

Tin-Tin triumphs in classic final

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Fourteen-year-old Tin-Tin Ho won the English Women's Under 21s after an astonishing final victory over the unfortunate Yolanda King.

It was King last year who knocked the cadet out of the Women's Singles in the last 16 of 2012, but this time the girl from Paddington narrowly survived in a titanic tussle that went all the way to deuce in the fifth.

Going five games was an early habit for Tin-Tin who had both her groups games run the full distance, one of which she lost to Abbie Milwain. After beating Sophie Neil 3-2 she lost to Milwain 3-2 (5-11, 11-7, 11-6, 6-11, 11-7).

However, by finishing second in her group she then came up against Jess Dawson, who pushed the no. 1 junior all the way for a third time in the afternoon. Dawson, despite losing the third game 11-1, came back to win the fourth 13-11 and force yet another decider for the 14-year-old – one she eventually won 11-7.

The trials of character kept coming for the cadet as she faced great rival Maria Tsapsinos in the quarter-finals. Winning that match 3-1 before shocking the top seed, Karina Le Fevre, 3-0 (11-7, 12-10, 12-10) in the semi-final made her a slight favourite going into the final stage.

On the other hand, King's route to the final was somewhat less complicated.

Having justified her seeding and won her group, she received a bye to the quarter-finals where she faced Evangeline Collier. After beating Collier 3-1 she beat Vicky Smith 3-0 and booked her place against Tin-Tin to give both the chance to win their maiden under 21s title.

In the final it was the Sussex-born girl that struck first blood with an 11-8 game before Tin-Tin recovered in the second game, converting a 5-1 lead to an 11-5 game.

In the third game Tin-Tin was gifted two game points when a lucky net gave her a 10-8 lead but King's character shone through to not only save the game points, but to earn, and win her own for a 13-11 game.

It was a similar story in the fourth game when Tin-Tin led 9-7 but allowed King to create her first match point opportunity at 10-9. That was saved by a big spin serve from the 14-year-old, before another identical serve created her first game point at 11-10. This was saved by a wonderful defensive point from King, however, a third excellent probing serve from Tin-Tin broke King's resistance and sealed the game 13-11.

The pair headed into a deciding game but were once more inseparable throughout. At 9-9, King's aggressive attacking prowess earned her a second match point at 10-9. However, the 18-year-old's weakness to the Tin-Tin serve cost her one final time as the cadet levelled before taking her first, and only, match point to seal an

incredible title.

Tin-Tin Ho bt Yolanda King 3-2 (8-11, 11-5, 11-13, 13-11, 12-10)

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