

Lawrence becomes Kent's youngest Champion at 15

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Dan Lawrence becomes the youngest Kent Men's Singles Champion at 15



Fifteen-year-old Dan Lawrence from Tonbridge became the youngest ever Kent Closed Men's Singles Champion when he beat Bromley left-hander Chris Bartram, currently the England veteran (over 40) no.2, 3-0 (12-10, 11-6, 11-6) in the final at the Howard School, Rainham over the weekend.

Playing superbly well Dan, a member of the Byng Hall Club, Tunbridge Wells and of the SE Performance Centre, High Weald Academy, Cranbrook, dropped only one game in the event, to Allan Watson (Bromley), who he beat 3-1 (11-7, 10-12, 11-4, 11-8) in the second round.

Lawrence made a clean sweep of the singles he entered, also beating Aaron Smith (Bromley) 3-0 (11-8, 11-5, 11-5) to take the under 21s, and Jack Merton (Bromley) 3-1 (11-9, 13-11, 8-11, 11-8) to win the junior (under 18) boys' singles.

With Tom Windram (North West Kent), he overcame Bromley pair Jack Merton & James Smith in the junior boys' doubles.

Top seed in the junior girls' singles, Daniella Gray from Benenden and a member of the Weald Club, Cranbrook, was disappointed to lose 3-1 (11-9, 11-6, 8-11, 12-10) to a spirited Evie Foster (Medway) in the final. A very nervous Daniella slipped up when she was 9-3 ahead in the fourth game and that cost her the match.

However, she did get some consolation, when partnered by Foster she beat Byng Hall Club pair Becky Hancock & Ruth Marsden 3-0 (11-3, 11-8, 11-2) to win the junior girls' doubles.

Later, Gray was to give no.1 seed Jasmin Ould (Byng Hall Club) close matches in the semi-finals of both the women's singles and the under 21 singles, going down 3-1 (11-3, 8-11, 11-9, 18-16) in the former and 3-0 (11-9, 11-8,

11-8) in the latter.

Jasmin had to relinquish both her senior singles titles when she fell in each final to the new England Schools under-19 champion Emma Tovey (Meopham/Maidstone League), the scores being 3-1 (11-6, 11-6, 7-11, 11-7) in the senior women's singles and 3-2 (11-5, 9-11, 16-14, 9-11, 11-5) in the under-21s. Tovey's advantage was that she played a tighter, more consistent game.

However, the Byng Hall star, Ould, did take two doubles trophies. She and Emma Tovey defeated Lorraine Perryman (North West Kent) and Sue Sullivan (Bromley) 3-0 (11-8, 11-9, 11-7) in the women's doubles, and with Chris Bartram she beat Phil Thomas (Medway) and Tovey 3-1 (8-11, 11-8, 11-1, 11-4) in the mixed doubles.

Apart from the junior girls, Byng Hall's Becky Hancock and Ruth Marsden dominated the girls' events. Becky beat Ruth in the under 15 (cadet) singles, but Ruth overcame Becky in the category 2 girls' singles. Ruth also triumphed in the under 13s singles with a victory over Zurafa Sakel (Canterbury).

In a tense under 11 boys' singles final, Chamika Weerasinghe (Tonbridge) bt Leon Smith (Bromley) 3-2 (9-11, 7-11, 11-6, 11-7, 11-7).

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