

Tin-Tin Ho takes gold

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A young England team found the competition tough at the cadet six nations even in Dusseldorf, Germany over the weekend. The other five nations involved; Germany, France, Sweden, Holland and Denmark provided a true test for the English players. The four boys and four girls will all be able to compete in the cadet age group next season.

The England teams started with a wake up call against Germany, the girls losing 0-10 whilst the boys went down 2-8 with Sam Mabey and Marcus Giles contributing one each. The team event is constructed into top half with two players and the other two in the bottom half. England boys started with Helshan Weeringhe and Sam Mabey in the top half with Danny Lawrence and Marcus Giles as the B team. The girls were led by Tin-Tin Ho with Maria Tsapsinos starting in the top half and Emily Bolton and Louis Peake competing as the lower half team. As number ones, Helshan and Tin-Tin Ho had to play in the A teams. England teams performed better against France, Tin-Tin Ho won her two in the 2-8 loss and the boys played superbly to record a 7-3 win; Helshan taking one in the top half and doubles with Sam. In the bottom half Marcus Giles and Danny Lawrence performed very well winning all five matches singles and doubles.



Against Holland, Tin-Tin was again England's only contributor with two singles win. The boys went down 2-8 also with Marcus and Helshan picking up wins. England girl's fortunes changed when Maria and Emily changed teams and Maria started to contribute results to support Tin-Tin in the top half. Against Sweden this nearly worked as England lost 4-6, the four coming from Tin-Tin and Maria with two each. The boys went down to a strong Swedish boy's team 1-9 with Helshan the only winner for the boys. The eventual winners of the competition Denmark were England's final opponents and England romped into a 2-0 lead through Helshan and Danny. Despite the impressive start the strong Danish boys stepped it up and took control and ran out 8-2 winners. Tin-Tin and Maria again won two each with Emily and Louis pairing taking the doubles to secure a 5 all draw.

Individuals

All players had a good deal of matches in the singles and all fought hard throughout the competition. Despite some good wins from some of the players it was only England's number ones Helshan and Tin Tin who progressed through to the main draw. Helshan lost out at the quarter final stage to France's Nolan Givonne 3-1 but the best was yet to come. Tin-Tin was flying and stormed to victory with a 3-1 win against Roza Soposki of France in the quarter-final stage. From then on Tin-Tin went from strength to strength overcoming two German's in the semi-final and final. In the semi she overpowered Lilli Eise 3-0 with some fantastic counter attacking table tennis. The final was against a player she lost 3-0 to in the team event in Yuan Wan however Tin-Tin raised her game and didn't give Wan an opportunity to settle down and Tin-Tin came out a 3-0 winner to take the title. No one can remember the last time the event was won by English girl so this was a tremendous effort.

The English coaches at the event were Sally Shut, Alison Broe, Stephen Gertsen and Matthew Stanforth. Peter Charters also attended the event to check out the future stars of England in an international competition.

By Stephen Gertsen

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