

## SQUASH

## Matt comes through the best of five

North Walsham-based Rossis took on Oasis in their latest Norfolk Summer Squash League match.

Clearly practice doesn't make perfect as Rossis' Matt Bolt and Tom Smith were both dismantled 3-0 by Andy Trimm and Mark Nicholls respectively. After playing three matches the day before at the Norwich Grand Prix, Matt and Tom couldn't compete.

Matt Sumner faired far better. In a rematch against Paul Atterton, the match went to five and Sumner picked up the victory for Rossis.

Rob Whiting played Terry Mayers in the battle of the fourth seeds. Rob took a 2-0 lead and Terry got one back before the improving Rob took control.

The second team welcomed Bannatynes in a titanic battle. Ben Harris was involved in a fantastic game against Gareth James. After levelling the match at 2-2, Ben found the tank a little empty as Gareth gained a lead that he wouldn't relinquish.

Phil Slack has been having a poor season but he secured an excellent 3-0 victory over Anthony Baines. Phil found the same kind of form that secured his spot in last year's first team. Matt Purling took on Shaun Nicholas in what turned out to be a very close encounter. All games went to 11-11 and Matt had game balls in two of them, yet still found himself losing the match 3-0.

Ben Parravani was looking for an improved performance against Rod Taylor. Ben motored off to a 2-0 lead, before Rod pegged him back to level the match at 2-2. At 7-6 in the fifth, Ben took control to secure an impressive 3-2 win.

The third team travelled to Broadland Hunters without number one seed James Gair. Rob Stimpson stepped up and played the best squash of his season to claim an emphatic 3-0 win. Dave Atten and Howard Bowen were both then involved in tight losses which meant the pressure fell on Michael Crafer to secure victory and he didn't disappoint as he bulldozed to a 3-0 victory.

## FOOTBALL

## Owls' search

Holt Football Club are looking for a secretary and reserve and 'A' team managers as the new seasons looms. All applications and enquiries should be made to the chairman, Andy Turner on 01263 712905 (mobile 07590404770) or me on 01263 712211.

## BOWLS

## County win

As part of Holt Bowls Club's 25th anniversary celebrations the club entertained a high quality team drawn from the Norfolk County ladies' and men's Federation squads. In front of a good crowd of spectators the county team ran out winners but a enjoyable afternoon was had by all who took part. See next week's paper for a picture.



**LOOK WHO'S BACK IN TOWN!:** Norfolk's very own British Lions Tom (left) and Ben Youngs (right) with Holt's captains for next season Joe Buxton (second left) and Bruce van Poortvliet. Picture: GUY ROPER.

# Pleasant surprise for Holt players

A surprise visit from British Lions heroes Tom and Ben Youngs has added a touch of spice to pre-season preparations at Holt Rugby Club.

The Norfolk brothers have strong links with the club and after returning home from the triumphant summer tour to Australia they were quick to accept an invitation to pay a visit to their High Kelling base.

Last week's session was kept under wraps by the club beforehand, and the first time most players were aware of it was when they arrived at the club.

"We wanted to get the maximum impact from this session," said coach Ed Steed. "The players have worked really hard so far and have upped their game and intensity levels. This was definitely true of this session. It's not very often that you can say you have trained alongside and been coached by two British Lions players and our players really bought in to what Tom and Ben were trying to achieve."

Tom enjoyed his trip down memory lane, saying: "Ben and I always enjoy

## RUGBY UNION

coming back to Holt, it's where we grew up and it was great to give something back in this way. All the players worked really hard and were very receptive. Obviously we know many of them, having grown up with them so we had some fun to, which is what rugby and training should be about." Ben added: "Pre-season can be pretty hard going sometimes, regardless of the level you play at, so we wanted to demonstrate some of the conditioned games and exercises we enjoy and have fun doing because that makes it so much easier."

Holt's forwards coach, Penny Chapman, who is a coach educator for the RFU, said of the session: "I can't praise Ben and Tom enough.

"Professionals often get frustrated when players who are not of their standard don't understand what they want them to do or are not capable of doing it to their level but the boys were bang on, coming up with a great session plan."

Holt have a variety of sessions still planned, which will see a British and Commonwealth judo champion and coach and Team GB Paralympic sprint coach visit the High Kelling over the next few weeks and a training camp with National League Two side Shelford planned for this weekend before the first pre-season fixture on Saturday.

