

LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 05

AS AT 27 NOVEMBER 2022

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
COMETS A	5	5	0	44	6	15	59
CASTAWAYS	5	3	2	39	11	15	54
MORPETH A	6	2	2	31	29	18	49
NAT WEST	5	3	1	30	20	15	45
COMETS B	5	2	0	20	30	15	35
PRO	5	2	1	20	30	15	35
OUTCASTS	6	1	0	17	43	18	35
GOOD KARMA	5	0	0	9	41	15	24

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_22-23/Division_One
- **Check out the photos on the front page of the website under Featured Photos. Is your team there?**

COMMENTARY

Week 8

The week begins with Morpeth against Comets A. Both teams have started well this season but Comets must be favourites for the win. That view was reinforced once Comets' team was revealed: Persaud, Cain Fagan and Francis. Their opponents were Brown, To and Miuccio. The first set didn't last long as Persaud proved too strong for Duncan Brown. The second set seemed to be going the same way as Francis rattled off the first two ends against Miuccio. Things then took a turn in Miuccio's direction as he fought back to win the next two ends fairly comfortably. Everything was going in Miuccio's favour and he ran away with the deciding end too, 11-5. A good win and the match is all square. Cain Egan then made short work of Toan To and Comets lead 2-1. Laikram Persaud faced Miuccio. This proved to be a real ding dong battle. Miuccio was in front after three ends, winning the third end from a losing position. Laikram then staged a dramatic comeback and dominated the fourth end to win 11-2. A very open contest at this stage – no obvious winner. More drama in the deciding end as Miuccio reaches match points at 10-6. A famous win in prospect. But Laikram wins the next point. And the next point. And the one after that and suddenly it's 10-10. We've all been in this spot – at risk of snatching defeat from the jaws of victory and under big psychological pressure. The next point is key....and it goes to Laikram to give him match point. 95 points played and it all comes down to this. Which way is it going to go? The answer is that Laikram takes the next point to secure an unlikely win! Very bad luck for Miuccio and credit to Laikram for never giving up. Great contest! More was still to come as Toan To was scoring point for point with Ian Francis. The set reached the deciding end with To coming from two ends to one down. The score reached deuce before Ian won the next two points to secure victory. Another close contest, 101 points played. After that, Comets were just too strong. Cain Fagan won three without breaking sweat. Three also for Persaud and two wins for Francis. A 9-1 outcome but a more hotly contested match than the score suggests.

Second match this week is Nat West visiting Castaways. These two teams are Comets A's closest rivals for the title. Over the years, they've been seen to be very evenly matched so a draw looks likely. Castaways put up Loveder, Bispham and LeMilliere. Nat West have two Chris's – Herbert and Penrose – plus, for the first time this season – Adam Johnson. Adam never played in this Division last season following a run of seasons when his average never fell below 70%. He's also playing in the Wembley League this year and having a real struggle to win sets. Loveder began against Penrose and went three and out in quick time. Next up is Bispham against Herbert and again a quick outcome – four ends with very odd scorelines: 11-2, 5-11, 11-4, 11-2 to Bispham. The

