



Action packed day 1 at Aldershot Grand Prix

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Over 165 players descended upon Aldershot for the Banded competitions of the second Grand Prix on the 2015/16 circuit. The Aldershot Garrison Sports Centre is a new venue on the Grand Prix series and was christened by a 13 hour day of table tennis!

Men's Band 1

Having just returned from international duty at the European Championships in Russia, Gavin Maguire showed his class and determination to take the Men's Band 1 crown. He beat a tired Alex Ramsden 3-0 in the final.

Ramsden had played a lot of matches and it was unfortunately for him, tiredness that told at the end. His great run was ended by the Irish man but only after some good victories over Liam McTiernan and Danny Lawrence, as well as a group win against his victor.

The result of Maguire coming runner-up in his group was a first round tie with Niall Cameron. Maguire managed to beat him comfortably in three, before repeating the score line against Adam Nutland in the quarter-finals. Maguire's first test didn't come until the semi-final when he had to fight back from 2-1 down to beat Steve Beerling.



Winner – Gavin Maguire (right) & Runner-up – Alex Ramsden (left)

Women's Band 1

Lois Peake returned to winning ways in the Women's Band 1 after struggling earlier in the day in the Band 2 competition. Peake won the round robin group with a perfect record of four wins from four matches.

Kate Cheer also responded well to earlier disappointment to clinch second place from Emma Torkington on count back. Emily Bolton finished in fourth place and Emma Tovey in fifth. These two places were also decided on count back.



Winner – Lois Peake (left) & Runner-up – Kate Cheer (right)

Men's Band 2

England Junior Alex Ramsden survived a number of scares to win the Men's Band 2 competition, eventually beating his international team mate James Smith 3-0.

Ramsden's quarter-final saw a repeat of the recent Sainsbury's School Games Boys Singles final against Shaquille Webb Dixon. Webb-Dixon showed great character to level at 2-2, having trailed 2-0, but Ramsden made it two wins on the trot against his opponent winning 11-8 in the decider. He then took out his School Games team mate Matthew Leete, this time only dropping the one end in a 3-1 victory.

James Smith, runner-up in his group, then put together a string of four fine wins to reach the final, beating Calum Morrison, Martin Matuzevicius, Adam Jepson and Hugo Pang en route.

Women's Band 2

Number two seed Emily Bolton took the Women's Band 2 title in Aldershot as number one seed Lois Peake, fresh from making her senior international debut, seemed to struggle back on home soil.

It was Bolton that put Peake out, taking the semi-final match 11-9 in the fifth. Event runner-up Sally Hughes got herself an impressive victory against fellow Sussex player Kate Cheer to make the final.

The final was won in three straight by Bolton but all ends were closely contested with the Grantham College student winning 11-8, 11-9, 11-9.



Winner – Emily Bolton (right) & Runner-up – Sally Hughes (left)

Men's Band 3

James Smith made it two finals from two, only this time he went one stage further than he had earlier in the day, as he secured the Men's Band 3 title thanks to a 3-1 victory over Liam Grant.

Smith had a good day and played well, doing better than he was perhaps expected too. Defying his seeding, en route to the final he beat Paralympic star David Wetherill in round one, Scotland's Steven Gray in the last 16, Radek Mlynarczyk in the quarter-finals and then another Scot, Calum Morrison in the semis.

The third seed Liam Grant made steady progress throughout the rounds dropping one end to Tim Denby, two to Adam Jepson, and another single end to Mark Collins before finally going down to Smith in the final.



Winner – James Smith (right) & Runner-up – Liam Grant (left)

Women's Band 3

Sally Hughes completed a successful day by winning the Women's Band 3 title. Having come runner-up in the Band 2, Hughes went one better this time, beating Amy Blagbrough in the final, 3-0.

Sally Hughes won group two, and her prize was a semi-final against Anna Hursey which she won comfortably 3-0. Amy Blagbrough reached the final after winning group one and then putting on a strong display to beat Band 4 champion Edyta Schimd 12-10, 11-8, 11-3.