This will see Holt play host to a triangular fixture also featuring North Walsham, newly promoted to London 1 NE, and Twickenham, who have themselves just been promoted to London 2NW.

Off the field Guy Roper has replaced Richard Seaman as Holt chairman, after the most successful period in the club's history, while the Youngs' cousin Bruce Van Poortvliet and Joe Buxton have been confirmed as first and second team captains, with Ashley Woods and Jamie Seaman taking on the respective vice-captain roles. Bruce follows in the footsteps of older brother Jake, who previously captained the club.

## Chairman stresses importance of the squad

Holt are hoping to run their first and second teams with one interchangeable squad this season.

"The coaches tried to ban the concept of players being dropped last season," said new club chairman Guy Roper. "Instead it should be recognised that players are being tactically rested or developed in the second team, with other players given the opportunity to show what they can do in the first team.

"If we want to continue our recent success then the size and depth of our squad will become increasingly

important, especially if, as we want to, we aspire to go further up the leagues. We are hoping to get to the position where all first and second team players regularly attend training. We already get quite a few, as well as several third team players but we need to get more. This won't be easy and may take some time but it's not that long ago we only trained once a week and look how successful we've been since the coaches introduced twice a week training."

To support this change Holt have also reintroduced the position of

senior teams manager to support coaches Ed Steed and Penny Chapman, which will see Sean Chapman working alongside his wife, in what must be one of few management husband and wife combinations in team management in rugby, certainly at this level. The club has also decided to adopt a selection committee to choose the clubs senior sides each week. Holt continue to seek new players for all three of its senior sides and anybody wishing to play should contact Sean Chapman on 07701 011592.

## SQUASH

## Title race is heading for exciting finish

With just two matches left to play the positions at the top of Division One of the Anaco sponsored Norfolk SRA Summer League remain unchanged after both Cromer and Barnham Broom II picked up another 14 points in their matches against Broadland II and Fakenham respectively.

Cromer's lead at the top of the table remains at just two points after their unchanged team had a fine 14-7 victory, their ninth win of the summer, on the Fleggburgh courts against a strong Broadland team. The key to their success this summer has been that they have been able to field a settled team and the three youngest players, at the top of the order, have turned in some good match winning performances.

Team captain Henri Paul, who is very much the team's senior player both in terms of age and experience, has struggled a bit on the warm, and sometimes, hot summer courts which do not really suit his all action style with the ball difficult to control. This week he was again the team's only casualty as he lost a closely contested fourth string match 3-1 in which each of the four games was only decided by the narrowest of margins.

After a shaky start to the season, following his return from Australia, Alex Foster is now playing some good squash at No.3 and after surrendering a two-game lead to an experienced opponent he had to dig deep to win the decisive fifth game 13-11. Club champion Ben Herrieven, at No.2, has always had the ability to do well but in the past he has not won matches as easily as he should. After working on his concentration with the technical director he is now more focused and he won his match in straight games against one of the leading junior players in the county.

At this stage Cromer led 7-5 in games won which left Richard Keeble needing to take at least two games from the first string match if his team were to take the four bonus points and maintain their title challenge. After narrowly losing the third game 14-12 to trail 1-2 things did not look too promising but after taking the fourth game 13-5 to draw level the pressure was off and he took the final fifth game 13-10 to round off a good night's work for the team.

Starling said afterwards: "This was another good victory. With just two matches left to play it is now in our hands as to whether we win the division. We know that our two remaining opponents have both got good players at the top of their order so it is going to be tough but we will give it our best shot."

The second team meanwhile gained a fortuitous 16 points when their scheduled opponents Oasis II were unable to raise a team to fulfil the fixture. With the season drawing to a close there was no opportunity to re-arrange the match and Starling reluctantly claimed a 16-0 walk-over saying: "We don't like to claim walk-overs as fixtures made are meant to be played but in this case we had no choice."

## RESULTS

Richard Keeble beat Jon Bird 13-8 7-13 12-14 13-5 13-10, Ben Herrieven beat Will Henden 13-10 14-12 13-7, Alex Foster beat Terry Mayes 13-8 13-6 8-13 6-13 13-11, Henri Paul lost to Justin Miller 11-13 13-10 10-13 11-13.