



Walsh and Bardsley take titles

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Charlotte Bardsley and Ethan Walsh are the Cadet Singles champions for 2016/17.

They won their respective titles at Medway Park in Gillingham, and it was a great day for Bardsley in particular as she added doubles and team titles.

Cadet Boys' Singles

Ethan Walsh fought through some sticky moments early in the competition to win the title.

The Stevenage player, seeded second, beat top seed Amirul Hussain 4-1 (8-11, 11-6, 11-9, 11-4, 14-12).

Walsh said: "It's probably my biggest event of the year. At points I wasn't playing my best but I had to keep fighting and push through.

"In the final my hard work paid off and I started playing better and was more relaxed."

In the semi-finals, Walsh had beaten his doubles partner, Joe Cope, 4-2 (11-7, 11-7, 9-11, 11-13, 11-7, 11-8), while Hussain needed one set fewer to see off Jamie Liu (11-13, 11-5, 11-5, 12-10, 11-6).

Back in the quarter-finals, Walsh had to fight hard to shake off Naphong Boonyaprapa 4-3 (12-10, 12-10, 6-11, 5-11, 11-5, 16-18, 11-8), while Hussain beat David Gofton in six, Liu defeated Louis Price in five and Cope got past Sam Chesterman, also in five.

The last 16 had a series of humdingers, with three ties going the distance and Hussain in particular being mighty relieved to get the better of Maxim Stevens. Hussain trailed 2-0 but eventually won 4-3 (3-11, 6-11, 11-4, 11-4, 11-8, 6-11, 11-7).

Chesterman came through against Josh Weatherby, wasting a match point in the fifth and saving one in the seventh on his way to a 4-3 (11-7, 8-11, 11-9, 11-9, 11-13, 9-11, 12-10) victory, having been 6-0 down in the last.

Price also saved a match point as he triumphed over Kieran Wardell in the seventh (8-11, 12-10, 11-6, 7-11, 11-9, 10-12, 12-10).

Also in the first round, Gofton upset Reece Chamdal in six (11-8, 11-9, 6-11, 11-8, 8-11, 11-4).

In the groups, there was a three-way tie in Group 1, with Shae Thakker coming out on top ahead of Jonny Heslop and Jamie Blair – it was the close nature of Thakker's defeat to Blair which helped him, the 3-2 (14-12, 11-9, 10-12, 9-11, 11-9) scoreline proving decisive as the other two group results were 3-0.

Branislav Zivkovic got above Ben Fillingham in Group 6, as did Freddie Osenton-Brown with Harry Watson in Group 7.

Consolation



Jack Rogers in action in Gillingham (picture by Michael Loveder)

Jack Rogers defeated Louis Rogove 3-0 (11-4, 11-9, 12-10) to take the gold.

The victor, who is 15 and from Leicester, said: "I wanted to get past the group stage but that didn't quite happen, so after that I wanted to bring something home.

"I'm very happy, it's the first national competition I've won. It's my last year in Cadets, so now I'll start working in the Juniors and hopefully be invited to the Nationals in that."

Rogove reached the final with a 3-1 victory over Zaiim Premji, while Rogers' semi-final was a tight one against

Harry Watson, the former winning it 3-2 (11-9, 8-11, 7-11, 12-10, 11-9).

Watson had started with a great comeback in the first round, overturning a 2-0 deficit against Jamie Blair to win 3-2 (8-11, 5-11, 11-8, 12-10, 13-11), and then beat Joshua Amanor in the quarters.

Also in the quarters, Rogove fought back in fine style against Rhys Davies, taking it 3-2 (2-11, 5-11, 12-10, 12-10, 11-8).

Cadet Girls' Singles

Charlotte Bardsley won the battle of the top two seeds and doubles champions as she defeated Megan Gidney to take the title – her third gold of the day.

It was four straight by not always straightforward as the top seed won 4-0 (12-10, 11-7, 11-5, 12-10).

Bardsley said: "Megan's a really great doubles partner, we have great chemistry, so it was hard to play the final against her. She's a good friend but I managed to win it.

"It's a great competition – the top four in the Cadet National Cup have finished in the top four again here and it shows how tough it is."

In the last four, Bardsley overcame Jasmin Wong 4-1 (11-9, 6-11, 11-9, 11-5, 11-4) but the real drama was in the other half of the draw, where Mollie Patterson led Gidney three times before seeing her opponent take the decider to complete a 4-3 (7-11, 11-4, 12-14, 11-3, 6-11, 11-6, 11-8) scoreline.



Charlotte Bardsley on her way to the title (picture by Michael Loveder)

The first round saw a terrific match between Chiang and Gemma Kerr, won 4-3 by the former (12-10, 8-11, 11-3, 8-11, 4-11, 11-9, 11-7).

In the group stage, Jasmine Williams went into the main draw at the expense of top seed Charlotte Weatherby in Group 4, winning their clash 3-2 (11-7, 14-16, 11-9, 9-11, 11-3).

Group 5 also saw an upset as Lois Perryman advanced ahead of Katie Holt, winning the deciding match 3-0 (7, 6, 8) – having earlier come from 2-0 down to defeat Kirsty Maull.

In Group 7, Sophie Chiang and Joelle Bennett both overcame top seed Erin Greensmith, Chiang winning the group, while in Group 8, featuring only two players, Federica Bonato beat higher-ranked Gracie Edwards.

