



Uni of Nottingham steal the show at the BUCS Championships

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During two days of high quality competition, University of Nottingham retain their title of most successful table tennis institution in the UK with four golds, three silvers and two bronze medals.

The BUCS Table Tennis Individual Championships were held at the University of Nottingham's David Ross Sports Village over the weekend of Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 November 2017. Featuring an impressive 558 entries across men's and women's singles, men's and women's doubles, and mixed doubles, the competition welcomed an increase in numbers on previous years. A total of 42 institutions sent their best competitors to represent and battle it out for national honours, and the acclaimed titles of being the best Higher Education table tennis players in the UK.

The mixed doubles category was the first to reach its climax on Saturday evening. With University of Nottingham fielding strong mixed partnerships it was no surprise they made up three of the four semi-finalists. James Hobson and Evie Collier from Nottingham Trent University were the fourth pair looking to reach the final, with Collier aiming to improve on the bronze medal won last year. However, it was the number one seeds Danny Reed and Maria Tsaptsinos who overcame the NTU pair in straight games, and reached the final to play Adam Harrison and Letitia McMullan who defeated Gabriel Achampong and Yolanda King 3-0. Top seeds Reed and Tsaptsinos were too strong for Harrison and McMullan, winning 11-5, 11-5, 11-7 to claim the first silverware of the weekend.

The men's and women's singles progressed to the knockout elimination stages on Sunday morning, once winners and runners-up had been determined from Saturday's group fixtures. The majority of seeded players progressed through their groups unscathed, with only a few surprise results appearing in the women's singles. The absence of the previous three women's singles winners meant a new champion would be crowned for 2017-18. Number one seed and England no. 3 Karina Le Fevre (Teesside University), runner-up last year, easily progressed to the semi-final and would face 13th seed Elizabeth Roberts (Aberystwyth University). In the bottom half of the draw Loughborough University's Lois Peake would meet 2016-17 bronze medallist and England's no.4

Maria Tsaptsinos. In two gripping semi-finals, both being won 3-2, it was Roberts and Tsaptsinos who would prevail to reach the final. The last match of the women's singles was a more one-sided contest with Tsaptsinos overpowering Roberts 11-3, 11-4, 11-8 and sealing the title.

Danny Reed, current England no.9 and top seed, made his progress to the final appear relatively easy. His dispatch of number 4 seed Jack Bennett (University of Derby) in the semi-final was at the expense of only one game. Teammate Adam Harrison faced Helshan Weerasinghe (University College London) in a much closer and dramatic contest. Both competitors displayed incredible attacking shots and resilient defence, during which Harrison took a two game lead. Weerasinghe fought back and forced a deciding game much to the annoyance of both Harrison and the patriotic home crowd. However, Harrison won the fifth game amid enthralling scenes to ensure a rematch of last year's final against Reed. Harrison improved on his final performance from 12 months earlier and took Reed to a fourth game, but was unable to unsettle the reigning champion. Reed ultimately winning 11-3, 7-11, 11-7, 11-4 and securing his second gold medal.

The women's doubles semi-finals featured four separate institutions. King and Tsaptsinos (University of Nottingham) took on Yuki Wat and Huiyue Xiao from the University of Manchester, while the Welsh international pairing of Angharad Phillips and Megan Phillips (Durham University) would battle Evie Collier and Lauren Evans (Nottingham Trent University). Defending champions Phillips and Phillips progressed in straight games, while King and Tsaptsinos overcame the Manchester pairing with the loss of only one game. University of Nottingham, successful in all other categories in recent years, were left frustrated after being thwarted again by the strong Durham pair. Phillips and Phillips victorious for the third consecutive year, winning in five intense games 15-13, 5-11, 11-5, 7-11, 11-9.

The weekend was brought to a close with the final of the men's doubles. After battling against each other in the singles final, Reed and Harrison resumed their doubles partnership and faced Jack Bennett and Petr Biza (University of Derby) in the semi-finals. Harrison and Reed would eventually come through 3-1 and await the winners of Marcus Giles and Joe Pilkington (University of Nottingham) or James Hobson and Joel Webb (Nottingham Trent University). Despite their best efforts, Giles and Pilkington could not make it an all green and gold final, with Hobson and Webb enduring a five game thriller. In the final Harrison and Reed asserted themselves efficiently and proved their top seed status, triumphant 14-12, 11-7, 13-11, and retaining their trophy from last year.

At the conclusion of the men's doubles category the University of Nottingham topped the medal table collecting four gold medals, with Durham University taking home one gold medal. Over the weekend a total of 911 matches were held across 32 tables, amassing over 53,000 points played. The BUCS Table Tennis Individual Championships will next take place in November 2018.

Full BUCS Table Tennis Individual Championship results are available on the [Tournament Software webpage](#)

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