

Following a disappointing mid week 3:0 loss at Stow market, Newmarket reverted to their experienced players for the trip to Battersea, to face London League side Flaming 6 Aces in the National cup. On arrival Newmarket knew they had a big challenge as the London side averaged 6'3" against Newmarket's 5'11". The London Side looked very strong in the early exchanges and with Newmarket slow out of the blocks looked beaten in the early phase. Krzysztof Wodecki playing in specialist 'Libero' defending role, for the first time this season, kept the ball alive with some impressive defending, but in general Newmarket's passing was poor again, failing to get consistent ball to setter Ben Child. A spirited effort did see a revival to get within 1 point at 13:14 but they could not generate any momentum and eventually lost 17:25

The second set followed a similar pattern, but when Marius Polanski was brought in, his lightening speed masked the poor passing and he found Pete Gale with several quick middle attacks that were thumped down. New comer Paul Day had a good debut and also won good points when given a good set. From 7:16 down Newmarket woke up and slowly clawed back to 14:20. But despite the efforts Newmarket just could not get an effective block against the taller Londoners and the set finished 17:25

The tactical changes made in the second set did appear to give Newmarket a better balance and in the third set they led 13:8 with Rob Dovaston making some excellent defensive pickups, and Simon Holroyd and Dan Rice winning some excellent powerful hits. Newmarket were unable to keep their momentum going at times and some players struggled with the new ruling of Technical timeouts, brought into the world game for television advertising, but implemented at all National level fixtures. These enforced breaks broke Newmarket's rhythm at crucial times. 'Flaming 6 Aces' also kept all their attacks with their two biggest and powerful hitters worried at Newmarket's improvement. Newmarket had no answer to this change in tactics, but at 17:19 should have got closer than the 20:25 final set loss and 3:0 defeat. The later stages of the match showed some encouragement but on reflection the London side were far more powerful with strength right through the team, and this defeat was no embarrassment.

Next week sees Newmarket on the road again taking on London Tooting and Southampton.