



Hussain and Wong strike gold at the double

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Amirul Hussain and Jasmin Wong were double champions on day one of the PG Mutual Cadet & Junior National Championships.

The top seeds won their singles titles and teamed up with Jamie Liu and Ruby Chan to take the doubles.

And the Green family are celebrating double success in the consolation singles events as Erin took the girls' gold and Connor the boys'.

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Girls' Singles



Jasmin Wong (picture by Michael Loveder)

Jasmin Wong was in unassailable form as she took the title without dropping a game.

The top seed met second seed Darcie Proud in the final and though Proud had her moments, she was never able to exert enough pressure as Wong won the match 4-0 (11-7, 11-4, 12-10, 11-9).

Wong said:

It feels amazing. Last time I lost at the National Cup, so I'm really pleased. I'm really happy with my performance. Darcie was quite tough competition, but I managed to keep calm and didn't lose a set. I was really excited to win both the singles and the doubles, particularly because I've never won a doubles before.

Proud had reached the final with a quite monumental effort against Ruby Chan, eventually earning a 4-3 (7-11, 6-11, 11-3, 11-9, 11-2, 9-11, 14-12) victory in a tie in which both had match points.

Wong, by contrast, was serene in her 4-0 (11-5, 11-5, 11-3, 11-4) victory over Gemma Kerr.

No dramas in the quarter-finals in terms of rankings being upset – Wong and Chan both made it through in four straight and Kerr in five. And Proud made it all four top seeds going through in a closer five-game match against Millie Rogove.

The first round saw what in football speak would be 'a game of two halves' as eighth seed Amy Marriott turned it around against Kirsty Maull in spectacular style, coming from 3-0 down to win 4-3 (9-11, 6-11, 6-11, 11-2, 11-5, 11-5, 11-6).

The eight seeds all made it through to the quarters, only Rogove and Kerr dropping solitary games, against Scarlett O'Neil and Samadhi Udamulla respectively.

Group stage



Samadhi Udamulla (picture by Michael Loveder)

The first match in Group 1 had plenty of drama as Samadhi Udamulla upset top-ranked player Erin Green in five. Udamulla won two tight games and had chances to close it out in the third, but Green came back to win games three and four on deuce. But Udamulla stepped up again to take the decider and complete a 3-2 (12-10, 11-8, 13-15, 10-12, 11-6) victory.

Udamulla then confirmed herself in top place in the group by defeating Eve Witterick 3-1 (11-2, 11-8, 10-12, 11-6).

Ella Barnard came through from third in Group 6, first defeating the group's top player Isabelle Doyle 3-1 (11-7, 11-6, 8-11, 11-8) and then Niamh Scarborough 3-1 (6-11, 11-8, 11-3, 11-4).

In Group 3, the second-ranked player, Jodie Morris, topped the standings after winning her two matches against Scarlett Anders and top-ranked Lauren Loosemore – who also lost in five to Anders.

Group 5 saw Amilia Baker advance from second ranking as she overcame Anya Milne and top seed Helena Dicken – who ended up in third by virtue of a five-game defeat (11-8, 11-8, 2-11, 6-11, 11-7) to Milne.

The top ranked players in Groups 2, 4 and 7 – Scarlett O'Neil, Angharad Beman and Kirsty Maull respectively – duly finished top. Maull was joined in the main draw by the runner-up in Group 7, which was the only four-player group, and that was Rebecca Savage from fourth place. Savage defeated both Ilyssa Lacorte and Joelle Bennett in five.

Consolation Singles



Erin Green (picture by Michael Loveder)

Erin Green made up for the disappointment of going out in the group stage as she defeated Sophie Rinnhofer 3-0 (9, 6, 7) in the final.

She had earlier faced a potentially difficult semi-final – against her younger sister Anna. In the end, age prevailed in three straight (6, 7, 9).

By contrast, Rinnhofer had to go the distance against Scarlett Anders, twice coming from a game down before booking her place in the final 3-2 (8-11, 11-9, 11-13, 12-10, 13-11).

Erin Green said:

It feels pretty good. I was quite upset to not get through my group but I had to pick myself up, which I did.

