



Cippenham Team 2* Open: Kingfisher justify top seeding

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A huge entry was received for the 10th running of the Cippenham Team 2-Star Open on Saturday. A maximum of 24 teams can be accommodated for this competition which, in addition to being a team rather than individual tournament, also features the progressive knock-out format. This is unique in open tournaments in this country and proved so popular that the event could have been filled with eager participants nearly twice over.

The only disappointment was the lack of involvement by local teams even though it was Reading's Kingfisher club that eventually prevailed against opponents who had travelled from as far afield as south Wales, Devon and Herefordshire.

The Kingfisher team of Andy Trott and Hari Gehlot had little difficulty in winning their preliminary round group and thus took up their position at the top of the draw, a position they never relinquished.

They were however, briefly tested in the first of the progressive knock-out rounds when Blaenafon Spinners led 1-0. Piotr Sniezek put the Welsh team ahead against Trott but both Gehlot and Trott rescued the day by winning convincingly against Ben Allen. Blaenafon, after winning their group, eventually finished 11th, winning two and losing two of their remaining four matches.

Kingfisher then eased past Next Time 2-0 and then beat the 2015 champions Class Act in the semi-final. Trott eased past Neil Wright and then Gehlot came from a game down to defeat Steve Buck. Class Act eventually finished third after defeating Pimple Power in the final round.

Waiting for Kingfisher in the final were Team J&R, a combination from Kent of James Smith and Reiss Vydelingum. They had started in Group 6 with a couple of comfortable wins and then relegated Class Act to a repechage. Smith followed the rankings by beating Wright but Vydelingum's win against Buck was one that will have earned the youngster many ranking points.

Team J&R then beat the imaginatively named "I Dunno" 2-0 and then Pimple Power by a similar scoreline. In this match Smith just got the better of a tight five-game match with Rory Scott before Vydelingum settled the score 3-1 against Dave Wetherill.



Runners-up Reiss Vydelingum and James Smith

Team J&R had thus reached the final without dropping a set, having won all their matches 2-0. That momentum continued for, in the first game of the final, Smith won 11-8 in the fifth against Trott, having been 2-0 up before Trott pegged those two games back. Gehlot then equalised for Kingfisher against Vydelingum and then the deciding match, played between the two losers, saw Trott secure the match for his team, 3-0 against Vydelingum.

The title was therefore Kingfisher's and both Gehlot and the losing finalist's Smith had survived the day unbeaten.

The tournament was organised and refereed by Graham Trimming.

Finishing positions

- 1) Kingfisher: Andy Trott & Hari Gehlot
- 2) Team J&R: James Smith & Reiss Vydelingum
- 3) Class Act: Neil Wright & Steve Buck
- 4) Pimple Power: Rory Scott & Dave Wetherill
- 5) Gunns & Roses: Martin Gunn & Emma Rose
- 6) I Dunno: Paul Martindill & Keith Fung
- 7) Next Time: Alex Aston & Peter Bannister
- 8) Essex Midgets: Sam Hume & Jack Stockdale

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