



FARNBOROUGH GATE V HOOK RAVENS  
JAM LEAGUE  
12th FEBRUARY 2026

The wheels on the bus go round and round, round and round..... and then they fall off! The Ravens arrived at Farnborough Gate feeling confident of remaining in the promotion hunt but within 8 ends we could see those hopes flying off into the distance. In reality this hopes disappeared a couple of weeks ago. The table looks close but Odiham D have a game in hand that they are probably expected to win and with only 2 league matches remaining (where has the season gone?) And mathematically it is still possible but the reality is that it will Division 2 again next season.

Mat 1 had Carole Newman at Lead, Brenda Grout at Second and Martyn Kee at Skip whilst Mat 2 had Peter Newman at Lead, Hannah Goddard at Second and Liz Wilson at Skip. Initially the mats were close with a bizarre scenario of the Ravens doing well on one mat and struggling on the other and suddenly those fortunes changed! As the match progressed the home side grew in confidence and started taking vital shots with their skips taking full advantage of the pace of the mats. Both mats were much slower than the ones at Hook, they were very much like mat 2. This led to a lot of movement of bowls at lower speeds and this was the undoing of the valiant visitors. Mat 1 saw several scenarios where they were holding a lot of shots only for the hosts to grab the points with last gasp deliveries, the worst being a holding of 6 shots being disrupted for the hosts to take 1. Mat 3 finished closer than Mat 1 and things could have been oh so different if they hadn't lost ends by scores of 4 or 5.

This was the first game all season where the entire Ravens squad look forlorn and even down and I felt for them. All season I have relentlessly impressed upon them the need to smile and project positive body language so the opponents don't feed off the negative vibe. Today I think I let the squad down at times by not maintaining my own smile. It was a tough defeat to take, especially after our greta victory against Farnborough Gate when we played at Hook. Everyone in the team tried and tried throughout the match but it looked like one of those days where the harder you try the worse the performance. There will be players that will be thinking they should have played better but we all have games like that but as disappointing as the result is I was pleased and indeed proud that all persevered through their 18 ends and all learned about the game.

The day was big for one reason in that we had our first away supporter of the season in Mike Draper. Thank you Mike for making the trip to Farnborough. Things also looked up with the tea and coffee at the end as our hosts provided hot sausage rolls!

A 24-38 defeat means three defeats on the trot. We get up, dust ourselves off and do it all again next week for our second of three road trips win a row as we visit Odiham to play their 'OD' team and make them earn their place in potential promotion. We have to play them and Crondall so we have the opportunity to influence who goes up with Alencon 25. The draw has been made for the post season matches and should we progress in the plate competition we will play Howard Park Greens at a neutral venue.  
Go Ravens