

AS AT 9 MARCH 2025

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
COMETS A	12	11	1	102	18	36	138
MORPETH A	13	10	2	90	40	39	129
CASTAWAYS	11	6	2	69	41	30	99
NAT WEST	12	6	2	60	60	36	96
PRO	12	2	3	45	72	36	81
COMETS B	11	2	1	37	73	33	70
COMETS C	11	1	1	28	82	33	61
OUTCASTS	10	1	2	26	74	21	47

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_24-25/Division_One

- Check out the photos on the front page of the website under Featured Photos. Is your team there?
- Want a trip down memory lane? Every weekly bulletin issued since the 2014-15 season can be found on the first page of the website under the “Div Sec Reports” heading

COMMENTARY**Week 22**

Outcasts come up against PRO for the first time this season, the first half fixture being a walkover. Their team is Petko Guimichev, Bob Coull and Bing Siah. PRO have their regulars: John Crawford, Jai Persaud and Ronnie Turner. This should be a close match! The first set sees Crawford against Guimichev. The last time they played the set lasted ten minutes with John winning emphatically 3, 3, and 5! This time it wasn't that easy but the result was the same. A win for John 7, 3, and 9. I suspect there's a clash of styles between those two! In contrast, set two was a marathon. Bob Coull takes the first two ends against Jai Persaud. He loses the third end but is on the verge of celebrating victory at deuce in the fourth. But Jai clung on and, by the skin of his teeth, took the end 12-10. Having levelled the set after a slow start, it's Jai who gets in front in the deciding end and pulls off an 11-8 come-from-behind victory! Only just! Crawford's back for the third set and, again in a hurry, he dismisses Siah three straight. That's 3-0 to PRO – a flying start. Now it gets harder as I suspect Guimichev starts favourite against Persaud. That proves to be correct but the margin surprised me -a three straight win for Petko 4, 1, and 3! Ronnie Turner then began his night against Coull. First end to Bob 11-9. Same outcome and the same score in the second end. Bob then continues his “win by two points” theme in the third but this time it's 12-10 which secures the win. A three straight win for Bob which could easily have gone the other way. Outcasts are down 2-3 but the next few sets will be key to deciding the winner. First, it's Bing Siah against Jai Persaud. Bing is as yet winless while Jai has got that good victory over Coull. The first end is mighty close but Bing steals it 13-11. The second end also goes to Bing but is inexplicably a runaway 11-2! Jai fights back with an 11-6 third end success. The fourth end proves to be decisive as Bing wins it 11-8. That's Bing's first win and Outcasts are level at 3-3. It's now down to Ronnie Turner to replicate Crawford's first set win over Guimichev. Ronnie starts well, taking the first end comfortably. But things then start to go wrong as Petko gets hold of the lead in the second end and holds on to it for an 11-7 success. That three or four point gap proved to be Ronnie's undoing in the third and fourth ends too. Both ends went Petko's way giving him an important win and Outcasts a 4-3 lead. That takes us to the set that will probably determine who wins this encounter. It's Crawford against Coull. The first end was extremely close and won by Bob 15-13. The second end was John's – a comfortable 11-5. The third end was

close – again, won by Bob 12-10. John countered with another runaway scoreline 11-3 in the fourth. So, we've played four ends, two very close – won by Bob – and two very easy – won by John. Following that pattern, John must surely be favourite for the decider? But the fifth did not follow the pattern. It was very close and you know who wins all the close ends! Yes, it was Bob's night, winning the decider 11-9. A good win over a frustrated John. 100 points played, John won 54 of them but still lost! Outcasts have come from 3-0 down to leading 5-3! One singles set left – Siah against Turner. After three ends, and Bing leading 2-1, this threatened to be a disaster night for PRO. Ronnie rallied and took the fourth end 11-6. And then covered himself in glory by winning the decider 11-8. So, can PRO rescue a draw by winning the doubles? Well, it doesn't look like that after two ends. Both close but both going to Outcasts. PRO dig in, clawing their way back to force a deciding end. The final end of the final set of the night concluded at 11-9. Who won it? It was PRO, to ensure the match was drawn! A good night's table tennis. Four sets went to a decider while two more finished in four ends. For the sixth time this season all six players won at least one set. The previous all-time record was three matches in a season. I've no idea what to make of that or what makes this season so different.

