

Main secures top gong on Day 1 of Tees Sport Liverpool GP

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Men's Band 1

Scotland's Calum Main took the main prize on the first day of the 2013-14 Grand Prix season by claiming the Men's Band 1 crown on Saturday evening at the Tees Sport Liverpool GP.

Main won an absorbing final against Roman Doryn who he also met in the group stage where the Scot also came out on top in four games to win the group.

From there Main beat Kev Dolder in straight games before producing an amazing comeback against compatriot Scott Barton to win a heated semi-final 3-2 (8-11, 8-11, 11-9, 11-5, 11-9).

Doryn meanwhile, beat another Scot, Colin Dalgleish, in his first knockout round before moving on to beat both Peter Graham and Simon Nutch in four games.

The final was a real rollercoaster ride with Main assuming control from the off to dominate the first two games 11-6 and 11-9. However, Doryn fought back to change the tide of the match by winning games three and four comfortably as the momentum shifted.

Main, not to be denied, raised his play once more in the deciding end to hold off Doryn's challenge and seal the opening title of the season 11-8.



Women's Band 1

Angharad Phillips capped off the perfect start to the season by charging to the Women's Band 1 title in impressive style at the Tees Sport Liverpool Grand Prix.

The Welsh international began where she finished up by facing final opponent Kelly Skeggs in her group on her way to the top position from group two.

Seeded for the knockout rounds, she then avoided her sister Megan in the semi-finals after Abbie Milwain put a stop to Megan's campaign with a 3-1 (6-11, 11-8, 13-11, 11-5) win.

Angharad then did what her sister could not by defeating the top seed in a comprehensive manner despite dropping the first game 11-2. She recovered to edge a narrow second game 13-11 before sealing the win with consecutive 11-8 triumphs.

Skeggs, on the other hand, had to battle her way past Gillian Edwards, who was unfortunate to lose deep in the fifth end. After the pair tussled to 2-2 it was in the final game where a challenged let call worked out for Skeggs who came out on top 11-9.

It mattered little in the final as nothing would stop the dominant Phillips who strode home in three quick trips to the table.



Men's Band 2

Roman Doryn won the Tees Sport Liverpool Grand Prix Men's Band 2 with a typically powerful series of performances during his season's debut at the Lifestyles Tennis Centre.

Doryn encountered one of his most difficult tests in his first knockout round against Ryan Farell who extended the Yorkshire-based player to the full five games. The Irishman battled hard but eventually succumbed in the final game to lose 3-2 (11-4, 11-9, 3-11, 9-11, 11-7).

Doryn then completed a fine win against the ever-improving Colin Dalglish in the semi-final in four games before taking on Josh Band in the final. Despite Band winning the first end 11-8, he was unable to cope with Doryn's consistently powerful shots that helped him to stride to three successive games and the first title of the season.



Women's Band 2

Nicole Hall battled her way to another Women's Band 2 title after back-to-back five-game matches in her semi-final and final encounters.

Hall came out on top in group two, a group that included her eventual final opponent, Kelly Skeggs. After her group triumphs she defeated Ireland's Sarah Timlin in four games before winning the first of her full-distance matches against Kate Hughes 3-2 (11-3, 6-11, 13-15, 14-12, 11-4) in the semi-final.

She then repeated the dose in the final when she met Skeggs once again. Despite losing a tight first game 16-14, the young Welsh girl recovered to win games two, three and five to seal a deserved title.



Men's Band 3

Welshman Nathan Thomas beat Josh Robinson to claim the Men's Band 3 title from the Tees Sport Liverpool GP.

Thomas was another player whose game developed over the course of the day as he got into his stride. First of all, once he'd safely progressed to the knockout stages, he had to work extremely hard to fend off Welsh colleague Callum Evans in five long games 3-2 (4-11, 13-11, 11-3, 10-12, 11-9).

However, once he surmounted that challenge his progress became more assured with firstly a four-game victory over Rory Scott, before then winning his semi-final with Josh Band in three straight games.

His form continued in the final where he met Robinson who had earlier beaten Stephen Green, Ryan Oyler and Marcin Dens in the knockout stages. However, he was no match for Thomas who held his nerve in two consecutive 12-10 games to seal a 3-0 victory and a first prize for the season.



Women's Band 3

England junior international Emily Bolton had just enough in the tank to see off surprise package Sandra Kaczynska from Yorkshire.

Bolton, whose morning Band 2 campaign never got off the rails, was much improved in the afternoon as she won her group before beating Danielle De Jong in straight games.

