

Many medals for London Academy

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Posted On: **May 20, 2013**

Many Medals For London Academy!

It was decided to run this event only a week before it happened, due to the fact that there were four to five available tables on the Sunday of the Sussex Satellite Grand Prix at the Triangle, Burgess Hill on 5th May.

Despite the very short notice a very impressive 35 players entered. There were 28 players in the morning session and 26 in the afternoon. It would not have been possible to accommodate any more players, without causing the events to finish late, so the ideal number of entrants took part. This was helped greatly by the London Academy TTC bringing nine players and Dulwich TTC bringing four players. Nice to see four players from the Eastbourne League too.

There were 12 medals available for both morning and afternoon sessions (i.e. 24 in total), so players had a great chance of success, especially since the bottom two players from each morning band were relegated in the afternoon and the top two were promoted, to give everyone a mixture of winning matches and being challenged. All the events were round robin groups, to give players plenty of matches. London Academy players won 11 medals in total, so just short of half of what was available.



Band A Morning:

This Group contained seven players all playing each other. Top seed Nathan Knowles (London Academy-LA) won all six of his matches, but was extended to five games, by both James Arnold (Horsham Spinners), who finished fourth and Theo Achampong (LA), who finished sixth. Marcus Bracey (Lancing) came second on count back with Kidi Martin-Paulo (LA), he won the encounter between them in the decider.



Band B Morning:

Again there were seven players in this event. No player was undefeated and no player lost all of their matches. The Gold medal winner was Shayan Naserbakht (LA), with five victories. His loss was in the fifth set against Owen Bryan (Dulwich), who won three matches and finished fourth. Naserbakht was also extended to the fifth by club mate Jale Dale, Ryan Darwen (Bonor Regis), Barry Goodson (Polegate) and Alan Chumbley (Polegate).

In fact the only player not to take him to five was 9-year-old Michael Tunubu (Dulwich), who came second on count back with four wins, two of which were in the deciding game. Dale also had four wins, but lost to Tunubu, so finished third.



Band C Morning:

As with Band B, all players won at least one match in this, a group of six players. The winner was favourite Davis-Francis (Dulwich), who won all five of his fixtures. Interestingly he was only taken to five once, by Peter Lambert (North Mundham), who finished sixth on count back with Connor White (LA) and James Bracey (Lancing). Second place went to Ryan Barnett (LA) on four wins. Ryan Enstone (also LA) came third with three wins.



Band D Morning:

Band D was two groups of four initially, with the top two from each group going to the top group and the other two from each group going into the second group, giving all players six matches. Group 1 was won by Usamah Benallal (LA), playing in only his second tournament ever. Group 1 runner-up was Ollie Jackson (North Mundham). Samuel Shoubridge (Horsham Spinners) won all his matches 3-0 in Group 2. The group runner-up was Kelli Bragg (Trinity). Talented six-year-old Lewis Stevens (Dulwich) played well and was unlucky to lose two matches in the fifth set. All of the matches in Group A (the top group) were 3-0, with Benallal emerging the champion, Shoubridge in second place and Bragg picking up the bronze medal. Young Stevens won Group B, winning one match Vs Matthew Forster (Horsham Spinners) 18-16 in the fifth.



Band A Afternoon:

Just under half of the matches in this six player group went the distance, showing how evenly matched the players were. Promoted Tunubu, who finished sixth even took the runner-up Will Goodstone (Cavendish) to the decider. Morning bronze medallist, Martin-Paulo went two better in the afternoon, winning all five of his matches to clinch the Gold this time. He was extended by fifth place Achampong and third placed Naserbakht. Morning Band A champion Knowles, had to be content with a fourth place showing, only picking up two wins.



Band B Afternoon:

Another seven-player group, which produced a two way count back for first and second place. Gavin Brown (Polegate) took the Gold, as he had defeated Bryan, both of whom had five wins each. There was then a three-way count back for third, fourth and fifth place in another incredibly tight group. Barnett won the count back to get the bronze medal, a good achievement, considering he had been promoted from Band C in the morning event.



Band C Afternoon:

There was yet another count back in this group of six. Alan Chumbley (Polegate) snatched the Gold from eventual silver medallist Darwen, both of whom won four matches. Joe Worskett (Horsham Spinners) came third with three wins, with a good win over Chumbley, but a loss to fourth placed Enstone. Promoted Benallal and Adam Boxall (Horsham Spinners) both got a win each, but Boxall got fifth place thanks to his defeat of Benallal.



Band D Afternoon:

Relegated Morning Band C player, White more than made up for not winning a medal in the morning, by winning all six of his matches in the afternoon and only conceding one set in the process, to fifth placed Matt Weller (Horsham Spinners). Horsham Spinners club mates, Jamie Clarke and Scott Slater, battled hard for the silver medal, with Clarke finding a way through in one of the closest matches in the tournament 11-8, 9-11, 11-8, 9-11, 11-9! Slater had to be consoled by the bronze medal. Young Stevens performed well again to come fourth with three wins, again winning a very close match, this time edging out Weller 16-14 in the fifth! The six-year-old must have nerves of steel!

Morning Placings (Club Names in Brackets):

Band A:

1. Nathan Knowles (London Academy)
2. Marcus Bracey (Lancing)
3. Kidi Martin Paulo (London Academy)
4. Will Goodstone (Cavendish)
5. James Arnold (Horsham Spinners)
6. Theo Achampong (London Academy)
7. Gavin Brown (Polegate)

Band B:

1. Shayan Naserbakht (London Academy)
2. Michael Tunubu (Dulwich)
3. Jake Dale (London Academy)
4. Owen Bryan (Dulwich)
5. Barry Goodson (Polegate)
6. Ryan Darwen (Bognor Regis)
7. Alan Chumbley (Polegate)

Band C:

1. Kai Davis-Francis (Dulwich)
2. Ryan Barnett (London Academy)
3. Ryan Enstone (London Academy)
4. Connor White (London Academy)
5. James Bracey (Lancing)
6. Peter Lambert (North Mundham)

Band D:

1. Usamah Benallal (London Academy)
2. Samuel Shoubridge (Horsham Spinners)
3. Kelli Bragg (Trinity)
4. Ollie Jackson (North Mundham)
5. Lewis Stevens (Dulwich)
6. Joe Jackson (North Mundham)
7. Matt Forster (Horsham Spinners)
8. Jonathan Grainger (Horsham)

Afternoon Placings:**Band A:**

1. Kidi Martin Paulo (London Academy)
2. Will Goodstone (Cavendish)
3. Shayan Naserbakht (London Academy)
4. Nathan Knowles (London Academy)
5. Theo Achampong (London Academy)
6. Michael Tunubu (Dulwich)

Band B:

1. Gavin Brown (Polegate)
2. Owen Bryan (Dulwich)
3. Ryan Barnett (London Academy)
4. James Boltwood (Littlehampton Academy)
5. Kai Davis-Francis (Dulwich)
6. Barry Goodson (Polegate)
7. Jake Dale (London Academy)

Band C:

1. Alan Chumbley (Polegate)
2. Ryan Darwen (Bognor Regis)
3. Joe Worskett (Horsham Spinners)
4. Ryan Enstone (London Academy)
5. Adam Boxall (Horsham Spinners)
6. Usamah Benallal (London Academy)

Band D:

1. Connor White (London Academy)
2. Jamie Clarke (Horsham Spinners)
3. Scott Slater (Horsham Spinners)
4. Lewis Stevens (Dulwich)
5. Matt Weller (Horsham Spinners)
6. Matt Forster (Horsham Spinners)
7. Alex Pelling-Fulford (Storrington)

Rory Scott

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