

Ron Fosker

19.12.09

table tennis

Rayne and Notley both have five teams in the second round of the Braintree Table Tennis League handicap cup.

In a series of tight matches, Rayne teams won three of the five first round matches while Notley teams won the other two.

The closest encounter was between two Rayne teams.

After leading 2-0, 3-1 and 4-2 the C team were pegged back to 4-4 by the H team.

The final match between Matt Millbank and Keith Martin went the full distance before Martin held on for an 11-8 victory in the final game to drag the C team through.

Although he finished on the losing side, Jason Hearn had an evening to remember for the H team.

He won his three singles very comfortably in three straight games, including a crushing victory over Martin who was twice left on minus five when Hearn clinched the set. In effect that meant that Hearn, a player from the lower end of division three, was twice leading a first division player 5-2.

Rayne's E and G teams were the others to win through the first round.

The E team had to come behind to progress against Notley G. They were 2-1 and 3-2 down before winning the last four sets to take the match 6-3.

Simon Fleming was Rayne's mainstay. He won all three singles but it was his second win of the evening that was pivotal. Giving away 11 points to Harold Jones, he crept home at 13-11 in the fifth game to prevent his team going 3-1 behind.

Rayne G only had two players to face but they were not given an easy ride.

Notley H's Matt Ward won two and Keir Hughes one but two out of two from Tim Gowers led them to safety.

Despite having the toughest handicap in his team, it was Will Jackson who led the way for Notley E against Rayne F. He won all three, including a victory over Peter Taylor off scratch.

Gordon Fairchild was similarly impressive in Notley C's 6-3 win over Liberal B. He gave away a small start to Dave Hardy and Martin Wells and received one from Trevor Laird but they all came the same to him and he won his three singles, two in three games and one in four.

Rayne A reached the final of the team knock out cup with a victory over second division Notley C.

It was a fairly straightforward evening, but Lyndon Griffiths made it an uncomfortable one for Dean Andrews with a creditable 10-12, 11-9, 5-11, 13-11, 11-7 win.

In the league division two leaders Rayne E repeated their first half win over their own F team, but the F team improved by three sets on their first performance, a 10-0 defeat.

This time Ted Sims and Malcolm Wehmeyer won one each and they combined to take the doubles. Richard Whiteside and Phil Wade were unbeaten for the E team.

Black Notley C's season started slowly after they had to concede their opening match to Sible Hedingham when they got the dates mixed up.

They started the second half started in happier fashion by beating Hedingham 6-4. But they had a struggle and a half to do so.

In one of the closest matches the season is likely to see, seven of the ten sets went to five games, and Notley won six of them.

What made the evening even more interesting was that the wins on both sides did not come from the expected quarters. Adam Pitt won his three singles for the first time this season for Notley and for the first time since they entered the league last season, Mark Brown was Hedingham's leading scorer with two wins.

White Lions A started the season with a surprise 6-4 defeat to Rayne H, but they remedied that at the start of the second half with a resounding 9-1 win.

Rayne H's new signing Ryan Sanderson, 13, made a promising debut and took his side's sole victory, an impressive one over the experienced Steve Willis.

Lions A are now only four points behind leaders Pillar House B who beat Notley H 8-2.

John Breen took the two for Notley H but could not trouble Matt Shelley.

Rayne G and White Lions B remain in the hunt. Rayne had a 6-4 win over Notley G, despite three wins from Notley's Ian Wallace, while Lions B's two-man team Steve and Stuart Ascott won all seven against Notley F.