

AS AT SEASON END

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
CREDEX	20	18	0	174	26	60	234
CASTAWAYS	20	18	0	168	32	60	228
TREASURY A	20	14	0	128	72	60	188
NAT WEST	20	12	2	125	75	60	185
MORPETH	20	13	0	122	78	60	182
EMPLOYMENT	20	10	1	100	100	57	157
COMETS	20	9	2	96	104	57	153
PRO	20	6	3	87	113	60	147
TREASURY B	20	4	0	54	146	60	114
BTB	20	1	0	26	174	60	86
SEDCOPIANS	20	1	0	20	180	57	77

Bonus points shown in penultimate column. Ultimate column shows total points from sets won and bonuses

THINGS TO NOTE

- ✓ Commentary on the season's final week and review of the season
- ✓ My thanks to team captains for sending results in promptly and for proving the comments that are the basis of my weekly commentaries.
- ✓ AGM date and arrangements for next season to follow.

COMMENTARY**Week 28**

And so, after 19 matches stretching back to the end of September 2016, the title race came down to the final match of the final week of the season - Credex versus Castaways. The drama began even before the first ball was served, as it emerged that the injury Andy Nash sustained in the previous week meant he couldn't be risked for this match. A hammer blow for Castaways as Andy would have been an automatic selection. The first set of the night involved the top two players in the averages: Adewale versus Harris. The set scores were close but Harris could never get his nose in front and went down three straight. That triggered a run of four straight losses for Castaways and the writing was on the wall as they only managed to win one end in those four singles. Then followed the best set of the night as Harris faced Persaud. Pete was looking good having taken the first two ends but Laikram fought back to win the third and fourth ends. A real nail biter in the fifth as the players swapped points as the score moved towards the apparently inevitable deuce-in-the-fifth scenario. As the points played out it didn't quite get that far with Harris squeezing home by 11-9. A very close set! Next set was another victory for Credex as Perry Fung beat Neil LeMilliere by a surprisingly comfortable three straight. Next came the longest set of the night as Keld Jakslund fought really hard against Persaud but lost 11-5 in the fifth. Pete Harris scored a consolation win over but Perry Fung but the title race was over with Credex running out the winner by 8-2. Heartbreak for Castaways, for the second successive year being top at halfway but being overhauled by Credex in the second half. To put Credex's comeback in perspective, since Christmas they contested 100 sets and won 94 of them! Treasury A finish third, their final match being a whitewash of BTB. Eight sets finished three straight with Jeremy Jones dropping an end to both Xavier and Roberts. Nat West finish fourth, a very creditable performance given their team selection problems this season. They took on Employment and won 7-3. This was a good match. Chis Herbert beat Paul Baylis in four very close ends. Anita Jermyn put up a good fight against Tony Catt, losing 14-12 in the fourth. And, closest of all, Richard Mak going down 11-5 in the fifth against Herbert. Morpeth come next in the table, finishing with a 10-0 defeat of BTB. This wasn't plain sailing for Morpeth and oddly it was their best player Sammy Bekele who struggled. Doug Lavis matched him all the way over four ends but came apart in the fifth, losing 11-4. Alec Fenn was two ends to one up against Bekele and came within two points of winning the set only to be edged out 11-6 in in the fifth. Treasury B completed a disappointing season

with a 7-3 loss to a two-man Comets team. For Comets, Steve Fagan won all his sets three straight. Steve Codrington did the same but dropped an end to both Okai and Colgan and really rode his luck against David Shore, winning a long set 11-9 in the fifth. Best set of the night was a very even doubles which Treasury lost 11-9 in the fifth, having won the first two ends!

The closest finish ever to a season in Division One. The best team won but Castaways put up an impressive fight. With Adewale in the team, Credex usually started 4-0 up against everyone. Third to fifth positions were very close with just six points separating them. Credit to Treasury A for finishing top of the bunch and up from fifth place last season. In Chris Penrose, Nat West have the second strongest player in the Division and they had to use him more than usual this season with Samuels and Herbert out of action for much of the time. Not the easiest of seasons for Nat West but well done in fulfilling all their fixtures. In fifth spot, we find Morpeth who were involved in some of the most entertaining matches of the season. They have a strong squad but I think this strange phenomenon – intended or otherwise - of rarely fielding the same three players in two successive matches probably works against them finishing higher. Employment and Comets have been neck and neck all season but Employment just come home in front. Baylis and McKee are capable of winning one or two sets most weeks and combined with the ever-present Richard Mak and an improved contribution from Anita Jermyn made for a very satisfactory season with a noticeably better second half than first half. Comets, on the other hand, are all about the two Steves. Steve Fagan was the highest player in the averages other than players from Credex and Castaways. Steve Codrington is a solid number two but they need a regular number three to go any further. PRO started well but then fell away a bit after Christmas. They won six matches – all against the teams finishing beneath them – and that kept them well away from the relegation zone. A bit like PRO, Treasury B won four matches, all against teams beneath them. The margins of those wins provide ample evidence that they were better than the teams in the relegation positions. I have a lot of respect for Old Seds and BTB. They battled on throughout despite being on the wrong end of most matches. BTB have a settled squad and field Roberts, Xavier and Waterhouse almost every week. It is to their credit that in only one match did they fail to field three players. Seds have a bigger squad which, despite finishing well adrift, was more capable of surprise wins and near misses than BTB. Only in the last two matches of the season did they fail to field a full team. All in all, a very interesting season!

