



GUILDFORD CLOSED CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 83rd Guildford Closed Championships saw a new name on the Open Singles Cup – Federico Viterbo. The tournament was held at Christ's College, Guildford over the weekend of the 3rd and 4th February 2018.

The semi-finals of the open singles saw Federico Viterbo play against a determined Simon Vine and winning in four, 11-8, 11-6, 12-14, 11-5. In the other semi-final Ross Saxby beat John Robinson 11-6, 8-11, 12-10, 11-8. Saxby started off in imperious form but Robinson used his experience to peg back the younger man. However, Saxby pulled out his big shots just at the right time to narrowly earn a victory.

In the final, Saxby was always under pressure from the classy Viterbo. Determined to get a big shot in first this put Saxby under pressure which led to mistakes. Viterbo, after the disappointment of losing in last year's final, was a comfortable winner 11-7, 11-4, 11-9.

A consolation event was held for group losers and the final saw a high class match in which young Charlie Cunningham overcame the more experienced Vijay Bhaskar 8-11, 11-7, 11-6, 11-8.

The open doubles saw the numbers one and two seeds pitched against each other. Ross Saxby and Federico Viterbo played superbly to defeat John Robinson and Jason Tandler 11-9, 8-11, 11-8, 11-5.

In the ladies singles, number one seed Maria Hilsdon overcame a scare in the semi-finals when she just scraped through to beat Shula Laws in five sets. She regained her composure in the final and beat Louise Newman 14-12, 11-4, 11-5.

The ladies doubles saw Maria Hilsdon and Shula Laws comfortably beat Charley Penny and Louise Newman 11-2, 11-4, 11-6.

In the mixed doubles final, the unfancied Jonathan Cannon and Shula Laws put up a spirited fight against John Robinson and Maria Hilsdon losing 11-5, 11-5, 9-11, 11-5.

Every year a restricted event is staged. Players compete against other players from their respective divisions. This popular event always sees some fantastic matches and this year was no exception.

In the restricted premier division competition the first semi-final saw Simon Vine playing Jason Tandler. Earlier Vine had a narrow five set escape against Richard Seymour but it was not to be this time as Tandler ran out the winner 11-9, 9-11, 11-7, 5-11, 11-6. A real topsy-turvy match. In the other semi-final Daniel Heo had a fabulous win against Ross Saxby 14-12, 11-5, 8-11, 5-11, 12-10. Real edge of the seat stuff. In the final Heo took the vital first match 12-10 and then fell apart to lose 3-11. He then pulled himself back together to win the last two games 11-4, 11-7. A worthy winner.

The restricted division one final was between the up and coming Charlie Cunningham and Ross Lingard with Cunningham narrowly winning 11-5, 11-8, 5-11, 12-10.



The division two restricted was played on a round-robin basis and Chris King was the winner with James Sellen runner-up. Two groups from division three battled it out with James Wyncoll beating Ansh Richharia in the final, 3-11,11-6,11-9,11-7. The division four restricted was again played on a round robin basis and Max Flint emerged as the winner with Rob Chatwin runner-up. This is Max's first season in competitive table tennis and he had an excellent tournament showing much promise.

The restricted doubles produced the following results:

- Division 1 – Winners: Vijah Bhaskar/Jonathan Cannon
Runners-up : Adrian Sharp / Ross Lingard
- Division 2 – Winners: Mick Stanners/Adrian Cretu
Runners-up: James Sellen /Chris King
- Division 3 – Winners: Ansh.Richharia/Anil Gadage
Runners-up: Keith Brown/Steve Bridle
- Division 4 - Winners: Max Flint/Guangmu Zhu
Runners-up: Nathan Tse/Rob Chatwin

The veterans competitions are always keenly contested. In the semi-finals John Robinson beat his team-mate Jason Tendler in four and Phil Harrison, having had a fine win against Simon Vine in the previous round, lost in four to Daniel Heo. In the final Robinson played brilliantly to outplay Heo in winning 11-4,11-6,11-5.

In the veterans doubles Jason Tendler and John Robinson overcame Graham Faulkner and Richard Seymour 11-6, 12-10,11-9. The veterans ladies was won by Maria Hilsdon when she beat Shula Laws 11-5,11-6,12-10.

Phil Harrison finally won a trophy when he beat Peter Palmer in the final of the Masters competition 11-9, 11-4,11-5.

Over the weekend, in total, there were 168 matches played. It is a credit to the Association that the whole tournament was played in a competitive but friendly spirit. Exemplified at the end when all the tables and equipment were swiftly put away.

John Callcut



General View of playing area



**Winner and Runner-up of the open singles –
Federico Viterbo and Ross Saxby.**