

LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 12

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2018: END HALF

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
CASTAWAYS	10	8	2	85	15	30	115
MORPETH	10	8	2	74	26	30	104
TREASURY A	10	5	2	65	35	30	95
COMETS	10	6	1	59	41	30	89
NAT WEST	10	5	2	59	41	30	89
EMPLOYMENT	10	5	1	51	49	30	81
PRO	10	5	0	50	50	30	80
INSURANCE	10	3	1	39	61	30	69
SPARTA	10	2	1	31	69	27	58
BTB	10	1	1	22	78	30	52
DIT	10	0	1	15	85	30	45

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

Postponed matches

Three postponed games to review and the first is Sparta versus PRO. Sparta are looking to break free of the relegation zone while PRO want to climb back up the table. Ian Buchanan returns for PRO after a few weeks' break and makes an instant impact beating Peter Tokely in four ends. Jai Persaud then faced Dave Evans and hoped to continue his good form of the previous week. After three ends, Jai was in front but each end was close. The fourth end saw Dave level the scores. Who is going to win? The averages say it should be Dave and so it was, though a good fight by Jai only to lose 11-8 in the fifth. Next up is the in-form Ronnie Turner against Steve Hattrill, who we haven't seen much of this half. This was an action replay of the previous set with Ronnie two ends to one up only for Steve to take the fourth 11-5. Who is going to win? Punters who bet on the basis of the averages were quids in for a second time as Ronnie stormed home 11-5 in the fifth! It turned out all of the drama was in those first three sets and after that PRO pulled steadily away and went 7-2 up. Sparta's second win again came from Dave Evans beating Ian Buchanan over four ends in a close contest. Last set of the night and the Persaud / Turner combination, who nearly pulled it off last week against Nat West, this time produced a "come from behind" win at 11-6 in the fifth, completing an 8-2 victory for PRO and Ronnie Turner's fourth maximum of the season, which included a three-straight defeat of Dave Evans.

Comets haven't had a settled squad for some years and it shows in their finishing positions – usually seventh or eighth place. But that started to change last season and this year the same three – Fagan, Francis and Codrington – have played all but two fixtures. This time they were up against Insurance who are struggling a bit and have only won three times this half. Comets went 3-0 up before Ian Cranstone scored a great three-straight win over Ian Francis. Albert Francis took an end off Steve Fagan and Steve Codrington but his finest hour was against his namesake Ian. I can do no better than repeat the words of Steve Codrington: "Albert was fired up and moving like a 18 year old playing big forehand winners against some steady chops, pushing and blocks from Ian, the fourth end was a very tense one, with game/match points switching hands until Albert pulled off the win" 17-15 in the fourth. The outcome was an 8-2 win for Comets, taking them up to fourth place, and concluding a very satisfactory half season.

Final match of the half sees PRO take on Morpeth. Bad luck for PRO as Morpeth fielded the strong team I thought they would put out against Treasury: Luk, Bekele and Chambers. In truth, the contest was a bit one sided. Seven sets ended in three-straight victories for Morpeth. The three sets that didn't end that way all involved Rob Chambers. John Crawford game him a good game but lost in four close ends. Jai Persaud was on the brink of beating Rob at two sets to one up and 9-3 up in the fourth. Rob then staged a comeback reminiscent of the one Samson Bekele pulled off against Ian Cranstone earlier in the season. 9-3 down became 10-8 down and match point to Jai. Then came a "buries head in hands" moment as Jai missed a sitter that would have given him the victory. In a trice, 10-8 down became 14-12 up to Rob and the comeback was complete. Jai wasn't finished but he was never ahead again and lost the deciding end 11-8. 108 points played in that set! Ian Buchanan also pushed Rob all the way but it wasn't to be PRO's night and he lost 11-9 in the fifth! Luk and Bekele had a trouble-free night each scoring a three-straight maximum with Bekele in stingy mood, dropping 37 points over the whole evening. So, 10-0 to Morpeth who keep up the pressure on Castaways at the top.

Castaways take an 11 point lead into the second half, desperately wanting to shake off the memory of being in front at the mid-point for the last two seasons and yet ending up second. I think it will be enough, partly because to pip them Morpeth would need to put their best team out for most of the second half and I can't see that happening. It's not a foregone conclusion as Treasury, Nat West and Comets can all take sets off the top two. DIT and BTB occupy the relegation positions but they're still in touch with Sparta but probably too far behind to pull Insurance into the relegation dogfight. A very interesting first half and all to play for when the second half begins on 7 January!

The 2017-18 season – first half - in facts and figures

All-time divisional record set this half: Chris Herbert played 309 points in one evening, won all three, two at deuce in the fifth.

