



Bush and Esposito win titles at Cippenham

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Cippenham Table Tennis Club ran a highly successful open tournament on Sunday. The Cippenham Five by Two Senior and Veterans' 1-Star Open was supported by players from across the south and midlands and from Wales, resulting in a maximum 45 entries for each of the two events.

Two new winners emerged as previous champions were eliminated one by one.

The day commenced with the veterans' events. Multi-times champion Martin Gunn was the first of the favourites to lose. He lost his very first match in the preliminary round group. However, it turned out that his conqueror was a former Philippines international in the shape of Julious Esposito. The first two games were shared, both by deuce scores, but then Esposito showed his prowess by pulling away to win 3-1.

Third seed Jojo Senorin was next to fall. He lost to Henry Arthur and, after a three-way tie was calculated, found himself in third position and out of the championship event and into the consolation.

Another of the top players, Pat Glynn was beaten by Hiroshi Furuta but this was not terminal for Glynn as he finished runner-up in the group and still qualified for the championship event. Maidenhead player Mark Banks was also expected to win his group but he also had to be content with runner-up as he lost to Chris Maiden.

And so into the competition proper. Esposito, now occupying the place at the top of the draw made serene progress, showing his undoubted class throughout. He accounted for Raj Singh, Alex Aston and Pat Glynn without dropping a game.

Defending champion Steve Davis was a victim of the penholder style of Glynn in the quarter-finals. Martin Gunn's run was ended by Rory Scott, while Mike Browne, who had lost to Samson Bekele at the group stage, progressed to the semi-final by beating Phil Snelson.

Hari Gehlot's progress in to the final was spectacular. His first match in the knock-out stage was against his Cookham Social team-mate Mark Banks. Gehlot won this in a canter but then had to come back from 2-1 to defeat Rory Scott in the quarters.

He then eased past Mike Browne in the semi-final to set up a final against Esposito. Gehlot battled bravely and took the third game but in the end was no match for the former Philippines player.

The Veterans' Consolation was won, not surprisingly, by Jojo Seniorin although he did have to fight back from 2-1 down against Gary Keers in the semi-final. Cippenham's Paul Baker awaited Seniorin in the final but went down 3-1.

Half of the veteran players stayed on for the Open Singles in the afternoon and pitted their skills against younger contenders. All the top four seeds came through their groups comfortably, but that was not the case for the next highest ranked players. In Group 6, Mohammad Owadally lost in five games to the veterans' champion Esposito, Seniorin lost out to Vadym Krevs while Steve Davis succumbed to Sam Ricks.

Sam Ricks then went on a great run that saw him beat Jacob Goss and Martin Gunn to take his place in the semi-finals alongside the seeds Federico Viterbo, Pat Glynn and Chris Bush. Seniorin, winner of the veterans' consolation in the morning beat the veterans' champion Esposito in the first round, a reversal in form if there ever was one. At the same stage Phil Snelson got the better of Steve Davis and Rory Scott eliminated Mohammad Owadally.

The quarter-final provided four top class matches. Two of these required a deciding game as Sam Ricks defeated Gunn and Glynn put out Snelson. Viterbo eliminated Scott and Bush got through Seniorin, both in four games. Bush's next two games were much quicker as he first beat Glynn in the semi-final and then reversed the seeding against Viterbo in the final itself.



Finalists Chris Bush and Federico Viterbo

The consolation event was won by Joseph Goss who beat Akash Shah in the final.

The tournament was organised by Paul Baker and refereed by Sue Hayes.

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