

## CLUB TOURNAMENT 2022

Our annual club tournament returned after its enforced break of three years due to COVID and was played over the weekend of 23<sup>rd</sup> / 24<sup>th</sup> April. This year the organisers took a gamble by inviting guest players which I am pleased to say turned out to be a very successful move.

As we had no entries from the premier division the “blue star” event was the division one singles. A record eighteen players turned up to pit their considerable skills against one another. Sighs of relief went out from many competitors when it was announced that the Number 1 seed Isabelle Lacorte had had to withdraw owing to a late call up for an England training session which left the field wide open with several players capable of winning the title.

Group one was won by Blayk Marquis from the Luton Table Tennis Club with our own Meth Wijeyekoon in runner up spot.

Group two (possibly the toughest of the four groups) was won by Frederic Fourier with Stuart Marquis runner up.

Groups three and four were won by George Thorn and Richard Foster respectively with Chris Malcolm (Bedwell TTC) and Oliver Beasley (Grange) also qualifying for the KO rounds.

In the Q/Fs, Blayk overcame dad Stuart 11-4, 11-7, 11-6, George beat Oliver 11-4, 11-9, 11-9, Richard was the victor over Meth 11-2, 11-7, 11-7 and Frederic overcame Chris 7-11, 11-3, 11-6, 14-12.

The semis went according to the seedings with George taking Blayk in four legs 10-12, 11-7, 11-3, 11-7 and Frederic ending Richard’s hopes 11-5, 13-11, 11-4

The final itself was an absolute thriller having all of the ingredients a final should have including the inevitable fighting comeback At the very end it was George that stood tall over Frederic winning 7-11, 7-11, 11-9, 11-9, 11-9



*Winner George (L), Runner-up Frederic (R)*

The division two event was a more straightforward affair with the top two seeds Frederic Fourier and Richard Foster dominating proceedings from the start. The groups all went according to plan with the top four all coming through relatively unscathed, the only exception being Jonathan Burn's (Royston) defeat of Noah Maidment which ended Noah's run in this event.

In the quarters, G1 winner Frederic defeated G2 R/Up Alan Chapple (Royston) 11-6, 11-3, 11-4 whilst G3 winner Heidi Oestreicher accounted for G4 R/Up Jonathan 11-3, 11-6, 11-8. The defensive skills of G2 winner Richard were too much for G3 runner up Cesar Molina as he came out on top 11-9, 11-2, 11-8. The surprise of this round saw John Cox eliminate fourth seed Chris Jones 11-6, 11-8, 11-8

The semi finals saw Heidi give Frederic his toughest game of the day by far before she succumbed to defeat 11-4, 8-11, 11-5, 11-6. In the other semi Richard beat John 11-2, 11-9, 11-4.

The final was eagerly awaited with everyone expecting a long drawn out affair of attack versus defensive mastery, but by now Frederic was firing on all cylinders as he took the event 11-8, 11-3, 11-4



*Division 2 Winner Frederic (L), Runner-Up Richard (R)*

The division three event saw some of the closest games of the entire weekend full of five set battles many going to the wire. Two examples of this were in the group stages and concerned the match between Eric Morcombe and Dan Weston with Eric just coming out on top 9-11, 8-11, 13-11, 14-12, 11-9 and Will Hurley and Zak Burn with Zak just coming through 11-7, 12-10, 6-11, 9-11, 11-8.

At the Q/F stage though it was the top three seeds ( Jim Keirl seeded one had withdrawn due to injury) who eventually came through with fourth seed Eric surprisingly beaten.. Here, Rohan Kurumaddala easily shook off Mike Hurley, Mike Reading just scraped home against Dan Weston 9-11, 11-5, 13-15, 11-5, 11-7, Eric losing to Will Hurley 11-9, 6-11, 11-6, 11-7 and No 1 seed Elliott Lugg - who although playing at Royston had represented our club at the National Cadet League – defeating Louis Economides 11-4, 11-9, 14-12. The

semis saw Mike take on and beat Rohan 11-9, 8-11, 11-9, 11-9 whilst Elliott accounted for Will 10-12, 11-8, 11-2, 11-6. The final was closely fought with Elliott taking the division three title 11-8, 11-8, 11-9.



*Division 3 Winner Elliott (L) with Runner-up Mike (R)*

The handicap played over three legs to 21 points proved to be as popular as ever. Some highlights leading up to the semi-finals were John Cox playing off 3-0 beating of Stuart Marquis 16-21, 21-12, 21-19, and Meth Wijeyekoon's playing off -4 victory over Chris Malcolm 21-14, 18-21, 21-18. The semis saw the best match of this particular competition with Paul Waterman playing off -6 up against and coming out on top over Lucca Harvey-Manning 21-20, 12-21, 21-20. The other semi had Blayk Marquis matched with Noah Maidment, Blayk winning reasonably comfortably 21-17, 21-13.

The final between a still relatively fresh and fast Blayk against a fast but rapidly slowing "old un" Paul saw Blayk steal the glory taking the title 21-19, 21-13.



A great weekend of table tennis with copious amounts of food and drink. Many thanks to all for providing such good fare. Martin your fruit salad was amazing, Sue, thank you once again for proving that you can have both quality and quantity and with almost everyone saying that they will be back next year.

*Handicap Winner Blayk (L) with Runner-up Paul (R)*

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