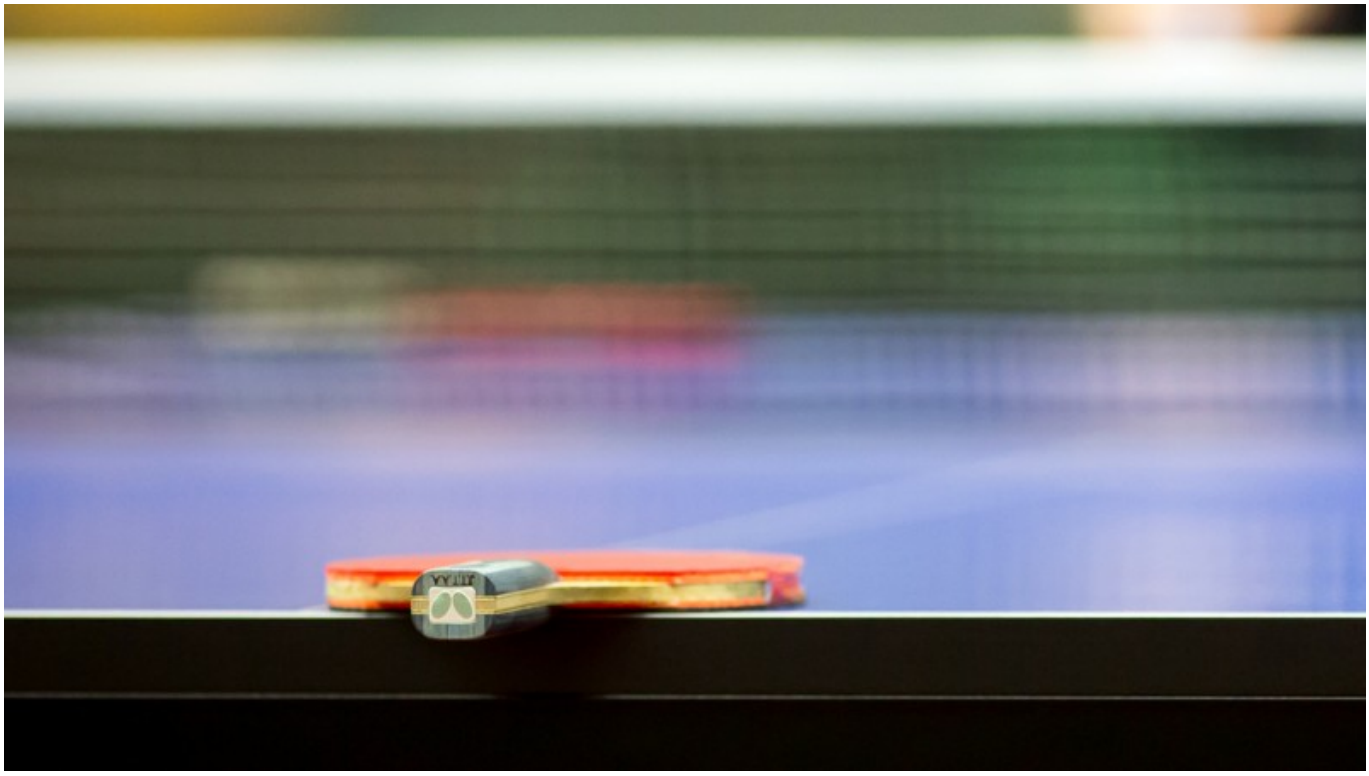

Clacton & District: Kestrels' survival bid takes off

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Windsor Kestrels' outside chances of survival in **Division One** of the Clacton & District League were given a boost this week with a timely 6-4 success over Walton B. It was only the Kestrels' fourth victory of the season.

Bob Sawyer was the hero of the hour, enjoying excellent wins over Gavin Price, Paul Woolnough and Graham Buxton. Kestrels' skipper Dave Martin contributed a valuable couple of points, which included an 11-3 in the fifth success against Buxton, whilst Graham Bunce took a crucial 3-2 (11-8, 7-11, 9-11, 12-10, 11-8) victory over the unfortunate Buxton. Price with two wins and Woolnough with one were Walton's points-scorers.

With leaders Nomads Panthers match-less, the attention at the top of the table turned to the battle for the runners-up spot.

Current second-placed side Windsor Eagles did their chances a power of good by notching up a 7-3 win over fifth-placed Walton C. Gary Cattermole won three, Phil Smith two and John Hobson one with Cattermole involved in both matches that went the distance, beating Paul Meikle 11-4 in the fifth and Jason Gale 11-8 in the fifth. Meikle with two and Derek Willis with one took the points for Walton.

Third-placed Windsor Condors also enjoyed a 7-3 win, this over Nomads Lions. Martin Green, making a belated first appearance of the season, stayed unbeaten for the winners whilst there were two for Elliott Attrill and one for Annabelle Rodriguez. Adam Wilkin's two wins for the Lions were both close matches, 11-5 in the decider against Rodriguez and 11-8 in the decider against Attrill, but the tightest finish of the evening was Brian Parish's 3-2 (3-11, 11-8, 11-8, 5-11, 12-10) win over Rodriguez.

It was good to see John Hockley back in action for the Lions and, although he failed to gain a point, he took Attrill all the way before going down 11-5 in the fifth.

So, with three matches to play, just four points separate the three Windsor sides – the Eagles, Condors and Hawks – in second, third and fourth places, with Walton C a further nine points behind but with a game in hand.

