

Jenkins and Ho power to Bribar Guildford GP titles

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Ryan Jenkins with Mick Strode, picture courtesy of John Upham

Men's Singles

Ryan Jenkins picked up his second Grand Prix win of the season and staked an early claim as the title favourite for the overall Men's Singles crown after a hard-fought competition in Guildford.

Jenkins began as the favourite for the Bribar Guildford Grand Prix title as neither of his main rivals from 2012-13 (Chris Doran and Gavin Rumgay) were able to attend this time around.

After cruising through his group he beat Sam Logue 3-0 in the first round before finding the going a lot trickier against Wales' Mike Marsden.

Despite taking the first two games, Jenkins found himself frustrated after losing the third game 11-9 and dropping into trouble at 6-3 down in the fourth. However, he used all of his experience from there to win eight consecutive points and reach the quarter-finals.

There he met Mark Scutts, who had impressed by beating the on-fire Scot, Chris Wheeler, before surprising the Welshman with a series of powerful left-handed attacking forays.

It was a real shock to see the former Grand Prix Champion turned over 11-3 in the fourth game as Scutts verged on a huge upset. However, Jenkins escaped a potential giant-killing with a confident 11-5 deciding game.

From there the 'Grand Prix King' turned on the style as he started to relax and unfurl his full repertoire. Matt Ware was the first victim in the semi-final before Mike O'Driscoll succumbed 3-0 in the final despite his best efforts.

O'Driscoll was unfortunate to meet the Welshman in top gear as he had previously beaten Patrick Thomas, Richard Andrews and Paul McCreery all 3-0 after scraping past Niall Cameron 3-2 in his first round fixture.



Tin-Tin Ho, picture courtesy of John Upham

Women's Singles

Fifteen-year-old Tin-Tin Ho secured her maiden Grand Prix title in her first full appearance after seeing off the defensive pair of Sarah Berge and Hannah Hicks in the Guildford Spectrum.

The English prodigy was in spectacular form throughout the tournament in which her abilities against defence were put to the sternest test in her dramatic last two performances.

She came through her group unscathed early on with five successive straight games victories in order to seal a quarter-final berth against Megan Phillips.

The Welsh girl gave Tin-Tin her first challenge by stretching her to the full five games. At 2-1 down her singles campaign could have ended early but she recovered her form and composure well to win a stylish attacking match 3-2 (9-11, 11-4, 9-11, 11-8, 11-6).

After that she met the indomitable Sarah Berge who, after winning the Women's Singles and Band 1 in Liverpool, had already won the Band 1 in Guildford on Saturday.

However, the French girl met a completely different prospect in the form of the English Junior No. 1 who forced their encounter into a deciding end after a brilliant tactical timeout.

Called by her father Charles at 2-1 and 8-5 down, she recovered to 10-8 up before saving a match point at 11-10 and taking her own game point on 14-12.

The final game was more one-sided as the youngster won through 11-7 to meet Hannah Hicks who had dropped just one game in beating Yolanda King and Maria Tsaptsinos to make the final.

By that time, however, Tin-Tin was on full throttle and held her nerve for a tight 13-11 opening game before moving further ahead by taking the second game 11-8.

The gutsy Hicks managed to win six consecutive points in the third game to keep her dreams alive, but she was kicking herself in game four for failing to convert a game point at 10-9 which let Tin-Tin eventually win her first title 16-14.

Men's Under-21s

Helshan Weerasinghe won the Men's Under-21s final against Adam Nutland to alleviate the pain from his Men's Singles defeat earlier in the day.

The English junior star was disappointed to lose 3-1 (11-8, 3-11, 13-11, 12-10) to Paul McCreery in the Men's Singles last 16 but made amends by storming through the under-21s.

He won his group after two tough five-game victories over Sam Mabey 3-2 (11-7, 6-11, 7-11, 11-8, 11-3) and Josh Band 3-2 (9-11, 11-3, 11-8, 11-13, 11-8) but stepped on the gas soon after to drop just more game to reach the final.