Top of the averages: Sammy Bekele and Alex Luk – both from Morpeth and both unbeaten
Longest unbeaten streak: 20 wins for Bekele (streak still live)
Best doubles team: Castaways (eight wins from 10 contests)
Most Player of the Match awards: Four awards for Bekele, Luk and Ronnie Turner
Played in every match: Neil LeMilliere, Steve Codrington, Ian Cranstone and Albert Francis
Biggest squad: Nat West with eight players
Smallest squad: Insurance with three players

Other records and highspots:

Longest single end: An 18-16 scoreline occurred four times: Terry McKee beating Graham Miller and Tony Egan; Samson Bekele edging out Anita Jermyn; and Gareth Jones' final end against Giovanni Giuffrida
Longest set: 120 points were needed before Jon Velinor beat Flavinda Xavier. The second longest match in the division's history.
Match involving most five-enders: Four ends went all the way when Sparta drew with Nat West and when Insurance beat BTB
Closest match: Seven sets went on passed the third end when Castaways drew with Morpeth
Fewest points played in a five ender: In the Tokely / Gazheli set just 76 points were played in five ends
Matches in which all six players registered at least one victory: Not happened.
Man in a hurry: Perry Fung conceded just 35 points in achieving his maximum against DIT

Memorable team performances:

Castaways not dropping a single set in beating rivals Nat West. Extraordinary!
Insurance defy the formbook to draw with Nat West
Morpeth beating a really strong Nat West team 6-4, with Luk and Bekele undefeated
Comets defeat Treasury 6-4 despite a maximum from Tony Egan
Employment's surprise victory over Treasury 6-4, mainly due to three wins from Chris McKee

Outstanding individual performances:

Graham Miller's win over Pat Caunt
 Jon Velinor's three close sets against Sparta – one won, two lost
 Albert Francis beats Dave Evans three straight.
 Ian Francis' good night against Nat West – only one win but two near misses
 Paul Baylis and Anita Jermyn both beating Steve Fagan. And Anita's win over Ian Francis in the same match
 Alex Luk defeating Pete Harris 13-11 in the fifth. Pete's single loss in the first half.
 Chris McKee's win over Adam Johnson
 Phil Wroe beats Winston Wong
 Graham Miller's near misses against Employment
 Albert Francis losing 12-10 in the fifth to Chris Herbert and 14-12 in the fifth to Lew Hodges
 Ian Francis coming closest to beating the undefeated Tony Egan
 Jeremy Jones just losing out to Chris Herbert 12-10 in the fifth
 BTB's finest hour: Waterhouse, Roberts and Xavier all defeat Steve Fagan
 Peter Tokely so close to beating Steve Codrington but losing 13-11 in fifth
 Samson Bekele beats Ian Cranstone from two ends to one down and 10-4 down in the fourth
 Dave Evans gets the better of Chris Herbert
 Ronnie Turner's two wins against Comets

RICHARD CAMPBELL
DIVISIONAL SECRETARY

Issued: 07/01/2019

AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥11 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
Bekele	MORPETH	20	20	100.0
Luk	MORPETH	15	15	100.0
Harris	CASTAWAYS	20	21	95.2
McKee	EMPLOYMENT	13	15	86.7
LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	25	30	83.3
Caunt	CASTAWAYS	10	12	83.3
McKee	CASTAWAYS	10	12	83.3
Herbert	NAT WEST	16	21	76.2
Evans	SPARTA	15	21	71.4
Wong	TREASURY A	15	21	71.4
Turner	PRO	17	24	70.8
Codrington	COMETS	20	30	66.7
Baylis	EMPLOYMENT	16	24	66.7
Robinson	TREASURY A	10	15	66.7
Francis	COMETS	17	27	63.0
Catt	NAT WEST	9	15	60.0
Jermyn	EMPLOYMENT	9	15	60.0
Chambers	MORPETH	10	17	58.8
Fagan	COMETS	14	24	58.3
Loveder	SPARTA	7	12	58.3
Brown	MORPETH	8	14	57.1
Crawford	PRO	11	21	52.4
Cranstone	INSURANCE	15	30	50.0
Persaud	PRO	10	21	47.6

Francis	INSURANCE	14	30	46.7
Giuffrida	TREASURY A	8	18	44.4
Jones	NAT WEST	10	24	41.7
Buchanan	PRO	5	12	41.7
Jones	TREASURY A	5	12	41.7
Sinarain	BTB	8	21	38.1
Velinor	INSURANCE	6	24	25.0
Waterhouse	BTB	5	24	20.8
Miller	DIT	4	24	16.7
Tokely	SPARTA	4	27	14.8
Xavier	BTB	3	24	12.5
Gazheli	DIT	3	26	11.5
Goodman	DIT	3	26	11.5
Mehta	DIT	1	11	9.1
Buck	PRO	1	12	8.3
Burrows	EMPLOYMENT	1	12	8.3
John	SPARTA	1	15	6.7
Roberts	BTB	1	15	6.7