

# LONDON BANKS AND CIVIL SERVICE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE BULLETIN 13

AS AT 26 JANUARY 2025

	P	W	D	F	A	B	P
COMETS A	7	7	0	64	6	21	85
NAT WEST	9	5	2	48	42	27	75
MORPETH A	8	6	1	50	30	24	74
CASTAWAYS	8	4	2	50	30	21	71
PRO	9	1	2	30	57	27	57
COMETS C	9	1	1	22	68	27	49
COMETS B	7	1	1	26	44	21	47
OUTCASTS	5	1	1	17	33	12	29

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](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 16

The first of this week's matches involves Castaways and Comets B. Last season, these two were fighting for second place, which Comets duly won. This year things have been tougher for Comets and they've struggled to put out a strong consistent team each week. This week they had David Adesanya, Arunn Sathasivam and Richard Hallinan. Castaways had the usual threesome: Neil LeMilliere, Mike Loveder and Johnny Bispham. Johnny's average is down on last season and he's trying out new pimped rubber on the backhand. He opens against Sathasivam and began strongly, taking both the first two ends. The third and fourth ends were close but Arunn just got home in both. In the fifth, Johnny took a good lead and held it all the way to an 11-5 success. Following that, Hallinan never got going against LeMilliere and Castaways were 2-0 in front. With Adesanya not yet arrived Loveder went on to play Sathasivam. This set twisted and turned with neither player holding the lead for long. They reached the fifth end pretty much level – two ends each and both having conceded a total of 13 points. The fifth end continued to be close and it was predictable that the win was narrowly achieved by just a two-point margin. The winner was Mike Loveder and Arunn had lost a second five-ender on the night. Bispham followed that up with a routine win over Hallinan and Treasury had extended the score to 4-0. Adesanya began with Loveder as his opponent. Last season David was quite a force, ending with an 80% average but Mike was one of his losses. I expect this to be close. The first two ends were shared but both ends could have gone the other way. The third end went to Mike by an 11-8 scoreline. As we start the fourth end the odds are this is going to five but suddenly Mike was running away with it and reached the winning post 11-4 in front. A good win and Castaways are winning this unexpectedly easily. Set six brings back the luckless Sathasivam to face LeMilliere. The set had an explosive start as Arunn dominated the first end 11-2 and hung on to take the second end 12-10. Not to be outdone, LeMilliere came back with convincing 11-4 and 11-7 scores in the next two ends. Can't pick the winner as the deciding end begins. The winner still wasn't obvious as the score reached 10-10. Two points later the winner was clear. It was LeMilliere 12-10 in the fifth. That makes Arunn's third five-end loss on the night! Tough luck! The next set also went Castaways' way. It was Johnny Bispham registering an emphatic win over Adesanya for the loss of 22 points. Castaways were 7-0 up. Loveder added a win over Hallinan to leave LeMilliere to face Adesanya. Last season this was a real ding-dong battle which David won with a huge spurt in

the deciding end. On this occasion, David was in front after three ends only for Neil to win the fourth. The final end was neck and neck but it was revenge for Neil as he pinched it 11-9 in the fifth. Castaways needed the doubles to complete a whitewash. They lost the first end from a winning position but won the second end from 8-1 down! Comets kept it alive with a fourth-end deuce success only for Castaways to accelerate away to secure the victory 11-4 in the decider. So, a satisfying 10-0 outcome for Castaways but it was a lot closer than the score implies. Five sets needed all five ends to complete and Castaways won every one of them! Sathasivam went home thinking he'd been cursed. Three five-enders played and all lost. Four, if you include the doubles! Throughout the night quite a few sets did not progress as you might have thought. An odd night but I doubt that will trouble Castaways!