The 2016-17 season in facts and figures

Champions: Credex

Runners up: Castaways

Relegation positions: Old Seds and BTB

Top of the averages: Ade Adewale

Longest unbeaten streak: Ade Adewale

Best doubles team: Credex (19 wins from 20), Castaways (16 from 20) and Nat West (16 out of 21)

Players involved: 71 different players appeared this season from the 11 teams involved. Somewhat higher than last season.

Most Player of the Match awards: Steve Fagan with nine awards.

Played in every match: No one

Most appearances: Xavier, Waterhouse, Mak and Perry Fung all played in 19 of the 20 matches.

Biggest squad: Nat West with ten players

Smallest squad: Treasury B and BTB each with five players

Longest set: the doubles between Nat West and Morpeth involved 115 points (that's closer than all five ends ending 12-10).

Match involving most five-enders: Six sets went to five when Morpeth played Treasury A

Matches in which all six players registered at least one victory: Happened once – Morpeth versus Nat West

Fewest points in a five-ender: 77 points when Treasury A played the doubles against Comets

Great escapes: George Buck beating Rod Fitzgerald from 10—4 down in the fifth. Perry Fung saving a hatful of match points against Paul Baylis.

Upset of the season?: George Buck beating Adam Johnson three straight!!

Memorable team performances: PRO drawing with Nat West. Nat West beating both Castaways and Credex. Morpeth getting so close to NatWest. Morpeth beating Treasury A despite an injured Sammy Bekele. Treasury A beating Nat West 6-4. And Castaways 7-3 win over Credex in the first half.

Outstanding individual performances:

John Crawford beating Les Samuels

Adam Johnson and Chris Herbert beating Pete Harris. Adam went on to beat Perry Fung and Laikram Persaud.

Ronnie Turner beating Steve Fagan and Neil LeMilliere

Les Samuels defeating Persaud and Nelson from Credex and Chris Penrose's maximum in the same match

Giovanni Giuffrida's wins over Tony Catt and Andy Nash

Anita Jermyn's wins at PRO

Nabil Chair's defeat of Perry Fung

Sammy Bekele's wins over Chris Penrose, Les Samuels and Perry Fung

Oleg Blyuss denting Chris Herbert's perfect record

Bryan Gittens' win over Jai Persaud

Chris McKee blowing away Winston Wong three straight

Doug Lavis beating Steve Codrington

Richard Mak's win over Pat Caunt

Most improved average over the previous season: George Buck turned his 3.1% average in 2015/16 to 23.1% this season. Andy Nash improved to 90.6% this season from 75.8% last season.

About one match in three ended 10-0 this season. In contrast, 4% of matches were drawn.

Match result	10-0	9-1	8-2	7-3	6-4	5-5
% of all results	34%	16%	18%	13%	15%	4%

In some 18% of all matches, fewer than six players participated. Comets conceded more sets than any other team (15 sets conceded) while Credex had the most sets conceded to them (12 sets).

See you next season!

RICHARD CAMPBELL
DIVISIONAL SECRETARY

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AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥ 24 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
Adewale	CREDEX	27	27	100.0
Harris	CASTAWAYS	45	49	91.8
Nash	CASTAWAYS	29	32	90.6
Herbert	NAT WEST	21	24	87.5
Persaud	CREDEX	27	31	87.1
P Fung	CREDEX	45	53	84.9
Fagan	COMETS	36	43	83.7
Wong	TREASURY A	28	35	80.0
LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	32	41	78.0
Jaksland	CASTAWAYS	20	26	76.9
Nelson	CREDEX	19	25	76.0
Bekele	MORPETH	28	37	75.7
Samuels	NAT WEST	20	27	74.1
Blyuss	MORPETH	28	42	66.7
Baylis	EMPLOYMENT	18	29	62.1
Crawford	PRO	29	47	61.7
McKee	EMPLOYMENT	20	33	60.6

Codrington	COMETS	29	53	54.7
Giuffrida	TREASURY A	24	44	54.5
Brown	MORPETH	20	37	54.1
Jones	TREASURY A	25	48	52.1
Dight	TREASURY B	18	35	51.4
Jermyn	EMPLOYMENT	18	35	51.4
Persaud	PRO	20	39	51.3
Mak	EMPLOYMENT	27	54	50.0
Jones	NAT WEST	22	46	47.8
Turner	PRO	19	42	45.2
Shore	TREASURY B	16	49	32.7
Sinarain	COMETS	7	29	24.1
Buck	PRO	9	39	23.1
Lavis	SEDCOPIANS	6	33	18.2
Fitzgerald	SEDCOPIANS	7	42	16.7
Waterhouse	BTB	8	56	14.3
Mason	SEDCOPIANS	3	24	12.5
Xavier	BTB	6	54	11.1
Okai	TREASURY B	2	31	6.5
Gittens	TREASURY B	2	36	5.6
Roberts	BTB	2	48	4.2
Fenn	SEDCOPIANS	1	27	3.7
Salmon	SEDCOPIANS	0	36	0.0