



It's just capital for JBL leaders!

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It is a case of 'London Calling' as Fusion and London Academy head the standings in the respective Boys' and Girls' Premier Division tables after weekend one of the Junior British League.

The boys' table is particularly tight, with no team remaining unbeaten and only two points separating the top six in the eight-team league.

Fusion lead the way with seven points, having garnered three wins, one draw and one defeat – the same record as second-placed Clifedale Chandlers Grantham College, who have an inferior sets difference. Dublin and Ormesby are only a point behind, with XLNT Draycott and BATTs one further back on 5pts apiece.

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The two leading teams had contrasting starts to the weekend at Derby Arena, as Fusion opened with a 6-0 victory over Nottingham Sycamore, while Clifedale were on the wrong end of a 5-1 defeat to Ormesby.

Both won in round 2 and drew in round 3 – Clifedale with Sycamore and Fusion with Draycott – to end day one. And both had 4-2 victories in round 4 as Clifedale saw off Draycott and Fusion beat Ormesby.

All of which built up to a 'summit meeting' in the last round of fixtures, and it went the way of Clifedale, ensuring they moved level with their opponents at the top. It was a victory they twice had to twice come from behind to achieve, Joseph Hee giving Fusion the lead against Hippolyte Levy and Ben Lee putting the Londoners 2-1 up by beating Luc Miller, either side of Shayan Siraj's win for Clifedale over James Smith.

Those three matches were all decided in three games but the last three all went to five and all in favour of Clifedale. First, Siraj came from 2-1 down to defeat Joseph Hee 3-2 (8-11, 11-6, 9-11, 13-11, 11-5) and then Levy put Chandlers in front for the first time overall as he withstood a Ben Hee comeback to prevail 3-2 (11-9, 11-9, 5-11, 8-11, 11-7). Jersey ace Miller also faced a deficit against Smith but came through 3-2 (11-8, 6-11, 7-11, 12-10, 11-9)

to secure the 4-2 overall victory.

Not surprisingly, there were no personal 100% records in the top flight, with 80% the best anyone could manage. Four players shared that strike-rate with 8 out of 10 – Joseph Hee, Siraj, Joe Cope of Ormesby and Art McLaughlin of Dublin.

Dublin were named boys' team of the weekend and with the third-placed side still to play both of the top two, and Ormesby also very much in the reckoning, there is plenty still to play for at the top on weekend two in February.



The boys team of the week Dublin A with Table Tennis England Chairman Sandra Deaton

By contrast, the picture at the top of the girls' premier is much more clear-cut, with London Academy having won all five and for the loss of only four individual matches. Both Nomin Baasan and Annie Hedlund won all 10 matches to lead the averages.

Kingfisher are second on eight points, one ahead of Cardiff City and Fusion. London Academy beat Kingfisher

but have yet to play the others, so things could change on weekend two.

Boys' Division 1 was almost as tight as the top flight, although there are clear leaders in the shape of Swerve, who have seven points, one clear of XLNT Draycott II, Fusion II and Formby.

Swerve won all three matches 4-2 on day one, Callum McRae winning six out of six, but they lost their way on Sunday as they went down 4-2 to Halifax as both Harry Watson and Freddie Osenton-Brown defeated McRae. A 3-3 draw in Swerve's final match against Formby was still enough to keep them top of the pile, however.

Kieran Wardell of Swerve was the best individual performer – he lost his opening match of the weekend to Uther Kingdom of Sussex Blades but won his next nine matches to sit on a 90% record. Formby's Rhys Davies was next on 80%.

Below that, there were a few unbeaten records in the lower divisions, including both leaders in Division 2. The accolade belongs to Ormesby B in Division 2A and to Colebridge in 2B.

Ormesby actually had a perfect record, defeating all the other five teams in the league and only dropping four individual matches as they utilised a four-pronged squad of Adam Webster, Thomas Rayner, Ben Piggott and Zaid Khalid.

Two of the dropped matches were against Cardiff, for whom Martin Johnson and Benedict Watson boasted 8/10 win ratios to top the averages, alongside Webster, for those who played all 10 matches. Rayner and Piggott both had 7/8 and Khalid 4/4 to record higher percentages. Khalid also won four matches out of four in Division 3A for Ormesby C.

In 2B, Colebridge had one draw, in their first match against Britannia Ipswich, to lead the way on 9pts, two ahead of Ipswich, who lost to Crusaders in round five. Britannia did, though, have the only player with a 100% record as Kian Burgess won all 10 of his matches, one better than Colebridge's Marcus Holba.

Dublin B are top of Division 3A with five wins and also have the only ever-present player to remain unbeaten – James Skelton racking up a perfect 10.

Division 3B is tight, with the top three all on seven points. Cardiff City B just hold the edge over Wigan and Kingfisher and also have a 100% player in the shape of Louie Evans (10 matches).

It is a similar picture in 4A, where Rotherham Scorpions, Bishop Auckland and Generation 2 all have seven points. Rotherham's Jie Fu Tham tops the averages with 9/10.

In 4B, Halton II are three points clear at the top, having racked up four wins and one defeat. The loss was against BATTs B, who are one of four teams on five points. Halton's Toby Ellis and Cippenham's Mihnea Dascalu had the best individual records with eight wins from 10.

In the lower girls' divisions, the picture is quite tight. Division 1 leaders are XLNT Draycott II, who picked up three wins and a draw for seven points, one ahead of Ellenborough but with only four points separating the entire division. The top individual player is Samadhi Udamulla of Ellenborough, who won nine out of 10.

Brighton lead Division 2 and are unbeaten, though two draws means they are on eight points, two ahead of Wensum and Halton. In fact, they beat both of their nearest rivals and drew with fifth-placed St Neots Bribar and fourth-placed Ulster.

Brighton's success was based on 90% averages for Jodie Morris and Lauren Loosemore, who were joined on that figure by Charlotte Marsden of St Neots.

In Division 3, Wensum III are top of the pile and unbeaten, winning four matches and drawing with third-placed Ormesby II. Woodfield are second on seven points, two behind the leaders, and they had the leading player in the averages as Megan Jones won all eight of her matches. The best record among the players who played all 10 was Abbie Hurley's 80% for Byng Hall. Division 3 side Lillington were the team of the weekend.



Girls team of the week Lillington with Sandra Deaton

The second weekend of JBL action is on February 2 and 3.

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