

ELCC Finals Report

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Aaron Beech and Tomasz Rzeszotko, the Wilmott Cup winners

ELCC FINALS REPORT

The finals of the English Leagues Cup Competition took place at Westfield Table Tennis Club, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, over the weekend of 16th and 17th June 2012. The competition was the strongest yet since the new format was introduced five years ago with more teams and higher ranked players competing for the honours.

Wilmott Cup (Senior Men)

The senior men's trophy saw seven teams on the day fight for the number one spot. In the first round the number one seeds, Sheffield's Matt Dodds and Mark Short, defeated the two-man Hull team of Shaun Madden and Chris Clinton 4-1. Shaun was unlucky to lose both his singles in the fifth set and Chris had an excellent win over Matt Dodds. The other match in Group A saw Guildford overcome Ipswich 5-0 but again two very close games went to five. In Group B the father and son team of Jimmy and Luke Walsh, playing for SHAW, took one game apiece in the singles against Chester/Ellesmere Port but lost the doubles which proved a crucial match.

After lunch Sheffield's duo of Matt Dodds and Mark Short continued their winning ways with a 4-1 win over Guildford's former winners, Alain Choo Choy and Michael Chan. The Ipswich team, with brothers Ryan and Jake Collins, had an excellent 5-0 win over Hull but again there were some close games. Group B and the young team of Lawrence Sweeney and Matthew Outhwaite representing Leamington Spa entered the fray and despite a good fight went down 3-2 against the pair from Chester/Ellesmere Port, Tomasz Rzeszotko and Aaron Beech.

Three o'clock and the third set of matches began. Sheffield secured their place in the first and second place play-offs with a 4-1 over Ipswich. Hull's Chris Clinton helped his team to victory over Guildford winning both his singles and also took the doubles with partner Sean Madden. This resulted in a three-way tie for second, third and fourth places in the group. Guildford ended up as the highest placed team of the three with a 7-3 game difference, Ipswich 5-5 and unlucky Hull coming fourth in the group.

Group B's match and SHAW emerged victors by three games to two against Leamington Spa. Jimmy Walsh won his two singles comfortably. However, the other two singles matches both went to five with Luke Walsh just losing out in game 8 and game 9. SHAW came back from 2-0 down to win the doubles too.

Into the final set of matches winners of Group A, Sheffield faced Winners of Group B, Chester/Ellesmere Port for first and second place. Second placed teams Guildford and SHAW vied for the bronze medal position.

The match for the cup and the title between Sheffield and Chester/Ellesmere Port looked as if it would be an interesting contest with Tomasz Rzeszotko being the only undefeated player whilst Aaron Beech had yet to win a singles. The first game started well for Sheffield when after a real tussle Mark Short inflicted Tomasz's first defeat of the day 3-0 (12-10, 12-10, 13-11).

Everything seemed to be going Sheffield's way when Matt Dodds had a relatively easy win over Aaron Beech. Chester/Ellesmere Port fought back to take the doubles in the fifth and then Tomasz continued with a five game victory over Matt Dodds.

In the final match Matt took the first set but Aaron then produced a series of spectacular backhands to claw his way ahead to 2-1. The fourth game was spectacular with both players producing some outstanding shots. Despite Matt saving several match points ultimately Aaron proved too strong and registered his first win of the day to take the title for Chester/Ellesmere Port.

FINAL PLACINGS

1. Chester/Ellesmere Port
2. Sheffield
3. SHAW
4. Guildford
5. Ipswich
6. Leamington Spa
7. Hull



Sanja Clements and Hannah Hicks won the JM Rose Bowl

J M ROSE BOWL (Senior Women)

The ladies competition saw all previous winners from the last four seasons – North Herts, Leicester, Bournemouth and the holders, Hastings, taking part. England international Hannah Hicks partnered by Sanja Clements playing for the Bournemouth League were the number one seeds with Karen Smith, former England international, and Joanne Kennedy for Leicester being the number two seeds.

The day started well for Bournemouth with an expected 5-0 win over Birmingham's Kate Hughes and Dawn Sagoo. The other match in Group A was a close run affair with North Herts Janice Laing winning the first, Sarah Horsnell for Guildford the second, the doubles went to North Herts. Feifei Pei had her first win for Guildford to draw level and then Sandra Harper clinched it for North Herts with a win 3-2 against Sarah Horsnell in a very tight game. Group B and second seeds Leicester (Karen Smith and Joanne Kennedy) took Bracknell & Wokingham 4-1 with Sharon Mitchell playing well to defeat Joanne Kennedy. A close match in the doubles, so often the decider, just went Leicester's way with Wendy Porter playing her part for Bracknell & Wokingham to nearly upset the higher ranked pair. The biggest upset was when Leeds Nicola Smith and Nicole Finn went 2-0 up against the holders Hastings, Rose Rainton and Lisa Standen. Hastings pulled one back by winning the doubles but Nicola Smith decided the result in the fourth with a comfortable win over Lisa Standen.

