



**SOUTH WALES PREMIER LEAGUE – PLAYOFF FINAL**

## **RHIWBINA HAVE BETTER OF STRINGS IN FINAL**

Words by Damian Burgess 12.5.2011

On May 11<sup>th</sup> 2011 Rhiwbina made history to become the third team to win the South Wales Premier League over a season and the fourth team to win a half season after Strings, St Mellons and Newport. Rhiwbina were taking on Strings at Cardiff Squash Club in the first ever playoff final to determine the 2011 Champions.



Strings walked away with the SWPL pre Christmas with the biggest points tally for a 8 team season, in the second half of the season Rhiwbina were strengthened by the return of Peter Creed after his tour of America. The season went all the way to the final week with Rhiwbina winning the last

3 fixtures 5 – 0 to win the league by 8 points of Strings in the closest leagues in many years. Because a different team won the pre and post leagues there would have to be a playoff final to determine the 2011 overall champions.

Cardiff Squash Club was the venue for the final, the crowds packed in from 7pm to watch some of the best squash in Wales. With the show glass back court and seating at Cardiff it is the perfect venue for a great night of squash..

The teams for the night were.

### **STRINGS v RHIWBINA**

Jethro BINNS v Peter CREED  
Andrew NEAL v Sam FENWICK  
David HOWE v Matt O'CONNER  
Dan ANDERSON v Richard MURPHY  
Huw GRIFFITHS v Jason BURGON

First on court were Richard Murphy v Dan Anderson and Jason Burgon v Huw Griffiths, Richard had lost earlier in the season to Dan when the two sides met but was too strong and fit for Dan and won 3-1. On the show court Huw Griffiths played an excellent brand of squash with very little errors and won 3-0. The match was 1-1.



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Next on court was David Howe and Matthew O'Connor, billed as the match that could decide the outcome of the team match the crowd packed in behind the glass back, with over 50 people in their seats and nearly 30 viewers online the players had their support. Dave started the strongest in the match and took the first game with a string of errors from the racket of Matthew. In the second game Matthew started the strongest but was always kept in check by Dave, with some great rallies from the two experienced players the game ended on a no let for Dave, 1-1. After that there was no looking back for Matt who won the match 3-1 and now Rhiwbina only needed one more match to win the team match.



Sam Fenwick and Andrew Neal were on court 2 and were locked at 1-1 when Peter Creed and Jethro Binns stepped on the glass back. Peter started the strongest and looked in great form from the off, taking the first game in less than 10 minutes 11-3. The next two games went a similar way, in the last Jethro put up a fight and the scores were 6 – 8 but again some great winners mixed with patient squash Peter came out a winner 3-0 and the match was Rhiwbina's and the title too.



The dead rubber now on court 2 finished 3-1 to Sam Fenwick and the match ended 4-1 to Rhiwbina, the title was theirs and a new name on the trophy. Well done to both teams on a great night of squash.

After the match Mike Workman, director of coaching and development at Squash Wales thanked both teams and all the players for a great night of squash, Cardiff Squash Club for hosting the event and for putting on some great food.



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The losing captain, Dave Howe of Strings said ***“what a great night of squash, even though we may not have won we want to thank everyone for their support all season and especially tonight to the fans who travelled down from Strings to watch, a big thank you to Rhiwbina on being great opponents and worthy winners again, we now look forward to next season”***



The after picking up the trophy Matthew O'Connor, team captain of Rhiwbina said ***“we have finally won it, thank you to everyone for coming tonight, we didn't expect this amount of support from anyone, thank you. Thank you to all of my team and the squad of players we used all year, a great achievement for the club. Thank you to Damian for his efforts on gaining support for the league with news on facebook, twitter and LIVE streaming, I don't think we have ever had a closer league. Thank you to Strings on a great battle all season, we are also looking forward to next season.”***

Again a big thank you to everyone who came last night to support, it makes playing that much easier for the players. Thank you to the teams also who gave us a great night of squash at Cardiff Squash Club. We had LIVE streaming on the night with over 50 different viewers tuning in online, this coupled with over 200 watching on the weekend for the inter counties shows a demand for the service which we will endeavor to continue next season. As well as the LIVE streaming we are looking at a website for the SWPL as well as a SWPL Fantasy League for next season to hopefully get everyone involved in the league. Any ideas you have please let us know.



Here are the previous SWPL Champions since 2004.

YEAR	TEAM	No. of clubs	POINTS
2010/2011 Post X	Rhiwbina*	8	221
2010/2011 Pre X	Strings	8	236
2009/2010	Newport	8	220
2008/2009	St Mellons	10	303
2007/2008 Post X	St Mellons	6	148
2007/2008 Pre X	St Mellons	6	164
2006/2007 Post X	St Mellons	6	140
2006/2007 Pre X	St Mellons	5	124
2005/2006 Post X	Newport	6	164
2005/2006 Pre X	Newport	6	161
2004/2005 Post X	St Mellons	6	157
2004/2005 Pre X	St Mellons	6	156

\*Rhiwbina won playoff Final and 2011 season overall

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