



Braintree League: Rayne head tight table

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A strong win for Rayne D, a win with two players for Liberal C and a first defeat for Black Notley F means that only one point separates the top three teams in Division Two of the Braintree Table Tennis League.

The most important win was for Rayne E, who held on to top spot after beating Notley F in a match where no one remained unbeaten.

Dave Marsh made his first appearance of the season and won twice. Peter Pond was too good for him but he in turn could not get past Richard Whiteside. Whiteside lost to Gordon Fairchild, who then lost to Marsh.

Gauthier Chevallier added one singles and he and Marsh won the doubles for a 6-4 victory.

Only Garry Fryatt and Jon Fieldsend were available for Liberal C, but that was enough for seven points against Nomads.

Rayne D took eight points from bottom team Netts D, where Paul Wellington was the only player to beat Clive Forster. What stood out, though, was the performance of 16-year-old Mia Charles. Playing up from division three, she took Wellington to 11-9 in the fifth game and was also two games to one up on Dave Miller.

Notley E moved up to fifth place with an 8-2 win over Felsted RBL while Notley C overcame their D team 7-3.

The most significant event in Division One happened at Liberal, not on the table but at a league management committee meeting, where it was confirmed that Liberal had contravened the rules by not having any players signed on for their A team when their first match was played. The A team had turned out three reserves and won 6-4, but the result will now go down as a 10-0 win for Netts C.

Despite that turnaround, Liberal still share top spot in division one with Rayne A, where both teams have 37 points.

Both won 9-1 in the most recent set of matches. Without Paul Davison, Netts A were only able to take the doubles

against Liberal A, while Keith Martin's win over Alan Burgess spoiled Rayne A's clean sheet against their own C team.

Third-placed Netts B retained their unbeaten record with a home draw against Rayne B.

After nine wins out of nine in her first three matches, Nikki Davison lost out twice – to John Andrews and Ian Whiteside.

Notley A, eighth last year, are up to fourth after an 8-2 win over their own B team while Liberal B just edged home 6-4 against Netts C. New signing Waseem Qureshi led the way with three wins.

After four wins out of four in Division Three, Notley G went down 6-4 to their own I team, who are now the only unbeaten team in the division, although in third place.

Rayne G moved to within three points of Notley G at the top after a 9-1 win over Liberal D.

The league remains desperately short of women players so it was good to see both Kath Little and Davina Brazier turning out for Netts E against Rayne H. They won the doubles and Brazier won two singles but found Tim Townsend too tough a nut to crack.

Notley H were leading Rayne I in the table by 10 points but that counted for nothing when they faced each other. Three wins for Ian Rubens and two each for Barry Mouser and Ernst Midl led Rayne to an 8-2 victory.

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