

Cippenham Young Players' Summer Festival

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Cippenham Young Players' Summer Festival (14-15.6.14)

Shristi leads the Cippenham surge



Another successful season for Cippenham Table Tennis Club was concluded over the weekend of 14/15 June with the ever-popular Cippenham Young Players' Summer Festival. This 1-star open tournament attracted another bumper entry of over 200 and the host club's own group of young players starred by picking up some of the honours.

Two players stood out by winning two different age groups. Cippenham's Shristi Ghosh, who last year won the under-12 and was runner-up in the under-14s went even better this year. Ghosh won both the under-14 and under-16 events and, for good measure, was runner-up in the under-18 event, playing five years out of her age group. The other stand-out player was Eren Gozcu, a Londoner who won both the under-18 and under-16 boys' events.

Such was Cippenham's dominance of the two girls' event won by Ghosh that she met fellow Cippenham players in the finals of each. In the under-14s it was Jemma Walker while the under-16 finalist was Megan Ashfield. It was not just in the girls' events that Cippenham players starred as Ben Naylor-Smith was the beaten finalist in the boys' under-16 event also.



Left to right; Shristi Ghosh, Sue Hayes, Jemma Walker

The Saturday events were actually over-subscribed and the organisers had to make changes to the schedule to accommodate the number of boys, over sixty, who registered for the under-14s.

Saturday started with the under-12 events and the boys' singles was the first of two events over the weekend that saw the winners' trophy wend its way down the M4 to Wales. Mithun Padmanabhan was the victor but his success was far from easily won. The top seed came through his preliminary round group and then dispatched his second round opponent with some ease. It then got a lot harder. Fellow Welshman Louis Evans took Padmanabhan the full five-games distance in the quarter-finals and Cippenham's Shae Thakker did likewise in the semi-final. In the final Padmanabhan was 2-0 down in games to Stanley Shilton before clinching the third game 13-11 and the next two to take the title. Shilton was a surprise finalist in that he was only runner-up in his group and then needed all five games to eliminate second seed Felix Thomis in the last 16 and another five games to get through Ellis Burgess in the quarters. By contrast, his 3-0 win over Casey Mansfield in the semis was easier.

The counterpart U12 girls' event was run as a round robin with Habina Seo and Anna Hursey both winning five of their six matches, the title going to Seo by virtue of her closely fought 3-2 victory over Hursey. Seo's loss, in five games all decided by the minimum margin, came at the hands of Lara Whitton who, nevertheless, finished only sixth.

The only player to retain his 2013 title was George Hazell in the Under-14 Boys' Singles. This event ran to form with the top two seeds meeting in the final. Hazell did not drop a game in winning the title as he dispatched Seun Sontan, under-12 winner Mithun Padmanabhan and Louie Evans before dishing out the same scoreline to Carl Breindel in the final.

The two Cippenham players were the top two seeds in the Under-14 Girl's Singles and neither was troubled up the semi-final stage. At that point top seed Shristi Ghosh only just managed to get the better of Victoria Coll 11-6,

10-12, 13-11, 9-11. 15-13 while Jemma Walker was a little more comfortable in disposing of Scarlett O'Neil after dropping the first game. Ghosh then won the first of her two titles with a 3-1 victory over her Cippenham training partner.

It was the turn of the two older age groups on the Sunday and an opportunity for Cippenham's top boy Ben Naylor-Smith to make his mark. This he did as, despite being seeded only fifth in the Under-16 Boys' Singles, he won his preliminary round group and then got the better by 3-2 of Shrey Bjardwaj in the quarter-final. In the semi-final Naylor-Smith eased past second seed William Goodstone and then had the temerity to take the first game from top seed Eren Gozcu in the final. However, Gozcu, who had come through the rounds without dropping a game, was in no mood to give up on the title and won a close second game 13-11 and then ran out an easy winner in the third and fourth games.

Shristi Ghosh continued in the Under-16 Girl's Singles where she left off the previous day – winning! Seeded second behind her team-mate Megan Ashfield in this event, Ghosh turned the tables by coming from 2-1 down to win a close encounter in which all the games finished 11-9 or 11-8. Cippenham other young star, Jemma Walker, was beaten by Ghosh in the semi-final while the other beaten semi-finalist was Zoe Davies of Essex.



Left to right: Megan Ashfield, Ben Naylor-Smith, Shristi Ghosh

The two finalists met again later in the day in the semi-final of the Under-18 Girls' Singles. This time Ghosh prevailed 3-0 but was then beaten for a second time in the event by Beth Roberts who delivered the second title of the weekend for the Principality.

Eren Gozcu showed that he is a talent to look out for in the future in the Under-18 Boys' Singles. The Middlesex youngster, who is yet to turn fourteen, justified his second top seeding of the day. After winning his group stage he went on to eliminate Theodore Achampong and Ben Naylor-Smith before his 3-1 win over Worcestershire's Ben Bennett brought him his second title. Bennett's route to the final included wins over Shrey Bhardwaj and William Goodstone.

The tournament was organised by Catherine Hayes and refereed by Steve Smith.

Results:

Event	Winner:	Runner-up:
U18 Boys' Singles	Eren Gozcu (Mi)	Ben Bennett (Wo)
U18 Girls' Singles	Beth Roberts (WAL)	Shristi Ghosh (Bu)
U16 Boys' Singles	Eren Gozcu (Mi)	Ben Naylor-Smith (Bu)
U16 Girls' Singles	Shristi Ghosh (Bu)	Megan Ashfield (Bu)
U14 Boys' Singles	George Hazell (Sx)	Carl Breindel (He)
U14 Girls' Singles	Shristi Ghosh (Bu)	Jemma Walker (Bu)
U12 Boys' Singles	Mithun Padmabhan (WAL)	Stanley Shilton (Gs)
U12 Girls' Singles	Habina Seo (Ha)	Anna Hursey (WAL)
U18 Boys' Consolation	Antony Atkins (Sy)	Paul Toader (Mi)
U18 Girls' Consolation	Zoe Davies (E)	Anisha Rasan (Mi)
U16 Boys' Consolation	Justin Jeffery (E)	Ellis Burgess (WAL)
U16 Girls' Consolation	Rhoda Boadu (Mi)	Bethany Brewer (WAL)
U14 Boys' Consolation	Joseph Barraclough (Bk)	David Avery (WAL)
U14 Girls' Consolation	Lara Whitton (WAL)	Alana Mansfield (E)
U12 Boys' Consolation	Louis Price (Av)	Charlie Cunningham (Sy)

Graham Trimming (June 24, 2014)

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