



Clacton & District: Merlins break winless spell

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Windsor Merlins celebrated a first success of the season in Division Three of the Clacton & District League with a 7-3 success over Windsor Robins. Sharon Gowlett and Bradley Henshaw both recorded trebles.

It was a first-ever League hat-trick for Henshaw although he had to battle hard for it, beating Oleksandra Klymenko 3-2 (11-6, 12-10, 6-11, 8-11, 11-9). The result lifts the Merlin off the bottom of the table, leap-frogging the Robins who now trail by four points.

At the other end of the table, leaders Brotherhood E beat third-placed Nomads Pumas 9-1. Tony Edmonds and Rodney Betts remained unbeaten, although it was a tight 3-2 (11-4, 11-4, 6-11, 10-12, 11-6) for Edmonds against Lionel Goddard. Alan Dockerill picked up the Pumas' point, an 11-3 in the fifth win over Duncan Dunne in the opening match of the evening.

Hat-tricks for Darren Bunce and Paul Dale, and two for Alan Charman, gave Windsor Penguins a 9-1 success over Walton E. Walton's Lynette Sparks had a 3-2 (11-13, 11-5, 9-11, 12-10, 11-9) win over Charman, whilst her team-mate Tony Sharman went close to adding a second point, going down 11-8 in the decider to Dale.

The all-Nomads clash between the Leopards and the Lynx ended all-square, the Lynx crucially winning the two matches which went the distance. For the Lynx, Mike Vilka took a maximum, Dominic Joannou defeated Dave Wright 3-2 (11-7, 7-11, 18-16, 10-12, 11-8) whilst the two of them combined to take the doubles 3-2 (11-8, 11-7, 9-11, 13-15, 11-8) against Bob Jillins and Stewart Wilkinson. Jillins and Wilkinson won a couple each for the Leopards, and Dave Wright one.

Three for Morgan Harvey, two for Maci Harvey and a 3-2 (10-12, 8-11, 12-10, 11-9, 11-7) doubles win for the pair over Arthur Wells-Garrett and Barbara Rhodes saw Brotherhood J to a 6-4 win over Nomads Ocelots. Wells-Garrett won two for the Ocelots, Rhodes and Hazel Blanche one each.

In Division One Nomads Panthers defeated Walton A 6-4, Paul Hume taking three, James Denyer two and John Hatley one. For Walton, Daniel Young won twice and Gavin Price once, the two of them also sharing a doubles

success. The most eye-catching result of the evening was Young's 3-2 (10-12, 7-11, 11-8, 11-9, 16-14) win over Denyer, only his third defeat of the season.

Martin Edwards was Brotherhood C's undefeated man in his team's 6-4 win over Walton B, Kevin Gowlett contributing a couple. For Walton, Colin Dearman won two, and Jason Gale and Derek Willis one each. Dearman, having recently beaten Gary Cattermole of Windsor Eagles, lived up to his reputation of being able to produce surprise results and defeated Gowlett 3-2 (11-5, 13-15, 12-10, 9-11, 11-9).

It was also 6-4 as Walton C beat Nomads Lions. Every player picked up at least one point but none of the matches went the distance. Peter Burrows was unbeaten for Walton, with Paul Newbould and John Rankin taking one each whilst, for the Lions, Ethan Lloyd won two, and Adam Wilkin and Jason Lloyd one apiece.

In a vital relegation clash, Brotherhood D and Nomads Tigers shared the spoils, the first draw this season for both sides. Scott Campbell was the unbeaten man-of-the-match for Brotherhood whilst there was one each for Russell Hillier and reserve Barry Allen, Allen enjoying an unexpected 11-8 in the decider victory over John Marshall. Pawel Szemro and Chris Parr each won two for the Tigers, and Marshall one.

Windsor Hawks were 9-1 winners over bottom-team Lawford who now look doomed to relegation. Andy Vincent and George Berry recorded trebles for the Hawks, and John Barton took a couple, but Lawford skipper Ian Sherwood will feel encouraged by his 11-8 in the decider victory over Barton which prevented the whitewash.

