

Olympians Pitchford and Parker win Tees Sport K2 Sussex Open

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Geoff Ware presents Open Trophy to Liam Pitchford

After months of preparation, liaising with players, suppliers and supporters of the K2 Sussex Open, the build team took to work Friday evening and transformed the K2 hall into an arena worthy of the quality players on show during the weekend of July 20/21 – Pitchford, Parker, Zwickl, Baggaley, Salifou, Rumgay, Szymanski, Doran and more. Fans packed the main hall to watch the drama unfold as surprise results and great matches abounded. Special thanks go to Gerflor for the assistance of the Taraflex flooring and Freedom Leisure for the use of K2.

England No1 Liam Pitchford became the Tees Sport K2 Sussex Open champion when he beat the reigning champion and Scotland No1 Gavin Rumgay 3-1 in a fitting climax to a wonderful weekend of table tennis and so collected the £2,000 first prize.



Matt Ware

In the semi-final, top seeded Pitchford beat Dorset's Matt Ware 3-0, but not before Ware had provided two shocks on the way. In the last 16, the England No10, full of confidence following his victory in Men's Band 1 on Saturday, overcame Olympian, England No3 and Commonwealth Games gold medallist Andrew Baggaley 3-1, 15-13 in the 4th in arguably the most exciting game of the tournament, but there were lots of others to debate. Ware continued his brilliant form by beating England No5 and Commonwealth Doubles silver medallist, Chris Doran 3-1 in the quarter-final. In another quarter-final, Pitchford was put under severe pressure by Filip Szymanski, the Polish No 8. At 8-7 in the 5th it was anyone's game.



Filip Szymanski & Daniel Zwickl

In the other semi-final, serve specialist Rumgay defeated England No6 Darius Knight 3-2 in another pulsating thriller. Knight had earlier eliminated second seed Daniel Zwickl who represented Hungary at the London Olympics. In the quarters Rumgay's victim was another surprise package in Hampshire's David McBeath who put out one of the favourites for the overall prize, French No5 and World 104 Abdel-Kader Salifou. Salifou went into the tournament with a record of 26 wins out of 32 in international competition this year and has won 3 Pro Tour Tournaments – an incredible achievement. After much deliberation the referee, Steve Smith awarded the TT365 sponsored best win of the tournament prize of £250 in Tees Sport vouchers to David McBeath for what must be the win of his career. A difficult decision, given the equally impressive performance by Matt Ware.



Joanna Parker

Joanna Parker picked up the £500 sponsored by Heritage Oil for finishing the highest woman after an excellent performance against Szymanski in the last 16. This followed her victory in Women's Band 1 on Saturday. Paul Atherton, Finance Director of Heritage Oil was "delighted that Olympian Jo Parker had won their prize". He went on to say that "Heritage Oil is further enthused following the success of this event. We see the potential of this great sport, which oddly seems to have fallen below the radar in England despite it being a popular Olympic sport. Table tennis is truly global and we are looking at other opportunities to help its development in England".

Joanna's victory in the Women's event was secured without dropping a game although surprise entry Sandra Go (Singapore), an ex Junior International pushed her hardest of all the competitors.

Tournament organiser Steve Pound from Sussex County Table Tennis Association was delighted with the support and the way the competition went, attracting an entry of 150 players including international players who flew in from France, Hungary, Poland, Singapore and Sweden.

He said: "The tournament went really well. We were pleased with the high standard of entry which made it the strongest line-up of any tournament in the UK this year. In particular, we would like to thank our sponsors Tees Sport, Heritage Oil, Freedom Leisure, TT365 & Horsham Motor Services, which made this possible. We would also like to thank the volunteers, players and supporters who helped us put on a brilliant weekend which we hope to make an annual event and make it even bigger next year."



Ryota Kawai

On the Saturday afternoon, the Men's Band 1 event was also a thrilling competition, which threw up one of the surprises of the tournament in Ryota Kawai who has recently joined Brighton University from Japan. Ryota had a challenging group in Ritchie Venner, Darren Reed and Garry Dodd (Guernsey) but managed to despatch all three in close matches. He then went on to beat Niall Cameron (Scotland) until he finally succumbed to the inform Matt Ware. Ryota also had a great run in the Open event defeating Mike O'Driscoll before defeat by Chris Doran in the last 16. David McBeath recorded 3 victories in his group and registered his place in the final after wins against Darren Reed and Lewis Gray. Ware joined McBeath after a nail biting match against O'Driscoll which Ware won 11-9 in the 5th game. After losing the first game, Ware went on to secure victory with 3 games in a row all to deuce in a tight match.

In Band 2 Mark Scutts (Sussex) scored a victory over Emil Ohlsson (No.7 Junior Sweden) which was later reversed when they met in the Band 1 Men's event. Scutts won all 3 matches in a tough group which included Philip Lovgren (Sweden), Josh Robinson and Omar Khassal. He then breezed past Josh Band and Zayd Mauthoor before ultimately winning the event against Ohlsson.