It was horrible playing Anna – she’s one of the hardest people I have to play because she knows my serves and how I play.

Boys’ Singles

Top seed Amirul Hussain lived up to billing with victory over second seed Jamie Liu in six games.

The Oldham youngster wasted three match points in the fifth, but bounced back to make sure of his second title with a 4-2 (11-7, 11-6, 7-11, 11-5, 10-12, 11-5) victory.

As in the girls’ singles, the top four seeds reached the semi-finals. And they were both classics. Liu had to dig in

against Josh Weatherby, twice trailing and then seeing his opponent battle back to level at 3-3. The decider was tense but Liu was always in front as he took it 11-7. The final scoreline was 7-11, 11-8, 10-12, 11-5, 11-8, 5-11, 11-7.

Hussain saw Naphong Boonyaprapa claw back from 3-1 down to level at 3-3, but was able to refocus when it mattered to book his place in the final thanks to a score of 11-8, 11-8, 10-12, 12-10, 3-11, 9-11, 11-7.

The champion said:

I feel very proud. I lost in the final last year and I wanted to put that right. I tried to keep my focus all the way through without dropping level and I mostly did that.

I wasn't too worried when Naphong came back because I've done a lot of hard training and I knew I could still win.

Liu had trouble shaking off Ben Piggott in the quarters, the 4-0 scoreline in no way telling the tale of the game scores, which were 11-4, 14-12, 18-16, 12-10.

Boonyaprapa had a more routine 4-0 against Felix Thomis, while Weatherby needed one more against David Gofton. Hussain was pushed harder by Louis Price, giving up two games and holding his nerve in two tight games at the end to come home 4-2 (6-11, 11-7, 11-9, 6-11, 13-11, 14-12).

Earlier, two of the seeded players went out in the first round in breathtaking matches which went all the way.

Thomis had a real ding-dong with sixth seed Peter Smallcombe, eventually taking him out 4-3 (11-7, 7-11, 8-11, 11-9, 7-11, 11-8, 11-9).

If that went to the wire, then Piggott's clash with seventh seed Max Stevens went to the strand of the wire, as Piggott saved three match points and then took his own first chance to go through 4-3 (11-5, 7-11, 8-11, 12-10, 2-11, 12-10, 13-11).

Rhys Davies came oh-so-close to toppling second seed Liu in a match which Liu won 4-3 – but 74-50 in points due to a purple patch in the middle games. The final score was 10-12, 10-12, 11-3, 11-0, 11-4, 10-12, 11-7).

Group stage



Charlie Graham-Adams (picture by Michael Loveder)

Charlie Graham-Adams upset the rankings in Group 1 as he saw off Freddie Osenton-Brown and Ben McDonald. The first match against top-ranked Osenton-Brown was decided on fine margins and went all the way to 13-11 in the decider as he completed a 3-2 (8-11, 12-10, 9-11, 11-9, 13-11) win.

Graham-Adams ensured he would top the group by defeating McDonald in three, while the final match also went to five, Osenton-Brown edging McDonald 8-11, 12-10, 10-12, 11-6, 11-5).

Group 5 was a real battle as all three players won one match by a 3-2 margin – Nahom Goitom coming from 2-0 down to beat top-ranked Bertie Kelly, second-ranked Che Goulbourne defeating Goitom and then Kelly besting Goulbourne 13-11 in the fifth.

It came down to points and Goulbourne had the edge on 92-88, ahead of Goitom on 94-94 and Kelly on 91-95.

Group 7, the group of four players, saw the top two go through but in reverse order as Felix Thomis topped the standings thanks to a tremendous comeback against Jie Fu Tham, finally edging it 3-2 (10-12, 12-14, 11-9, 11-9, 11-7).

Also in that group, Joe Newman saved two match points as he beat Shae Thakker 12-10 in the fifth and Thakker defeated Thomis in five.

The other groups went more or less with seeding as Rhys Davies, Thomas Rayner, Ben Piggott and Chamika Weerasinghe won groups 2, 3, 4 and 6 respectively. Dan Hearne-Potton climbed above Toby Ellis to finish second in Group 4, thanks to a terrific 3-2 (11-9, 7-11, 9-11, 12-10, 12-10) win – and he also took Piggott to five before losing out 3-2 (11-6, 7-11, 11-7, 3-11, 2-11).

