

# BATTS 1 Star Open

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The New Year BATTS One Star Open Tournament was held at the home of BATTS Table Tennis Club, the Norman Booth Centre, Old Harlow on 8/9 January with players mainly dominated from those within the M25 ring but with a disappointing entry only just over half of the October numbers. Perhaps the severe wintry weather in December or the closeness to the start of the new school term suppressed entries. However this did not detract from the quality of some of the matches over the weekend. In all the Boys events every player proceeded from the Group Stages into the Main or Consolation event KO stages. All the Girls events were round robins but alas no Under 16 event due to lack of entries.

Saturday saw the staging of the Junior events starting off with the Under 16's. With 5 Boys Groups, each of five players, the only Group top seed to win his Group was Raphael Lawanson, so close was the points situation of the seed entries, and he was to lose in the quarter final to Lithuania's Viktoras Burbulevicius who went on to reach the final by defeating Moshood Awosile 7, -12, 9, 6 in the semi. In the other half Jouvalle Wilson who headed his Group by defeating Ezra Myers went on to reach the final after coming back from 2-0 down to defeat Arif Ahmet -7, -10, 6, 9, 4 in the semi. In the final it was one way traffic with Viktoras winning 5, 4, 3. Having also lost to Alex Savva in his Group Ezra proceeded to reach the final of the Consolation event where he lost to Amagan Huseyin -6 12, 6, 7.

In the Under 18 event comprising 3 Groups of five and 2 Groups of six players three of the Group top seeds failed to win their Group. Yet again Viktoras showed that he will quickly ascend the Ranking List accounting for the higher ranked players Ezra Myers in his Group and Jouvalle Wilson in the quarter final. In the semi he defeated Lewis Savva 7, 6, 2, who a round earlier had narrowly defeated the higher ranked James Austin in a fluctuating match -7, 6, 7, -8, 9, to reach another final. In the semi final clash in the other half of the draw Moshood Awosile came back from 2-1 down to defeat clubmate Raphael Lawanson 6, -5, -5, 4, 6. In the final defender Viktoras (takes you back to Matthew Syed's junior days!) emerged a 6, 8, 6 winner for the day's double. In the Consolation event three of the quarter final winners would have expected to be contesting the same stage in the Main event but they were usurped by the unseeded Alex Savva. Alex won his quarter final with a five game thriller over Jordan Anderson and then accounted for Mustafa Mohamed 3, -7, 4, 4 whilst in the other semi Matthew Clark had a close 8, 9, 8 win over Robert Shrimpton. The final ended in a fourth game thriller which had the audience captivated with Alex a number of match points and Matthew also a number of game winning points. However it was Alex that clinched the two points needed for a 7, 9, -5, 18 win.

In the Girls Under 18 event there had been four entries but with one entry still with Royal Mail and another accepted on the day a round robin group of six was able to be played. Only one match went the full five game distance, this the match between the top two seeds where Lithuanian Laura Burbuleviciute, younger sister to Viktoras, squeezed past top seed Sarah Austin with a last gasp 11-9 win. Sara Elbana was third.

Sunday's events started with the Under 13's. Four Groups of five players and this time the top seeds won their Group. Marcus Hensher was the seed not to get to the semi finals, Alex Savva continuing his fine form of the previous day with a 2, 4, 8 quarter final win. Alex then defeated number two seed Ryan Williams in an enthrallingly fluctuating semi 7, -4, 6, -7, 8 to reach the final. In the top half Oliver Gunns atoned for his poor performances the previous day by defeating Scott Neave 5, 9, 6 at the semi final stage and Alex 8, 6, -8, 7 in the final.

In the Consolation event a marathon final which Nathan Knowles won -14, 6, 11, -10, 7 against Kleba Silva. Perhaps Kleba's five game semi win over Chris Clifford 8, 9, -9, -11, 1 may have had some effect.

The last event of the weekend was the Under 15 Boys with 6 Groups each of 5 Boys and only four of the six seeds winning their Group. In the top half Yinka Farlana beat Arzan Kamara 9, -8, 4, 10 in the quarter final having lost to brother Enisa in his Group and scraping through -10, 10, -7, 7, 10 against Lewis Savva in the previous round. A 6, 4, -8, 5 semi win over Ishan Bairoliya took him in to the final. In the bottom half second seed Raphael Lawanson

had a much easier course to the final defeating Enisa 8, -15, 8, 6 in the semi. In the final a comfortable win for Raphael over clubmate Yinka 8, -6, 4, 8.

Seven girls took part in the Girls Under 13 event following the allowance of a scratch entry on the day. Top seed Jane Li lost to Laura Burbuleviciute 10, 7, 10 whilst number three seed Rosemary Luscombe also only lost one match, that to Jane 8, 11, 7. Laura lost to scratch entry Heba Feredj 8, 8, -5, -5, 7 in the first match of the Group and also to Rosemary 7, 5, -8, 7. Thus Jane won the Group with Rosemary second and Laura third.

For the Under 15 Girl's event the same three girls were again involved but with differing results and unfortunately the number two seed Sarah Austin, runner up in yesterday's Under 18 event, was taken ill overnight and withdrew. This allowed Heba to gain another scratch entry into the eight girl round robin. Laura remained unbeaten gaining 3-1 revenges over both Heba and Rosemary and defeated Jane in five this time. Jane also somewhat surprisingly lost to Cheridan Thompson 3-1 but still managed to finish runner up. Meanwhile Rosemary's two losses to Jane and Laura, also both 3-1, left her in third place. With Stephanie Cross defeating Cheridan 12-10 in the final game of the match between them she finished in fourth place with Cheridan fifth.

The next BATTs 1 Star Tournament will be on Sunday 27 March involving Under 11, 13 and 15 events with a Closing Date of Friday 11 March. Entry Forms are already on the ETTA website.

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