



Clacton & District: Eagles leave it late

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Windsor Eagles secured third place in **Division One** of the Clacton & District League – by winning match 10 of their very last game of the season.

Needing four points from the fixture with Brotherhood B to deny their rivals the honour of taking third position, the Eagles lost 6-4 – and so just managed it!

With regulars Gary Cattermole and John Patrick unavailable, it was a patched-up Eagles' trio that did it, with a far-from-fit John Hobson and reserve Jenny Higgins forced into action alongside Phil Smith. But Smith turned up trumps with a hard-fought hat-trick which included a 3-1 (11-8, 12-10, 8-11, 11-3) victory over Martin Edwards in the final match of the evening to give the Eagles' their invaluable fourth point.

However, the crucial match was the doubles where Smith and Hobson scraped past Edwards and John Cleasby 3-2 (8-11, 11-8, 4-11, 18-16, 12-10) in a match where the Eagles were 10-5 down in the fourth set and 6-1 down in the fifth.

Edwards, Cleasby and John Owen all won two for Brotherhood B who, nevertheless, should feel pleased with their final fourth-place position.

With the issues at the top of division already sorted, the meeting of the leading two teams, Nomads Panthers and Windsor Condors, proved to be something of an anti-climax. With no Colin Stallwood, Greg Green or Martin Hogg in the Condors' line-up, the Panthers' 10-0 win proved straightforward, giving little indication of the outcome of their more important cup final meeting on 2nd May.

Sam Hume of the Panthers stayed unbeaten to maintain his hundred per cent record for the season, his 11-7 in the fifth victory over Felipe Rodriguez the only match which went the distance. James Denyer and John Monk also recorded trebles for the Nomads' team.

Walton A beat Windsor Hawks 6-4 to end their season in fifth place, three points behind Brotherhood B. Gavin Price, Kevin James and Paul Woolnough all won a pair apiece but no-one could get the better of Andy Vincent

who stayed undefeated for the losers. The Hawks won two matches 12-10 in the fifth – Vincent against Price, and the doubles where Vincent and John Barton edged out Price and James.

Windsor Kestrels beat Lawford 8-2, with Dave Martin and Colin Beaumont unbeaten. The match was closer than the scoreline might suggest with Martin beating Paul Hewitt 11-6 in the fifth and Beaumont defeating Richard Spence 11-4 in the fifth. But the closest match of all was Beaumont's win against Ian Sherwood, an incredibly tight 3-2 (16-14, 9-11, 11-6, 8-11, 18-16). Hewitt and Spence took a point each for the losers, Hewitt beating John Harvey 11-9 in the decider.

The two points for Lawford ensured they finished a point ahead of bottom-side Windsor Owls who ended their brief sojourn in the top-flight with a 6-4 defeat at the hands of Brotherhood C. Kevin Gowlett took his maximum for Brotherhood and Kevin Pryor two. But all the Owls' players had the satisfaction of getting on the score-sheet, Mark Salter with two wins, and Frank Burbidge and Tricia Salter with one each.

Congratulations go to Brotherhood H who confirmed themselves this week as **Division Two** champions. Requiring just three points from their final match against Windsor Buzzards, they ran out 9-1 winners, Graham Parkes and Stewart Murray taking trebles. In the only match which was extended beyond the regulation three sets, Pete Bloomfield defeated Grant Sharpe to take the Buzzards' consolation point.

Brotherhood D had already guaranteed themselves second place and, fielding a reserve, their 7-3 defeat at the hands of third-placed Nomads Bobcats was somewhat academic. Jason Lloyd won three for the Bobcats, Ethan Lloyd two and Andy Cawley one to complete an excellent season for the Nomads' trio. Lee Harvey won a couple for Brotherhood but both were tight matches, 11-5 in the fifth against Cawley and 12-10 in the fifth against Ethan Lloyd.

