



Leicester & District: Unicorn close on title

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After all the cup exploits it was back to play in the Leicester & District League where there has been some interesting catching up in Division One, both at the top and the bottom of the chart.

The top is just about done and dusted after a 5-5 draw between defending champions, Unicorn, and Knighton Park who needed an outright victory to stand any chance of bridging their gap.

George Briskolas and Garry Knights both won two for Unicorn as well as the doubles but neither could get past KP's Chris Rogers who won three to remain at the top of the averages. Crucial was Jack Rogers' 11-8 in the fifth win against Geoff Parsons to give KP their fifth set after Reza Kiani had also won one.

Meanwhile Electricity opened up the battle for third position with a very good 6-4 victory over Ajax Wolvey, the winners now being very much in touch with their rivals in what was, in effect, an eight-point fixture as Ajax would have sewn up third with a win, or even a share.

Aidan Walsh won an excellent maximum for Ajax while Jon Williams took one but the Sparks showed a greater depth when David Grundy and Andy LeButt each won a brace while Mat Hobday secured a vital fifth singles before the first two took the doubles for full points. Perhaps those doubles given away by Ajax are coming home to roost?

Abbots Road are now on the very brink of relegation, something not even considered earlier in view of their potential team, including Dave Gannon who is still very near to the top of the averages. The crucial fixture came against fellow strugglers, Arnesby, and what a battle it turned out to be.

Ian Brown did the most damage by winning all three for Arnesby while Abbots, without Gannon, had Amish Rana with two, Vishal Parmar and Ross Adams one apiece. Crucial was Darren Bramhall's contribution. First set of the match he beat Parmar 13-11 in the fifth before following up with an even bigger nail-biter when he defeated Adams 17-15, again in the fifth game.

Abbots have now lost four of their last five matches and drawn the other, while Arnesby have been showing

decent form and are three points ahead of their rivals but also have a more than handy match in hand. This is for the second demoted team to join the already doomed Syston Casuals who have yet to win a match.

And they will go down fighting as shown when losing 9-1 to Knighton Park II when the match was nothing like as one sided as it appears. Jason Woodfield beat George McClurkin for Syston's lone success while Karen Smith and Les Baker emerged undefeated for KP.

Great Glen were on the receiving end twice in Division Three in very similar circumstances and, having been shoed in for promotion at the end of the first half of fixtures, are now very much in danger of not making the top two, even after winning one of these two.

Winstanley Wizards made almost sure of this division's championship by beating Glen 6-4 and it was Dan Andrews who took all three, including the scalp of Alex Mason who just about maintains his status at the top of the individual averages. Andrews, improving in leaps and bounds, is graded at 148, while Mason is 190 and another victim, Kevin Trueman, is on 162. Good support from Himansu Mishra with two.

Then, in a rearranged fixture, Great Glen beat Knighton Park V by 6-4. This time it was the turn of Simon Aldis to take a maximum, albeit in a losing cause. Graded at 151 Aldis also beat both Mason and Trueman, liking them to his two best ever, while Martin Pember supported with one. Aldis's win over Trueman was 3-2 (6-11, 11-9, 9-11, 14-12, 12-10). Mason and Trueman both won their other two while Kelvin Herbert grabbed the other singles.

Regent Sports is one of the teams battling for the second promotion spot from Division Two behind the rampant Holwell Sports and might well send a goodwill message at the end of the season to Knighton Park III whom they beat 6-4.

Martin Bolton won three for Regent, backed by two from Kevin Sanderson. For KP Brajesh Patel won two, Rayan Kotecha and Patrick Cox one each. With the match poised at 5-4 to Regent, Knighton Park gave them the doubles for full points instead of a possible share.

Two fighting maximums in Division Four both brought about 5-5 draws. Freddy Jones won three for Lutterworth Rotary in their draw with Goons II, while Martin Taylor was unbeaten for Nomads III in his team's share against Wigston Conservatives.

In Division Five Syston Casuals V lost for the second week in succession, dropping from top spot. This time it was Regent Sports IV who won 7-3 thanks to three from Richard Just, two by Gary Featherstone and one from Bob Smith in a very good team success.

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