



Braintree League: Bennett-Smith stars on debut

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Nomads have for some time been a team of two halves. With three players in the top half of division two of the Braintree Table Tennis League and three in the bottom, it is pot luck who their opponents come up against.

Now they have added a seventh player and judging by his first appearance, Lloyd Bennett-Smith is going to trouble most people in the division.

He became the first person this season to beat Gareth Davies and remained unbeaten on his debut.

It was Liberal C's misfortune to come up against Nomads' strongest team of the season. In addition to Bennett-Smith's hat-trick, two wins each from Kevin Saunders and Richard Kemp put further dents in their promotion hopes in a 7-3 win.

Leaders Rayne E took full advantage with a 9-1 win over Rayne G.

Black Notley C kept in touch with an 8-2 win over Felsted RBL B but would not have expected those two defeats in their debit column. David Swash and Dean Wood can be more than satisfied with their wins over Gordon Fairchild and Dave Parker respectively.

Unbeaten evenings by Matthew Laws and Richard Upson helped Felsted A to a 6-4 win over Notley D while Dave Moles' three wins helped Rayne F draw with their own D team.

In **Division Three**, Rayne H stretched their lead over Notley E to nine points with wins of 6-4 over Netts D and 8-2 against Notley I.

Notley E on the other hand followed a 7-3 win over Notley H by losing 6-4 to Netts C, who are now only three points behind them.

But Jamie Brooks retained his supremacy over his fellow juniors by dispatching all three of them, Joe Belsom and Max Plumridge in four games and Kierlan Richards in three.

Netts C also beat Notley F 7-3, all three players losing to Leon Hewitt.

Before their defeat by Rayne H, Notley I had beaten Rayne's I team 8-2.

Notley H's 8-2 win over their own G team was notable for two milestones, the first wins in the league for new signing Melvyn Cooch and the first hat-trick for Takunda Nerutanga, also in his first season in the league.

Notley G also lost by the same score to Rayne J, who went on to beat Netts D 6-4. Ian Rubens and Chris High were undefeated in the first match and Barry Mouser in the second.

Rayne H were involved in one of those logic-defying sequences against Notley F in which Tim Townsend beat Hewitt but lost to Mike Smith, whereas Brian Dixon did it the other way round. Rayne won the match 6-4.

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