

Leicester League: Walton win crucial in Knighton battle

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At the midway point of the Leicester League season Knighton Park XI were riding high at the top of **Division Five**, unbeaten and with two players performing very well in Nikki Farrall, new to the league, and Paul Ducksbury. Since then, with these two having had restricted availability, the team has lost three of their last four matches yet, with challenging teams squabbling among themselves, they are still at the head of affairs.

Their latest fixture was against their own 12th team, who introduced Simon Taylor for his first match. He won two but was beaten by Pat Evans, who also defeated Rafe Walton in an excellent performance, while Aga Hirt also won two for the 11th team. Robbie Bowsher weighed in with two for the 12th but the crucial singles was secured by Walton against Ange Bowness, and he and Bowsher then took the doubles in five games after losing the first two, making it 6-4 to the 12th team.

Meanwhile, Winstanley Wizards were missing a great opportunity to move to with striking distance of the leaders when they lost to another Knighton Park team, this time the 10th, when Adam Green scored a very good maximum to include the scalp of high-flying Jack Kermode. Supporting well were Max Huggins and Oscar White with two apiece, while Kermode won two for the Wizards in a 7-3 result for KP.

Regent Sports IV, who had a match postponed, are now the best placed to challenge the leaders with a match in hand and have Richard Just coming into some very good form.

Chetan Tailer has now won four Player of the Match awards in a row in **Division Four** for Leicester Police who are well top, but his three against Nomads III were somewhat close with successes against both Derek Butt playing up and Laszlo Kocsis needing a deciding fifth game, both could have gone the other way. In fact, the Police won all four sets that needed five games so the 8-2 result might have been much closer. Kocsis secured both sets for Nomads.

Paul Weston is going to take some beating in this division and won another three for Syston Casuals III against Regent Sports III in a 7-3 success in which Terry Wale supported well with two. Allan Clarke won two for Regent while Dave Dewsbury was very unlucky not to come away with something having had a high number of deuce games going against him.

Unicorn are back on the road and back to the top of **Division One** after an 8-2 victory over Arnesby. Tim Sheppard won three, as did the undefeated Jared Patel, but the latter had to pull out all the stops against James Lancaster, winning 11-8 in the fifth. Trevor Kerry completed the Unicorn scoring with two while Arnseby won the doubles.

Maurice Newman is still proving very difficult to beat, as Syston Casuals found to their cost when the Thringstone star won three, all in three straight. Barry Taylor gave Newman some excellent support by gaining two of his own and then this pair won the doubles for full points in a 6-4 success. Jason Woodfield won two for Syston.

I have mentioned Knighton Park seconds' John Underwood before as he battled against the odds trying to win a set this season. After 32 successive defeats he gained just reward for endeavour as, like London buses, two victories came together, ironically against his own club's third team. Underwood beat Zack Moss and then went on to defeat Steve Adams 15-13 in the third, only just going down to Aman Rashid in five. With Reza Kiani gaining three and George McClurkin two, KP's second team won 8-2.

Other very good individual performances around the league include a brilliant maximum by Great Glen's Alex

Mason against a strong Nomads team in **Division Two**. Alas for Mason, none of his team-mates were able to cash in so Zaheer Mohamed, Andy Searle and Cliff Smith all won two to secure a 7-3 win.

In **Division Three** Harry White fought an almost lone battle against Leicester Taxes in winning three in a 6-4 defeat. This included an excellent success against Taxes star man, Bruce Johnson.

Just a reminder that the Leicester League's newsletter, Top Spin, celebrates 50 years this term. It started as a duplicated hard copy, evolving slowly, and finally emerged as a fully online newsletter last season, this term growing to include a feast of information. www.topspin-ldttl.co.uk

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