

LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 6

AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2023

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
CASTAWAYS	7	4	3	48	22	21	69
COMETS A	5	3	2	38	12	15	53
MORPETH A	6	3	1	33	27	18	51
COMETS B	4	3	1	27	13	12	39
NAT WEST	5	1	0	20	30	15	35
PRO	5	1	1	18	32	15	33
GOOD KARMA	4	1	0	9	31	12	21
NORDWEST	4	0	0	7	33	12	19

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_23-24/Division_One

- Check out the photos on the front page of the website under Featured Photos. Is your team there?

COMMENTARY

Week 7

This week's match between Comets B and Morpeth was postponed.

Which leaves us with just one match this week but an important match it is – Castaways against Comets A. These two teams have been fighting it out for the title in each of the recent seasons but Comets A have had the edge! The same is true this season – coming up to the halfway point and, though Castaways are currently in front, a win for Comets in their outstanding fixtures will knock Castaways off the top. Let's look at the teams. For Castaways, we have their best team: Bispham, McKee and LeMilliere. For Comets, we have Francis, Steve Fagan and, playing his first game of the season, Winston Wong. If I were Castaways, I'd be thinking this was a chance – perhaps the only chance – to wrestle the initiative off Comets A. We kick off with Wong against McKee. The players took it in turns to win an end, taking us to a hotly contested fifth. They couldn't be separated right up to 10-10. High tension here but it didn't last much longer as McKee took the next two points and the win, 12-10 in the fifth. An important win, 1-0 to Castaways and first mission accomplished! Next, LeMilliere against Fagan. The history of this match-up is they always go to five and Fagan almost always emerges the winner. What will happen this time? The first two ends were shared. The third was a landslide victory for Fagan 11-1. The fourth was neck and neck all the way up to deuce at which point Fagan produced two great winners to seal the victory. The match score is level. There will be very few sets in this match where one player decidedly has the edge but now we come to one of them – Bispham against Francis. Bispham is having a good season so far and he's never lost to Francis in the few times they've played. That record looks a little questionable as Ian takes the first end. But things quickly return to normal as Bispham rattles off the next three ends to complete the victory. Another "hard to call" set followed as Fagan takes on McKee. First end to Fagan but second end to McKee. Is this going all the way?? The third end sees McKee pull out in front. Into the fourth and it's Fagan's turn to pull away, taking a 9-5 lead. Surprisingly, this proved to be the turning point of the set as McKee came all the way back from that huge deficit to lead 10-9 and match point. Steve saved that match point but eventually capitulated at 13-11 in the fourth. Bispham then beat Wong in four and Castaways had won three sets on the bounce. It's 4-1 to Castaways! It's Francis against LeMilliere and Ian needs a win to keep Comets' hopes alive. He's in front after three ends and the moment of truth comes at 10-10 in the fourth. This is make or break time! And Francis comes through with two excellent points to win the set and take the score to 4-2. Possible comeback?? That prospect looked more likely a few moments later as Fagan won the battle of the night's unbeaten players, downing

Bispham 11-7 in the fifth. It's left to Terry McKee to beat Francis and get Castaways over the line. He surely must be favourite. It's even after two ends. But Ian holds his nerve to take the next two ends in a heroic victory. 4-1 to Castaways has become 4-4!! All the momentum lay with Comets and unbelievably Winston Wong then crushed LeMilliere in a comfortable three straight set and Comets were in the lead! So, Castaways had gone from odds-on favourites to win the match to now banking on the doubles to stave off defeat. And, to their credit, that's what they did – winning the doubles in four to make the score 5-5. Looking back, you have to pay tribute to Comets for a huge comeback but I think Castaways will be kicking themselves for throwing away that 4-1 lead. That would seem to be a chance missed by Castaways and Comets must now be strong favourites to be first past the post come the end of the season!

RICHARD CAMPBELL
DIVISIONAL SECRETARY

Issued: 03/12/2023

AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥ 6 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
Yi	MORPETH A	12	12	100.0
Johnson	NAT WEST	8	9	88.9
Persaud	COMETS A	8	9	88.9
Bispham	CASTAWAYS	15	18	83.3
Adesanya	COMETS B	10	12	83.3
Francis	COMETS A	10	12	83.3
Fang	COMETS B	5	6	83.3
Luu	COMETS B	7	9	77.8
McKee	CASTAWAYS	7	9	77.8
S Fagan	COMETS A	7	9	77.8
LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	14	21	66.7
C Fagan	COMETS A	8	12	66.7
Crawford	PRO	6	12	50.0
To	MORPETH A	6	12	50.0
Sanders	GOOD KARMA	3	6	50.0
Turner	PRO	7	15	46.7
Alnak	MORPETH A	5	12	41.7
Brown	MORPETH A	4	12	33.3
Nelson	NORDWEST	4	12	33.3
Schmidt	GOOD KARMA	4	12	33.3
Persaud	PRO	2	6	33.3
Samuels	NAT WEST	2	6	33.3
Herbert	NAT WEST	3	12	25.0
Francis	NORDWEST	2	12	16.7
Grant	CASTAWAYS	1	6	16.7
Link	GOOD KARMA	1	6	16.7
Stair	NORDWEST	1	9	11.1