



Braintree League: Liberal sink leaders

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Defeats for the previously unbeaten leaders of both divisions two and three have opened up the promotion race in the Braintree Table Tennis League.

Black Notley C had won all six matches in division two when they travelled to second-placed Liberal C. But they encountered Gareth Davies and Garry Fryatt on top form. Unblemished evenings for both of them, including the doubles, and a 7-3 win brought them level with their opponents at the top of the tree.

But they were not alone. At the same time, Rayne E beat Felsted RBL A 9-1 to join them on 43 points from six matches. Three sets each for Dave Miller and Paul Wellington led to Felsted's first defeat of the season.

Rayne G held on to fourth place after drawing with Notley D, where Adam Purslow's three sets were vital.

Nomads tend not to lose when Ken Lewis is in action and so it proved against Rayne F. But Lorraine Burgess and Barrie Applegate also chimed in with two sets each to give them an 8-2 victory.

At the other end, Rayne D picked up only their second win of the season when their two-man team overcame Felsted B 6-4.

In division three the big tumble was by Notley E, who went into their match with Rayne H with 52 points out of a possible 60. They were handicapped by the absence of the unbeaten Jamie Brooks but will not have expected to go down 8-2. Tim Gowers hit top form to join Brian How in the three-sets enclosure.

The juniors of Netts C remain on the coattails of the leaders but they were held to a draw by Notley I. Joe Belsom became only the second person to beat Liam Ebbs this season.

Netts' D team picked up their second win of the season, 6-4 against Notley G. Derek Kennard took his anticipated three sets, but it was a good evening too for Peter Lewis, whose two wins doubled his total for the season.

In division one, Rayne A's brief sojourn in second place came to an abrupt end after they faced leaders Liberal A. Steve Pennell and Ryan Pitt both got the better of Scott Dowsett but unbeaten evenings from Brandon Crouchman and Simon Webber produced an 8-2 win.

Netts B remain above their A team – although the latter have a match in hand – after their 9-1 win over a two-man Rayne C. It was an evening of note for Brian Riedling though. Wins over Andy Holmes are not easy to come by.

Netts A beat Notley A 8-2.

After a tough opening set of fixtures, Liberal B have at last recorded their first win, a comfortable 9-1 against Notley B. Mike Johnston and Adrian Pitt were unbeaten.

The two Notley teams now occupy the bottom two places after Sible Hedingham picked up four points from Rayne B. Richard Jennings and Mark Brown took two each.

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