

Chelmsford & District League: Danbury storm to Division Two title

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Posted On: March 30, 2015



Danbury B scored their 12th and 13th wins of the season and it was enough to secure the Division Two title in the Chelmsford & District Table Tennis League.

They have used seven players this season and their strong all-round squad of Charles Sweeney, Andrew Halling, Lewis Ewers, Sidney Dorn, Chris Buer, Steve Buer and more recently Matthew Brown always looked like being amongst the front-runners. Their side of Steve Buer (one win), Chris Buer (two wins) and Brown (two wins) beat Elmtree Excalibur B this week in a match where they stormed into a 5-0 lead but ended up limping over the finish-line 6-4.

Lee McHugh fashioned the Elmtree fightback with a stirring 3-2 (18-16, 9-11, 5-11, 11-8, 16-14) victory over Steve Buer. In as widely a fluctuating battle as you are likely to see Richard Storey defeated Brown 3-2 (7-11, 11-2, 13-11, 2-11, 11-1). The week before, Danbury B had beaten Hatfield Peverel A 7-3. Dorn held them together with a hat-trick and he looks to be a player to watch in the first division next Season.

Hatfield Peverel A also drew 5-5 with Danbury C. Peverel's John Webber and Gary Ward and Danbury's Eric Green and Graham Briggs all won twice. Ace-defender Green was involved in three very hard-fought five ends. Eric beat Webber 3-2 (11-3, 7-11, 11-6, 5-11, 13-11) but missed out to Ward in five (10-12, 9-11, 15-13, 11-8, 8-11) and he rounded off his evening by beating his Southend League team-mate Dave Calleja, again in five (11-8, 10-12, 11-9, 5-11, 11-9).

Third-placed OCs A scored an impressive 7-3 win over Maldon A in **Division One**. Brandon Crouchman and Michael Andrews were both undefeated for the OCs side. Brandon completed his hat-trick with a hard-fought 3-0 (11-9, 18-16), 11-9 win over Paul Sayer. Maldon's Paul Stephens impressed by getting the better of former Maldon player John Cleasby by a quick-fire 3-0 (11-6, 11-6, 11-7) margin.

The big match in **Division Three** saw third-placed Danbury F storm to a 7-3 win over the leaders OCs C. Danbury's Gordon Gatherall (with a record of 26 wins out of 36 – 72 %) was on top form and he scored a memorable hat-trick of wins over Nat Ravlic (7-11, 2-11, 11-6, 11-8, 11-6) and Frank Hodge (11-7, 11-2, 9-11, 11-7). Totally in the zone he completed his night's work by getting the better of Andrew Huckson 3-0 (11-7, 11-9, 11-7).

Second-placed Hatfield Peverel B won 7-3 this week and they now trail OCs C by five points although they have a match in hand. Neil Freeman's hat-trick held the Hatfield Peverel side together. Neil received good support from Dave Fiddeman and Gordon Fairchild, who both won twice.

Division Four leaders Maldon D were somewhat surprisingly held to a draw by Danbury K, although in fairness they were without two of their leading players – Ciaran Whelan and Colin Napper. Maldon's evergreen Ev Lucas won his three singles but Danbury's Norman Hayes (one win), Roger Tiffin (two wins) and Raymond Cheung (two wins) all played a part in a fine Danbury performance.

Danbury H jumped into second place by beating both Writtle and EPHQ 8-2. Both were hard fought matches with five of the games against EPHQ going to a decider whilst six of the games against Writtle were decided in the fifth end. Dave Goody won his three singles against EPHQ whilst Craig Foster and Dave Powell were undefeated against Writtle. Powell showed up well against Writtle. He beat Colin Griffiths 3-0 (11-6, 11-9, 11-7) and then Frank Neill 3-2 (11-8, 11-7, 8-11, 4-11, 11-6) and finally Andy Fox 3-0 (11-9, 11-4, 11-9).

Chelmsford D beat the higher-placed Elmtree Excalibur D 7-3. Bob Francis won his three singles for the Chelmsford team. Chelmsford's Ian Austin won twice and this included a fine 3-2 (11-6, 17-15, 11-13, 8-11, 11-2)

victory over Dave Moles. Galleywood G beat Danbury J 7-3. David Gatherall was undefeated for the Galleywood side and this included a last-gasp 3-2 (9-11, 6-11, 11-3, 11-4, 11-9) victory over Kevin Willis.

In **Division Five** Danbury M (Dan Anderson, George Ashley and Cameron Gray) made it 16 wins out of 16 by beating Elmtree Excalibur E 8-2. They hold a massive 29-point lead over Danbury L who were this week held to a 5-5 draw by Hatfield Peverel D. Hatfield Peverel's Peter Taylor and Paul Lombardi both won twice. Danbury's John Knights did well to beat Peter Taylor 3-2 (11-3, 11-8, 6-11, 10-12, 11-8).

Chelmsford F – Mike Pitt (two wins), Richard Upson (three wins) and Jamie Dowsett (one win) beat Elmtree Excalibur E 6-4 whilst OCs G – David Bishop (three wins), Mike Moorcroft (two wins) and Harry Rogers (one win) were 6-4 winners against Galleywood D.

In the CLICK League, Chelmsford H did well to beat the higher-placed OCs H 4-1.

Their three-player side of Sebastian Leadbetter, Kristian Krejcirik and Callum Day all played a part in this success. Sebastian Leadbetter was involved in two hard-fought five-setters. He beat Harry Rogers 2-11, 11-9, 14-16, 12-10, 11-8 and he just missed out to Adam Chalk 6-11, 3-11, 11-5, 11-8, 10-12.

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March 30, 2015

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