

British League Round 1 – North

Author: Russell Moore

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Division One North

Drumchapel Glasgow II, last year's Champions have made a perfect start and may well be favourites to retain their title although there is no doubt that second-placed Wymondham Grantham (seven points) will have something to say about that. Probably quite a lot!

Drumchapel made a shaky start against Burton Uxbridge in their first match, falling 2-0 behind before pulling through to win 5-3. Burton's Adam Nutland scored an excellent 3-1 win over Craig Hardie and the alarm bells must have been ringing loud and clear when James Ward beat Richard Main after trailing 2-0. Ward recovered to win 9-11, 7-11, 11-9, 11-3, 12-10. The pressure was really on Terry McLernon and he was up to the task. He dominated the first two ends against David Savage and although he was pegged back he eventually won 11-4, 11-8, 6-11, 8-11, 11-9. Wins for Christopher Main and Craig Hardie gave the Glasgow side a 3-2 lead and although fast-improving England no. 144 Adam Nutland scored a second excellent success by beating Terry McLernon 12-10, 11-8, 6-11, 13-11 it wasn't enough. Richard Main beat Russell Boone 11-7, 16-14, 11-5 and Christopher Main beat David Savage 9-11, 11-5, 11-6, 11-8 to secure the Glasgow victory. Glasgow were up and running.

Halton I also proved to be a tricky proposition in round two but again Glasgow won 5-3. Their no. one and four players Craig Hardie and Chris Main were both undefeated with Craig Hardie turning in an excellent performance. He beat Tomasz Rzeszotko 11-7, 11-9, 11-6 as well as Richard Lightowler 9-11, 11-7, 13-11, 11-9. Glasgow had fewer problems with Ormesby II in round three, running out 7-1 winners. Richard Main beat Andy Wilson 11-6, 11-5, 9-11, 9-11, 11-8 in a hard-fought first game and that result rather shaped the match. Thereafter, Drumchapel Glasgow were always in control. But, it was back to a 5-3 struggle in their last game against ELGRE Nottingham I, runners-up in this Division last Season. Emma Vickers was involved in two hard-fought five-enders. The England no. four lady just missed out 5-11, 11-9, 11-6, 6-11, 12-10 against Terry McLernon but she hit back in her second singles, beating Chris Main 11-4, 6-11, 14-16, 11-2, 11-8. Chris Main had done well to beat ELGRE no. three Mark Green 7-11, 11-9, 4-11, 11-8, 11-8 in his first singles.

Wymondham Grantham (new name / some familiar faces) operated a six man squad and they came close to winning all four games as well. They led 4-3 against ELGRE Nottingham and with Andy Wignall to face Emma Vickers you might well have decided that this particular encounter was just too close to call. It certainly couldn't have been much tighter with Emma prevailing 11-9, 18-16, 14-12. A good match for Emma who had also got the better of Paul Cichelli 11-8, 6-11, 11-9, 12-10. The much improved England no. five Cadet Boy – Paul Smith caused Wymondham the most problems in their clash with Ormesby II. Playing at no. four Smith scored two exceptional wins : a 11-7, 15-13, 12-10 victory against Paul Cichelli and a 11-6, 11-9, 11-8 win against David Low. Defender Cichelli earned his side their victory, beating Steve Brunskill after a marathon 11-9, 10-12, 14-16, 11-9, 12-10 thriller. They don't come any closer!

Northfield have failed to get off the mark and they may well feel that lady-luck deserted them in their 6-2 defeat against Wymondham. They lost both of the five enders by the narrowest of margins. Tony Wilson missed out 7-11, 3-11, 12-10, 15-13, 10-12 against newcomer Tobias Bergman and if that wasn't bad enough Danny Welsh lost to David Low 10-12, 11-7, 5-11, 11-5, 13-15. Ian McLean clinched the Wymondham victory, by beating Danny Welsh 11-8, 11-8, 9-11, 12-10.

Derwent, relegated from the Premier Division have made a modest start to their Season and they were beaten 6-2 by an inform Halton team. England no. 12 Veteran Richard Lightowler scored two excellent wins, a 3-1 success against Stephen Horsfield and an even better 3-2 win over England no. 31 Simon Noutch. Halton trailed 2-1 but finished very strongly to win the last five games. Michael Moir beat Stephen Horsfield 4-11, 12-10, 11-7, 13-11 in the seventh game and Radek Mlynarczyk completed what was an excellent performance by the Cheshire side by getting the better of Richard Smith 15-13, 11-9, 11-9.

