

League split adds excitement to Premier British League

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Posted On: April 05, 2019

Eight teams. Three rounds. Plenty to play for.

Premier British League returns this weekend, and the stakes could hardly be higher.

After the first seven weeks of the season, the league has split into two leagues of four, with the top quartet and the bottom facing off in the final three rounds of action.

For Ormesby, Urban, Ormeau and Drumchapel, the goal is to capture the Premier British League title.

For the rest; North Ayrshire, Fusion, BATTs and Cardiff, it's survival.

In Premier 'A', Ormesby will host Drumchapel while Urban will entertain Ormeau (both 2 PM kick-offs).

Ormesby are the current league leaders, a mere point ahead of Urban after their 3-2 victory in the final round of the regular season.

Ormesby have named a full-strength side of Tianyuan Liu, Darius Knight, Zhao Tianming and Danny Reed. Their selection tells you everything you need to know about how pivotal they believe this fixture to be.

Knight remains unbeaten in singles competition this season, but, depending on who makes the final three-man squad, he could put that record on the line against David McBeath, the Drumchapel number one who has won all seven of his singles sets for the Scots.

McBeath, currently ranked 490th in the world, will be joined by Swede Simon Berglund and Chinese ace Vitor Guang Shi in the Drumchapel team. The Scots are five points behind the leaders heading into the match.

Urban, who are second, host Belfast-based Ormeau.

With a lot on the line, Urban are expected to feature the unbeaten Satoshi Aida. Beyond that, Hungarian Daniel Schaffer is also likely to be included against an Ormeau side looking for revenge after a 3-2 defeat against this weekend's foe in round four.

Young Frenchmen Alexis Lebrun and Lucas Molland are in contention.

Tickets can be bought here:

<https://urbantabletennis.com/en/events/view/urban-ttc-ormeau-ttc?fbclid=IwARlgEEBkVHLP4vg48qBaIZkacUeLO0v47LDE5KbatDYINTIyon-SRCzVsXA>

In Premier 'B', it's an epic doubleheader weekend for all four teams, as fixtures are set to take place on both Saturday and Sunday.

North Ayrshire head from Scotland to London for two matches as they face Fusion and BATTs, but will do so without the injured Colin Dalgleish.

The Scots are fifth in the table currently and will hand a debut to youngster Ethan Chapman, who will get his chance to impress.

It's a huge weekend for Cardiff, who have home advantage in games against BATTs and Fusion, who are the two teams directly above the basement side.

The Welsh side is currently two points adrift at the bottom, but with two home fixtures, they'll be hoping the table

looks a lot brighter come Sunday evening.

Fusion will travel to Wales after their game on Saturday against North Ayrshire, while Batts will travel from Cardiff back to Essex to host North Ayrshire on Sunday.

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