

Yorkshire Winter League deconstructed (from a Huddersfield point of view)

This league is intended to provide the opportunity for players wanting to continue playing in the winter. There is no need for pre-booking at most of the events - pairs just need to turn up and register by 9.45 at the latest. If the calendar shows that entry is dependent on space then the club make the decision if teams can be allowed on the day. They are long days with early starts and 5 rounds of games. In deep midwinter there are sometimes sunset finishes and long drives home. Entry fee is £10 and cash prizes are paid.

The season began in September and staged events at Brandsburton (twice), Stockton (twice), Hollicarrs (twice), Wetherby (twice) and one each at Bridlington, Mirfield, Heckmondwike and Huddersfield. It ended in March. There have been 6am alarms, snow showers and ice sheets, surprisingly sunny winter days and late finishes with i-phones illuminating dark rainy corners.

It's all over for 22/23 winter and time to look at the results. It's clearly a popular event as 145 people took part. These came from 19 different clubs/regions. Only 3 people played 10 out of 12 events; 45% of players only played in 1 event and 55% only played 2.

North West	18
Brandesburton & Huddersfield	15
Molescroft Beverley	13
Heckmondwike & Hollicarrs	11
Bridlington, Stockton, Wetherby, North Stainley	10
Leeds	6
Mirfield & Unattached	5
Westow	4
Harrogate Montpellier	3
Mercia	2
East Midlands & London	1

The North West supplied the most players. The joint top Yorkshire club was Huddersfield. Well done Paul, Brendan, Christine, Robin, Rita, Moira, Mike, Roy, Pete, Margaret, Nell, Glyn, Fred, Barbara & Kevin.

The top ten players have all performed well over many games. Colin and Shane were on course to be Invincibles until they lost a couple of games towards the end. Their average result was 13-5 over 40 games.

			P	W	Pts
1	Colin Smith	Mercia	8	38	327
2	Shane Howarth	Mercia	8	38	327
3	Robert Eunson	Brandesburton	10	38	241
4	Charles Stewart	Harrogate Montpellier	8	35	265
5	Romain Lenne	Stockton Fox	8	29	203
6	Joanne Siddons	Wetherby	10	29	37
7	Thierry Condette	Molescroft Beverley	7	24	129
8	Migs Trimmingham	Leeds	8	24	53
9	Graham Brookes	Bridlington	10	24	10
10	Ralph Keenan	Stockton Fox	8	23	79

Clearly the more you play the better chance you have of winning more games but there were two who won every game they played. Huddersfield didn't feature in this table or the one below.

		P	W	Pts	Win %
Paul Matthews	Leeds	2	10	70	100%
Matt Blyton	North Stainley West Tanfield	1	5	41	100%
Colin Smith	Mercia	8	38	327	95%
Shane Howarth	Mercia	8	38	327	95%
Dag Nygaard	Stockton Fox	3	14	85	93%
Garry Cheetham	Molescroft Beverley	2	9	50	90%
Charles Stewart	Harrogate Montpellier	8	35	265	88%
Neill Rank	Leeds	3	13	76	87%
Mike Walkley	Unattached	4	17	148	85%
Lee Edgar	Molescroft Beverley	3	12	65	80%

If however we extend the main results list to top 25 then 3 Huddersfield players appear.

			W	Pts
11	Peter Butterfield	Bridlington	9	22
12	Robert Palmer	Stockton Fox	7	20
14	Kit Hamilton	Stockton Fox	5	19
13	Stephen Meadowcroft	London	6	19
15	Paul Simpkins	Huddersfield	7	19
16	Steve Jones	Hollicarrs	9	19
17	Alan Swift	Wetherby	6	18
18	Brendan Callaghan	Huddersfield	7	18
19	Bob Mitchell	Brandesburton	7	18
20	Mike Walkley	Unattached	4	17
21	Julia Washington	Wetherby	6	17
22	Ray Gatenby	Hollicarrs	6	16
23	Debbie Gatenby	Hollicarrs	6	16
24	Christine Appleyard	Huddersfield	6	15
25	Mike Cooper	Molescroft Beverley	6	15

There's group of players who could be called one hit wonders who achieved a fantastic 80% win rate. They probably only played in their own clubs Winter Pairs. 3 Huddersfield players in this list.

Paul Harper	Brandesburton	1	4	35	80%
Roy Peskey	Brandesburton	1	4	35	80%
Dennis Truby	North West	1	4	29	80%
Christine Clancy	Unattached	1	4	27	80%
Ian McNicholas	North West	1	4	27	80%
Joe Fairbrother	North West	1	4	26	80%
Paul Fairbrother	North West	1	4	26	80%
Kevin Hepworth	Huddersfield	1	4	25	80%
Richard Burrow	Leeds	1	4	23	80%
Rita Schofield	Huddersfield	1	4	22	80%
Robin Schofield	Huddersfield	1	4	22	80%
Ian Jones	Wetherby	1	4	20	80%
Michael Yates	Wetherby	1	4	20	80%
Jacob Smith	Mercia	1	4	19	80%
Nichola Reader	Brandesburton	1	4	7	80%

Individual Huddersfield results are a mixed bag.

	P	W	Pts
Paul Simpkins	7	19	-2
Brendan Callaghan	7	18	3
Christine Appleyard	6	15	-5
Mike Stedman	6	10	-87
Moiria Stedman	6	10	-87
Nell Griffiths	5	7	-84
Roy Henstock	2	6	23
Margaret Cowley	3	5	-54
Peter Cowley	3	5	-54
Kevin Hepworth	1	4	25
Rita Schofield	1	4	22
Robin Schofield	1	4	22
Glyn Jennings	1	1	-28
Barbara Holloway	1	0	-49
Fred Tidball	1	0	-49

If this has whetted your appetite for another type of event why not try a regional event.

There is an urban myth that every regional player is an ogre that will beat you mercilessly and grind you down. Wrong. The players are unfailingly friendly as they quietly beat you.

There were many more new players this year trying it out and they all agreed that it was a good experience and that their game improved despite losing more than they won.

Start by entering a summer regional event when it's warmer and sunnier. There will be events less than an hour's drive away. Ask someone who played in a winter league what they thought of it.