

Leicester League: Newman turns it on in defeat of Gannon

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The long-awaited clash of two titans in Division One of the Leicester League, who have been battling each other for seemingly decades for the individual top spot, turned out to be something of a damp squib when Dave Gannon, who won the title last season, was well beaten by his nearest rival Maurice Newman 3-0 (11-9, 11-4, 11-4) in what developed into a tight match at 5-5.

Newman plays for Thringstone and he gained a fine maximum to give his team the edge, with backing from Alastair Hawthorn and Barry Taylor winning one apiece. Gannon, playing for Abbots Road, won his other two, as did team-mate Omar Ahmed, and these two also won the doubles for a deserved share of the spoils.

One of the best performances so far this season came in Thringstone's previous match when Knighton Park V had Steve Bessant playing up. Bessant is graded 158 and he beat Barry Taylor graded 221, probably akin to a century at cricket, and only just went down in five to John Lenton. Thringstone won the match 6-4 with Newman gaining his customary three.

Nothing seems to be standing in the way of defending champions as far as the teams are concerned as Unicorn beat Knighton Park II 8-2. Reza Kiani won the first two games against the hitherto unbeaten Jared Patel before the latter rallied to take the next three, eventually emerging unbeaten again, as did Tim Sheppard, while Peter Claxton won one. Kiani and George McClurkin both took one set for KP, who will be disappointed as they had been riding high before this match and the one before, when key players were unavailable.

Queens were on fire in **Division Two**, racing to an 8-2 victory over Regent Sports with full houses from both Dave Daniel and Mick Rayner and Eileen Shaler pitching in with two. Three each also from Martin Bolton and Kevin Sanderson for Great Glen II in a 6-4 victory over Nomads.

Leaders Desford Village II, on the other hand, were battling out a draw with Abbots Road II to drop their first points, with the latter's Vishal Parmar in unbeatable form after defeating Neil Matthams in the first set in five. Just enough backing was supplied by Geoff Hancock and Fahed Sacoor taking one each.

Great Glen beat Knighton Park V 6-4 thanks mainly to a maximum from Alex Mason, who had a real struggle to overcome Dean Jordan 3-2 (3-11, 9-11, 11-8, 11-7, 12-10), with Dermot Whelan and Kevin Trueman each supplying one for Glen. A feature of the match was a couple from Nikki Farrall, who normally plays in Division Five for Park but is showing great promise in her forays in the higher reaches so far.

Great Glen II lifted themselves off the bottom of **Division Three** with a 6-4 victory over Blaby and Whetstone when Martin Taylor was back to his best in scoring three, while Phil Tomlin with two and Terry Highton (one) are both still difficult to beat. Paul Hinson won two for Blaby and Rich Davies One.

Bruce Johnson used all his experience for Leicester Taxes to keep the emerging young talent of Knighton Park VIII at bay with a full house after just getting the better of Jack Rogers in five. Rogers and Richard Martin both won two for Park.

Steve Andrews continued his good form for Nomads II against Regent Sports II with three, while his team-mate Trevor Hawkins had all three singles go to a fifth game, winning one in a 5-5 draw.

All three unbeaten tags in **Division Five** fell by the wayside, including both Knighton Park XI pathfinders, Nikki Farrall and Paul Ducksbury, succumbing to a splendid maximum by Luke Blair, who was very much back to form for Desford Village IV. Park were, however, that bit stronger in depth with two each from the previously mentioned pair as well as an important singles by Pat Evans, who combined with Farrall for a match-winning

doubles success.

Jack Kermode of Winstanley Wizards was the other to taste defeat for the first time when losing to the wiles of Derek Butt of Nomads V in five games. Wizards' Chris Webster kept the ship afloat with three of his own to go with Kermode's two and one from Ken Wadeson to win 6-4. Butt won two for Nomads.

A very good maximum for Oscar White spearheaded Knighton Park X to a 7-3 victory over Abbots Road V, including the scalp of Dave Rana. Support for White came in the form of two from Dan Pearson and one from Adam Green.

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