



Chelmsford & District: Writtle edge a real thriller

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Writtle Excalibur A have battled their way through to the Division Two Knockout Cup final in the Chelmsford & District Table Tennis League after beating Galleywood A 5-4 in a thrilling semi-final.

Galleywood led 4-2 and must have thought they were home and dry but Writtle weren't finished. Ryan Pitt made the score 3-4 by beating Bryn Thomas 3-1 (11-6, 11-7, 4-11, 11-6) and then in a really hotly contested battle of the No 1s, Lee McHugh pipped James Hicks 3-2 (11-7, 13-15, 12-14, 11-7, 12-10). All to play for in the deciding doubles and McHugh and Richard Storey came through in four ends against Gary Brignall and Thomas 3-1 (11-8, 11-5, 8-11, 11-9).

Writtle Excalibur will play Chelmsford in the final after they beat Hatfield Peverel A 5-1 in their semi-final. The big game here was the second one and Julie Johnson excelled by beating Gary Ward 3-2 (5-11, 19-17, 12-10, 10-12, 14-12). An outstanding win for Julie and her team-mates Alistair Piper and Mike Johnston were clearly inspired by it. Chelmsford ran out 5-1 winners with Julie defeating John Gagg 3-0 in impressive style (11-6, 11-5, 11-3) to seal the victory.

Hatfield Peverel A will play Danbury A in the Division Three Knockout Cup final. Hatfield Peverel (Neil Freeman, Dave Fiddeman and Gareth Davies) beat OCs A 5-2. Tom Barker beat Gareth Davies 6-11, 9-11, 11-8, 11-8, 15-13 to keep the tie alive but Dave Fiddeman settled matters with a decisive 3-0 (11-3, 11-4, 11-7) victory over Mick Hayes.

Danbury A's match against Maldon B was much closer and Danbury sealed it 5-4 with a final doubles win for David Gatherall and Ken Sheard against Colin Napper and Jan Fuller (11-6, 11-9, 11-2). Maldon's Ciaran Whelan was the top player on the night beating Tim Pulham 11-4, 11-9, 11-6 and David Gatherall 11-9, 11-6, 11-6.

The Division Five Knockout Cup final will be fought out by Writtle Excalibur B and OCs B. Writtle Excalibur B beat Buttsbury 5-1 but the final scoreline fails to show just how close the actual games were. Buttsbury's Nathan Fry scored an outstanding 3-2 (5-11, 7-11, 11-9, 11-7, 11-9) win over Ian Hockley whilst Buttsbury came very close to picking up another game on four separate occasions.

Andy Fox beat Toby Kelly in five (11-8, 11-13, 3-11, 11-4, 11-8) whilst David Meah had to pull out all the stops to get the better of Tom Picton also in five (9-11, 5-11, 11-3, 11-4, 12-10).

Hockley and Fox were also stretched to the maximum in the doubles before they triumphed 11-9, 10-12, 11-7, 9-11, 13-11 and Meah finally sealed the Writtle victory with a 3-2 (10-12, 11-9, 13-11, 7-11, 11-7) win over Fry. One of the hardest fought 5-1 matches on record.

OCs B (Tanishq Kotwal, David Bishop and James Mitty) ran out 5-1 winners over Writtle Excalibur A. The big talking point here was the great performance from newcomer James Mitty who was called up late after just making one appearance in the CLICK League. His comparative lack of experience didn't count against him and he beat Keith Pallett 3-2 (5-11, 11-9, 7-11, 11-8, 11-9).

Buttsbury B won a thrilling Junior Knockout Cup semi-final 5-4 against OCs A and they will play Buttsbury A in the Final. One of the crucial games here was a vital 3-2 (11-7, 5-11, 11-4, 6-11, 11-5) win for Toby Kelly over Lawrence Bartlett. With Tanishq Kotwal winning both of his singles it all came down to the deciding doubles and James Hughes and Toby Kelly prevailed. They beat Lawrence Bartlett and Harry Rogers 3-0 (12-10, 11-8, 11-9) to book their place in the final.

Division one leaders Maldon A played Danbury B twice in a couple of days and they added 18 points to their tally. Alex Abbott, Trevor Lloyd and John Poysden won the first match 10-0 and Colin Stallwood (the recent Men's Singles runner-up to Rik James in the Colchester Closed Championships) replaced Poysden for the second encounter which Maldon won 8-2. David Richardson excelled here and he scored an outstanding 3-1 (11-6, 9-11, 13-11, 11-6) win over Alex Abbott. Richardson's encounter with Stallwood was also a really close one with Stallwood eventually coming out on top 3-2 (8-11, 11-7, 7-11, 12-10, 11-9).

Rawreth B have taken charge in division two and they raced to an 8-2 win over Writtle Excalibur A. Kim Shead and Paul Churn were both undefeated with Churn fighting back from 2-0 down to get the better of Lee McHugh 3-2 (9-11, 7-11, 11-8, 13-11, 11-7).

Galleywood A ran out 7-3 winners over Writtle Excalibur B. All three Excalibur players won twice and the big story here was the superb form of Lin Roff. She beat Gary Brignall 3-2 (8-11, 6-11, 11-8, 11-8, 11-6) and then most impressively James Hicks in five (9-11, 13-11, 11-9, 9-11, 13-11). However she wasn't able to complete her hat-trick and she lost 3-0 (8-11, 6-11, 6-11) to Bryn Thomas.

Danbury D stay third after beating Hatfield Peverel A 7-3 and Writtle Excalibur B 6-4. Chris Buer led the way with a hat-trick of wins against Hatfield Peverel and this include a widely fluctuating victory over Gary Ward – Hatfield Peverel's best player – 3-2 (8-11, 11-4, 5-11, 11-8, 11-2). Buer was also the best player on view in the match against the Writtle team with a second hat-trick. Tim Cramphorn beat Lin Roff 3-2 (4-11, 7-11, 11-7, 11-7, 15-13) in the closest match of the night.

Liberal B beat OCs C 7-3. Andy Huckson was unbeaten for Liberal whilst OCs' Peter Windley secured a fine 3-1 (14-12, 12-10, 8-11, 17-15) victory over Adrian Pitt.

Anglia Ruslin University shared the points against OCs G in division five. Their leading player Pewist Osman led the way and retained his 100 % singles record.

In the CLICK League there were wins for Buttsbury A, Galleywood C and Buttsbury C. Buttsbury A (James Green and Harry Hutt) defeated Buttsbury B 5-0. James Green was hard pushed to beat Chris Stephens and he finally edged home 3-2 (4-11, 14-12, 11-5, 9-11, 12-10).

Galleywood C (Rio Teplizki and Lewis Wilson) were 4-1 winners over Chelmsford J. Calum Day was on target for the losers and he beat Lewis Wilson in five (11-7, 10-12, 10-12, 11-8, 11-4).

Buttsbury C (Toby Kelley and Daniel Slaney) ran out 4-1 winners over BNCA B. Daniel Slaney picked up the loser's success with a 3-1 (9-11, 12-10, 11-7, 12-10) victory over Nicholas Grice.

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