

Jenkins reigns supreme at Tees Sport Liverpool GP

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Posted On: **August 18, 2013**



Men's Singles

Some things tend get better with age and 'Grand Prix King' Ryan Jenkins seems to be one of them after waltzing to the Tees Sport Liverpool Grand Prix title.

The Welsh star signed off last season at the Bribar Medway Grand Prix with a stunning victory and picked up exactly where he left off to win the season's opening competition in Liverpool.

Jenkins had no problems in progressing from his group and continued his sublime form into the knockout stages. Straight games wins over Ernest Mpundu, Victor Shi and Simon Noutch set up a semi-final appearance against Matt Ware.

On the top half of the draw, Gavin Rumgay and Darius Knight worked their way to a semi-final match-up with the Scot following Jenkins' lead by not dropping a set throughout. His biggest test had in fact already come in the group stage where he had to come from 2-1 behind to beat Roman Doryn.

Knight, meanwhile had to work his way past Mike Marsden in four before holding his nerve in a tight victory over Scotsman Craig Howieson 3-1 (11-9, 9-11, 12-10, 11-9) to book a place in the last four.

Knight and Rumgay then played out one of the matches of the day with their contest going the full distance. In an absorbing encounter, Knight twice led following 11-9 games but Rumgay fought back from 4-2 down in the fourth game to win seven consecutive points en route to levelling the match.

The deciding game saw Rumgay make another crucial run as he won six consecutive points from 7-5 down to beat the left-handed Englishman and seal a place in the final.

There he met Jenkins who had already made light work of Matt Ware in the semi-final 3-0 (11-8, 11-5, 11-9). Despite the first game being a tight 14-12 battle between the experienced duo, it was a one-sided contest for the most part with the Welshman sweeping home competently in the second and third games – dropping just nine more points to seal the top prize.

Rumgay will be disappointed to miss out on equalling Victor Barna's record of five Tees Sport Liverpool Grand Prix (Liverpool Open) wins, but picks up handy points with 2012-13 winner Chris Doran out through injury for an extended period.



Women's Singles

French defender Sarah Berge was the surprise winner of the Women's Singles at the Tees Sport Liverpool Grand Prix after confidently sweeping through the field in her maiden appearance.

She began the day as she meant to go on by exposing top seed Karina Le Fevre's weakness against chop in the opening group stage. She shocked the overall 2012-13 champion 3-0 (11-8, 11-7, 12-10) to win group 1 and seal a quarter-final place.

That left Le Fevre the long-winded path of having to overcome both Janay Gibson (3-0) and Sophie Neil (3-1) to make the semi-final where she met Tees Sport Player of the Weekend, Sandra Kaczynska. It was a well-deserved title for Kaczynska who had to battle through two five-game group matches against Kelly Skeggs 3-2 (11-7, 11-4, 8-11, 11-13, 11-6) and Megan Phillips 3-2 (7-11, 6-11, 11-5, 11-6, 11-5) just to qualify.

Berge, meanwhile, was beating Natalie Slater in straight games and Angharad Phillips in four ends to make the final where she met Le Fevre who had beaten the weary Kaczynska 3-1.

The final, a repeat of the group meeting, was even more one-sided than earlier as the French world no. 355 conceded just ten points in sealing her first Women's Singles title.



Men's Under 21s

Colin Dalglish's hard work over the weekend was finally rewarded with the Men's Under 21s title after beating a weary Conor Edwards in the final late on Sunday afternoon.

Dalglish had previously been unfortunate to meet Roman Doryn twice in the banded events on Saturday before only being knockout at the quarter-final stage of the Men's Singles by the highly ranked Matt Ware.

However, this time he was not to be denied as he charged through the knockout rounds by beating Jac Jenkins, Josh Robinson and Ryan Farrell in straight games to make the final.

There he met Welshman Conor Edwards who was unfortunate in his own way that the delayed nature of his half of the draw meant that his matches were rushed towards the end of a long weekend.

