

Clacton & District TTL Divs 2 and 3 season preview

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Kestrels aiming high

The 2013/14 Clacton and District League season begins this week with the new-look Windsor Kestrels aiming to take the Division Two honours.

Dave Martin and Bob Sawyer have both played at a higher level and, with the much-improved Graham Bunce and new signing Alan Rutledge, they start the season as marginal title favourites.

Brotherhood C and Lawford, third and fourth respectively last year but separated by only six points, are both unchanged and it would be a surprise if one of these two teams is not in the promotion mix at the end of the season.

But there have been many instances in the past – including last year – where a team of juniors has burst on the scene to upset the pundits' predictions, so keep an eye on the Brotherhood J quartet of Tom Burton, Gracie Edwards, Kelvin Olano and Tom Wilkin.

Gary Stallwood is now part of the Windsor Ravens' set-up and, if a fully-fit John Harvey gets into gear and plays regularly, the Ravens should be top-half certainties.

There's little to choose between Doug Green's Nomads Ocelots and Ferdy Rodriguez's Windsor Harriers, for whom Isabel Barton replaces Ian Fielder, with both teams having a solid rather than spectacular look that ought to see them safe in mid-table.

Elliott Attrill joins Brotherhood F in place of David North, whilst Tony Beezer and Caroline North join Nomads Tigers, and although neither side will be pot-hunting, neither should have relegation worries.

And with Windsor Owls relying heavily on their new number one, Frank Burbidge, to steer them clear of trouble, it leaves three teams likely to be battling it out at the bottom.

Promoted Brotherhood I are unchanged but, with only John Wrigley having previously played at this level, they could struggle.

The new-look Nomads Jaguars' side of Harry Hawkes, Mike Hillier, Vic Little, Denise Thompson and Mike Vilka may also find it an up-hill battle whilst Windsor Magpies, shorn of last-year's best two players, could also find the going tough this season.

In Division Three look no further than relegated Brotherhood E, unchanged from last season, to make a speedy return to Division Two – but the matter of who will join them is a more open question.

Andrew Cousins joins a five-man Nomads Pumas' squad, all of a similar standard, and they look a competitive outfit, as do an unchanged

Windsor Swallows – provided they can stay injury-free and put out a full team each week.

Brotherhood H are another side who won't be far off the top but, with only three players currently registered and no Tom Wilkin, they might find a promotion place an ambition too far.

Brotherhood G has a dependable look about it and, with Alan Fryer and Lee Allen joining Pete Bloomfield and Mark Trayhorn, they could be the Division's dark horses.

Nomads Lynx comprises Brian Friday, Kevin Hume, Pete Miller, Paul Dale and Tom Collins, another side that should fit comfortably in the top half-dozen, whilst an unchanged Windsor Penguins will be looking to their lead player, Ray Chillingworth, to better last season's eighth position.

Improving juniors Morgan Harvey and Jonathan Found should ensure Brotherhood L push themselves up the table while Nomads Leopards will remain competitive, with Rob Bright and Harry Beezer joining Tony Rayner, Roger McNaughton and Norman Jacobs.

The Nomads Wildcats' line-up is Barry Brandon, Roger Baalham, Hazel Blanche, Alan Charman and Harry Barlow, a side with the ability to finish above a Windsor Kites' team desperate to avoid a fourth wooden spoon.

Windsor Ospreys is a new team that includes four junior players of whom only Lucy Burton has League experience whilst the League welcomes a brand-new Walton team – Walton E – all their players playing League table tennis for the first time.

* Players are reminded that they must register with the ETTA before being eligible to play League table tennis. Any queries contact Annabelle Rodriguez on 01255 221259.

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