First Grand Prix title for Weerasinghe

Author: Paul Stimpson

Posted On: January 08, 2016

The Sussex Satellite Grand Prix saw 110 entrants this year, a big increase from 93 last season. There were five more women than last year too, meaning it was possible to run the women's events without merging them with the men's events, except in the case of Women's Band 1.

The Saturday Banded events were particularly popular, with 174 entries that day (most players entering two bands each).

Men's Singles

Men's singles winner and runner-up Helshan Weerasinghe and Darius Knight

There were 41 entries in this the biggest event of the weekend, divided into 10 groups. The top eight seeds all won their groups, but ninth seed James Smith (K) lost 0-3 to Webb and 10th seed Waterman lost 2-3 to 11-year-old Louis Price, who had a great event, also defeating the much higher ranked Burman 3-2, as well as the higher ranked Mills 3-0.

Louis is my pick for player of the tournament, because as well as these three very good wins, he beat a player higher than him in Band 4 and another in the U21s and didn't lose to anyone below him, other than the unranked Burbulevicius.

Waterman stumbled over the line 12-10 in the fifth vs Burman to go through the group. Scratch entry Paul Carter (Sx-Crawley Community TTC), unranked at senior level, caused quite a stir, first defeating Waterman three-straight, before taking the massive scalp of England No 37 Jack Bennett (Sx), the fifth seed, in a well contested five-setter to reach the quarter finals.

The rest of the top eight seeds made it safely to the quarter-finals and the line-up looked as follows: Darius Knight (Sy) vs Walsh, Zoltan Hosszu (Mi) vs Josh Bennett (Sx), Kinlocke vs Carter and Adeoye Adewale (E) vs Helshan Weerasinghe (Sx). Knight won in four, Hosszu upset the rankings to win 11-9 in the fifth, Kinlocke won in four and Weerasinghe won in three.

Both semi-finals were comfortable wins for the top two seeds, with Knight accounting for Hosszu and Weerasinghe knocking out Kinlocke. After the first two games, the final looked to be a straightforward win for Knight, ranked over 500 points above Weerasinghe, but Weerasinghe had other ideas and upped his game, winning the next three games 11-5, 11-8, 11-7 to claim the top prize and his first ever Grand Prix Men's Singles title.

Women's Singles

Women's Singles winner Emma Torkington and runner-up Nayana Temml

The Women's Singles had eight entries in two groups of four. Top seed Clements was defeated in three close games by Women's Band 2 winner, Temml, but advanced to the semis in second place.

In Group 2 Emma Torkington (K), the second seed, won all her matches, just conceding one end to Kate Cheer (Sx). Holt achieved a very impressive straight sets win over the much higher ranked Cheer to finish in second place in the group.

Thus the top two seeds met in the semi-final and it was the slightly lower ranked Torkington, who prevailed in a well contested five-set match. In the other semi-final, Temml continued her good form winning in straight sets vs Holt, but alas for Temml, was no match for Torkington in the final, losing 0-3.

Men's Band 1

Men’s Band 1: Mitchell Jones and Garth Kinlocke

There were eight players in this event. Top seed Garth Kinlocke (Av), won Group 1 with relative ease and Bryan Kwan (Mi) overcame James Smith (K) 12-10 in the fifth set for second place in the group.

Group 2 was won by Mitchell Jones (Mi), who won all four of his matches, just dropping one end. Second seed Ethan Walsh (He) failed to get out of the group on countback, with two wins out of four. Raj Waterman (Av) also with two wins, went through in second place. Kinlocke defeated Waterman in four in the first semi and Jones knocked out Kwan in five ends in the other. In the final, Jones pushed Kinlocke all the way, just losing out 11-7 in the decider.

Men’s Band 2

Men’s Band 2: Mitchell Jones and James Smith

There were four groups of four in the Men’s Band 2. The four seeds all won their groups, although top seed Walsh only won on countback, having lost to Joel Webb (La) in the deciding game. Interestingly, none of the second ranked players in the groups progressed through the groups.

