



Braintree League: Leaders stretch advantage

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The top two teams faced each other in both the second and third divisions of the Braintree Table Tennis League – and in both cases the current leaders were the victors.

Rayne E's victory over Liberal C in division two was an emphatic 8-2, which increased their lead to 11 points.

Richard Whiteside and Dave Marsh were their mainstays. Neither was stretched to a fifth game in winning their three singles. Garry Fryatt and Jon Fieldsend gained minimal consolation for Liberal with wins over Gauthier Chevallier.

Black Notley's E and F teams are now equal on points in third place. Notley E brought in Bryan Speller for his first match of the season, but it was the reliable bat of Takunda Nerutanga that inspired them to a 6-4 win over Notley D, a result that ended a remarkable run of five consecutive 6-4 defeats.

The club's F team unexpectedly became the first victims of Netts D this season. With 12 defeats in 12 matches behind them after their promotion last year, Netts had been losing touch but their 6-4 victory will give them renewed hope. Gordon Fairchild was unbeaten for Notley F.

Notley C could rustle up only two players, and no sets, against Nomads, while Haydn Upson's three sets were not quite enough for Felsted RBL, who lost 6-4 to Rayne D.

Rayne's F and G teams were the top two in division three and Rayne F's 7-3 win left their clubmates five points behind.

Dave Allinson led the way with his three singles, as he has so often this season, although he was given a tough time by Tim Gowers, having to come from two games to one down before edging home at 11-8 in the decider.

Notley G took advantage of Rayne G's defeat by moving a point ahead of them in second place with an 8-2 win over Rayne H. Jim Davy and Jill Canning were undefeated.

Jonny Evans was unbeaten as Notley I beat Rayne J 6-4.

Division one leaders Liberal A became the first team throughout the league to top 100 points after their 10-0 win over Notley B.

Second-placed Rayne A had the misfortune to come up against Paul Davison for the second time this season in their match against Netts A and like the first time, he was in commanding form, dismissing Adam Buxton, Lee McHugh and Steve Pennell in four games.

He and Maria Boulton could not quite bring off a doubles victory, which allowed Rayne to claim a share of the points.

Netts B suffered only their third defeat of the season when Matthew Brown's three singles led Rayne C to a 7-3 win.

Adrian Pitt and Mike Johnson were unbeaten in Liberal B's 8-2 win over Notley A.

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