Division Two North

This Division looks like being a straight fight for honours between two strong sides – Chesterfield and Barrow II who have both won their four opening games. Chesterfield featured Will Cooney, Andy Henry, Andrew Horsfield, Mark Short and Shaun Bibby whilst Barrow's team included brothers Jonathan and Scott Crawford, Tristan Swan, Tom Smith and Graham Coupe. You can bet that when they face each other in December they will both be fielding their strongest possible line-ups.

Barrow beat Woodfield I 6-2 and it was the two games that Barrow lost that caught the eye. Andy Rich beat both England no. 85 Scott Crawford (11-9, 11-8, 8-11, 13-11) as well as England no. 48 Jonathan Crawford (12-10, 11-4, 8-11, 11-13, 11-4) – two excellent wins. Barrow impressed as they beat Derwent II quite comfortably 7-1. Jonathan Crawford, Scott Crawford and Tristan Swan were all undefeated. Tristan Swan turned in a polished display to hit his way through Mick Wilcockson's solid defence 10-12, 11-7, 11-7, 11-3. Doug Bartle was Derwent's sole winner. He beat Tom Smith 11-1, 11-9, 15-13 in the last game.

Likewise when Chesterfield beat Ormesby II 6-2 it was the two games that Chesterfield failed to win that stood out. Eddie Fambely was responsible for both of these. He beat Andy Henry in four ends (11-9, 5-11, 11-9, 11-8) and he completed a magnificent double by getting the better of Will Cooney 11-7, 11-4, 16-14. Derwent II were handicapped by being a player short and Chesterfield made no mistake running out 8-0 winners. Will Cooney did not drop a game, beating Rich Crowther (11-4, 11-7, 11-5) and Rich Brearley (11-8, 11-2, 14-12). Chesterfield also played well to beat Drumchapel Glasgow III 6-2. Drumchapel's Calum Main scored a fine 9-11, 12-10, 11-9, 11-8 win over Andy Henry but he missed out against Andrew Horsfield 11-2, 7-11, 8-11, 8-11.

With a full team Derwent were a stronger proposition and their match with Ormesby III was a good one. It finished tied at 4-4 and the last four games were decided in the fifth end. Fittingly, they were shared 2-2. Derwent's Richard Moss won twice. He beat Mick Young 11-6, 13-11, 8-11, 11-4 as well as Martin Rutter 11-2, 8-11, 12-10, 9-11, 11-7. Doug Bartle secured the draw for Derwent in the last game with a hard-fought 11-5, 7-11, 11-7, 7-11, 11-9 success against Karl Shaw.

Sheffield picked up their sole point against Halton I, and it was well earned. Sheffield no.4 Liam Carson, who had beaten Pavel Orz 3-1 in his first singles earned his team a point by getting the better of Fiona Dennett in the last game. Carson made no mistake winning 11-9, 11-7, 11-6. Halton no. one Chris Ford won both of his singles. He beat Peter Morgan in five ends (11-8, 7-11, 5-11, 11-6, 11-8) and he overwhelmed Bill Grant, winning 11-4, 11-5, 11-9.

Division Three North

As an ETTA Reporter you never like to put unfair pressure on teams when you eulogise them for their performances. But, apart from Bribar Redlands Raiders (runaway winners of Division four North last Season) you really can't see anyone else winning this Division if their top two players – Ben Barlow and Sam Walker continue to play regularly. England no.33 Ben Barlow and England no.57 Sam Walker (one of the most improved players in the country) would surely grace the Premier Division and they should be praised for their loyalty in turning out for their local team instead of looking for an opportunity to play in a higher Division. With Barlow and Walker in their line-up the results were never in any doubt and ELGRE Nottingham II were brushed aside 7-1 whilst Drumchapel Glasgow IV were beaten 8-0. Adam Feargrieve picked up ELGRE's sole win, beating Farrel Anthony 11-8, 12-10, 8-11, 6-11, 11-9.

Ben Barlow didn't play on the Sunday and they weren't quite the same force. They beat Ormesby IV 5-3 but it was noticeably more of a struggle. Jessica Dawson levelled the scores at 3-3 by beating Farrel I Antony 3-2 and suddenly Bribar Redlands Raiders were looking very vulnerable. Around ten minutes later and they looked in even deeper trouble when Anthony Phoenix had taken the first two games off Richard Wesley. However, Wesley kept his head and he fought back to win 4-11, 13-15, 11-8, 11-5, 11-8. Bribar were still in a position to retain their 100 % record, which took in all 14 matches of last Season. Aidan Keyworth was up to the task and he beat Shannon Walker 11-6, 8-11, 11-4, 11-7 to secure the Bribar victory. After this scare Bribar turned in a strong performance to beat Northfield II 6-2. They raced into a 6-0 lead as Sam Walker inevitably won both of his singles, whilst Richard Wesley followed suit by beating Phil Robinson (3-0) and Nick Corking (3-2). However, they could not maintain the momentum and Mick Hahn hit back by beating Farrel Anthony 11-9, 11-7, 11-7. Jonathan Durham did well to beat Aidan Keyworth 12-10, 8-11, 11-3, 11-4 to make the score 6-2.

