

# Tees Sport Blackpool GP Day One Report

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Mike O'Driscoll won the Men's Band 1 in Blackpool late on Saturday

## Men's Band 1

Mike O'Driscoll won a high-class Band 1 final against Lewis Gray late into Saturday night with quality rallies outlining the displays from both players. The four-game final was the highlight of an excellent day of play at the Tees Sport Blackpool Grand Prix.

Gray could have been forgiven for not putting up a fight after two successive five games matches in both his semi and quarter-final ties might have left him exhausted. However, he pushed the experienced O'Driscoll all the way in four tight and entertaining games featured excellent forehand and backhand rallies.

O'Driscoll beat Gerry Campbell, Scott Barton and Richard Main in three straight games to reach the final while Gray had the gruelling five-game wins over both Daniel Basterfield (5-11, 12-10, 10-12, 11-8, 12-10) and Garry Dodd (8-11, 12-10, 11-3, 13-15, 11-5).

## Women's Band 1

Angharad Phillips was the deserved winner of the Women's Band 1 competition after winning all four of her matches in the round robin tournament.

The Welsh youngster defeated both Natalie Slater and Xue Bai in three straight games as well as Jersey player Kelsey Le Maistre in four games.

Her final fixture of the event was a match-up against her twin sister Megan, who also still had a chance of winning the tournament after two wins of her own. However, Angharad was not to be denied as, after winning a tight opening game 14-12, she fought back from 7-3 down in the second to win 11-8 before completing the 3-0 win with an 11-7 third game.



Angharad beat sister Megan 3-0 to end the Band 1 event unbeaten

## Men's Band 2

Men's Band 2 was confidently won by the impressive young Scotsman Christopher Wheeler who continues to impress.

He had a big semi-final battle with Richard Wesley though after he fell 2-0 behind 11-6, 11-8. He came back immediately with two quickfire games to level – conceding only seven points in the process. After a tense fifth game – the young Scot came through 11-9.

In the final he faced Mike Fraser who beat Pawel Orzechowski 3-0 (11-5, 11-7, 11-8) in his semi. Fraser found the going tough against Wheeler in the final with the latter taking it 11-2.

The second and third games were much closer affairs as Fraser went toe-to-toe with Wheeler before narrowly losing them both, 12-10 and 17-15 respectively.

## Women's Band 2

Zoe Cheesman fought her way to an excellent Band 2 title after a thrilling semi-final contest with Janine Bromley went to the wire.

Cheesman had dominated the opening exchanges of the match and led 2-0 (13-11, 11-8) but found herself pegged back to level after Bromley rediscovered her rhythm in the third and fourth games.

Just when it looked like Bromley would continue her form to victory, Cheesman fought back and led throughout the deciding game to set up two match points at 10-8. However, she was left frustrated when Bromley eradicated both points quickly to leave the contest in the balance.

Finally, Cheesman held her nerve to seal the fifth 12-10 and reach the final against Janay Gibson who won a more straightforward three-gamer against Annie Hudson.

The first game of the final was won by Gibson 11-7 but Cheesman was not to be denied her title – claiming the next three games 11-4, 11-9, 11-9.



Runner-up Janay Gibson with Tees Sport's Matt Porter and winner Zoe Cheesman

### **Men's Band 3**

Anthony Phonenix finished his day at the Tees Sport Blackpool Grand Prix with his second title (after winning the Band 4 earlier) by beating Ernest Mpundu 3-0 in the final.

Mpundu had beaten Adam Feargrieve, Aidan Ranftler and Rajan Waterman in straight games to reach the final but he was no match for Phoenix thereafter.

Phoenix had to fight his way through a classic 3-2 (5-11, 11-6, 11-9, 8-11, 11-9) win over Josh Robinson to make the final but once there he outclassed Mpundu to take the match in steady fashion 11-7, 11-3, 11-8.

### **Women's Band 3**

Janay Gibson exacted her revenge on Zoe Cheesman for her defeat in the Band 2 singles by winning the Band 3 final against the same opponent.

Cheesman came through a tough five-game semi-final against Lu Huang 3-2 (11-7, 9-11, 8-11, 11-7, 11-4) while Gibson made easier work of her last-four tie with Janine Bromley by winning 3-0 (15-13, 13-11, 11-6).

Gibson then wasted no time and energy in taking the title with a dominant 3-0 (11-4, 11-6, 13-11) performance.

### **Men's Band 4**

Anthony Phoenix won the Men's Band 4 with a 3-0 (11-8, 13-11, 11-4) win over Josh Robinson in the final.

Phoenix had fought his way through a strong line-up in Band 4 beating Simon Holohan 3-0, David Graham 3-1 and Adam Smith 3-1 in his semi-final.

Robinson had made the final after knock-out victories over Andrew Eagles (3-1), Rob Owen (3-0) and Phillip Bell (3-0).

### **Men's Band 5**

Noor Owadally won the Men's Band 5 with a consummate performance in the final against Senri Ohara.

After defeating Band 6 winner Gabriel Achampong in his first knock-out game he never looked back with steady progress to the final where he beat Ohara in three straight games.

### **Men's Band 6**

Gabriel Achampong was the stand-out performer in Men's Band 6 after he cruised through the stages to take the title – dropping only two games in the knock-out rounds.

Achampong had straight games wins over both Jonathan Greaves and Liam Rowson before he beat Senri Ohara in four games in the semi-final.

In the final he met Turkish player Osman Yildirim. However, Yildirim struggled to stay with Achampong early on with the London Progress player winning the first two games 11-3, 11-6. Yildirim pulled one back in the third, but Achampong sealed the title one game later with an 11-9 triumph.



Winner Gabriel Achampong with Tees Sport's Matt Porter and runner-up Osman Yildirim

#### **Final Results:**

##### **Men's Band 1**

Mike O'Driscoll bt Lewis Gray 3-1 (11-6, 10-12, 11-9, 11-9)

##### **Women's Band 1**

Angharad Phillips won the round-robin event

##### **Men's Band 2**

Christopher Wheeler bt Mike Fraser 3-0 (11-2, 12-10, 17-15)

##### **Women's Band 2**

Zoe Cheesman bt Janay Gibson 3-1 (7-11, 11-4, 11-9, 11-9)

##### **Men's Band 3**

Anthony Phoenix bt Ernest Mpundu 3-0 (11-7, 11-3, 11-8)

##### **Women's Band 3**

Janay Gibson bt Zoe Cheesman 3-0 (11-4, 11-6, 13-11)

##### **Men's Band 4**

Anthony Phoenix bt Josh Robinson 3-0 (11-8, 13-11, 11-4)

##### **Men's Band 5**

Noor Owadally bt Senri Ohara 3-0 (11-8, 11-7, 11-7)

##### **Men's Band 6**

Gabriel Achampong bt Osman Yildirim 3-1 (11-3, 11-6, 9-11, 11-9)

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