

LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 10

AS AT 12 FEBRUARY 2023

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
COMETS A	9	8	0	73	17	27	100
CASTAWAYS	9	6	2	65	25	27	92
NAT WEST	10	6	2	60	40	30	90
MORPETH A	10	4	3	56	44	30	86
COMETS B	8	4	1	40	40	24	64
OUTCASTS	10	2	0	30	70	30	60
PRO	9	2	2	31	59	27	58
GOOD KARMA	9	0	0	15	75	27	42

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 19

This week begins with Morpeth against PRO. This was a draw in the first half. PRO's team included Jai Persaud in place of George Buck along with Crawford and Turner, while Morpeth brought in Ettore Miuccio in place of Duncan Brown, joining Toan To and Chris Alexander. On balance those team changes probably edge the match in Morpeth's favour. The first two sets passed without drama and both went to Morpeth three straight. First, To beat Crawford and then Miuccio got the better of Persaud. Next up, Turner against Alexander. This was a very odd set. It went to five ends, two ends finished 11-1 and 11-2 and they were won by the player who lost the set overall! How can that happen? The other three ends – 9, 8, and 5 – were won by Chris Alexander, reversing Ronnie's first half defeat by him. Very strange! Ettore Miuccio's debut in this division came with an eye-catching maximum at Castaways in the first half. Since then, he's rarely lost – only Comets A have given him trouble. The first three ends in his set against John Crawford went in John's favour by two ends to one. Ettore levelled the set and took us into a deciding end. The outcome was narrow miss for Crawford, going down 11-9 in the fifth. That was followed by another five-ender when Turner came up against To. The set progressed exactly as the previous set had done – PRO in front after three ends, the set goes to a deciding end and Turner ends up losing 11-8 in the fifth. That's two successive sets PRO have lost from winning positions and Morpeth are 5-0 up! It was left to Jai Persaud to get PRO on the scoreboard and he did that with a win over Alexander in four. Miuccio then comfortably beat Turner to complete his maximum, leaving Turner winless for just the second time this season. In the last two sets, Crawford got the better of Alexander and To also posted a maximum with a win over Persaud. The doubles proved to be a good contest but again PRO were in front after three ends and ended up losing 15-13 in the fifth after 102 points. That's the second successive week PRO have lost the doubles in five! Turner's two five-enders cement his position as the player most likely to go to five in this division. So, an 8-2 win for Morpeth in an unsatisfactory night for PRO where they just didn't seem able to convert those good starts into positive finishes!

I hinted last week that Nat West might have trouble against Comets B so it was a bold move for Nat West to go into the match without Chris Penrose. Andrew Muller stepped in for Penrose, to join Jones and Johnson. Comets B had a handy team out: Luu, Bhangoo and Adesanya. The first two sets were almost perfect copies of each other. Nat West are in front after three ends. They lose the fourth by a whisker and suddenly a potential win subsides into a fifth end loss. The two victims were Muller – losing to Luu after 95 points – and Jones – losing to

Bhangoo also after 95 points! 2-0 to Comets when it might have been 2-0 to Nat West! I think the next set had a huge influence on the match outcome. Tai Luu came to the table to face Adam Johnson. There is nothing in the past to suggest this will be anything other than a win for Johnson. And yet Luu sat down the winner in no time at all – three straight, to rub salt in the wound. Amazing, a prize win! Nat West could be forgiven for feeling deflated after a start like this. 3-0 to Comets and it got worse and worse for Nat West. When Comets won the doubles, it brought to an end an 8-2 loss for Nat West – their two came from Adam Johnson. Nat West got hit by the fifth end jinx – four sets went to five and Comets won every one! Both Muller and Jones lost to Adesanya in five by the narrowest of margins. One of those strange nights when you “narrowly” lose 8-2! Pats on the back for Comets though. An excellent team effort!

