

Bardsley leads march of the top seeds

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Charlotte Bardsley. All photos courtesy of Trevor Parsons

Charlotte Bardsley says she is proud to have won her first national title after battling back from the brink of semi-final elimination to take the Under-12 girls' singles trophy on a day all four top seeds triumphed in the U11-U14 Nationals.

Woodfield TTC player Bardsley was in top form as she marched into the last four in Doncaster without dropping a set.

But the top seed found Alice Dillon a different proposition as the Lancashire player quickly opened up a 2-0 lead.

Bardsley rallied to edge a nervy third end before pulling ahead impressively to clinch the tie 3-2 (6-11, 3-11, 11-9, 11-7, 11-5).

Her final performance against Middlesex's Amelia Chan was full of control by comparison as she maintained a steady advantage throughout. Having taken the first two games, the top seed let a solitary match point slip in the third before finally sealing her title in the fourth to close the event with a 3-1 (11-7, 12-10, 10-12, 11-5) win.

"I feel really happy and proud," said Bardsley. "I thought I was buried in the semi-final, but when I won the third set I got my confidence back and focused a bit more.

"I think to win a title you need determination, hard work and being able to listen, and I'm grateful to my coach and parents as well."

Her final opponent Chan had previously overcome her own five-end battle in her quarter-final with Danielle Kelly but despite that win and a 3-0 semi-final triumph over Katie Holt, she was unable to match Bardsley at the final hurdle.

Under-12 boys



Ethan Walsh lofting the trophy high

In the boys' event, Ethan Walsh made it back-to-back singles titles by following up last year's U11 triumph by surviving a couple of scares to secure the U12s crown.

After a close first set against Joshua Weatherby in the quarters, Walsh saw his opponent level at 1-1. However, it seemed to inspire him to up his game as he swept through the next two sets to seal a 3-1 victory (13-11, 8-11, 11-3, 11-4).

His opponent in the final – 10-year-old Jamie Liu from the Kingfisher Club in Reading – repeated that feat to level at 1-1. But once again, Walsh turned on the power to pull ahead and lift the trophy after a 3-1 (11-3, 7-11, 11-6, 11-5) victory.

"It feels good," said the Stevenage youngster. "I think I had some tough matches but I prepared for it and I had motivation.

"In the final, when he came back to 1-1 it can go either way, so I tried to stay relaxed."

Liu had secured his own place in the final after a 3-2 quarter-final victory over Louis Moyes and a 3-1 semi-final triumph against tournament surprise package Will Ibbitson.

The Yorkshire youngster had previously upset both seventh seed Ben Fillingham and second seed Amirul Hussain to reach the last four before his run was finally ended by the charismatic Liu.

Under-11 boys



Amirul Hussain entertaining earlier on in the day

Amirul Hussain claimed his first national title in emphatic style as he lifted the under-11 trophy without dropping an end.

After breezing through his group, the top seed ended the challenges of Louis Price, Joshua Weatherby and Freddie Osenton-Brown to set up a final against Louis Moyes.

And the Oldham youngster continued his dominance with a 3-0 (11-4, 11-6, 11-9) win against his Norwich opponent.

Moyes had earlier ended the challenge of Liu 3-0 in the semi-finals, though the scoreline of 11-6, 16-14, 12-10 shows the match was closer than the result suggests.

Hussain said: "It's really good to be a champion, it's fantastic. I think my serve helped me to win."

Under-11 girls



Top seed Jasmin Wong seals the title in Doncaster

The day's last final was won by Jasmin Wong, defeating Nicole Scott to win the Under-11 girls' title, less than a year after arriving in the UK from Hong Kong.

Wong, now based in Hull and playing at both Hull YPI Sports Centre and Ormesby TTC, prevailed 3-1 (11-3, 8-11, 12-10, 11-5) against her Wirral-based opponent.

Both girls had needed four ends to beat their semi-final opponents – Wong, the top seed, seeing off Darcie Proud and Scott getting past Joelle Bennett. Scott also had to withstand a quarter-final comeback from Naomi Collins before closing out a 3-2 (11-4, 11-3, 8-11, 4-11, 11-6) victory.

Champion Wong said: "I'm really excited. My coach (Hong Hong Peebles) helped me to win."

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Paul Stimpson (June 1, 2014)

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