

Wheeler shines at Bribar Guildford GP

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Pictures by Mike Loveder Photography

Men's Band 1

Scottish cadet Chris Wheeler picked up his second Men's Band 1 title after a scintillating performance at the Bribar Guildford Grand Prix.

Although he finished runner-up in his group to Igor Morais, the youngster wasted no time in powering through his knockout opponents with competent victories against Conor Edwards (3-2), Liam McTiernan (3-1) and Sam Mabey (3-0) to make the final.

There he met Mike Marsden who had also finished runner-up in his group (behind Edwards) before setting on his own route through the knockout rounds.

Marsden began with two difficult ties that went the full distance; a 3-2 (9-11, 8-11, 11-5, 14-12, 11-5) win over Chris Bush and a 3-2 (8-11, 12-10, 11-13, 11-9, 11-8) victory over Stephen Beerling, before seeing off Igor Morais 3-0 in a one-sided semi-final.

When the duo met in the final the Scottish youngster's speed and aggressive style of play took his more experienced foe by surprise as he raced to a second band 1 title (after winning the Bribar Medway GP in 2012) in style.



Pictures by Mike Loveder Photography

Women's Band 1

Sarah Berge secured consecutive Women's Band 1 titles at the start of the 2013-14 British Grand Prix season after another professional outing at the Bribar Guildford Grand Prix.

The French girl beat English junior Maria Tsaptsinos 3-1 in the final but only after she had forced her way through a five-game semi-final with Angharad Phillips.

Berge continued her form from Liverpool and cruised through her group, including a 3-0 victory over her final opponent Tsaptsinos, before winning her quarter-final against Nicole Hall 3-0.

She then met her biggest test against Welsh youngster Angharad Phillips who made her work hard for a place in the final – only losing after five full games 3-2 (11-4, 11-13, 11-6, 7-11, 11-4).

Tsaptsinos, meanwhile, battled through her own five-game encounter against Megan Phillips before she raced past Yolanda King in three straightforward games.

She carried that momentum into the first game of the final, which she won 11-7. However, the extra class and experience from Berge told in the end as the defender secured another title.



Pictures by Mike Loveder Photography

Men's Band 2

Mark Scutts was in supreme form to race to the Men's Band 2 title at the Guildford Spectrum with a series of excellent knock-out performances.

He had a shaky start in his group, winning both of his first two matches but only after he had been pushed to five ends by Mickel Miller and Nathan Bingham to qualify in top spot.

From there on Scutts was unstoppable. Firstly beating Steve Foster 3-0 (11-9, 11-7, 14-12) before similarly cruising past Wales' Patrick Thomas 3-0 (11-4, 12-10, 11-8) and Junior England international Gabriel Achampong 3-0 (11-7, 11-8, 12-10) – all in straight games.

His final opponent, Sam Mabey, had a more difficult route to the final with back-to-back five-game matches against Dean Cundy and Chris Lewis in the quarter and semi-finals respectively.

After coming from 2-1 down to beat Cundy 3-2 (12-10, 7-11, 6-11, 11-6, 11-8) he won a 3-2 thriller with Lewis to set up the meeting with Scutts.

Whether those previous matches had an impact on Mabey is questionable but, like Scutts' other knockout opponents, he was no match for the Sussex player who secured a fifth consecutive 3-0 win for the title.



Pictures by Mike Loveder Photography

Women's Band 2

Top seed Maria Tsaptsinos justified her position at the head of Women's Band 2 by winning title in comprehensive fashion.

The Junior England international confidently won her group before seeing off the experienced Sue Collier in four games in her quarter-final. That win set up a meeting with similarly proficient campaigner Teresa Bennett who had just come off the back of a tight 3-2 win over Ashley Givan.

Tsaptsinos was able to capitalize on her youthful energy by sealing a place in the final against Wales' Nicole Hall after another four-game victory.

Hall, who beat Zoe Cheesman, Amy Humphreys and Lois Peake to reach the final, took the first game 11-9 but couldn't make any more inroads as the top seed from Berkshire won the next three to secure the prize.

Men's Band 3

Declan O'Brien flew the flag for Ireland as the sole Irishman to win a grand prix title on the first day of the Bribar Guildford Grand Prix.

After winning group 7, O'Brien went on to produce a number of accomplished performances against Josh Bennett (3-1), Richard Carden (3-0) and a fine 3-1 (16-14, 5-11, 11-6, 11-9) win against Hugo Pang in the semi-final.

In the final he met Jersey's Josh Band, the Tees Sport Liverpool GP Band 2 runner-up, who forced his way into the band 3 final on Saturday night after a series of hard-fought wins.

He too won his group but had to twice battle through five-game encounters with Martin Matuvicius and Joe Pilkington to set up a semi-final against Liam Grant.

He cruised past Grant 3-0 (11-2, 11-6, 11-5) but was unable to maintain his form against the Irishman who deservedly won a straight-games final.



Pictures by Mike Loveder Photography

Women's Band 3

Naomi Jackson won the Women's Band 3 title at the Briar Guildford Grand Prix after defeating Daniella Gray 3-1 in the final.

Jackson and Gray were the stand-out performers in the band with each winning all five matches in their group games. Jackson dropping just two games in the process while Gray sealed a monumental victory over Teresa Bennett 3-2 (5-11, 11-4, 8-11, 12-10, 11-7).

Each then came through their own five-game semi-final; Jackson a 3-2 (11-8, 8-11, 5-11, 11-5, 11-8) victor over Bennett and Gray a 3-2 (11-9, 9-11, 8-11, 11-8, 11-9) winner against Danielle De Jong, before they met in the final.