Winner – Sally Hughes (right) & Runner-up – Amy Blagbrough (left)

Men's Band 4

George Hazell was crowned the Men's Band 4 champion after he was victorious against Derbyshire's Tim Denby, the second and third seeds respectively, battled it out with Hazell prevailing 3-1.

Hazell scraped past Artur Caltabiano 3-2, but then found the going easier winning his quarter and semi-final matches 3-0 against Joshua Dye and then Sam Chesterman. Denby beat Mark Collins 3-1 to reach the final, after Collins impressively knocked out the number one seed Eren Gozcu one round prior.



Winner – George Hazell (left) & Runner-up – Tim Denby (right)

Women's Band 4

Unranked Polish player Edyta Schmid proved too strong for the Women's Band 4 field. She overcame young Welsh star Anna Hursey, not once, but twice. The first time was in the groups but more crucially Schmid won again in the final 13-11, 12-10, 11-9.

Schmid beat number one seed Silvia Trenti in the semi-finals and Hursey beat the group one winner Alice Hazell, both finalists were too strong in this round, each coming through 3-0.

Men's Band 5

Finn Morgan-Bayliss won the Men's Band 5 event beating Shaun Murray, unfortunately for the latter this was his second final loss of the day.

Morgan-Bayliss, winner of group 14, battled his way through the rounds. First defeating Ryan Moore, and later dispatching Sam Weaving 5-11, 11-5, 11-4, 11-5 and Ben Warner 11-7, 11-4, 11-5.

Murray showed good consistency having made the Band 6 final earlier in the day. This time he got just as far by beating Ugur Salik 3-1 and Chris Cockburn 3-2, before getting a walkover in his semi-final.



Winner – Finn Morgan-Bayliss (right) & Runner-up – Shaun Murray (left)

Men's Band 6

The Men's Band 6, as ever, proved unpredictable. On this occasion it was Ben Warner who took home the glass trophy. Warner beat Shaun Murray in the final 13-11, 11-4, 9-11, 13-11.

Warner came through four knockout rounds beating Rafal Bajda, Ugur Salik, Simon Vine, Finn Morgan-Bayliss and then Shaun Murray.

As winner of group five, Murray got a bye through to the second round. He started in the last 16, beating Chris Cockburn 3-1, Brett Heppenstall 3-0 in the quarter-finals and then Chris Sabourin by the same score line in the semis.



Winner – Ben Warner (right) & Runner-up – Shaun Murray (left)

Results

Men's Band 1

Gavin Maguire (IRL) bt Alex Ramsden (Np) 3-0 (11-8, 11-7, 11-5)

Women's Band 1

Round robin group winner, Lois Peake (Sx) & runner-up, Kate Cheer (Sx)

Men's Band 2

Alex Ramsden (Np) bt James Smith (K) 3-0 (11-8, 11-8, 11-9)

Women's Band 2

Emily Bolton (La) bt Sally Hughes (Sx) 3-0 (11-8, 11-9, 11-9)

Men's Band 3

James Smith (K) bt Liam Grant (Sy) 3-1 (11-6, 11-6, 6-11, 12-10)

Women's Band 3

Sally Hughes (Sx) bt Amy Blagbrough (Ha) 3-0 (11-8, 11-7, 11-7)

Men's Band 4

George Hazell (Sx) bt Tim Denby (Dy) 3-1 (11-7, 13-11, 7-11, 11-6)

Women's Band 4

Edyta Schmid (Ha) bt Anna Hursey (WAL) 3-0 (13-11, 12-10, 11-9)

Men's Band 5

Finn Morgan-Bayliss (Do) bt Shaun Murray (Ca) 3-2 (13-11, 5-11, 13-15, 11-1, 11-8)

Men's Band 6

Ben Warner (E) bt Shaun Murray (Ca) 3-1 (13-11, 11-4, 9-11, 13-11)

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