



## Braintree League: Rayne win topsy-turvy clash

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A match in which the form book was about as much use as a London Underground map in the Arctic may have sealed one team's fate while giving the other a slender thread of hope in division two of the Braintree Table Tennis League.

The result means that Netts D, third division champions last season, look likely to make a quick return, while Rayne G just about live to fight on.

The individual results looked so unlikely that the league's fixtures secretary had to make a phone call to ensure they were accurate.

But yes, Steve Siggs, Rayne G's best player, did have worse results than both his team-mates and Max Plumridge, Netts D's most successful player, repeated that experience for Netts D.

The evening was a personal triumph for Steve Willis, who won his three singles for the first time this season to help his team to a 6-4 win.

Dave Allison won two singles for only the fourth time this season while Siggs, in the Rayne D team that won the division last season, lost in three straight games to Joe Belsom and Kierlan Richards.

The form book was a much more reliable guide in the other match in the division, a 6-4 win for Nomads over Rayne F, in which Ken Lewis won three and Kevin Saunders two for Nomads and Dave Marsh two for Rayne F.

In division one Liberal B had a 6-4 win over Black Notley A while Netts A were surprisingly held to a draw by their own C team.

Nikki Davison and Hannah Pitt both beat Andy Holmes and Antonio Beckles. They missed out against James Hicks but he in turn was downed by James Mullane.

The Rayne A v Rayne B match pitted Steve Pennell against his long-term teammates Ian Whiteside and Jon Hill

for the first time.

He justified the club's decision to keep him in the A team by beating both of them, although Hill stretched him to 17-15 in the fifth game. The A team won 6-4.

In division three Felsted RBL C dropped more than one point for only the third time this season when both Matt and Jamie Brooks, of Notley E, got the better of Mike Pitt.

Rayne H and Netts F played each other twice in eight days with the same six players involved and the same result: 10-0 to Rayne.

Rayne H also beat Notley G 7-3, all their players having to give second best to Alan Billing.

Mark Jackson and Barry Mouser were unbeaten as Rayne J beat Notley H 9-1 – but the division's bottom team gave them a real workout. Six sets went to five games and the other four to four games.

Results in the second round of the handicap cup: Liberal B 6 Notley G 3 (three wins for Robin Armstrong); Rayne E 6 Notley E 3; Notley C 8 Rayne D 1; Netts D 5 Felsted A 1; Rayne J 0 Notley A 5; Notley F 5 Felsted C 4 (three wins for Mel Cooch); Rayne I 4 Notley D 5 (three for Adam Clift, including a win over Roger Hasler at 22-20 in the third game with the match score at 4-4).

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