The top match in **Division Two** saw leaders Windsor Owls win three of the four matches that went the distance to

edge past third-placed Lawford 6-4. Frank Burbidge and Mark Salter each won two for the Owls, Burbidge defeating both Ian Sherwood and Paul Hewitt 11-7 in the fifth, and Salter having a narrow 11-8 in the decider victory over Hewitt. Tricia Salter contributed a valuable win over Sherwood. But Lawford's Richard Spence once again stayed above it all to remain unbeaten on the night, his treble including a five-set (11-9, 13-11, 9-11, 8-11, 11-8) victory over Mark Salter.

Second-placed Nomads Tigers retained their unbeaten record with a 7-3 victory against the Windsor Buzzards, John Marshall winning three, Daryl Lott two and John Bonner one. Pete Bloomfield won a couple for the Buzzards and Alan Rutledge one – and although Dan Malinowski failed to get on the score-sheet, he so nearly caused an upset, just losing 13-11 in the decider to Marshall.

With two matches to play, the Owls are now 17 points ahead of the Tigers, who have three matches left, who are 14 points in front of Lawford who have four games to play.

At the other end of the table, there were defeats for both Brotherhood E and Nomads Jaguars.

Brotherhood F beat their 'E' team 7-3, both Barry Allen and Lee Allen taking maximum points. For the losers, Duncan Dunne defeated Sandie Isaac 3-0 (14-12, 11-8, 11-5) whilst Rodney Betts scraped past the same player 3-2 (10-12, 11-8, 18-16, 9-11, 12-10). Dunne and Betts also shared a tight five-game (13-15, 11-6, 11-7, 5-11, 11-9) doubles success against Isaac and Barry Allen.

But the 'E' team will look back on the match as three points gained, especially as their relegation-rivals Nomads Jaguars failed to pick up a point as they slumped to a 10-0 defeat at the hands of Windsor Harriers. Isabel Barton and Jenny Higgins stayed unbeaten for the Harriers and shared a topsy-turvy 3-2 (11-4, 4-11, 13-15, 11-5, 11-4) doubles win against Andrew North and Kevin Hume.

These results mean Brotherhood E are now six points ahead of the Jaguars, having played two matches more.

Division Three leaders Nomads Pumas got back to winning ways with a predictable 9-1 victory over bottom-team Nomads Lynx. Eric Lemke and Andrew Cousins both took trebles and Lionel Goddard won two. But the match was not without its drama, with Cousins tested all the way before beating Paul Dale 11-9 in the fifth and Liam Harris 12-10 in the fifth. Dale defeated Goddard in four for the Lynx' consolation point.

Lynx also went down 9-1 to Windsor Penguins. Alan Charman and Jackie Bunce stayed unbeaten for the Penguins but Cameron Cini recorded a good win against Harry Barlow for the Lynx.

Three for Jason Lloyd, two for Ethan Lloyd and one for Roger McNaughton saw Nomads Leopards home 7-3 against Windsor Ospreys. Jason Lloyd won the battle of the big beasts, defeating Windsor's Woody Fitzpatrick 3-2 (11-5, 9-11, 9-11, 11-3, 11-5). Fitzpatrick with two and Debra Found with one were the Ospreys' points-scorers.

It was also 7-3 for Nomads Cougars against Windsor Kites. Mike Hillier won three, Zoe Strange two and Sue Lee one, with Hillier and Strange taking the only match that went the distance, 11-4 in the fifth in the doubles against Chris Simson and Jack Haylett. Simson took a couple for the Kites and Haylett one.

Windsor Swallows were 6-4 winners over a Nomads Ocelots side forced to field a guest player. Tom Collins stayed unbeaten for the losers although it was a close 3-2 (14-12, 8-11, 11-3, 7-11, 11-9) against Kayley Lamb. Dave Wright picked up the Ocelots' fourth point.

* In the outstanding quarter-final match of the **Handicap Knock-Out Cup** Nomads Lions defeated Walton B 5-3 in an all action-Division One clash.

The Lions raced into a 3-0 lead before Walton rallied to level the scores at 3-3. But the Lions edged the next two matches – which turned out to be the closest encounters of the tie – Matthew Horrocks (-5) beating John Rankin (+1) 3-2 (11-8, 11-9, 3-11, 8-11, 11-7) before Adam Wilkin (0) scraped past Paul Woolnough (0) also in five (11-7, 11-9, 9-11, 9-11, 14-12).

In the semi-final, the Lions will be away to Windsor Condors.

* The closing date (Saturday March 26) for entries for the League's 2016 Closed Championships is now less than

a week away. Entry can be made online to Peter White or by post to Tony Oswick. The Championships take place over the weekend of April 16 and 17 at the Coastal Academy Sports Hall.

* The Windsor Quiz Evening will be held on Saturday April 23 at St James' Hall, Clacton-on-Sea. The cost is £5 per person for teams of up to six people. For more details, contact Jenny Higgins on 01255 432397 or 07790 240566, or e-mail mahiggins@talktalk.net.

RESULTS

Division 1
Windsor Kestrels 6 Walton B 4
Nomads Lions 3 Windsor Condors 7
Walton C 3 Windsor Eagles 7

Division 2
Windsor Harriers 10 Nomads Jaguars 0
Windsor Buzzards 3 Nomads Tigers 7
Brotherhood F 7 Brotherhood E 3
Lawford 4 Windsor Owls 6

Division 3
Nomads Lynx 1 Windsor Penguins 9
Nomads Ocelots 4 Windsor Swallows 6
Nomads Pumas 9 Nomads Lynx 1
Windsor Ospreys 3 Nomads Leopards 7
Windsor Kites 3 Nomads Cougars 7

Handicap Knock-Out Cup (Round 4)
Nomads Lions 5 Walton B 3

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