



Premier leaders aim to finish the job at JBL

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It will take a lot to dislodge the two Premier Division leaders as the Junior British League plays to a conclusion at Derby Arena this weekend.

TableTennisDaily and Ackworth top the boys' and girls' standings respectively, both with 100% records and with more than handy leads over their nearest rivals.

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The margin is particularly wide in the boys' table, with TTD holding a four-point lead over a cohort of challengers – no fewer than four teams are on 6pts and another on 5pts.

TTD do have to play two of the challengers, Draycott & Long Eaton and Grantham College, to complete their fixtures before the eight-team league splits, but given that they dropped only three individual matches on Weekend 1, it seems a stretch to suggest they will hit trouble. In Louis Price, they also boast the only player with a 100% individual record from the first weekend.

Ackworth, spearheaded by the perfect 100% record of Jasmin Wong, hold a three-point lead over Kingfisher and Grantham College, both of whom they have already beaten. So it again appears to be a case of the title being theirs to lose.

The picture is much close in some of the other divisions, including boys' Division 1, where Mid-Ulster and Ormeau Belfast jointly lead an Irish quest for the title on 8pts. They also have the same match difference – and drew 3-3 with each other on Weekend 1 – so they are separated only on sets difference, with Mid-Ulster holding the edge. London Academy, two points behind, are best placed to capitalise on any slips from the top two.

Ormesby II are in pole position in Division 2, unbeaten and with a two-point lead over Joola Plymouth Torbay Academy, with Cardiff City one further point behind on six.

There are a lot of 'interested parties' in Division 3, where only two points separate the top four. Urban TTC are just

ahead of Draycott & Long Eaton II on match difference in a division where no side is unbeaten. The top pair are on 7pt, one ahead of Formby, who in turn lead Joola Plymouth Insideout by a point.

It is a similar picture in Division 4, although leaders Sussex Blades II have a point advantage over Lillington and Greenhouse II, with fourth-placed Crusaders another point back. The top three are all unbeaten and all have a match difference of 20-10, so there is plenty to play for.

Division 5 has clear pace-setters, Birmingham TTA having won all five ties on Weekend 1, for the loss of only six individual matches. Halton are second on 7pts but effectively the only challengers as the other four teams are on either three or four points.

The eight-team Division 6 is headed by Fulham Brunswick, but only on match difference from Nailsworth Phoenix, both teams having won four and drawn one to total 9pts. Nottingham Sycamore are third on 7pts, but have yet to play either team above them, so could make strides before the division splits.

The seventh and final boys' division has Byng Hall out in front on 9pts, with Greenhouse III and Corby Smash II a couple of points behind them. The leaders have played their closest challengers already, but Greenhouse and Corby will meet in the final match before the split.

Division 1 of the girls' competition has one of the biggest leads, with London Academy boasting a 100% record and a four-point advantage at the top. Draycott & Long Eaton lead the chasing pack, with only two points separating them from fifth spot in the six-team league.

Division 2 is tighter, unbeaten Brighton on 9pts holding just a one-point lead over Greenhouse, who have also yet to taste defeat but drew once more on Weekend 1.

Finally, Division 3 sees St Neots take a 100% record into the weekend, giving them a 2pt advantage over Cippenham. With a three-point gap to third, it seems the winner will come from the top two.

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