

## **Bowls Hampshire Middleton Cup Report - 2023**

This year saw Hampshire start their Middleton Cup campaign against Kent at Banister Park BC.

The game was a tight affair all the way through, but Hampshire could not hold on for the final couple of ends and ended up losing the game 16 points to 6 points and by nine shots overall.

Up next, was Middlesex also at Banister Park. This was a very similar game to the one against Kent but this time Hampshire managed to win the match by 1 shot and 16 points to 6 points victory.

Our third game of the campaign saw us away to Surrey at Cranleigh bowling club. This time we managed a more convincing 11 shot win and gained another 16 points. The team in this game showed a lot of grit and determination to gain the win as unfortunately the green was not up the standard you would expect to see Middleton cup bowls played on.

The last game of the round robin was against the Isle of Wight. Although this was to become a dead rubber as Kent had already managed to win the group, it was explained to the squad that this would be the last game Richard and Myself would be the managers and wished them all the luck for future campaigns.

In conclusion – even though we only lost one game this year I personally felt a little deflated with some of the negative comments that were expressed from some of the players and squad members throughout the season. For any county to win the Middleton cup you must all support each other, play for each other and be proud each and every time you put the shirt on, but unfortunately, I did not see or feel this from some of the squad at times.

Going forward I would like to wish whomever the new manager is the best of luck and hope they can bring home lots of silverware to our great county. The talent across the county is undoubtedly unquestionable and more than good enough.

Paul May