

# LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 02

AS AT 31 OCTOBER 2021

	<b>P</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>P</b>
COMETS	2	2	0	17	3	6	23
MORPETH A	2	2	0	14	6	6	20
OUTCASTS	2	1	0	6	14	6	12
PRO	2	0	0	6	14	6	12
CASTAWAYS	1	0	0	4	6	3	7
NAT WEST	1	0	0	3	7	3	6
GOOD KARMA	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\\_21-22/Division\\_One](https://www.tabletennis365.com/LondonBanksAndCivilService/Fixtures/Active_Season_21-22/Division_One)

## COMMENTARY

### Week 2

Our second week and the first matches that might influence the title's destiny. Top billing goes to last season's second place finisher – Morpeth – against third place – Castaways. Morpeth rarely seem to field the same team twice and for this clash Samson Bekele was joined by Adam Alnak and Matt Robertson. You may remember Adam and Matt played for Morpeth C last season. Castaways had only two players – very unusual indeed. The last time Castaways failed to field three players was October 2014!!! Pete Harris and Neil Milliere made up the Castaways team for this match. In the first end of the night, Matt Robertson managed to take the lead over Pete Harris. It was close 15-13! That set the trend for the following ends – all close - but on the next three occasions it was Pete who came out on top. Castaways go one up on the table but 1-3 down on the night. The second set was probably the best of the night. The last time Adam Alnak played Neil LeMilliere Adam came out on top in four ends. Things started well for Neil, taking both of the first two ends. Adam then started to work his way back into the set and soon levelled things at two ends each. The fifth was promising to be a nail biter but Neil's challenge inexplicably fell away and the end was lost 3-11. The five ends involved 96 points. The next set looked on paper to be the closest of the night: Bekele against Harris. Now Pete has knee problems and is waiting to have an operation. The pain surely must affect his play against his close rival. The first end went point for point but Pete edged it 14-12. Then, just as in the previous set, at the very moment more close competition was expected, it suddenly became one way traffic and Pete took the next two ends conceding just ten points! That wasn't expected! Next up, LeMilliere faced Matt Richardson. Neil won the last time they played but it wasn't to be on this occasion. He managed to win an end but went down in four. Neil went on to lose to Bekele three straight to complete a winless night. Pete Harris, on the other hand, was carrying everything before him. He completed an impressive maximum with a three straight defeat of Alnak. Quite a night – he lost the first end he played and then won the next nine ends on the trot! Morpeth were 6-3 up going into the doubles but Castaways took the set for a 4-6 loss. A good match with a close outcome yet only one set needed all five ends to complete!

The hardest-fought match of the week turned out to be Outcasts versus PRO. Here are two teams likely to finish towards the bottom of the table but that doesn't make it a potentially dull affair. First blood goes to PRO with John Crawford scoring a good win over Petko Guimichev in four ends. Next on table was Bob Coull against Jai Persaud – both playing their first matches of the season. Jai won the first end and had chances to go two up but Bob clung on and took the end 16-14. That seemed to shift the momentum Bob's way and he won the third end 11-7. Momentum reversed in the fourth end as Jai squared the set by another 11-7 scoreline. The final end went on and on, past 10-10 and deep into deuce territory. Who would win the season's first deuce-in-the-fifth encounter? In fairness it could have been either player but the honours went to Bob, the set ending at 13-11. 110

points played – the first of the season to exceed 100 points. A straightforward win for Ronnie Turner over Eddie Roullier matched by an equally straightforward defeat of John Crawford by Coull took the match score to 2-2 (I recall Bob also won the last time they played). Guimichev put Outcasts into the lead in the next set, doing well to beat Ronnie Turner. That saw Roullier face Persaud and we're off on another marathon. It didn't look like that as Jai took a comfortable two-ends lead. The dominance didn't last long as Eddie squared the set, winning the next two ends. Into the final end and this time Lady Luck favoured Jai with a 13-11 outcome. 106 points played on this occasion! Another five-ender was to follow where a valiant effort from Turner just fell short against Bob Coull, going down 11-9 in the fifth. Wins for Roullier over Crawford and Guimichev over Persaud gave Outcasts a 6-3 lead. There followed a hotly contested doubles where the initial ends favoured Outcasts but PRO finished stronger to bring the match outcome to a 6-4 win for Outcasts. Excellent competitive match! Four sets went the distance, with two ending at deuce! The result could have gone either way but it was Bob's Coull's maximum that gave Outcasts the edge.

The trend this week appeared to be to change your team selection significantly from week one. Comets appeared against Nat West with just Winston Wong retained from last week, supplemented by Ian Francis and Steve Fagan. This was Nat West's first outing and they selected Jones, Herbert and Muller – a combination we saw a lot of in 2019-20. Comets stormed through the first five sets, winning every one of them for the loss of a single end. Things were looking bad for Nat West and there was no better news in set six as Ian Francis took the first two ends from Andrew Muller, dropping just six points. The outcome looked inevitable in the third end but somehow Andrew just took the end 12-10. In hindsight that proved to be a tipping point as Andrew took the fourth end and suddenly, we have a match on. At this point it would be a bold man who could pick the winner but it proved to be Andrew, who completed the comeback with an 11-8 score. A victory snatched from the jaws of defeat! This was a notable win from a player who played his table tennis in Division 2 a few seasons ago. Perhaps that outcome inspired Chris Herbert, who just sneaked ahead of Steve Fagan in the next set, leading 2-1 after three ends. Steve came back to take the fourth but Chris held on to win it in five. A 5-0 scoreline had become 5-2. Another win for Nat West looked possible in the next set as Muller continued his good run to take Winston Wong to a fifth end. Unfortunately, at that point Andrew's bubble burst as Winston ran away with the deciding end. Nat West then managed a good win in the doubles to make the result a 7-3 loss. Nat West proved to be stronger competition in the last five sets than they did in the first five. Three sets went to a fifth end but Winston Wong, the wobble against Muller aside, looked untroubled for his maximum and was Player of the Match.

Only one match next week. Good Karma make this season's debut against the all-conquering Comets.

**RICHARD CAMPBELL  
DIVISIONAL SECRETARY**

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**AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥3 sets played)**

<b>Player</b>	<b>Team</b>	<b>Sets Won</b>	<b>Sets Played</b>	<b>Average (%)</b>
Wong	COMETS	6	6	100.0
Coull	OUTCASTS	3	3	100.0
Fung	COMETS	3	3	100.0
Harris	CASTAWAYS	3	3	100.0
Persaud	COMETS	3	3	100.0
Bekele	MORPETH A	4	5	80.0
Blyuss	MORPETH A	2	3	66.7
Brown	MORPETH A	2	3	66.7
Fagan	COMETS	2	3	66.7

Francis	COMETS	2	3	66.7
Crawford	PRO	3	6	50.0
Alnak	MORPETH A	1	2	50.0
Robertson	MORPETH A	1	2	50.0
Guimichev	OUTCASTS	2	6	33.3
Herbert	NAT WEST	1	3	33.3
Muller	NAT WEST	1	3	33.3
Persaud	PRO	1	3	33.3
Roullier	OUTCASTS	1	3	33.3
Turner	PRO	1	6	16.7