

NatWest Jersey GP wins for Doran & Loveridge

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The sun shone down on FB Fields, St. Clement in Jersey and the temperature rose as the Men's and Women's Singles progressed through the group stages.

The top eight seeds led by the No1 Darius Knight all won their groups in the **Men's Open Singles** with local interest also represented as Craig Gascoyne who also won his group whilst fellow Islanders Chris Morshead, Marcin Jurkiewicz, Max Tupper and Josh Band progressed as group runners-up.

Tupper negotiated Staffordshire's Shaun Slater in the preliminary knockout round whilst Morshead and Band battled out their prelim which Band won 3-1 to join Jurkiewicz and Gascoyne in the last sixteen.

Darius Knight, Matt Ware, Michael O' Driscoll and Paul McCreery reached the quarter-finals from the top half of the draw without any scares. In the bottom half, Slovakia's Sam Novota put pay to Jersey's Max Tupper meanwhile, Guernsey's Garry Dodd beat Jurkiewicz, Damien Nicholls beat Gascoyne and Chris Doran finished off the last Islander standing – Josh Band.

In the quarters, Knight dismantled Matt Ware 3-0 with some clinical shots and eventually made the final after having surrendered a 2-0 lead to McCreery to win the fifth and deciding game. McCreery had earlier seen off the in-form Mike O' Driscoll.

Novota, the Slovak No 6, put pay to Guernsey's Garry Dodd in the last eight spurred on by good natured support from the Jersey crowd whilst Doran saw off Damien Nicholls in an entertaining match. The Doran v Novota match was a battle of booming forehands interspersed with exquisite backhands from the Slovakian. Eventually Doran eased through 3-1 forcing errors from his opponent.

The final was a re-run of the previous year and the money was on Knight to get revenge. Doran took the first 13-11 and Knight struck back instantly 11-7 in the second before taking the lead by converting the third 11-9.

He looked odds-on to finish the job but Doran, aided by some winning nets and edges, nicked the fourth game 11-9 to level the match. The final game was all about Doran imposing himself from the start and at the turn he had his nose in front after a number of extended looping rallies which drew massive applause from a huge and appreciative audience. He drew errors from Knight as the game progressed and eventually got over the winning line 11-6 to defend his title and collect the cheque for **£570.00**

The **Women's Singles** was also of the highest quality with the number 1 and number 3 seeds Hannah Hicks and Emma Vickers winning their groups whilst Guernsey's Alice Loveridge the no2 seed could only progress as group runner-up having been beaten by Wales's Chloe Thomas.

The Sarnian recovered to beat Tressa Armitage from Hampshire to make the semi to face Hicks. Vickers had to face the in-form Sue Collier who was at the top of her game. And so it turned out as Collier progressed to the semi with some aggressive winning shots.

Loveridge's Achilles heel is known to be playing against chop and with Hicks as her opponent a win for the Hampshire girl looked likely. Loveridge had other ideas though and was never behind with some very patient play once Hicks had levelled at one all to take the next two games 11-9 and 11-4 to lift the trophy for the fourth year on the trot.

The **Under 21 Mixed Singles** saw a single lady player in the guise of the talented Emma Torkington against a strong male entry. Torkington finished second in her group, won by Jersey's Josh Band, to make the preliminary knock-out round where she beat Adam Curran to make the last eight.

She finally exited at the hands of No1 seed Paul McCreery. Ireland's talented no1 was joined by Colin Dalglish who ended Jersey player Chris Morshead's hopes. Sam Novota also eased past Hugo Tupper while Josh Band defeated Tyler Gosselin.

McCreery won the Celtic semi-final against Dalglish and Novota snuffed out the last Jersey hope Josh Band clinically 3-0. The final was high quality with McCreery forcing his opponent to the back court to clinch forced errors which proved to be the deciding tactic as he took the title 3-1.

The **Veterans Singles** were once again steeped with talent. Sue Collier continued her fabulous form during the three-day festival as runner-up in her group to then reach the semis at the expense of Jane Vickers where she was finally abruptly halted by the uber-talented Mike O'Driscoll.

Sanja Clements won her group and eased past Ken Parradine to face Jersey's Yogi Ellis where the Islander weaved his magic to nick the fifth game. In the final the experience, power and silky skills of the former European Junior and Commonwealth Champion O'Driscoll, was too much for the local legend to handle and the Herefordshire player went home with the winner's cheque.

The **Restricted Singles** [for players between the ages of 21 and 40] ended up being a battle between the seeded players too. Hampshire's Matt Ware and Guernsey's Garry Dodd eased through their groups without any hiccups and Ware reached the final comfortably beating Jersey's Marcin Jurkiewicz in the last four. Dodd joined him after ending Dorset's Steve Foster's hopes in similar clinical style. The final was all guns blazing from both attacking players and finally it was Dodd who made fewer unforced errors to take the winner's plaudits.

[Read the full report here from Saturday's Banded Events](#)

[Read the full report here from Friday's Team Events](#)

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