



Braintree League: Netts narrowing the gap

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Netts C are turning out to be the surprise team in this year's Braintree Table Tennis League. Promoted to division one last season, they have run up a series of impressive scorelines despite not winning any matches apart from their walkover against Liberal A.

Their last six matches have either been a draw or a 6-4 defeat, which has given them a healthy haul of points to keep them well clear of the relegation zone.

Their most recent result was possibly the most admirable. Against Rayne A, the only unbeaten team in the division, they took four points, and were not that far away from an overall victory: Rayne twice had to come from behind to secure a win in five games. Rayne had to include a reserve, Paul Lombardi, but they cannot use that as an excuse. His results turned out to be better than his team-mates, losing once in four games but winning his other singles in three and four games.

Steve Pennell also lost one and won one in three games and the other, against Jan Fuller, in five after coming back from two games to one down.

And for Adam Buxton it was not a night to remember. He lost to both Fuller and Patrick Gilbert. Gilbert also beat Pennell while Fuller was the only one to beat Lombardi.

It was a good week for Netts, their A team beating Liberal B 9-1 while their B team had an 8-2 victory over Black Notley B.

Adrian Pitt beat Colin Bennett for Liberal B's only point while Notley B's points came from the doubles and a win at 13-11 in the fifth game for Patrice Élonge over Derek Kennard.

Liberal A dropped only the doubles against Notley A, while Rayne B witnessed a fightback by their own C team who won the final three sets to turn 6-1 into 6-4.

In division two, Rayne E stretched their lead at the top with a 9-1 win over Felsted RBL. They included Richard

Jennings in their line-up for the first time and he and Richard Whiteside remained unbeaten. Felsted's point came from an unexpected win for Haydn Upson over Dave Marsh 11-6, 11-8, 11-6.

The teams in second and third place, Liberal C and Notley E, faced each other and, despite three wins from Notley's Takunda Nerutanga, Liberal took the match 6-4.

Notley D had a 6-4 win over Nomads – Karl Baldwin getting three for the visitors – while Notley F staged a superb fightback in their match at Rayne D. They trailed 4-0 and 5-1 but won the last four sets to come away with a draw.

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