


Knighton Park Championships

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 Dave Gannon won the club singles title as the club championship came to a climax on finals day which followed two weeks of qualification groups.

It was also a chance for the club to show their appreciation of Gordon Sanders, who could well have been elsewhere picking up the well deserved Alan Kind Trophy from Leicestershire and Rutland Sport, but decided his place was at the club overseeing the finals.

This award was for outstanding contributions to schools and/or junior sport and is so well deserved given Gordon's involvement at club level, the 32-team Leicester Development League and managing the County's junior and cadet teams.

In the club singles event, for the Stan Aarons Trophy, the first semi-final saw Gannon in ominous form as he beat Les Baker 3-0 (11-6, 11-5, 11-9). The other semi-final was a terrific match between Karen Smith and Osman Bawa, who shared the first four games. Bawa changed ends 5-4 to the good in the fifth but a subtle change of tactics by Smith, a couple of quickened up points and then another change of pace, saw her home 11-4, 8-11, 11-5, 5-11, 11-8.

Gannon maintained his outstanding form in the final to beat Smith 3-0 (11-7, 11-8, 11-5).

In the boys' singles, for the Brian Pearn Trophy, Jack Mooney belied his Division Two status in his final year as a junior when he overcame his Division One opponent, Aman Rashid, with some superb defending augmented by an array of well selected attacking shots. The first two games were shared but Jack gradually got on top to win 3-1 (11-8, 8-11, 11-9, 11-6).

Les Baker topped a superb final with the 'shot of the day' against Reza Kiani to take the veterans' singles for the Bryan Hall trophy.

Baker completed the win with an impossible point, virtually getting his leg over the barrier into the spectators before, somehow, propelling the ball onto the table to complete a 3-1 victory (11-8, 11-2, 8-11, 11-8).

In the handicap singles for the John Ellis Trophy, numerous play-offs in the group stages and on finals night eventually provided an opponent for Patrick Cox, in the form of Jack Mooney – who beat Kiani and Baker after a countback of points. Cox, with an eight-point advantage to 21 each game, overcame an uncertain start to beat Mooney 21-19, 21-14.

In the handicap doubles for the Glenys Odams Trophy, Martin Pember was defending his title with a new partner in Zack Moss and they played very well with the aid of a four-point start to defeat Les Baker and Simon Aldis 21-16, 21-16.

Other results:

Hard Bat Singles winner: Karen Smith

Ladies' Singles winner: Karen Smith

Junior Girls' singles winner: Sufyaana Dhanji (runner-up Maya Dehnen)

Cadet Singles: Rayan Kotecha beat Jack Rogers 3-2 (4-11, 11-8, 11-9, 7-11, 11-8).

John Bowness (12th May 2014)

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