

British League Play-Offs Rd1

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Pavilion and Fusion are the early leaders

Pavilion Brighton I and Fusion I are the early leaders in the British League

Premier Division Play-Offs which are taking place this weekend at the Cippenham Table Tennis Club, in Slough. Both sides scored comprehensive 7-1 wins. Sule Olaleye, Tom Cutler and Mark Smith were all undefeated as Fusion beat ELGRE Nottingham I 7-1. Tommy had to fight back from 2-0 down to get the better of Chris Rogers -3, -8, 6, 7,4 in the first game and there was no joy for Chris in his second match either. Chris had no answer to the seemingly effortless two-winged attack of former Olympian Sule Olaleye who raced to a 2,6,5 victory. Can anyone remember the last time Chris was defeated quite so convincingly? Emma Vickers, who has determinedly fought her way back to the England no. three position demonstrated just what a good Season she has had this year by beating John Dennison 8,6, -5, 5 for her side's only success.

Pavilion Brighton's fine 7-1 victory over OLOP Impact I wasn't quite as clear-cut as Fusion's success. Ashley Stokes had to pull out all the stops to get the better of David Barr 9, -6, 6-5, 8 whilst Da Shuai "Dash" Zhang had to battle in both of his singles before he picked up two important victories. Dash beat

Liam McTiernan (-9, 10, 7, -8, 11) as well as Chris Bush (7, 5, -10, -10, 1).

Newcomer Hans Pillards made an excellent start to his weekend beating Chris Bush (6, 7,-8,8) and David Barr (9, -7, 8,6). Hari Gehlot was the Reading side's only winner on this occasion. He scored an excellent 7,7, -11,10 victory over Ashley Stokes.

Barrow Fastbats (Jakov Krivic,Bradley Evans, Jonathan Crawford and Scott Crawford did well to beat TTK Greenhouse 5-3, having trailed 3-2. As you might have expected Gareth Herbert was the main thorn in their side. He beat both Bradley Evans and Jakov Krivic 3-1 to add to his 25 wins out of 25 during the course of the Season. Trailing 3-2 and with master tactician and motivator Dennis Neale in their corner Barrow finished this match with a vengeance.

Jonathan Crawford (ranked no. 59 nationally) made no mistake beating England no. 81 Chris Lewis 6,3,7 and Bradley Evans played his part by getting the better of Jide Owalabi 6, 8, 8. England no. 18 Junior Scott Crawford wrapped things up with a hard-fought 13, 9 6 victory over Fatlum Sadiku.

On this showing Fusion appear to be the team to beat!

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