel Hill's 29; and Tom Bray's 27, leaving home side needing some excellent shooting in order to overcome both totals. The opening 28 from veteran shooter, Brian Allen, gave the Hounds a strong start to their second half and this, together with Richard Green's 30 and Paul Huddleston's closing 29 gave the home side 199 and victory in the regular match, but the best they could do in the Yates Trophy was a tie as they too finished on 12 points despite the 26s of Chris Allen and Richard Allen.

As good as the Hounds' performance was, the winning team from the Hinckley Phoenix versus Ashby Road meeting did even better. The visiting Ashby Road started well with Alison Finney's opening 29 preceding Innes Droomer's 28, Lewis Raine's 26, and Pete Finney's 30 but the home side very nearly matched this thanks to Kareen Bown's 30, Luke Bown's 28, Craig Bown's 27, and Tony Overton's 26. Sadly, for the home team Ashby Road turned the screw in an excellent second half with successive 29s from Richard White and Seamus Moore being followed by Lorraine White's 27 and David White's 28. The Phoenix reply recommenced in fine form with a personal best 30 from Mick Edwards but sadly this wasn't a sign of things to come, with the next best scores being the 26s of Geoff Herbert and Ian Ratheram. This left them seven behind in the regular match which finished 200-193 in Ashby Road's favour, and an agonisingly small one point deficit in the Yates Trophy match which Ashby Road won by 14 to 13.

The visit of the Trojans to the Barwell home of Smallshaws resulted in the largest victory margin in the regular match but the Yates Trophy match was much tighter. The Trojans shot first and set their hosts excellent totals of 198 and 13 points thanks to Mark Horsler's 26; the 27s of Mark Smith and Will Chambers; the 28s of Dave Brown, Rebecca Horsler and Rob Forman; and the 29s of Phil Hood, Leigh Hall and Chris Sills. The 198 proved too good for the home side as they finished a distance behind with 187 but a Tom Williams 30; Simon Grewcock's 28; and the 27s of Rob Wainwright and Bob West took them excruciatingly close in the points match, coming up just one short on 12.

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Trojans	8	6	1	1	13	194.13
Sporting Lions	6	5	1	0	11	195.00
Ashby Road	8	5	1	2	11	190.50
Hounds	8	4	1	3	9	190.00
Ashby Road B	7	4	0	3	8	188.29
Hinckley Phoenix	7	2	0	5	4	186.57
New Plough	8	2	0	6	4	186.13
Smallshaws	8	0	0	8	0	183.25

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 28th November, 2019

Every year representative teams from the air rifle leagues of Hinckley and Bedworth meet over three legs to compete for the imaginatively named Inter-league Trophy. For historical reasons that have been lost in the mists of time one league hosts two legs whilst the other has just one, with the leagues alternating season to season. For this season the honour of hosting the first leg went to the Hinckley Working Men's Club with the best eight shooters (or, at least, the best eight available) from each league competing to see which league would take the trophy won last season by Bedworth.

The format of the competition differs quite substantially from normal matches where each team achieves a total made up of the individual shooters' scores. For this competition each shooter competes directly against one from the other league, shooting side by side on different targets, with the shooter achieving the highest score being awarded two points or, in the event of a tie, one point apiece. Once the first four shooters have shot, they do the same again with the only difference being that they swap targets, so that no team is disadvantaged by shooting on a tighter target.

Hinckley's captain, Glen Dainter, led the way for his team with an excellent 30 but this was matched by his Bedworth opponent, Jon Storer, giving both leagues a point each. Andrew Cryer took Bedworth into an early lead with a 30-29 win over Karl Bunting and Rikki Hammersly extended this lead as he beat Giles Headley by 28-27. Hinckley's fourth shooter, John Bray, managed a 29-29 tie with James Bend, a score repeated by Glen Dainter and Jon Storer in the first of the reverse meetings. This gave Bedworth a 7-3 lead but Hinckley managed a strong recovery, started by Karl Bunting's 30-28 defeat of Andrew Cryer and continued by Giles Headley's 30-28 win over Rikki Hammersley. Finally, a 29-27 win for John Bray over James Bend left the home side with an unexpected 9-7 lead over Bedworth at the half-way mark.

The second half started with Hinckley extending their lead thanks to Alison Finney – a late substitute, called into the squad less than an hour before the start of the match – as she defeated Linda Metcalfe by 28-27, but Todd Astill's 30-29 defeat of Paul Huddleston brought Bedworth back to just two behind. This remained unchanged following the 29-29 tie between Hinckley's Pete Finney and Bedworth's Klaus Baker, but Hinckley again moved to a four point advantage with thanks to Chris Sills' 30-29 victory over Bill Bend.

Unfortunately for the home side the next set of meetings between these shooters all went in Bedworth's favour. Linda Metcalfe beat Alison Finney by 29-26; the second meeting between Todd Astill and Paul Huddleston again finished 30-29 in Todd's favour; Klaus Baker outscored Pete Finney by 28-27; and Bill Bend reversed the scoring from his first meeting with Chris Sills, running out the winner by 30-29. All of this left Bedworth winning the first leg in this season's inter-league competition by 18-14.