Sustained by lunch and Bournemouth continued their winning ways with a 5-0 victory over Guildford. A much closer encounter was taking place between Birmingham and North Herts. The match started with a win for North Herts, Birmingham's Kate Hughes then made it one all, Kate with Dawn Sagoo went ahead with a good doubles win. Janice Laing pulled it back to 2-2 for North Herts and then in a very tight match Janice Laing just pipped Dawn Sagoo 11-7 in the fifth. Three of the five matches went to five and the other two were close 3-1 encounters. Group B and another unexpected defeat, this time Leeds ladies over Leicester. Despite Karen Smith winning both her singles the score line showed a 3-2 win for Leeds. Another instance of the importance of the doubles match which Leeds won 13-11 in the final game. The final match in this round and Hastings had a fairly comfortable win over Bracknell & Wokingham.

The final set of matches in the groups and again Bournemouth ladies had a 5-0 win, this time over North Herts. The other match in Group A was another very tight match. Guildford's Feifei Pei won the first, Sarah Horsnell put Guildford 2-0 ahead. Birmingham took the doubles, Kate Hughes levelled the score for Birmingham before Sarah Horsnell won the last match to give Guildford a 3-2 victory. In Group B Leeds continued their winning ways beating Bracknell & Wokingham 4-1 to put them in the play-offs for 1st and 2nd place. Hastings registered a 3-2 win over Leicester to put them in the play-offs for a bronze medal and left Leicester to compete for 5th/6th position.

The play-offs for 1st and 2nd place were a fairly one-sided affair with the classy duo of Hannah Hicks and Sanja Clements winning the first two singles and then the doubles in four to regain the trophy that Bournemouth had last won in 2008. However, all credit to the Leeds ladies, Nicola Smith and Nicole Finn, who had played so well throughout the rest of the day to get to the finals and win a silver medal. The third and fourth place match was

much closer.

Sandra Harper for North Herts started well with a 3-0 win over Lisa Standen of Hastings. Rose Rainton levelled the score defeating Janice Laing, also by 3-0. The doubles went to North Herts in five before Rose levelled the score. The final match to decide who went home with the bronze medal saw a win for Hastings so North Herts ended in the unlucky fourth spot.

FINAL PLACINGS

1. Bournemouth
2. Leeds
3. Hastings
4. North Herts
5. Guildford
6. Leicester
7. Birmingham
8. Bracknell & Wokingham



Bromfield Cup Champions North Middlesex's Samantha Lai and Jasmine Chan

BROMFIELD TROPHY (Junior Girls)

Rosemary Luscombe and Georgina Lark represented the Aylesbury League and Samantha Lai and Jasmine Chan represented North Middlesex in the Bromfield Trophy. North Middlesex started well with Jasmine beating Rosemary in four games before Samantha increased the North Middlesex lead with a straight win over Georgina. Another win for North Middlesex in the doubles saw them clinch the title. Aylesbury prevented a whitewash when Georgina gained an excellent win for Aylesbury over Jasmine to bring the final result to 4-1.

FINAL PLACINGS

1. North Middlesex
2. Aylesbury



Carter Cup Champions: George Downing, Hugo Pang and Finn Morgan-Bayliss

CARTER CUP (Junior Boys)

The entry this year was higher and stronger than ever. The holders Reading had been eliminated in the Zonal Rounds by Wembley & Harrow so a new name would be engraved on the trophy. Bournemouth A were the number one seeds with Leamington Spa A at number two.

The first matches of the day in Group A and Bournemouth A's George Downing, Hugo Pang and Finn Morgan-Bayliss got off to a good start defeating Plymouth lads, Ollie Buddell and Kevin Vandabona, in five straight. The Devon lads put up a tremendous fight in the doubles and only just lost in the fifth in a closely contested game. The other two teams in Group A ended with Gabriel Achampong and Omar Khassal from Wembley & Harrow also winning 5-0 against Leamington Spa B's Ryan Lines and Jesse Kendrick-Hill.

