

## ANNUAL CLUB TOURNAMENT 2015

The 2015 club tournament kicked off over the weekend of 21/ 22 March with some thirty competitors spread over four events. Unfortunately, we could not attract any interest from our premier players this year but there were still thrills and shocks to be had.

The weekend began with a hotly contested division three event, hotly contested because most of the leading players in that division came from the Warren Spring club. The surprises began almost immediately with the top seed Jim Keirl having to concede defeat to young Charlotte Marsden before making it through his group. This was quickly followed by Sam Kester going down in five legs to Oliver Dorn with Oliver playing his best table tennis of the season. Two of the club's rising young stars Bruce Yao and George Whitley also made it through to the quarter finals as did the seasoned veteran Chris Denman, Charlie Shephard and Toby Snoxell. Our first match in the quarter's brought together Charlotte and George and you would not have guessed that they were National Cadet League team mates as both fought tooth and nail with no quarter asked or given. Finally it was Charlotte who just managed to make it over the winning line relieved to have beaten a difficult opponent. On the adjacent table, Charlie was having an easier time against Oliver who struggled to find an answer to Charlie's defensive play built around his long pimped rubber. The third match of the round saw Toby, who was beginning to look dangerous, take on Jim and it was the top seed who eventually faltered losing in five close legs. The last match of the round had Bruce (many people's favourite for the title) take on Chris whose heavy spin and awkward defensive style finally proved too much for the youngster who nevertheless took his more experienced opponent all the way.

The semi finals saw Charlotte desperately trying to find a way to counter Charlie's long pimples and spin game which she finally managed to do coming through 11-8 in the fifth. Meanwhile Toby was in exactly the same position in the other semi against Chris - who had already beaten him in the league this season - when he like Charlotte finally found a way to overcome the difficult style he faced.

In the final, it was apparent that Charlotte's tactics were to take the ball really early and give no time for Toby to get his good topspin game working. She did this really well to open up a two leg lead 11-6, 11-8, before Toby staged a recovery to take the third 11-7. In the fourth some good backhand blocking, together with a couple of



lucky net and edge points saw Charlotte take control again winning 11-7 and becoming division three champion for 2015.

**2015 Division 3 Champion; Charlotte Marsden, Runner up; Toby Snoxell**

Sixteen entrants contested the division two event, including some from the lower division who fancied pitting their skills against the more experienced players. The groups were not without some close calls and contained an upset of epic proportions. The upset was caused by Jim Keirl from division three who inflicted a rare defeat on the favourite and No 1 seed Ewan Fewell in a group one match up. This loss by Ewan was enough to ensure that he did not make it out of a very competitive group stage. Add to this the drama of the No 3 seed Alan Dorn who faced a tough challenge from Charlotte Marsden before just scaping over the line to win and the crowd was buzzing. The quarter finals saw group one winner Steve King take on Bruce Yao in a fine five setter won by Steve 3-11, 11-9, 11-6, 5-11, 11-6. Then came Alan who had a much easier job than his group games beating Chris Denman 11-4, 11-1, 11-6. John Cox had too much in the tank for "giant killer" Jim, winning 11-5, 11-8, 11-3 whilst No 2 seed David Kells unusual style and spin game made him too much of a handful for young Charlotte.

The semi finals brought together Steve and Alan with Alan the victor by a score of 11-8, 11-9, 11-6 and John and David with the latter winning a good contest 10-12, 11-



8, 11-3, 12-10. And so the second and third seeds fought out the final to decide the 2015 division two champion. This honour finally went to David who managed to control most of the game against Alan coming through 11-8, 11-9, 11-7.

**2015 Division 2 Champion; David Kells (L), Runner Up; Alan Dorn**

The final two events played on the Sunday were the division one and handicap competitions. In division one, all fancied players made it out of their respective groups and into the quarter final stage. The first two matches on saw Bill Price made to work hard by an inspired Steve King before coming through 11-9, 11-4, 12-10, and Grant Whitfield who survived losing the first leg to super veteran Roy Jager (thought people should know that Roy) before going on to win 10-12, 11-3, 11-8, 11-8. The number four seed Paul Waterman then beat the two times winner of this event Erol Hasan in somewhat of an easier fashion than he may of expected 11-2, 11-3, 8-11, 11-5. The final match of the round pitted No 2 seed Mark Redford against twelve years' old Bruce Yao (from division three) who only accepted his place in the event so that an even number of players could participate. The young man soon showed

everybody that he was there on merit as he performed heroics before going down to his vastly more experienced opponent 13-11, 11-13, 11-5, 11-7. In the semis Bill overcame Grant in four legs 11-8, 11-2, 6-11, 11-8 whilst Mark took on Paul in the game of the day winning 21-19, 11-8, 7-11, 4-11, 11-7. So, the final and could last years' winner Bill beat Mark who had already shown that he was in inspired form. The answer was no as Mark took out the defending champion 12-10, 11-6, 11-9 to become the 2015 division one winner.

**2015 Division 1 Champion; Mark Redford (L),  
Runner Up; Bill Price**



The handicap event was dominated in the later stages by two of the club's junior players who had really risen to the occasion. The semi finals saw Jim Keirl take on Bruce Yao off an even start with Bruce getting the upper hand 21-20, 21-16, and young George Whitley getting to grips with John Cox. The +9 handicap proved too much for John, even allowing for his battling qualities as he succumbed 21-12, 21-13.



The final brought together Bruce and George whose collective ages totalled just 22 years. With George enjoying a two start lead over Bruce it was indeed the former who took the first leg 21-17. However Bruce is known for his battling qualities and these were much in evidence as he proceeded to take the next two legs 21-15, 21-19 to become the handicap champion for 2015.

**2015 Handicap Champion; Bruce Yao (R),  
Runner Up; George Whitley**