



## Leinster Senior Team 2017-2018

It gives me great delight to report that Leinster have been promoted to the premier division of the English Inter County Championship for the 2018-2019 season after an absence of approx. 15 years. For the third year in a row Leinster reached the Division 1 playoffs. This was to be their year coming away with the silver medal and only missing out on winning Division 1 by one match.

The 2017-2018 campaign got underway back in November. Leinster made known their intentions for the season from the very first match. 9-2 victories over Surrey 2 and Kent were secured as Leinster came away with eighteen points from the first weekend.

On to January and first up were our neighbours Ulster, promoted from Division 2. Despite a strong start from Ulster, Leinster showed their composure and took 7 of the remaining 8 matches earning them a 7-4 victory. A 6-5 win against Essex concluded the second weekend.

The final weekend in March saw us return to Redbridge Sports Centre, Essex with a playoff place in our sights. The team were keen to get points on the board early and duly delivered on their intentions with an 8-3 win against Devon. The afternoon match was a closer encounter but again Leinster dug deep and came away with a 6-5 win over Middlesex 2. This left Leinster in 2nd place at the end of the day with table toppers Hertfordshire to play on Sunday. Hertfordshire also had their sights set on the playoffs and proved too strong on the day with Leinster losing 8-3, coming out on the wrong side of three very tight three set matches. However, the playoff place was secured and a showdown with the top 2 teams from Division 1 North along with Hertfordshire awaited them the first weekend in May.

The playoffs were held in the National Badminton Centre, Milton Keynes on 5 and 6 May. First up were the Division 1 North group winners Warwickshire. Leinster got off to a flying start with a 10-1 victory with some super performances and all the practice sessions paying off. The afternoon match followed and another fine performance from the team earning a 6-5 win over Nottingham. A shoot out with Hertfordshire for the Division 1 title awaited on Sunday. The teams were level going into the final game but the experience of Olympic, world and European medallist Jo Goode, (nee Wright) proved too much with Hertfordshire gaining the final point. However a great performance from the team and a place in the Premier ICC secured for the 2018-2019 season.

My thanks must go to fellow selectors Seamus Halpin & Cheryl Evans for their help throughout the year, to Siobhán in the office for all her work keeping us on track, to Joe Byrne for the face book posts and to Yonex Ireland our sponsors.

Report by Siobhán Grehan,  
Leinster Senior Team Manager

Squad of players involved:

**Men:** Mark Brady, Sam McKay, Nigel Boyne, Dan Magee, Owen Marron, Eddie Cousins, Neil O'Flaherty, Declan Bennett, Adam Jermyn and David Walsh,

**Women:** Kate Frost, Moya Ryan, Jennie Magee, Lauren Au, Fiona Farrell and Niamh Gannon.