



Clacton & District: All to play for at top and bottom

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With just two weeks of the Clacton & District League season remaining, the issues at the top and bottom of all three Divisions are becoming clearer.

In **Division One** Nomads Panthers are closing in on yet another title. This week their side of Sam Hume, James Denyer and Colin Webber enjoyed one of their easiest wins of the season, breezing past a Windsor Hawks' team which fielded two reserve players. Only one of the matches was extended to a fourth set. The 10-0 win means they need just three points from their final two matches – against struggling Lawford and second-placed Condors – and then they can let the champagne flow to celebrate a fifth consecutive title success.

In the all-Windsor clash of second and third-placed sides, the Condors came out on top 7-3 against the Eagles. Greg Green and Colin Stallwood stayed undefeated, Green having 11-6 in the fifth victories over both Gary Cattermole and John Pattrick. Felipe Rodriguez of the Condors lost out to both Pattrick and Phil Smith but had a fine 11-7 in the decider win against Cattermole. However, the Eagles had the satisfaction of inflicting only a second doubles defeat of the season on the Condors, Cattermole and Smith beating reigning Clacton champions, Green and Stallwood, 3-2 (11-4, 11-6, 10-12, 4-11, 11-5).

The result means the Eagles cannot catch the Condors who, unless the Panthers implode spectacularly, must now settle for the runners-up spot.

The battle of the Walton 'A' and 'B' teams ended with honours even. Gavin Price took all three for Walton A whilst Paul Meikle and Jason Gale took a couple each for Walton B in what was their first drawn match of the season.

There was a reserve on each side of the table as Nomads Lions defeated Windsor Kestrels 6-4. Paul Hume with three and Roger Hance with two, plus a doubles win, took the points for the Lions. John Harvey's two for the Kestrels included an 11-7 in the fifth win over Hance, whilst there was a point apiece for Windsor reserve Ray Chillingworth and former Kestrels' skipper Dave Martin.

Kevin Gowlett and Alan Burgess each took a maximum as Brotherhood C beat Lawford 7-3 for a second time this season. Paul Hewitt, Ian Sherwood and John Colvin each secured a win for Lawford, the three points lifting them off the foot of the table, one point ahead of Windsor Owls.

The Owls battled hard against Brotherhood B but failed to get on the score-sheet, Martin Edwards, John Cleasby and John Owen all undefeated in the 10-0 Brotherhood victory. The closest match of the night was Edwards' 3-2 (10-12, 11-5, 11-6, 9-11, 11-6) win over Mark Salter.

The result confirms what has been inevitable for a long time – that the Owls cannot now finish outside the bottom two – whilst Lawford would need an unprecedented 19 points from their last two matches to avoid the same fate.

In **Division Two** Brotherhood H are edging ever-nearer the title, taking all 10 points in their encounter with Windsor Harriers. Grant Sharpe, Stewart Murray and Graham Parkes all recorded trebles although Parkes struggled to beat Ferdy Rodriguez 11-7 in the fifth and Jenny Higgins 11-8 in the fifth.

But Brotherhood D are making sure the title race goes down to the wire, matching their rivals with a 10-0 victory of their own over bottom-team Nomads Pumas. The only match which went the distance was the doubles, Paul Alden and Russell Hillier defeating Eric Lemke and John Bowers 11-6 in the fifth.

Windsor Magpies also suffered a 10-0 reverse, this at the hands of Nomads Bobcats. Again, only one match went to five, Andrew Cawley beating Dave Sweetland 11-4 in the decider.

These latest defeats for the Pumas and Magpies merely delays the inevitability that both teams are destined to finish in the bottom two places.

Elsewhere in Division Two, Lee Allen was Brotherhood' F's unbeaten star in his team's 8-2 success over Walton C, with Lawrence Torr and Barry Allen taking two each for the winners. Rivhu Khan had a good win in four over Torr whilst John Bonner will feel pleased with his 11-7 in the decider victory over Barry Allen.