Hat-tricks for Lee Allen and Lawrence Torr, and a couple for Barry Allen, saw fourth-placed Brotherhood F end with a 9-1 win over Nomads Jaguars. Andrew North took the Jaguars' point with a 12-10 in the decider victory over Barry Allen. But that wasn't the closest match which – despite there being nothing riding on it – proved as competitive as if it had been a vital promotion or relegation battle, Lee Allen and Lawrence Torr taking the doubles 3-2 (11-8, 11-5, 7-11, 9-11, 19-17) against North and Kevin Hume.

Windsor Harriers defeated already-relegated Nomads Pumas 9-1, Ferdy Rodriguez unbeaten. Eric Lemke picked up the Pumas' point with a Jekyll and Hyde performance, winning only five points in the first two sets but eventually overcoming Isabel Barton in five (3-11, 2-11, 11-6, 11-8, 11-5).

Brotherhood I were 8-2 victors over Windsor Magpies who finish seven points ahead of bottom-team Pumas – but twenty points adrift of Brotherhood E, the side immediately above them. Scott Campbell took three for the 'I' team, and there were two each for Woody Fitzpatrick and Mark Beckham. But, with more good fortune, the Magpies will feel they could have shared the spoils, John Plummer losing 11-9 in the fifth to Campbell and 12-10 in the fifth to Beckham, whilst Plummer and Malcolm Caley went down 11-7 in the decider in the doubles to Campbell and Beckham.

Division Three champions Walton D finished their programme with an emphatic 9-1 victory over third-placed Windsor Penguins to complete an unblemished series of 22 wins. Jared Chelski's three means he ended the season unbeaten whilst Daniel Young, again undefeated, has lost only once all season. The Penguins' sole success was Alan Charman's 11-4 in the decider victory over Jane Young.

The very last match of the Clacton League in 2016/17, played on the final Friday of the season, was between Nomads Lynx and Windsor Kites. And the drawn result was as predictable as night follows day – it was the Kites' eighth draw of the season and the Lynx's ninth, and the second time this season the two teams had locked horns and ended with honours even. Liam Harris starred with a well-deserved treble for the Lynx and, with Dad Dave Harris, took the doubles 11-9 in the decider against Chris Simson and Jack Haylett. Simson and Carl Hubbard won two each for the Kites.

And so ends another successful season. Well done to all the players – and a special 'thank you' to Team Secretaries for all your efforts during the year.

* The League's Quiz Evening takes place this Saturday (6th May) at the Brotherhood Hall, Clacton-on-Sea, 7pm

for a 7.30pm start. Teams of up to six, £3 per person, bring your own drink and nibbles. For more information or to book a table, contact Viv or Ferdy Rodriguez on 01255 830951.

* The League's 'Come and Try' table tennis taster sessions begin on Friday 2nd June from 7.30pm onwards at the Brotherhood Hall, Clacton-on-Sea. They continue on every Friday evening in June. Anyone, young or old, who would like to take up competitive table tennis is welcome to attend on one or all of the sessions. All equipment is provided and the evenings are free of charge. For more information, ring Ferdy Rodriguez on 01255 830951.

* The League's Annual General Meeting takes places on Tuesday 6th June at the Brotherhood Hall. The presentation of trophies for the 2016/17 season will take place at this meeting.

RESULTS

Division 1

Windsor Kestrels 8 Lawford 2

Windsor Eagles 4 Brotherhood B 6

Walton A 6 Windsor Hawks 4

Brotherhood C 6 Windsor Owls 4

Nomads Panthers 10 Windsor Condors 0

Walton B 10 v Nomads Lions (walk-over)

Division 2

Windsor Magpies 2 Brotherhood I 8

Windsor Harriers 9 Nomads Pumas 1

Brotherhood H 9 Windsor Buzzards 1

Brotherhood D 3 Nomads Bobcats 7

Nomads Jaguars 1 Brotherhood F 9

Division 3

Windsor Penguins 1 Walton D 9

Nomads Lynx 5 Windsor Kites 5

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