



Braintree League: Dowsett and Webber lift Liberal

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The fact that league leaders Liberal A beat Netts A 6-4 may not appear to be the surprise of the week but it needs to be put in context.

Netts' team included a previously unbeaten Paul Davison; Liberal had only two players; and neither of them was Brandon Crouchman or Peter Hayden.

Up to the mark stepped Scott Dowsett and Simon Webber. Webber, beaten only once in 21 sets – by Victor Chan – missed out to Davison, but overcame both Alistair Hill and James Mullane.

It was Dowsett, though, who hit the heights. He has had a mixed season so far with a series of surprising defeats giving him only eight wins out of 15.

But he had shown what he is capable of with a quarter-final win over Paul Davison in last season's individual championships, and he repeated the dose here.

He had a typical lapse of concentration in the second game, but then came through comfortably 3-1 (11-4, 2-11, 11-6, 11-5).

Dowsett and Webber combined to take the doubles at 11-3 in the final game to ensure that Liberal have now beaten all nine teams in the first division.

The defeat leaves Netts a point behind their B team and two points behind Rayne A, both of whom have played one more match.

Rayne beat Black Notley B 9-1 – Andrew Pagett's win over Jon Hill the one that got away – while Netts B were held to a draw by Rayne B where Maria Boulton unusually outscored team-mates James Hicks and Andy Holmes. All three lost to Adam Buxton but Boulton was the only one to beat Hector Rogers.

At the wrong end of the table Sible Hedingham scored a vital 6-4 win over Notley A to lift themselves once more above both Notley teams.

Roy Hooper and Richard Jennings both lost to Zach Harrington and Chris Parr, but Mark Brown, whose record has been inferior to his team-mates' this season, won all three.

After struggling for much of the season, Rayne C at last gave themselves a bit of space above the relegation scrap with a surprisingly hefty 8-2 win over Liberal B.

In a match where five sets went the full five games, Keith Martin lost to Adrian Pitt and Dean Andrews missed out against Mike Johnston, but Peter Hance won all three.

In division two, joint leaders Liberal C were without a match, which allowed Rayne E to open up an eight-point gap with an 8-2 win over Rayne D. Nick Hasler won twice for the D team but could not get the better of Dave Punt.

Notley C reclaimed second place with a tightly fought 6-4 win over Nomads. Gordon Fairchild won his three singles for Notley, all of them at 11-7 in the fourth game.

Rayne F's match at Felsted A featured one of the closest sets of the season. Alastair Brown, who has found some of his old form this season, beat Richard Upson 3-2 (14-12, 15-13, 8-11, 12-14, 12-10).

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