



## Bath Grand Prix day one report

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**Posted On:** December 17, 2017

The **Bath Grand Prix** took place at Bath Arena, Sports Training Village at the University of Bath on **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup>** and **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> of December**. It's been a great weekend of competitive table tennis with some local players competing on both days.

Day One action is as follows:

**Men's Band 1 Singles**



Runner up Michael O'Driscoll with the winner Callum Evans

Callum Evans overcame all of the odds to take an extremely competitive Band 1 with a straight set win over number one seed Michael O'Driscoll. It was a comfortable game for the youngster winning 11-5, 11-4 and 11-6 to claim the top prize of the day and will prepare him well for the open competition.

Evans certainly grew into this band after winning his group but he had to dig deep for some of his best table tennis. Fin Morgan-Bayliss went two games up only for Evans to win the next three to get to the quarter-finals. He met number three seed Matthew Leete in this game and had to concentrate again to win in five in an incredibly close game.

The number five seeded Welshman also beat number two seed Adam Nutland in the semi-finals in 4 sets. Nutland won the first set 11-9 with Evans winning the second 11-6, the turning point was in the third set giving Evans a 12-10 win. Evans closed the game 11-7 in the fourth.

O'Driscoll had come through his games with ease until the semi-finals where eighth seeded James Hobson ran him close in a 5 game thriller. O'Driscoll won the first game but soon found himself 2-1 down before overcoming Hobson in a tight fourth set 12-10; winning the match 11-7 in the fifth.

### **Men's Band 2 Singles**



Winner Marius Marth and runner up Matthew Daish

The band was the battle of the five sets as both semi-finals and the final was decided in five sets. Marius Marth was the eventual winner edging out Matthew Daish 8-11, 11-7, 10-12, 11-9 and 11-8.

Both finalists just made it through against determined opposition earlier that day. Daish overcame Finn Morgan-Bayliss after coming back from 2-0 down to take the crucial fifth set 11-9. Marth managed to beat Sepehr Bidari in a very close encounter; 11-4, 4-11, 5-11, 11-7 and 11-6.

There were more five sets wins in the earlier rounds for Bidari and Timothy Franke against Emil Erkekon and Adam Jepson respectively highlighting the strength of this Band.

### Men's Band 3 Singles



Runner up Jamal Dennison and winner Sam Wilson

Sam Wilson battled through a competitive Band beating Jamal Dennison in the finals in four sets. Going one set up with a quick 11-5 win the second set was a lot closer with Dennison winning 14-12 to tie the game. However Wilson kept his cool to win 11-7 and 11-3 in the fourth.

There was no easy game for either finalist in the knock out stages with both finding a little something extra over their opponents. Dennison beat Carl Baldry in one of the closest games of the day 12-10, 9-11, 12-10, 11-13 before an 11-3 win. He then had to go the distance again with Louis Rogove, 11-6, 8-11, 11-8, 7-11 with a tight fifth set 11-9.

Dennison needed to keep his head in the semi-finals losing 11-9 in the first set to Alexander Ahil. However he edged out the next three games 11-9 in each to get to the finals.

Wilson also had to be at his best after meeting Andrew Smith in the quarter finals. He found himself two sets down early on but came back to force a fifth set, winning 13-11. Ben Willson took a set off of Wilson to make it one all but the eventual winner came through a crucial third set 13-11, finishing the fourth with an 11-3 win.

James Rule also took Wilson close in four sets in the semi-finals, winning the third set 11-7. However Wilson was too strong in the fifth and found a little something extra to win 12-10.

#### Men's Band 4 Singles



Runner up Colin Stallwood and winner Colin Whitehead

Connor Whitehead came through in straight sets to beat Colin Stallwood, 11-9 in each. Both players form improved throughout this popular banded event which resulted in this tight final.

Stallwood fought hard in the early rounds to reach the semi-finals against Louis Rogrove, who he defeated in three sets. James Mason took Stallwood to five sets but Mason lost 11-4 in the fifth. Joseph Goss also proved a tricky opponent with Stallwood winning 11-9 in the fourth set.

