

Helshan scoops a treble at Nationals

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Helshan Weerasinghe has won a magnificent treble of trophies at the Cadet & Junior Nationals in Preston.

The Tonbridge teenager successfully defended his singles and mixed doubles crowns – the latter with Tin-Tin Ho – and alongside Tom Jarvis added the boys' doubles title which eluded him last year.

Maria Tsaptsinos retained her junior girls' crown, repeating last year's victory over Ho in a five-set thriller at the University of Central Lancashire's Sir Tom Finney Sports Centre.

The two then teamed up to romp to the girls' doubles title without dropping a set.

Tomorrow, attention turns to the Cadets, with the action starting at 9am. We will again be providing regular updates via Twitter (@TableTennisENG) and Facebook (Facebook.com/TableTennisEngland), as well as live streaming from the show court.

Boys' Singles



Action from the boys' final between Helshan Weerasinghe and Marcus Giles (picture by Steve Parkin)

Helshan Weerasinghe successfully defended his title with a superb display, showing his class when needed as he came from 1-0 down in the final against Marcus Giles.

Giles, buoyed by an impressive run of 3-0 wins in the knockout stages, took the first 11-8 and an upset seemed on the cards.

The opening half of the second followed the same pattern as Giles went 5-2 up, but Weerasinghe stepped up his game to take nine points on the bounce and level the match.

And it marked a permanent momentum shift as the champion ensured he would be taking the trophy back to Tonbridge again with 11-7 and 11-3 scores in the third and fourth – one 'slam dunk' at 7-6 in the third among the stand-out shots.

"It feels really good to have won all three. Last year I won two and got to the other final, so it's nice to win the clean sweep," said Weerasinghe.

"Marcus was 1-0 and 5-2 up and playing really well but I don't think he truly believed he could beat me over five sets.

"Once I got back into the second game I knew I had a really good chance to win 3-1. I kept my focus and was quite comfortable in the end."

The final was not the only time Weerasinghe was behind as Alec Ward took the first game off him in the quarters. No such drama in the semis as Weerasinghe played arguably his most complete match of the event in seeing off third seed Danny Lawrence 3-0 (11-5, 11-5, 11-5).

In the other semi, Giles dispatched sixth seed Luke Savill, who had enjoyed some notable victories of his own on the way to the last four.

The Kent youngster was taken to 18-16 in the third by James Smith in the last 32 and then beat under-14 national champion Alex Ramsden in the last 16.

Savill then turned a few heads by coming from one down to end second seed Sam Mabey's interest in the

competition in the quarter-finals.

[Click here for boys' singles knockout results](#)

Girls' Singles



Maria Tsaptsinos celebrates victory (picture by Steve Parkin)

The expected final between top seeds Tin-Tin Ho and Maria Tsaptsinos duly materialised and lived up to all expectations.

Second seed Tsaptsinos was going for a repeat of last year's result, while Ho was looking to emulate her singles success over her opponent at the School Games in September.

It was the defending champion who was quickest out of the blocks as she took the first 11-6, only for Ho to hit back 11-7.

The pattern of one player dominating alternate games intensified as the champion hit the front again with an 11-5 scoreline, followed by Ho again levelling, this time 11-3.

But there was no suggestion of the momentum building in favour of Ho as the start of the fifth was cagey, with the players locked at 4-4. Tsaptsinos swapped ends 5-4 to the good at the start of a run of four points which proved crucial.

It gave Tsaptsinos the buffer to eke out the three points she needed and become the second player to defend her singles crown on the day.

Both girls had dropped a set to their semi-final opponents. Lois Peake took the third against Tin-Tin and Letitia McMullan the second against Maria – who then turned up the power to win the third and fourth for the combined loss of only four points.

Tsaptsinos said: "I didn't think I was on form at all until the final – I thought Tin-Tin was going to wallop me.

"But for some reason when I get into a final, sub-consciously something changes and I start playing table tennis.

"It's much better (than last year) because it's my last year and it's nice to finish on a high."

[Click here for girls' singles knockout results](#)

Boys' Doubles



Boys' doubles champions Tom Jarvis and Helshan Weerasinghe

Weerasinghe and Jarvis proved the combination to beat as Weerasinghe completed his treble in the last match of the day, which provided a first Junior title for Jarvis.

The top seeds and second-ranked pair Sam Mabey and Danny Lawrence advanced to the final with few alarms, and it was the No 1 pair who laid down a marker by taking the first 11-8. A close second was shaded 14-12, which seemed to deflate Mabey and Lawrence, resulting in a one-sided third.

[Click here for boys' doubles results](#)

Girls' Doubles



Girls' doubles champions Tin-Tin Ho and Maria Tsaptsinos

Top seeds Ho and Tsaptsinos romped to the title without conceding a set – and without conceding more than seven points in an individual set.

Having seen off Katie and Sophie Barlow, followed by Jazmin Johns and Bethany Wilson, the second seeds Lois Peake and Letitia McMullan stood in their way.

But their opponents, who had also both reached the singles semi-finals, were powerless to prevent another victory in three straight.

[Click here for girls' doubles results](#)

Mixed Doubles



Mixed doubles champions Tin-Tin Ho and Helshan Weerasinghe (picture by Steve Parkin)

Top seeds Helshan Weerasinghe & Tin-Tin Ho took the first title of the day at Preston and were imperious in taking their third successive title in the event.

Opponents Danny Lawrence and Maria Tsaptsinos, the second seeds, were quickly out of the blocks, but a run of points from 5-2 down saw them take the first 11-7.

Lawrence and Tsaptsinos again started quickly, taking the first three points of the second but from then on the top seeds were virtually unplayable, winning the second 11-5 and blitzing through the third for the loss of only one point,

The two pairs had dominated the competition, both dropping only one set on the way to the final – Lawrence and Tsaptsinos to Jack Bennett and Lois Peake in the quarters and Weerasinghe and Ho to Josh Bennett and Letitia McMullan in the last four.

[Click here for full mixed doubles results](#)

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