

LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 07

AS AT 4 DECEMBER 2021

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
COMETS	5	5	0	42	8	15	57
MORPETH A	5	4	1	35	15	15	50
NAT WEST	5	2	2	26	24	15	41
CASTAWAYS	4	1	1	19	21	12	31
PRO	5	0	1	15	35	15	30
GOOD KARMA	4	0	1	12	28	12	24
OUTCASTS	4	1	0	11	29	12	23

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 7

Playing Morpeth was always going to be an uphill battle for Karma. They made two changes for this match bringing in Terese Johansson and Frederic Fremion, both for the first time this season, to join George Sanders. George against Bekele set the night in motion. A good start for George narrowly taking the first end 14-12. That acted as a wake-up call for Samson who stormed through the next end 11-1. The next two ends went the same way, ending in a comfortable win for Samson. The second set progressed in the same way. Terese Johansson took the first end off Matt Robertson only for Matt to reel off the next three ends. Set three – Fremion against Adam Alnak - was the closest of the night and the only one to need all five ends to resolve. Each of the first three ends was quite close and Fremion came out ahead. In the fourth end Alnak levelled the set but only just, 11-9. A good fight back from Adam but it was not to be as Frederic pulled ahead in the deciding end to win it 11-7. A close contest that ran for 103 points! Morpeth extended their lead with a win for Bekele over Johansson in four ends. More frustration for Adam Alnak in set five as came out second best to Sanders but again by a narrow margin 12-10, 12-10, 11-5. Sets six, seven and eight all went Morpeth's way for the loss of two ends, Robertson and Alnak each losing one end to Fremion and Johansson respectively. Karma did end on a high note however with an impressive three straight win for Sanders over Robertson. The end result was a 7-3 victory for Morpeth but it wasn't one-sided with five sets going to four ends and one set going the full distance.

Next up is Nat West against Outcasts. Muller, Jones and Herbert face Bob Coull, Eddie Roullier and Simon Jameson. You have to fancy Nat West for this one. Things started well for Nat West as they raced into a 3-0 lead, beginning with a good win for Andrew Muller over Bob Coull. The next set looked to be going Outcasts' way as Roullier took the first two ends off Gareth Jones and reached 11-11 in the third. Looking back on it, that proved to be the turning point as Gareth won that end 13-11 and then breezed through the next two ends to register a come-from-behind win in five. Outcasts opened their account in set four as Coull got the better of Gareth Jones. Jameson then added to that, coming out on top of Muller, and taking the match score to 3-2. I thought Chris Herbert would be too strong for Roullier in the next set but Eddie put up a good fight and took the set to a deciding end. At that point things swung Chris's way and he managed to come home the victor by 11-7. Outcasts were not going down without a fight! The next two sets were shared, Jameson beating Jones and Herbert beating Coull, and we're coming towards the end of the match and Outcasts are still in it. Eddie Roullier contested the final singles set having lost his previous two sets in five. Andrew Muller held a two ends to one lead going into the fourth but suddenly point after point was going Eddie's way and took the fourth 11-2 and the fifth 11-4! Some comeback! 5-4 to Nat West – can Outcasts steal a draw?? All four ends in the doubles ended with the same score - 11-9 - so it was close. Who got more of those 11-9s? It was Nat West, which gave them a 6-4 win. A much closer match than I expected. Three sets went the distance – all of Eddie Roullier's – and a further

six sets required a fourth end. A long night for Eddie who contested 286 points for his one victory. A little short of the record for the most points played in one night which stands at 308 points (Tony Dight, Treasury, 2015).

In previous years Comets versus Castaways has been one of most eagerly anticipated fixtures of the season. Recently, Comets have gained the upper hand but it's always a close contest. This year is different as Castaways haven't really got going yet and are still struggling for a settled team. Hopes of a close result evaporated early on when it became clear Castaways would only have two players – LeMilliere and Bispham take on Fung, Fagan and Francis. The best set of the night proved to be Johnny Bispham against Steve Fagan. Bispham won the first and third ends by the narrowest of margins – 14-12 and 15-13 – which required him to save numerous game points. A win was in sight for Bispham in the fourth end but Steve rallied to take it 11-9. The deciding end was hard fought but it was Steve who gained the victory 11-7. A long set – 109 points in total. Bispham was subsequently responsible for Castaways lone singles set win. A surprisingly easy three-straight defeat of Ian Francis. With Comets in front 8-1 you wouldn't give Castaways much chance in the doubles but that proved not to be the case and Castaways won it in four ends. They may have won only one match this year but they're on a four-game winning streak in doubles!

A look at the league table shows it's developing into a two-horse race. Next week is the last full week of the first half and fittingly it features the two title contenders going against each other, Morpeth against Comets. A win for Morpeth keeps the title race open whereas a win for Comets means they have one hand on the trophy. There's also an interesting clash between Outcast and Karma that will influence who finishes in last place. PRO have yet to win a match this season and they would usually expect that not to have changed after next week's fixture with Castaways. But Castaways are looking vulnerable this season! Over the years, PRO have rarely won more than a couple of sets in this fixture but on 10 December 2015 they managed a draw. Ronnie Turner was their star that night and, believe it or not, PRO won the doubles! Might this be an omen??

RICHARD CAMPBELL
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AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥5 sets played)

Player	Team	Sets Won	Sets Played	Average (%)
Catt	NAT WEST	6	6	100.0
Persaud	COMETS	8	9	88.9
Wong	COMETS	8	9	88.9
Fagan	COMETS	7	8	87.5
Fung	COMETS	7	8	87.5
Bekele	MORPETH A	11	13	84.6
Harris	CASTAWAYS	5	6	83.3
Francis	COMETS	6	8	75.0
Coull	OUTCASTS	4	6	66.7
Blyuss	MORPETH A	5	8	62.5
Robertson	MORPETH A	6	10	60.0
Herbert	NAT WEST	5	9	55.6
Crawford	PRO	8	15	53.3
Sanders	GOOD KARMA	6	12	50.0
Bispham	CASTAWAYS	3	6	50.0
LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	5	11	45.5
Muller	NAT WEST	5	12	41.7

Alnak	MORPETH A	2	5	40.0
Turner	PRO	5	15	33.3
Guimichev	OUTCASTS	2	6	33.3
Jameson	OUTCASTS	2	6	33.3
Link	GOOD KARMA	2	6	33.3
Roullier	OUTCASTS	2	9	22.2
Jones	NAT WEST	3	15	20.0
Zhao	GOOD KARMA	1	9	11.1