



Siraj and Patterson hit gold standard

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No 1 seeds Shayan Siraj and Mollie Patterson both completed perfect records of nine wins from nine to take the Junior National Cup gold medals.

James Smith took silver from second seeding in the boys' event, with sixth-ranked Joe Cope punching above his weight to take bronze.

In the girls' event, it went with seeding as Megan Gidney won silver and Sarah Menghistab bronze.

The winners were decided after a high-quality weekend at Ellenborough TTC in Enfield as 10 of the best players in each category played each other over seven games.

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Girls



Mollie Patterson

Mollie Patterson won all nine matches – though not without alarms in some – to take the gold medal after winning silver and bronze in previous years.

She recovered from match point down to third seed Sarah Menghistab and then two games to one behind against second seed Megan Gidney in her final match to emerge as a worthy champion, with Gidney taking silver.

Menghistab came from 3-2 down in her final match against fourth seed Tiana Dennison to secure the bronze.

The champion said: "I'm really pleased to have won a gold this year after getting bronze and silver the last couple of years.

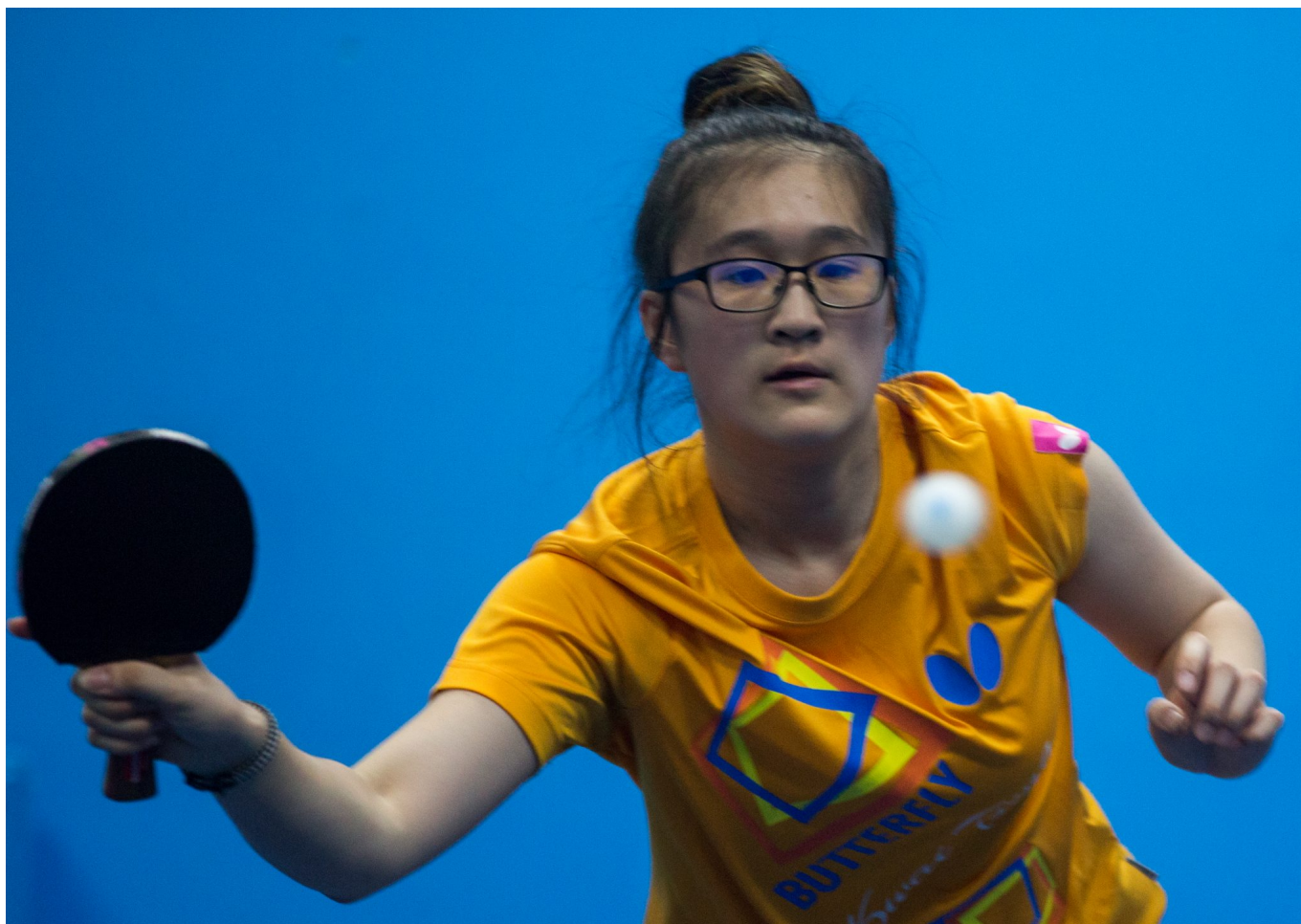
"I tried to feel no pressure and go into every match the same and beat the player in front of me.

