



Clacton & District: Six of the best for Panthers

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Congratulations go to Nomads Panthers and Brotherhood G who this week have been confirmed as champions of their respective Divisions in the Clacton & District League, with three weeks of the season still remaining.

In Division One Nomads Panthers guaranteed the title when Colin Webber, Sam Hume and James Denyer cruised past Windsor Hawks 10-0. That makes it six titles in a row for the Panthers' squad of Colin Webber, Sam Hume, James Denyer, John Hatley and Gill Locke, an achievement even more remarkable because it's a feat accomplished only once before in the League's history, by the all-conquering Brotherhood A team who ruled supreme between 1999 and 2007 with nine consecutive titles.

Walton A look favourites to be runners-up following their 9-1 victory over bottom team Windsor Kestrels. Gavin Price and Kevin James took trebles and Paul Woolnough two.

But the future looks bleak for the Kestrels whose predicament was not helped by one-from-bottom Brotherhood D picking up seven valuable points, despite suffering two defeats, and who are now ten points ahead of the bottom-placed team.

Every player won at least one match in Brotherhood C's 6-4 win over the 'D' team, Oli Reynolds unbeaten for the winners. Russell Hillier took two for the losers including a tight 3-2 (11-5, 14-16, 11-9, 8-11, 16-14) victory over Kevin Pryor, although Pryor had a close win of his own, 12-10 in the fifth against Grant Sharpe. Scott Campbell and Sharpe won a point apiece for the 'D' team.

Brotherhood D then went down 7-3 to Brotherhood B and, once again, every player took at least one point. Martin Edwards won three for the 'B' team, reserve Mark Ratcliffe two and John Owen one. Hillier, Campbell and Sharpe took a point each for the 'D' side but they could so easily have taken more, going down narrowly in five of the six matches which went the distance. Ratcliffe defeated Sharpe 12-10 in the fifth and then Campbell 11-7 in the fifth, Edwards beat Campbell 11-6 in the fifth, Owen beat Hillier 11-7 in the fifth whilst it was also 11-7 in the decider in the doubles, Edwards and Ratcliffe edging out Campbell and Sharpe.

Brotherhood B had a second 7-3 win in their match against Walton B. John Andrews was unbeaten and Edwards won two. Jason Gale was Walton's best player, his two points including a fine 11-9 in the fifth win over Edwards.

Three for Greg Green was the highlight of Windsor Condors' 8-2 success against Nomads Lions. Martin Hogg and Felipe Rodriguez both won two, Rodriguez having a close 11-8 in the fifth win over Ethan Lloyd.

It was also 8-2 for Windsor Eagles against Walton C. Phil Smith was unbeaten, and Sue Welham and John Patrick won two each, whilst Paul Newbould took two for the losers. The Eagles were fortunate to win three of the four matches which went all the way, Patrick beating Graham Buxton 11-9 in the decider, the same score by which Sue Welham defeated Rankin. Patrick also beat the unfortunate Rankin 11-5 in the fifth.

The battle for top place in Division Two continued when Lawford and Nomads Tigers, the two teams fighting for the champions' spot, met at the URC Hall. As might have been expected, the match ended all-square, although the result suits Lawford more than the Tigers. Daryl Lott of the Tigers turned out to be the surprise hero of the evening, taking a fine maximum by defeating Richard Spence in four, James Tindle 11-5 in the fifth and Paul Hewitt 11-9 in the fifth.

Phil Wolski also had an 11-9 in the decider win over Spence, as well as defeating Tindle. For Lawford, Hewitt won two, Spence beat John Marshall in yet another 11-9 in the fifth encounter, whilst Tindle won one and shared an important 11-8 in the decider doubles victory with Hewitt over Lott and Marshall.

The drawn result means the Tigers remain two points ahead of Lawford who, crucially, have a match in hand and remain favourites to take the title.

The encounter between Brotherhood F and a Brotherhood I side fielding a guest also ended with honours even. Paul Alden got another treble for the 'I' team but it was the doubles which proved crucial, Alden and Graham Parkes beating Barry Allen and Sandie Krelle 11-9 in the fifth.

Predictable hat-tricks for Jared Chelski and Daniel Young were good enough to give Walton E a 7-3 win over Windsor Harriers. The only match which went to five was the doubles, Chelski and Young beating Ferdy Rodriguez and Isabel Barton 11-4 in the decider.

Andy Cawley's good form continued, remaining unbeaten for Nomads Jaguars in their drawn match with Windsor Magpies, although it was a tight 11-7 in the decider against Kayley Rodriguez. John Plummer and Rodriguez picked up a couple each for the Magpies.