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 5th December, 2019

The closest results from the latest round of matches in the Hinckley Air Rifle League's came at the New Plough Inn, where the visitors were Ashby Road 'B'. The travellers won the toss and decided to shoot first with Neil Price leading the way with his 29. Craig Shuttleworth's 27 and Kim Baker's 26 followed, after which Jon Storer maintained his strong form this season with a maximum 30. The reply from the New Plough shooters wasn't quite as accomplished but it was good enough to keep them in contention at the half way point with the 27s of Daniel Lakin and Nigel Hill preceding Darren Statham's 26 and Glenn Foxon's excellent 29. Ashby Road's second half performed very similarly to their first with Martyn Wood's 27 and Jeff Goodyer's 26 supporting Mike Sansome's 29, all combining to give them 194 in the regular match and 14 point in the Yates Trophy. The second half from the Plough started slowly but a 30 from third shooter John Bray left their final shooter, Tom Bray, needing a 30 to tie both competitions. His attempt started well with four successive fives but unfortunately his fifth shot failed to ring the bell. However, whilst this meant that the regular match was lost, a final shoot bell did at least mean that he scored the two points that gave his team a draw in the Yates Trophy, his 29 taking the Ploughmen to 193 and 14 points.

Ashby Road shot first in their match against their Smallshaws guests, getting off to a strong start thanks to Richard White's 28 but sadly the next three shooters were less successful, and they only returned to the desired standard with Pete Finney's closing 27. The reply from Smallshaws started slowly but they quickly improved as the rest of their first half consisted of the 26s of Bob Wainwright and Robert Good, and the 28s of Michael Stephens and Jamie Slimm. A weakened Ashby Road team, missing three of their best shooters, knew that they would have to improve in the second half if they were to have any chance of winning and it briefly looked like they might as Seamus Moore opened the second half with another 28 but their scoring rate dropped precipitately after this and they finished on a disappointing 182 and 7 points. The visitors too full advantage of their hosts shortcomings to take their first wins of the season so far as Tom Williams' 28, Bob West's 27, and Jackie West's 26 took them to 189 and 11 points.

The Trojans increased their lead at the top of the league table thanks to a comfortable victory over the visiting Hounds team. However, on the evidence of the first half, the scale of their win was by no means guaranteed with the home side trailing by very little at the break. The Hounds could count a couple of 25s plus an Adam Padamsey 27 and a 29 from Giles Headley whilst the visitors could also count two 25s plus a 26 from Dave Brown, and the 29s of Rebecca Horsler and Phil Hood. Unfortunately for the visitors, whilst their second half scoring worsened; the only scores of note being Richard Green's 26 and Paul Huddleston's 28; their opponents improved. A 26 from Will Chambers combined with Mark Smith's 27, the 29s of Rob Forman and Leigh Hall, and a match closing 30 from Chris Sills took their match scores to 199 and 12 points as opposed to 184 and 7 points for the Hounds.

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Trojans	9	7	1	1	15	194.67
Sporting Lions	6	5	1	0	11	195.00
Ashby Road	9	5	1	3	11	189.56
Ashby Road B	8	5	0	3	10	189.00
Hounds	9	4	1	4	9	189.33
New Plough	9	2	0	7	4	186.89
Hinckley Phoenix	7	2	0	5	4	186.57
Smallshaws	9	1	0	8	2	183.89

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 12th December, 2019

The Trojans maintained their lead at the top of the Hinckley Air Rifle League's table thanks to a dominant win over the visiting Hinckley Phoenix but they just failed to maintain their one hundred percent record in the Yates Trophy as Phoenix did just enough to match their score in that. Even that small consolation seemed unlikely on the evidence of the first half as the Karen Bown top-scored for visitors with her 27 whilst the remaining shooters scored just 3 points, due to Tony Overton's 26 and Mark Haskins' 24. By contrast the home side managed 6 points together with 28s from Dave Brown and Phil Hood, plus a Nigel Jackson 27. However, the Phoenix points haul improved after the break as Mick Edwards (25), Colin Rusted (26), Kurt Challifour (27) and Geoff Herbert (26) scored 2 apiece to take their team total to 11. The only effect of Ian Ratheram's closing 27 was to take their league score to a disappointing 184, a total easily surpassed by the host side who moved onto 195 and 11 points thanks to Leigh Hall's 30; the 28s of Rob Forman and Chris Sills; and Will Chambers' 26.

For the first eight rounds of matches the thrill of victory had been an unfamiliar sensation for the members of the Barwell based Smallshaws team. Thankfully for them that changed last week with victory over the high-flying Ashby Road and so this week they made the journey to the New Plough Inn looking to experience that sensation again. The two teams looked to be evenly matched in the first half with Daniel Lakin and Glen Foxon both scoring 27s for the Plough whilst for Smallshaws there was a 28 from Rob Wainwright and a 26 from Robert Good. The home side did much better in a second half made up of Nigel Hill's 27 and the 30s of John Bray and Tom Bray but, due to a shortage of shooters, they also had to count a 22 so the resulting totals of 188 and 10 points, whilst reasonable, were a little more vulnerable than perhaps they should have been. Smallshaws proved to be up to the challenge on both fronts, finishing on 190 and 12 points thanks to the 27s of Tom Williams and Jackie West, Bob West's 28, and an excellent closing 29 from Jamie Slimm.

