



Saglik digs deep to win Chelmsford title

Author: Paul Stimpson

Posted On: February 12, 2019

Nineteen-year-old Ugur Saglik, many people's favourite, is the 2019 M&G Investments Chelmsford Men's Singles champion.

He took the title with five-game wins over David Cole in his semi-final and against Wale Bada in the final at the Old Chelmsfordians Club on Monday in front of a sizeable crowd.

His semi against Cole was one of the most dramatic on record with Cole showing that he is still a match for everyone despite playing in division two. Cole edged a tight first end 11-9 but Saglik hit back taking the second end 11-5.

Saglik was playing well and when he led 10-6 in the third end it appeared as if he was on the way to victory. Cole had other ideas and he sneaked home 14-12 and he proceeded to dominate the fourth end, leading 10-4. Amazingly it was Saglik who hit back and, by going for his shots when many players would be happy just to get the ball back in play, he fought back and edged the game 12-10.

Cole led 7-4 in the decider but Saglik was far from finished and he surged back to 8-8 and he finally won a truly marvellous match 11-8.

Bada came through his semi-final against surprise package Steve Whiteley in four ends. Wale "digs" the ball hard with his backhand push and it is difficult for the opponent to open up cleanly against him. He combines that with a deadly forehand drive. Although Whiteley dominated the third end with some controlled hitting it was Wale who pulled away in the fourth end for a 11-9, 11-6, 6-11, 11-3 victory.

Lin Roff & Gary Young are the 2019 Mixed Doubles champions. They won the first end 11-6 against Jan Fuller & Wale Bada but after that there was never anything in it at all. Both the second and third ends could have gone either way but it was Lin and Gary who shaded them 11-9, 13-11.

Ugur Saglik won the Under-21 Singles title as expected but although he raced away with the first end against Daniel Young 11-3 it was Young who started the faster in games two and three. There was never a lot in it the

second and third ends before Saglik secured his 11-3, 11-8, 12-10 victory.

The Veterans Singles' final went to five ends and there was never a lot to choose between Bada and Trevor Lloyd. Bada raced into a 2-0 lead but Lloyd hit back and it was anyone's game in the decider. Bada eventually won a fascinating contest 3-2 (11-8, 11-8, 9-11, 9-11, 13-11).

There is a new set of names on the Men's Doubles trophy – the young pretenders Liam Squirrell and Reece Seddon. They looked well drilled and tidy throughout and when their opponents David Cole and Gary Cattermole hit top form in the third end they responded with some ferocious hits of their own to edge an explosive match 11-8, 11-7, 12-10.

So to the Men's Singles final. Saglik raced into a 8-2 lead in the first end but he lost his way and Bada shaded it 11-9. Worse was to come for Saglik as he fell away in the second end as well as Wale won 11-7. He was in big trouble but he showed very good composure and plenty of confidence to continue to go for his shots as he fought back over the next three ends and eventually won 9-11, 7-11, 11-6, 11-7, 11-4.

Special guests included Geoff Curd, Marketing Manager of M&G Direct Marketing, Ken Field (Essex County Table Tennis Chairman) and Jayne Johnson (Essex County Table Tennis Association General Secretary).

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