ELGRE Nottingham II had to wait until the fourth round of matches to register their first win, and how well they played. They beat St. Mary's Hull 5-3, who had five points going into the last round of matches. With the scores tied at 2-2 Chris Brewer gave the ELGRE side a lift by getting the better of Gary Usher 3-1. Chris ran away with the fourth end after the first three games had been closely fought. Chris won 14-12, 7-11, 11-9, 11-2. Jimmy Brewster made no mistake by beating Chris Kendall 11-5, 11-6, 11-8 to make the score 4-2. Michael Fraser hit back by beating Adam Feargrieve 3-1 but ELGRE had the last laugh. Rob Fearn secured their first points of the Season by getting the better of Kevin Hodgson 11-8, 11-6, 11-4.

Ormesby IV impressed when they beat ELGRE Nottingham II 6-2. Not least Carl White who beat both Jim Brewster (13-11, 11-6, 11-7) and Chris Brewer (11-5, 9-11, 12-10, 6-11, 11-7). Jessica "Jess" Dawson played her part by beating Chris Brewer (3-1) as well as Adam Feargrieve (3-1) whilst Shannon Walker's two wins rounded off a very good Ormesby team-performance. Shannon beat Adam Feargrieve 12-10, 11-7, 11-6 and Robert Fearn 15-13, 11-6, 6-11, 11-8.

Division Four North

Woodfield III are in a strong position, not only have they won their four matches but they also defeated second-placed Pudsey (six points) in the second round. This was despite falling 2-0 behind. Phil Cawser scored a superb 3-1 win over Steve Horton and Chris Parker added to this by defeating Paul Worrallo 12-10, 10-12, 11-7, 15-13, 11-9. Pudsey were off to a "flyer" but they could not build on it. Wins for Joe Hurdley over Phil Lowe and for Chris Tarr against James Atkins levelled the scores. Steve Horton made no mistake against Chris Parker winning 11-5, 11-6, 11-2 – clearly suffering a second defeat wasn't on his agenda and Joe Hurdley made the score 4-2 by beating Phil Cawser 11-9, 11-8, 11-13, 11-3. James Atkins pulled one back with a fine win over Paul Worrallo (11-9, 6-11, 11-5, 11-8) but it wasn't enough to secure a point. Chris Tarr became his side's hero as he picked up his second win, beating Phil Lowe 12-14, 11-9, 11-8, 11-8.

Woodfield III were also given a tough work-out by Halton III. Steve Horton again tasted defeat, this time against Khammal Hussain after romping away with the fourth end. Hussain picked his game up in the decider to win 11-5, 5-11, 12-10, 0-11, 13-11. Chris Tarr addressed the situation with a hard-fought 7-11, 11-7, 11-7, 9-11, 11-9 win over Graham Cleary to give Woodfield a 2-1 lead and after that they never looked back. Paul Worrallo who had beaten Ernest Mpundu 3-2 picked up his second win with a 9-11, 11-5, 11-9, 12-10 victory over Graham Cleary.

Halton III were very strong on the Saturday with England no.7 Veteran Keith Williams, the National Closed Over 40s Champion bolstering their line-up in the no.2 position! His presence rubbed off on his team-mates and they ran out emphatic 7-1 winners over Hartlepool Stiga. The usually reliable Darren McVitie (the England no. 23 Veteran) suffered two defeats, something of a rarity at this level. McVitie missed out against Keith Williams (7-11, 11-9, 10-12, 6-11) and he was also defeated by Ernest Mpundu, again in four ends – 10-12, 18-16, 8-11, 10-12. A case of crumbling perhaps! There was no way back for Hartlepool Stiga and Graham Cleary and Andy Eagles wrapped up a top-class performance as they beat Chris Blake and Anthony Jackson respectively in the last two games.

New team and late-entry Bonsall Barbarians secured their first win when they beat Clifedale Chandlers 5-3 in round two. Good going as they fell 3-0 behind. Chris Turner beat Ronan Kelly in five games and Ed Winfield fought back from 2-0 down to get the better of Dave Kelly 7-11, 6-11, 11-9, 11-9, 11-7. With Danny Cox beating Mark Chajeki 3-1 there looked to be no way back for the newcomers. Matt Morris gave them hope by beating Terry Wilson in four ends and suddenly the match took on an entirely different complexion. Dave Kelly scored a dramatic 14-12, 3-11, 14-12, 2-11, 21-19 win over Chris Turner (the scores tell their own story here) and Ronan Kelly also won in five ends. He beat Danny Cox to level the scores. After such a determined fight-back it perhaps wasn't surprising that Matt Morris and Mark Chajeki completed the job with three-straight wins in the last two games.

