Mental health charity is big winner at tournament

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A tournament to raise money for mental health charity Young Minds was a huge success, making almost £1,000.

The Open Up tournament in Bristol was the idea of Joe Sheppard, one of Bristol's leading Junior players, and was hosted by the Civil Service Club in Filton.

The tournament was to support CAMHS (Children and Adolescence Mental Health Services) and to raise awareness in mental health issues in sport, with all proceeds going to the charity Young Minds, which gives mental health support to young people.

With more than 40 players of all ages and abilities, the event was fully booked within 36 hours with players from as far away as Grantham and Reading. Players' abilities ranged from England Junior internationals to ex professional players from Germany and Poland.

Will Bayley MBE, Paralympic champion and a former student at WISE in Filton, and Commonwealth Games doubles gold medallist Paul Drinkhall gave heart-warming video messages of support for the event.

The sponsors were Mensis Accountants and TableTennisDaily and the day raised just under £1000, while donations included Alpha Communications and Redwick Business Solutions.

The day focused on a non-pressurized environment to enjoy a competitive game of table tennis, with awards were handed out to Jaycob Price for best sportsmanship, most hardworking went to Jake Tucker and best focus and determination went to Will Avery.

The consolation event was won by Julie Byrne as Ronan Elder settled for runners-up spot.

The final of the main event and the award ceremony has reached more than 12,000 views on the TableTennisDaily Facebook page, with the gold medal going to Liam McTiernan from Reading who beat current

England Junior international, Louis Price, from Filton. The match can be watched below.

https://www.facebook.com/TableTennisDaily/videos/358302994910371/

Plans are already afoot for a bigger and better tournament in 2019.

Joe Sheppard commented: "It's great to see a lot of support throughout the local community to help raise awareness and money for such an amazing cause."

Bristol-based coach Dan Ives said: "This was such a fantastic event and a pleasure to be part of it. There were a lot of smiles on the day with everyone showing great sportsmanship and coming together for a great cause. The finals were truly spectacular, and I cannot wait for the second edition next year."