Three for John Marshall, two for Daryl Lott and one for John Hockley, plus an 11-9 in the fifth doubles win for Marshall and Lott over Ray Chillingworth and Alan Rutledge, saw Nomads Tigers home 7-3 against Windsor Buzzards. Pete Bloomfield won a couple for the losers and Chillingworth one.

A two-player Brotherhood I immediately conceded three points to Nomads Jaguars but hat-tricks from Scott Campbell and Woody Fitzpatrick gave them a 6-4 win. But the score-line might easily have been reversed, Campbell only just beating Kevin Hume 11-8 in the decider and Fitzpatrick edging past Andrew North 11-9 in the fifth. North and Allen Denyer enjoyed an unexpected doubles victory over Campbell and Fitzpatrick.

In **Division Three** Nomads Wildcats, already assured of second place, became the first team to complete their programme for the season, ending with an 8-2 win over Brotherhood J. Doug Green and Mike Wellum recorded predictable hat-tricks whilst Harley Wood and Gary Ayton picked up a win each for Brotherhood.

The result brings the Wildcats level on 179 points with Walton D but the Walton side have two games to play – and even if, by the remotest of chances, they lost both 10-0, Walton would still be champions by virtue of having twice beaten the Wildcats this season.

Vic Little made a rare, but welcome, appearance for Nomads Caracals and remained unbeaten as the Nomads' side beat Windsor Ospreys 8-2. There was a hat-trick also for Chris Jones. Maci Harvey and Jordan Webb took a point each for the losers, Webb involved in the closest match of the evening, going down in five to Little.

It was also 8-2 as Windsor Penguins beat Windsor Kites, the Penguins taking all three matches which went the distance. Jackie Bunce took an excellent treble, defeating Carl Hubbard 3-2 (12-10, 12-14, 11-5, 9-11, 11-5) and edging past a determined but unlucky Mick Simson also in five (11-7, 8-11, 11-4, 10-12, 12-10). Alan Charman and Debra Found each won a couple for the winners, Found having a close 11-8 in the decider against Jack Haylett. Carl Hubbard took the two points for the Kites.

Nomads Lynx, with a guest player, shared the spoils with Nomads Ocelots. It was a third draw in as many weeks for the Lynx – and their eighth overall for the season. Arthur Wells-Garrett was the best player on show, winning

both his matches for the Ocelots.

Brotherhood G were 9-1 winners over a Nomads Leopards' side which fielded a guest player. Paul Metcalf and Graham Healey took their two legitimate games for the winners whilst Dave Wright, with a narrow 11-9 in the fifth win over Rob Bright, took the Leopards' point.

* The League's Closed Championships, sponsored for a 24th year by Paul Newbould Planning and Building Design Services, take place on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd April 2017 at the Coastal Academy Sports Hall. An excellent entry of 78 players will be competing for twelve trophies. All players should receive further information, including details of start times, by this Saturday (15th April). Any player who does not receive this information should contact either Peter White or Tony Oswick. Players should note that, because of the number of matches to be played, play will now start at 9am on both days.

RESULTS

Division 1

Windsor Eagles 3 Windsor Condors 7
Nomads Panthers 10 Windsor Hawks 0
Brotherhood C 7 Lawford 3
Walton B 5 Walton A 5
Windsor Owls 0 Brotherhood B 10
Windsor Kestrels 4 Nomads Lions 6

Division 2

Windsor Magpies 0 Nomads Bobcats 10
Brotherhood D 10 Nomads Pumas 0
Brotherhood H 10 Windsor Harriers 0
Nomads Tigers 7 Windsor Buzzards 3
Walton C 2 Brotherhood F 8
Nomads Jaguars 4 Brotherhood I 6

Division 3

Brotherhood G 9 Nomads Leopards 1
Windsor Ospreys 2 Nomads Caracals 8
Windsor Penguins 8 Windsor Kites 2
Nomads Wildcats 8 Brotherhood J 2
Nomads Lynx 5 Nomads Ocelots 5

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