**Table tennis by Chris Blake - www.tabletennis365.com/Sunderland**

In Division 3 of the Sunderland & District table tennis league leaders St Gabriels are all but guaranteed promotion following their comfortable 9 – 1 win over bottom placed St John C.

Not for the first time Syd Gooding was man-of-the-match winning all of his 3 singles sets, he also combined with teammate Ronnie Douglas to win the doubles set. Alan Ray played well to win his 3 singles matches, whilst Douglas picked up 2 sets having narrowly losing out 11 – 5 in the 5th to St Johns player Dave Aldridge.

With 2 promotion places up for grab only Redby CA B, currently lying in 2nd place, can now register more points.

If 4th placed Sacriston St Bedes D are to topple St Gabriels they will need to win all of their remaining games by 7 – 3 or more in order to match Saints current 59 points total and hope that the leaders lose all of their 3 remaining league games by 7 – 3 or more.

In the only other match in Division 3 Sacriston St Bedes C registered a 9 – 1 win over Lanchester CC – Ian McPherson played some great table tennis throughout to take man-of-the match for winning his 3 singles. He was well supported by Dan Hutchinson (3) and Colin Pritchard (2) with the 2 players combing to win the doubles.

J Cook registered the only set for Lanchester with a good win over Pritchard in a very tight and entertaining game.

In Division 2 North East Bed Centre extended their lead at the top with a 7 – 3 win over St Gabriels B who could only manage to field 2 players. Saints player Dave Revell played well to win 2 of his 3 singles with victories over Anderson and Watson but narrowly lost out to Alex Smith who maintains his 100% record with only 1 game remaining.

Sacriston St Bedes B sealed the final promotion spot into the top flight despite losing 6 – 4 to 3rd placed West CA A. In a quite enthralling game all but 1 of the sets were decided in either the 4th or 5th ends.

The match was played in good spirit with both sets of players playing excellent table tennis throughout. There were some great individual performances, but Sacriston’s Tony Taylor was voted man-of-the-match for winning all of his singles games, which included a hard-fought win against Rob Kerr which guaranteed his team’s promotion to Division 1.

3 matches were worthy of note, Linda Spensley’s 3 – 2 victory over Sacriston’s Ian McPherson, Nigel Coe’s 11 – 9 deciding end win over Kerr and Taylor’s 3 – 2 and 11 – 8 victory over West’s Dave Thompson after coming from 2 – 0 down to win the final 3 games.

Silksworth IM B returned to winning ways with a fine 7 – 3 victory over Redby CA A. Alan Bickle was voted the man-of-the-match for the 7th time this season after winning his singles sets and combining with Howard Brown to win the doubles. However, he was forced to dig deep in a very entertaining match against Redby’s Amanda Paxton – coming from 2 – 1 down to win in the 5th and deciding end by the narrowest of margins 11 – 9.

Paxton recovered well to pick up an excellent win over Silksworth’s Brown in another 5-ender, eventually winning 11 – 5.

Brown and Graham Sleep picked up 3 sets between them to ensure a maximum points win for Silksworth and keep their hopes alive for a 3rd place finish in the league.

Ken Tweedy and Malcolm Deneven won a set a piece for Redby to go alongside Paxton’s single set win.

There were no matches played in Division 1 this week.

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