



Braintree League: Four champions in junior finals

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Success was shared around in the junior events at the Braintree Table Tennis League's individual tournament.

Unusually all the entrants were under 15 and therefore eligible for both the cadets' singles as well as the junior boys' or girls' singles – but different names will appear on all four trophies.

The events have been dominated by the Bettley brothers William and Alexander in the past two years but their disappointing decision to give up the game left the field wide open and into the gap came Ben Jackson, Rio Teplizki, Barry Buckle and Charlie Craig.

It was Jackson who took the junior (under-18) boys' singles when he beat Buckle in four games in the semi-final and then Teplizki 3-0 (11-6, 13-11, 14-12) in the final.

Jackson fell in the semi-final of the cadets' singles when Craig just edged him out 3-2 (3-11, 11-8, 6-11, 14-12, 11-7), but it was Teplizki who triumphed in the final in three (11-2, 11-9, 11-3).

Neither of the two singles winners progressed past the first round in the junior doubles where Buckle and Craig beat Elliott Game and Nicholas Grice 3-0 (11-7, 11-5, 11-3) in the final.

With three entries, the girls' singles was played as a round-robin and it was Mia Charles who regained the title she last won in 2014.

She beat Zara Darcy-Willis 12-10, 11-7, 11-7 and Ellie White 11-4, 11-5, 11-8. Darcy-Willis beat White to take the runners-up medal.

The preliminary rounds of the veterans' and over-50s' singles were also held at the weekend and there will be no repeat of last year's double success for Peter Hayden.

Clearly troubled by his chronic wrist injury, he was unable to keep going against Ken Lewis and surrendered 3-1 (6-11, 11-9, 11-9, 11-4).

Lewis will make his first appearance in the final against new veteran Paul Davison. The five-times men's singles winner had a straight games victory over Steve Pennell in the semi-final.

And it is Lewis and Pennell who will face each other in the over-50s' final. Lewis, winner of the event in 2007 and 2008, beat Robin Armstrong in four games in the semi-final, while Pennell, who has been runner-up three times, beat Adrian Pitt, also in four games, in his semi-final.

The finals of those events, together with the finals of the other major events, will be held on finals night, on Sunday at Black Notley Community Association, starting around 5pm.

* Braintree League players were greatly saddened to hear of the death of Jake Whiteside, son of Richard, grandson of Ian, on Wednesday April 19.

Jake, who was 16, had been diagnosed with cancer in July last year. A student at Notley High School, Jake had been a regular attendee at the league's Sunday afternoon coaching sessions, played in the Click League for Black Notley and some games for Rayne in the Braintree League.

The funeral will be held at Rayne Church at 11am on Tuesday May 2.

* Netts C have clinched the division three title in the Braintree Table Tennis League. They did so in style, with a 9-1 win over Black Notley I.

It was a match that could have caused a modicum of difficulty as Liam Ebbs had won two sets against them at their first meeting. This time they limited him to one, although it was Joe Belsom who lost this time while he was the only one to beat him first time round. This time Max Plumridge and Kierlan Richards remained unbeaten.

The match that put them out of reach was Rayne H's 8-2 win over Notley E. Although that win put Rayne firmly on course for the runners-up spot it was actually Notley E, with matches in hand, who mathematically could have caught Netts but their defeat to Rayne ruled that out. Brian How won three for Rayne and Dave Allinson and Tim Gowers two each.

There was cause for celebration too at the other end of the table where, after 23 defeats from the start of the season, Notley G recorded their first draw.

It helped that Mel Cooch was playing up from the H team and won two singles but there were two wins too from Peter Game and one from Nguyen Tran as they shared the points with Netts D.

Declan Baines was unbeaten in Notley H's 8-2 win over Rayne I while Keller Pritchard Green and Leon Hewitt were likewise untroubled in Notley F's 6-4 win over Rayne J.

In division two Rayne E pulled further ahead with a convincing 9-1 win in what could have been a tricky fixture against Felsted RBL A.

All three players had lost to Matthew Laws last time round, but both Dave Punt and Steve Siggs overcame him this time.

Liberal C's challenge faded even further when their two-man team lost 7-3 to Notley C, who could yet pip them to the runners-up spot.

Nomads' Kevin Saunders and Lorraine Burgess picked up excellent wins over Dave Marsh and Dave Moles respectively against Rayne F but Marsh beat Burgess and Moles beat Saunders to ensure the match finished all square.

Other results: Rayne G 5 Notley D 5; Felsted B 2 Rayne D 8.

The two Netts teams were big winners in division one, the A team 8-2 against Notley A, where Andrew Huckson picked up the two for the visitors, and the B team 9-1 against Rayne C where Peter Hance's win over Steve Buer

spoiled the scoreline.

Robin Armstrong, often in the shadow of his teammates this season, outscored them both in Liberal B's 7-3 win over Notley B where Glen Laing outlasted Adrian Pitt at 14-12 in the fifth game and Andrew Pagett battled to a win at 11-8 in the fifth against Mike Johnston.

Adam Buxton was unbeaten in Rayne B's 7-3 win over Sible Hedingham.

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