



## Braintree League: Netts come unstuck

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Another week and another defeat for a team at the top in the Braintree Table Tennis League.

Last week it was division three leaders Black Notley F who were found wanting. This week, it was the turn of division two's top team Netts D.

They came up against Notley C's double prong of Dan Anderson and Glen Laing, who have yet to be on the losing side when they have played together.

Laing was downed by Roy Hooper for the second time this season but he gained his revenge on Patrick Gilbert, who had beaten him in their last meeting, by the surprisingly straightforward scores of 3-0 (11-4, 11-5, 11-7).

Gilbert had earlier in the evening lost to Anderson to end his five-match unbeaten run. Anderson remained unbeaten in the 6-4 victory.

Liberal C took advantage of Netts D's slip-up to move back to the top, but it was a limp rather than a stride, as they struggled to get past Notley D 6-4 and then in a rearranged fixture were held to a draw by Nomads. Sean Clift, for Notley D, and Ken Lewis, for Nomads, were unbeaten.

All of which strengthened Rayne D's hand. They beat Notley E 9-1 to nestle in five points behind the leaders with a match in hand.

It was not just the top of the division that was of interest as there was a second win of the season for bottom team Felsted RBL B. They beat a weakened Nomads team 6-4, Ashley Butler, Nick Butler and Barry Evans all winning twice.

By contrast Felsted A turned out their strongest team to face their second team and had little difficulty winning 10-0.

Felsted A also drew with Rayne E, who had Dave Marsh back in the side after a five-match absence. He and Keith

Flowers won twice as did Richard Baxter and Haydn Upson for Rayne.

The top of division three also received another shake-up and like the previous week, it was an intra-club match that caused a problem.

Earlier Notley F had been pegged back by their I team and this week it was Netts E's turn to be restricted by their own F team.

With Clive Forster, beaten only once in 21 sets, in the team, they must have felt confident of overcoming their young opponents.

But Jack Cains, who turned 14 this week, Daniel Farquharson, 14, and Mia Charles, 15, illustrated their vast improvement over the season by digging in for a draw.

Forster won his three singles but all three juniors beat Michael Goodchild and Cains and Farquharson also added the scalp of Peter Lewis, a player with a 68 per cent average.

The other three teams in contention for the title all had 9-1 wins. Notley F beat Rayne H – a good win for Ian Rubens over Declan Baines the only blemish – Notley I beat Rayne G and Rayne F defeated Notley H, where Jonny Evans scored his second win of the season over Charles Wilkinson.

In the other match in the division Notley G beat Rayne I 8-2, where Alex Morgan will be pleased with his win over Jill Canning.

In the handicap cup, five Notley teams and three Rayne teams have made it through to the quarter finals.

The Laing-Anderson double act saw Notley C through against Rayne D – but only just. Laing lost to Kelly Yuenyongpknan, but they won the other five for a 5-4 victory.

Elliot Game's three wins helped Notley I through by the same score against Rayne G.

Notley's D team won the first four sets against Rayne J before pausing for breath and eventually got home 6-3 while the F team declared at 5-1 against Rayne H and the B team were given a walkover by Liberal A.

Rayne I had a gentle passage against Notley H. The home team had only two players and lost the first two sets to make victory impossible. The match finished 8-1, with both Alex Morgan and James Long unbeaten.

The other two Rayne teams had more difficult passages, with the A and F teams both winning 5-4.

Rayne A had to come back from 4-3 to beat their own E team – two wins each for Dean Andrews and Lee McHugh – while the F team recovered from a similar deficit to eliminate Felsted B. Dave Allinson was unbeaten.

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