



Braintree League: Rayne miss chance

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Rayne A missed the chance to take over at the top of division one in the penultimate series of matches before the Braintree Table Tennis League was called to a halt.

With only two players, Rayne went down 6-3 to Liberal B. In addition to the handicap of an absent player, Rayne also had to face Liberal's new recruit Adam Cuthbert in excellent form. He beat both Alan Burgess and Adam Buxton and a surprise win for Adrian Pitt over Buxton gave his team six points.

Rayne B also only had two players, plus an unregistered one, which cost them a couple of points against Liberal A. Their 8-1 win marked the first defeat this season for Peter Hayden, found wanting by Steve Pennell.

Pennell also stretched Liberal's other two players, Simon Webber and Terry Dowsett. He fought back from two games down against Webber before going down in five games. It was the other way round against Dowsett. This time Pennell took the first two games, but Dowsett rallied to take the rest.

Pennell, Dean Andrews and Ian Whiteside all won twice in Rayne B's other match, a 6-3 win over Netts B. Pennell and Whiteside both lost to their former teammate Jon Hill while Andrews beat Hill but lost to Nikki Davison.

After two consecutive 5-4 defeats in division two, Liberal C finally got on the right side of that scoreline against Black Notley A. Robin Armstrong and Gareth Davies both won twice, as did Chris Parr and Patrice Élonge for Notley.

In division three, Notley D increased their lead over their C team with an 8-1 win over Netts D while the C team lost 6-3 to Rayne E. Rayne E's win moved them up into third place, above Notley's E team. Ted Sims was unbeaten, taking his tally to eight wins out of nine.

Dave Whiting's record in division four is even more impressive. He has 15 out of 15, playing for three different teams. He was unbeaten again in Rayne G's 5-4 win over their own H team although the surprise result of the evening was probably a win for Ernst Midl over Tim Townsend, something that their relative averages over the past few seasons would not have anticipated.

Rayne F had a 9-0 win over Netts E to increase their lead at the top to ten points.

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