



Thomis retains title at Cippenham 4*

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The sixth running of the Cippenham Junior 4-Star Open over the weekend proved another extremely successful event with 220 entries keeping nine tables very busy for two days. Entries Secretary Ken Phillips and Referee Steve Smith are to be congratulated on their expert arrangements as are the team of busy umpires and other volunteer helpers.

Cadet Boys' Singles

The weekend commenced with the Cadet Boys' Singles, an event won by Berkshire's Felix Thomis who retained the title he won at the last such event in May.

However, Thomis was pushed all the way, firstly in the quarter-final when he faced a 2-1 deficit against Octavian Aparaschieve and then, even more so, in the semi-final in which he lost the first two games to Nathaniel Saunders. By contrast, the final was more straight-forward as Joseph Hunter was despatched 3-1.

Sixth seed Hunter made it all the way to the final despite being displaced in his preliminary round group after losing to Ty Dennis-Thompson. After a comfortable win against Cippenham's William Saint in the first round proper, Hunter then eliminated fifth seed Todd Stanmore in the second round and Yiannis Kazantzidis, both by the narrow margin of deuce in the fifth.

In his quarter-final Hunter faced second seed James Hamblett and then reached the final with a 3-0 victory over third seed Oliver Maric-Murray.

Nathaniel Saunders' run to the semi-final was also accomplished the hard way. He got out of his group in only second place, having lost to Kazantzidis, but then proceeded to eliminate fourth seed Bertie Kelly in round two followed by Francesco Bonato and Jack Roberts.



Cadet finalists Joseph Hunter and Felix Thomis

Cadet Girls' Singles

The Cadet Girls' Singles event followed the counterpart boys' event on Saturday afternoon. The winner was sixth seed Tianer Yu, a recent addition to the national scene. Yu was largely untroubled throughout and dropped only a solitary game during her route to the title.

In the final Yu was opposed by Abbie Hurley in a repeat of the match played earlier in the preliminary round group. Sixth seed Hurley then beat top seed Scarlett Anders in round two and this was followed by wins against Sienna Jetha and third seed Anna Green.



Tianer Yu

Yu's path to the final came through the vacant second seed position and included a win against fourth seed Lauren Loosemore and then, in the semi-final, Rebecca Savage, another player to reach the final stages of the competition despite only finishing second in her group.

There was a match-up in Group 7 between two members of the Cippenham team in the Junior British League. Local girl Anna Piercey, however, lost out to Hannah Silcock from Jersey. Silcock then beat another girl who trains at Cippenham, Jyothi Ghanta, in round two while Piercey had found Abbie Hurley too strong in the previous round. Cippenham's other contestant, Rachael Iles, progressed through the group stage but lost in round two to Isabelle Lacorte.



Finalists Tianer Yu and Abbie Hurley

Junior Boys' Singles

It was the turn of the older boys on Sunday in the Junior Boys' Singles. Like in the cadet girls' event the day before, the final was contested by two players who had opposed each other in the preliminary round group.

However, this time, the outcome was different in each case. It was top seed Ethan Walsh, ranked number one in England, who prevailed in the final against Oliver Maric-Murray. That was not the case earlier when the diminutive Maric-Murray had shocked his higher ranked opponent, winning deuce in the fifth amidst huge applause from the strong gathering of spectators.



Ethan Walsh

As a result of this, Maric-Murray took his place at the top of the draw while the displaced top seed, Walsh, had to manoeuvre his way through the bottom half, which included a match-up between the top two seeds in the quarter-final. Unlucky for second seed Amirul Hussain.

Other seeds also tasted defeat in their groups but all made it through to the competition proper nevertheless. Fourth seed Oliver Cornish lost to Joseph Hunter, but both players still eventually reached the quarter-finals, and seventh seed Mahmood Kelani lost to Nathaniel Saunders. Cippenham's Pranav Gudipati beat 15th seed Bertie Kelly but then lost in round two to Oliver Cornish after having been 2-1 up. Another seed who fell early on was third seed Sam Chesterman who lost to Jake Grayson 12-10 in the fifth game of their second round match.

Felix Thomis, buoyed by his success in the cadet event the day before, enjoyed another good run on Sunday, reaching the semi-final, and it took the eventual winner, Ethan Walsh, to stop him.

Cippenham's Shae Thakker, on the eve of his departure to represent the GB para team in Costa Rica, had a disappointing day, finishing second in his group and being eliminated by Samuel McIvor in round one.



Ethan Walsh and Ollie Maric-Murray

Junior Girls' Singles

As with the boys on the morning, it was the top ranked player in England who finished up with the winner's trophy but Charlotte Bardsley did not have it all her own way.

In the semi-final she faced 8-10 deficit in the fifth game against the left-hander Mille Rogove but kept her nerve to win an entertaining battle. Bardsley also beat cadet winner Tianer Yu in the quarter-final but this was more straightforward 3-0.



Charlotte Bardsley

This was Bardsley's third title at these championships, having also won this event in 2017 and the cadet event in 2016.

With the second seeded player absent, Rebecca Savage came through the vacant position but her run was ended in the semi-final by Mari Baldwin.



Mari Baldwin and Charlotte Bardsley

Results:

Junior Boys' Singles
 Junior Girls' Singles
 Cadet Boys' Singles
 Cadet Girls' Singles
 Junior Boys' Plate
 Junior Girls' Plate
 Cadet Boys' Plate
 Cadet Girls' Plate

Winner:

Ethan Walsh (Herts)
 Charlotte Bardsley (Staffs)
 Felix Thomis (Berks)
 Tianer Yu (Middx)
 Octavian Aparaschieve (Middx)
 Megan Jones (Salop)
 Gregory Fray (Lincs)
 Kathryn Silcock (Jersey)

Runner-up:

Oliver Maric-Murray (Surrey)
 Mari Baldwin (Devon)
 Joseph Hunter (Middx)
 Abbie Hurley (Kent)
 Rhys Hetherton (Wales)
 Abbie Hurley (Kent)
 Harri Docherty (Wales)
 Mabel Shute (Essex)

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