



Knight and Hicks Tower Over Opponents at Blackpool

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Darius Knight and Hannah Hicks took away the top prize at the Blackpool Grand Prix, winning the Men's Open and Women's Open respectively.

Knight takes his second Men's Open Grand Prix win of the season, whilst Hicks picks up her first in a season where 4 Grands Prix have seen four different winners in the Women's Open.

Women's Singles

The Women's Singles final saw the two top seeds face off for the championship. In the first of the semi-finals Hannah Hicks beat Scotland's Lynda Flaws with a confident 3-0, whilst Karina Le Fevre dispatched Cumbria's Emily Bolton also by a margin of 3-0 to set up a high calibre finale.

Hicks started out fast, taking the first two ends comfortably. It looked as if Le Fevre might be putting together a fightback in the third as they continually exchanged points. However, Hicks held her nerve to settle a 13-11 end and wrap up this weekend's Blackpool GP Women's Singles Championship.

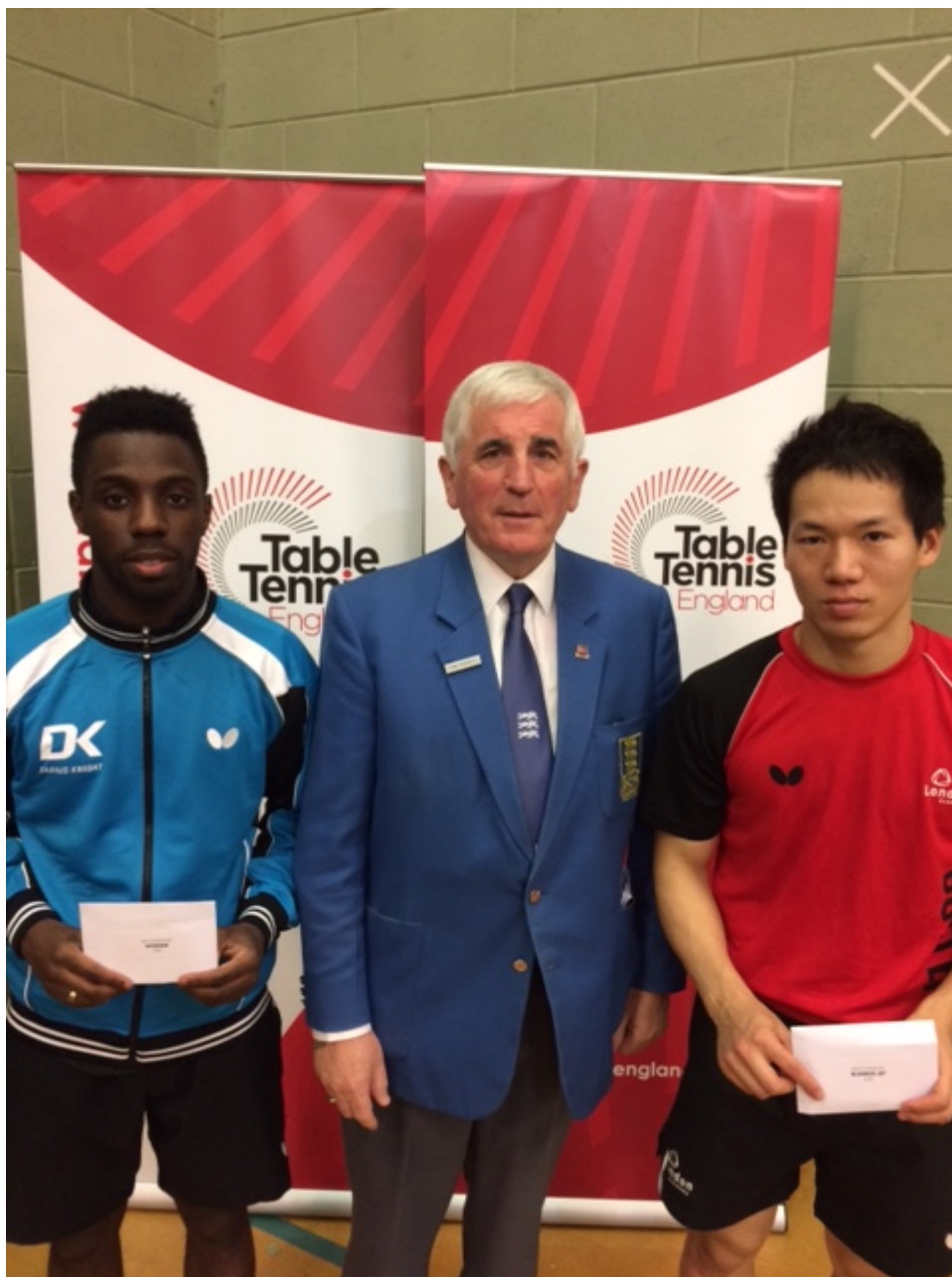


Winner Hannah Hicks (left) and runner-up Karina Le Fevre (right)

Men's Singles

Darius Knight and Ryota Kawai met in the final of the Men's Singles event. Knight (the top seed) took the first end off of Kawai (the no 2 seed) with relative ease.

It looked as if Kawai might turn the tables as he fought back from 9-5 down, only to just fall short losing the second end 13-11, before Knight coolly closed out the match 11-6 in the third.



Winner Darius Knight (left) runner-up Ryota Kawai (right and Board member Tom Purcell (middle)

Women's U21 Singles

Charlotte Bardsley and Rebecca Plaistow faced off to try to win the U21 Women's event. Plaistow reached the final and following a strong weekend will have been hopeful to seal a hat-trick of trophies. Bardsley had shown strong form throughout the groups and knockout stages and it was she who came out on top, winning in straight sets.



