

2016 Republic Bank Interclub – Final

Summerhayes defeated Yacht Club by one point for the 2016 RBL Inter-club Championship

This year's Republic Bank sponsored Inter-Club tennis competition came to a thrilling end at the National Tennis Centre, as Barbados Yacht Club (BYC) served for the Championship in a must win game for both sides. It was Summerhayes who, two weeks in a row, won the crucial game and the tie. It was a great disappointment for BYC who had played undefeated throughout the round robin phase and had previously dispatched of Summerhayes easily in the third week of play. Summerhayes coming into the semi's, which is the knockout phase, in fourth place rose to the occasion when it counted most, and despite winning only three of the seven matches, were able to win 43 games in total compared to BYC's 42.



BYC won both the opening singles matches. Veteran Peter Symmonds (BYC) came from 4-5 down to overcome Sean Eteen 6-5(6) in what would be closest match of the day. In the women's singles, junior Emmanuelle Mottley played consistent tennis to comfortably defeated Summerhayes stalwart Judith St. John 6-1 which gave BYC an overall six point lead.

The number 1 doubles were up next and there were two decisive wins for Summerhayes. Marie-Jeanne Symmonds playing with top junior Ilana Blackwood had a comfortable win at 9-3 over Marie-Ann Gonsalves and Helen Roper. It was the superior ground strokes and the powerful swinging volleys of Blackwood that distinguished the pairs, and for her undefeated record in all 8 matches played this season, Blackwood was named MVP of the tournament. The Summerhayes men of Michael Date and Martin Frost also defeated rivals Jason Small and Brian Cadogan 9-3 in what was a battle of supremacy at the net.

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FINAL	BYC - SH	Barbados Yacht Club	Summerhayes
MS	6 - 5	Peter Symmonds	Sean Eteen
WS	6 - 1	Emanuelle Mottley	Judith St. John
MD1	3 - 9	Jason Small/Brian Cadogan	Martin Frost/Michael Date
MD2	6 - 9	Mark Gilkes/Jimmy Tasker	Kyle Frost/Russell Jones
WD1	3 - 9	Marie-Ann Gonsalves/Helen Roper	Ilana Blackwood/Marie-Jeanne Symmonds
WD2	9 - 3	Kelly Corbin/Jackie Marshall	Jane Steinbok/Caryl Pearson
MD	9 - 7	Joshua Worme/Donna Gibbs	Preshant Nebhani/Kim Brandford
Matches	4 - 3		
Score	42 - 43		

BYC clinched their third victory in the ladies no 2 doubles. It was a battle of attrition that saw the reliable pair of Jackie Marshall and Kelly Corbin out rallying Jane Steinbok and Caryl Person to take a 9-3 victory for BYC. After 5 matches the scores were dead even on 27 point each. Match 6 saw Jimmy Tasker playing for BYC with Mark Gilkes in his doubles debut. The two took on top junior Kyle Frost playing with Russell Jones for Summerhayes. BYC found themselves fighting from behind with Summerhayes leading 7-2. BYC were able to break Frost and Jones to come within one game of tying the match at 6-7. On a crucial deuce point it was Summerhayes who held their nerve and their serve to finish the match with the win at 9-6.



The stage was set for a tense finish. BYC needed to win the final match and also stop Summerhayes getting 7 games, to ensure victory. Both teams were represented by their reliable key mixed doubles pairs. For Summerhayes it was Preshant Nebhani & Kim Brandford, playing against BYC's Joshua Worme and Donna Gibbs. Summerhayes got off to a quick start breaking Gibbs in the opening game and again to consolidate a 4-1 lead.

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BYC fought back and put their nose ahead with 3 breaks of their own to get to 7-5. Both teams needed 2 more games, and when BYC was broken Summerhayes seemed to be in control of their destiny at 6-7 with Nebhani serving. That game went the distance, and in the all-important sudden death deuce point, in what was a long rally with several great shots by both sides, Worme made the smash to get the break and to also bring BYC to within one game of the championship at 8-6. Worme had an opportunity to serve it out but Nebhani held his nerve with 2 superb returns of serve down the middle that together with key volleys from Brandford, created 3 championship points for Summerhayes, who were able to close it out on the first opportunity to ensure Summerhayes the crucial 7th game.

With the tie decided, Summerhayes lost the next game while serving and the match 9-7, however they had sealed the championship victory by one point in what was a thrilling finish.

Darrell Wilson, Manager Retail Services, Speightstown & Limegrove Cluster of Republic Bank was on hand to present the trophy to Bernard Frost the men's captain and Marie-Jeanne Symmonds the ladies captain of Summerhayes. The President of the Barbados Tennis Association Dr Raymond Forde also commended all involved for the wonderful evening of sport and camaraderie.

