

LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 7

AS AT 26 NOVEMBER 2017

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
NAT WEST	8	6	1	56	24	24	80
CASTAWAYS	7	6	0	53	17	21	74
MORPETH	7	5	1	46	24	21	67
TREASURY A	6	4	0	43	17	18	61
PRO	6	2	1	30	30	18	48
INSURANCE	7	2	0	23	47	21	44
OUTCASTS	7	1	1	23	47	21	44
SPARTA	6	2	1	24	36	18	42
EMPLOYMENT	6	1	2	23	37	18	41
COMETS	5	3	0	24	26	15	39
TREASURY B	7	0	1	15	55	21	36

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_2017-2018/Division_One

COMMENTARY

Week 6 (postponed game)

Insurance take on Morpeth in a rearranged match. For Morpeth, Bekele and Blyuss were relatively untroubled and both won all three. Stuart Sweeney was Morpeth's number three and he was involved in three close contests. Stuart took the first end off Ian Cranstone but then lost the next three. Strangely, the reverse happened against Jon Velinor with Stuart losing the first end but then winning the next three. Best set of the night came last with Stuart taking on Albert Francis. Albert was 2-1 up after three ends but Stuart took the fourth end and a long fifth end ensued. They swapped point for point, reached 10-10 and went on 11-11, 12-12, 13-13 until Albert finally won 15-13 in the fifth! 104 points played in that marathon! The result was 8-2 to Morpeth.

Week 8

Second match this week for Morpeth and they make it two wins out of two. Employment were the defeated side but this was a good match ending 6-4. Match-turning first set saw Oleg Blyuss start fast against Richard Mak, go into reverse in the third and fourth ends but just have enough acceleration to get over the line at 11-7 in the fifth. Set two and another huge battle where five ends were needed before Chris McKee beat Duncan Brown 11-7 in the fifth. After that, the highlights were an against-the-odds three-straight win for McKee over Blyuss, followed by a superb three straight win for Terese Johansson over McKee. It seemed only fitting that such a topsy-turvy night culminated in a long, long set between Richard Mak and Duncan Brown which, at one point looked like a foregone conclusion, but turned into one of the closest sets of the season which Richard won 14-12 in the fifth after 106 points. Morpeth go into the doubles 5-4 up and it's another close finish with Morpeth scraping home 11-6 in the fifth. Good match but, looking back, I suspect Employment might have felt a draw was a fairer result. In contrast, Insurance also played twice this week and saw two losses! Nat West are hard opponents for anyone and this is the sort of fixture where any points would be a success for Insurance. Seven sets ended three straight to Nat West. Ian Cranstone took an end off Gareth Jones but Albert Francis was determined to not go home early and put up stubborn resistance against Jones and Herbert. Albert's set against Chris Herbert was another contender for longest set of the season. 112 hard-fought points before a winner was determined and that winner was Chris Herbert 11-6 in the fifth. Castaways made light work of Outcasts, beating them 10-0. It was the first fixture of the season where Outcasts had failed to score. In truth, they didn't look like winning a set all evening. All ten sets ended three straight. Sparta started the season well and looked good in their first three matches.

Since then they've faltered a bit and their cause was not helped by having only two players against PRO. Despite this there were some close sets. Ian Buchanan took the first two ends against Peter Tokely and was 9-5 up in the fourth with the win in sight. That prompted an impressive comeback from Peter taking the next six points and winning the end 11-9. The fifth end went on and on, reached 10-10 when Ian sneaked ahead to win the set 13-11. In a week where long sets were commonplace, here was another that topped the 100 points' mark, 105 points were played in that instance. Later in the evening Peter scored Sparta's lone victory of the night – a defeat of Ronnie Turner by 11-6 in the fifth. A 9-1 win for PRO and their second win on the trot. Final match of the week is a clash between the bottom two teams: Comets and Treasury B. Both have had selection problems this season so it was no surprise that only five players were involved – Treasury had two players. For Comets, Steve Fagan breezed through the match without breaking sweat. Steve Codrington won one and lost one – to David Shore in a close set that finished 11-8 in the fifth. Greg Gargrupe beat Bryan Gittens and faced David Shore. First end goes to Greg at 12-10. Second end goes to David at 18-16 – the season longest single end of the season. The third end saw Greg get his nose in front again by a 12-10 scoreline. The fourth end was for strong men only as nothing could separate the two players as the score grew and grew. It ended in a 16-14 win for David to level the match at two ends each. Have you noticed something? We've played four ends and everyone has ended at deuce! At this point any fair man would have called it a draw but on we go into the fifth end knowing one player is facing certain disappointment at losing such a close game. Now my experience of close matches like this is that the fifth end will usually end in a runaway victory for one player or another nail-biting finish. Nothing in between. Well, by the time we'd played a dozen points it was clear it was not going to be a runaway. Almost inevitably, we reached deuce again. In the end, it was David who secured those vital last two points to win the end 12-10. Congratulations to David but huge kudos to Greg for putting up such a valiant fight. It was a pity someone had to lose. As the dust settled, the enormity of this set sunk home. It was the first set ever in the history of the Division where five ends were played and all finished at deuce. It smashed by some margin the record for the most points played in a set with an all-time Division record of an extraordinary 130 points. Phew! All that rather overshadowed the fact Comets won 8-2.

Some shuffling of positions in the table. No significant change at the top but PRO move up and Comets open a gap on their relegation rivals Treasury B. Not a good week for the newly promoted teams which each fell back a bit. There's a lot of bunching in the playing averages and I suspect it will take to the end of the half for a representative picture to emerge.

Next week sees difficult fixtures for Sparta and Outcasts while Insurance will hope to take sets off Employment. Morpeth should be too strong for Comets but that match certainly won't be one-sided. And Treasury B, still looking for their first match win, must take sets off PRO if they are to avoid worsening their relegation prospects.

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AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥ 8 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
Catt	NAT WEST	11	12	91.7
McKee	CASTAWAYS	11	12	91.7
Harris	CASTAWAYS	8	9	88.9
Fagan	COMETS	12	14	85.7
Herbert	NAT WEST	10	12	83.3
Bekele	MORPETH	9	12	75.0
Grant	CASTAWAYS	6	8	75.0
Persaud	TREASURY A	8	11	72.7
Blyuss	MORPETH	8	12	66.7
Baylis	EMPLOYMENT	6	9	66.7
Chambers	MORPETH	6	9	66.7
Giuffrida	TREASURY A	6	9	66.7

Crawford	PRO	11	17	64.7
Evans	SPARTA	9	14	64.3
Wong	TREASURY A	9	14	64.3
Fung	TREASURY A	7	11	63.6
LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	12	20	60.0
Mak	EMPLOYMENT	8	14	57.1
Turner	PRO	8	14	57.1
Jones	NAT WEST	10	18	55.6
Shore	TREASURY B	10	18	55.6
Brown	MORPETH	5	9	55.6
Johansson	MORPETH	5	9	55.6
Tokely	SPARTA	8	15	53.3
Macalister	OUTCASTS	6	12	50.0
Hattrill	SPARTA	4	8	50.0
Jameson	OUTCASTS	4	9	44.4
Francis	INSURANCE	9	21	42.9
Cranstone	INSURANCE	6	18	33.3
Roullier	OUTCASTS	5	15	33.3
Buchanan	PRO	4	14	28.6
Velinor	INSURANCE	5	18	27.8
Jones	OUTCASTS	3	12	25.0
Gargrupe	COMETS	2	14	14.3
Hawkes	EMPLOYMENT	1	8	12.5
Gittens	TREASURY B	2	21	9.5
Okai	TREASURY B	1	12	8.3