



Braintree League: Rayne on the rise

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In many ways, Rayne G have been the surprise package of this season's Braintree Table Tennis League.

With two-thirds of the team that finished rock bottom of division two in 2015 and second from bottom last year, they have risen to the unexpected heights of fourth place this time.

Adam Purslow and Steve Willis have been joined by Keith Flowers, moving over from Black Notley D, and have clearly benefited from each other's presence as all have higher win percentages than last season: Flowers up from 45 to 71, Purslow from 49 to 67 and Willis from 17 to 43.

In their most recent match they gained arguably their most impressive result to date at joint leaders Black Notley C.

Against a team including Gordon Fairchild and Dave Parker, both beaten only four times up to that point, Purslow and Flowers remained undefeated in a crushing 8-2 win that took them to within six points of the top spot.

Notley fell back to third place after that defeat after the other two teams sharing first place, Liberal C and Rayne E, drew with each other.

Flowers was called into action as a reserve in this one and did his bit by winning twice, including an outstanding win over the previously unbeaten Jon Fieldsend. Dave Punt for Rayne and Fieldsend and Garry Fryatt for Liberal also won twice.

Elsewhere in division two there were 8-2 wins for Nomads over Notley D and Rayne F over Felsted RBL B, where Dave Moles and Ted Sims remained unbeaten.

Rayne D went one better with a 9-1 win over Felsted A that lifted them up one place to eighth. Nick Hasler and Richard Whiteside were unbeaten.

In division one, leaders Liberal A were forced to call in two reserves against Notley A but the step-up proved no problem for Gareth Davies, who won his three singles in the 7-3 win.

Netts' A and B teams are now level on points in second place after the A team's 9-1 win over a two-man Rayne C and a 7-3 win for the B team, who themselves only had two players, against Liberal B.

Rayne A lost only the doubles against Sible Hedingham while Rayne B were 8-2 winners against Notley B. Adam Buxton and Hector Rogers were unbeaten.

Division three leaders Rayne H took all 10 from Notley G to open up a 12-point lead, although Notley E, who did not play, have two matches in hand.

Liam Ebbs, beaten only twice so far, found Derek Kennard as impossible to overcome as everyone else has in Notley I's 7-3 win over Netts D but took his three singles playing up for the H team in their draw with Notley F.

Netts C moved a point closer after their 8-2 win over Rayne I, where Max Plumridge was the only one to beat Tim Townsend.

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