

LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 10

AS AT 9 DECEMBER 2018

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
CASTAWAYS	9	7	2	76	14	27	103
TREASURY A	9	5	1	60	30	27	87
MORPETH	8	7	1	59	21	24	83
NAT WEST	9	4	2	53	37	27	80
COMETS	9	5	1	51	39	27	78
EMPLOYMENT	9	5	1	50	40	27	77
PRO	7	4	0	38	32	21	59
INSURANCE	8	2	1	29	51	24	53
BTB	9	1	1	20	70	27	47
SPARTA	8	1	1	21	59	21	42
DIT	9	0	1	13	77	27	40

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

Week 10

This week begins with the battle at the bottom of the division - BTB versus DIT - and a good battle it was too. Four sets each needed five ends and just one set ended three straight. BTB brought in Denis O'Riordan who only plays occasionally but his presence made all the difference. He had beaten both Goodman and Miller last time he played them in 2015-16 so this was a shrewd move for BTB. Denis began with a win in four ends over Florian Gazheli. He then had a real ding-dong against Simon Goodman that could have gone either way but finished 11-6 in the fifth in Denis's favour. He capped off the evening with a four-end win over Graham Miller. These were all good contests and DIT had a fighting chance in every case. Rishi Sinarain also won three but his sets were even closer. A win in four ends over Goodman proved to be his easiest contest. Graham Miller pushed him all the way but couldn't quite make it and lost 11-6 in the fifth. Rishi's last set - against Gazheli - was closer still. Gazheli came as near as you can to winning but in a cruel last throw of the dice lost 12-10 in the fifth. The score says 7-3 to BTB but, on another night, it could have been 5-5 or even 6-4 in DIT's favour. Congratulations to BTB for their first win and well played to DIT but it wasn't your night. The next result surprised me. Sparta, fresh from last week's standout draw with Nat West, came down with a mighty crash against Employment. I wasn't expecting Sparta to win but to lose 10-0...??? It was a clean sweep for Baylis, McKee and Jermyn. McKee again didn't break sweat and now has a run of 12 straight singles victories. Anita Jermyn had a close game with Peter Tokely that she won 11-4 in the fifth. Tokely and Mandy John won two ends each and Mike Loveder - having beaten Chris Herbert last week - came away without winning a single end. A surprisingly one-sided victory. If that result raised an eyebrow the next result caused my jaw to drop. It's Castaways taking on Nat West. Pete Harris is Castaways' bedrock but in this match he faced two players who had previously beaten him - Tony Catt and Adam Johnson. Gareth Jones opened against Pat Caunt and took the first two ends. At 10-10 in the third the first upset of the night looked likely. But Caunt rallied and stole the end 12-10. That proved to be the turning point and Caunt ran away with the next two ends to win the set. First blood to Castaways. Set two and it was Johnson versus Harris. Pete wins the first two ends comfortably but loses the third 11-8. The set looked over in the fourth end but Johnson hung on to win it 13-11. That seemed to spur Harris on to still greater things and he raced through the deciding end to win it 11-4. 2-0 to Castaways, both won in five ends, and crucially Harris's win gives them the first "match turning" victory. Set three saw Tony Catt face LeMilliere. You have to fancy Tony in this contest but Neil did beat him a couple of seasons ago and it can get close. Well, the set was over in the blink

