



MK League : Kings on the brink

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PREMIER

Greenleys Kings were given a good run for their money by 6th placed MK Phoenix this week. Phoenix took 3 sets from the runaway leaders and might have had more with Terry Lau losing 11-9 in the 5th twice over to Guy Sparrow and Jordan Moss. The Phoenix wins came from Ioan Constantin and Mervyn Phillips, who both beat Jordan before combining to inflict Kings' second doubles defeat of the season (their first was by 8th placed MK Topspin). Another easy night for Kings' star man Matt Haynes however and they will clinch the title in the next round of matches.

Topspin themselves gave an outing to Adebola Odetayo from Div 3's MK Tonkings side. Ade was the leading player at the League's Supplementary tournament in November, appearing in 3 finals and winning two titles as well as many fans with his all action style and whole hearted commitment. And he did not disappoint on his Premier debut against Greenleys Warriors, in 4th spot, with a straight games win over Div 1's Christine Scaysbrook, who was playing up herself. Russell Penn and Mervyn Kelly also beat Christine, sweet revenge for Russell who lost last time they faced each other in the Premier a couple of years back. Mervyn added another victory for Topspin with a fine win over Ollie Horswell in the last set of the night. But Ricky Taiwo remained an unmovable obstacle for the Topspin trio for Warriors to run out 6-4 winners.

2nd placed Greenleys Monarchs trounced MK Powers, in 7th, 10-0. Monarchs have won more 10-0s than any other team and Powers crashed to a 2nd consecutive 0-10 reverse.. Jiten Pitamber came close when leading Martin Hall but lost the 4th 11-8 and missed out 12-10 in the decider. Dave Beddall and Tomek Nowakowski joined Martin on maximums while Pete Tillotson and Keith Carrington, playing up from div 1, completed the Powers side.

A good 7-3 victory for 3rd placed MK Spinners over 5th placed MK Kingpins in a match that threatened to burn the midnight oil before moving onto two tables to ensure a reasonable finish time. Alan Cherry took his usual maximum for Spinners and was backed up by a pair each from Neil Massa and Tim Cheek. Mark Purcell starred for Kingpins, winning two as well as the doubles with Peter Bannister. Dave Allison was the other Kingpin.

Player of the week is Mark Purcell

DIVISION 1

VAN HIRE WIN CLASH OF THE TITANS

The big match this week was the battle between the top two which virtually decided the destination of the title, which will be heading off to Leighton Buzzard following St. Christopher Van Hire's victory over MK Pumas. As expected, it was a close run match but with Van Hire's 'ace in the pack' Biao Wang always likely to remain unbeaten the scales were tipped in Van Hire's favour and they ran out 6-4 winners. Biao duly took a straight games hat-trick with Fabrice Spelta winning twice and joining the key man for the crucial doubles win. Paul Haigh remained winless while for Pumas, Andy Smith took a brace with Julie Snowden and Chris Belton winning one each. The victory takes the gap at the top to 9 points so it should be a procession from here on in to Van Hire's first title.

Greenleys Eagles remain 3rd for now for now after beating bottom team Newport Pagnell Vantage 8-2 with Iain Lindsay back in the side. Iain's presence will be much needed in the remaining weeks if Eagles are to hang on to this spot. Iain took his win record for the season to 31 (from 33) and was joined on a hat-trick by Barry Bishop with Dave Plumb contributing 2 wins. The fantastic doubles combination of Tony Ardis/Sue Lewis struck again for Vantage as the dynamic duo chalked up yet other outstanding victory, this time over Iain/Barry with Tony providing the other point for Vantage. Mike Howard remained winless.

Data are flying at the moment now that Darren Ward has hit top form with their 7th win in the last 8 matches. This time they trounced Open University Primes 10-0 with Rob McPheat and James Molloy joining Darren on maximums. Andy Tan played for Primes along with Patrick and Charity Wong. From out of nowhere Darren is looking a sure bet for a place in the top 8 and his team a top 3 finish.

