



Braintree League: Felsted cause major upset

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The bottom team beating the top team may happen occasionally in football or cricket, but in the more individual sport of table tennis examples are as rare as a clean-shaven Santa Claus.

Felsted RBL B's 6-4 win over Netts D must therefore rank as one of the upsets of the century in the Braintree Table Tennis League. Felsted had lost all 12 of their matches in division two while Netts sat just one point off the top spot.

The result is partly explained by Netts having to field a reserve, but the main story is the form of the Felsted players, particularly Ashley Butler, who ran through all three of the opposition.

His hardest set came against Peter Hardy, stepping up from division three for the evening, who took him to 15-13 in the third game.

Joe Meleschko, with 16 wins out of 24 behind him, also perished at deuce in the fifth, but Butler's most impressive performance was in dismissing Roy Hooper, who had lost only two of his previous 21 sets, in straight games.

Nick Butler also beat Meleschko and came within an inch of beating Hooper before surrendering at 13-11 in the fifth.

Damage to Netts' title hopes was limited after their main rivals Liberal C also lost 6-4. In a match where no one remained undefeated it was Richard Whiteside and Nick Hasler, with two singles wins each and the doubles between them, who steered Rayne D to victory.

Dan Anderson won his three singles for the fourth match in a row to help Black Notley C move closer with a 6-4 win over their own E team. Takunda Nerutanga and Stewart Ireland won two each for the E team.

Curiously, all five matches in the division finished with the same 6-4 scoreline, Felsted A beating Notley D and Nomads overcoming Rayne E.

Jarek Pietraszuk was unbeaten for Felsted A while the Clift brothers, Sean and Adam, won two each for Notley D. Adam Clift gave Pietraszuk something to think about when he took a 2-0 lead in games before eventually losing 11-8 in the fifth.

The Nomads-Rayne E match brought together two of the division's top players, Ken Lewis, defeated only once, and Dave Marsh, with only two defeats behind him. It was Lewis who took the honours 3-1 (11-8, 17-15, 3-11, 11-4).

The previous week Rayne E had drawn with Felsted A, where Marsh was unbeaten.

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