

LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 02

AS AT 20 OCTOBER 2024

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
COMETS A	1	1	0	10	0	3	13
MORPETH A	1	1	0	10	0	3	13
COMETS C	2	0	0	4	16	6	10
CASTAWAYS	1	1	0	6	4	3	9
NAT WEST	1	1	0	6	4	3	9
COMETS B	1	0	0	4	6	3	7
PRO	1	0	0	0	10	3	3
OUTCASTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Bonus points shown in penultimate column. Ultimate column shows total points from sets won and bonuses

THINGS TO NOTE

- Individual match details can be found on the website at

https://www.tabletennis365.com/LondonBanksAndCivilService/Fixtures/Active_Season_24-25/Division_One

- Check out the photos on the front page of the website under Featured Photos. Is your team there?

COMMENTARY

Week 02

Week Two begins with an old rivalry between champions Comets A and PRO. Looking back over the years, this fixture has usually ended in a convincing Comets win though the PRO team usually manage to pinch one or two sets. PRO field their usual threesome: John Crawford, Jai Persaud and Ronnie Turner. Comets A have Steve Fagan, Ian Francis and Laikram Persaud. We begin with an interesting first set as Francis takes a two-end advantage over Crawford. John's on the verge of defeat in the third end with the score at 10-10 but he takes the next two points to stay in the set. That proved to be only a temporary respite as Ian accelerated away to claim the winning end 11-7. That was followed by Jai Persaud against Steve Fagan where Steve delivered a clinical performance, never in doubt, in a three-straight canter. Crawford then faced Laikram Persaud and made very little headway winning just 19 points in another three-straight loss. This was looking like a match with an early finish but Jai Persaud slowed things down, staging a great comeback to level his set against Francis, coming from a two-end deficit. Might this be PRO's first win? There's a lot of different theories about what's likely to happen in the fifth after this comeback scenario. Might the player coming back take his momentum into the fifth and pull off the win? Might the comeback jolt the player taking the first ends into renewed efforts to regain the advantage? Well, in this case, the outcome soon became clear as point after point went in the same direction. When the winner reached 11 points, the loser had just two! So, who won this runaway fifth end? It was Ian Francis! Bad luck for Jai and PRO are 4-0 down. Ronnie Turner then took the first end off Fagan but melted away in the following three ends. Two more three straight wins went Comets' way: Laikram winning the battle of the Persauds and Fagan looking too good for Turner. PRO fared a bit better in the next two sets as Crawford took an end off Fagan and Turner did the same against Persaud. The doubles pitted Crawford and Turner against Francis and Fagan. An interesting clash in prospect as this PRO doubles combination can punch above its weight. They lost the first end by the narrowest of margins but levelled the set winning the second. Then, very much in keeping with the rest of the night, Comets pulled away to wrap up the set in four. A 10-0 victory for Comets but six sets went beyond the third end so it wasn't completely one sided.

I can see we're going to have fun distinguishing Comets B from Comets B this season. Comets C continued their season this week with a match against Nat West. The Comets team was Anoop Sharma, Adil Islam and Hejran

Sultani who won all three last week while playing for Comets B against Castaways. The Nat West team was Gareth Jones, Andrew Muller and Les Samuels. Sultani began against Jones and quickly demonstrated his performance last week was no fluke. He rattled off a three-straight win though Gareth was in with a shout in two of those ends. Playing out of order, Hejran stayed on the table to face Andrew Muller. Andrew takes the first end before Hejran goes up a gear to take the next three ends comfortably. Hejran was playing three off and his last set was against Les Samuels. This should be interesting! Les got a fast start winning the first two ends 9 and 7. Hejran was clearly not going down without a fight and he levelled the set winning the third and fourth ends. Into the fifth and, just like the Francis / Persaud set in this week's other match, points were suddenly all going in the same direction! And that proved to be Les Samuels' direction, storming through the final end with a 11-2 scoreline. That's a good win and a big contribution to Nat West's chances of winning the match. Gareth Jones's next contest was against Anoop Sharma. I thought this would be close but Gareth was dominant, winning the set in three. Another potentially close set followed – Islam against Muller – but once again Nat West emerged the winners, this time in four ends, Andrew losing the first end but taking the next three. I think those last three wins tip the battle in Nat West's favour as they lead 3-2. But have I spoken too soon? It's Sharma against Samuels and Anoop is in front after three ends. This is proving to be an unpredictable night's table tennis! The fourth end is complete and to my surprise it's won by Anoop! An upset win! The match is all square again. Comets are on a roll and Islam takes the next set against Jones to put Comets into a 4-3 lead. Time for a hero to emerge. Will that come in the next set – Sharma against Muller. I've no idea who's the favourite here. First end to Muller 11-7. Second end to Muller, but only just, 13-11. Third end to Muller 11-8 and Nat West let out a sigh of relief as they're back level again 4-4. The final singles set brings together Samuels and Islam. The formbook says Les should win this. But the formbook also said that for Les's earlier loss to Sharma. It turned out to be a close set, albeit ending three straight, and the winner by a narrow margin was Les Samuels. Nat West are 5-4 up, to which they quickly added the doubles for a 6-4 victory. A strange seesaw match and a good effort from both teams. Everyone played a part. All six players registered at least one win. That's highly unusual and normally happens only once or twice each season!

RICHARD CAMPBELL
DIVISIONAL SECRETARY

Issued: 21/10/2024

AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥ 0 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
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Will commence with the third bulletin