

Chelmsford & District League: Unbeaten Hodge and Berry fire OCs to top

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A single point separates OCs C and Hatfield Peverel B in Division Three of the Chelmsford & District League after 14 rounds of matches. Both sides were in action this week and OCs C fared better. They beat a strong Danbury G side 8-2 to leapfrog their rivals.

Frank Hodge and Daniel Berry were both undefeated whilst Peter Windley won twice. There were numerous close games and Berry was involved in two of them, beating Dave Marsh by a last-gasp 3-2 (10-12, 10-12, 11-4, 14-12, 11-9) margin and Matthew Brown by an equally close five-set (6-11, 11-9, 9-11, 11-8, 11-9) scoreline. Windley was also involved in a real humdinger against Brown and he just missed out 3-2 (17-15, 8-11, 11-5, 9-11, 8-11).

Hatfield Peverel B were held to a draw by Chelmsford C, for whom Chris Denyer hit top form. Denyer made a mockery of his 55 per cent win record by getting the better of Gareth Davies (3-0), Dave Fiddeman (3-1) and Gordon Fairchild (3-0).

Teamwork enabled Chelmsford C to overcome Maldon C 7-3. Dave Parker, Chris Denyer and Paul Nicol all won twice. Brian Riedling picked up two wins for the Maldon side.

Chelmsford B had Ryan Gooday to thank as they beat Hatfield Peverel C 6-4. Gooday picked up a hat-trick of wins against Adam Carter, Dave Carter and Ray Eldridge.

Bocking B took two steps towards winning the **Division One** title. Most significantly, they beat second-placed Rawreth & Hullbridge B 8-2. Rik James and Dave Cole were both undefeated whilst Gary Cattermole – arguably the most improved player in the league – picked up two wins. This included a 3-1 (8-11, 11-7, 11-8, 11-7) victory over Gary Young.

Bocking B also beat Galleywood A 8-2. Cattermole again impressed, this time beating ace defender John Holland 3-2 (11-7, 13-11, 2-11, 8-11, 14-12). Cole, who is playing as well as ever as befits his record of 21 wins out of 23 (91%), had to dig deep to overcome Mark Mulley 3-2 (8-11, 11-9, 7-11, 11-5, 13-11).

Danbury B are looking increasingly like becoming **Division Two** champions. They beat third-placed Danbury D 9-1 as Andrew Halling and Charles Sweeney were both undefeated whilst Steve Buer only missed out against Chris Hancox. Buer nevertheless scored a fine 3-1 (8-11, 11-9, 13-11, 13-11) victory over Steve Whiteley.

Liberal emerged as 6-4 winners over Elmtree Excalibur B. Steve Pennell remained undefeated.

Chelmsford A also impressed this week. They beat Hatfield A 6-4 – a result that sees Hatfield Peverel A drop into the relegation zone. Waseem Qureshi and Alastair Piper were both undefeated for Chelmsford and they both defeated the hard-hitting Gary Ward in the process.

All four matches played in **Division Four** this week resulted in 6-4 scorelines and all were decided in accordance with league placings.

Colin Barham led Galleywood C to a victory over Writtle, whilst a Neil Thompson hat-trick enabled Elmtree Excalibur D to beat Danbury J. Danbury H emerged as winners against OCs E, whilst EPHQ's success against Danbury K leaves Danbury K holding up the table. Calvin Wright won his three singles for EPHQ and Francis Whitbread beat Roger Tiffin 3-2 (4-11, 11-9, 8-11, 11-8, 11-9) in the last game of the evening to secure the EPHQ victory. Tiffin had also missed out very narrowly against Calvin Wright 3-2 (11-8, 11-7, 9-11, 9-11, 9-11).

A four-man Hatfield Peverel D jumped into second place in **Division Five** by beating Chelmsford F 7-3. Keith

Cullen won his three singles and newcomer Paul Lombardi won his two singles. Lombardi defeated Richard Baxter 3-2 (7-11, 11-8, 4-11, 11-9, 11-9).

Chelmsford E (Adam Pitt, Jacqui Smith and Steven Chambers) were 10-0 winners over Galleywood D. Jacqui Smith came under the most pressure of the Chelmsford players but she prevailed 3-1 (4-11, 15-13, 11-6, 16-14) against Arthur Clark and 3-2 (2-11, 4-11, 11-8, 11-7, 13-11) against Emily Wood.

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