The best performance in Division Two came from Walton E's Mark Gale who took a maximum in his team's 6-4 victory over Brotherhood H. Gale had a close 11-8 in the fifth victory over in-form Woody Fitzpatrick, his first reverse after five consecutive hat-tricks. Walton team-mate, Gary Stallwood, won two although it was a narrow 11-9 in the fifth win against Mark Salter. Fitzpatrick won two for Brotherhood, Salter and Frank Burbidge one each.

Table-toppers Brotherhood I were 9-1 victors over relegation-strugglers Brotherhood G, John Owen and Paul Alden unbeaten and Fred Gallone winning two. But the 'G' team will feel unfortunate not to have done better, Metcalf beating Gallone and only narrowly going down 11-9 in the fifth to Owen whilst Mark Beckham just lost 11-7 in the decider to Paul Alden.

Brotherhood F won three of the four matches which went the distance to win 7-3 against a Windsor Harriers' side hovering dangerously near the relegation zone. There were three for Lee Allen, two for Barry Allen and one for Shaun Beckham, plus an 3-2 (11-7, 8-11, 12-10, 12-14, 11-7) doubles win for the Allens over Jenny Higgins and Isabel Barton.

However, the prospects are looking bleak for Nomads Jaguars who are now rooted to the foot of the table, this week going down 8-2 to Nomads Bobcats. There were trebles for Liam Harris and Andy Cawley but the Jaguars did not make it easy for Cawley, the Bobcats' skipper having to work hard to defeat Kevin Hume 11-3 in the fifth, Harry Hawkes 11-5 in the fifth and Caroline Page 11-8 in the fifth. Hawkes and Page picked up a point each for the losers.

Finally, the all-Windsor middle-of-the-table clash between the Buzzards and Kestrels saw the Buzzards record a narrow 6-4 win. John Harvey and Alan Rutledge each won two and Ray Chillingworth one. But none of them could get the better of Graham Bunce who remained unbeaten for the Kestrels, enjoying a 3-2 (9-11, 11-7, 11-7, 6-11, 11-5) victory over Harvey in the battle of the number one players.

* The draw for the quarter-finals of the Knock-Out Handicap Cup sees just one all-Division One tie, with the Condors drawn at home to Nomads Tigers. The only remaining Division Three side, Brotherhood E, have been handed a difficult away match against top-flight Nomads Lions whilst Division Two Brotherhood G will not relish their match against another First Division team, Windsor Eagles. One Brotherhood team from the Second Division is guaranteed a semi-final place, with the 'F' and 'I' teams drawn against each other.

In the draw for semi-finals of the Division Three Handicap Challenge, the two Nomads teams have been rewarded with home ties, the Leopards to host Brotherhood E whilst the Pumas will entertain Windsor Penguins.

The matches in both competitions will be played during week beginning 11th March.

* It's less than two months until the Closed Championships which will be held over the weekend of 13th and 14th April at the Coastal Academy Sports Hall. Entry forms will be available and circulated to all players during the first week in March.

RESULTS

Division 1

Walton B 4 Brotherhood C 6

Nomads Lions 4 Walton C 6

Windsor Hawks 9 Lawford 1

Walton A 4 Nomads Panthers 6

Brotherhood D 5 Nomads Tigers 5

Division 2

Brotherhood H 4 Walton E 6

Nomads Jaguars 2 Nomads Bobcats 8

Windsor Buzzards 6 Windsor Kestrels 4

Brotherhood I 9 Brotherhood G 1

Windsor Harriers 3 Brotherhood F 7

Division 3

Nomads Leopards 5 Nomads Lynx 5

Walton D 1 Windsor Penguins 9

Nomads Pumas 1 Brotherhood E 9

Windsor Merlins 7 Windsor Robins 3

Brotherhood J 6 Nomads Ocelots 4

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