



Leicestershire TTA: Rogers' Grade-A display

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Many years ago William (Bill) Bentley, a prominent businessman who was the owner of the Bentley Engineering Group, was a patron of all sports for his employees and included a good size playing fields as well as his many factories.

At that time he wanted a table tennis tournament to be included but knew that the difference in standard between the best and those near the bottom of the pile was quite large.

So I was fortunate to be the one he asked to formulate a handicapping system for his event. I realised that all handicapping systems need a very accurate grading set up as its foundation, with table tennis lending itself very well to what became, 55 years ago, the system still used in the Leicester League today, which is still going strong and used in all handicap and graded events.

There are two significant levels, one near the top, a mark of 300, above which few climb but which separates those a cut above the others as far as a local league is concerned. The other is 50 which is the very lowest, mathematically, anyone can fall to and even then only if losing every set for two whole seasons.

Top of the League gradings, albeit unofficial at this point, is Knighton Park's Chris Rogers who came back to join his sister, Karen Smith, the season before the one just finished after several years playing in the Nottingham League. He lost two sets this time in topping the official averages, well ahead of Abbots Road's Dave Gannon.

There is one player potentially above Rogers in England-ranked Lois Peake, who played six matches for Unicorn and emerged undefeated, but she did not play against any of the top four so her grading from such a sparse return could go either up or down quite quickly. Her current grading number would be 325 in comparison with Rogers' 321.

It should be noted that Rogers' son, Jack, finished at the top of the Division Two averages with a grading of 239, clearly following in the family footsteps.

Top 10 gradings (have played at least 60 percent of their team's matches):

321 Chris Rogers (Knighton Park) average: 96.3.

320 Jared Patel (Unicorn) 94.4 – enough carried over from last season.

309 Dave Gannon (Abbots Road) 92.7.

300 Trevor Kerry (Thringstone) 84.9.

290 Karen Smith (Knighton Park) 78.7.

288 Aidan Walsh (Ajax Wolvey) 76.3.

285 Maurice Newman (Thringstone) 73.2.

284 Richard Hayes (Desford) 72.9.

283 Jon Williams (Ajax Wolvey) 71.4.

278 Ian Brown (Arnesby) 68.8

In Division Three Alex Mason (Great Glen) finished at the top with a grading of 219 (average 96.5), Division Four saw Dan Pearson of Knighton Park on 189 (average 92.4) while Division Five had Lutterworth's Mike Eastell retaining his top placing on 164 and an average of 87.5, just ahead of emerging star, Dan Andrews of Winstanley Wizards.

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