

Rayne E's impressive run to the division two championship of the Braintree Table Tennis League has clearly inspired them with confidence as they face the task of claiming a place in next year's top division via the play-offs.

Assuming the league format stays the same, the top three teams in play-off group one will be in division one next season and Rayne E's start to the end-of-season campaign suggests they intend to be one of those three.

They followed their initial 8-2 win over Liberal B with a promising performance against Pillar House A, one of three teams battling to save their first division place.

Then they thumped their own D team 10-0.

Simon Fleming continued his good run of form against Pillar House where he picked up excellent wins over Chris Ciniglio and Sean Clift but Ryan Pitt's three singles saw the visitors through to a 6-4 win.

There was no stopping them against their D team whom they had beaten 6-4 and 7-3 earlier in the season. This time the alphabet made no sense at all as the D team failed to stretch even one set to five games.

Rayne's C team, the most vulnerable of the ex-division one trio, started with a not unexpected 9-1 defeat against their own B team – Dave Punt pinching the one with a creditable win over Brian Riedling – but followed up with an unconvincing 6-4 win over Sible Hedingham.

Punt and reserve Roger Warren won twice while Graham Cannon won two for Hedingham.

Rayne D also beat Hedingham 6-4 but the visitors had only two players. Roy Hooper won all his singles for Hedingham.

Keith Perrins was on fire for White Lion A in their play-off group two match against Netts B. He won all three but his teammates surprisingly failed to follow his example and lost all theirs. A win in the doubles restricted Netts to a 6-4 win.

Nomads had a comfortable 9-1 win over Pillar House B while Black Notley C, with a reserve, beat their own D team 7-3.

Gordon Fairchild's three wins included one in which he lost the first game 11-0. He gradually wound up from there, losing the second 11-6 before scraping home

15-13 in the third and finally getting it right 11-8, 11-6 in the last two. His opponent Keith Flowers must still be scratching his head.

In the consolation trophy White Lion B made life difficult for themselves by fielding only two players against a Rayne H team that included both John and Ryan Sanderson. Sanderson junior won both his singles while his father had a good win over Adam Purslow to bring up a 6-4 victory.

A full house from Barry Mouser helped Rayne G to a draw against Notley E.

And just to prove that Rayne are not the only club having problems with the alphabet, Notley H had a 6-4 win over their own F team. Two singles from league cadets' champion Warren Baines added to three from the reliable John Breen did the damage.