Ray Chillingworth and Pete Bloomfield were Windsor Buzzards' maximum men in their 9-1 victory over relegation-threatened Brotherhood E. Duncan Dunne took the Brotherhood point, beating Dan Malinowski 3-2 (5-11, 11-6, 11-9, 16-18, 11-7), but he will feel disappointed to have lost 11-7 in the fifth to Bloomfield and 11-8 in the fifth to Chillingworth.

Brotherhood H were 7-3 winners against bottom team Walton D, Mark Ratcliffe winning three, Woody Fitzpatrick two and Tricia Salter one. But the Walton side will be content to have taken three points, John Long having good wins over Fitzpatrick and Salter, with John Bonner adding a victory of his own over Salter.

In Division Three the champagne corks are popping for Brotherhood G whose 19 points from their two matches this week confirmed them as Divisional champions.

John Gallagher, Mark Beckham and Paul Metcalf were comfortable 10-0 winners against Nomads Ocelots, none of the individual matches extended beyond three sets.

And they followed this with a 9-1 victory over club-mates Brotherhood J, Beckham and Metcalf again undefeated with Graham Healey winning twice. Dan Still took the 'J' team's point whilst Harley Wood gave Beckham a fright before going down 11-8 in the fifth.

No-one stayed unbeaten as second-placed Windsor Penguins defeated Nomads Caracals 6-4, the Penguins winning both matches which went the distance. There were two each for Debra Found and Alan Charman, as there were for Chris Jones and Vic Little of the Caracals. The crucial match proved to be match nine, Charman defeating Little 11-8 in the fifth.

The Penguins, who have two matches left, are now 12 points ahead of third-placed Nomads Lynx who have three matches to play. And it could be that the runners-up spot will not be decided until the final day of the League season when the Penguins and Lynx are due to meet.

Three for Andrew Cousins, two for Lionel Goddard and one for Alan Dockerill saw Nomads Pumas home 7-3 against Brotherhood J in their second match of the week. Harley Wood won two for Brotherhood, including an 11-9 in the decider win against Dockerill, and Maci Harvey one.

The Windsor Kites v Nomads Leopards fixture ended all-square. Stuart Wilkinson took a maximum for the Leopards whilst there were a couple each for Carl Hubbard and Chris Simson of the Kites.

But the Leopards came out on top 6-4 against Nomads Caracals, despite no-one staying unbeaten. Wilkinson, Roger McNaughton and Bob Jillins all took a couple for the Leopards. Chris Jones won two for the Caracals and Yasmin Ticquet one, with the pair sharing a doubles success.

* The Closed Championships, sponsored for a 25th year by Paul Newbould Planning and Building Design Services, will be held next weekend (Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th April) at the Clacton Coastal Academy Sports Hall. Sixty-seven players will be competing for 12 titles.

Overall, there are 271 matches scheduled to be played over the two days. Play starts at 9am on both days with the finals scheduled to take place from 4pm onwards on Saturday and Sunday.

Admission to the Championships is free and spectators are welcome. Light refreshments will be available as usual. There will also be a raffle and any donations of prizes would be welcome.

Details of check-in times have been sent to all competitors. Any player who has not received this information should contact Peter White (Tel 01255 425292) as soon as possible.

Anyone who would like to sponsor an individual event, should also contact Peter White.

* The final of the Division Three Handicap Challenge will be held at Windsor's St James' Hall venue on Wednesday 25th April at 7.30pm.

RESULTS

Division 1

Nomads Panthers 10 Windsor Hawks 0
Walton A 9 Windsor Kestrels 1
Brotherhood C 6 Brotherhood D 4
Windsor Condors 8 Nomads Lions 2
Brotherhood D 3 Brotherhood B 7
Windsor Eagles 8 Walton C 2
Brotherhood B 7 Walton B 3

Division 2

Brotherhood F 5 Brotherhood I 5
Walton E 7 Windsor Harriers 3
Walton D 3 Brotherhood H 7
Windsor Magpies 5 Nomads Jaguars 5
Windsor Buzzards 9 Brotherhood E 1
Nomads Tigers 5 Lawford 5

Division 3

Brotherhood J 1 Brotherhood G 9
Nomads Caracals 4 Nomads Leopards 6
Brotherhood G 10 Nomads Ocelots 0
Windsor Penguins 6 Nomads Caracals 4
Nomads Pumas 7 Brotherhood J 3

Windsor Kites 5 Nomads Leopards 5

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