



Clacton & District: Lions roar, Eagles soar

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This year's cup final will be an-all Division One affair between Nomads Lions and Windsor Eagles. In the semi-finals of the Clacton & District League's Handicap Knock-Out competition, the Lions put out the Windsor Condors whilst the Eagles defeated Nomads Jaguars.

The Lions started second-favourites against the Condors but a doughty performance from Adam Wilkin, Adam Cuthbert and Brian Parish saw them emerge narrow 5-2 winners in a tie where the final five matches were all settled in the fifth set.

After racing into a 2-0 lead, the Lions were pegged back by Martin Hogg (-6) who got the Condors on the scoresheet with a tense 3-2 (9-11, 9-11, 11-8, 14-12, 11-9) win over Brian Parish (+1). But the Lions bounced back to take the next two matches, Adam Wilkin (0) beating Elliott Attrill (0) 11-5 in the fifth and Adam Cuthbert and Brian Parish (+1) defeating Attrill and Greg Green (-3) 3-2 (11-13, 11-4, 9-11, 11-3, 13-11).

When Hogg (-3) saved four match points in a nerve-racking 3-2 (11-7, 11-6, 2-11, 6-11, 12-10) victory over Cuthbert (+1), the Condors began to dream of a miracle recovery. But alas, it was not to be, with Wilkin (+1), the only player to remain unbeaten on the night, settling the tie by defeating Green (-6) in five (11-6, 9-11, 9-11, 11-4, 11-4).

In the final, the Lions will meet Windsor Eagles, 5-3 victors over Nomads Jaguars. Mark Smith. Phil Smith and Sue Welham won a singles each but, crucially, the Eagles took both opening doubles – albeit that one of them was a narrow 3-2 (9-11, 8-11, 11-9, 11-6, 11-9) success for Welham and Mark Smith (-8) against Andrew North and Kevin Hume (+2).

The Jaguars, struggling at the foot of the Second Division, gave a gritty account of themselves, coming back from an early 2-0 deficit to level the scores at 3-3. But the Eagles then turned the screw, Phil Smith (-8) beating Andrew North (+1) 3-0 (11-5, 11-8, 13-11) and Welham (-8) defeating Kevin Hume (+2) 3-1 (11-5, 11-7, 8-11, 11-8) to secure the Eagles a place in this year's Knock-Out Cup final.

The final takes place on Tuesday April 26 at 7.30pm at the Brotherhood Hall, Clacton-on-Sea.

* With just three weeks remaining of the League programme, Windsor Hawks maintained their challenge for the **Division One** runners-up spot in with an 8-2 victory over Windsor Kestrels. Andy Vincent won three with John Barton and Ian Fielder, making a rare appearance for the Hawks, taking a couple each. Graham Bunce took the two points for the losers, beating Fielder 3-2 (11-13, 11-9, 11-8, 7-11, 11-6) and Barton also in five (11-9, 8-11, 10-12, 11-3, 11-7).

Walton C are one of four other teams still in with a chance of finishing second and they chalked up a 9-1 victory over Brotherhood D, Derek Willis and Paul Meikle undefeated. Willis' 11-9 in the decider win against fellow-defended Russell Hillier was their closest win but the closest match of the encounter was between Brotherhood's Paul Alden and Walton's Mark Gale, Alden edging it 3-2 (6-11, 11-9, 8-11, 11-8, 13-11).

But it was a bad week for Windsor Condors who, having been defeated in the Knock-Out Cup semi-final, saw their hopes of the runners-up spot founder when they could only muster two reserves and a guest for their match with Brotherhood C – who unsurprisingly ran out 9-1 winners. The Condors' point came from the ever-reliable bat of reserve Frank Burbidge who beat Kevin Pryor 3-1 (9-11, 11-9, 11-5, 11-9).

In **Division Two** second-placed Nomads Tigers survived a tough battle with Brotherhood I to emerge narrow 6-4 winners. Roger Hance stayed undefeated although it was a close 11-9 in the decider against Maurice Hardy, the same score by which Hance and Lott won the doubles against Hardy and Tom Wilkin. Daryl Lott won two for the Tigers but John Marshall failed to get on the scoresheet, going down 11-6 in the fifth to Mark Beckham and 11-9 in the fifth to Tom Wilkin. Hardy took Brotherhood's other two points.

