



Braintree League: Surprise defeat for leaders

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The tightness at the top of the Braintree Table Tennis League has got tighter after a surprise defeat for leaders Rayne A.

Rayne were looking good after a win over champions Liberal A in the first week and a 9-0 win over Black Notley B in their next match. But they found their match in Netts B, who beat them 6-3.

They were hampered by an elbow injury to Adam Buxton, who had to concede his final set but two wins for Graham Playle and Nikki Kennard had set Netts on their way. Playle's 3-1 (11-7, 7-11, 11-8, 11-7) win over Steve Pennell was the Rayne player's first defeat of the season.

Liberal A recorded their first win after welcoming back Simon Webber, who was not expected to play much this season. It was his first outing for more than a year but he was quickly in the groove to win his three singles in the 7-2 win over Notley A.

Netts A scored their third win out of three, 7-2 over Notley B, with three wins each for Paul Davison and James Hicks, while Liberal B beat Rayne B by the same score. Adam Cuthbert won his three singles for Liberal while Paul Lombardi picked up the two for Rayne.

The stand-out performance in division two came from Notley C's Jonny Evans. In his first season in division two, he won all his singles in the 9-0 win over Notley F, a notable performance particularly as one of his victims was Sean Clift, eighth in the division's individual averages in 2020.

Liberal C moved into second place with a 7-2 win over Notley E with the help of three wins from Gareth Davies.

Steve Willis is another player who has not played much recently and, like Webber, showed little sign of it as he took his three singles to give Rayne D their first win of the season, 5-4 over Notley D.

Promotion candidates Rayne C came up against a strong Sudbury Nomads' side of Ken Lewis, Kevin Saunders and Richard Kemp, who triumphed 6-3. Lewis was unbeaten but Dave Marsh and Paul Wellington beat Kemp

and Marsh beat Saunders.

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