



Clacton & Dist: Top two produce a cracker

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The long-awaited meeting of Nomads Panthers and Walton A, the two teams vying for honours at the top of **Division One** of the Clacton & District League, produced the match of the season so far, the Panthers eventually taking it 7-3.

With six of the League's top players on show, the match did not disappoint, the Panthers sealing the victory by taking the last two matches of the evening. James Denyer again excelled to stay unbeaten, Paul Hume showed top form to win two, while Greg Green took a valuable win over Gavin Price. The Panthers' closest victory was Hume's 11-9 in the fifth success against Daniel Young, a win which ended the junior's proud four-month unbeaten League run.

Gary Young was in good nick for Walton, his pair of victories including an 11-7 win in the fifth over Hume, whilst Daniel Young took one, beating Green 11-7 in the decider.

With the two teams fielding their top trios, the match, postponed from earlier in the season, produced some amazing rallies which prompted spontaneous bouts of applause from the watching players. And, to quote one of those involved, "it was a privilege to be part of the game".

Both Walton A and Nomads Panthers had a second match in the week and the winning score-line was the same in both.

The Panthers were 9-1 victors over Nomads Lions. Denyer and Hume remained unbeaten although Denyer was taken close by Adam Cuthbert, narrowly winning 11-8 in the fifth. Liam Harris went down to Cuthbert but won twice and shared a doubles win with Hume, 11-6 in the fifth, against Cuthbert and Adam Wilkin.

Walton C also had a highly-competitive encounter with one of their club-mates but they also finished 9-1 winners, this against Walton C. Gary Young and Gavin Price stayed undefeated although it was a narrow 3-2 (11-4, 9-11, 11-5, 10-12, 11-7) for Price against Paul Newbould. Graham Buxton picked up a consolation point for the losers with a good win over Kevin James.

So the Panthers, one of only two unbeaten teams in the League, become the first team to break through the 100-point barrier, and now lead Walton A by three points at the top of the table.

The all-Brotherhood clash ended as a predictable 10-0 win for the 'A' team over the 'B' team, Gracie Edwards, Martin Edwards and Kevin Gowlett recording trebles. The closest match was Gowlett's 3-2 (11-2, 10-12, 11-2, 13-15, 11-7) win over Fred Gallone. The 'A' team are currently in third place, just nine points adrift of the Panthers, and must still feel they have an outside chance of taking top honours.

Sue Welham chalked up her first maximum of the season in Windsor Eagles' 9-1 victory over Walton E, her hat-trick including the only match which went the distance, a 3-2 (5-11, 11-7, 14-12, 4-11, 11-9) win over Mark Ratcliffe. There was a treble also for Gary Cattermole and, although Phil Smith won a couple, he lost out to an inspired Paul Woolnough who took their individual match 3-0 (11-3, 11-9, 11-9).

Three for Felipe Rodriguez, two for Andy Vincent and one for John Barton, were good enough to see Windsor Hawks home 7-3 against Walton B. Jason Gale was Walton's best player, winning two and taking Rodriguez close before losing 11-7 in the decider. Paul Meikle picked up the third Walton point.

The top match in **Division Two** saw second-placed Brotherhood C beat third-placed Lawford 7-3, this despite having to field a guest player. Russell Hillier and Mark Salter did the business for Brotherhood, Salter's 11-4 in the fifth win over Ian Sherwood the only match which went to five.

But Brotherhood D, 9-1 winners over Windsor Kestrels, still head the table. Grant Sharpe and Martin Scarfe both remained unbeaten, and Lee Allen won twice. Bob Sawyer, making a rare appearance for the Kestrels, had a tight 11-9 in the decider win over Lee Allen and took Sharpe close, losing by the narrowest of 15-13 in the decider margins.

The defeat for the Kestrels drags them into the relegation dog-fight and they weren't helped when two of the other threatened teams recorded good results.

Windsor Harriers' 7-3 win over Windsor Magpies eased their own problems but condemned the Magpies to greater isolation at the foot of the table. Ferdy Rodriguez's three for the Harriers included an excellent win in four over Dave Martin. Isabel Barton won two and Jenny Higgins one, Barton's 3-2 (13-11, 11-8, 6-11, 9-11, 11-9) victory over John Plummer the closest match of the contest. Martin with two and Plummer with one were the Magpies' points-scorers.