The Comets C team were also in action, playing Nat West. Nat West fielded their usual team of Adam Johnson, Les Samuels and Gareth Jones. For Comets, regulars Adil Islam and Anoop Sharma were joined by Richard Hallinan. The night started slowly with Johnson beating Hallinan comfortably, three straight. Gareth Jones went two ends to one up on Islam but lost the fourth 11-8. Thereafter, Adil took full control of the set, winning the deciding end an emphatic 11-3. The third set was a bit similar in that Les Samuels won the first two ends against Anoop Sharma but then lost the next two. The deciding end was hard fought but Les got his nose in front to secure an 11-8 win. It's 2-1 to Nat West after the first round of matches. The fourth set brought back Gareth Jones. His opponent was Richard Hallinan. First two ends to Gareth but Richard fights back with a strong 11-4 scoreline in the third. That didn't faze Gareth as he pushed on to secure the fourth end 11-7 and with it the set. The match score was 3-1 to Nat West and at that point Comets' resistance suddenly ebbed away. The next six sets all went to Nat West and all three straight. Worse than that, there was only one end in those six sets which Comets looked to have a chance of winning. Adam Johnson had no trouble against Islam but did nearly drop an end against Sharma. Les Samuels breezed through Richard Hallinan but it was a bit closer against Islam. And finally, Gareth Jones completed his most satisfying night so far this season with a win against Sharma. The night ended with Nat West taking the doubles, their fourth doubles success of the season. I hadn't expected Nat West to win this match by such a 9-1 margin. But Comets C are significantly weaker without Sultani and Woo

I sense the Comets A fixture is not one of PRO's favourites. Over the years, like many other teams, PRO have never really got close to beating the champions. They usually have to be content with or two sets at best. For the second week running PRO are without Ronnie Turner. Their team is John Crawford, Jai Persaud and George Buck. Comets A have Laikram Persaud, Winston Wong and Ian Francis, on paper their strongest team having lost just three sets of the 40 they've played so far this season! The first contest was between Crawford and Persaud. When John won the first end 11-9 a few eyebrows were raised. Surely not an upset coming! Well, Laikram was clearly not in the mood for an upset as he dished out an 11-2 crushing in the second end. Followed by two 11-5 ends to put this beyond doubt. Moral: expect a reaction if you poke the bear! Laikram's teammates continued this theme with two comfortable three-straight victories, Francis over Buck and Wong over Persaud. Francis against Crawford up next. They split the first two ends. The third end could have gone either way but it went to Ian 14-12 by the skin of his teeth. But John's not out of it as he comes back with an 11-5 success in the fourth end. Make or break time in the fifth end as the score reaches 9-9! Now, if there's anything fair about table tennis the next two points should go to the underdog! Unfortunately, fairness doesn't really come into it as Ian cruised home 11-9 in the fifth! Good effort from John but he falls agonisingly short! Three more quickfire sets followed. Laikram won the battle of the Persauds, Wong beat Buck and Francis completes his maximum with the defeat of Jai Persaud. Set eight and can Crawford rise above the odds to beat Wong? Things progressed very much like John's set against Ian. Neither player could gain the advantage as we reached two ends each. So, another deciding end faces John and thoughts of fairness re-enter the mind. But, once again, fairness decides to slap John in the face as Winston puts his foot down to bag his third win of the night, 11-3! Unanimous applause for effort but this just wasn't John's night. Persaud went on to beat Buck and Comets took the doubles, albeit PRO did have a glimmer of hope for a moment, winning the third end. The outcome was a 10-0 victory for Comets who are pulling away at the top of the table. PRO had to be content with a "what might have been" night for John Crawford. So near yet so far!

**RICHARD CAMPBELL**  
**DIVISIONAL SECRETARY**

**AVERAGES (Qualification: ≥ 9 sets played)**

<b>Player</b>	<b>Team</b>	<b>Sets Won</b>	<b>Sets Played</b>	<b>Average (%)</b>
Persaud	COMETS A	19	20	95.0
Wong	COMETS A	11	12	91.7
Francis	COMETS A	10	11	90.9
Johnson	NAT WEST	15	18	83.3
To	MORPETH A	15	18	83.3
S Fagan	COMETS A	9	12	75.0
Samuels	NAT WEST	11	15	73.3
Sultani	COMETS C	13	18	72.2
Brown	MORPETH A	11	18	61.1
LeMilliere	CASTAWAYS	13	22	59.1
Loveder	CASTAWAYS	10	17	58.8
Holohan	MORPETH A	7	12	58.3
Adesanya	COMETS B	8	15	53.3
Marott	MORPETH A	6	12	50.0
Crawford	PRO	11	24	45.8
Bispham	CASTAWAYS	6	14	42.9
Islam	COMETS C	7	21	33.3
Woo	COMETS C	4	12	33.3
Coull	OUTCASTS	3	9	33.3
Sathasivam	COMETS B	3	9	33.3
Turner	PRO	5	18	27.8
Morley	COMETS B	2	9	22.2
Pink	PRO	2	9	22.2
Jones	NAT WEST	5	27	18.5
Persaud	PRO	2	12	16.7
Sharma	COMETS C	2	15	13.3
Buck	PRO	1	9	11.1