

An England manager explains his earlier disqualification, after...

Ashby league's nail-biting finish!

CASTLE Ashby's AT winter league is over for another year... but it may take time for the dust to settle...

Starlets – fielding a clutch of England internationals – were a 'shoo-in' to win the last round and romp off with the series title.

But it was a real scrabble for series runner's-up spot (and the other semis ticket) as Maver MK, second on the day, tied with Guru...eventually going through after a nail-biting countback.

Then, in an unrelated post-match incident, two competitors came to blows. Far from happy, venue boss Mick Hewlett said: "It was nothing to do with the match. It was personal between them."

Maybe, but ours is supposed to be the 'gentle' sport – NOT *The Premiership!*

And Starlets' Mark Downes (an England team manager, and nothing to do with the punch-up) has told the *Chron* that his actions – leading to his disqualification from an earlier round – had been "a mistake".

He said he'd left his peg and walked the bank that day as, being diabetic, he'd needed chocolate from his van.

But he admits leaving his tackle in the water while away, and that other anglers could have seen him put a small fish in his net after returning and winding in.

"But it hadn't hung (hooked) itself," he said, "I'd foul-hooked it as I reeled in."

Rules apart, leaving tackle fishing unattended is against the law. Mr Downes said: "I made a mistake, and it got blown out of proportion because of who I am."

"It has been an acrimonious league with lots of bad feeling. When things like this happen you have to wonder if it is worth it. We may not be back next year."

Final placings: Starlets 11, Maver MK and Guru

both 15, Royal Mail 29, 'Ashby Youth 31, 'Ashby A 32, RAF 34.

● Town's Steve and Phil Ringer are home from South Africa with bronze team medals after fishing for England in the world feeder champs.

England (managed by Tom Pickering) looked good in the

first of two matches but finished level with Hungary and dropped back a medal slot on weight. The home-side cruised home. Steve was 8th overall with Phil 10th.

"We'd definitely been seen as the team to beat," said Steve. "Two squads even videoed us throughout practice days. They'd have known what we were doing down to how many turns back (of the reel) we made after casting."

● MEADOWLANDS open: Glen Maxwell 79lb, Paul Garner 63-8, Tony Wickam 59-12.

● WHITE Hart Flore, Barby Banks: John Berry 85lb, Glen Tilson 65-8, Tom Griffiths 38-8.

● DAVENTRY, Peatling Pools: Mick Turner 20-14, Rich Wills 13lb, Barry Carr 11-9.

● Towcester, town Tove: Kevin Elliot (dace and a goldfish!) 13-8, Tony Hirst 7lb, Mark Read 5-7.

● CASTLE silverfish series, Canons: Pat Neale 12-8, Dave Cantrell 12-4, Paul Lafflin 10-3. Jeff Rice, Lafflin and Neale finished the series in that order on weight after tying on points.

● LITTLE Harrowden, Oundle Nene: Ken Taylor 10-2 (seed roach), Dave Chamberlain 9lb, Nigel Roberts 4-2 ■



■ TOUGH day in the office! Steve Ringer in South Africa – blue skies, carp...and sunshade over his bait!



...and bending into another on his way to second in section for England

Matches, catches, even rough patches? If there's a tale to tell call Trevor Johnson on 01908 270000 (office) or 07801 183381 or angling@intermediauk.com (click link to email)