West CA march on following win over Saints

**Table tennis notes by Chris Blake**

West CA continued their strong start to the season with an impressive 7 – 3 victory over close rivals St Gabriels. West played arguably their strongest side in the form of Jim Stamas, Geoff Salter and John Williamson. Excellent table tennis was the order of the day. Stamas had a good 3 – 2 win over Saints George Gibson. This was a tense affair with Gibson looking to stem the forehand and backhand attack of West’s No. 1 player before bringing in his own forehand loop wherever possible. Stamas just edged the final end to win 11 – 7 in a game which could have went either way. Stamas followed this up with a straight sets win over Tom Bainbridge but was left wanting when he was convincingly defeated by Saints No. 1 player Dave Robson. Robson also beat Williamson but was forced to fight all the way to narrowly defeat Salter 11 – 7 in the 5th. Salter recovered well to win his remaining 2 single sets and was well supported by team-mate Williamson who beat Gibson and Bainbridge respectively. West won the doubles set to win the match 7 – 3.

It has been a tough campaign to date for the Saints as they have been unable to draw upon the skills of the experienced Norman Pescod who has been recovering from a hernia operation. Pescod is hoping to return to action in the new year which will provide the Saints with a much needed boost.

The remaining 2 league fixtures in Division 1 went to form. St Chads had a 10 – 0 victory over Redby CA A and Thompson Insurance A’s 10 – 0 win over their B team – a game which saw Darren McVitie joined by his son Jake to win the only doubles set over Shirley Gelder and David Winterbottom.

**Week 9 results:**

Redby CA A 0 vs. St. Chads 10

Thompson Ins. B 0 vs. Thompson Ins. A 10

West CA A 7 vs. St. Gabriels A 3

Sacriston St Bedes A remain top of Division 2 following a comfortable 9 – 1 win over their ‘B’ side – Nigel Coe registering the only set for the Saints second string.

The fight for 2nd place is gathering pace with only 3 points separating the next 4 sides. St Gabriels B moved into runners up spot with a 9 – 1 victory over West CA B – Mark Burton and Dave Revell unbeaten for the Saints, closely supported by Young who chipped in with 2 sets before combining with Burton to win the doubles set - Alan Whitwham winning the only set for West CA with a hard fought win over Young 11 – 4 in the 5th.

Mortimer CA remain in contention for 2nd place following their 6 – 4 win over close rivals Silksworth IM B - the win was a real team effort and saw Mortimer move into 3rd place. Cutler and Hampton won 2 sets each and combined to take the doubles – Moore added the 6th set with a win over George Carlyon. Alan Bickle and Howard Brown picked up 2 sets each to ensure Silksworth at least secured a point for their narrow defeat.

Redby CA B secured their 1st win of the season with an excellent 6 – 4 win over Redby CA - Joe Muldowney was ‘Man of the match’ after winning his 3 singles sets. He was closely supported by Allan Girdwood (2) and Howard Forster (1). This was a great effort by the B side who were losing 4 – 2 at one stage but stormed back to win the final 4 sets to win 6 – 4 and be rewarded with 3 hard fought points for their efforts. Dave Thomson (2) and Kishore Sridharan (1) won the singles sets for Redby. Peter Scott could count himself particularly unlucky not to pick up a set on the night, however, he did combine with Thomson to win the only doubles set. Redby CA B’s win see them move off the bottom of the league for the first time this season.

**Week 9 results:**

Mortimer CA 6 vs. Silksworth IM B 4

Redby CA 4 vs. Redby CA B 6

Sacriston St. Bedes B 1 vs. Sacriston St. Bedes A 9

St. Gabriels B 9 vs. West CA B 1

Match of the week in Division 3 saw a really exciting 5 – 5 draw between Lanchester CC and St Johns C - 6 out of the 10 sets being decided in the 5th and final end. All players contributed to a very entertaining game which saw Lanchester come back from 2 – 5 down to win the final 3 sets to secure a 5 – 5 draw.

Callum McCabe (Lanchester) played particularly well winning 2 of his sets over Sean Gleghorn (11 – 7 in the 5th) and Robert Renton (11 – 8 in the 5th) but was narrowly defeated (also in the 5th) by Jacob Helm. John Cook (Lanchester) secured 2 sets with wins over Renton and Helm but narrowly lost out to Gleghorn.

Jack Brewis (Lanchester) chipped in with a win over Gleghorn (11 – 8 in the 5th) but was narrowly defeated in his other sets – Renton (11 – 8 in the 5th) and Helm (13 – 11 in the 5th). This was a great effort by Brewis who never gave up – a great trait to have.

St. Johns played extremely well all night and can count themselves’ unlucky not to go on a win the match, however, the players should be very proud of their performance - all players continue to gain valuable league experience which should hold them in good stead.

The remaining fixtures in Division 3 went very much to form; leaders St Johns A had a 8 – 2 win over St Gabriels C. Sacriston St Bedes C had a 9 – 1 win over their D team - Terry Charlton registering the only set for the D team with a narrow win over Ian McPherson (11 – 6 in the 5th). St John B had a 7 – 3 win over Redby CA C – a great team effort from the Saints players who all managed to win 2 sets a piece with Watson and Anderson combining to win the doubles set to secure a maximum 4 points win. Tom Turner was ‘Man of the match’ for Redby winning all of his 3 sets albeit by the narrowest of margins.

**Week 9 results**

St. Gabriel’s C 2 vs. St. John’s A 8

Lanchester CC 5 vs. St. John’s C 5

Sacriston St. Bedes D 1 vs. Sacriston St. Bedes C 9

St. John’s B 7 vs. Redby CA C 3