

Sussex last played Tyne and Wear in the British Inter Counties in March 1996 at the Dunnings Mill in a season that finished with Sussex Mens "A" team champions of Division Three and Tyne and Wear relegated to Division Four. Back in Division Three after just two seasons Sussex began the fight for promotion with an excellent 23-13 win with all four teams gaining victory.

New Sussex team manager Mark Davis made ten changes to the Mens teams who failed to beat Staffordshire at the end of last season. Returning to County action in the "B" team were Tony Ayres, Andy Derrick, James Stephenson and Gareth Thomas and from the "A" team Darren Woolgar and Aegir Bjornsson with Geoff Taylor back from the reserves. The Mens "A" team were strengthened by the return of Jim Withers, Andy Derrick and from the "B" team Paul Robinson. Rhonda West made five changes to the Ladies "B" team with newcomer Emma Bist, the return of Lisa Withers and Laura Macintosh and from the "A" team Denise Peake and Hayley Gatford. The Ladies "A" side saw the return of Kelly Ryan and up from the "B"s Karen Winter and Becky King.

After going 2-0 down without winning a leg the Sussex Ladies "B" fought back to register their second consecutive 4-2 win. Lisa Withers, Eastbourne marked her return to the County after five years with a 3-0 win followed by success for Hayley Gatford, Littlehampton and Laura Macintosh, Brighton. Bridget Guilford, Lewes made it 4-2 with a Lady-of-the-Match performance and a 16.67 average. In a low scoring match Sussex hit 12 tons to the visitors 7.

The Sussex Mens "B" team were determined to put the 9-3 defeat last April against Staffordshire behind them and they did just that by taking seven of the first nine games. Wins for Newhaven pair Darren Woolgar and Dave Creasey, Andy Derrick, Hastings, Aegir Bjornsson, Littlehampton, Ken Sowerby, Lancing, Andy Gurr, Crawley and a Man-of-the-Match award winning average of 26.11 by Lee Jennings, Southwick ensured the win. The visitors fought back to take the final three games but Sussex ran out 7-2 winners out scoring Tyne and Wear 67 tons and 3 maximums to 63 tons.

Sussex Ladies "A" got off to a fine start on Sunday morning, beginning with Trish Kidd, Littlehampton winning 3-2 with an 18.77 average which proved to be a Lady-of-the-Match award winner. Kelly Ryan won 3-1 on her return to the County stage and her Eastbourne team mate Becky King proved her promotion to be right with a 3-0 win. Donna Rainsley, Newhaven won 3-0 to give Sussex Ladies "A" their second successive 4-2 win, this despite being out scored by the visitors who hit 30 tons to the home team's 19 and one maximum.

Going into the Mens "A" match Sussex knew they needed just four wins to take the bonus points for the weekend and they reached their target at the half way stage. Wins for Cliff Prior, Littlehampton, Adrian Gray, Hastings, Joe Davis, Southwick and Michael Hammond, Newhaven gave Sussex the nineteen points they required. Adrian Gray's winning average of 27.89 proved to be the best over the two days and won him the Man-of-the-Match award. Sussex continued their winning ways taking four of the final six games to run out 8-4 winners with success for Danny King, Broadbridge, Jim Withers, Lewes, Paul Eves, Newhaven and Dan Bradford, Littlehampton. A well deserved win judging by the tons tally, Sussex hitting 122 tons and 4 maximums to the visitor's 90 tons and 2 maximums. The overall match score of 23-13 to Sussex moves them up to sixth place in the promotion table with a fixture in hand of the teams above them.

