

Over 45s CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL – Neil Shepherd (Black shirt) v Mike Sutherland (Lime Green shirt)

Game 1. In his second final of the day Mike Sutherland was drawn against Neil Shepherd who was looking to retain his title from last year. Both players traded points upto 4-4 all. Both players working the ball into all parts of the court. Points continued to be traded upto 6-6. Mike was able to find a brace of point using his lobs to drive Neil into the back of the court to go 7-8 up. Neil found a good angled boast to keep in touch 7-8. Mike responded with some boasts of his own to go to Game ball 10-7, and just needed a point. Neil was not going to concede and battled back to 10-10 before closing out the first game 12-10.



Game 2. Mike bounced back and quickly had a 4-1 lead. Neil found two more points to counter the pressure Mike was creating at 5-3. Neil changed the pace and countered the lobs by reducing Mike's options to play them and putting Mike deep in the back corners. This turned the game towards Neil as he took the next four point to go 7 -5 up. Both

players traded the next couple of points with Neil slightly ahead at 8-6. Mike found a second wind and took the game back to Neil winning the next four points to go to game ball at 10-8. Just like the first game Neil was not going to go quietly and returned the run of points to level the game before again pushing through to close out the 2nd game 12-10.

Game 3. Mike now had nothing to lose 2 games down he responded by going 3-1 up. Neil was also not wanting to give Mike any way back into the game and levelled the game at 3-3. Mike however had other ideas and with his lob working again, he created some great opportunities to change his hard work into points to go to 6-3. Neil again bounced back with a brace to close the gap at 5-6. Much like the first two games Mike moved through to game ball at 10-6. Neil won the next two but Mike was determined to close out the game 11-8, which he did to take the match into a 4th game.



Game 4. Into the fourth game and again Mike took a healthy lead 4-2 and then traded points to 5-3. Neil then put Mike under pressure to level the game and edged into the lead at 6-5. Another couple of points each and the game was level again at 7-7. Like the previous games Mike moved through to game ball at 10-8, Neil was not going to let Mike level the match and stretched Mike to all parts of the court. Neil whittled away the points to level and move to 11-10. Mike levelled at 11-11 before Neil was able to push through the two points he needed to close out the game and the match 13-11. Some great rallies by both players throughout this match, both showing some great experience, tactical prowess and stubborn resistance.



Neil Shepherd Won 3-1: 12-10, 12-10, 8-11, 13-11