The outstanding team performance of the week came at the Hinckley Working Men's Club home of the Sporting Lions where the visitors were Ashby Road 'B'. The visitors won the toss and decided to shoot first, putting together a decent first half total that included Andrew Cryer's 29, Jon Storer's 28, Rikki Hamersley's 27, and Neil Price's 26 but these efforts were totally eclipsed by the response from the Lions who could count 30s from Glen Dainter and Karl Bunting plus Todd Astill's 29 and Jeanette Mulkeirins' 28. The Ashby Road didn't do enough to close the gap with the best scores being a 26 from Martyn Woods and Mike Sansome's 29 so the resulting totals of 190 and 4 points were never going to be enough. This soon proved to be the case as the home side complete their totals of 199 and 9 points thanks to Melanie Jenkins' 26, and the 28s of Alison Smith and Darren Hicks.

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Trojans	10	8	1	1	17	194.70
Sporting Lions	7	6	1	0	13	195.57
Ashby Road	9	5	1	3	11	189.56
Ashby Road B	9	5	0	4	10	189.11
Hounds	9	4	1	4	9	189.33
New Plough	10	2	0	8	4	187.00
Hinckley Phoenix	8	2	0	6	4	186.25
Smallshaws	10	2	0	8	4	184.50

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 19th December, 2019

The most competitive match of the week in the Hinckley Air Rifle League took place at the home of Hinckley Phoenix where the visitors were the New Plough. The home side shot first and had a very mixed first half with scores ranging from 21 to Samantha Haskins' 30, with a 24 and the 28s of Karen Bown and Craig Bown in between. The reply from the Plough's first half was less extreme but also lower scoring with Daniel Lakin's opening 28 being their best individual score, followed by Glen Foxon's 27 and a 26 from Darren Statham. The visitors maintained a reasonably high level of scoring after the break as Colin Rusted's 26 together with Ian Ratheram's 27 and the 28s of Mick Edwards and Kurt Challifour helped them to set challenging totals of 195 and 13 points. This left the remaining New Plough shooters - John Bray, Tom Bray and Nigel Hill - all needing to score 30s in order to win both matches by one. John started off with the required score but unfortunately Tom's fourth shot missed the mark to give him 29 (but still two points). Thankfully Nigel held his nerve under the enormous pressure of hope to score his first 30 of the season to take his team's totals to 195 and 14 points, tying the regular match and winning the Bernard Yates Trophy point match.

The match between the Hounds and the in-form Sporting Lions saw the former winning the toss and deciding to shoot first. They put together a reasonable first half performance, thanks to 26s from Lee Foskett and Paul Griffin plus Giles Headley's 28 and a closing 29 from Richard Green but these were out-scored substantially by the visitors who started with the 29s of Glen Dainter and Todd Astill, and continued with back-to-back 30s from Karl Bunting and Jeanette Mulkeirins. With just three remaining shooters, the home side needed to shoot excellently and hope that their guests would have an unprecedented collapse in their own second half. The Hounds almost managed the first as Claire Barnes (trying her new shooting jacket for the first time) scored a 28 and Paul Huddlestone closed for the home side with a 30, but the second part didn't occur as the Lions second half added 28s from Alison Smith and Taryn Cockerill plus the 29s of Melanie Jenkins and Darren Hicks. This gave the visitors victory in the regular match by a margin of 204-192 and a much closer 12-11 points win in the Yates Trophy.

A combination of a strong visiting team and a below par home side meant that Ashby Road's meeting with the visiting Trojans ended with them losing in in both competitions. The writing was on the wall for Ashby Road from the start with the Trojans' first half including Phil Hood's 29, Dave Brown's 28, and the 27s of Rebecca Horsler and Rob Forman whilst Ashby Road had to be content with Seamus Moore's 28, Lewis Raine's 27, and the 26s of Bertie Bugden and Alison Finney. The differences between the teams became even more stark after the break as the Trojans added a Mark Smith 27; the 28s of Leigh Hall, Will Chambers and Nigel Jackson; and Chris Sills' 29 whereas the best that Ashby Road could come up with were Richard White's 26 and the 27s of Pete Finney and David White. This left Ashby Road trailing badly in both competitions, losing the regular match by 197-187 and the points match by 13-6.

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Trojans	11	9	1	1	19	194.91
Sporting Lions	8	7	1	0	15	196.63
Ashby Road	10	5	1	4	11	189.30
Ashby Road B	9	5	0	4	10	189.11
Hounds	10	4	1	5	9	189.60
Hinckley Phoenix	9	2	1	6	5	187.22
New Plough	10	2	0	8	4	187.00
Smallshaws	10	2	0	8	4	184.50

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 9th January, 2020

After having two weeks off over the festive period the Hinckley Air Rifle League returned to action with the shooting of the Presidents' Trophy at the Hinckley Working Men's Club. Primarily run to raise money for the league's chosen charity – the local air ambulance – the event also gave a chance for the league's members to ease themselves back into competition in a fun competition. For this year's event each competing shooter shot their score and then once all the entrants had finished those scores were randomly drawn together into teams of three with the winning team having the highest aggregate score.

Individually the best score on the night came from Karl Bunting who shot an unimprovable 30.6, just ahead of Andrew Cryer's 30.4 and Dave Brown's 30.3. Paul Huddleston (29.4), Giles Headley (29.3), Alison Smith (29.2) and Rikki Hammersley (29.1) all missed just one shot whilst Richard Green (28.3), Rob Forman (28.3), Phil Hood (28.2) and John Bray (28.2) were a shot further back. Bob West came top of the 27s with his 27.2, fractionally ahead of the 27.1s of Lee Foskett, Simon Grewcock and Jeanette Mulkeirins, who themselves outscored Daniel Lakin's 27.0 by the same margin. Finally, the noteworthy individual scores were rounded out by the 26.2s of Tom Bray, Taryn Cockerill, Adam Padamsey and Darren Statham; the 26.1s of Jackie West, Leanne Simpson, John Stevenson and Roy Pritchard; and the 26.0s of Todd Astill, Rebecca Horsler and Steve Reynolds.