He beat Declan O'Brien 3-1 and Mark Scutts 3-0 before resisting a potential comeback from Nutland in the final to secure the main prize.

Women's Under-21s

Tin-Tin Ho secured a double success from the Briar Guildford Grand Prix after strolling to the Women's Under-21 title.

With main rival Sarah Berge deciding to play the Open Doubles instead, Tin-Tin was left to dominate the proceedings in the under-21s where she won every match en route to the final without dropping an end.

She won all four in her group before beating Yolanda King 3-0 in a repeat of the National Championships Under-21s final from 2012.

In the final she met Naomi Jackson, who finished runner-up in Group 3 to King, before beating Daniella Gray 3-0 and receiving a bye against Ashley Givan in the semi-final after the Irish girl had to fly home.

Unfortunately for Jackson, the classy Middlesex girl remained in top form to take the first two games. To her credit she battled her way to winning the third game 12-10 but she was unable to stop Tin-Tin from taking the fourth game 11-5, and with it, the title.

Open Doubles

The left-hand/right-hand partnership of Mike O'Driscoll and Matt Ware continues to pay dividends on the Grand Prix circuit as they secured another title with a supremely confident performance.

After winning their group they beat Niall Cameron and Steve Beerling 3-1 (11-7, 11-7, 8-11, 12-10) in the semi-final before winning even more convincingly in the final stage against scratch entries John Murphy and Sarah Berge.

The Irish/French pair had done well to forge a partnership but were no match for Ware and O'Driscoll who won 3-0 (11-5, 11-5, 11-7).

Veterans

Adrian Moore won the Veterans' Singles title at the end of a long day at the Briar Guildford Grand Prix in an energy-sapping five-game final with Phil Snelson.

Both players had made comfortable progress through their groups and into their respective semi-finals where they also both made light work of their opponents.

Moore defeated Geoff Grange 3-0 (11-7, 11-5, 11-5) while Snelson beat Paul Beck 3-0 (11-3, 11-5, 11-7).

The final was a much closer and more gruelling affair with tired legs and minds taking effect after a long day in the Guildford Spectrum.

Moore twice took the lead but was pegged back on both occasions by Snelson who refused to give in. His spirit reflected in a tight 12-10 fourth game to force a decider.

However, he was unable to make the final move and fell to Moore in a one-sided final game 11-4.

Sudden Death

Irishman Paul McCreery became the first man to win the Sudden Death competition twice after his success at the Briar Guildford GP.

Entered as a scratch following teammate John Murphy pulling out, McCreery made no mistakes as he beat Phil Marshall, Sarah Berge, Jack Bennett and Kelsey Le Maistre to make the final.

Meeting him was O'Brien who had impressed by completely baffling his quarter-final and semi-final opponents Conor Edwards and Noor Owadally with a pair of disguised forehands.

However, he couldn't make the difference when it mattered with McCreery winning the deciding point to take home £32.



Player of the Weekend, Jamie Trevillion, picture courtesy of John Upham

Briar Guildford Grand Prix Results:

Men's Singles

Ryan Jenkins bt Mike O'Driscoll 3-0 (11-8, 11-6, 12-10)

Women's Singles

Tin-Tin Ho bt Hannah Hicks 3-1 (13-11, 11-8, 8-11, 16-14)

Men's Under-21s

Helshan Weerasinghe bt Adam Nutland 3-1 (11-4, 11-9, 8-11, 11-9)

Women's Under-21s

Tin-Tin Ho bt Naomi Jackson 3-1 (11-5, 11-7, 10-12, 11-5)

Open Doubles

Matt Ware/Mike O'Driscoll bt Sarah Berge/John Murphy 3-0 (11-5, 11-5, 11-7)

Veterans

Adrian Moore bt Phil Snelson 3-2 (11-8, 6-11, 11-7, 10-12, 11-4)

Sudden Death

Paul McCreery bt Declan O'Brien

Written by Russell Moore (September 8, 2013)

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