Outcasts have a real challenge this week, facing the all-conquering Comets A. You have to feel doubly sorry for them when in walks the strongest team Comets can field – Cain and Steve Fagan plus Laikram Persaud. Facing this Herculean challenge are Alan Jones, Nabil Chair and Eddie Roullier. The fairest thing to do is quickly draw a veil over the outcome. Two sets went beyond the third end in what became a bit of a procession. Cain Fagan looked on course to break the record for the fewest points conceded in one night until he dropped an end to Chair. Roullier managed to take an end off Steve Fagan. Persaud was his usual miserly self, hardly breaking sweat. Outcasts fought hard and never gave up but I suspect this is a match they’d rather not dwell on.

Given the outcome of the previous match, nothing less than a 10-0 victory would ensure Castaways did not lose ground on Comets A. Castaways’ opponents were Good Karma who fielded Jason Killip, Michael Miller and Xavier Zhao. The Castaways’ trio entrusted with not dropping a set were LeMilliere, McKee and Bispham. The first set – McKee against Killip – was a real humdinger! Things were looking good for Castaways as McKee takes the first two ends. Killip responds by taking the third but finds himself in real trouble at 10-10 in the fourth. Is this the end? The answer was “no” as Jason comes home at 13-11. Having escaped that, Jason finds himself 10-7 down in the fifth. Is this the end? Surely must be. Well, 10-7 became 10-8, and 10-9, and 10-10. You need nerves of steel to watch this let alone play in it! 10-10 becomes 10-11 and Jason’s in front for the first time. And the next point goes to.....Jason, and he’s pulled off the great escape. So many set points saved! 101 points played, of which Terry won 52 and Jason 49, but Jason won the points that matter. Great comeback win! That drama was followed by two fairly routine wins for Castaways: Bispham beating Miller and LeMilliere beating Zhao. Back to the drama again as Killip faces Bispham. In a week of repeats, there followed another repeat as Bispham is ahead after three ends only for Killip to take the next end by a crushing 11-1. Is he going to pull off another comeback? Into the deciding end, and everything’s going Jason’s way as he takes another scalp 11-6 in the fifth. Castaways pick up the next three sets to make the score 5-2 in their favour. Now it’s LeMilliere’s turn to take on Killip. The pattern departs from Jason’s other sets in that he wins the first end. But promptly loses the next two! So, once again, we begin the fourth end with Jason fighting for his life. Could he do it again? At this point, Jason’s heroics come to an end as Neil keeps steady to win the end and the set 11-6. That’s a good win for Neil, I don’t remember him beating Jason before. The remaining sets were uneventful and Castaways emerge the winners 8-2. A good result for them but not good enough to increase the pressure on Comets A.

Next week it’s Nat West who try to stop Comets A’s progress. Should be interesting! Castaways have an apparently easier challenge against PRO – though not a challenge to be underestimated!

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AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥ 11 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
Penrose	NAT WEST	18	18	100.0
Persaud	COMETS A	14	15	93.3
C Fagan	COMETS A	10	11	90.9
Loveder	CASTAWAYS	10	12	83.3
McKee	CASTAWAYS	10	12	83.3

S Fagan	COMETS A	18	23	78.3
Adesanya	COMETS B	9	12	75.0
Johnson	NAT WEST	9	12	75.0
Wong	COMETS A	9	12	75.0
LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	20	27	74.1
Miuccio	MORPETH A	10	14	71.4
Francis	COMETS A	12	17	70.6
Bispham	CASTAWAYS	16	24	66.7
Chair	OUTCASTS	10	15	66.7
Alnak	MORPETH A	9	15	60.0
Turner	PRO	14	24	58.3
Herbert	NAT WEST	7	12	58.3
Luu	COMETS B	7	12	58.3
Brown	MORPETH A	14	26	53.8
Crawford	PRO	11	21	52.4
Alexander	MORPETH A	6	12	50.0
To	MORPETH A	8	17	47.1
Coull	OUTCASTS	7	15	46.7
Bhangoo	COMETS B	6	15	40.0
Jones	NAT WEST	9	24	37.5
Jameson	OUTCASTS	3	12	25.0
Muller	NAT WEST	3	12	25.0
Miller	GOOD KARMA	3	12	25.0
Persaud	PRO	4	21	19.0
Roullier	OUTCASTS	2	15	13.3
Zhao	GOOD KARMA	2	15	13.3
Jones	OUTCASTS	1	12	8.3
Buck	PRO	1	15	6.7