Once the shooting had finished the teams of three were randomly drawn, a draw which gave the fourth place to Rikki Hammersley, Jackie West and Bob West, who finished with a total of 82.4. Just 0.2 ahead were the combination of Alison Smith, Richard White and Paul Huddleston with their 82.6; whilst Denise Kato, John Bray and Karl Bunting finished in second with their 83.8 total; leaving the top position to the team consisting of Dave Brown, Lee Foskett and Phil Hood, who finished with 85.6.

Running in parallel with the main competition was a "Whisky" shoot (although the prize for winning was actually a bottle of brandy) which was shot on what, at first glance, appeared to be a standard target but which actually had a bull that two thirds the diameter of a regular target. Despite, or perhaps because of, the extra difficulty this posed this proved to be a popular competition and continued even when the main match had completed. For a long time, the leaders were Andrew Cryer and Adam Padamsey, who managed to score 23s from their five shots whilst Tom Bray and Giles Headley all managed 22s, with Rebecca Horsler, Collene Smith and John Bray another shot adrift with their 21s. However, just as the President, Chris Rose, was coming up with a scheme to separate the top two, Karl Bunting went and got an excellent 24 (missing just his last) to break the impasse. Paul Huddleston came very close to matching this but his final shot failed to ring the bell and he had to be satisfied with 23 and the joint runner-up spot.

In all, between the entrance fees for the Presidents' Trophy, the entrance fees for the "Whisky" shoot, and the money made from the sale of raffle tickets the league raised a total of £214 for the Air Ambulance.

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 16th January, 2020

Ashby Road 'B' latest match in the Hinckley Air Rifle League saw them shooting at home against the visiting Hounds. The visitors won the toss and, after deciding to shoot first, put together a reasonable first half performance, including as it did Richard Green's 26, Colin Smith's 27, and Adam Padamsey's 28. However, this was totally eclipsed by the response from Ashby Road who could count a 30 from Andrew Cryer, and 29s from Neil Price and Jon Storer. The Hounds pulled back some of the deficit in their second half thanks to Giles Headley's 30, Paul Huddleston's 28, and Paul Griffin's 27 but neither of their match totals, 190 in the regular match and 10 points in the Bernard Yates Trophy, proved good enough as the home side moved onto 197 and 11 points thanks to a 29 from Mike Sansome; 27s from Rikki Hammersley and Jeff Goodyer; and 26 from Alf Shore.

The meeting between the Sporting Lions and the visiting Smallshaws ended with honours shared, the Lions taking the win in the regular match whilst Smallshaws came out on top in the Bernard Yates Trophy. The outcome of the standard match was pretty much settled after the first half for whereas Smallshaws had to be satisfied with Robert Good's 27 and the 26s of Jamie Slimm and John Stevenson, the Lions boasted a trio of 29s from Glen Dainter, Todd Astill and Karl Bunting, plus a 26 from Melanie Jenkins. The visitors did marginally better after the break thanks to 28s from Tom Williams and Bob West but the resulting 185 proved woefully inadequate as the home side moved onto 199 thanks to Alison Smith's 30, and the 28s of Tarryn Cockerill and Darren Hicks. However, the visitors did enough to win the points competition by one, winning by 9-8.

The closest results of the night came at the New Plough Inn where the opposition to the home side was provided by Ashby Road. The home side shot first, getting off to a good start with a 28 from Nigel Hill, after which Glenn Foxon chipped in with a 26, but the highlight for the home side first half was undoubtedly a first ever competitive 30 from John Orton. The second half also did reasonably well, adding John Bray's 28 together with the 27s of Tom Bray and Daniel Lakin, all of which allowed them to set their guests reasonably competitive totals of 191 and 9 points. The reply from Ashby Road started slowly, the best their first half having to offer being Seamus Moore's 27 and the 26s of Alison Finney and Lewis Raine, but they upped the pace after the break with team captain Pete Finney leading the way with his 29. They also finished strongly with Lorraine White and David White closing the match with 28 apiece but these weren't quite enough, taking them to 189 and 8 points.

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Trojans	11	9	1	1	19	194.91
Sporting Lions	9	8	1	0	17	196.89
Ashby Road B	10	6	0	4	12	189.90
Ashby Road	11	5	1	5	11	189.18
Hounds	11	4	1	6	9	189.64
New Plough	12	3	1	8	7	188.00
Hinckley Phoenix	9	2	1	6	5	187.22
Smallshaws	11	2	0	9	4	184.55