George Long pushed Whitehead to four sets on the other side of the draw before the eventual winner dispatched Scott Wilson in three straight in the quarter-finals. Whitehead suffered an early scare in the semi-finals losing 11-7 to Ed Slot in the first set, but he recovered well to win the next three to make the final.

#### Men's Band 5 Singles



Thomas Earley band 5 Winner

Thomas Earley beat his twin brother Zak Earley 11-7, 11-7, 11-7 in the final of their first ever GP. Both players came through their groups as winners and dispatched every player they faced in straight sets.

Local teenager Leon Kashdan-Brown came close to the semi-finals narrowly losing to Chris Marlow in five sets and deuce in the fifth of the quarter-finals. On the other side of the draw losing semi-finalist Jamie Blair edged out Colin Stallwood in the quarter-finals and Matthew Pearce in the round before both in 5 sets.

#### Men's Band 6 Singles



Zac Earley Band 6 winner

The Earley twins met again in these finals but it was Zac who was victorious this time. Four sets separated the

brothers with the crucial set coming in the second set; where Zac raced to a two set lead winning 12-10. Thomas pulled one back 11-5 in the third then Zac reversed the deficit to win.

Both needed four sets to overcome stubborn opposition in the semi-finals with near identical scores. Mihnea Dascalu took the first set against Zac only to be defeated 11-4, 11-5, 11-5 whilst local player Joshua Kashdan beat Thomas in the first but lost 11-4, 11-8 and 11-5.

One other local player to note was Madhusudana Ramakridhna who was competing for the first time after taking up table tennis again last year. The Bath Premier League player beat Dominic Weston in three straight after finishing runner up in his group. However he fell short to Dylan Linsell in five sets in the next round.

### **Women's Band 1 Singles**



Katarina Bondarenko-Getz band 1 winner band 2 runner up

Katherina Bondarenko-Getzger triumphed over Mollie Patterson in straight sets in the final. It wasn't an easy game with 13-11, 11-6 and 12-10 victories over her opponent.

Pia Ludwig ran Bondarenko-Getzger close in four sets with the eventual Band 1 winner beating Ludwig 12-10 in the first and last sets. Patterson on the other hand got better with every game against Lilly Nicodemus defeating her in three straight sets.

### **Women's Band 2 Singles**



Band 1 Runner Up & Band 2 Winner Mollie Patterson

Mollie Patterson overcame Katharina Bondarenko-Getzger in four sets to win Band 2. Patterson raced to a two set lead but Bondarenko-Getzger won the third set 11-8 only to be beaten to 6 in the fourth set.

Bondarenko-Getzger played out a very close set with Patricia Ianau in the semi-finals. Ianau went 2-1 up in the third set with a 17-15 win but Bondarenko-Getzger narrowly defeated her 11-9, 11-9 to seal her path to the final. Patterson also had a scare in the semi-finals with the game at 1-1 in the third set. She managed to overcome Darcie Proud 12-10 and went on to win to 6 points in the fourth.

### Women's Band 3 Singles



Patricia Ianau winner & Natalia Ianau runner up

Patricia Ianau beat her sister Natalia in three straight sets to win Band 3; 11-8, 11-5 and 11-8. The route to the final was very different for this pair though.

Natalia came through the quarter-finals and semi-finals in five sets in both against Jamie-Lee Harley and Raquel Sao Pedro respectively. Patricia fared better as she came through in 3 sets against Grace Clement and Millie Rogrove.

#### Women's Band 4 Singles



Runner up Raquel Sau Pedro and winner Ivy Chan

Ivy Chan's debut competition went as well as she could have imagined as she won her first ever band. She overcame the attacking Raquel Sau Pedro in four sets in the final after being a set behind in the first set; 6-11, 11-9, 11-7 and 11-7.

Chan dispatched Medha Verma and fellow debutant Samadhi Udamulla in three straight sets to reach the finals. Sao Pedro had an early scare to another debutant Isabella Khan in the quarter-finals as Khan took her to five sets. She then had to summon a little extra to get past Jamie-Lee Harley defeating the Welsh player in four sets.

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