He beat Robert Barker, Ryan Oyler and Matthew Outhwaite comfortably but was no match by the time the final came around as he ran out of steam to gift Dalgleish a deserved prize.



Women's Under 21s

Sarah Berge capped off an excellent weekend by adding the Women's Under 21 title to her Women's Singles crown that she won at the Lifestyles Tennis Centre at the Tees Sport Liverpool Grand Prix.

With the ill Abbie Milwain absent from her group, the French prodigy was able to qualify with ease into the knockout stages where she met compatriot Margaux Tschirr.

She beat both Tschirr and Emma Torkington comfortably to reach the final where she met Emily Bolton.

The English international had managed to overturn a 10-6 deficit in the fourth game of her quarter-final with Ashley Givan to progress before once again shining in the fourth end against Sophie Neil to take it 11-1 and reach the final.

However, as with many of the other contenders throughout the weekend, she was unable to match the levels the French girl set as Berge secured her second title in three straight games.



Open Doubles

Gavin Rumgay and Craig Howieson won the first Open Doubles competition of the season after overcoming a big all-Scottish encounter in the semi-final with Sean Doherty and Calum Main.

Rumgay, who picked himself up after the Men's Singles final defeat earlier in the day, partnered Howieson through the group stages comfortably before also defeating Damian Galka and Rafal Aleksanrzak in straight games.

Their toughest fixture came in the semi-final when they met fellow Scots Doherty and Main. The third seeds led 2-0 after successive 11-8 games but Rumgay and Howieson fought back to win the next three 11-7, 11-5, 11-7 to complete the turnaround.

In the final they met Keith Knox and Matt Ware who were unable to make the same tense atmosphere as the previous round. However, they did produce an interesting score of losing in straight games 6, 6, 6.



Veterans

Tomasz Rzeszotko won the Veteran's Singles title at the Tees Sport Liverpool Grand Prix with a four-game victory in the final against Keith Williams.

Rzeszotko won his group comfortably before winning the crucial points against a spirited Paul Beck in the semi-final. Beck had beaten Brian Allison 3-0 in his quarter-final but couldn't find the extra level as he went down 3-0 (12-10, 13-11, 11-4).

Rzeszotko's final opponent, Williams, also won his group before emerging victorious in a relatively one-sided semi-final against Stephen Green 3-1 (11-2, 11-5, 5-11, 11-2). However, in the final Williams couldn't keep up with Rzeszotko's aggressive play and lost out in four ends.

Sudden Death

Alan Walsh continued the run of the Sudden Death competition in never having a repeat winner as he won his first title, and the £32 prize money, by defeating French girl Sarah Berge in the final.

Walsh beat previous Champion Joe Killoran in the first round before also getting past Ryan Farrell, Conor Edwards and Jack Dempsey. Berge, meanwhile, echoed his passage by beating former winner Colin Dalglish and then Amy Wells, the prized scalp of Ryan Jenkins and finally Tom Davis before falling at the final hurdle.

That's the second time a woman has reached the final but we still await our first female victor, who can break the duck?

Tees Sport Liverpool Grand Prix Results

Men's Singles

Ryan Jenkins bt Gavin Rumgay 3-0 (14-12, 11-5, 11-4)

Women's Singles

Sarah Berge bt Karina Le Fevre 3-0 (11-1, 11-6, 11-3)

Men's Under 21s

Colin Dalglish bt Conor Edwards 3-0 (15-13, 11-3, 11-3)

Women's Under 21s

Sarah Berge bt Emily Bolton 3-0 (11-6, 11-3, 11-4)

Open Doubles

Gavin Rumgay/Craig Howieson bt Keith Knox/Matt Ware 3-0 (11-6, 11-6, 11-6)

Veterans

Tomasz Rzeszotko bt Keith Williams 3-1 (7-11, 11-9, 11-4, 11-9)

Sudden Death

Alan Walsh beat Sarah Berge

Written by Russell Moore (August 18, 2013)

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