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 23rd January, 2020

The most competitive match of the latest round of matches in the Hinckley Air Rifle League came at the Greyhound where the Hounds team played host to the Smallshaws. Having won the toss, the visitors decided to shoot first and proceeded to shoot consistently well throughout their first half as Chris Slimm's opening 27 was followed by a trio of 28s from Bob Wainwright, Jackie West and Simon Grewcock, after which John Stevenson closed their first half with a 26 that helped them to accumulate 9 points in the Yates Trophy side of the match. The reply from the Hounds didn't start as well but the closing threesome of Leanne Simpson, Giles Headley and Paul Griffin scored 27, 29 and 29 respectively to keep them in touch, particularly in the Yates Trophy where they trailed by a single point. Smallshaws needed two of their three second half shooters to perform well if they were to set their hosts competitive targets and Tom Williams and Bob West managed to do just that, scoring 28 and 30 respectively to give them very respectable totals of 195 and 12 points. The hopes of the home side were kept alive by Denise Kato's 27 (her best score of the season so far) and a 28 from Adam Padamsey but unfortunately their penultimate shooter didn't do well enough to give their anchor man, Paul Holyland, the opportunity to win the regular match. However, his closing 30 was good enough to bring them level with 195 of their own, and to take them to victory in the Yates Trophy with 13 points.

The Sporting Lions moved to the top of the league table thanks to a six shot win over the travelling Ashby Road. The visitors had a decent first half, opened by Alison Finney's 29 and also including Seamus Moore's 28, the 27s of Innes Droomer and Pete Finney, and Lewis Raine's 26 but the home side did markedly better with a 30 from Jeanette Mulkeirins; 29s from Glen Dainter and Karl Bunting; and a 26 from Melanie Jenkins. Ashby Road's second half continued in a similar vein to the first with a couple of 26s from Richard White and Lorraine White, and the 27s of David White and Paul Holyland, all of which took them to 191 and 9 points. The first of these proved no obstacle for the Lions who moved into a winning position after Alison Smith's 28 and Taryn Cockerill's 26 but the points total presented a greater problem, and whilst they couldn't find a way to beat it, Darren Hicks' closing 29 gave them the 2 points that took them level with Ashby Road in the points competition and gave them their 197 total in the regular match.

The match between Ashby Road 'B' and their guests from Hinckley Phoenix also ended with both teams feeling some degree of satisfaction as the home team won the league match whilst the visitors came out on top in the Yates Trophy. Ashby Road shot first and performed well in both halves, the 30s of Andrew Cryer and Jon Storer plus Jeff Goodyer's 29, the 28s of Neil Price and Mike Sansome, Craig Shuttleworth's 27, and Martyn Wood's 26 taking them to 198 and 12 points. The Phoenix side were always a little behind in the high scores stakes, their highest individual totals being the 28s of Samantha Haskins, Luke Bown, Mike Edwards, Barry Robinson and Ian Ratheram, but these, together with the 27s of Craig Bown and Geoff Herbert, plus Karen Bown's 26, were enough to give them victory in the Yates Trophy match with 14 points, whilst leaving them trailing on 194 in the normal match.

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Sporting Lions	10	9	1	0	19	196.90
Trojans	11	9	1	1	19	194.91
Ashby Road B	11	7	0	4	14	190.64
Ashby Road	12	5	1	6	11	189.33
Hounds	12	4	2	6	10	190.08
New Plough	12	3	1	8	7	188.00
Hinckley Phoenix	10	2	1	7	5	187.90
Smallshaws	12	2	1	9	5	185.42

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 30th January, 2020

Back in October of last year the Hinckley Air Rifle League teams of the Sporting Lions and Hinckley Phoenix had been scheduled to meet at the former's home venue. Unfortunately, that venue, Hinckley Working Men's Club, wasn't available. In the normal run of things this might have prompted the teams to reverse the match and shoot it at Phoenix's home but this wasn't an option on this occasion as they also shoot their home matches at Hinckley Working Men's Club. And so, the match had to be postponed, the solution agreed by the two teams being to shoot the two matches side by side when next they were scheduled to meet. That meeting came this week.

The Sporting Lions shot first in the rearranged match getting off to their accustomed strong start as Glen Dainter's opening 28 was followed by Karl Bunting's 30, and the 28s of Todd Astill and Jeanette Mulkeirins whilst in reply Phoenix had to be content with a 26 from Fred Knowles, and the 27s of Samantha Haskins and Karen Bown. The pace of Lions scoring slowed after the break with the 27s of Alison Smith and Taryn Cockerill being their best offerings which, together with a 26 from Mollie Harris took them to a total of 195. The Phoenix fortunes didn't improve in their second half with only Ian Ratheram, with his 26, providing a noteworthy score, and eventually finished 17 behind on just 182.

Hinckley Phoenix shot first in the other match which, being from the second half of the season, was also subject to the requirements of the Bernard Yates Trophy. The Phoenix first half did better in this match than the other with Samantha Haskins scoring 29, Karen Bown and Craig Bown both scoring 27s, and Fred Knowles adding a 26 but unfortunately their opponents also improved with their first half dropping just four shots between them thanks to the 30s of Glen Dainter, Karl Bunting and Jeanette Mulkeirins, the 29 of Todd Astill, and a 27 from Melanie Jenkins. The Phoenix second half again shot disappointingly with only Colin Rusted, with his 29, and Geoff Herbert, with his 26, scoring anything like enough. The resulting 189 league score was never going to be enough in that competition but they did do well enough to score 13 points in the Yates Trophy, giving them a very real chance in that competition. As in the other match the Lions second half didn't do as well as the first but an Alison Smith 29, and the 26s of Taryn Cockerill and Mollie Harris were sufficient to take them to an excellent 201 and a twelve shot victory in the league match. However, these weren't quite good enough to also win the points competition, leaving them one short on 12.

