



Leicester & District: Genovese on top form

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There have been a number of very good individual performances this week in the Leicester & District League, not least of all John Genovese of Unicorn II in Division Two who maintained his place at the top of the individual averages with a very good maximum against one of the teams vying for the other promotion spot, Electricity III, in a 7-3 victory which virtually ensures top spot for Unicorn.

Genovese included a splendid success over his rival for the individual top position, Adam Pettitt, who won his other two for the Sparks, while Joe Kirkup also won two and Jianglong Guo one for the students. Sam Radenhurst took the other singles for Sparks.

This leaves second place position once again in the balance as Knighton Park IV put their previous week's hiccup behind them when defeating Desford Village 7-3 with Rayan Kotecha another player claiming a fine unbeaten return while Patrick Cox, playing up, won two and Oscar White one for KP to go ahead of Electricity who have a match in hand. Matt Briggs took two for Desford.

Lucky Obi was playing in Division Four four years ago and then took some time out of the sport, coming back this year in Division Two with a bang, his latest of a long line of maximums coming against Nomads when Knighton Park V won 6-4, John Underwood offering very useful support with two. Andy Searle secured two for Nomads. Obi and Underwood cemented full points with the doubles.

While top teams continued winning in Division One – for instance, Unicorn overcame Holwell Sports 7-3 while the Knighton Park's first string beat Abbots Road, who were again without Dave Gannon, 9-1 – the teams vying for third spot fought out a thrilling 5-5 stalemate.

In this match came my Performance of the Week nomination when Andy LeButt took a brilliant maximum against Ajax Wolvey. LeButt is graded 253 and defeated John Fuller (284), Aidan Walsh (272) and Jon Williams (264) for a terrific return, backed by two good victories from David Grundy.

Walsh won two, the other two one each, and Ajax were forced to play a rare doubles to secure the share of

points, Williams and Walsh winning 12-10 in the fifth.

After looking in complete command at the top of Division Four since well before the new year, Winstanley Wizards came a cropper against a relatively lowly Electricity V who were just that bit stronger in depth with Dan Woolman and Dave Bray gaining two apiece while Dave Silvester won the all-important fifth singles before the first two squeezed home 13-11 in the doubles for a fine 6-4 result. Dan Andrews and Himansu Mishra both won two for the Wizards.

The Wizards still look well ahead in the chart but the next two teams both have two matches in hand and could just reach the leaders having both notched up 9-1 victories this week.

Eddie Kwok defeated John Dewsbury in the first set of the night but that was all Knighton Park IX could muster as Rob Price and Allan Clarke both emerged undefeated for Regent Sports II while Dewsbury won both his other two. Closest to another Park success came when Robbie Bowsher went down 17-15 in the fifth to Price.

Meanwhile, the Park's 10th team were also maintaining their challenge at 9-1 against Wigston Conservatives who will miss Ian Lockington, not playing for the rest of the season due to a minor operation. For the Park Brajesh Patel and Zia Malik both won three, Vishaal Sharda two, with Pete Garford taking the one for Wigston and only just lost a humdinger against Malik 3-2 (15-13, 8-11, 8-11, 13-11 18-16).

It will be the clash of the titans this week when the top two in Division Five, Unicorn III and Goons II, face each other, with the winner claiming bragging rights at the top of the chart. Both prepared with different sorts of victories.

Goons thrashed Abbots Road IV, no mugs themselves, 10-0 with Kevin Edwards, Steve Harrison and Scott Robinson all in absolute tip top form. Meanwhile Unicorn were just getting home 6-4 against Blaby and Whetstone III thanks to another great maximum from Guan Zhang. The coming result might well resolve around the latter and whether anyone can find a way to beat him.

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