



ELCC finals: Hall seals a thrilling triumph

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The finals weekend on 11/12 June 2016 at Westfield Table Tennis Club saw the culmination of the competition following the zonal rounds which were held in April.

The play on both days for the senior competitions, Wilmott Cup and J M Rose Bowl, and the Junior events, Carter Cup and Bromfield Trophy, saw some excellent play, exciting rallies, numerous very close matches and some entertaining characters which made the whole weekend a very successful one.

The format of two singles followed by a doubles and then the reverse two singles made the results interesting, with the doubles match often proving the decider in a match.

Thanks as always to the officials for all their hard work and to Westfield TTC for hosting the event and for their hospitality.



The ELCC umpires

Wilmott Cup (Men)

Group A

This group was headed by Sheffield, who won all their matches although they had a close encounter against Central London with a 3-2 scoreline. Cambridge won two of their matches and so were second, leaving Birmingham third and an unlucky Central London, who lost all their matches 2-3, fourth. The Birmingham squad of Mike Brown, Pat Glynn, Kenny Lindsay and Ben Willson all playing their part, similarly Sam Do, Patrick Green and Kevin Kan all had wins along the way for Central London.

Group B

Chester/Ellesmere Port finished in pole position with two 4-1 wins although this does not fully reflect the competitiveness of their matches against Reading and Leamington Spa, with six of their 10 matches going to five and three matches going to four. Reading's three-man team of Hari Gehlot, Daniel Moses and Frederico Viterbo ended with one win and one loss which put them in second position, with Leamington Spa third.

Finals matches

The drama really began in the fight for the title and the trophy between Sheffield, the holders, and Chester/Ellesmere Port who last won the Wilmott Cup in 2012. The teams are old rivals in the competition, frequently playing against each other in the finals or zonal rounds.

Shaun Hall started well for Chester/Ellesmere Port with a five-set win against Warren Li Kam Wa, Tomasz Rzeszetko then defeated Michael Fraser, increasing Chester/Ellesmere Port's lead.

Sheffield then began their fightback by taking the doubles and then Warren winning his second singles.

It was Michael Fraser versus Shaun Hall in the fifth and final match and what a match it was, the quality of play was outstanding. Mike went into a 2-0 lead and then was comfortably ahead in the third but Shaun was not to be defeated, he clung on tenaciously to take the third end and then after some fierce tussles to the delight of his team-mate triumphed for the win 11, 13, -10, -7, -9.



The winning line-up from Chester/Ellesmere Port

The bronze medal match between Reading and Cambridge was also very tightly contested. Hari Gehlot and Daniel Moses won a singles apiece for Reading. The doubles went to Cambridge, 8, -7, 9, -9, -9 and Adam Jepson, who had won his first singles then went on to win the fifth and final match to take third place for Cambridge, ably assisted by Dan Fielding.

It was a Midlands derby between Birmingham and Leamington Spa for the fifth and sixth placings. Kenny Lindsay led the way for Birmingham, Mark Jackson then equaled the score for Leamington Spa. The doubles went to Birmingham game 10 in the fifth followed by a win for Matt Outhwaite of Leamington Spa to level the score once again. In the final match Kenny Lindsay once again proved too strong and so enabled Birmingham to finish fifth.

Final Placings

Chester/Ellesmere Port

Sheffield

Cambridge

Reading

Birmingham
Leamington Spa
Central London

J M Rose Bowl (Women)

The day started with two group matches, Group A with four teams and Group B with three.

Group A

Leicester were firm favourites with their team of Lois Peake, current international, and Karen Smith, former international. This proved the case with Leicester winning two matches 5-0 and the other 4-1, the latter against Central London saw Karen Smith beaten by Kristina Vaskeviciute.

Leicester did have a couple of close calls when Lois beat Kristina in five, the doubles against Central London also went to five with Kristina and Sandra Go getting so close to a victory.

Julie Snowdon for Luton nearly had a career-best win when she was in touching distance of Karen Smith, going down game 9 in the fifth end.

Central London came a fairly comfortable second in the group, beating Luton 4-1 and Tamworth 5-0.

A fight was on for the third and fourth placings between Luton and Tamworth. Luton got off to a good start with Sarah Hudson and Julie Snowdon giving them a 2-0 lead. The Tamworth doubles pairing of Dawn Sagoo and Lauren Evans won that match followed by a win for Lauren in the fourth to level the score. The last match saw Julie Snowdon of Luton just edge out Dawn Sagoo game 9 in the fifth.

Group B

A three-way clash between Warrington, the No 2 seeds, Guildford and Hastings. The first match saw a good 4-1 win for Warrington's team of Rachel Baker and Zoe Cheesman against the Hastings pair of Rose Rainton and Lisa Standen. Guildford came into the arena against Hastings with Danielle Kelly and Sally Cimiotti playing singles for Guildford and Sally and Sarah Horsnell the doubles. Hastings finished ahead 3-2 but Rose Rainton had to retire from the competition due to an injury. The third match between Warrington and Guildford was another evenly balanced match. Zoe Cheesman and Annie Hudson both defeated Danielle Kelly whilst Sarah Horsnell won her two singles for Guildford, the last match game 10 in the fifth.

