

Cadet Masters day one: Six unbeaten

Author: Paul Stimpson

Posted On: February 22, 2015



Joe Clark is unbeaten after day one (Picture by Trevor Parsons)

Top seeds Alex Ramsden and Denise Payet did what was expected of them on day one of the Cadet Masters – winning all six matches.

But they still have plenty of work to do on day two tomorrow as four other players remained unbeaten.

Three of them were girls – Kate Cheer, Charlotte Bardsley and Isabelle Joubely – meaning tomorrow's action at Burton Uxbridge TTC is set to be enthralling.

On the boys' side, No 4 seed Joe Clark was the other player to boast a 100 per cent record, while Shayan Siraj is not far behind with five wins from six.

The day started with some surprises as both opening rounds saw the No 3 seeds shocked by the 12th seeds – the lowest ranked players in the round-robin event.

Sophie Barlow went down 3-1 to Holly Williams in the girls, while James Smith lost to Jonathan McMullan in a titanic struggle in the boys, McMullan coming from 2-1 behind and saving a match point before accepting his own second chance to take the tie, 13-11 in the fifth (11-8, 8-11, 10-12, 11-8, 13-11).



Jonathan McMullan caused some early upsets in Burton (Picture by Trevor Parsons)

McMullan reinforced his good start with another brilliant victory in five sets, this time over No 2 seed Harry Dai.

The underdog raced into an 8-2 lead but ultimately lost the first 12-10, and it seemed Dai had taken control when he won the second 11-8. But McMullan kept giving as good as he got in some blistering rallies, clawing back the third and then the fourth, before closing out on his first match point to win 3-2 (10-12, 8-11, 11-8, 11-9, 11-8).

Siraj and Ethan Walsh also had good days, both exemplified by their exploits in round five.

Walsh stormed back from 2-0 down against Dai to level, taking the fourth 13-11 after saving two match points. With the momentum behind him, he flew through the decider 11-4 for a final scoreline of 8-11, 6-11, 11-9, 13-11, 11-4.

Siraj, meanwhile, had to fend off a comeback by McMullan, who was hunting for his third scalp of the day. Leeds youngster Siraj opened up a 2-0 lead, only for McMullan to level – like Walsh, he took the fourth 13-11. But Siraj found the edge in the fifth, completing a 3-2 win (11-9, 12-10, 8-11, 11-13, 11-7).

Siraj ended the day with just the one defeat – to Walsh – while Walsh himself was one of four players on four victories – Dai, Olly Tyndall and Smith the others.

McMullan ended his splendid day with a third scalp, seeing off Tyndall in three straight.

At the top, Ramsden was largely untroubled, though Sam Chesterman went 1-0 up against him before losing 3-1, and Artur Veeck Caltabiano came from 2-0 down to force a decider, which Ramsden took, in the second round. The top seed won his next four ties without dropping a set.

Ramsden said: "Obviously, I'm happy with how I'm playing. It took me a little while to get going in the first two matches, but it's been a good day."

Clark was arguably even more assured, also dropping only three sets, but never more than one in a match.

Clark's verdict on his day's play was: "My coach said she wanted me to be as professional as I could and that

helped – I kept playing at the same level and stayed focused.”

Four boys are yet to record a victory – Eren Gozcu, George Hazell, Caltabiano and Chesterman.



Isabelle Joubely was one of four girls unbeaten (Picture by Trevor Parsons)

In the girls' event, Payet dropped only one end and Bardsley two over the course of the day, but Cheer and Joubely were given a fright each before they were able to complete unbeaten days.

Joubely's came in the first round, when she came from 2-0 down to defeat Amy Blagbrough.

Cheer, meanwhile, had to overturn a 2-1 deficit in her second match, as Williams threatened back-to-back upsets after her early win over Barlow.

Gauri Duhan is hot on the heels of the leading pack with five wins – her only defeat a 3-2 reverse to Williams, who ended the day on two victories, one behind Barlow. Blagbrough and Tiana Dennison had one victory apiece, with Jasmin Wong, Bhavika Mistry and Megan Dillon not yet off the mark.

Top seed Payet's verdict on the day was: "I was nervous at first but by the time the day got going I got more relaxed. I'm hoping to win them all tomorrow. I'm playing well and I've worked really hard, so hopefully the best will come."

Meanwhile, Joubely said: "My goal was just to play well, really. I'm quite surprised I won all of them, even though theoretically I'm expected to. I'm happy with how I played today and I stayed positive."

Cheer was pleased to start strongly, saying: "Usually, I get better as the day goes on, but I started quite well this morning. Sometimes when I play players who aren't so high up the rankings I don't do so well."

And Bardsley said: "I wanted to get more than 50 per cent today, so I'm very happy. It's a tougher day tomorrow but hopefully I can perform as well as I did today."



Holly Williams won twice, including upsetting third seed Sophie Barlow (Picture by Trevor Parsons)

The tournament resumes at 9.30am on Sunday with girls' round seven. Follow all the latest on our website or via Twitter (@tabletenniseng and the hashtag #cadetmasters).

Paul Stimpson

February 21, 2015

Downloaded From:

<https://newsarchive.tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/cadet-masters-day-one-six-unbeaten/>