Hat-tricks for Lee Allen and Barry Allen saw Brotherhood F to a 7-3 win over Nomads Bobcats, thus avenging an early-season 6-4 defeat. There was a point apiece for Nomads' Tony Robinson, Doug Green and Tony Beezer, Green getting his point with a 12-10 in the fifth win over Sandie Isaac.

Brotherhood H defeated Nomads Jaguars 6-4 in a tight match where six of the matches went the distance. Grant Sharpe took three and Graham Parkes two for Brotherhood and although their team-mate James Smith-Daye failed to pick up a point, he went close in all three singles, going down 11-7 in the fifth to Kevin Hume, 11-8 in the fifth to Caroline North and 12-10 in the fifth to Andrew North.

But Smith-Daye had the consolation of sharing a crucial doubles victory with Parkes, 11-7 in the fifth, against Hume and Andrew North. Hume's two points for the Jaguars included an excellent 11-8 in the decider win over Parkes.

Windsor Buzzards recorded their first win of 2016 with a 9-1 success over Windsor Magpies. There were hat-tricks for Ray Chillingworth, Pete Bloomfield and Alan Rutledge but Dave Sweetland and John Plummer prevented the whitewash with a fine 11-8 in the fifth doubles victory over Chillingworth and Rutledge. The closest singles match was also an 11-8 in the fifth result, with Bloomfield scraping past Plummer.

The Magpies' plight at the bottom of the table was not helped when they went down in their second match of the week, 7-3 to Windsor Harriers. Ferdy Rodriguez, returning to the Harriers' side after injury, recorded an excellent treble.

The all-Windsor mid-table contest in **Division Three** between the Penguins and the Ospreys ended all-square. Harry Barlow and Jackie Bunce won two each for the Penguins, who were forced to field a guest, but neither could get the better of Debra Found who won her two legitimate matches for the Ospreys. It was the Penguins first draw of the season.

Nomads Leopards beat Brotherhood G 6-4, in-form Jason Lloyd recording his seventh consecutive hat-trick. Ethan Lloyd won two but went down 11-6 in the decider to Rob Bright. Bright, with two, and Paul Metcalf and Graham Healey with one each, were the Brotherhood points-scorers.

Brian Friday and Andrew Cawley stayed unbeaten, and Jordan Webb won twice, as Nomads Wildcats overcame Nomads Cougars 9-1. Three of the matches went the distance, Friday beating Mike Hillier 11-6 in the fifth, Cawley beating the same player 11-5 in the fifth and Webb edging out Zoe Strange 11-7 in the fifth.

* A total of 70 players will be competing for honours in the League's 2016 Closed Championships, sponsored by

Paul Newbould Planning and Building Design Services, which take place on April 16 and 17 at the Clacton Coastal Academy Sports Hall. Because of the high number of entries, play will begin at 9.10am on both days. All entrants will receive details about their personal check-in times by Friday April 8. Any player who has not received details by this date should contact Peter White or Tony Oswick.

* The Windsor Club Quiz Evening will be held on Saturday April 23 at St James' Hall, Clacton-on-Sea, 7.30pm for 8pm. 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

Handicap Knock-Out Cup (semi-finals)

Windsor Condors 2 Nomads Lions 5

Nomads Jaguars 3 Windsor Eagles 5

League

Division 1

Brotherhood D 1 Walton C 9

Windsor Condors 1 Brotherhood C 9

Windsor Hawks 8 Windsor Kestrels 2

Division 2

Nomads Tigers 6 Brotherhood I 4

Windsor Buzzards 9 Windsor Magpies 1

Brotherhood H 6 Nomads Jaguars 4

Windsor Magpies 3 Windsor Harriers 7

Brotherhood F 7 Nomads Bobcats 3

Division 3

Nomads Cougars 1 Nomads Wildcats 9

Windsor Penguins 5 Windsor Ospreys 5

Nomads Leopards 6 Brotherhood G 4

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