



Braintree League: Difficult start for Rayne

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Relegation from division one could be one of the more interesting conundrums in this season's Braintree Table Tennis League.

Newly promoted Rayne D remain the favourites to go back down, but there are other teams who will be casting a few glances over their shoulders.

Rayne D have not had the easiest of starts to their new life – a match against reigning champions Liberal A was followed by one against the new-look Rayne A, both of which they lost 10-0 – but Rayne C have only garnered two points while Netts C and Black Notley A will be pleased that they each posted five points on the board in the league's second week.

Netts C should be strong enough to survive but they were surprised by a Notley team who only just avoided relegation last season. They gained a draw without the help of new signing Lucy Wang. Chris Parr scored two wins together with Victor Chan, promoted from last year's B team, while Guy McKenzie got the better of Hannah Pitt. It was an evening when no one remained unbeaten. For Netts, Nikki Davison and James Mullane won twice.

Rayne C tasted the might of Liberal A with the same result as the D team.

Liberal B and Rayne B, likely mid-table residents, came up against each other and it was the village team who came away 7-3 better off. Lee McHugh, in a rare appearance, won his three singles.

Netts A will be fighting it out at the top end of the table, but they were made to work hard for their 6-4 win over their own B team.

Maria Boulton won twice for the B team, including an excellent 3-0 (11-4, 11-2, 11-6) win over Andy Holmes, but Terry Dowsett continued his comeback in the same vein as the previous week by taking his three singles.

The division three table has an unusual look – after only two matches no team has won twice.

Notley E have only played one match, but Notley F, the only other team to win in the first week, lost second time round to Rayne H. Brian How was unbeaten in their 8-2 win while Declan Baines overcame both Peter Taylor and Charles Wilkinson.

Felsted RBL C, who drew with Rayne H in the first week, were even more ruthless, taking all 10 from Rayne I, while Notley G and Rayne J both chalked up 6-4 wins.

Peter Taylor was unbeaten in Rayne J's win over Netts F.

New signing Joshua Akparanta was unbeaten for Notley H but the G team took six of the remaining seven sets.

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