Ashby Road 'B' consolidated their third place in the league table with a comfortable win at the Barwell home of their Smallshaws hosts. Put in by to shoot first by the home side, Ashby Road started the first half strongly thanks to Neil Price's 29 and Craig Shuttleworth's 28, and then went on to finish the half even more strongly with Rikki Hammersley's 29 preceding a 30 from Jon Storer. Their second half didn't achieve as many individual high scores as the first but those that did, Andrew Cryer with a 30 and Mike Sansome with his 29, were enough to take them to an excellent 200 in the league match and an unbeatable 14 in the Yates Trophy. The reply from Smallshaws was severely hampered by their being below strength, numbering a bare seven, and so although they could count a Tom Williams 29, John Stevenson's 28, the 27s of Simon Grewcock and Bob West, and Jackie West's 26, they still finished well behind in both competitions, finishing on 184 and 8 points.

An understrength Trojans team, missing their top two shooters, were visited by the in-form New Plough Inn, knowing that a loss in the regular match would seriously hinder their hopes of retaining the league title. The visitors shot first with the highlight of their first half being a first ever 30 from Glenn Foxon. John Orton followed with a 26 but this proved to be the only other notable score in an otherwise disappointing first half. However, these were enough to keep them in contention as the Trojans responded with a first half that had Rebecca Horsler's 28 as it's top score, plus Phill Hood's 27 and Mark Horsler's 26. The Plough's second half started slowly but did reasonably well after that as the 27s of John Bray and Tom Bray, together with Nigel Hill's closing 29 took them to 189 and 7 points. Even depleted as they were, these should still have been within reach of the home side but sadly a best second half score of 27 from Mark Smith, plus 26s from Rob Forman, Will Chambers and Roger Sills, took them to just 186 in the regular match whilst giving them the consolation of tying the Yates Trophy match as they too finished on 7 points.

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Sporting Lions	12	11	1	0	23	197.08
Trojans	12	9	1	2	19	194.17
Ashby Road B	12	8	0	4	16	191.42
Ashby Road	12	5	1	6	11	189.33
Hounds	12	4	2	6	10	190.08
New Plough	13	4	1	8	9	188.08
Hinckley Phoenix	12	2	1	9	5	187.50
Smallshaws	13	2	1	10	5	185.31

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 4th & 6th February, 2020

The Hinckley Air Rifle League's matches are typically held on Thursday nights so for the week's action to start on Tuesday could only mean that something slightly unusual was occurring. On this occasion that "something slightly unusual" was the second leg of the annual Interleague competition, held over three legs between representative teams of the Hinckley and Bedworth leagues.

A four point win for Bedworth in the first leg meant that Hinckley's captain, Glen Dainter, took his team to the Bedworth Ex Servicemen's Club knowing that a positive result was needed if Hinckley were to have any chance of regaining the trophy that Bedworth took last season. Glen took the lead for his side and got them off to a good start with a 29-28 win over Bedworth's Jon Storer but the advantage was short lived as Bedworth's captain, Andrew Cryer, brought the teams level with a 30-29 defeat of Giles Headley. Jeanette Mulkeirins' 30-29 defeat of Todd Astill re-established Hinckley's lead and this was extended thanks to Paul Huddleston's 29-26 win over Linda Metcalfe and John Bray's 29-28 defeat of Rikki Hammersley. Bedworth's hopes were strengthened thanks to Bill Bend beating Leigh Hall by 29-28, taking them to within four points of their guests, a margin that held up to the half time break as James Bend drew with Chris Sill, and Klaus Baker tied with Karl Bunting, all four shooters scoring 28 apiece.

Sadly, for Bedworth they were never to come that close again. Glen again beat Jon, this time by 29-27, and Giles beat Andrew by 29-28 to open up an eight point lead. Todd's 29-29 tie with Jeanette kept Bedworth's faint hopes alive but these were immediately dashed by Paul's 29-26 win over Linda, the win taking them to an unassailable 17 points. Successive 29-28 wins, for John over Rikki and Leigh over Bill, took Hinckley's score into the 20s, and whilst Bedworth stopped the rot to some extent thanks to a 29-29 tie between James and Chris, Hinckley emphasised their dominance on the night with a 28-27 victory for Karl over Klaus which took the score on the night to 24-8 in Hinckley's favour, to set up a winner-takes-all third leg in May.

The arrival of Thursday night had Glen Dainter captaining in another important match as his Sporting Lions team faced the visiting New Plough, knowing that a win would confirm the league title. The visitors won the toss and decided to shoot first but if they'd hoped that this would enable them to pressurise the home side then those hopes were soon dashed as their first half struggled badly, their best scores being a couple of 25s. The Lions had no such problems as back-to-back 30s from Glen Dainter and Todd Astill were followed by a trio of 27s from Karl Bunting, Jeanette Mulkeirins and Peter Dainter. The Plough made a better showing after the break, their second half including John Bray's 30, Nigel Hill's 27, and John Orton's 26, but neither of their totals, the 182 in the regular match or the 6 points in the Yates Trophy match, were enough as the Lions moved onto 197 and 10 points thanks to a second half consisting of Alison Smith's 29, the 27s of Taryn Cockerill and Darren Hicks, and Melanie Jenkins' 26.