"I just tried to stay cool and relaxed and play my game and in the difficult moments just have belief in myself and confidence in my abilities.

"I've got a couple more years at this level so, hopefully, more golds to come."

Patterson was quickly into her stride in the day's first round against Katie Holt, the first match to finish in four straight, soon followed by Lois Perryman picking up her second victory in four against Lisa Rinnhofer.

Menghistab kept her medal campaign going, 4-2 against Amelia Chan, as did Gidney in five close games against Danielle Kelly. Dennison almost came unstuck against Sophie Barlow, who led 3-1 and had chances to win before Dennison took the decider 11-9.



Amelia Chan

As the top four began to play each other in Round 7, the medal picture became clearer. At the top, Patterson continued her serene progress in four straight against Dennison to put one hand on the gold, but the battle behind her saw the second and third seeds serve up a marathon.

Menghistab, the lower ranked of the two, had Gidney searching for answers and seemingly short of confidence as she took a 2-0 and 3-1 lead. But the second seed found her game again and clawed back to level.

The decider was always close, but Menghistab will be kicking herself on two counts – wasting a match point at 10-9 and then serving off via the net at 10-11 to present the victory to Gidney.

The other three matches were all decided in six and there were some crackers among them, not least as Chan eventually overcame Barlow, with two games going to 15-13 and one to 14-12.

There was a 17-15 game as Kelly notched a victory over Perryman – though it was to be Kelly's last involvement as a knee injury saw her have to default the last two matches. The other tie saw Rinnhofer compete but come away empty-handed against Holt.

Patterson remained unbeaten in Round 8 but it was oh-co-close as Menghistab again almost upset the rankings. She came from 1-0 and 2-1 down to lead 3-2 and, after Patterson won the sixth at a canter and opened a 5-1 lead in the decider, it looked like a decisive momentum shift.

But Menghistab fought back and both players had match points before Patterson took it 14-12.

That meant Gidney's 4-2 win over Dennison set up a gold-medal match against Patterson – the beaten athlete and Menghistab left to contest bronze in their own meeting in the final round.

Chan had a real tussle with Perryman, recovering from losing the fifth 19-17 to go 3-2 behind by taking the next two games. Holt overcame Barlow 4-0 in the other tie of the round.

So to the medal shootouts, and victories for Patterson and Menghistab. In the other two final-round matches to be played, Perryman ended with a 4-1 defeat of Holt and Barlow withstood a comeback by Rinnhofer to win 4-3.

Final standings: 1 Mollie Patterson, 2 Megan Gidney, 3 Sarah Menghistab, 4 Tiana Dennison, 5 Amelia Chan, 6 Katie Holt, 7 Danielle Kelly, 8 Lois Perryman, 9 Sophie Barlow, 10 Lisa Rinnhofer

Boys



Shayan Siraj

Shayan Siraj won with a match to spare, but the top seed still went on to complete a perfect record by defeating James Smith in the final round.

