

Leicester League: Unicorn hit back for draw after Gales blow

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It was the 10th of 11 weeks of the first half of the Leicester League season when the final two 100 per cent records fell by the wayside – though both teams only just missed out, recording 5-5 draws.

In **Division Three**, Unicorn were held by Knighton Park VI, with the highlight of the match coming when the previously undefeated student Shane Gales faced the hard-hitting Steve Bessant, who had already lost narrowly to John Genovese.

After losing the first game, Bessant won two games in a row before finding himself on the wrong end of an 11-0 scoreline. Undeterred, he pressed on to grab an victory 11-9 against an opponent who had not dropped a game previously, let alone a set.

Both Gales and Genovese won two while John Bowness took two for Park, Robert Geary one, and then Gales and Andrew Pagett defeated Bessant and Bowness for the first time this term for the share of points.

The other team dropping points for the first time were Knighton Park XI in **Division Five** against Eagles. For Park, Paul Ducksbury, having a fine season, was in complete control in winning an easy-looking maximum.

He needed support in order to avoid defeat and that came from Pat Evans in her debut season who scored a terrific victory at 12-10 in the fifth against Zeljko Koncarevich and then combined with Ducksbury to maintain the team's unbeaten tag in the doubles. For a fighting Eagles, Borislav Trivic and Zoran Djurkovic both won two and Koncarevich one.

In **Division One** Ajax Wolvey bounced back from a 9-1 defeat at the hands of Unicorn's first team by inflicting the same score on Knighton Park III, who are suffering heavily because of injuries. Mick Allsopp, John Williams and Aiden Walsh all cruised to maximums and Park's one came from a forfeited doubles.

Meanwhile, Knighton Park firsts are plugging away and are doing enough to maintain a firm hand on the shirt tails of Unicorn and, at this rate, the return match between the two teams might well be the deciding factor of who wins the championship.

Park played their own second team and won 9-1. The latter's Reza Kiani beat Karen Smith but that was it as both Chris Rogers and Tobit Dehnen proved unbeatable on the night.

Desford Village II remained at the top of **Division Two** with an excellent 8-2 victory over Queens with Neil Matthams and Richard Hayes both showing championship-winning form. Thomas Hayes took one and then combined with Matthams for the doubles. This knocks Queens down a peg from second position.

Taking over in that second spot were Electricity II who tiptoed over the line at 6-4 against a competitive Syston Casuals II. Sam Radenhurst had two go to five for the Sparks, winning 11-9 against Terry Hall in the vital fifth but then losing out against Mike James, the three mentioned all winning two for their respective team, while Russell Pettitt also grabbed two for Electricity. A terrific contest was finally brought to a close when Pettitt and Andy Wright won the doubles.

Knighton Park IV are gradually moving up the chart and could yet have a say in the final placings as they showed with an 8-2 success against Great Glen, league chairman Peter Wilson winning three, Patrick Carton and Mike Lapworth two apiece.

Back to **Division Three** we find Harry White in terrific form for Electricity IV against Regent Sports, although he only

just got the better of Stu Jones 13-11 in the fifth to record his maximum. Jones won two, as did Tim Cawston, backed by one from Rob Price and the doubles for Regent to win 6-4.

Goons came back with a bang to beat Nomads II 9-1, with Steve Andrews defeating Barry Robinson to prevent the whitewash. Andrews rarely loses two but was beaten by both John Jacques, as canny as ever, and Graham Cutler, albeit both times in five games.

Bruce Johnson won his habitual maximum for Leicester Taxes against Great Glen II in an 8-2 team success, with Martin Taylor taking both for Glen. David Hodgson and Phil Hodgson both won two for Taxes.

John Bowness (publicity officer)

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