

# INTER-REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS BREAN SANDS 2007

## **SOUTHERN COUNTIES JUNIOR MANAGERS REPORT**

It was my great pleasure to be the Junior Manager again for the Southern Counties at Brean Sands this year. I have known Charlotte Dennis, Helen Manley and Stuart Floyd for some years and have managed Charlotte and Stuart when they won the Junior Division 2 title in 2005 at Brean playing for Devon.

With the team being British Triples Champions they were keen to prove to people that they were worthy Champions after the disappointment of not being picked to play in Germany this summer at the North Sea Championships despite beating the team that went to Germany.

There were a number of key teams that needed to be beaten; of course all team had to be beaten. I felt that there were a number must win games against Kent, Northern, East Midland and Wales. The first game was against Eastern, a game that I thought we would win, however it was not to be as the team was sluggish and could not get going. I thought that it's going to be a hard weekend.. The team settled better for game 2 and although West Midlands took 8 points from them, I did not think they would lose and won with ease in the end. Wales were beaten in the 3<sup>rd</sup> game to a 11, a game that could have been lost but fortune did not shine on the Welsh. The last game before the break was against Chiltern. This turned out to be an easy game with the team better settled and went on to win 13-0.

The three games in the afternoon on paper were the hardest that were due to be played, and this proved to be the case. Kent felt that they were the best team at Brean, and some would agree, but it is results that count and having beaten Kent in the past we knew that the team could beat them again. In a close game with Charlotte, Helen and Stuart playing well they ran out 13-11 winners. At one stage the team was 10-0 down and it looked all lost, but the game is never over until it's over, they rallied and turned it around to win. It helped that there seemed to be some dissent in the Kent camp and this must have helped the situation.

The next game was now against East Midlands, a team with good players. Compared with the game that was to come on the Sunday this game was very quiet and they came out winners 13-8.

The last game of the Saturday was against the lads from Northern, and very important in seeing who would be in first place at the end of the day. This was the hardest game of the day and the team was always playing catch up and never seemed to have enough boule.. This game should have been lost, with all the boule played all Northern had to do was to point in their last boule to win, with loads of room. No one could not believe it when Andy from Northern did not get his boule in. Northern had lost their chance and Southern Counties won the next end to win.

The Juniors were not sure if they were leading, but it was very close with all to play for on the Sunday. I could not complain at 6 wins from 7 the Juniors had played well, but had their share of luck during the day but no one minded that.

The Sunday saw the good weather continuing and it was down to the team to continue where they had left off on Saturday. The Juniors had the good fortune in that the draw for the day and did not have to play Northern again or Eastern. I could not remember the full order of play, but the team played a good game beating West Midlands 13-7. Next up were the lads from Wales who were not having a good Championships, and were beaten by Southern Counties 13-5. Things were looking good, but with hard games still to come.

We then moved on to the next showdown with Kent, this game would more or less decide the who would win the Junior Title, and it was getting tense elsewhere in the main Competition. It was certainly all to play for in both Championships. Kent seemed to be the team under pressure at this stage and had made a change to their team. A hard game again but the Southern Counties Juniors were able to play the board over manhole cover better!! Kent made a change during the game, but they had lost it and the game losing this time 6-13.

The next game was against the East Midlands and this turned out to be the hardest game of all the weekend. The East Midlands had a lot of vocal supporters that for the players was quite off putting at times, and the tactics from East Midlands at times were directed to disrupt play, by trying to make substitutions at the wrong time and all going off to see their coach, just to slow the game down.

East Midlands were however shooting well and this was making it hard going, with both teams having good ends and bad. Southern Counties were

slowly pulling away with more of their own supporters coming to give support, in the end after some close ends it came down to Charlotte to do the wonder shot of the weekend. To win the game she had to get her boule over the front boule to hit the target boule that was not that far in front. Charlotte had not done much shooting over the weekend, but it had to be done, we all prayed that she would hit it and hit it she did and did not move the coche. A well deserved win in the circumstances 13-8. I had to go and pull myself together and have a beer before going on to our last game.

The last game was against Chiltern and although a win was on the cards I did not want them to ease off as we still needed wins for the main championships. In an easy game saw the team coming out 13-3. The Junior Division 1 was the Southern Counties again after some years.

The team did overall play well but did have luck on their side on Saturday, but they got the results. As they say the final table does not lie. Stuart played very well and was confident at what he had to do only having to come to me a few times for advice. The girls played well, but needed to concentrate better at times. The girls also needed to be more confident, they are quite able. Helen had to shoot when Stuart was out of boule. She hit the shots when needed most of the time. A small factor that has helped in the past and again this was both myself and the team did have knowledge of the other teams, after playing against some of the other Juniors over the last few years.

Away from the playing side of things it was a lot easier not having to look after the Juniors after the games. This took a lot of pressure away from me and I was able to enjoy the weekend a lot more. I must thank Helens Mum for more or less being my number 2 and being the runner. It was a great help again to have some one making sure that the girls were eating and drinking properly. This was important when the team seemed to low on energy, thanks for Chocolate. I had taken drink for the team but this did not last as a certain person looking after the Cornish Juniors took half of my supplies. This was very important as the girls did not concentrate as well as Stuart and we had to keep on at the girls to stay Focused. They soon got the hand of my hand signals to the head after a few strange looks from them. They were a lot better on Sunday. Overall I can not complain, they won it, 11 games from 12 to end up 3<sup>rd</sup> best team at Brean. I hope others will see that they are worthy British and Inter-Regional Champions.

I did enjoy Charlotte, Helen and Stuart's company both while playing and afterwards. They did not give me any problems during the weekend. I was very proud of them. I will always be willing to be manager of the Juniors, but one year I will play at Brean.

Peter Galton

Southern Counties Junior Manager 2007.