Isle of Man looked to be heading for an 8-0 defeat against Pudsey as they lost the first five games 3-0. When Julian Briercliffe took the first end off Phil Cawser they will have breathed a sigh of relief although Cawser reasserted himself to win fairly comfortably 12-14, 11-6, 11-7, 11-3. Isle of Man finished strongly with Paul Corran doing well to beat James Atkins in five ends (11-6, 8-11 16-14, 9-11, 13-11) and Darren Smethurst getting the better of Bryan Birkbeck (14-12, 11-13, 12-10, 3-11, 11-9).

Division Five North

Newcomers Blakeley's Wigan and Bribar Redlands Raiders III who both have seven points out of eight are the early leaders in this evenly matched Division in which no single team has failed to get off the mark. Blakeley's fielded the same side in all four matches – James Bartolo, Mark Bleakley, Dev Shete and Rick Beattie and it was only in the first match against Sycamore that they failed to record a win. Sycamore were bolstered by the inclusion of sometimes (well... quite often) Premier Division player – Jason Ramage for this game and not surprisingly he won both of his singles. However, he didn't have it all his own way and Mark Bleakley only succumbed 9-11, 6-11, 7-11 whilst James Bartolo took the third game before missing out 8-11, 4-11, 11-9, 5-11. Dev Shete was Wigan's best player and his 3-0 win over Craig Witton changed the course of the match when Wigan were trailing 3-0. Shete won his second singles as well, with a tightly fought 11-8, 14-12, 11-9 success against Joseph Bell.

Wigan's third round opponents – Ormesby V also provided a tough test and they only succumbed 5-3. Chris Wheeler appears to be a name to note. He is only 11 but he displayed a maturity here far beyond his tender years. He beat Dev Shete in his first game, coming from behind to win 9-11, 13-11, 6-11, 11-6, 11-9 and in his second singles he saw off Rick Beattie 11-4, 11-8, 9-11, 11-6. Rick Beattie won his other singles but only after a titanic struggle against John Bousfield. Beattie edged this one 7-11, 6-11, 11-7, 21-19, 11-8. Quite a battle! Wigan moved into over-drive in their final game and Pudsey II were despatched 8-0 in double quick-time. All eight games were won 3-0.

Bribar Redlands Raiders III (Steven Walker, Dave Gascoyne, Phil Beresford and Steven Arliss) couldn't match the two 8-0 wins that Blakeley's Wigan recorded but they were nevertheless pretty consistent. Steven Arliss was the only player to beat "new kid on the block" – Chris Wheeler which he achieved in five ends and he completed his double by getting the better of Ashley Scott – again over five ends – 6-11, 8-11, 11-8, 11-8, 11-4 which gave them their 5-3 win over Ormesby V. Steven Walker won twice for Bribar – beating Gary Whyman 11-8, 11-8, 11-4 and Adam Smith after a widely fluctuating battle : 16-14, 9-11, 15-13, 6-11, 11-3.

Bribar Redlands Raiders III dropped their only point on the Saturday afternoon against Pudsey II. Steven Walker again won his two singles, although "the cool, calm and definitely collected" (taken from the comments box on the scoresheet in case you are wondering) Nicola Smith proved a very testing opponent. Walker was relieved to get over the finishing line 11-9, 5-11, 12-10, 9-11, 11-9. Walker had fewer problems against Pudsey no. one Chris Newsome racing home to a 11-2, 11-3, 11-6 victory. Pudsey no. four – England no. 34 Junior Girl Nicole Finn also made her presence felt and she scored two excellent victories. 11-9, 5-11, 6-11, 11-8, 11-8 against Phil Beresford and 2-11, 11-9, 11-7, 11-7 against Steve Arliss. The win over Arliss secured the draw for her team.

Ormesby V made a slow start against Sycamore II and trailed 2-0 after Joe Zygodlo had beaten John Bousfield 3-2 and Mike Lunn had seen off Adam Smith 3-1. Ashley Scott's 3-1 victory over Craig Witton seemed to galvanise the Middlesbrough team and they never looked back after that. Chris Wheeler again picked up a double whilst Ashley Scott scored his second victory by beating Keith Dale. What finished as a fairly routine 6-2 win had not looked on the cards at one stage.

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