

Clacton & District League: Double-top is the target for Brotherhood

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As the 2014/15 Clacton and District League season gets under way this week, the Brotherhood Club will be hoping for a one-two finish in Division Two.

Relegated Brotherhood D add talented junior Morgan Harvey to their squad in an endeavour to yo-yo back to the top-flight at the first attempt, but Gary Stallwood's inclusion alongside Brotherhood C's regular trio sees them start as narrow pre-season favourites to take top spot.

Lawford have finished fourth and third in the last two seasons, and it will be no surprise to see them challenging for promotion, whilst the Nomads Ocelots' team of Peter Giles, Harry Hawkes, John Hockley and Brian Parish looks distinctly useful and they will surely be there or thereabouts.

Both Windsor Owls and Windsor Harriers are unchanged and, as last year, both teams will be seeking to attain a position of mid-table security.

The new-look Nomads Tigers' team of Eric Lemke, John Marshall, Daryl Lott and debutant Khai Hoang should be able to steer clear of trouble, as should Brotherhood F, who have promoted Lee Allen and Gerald Batt to replace Elliott Attrill and Mark Beckham.

Beckham joins Kelvin Olano-Harper and Tom Wilkin in the Brotherhood I team, who also give an opportunity for Jonathan Found to test himself at this level – they could be the division's surprise package.

A revamped Nomads Jaguars include four players familiar to the League – Tony Beezer, Andy North, Caroline North and Kevin Hume, all players capable of keeping their team's head above water.

Last season's runaway Division Three champions, Brotherhood E, are unchanged and, although they will find life tougher at this level, they have sufficient experience to survive.

Windsor Magpies are another side to have promoted a player, Malcolm Caley joining John Plummer, David Sweetland and Dan Wright, but Brotherhood H, who welcome back Grant Sharpe to replace John Wrigley, will be weakened through Allen Denyer's absence through injury.

Both the Magpies and Brotherhood H were reprieved from relegation last season and they may find themselves struggling again this year.

In Division Three, there are two stand-out teams who look likely to go head-to-head in the quest for honours.

John Wrigley takes Gerald Batt's place in the Brotherhood G line-up, whilst the brand-new Windsor Buzzards' team of Pete Bloomfield, Ray Chillingworth, Alan Rutledge, supported by reserves Sue Chillingworth and Dan Malinowski, has strength in depth.

An unchanged Nomads Pumas will, as always, be stern but companionable opponents and they are capable of a top-four position, as are the Nomads Lynx team of Brian Friday, Mike Hillier and Peter Miller – although they may have problems with only three registered players.

Nomads Bobcats include Doug Green, Vic Little, Roger McNaughton and Mike Vilka in a squad of seven players that should win more matches than it loses.

Nomads Leopards' regulars Harry Beezer, Norman Jacobs and Tony Rayner are joined by Tom Collins and John Bonner and they, like Harry Barlow, Hazel Blanche, Andrew Cawley, Martin Cunningham and Paul Dale of

Nomads Wildcats, will be hoping for mid-table respectability.

Windsor have five teams in the division but four of them may find themselves occupying the lower reaches of the table.

Sadly, there will be no Sheila Howe in action for Windsor Swallows, who have added Kayley Lamb to their all-women team, whilst Windsor Ospreys have Debra Found providing the experience to supplement the exuberance of juniors Lucy Burton, Woody Fitzpatrick and Millie Easton.

Jackie Bunce and Mike Monschau again feature for the Penguins alongside Alan Charman and new-signing Zoe Strange but Windsor Kites, who had their best-season ever in 2013/14, remain unchanged for a fourth year.

Walton D now have a year's League experience behind them and, having shown marked improvement during the second-half of last season, will be going all-out to ensure they do not finish bottom for a second time.

* Players are reminded that they must register with Table Tennis England before being eligible to play League table tennis. Any queries – contact League Secretary Lyn White on 01255 425292.

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