Weerasinghe needed five against Nikit Sajiv in Group 6, and it was a real thriller which finished 3-2 (11-9, 8-11, 12-14, 11-9, 15-13). Sajiv also lost 12-10 in the fifth to Callum McRae.

Consolation Singles



Connor Green (picture by Michael Loveder)

Connor Green and Freddie Osenton-Brown served up a tight encounter which was edged by Green, ensuring he matched his sister Erin's feat by taking the gold.

He was relieved in the end though, after seeing his opponent come back from 2-0 down to level. The momentum swung back and forth before Green took the last 11-9 to complete victory by 3-2 (11-7, 14-12, 3-11, 10-12, 11-9).

Osenton-Brown came through a semi-final against Ricardo Bolanos 3-1 (11-8, 6-11, 11-9, 11-3), while Green ensured there was family representation in both consolation finals as he defeated Ben McDonald 3-0 (7, 7, 12).

Green said:

It's good because I wasn't meant to beat him because he's higher ranked. I went 2-0 up but when he came back to 2-2 I wasn't in a good place, so I'm pleased I managed to win it.

Girls' Doubles



Jasmin Wong and Ruby Chan receive the trophy from Table Tennis England Deputy Chairman Susie Hughes (picture by Michael Loveder)

Jasmin Wong & Ruby Chan turned up the power to defeat second seeds Darcie Proud & Anaya Patel 3-1 and take the title.

After the first two games had been shared, the top seeds ran away with the next two to finish up triumphant by a score of 11-9, 9-11, 11-0, 11-4.

Chan said:

I feel quite proud. I'm pleased that we won the doubles match – it's the third time I've won it, and the first time I've won it with Jasmin. Her pimples are really effective because they're so varied, and we were just too tough for Darcie and Anaya, but they played really well.

Both pairs had made untroubled progress to the final, winning their quarters and semis in three straight. The beaten semi-finalists were Gemma Kerr & Millie Rogove, who lost to Wong & Chan, and Kirsty Maull & Amillia Baker.

None of the quarters went to a decider, but the first round featured one five-setter with a somewhat strange scoreline at the end as Amy Marriott & Angharad Beman prevailed against Mari Baldwin & Erin Green 3-2 (11-5, 9-11, 5-11, 11-8, 11-1).

The winning pair then lost the only quarter-final which wasn't decided in three straight as they were defeated 3-1 (11-7, 11-8, 7-11, 11-9) by Maull & Baker.

Boys' Doubles



Amirul Hussain and Jamie Liu with Susie Hughes (picture by Michael Loveder)

As in the girls' competition, top seeds beat second seeds as Amirul Hussain & Jamie Liu took the title in four sets against Naphong Boonyaprapa & Louis Price – 11-7, 11-7, 4-11, 11-9.

For Hussain, it was a retention of the title, having won alongside Sam Chesterman last year, and Chesterman – an Ackworth School colleague of the winners – was in the corner to coach this time.

Liu said:

We started off a bit slowly, going to five in the first match, but after that we started getting into it and our teamwork and communication got stronger and in the end we both played really well to take the title. I'm happy with both our performances.

The semi-finals were both decided in three straight, but by contrasting scorelines. Hussain & Liu made it through 7, 8, 8 against Freddie Osenton-Brown & Rhys Davies, but Boonyaprapa & Price found it harder against young pair Felix Thomis & Connor Green before coming through 16-14, 12-10, 11-6.

Hussain & Liu were pushed hard by Callum McRae & Peter Smallcombe in the quarter-finals but asserted themselves when it mattered to win 3-2 (11-7, 8-11, 11-8, 7-11, 11-4).

There was a cracking match in the preliminary round as Thomis & Green battled through against the older Dan Hearne-Potton & Nahom Goitom by a 3-2 (11-9, 9-11, 12-14, 11-6, 11-7) margin.

They then beat another older pair, Josh Weatherby & David Gofton, 3-1 (11-9, 11-8, 6-11, 11-6) in the quarters to set up a surprise but deserved semi-final spot.

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