

Loughborough and Durham delight as Birmingham come away with nothing

BUSA Hockey Finals
March 28 2007

THERE WAS disappointment for the hockey players of Birmingham University, as they came away with nothing from three matches at the BUSA finals. Loughborough were twice the side to inflict the defeat, winning the Men's Championship and Trophy finals. Durham beat Birmingham in the Women's Championship final thanks to an extra-time golden goal from Gwen Smith.

Loughborough captain Mark Gleghorne scored the opening goal of the Men's Championship final from a short corner, but the lead didn't last long as Birmingham were awarded a penalty stroke which was calmly converted by England international Simon Mantell.

Despite going temporarily down to ten

men after Ian Mackay was shown the yellow card, last year's defeated finalists Loughborough were determined not to suffer the same fate again, and Robbie Smith slotted home the winner.

"We did dominate for most of the match but it was hard to break them down, particularly in the second half when they had all eleven players in front of the ball," said Loughborough coach David Ralph.

"One of the things I've been most impressed with has been their attitude and work ethic. This year we have upped the training regime to something none of them have had before. They've whinged about it, but they've taken it on board and that has been a big part of the reason why we have had a successful year."

Birmingham twice took the lead in the Women's Championship final, but were made to pay for failing to kill the game off.

Liz George scored the only goal of the first half on 17 minutes, but Durham equalised inside the first minute of the second half through Gwen Smith. Jenny Farrow scored from a short corner to restore the Midlands' side lead, but Cat Horn got Durham's second goal with ten minutes left to take the game into sudden death extra time.

Durham soaked up Birmingham pressure in



Loughborough in possession during the Men's Championship final

Photos: Dave Hughes, www.davehughesphotography.co.uk

the early stages of extra time, and then with just four minutes left and a penalty stroke competition looming, Smith scored her second to give Durham the Championship.

Earlier in the day, the second teams of Loughborough and Birmingham had contested the Men's Trophy final, but this was not as close as the Championship finals turned out to be. Captain Mark Burchett and Patrick Knight gave Loughborough seconds a 2-0 half-time lead, with Adam Wilson and Derek Salmond adding two

more before Edmund Jackson scored a consolation goal for Birmingham with five minutes left.

The Women's Trophy final demonstrated the strength in depth of hockey at Loughborough University, with the second team playing the third team for the title.

There was to be no upset though, as the seconds scored four first-half goals on their way to a 6-0 win. Stirling beat Exeter seconds 3-2 to win the Men's Shield final, with Newcastle defeating Kent 2-1 to win the Women's Shield.



A Birmingham player after their golden-goal defeat

Western Conference side Hartpury reach BUSA Championship final

BUSA Football
Men's Championship Semi-final
March 21 2007

UWE Hartpury 3 Northumbria 0
by Ore Oduba

HAVING COME so far in a gruelling competition, spread broadly over seven months, the reality of being one step away from the final would eventually sink in for these two teams...defeat was unthinkable.

For neutral supporters it might have seemed strange to see the succulently prepared Loughborough pitch without the usual treads of the home side. Following the 2006 champions' exit the week before, there had appeared for Hartpury or Northumbria the opportunity to play Loughborough's quarter-final conquerors Swansea or last year's runners-up Bath for cup glory.

Unbeaten in the Western Conference, Hartpury had undoubtedly been this year's surprise package and after five-minutes they certainly caught the northern outfit off guard. A cross from the left saw midfielder dynamo Richards ghost in and loop a header into the net for the first goal.

Northumbria's stuttering and tentative start continued and twice in the opening fifteen minutes they would have to thank the woodwork for containing UWE Hartpury efforts, but also the opposition's wayward finishing. On twelve minutes the front two combined when a loose ball was collected by Mike Symons in the box. His clipped ball over a flapping Jordan Yorath in the Northumbria goal found Will

Morford who should have scored despite a tight angle, the goal was at his mercy.

Half-way through the first period Northumbria began to show signs of life, finding an effective outlet in left-winger John Clarke. Clarke's endeavours created a few attacking openings with his mazy runs and ability to get to the by-line, but more often than not, his hard work came to nought with the Hartpury box invariably devoid of white Northumbria shirts.

With minutes to go in the first half, Clarke's strength and pace on the left-hand side again provided the ball into the box. Under pressure, goalkeeper Tassell picked up the ball after a back-pass and referee Sean Hewitt was left with no option but to award an indirect free kick on the six-yard line. Tassell made up for the error, palming Bruce Hogg's resultant shot round the post. Really, Northumbria could count themselves lucky to be only one-nil down after 45 minutes.

Their second half game plan was immediately countered by Hartpury's more 'effective' strategy, midfielder Matt Smith the catalyst. After three minutes of the restart, Smith picked up the ball on the left side forty yards from goal. Running with intent, power and nimble feet he rode four challenges before entering the penalty area and side-footing past a helpless Yorath to double the lead.

Symons continued to demonstrate why his inclusion in the English Universities squad was no mistake. His unrelenting presence up front constantly posed problems for a jolted Northumbria. Substitute

Beng Ngwa looked very agile on the wing and added to Hartpury's attacking threat, but Morford seemed most likely to finish off the game. Twice he was sent through, showing excellent patience to beat the off-side-trap. However his goal-scoring appeared not as finely tuned as his timing, the better chance wasted with a lob onto the top of the net.

For Northumbria, chances were hard to come by – one chance had the goalkeeper beaten only to find the immovable skipper Molyneux blocking a certain goal. Soon enough, the result was beyond doubt: a corner from the left was headed back into the danger area by Ngwa and poked home by Smith from close range for his second goal. An injury-time corner presented Northumbria with their best chance of the game, Tassell making a smart save from late substitute and English Unis player Chris Ogboke.

