



Braintree League: Netts rise to the top

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A top-of-the-table clash has resulted in a change of leader in division three of the Braintree League.

Netts E went into their match with Black Notley F just one point behind – and came away one point in front. It was Netts' strength in depth that pulled them through. Peter Lewis and Tony Smith won two singles each and Michael Goodchild one. And Smith and Lewis scored a crucial win in the doubles.

James Gronland won his three singles for Notley but Netts' vital wins were two very tight sets against Mel Cooch. Smith won 11-7 in the fifth game while Lewis had to work even harder. He looked out of it after losing the first two games 11-6, 11-3, but rallied to win the third 11-8 and then had two almighty tussles before winning the final two 15-13, 15-13.

The tightness of that match enabled Rayne F to move in closer to the top two after beating Rayne I 10-0. They overtake Notley I, who were restricted to a 7-3 win over Rayne H. Elliot Game was unbeaten.

Game's fellow junior Jonny Evans was also to the fore, taking his three singles in straight games against Rayne G to help Notley H to an 8-2 win.

And it was another junior, Mia Charles, who made her mark for Netts F, taking their only two sets against Notley G. Jim Davy was the one who proved a hurdle too far.

There are new leaders too in division two and again it's a Netts team that has risen to the summit.

The club's D team scored an 8-2 win over Notley D while the previous leaders Liberal C came up against Nomads' strongest team and went down 7-3.

Ken Lewis was his usual tidy self with three straight-game victories, backed by Richard Kemp, who won twice, and Kevin Saunders once. Gareth Davies won twice for Liberal.

Notley E scored their third win in a row and like the others it was over a team who were above them in the table.

Rayne E are now below them after their 6-4 defeat. Three wins from Keith Flowers were not enough.

The two Felsted teams came up against each other with the result a predictable 9-1 in favour of the A team. Nick Butler got the one for the B team.

Rayne A took advantage of Liberal A's inactivity in division one to pull further ahead at the top after a 9-1 win over Liberal B.

Robin Armstrong spoiled the purity of the scoreline with a commendable win over Alan Burgess.

Netts B climbed above Liberal A – although they have played two more matches – by beating their own C team 8-2 while Netts' A team had a 9-1 win over Notley B.

The most notable feature of that match was that Notley's win came from Dave Parker, his first in division one.

Notley's A team had a 6-4 win over Rayne B, the team one place above them, thanks largely to three sets from Steve Kerns, although Kerns was given an unusually stiff test by Keith Martin before coming through in five games.

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