

Dowden brace in top clash

Mid Somerset 1sts 4
Exeter Hornets A 2

This was the clash between the two teams at the top of the league, and it was Mid Somerset who emerged victorious over second-placed Exeter Hornets.

With only two league games remaining, Mids now have the upper hand over their Devon rivals, with a three-point lead and a better goal difference by five. There was a cagey start to the game by both teams, who both knew the importance of not conceding an early goal.

Mids had the better of the early chances. Darren Wilson's shot was saved by the keeper, while Martin White's run and shot was also kept out by the Hornets' defence.

The best chance came after 23 minutes when a quick free hit inside the 22 by Andy Berry found Wilson at the far post, but he pushed his shot wide. Just as half time was approaching, Hornets took the lead after some slick passing, but almost immediately Mids broke away to gain a short corner, from which Andy Rogers equalised with a first time shot. It was one each and all to play for in the second half, but Mids soon took the initiative with a brace from Steve Dowden within the next five minutes. He first deflected a White cross into the net and then swept in a cross from Dan Durston.

Hornets kept pressing after scoring their second goal and gave

the Mids' defence some anxious moments. However, with only seven minutes remaining Mids wrapped up the game. Another quick free hit inside the 22, this time by Wilson, found the unmarked Durston, who scored the fourth goal.

Sidmouth 2nds 4
Mid Somerset 2nds 0

A late withdrawal shortly before the team were due to leave, meant Mids had to visit Sidmouth with only 10 players.

Matters were not helped when Jon Sawyer received a crack on his wrist, which restricted his play in the second half. However, the team responded in a magnificent way and gave the home team a run for their money. Defenders James Payne and Jonathan Crees played well at the back, while keeper Bob Seddon pulled off a number of good saves. Sidmouth scored twice in both halves to win by four goals to nil.

Mid Somerset 3rds 0
Yeovil B 4

Yeovil's third team had been relegated a year ago but have been promoted at the first attempt, while Mids' thirds were promoted last year and now find themselves relegated again.

The result went to form, as the team at the top of the league beat the team at the bottom by four goals to

nil. Once again, the Mids team included a number of youngsters who had stepped up from the fourth team but, despite their efforts, Yeovil won the game comfortably.

ISCA C

Mid Somerset

In the penultimate league game of the season Mids raced to an easy victory over a side that could only muster 10

players.

Mids set their stall out in the opening seconds as Andy Berry hit the post with Mids' first attack and the visitors dominated the game with goalkeeper Mark Seward a virtual spectator for the game.

Mids were four goals up at half-time with two goals from Steve Dowden and one each for Roger Knife and Darren Wilson.

Another five in the second half completed the resounding victory as Dowden completed his hat-trick with second goals for Wilson and Knife.

The scoring was completed by Dan Durston and Mike Davis with the man of the match award being shared between Mark Salvidge and Davis.

This victory now gives Mids a three-point lead at the top of South East Division One with a nine-goal difference better than second placed Exeter Hornets.

Mids' final league game is home to Chard on Saturday and they only need a point to be certain of promotion.

Mid Somerset 3rds

Bridgwater B

With a three o'clock start this was the only game on Saturday that was played at Wells due to the frozen pitch.

The second team game which was due to precede this one was cancelled as a decision had to be made before Torbay departed (to avoid a wasted journey), but the decision to play the third team game was made a lot later, as the opponents were local rivals Bridgwater.

It was a typical physical game from the visitors as they recorded a comfortable three nil victory. Mids played well as a team, but once again found it difficult to score. Man of the match for the second week running was

teenage goalkeeper Jameson Kergozou, who pulled off a number of fine saves to keep Mids in the game.

Exeter Hornets D

Mid Somerset 4ths

Hornets are likely to win promotion this season by finishing second in South East District Three, but were given a real run for their money at Cullompton by Mids fourths. Mids took the lead in the first half as a free hit inside the 22 by Steve Tinnion found the stick of Joe Stansbridge, who deflected the ball into the net. With Phil Ballam Whitfield commanding Mids defence Exeter became frustrated at not being able to open up the visitors defence. However, their confidence of winning so many games this season told in the end as they won by the odd goal in five. Mids second came from a well struck short corner by Steve Tinnion, which levelled the scores at two each, before Hornets scored the winner.

Mids set sights on play-off place

Mid Somerset
Taunton Vale B

4

1

Chudleigh 2nds

Mid Somerset 2nds

2

1

For the second week running Mid Somerset first team won with a 4-1 scoreline and, with only four league games remaining, the victory ensured that Mids will finish no lower than second in the League and guarantees the team a play-off place.

Mids are now locked at the top of the table with Exeter Hornets A. Both teams have identical playing records, but Mids occupy top spot with 35 points thanks to a goal difference which is only one better than their Devon rivals.

The teams still have to play one another at Wells a week on Saturday in what should be the game of the season.

Saturday's opponents have been one of Mids' bogey teams and although they were outplayed in the first period, Mids were able to reach half-time on level terms courtesy of Roger Knife who swept in a pass from Martin White.

Early in the second half keeper Mark Seward and defender Gary Squire kept their team in the game with goalline clearances before Mids scored a brace of goals inside two minutes.

With only three short corners in the whole game, from two of these they scored thanks to well worked routines with Andy Rogers and Darren Wilson claiming the goals.

The victory was wrapped up when an aerial pass from Steve Dowden found Knife and his cross to the back of the circle was met by White to score the final goal.

This Saturday the team travel to Torbay.

On paper this was a game Mids would have expected to win, but the home side recorded their second league victory of the season.

Injuries and non availabilities gave second team opportunities to Ben Underdown, Gavin Pa-tey and Findlay Rarity, but it was the home side that took the early initiative and they raced into a two-goal half-time lead. The first came after the Mids defence stopped expecting a short corner to be awarded, while the second was a penalty stroke, given after the ball hit a defender's chest on the goalline.

Mids pulled a goal back in the second half when they were awarded a free-hit on the Chudleigh 22. A quick pass from Jonathan Crees to captain Gareth Searey set up Gavin Pa-tey for Mids' goal.

Mids threw caution to the wind in the final 10 minutes to try and level the scores, but although they played their best hockey of the match in this period, they were unable to equalise.

Mid Somerset 3rds

Minehead 2nds

4

7

It was fortunate for Mid Somerset that their fourth team had no league game on Saturday as nine of the players turned out for the thirds in a high scoring game against Minehead.

Mids got off to a great start with a Dave Lennard goal inside the first minute of the game, but Minehead's pace and experience soon told as they rattled up four first half

goals.

The second half saw three goals each for both teams as Lennard completed his hat-trick for Mids, while the other goal came from teenager Joe Stansbridge.

It was a good team effort from a side that never gave up, epitomised by the efforts of youngster Chris West at full back.

Mid Somerset Ladies

ECVH

6

0

On Saturday Mid Somerset Ladies, along with umpire Colin Crees, travelled to Cullompton and the game started well for Mids with excellent passing which left little for stand-in first half goalkeeper Kerrie Tucker to do.

The attackers were on form with four goals coming from Mel Petherbridge, one from Nicole Burns and another from Kirsten Vowles.

Julie (the second half stand in goalie), made an excellent save in the closing minutes of play to deny the home team. Mids remain unbeaten at the top of the table with four league games left.

This week Mid Somerset Ladies are entertaining Cheddar Ladies in a friendly at Wells Blue School. Push-back 3pm.