

Haddington Badminton Ace Reigning Scottish National Doubles Champion!

On the eve of his 48th birthday, **enjoyleisure**'s Aubigny Sports Centre Service Manager, and Haddington local, Craig Lamb, took to the courts to defend his title as Scottish National Masters Double Championships (over 45s), alongside his partner Mark MacKay.

Held at the Sir Craig Reddie Centre in Glasgow, Craig and Mark were favourites heading into the tournament as current title holders. However as the competition has been cancelled for the past two years due to the pandemic - as Craig puts it - "it was theirs to lose!"

In reality though, the pair had nothing to fear, as they made their way through two pools before reaching the final, winning in straight sets 21:13 and 21:18.

Craig currently keeps himself physical fit and active, and with the full support of **enjoyleisure**, currently trains twice a week with his coach at Meadowmill Sports Centre. However what may come as a surprise is that he trains alone, as his partner Mark is based in Thurso. Incredibly the only time they come together is at competitions. However after being partnered for over 25 years, they have an incredibly strong relationship.



Craig explains, *"Whenever we come together, we just click. We've played together for so long, we're liked a married couple of the court, and we each play to our own strengths. I prefer to play a tight net game, whereas Mark is really strong in defence, so we are incredibly well matched."*



The pair's continued success as national champions is really quite remarkable given that in April 2015, with no prior knowledge or warning, Craig suffered a stroke, caused by a previously undetected hole in his heart. After significant rounds of physio and a heart procedure in September 2015, Craig made a remarkable recovery and was back on the court, winning the Scottish National Master Singles Champion (over 35s) on 5th December 2015.

It is unlikely that Craig would have been able to make such a quick recovery, had it not been for his decision to actively look after his health and wellbeing, and maintain his fitness levels.

Craig explains, *"After having a stroke, the biggest factors I had to overcome was balance and coordination. However, having been an active sports player prior to my stroke, it was more of a case of regaining muscle memory. Nevertheless, it was really quite scary when I realised the extent of my ordeal, and for weeks had to work on getting my left hand to find and touch my nose!"*

However, having been physically fit and active prior to my stroke, my doctors indicated this certainly benefited my recovery time, which otherwise could have been significantly longer. At the time, I didn't think I would be able to play badminton at all, never mind compete in competitions again.

PRESS RELEASE

8th November 2021



That's not to say it gets any easier as I get older. However, I still thoroughly enjoy playing, and that's why I keep doing it!"

Having now achieved the title of Scottish National Badminton Doubles Champions, Craig and Mark have their eyes set on their next tournament, where they will hopefully be selected to play in the Scottish National Team in an international competition in January. However Craig's not stopping there, and has his eyes on the ultimate prize of the World Championships in 2025 in the over 50s category!



Ian Sills, Head of Operations and Transformation at **enjoy** says, "Everyone at **enjoyleisure** wishes him good luck. He's truly an inspiration to us all and is a shining example of what you can achieve through dedication to your chosen sport, especially after the restrictions placed on his training regime during lockdown!"