The next match is Comets B against Nat West. The Comets team is made up of Arunn Sathasivam, Eric Woo and Greg Gargrupe. Nat West have not played for a few weeks and re-emerge with a slightly different team composition. It's ever-present Gareth Jones joining Les Samuels and Andrew Muller. The first set didn't take long. A three-straight win for Muller over Sathasivam. Eric Woo has had a couple of good wins this season but he has his work cut out against Samuels. Les is quick out of the blocks and takes the first two ends with little difficulty. But then things changed as Eric suddenly came into his own to dominate the next two ends. The deciding end had all the hallmarks of a deuce finish but turned out to be the most one-sided end of the contest. Who was it who finished strongly. It was Les with a commanding performance that blew Eric away 11-3. Nat West then completed a hat-trick of wins in the first three sets as Gareth Jones beat Gargrupe in four. The fourth set was the best and closest of the night. It was Muller against Woo. This set followed the pattern of Eric's previous set against Samuels. First two ends to Muller. Eric then produces a fightback to capture the third and fourth ends. And, to complete the pattern, Eric loses the deciding end but this time it's really close, a 12-10 scoreline. Good persistence from Andrew but you have to feel sorry for Eric – that's two sets he's lost in the deciding end. Set five saw Comets open their account with a comfortable win for Arunn Sathasivam over Gareth Jones. That success was offset in the next encounter as Samuels beat Gargrupe in double quick time. That brings Woo to the table to face Jones. Are we going to see another five-ender? The answer was a resounding "no" as Eric took control in the first end and never looked back. A three straight win and that takes Comets to 5-2 down in the match score. Andrew Muller moves the score on to 6-2 in Nat West's favour defeating Gargrupe by 5, 8 and 7. The final singles set was a real seesaw affair as Samuels again came under pressure from Sathasivam. Les was immediately in trouble in the first end but managed to creep home 12-10. Back comes Arunn to take the second end 11-7. The next two ends were also shared which means a decider is required. For the third time in the evening a Comets player was involved a decider and for the third time the Comets player lost! The final score was 11-5 to Les! Arunn's average is about 25% but very few times does he lose three straight. Before this match Arun had contested 12 sets and in only two did he lose three straight! Nat West polished off the doubles taking the match result to 8-2. Looking back, that seemed a bit hard on Comets, losing three sets in the deciding end.

Comets C play Castaways in the final match of the week. Hej Sultani, Richard Hallinan and Anoop Sharma make up the Comets team. Castaways put out their regular team: Johnny Bispham, Mike Loveder and Neil LeMilliere. Castaways won 8-2 in the first half, Sultani winning two for Comets but losing to LeMilliere. Sultani began the match against Bispham. Johnny never played in the first half fixture so no history to point out the likely winner. Hej has held his average pretty steady around 75% this season whereas Johnny's average is barely 50%. Johnny started very well claiming both the two opening ends 11-7. He looked well on his way to victory but hit a bump in the road as he lost the third end 13-11. I thought this might be the start of a comeback but Johnny held on to take the fourth end in a narrow 11-9 victory. That's a good win and a little unexpected. Mike Loveder had little trouble with Richard Hallinan, dropping just nine points in the second set. Then three sets were played out of order. First, Sultani avenged his first half loss to LeMilliere in four hard fought ends. Second, Bispham dropped a single end in dismissing Hallinan. And, third, LeMilliere conceded just 11 points to Anoop Sharma in a routine four-end victory. In set six, Anoop fared a little better against Loveder but still only amassed 23 points. Castaways were 6-1 up and churning out a run of fairly comfortable wins. LeMilliere dropped one end in seeing off Hallinan and Bispham completed a dismal night for Sharma with a three straight win. In set nine, Sultani stopped the rot, completing the double over Loveder. Sultani did drop one end but otherwise always seemed to have a buffer of about five points in hand. Castaways ran away with the doubles to complete a comfortable 8-2 win, only Sultani's pair of wins preventing a whitewash. Castaways need three more wins at least as emphatic as

that one if they're to push Morpeth out of second place in the table. That will have to include reversing their first half loss to rivals Morpeth. A tall order!

RICHARD CAMPBELL
DIVISIONAL SECRETARY

Issued: 10/03/2025

AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥ 14 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
Persaud	COMETS A	27	29	93.1
Wong	COMETS A	22	24	91.7
Wang	MORPETH A	12	14	85.7
Johnson	NAT WEST	15	18	83.3
To	MORPETH A	21	26	80.8
Samuels	NAT WEST	14	18	77.8
Francis	COMETS A	20	26	76.9
Sultani	COMETS C	18	24	75.0
S Fagan	COMETS A	15	21	71.4
Brown	MORPETH A	18	26	69.2
Holohan	MORPETH A	13	21	61.9
Marott	MORPETH A	13	21	61.9
LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	16	28	57.1
Loveder	CASTAWAYS	13	23	56.5
Adesanya	COMETS B	8	15	53.3
Bispham	CASTAWAYS	12	23	52.2
Crawford	PRO	17	33	51.5
Guimichev	OUTCASTS	8	18	44.4
Woo	COMETS B	10	24	41.7
Turner	PRO	9	24	37.5
Islam	COMETS C	7	21	33.3
Siah	OUTCASTS	7	21	33.3
Coull	OUTCASTS	5	15	33.3
Sathasivam	COMETS B	4	15	26.7
Persaud	PRO	4	18	22.2
Jones	NAT WEST	7	36	19.4
Sharma	COMETS C	3	21	14.3
Buck	PRO	2	15	13.3