

Handicapped Singles & 1/2 Season Review

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The first major New Year event for the Clacton and District Table Tennis League is the Handicapped Singles Tournament which takes place on Saturday 15th January at the Coastal Academy Sports Hall.

The Tournament is open to all registered League players. Entries, with the entry fee of £2.50, can be sent to either Tony Oswick or Pete White by post. Alternatively, entries can be e-mailed directly to Pete White.

Full details are with Team Secretaries and they are also on the League's website. The closing date is next Monday (10th January). Competitors should send in their entries as soon as possible.

In the past, this Tournament has always proved popular but a minimum of 32 players will be needed to ensure it goes ahead.

For more information, contact Tournament Officer Pete White on 01255 425292.

* The next three months will see fierce action in all three Divisions of the League but reigning champions Brotherhood A look firm favourites to retain their Division One title.

Walton A and Windsor Condors, separated by a single point at the half-way stage of the season, are the likeliest contenders for the runners-up spot, with Windsor Eagles, Nomads Panthers, Windsor Roosters and Red Triangle B vying for a top six place.

Red Triangle A, now an established Division One side, Brotherhood B and Nomads Jaguars, for whom Gary Stallwood returns in place of John Weller in the second-half of the season, should all find comfort in the middle of the table.

At the bottom, perennial strugglers Windsor Falcons and a Windsor Hawks side suffering from a bout of "Austin's new rubbers" will be fighting it out to avoid relegation alongside an already-doomed Lawford team who have endured a torrid first-half season.

Three teams head Division Two and although Windsor Kestrels have led from Day One it would be a brave pundit who would predict which two of the Kestrels, Brotherhood C and Nomads Cougars will eventually fill the promotion places.

In what is again proving to be an extremely competitive Division, four evenly-matched teams – Walton B, Windsor Harriers, Brotherhood D and Windsor Ravens – are locked in the middle of the table, safe from relegation.

Of the five teams at the bottom, Windsor Owls – with Barry Howe and Dave Martin now playing regularly – should survive, but there is little to choose between Nomads Tigers, Brotherhood F, Brotherhood E and Nomads Lions.

It looks likely to be a battle royal between these four teams to avoid the drop, a battle that may not be settled until the final ball of the season has been played.

The most clear-cut situation is at the top of Division Three where Windsor Magpies have dropped just five points all season and only an earthquake or plague of locusts will stop them taking the title.

But the runners-up spot is wide open, with Mike Proctors' Nomads Lynx side holding a narrow first-half advantage over Allen Denyer's Brotherhood G and the promising newcomers of Brotherhood K.

Windsor Swallows and Nomads Pumas are proving competitive mid-table sides, just a class ahead of Nomads Leopards, Brotherhood H, Brotherhood I and Brotherhood J.

At the bottom Brotherhood L and Windsor Penguins have opened up a gap over the enthusiastic but luckless Windsor Kites whose only trophy in their first season of competitive table tennis looks likely to be the proverbial wooden spoon.

By Tony Oswick

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