



Leicester & District: Chasing pack lose ground

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While Desford Village rule the roost at the top of Division Two of the Leicester and District League, having a seven points lead with a match in hand at the time of writing, their three closest rivals battling it out for the other promotion spot all lost.

Holwell Sports II, 7 points down on the lead, went down 7-3 to Fleckney who had Matt Rayner in excellent form and winning all three but good team support from Jason Prescott who took two while Robert Palmer lobbed in one of his own, the first two taking the doubles. Dave Roche won two for Holwell, Mike James one to gain a point.

Abbots Road entertained Knighton Park IV and were shocked into a 5-0 deficit before the Park relented in any way, eventually fighting back but too late as the Park took the match 6-4 with a superb team performance when Andy Searle, John Underwood and Zia Malik all recorded two. For Abbots, Vishal Parmar eventually won two, Chetan Tailor one, before Geoff Hancock joined Parmar for a doubles success.

The third team near the top, Electricity III, won the first two sets against Desford Village's second team before the latter finally got themselves together to take the next eight sets to beat the Sparks 8-2. Matt Briggs initially stopped the rot and went on to win all three, while Paul Bumpus and Kevin Parker each recorded a pair. Steve White and Russ Pettitt had to make do with their opening successes.

There was a top versus bottom clash in Division Three when the higher team, Knighton Park V, just got the better of the languishing Holwell Sports III by 6-4 despite a very good maximum by the latter's Dave Sharp who came back to top form. It was a very good team effort from Park with Ruben Dehnen and Chris Parmar-Saville each taking two, Steve Adams one, and then the first two named took the crucial doubles to gain a very thankful full points.

Meanwhile Abbots Road II are breathing down the leaders' neck, even more so after thrashing Electricity IV 10-0 when Hardik Patel, Raju Rahul and Richard Lee took all before them.

Armadeep Gudela continues to do well for the Park's seventh team when, supported by two from Simon Aldis,

they defeated Winstanley Wizards 6-4, Mick Box taking a good two for the Wizards.

Gudela, meanwhile, was given the chance of playing in Division One for his club's first team against their seconds, and won a set on his debut at the highest level. Father/son combo, Chris and Jack Rogers each won three for the firsts while Karen Smith and James Berry each beat Gudela, each going down in five games in one of their others as the first team won 8-2.

There was a top of the table clash in Division Four, although looking at the score would not have suggested this as Lutterworth stamped their authority by beating nearest rivals, Syston Casuals III, by 9-1, Wes Glauds winning that solitary success to prevent the full house. Unbeaten for the improving Lutterworth were Colin Jones, yet to be beaten, and Mike Eastell, while Kevin Jones took two.

There was an epic battle between Blaby and Whetstone's Tom Phipps and Electricity sixth team's Dave Silvester before the Blaby man got home 14-12 in the fifth game to emerge undefeated in helping his team to an 8-2 victory when Alan Willson and Ian Knight each won two. Silvester secured his other two for the Sparks.

11-year-old Kai Bhakta is making his senior league debut this season in Division Five and helped Winstanley Wizards IV to a 6-4 victory over would-be promotion team, Knighton Park IX, with a fine maximum.

The young, rising, star then stepped up to his club's second team in Division Four to help beat Regent Sports II by 9-1 alongside an echoing maximum by Ben Cooke while Frankie Hallam won two, beaten only by Dave Dewsbury who saved the full house.

There was an unusual situation in Division Five. The league has battled long and hard over the years to promote the sport for females with mixed success so it was good to see one match where the doubles was contested by four ladies. Desford Village IV defeated Knighton Park XI by 7-3 and the Park grabbed their point when Jeanette Stevenson and Angela Bowness beat mother/daughter, Gillian Wisdich and Gemma Hargrave in the doubles. The latter pair had both won all their singles earlier.

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