

With the National League squad largely rested, the start to the Cambridgeshire season got underway with a match against local rivals St Philips.

NVC were delighted to give debuts to Maciej Weglouski & Stephen Watts who both had solid games – Weglouski using his 6'6" frame to great effect in the middle, and Watts applying his experience to find large holes in the opposition defence.

The first set saw Michele Solazzi moving to the setting position for the first time, adding control to this key position and presenting the hitters with good opportunities for points. Newmarket maintained a solid lead throughout and took the set 25-19.

With the introduction of captain for the night, Charlie Reed and southpaw, Keith Hardman, the second set followed a similar pattern to the first. An early deficit was quickly reined in, helped by consistent hitting from the front line. Accurate passing from Ryan Graver made the setting easy, and Hardman crushed the ball onto the 10 foot line in one glorious attack.

Coach Pete Saunders made radical changes in the third set, and this caused confusion all around. The changes coincided with Pips also changing their line-up, and they eased to a 10-2 lead. A few switches helped, but the lead was never trimmed, and a startling 25-10 reverse made for a rethink.

Reverting to a more familiar set-up, Ben Child was brought back into the six, and after an early stumble, NVC battled back in the third set from 6-2 down to march into an unassailable lead. Tim Saunders found holes in the back line, and the match ended with a crunching kill by Weglouski from Child's accurate short set. The set was won 25-14 and the match 3-1.