

LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 19

AS AT 24 FEBRUARY 2019

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
MORPETH	17	13	4	129	41	51	180
CASTAWAYS	16	12	3	132	28	48	180
TREASURY A	15	10	2	108	42	45	153
NAT WEST	16	9	3	102	58	48	150
COMETS	16	9	1	91	69	48	139
PRO	17	9	1	84	86	51	135
EMPLOYMENT	16	8	1	77	83	48	125
INSURANCE	17	3	2	56	114	51	107
SPARTA	16	4	1	50	110	45	95
DIT	16	1	1	31	129	48	79
BTB	16	1	1	30	130	48	78

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

THINGS TO NOTE

- ✓ Individual match scores can be found on the website
https://www.tabletennis365.com/londonbanksandcivilservice/Fixtures/Season_2018-2019/Division_One

COMMENTARY

Week 21

Insurance haven't won in the second half but they anticipated breaking that duck against a DIT side they beat comfortably previously. Unfortunately, Insurance only had two players with Albert Francis missing which seriously hampered their chances. Ian Cranstone was in good form and cruised to a maximum for the loss of a single end. Jon Velinor had a real scrap with Florian Gazheli, losing the first two ends but winning the next two. In the final end, things just didn't go Jon's way, losing by a narrow 11-8. Jon's set against Simon Goodman went exactly the same way, with Jon coming from two ends down to take the set to a deciding end. Unfortunately, more heartbreak was in store as this time Jon went down 12-10 in the fifth. The doubles also went the distance with Insurance initially in front but pegged back to a final end and another narrow loss – 11-9 in the fifth. Three sets went to five and Insurance lost all of them – underlining my comment last week that Insurance just can't catch a break at the moment. So, a 7-3 win for DIT. Congratulations on their first win of the season! Insurance achieved a large enough cushion in the first half to avoid relegation but this is proving a very lean second half for them. Morpeth's slim hope of winning the title depends on them not dropping points and Castaways coming adrift somewhere. This week Employment proved to be stubborn opponents for Morpeth and seven sets went on past the third end. For Employment, Lew Hodges lost to Chambers and Bekele but took an end off each of them. Lew had a very odd set against Oleg Blyuss losing the first two ends -2 and -6 but winning the next two 5 and 6! Persistence paid off for Lew as he won the deciding end 11-7. Paul Baylis lost in four to Rob Chambers but was two ends to one and 5-0 up on Oleg Blyuss, only for Oleg to add to this season's "great escapes" and win it 11-7 in the fifth. The doubles continued in the same vein with Employment pushing all the way but coming up agonisingly short 11-5 in the fifth. A bit like the DIT/Insurance match, all the close sets went one team's way and Morpeth emerge with a 9-1 victory. Good contest! The pick of the week was always going to be Nat West against Treasury. Nat West put out a strong team - Herbert, Samuels and Johnson – but I guess there was a gulp when they saw the Treasury team –Wong, Fung and Zhao. Chris Herbert is having a good season and started with a narrow win over Winston Wong in four ends. Adam Johnson made it 2-0 to Nat West as he beat Perry Fung in a seesaw five-ender that Adam won 11-4 in the deciding end. Next up was Yiji Zhao who beat all three Castaways players in her last outing. Looking at the scorecard there's little I can say as Yiji also beat all three Nat West players by margins that suggest she's a class above anyone else playing in this division. Three wins, all three straight in double quick time. All the other sets were close. Chris Herbert beat Fung in four ends. Adam Johnson

