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NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Table Tennis England | Qualifying Tournament

Who will make their mark this weekend?

Author: [Rebecca Hughes](#)

Posted On: [January 17, 2019](#)

Dozens of players are preparing to do battle this weekend to seal a prized place at the PG Mutual Senior National Championships.

The Sir Tom Finney Sports Centre in Preston is the stage for the inaugural Nationals Qualifying Tournament, where competitors in men's and women's singles will be aiming to secure a top-10 finish.

That is what is needed to get through to the PG Mutual Nationals in Nottingham at the start of March, where the possibility opens up of landing a plum tie against one of the English game's big guns.

The field in Preston ranges in age from 13 to 69 – Felix Thomis is the youngest and Dave Randall the oldest. Despite being to opposite ends of the spectrum, they share the common dream of reaching the biggest domestic stage.

Randall said: "I thought it would be similar to a Grand Prix tournament, with group matches on the first day. It's a nice weekend away and I like the venue.

"I'd much rather go to the Nationals to play as well as watch, so that was the motivation to play in Preston.

"It's not impossible to get through, but I accept that most players will be a lot better than me, but I like playing players who are of a high standard.

"And I prefer to play young people because of the way I play, my defensive game. I can sometimes raise my game against them and there aren't many decent defenders around."



69-year-old Dave Randall is the oldest player competing in the PG Mutual Senior Nationals Qualifier

Thomis said: "I like the qualifying tournament, because it gives players outside the top few a chance of taking on the best and I thought it would be an opportunity to take on physically bigger and stronger players. I think doing that helps build mental strength.

"If I got through, it would be great to get Liam Pitchford or one of the other top players. Maybe I won't be able to beat them yet, but it's a chance to understand what it feels like to play against that class of opponent."



13-year-old Felix Thomis is the youngest player in the PG Mutual Senior National Championships Qualifier

[Click here to view the event programme including the full draws.](#)



The 10 qualifiers in each event will join the top 20 in the rankings, plus two wildcard entries, at the PG Mutual National Championships at the University of Nottingham from March 1-3.

The Nationals are the only chance to watch the top players in England, including the Commonwealth Games and Team World Cup medal-winners, plus the leading para players, under one roof.

Tickets start from just £5. [Click here to buy tickets.](#)

TICKET PRICES			
FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	3 DAY
STANDARD £5	STANDARD £10	STANDARD £15	STANDARD £25
CONCESSIONS* £3	CONCESSIONS* £5	CONCESSIONS* £8	CONCESSIONS* £13
FAMILY** £12	FAMILY** £24	FAMILY** £36	FAMILY** £60

* U18, SENIOR CITIZEN, STUDENT, DISABLED **TWO ADULTS AND TWO U18S/STUDENTS
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