Whilst the Sporting Lions victory may have denied the Trojans the chance of retaining their league title, they still went into their match at the home of Ashby Road 'B' with a very real chance of holding onto the Bernard Yates Trophy for another year. The home side's first half seemed intent on denying them even this consolation as four of their number scored Yates Trophy points; Neil Price's 27, Rikki Hammersley's 28, Andrew Cryer's 29, and Jon Storer's 30 helping them to accumulate 5 points; but the visitors did still do slightly better as Mark Horsler's 25, Richard Sanders' 26, the 27s of Nigel Jackson and Rebecca Horsler, and Phil Hood's 28 gave them 6 points. The home side struggled after the break, adding just one more point, thanks to John Palk's 24, and just one more noteworthy score, that being Mike Sansome's 27, meaning that they finished on disappointing totals of 189 and 6 points. These left the way clear for comfortable wins for the visitors in both competitions, moving onto 193 in the regular match and, more importantly, 12 points in the Yates Trophy, thanks to a 30 from Chris Sills, Leigh Hall's 29, and the 26s of Rob Forman, Mark Smith, Will Chambers and Roger Sills.

The closest match of the night was contested between Smallshaws and their guests from Hinckley Phoenix. The home side did reasonably well in the first half, thanks to Rob Wainwright's 27, and the 26s of Chris Slimm and Michael Stephens, but the visitors did slightly better as Karen Bown scored 29, Luke Bown 28, and Samantha Haskins 26. The situation was somewhat reversed after the break as Smallshaws outscored their guests, with Tom Williams' 29, Simon Grewcock's 28, and Bob West's 27 against Barry Robinson's 28, and the 27s of Mick Edwards and Ian Ratheram, but this wasn't enough of an improvement to give them the win in the regular match, which finished 190-188 in Phoenix's favour. However, there was some consolation in the Yates Trophy which finished all square, the teams scoring 12 points apiece.

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

The match at the Greyhound, between the Hounds and the visiting Ashby Road, was very nearly as close. The two first halves were evenly matched with the Hounds scoring an Adam Padamsey 28 and a Leanne Simpson 27, to which Ashby Road responded with Lorraine White's 28 and Bertie Bugden's 27. The Hounds improved after the break with the 27s of Richard Green and Paul Griffin preceding Giles Headley's 30 and Paul Huddleston's 28, and whilst Ashby Road also did better, thanks to Seamus Moore's 29, the 28s of Alison Finney and Pete Finney, and Richard White's 26, it wasn't quite enough to deprive their hosts of either win as they finished one behind in the regular match, which finished 192-191, and two points short in the 12-10 Yates Trophy score line.

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Sporting Lions	13	12	1	0	25	197.08
Trojans	13	10	1	2	21	194.08
Ashby Road B	13	8	0	5	16	191.23
Hounds	13	5	2	6	12	190.23
Ashby Road	13	5	1	7	11	189.46
New Plough	14	4	1	9	9	187.64
Hinckley Phoenix	13	3	1	9	7	187.69
Smallshaws	14	2	1	11	5	185.50

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 13th February, 2020

With the winners of the league title and the Bernard Yates Trophy settled by last week's matches, the final round of matches in both competitions was largely inconsequential. The runner-up spot in the points competition was still up for grabs with Hinckley Phoenix hoping to leapfrog the Sporting Lions to finish second whilst the only other matter to decide was whether the Hounds or Ashby Road would finish fourth in the league table, as this would determine the final line-ups for the league's two round-robin cups, with the top four teams competing for the more prestigious Gordon Smith Cup whilst the remainder would go into the Paynes Cup.

The first of these questions was settled at the Greyhound where the winners of the Bernard Yates Trophy, the Trojans, played host to the currently second placed Sporting Lions. Put in by their guests the Lions shot reasonably well in the first half, Glen Dainter's opening 27 preceding the 29s of Todd Astill, Jeanette Mulkeirins and Melanie Jenkins, but these only yielded them four points from the ten on offer. However, the home side also did disappointingly on the points front as the 26s of Nigel Jackson and Rebecca Horsler together with Dave Brown's 27 and Phil Hood's 29 took them level on points at the half way stage. The 28s of Alison Smith and Taryn Cockerill, plus Darren Hicks' closing 29 took the Lions to an excellent 199 in the regular match whilst also allowing them to set a decidedly beatable 10 points in the Yates Trophy, and whilst the Trojans never looked like winning in the standard match, Leigh Hall's 29, Mark Smith's 28 and Roger Sills' 26 gave last man Chris Sills the opportunity to win the points. However, his 28, whilst sufficient to take them to a reasonable 193 in the normal match, wasn't enough to give his team any points in the Yates Trophy and they finished just behind on 9, to confirm the Lions in the runner-up spot.

Clearly Hinckley Phoenix didn't know this as they shot their match against their guests from the Hounds but they must have feared that their chance of taking second place were rapidly diminishing over the course of a first half where they were outscored by their guests. Phoenix shot first, doing reasonably well to score 6 points in a half that included Karen Bown's 30, and the 26s of Fred Knowles, Luke Bown and Craig Bown, but the Hounds improved on this by scoring 8 points thanks to the 26s of Lee Foskett and Denise Kato, Leanne Simpson's 29, and Giles Headley's 30. However, Phoenix went on a points rampage after the break with every one of their remaining shooters beating their target scores to take them to an unbeatable 14 points. The regular match was another matter as Colin Rusted's 26, the 27s of Mick Edwards and Barry Robinson, and Ian Ratheram's 28 took them to 190, good but not good enough as the Hounds responded with an excellent 197 total thanks to the 27s of Richard Green and Claire Barnes, and the 29s of Adam Padamsey and Paul Huddleston. However, good as this was, it wasn't quite good enough to tie the points match as they finished one short on 13.