Group B's top seeds, Leamington Spa A (Lawrence Sweeney and Matthew Man) had a comfortable win over the far less experienced West Wilts pair of Jamie and Lee Phillips. Sheffield's David Thompson and Bradley Wood had a good 4-1 win over North Middlesex with Armagan Huseyin gaining the one victory for North Middlesex. Yan Williams for North Middlesex came close losing 3-2 against Bradley Wood. Arif Ahmet partnered Armagan in the doubles and although they took the second game 11-1 went down in four.

The second round and Bournemouth A had a closer than expected match against Leamington Spa B with Jesse Kendrick-Hill playing well to beat Hugo Pang. Jesse with Ryan Lines also took the doubles. Gabriel Achampong and Omar Khassal for Wembley & Harrow proved too strong for Plymouth's Ollie Buddell and Kevin Vandabona although Ollie had a tremendous last match which went to five. Group B and Sheffield and Leamington Spa A, both had 5-0 wins over West Wilts and North Middlesex respectively. Matt Outhwaite and Matt Man played for Leamington this time in the singles and Armagan Huseyin gave them both very good matches going down to Matt Man game 8 in the fifth and game 13 in the fourth against Matt Outhwaite.

Third round matches and all was not going Bournemouth A's way against Wembley & Harrow whose Gabriel Achampong won the first against Hugo Pang. George Downing levelled the score against Omar Khassal. A close encounter and Wembley & Harrow went ahead after the doubles before George again levelled the score. The decider and Hugo Pang came away the victor to put Bournemouth A in the 1st/2nd position play-offs leaving Wembley & Harrow to fight for the bronze medal position. Another 3-2 score line in Group A, this time Leamington Spa B won the decider in the fifth with a win for Ryan Lines over Kevin Vandabona.

Group B and number one seeds, Leamington Spa A, had a scare when Lawrence Sweeney lost the first to Bradley Wood in five. The second match between Matt Outhwaite and David Thompson just went Leamington's way with a -10, 8, 8, -9, 8 score. It all went Leamington's way after that, however, and they came away 4-1 winners. North Middlesex had a more comfortable win over West Wilts with Armagan Huseyin and Lee Phillips having the highest score of the day with a 3-2 win for Armagan 9, 9, -18, -9, 5.

The number one and two seeded teams were set to do battle for first and second place. George Downing for Bournemouth took his team into the lead with a 3-1 over Matt Outhwaite. Lawrence Sweeney ensured Leamington Spa A had a fighting chance by an enthralling duel with Hugo Pang which he won game 9 in the fifth. George Downing and Hugo Pang put their team ahead with a close doubles win against Lawrence Sweeney and Matt Man. The fourth match was one of the best of the day, a fitting end to the competition. It resulted in a win for George and therefore the title for Bournemouth. The bronze medal went to Wembley & Harrow whose two players had played well all day. They defeated the gallant Sheffield pair of Bradley Wood and David Thompson who also had given very good account of themselves. The final score was 3-1 to Wembley & Harrow with David Thompson getting Sheffield's win. Fifth place went to Leamington Spa B with a 3-1 win over North Middlesex whilst a relatively local derby match between Plymouth and West Wilts saw Plymouth take the honours.

FINAL PLACINGS

1. Bournemouth A
2. Leamington Spa A
3. Wembley & Harrow
4. Sheffield
5. Leamington Spa B
6. North Middlesex
7. Plymouth
8. West Wilts

The weekend saw some excellent matches, which were played in an excellent spirit and credit to all participants. Much appreciation goes to Mick Strode, the referee, and the team of umpires – Wendy Hancock, Paul Nichols, Alan Thomas, Trevor Vincent, Mike Atkinson, Brian Freer and Jim Kenny – who helped ensure the smooth running of the event. Our hosts at Westfield TTC provided their excellent hospitality and special thanks go to Kevin Bird, Elaine Smalley and their team of helpers for making us so welcome and providing such lovely food.



Wilmott Cup 3rd place for Luke and Jimmy Walsh of SHAW who share a joke with ETTA President Keith Ponting

All trophies were presented by the ETTA President, Keith Ponting, who has been such a major part, and support,

of this competition going back too many years to mention. Thanks also to Mike Holt (Vice-Chairman, Competitions and Marketing), Mike Smith (ELCC Chairman) and Richard Hudson (ELCC Committee Member) for their continued support of the competition.

Diane Webb

ELCC Organiser

Photos by [John Upham](#) and Diane Webb

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