

Report on Jasmin Ould at the Hereford Grand Prix from Gary Howes

Jasmin Ould from the Byng Hall table tennis club in Tunbridge Wells had a spectacular weekend at the final senior grand prix of the season up in Hereford. She started off well on the Saturday winning her group which included the scalp of number two seed Gasia Muda from Poland in 3 straight games; she also beat Sarah Riach and Charlotte Binley also in 3. Muda and Riach were both maximum points wins as both players were at least 500 ranking points above Jas. In the following round she had the number one seed Joy Whitethorn who she surprisingly dispensed with in 3 games, much to everyone's surprise, with some awesome forehand wide angled topspins outstretching Joy on both wings. Jas' great performance was to end there at the quarter final stage when she was finally stopped by Raquel Pilgrim who eventually won the event. Not a bad morning's work for the 13 year old, as her excellent performance elevated Jasmin to 5th position in the overall grand prix points stakes and a share of the band two prize fund.

The afternoon saw the start of the women's band 3 event, Jasmin started off in her group with a win against Claire Rogers, which looked shaky to start losing the first leg but she came back strongly taking the next 3 easier and easier as she got into her stride. The long pimples of Megan Phillips took a bit of getting used to, and need all 5 legs, but Jasmin overcame the fast improving Welsh girl in a close decider. She now found herself in a high pressure situation having discovered that the next round match win or lose would decide if Jasmin won or came runner up in the overall Grand Prix band three standings, This one match against the virtually unknown Irish girl Ashley Givian proved too much, and Jasmin finally went down 8 in the fifth leg, but Jas took solace in receiving second prize fund for the series. Ashley Givian went on to win the band three event.

Day two was always going to be a tough day for the 13 year old as this was the open event and each group had some of the best players in the county, so just to qualify was going to be a tall order. Jasmin got her own back on the Irish girl who robbed her of the band three overall winners title the previous day by the same score line in Jas' favour but was unable to defeat Sanja Clementson or Stephanie Donnelly to go through. The U21 event was a similar story but here Jasmin beat the other Welsh Phillips sister Angarhard, for another big points win for Jasmin. So although she didn't qualify she did come away from the weekend richer in both cash and national ranking points.