At the last stage, the Kent youngster took the first game but fell away as Jackson won the next three to pick up the title.



Pictures by Mike Loveder Photography

Men's Band 4

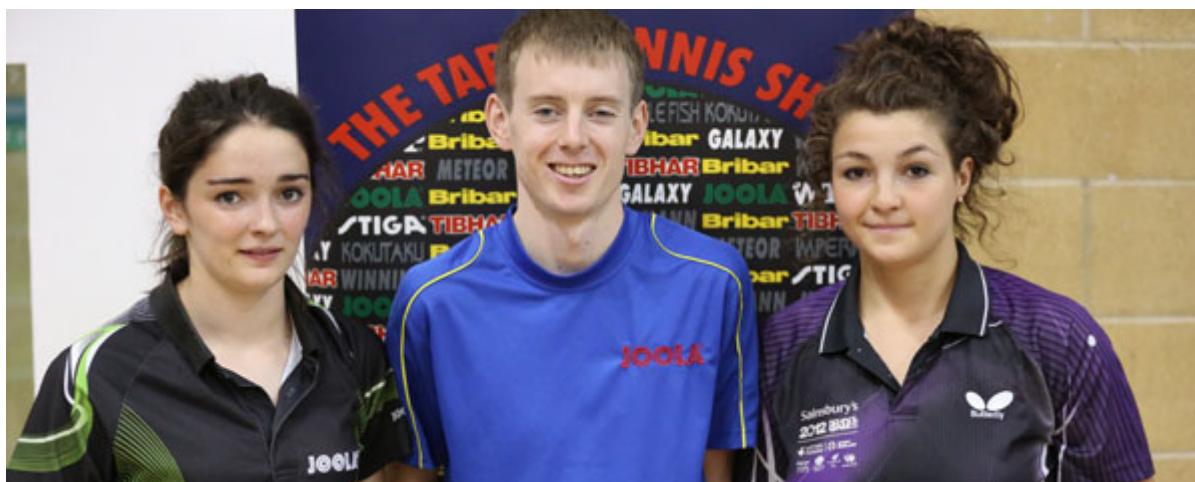
Jac Jenkins won his maiden Grand Prix title after emerging as the surprise winner of the Men's Band 4.

Seeded lowly in third place in his group he overcame the odds by finishing top of Group 4 – beating Rory Scott 3-1 in his opening fixture.

He then advanced to the knockout stages where he beat Finn Morgan-Bayliss (3-0) before producing an amazing recovery from 2-0 down against Joe Pilkington to reach the semi-final with a 3-2 (7-11, 8-11, 11-8, 11-9, 11-5) victory.

Then, with great character, he blasted through the final two matches without making a mistake, beating both Jaraslow Klamut and finally Jamie Trevillion 3-0.

Trevillion himself had performed admirably to beat Rory Scott 3-2 and Callum Evans 3-1 to reach the last stage.



Pictures by Mike Loveder Photography

Women's Band 4

Due to a few absentees the Women's Band 4 event was just a single match between Olivia Churchill and Hannah McErlane in which the former won in three straight games.

Men's Band 5

Curtis Welsh denied Jac Jenkins a second band win of the day, instead securing his own prize as the last final of the day finished at an astonishing 21:30 on Saturday night.

Welsh won his group and beat Tom Savary and Nathan Butler both in five games en-route to the final, in both cases coming from 2-1 down.

Jenkins meanwhile, beat Kidi Martin-Paulo, Ben Cawston and Jody Bevington to make the last stage.

Unfortunately for the Welsh prodigy, he was unable to stop the 'other Welsh' in taking a four-game victory for a well-earned title.



Pictures by Mike Loveder Photography

Men's Band 6

Hewley Griffith won his first-ever Grand Prix title after successive five-game victories in two tense semi-final and final appearances.

The Londoner, like his final opponent Nathan Butler, had to overcome a full-distance match in his semi-final. While Butler was beating Ben Cawston 3-2 (11-7, 11-9, 9-11, 7-11, 11-9), Griffith got the better of George Dicker 3-2 (9-11, 11-5, 10-12, 11-8, 12-10).

When the pair met in the final it was another close affair with no player losing a game by any more than three points. In the end Griffith worked out a 10-6 lead in the fifth and deciding game before seeing the deficit close to one. However, just in time he pulled out a big serve to clinch the final point and claim the win.

Bribar Guildford Grand Prix Results:

Men's Band 1

Chris Wheeler bt Mike Marsden 3-0 (11-6, 13-11, 11-6)

Women's Band 1

Sarah Berge bt Maria Tsaptsinos 3-1 (7-11, 11-5, 11-5, 11-6)

Men's Band 2

Mark Scutts bt Sam Mabey 3-0 (11-8, 12-10, 11-9)

Women's Band 2

Maria Tsaptsinos bt Nicole Hall 3-1 (9-11, 11-7, 11-8, 11-8)

Men's Band 3

Declan O'Brien bt Josh Band 3-0 (11-4, 11-4, 11-4)

Women's Band 3

Naomi Jackson bt Daniella Gray 3-1 (7-11, 11-6, 11-8, 11-5)

Men's Band 4

Jac Jenkins bt Jamie Trevillion 3-0 (12-10, 11-8, 11-6)

Women's Band 4

Olivia Churchill bt Hannah McErlane 3-0 (11-6, 11-3, 11-8)

Men's Band 5

Curtis Welsh bt Jac Jenkins 3-1 (11-6, 5-11, 13-11, 11-5)

Men's Band 6

Hewley Griffith bt Nathan Butler 3-2 (11-9, 8-11, 10-12, 11-9, 11-9)

Written by Russell Moore (September 7, 2013)

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