

Essex Ladies Over 35s County Cup Report 2024

By Sophie Cockell

Essex Ladies were looking forward to another year at Eastbourne for the over 35s event. They had a difficult year last year with bad weather making the formats different and were relegated to division 3. The team this year was myself (Sophie Cockell), Claire Frewer, Chloe Jackson, Amy Cockell, Kirsten Warner and Claire Dixey. We had some bad news a few weeks back that Claire Dixey had broken her wrist and then the week before the event Amy had been wiped out with COVID and a gastro illness so we were a more depleted team than I thought but never mind.

We had 3 counties that I hadn't come across before, Avon, Nottinghamshire and Gloucestershire.

We played Avon on day 1 and they had 2 newly turned 35 year olds playing the singles, it was very tough for Chloe and Claire but they put up a good fight. Myself and Kirsten played the doubles and were a set down but 2-0 up when the rain came down and play was cancelled for the rest of the day. We then started with the doubles and narrowly lost in 3 sets. The referee had decided to end all the matches after 3 rubbers so that was a 3-0 loss against Avon.

Next we played Nottinghamshire and were 1 all after the singles with Claire Frewer having a great win. Amy came on for the doubles with me but they were a strong pair and we lost in a close 2 sets. Claire and Chloe managed a win in the doubles but Kirsten and myself were no match for their number 1 player who had been winning everything so unfortunately we lost 3-2.

So all to play for to stay in Div 3 for next year. Chloe had another really hard singles but Claire at number 2 managed another great win and Kirsten and I managed to win the 1st doubles. Chloe and Claire also got the win so we won 3-1 and stayed in the division.

Overall we had great fun as a team and I felt proud that we managed what we did as most other counties had a younger 'star' singles player. A big thank you to Kirsten for stepping in last minute and to Chloe for braving it at number 1 singles all weekend!