



## Leicester League: Hundreds of youngsters show skills

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Able to be organised by Mike Smith and his team of helpers, the **Leicestershire Schools Team Finals** had an entry of 54 teams of four, 33 boys and 21 girls' teams all vying for a place in the next stages of this national event which is at Grantham in January. The matches were played at Judgemoor College and Knighton Park TTC.

The teams were all champions of the 10 local districts and it is estimated that numbers approaching 700 played altogether, a positive indication of the recent upsurge in young people taking up the sport. All eight champions go on to the next stage with two or three "wildcards" awaiting any withdrawals.

**Results:**

Boys U11: Burbage beat Manor.

Boys U13: Manor beat Leicester Grammar School.

Boys U16: Hastings beat Kibworth.

Boys U19: Bosworth beat Ashby.

Girls U11: St Peters COE beat Bottesford.

Girls U13: Market Bosworth beat Kibworth.

Girls U16: Kibworth beat Manor.

Girls U19: Bosworth.

\* Leading in Division One of the Leicester and District League, Unicorn are trying for the double by also making a very strong attempt at the top of **Division Two** with their second string, having opened up a significant gap above the chasing Knighton Park fourth team with the rest, at the moment, nowhere.

Unicorn's latest success in the second division came against the surely doomed Great Glen who reside firmly at the bottom, although the latter did manage to take the first and last sets. Alex Mason beat Ben Stone first set of the match and helped Glen to a doubles win right at the end for Unicorn to win 8-2. New signing, Joe Kirkup, won

three for Unicorn, as did John Genovese all in three, while Stone notched his other two.

The young Knighton Park fourth team could get to within one victory behind Unicorn should they win their match in hand against Electricity III. KP's latest win came at the expense of Regent Sports when Rayan Kotecha scored a terrific maximum, including beating Martin Bolton 11-9 in the fifth, the latter gaining two for Regent. Supporting Kotecha were Adnan Ebrahim with two while Oscar White won one.

The middle section of this table is very bunched while at the bottom Nomads and Knighton Park III are vying not to join Great Glen in the drop.

Nomads did their cause no end of good with a 5-5 draw against Syston Casuals when Cliff Smith scored a very good full house, supported by one each from Andy Searle and Zaheer Mohamed.

Meanwhile Knighton Park III continue to struggle, losing 9-1 to Desford Village who had both Jessica Birbeck and Neil Matthams in tremendous form and undefeated, while Matt Briggs won two, losing only to Peter Wilson.

Charlie Bateman won the fourth session of the Leicester daytime **Ladder League**, gaining enough points to move alongside Andy Searle whom he beat 2-1 along the way. They have a seven point lead and the battle for the title should be an interesting one in the new year.

[Click here](#) to view latest standings.

\* We are sad to announce the passing of Tony Odams, husband of Knighton Park's new President, Glenys.

Tony was in the thick of things in the 1950's when table tennis was so buoyant and he not only played representative table tennis for Leicester he was also a top notch administrator who held positions such as the League's Secretary and the County Association's Treasurer.

Unfortunately for table tennis he soon moved into the world of bridge and became one of the best players in Leicestershire, holding the title of Grand Master. With his wife still a major part of table tennis he continued to hold a keen interest in the sport throughout his life.

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