A convincing final score and Northumbria knew they had been outplayed. Hartpury showed a glimpse of how they'd yielded an average of nearly four goals a game. Had it not been for a few outstanding players though, they may have encountered more trouble. In the final against a strong Team Bath, they will unquestionably need to be more clinical in front of goal.

In the Women's Championship semi-finals, defending champions Loughborough beat UWIC 5-2 and Brighton defeated Northumbria 4-1 to book their places in the Championship final.

University student Carla Cantrell has received her first call-up to the England senior women's football team.

The 19-year-old, who is in her first year of a BA (Hons) in Physical Education at the university, plays for Doncaster Rovers Belles in the FA Women's Premier League, and will join the England squad at a training camp in La Manga, Spain in April as preparations continue for the 2007 FIFA Women's World Cup in September.

British Universities draw with South Africa youngsters

THE FIRST match of the British Universities' cricket tour of South Africa ended in a draw against the hosts' under-19 side.

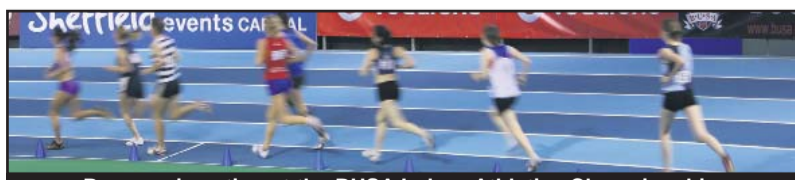
Seven Loughborough players were joined by two from Durham (including captain James Morris) and one each from Oxford and Cambridge for the match at the Tshwane University of Technology's Technikon Oval in Pretoria.

Loughborough University and Somerset bowler Stephen Wheeler was the pick of the British attack in the first innings, returning figures of 3-20 from 13 overs, as South Africa U19s made 302-9 before declaring.

A steady 74 from Loughborough's Matthew Spriegel helped the British Universities to 209 all out in reply, with Nick Lamb (Durham) and Ruel Brathwaite (Loughborough) adding some useful runs lower down the order.

Although a draw now looked likely in the three-day match, South Africa pushed on in their second innings and declared on 207-2, setting a target of 301 to win, but with the Universities needing to score at over four runs per over.

It seemed that the home side might snatch an unexpected victory as of the top six batsmen only wicket-keeper Edward Foster (Loughborough) made it past 20, scoring 45 before being given out leg before wicket. Nick Lamb and Oxford's Nick Woods had other ideas though, both reaching half centuries, and Woods remaining not out as the British Universities finished on 201-7.



Runners in action at the BUSA Indoor Athletics Championships

Please send your match reports and other sport articles to Sports Editor Geraint Tucker at:

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Sport in brief

BATH UNIVERSITY'S judo players continued their domination of the BUSA Championships in March, with the women winning their fifth successive team title, and the men winning their third in a row. Third year student Sian Wilson won her third BUSA Championship title in the under 78kg category, with Danny Murphy winning individually for the second successive year in the over 100kg competition as well as helping Bath to the men's Championship.

In all, Bath won eight of the thirteen gold medals on offer, with Brunel winning two and Cambridge, Worcester and Coventry winning one each. The only event in which Bath didn't win a medal was the men's under 90kg event, in which Stuart Austin (Coventry) defeated John Kunzi (Chichester) to win the gold medal.

LEEDS METROPOLITAN University won the men's and women's team competitions at the BUSA Gymnastics Championships. Steven Jehu and Thomas Rawlinson finished first and second for Leeds Met in the Men's Grade 1 Overall standings, with Loughborough's Matthew Pike winning the Grade 2. Vicki Johns (Leeds University) won the Women's Grade 1 Overall competition, with Samantha Davies picking up the Women's Grade 2 Overall title for Loughborough.

BRISTOL'S MEG Bichard defended her Cross Country title at the BUSA Mountain Bike Championships in Scotland. She finished comfortably ahead of Bath's Nicola Duggan, with Southampton's Adams Ross winning the Men's Cross Country race. Sue Mahoney also defended her Downhill crown for Bristol, but Cardiff's defending champion Philip Shucksmith was denied another victory by Bath's Dan Stanbridge. Shucksmith did help his team to victory in the overall Downhill competition though, with Leeds taking the team Cross Country title.

THE ENGLISH Universities netball team beat their Scottish counterparts 58-25 at Edinburgh University at the beginning of April. After narrowly losing a warm up match to the Scottish National side, the English side conceded the first goal against the Scottish Universities but had moved into a convincing lead by the end of the first quarter. The Scots were optimistic after running the English side close last year, but English Universities came away with a comfortable victory.

NINE CHAMPIONSHIP records and a Welsh National record were broken at the BUSA Indoor Athletics Championships at the EIS in Sheffield in March. Scott Simpson cleared 5.42m in the Pole Vault to set a new Welsh record, as he finished over 30cm better than nearest rival Christian North of Bath. Craig Pickering, also from Bath, pulled out of the 60m after feeling a 'slight niggle' in the warm-up, and Middlesex's Simeon Williamson upset the odds to defeat Pickering's team-mate Ryan Scott in a time of 6.71 seconds. Loughborough won the overall team competition, ahead of UWIC in second and Bath in third.

Heriot-Watt student signs for Edinburgh Rugby

JOHN HOUSTON, a final year Sport and Exercise Student at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, has been signed by Edinburgh Rugby.

Houston has played for the Scottish international sevens side and captained the British side to the silver medal at the World

University Rugby 7s Championships last year. The centre has played for Scotland under-19s and was a member of the Scotland Under-21 squad for the IRB Under-21 World Championships in Scotland in 2004.

Meanwhile, Leeds Metropolitan