



Chelmsford & District: Excalibur put champs to sword

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The division four Knock Out Cup final in the Chelmsford & District Table Tennis League produced a marathon encounter and it was Writtle Excalibur who emerged as sensational 5-4 winners over division four champions Hatfield Peverel.

What a match this was – Hatfield Peverel raced into a 3-0 lead and when Steve Siggs pulled one back by defeating Dave Carter 3-2 (11-8, 11-2, 2-11, 8-11, 13-11) it is doubtful if the alarm bells were ringing too loudly in the Hatfield Peverel camp.

A five-game doubles win for Neil Thompson and Alan Offord over Trevor Collin and Bob Garson made the score 3-2 but Garson picked up his second singles win by defeating Siggs in five ends to give Hatfield Peverel what seemed like a match-winning 4-2 lead.

However, the match was far from over and as the action became even more tense it was Writtle who finished the stronger. Alan Offord beat Dave Carter 3-1 (11-9, 11-9, 8-11, 11-7) and Thompson (with a record of 47% in League play) sensationally toppled Collin (with a superb record of 90% in League action) 3-1 (12-10, 11-9, 10-12, 11-9).

Writtle were clearly on a roll and Thompson and Siggs sealed a famous victory by getting the better of Garson and Carter 3-2 (11-3, 11-7, 7-11, 7-11, 11-6) in the deciding doubles.

There was another upset of sorts in the division five Knock Out Cup final where Writtle Excalibur B, the division five champions, were well beaten 5-1 by OCs B, the division five runners-up. Lawrence Bartlett excelled for the Old Chelmsfordians team by beating Frank Neill (11-8, 11-9, 11-6) and Andy Fox (15-13, 11-4, 12-10). His victory over Fox was the match-clincher. OCs' Tanish Kotwal (with a 92% record in League matches) was again on top form beating Brian Steward 3-1 (11-7, 11-8, 8-11, 11-5).

Chelmsford D (Rob Shrimpton, Martin Hiskey and John Wickins) were impressive 5-2 winners over Hatfield Peverel B in the Handicap Knock Out Cup final. Crucial games here were the successes for Martin Hiskey (handicap of plus six) over Gareth Davies (handicap of minus six) 18-21, 21-13, 21-19 and for Rob Shrimpton (handicap of minus one) against Gareth Davies (handicap of zero this time) 21-10, 18-21, 21-16. Hiskey sealed the match for Chelmsford by beating Neil Freeman (handicap of minus seven) 21-12, 21-18.

In League action, Writtle Excalibur A picked up 11 points in division two. Lee McHugh scored a hat-trick as they beat Chelmsford B 6-4. McHugh had to work hard for his successes in all three games. He beat Mick Richardson 3-2 (7-11, 11-4, 11-6, 12-14, 11-2) and Julie Johnson 3-1 (4-11, 11-8, 11-8, 11-9) and he completed his trio of wins by getting the better of Alastair Piper 3-1 (11-8, 11-6, 5-11, 11-2).

Writtle Excalibur A were also held to a 5-5 draw by their B side. Lee McHugh and Matthew Brown (for the A side) and Phil Smith and Paul Sturton (for the B side) all won twice. Matthew Brown's win over Paul Sturton produced one of the most unusual scorelines of the season with Brown sneaking home 3-2 (11-3, 13-11, 1-11, 5-11, 12-10).

Congratulations to Chelmsford C (Victor Chan, Rob Shrimpton and Paul Nicol) who were crowned division three champions by beating fourth-placed Danbury E 6-4. Rob Shrimpton led the way with three wins and Paul Nicol won twice.

Chelmsford finished four points clear of Danbury G and the records of their main-stays – Mark Allaway (74 %), Paul Nicol (74 %), Rob Shrimpton (83 %) and Victor Chan (67%) – show what a strong all-round team they are. They will enjoy life in division two next season.

Chelmsford F are relegated from division four but they completed their fixtures with a 7-3 win over Danbury L. Connor Payne, John Barrett and Jason Clark all won twice whilst Nick Robinson picked up two victories for the Danbury side.

The match between Norman Hayes and Jason Clark was one of the closest of the season with Clark finally sealing victory 3-2 (12-14, 12-14, 17-15, 11-8, 17-15).

It was honours even in division five when the champions Writtle Excalibur E (139 points) faced second-placed OCs H. Tanishq Kotwal was undefeated for OCs beating Colin Griffiths 3-1 (11-8, 11-8, 4-11, 11-3), Frank Neill 3-1 (11-7, 11-5, 8-11, 11-5) and David Meah 3-1 (13-11, 8-11, 11-7, 11-4).

OCs G ran out narrow 6-4 winners against Writtle Excalibur D. Stuart Wintle and Mike Morecroft (for OCs) and Melanie Bonnett and Keith Fitzjohn (for Writtle) all won twice. Fitzjohn beat Stuart Wintle 3-2 (5-11, 11-6, 6-11, 11-7, 12-10) in the pick of the night's action.

Galleywood C retained their impressive lead at the top of the CLICK division by beating Black Notley A 5-0. Aidan Noguchi and Rio Teplizki were firing on all cylinders for the Galleywood side.

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