Brotherhood G will also feel pleased with sharing the spoils with Brotherhood E. Mark Beckham was the 'G' team's star, beating Duncan Dunne 3-2 (9-11, 10-12, 16-14, 11-8, 11-5) on his way to a maximum. Dunne and Rodney Betts won a couple each for the 'E' side, Betts enjoying an 11-6 in the fifth victory over Paul Metcalf.

The mid-table clash between Nomads Bobcats and Windsor Buzzards ended 6-4 in favour of the Bobcats, although they could well have been re-christened the Nomads Norths, as their team consisted of three members of that well-known table tennis family, Andrew, David and Caroline. David North remained unbeaten whilst Caroline Page enjoyed two excellent, if tight, 11-9 in the fifth wins against both Pete Bloomfield and Ray Chillingworth. Andy Cawley won a couple for the Buzzards.

In **Division Three** Nomads Jaguars, the only other undefeated side in the League, beat club-mates Ocelots 9-1, Harry Hawkes and Mike Vilka each taking three, and Kevin Hume two. But Arthur Wells-Garrett again showed what a dangerous player he can be at this level, defeating Hume in three-straight and narrowly losing to both the other Jaguars' players, 11-5 in the fifth to Hawkes and 11-8 in the fifth to Vilka.

No-one stayed unbeaten in the all-Windsor clash between the Penguins and the Robins, the match ending 7-3 in favour of the Penguins. Alan Charman, Allen Denyer and Jackie Bunce all won two for the winners, as did Bob Bales for the losers. Mick Coker had a surprise 3-2 (12-10, 8-11, 11-5, 6-11, 11-3) win for the Robins against Bunce whilst Oleksandra Klymenko played well before losing to Denyer in five.

The clash between Nomads Leopards and Nomads Pumas ended in an honourable draw, the first drawn match for both sides this season. Dave Harris won his three for the Pumas and, with Alan Dockerill, shared a close 11-7 in the fifth doubles win against Bob Jillins and Stuart Wilkinson. Dockerill won the fifth Pumas' point, a mighty-tight

3-2 (11-7, 11-7, 11-13, 8-11, 14-12) victory over Dave Wright. For the Leopards, Jillins and Wilkinson each won two, and Wright one, Jillins' pair including an 11-8 in the decider victory over Dockerill in the final match of the evening.

Finally, Brotherhood F were 10-0 winners against Windsor Merlins, Lee Harvey, making a rare reserve appearance, Dan Still and Maci Harvey all remaining unbeaten.

And it was also 10-0 for Walton D against a Nomads Lynx side fielding a guest. Lynette Sparks was involved in the closest match of evening when she edged out Norman Jacobs 3-2 (11-4, 10-12, 11-5, 6-11, 11-7).

But the Lynx, who are currently bottom of the Division, did have some consolation later in the week when, at the Windsor Club's Quiz Evening on Saturday, the team which included Lynx players Norman Jacobs and Dominic Joannou, as well fellow-Nomads' club-mate Tony Rayner, emerged as Quiz winners!

RESULTS

Division 1

Walton C 1 Walton A 9

Windsor Eagles 9 Walton E 1

Brotherhood B 0 Brotherhood A 10

Walton B 3 Windsor Hawks 7

Nomads Panthers 7 Walton A 3

Nomads Lions 1 Nomads Panthers 9

Division 2

Brotherhood C 7 Lawford 3

Windsor Harriers 7 Windsor Magpies 3

Brotherhood G 5 Brotherhood E 5

Nomads Bobcats 6 Windsor Buzzards 4

Brotherhood D 9 Windsor Kestrels 1

Division 3

Nomads Lynx 0 Walton D 10

Nomads Leopards 5 Nomads Pumas 5

Windsor Merlins 0 Brotherhood F 10

Windsor Robins 3 Windsor Penguins 7

Nomads Jaguars 9 Nomads Ocelots 1

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