

Clacton & District Table Tennis League: Leaders Limping Over Line

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Leaders Brotherhood C are not so much striding as stuttering over the finishing line in Division Two of the Clacton and District League.

The Brotherhood side have headed the table since the beginning of January and have looked firm title favourites. But two defeats in their last three matches, and a meagre return of just thirteen points, has seen their healthy lead at the top begin to disintegrate.

This week it was the turn of Windsor Owls to inflict the misery, the Owls recording a well-merited 6-4 win. Gary Stallwood stayed unbeaten for Brotherhood and Fred Gallone won one, but Frank Burbidge and Adam Jackson each took two singles' wins for Windsor, and they combined to take a close 12-10 in the fifth doubles' success against Stallwood and Kevin Pryor.

The Brotherhood team also lost two other matches that went close in five, Pryor going down 11-8 in the fifth to Jackson and 11-6 in the fifth to Tricia Salter.

The 'C' team's defeat allowed club-mates Brotherhood D to close the gap at the top but they made hard work of beating bottom team Nomads Jaguars 6-4. Russell Hillier won three and Morgan Harvey two, but Lee Harvey's off-night saw him win only once. Roger Hance's double for the Jaguars included an 11-7 in the decider victory over Morgan Harvey whilst it was a surprise 13-11 in the fifth for Andy North against Lee Harvey.

The indifferent performances of the two Brotherhood teams opened the way for Nomads Ocelots to make up ground and they did so in most convincing style with a 9-1 victory over the more-than-useful Brotherhood F. Peter Giles and Brian Parish stayed unbeaten for the Ocelots, although it was a tight 15-13 in the fifth for Parish against Lee Allen. Sandie Isaac's victory for the 'F' team over Harry Hawkes was the only blot on the Ocelots' copy-book.

The force now seems to be with the Ocelots and their win puts them just three points behind Brotherhood D and only eleven points adrift of Brotherhood C, with the Ocelots having a match in hand over both their rivals.

At the other end of the table, Nomads Tigers continued their climb to safety with an 8-2 victory against Brotherhood I, Daryl Lott and John Marshall unbeaten and Kai Hoang contributing a welcome point.

But things are looking gloomy for the Jaguars – their 6-4 defeat by Brotherhood D leaves them rooted to the foot of the table – and for Windsor Magpies whose prospects of survival were not helped when they were beaten 7-3 for a second time this season by Windsor Harriers. Ferdy Rodriguez won a couple for the Harriers whilst reserve Pete Bloomfield with two and Malcolm Caley with one took the Magpies' points.

Elsewhere, Brotherhood E took advantage of Brotherhood H fielding a guest player to record a 7-3 victory although none of their players could get the better of the 'H' team's Grant Sharpe who won his three. His team-mate James Smith-Daye will feel unfortunate not to have picked up at least one point, going down 11-8 in the decider to Duncan Dunne.

In Division Three Nomads Lynx shared the spoils with Nomads Bobcats for whom Doug Green was unbeaten. Brian Friday and Mike Hillier each recorded two wins for the Lynx whilst Pete Miller scraped the draw for his side with an 8-11, 11-4, 8-11, 11-7, 12-10 victory over Keith Clubb. The result almost certainly ends the Lynx' title hopes and they will likely have to settle for the consolation prize of the runners-up spot.

Nomads Leopards defeated Windsor Swallows 7-3. John Bonner won three and Harry Beezer two, Beezer denied

his maximum by Angela Barratt who took their individual match 11-5 in the fifth. The Swallows' points came from Barratt with two and the ever-green Iris Howlett who defeated Tom Collins.

It was also 7-3 in the all-Windsor clash between the Ospreys and the Kites, with trebles for Debra Found and Woody Fitzpatrick and a Millie Easton success over Mick Simson. Carl Hubbard and Chris Simson picked up a point apiece for the Kites, and took part in the closest match of the evening when they combined in the doubles to defeat Found and Easton 10-12, 11-3, 5-11, 13-11, 15-13.

In Division One Nomads Panthers are well on course to make it a hat-trick of titles and they continued their relentless march onward with an 8-2 success over a weakened Windsor Eagles. John Monk stayed unbeaten for the winners whilst Phil Smith picked up the losers' two points, defeating Colin Webber 11-4 in the fifth and Gill Locke 11-8 in the fifth.

Nomads Lions are almost guaranteed the runners-up spot and they made no mistake against bottom-team Windsor Ravens, winning 10-0. Only John Fenton's 11-7 in the decider victory went the distance. For the Ravens, the result confirms what has long been inevitable – they are definitely relegated.

Walton A are now strong favourites to finish third following their 9-1 win against Brotherhood A, Peter Burrows and David Binns undefeated. It was Brotherhood's worst result of the season but they will feel unfortunate to have lost all four matches that went to five – Burrows and Binns' singles victories over Greg Green, Colin Dearman's win over Elliott Attrill, and the closest of all four, Burrows and Dearman's 3-11, 11-13, 13-11, 11-9, 12-10 doubles success against Green and Attrill.

Walton C made short work of Windsor Kestrels, winning 9-1, with only two matches extended to a fourth set. Derek Willis and Paul Meikle recorded trebles whilst Dave Martin took the Kestrels' consolation point with a win in three-straight against Mark Gale.

Three for Felipe Rodriguez, two for John Barton, one for Ian Fielder and an 11-9 in the fifth doubles success for Rodriguez and Fielder against John Owen and Gracie Edwards, gave Windsor Hawks a 7-3 victory over Brotherhood B. Edwards won two points for the losers and David North one.

* The closing date for the League's 2015 Closed Championships is fast approaching – Sunday 29th March. The Championships will be held on Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th April at the Coastal Academy Sports Hall. The qualification for entry is six League matches. Entries can be made on-line or sent by post to Tony Oswick or Peter White.

* The Windsor Club's Pig Race Night at the St Osyth Village Hall takes place on Saturday 11th April at 7.30 pm. Tickets are £3.00 (for adults) and £2.00 (for children). Bring your own nibbles and drink. For more information contact Jenny Higgins (Tel : 01255 432397 or 07790 240566).

RESULTS

Division 1

Nomads Lions 10 Windsor Ravens 0;
Nomads Panthers 8 Windsor Eagles 2;
Walton C 9 Windsor Kestrels 1;
Walton A 9 Brotherhood A 1;
Windsor Hawks 7 Brotherhood B 3.

Division 2

Brotherhood C 4 Windsor Owls 6;
Brotherhood D 6 Nomads Jaguars 4;
Windsor Harriers 7 Windsor Magpies 3;
Brotherhood F 1 Nomads Ocelots 9;
Brotherhood H 3 Brotherhood E 7;
Nomads Tigers 8 Brotherhood I 2.

Division 3

Windsor Swallows 3 Nomads Leopards 7;

Windsor Kites 3 Windsor Ospreys 7;

Nomads Bobcats 5 Nomads Lynx 5.

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