first close set came next as Adam Johnson gets the better of the first three ends against LeMilliere. Johnson lost the fourth and it goes to a deciding end. Adam goes 5-1 up but runs into the sand and Neil hauled him back to win 11-9 in the fifth. Another real tussle followed as Penrose wins the first two ends against Bispham only to lose his way as Bispham takes the next two ends comfortably. Into the fifth and all the momentum is with Bispham. Might this be Chris's first loss of the season? Chris answered that with a flat "no" as he steamed through the final end 11-3. Good recovery! Those two close sets were followed by two three straight wins. First, Johnson was all at sea against Loveder and, second, Herbert never got going against LeMilliere. Castaways were 4-2 up and looking good. This hadn't been a good night for Johnson but he came into his own against Bispham, dominating the set and winning in four. The fourth end, which Adam won 16-14 was crucial, ending the Bispham fightback. In the next set, LeMilliere couldn't stop Penrose achieving his maximum, losing in four. Nat West had pulled it back to 4-4. The final singles set saw Mike Loveder against Chris Herbert. Now, over the years, these two have played each other dozens of times. It's always close but latterly I think Mike has edged in front. Chris was determined to reverse that trend as he rushed through the first two ends and reached an impressive match point. Sometimes you can look back on a game and say "that was the turning point". So it was here as Mike saved the match point, won the next end 11-1 and Chris collapsed in the fifth end 11-6. Castaways in front 5-4 but they were up against it with Penrose and Johnson as their opposition in the doubles. Nat West took the first two ends, Castaways took the third but once again there was a crucial deuce win as Nat West stole the fourth end 12-10. A hard fought draw, three sets went the distance, and credit to both sides!

Final match this week is PRO against Comets B. PRO make a rare change with no John Crawford (only the second match he's missed of the last 15 fixtures). The PRO team was Persaud, Buck and Turner. Comets B had John Yi (who debuted last week) and two new name David Adesanya and Adil Islam. Comets were quick out of the blocks and built a 3-1 lead. The best of those four singles was Turner beating Adil Islam in four very close ends. Set five pitted Adil against George Buck. George won two of the first three ends but dropped the fourth 7-11. The fifth end was close but Islam just got home in front 11-8. The next set – Turner against Adesanya – was even closer. Five ends were involved. No end was won by more than a three-point margin. 100 points were involved and Turner emerged the winner 11-9 in the fifth. Couldn't have been closer. The third five-ender of the night followed and again it involved Adil Islam. His opponent was Jai Persaud who had to come from behind to level things at two ends each. The final end was the second longest of the season, concluding at 17-15 in Islam's favour. That gave Comets a 5-2 lead and they went on to win all the outstanding sets for an 8-2 victory. Their best win of the season. Must single out John Yi for his three comfortable wins (which included a surprisingly easy win over Turner).

Almost the end of the first half and Comets A open a gap at the top of the table. Castaways are within touching distance but the rest are some way back. It's close at the bottom though Karma are in danger of being detached. Still early days in the averages but that will settle down as more matches are played.

RICHARD CAMPBELL
DIVISIONAL SECRETARY
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AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥ 6 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
Penrose	NAT WEST	9	9	100.0
Chair	OUTCASTS	6	6	100.0
McKee	CASTAWAYS	6	6	100.0
Persaud	COMETS A	6	6	100.0
Wong	COMETS A	6	6	100.0
LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	13	15	86.7

Turner	PRO	10	12	83.3
Loveder	CASTAWAYS	5	6	83.3
Yi	COMETS B	5	6	83.3
S Fagan	COMETS A	9	11	81.8
Francis	COMETS A	11	14	78.6
Bispham	CASTAWAYS	9	12	75.0
Alnak	MORPETH A	6	9	66.7
Miuccio	MORPETH A	5	8	62.5
Crawford	PRO	7	12	58.3
Jones	NAT WEST	6	12	50.0
Herbert	NAT WEST	3	6	50.0
Brown	MORPETH A	8	17	47.1
Luu	COMETS B	4	9	44.4
To	MORPETH A	5	14	35.7
Coull	OUTCASTS	3	9	33.3
Guimichev	OUTCASTS	2	6	33.3
Muller	NAT WEST	2	6	33.3
Samuels	NAT WEST	2	6	33.3
Wroe	CASTAWAYS	2	6	33.3
Bhangoo	COMETS B	2	9	22.2
Jameson	OUTCASTS	2	9	22.2
Zhao	GOOD KARMA	2	9	22.2
Roullier	OUTCASTS	1	6	16.7
Jones	OUTCASTS	1	9	11.1
Link	GOOD KARMA	1	9	11.1
Persaud	PRO	1	9	11.1
Buck	PRO	1	12	8.3