

Belfast and District League 2015/16 – Post-Christmas

The 2015/16 season of the Belfast and District League is, with the exception of two postponed matches with no bearing on championships or relegations, in the books, and it's been a cracker. Here's what went down in the closing weeks of the season;

Division 1

After Christmas, Ballynafeigh 1 went on a run of six wins in a row and went into the final week in second place, three points behind leaders Muldoons 1. As luck would have it, the top two faced each other in week 15, when reigning champions Ballynafeigh 1 needed to win by at least 3.5-1.5 to retain the title. Having beaten Muldoons 1 4-1 during their winning streak, they fancied their chances, but were beaten 3.5-1.5 as Muldoons 1 claimed their first Silver King.

This season also saw a Belfast and District League first as the week 13 contest between Ballynafeigh 1 and the CS Lewis Lions was broadcast via the UCU's live boards; the games can still be viewed at <http://www.ulsterchess.net/2016-02-09/>.

Silver King winners: **Muldoons 1**
Relegated: **Bangor Groomsport**

Division 2

Ballynafeigh 2 appeared to be cruising to the John Strawbridge Cup until their clash with nearest rivals Kelly's Heroes in week 13. With several key players unavailable, the leaders went down 4-1 and their lead was cut to 3.5 points. Would Kelly's Heroes mount a stunning comeback to retain the Strawbridge Cup? No way – Ballynafeigh 2 responded with two crushing victories in weeks 14 and 15, the latter being a whitewash of Muldoons 2 that sent the latter side down to Division 3 for 2016/17.

John Strawbridge Cup winners: **Ballynafeigh 2**
Relegated: **Muldoons 2**

Division 3

This was the only division where the winner was decided with a match to spare, as QUB 2's 3-2 win over Ballynafeigh 3 in the final week (their week 14 clash with title rivals Andrew's Army having been postponed) brought them across the finishing line.

The final week also saw QUB 3 and the Bangor Wannabees compete to avoid the wooden spoon. QUB 3 have had a good run of results since Christmas, overtaking the Wannabees in the process, and confirmed their superiority with a 5-0 win.

Division 3 plate winners: **QUB 2**
Wooden spoon: **Bangor Wannabees**

Robert Lavery
Ballynafeigh CC
9.3.2016