Smith had enough in hand to still claim silver, ahead of sixth seed and bronze medallist Joe Cope by virtue of having beaten him on day one.

Cope emerged from a clutch of players to be in contention for medals, finishing the competition strongly with four wins out of four today.

Siraj said having been knocked out in the first knockout round at the Nationals had spurred him on.

He said: "It feels good to win. After the Nationals, I worked on a few things that I was weaker on in my game and I think that's why I performed well here.

"It doesn't make up for the Nationals because that's the big one, but it's obviously still good to win gold."

Back in the first round, Ethan Walsh retained his outside interest in the medals by beating Sam Chesterman 4-0.

Apart from that, it was 4-1 all round including for the top two – Smith overcoming Artur Veeck Caltabiano and Siraj defeating Naphat Boonyaprapa – and for Cope against Israel Awolaja and Gaurav Aravind against Matthew Daish.

Round 7 saw some pivotal matches and at one point it looked as if the competition was about to be blown wide open by Aravind, who led unbeaten Siraj 3-1 in the last match to finish before the lunch break.

The top seed, though not aware at that stage that other results had gone in his favour, took a big step towards gold as he turned it all around to win 4-3 – an amazing fifth five-setter for Aravind in the competition.



Israel Awolaja

The other results created a log-jam behind Siraj, with Smith, Boonyaprapa and Aravind on five wins and Walsh and Cope on four.

Walsh hadn't shown his best form consistently thus far, but he picked up a great win over Smith, though the 4-0 margin was nowhere near as one-sided as it suggests. Cope joined him on four victories with a 4-2 triumph over Veeck Caltabiano.

Boonyaprapa's 4-0 win over Awolaja was pretty routine, while it was a bit closer, though still four straight, as Daish picked up his second victory by overcoming Chesterman.

Siraj made sure of the gold in Round 8 as he shook off Walsh in six, while Smith stayed in the medal frame with a strange-looking 4-2 win over Aravind, twice reacting to losing a set by blitzing through the next, including the final game 11-0.

Daish's win over Boonyaprapa in a decider – coming from 3-2 down – meant the race for bronze was still uncertain going into the last round, with Cope beating Chesterman 4-3 to also keep himself in the hunt. Awolaja overcame Veeck Caltabiano in four.

With Siraj completing his perfect record, the final round was also notable for Cope beating Boonyaprapa 4-2 to seal bronze for himself and prevent his opponent from taking it.

Aravind was out of contention thanks to his 4-1 defeat by Walsh, while Awolaja ended with a 4-1 victory over Daish.

And there was a happy ending for Chesterman as he beat Veeck Caltabiano in five to notch his first victory.

Final standings: 1 Shayan Siraj, 2 James Smith, 3 Joe Cope, 4 Ethan Walsh, 5 Naphat Boonyaprapa, 6 Gaurav Aravind, 7 Israel Awolaja, 8 Matthew Daish, 9 Sam Chesterman, 10 Artur Veeck Caltabiano

Today's details

Girls

Round 6

Mollie Patterson bt Katie Holt 4-0 (11-9, 11-3, 11-2, 12-10)
Lois Perryman bt Lisa Rinnhofer 4-0 (12-10, 11-5, 11-5, 11-6)
Sarah Menghistab bt Amelia Chan 4-2 (11-5, 6-11, 11-2, 11-6, 6-11, 11-4)
Megan Gidney bt Danielle Kelly 4-1 (11-7, 7-11, 11-9, 13-11, 11-9)
Tiana Dennison bt Sophie Barlow 4-3 (10-12, 7-11, 11-6, 4-11, 12-10, 13-11, 11-9)