In the quarters, Walsh beat Josh Nashed (Mi) 11-9 in the fifth, Smith overcame George Hazell (Sx-Blades TTC) in four, Lucas Papantoniou (Mi) upset Waterman in the fifth set and finally Jones saw off Webb relatively comfortably in three games.

Smith surprised Walsh in the first semi in four ends and Jones had a win over Papantoniou in four in the bottom half of the draw. Jones continued his good form, seeing off Smith in the final 3-1.

Men’s Band 3

Men's Band 3: Joel Webb and Mark Collins

There were 33 players in this category in 10 groups. Eight of the 10 seeds got through their groups, although Papantoniou and Dave Wetherill (Co) both came through as runners-up.

Papantoniou recovered from his group loss to reach the semi-final, with wins over Jack Josephs (Mi), Hazell, and Vincent Wu (Mi). There he lost to Webb 12-10 in the fifth. Webb had reached that stage with wins over Matt Daish (Ha) and Mateusz Mikosz (Mi).

In the top half of the draw, eight seed Mark Collins (Foresters TTC) made his way to the final, accounting for Wetherill, top seed Marc Burman (Sx-Warden Park TTC), and Wojciech Placek (Ha).

In the final, which had to be played on the Sunday, due to running out of time on the Saturday, Collins started strongly, winning the first two games, but was pegged back by Webb, who eventually won 11-8 in the decider.

Men's Band 4

Men's Band 4: Richard Pelc and Matt Evans

There were also 33 players in 10 groups in this event. All 10 seeds got through their groups, but seeds Josephs, Tim Surrey (Cv), Steven Gray (Ca) and Tommy Gritton (Mi) all went through as runners-up.

Richard Pelc (Sy) outdid himself in this event, winning the Band 4 title, despite being only the 21st highest ranked player in the event and the top players having double his ranking points. The same could be said of runner-up Matt Evans (Bd), the 24th highest ranked player in the event.

Both players had a number of maximum wins on their way to the final. Pelc saw off second seed Josephs in the group, Carsten Hovestadt (Mi), Gray and Sam Chesterman (Ca) to get to the final and Evans impressed with victories over Gritton, third seed, Josh Stacey (GGY), Marc Castro (WAL) and Dmitry Khakhamov (Mi) to get to

the same stage. The final fittingly was a close affair, with Pelc triumphing by 13-11 in the fifth, but having two Band 5 players in a Band 4 final at a GP is an unusual occurrence.

Men's Band 5

Men's Band 5: Matt Evans and Viktoras Burbulevicius

This was the band with the highest number of entries, with 38 players in 10 groups. Seeding often goes out of the window in Bands 5 and 6 at Grands Prix and there was no exception here, although a good number of the seeds got through their groups.

Three of the top four seeds did actually make it to the semi-finals. Top seed Pelc beat Cameron Brealey (Ha) and Jiten Pitamber (Bd) to get there, fourth seed Evans knocked out third seed Antony Morris (Sx-Horsham Spinners TTC) and Michael Bridger (Sx-Warden Park TTC) on his way and second seed Jack Mills (JEY) put paid to Mikael Papantoniou (Mi) and Dennis Hayden (Sx-Warden Park TTC) en route.

The fourth semi-finalist was Viktoras Burbulevicius (E), who defeated Band 6 winner Matt Gold (Sy) and Louis Price (Av) to reach the semis. At the penultimate stage chopper Burbulevicius overcame Pelc in three sets, which ended Pelc's very impressive 11-match winning streak. However Evans was not to be denied this time, as he dug deep to defeat another chopper Mills from 0-2 down in games in the semi-final and then overcame Burbulevicius 11-1 in the fifth set in the final, which ended just after 10.30pm! In all, Evans played 14 matches on the day and won 12 of them.

Men's Band 6

Men's Band 6: Matt Gold and Luis Dominguez

There were 27 players spread across eight groups in this band. The quarter final line-up was Burbulevicius vs M

Papantoniou, Luis Dominguez (Mi) vs Andy Price (Ha), Gold vs Damien Gray (Sy) and Alan Stone (Sx-Horsham Spinners TTC) vs Robert Pelc (Sy).

Papantoniou overcame Burbulevicius in four games, Dominguez scraped a win vs Prince 11-9 in the fifth, Gold accounted for Gray in straight sets and Pelc had a good five-set win over Stone.