Consolation

Millie Rogove defeated Charlotte Weatherby 3-1 to win the gold.

The 12-year-old from Barnet went one better than her older brother, who took silver in the corresponding boys' event, thanks to a (11-4, 11-7, 5-11, 11-6) scoreline.

She said: "I'm so happy. I didn't expect it but I tried my best and kept fighting. Being at the Nationals is quite overwhelming and there are a lot of good players, but it's very cool as well."

Rogove reached the final by beating Joelle Bennett, while Weatherby got past Ilyssa Lacorte, both in three straight.

Weatherby had been pushed by Erin Greensmith in the quarters but finally got home 3-2 (8-11, 12-10, 16-18, 11-8, 11-6). Rogove also needed five against Nina Kadir, winning 11-3, 11-9, 9-11, 9-11, 11-8.

Cadet Boys' Doubles

Sam Chesterman & Amirul Hussain took out the top two pairs to lift the trophy.

The Ackworth School duo took down school-mates and second seeds Jamie Liu & Reece Chamdal in four sets in the semi-finals.

It put them through to face top seeds Ethan Walsh & Joe Cope in the final and they put in a mature performance to win 3-1 (11-7, 11-9, 9-11, 11-3).

Chesterman said: "It feels really good because last year we managed to get to the final as quite low seeds and our aim was to win it this year. We performed really well in the final and lived up to our expectations."

In the other semi-final, Walsh & Cope beat Louis Price & Naphong Boonyaprapa.

A round earlier, Liu & Chamdal had a tough quarter-final as they saw opponents Peter Smallcombe and Kieran Wardell fight back from 2-0 down to level, but the second seeds blitzed the last to end with a 3-2 (12-10, 11-6, 9-11, 12-14, 11-2) victory.

Cadet Girls' Doubles

Charlotte Bardsley & Megan Gidney lived up to billing as they took the title.

The top seeds defeated Alice Dillon & Darcie Proud 3-0 (13-11, 11-5, 11-6) in the final.

In the semi-finals, Dillon & Proud defeated second seeds Jasmin Wong & Ruby Chan in four, while Bardsley & Gidney also needed four to defeat Gemma Kerr & Mollie Patterson.

There were no alarms for the top two pairs in the quarters, Bardsley & Gidney advancing past Lois Perryman & Scarlett O'Neil (3, 4, 2) and Wong & Chan defeating Ilyssa Lacorte & Mari Baldwin (8, 7, 8).

Junior Boys' Team



James Smith turned around a seemingly hopeless situation in the final match as Blades turned around an equally bleak overall picture to defeat Grantham College.

Grantham led 2-0 after Matt Leete beat Josh Bennett in five (11-7, 11-5, 9-11, 6-11, 11-8) and Joe Clark defeated Smith in four (7-11, 11-9, 15-13, 11-9).

George Hazell started the fightback with a 3-1 (11-9, 9-11, 11-7, 11-7) win over Olly Tyndall, and it was 2-2 when Bennett beat Clarke in three close games (11-8, 14-12, 13-11).

When Leete led Smith 2-0, it looked as if Grantham had steadied the ship, but Smith staged a brilliant fightback, winning it 3-2 (8-11, 9-11, 11-5, 13-11, 11-9).

Blades shook off Ackworth in the semi-finals, though Shayan Siraj did his best for the beaten side, defeating Bennett in the first match in four sets and then saving three match points to overcome George Hazell 3-2 (9-11, 11-8, 11-5, 8-11, 14-12) and make it 2-2.

Grantham made it through with a 3-1 victory over Harefield Academy, Clark winning both his matches, including a 3-2 (7-11, 11-2, 11-7, 4-11, 11-8) victory over Gaurav Aravind.

The battle for third place was won by 3-0 Ackworth against Harefield, Siraj beating Israel Awolaja, Amirul

Hussain overcoming Aravind and Jamie Liu orchestrating a comeback from 2-0 down against James Chappell to win 3-2 (8-11, 7-11, 13-11, 11-7, 11-7).

Junior Girls' Team

Burton Uxbridge took the gold medal, beating Ackworth School 3-2 in the final.

Jasmin Wong gave Ackworth – home of the National Talent Academy – the lead in four sets against Megan Gidney, but Mollie Patterson levelled 3-2 against Darcie Proud and Charlotte Bardsley put Burton ahead by defeating Ruby Chan in four.

Patterson's withdrawal from her match against Wong made it 2-2 and it came down to a superb match between Gidney and Proud to decide the destination of the title.

Gidney was twice pegged back by her young opponent but took the decider to complete a 3-2 (11-7, 7-11, 11-4, 9-11, 11-8) victory.

Third place went to Harefield Academy, courtesy of a 3-2 defeat of Swerve. They came from 1-0 and 2-1 down, Danielle Kelly taking the crucial victory in the fifth match, beating Sophie Barlow in four. The Harefield squad was completed by Zahna Hall, Amy Blagbrough and Sarah Menghistab, who played in the semi. Holly Williams and Erin Greensmith completed the Swerve line-up.

Ackworth's semi-final against Harefield was a marathon in which four of the five matches went to deciding fifth games.

That included the crucial last encounter in which Wong dug deep against the chop of Hall to take it 3-2 (12-10, 8-11, 11-8, 8-11, 11-7).

It was more straightforward for Burton Uxbridge, who beat Swerve 3-0 in their semi-final.

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