

LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 9

AS AT 2 DECEMBER 2018

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
CASTAWAYS	8	6	2	66	14	24	90
MORPETH	8	7	1	59	21	24	83
NAT WEST	8	4	2	53	27	24	77
TREASURY A	8	4	1	52	28	24	76
COMETS	8	4	1	44	36	24	68
EMPLOYMENT	8	4	1	40	40	24	64
PRO	6	4	0	35	25	18	53
INSURANCE	7	2	1	27	43	21	48
SPARTA	7	1	1	21	49	18	39
BTB	8	0	1	13	67	24	37
DIT	8	0	1	10	70	24	34

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 9

So, you're on next. It's your 50% average against the guy who's top of the averages, unbeaten all season. You're not the favourite! Fifteen minutes later, pinch yourself, you've won two of the first three ends and you're 10-4 up in the fourth. One point for the biggest upset of the season. What do you do to get that last point? One school of thought is attempt three or four mad hits hoping one will come off and you'd still have a small buffer if one doesn't. Another is play safe, make no mistakes, all the pressure is on him. Well, 10-4 becomes 10-6 and, gulp, then 10-8 and, oh no, then 10-10 and a hatful of match points has just evaporated. And finally, to rub salt in the wound, you go on to lose the end 15-13 from 10-4 up! That has to be tough! This is the story of Ian Cranstone's match against Samson Bekele. Psychologically, everything must be in Samson's favour going into the final end. If I stop being an unbiased reporter for a moment, I really hope Ian can pull it off. Unfortunately, it was not to be and Samson wins the decider 11-5. Returning to being an unbiased reporter, commiserations to Ian and huge respect to Samson for an extraordinary comeback. Who says table tennis is about the hand and not the head? This drama came from the Insurance versus Morpeth match where Insurance only had two players. Albert Francis was Ian's teammate but he isn't quite repeating his stellar season of 2017-18 and lost all three. Last singles set of the night did bring some solace for Insurance as Cranstone managed to beat Duncan Brown three straight. The outcome was 9-1 to Morpeth with three for Bekele and three for an untroubled Rob Chambers. The next match was interesting too – Sparta versus Nat West. Team selection suggests the odds favour Nat West. The first signs things may not go as expected were in set two as Dave Evans faced Chris Herbert. Chris won both their encounters last season but after three mighty close ends Dave was in front. Things went strange in the fourth end as Chris ran away with it (how do you explain a sequence like 13-11, 12-14, 11-9,.....1-11?). The fifth end couldn't have been closer and predictably reached 10-10, 11-11, and 12-12 before a winner was found. And, against the odds, that winner was Dave Evans. 108 points played – the second longest set of the season to date. Dave came down to earth with a bump in his next encounter, brushed aside by Tony Catt three straight. Mike Loveder then took on Chris Herbert. Chris takes the first two ends comfortably but then things go strange again as Mike wins the third and fourth ends even more comfortably. This suggests we're going to deuce in the fifth but, not quite, as the match ends at 11-9 and it's Mike who comes out triumphant. A good win and Chris is held to a single victory in a match for the first time this season. Mike also put up a good show against Tony Catt but lost 7-11 in the fifth, giving Tony a maximum on the night. 5-4 to Nat West going into the doubles and again the

