



MK League : Mighty Matt beaten at last

Author: Paul Stimpson

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PREMIER

This could prove to be a decisive fortnight in both the title and relegation races. The fixture computer has pitted teams against each other in consecutive weeks and both the top and bottom pairs (at week 11) have back to back matches against each other. Not that we learned much in the first week as the scores between the sides were as close as they could be.

Greenleys Kings increased their narrow margin at the top by 2 points when beating stable-mates Monarchs 6-4. After cruising into a 4-0 lead with their trio of Nick Howard, Matt Haynes and Guy Sparrow seemingly firing on all cylinders, the Kingsmen were shocked when their star turn went down in 4 games to Scottish hard battled ace Ian Johnston to end his own record run of 39 wins. This gave Monarchs a foothold in the match, but the damage had been done early doors and Kings held on for victory in a great match. Ian also beat Guy with Tomek Nowakowski beating both Nick and Guy for Monarchs other sets. Martin Hall completed their line-up.

Meanwhile, a 2-player (for the third time this season) MK Powers side fought out a draw with my MK Topspin team to maintain the status quo at the bottom. Pete Tillotson and Clare Styles both lost to me but beat Russell Penn and Mervyn Kelly, and also triumphed in the crucial doubles. All 3 sets Russell played in went to 5 games, as did my set with Pete, who led at change of ends in the decider after saving match points in the 4th game.

Cazuca Valentin got his best return since the opening week of the season with 2 wins in Greenleys Warriors 7-3 victory against MK Kingpins. Ricky Taiwo also chipping in with a brace to support a hat-trick by Tony Gorman. The reliable Dave Allison grabbed a pair for Kingpins, who also won the doubles leaving Mark Purcell and Peter Bannister winless on the night. Dave and Tony are old foes, having first played against each other in the 1982/83 season in Division 1.

A routine 10-0 win this week for 3rd place MK Spinners against strugglers MK Phoenix, who have now lost 6 in a row. Only Mervyn Phillips put up some resistance in taking Tim Cheek to a 4th game and Neil Massa to 5. Alan Cherry enjoyed a comfortable maximum with Gerald Ridgway (only 43 points won in the match) and loan Constantin well beaten.

Player of the week is Ian Johnston

DIVISION 1

VAN HIRE CLOSING IN ON TOP SPOT

Favourites MK Pumas seem to have imploded after losing to a 2-man side last week, as they followed that shock defeat with another one this time round. Their unlikely conquerors were mid table Woburn Sands Data, who put in a solid performance with all 3 of their team taking a brace each in a match where 4 sets were determined at 12-10 in the 5th. Congratulations go to James Molloy, Darren Ward and Rob McPheat for pulling off the surprise of the season so far. Chris Belton hasn't had the greatest of starts to his current campaign but he picked up 2 wins here to add to Andy Smith's sole victory over Darren. Pumas lost the doubles and Keith Carrington completed their line-up.

St. Christopher Van Hire missed out on the chance to go top by a single set after beating bottom club Newport Pagnell Vantage 8-2. Vantage usually put up a good fight, whoever they play, and this was no exception with half the sets going the distance. Biao Wang took a maximum for Van Hire with Jez Willcox and Paul Haigh a pair a-piece, as did Tony Ardis for Vantage. Michael Howard and Sue Lewis remained winless. Perhaps next week's repeat of the same fixtures will see a changing of the guard?

The last Greenleys derby between Glory and Eagles ended all square as did this one. Joe Lindsay has been on fire all year and claimed yet another hat-trick here but, with the Eagles fielding a 2-man team for the second week, the only support came from a single Geoff Callaway win, over Danny Sedgwick, plus the doubles. That left 2-a-piece for Glory boys Ian Brown and Jacob Midson. Set of the night was Ian's 5-game triumph over Geoff, which he needed 5 match points to accomplish.

Finally, Open University Primes entertained Chackmore Hasbeens in the Thursday match. James Zeng put in a mega performance here with a fine maximum over Bub Burman, Andy Whitehead and Sam Willett in Primes 7-3 win. Andy Tan and Martin Lok grabbed 2 each to complete the scoring, Andy with the prize scalp of Bub at 12-10 in the 5th. But the Bub/Andy W. Combo were as hard to beat as ever in doubles play, reeling off their 9th success of the season in straight games.