Finals Matches

Warrington faced Leicester in the gold medal match. Despite some spirited play by Zoe Cheesman and Rachel Baker for Warrington with all matches going to four, it was Leicester who came out triumphant to take the title. This meant a fifth title for Karen Smith, who first won the trophy with Leicester in 1980.



Title-winners Lois Peake and Karen Smith

The bronze medal match was unable to be played due the Hastings player's injury and so Central London took home the bronze medal which following their group results was well deserved.

Guildford's two strongest singles players, Sarah Horsnell and Sally Cimiotti gave the victory to Guildford over Luton's pair of Julie Snowden and Sarah Hudson with Sarah Horsnell having another five-set battle, this time against Sarah Hudson.

Final Placings

Leicester
Warrington
Central London
Hastings
Guildford
Luton
Tamworth

Carter Cup (Junior Boys)

Sunday morning saw players for the two junior competitions prepare themselves for the matches bright and early. It was a real pleasure to see all the teams in matching shirts, a credit to their leagues for the way the players all turned out.

There were two groups of four with Crawley/Horsham the No 1 seeds in Group A and Cambridge the second

seeds in Group B.

Group A

Josh Bennett and George Hazell justified Crawley/Horsham's seeding with wins of 5-0 against Northumbria, Wembley & Harrow and Nottingham, although some of the scorelines were closer than the clean sweep suggests.

Nottingham's team of Naphat Boonyaprapa and Max Stevens came well earned second with a fine 3-2 win over Wembley & Harrow's Eren Gozcu and Branislav Zivkovic. Northumbria's pair of Adam Webster and Andrew Matfin performed well taking into account the difference in rankings with many other players and Adam Webster gained his team's first victory with a singles win against Branislav Zivkovic of Wembley & Harrow.

Group B

Cambridge topped their group with wins over Stockton (4-1), Brighton (5-0) and Oxford (3-2). The Cambridge versus Stockton match was a tussle, with three matches going to five and one to four. James Kelly and Chingiz Kuanyshen of Cambridge ultimately proved too strong against brothers Jack and Joe Cope. Reece Chamdal of Oxford deserves a special mention as he won both his singles matches in the university towns' fixture against higher-ranked opposition, Reece was partnered by Kavan Warrender.

Another close match ensued between Stockton and Oxford and although Stockton won 5-0, three of the matches went to five and another to four. Stockton's third match against Brighton was also a 5-0 victory but again there were a couple of close matches.

The final match in the group between Brighton and Oxford to decide third and fourth place went to Brighton's team of Ollie Guile and Billy Keegan 3-2. Brighton were 2-1 down after the doubles. Ollie Guile went on the table against Reece Chamdal and defeated him in four, an excellent win against a player over 250 ranking points above him. With the score at 2-2 Billy Keegan kept his head. He was two games down but took the last three 9, 8, 10 to put Brighton in third place in the group with an unlucky Oxford fourth.

Finals Matches

The top two seeded teams faced each other for the title. It started well for Crawley/Horsham's Josh Bennett, beating James Kelly of Cambridge. Chingiz Kuanyshev levelled the score against George Hazell. Cambridge then took the lead in the doubles only for Josh to win his second singles, the score 2-2. The final set and George Hazell had a fairly comfortable victory against James Kelly – Crawley/Horsham were champions.



The winning pair, Josh Bennett and George Hazell

Nottingham versus Stockton for bronze saw Joe Cope of Stockton take the first match but this was their only win

with Nottingham's Max Stevens and Naphat Boonyaprapa taking the next three to take home the medals.

Wembley & Harrow came fifth, beating Brighton in three. The Brighton players should be proud of their achievement to finish sixth.

In the match for seventh and eighth, it was Oxford who came out on top against Northumbria, who had fought hard all day.

Final Placings

Crawley/Horsham

Cambridge

Nottingham

Stockton

Wembley & Harrow

Brighton

Oxford

Northumbria

Bromfield Trophy (Junior Girls)



The Bromfield Trophy players

Four teams played in a round-robin group for the Bromfield Trophy. England Junior International Kate Cheer, for Crawley/Horsham, was undefeated throughout the day although Jasmin Wong gave her a close call in their match, with Kate only winning game 11 in the fifth.

Alice Hazell was Kate's team-mate in their 4-1 victory against Hull and their two 5-0 wins over Cambridge and Tamworth.

It was a double celebration for the Hazell household with Alice's brother in the team which took the Carter Cup, the second time siblings have achieved this.



Kate Cheer and Alice Hazell

Hull's team of Zoe Hewitt and Jasmin Wong had two victories, including a close 3-2 against Cambridge's pair of Charlotte Boston and Georgina Lister with Charlotte and Georgina both winning one of their singles matches. The Hull girls also won both the singles but took the doubles, which proved the deciding match. Against Tamworth's young players Hull achieved a 4-1 win with Aimee Evans taking the one for Tamworth and Morgan Sykes going to four in both her singles.

Cambridge played Tamworth to decide who went home with the bronze medals. Cambridge started well with Charlotte Boston putting Cambridge in the lead. Aimee Evans for Tamworth levelled the score and with Morgan Sykes in the doubles went 2-1 up. However, Cambridge then won the last two singles for a 3-2 victory.

Final Placings

Crawley/Horsham

Hull

Cambridge

Tamworth

A great weekend and my thanks go to all the Local Leagues who supported the competition this season.

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