formbook is turned upside down as Sparta wins it in four ends. A good match – four ends went the distance in reaching a draw but the bragging rights rest with Sparta. This week’s trend of unexpectedly close finishes continued into the next match – BTB versus Employment. Employment are having a good season but when you have such a large squad with no “core team” your success will vary from week to week. In this match Paul Baylis rattled off three wins in quick time but life was much tougher for teammates Frank Dos Santos and Sam Burrows. Frank lost in four ends to Geoff Waterhouse and three straight to Rishi Sinarain. His best set was a nail biter against Flavinda Xavier which went all the way to a deciding end before Flavinda won it 11-8. Sam lost in four ends to both Waterhouse and Sinarain but managed to beat Xavier three straight. 5-4 to BTB and the prospect of BTB’s first win of the season. In the doubles, things start well for BTB as they take the first end. But then things swung round in Employment’s favour and they polished off the next three ends to salvage a draw. Valuable points for BTB nevertheless. Having told you at the start of the season that Perry Fung was no longer playing for Treasury he turns up in the match against DIT. Bad luck for DIT as Perry stormed through the night winning all three, conceding 35 points in so doing. I have watched Perry’s results for numerous years and there’s no one playing in this division who can crush opponents like Perry can. I recall he held the fewest points conceded in a night record for some years before that record was reduced to a never-to-be beaten total of 21 points by Lukasz Lewandowski for Credex in 2014-15. Winston Wong was back after a few games’ absence and he too won three. Giovanni Giuffrida was Treasury’s number three and he dropped an end to Graham Miller but completed the hat trick and a 10-0 win for Treasury. This week’s big match was Castaways versus Comets. I thought Castaways were done for when Comets went 2-0 up with wins for Ian Francis over LeMilliere 11-9 in the fifth and Steve Fagan over Pat Caunt. But you have to admire Castaways’ fighting spirit as they ground out the next six sets on the trot. Among them was a notable win for Pat Caunt over Francis and Pete Harris over Fagan. That took us to Harris against Francis and, when the dust had settled, observers agreed they had just seen the best set of the season. Harris takes the first two ends but Francis retaliates to take the next two. The final end saw both players push themselves to the limit and it was Harris who took the honours 11-8 in the fifth. Spontaneous applause from all. Pity there had to be a loser. Over the years so many times I’ve seen Pete Harris do this. Castaways’ success owes much to him. So the 0-2 scoreline became 6-2 and the match was won. At the conclusion it was 7-3 to Castaways – three for Harris, two for Caunt and a single win for LeMilliere - but the opponents deserve a mention too – two for Fagan, one for Francis and none for a luckless Steve Codrington. In the circumstances a satisfactory outcome for Castaways.

Next week’s fixtures see BTB play DIT in what might be the battle for the wooden spoon. We also have Castaways against the team most likely to beat them – Nat West. If Nat West put out their very best team Castaways have a match on their hands. Second place Morpeth have a bye week while Treasury must fancy their chances against Insurance, who have just one win all season thus far.

RICHARD CAMPBELL
DIVISIONAL SECRETARY

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AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥8 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
Bekele	MORPETH	17	17	100.0
Luk	MORPETH	9	9	100.0
Harris	CASTAWAYS	14	15	93.3
LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	20	24	83.3
McKee	CASTAWAYS	10	12	83.3
McKee	EMPLOYMENT	10	12	83.3
Hodges	EMPLOYMENT	7	9	77.8
Penrose	NAT WEST	7	9	77.8
Sweeney	MORPETH	7	9	77.8
Herbert	NAT WEST	16	21	76.2

Catt	NAT WEST	9	12	75.0
Crawford	PRO	9	12	75.0
Turner	PRO	11	15	73.3
Francis	COMETS	14	21	66.7
Baylis	EMPLOYMENT	12	18	66.7
Wong	TREASURY A	12	18	66.7
Evans	SPARTA	10	15	66.7
Robinson	TREASURY A	10	15	66.7
Jermyn	EMPLOYMENT	6	9	66.7
Wroe	CASTAWAYS	6	9	66.7
Brown	MORPETH	7	11	63.6
Codrington	COMETS	15	24	62.5
Persaud	PRO	7	12	58.3
Jones	NAT WEST	10	18	55.6
Cranstone	INSURANCE	11	21	52.4
Chambers	MORPETH	7	14	50.0
Giuffrida	TREASURY A	7	15	46.7
Fagan	COMETS	8	18	44.4
Jones	TREASURY A	4	9	44.4
Francis	INSURANCE	9	21	42.9
Sinarain	BTB	5	18	27.8
Velinor	INSURANCE	4	18	22.2
Waterhouse	BTB	4	21	19.0
Tokely	SPARTA	3	18	16.7
Xavier	BTB	3	21	14.3
Miller	DIT	2	18	11.1
Buck	PRO	1	9	11.1
Gazheli	DIT	2	20	10.0
Mehta	DIT	1	11	9.1
John	SPARTA	1	12	8.3
Roberts	BTB	1	12	8.3
Goodman	DIT	1	20	5.0