



Clacton & District: Cream rises to top in cup

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The prospect of a cup final between the League's top teams, Nomads Panthers and Windsor Condors, remains a mouth-watering end-of-season possibility after this week's semi-final draw kept the League's two big guns apart.

But first the Condors will have to negotiate a way past Nomads Lions, not an easy task, in a repeat of last season's semi-final which they lost 5-2.

The Panthers, league champions for the last four seasons, have surprisingly never gone past round three in that time – having won only two cup matches – but they have, on paper, an easier task against the only non-top-flight side left in the competition, Brotherhood D.

In this week's **round four** matches, the Condors dropped their first points in the competition this year but still ran out 5-2 winners against Second Division Windsor Harriers. Isabel Barton of the Harriers (+1) beat Annabelle Rodriguez (-5) in four sets, and Ferdy Rodriguez and Jenny Higgins (+1) edged out Rodriguez and Colin Stallwood (-8) 11-3, 8-11, 11-3, 7-11, 11-7 in the middle-doubles to reduce the deficit to 3-2. But the Condors took the next two matches, Greg Green (-8) sealing the win and their semi-final place with a 3-2 (11-13, 11-9, 11-9, 0-11, 11-8) victory against Ferdy Rodriguez (+2).

It was also Division One against Division Two in the all-Nomads clash between the Panthers and the Jaguars – and it began badly for the Panthers, Kevin Hume and Allen Denyer (+2) taking the opening doubles 3-1 (7-11, 11-1, 11-7, 11-0) for the underdogs against James Denyer and John Hatley (-13). But thereafter the Panthers took control and ran out 5-1 winners – although it was no walk in the park, with seven of the remaining 19 sets played going to deuce. Match four witnessed another encounter in which the two Denyers faced each other on opposite sides of the table but this time son James (-13) showed no mercy to dad Allen (+2), winning 3-1 (7-11, 11-6, 11-8, 11-7).

Nomads Lions ended the hopes of the last remaining Division Three side in the competition. Paul Hume, Adam Wilkin and Roger Hance proved too good for the battling Nomads Lynx, taking it 5-0 despite having to overcome

some of the largest handicap gaps seen this season in the Cup competition. Paul Hume (-17) beat Liam Harris (+2) in four sets as did Adam Wilkin (-17) against Cameron Cini (+2).

So Brotherhood D of Division Two are now the sole survivors outside of the top-flight to make it through to the last four. They enjoyed a surprisingly-easy 5-0 success against a Windsor Hawks side which included an injury-hit John Barton and out-of-form Elliott Attrill. The only match which went the distance was Russell Hillier's (+1) 3-2 (9-11, 12-10, 11-2, 7-11, 12-10) win against Andy Vincent (-5).

The semi-finals are to be played by 15th April with the final taking place on Tuesday 2nd May at the Brotherhood Hall.

* In **Division One** of the League, Windsor Eagles defeated Windsor Owls 8-2. Phil Smith and Sue Welham remained unbeaten, Welham having to pull out all the stops before beating Mark Salter 11-8 in the fifth. Salter and Frank Burbidge took the Owls' points.

Nomads Bobcats and Windsor Buzzards enjoyed a good scrap in **Division Two** before the Bobcats took it 7-3. There were the now-customary trebles for Jason Lloyd and Ethan Lloyd, although it was a close 11-7 in the decider for Lloyd junior against Ray Chillingworth. Andrew Cawley got the Bobcats' seventh point with a tight 11-9 in the fifth success against Dan Malinowski. Chillingworth and Pete Bloomfield took a singles apiece for the Buzzards whilst, in the closest match of the evening, Bloomfield and Malinowski took a fine doubles 3-2 (4-11, 12-10, 4-11, 12-10, 17-15) against the two Lloyds.

Three each for Barry Allen and Lawrence Torr were the basis of Brotherhood F's 8-2 victory over Brotherhood E, a win that keeps their promotion prospects alive. Duncan Dunne and Rodney Betts both enjoyed unexpected success for the 'E' team against Sandie Isaac, Betts taking it by the narrowest of margins, 12-10 in the fifth.

Walton D continued their inexorable march towards the **Division Three** title with a 9-1 victory over Windsor Kites, Jared Chelski and Daniel Young unbeaten. Jack Haylett took the Kites' point with a win against Jane Young.

The Kites also had the misfortune to meet second-placed Nomads Wildcats, an encounter that ended up in a 10-0 victory for the Wildcats' top trio of Doug Green, Mike Hillier and Mike Wellum.

It was also 10-0 for Nomads Caracals against Nomads Ocelots, the Caracals moving into fourth place and showing what-might've-been had they been able to turn out full-strength teams from the start of the season.

There's not much to choose between Windsor Penguins and Windsor Swallows, with only four points separating the two teams before their match this week. And the Penguins it was who edged the match 6-4, Debra Found and Alan Charman each winning two and Jackie Bunce one. But none of the Penguins' players could get the better of Angela Barratt who took a maximum for the losers. Paul Dale got the Swallows' fourth point in the only match which went the distance, 3-2 (6-11, 7-11, 12-10, 12-10, 11-8) against Bunce.

* Entry forms and details about the League's Closed Championships have been sent to all League players. The Tournament takes place on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd April 2017 at the Coastal Academy Sports Hall. The closing date for entries is Saturday 1st April. To qualify players must have played at least seven League matches by 31st March. Entries can be made on-line to Peter White or sent by post to Tony Oswick.

RESULTS

Knock-Out Cup: Round 4

Windsor Condors 5 Windsor Harriers 2
Nomads Panthers 5 Nomads Jaguars 1
Windsor Hawks 0 Brotherhood D 5
Nomads Lions 5 Nomads Lynx 0

League

Division 1

Windsor Owls 2 Windsor Eagles 8

Division 2

Windsor Buzzards 3 Nomads Bobcats 7
Brotherhood E 2 Brotherhood F 8

Division 3

Nomads Wildcats 10 Windsor Kites 0
Walton D 9 Windsor Kites 1
Nomads Caracals 10 Nomads Ocelots 0
Windsor Swallows 4 Windsor Penguins 6

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