and Winston Wong went to five with Winston winning by the narrowest of margins, 11-9 in the fifth. Les Samuels lost in three tight ends to Wong but managed to get past Perry Fung in a set that could have gone either way. The final score was 6-4 to Treasury but kudos to Nat West for putting up a good fight. Perry Fung lost all three for the first time since November 2014 (against Stepney Green, arguably the best team ever to play in this division). Comets fielded two reserves against BTB but still got home by 7-3. BTB also had an unusual team with no Xavier or Waterhouse. For Comets, Ian Francis won all three conceded just one end, to Barry Ilett. Don Lopes won two and lost his third set narrowly, by 14-12 in the fifth to Rishi Sinarain. Greg Gargrupe made up the Comets team and he won one set, against Ross Roberts. A fairly comfortable win for Comets but DIT's surprise win this week means they're just above BTB in the table. The last match of the week involves Sparta's visit to PRO. This had been an 8-2 win for PRO in the first half but both teams changed their composition for the return. Only three of the players that contested the first half fixture played in the second half. The match started well for PRO with Ronnie Turner beating Mike Loveder and John Crawford beating Peter Tokely. Dave Evans got one back for Sparta, defeating George Buck in four, but Crawford further extended PRO's lead to 3-1 with a win over Tokely. There followed three close sets that dictated the match outcome. Dave Evans, having lost the first two ends, crossed the line first in a really close set against Ronnie Turner with a "come from behind" win by 11-8 in the fifth (Ronnie won their first half encounter easily). Next came the closest set of all. George Buck went two ends down to Tokely but clawed his way back to take the match to a fifth end. As often seems to happen, the player staging the comeback takes all the momentum into the fifth end but Tokely held on to reach deuce, only to lose it 13-11. A similar story in the next set with Dave Evans getting the better of the first three ends against John Crawford. John fights back to take the fourth end and yet another set reaches a deciding end. These two players are evenly matched but the averages suggest Dave is the favourite. A few minutes later, we're at deuce again but on this occasion it's John Crawford who comes out on top with a 12-10 score line. This put PRO 5-2 up but Sparta weren't done and they quickly won the next two sets, which included a standout victory for Tokely over Turner. On to the doubles and PRO send out Crawford and Turner who still haven't lost a doubles this season. Four ends later, their perfect record intact, PRO are celebrating a 6-4 win. A good match and one in which for the second time this season all six players won at least one set. John Crawford was PRO's hero, winning all three having lost the first end on each occasion. Has that ever happened before? Well, I don't keep records on that but it certainly hasn't happen previously in this season

Most of my commentaries highlight a few sets that have involved more than 100 points. For some inexplicable reason that seems to have stopped happening in this half and it's several weeks since the 100 points barrier has been broken.

So Morpeth go top by virtue of more wins but drop another point adrift of Castaways who take on PRO next week while Morpeth face DIT. Might Morpeth gain back some ground? There must be a chance but it's unlikely to be the multiple points that Morpeth need. Castaways are getting short of players and this week's news that Terry McKee is out for the season recovering from a knee injury has made things tighter still. Castaways next stern test comes the week after next when they go up against Comets and then Nat West in the week after that. Morpeth have a fairly gentle run-in leading to that clash with Treasury in the final week.

**RICHARD CAMPBELL
DIVISIONAL SECRETARY**

Issued: 24/02/2019

AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥17 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
Luk	MORPETH	21	21	100.0
Bekele	MORPETH	35	38	92.1
Harris	CASTAWAYS	31	35	88.6
McKee	CASTAWAYS	15	17	88.2
Herbert	NAT WEST	33	39	84.6
McKee	EMPLOYMENT	17	21	81.0

LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	38	47	80.9
Hodges	EMPLOYMENT	13	17	76.5
Turner	PRO	29	39	74.4
Wong	TREASURY A	21	29	72.4
Caunt	CASTAWAYS	13	18	72.2
Blyuss	MORPETH	15	21	71.4
Robinson	TREASURY A	15	21	71.4
Evans	SPARTA	23	33	69.7
Codrington	COMETS	24	36	66.7
Fagan	COMETS	24	36	66.7
Johnson	NAT WEST	12	18	66.7
Chambers	MORPETH	23	35	65.7
Francis	COMETS	28	45	62.2
Giuffrida	TREASURY A	14	24	58.3
Crawford	PRO	19	33	57.6
Baylis	EMPLOYMENT	22	41	53.7
Cranstone	INSURANCE	26	50	52.0
Persaud	PRO	15	30	50.0
Brown	MORPETH	10	20	50.0
Loveder	SPARTA	9	18	50.0
Jermyn	EMPLOYMENT	13	27	48.1
Jones	NAT WEST	17	36	47.2
Buchanan	PRO	9	21	42.9
Francis	INSURANCE	16	44	36.4
Sinarain	BTB	11	36	30.6
Tokely	SPARTA	10	45	22.2
Miller	DIT	8	38	21.1
Waterhouse	BTB	6	36	16.7
Goodman	DIT	7	43	16.3
Gazheli	DIT	6	40	15.0
Xavier	BTB	5	36	13.9
Velinor	INSURANCE	6	44	13.6
Buck	PRO	3	24	12.5
Hattrill	SPARTA	2	24	8.3
Roberts	BTB	1	21	4.8
John	SPARTA	1	24	4.2