The Hounds win meant that the result of Ashby Road's match against their guests from Ashby Road 'B' lost all its significance, as even a win would leave the home side in fifth spot. Neil Price's 27 opened a reasonable first half for the visitors with John Palk contributing a 28, his highest score of the season; Martyn Wood added a 26; and Jon Storer closed for them with his 29. The home side did reasonably well themselves, Lewis Raine's 28 top-scoring ahead of the 27s of Innes Droomer and Seamus Moore, but they were definitely behind at the break. This wasn't helped when Andrew Cryer opened the second half for the visitors with a 30, which was followed by Rikki Hammersley's 27, Alf Shore's 26 and Mike Sansome's 29, all of which combined to take them to 196 and 10 points. Pete Finney's 29, the 27s of Lorraine White and David White, and Richard White's 26 weren't enough to compete in the regular match, where they finished five behind on 191, but a closing 25 from Jennifer White did give them the point they needed to finish level in the Yates Trophy.

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Average
Sporting Lions	14	13	1	0	27	197.21
Trojans	14	10	1	3	21	194.00
Ashby Road B	14	9	0	5	18	191.57
Hounds	14	6	2	6	14	190.71
Ashby Road	14	5	1	8	11	189.57
New Plough	14	4	1	9	9	187.64
Hinckley Phoenix	14	3	1	10	7	187.86
Smallshaws	14	2	1	11	5	185.50

Hinckley & District Air Rifle League

Match Report for 20th February, 2020

For half of the teams in the Hinckley Air Rifle League there was a break as the other half contested the semi-finals of the Norman Illiffe Cup. Fittingly, the four teams involved finished the regular season in the top four spots in the league table, the cup draw pitting first against third and second against fourth.

The league winners, Sporting Lions, made the journey to Ashby Road Sports Club, home of Ashby Road 'B', hoping to keep alive their hopes of adding the league's only knockout cup to their season's trophy haul but knowing that they would be at a severe disadvantage with several of their top shooters not able to make the fixture, and with just seven shooters. The home side were also missing one of their key shooters but they had the advantage of having nine shooters, allowing them to discard their two lowest scores. This advantage became apparent in the first half where the home side, having won the toss and deciding to shoot first, got off to a reasonable start thanks to Andy Cryer's 28.1 and Rikki Hammersley's 27. Kim Baker followed with a 25.2 and Martyn Wood's 27.1 came next, and whilst John Palk scored a relatively low 24 his team knew that it would be unlikely that they would have to count this. The response from the Lions' first half counted slightly better high scores, starting with an excellent 30.4 from Glen Dainter, and concluding with Jeanette Mulkeirins' 27.2 and Melanie Jenkins' 27.1, but also included Peter Dainter's 22 and Ken Paulley's 24, both of which would have to be counted.

Ashby Road's second half started well thanks to a 29.3 from Jon Storer but the scoring gradually slowed thereafter, Alf Shore following with his 27.1 before Mike Sansome added a 25 and Jeff Goodyer closing with a disappointing 23.1. Alison Smith opened the visitors' second half with an excellent 29.4 but their only other shooter, Taryn Cockerill, managed just 24, leaving Ashby Road 'B' victorious by 188.8 to 184.1.

The other semi-final saw the Hounds hosting the formidable Trojans team, the current holders of the trophy. Given that both teams shoot their home matches at the Greyhound, home benefit was going to be relatively slight, with the only advantage for the Hounds being that they would be shooting on their own target. Having won the toss, the Hounds captain, Paul Huddleston, decided to shoot first to force their opponents to chase a target but knowing that his team would have to put in possibly their best performance of the season if that target were to be large enough to take them to the final.

The Hounds opened the match in a modest fashion with a Lee Foskett 26.1 but they soon picked up the pace, an excellent 30.4 from third man Giles Headley preceding Leanne Simpson's 27.2 and Richard Green's 28.2. The response from the Trojans was relatively assured as Richard Sanders led the way with his 27 before Dave Brown added his 28.3, Rebecca Horsler chipped in with a 28.1, and Phil Hood closed the half with a 26.2, but this left the visitors slightly behind at the half way point.

The second half saw the Hounds piling on the pressure thanks to Colin Smith's 26.2, Adam Padamsey's 29.2, Richard Allen's 28.1, Paul Griffin's 28.2 and a closing 29.3 from Paul Huddleston to give the Hounds their highest score of the season so far, 200.6 The Trojans did their utmost to overhaul this outstanding total as Rob Forman's opening 29.3 was followed by Mark Smith's 27, Leigh Hall's 29.4, Nigel Jackson's 28.3 and Roger Sills' 26 but these left their last shooter, Chris Sills, needing at least 30.3 to take the win. Of all the shooters in the league Chris may well be the most capable of performing under that sort of extreme pressure as he has done similar things on numerous occasions in the past but a third shot four meant that he scored 29.2, still highly creditable, but leaving his team one short on 199.6 and sending the Hounds to April's final, to face Ashby Road 'B'.