In the semis Dominguez beat his cousin Papantoniou in three close games and Gold completed a 3-0 victory over Pelc. In the final, the players took turns winning the games, but it was Gold who triumphed 11-7 in the fifth.

Women's Band 1

There were just two players in this event, so the players were placed in the Men's Band 3 instead to provide more matches. The two players (Sanya Clements (Do) and Nayana Temml (SWE)) also played each other to decide the medals for Women's Band 1. The score was 11-7, 11-9, 11-9 to Clements.

Women's Band 2

Women's Band 2: Nayana Temml and Sally Hughes

This was a round-robin group of four players. Temml won all three of her matches, 3-0 vs Katie Holt (Ha) and 3-1 vs both Isabelle Joubeily (Sy) and runner-up, Sally Hughes (Sx-Hollingbury TTC). Hughes won her remaining matches both 3-0 for the silver medal and Joubeily beat Holt in five sets.

Women's Band 3

Women's Band 3: Kitty Chow and Sally Hughes

There were two groups of four in this band. Kitty Chow (Cv) won all three of her matches in Group 1, but only won in five sets vs top seed, Hughes, who was the group runner-up on countback, having lost to Charlotte Boston

(Ca) in four ends. Joubeily was undefeated in Group 2, but was again extended to five sets by Holt. Holt was the group runner-up with a last-gasp 14-12 in the fifth set victory over Federico Bonato (Mi).

In the first semi-final Chow won in straight sets vs Holt and in the second semi-final Hughes again denied Joubeily any ends, winning 3-0. Chow fared slightly better in the final vs Hughes than she had at the group stage, winning in four this time.

Women's Band 4

Women's Band 4: Kitty Chow and Alice Hazell

This band consisted of a group of three and a group of four. Group 1 was won by no 18 cadet in England, Alice Hazell (Sx-Blades TTC), who had good wins over the higher ranked Holly Holder (Sx-Horsham TTC) and Boston, who got through the group in second place.

Chow again emerged unscathed in her Band 4 group, but was pushed close by Lynne Trussell (Foresters TTC) who lost in four close games, all decided by two points only. There was a three-way count-back between the other three players, from which Bonato emerged the group runner-up.

In the top half semi-final Hazell defeated Bonato in straight sets and in the bottom half Chow won in four sets vs Boston. In the final Chow continued her unbeaten run, winning 3-0.

Doubles

Doubles: James Smith/Ethan Walsh and Linus Hafn/Nayana Temml

There were 10 pairs in the doubles event, which was played in knockout format. In the quarters, top seeds

Walsh/Smith defeated Hayden/Bridger 3-0, Josh/Lawrence Stacey (GGY) knocked out Richard Pelc/Joubeily 3-0, Tony Clayton (Do)/Clements narrowly beat Burman/Luke Gallagher (Sx-Warden Park TTC) 11-9 in the fifth and second seeds, Linus Hafn (SWE)/Temml were too strong for Chris/Craig Aukett (E), winning 3-0.

In the semis, Walsh/Smith were victorious vs the Staceys and the Swedes held their nerves to defeat Clayton/Clements 11-9 in the fifth set. The top seeds won 12-10, 6-11, 11-6, 12-10 in the final.

Restricted Singles

Restricted Singles: Wojciech Placek and Mike White

Due to a number of late withdrawals, the restricted singles went from being nine players down to being one group of four players. The event was won by the highest ranked player, Placek, who only conceded one game to runner-up Mike White (Sx-Arundel TTC). White won in five sets vs Steven Gray to get the silver medal.

Veteran Singles

Veteran Singles: Marc Burman and Paul Carter

This had 15 players and four groups. The top seed pulled out injured, leaving Dean Rose (K) to capitalise by winning Group 1. Clayton, Carter and Burman won Groups 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

In the quarters, Ray Goulding (WAL) beat Rose, Burman beat Dave Randall (Ha), Carter beat Paul Martindill (E) and Clayton beat Mark Farrow (WAL).