of an eye, three straight, and it's Neil who wins it. Cometh the hour, cometh the man! Pat Caunt has had his occasional wobbles for Castaways but in set four he pulls off another inspirational win, beating Johnson in four. By now, nothing was going to stop Castaways. Pete Harris beat Catt in four and LeMilliere brushed Johnson aside three straight. Everything was going Castaways' way. Best of the remaining sets saw Caunt face Catt, which went all the way to a fifth end and 10-10. Clearly, the table tennis Gods had decreed that Castaways were not to lose a set that night and Pat wins it 13-11! The same happened in the doubles when Nat West appeared to have a chance only for Castaways to pinch it 11-5 in the fifth. The result was 10-0 to Castaways in a match I thought they might lose. You have to go back to the 2014-15 season for the last time Nat West lost 10-0. I have nothing but praise for Castaways – this was a crunch match and, boy, were they on their A game! Much praise justifiably goes to Pete Harris but he can't win matches on his own so I single out Caunt and LeMilliere for the highest praise. Four sets went to five ends, Castaways won them all, and LeMilliere registered the perfect maximum – three wins, all three straight – in a high-quality encounter. Pete Harris's unbeaten streak extends to 15 straight victories, just behind Samson Bekele who's on 17 straight wins. Some performance! Insurance took a bit of a pounding last week against Morpeth and this week faced an uphill battle against a strong Treasury side. Perry Fung did his usual demolition job on Cranstone and Velinor but dropped his first end of the season in beating Albert Francis in four. Winston Wong was in good form and won three, dropping one end, to Francis. Best sets of the night involved Giovanni Giuffrida. He was 2-1 down on ends to Francis but levelled in the fourth. We seem to have reached deuce in the fifth so many times this season and we did so again here. Who came out in front? It was Francis, 12-10 after 97 points. Final singles set saw Ian Cranstone and Giovanni locked together at two ends all. Into the fifth end we go and, surprise, surprise, we're at 10-10 again. Now, after last week's nightmare loss to Bekele, you could forgive Ian for feeling the table tennis Gods, who smiled so benevolently on Castaways this week, were probably going to be looking away at this moment. But, no, Ian managed to win the next two points to pull off a victory. One win each for Francis and Cranstone make the match result 8-2 to Treasury. Tough luck for Giuffrida losing two sets at 12-10 in the fifth. Sometimes this game just doesn't seem fair! Final match of the week saw PRO's slide down the table continue with a 7-3 loss to Comets. One bright spot for PRO – Ronnie Turner's ongoing good form as he beat both Steve Codrington and Ian Francis. Good wins! In contrast, John Crawford was left uncharacteristically winless. Closest sets of the night were Codrington beating George Buck in five ends and the doubles, where PRO's doubles revival continues with a narrow 11-9 in the fifth victory. Steve Fagan, back on form, won all three for Comets.

Castaways open a big gap at the top but Morpeth have a match in hand. Next week Castaways take on Employment where sets might be dropped if Employment field their best team. Morpeth face Treasury - a really big fixture for both teams if they want to match Castaways. Bekele's 100% record must be in danger in that contest and will we see Alex Luk again? At the bottom, BTB's first win takes them out of the relegation placings. Sparta are not finding it easy to get away from the bottom of the table. This week Sparta face DIT in a "must win" match for both clubs. BTB play Insurance and the formbook installs Insurance as favourites for a 6-4 or 7-3 outcome. That takes us to the Xmas break and time to reflect on what we've learned in the first half.

RICHARD CAMPBELL
DIVISIONAL SECRETARY

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AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥9 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
Bekele	MORPETH	17	17	100.0
Luk	MORPETH	9	9	100.0
Harris	CASTAWAYS	17	18	94.4
McKee	EMPLOYMENT	13	15	86.7
LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	23	27	85.2
McKee	CASTAWAYS	10	12	83.3
Caunt	CASTAWAYS	7	9	77.8
Hodges	EMPLOYMENT	7	9	77.8

Penrose	NAT WEST	7	9	77.8
Sweeney	MORPETH	7	9	77.8
Herbert	NAT WEST	16	21	76.2
Jermyn	EMPLOYMENT	9	12	75.0
Turner	PRO	13	18	72.2
Baylis	EMPLOYMENT	15	21	71.4
Wong	TREASURY A	15	21	71.4
Francis	COMETS	16	24	66.7
Evans	SPARTA	10	15	66.7
Robinson	TREASURY A	10	15	66.7
Wroe	CASTAWAYS	6	9	66.7
Brown	MORPETH	7	11	63.6
Codrington	COMETS	17	27	63.0
Catt	NAT WEST	9	15	60.0
Crawford	PRO	9	15	60.0
Persaud	PRO	7	12	58.3
Fagan	COMETS	11	21	52.4
Cranstone	INSURANCE	12	24	50.0
Chambers	MORPETH	7	14	50.0
Jones	NAT WEST	10	21	47.6
Giuffrida	TREASURY A	8	18	44.4
Jones	TREASURY A	4	9	44.4
Loveder	SPARTA	4	9	44.4
Francis	INSURANCE	10	24	41.7
Sinarain	BTB	8	21	38.1
Velinor	INSURANCE	4	21	19.0
Waterhouse	BTB	4	21	19.0
Miller	DIT	3	21	14.3
Tokely	SPARTA	3	21	14.3
Xavier	BTB	3	21	14.3
Gazheli	DIT	3	23	13.0
Mehta	DIT	1	11	9.1
Goodman	DIT	2	23	8.7
Buck	PRO	1	12	8.3
Burrows	EMPLOYMENT	1	12	8.3
John	SPARTA	1	15	6.7
Roberts	BTB	1	15	6.7