Player of the week is James Zeng.

Division 2

Courtesy of Martin Johnson

Tornadoes have closed the gap to Hit 'n' Hope at the top of Division 2 to a single point, whilst the top two are now seven points clear of the third placed Classics. At the other end of the table, Blades have fallen further behind, but Cavaliers have closed to within a point of Shambles in the battle to move out of the relegation zone. In mid table, Hawks biggest win of the season sees them regain equal fourth spot with Lagondas.

Milton Keynes Hit 'n' Hope extended their unbeaten run to nine matches by edging past third placed Milton Keynes Classics, in a close fought 6-4 win. Classics had moved into an early 3-1 lead, before being pegged back, but moved 4-3 up with the final round of singles sets to go, and an upset looked possible, but Hit 'n' Hope finish strongly to take the win. In the opening round of singles sets, Ivor Howard, just back from being away for a couple of weeks, had his run of 15 wins on the trot ended by Masoud Nassor, to add to Dylan Cox beating Marco

Hahn over 5 games, the fourth consecutive set that Marco had 'gone the distance'. Masoud / Dylan also combined to take the doubles in four games against Paul Tompkins / Marco, and Masoud also won against Marco in set 7, to put Classics ahead at that point, but it was Paul who took the individual plaudits as he won all his three singles, to add to two for Ivor and one for Marco. Nick Markham completed the Classics line-up.

Milton Keynes Tornadoes closed to within a point of the leaders, winning 7-3 against Woburn Sands Mosquitoes. Yet again, Nicolas Wong won all his singles, taking his winning run up to 10, and he was backed up by a pair of wins each by Matthew Curley and Samuel Davies, although Nicolas / Samuel lost out in the doubles to Paul Hamer / Glenn Barcham. Samuel almost managed three wins, but lost out in a nail biting five game with Glenn, losing out 10-12 in the decider. Paul had earlier got the better of Matthew in four games, for his one win, as both he and Glenn won one singles each, whilst Mosquitoes' third player, David Shapter, playing up from division 4, could not quite manage a win, although he took Samuel to 11-8 in the decider.

Mursley Hawks picked up their biggest win of the season, 9-1 against Milton Keynes Blades, to move them back to equal fourth spot with Lagondas. Martin Johnson and David Bartlett (playing up from Division 3) won all their singles, with Frank Beck only losing out to Mark Thomas over five games, plus Frank / Martin taking the doubles against Brian Evans / Tony Coomber. Mark had also gone close against Martin, finally losing in a very tight five game, despite blasting the opening leg 11-1. Many of the games were close, it was Hawks who had the luck, and won nearly all of them, with David in especially fine form with his fast blocking and counter-hitting.

Newport Pagnell Lagondas remain in fourth spot, now jointly with Hawks, following their good 8-2 win against Milton Keynes Shambles. Simon Read and Glen Davison each won their three singles for Lagondas, with Chris Horn just losing out at 11-13 in the decider to Paddy Patel, and the other one to 'get away' was the doubles, as Paddy / Simon Green defeated Glen / Simon Read in four games. For Shambles, there were no further gains after the doubles, at which point the teams were level at 2-2, as Lagondas eased through all the remaining sets, despite several close games, as none of Paddy, Simon Green or Steve Jordan were able to extend Lagondas past a fourth game. The result leaves Shambles a precarious single point ahead of Cavaliers, as they battle to avoid the relegation zone.

St. Christopher Spitfires moved up to seventh spot with a 7-3 win over Milton Keynes Cavaliers. Andy King lead the way with a maximum, including the doubles with Graham Silversides, in an epic five game against John Bradley / Chris Welch, finally squeaking through 15-13 in the decider. Graham also picked up two singles and Jock Campbell one win, to complete the Spitfires' scoring. For Cavaliers, Chris won one singles, whilst high flying division 3 reserve, Derek Rodrigues, won twice, in the first absence of the season for Chris Paddon. John Bradley went closest to another set for Cavaliers, just losing out 11-9 in the fifth against Jock, and although the team lost, the three points moves Cavaliers within a single point of 8th placed Shambles.

Player of the week are Paul Tompkins and David Bartlett

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