The semis were straightforward wins for Burman over Goulding and Carter over Clayton. Going into the final the smart money would have been on Carter, after his impressive run in the men's, especially as it's safe to say Burman had been under par all weekend up until that point. However, Burman made up his mind to throw everything at Carter and after a slow start in the first game, went on to win 13-11, 11-9, 11-6 to claim his first ever

Veterans title (on his first attempt).

Men's U21s Singles

Under-21 Men: Jack Bennett and Josh Bennett

There were six groups of four in this event. All seeds bar one won their group (Daish beat fifth seed Hafn). In Round 1 Luke Jones (E) had a maximum win over Band 3 winner Webb in the fifth set.

In the quarters, top seed, Josh Bennett beat Josh Stacey 3-0, Walsh beat Daish 3-1, Smith beat Jones 3-0 and Jack Bennett beat Hafn 3-0.

The top half semi-final was a bit of a marathon between Josh Bennett and Walsh, which ended 17-15 to Bennett in the fifth, finishing with an unreturnable net. All the games were close and both players had numerous match points. In the lower half, Jack Bennett comfortably saw off the challenge of Smith 3-0.

The final was quite one-sided, as Jack beat a tired looking Josh, probably a spent force due to his extended semi-final.

Women's U21s Singles

Under-21 Women: Kate Cheer and Katie Holt

The Women's U21s was a round-robin group of six players. Cheer won all of her matches, only losing the one end, which was to her earlier conqueror, Holt. Temml and Holt both won three matches, but Holt was the runner-up, as she won the head to head between the two players in four sets. Temml was left exhausted after a long weekend, having played in all five possible events and 19 matches in total.

Summary of Results

Men's Singles
Helshan Weerasinghe (Sx) beat Darius Knight (Sy) 3-2 (7-11, 11-13, 11-5, 11-8, 11-7)

Women's Singles
Emma Torkington (K) beat Nayana Temml (SWE) 3-0 (11-9, 11-5, 11-5)

Men's Band 1
Garth Kinlocke (Av) beat Mitchell Jones (Mi) 3-2 (11-8, 9-11, 11-6, 8-11, 11-7)

Men's Band 2
Mitchell Jones (Mi) beat James Smith (K) 3-1 (7-11, 11-8, 11-8, 12-10)

Men's Band 3
Joel Webb (La) beat Mark Collins (Sx) 3-2 (7-11, 12-14, 11-8, 12-10, 11-8)

Men's Band 4
Richard Pelc (Sy) beat Matt Evans (Bd) 3-2 (10-12, 11-6, 4-11, 11-9, 13-11)

Men's Band 5
Matt Evans (Bd) beat Viktoras Burbulevicius (E) 3-2 (9-11, 11-9, 3-11, 11-7, 11-1)

Men's Band 6
Matt Gold (Sy) beat Luis Dominguez (Mi) 3-2 (11-4, 9-11, 11-8, 10-12, 11-7)

Women's Band 1
Sanya Clements (Do) beat Nayana Temml (SWE) 3-0 (11-7, 11-9, 11-9)

Women's Band 2
1st: Nayana Temml (SWE); 2nd: Sally Hughes (Sx)

Women's Band 3
Kitty Chow (Cv) beat Sally Hughes (Sx) 3-1 (11-3, 11-9, 5-11, 11-8)

Women's Band 4
Kitty Chow (Cv) beat Alice Hazell (Sx) 3-0 (11-7, 11-8, 11-6)

Doubles
Ethan Walsh (He)/James Smith (K) beat Linus Hafn (SWE)/Nayana Temml (SWE) 3-1 (12-10, 6-11, 11-6, 12-10)

Restricted Singles
1st: Wojciech Placek (Ha); 2nd: Mike White (Sx)

Veteran Singles
Marc Burman (Sx) beat Paul Carter (Sx) 3-0 (13-11, 11-9, 11-6)

Men's U21s Singles
Jack Bennett (Sx) beat Josh Bennett (Sx) 3-0 (11-6, 11-4, 11-9)

Women's U21s Singles
1st: Kate Cheer; 2nd: Katie Holt (Ha)

Downloaded From:
https://newsarchive.tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/first-grand-prix-title-for-weerasinghe/