

LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 3

AS AT 21 OCTOBER 2018

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
PRO	3	3	0	26	4	9	35
CASTAWAYS	3	2	1	24	6	9	33
MORPETH	3	2	1	21	9	9	30
COMETS	3	1	1	14	16	9	23
EMPLOYMENT	3	1	0	11	19	9	20
INSURANCE	3	1	0	9	21	9	18
NAT WEST	2	1	0	12	8	6	18
DIT	3	0	1	6	24	9	15
TREASURY A	1	1	0	10	0	3	13
SPARTA	2	0	0	7	13	6	13
BTB	2	0	0	0	20	6	6

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
- ✓ Sparta postponed against Treasury A this week

COMMENTARY

Week 3

Comets have made a confident start to the season but suddenly found themselves with just two players against DIT and needing to play catch-up. Things looked bleak for Comets as Florian Gazheli made the match score 4-0 to DIT with a hard fought victory over Greg Gargrupe. After that, sets flowed steadily in Comets' direction as they hauled back the lead to 3-4. The next set – Gaurav Mehta against Codrington – was nail-bitingly close. Mehta leads by two ends to one and got as close as you can to winning the fourth end and the set before losing the end 12-10. With that, the momentum swung in Steve's direction and he took the final end 11-8. That took 106 points and became the longest set of the season thus far. At 4-5 down entering the doubles, I didn't fancy DIT's chances of pulling off a draw but that's what happened. A really strong team effort from Goodman and Mehta saw them come from two ends down to win the doubles 11-9 in the fifth and bring about a creditable draw! A good competitive match! Next comes this week's big match – Morpeth against Castaways. Morpeth play their joker in fielding Alex Luk – who he? Not a name I've come across and so far as I know not a regular on the London table tennis scene but playing his first year for Morpeth in this and the Central League. Things start well for Castaways with Pete Harris beating Rob Chambers and Phil Wroe beating Terese Johansson. Alex Luk then faced Neil LeMilliere. If you've never played Neil before, his style always gives him an initial advantage so, no surprises, Neil wins the first end 11-3. However, after the change of ends we find Alex Luk is no pushover as he casts Neil aside in the next three ends, conceding just 16 points. That proves to be a temporary setback for Castaways as the score advances to 4-1 in their favour, including a morale boosting three straight win for LeMilliere over Rob Chambers. At that point the order of play swung in Morpeth's favour. Luk beats Wroe in four close ends. LeMilliere beats Johansson to take the score to 5-2 and on to the main event: Luk against Pete Harris. Luk races through the first two ends but Harris won't go down without a fight and levels it two ends all. The final end is heart-stoppingly close and reaches 11-11 before Alex triumphs 13-11. Great contest and ample evidence Alex Luk is a force to be reckoned with, given Harris has not been out of the Division's top three playing averages for several years. Buoyed up by that win, Morpeth pull the match score back to 4-5. There followed an excellent doubles that ebbed and flowed. Castaways squandered match point in the fourth end and found themselves 6-10 down in the fifth. They pull it back to 9-10 but the next point eludes them and Morpeth emerge with the honours! A hard fought draw. Only three sets didn't progress past the third end. Well done to

all! Like Morpeth, Nat West play with a big squad and it's hit or miss whether you face their best team. Employment looked at the Nat West team for their game and probably thought, "I fancy this". Employment started well, taking the first two sets. Adam Johnson was playing for Nat West and he opened their account in set three. Chris McKee makes it 3-1 to Employment with a narrow win over Mike Hughes. Johnson pulls one back to 3-2 in the next set, defeating Paul Baylis in four ends. A Gareth Jones win takes the score to 4-2 in Employment's favour. Then came the best set of the night – McKee versus Johnson. Now here's question for you. If you take two ends off an opponent by 11-1 and 11-3 what's your chances of losing the set? "No chance" you might reply but that's exactly what happened here. To cut a long story short, it was Adam Johnson that handed out the thrashings but interwoven with those scores McKee took the other three ends: 11-9, 11-9 and, building to a crescendo, 13-11 in the fifth! Chris was 9-10 down in the fifth but got two consecutive nets to turn the set! Heartbreak for Adam Johnson and pats on the back for Chris for a notable win. 90 points played in that set and a rare occurrence in that the loser won more points than the winner (Adam won 51 to Chris's 39)! A 6-4 win for Employment. Played two, won two, reads PRO's record this season but I thought Insurance would give them a run for their money. It's looking good for Insurance as Ian Cranstone beats John Crawford in the first set. That didn't last long as, in set two, Jai Persaud scored a surprisingly easy win over Albert Francis. Ian again covers himself in glory beating Ronnie Turner 11-9 in the fifth. However, it was to be Jai Persaud's night as he defeats Cranstone on his way to a maximum. Cranstone's two wins apart, it was a strangely barren night for Insurance, typified by an 11-8 in the fifth doubles loss. The result was 8-2 to PRO and their record now reads played three, won three, their best start for years. You have to go back dozens of matches before you find one where Persaud outscored Crawford or Cranstone outscored Francis.

Well, well, well! Just look at that table! Who would have believed PRO are top after three matches. Last season they didn't win a match until mid-November! Savour the moment as they have two very difficult fixtures coming up. It's early days and it will take another three or four matches for league positions to settle down. Some unexpected names towards the top of the averages too. They will take even longer to settle down and it will be the Xmas break before the true order of merit emerges.

Thursday is the key night next week with Castaways playing Treasury A, and Morpeth travelling to PRO. Will PRO still be top this time next week? BTB have their best chance thus far to pick up points, facing Sparta. Nat West will hope to get back to winning ways against DIT. And, finally, Insurance are up against Comets. A potentially difficult fixture for them but Insurance will want to put behind them this week's lack lustre performance against PRO.

RICHARD CAMPBELL
DIVISIONAL SECRETARY

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AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥3 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
McKee	CASTAWAYS	6	6	100.0
Bekele	MORPETH	3	3	100.0
Buchanan	PRO	3	3	100.0
Jones	TREASURY A	3	3	100.0
Luk	MORPETH	3	3	100.0
Penrose	NAT WEST	3	3	100.0
Robinson	TREASURY A	3	3	100.0
Sweeney	MORPETH	3	3	100.0
Wong	TREASURY A	3	3	100.0
LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	8	9	88.9
Turner	PRO	8	9	88.9
Crawford	PRO	5	6	83.3

Persaud	PRO	7	9	77.8
Codrington	COMETS	6	9	66.7
Brown	MORPETH	4	6	66.7
Chambers	MORPETH	4	6	66.7
McKee	EMPLOYMENT	4	6	66.7
Wroe	CASTAWAYS	4	6	66.7
Blyuss	MORPETH	2	3	66.7
Catt	NAT WEST	2	3	66.7
Caunt	CASTAWAYS	2	3	66.7
Harris	CASTAWAYS	2	3	66.7
Herbert	NAT WEST	2	3	66.7
Jermyn	EMPLOYMENT	2	3	66.7
Johnson	NAT WEST	2	3	66.7
Loveder	SPARTA	2	3	66.7
Evans	SPARTA	3	6	50.0
Francis	COMETS	3	6	50.0
Baylis	EMPLOYMENT	4	9	44.4
Cranstone	INSURANCE	4	9	44.4
Francis	INSURANCE	3	9	33.3
Fagan	COMETS	2	6	33.3
Hughes	NAT WEST	1	3	33.3
Jones	NAT WEST	1	3	33.3
Miller	DIT	1	3	33.3
Tokely	SPARTA	1	3	33.3
Gazheli	DIT	1	8	12.5
Velinor	INSURANCE	1	9	11.1