Band 3 Josh Robinson halted Martin Matuzevicius winning streak in a close fought final with few points between them. In Band 4, which was a mixed Band with Emma Torkington losing narrowly to Mohammad Owadally in the quarter-final after beating the in-form Matuzevicius in the last 16, saw Jamal Dennison come out on top after halting the impressive Jarek Klamut (Poland) in the semi-final and Miro Vala in the final.

Band 5 was won by Paralympian David Wetherill with straight games victories against Murray Wilson in the semi-final and Kieran Lally in the final.

Band 6 was also a mixed event which saw Kelly Skeggs reach the final against the experienced Pawel Gasiorski who had made the trip from Poland. Pawel later in the afternoon joined the Band 1 event in which he won one of his group matches.

Band 3 Women's event was a round robin which was won by Daniella Gray.

Other events on the Sunday included the u-21 Women's which saw a very closely fought contest decided on count back with Emma Torkington in 1st place, Caroline Tanka (Sweden) 2nd and Yolanda King (3rd).

Emma Torkington

Torkington's coach, Shu Huang said "It's great to see an event like this in England. We need more of this to provide our top players with the matches they need without having to go abroad. I would have preferred to see separate Open event for the Women, hopefully this will be possible next year, but Emma and Jo Parker showed that women can compete strongly with men in this sport. I'm pleased for Emma as she missed much of this season due to injury. I particularly liked her win against Sandra Go, she showed a lot of fight coming from 2-0 down."

The u-21 Men's event was won by Lewis Gray who has been playing in Germany this year against Liam McTiernan. The Junior boys banded competition was won by Daniel McTiernan and the Junior girls banded competition was won by Hiba Feredj. Michael O'Driscoll and partner Niall Cameron won the doubles and the Veterans was won by Anthony Corbin 11-9 in the 5th against Jo jo Seniorin.

John Denison, who runs the hugely popular Fusion Table Tennis Club in Bromley, Kent said "This was great, we'll definitely be back next year". His daughter, Tiana England No 8 at U13, piped in "this rocked!" Enough said.

Photos from the competition can be found on our [flickr site here](#)

Results: Tees Sport K2 Sussex Open

Open Singles

- Quarter-finals: Liam Pitchford (Derbyshire) bt Filip Zymanski (Pol) 3-2, Matt Ware (Dorset) bt Chris Doran (Nottinghamshire) 3-1, Gavin Rumgay (Sco) bt David McBeath (Hants) 3-0, Darius Knight (Surrey) bt Daniel Zawicki (Hungary) 3-2
- Semi-finals: Pitchford bt Ware 3-0, Rumgay bt Knight 3-2
- Final: Pitchford bt Rumgay 3-1

Men's Band 1 Singles

- Semi-finals: Ware bt Michael O'Driscoll (Herts) 3-2, McBeath bt Lewis Gray 3-1
- Final: Ware bt McBeath 3-1

Band 2 Singles

- Semi-final: Mark Scutts (Sussex) bt Zayd Mauthoor (Essex), Emil Ohlsson (Sweden) bt Fabien Mauroy (Kent) 3-0
- Final: Scutts bt Ohlsson 3-1

Band 3 Singles – Josh Robinson (Bedfordshire) bt Martin Matuzevicius (Hants)

Band 4 Singles – Jamal Dennison (Kent) bt Miro Vala (Mi) 3-1

Band 5 Singles – Final Dave Wetherall (Cornwall) bt Kieran Lally (Essex) 3-0

Band 6 Singles – Final Pawel Gasiorski (Pol) bt Kelly Skeggs (Norfolk)

Women's Band 1 Singles – Joanna Parker bt Yolanda King (Sussex) 3-0

No Band 2

Women's Band 3 Singles – Daniella Gray (Kent) bt Hiba Feredj (Middlesex) 3-2
Veterans Singles – Anthony Corbin (Hertfordshire) bt Jo jo Seniorin (Middlesex) 3-2
Doubles – Mike O'Driscoll/Niall Cameron bt Dean Cundy/Kelly Skeggs 3-1
Under 21s Men's Singles – Lewis Gray (Kent) bt Liam McTiernan (Berkshire) 3-0
Under 21s Women's Singles – Emma Torkington (Kent) bt Caroline Tanska (Sweden) 3-1
U-18 Boys banded Singles – Daniel McTiernan (Berkshire) bt Tom Windram (Kent) 3-1
U-18 Girls banded Singles – Hib Feredj (Middlesex) bt Holly Holder (Sussex) 3-0

Official YouTube video should be available in the next 2-3 weeks.

Written by: Steve Pound – Tournament Officer for Sussex County Table Tennis Association (July 29, 2013)

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