



HOOK RAVENS v MARNELL
JAM LEAGUE CUP
8TH JANUARY 2026

Happy New Year to all our readers, we trust you had a wonderful festive season but you also missed your weekly report of the JAM League Bowls. Hook Ravens hosted Marnell in the first match of 2026 with Hook sitting in third in the table whilst our visitors were sat at the bottom. On arrival Marnell almost seemed ready to be put to the sword but there remained an element of positivity about them. The first meeting between us at Marnell was an exciting event with an 8-2 Ravens win after Stan Goddard's fantastic final shot.

Mat 1 saw a club debut for Carole Newman at Lead, Elaine Bennett was at Second and Albert Johnson was Skip. Boy did this mat start the year in style! Whilst Carole and Elaine settled in to the match it looked like Albert was on a mission! Winning the first 6 ends to create a 13-0 lead the trio were soon working in unison and hounding the jack and the Marnell bowls as if their bowling careers depended on it. The large crowd of 5 watching were very impressed with the play but as is often the case the players on Mat 1 couldn't really appreciate the oohs and aah's that were aimed at their play. Marnell tried to mount some form of comeback but they were restricted to the odd end here and there. A fantastic 32-13 win for Hook was a welcome start to 2026 and the trio on Mat 1 should all be pleased with their efforts today.

Mat 3 saw Dave Wilson at Lead, Steve Potts at Second and Liz Wilson at Skip in the hope that they would dominate the opposition like the last time they played together at Crondall. The first delivery of the year was straight off the side of the mat and when other bowlers might have panicked or crumpled under pressure, Dave adjusted brilliantly and started to assert his dominance over his opposite number. Jus like Mat 1, this mat was looking comfortable after 6 ends with an 8-2 lead. Liz was busy demonstrating how when a bowl is delivered it is working on Plan A but by the time it ends in the final position it was on Plan Z! Time and again the opposition Skip was seen shaking his head at the winning shots but if you have watched Liz this season you will know that all her shots are played to incur the law of the best outcome and this often takes possible detours en-route. Steve was solid at Second and he both backed up Dave's great work and lead Liz to making the correct shot but on one end Liz played a great shot to take shot and was heard to say 'If you want it doing, do it yourself!' This was of course said in jest and the whole mood of the match was one of fun and playing with friends. Liz's best saying of the day was saved for the 14th end when Hook scored a fantastic 4 and as Liz marked the scorecard she said a very heartfelt 'Well played team'. That 14th end was a rarity in the final 7 ends with Hook losing 5 of them but they had already won the day by then and ran out 24-17 winners.

A fantastic 56-30 win over the two mats gave Hook a 10-0 win and that resulted in moving up to second in the division behind Alencon. Playing the team at the bottom can often throw up a surprise result and thankfully that was avoided today. Both teams played with smiles on their faces, complimented their teammates and opposition when good shots were played and enjoyed a thoroughly enjoyable cup of tea with each other. In fact I think you would be hard pushed to find a more perfect afternoon of playing and watching short mat bowls. Next week we switch to the cup competition again with an away match at Marnell, this time we face the team from the top division as the teams at the top of the cup group battle it out.

Go Ravens