Winner Charlotte Bardsley (middle), runner-up Rebecca Plaistow (right) and Board member Tom Purcell (left)

U21 Men's Singles

James Hobson and Albin Karlsson met in the final of the U21 Men's Singles event. Hobson, having beaten Joseph Goss in three, looked in fine form, whilst Karlsson came through a gruelling five-game encounter with Tapabrata Dey.

Karlsson looked to be on his way to the win, taking a 2-0 lead and starting strong in the third, however a mixture of strong defence and well timed attacking shots from Hobson kept him in the game, winning him an exciting third and fourth to tie the game at 2-2. Hobson finished the comeback with an 11-3 win in the fifth.



Winner James Hobson (right), runner-up Albin Karlsson (middle) and Board member Tom Purcell (left)

Veterans' Singles

Stephen Slowcroft took a win against Tomasz Rzeszotko in a match where many would have favoured the latter. After a tight first set, both players seemingly took turns dominating alternate ends. Rzeszotko winning the second 11-2, followed by Slowcroft taking the third 11-3.

After Rzeszotko won the fourth to take the game the distance it looked as if he may have the momentum to push through the win. However in the end it was Slowcroft who took the spoils.



Winner Stephen Slowcroft (right) and runner-up Tomasz Rzeszotko (left)

Blackpool Grand Prix Final Results

Men's Singles

Darius Knight (Sy) bt Ryota Kawai (Mi) 3-0 (11-7, 13-11, 11-6)

Women's Singles

Hannah Hicks (Ha) bt Karina Le Fevre (Cv) 3-0 (11-6, 11-4, 13-11)

Men's Under-21s

James Hobson (Y) bt Albin Karlsson (SWE) 3-2 (9-11, 9-11, 11-8, 11-6, 11-3)

Women's Under-21s

Charlotte Bardsley (St) bt Rebecca Plaistow (SCO) 3-0 (11-4, 11-9, 11-8)

Veterans' Singles

Stephen Slowcroft (La) bt Tomasz Rzeszotko (Cu) 3-2 (11-9, 2-11, 11-3, 7-11, 11-6)

Player of the Weekend

Joe Killoran (Ch)



Joe Killoran (right) with Board member Tom Purcell (left)

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