

Pleasure And Pain For New Milton Table Tennis Club

The Christmas break gives the New Milton Table Tennis Club the opportunity to look back over the first twelve weeks of the Bournemouth and District League. The league tables portray the contrasting fortunes of the Club's eight teams entered in the league this year.

The Club's success story comes in Div 3 where the E team are only deprived of the top slot by games difference as they are on the same number of points (36) as leaders Merton F. Regulars James Lewis (captain) and Gerard Redman were playing in Div 5 last season and are certainly unfazed by the leap upwards and have only lost three games each. The E team who have only lost one match so far claim full bragging rights over their stable mates in the D team as the "E's" shaded the first of their local derbies by 6-4.

The D team are not faring quite so well in Div 3 and are currently lying sixth out of ten teams with 21 points. Captain Bev Scott-Johns with an average of 48% has considerably upped his game from last year as has teenager Alex Everett-Bolter who is on the improved 58%. Star player, the unbeaten Clive Pitts has only managed three matches so far this season leaving Milton to wonder what might have been if he was fully available.

Looking down a division to Div 4, the F team have done very well to sit at mid table on 27 points. John Parkhouse has been a revelation as he has now managed to convert his excellent practice night form to the league with a very creditable average of 74%.

Milton also have two teams in Div 5 and currently the mid-placed H team with 25 points claim bragging rights over the G team who are bottom (9 points). The H team's five wins out of twelve include their two victories over G in their two local derbies. The Club use both teams to blood their youngsters and the Daish boys have started promisingly for the H team. New recruit, the not so young Sam Watkins battled away without reward in his first three matches for the G team, but kept the faith to come up trumps in his last match when he won all of his games. G's captain Malcolm Douglas also appeared to have turned the corner in his last couple of matches.

At the opposite end of the league, the promoted A team are finding life very difficult in the Premier and are currently second from bottom on 10 points. They have a bit of a mountain to climb as the three teams above them and the bottom team (Kinson A on 8 points) all have a game in hand over them. However, Steve Hemmings has impressed with an average of 56% and fellow regular Brian Vibert continues to plug away on 42%.

In Div 1, the promoted B team are third from bottom on 15 points but are four points clear of rivals Bournemouth Sports E. Basement boys North Bournemouth B appear to be already sunk on two points and Milton face previous victims Bourne twice more this season in what could prove to be two classic "eight-pointers". Their survival in the second tier could depend upon the availability of star player Paul Bolter who is currently on 57%.

In Div 2, the C team are currently the Club's draw specialists having tied six out of their eleven matches. This in conjunction with their two wins has helped them to fourth spot in the table on 21 points.

Only two of Milton's teams are still in the Times and Directory Handicap Cup as their F side lost their Round 3 match against Merton C. The B team face Merton B in Round 3 of the Cup and the E team play Bournemouth Sports D in Round 2 of the "Plate". The B team will be seeking to avenge their A side who were knocked out by Merton B in Round 2.

The Club has benefited from a number of new recruits this season but are always on the lookout for new players of all standards. Any readers interested in playing competitively or just for a bit of fun should contact Club Secretary Bev Scott-Johns on 01425 619552.