

Fitzwimarc met Phoenix Flames in the first round of the Peter Gibbs Cup at the Fitzwimarc School, vying for a place in the quarter final of the competition. Phoenix made it to the semi-final last year whereas Fitzwimarc reached the final, with both losing to eventual winners East Thurrock.

Three of the first four rubbers went to three games as it looked to be a tight affair. Phoenix Flames took the first in straight games though as Wanitaya Bolton and Sara Thompson (Scr) beat Kera Lewis and Angela McDaniel (-2).

Phoenix then twice came from behind to take a 3-0 lead overall. Tom Cook and Tim Baskett (Scr) lost the first game 21-14 to Jay Crewe and Daniel Wightman (-5) but matched that score in the next two as they made their handicap advantage count. It was even tighter for Wanitaya and Mandie Breed (Scr) as they edged the third game 21-18 against Kera and Becky Terry (-4).

They stopped the match from getting out of sight in the second Men's doubles though as Jay and Oliver Escott (-10) turned things around to win in three against Tom and Andrew McMahon (Scr), 21-16 in the decider.

After restoring hope, the first two Mixed doubles matches put the tie out of sight of Fitzwimarc. Tim and Sara (Scr) beat Daniel and Angela (-6) in straight sets and then Andrew and Mandie (Scr) did the same against Jay and Kera (Scr) to make it 5-1 overall and guarantee Phoenix's place in the quarters.

Fitzwimarc did win two of the remaining three rubbers as Oliver and Becky (-13) won in straight sets against Tom and Wanitaya (Scr). The eighth tie was conceded by Fitz but they triumphed in straight sets in the last as Oliver and Becky (-12) beat Tim and Sara (Scr) to see the match finish in a 6-3 win for the visitors.

Last year's finalists tumble out but Phoenix Flames must meet reigning champions East Thurrock in the quarters at Rayleigh Leisure Centre in January. Elsewhere, Westcliff will face Phoenix Flames Seconds, Eastwood take on Hawkwell and SLH Rayleigh play Fitzwimarc Seconds.