

Vickers wins third under-21 title

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Emma Vickers won her third under-21s title at Ponds Forge in the last match on Friday night at the English National Table Tennis Championships with a 3-1 triumph over Hannah Hicks.

Vickers progressed from her group with solid victories over Sophie Neil and Emily Ross before facing the big test in rising cadet talent Tin-Tin Ho. Vickers won a tight match 3-2 (11-9, 7-11, 11-8, 10-12, 11-7) to reach the quarter-finals where she faced Chloe Whyte.

Whyte again put up a massive fight but Vickers fought her way into the semi-finals despite trailing 2-1 at one stage. She eventually won 3-2 (11-8, 10-12, 8-11, 11-3, 11-7).

Her semi-final win over Vicky Smith was much more straightforward in a 3-0 (11-8, 11-8, 11-6) coast over the new junior number one.

It was Hicks who she met in the final after the number one seed had won all her group games 3-0 and then followed that up with her strong semi-final win over Jessica Dawson which was surprisingly one-sided – ending 3-0 (11-5, 11-2, 11-4) to Hicks.

Having looked at the scores you would have thought the defender of Hicks would have been favourite and taken the title but she missed out on her second successive title as Vickers was in determined form.

Vickers attacked from the start and Hicks was blown away in the first game 11-4 and found the going tough again in the second game as again she was swept aside 11-6.

Hicks finally found her touch with her delicate chops to take the third game 11-5 before fighting in a tense fourth game which went closer than the previous games. However, Vickers held her nerve and won her third title with a 3-1 (11-4, 11-6, 5-11, 11-8) win.

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