



Leicestershire TTA: Ladder Boys climb above Park

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Both semi-finals in the County Association's innovative handicap team competition for the Rose Johnson Challenge Bowl have been played and resulted in two absorbing matches.

Knighton Park III received 60 points over the 16 games of 21-up and had the worst of starts when they lost the first four.

For opponents, The Ladder Boys, Charlie Bateman beat Martin Pember 21-6 first up before Peter Wilson almost emulated at 21-7 against Alec Downes. Tim Cawston pipped Tracey Smith 21-19 and then the ideally suited to this format, Stu Jones, completed the picture 21-14 against Simon Aldis.

From 60 ahead, the Park were now only plus 22 which became 12 when Wilson defeated Pember 21-11. Park fought back and held off the Boys over the next few games with Aldis playing particularly well, eventually finishing with an excellent positive score of four. It was not until game 13 that the Boys went ahead and then held on to win 312-304.

For The Ladder boys Wilson finished at plus 34 while Jones was plus 27 and Bateman also finished with a positive return.

In the other match, Nomads received 76 against Abbots All Stars, the latter winning the first six games to be well ahead of the target at that point before their opponents began to win some of their own.

Ross Adams, the highest rated in the match, was Abbots' star, finishing with an impressive plus 44 score, while Fahed Sacoor and Steve Pratt supported at +13 and +12 respectively.

Andy Searle and Cliff Smith, Division Three team-mates in the league, excelled for Nomads when they both finished with positive scores, albeit small margins, but enough to make an impact.

The finish was tense when Adams beat Searle 21-11 to bring Abbots to within 11 with one game remaining when Smith faced Sacoor, both with Personal Handicap Numbers of 35. Smith proved too canny and won 21-11 to steer his team home with a 322-301 scoreline.

Thringstone's Maurice Newman has made a habit of winning the Vetts National Over-60 title, taking the title this season for the fourth time in six years when he defeated Brian Hill of Lincolnshire in the final. Having lost the first two games easily, Newman dug in to take the next three, securing the match at 11-9 in the fifth.

Newman had struggled in the early rounds but tenaciously pulled through and included an 11-9 victory in the fifth game against Berkshire's Chris Pickard in the quarter-finals.

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