



Braintree League: Netts strengthen their hand

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Netts A have put together a strong squad that looks capable of challenging Liberal A for honours in this season's Braintree Table Tennis League, which starts next week.

Liberal, winners for the last two years, will again rely on men's singles champion Brandon Crouchman – beaten only once last season – Scott Dowsett and Simon Webber.

But Netts A have brought together Paul Davison, second to Crouchman in last season's individual averages, and Andy Holmes, who finished fourth, with new signings Chelmsford first division player Gary Cattermole and Antonio Beccles, who included Dowsett among his victims in the Netts summer league.

Whether they win the title or not Netts A ought to be able to avoid a repetition of last season when they finished below their B team.

The B team have lost Holmes to the A team but retain James Hicks, Maria Boulton and Steve and Chris Buer, together with new signings Jan Fuller and Colin Bennett. They could again capture third place, if they are able to hold off a new-look Rayne A.

For the first time since 2007/08, the Rayne A team does not feature the Hill-Pennell-Whiteside trio.

Jon Hill has played less over the last two years but Ian Whiteside and Steve Pennell have remained regulars in the first team.

This term Whiteside and Hill drop to the B team, together with Ryan Pitt, also in last year's A team, while last year's B team members Adam Buxton and Hector Rogers and the C team's Alan Burgess join Pennell up top.

Netts also have a third team in the first division for the first time, taking the place of Sible Hedingham, who have disbanded after Mark Brown's move to Thailand.

Nikki Davison returns from maternity leave to join James Mullane, Alistair Hill and Hannah Pitt from last year's A

team, plus Aad Kwakkelstein, with Nomads in 2013-14, and Derek Kennard, who started last season in division three.

They and Liberal B are likely to occupy the middle ground while Rayne's C and the promoted D team – E last year – enter into a relegation battle with Black Notley A, who have lost Andrew Huckson to Liberal B but have promoted Victor Chan from last year's B team.

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