



Braintree League: Rayne open gap

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Two convincing wins and a surprisingly heavy defeat for their closest rivals have put Rayne F in a strong position in division three of the Braintree Table Tennis League.

Rayne F beat their own I team 8-2 and then their H team 9-1 but it was the defeat for Black Notley G, who had been tracking them closely, that allowed them to open up a gap at the top.

A resurgent Liberal D crunched Notley 8-2 to push them down from second place to fourth. Paul Martin was unbeaten for Liberal while Lewis Armstrong-Kirton and Yasunori Aoyagi won twice.

Matt Brooks won twice for Notley but it was not Jim Davy's night. He lost to both Martin and Aoyagi at 13-11 in the fifth game. Liberal D have now gone five matches without defeat and have risen from tenth place after five matches to fifth after ten.

After using an assortment of players in their first few matches, Rayne F now seem to have settled on the combination of Dave Allinson, Ted Sims and Alastair Brown that has seen them through the last four weeks. Allinson was unbeaten in all of them.

Rayne's G team also picked up wins of 8-2 and 9-1 to keep pace at the top. They beat Notley H and Rayne I, with Peter Rickwood unbeaten in both.

Notley I have moved above their own G team after an 8-2 win over Netts E and a creditable draw with Liberal D, where they had to field two reserves. Jonny Evans was in excellent form. He took his three singles against the same players who had held sway over Notley G and also partnered John Wickins to a doubles win. Evans beat Martin and Aoyagi in straight games and Armstrong-Kirton 7-11, 11-6, 11-2, 11-5.

At the other end of the table, Rayne J have risen off the bottom after registering their first win of the season. Alex Morgan was unbeaten in their 7-3 win over Notley H.

They had picked up three points earlier in a defeat by Netts E, for whom Kierlan Richards made his first

appearance of the season and remained undefeated. Netts E have now used 10 players in their 10 matches.

Rayne I drop to the bottom of the table after their defeats by Rayne F and G.

In division two, Rayne E began the second phase of the season in the same way as the first, by beating their own D team 7-3. Richard Whiteside also put in a repeat performance by winning his three singles.

Liberal C slipped a point further back with a 6-4 win over Notley C. Dan Anderson won his three singles for Notley for the sixth successive match. More remarkably he was on the winning side in the doubles for the sixth time with his third different partner, Declan Baines joining him to overcome Jon Fieldsend and Garry Fryatt.

Notley F rose above their E team into third place by beating them 6-4 while Nomads drew level with Rayne D in sixth place after a 6-4 win over Felsted RBL.

Sean and Adam Clift remained unbeaten in Notley D's 7-3 win over Netts E but their doubles pairing, beaten only once in five outings so far, could not get the better of Clive Forster and Tony Smith.

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