

Ron Fosker

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table tennis

It was a good week for some of the newer players in the Braintree Table Tennis League.

Patrick Gilbert picked up his first win of the season in division one while Ben Page, with only one win in nine sets so far, won twice.

Keir Hughes and Leon Hewitt matched them in division three. Hughes scored his first wins and Hewitt, also with one win in nine so far, won two.

Gilbert and Page, both 13, will be particularly pleased as they were both playing up a division. Their games so far have been in division two, but they were called into action for Netts A against Rayne C in division one, and rose to the occasion.

Both conquered the unorthodox and confusing style of Alastair Brown while Page went one better and beat the stylish Dave Punt.

Larte Lawson added his three singles to give Netts a 6-4 win.

Black Notley H's Hughes and Hewitt meanwhile have been learning their trade in division three.

Hewitt, 18, failed to win any sets last year but broke his duck in the second match of this season but Hughes had yet to score. Against Rayne H, they both notched up two wins to help their team to an 8-2 win.

Netts A's four dropped points in division one eased them off the top of the table.

Notley A crept one point ahead after their 7-3 win over Rayne B and a 9-1 win over their own B team.

Promoted Pillar House A have set out to ensure they do not follow the familiar pattern of teams going down immediately after going up. They scored an excellent 8-2 win over Notley B with three wins from the in-form Chris Ciniglio and two each from Ryan Pitt and Duncan Elloy.

The top two teams came face to face in division two and it was Rayne E who upset pre-season calculations by beating their own D team 6-4. Richard Whiteside was unbeaten for the third time out of three.

There was a tight match too at Notley C, who held off Rayne F by the same score. It was Notley's first win of the season and Rayne's third successive 6-4 defeat.

Gordon Fairchild and Stevie Pell for Notley and Malcolm Wehmeyer for Rayne won two each in a match in which no one won all three or lost all three.

Sible Hedingham's match against Nomads was similarly hard fought. They came back from 3-1 down to win 7-3.

Roy Hooper, Graham Cannon and Mark Brown all won twice for Hedingham while Nomads rotated their top scorer once again.

Kevin Saunders, Arthur Wilson and Lorraine Burgess have taken it in turns to win most singles in their three matches so far. This time it was Saunders' turn to win twice while Wilson had an excellent win over Cannon.

Pillar House B's encounter with White Lions A was a coming together of the two teams who finished within a point of each other in second and third places in last season's division three. Pillar House had the upper hand again to record a 6-4 win.

Adam Clift retained his unbeaten record which now stands at 11 singles.

White Lions' B team have persuaded Keith Perrins out of a short-lived retirement and he quickly got into his stride in his team's 6-4 win against Rayne G. He won twice and stretched Charles Wilkinson, who took his three, to 14-12 in the fifth game.

It was Rayne G's first defeat of the season.