



## Unseeded Garduli triumphs at Cippenham

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Another maximum entry assembled at Cippenham Table Tennis Centre for the Cippenham Super 6 Senior 2-Star Open Championship. The 48 players were arranged in eight groups of six for the preliminary stage and then separated into two knock-out events including a consolation for those finishing in the lower half of their group.

The eventual winner was Sabin Garduli, a Romanian, who was unknown to the seeding committee and therefore was a floater in the draw. Nevertheless, there was little indication of what was to follow early on as Garduli lost his opening match in the preliminary round group to Julie Hughes. However, with Hughes losing three of her five matches the group was eventually won by Garduli with David Randall second and Hughes third.

Other groups were generally progressing in line with the seeding with Neil Wright, a Welsh compatriot of Hughes, taking up his allotted top seeded position and Steve Davis and Ben Warner also remaining unbeaten during that preliminary stage.

Into the knockout competition and Wright's position at the top of the draw was short lived, losing 3-1 to Joe Kaye. The sequence of the name at the top of the draw being eliminated continued with Kaye's moment being punctured by Sammy Kaye in the quarter-final, who then lost to Phillip Smith in the semi-final. Smith had previously progressed unbeaten from his preliminary round group and then eliminated Adam Johnson and fourth seed Warner 3-2 to set up that semi-final meeting with Kaye.

Meanwhile, in the bottom half of the draw, Garduli was carving his way through with minimal resistance. Alan Papier and Chris Price were both beaten 3-0 although Price did extend his match a little with two deuce games. In his semi-final, Garduli matched up against third seed Davis who had earlier beaten Vadym Krevs and Cippenham's Paul Baker. This ended an impressive run for Baker who had finished second in his group and then defeated Hughes and David Ramsey to reach the quarter-final.

The final between Garduli and Smith was won by the Romanian in three close games, 12-10, 13-11, 11-9.

The consolation event for those players finishing in the bottom three places of their preliminary round group was

won by Samson Bekele, who has recently joined Cippenham to play in the Veterans' British League. His opponent in the final was Alex Emms.

The tournament was organised by Paul Baker and refereed by Sue Hayes.



Samson Bekele and Alex Emms

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