



Braintree League: Netts and Nomads seal final spots

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Netts A, who surprisingly lost to their own B team last year, are through to this year's final of the Braintree Table Tennis League team knockout cup, while Nomads are through to their third successive restricted cup final.

Netts D, one of the lowest placed teams in the league, contest the handicap cup final.

Netts A got through 6-2 against Rayne D in a match of tight finishes.

Wins by Adam Buxton and Paul Lombardi over James Mullane, at 11-8 in the fifth game and 12-10 in the fifth respectively, kept Rayne in the match but wins of 12-10 in the fifth by Alistair Hill over Matthew Brown and then 11-9 in the fifth by Paul Davison over Buxton ended the evening.

Their opponents in the final will be Liberal B, whose win over second division champions Black Notley C came at 11-8 in the final game of the final set of the evening.

Two wins by Notley's Remy De Lynen, one from Gary Jackson plus a doubles win set up the climax in which De Lynen and Jackson faced Robin Armstrong and Frank Neill.

The Notley pair led by two games to one but their opponents kept their nerve to close out the set 11-7, 11-8.

Nomads had no difficulty coming through their restricted cup semi-final 9-0 against Felsted RBL B, and Rayne E had even less difficulty against Notley E, who got their wires crossed and failed to turn up.

Netts D, who finished in last place in the league last season and one higher this time, scored the win of the round when they came from 4-1 down to beat Felsted B 5-4 in the handicap cup.

Two wins for Arthur Geen and one each from Matthew Laws and Brendan Mason appeared to put Felsted in the driving seat, but Netts then got to work and polished off the remaining four sets.

Joe Belsom won his three singles for Netts.

In the final they face Notley D, who came past a two-person Sible Hedingham 5-3. Victories by Adam Clift and Peter Foster over Roy Hooper (with 10 start up to 21) were enough to take them through.

In the league division one, Adam Buxton celebrated his first ever win over Ian Whiteside in Rayne D's 8-2 defeat by their own A team. But he then lost to Steve Pennell, who he normally beats.

Fresh from his excellent win over Scott Dowsett, Notley A's Guy McKenzie added Alistair Hill to his victims. But he could not stop Netts A from winning 8-2.

Rayne's B, C and D teams had something of an identity crisis when the B team included players from the C and D teams in their match against the D team.

Paul Lombardi found himself playing against his erstwhile teammates and managed to embarrass Hector Rogers along the way, as did the C team's Richard Whiteside.

Buxton surprisingly lost in three straight games to Ryan Pitt, but Rogers came good in the end, beating Pitt in the final set of the evening to secure a draw.

Rayne D also had a 7-3 win over a two-person Netts B team for whom James Hicks won the three sets.

Sible Hedingham only had two players to face Liberal B. Two wins for Richard Jennings and one for Roy Hooper ensured that the Braintree side did not have it easy. But Robin Armstrong beat both of them to see his side to a 7-3 victory.

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