However, she found the going harder in the semi-final against Janine Bromley where she had to recover from 2-0 down to set up a meeting with Kaczynska by winning 3-2 (8-11, 7-11, 12-10, 11-4, 11-9).

The Leeds-based girl had won through the top half of the draw against both Paulina Orzechowska and Hannah Lynch-Dawson, but, despite winning the second game 14-12, she was unable to mount any real pressure on Bolton who won in four.



Men's Band 4

Top seed in the Men's Band 4, Jamie Davies, justified his seeding by emerging victorious from the Tees Sport Liverpool Grand Prix. Davies started slowly but managed to get into his stride as the tournament progressed.

His biggest challenge came in the shape of Welshman Callum Evans who took him through five absorbing games in their first round knockout fixture 3-2 (1-11, 11-7, 12-10, 12-14, 11-9).

However, after escaping that close encounter, Davies got stronger and stronger. Firstly, he defeated Shaun Slater in straight games before cruising through his semi-final with Marcus McDonnell 3-1.

In the final he met Robert Barker who had beaten Brian Allison, Jack Dempsey, Noor Owadally and Robert Gavin en route to the last encounter. But, despite Barker's impressive run, he was no match for an in-form Davies who triumphed in three straight games.



Women's Band 4

Jan Johns was the impressive winner of the Women's Band 4 event, which turned out to be the first title won in the 2013-14 Grand Prix season.

Johns was a new face to the Grand Prix series this season but was clearly playing below her genuine level as her quality shone through in the round-robin competition.

She was victorious in all her matches, winning the majority of them in just three games as her snappy forehand drives defeated her opponents with ease. Only Soffi Jenkins was able to take a game off the experienced player when she was overcome 3-1 (11-3, 10-12, 11-2, 11-8).



Men's Band 5

Alan Walsh worked hard for his Men's Band 5 title from the Tees Sport Liverpool Grand Prix as he endured a tense five-game final with Wales' Jac Jenkins.

The young Irishman overcame the seedings to emerge triumphant from group 7 and force his way into a first round meeting with Kris Foster. Walsh beat Foster in four before repeating the performance against Iain Wood in the quarter-finals.

Once he defeated Jody Bevington 3-0 in the semi-finals only Jenkins stood in his way. However, the junior Welsh international, who had beaten Dermot Tierney, Mathew Faulkner and King Fun Chan to reach the final, would prove no pushover.

Jenkins took a 2-1 lead after 12-10 and 11-8 games before Walsh was able to force a decider with a one-sided 11-4 fourth game. The final game proved high in tension with the umpire asking the players to calm down during proceedings. Whether this affected the pair or not it wasn't clear – what was clear was that Walsh ended the stronger to come out on top 11-9.



Men's Band 6

Ireland's Tom Davis was the surprise winner of the Men's Band 6 competition when he advanced from group 7 to take the opening title of the season.

Davis had to win past Kieran Reilly, George Dicker and Luke Dempsey to make the final where he met fellow Irishman Eric Shekleton.

Shekleton had to overcome a difficult semi-final against Joel Webb to make the final as he won one of the tightest matches of the day 3-2 (9-11, 14-12, 13-11, 7-11, 12-10). However, once he made the final he was unable to force the match into a deciding end as he lost in four hard-fought games with the fourth (and final) end the most decisive – going the full distance 16-14.

Tees Sport Liverpool Grand Prix Results

Men's Band 1

Calum Main bt Roman Doryn 3-2 (11-6, 11-9, 8-11, 5-11, 11-8)

Women's Band 1

Angharad Phillips bt Kelly Skeggs 3-0 (11-6, 11-6, 11-7)

Men's Band 2

Roman Doryn bt Josh Band 3-1 (8-11, 11-9, 11-3, 11-8)

Women's Band 2

Nicole Hall bt Kelly Skeggs 3-2 (14-16, 11-7, 11-3, 3-11, 11-6)

Men's Band 3

Nathan Thomas bt Josh Robinson 3-0 (11-5, 12-10, 12-10)

Women's Band 3

Emily Bolton bt Sandra Kaczynska 3-1 (11-8, 12-14, 11-4, 11-8)

Men's Band 4

Jamie Davies bt Robert Barker 3-0 (11-4, 11-9, 11-9)

Women's Band 4

Round-robin: Winner Jan Johns, Runner-up Amy Wells

Men's Band 5

Alan Walsh bt Jac Jenkins 3-2 (11-9, 10-12, 8-11, 11-4, 11-9)

Men's Band 6

Tom Davis bt Eric Shekleton 3-1 (11-8, 11-13, 11-5, 16-14)

Written by Russell Moore (August 17, 2013)

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