

LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 13

AS AT 13 FEBRUARY 2022

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
COMETS	9	9	0	76	14	27	103
NAT WEST	10	5	2	54	46	30	84
MORPETH A	9	5	1	50	40	27	77
CASTAWAYS	8	5	1	46	34	24	70
PRO	10	1	2	39	58	30	69
GOOD KARMA	8	1	1	23	57	24	47
OUTCASTS	8	1	1	19	61	24	43

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_21-22/Division_One

COMMENTARY

Week 17

After their first win last week, Karma had a mountain to climb this week, facing Comets. This really wasn't about whether they could win the match but more about whether they could they take any sets. That prospect looked even gloomier when in walked Persaud, Fung and Fagan, probably Comets' strongest threesome. Karma were unchanged from last week: Fremion, Link and Zhao. Fremion, last week's hero, opened against Fung. It didn't last long – Perry cantered home three straight. Next came Ben Link against Steve Fagan. Steve won the first end but Ben levelled it, taking the second. Was this the chance for Karma to notch up a win? It didn't take long to answer that question as Steve went up a gear and took the next two ends fairly comfortably. The next four sets all went Comets' way, in each case three straight. The seventh set began in the same way as Persaud comfortably won the first end against Link. Ben then stopped the rot by winning the second end comfortably. The remainder of the set went the same way as the earlier contest with Fagan. Laikram accelerated and Ben just couldn't keep pace losing the next two ends in a matter of minutes. Karma did have one more success when Fremion pinched an end off Fagan but that was as good as it got. 10-0 to Comets, their third clean sweep of the season. Perry Fung was awarded Player of the Match, hardly breaking sweat in winning his three, dropping an average of five points an end.

Castaways' low position in the division is in part due to the fact they've played fewer matches. This week they set off on a run of fixtures that ought to see them rise up the table. First chance to get that going was against Outcasts. The combatants were Guimichev, Chair and Jones for Outcasts, and LeMilliere, Loveder and Harris for Castaways. First up was Guimichev against LeMilliere. Much to my surprise this was over in a flash, a convincing three straight win for LeMilliere. Impressive! The next set looked to be a much closer contest as Nabil Chair took on Mike Loveder. Nabil took the first end easily and the second end at deuce. Mike fought back to win the third and we're thinking "win two, lose two". Alert to that possibility, Nabil took charge of the fourth end and soon had an 11-6 lead to win the set and level the match score. Two quick three straight victories followed. Harris was too strong for Alan Jones and LeMilliere narrowly beat Chair. A good win for Neil as he has previously lost to Nabil. Harris then registered his second win, dropping one end to Guimichev. The match was running away from Outcasts. Things got worse as Loveder beat Jones in three and Harris completed his maximum for the loss of one end to Chair. The next set saw LeMilliere register a maximum too, beating Alan Jones. With the score at 7-1 to Castaways the final singles set brought Guimichev and Loveder to the table. Neither was having their best night. Petko takes the first two ends. Mike needs to make a big effort now. But it soon became clear it was not going to be Mike's night as he went further and further behind to lose the end 11-3 and with it the set. Castaways went on to win the doubles making the match outcome 8-2 to Castaways.

Last match of the week sees PRO's latest attempt to beat a rival team. This time it's Nat West who stand in their way. In the first half Nat West fielded Tony Catt and that was enough to give them a 7-3 win. In the reverse fixture their team was Herbert, Jones and Muller. PRO field Crawford and Turner most weeks, rotating Buck and Persaud at number three. It was Jai who turned out this week. PRO made a great start! In the first set John Crawford covered himself in glory, beating Herbert in four ends. That's the sort of 50:50 set that PRO must win if they are to beat Nat West. Good things continue for PRO in set two as Jai Persaud beat Gareth Jones in four ends. Best possible start for PRO. The next set is another 50:50 contest. Andrew Muller beat Ronnie Turner in the first half but it was mighty close. Could he do it again? First end went to Andrew but that was quickly countered by Ronnie. The third end was key and it couldn't have been closer. It reached deuce before Ronnie took the next two points to gain the upper hand. The fourth end went to Andrew and so we're back to level pegging and going to a deciding end. When the dust settled it was Andrew who claimed the victory, a hard-fought 11-7 in the fifth. This was just as close a contest as in the first half and the scores were almost identical. In the first half Andrew won 7-11, 11-8, 10-12, 11-8, 11-7 and in the second half 11-7, 5-11, 10-12, 11-7, 11-7. Extraordinary similarity! John Crawford then beat Gareth Jones and PRO lead 3-1. First win in sight? Time for Chris Herbert to shine. Over the years I think he has the edge on Ronnie Turner. On this occasion, Ronnie won the first end but Chris took the next three to make the score 3-2. Andrew Muller is clearly the man in form and Jai Persaud didn't keep him long, losing three straight. Nat West have pulled back to 3-3. Ronnie Turner then proved too strong for Gareth Jones and PRO regain the lead 4-3. The next set was crucial – Muller against Crawford. Let's see what the formbook says. It reveals their current season averages are nearly identical. Each has beaten the other in the past. In short, this is a coin toss! Muller's good form continues as he wins the first two ends fairly comfortably. If John's got anything left in the locker, he needs to produce it now. The vital third end went point for point before reaching 10-10. At that point, for the second week running, the table tennis Gods turned their back on John as Andrew took the next two points to win the set three straight. It's 4-4 and Jai Persaud is up against Chris Herbert. The first two ends were shared. The third end proved to be a real dogfight. All the way to deuce, on through 13-13 and 15-15, reaching 16-16 before a winner emerged. Who was that winner – it was Chris! That proved to be decisive and Chris went on to take the next end and the set. PRO had gone from 3-1 up to 4-5 down! The doubles proved to be the closest and most hotly contested set of the night. It went to five. The scores were 12-14, 11-2, 11-13, 13-11, 11-8! PRO were two ends to one up, came as close as you can to winning the fourth end, lost that and went on to lose fifth too. 106 points played. Heartbreak! A 6-4 loss for PRO and still the first win eludes them. Lots of "what might been" moments to talk about in the pub later! A resounding pat on the back for Andrew Muller for his three wins. His first ever maximum in this division earns him the Player of the Match award! Excellent match!

On to next week with lots of questions still to be answered. Can anyone get near Comets? Who's going to take second spot? Can PRO win a match? And which team will end up propping up the Division? Lots still to play for!

RICHARD CAMPBELL
DIVISIONAL SECRETARY

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AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥11 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
Fung	COMETS	16	17	94.1
Persaud	COMETS	16	17	94.1
Catt	NAT WEST	14	15	93.3
Harris	CASTAWAYS	11	12	91.7
Wong	COMETS	10	12	83.3
Fagan	COMETS	13	16	81.3
Bekele	MORPETH A	17	22	77.3
Francis	COMETS	9	13	69.2

LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	14	24	58.3
Herbert	NAT WEST	11	21	52.4
Robertson	MORPETH A	8	16	50.0
Loveder	CASTAWAYS	6	12	50.0
Sanders	GOOD KARMA	6	12	50.0
Crawford	PRO	13	27	48.1
Muller	NAT WEST	10	21	47.6
Alnak	MORPETH A	5	11	45.5
Blyuss	MORPETH A	5	11	45.5
Turner	PRO	12	27	44.4
Link	GOOD KARMA	6	18	33.3
Guimichev	OUTCASTS	4	12	33.3
Persaud	PRO	4	12	33.3
Jones	NAT WEST	7	30	23.3
Zhao	GOOD KARMA	3	18	16.7
Roullier	OUTCASTS	2	12	16.7