



Clash of the titans to kick off SBL Premier season!

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A magnificent seven teams are ready to embark on the new Senior British League, Premier Division season.

This weekend sees the first fixture, and the season is certainly starting with a bang as champions Ormesby begin their defence with an away trip to last season's runners-up – and previous champions – Urban TTC.

It is a mouthwatering clash and a chance for either team to set down a marker for the season. Their previous meetings have been close, with each picking up a 3-2 victory last season, although Urban's win in the final round of fixtures was not enough to prevent Ormesby from taking the title.

[Click here to watch the match live from 4pm on Saturday](#)

The champions can again call on Darius Knight and Helshan Weerasinghe, with support from Liam McTiernan. They have also recruited Sining Zhang, a Chinese student now based at the University of Nottingham. He has played previously in the Chinese A League, has represented Beijing University in Chinese national competitions and is expected to be the team's No 1.

The Ormesby ranks also include a trio of home-grown youngsters – Thomas Rayner, Josh Weatherby and Ben Piggott – and club Chairman Alan Ransome OBE said: "Our intention this season is to challenge again for the title that we won last year. However, we do intend to give some of our top Junior players who are performing well in the Championship Division the opportunity to play in some of the matches."

The other change is on the bench, where six-time English champion Denis Neale has been appointed captain and will lead the team at Urban on Saturday.

Urban rely on the same core as last year, with a squad comprising Satoshi Aida (Japan), Hungarian trio Daniel Schaffer, Daniel Kosiba and Szilard Gyorgy and Brits Alim Hirji and Mateusz Mikosz, to which can be added new recruit Matej Mamut from Croatia.

Head coach Urfi Urban said: "We are looking forward for another challenging season after the last two have been a great success. We have the same line up as the last two years and a new addition of Matej Mamut, hoping to strengthen the team in depth.

"It is a tough start of the new season to face the current champions but we are looking forward to the fixture and hoping to start as we left off the last season when we beat them away 3-2."

The other scheduled opening-weekend fixtures involve four returning teams from last season – with Fusion hosting Ayrshire and Ormeau at home to BATTs. However, both fixtures have been rearranged due to prior commitments for one or other team.

Ormeau versus BATTs is now on Sunday October 27, while a date has still to be confirmed for Fusion against North Ayrshire.

Drumchapel Glasgow and last season's bottom club Cardiff are no longer in the division. The six returning clubs are joined by Archway Peterborough, who will make their debut at Ormeau on October 26.

The newcomers have a strong-looking line-up in which Chris Doran and Jiawang Song – who won three Grand Prix events last season – are likely to feature prominently. The squad also includes Ismaila Akindiya, Callum Evans and Adam Jepson.

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