



Champions lose ground as Burton excel in WBL

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Defending champions YHL dropped three points to stand in third place after weekend one of the Women's British League at Kettering.

The team, again spearheaded by Yolanda King, started well enough in the Premier Division with three victories on day one – 4-2 over Halton and Formby either side of a 6-0 whitewash of Knighton Park.

But their Sunday was problematic as they were held to a 3-3 draw by XLNT Draycott, before Burton Uxbridge delivered a defeat by a 4-2 margin.

The former match was a rollercoaster as YHL led 1-0, trailed 2-1 and led 3-2, only for Inta Zdanovska to rescue a draw for Draycott by taking a deciding set 12-10 against Victoria Smith.

Mollie Patterson was the hero in the Burton Uxbridge tie, winning both her matches to set up the 4-2 scoreline.

It completed an unbeaten weekend for Burton, only a 3-3 draw against Draycott in the second round preventing a full house.

Patterson again won the key match in that tie, beating Diana Rusinova 3-0 (11-3, 12-10, 11-8) as Burton came from 3-2 down.

Charlotte Bardsley won both her matches for Burton earlier in the tie, and ended the weekend as one of four players to win eight out of 10 individual matches – but they all trail Formby's Emily Bolton, who had a 90% record in her 10 ties – the highest-scoring player across all the divisions.

All of which means that Burton Uxbridge lead the way on nine points out of a possible 10, one ahead of Draycott – also unbeaten with three wins and two draws – and two ahead of YHL.

Newly promoted Formby have three points, as do Halton, while Knighton Park were unable to get off the mark.

Across the other divisions, a number of clubs boast unbeaten records but only one retained a 100% win rate – Drumchapel Glasgow in Division Three.

And it was emphatic too, as Rebecca Plaistow and Lucy Elliot maintained individual 100% records across 10 matches and Alisa Khalid was beaten only twice. Drumchapel lead St Andrews by two points.

In Division One, Fusion are top of the table with four wins and a draw, while XLNT Draycott seconds are close behind with three wins and two draws. The top two drew 3-3, Fusion coming from 3-1 down with Tiana Dennison, Danielle Kelly and Sarah Horsnell winning one each.

Division Two was over-subscribed with draws – there were five in total – and two sides remained unbeaten. It is Culcheth who lead with three wins and two draws, while second-placed Burton Uxbridge seconds have two wins and three draws.

The only team unbeaten in Division Four were Burton Uxbridge thirds, starting with a 3-3 draw against Cliffedale Chandlers but then winning the next four.

And to make it an unbeaten day all-round for Burton Uxbridge, their fourths lead the way in the eight-team Division Five, with four wins and a draw, an identical record to Joola Plymouth. The two drew 3-3 in the final round of the weekend, Burton coming from 3-1 down to share the spoils.

Team of the weekend was Fastbats in Division Five, while Player of the Weekend was Lois Perryman of Thorntons, who won eight out of 10 matches.



Player of the Weekend Lois Perryman with Doug Livingstone (picture by Melvyn Lovegrove)

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