Greenleys Glory enjoyed their biggest win of the season over Chackmore Hasbeens. Only Bub Burman offered strong resistance in the 8-2 scoreline with wins over Christine Scaysbrook and Scott Dixon, although Sam Willett took Christine to 14-12 in the 5th. Jacob Midson took a hat-trick for Glory and Andy Whitehead was the other Hasbeen.

Player of the week is Biao Wang

Division 2

(courtesy of Martin Johnson)

With just a couple more League weeks to go after this week, the fixtures drew together the top two teams, as well as the bottom two teams.

Leaders, Milton Keynes Tornadoes, have virtually sealed the Division 2 title, recording their ninth win in a row, and avenging their last defeat, by beating second placed Milton Keynes Hit 'n' Hope 7-3, thus opening up a nine point gap at the top of the table. Nicolas Wong took his winning run to 11, as he won all his singles sets, plus the doubles with Tanmay Tijare, versus Mike Ainsworth / Marco Hahn. Tanmay picked up one singles win, with Samuel Davies picking up two singles wins, to add to their scoring. For Hit 'n' Hope, Marco Hahn won twice and Andy Frearson won once. Tornadoes' final two matches are against the bottom two teams, so the title now seems assured, whilst Hit 'n' Hope are still ten points clear of third place, so seem highly likely to grab the second promotion spot.

Third placed Milton Keynes Classics suffered a 6-4 reverse on their visit to the in form St. Christopher Spitfires, who extended their unbeaten run to five matches. The result leaves Classics' chances of promotion hanging by

a very thin thread. Bernie Raffe extended his run of form for Spitfires, as he won all his three singles, so taking his run of singles wins up to 15 in a row. The other Spitfires points came by way of Graham Silversides with two wins and Jock Wallace with one win. Dylan Cox took two wins for Classics, plus the doubles with Masoud Nassor against Bernie / Jock, whilst Masoud gained their other win, but no wins on the night for Nick Markham.

In the battle at the bottom of the table, Milton Keynes Cavaliers were held to a 5-5 draw by Milton Keynes Blades, a result meaning Blades will face relegation, whilst Cavaliers' chances of staying up are now very slim, especially with having to play Tornados in their penultimate match, as they are 12 points behind eighth place. Geoffrey Turner, playing up for Cavaliers took the honours on the night, winning his three singles, just pipping Blades' Brian Evans, who won twice and just lost out at 10-12 in the decider to Geoffrey. Brian had similarly close battles with Chris Paddon, this time just winning at 11-9 in leg five, whilst he teamed up with Tony Coomber, to sneak the doubles against the pairing Chris / John Bradley, again at 11-9 in the fifth. Tony also won twice for Blades, whilst Chris and John each picked up one win, to leave Mark Thomas without a win on the night.

Woburn Sands Mosquitoes and Newport Pagnell Lagondas also fought out a 5-5 draw. Glen Davison of Lagondas grabbed a maximum, winning his three singles, plus the doubles with Roy Read against the Mosquitoes pairing of Glenn Barcham / Paul Hamer, with one win for Roy to add to the Lagondas' scoreline. Andy Jenkins of Mosquitoes gave Glen his toughest battle, losing out at 11-7 in the deciding leg, but won his other two singles, with Glenn B also taking two wins, whilst Paul picked up a single win against Lagondas' reserve, Jim Brogan.

The final match of the week featured Mursley Hawks against Milton Keynes Shambles, and saw the third 5-5 draw of the week. Martin Johnson of Hawks claimed the individual honours, with three singles wins, whilst both Paddy Patel and Steve Jordan won twice for Shambles, also adding the doubles against Martin / Frank Beck. Hawks had a win apiece for Frank and reserve, Joe Rich, who both won against Jim Robinson.

No League fixtures this week, as the Challenge Cup reaches the knockout stages, with six of Division 2's ten teams still in the competition.

Players of the week: Bernie Raffe and Nicolas Wong

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