



Leicester & District: Searle eyes repeat in Ladder

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The daytime Ladder League now has two further sessions to run and has Andy Searle, last season's winner, at the top and going well, with just a further three players able to catch him.

Searle had a plus-three score in the latest session from his four sets which included a loss to the fast moving-up-the-chart, Cliff Smith, who was better than anyone with a score of plus-seven to sit just one point behind John Bowness and six behind the leader. In fourth place is Charlie Bateman with a gap of 11 points between him and Steve Bessant in fifth.

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What might well be the decider at the top of **Division Two** of the Leicester and District League resulted in a tight 6-4 victory for Syston Casuals over Electricity III and it was a good team effort that got them home.

Robert Whittaker and Jason Woodfield both notched two, the latter just getting the better of Richard Martin in a fifth game early in the match and, after John Szostak had supplied the other singles, the first two named got home in the crucial doubles. Steve White won two for the Sparks.

Electricity have been the draw specialists which has seen points dropped that might otherwise have been picked up and, although they have a match in hand, the gap is a significant 12 points.

Vying for second spot alongside the Sparks are Knighton Park IV, who had no match, and Blaby & Whetstone, who defeated Abbots Road II 8-2 thanks mainly to three each from Nick Raynor and Dave Daniel, John Winsper supplying one.

In a relatively quiet **Division One**, Unicorn continue to dominate but Knighton Park had a bit of a scare against

Thringstone before getting across the line at 6-4 when Chris Rogers and Karen Smith won the doubles relatively easily. Rogers won all three but with Maurice Newman scoring his other two while Trevor Kerry and Barry Taylor each won one, Thringstone fought all the way.

Blaby & Whetsone's second team are not quite so secure at the top of **Division Four** after being held to a 5-5 draw by Nomads III for whom Laszlo Kocsis recorded a fine maximum with his usual high degree of tenacity. Paul Hinson and his brother, Phill, each won two and the doubles to take a share of the spoils.

Meanwhile, the juniors of Knighton Park VIII creep ever nearer after an 8-2 victory over Nomads IV when Adam Green came out of the shadows to win a Player of the Match award with a stunning three, including the scalp of the wily Terry Highton, who beat both Dan Pearson and Oscar White.

This Nomads team also featured against the struggling Winstanley Wizards despite the latter's high-flying Jack Kermode, who won three in a 6-4 defeat, just defeating Highton in five very close games. The Wizards keep picking up a few consolation points that might well see them safe.

While the rest of the higher teams have been squabbling among themselves, Lutterworth Rotary had placed themselves in pole position at the top of **Division Five**, but received a rude awakening from Knighton Park XI, who beat them 8-2, depriving them even of a consolation point, and leapfrogging into first place.

Mike Eastell was beaten twice, by Simon Taylor 13-11 in the fifth of the first set and then by Aga Hirt later as both KP players emerged undefeated while John Murray, struggling with a calf injury, managed to win one.

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