

Leicestershire TTL Report (Feb 16)

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LEICESTERSHIRE TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION

Although defending champions, Leicester Electricity, are still in with a theoretical chance, the race to become top team in **Division One** of the Leicester League is now between two teams, neither of which had players featured last season in this division.

Unicorn are top and rely on players predominantly from the Nottingham League who happen to be in this area during the academic year. They are one point clear after beating Abbots Road II 8-2 when Trevor Kerry won all three ably backed by two each from Oliver Hampson and Geoff Parsons. Amrish Rana did well to win two for Abbots.

The team in second spot are Ajax Wolvey whose foray into the top division is something of a fairy tale as they were in the second division last term, albeit winning that easily enough, but it is no mean feat to come into the top flight and do so well. They might be one point behind the leaders but a match in hand is all-important at this stage.

They had a crucial 6-4 victory over Knighton Park first who are always likely to pinch points when you least want to drop any. Mick Allsop and Jon Williams both won two for Ajax but none of them could get past Karen Smith in her preparation ahead of helping to win the National Veterans' title for Leicestershire. Aaron Riley picked up one for Ajax and actually took Smith to five, while Tobit Dehnen won one for Park. Reza Kiani, who has been doing well playing up from Division Two occasionally for KP, came down to earth in this, although all three of his sets needed a fifth game.

Electricity kept their slender hopes alive with a 9-1 victory over Northwood when Dave Grundy and Andy LeButt both won maximums and two for Steve White who was beaten 11-9 in the fifth by Matt Briggs. The Sparks previously had 10-0 successes over both Abbots Road and Arnesby with Grundy, Lebutt and Matt Hobday all in good form each time awaiting a slip by the top two.

Previously Les Baker, who has been showing improved form for Knighton Park seconds, beat Karen Smith for the first time ever in his team's 8-2 defeat. Tobit Dehnen and Adam Cross were both unbeaten in the singles for KPs first team.

Maurice Newman was another helping his county win the veterans' title last weekend and he prepared by winning all three against Holwell for Thringstone in a 5-5 draw. Alastair Hawthorn won two for Thringstone, his loss to Martin Brunning was a nailbiting 11-9, 14-12, 8-11, 8-11, 8-11.

It was against Desford Village that Les Baker showed his improvement with an excellent max for KP seconds, with

Michal Godzibiewski winning two and one for Eddie Lyons in a 7-3 result. KP had previously leapfrogged Abbots Road II off the bottom with an 8-2 win over them, Baker and Godzibiewski unbeaten.

John Bowness, Publicity Officer. (February 16, 2014)

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