Round 7

Patterson bt Dennison 4-0 (11-5, 11-9, 11-8, 11-7)
Holt bt Rinnhofer 4-2 (11-4, 9-11, 9-11, 11-8, 11-7, 11-6)
Kelly bt Perryman 4-2 (11-5, 7-11, 12-10, 17-15, 5-11, 11-9)
Gidney bt Menghistab 4-3 (10-12, 9-11, 11-6, 7-11, 11-6, 11-7, 12-10)
Chan bt Barlow 4-2 (15-13, 14-12, 4-11, 11-9, 13-15, 11-7)

Round 8

Rinnhofer bt Kelly (w/o)
Holt bt Barlow 4-0 (11-4, 11-9, 11-8, 11-6)
Patterson bt Menghistab 4-3 (11-6, 5-11, 11-8, 10-12, 9-11, 11-3, 14-12)
Chan bt Perryman 4-3 (9-11, 11-8, 4-11, 11-9, 17-19, 11-9, 11-7)
Gidney bt Dennison 4-2 (11-8, 7-11, 13-11, 11-8, 12-14, 11-5)

Round 9

Chan bt Kelly (w/o)
Patterson bt Gidney 4-2 (11-4, 5-11, 5-11, 11-7, 11-7, 11-6)
Menghistab bt Dennison 4-3 (7-11, 11-9, 6-11, 11-7, 8-11, 11-6, 11-6)
Perryman bt Holt 4-1 (11-7, 11-6, 11-13, 11-5, 11-7)
Barlow bt Rinnhofer 4-3 (11-9, 11-6, 7-11, 12-10, 5-11, 8-11, 11-6)

Boys

Round 6

Ethan Walsh bt Sam Chesterman 4-0 (11-7, 12-10, 12-10, 11-5)
James Smith bt Artur Veeck Caltabiano 4-1 (11-8, 8-11, 11-4, 11-7, 11-7)
Shayan Siraj bt Naphat Boonyaprapa 4-1 (11-8, 11-6, 6-11, 11-6, 11-6)
Joe Cope bt Israel Awolaja 4-1 (11-8, 11-9, 11-13, 11-8, 11-9)
Gaurav Aravind bt Matthew Daish 4-1 (11-7, 11-7, 9-11, 11-9, 11-9)

Round 7

Boonyaprapa bt Awolaja 4-0 (11-8, 11-5, 11-7, 11-8)
Cope bt Veeck Caltabiano 4-2 (11-8, 5-11, 11-13, 13-11, 11-6, 11-8)
Daish bt Chesterman 4-0 (11-8, 11-5, 12-10, 11-9)
Walsh bt Smith 4-0 (13-11, 11-5, 14-12, 11-9)
Siraj bt Aravind 4-3 (9-11, 11-7, 10-12, 8-11, 11-8, 11-3)

Round 8

Awolaja bt Veeck Caltabiano 4-0 (11-6, 11-6, 11-6, 12-10)
Siraj bt Walsh 4-2 (11-13, 11-4, 11-6, 6-11, 11-7, 12-10)
Smith bt Aravind 4-2 (11-8, 11-5, 15-17, 11-2, 4-11, 11-0)
Cope bt Chesterman 4-3 (12-14, 11-7, 8-11, 11-7, 11-5, 7-11, 11-7)

Daish bt Boonyaprapa 4-3 (11-6, 6-11, 12-10, 16-18, 7-11, 12-10, 11-7)

Round 9

Chesterman bt Veeck Caltabiano 4-1 (9-11, 11-7, 12-10, 11-8, 11-7)

Walsh bt Aravind 4-1 (11-8, 10-12, 11-9, 11-7, 12-10)

Cope bt Boonyaprapa 4-2 (11-8, 11-8, 11-2, 7-11, 9-11, 11-7)

Siraj bt Smith 4-1 (11-2, 11-8, 11-13, 11-9, 11-8)

Awolaja bt Daish 4-1 (11-7, 11-9, 5-11, 11-9, 11-7)

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