



HOWARD PARK YELLOWS V HOOK RAVENS
JAM LEAGUE
18th DECEMBER 2025

Wow, what weather! Gale force winds, biblical rain and a nice chill to the air, just as well we were playing indoors then! Last week's result meant the Ravens were in need of a quick bounce back to winning ways. The opening game against Howard Park at Hook was a close match and today was no different. One of the most important lessons learned today was by Captain Chris - it is not easy playing in a match and keeping notes for the write up!

The venue is a little cramped at Howard Park and the mats look similar to our mat 2 but they don't play like mat 2! The match was a very tight one with Hook finding themselves 20-12 down after 8 ends and they were to trail until the 13th end when they tasted the lead for the first time outside the first end. Mat 1 had Ken Hawkins at Lead, Brenda Grout at Second and Paul Crook at Skip. They were under the cosh from the 4th end after a great 4-1 lead. Howard Park took 8 off the next 2 ends before the match settled into a tit for tat scenario. The opponent's skip seemed to be working magic with his shots and their second was piling on the pressure as well. The 12th end saw the momentum truly shift in Hook's favour and with 5 of the final 7 ends being won by the high flying Ravens, victory was well deserved but hard work to achieve. The final end was 15-16 to Hook but Howard Park had taken ends 16 and 17 and were buoyed by their comeback. All 3 Ravens knuckled down and played so coolly and took an all important 2 shots to record a 15-18 victory.

Mat 2 saw Chris Vickers make his season debut after his knee injury at Lead, Stan Goddard at Second and Liz Wilson at Skip. Unlike mat 1 this mat settled into one of those bizarre patterns often seen in bowls. When playing towards the bar Hook would win, when playing any from it Howard Park took the honours. The only difference was that Hook would tend to win 1s and 2s whilst the hosts took a 3 and a 4. The pattern was broken on the 11th end when Liz Wilson went for an all or nothing shot with both sides having a bowl resting on the jack. 2mm is a massive distance in bowls and that is how much Liz's shot missed perfection and Howard Park to the point! The Ravens responded by taking 3 off the next end (away from the bar) and then took the next 2 ends with a 1 and the lead was established in Hook's favour and they were never to relinquish that lead. Going into the final end with the score at 13-16, Howard Park threw everything at the head and at one stage were holding 2 and a possible 3rd. Liz and Stan placed bowls in excellent areas to counter the 3 Howard Park needed and by the time Liz delivered the final bowl it was known that Howard Park only held 1 and with mat 1 having won it would be nice to say that she did not try too hard!

A magnificent 34-29 shots win gave the Ravens a well earned 10-0 win and that was the perfect Christmas present for Captain Chris. We now have a small break until January 8th when the Ravens will return to the nest at Hook and take on Marnell.

I would like to thank all at the club for their support for the Ravens and in turn I would like to thank all the Ravens for their support for me. Running a squad is not easy but the Ravens are making this as easy as it probably could be. I would like to wish the Ravens a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Make the most of the festive treats but don't forget to get back to the food of sporting heroes before the next match. All the Ravens squad wish all at Hook Bowling club a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.