



Cippenham Super 6 Vets: Gunn fires on all cylinders again

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Posted On: April 25, 2016

Martin Gunn is taking a liking to open tournaments at Cippenham as, for the third time in less than three months, the Old Windsor resident has walked away with a title.

Having won two senior titles in February, last weekend he emerged supreme at the Cippenham Super 6 Veterans' 2-Star Open. In total, Gunn has now won four of the last seven veterans' opens at Cippenham, as well as those two senior titles.

Gunn seems to have found a new lease of life since swapping out his modern sponge bat in favour of a classic hard bat about 18 months ago. In that regard, Gunn is almost unique and opponents are unused to playing against such a style, which requires much greater technical ability compared to playing with the modern bat which rubber technology has made much more forgiving.

Gunn dropped only one game in nine matches as he serenely made his way to the title. That game was against John Hook in the preliminary round group. After winning his five matches at that stage he then quickly disposed of Ray Goulding in the first knockout round, Robert Gladstone in the quarter-final and Neil Wright in the semi-final.

That took Gunn into the final where his Reading League team-mate Hari Gehlot was his opponent. However, Gunn was too strong for the quadruple 2016 Maidenhead League champion and won the final 3-0 (12-10, 11-8, 11-8).

Top seeded Gehlot had not had quite such an easy route to the final. Both Bharat Malde and Roger Harris took a game each off him at the preliminary stage. In the quarter-final, Mark Farrow succumbed 3-1 and Richard Hutchinson fared no better in the semi-final.

Third seed Neil Wright duly made his allotted place in the semi-final and did not drop a game en route until

faced by Gunn. In the quarter-final Wright beat Simon Vine in a match that ended the Cippenham player's impressive run. Vine finished runner-up in the group, one place above his ranking position, losing only to fourth seed Mike Rhodes. Once at the knockout stage, he proceeded to eliminate Steve Davis, winner of the previous veterans' open at Cippenham, three-straight. However, the canny play of Neil Wright was too much for Vine in the quarters.

Mike Rhodes, a long-time member of the host club, duly won his group but missed out at the knock-out stage against his nemesis Kevin Nicholls who, in turn, was eliminated by Richard Hutchinson in the quarters.

The tournament was organised by Graham Trimming and refereed by Peter Hillier.

Results

Veterans' Singles: Winner – Martin Gunn (Avon); runner-up – Hari Gehlot (Berks)

Veterans' Consolation: Winner – Geoff Grange (Middx); runner-up – Ramesh Bhalla (Hants)



Geoff Grange and Ramesh Bhalla

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