

Week Commencing 10th January 2005

Birmingham Table Tennis by Bob Brown

Ian Ferguson, the Birmingham No 1, unbeaten in the city's Premier Division in 2004/5, went from hero to zero at the Warwickshire Closed Championships, held at the St Nicholas Centre, Warwick. The British League star, who represents the Curdworth club, was top seeded in his three events, but was beaten in the semi-final of the men's singles, men's doubles final and mixed doubles final. Ferguson looked in fine form in the early rounds of the singles, which included an excellent win in four sets over big hitting Mark Jackson (Leamington), but lost out to Ian Packford (Leamington) in the last four, in a match that went the distance. Jon Williams (Leamington) beat Kingshurst's Mike Browne in the other semi, before losing to Packford in the final 11-7, 11-6, 11-5. Ferguson and Andy Hare were beaten by Earl Sweeney and Packford in the men's doubles 11-3 in the fifth and Ferguson and Kay Nason lost out to Browne and Helen Turner (Sutton) in the mixed. England cadet Rachel Pilgrim (Nuneaton) upset the seedings in the ladies singles by beating Jan Dickens in the final. Navinder Mattharu (Colebridge) deserved the junior boys title after beating England Academy squad member Chris Burgess in the last four and Birmingham and Warwickshire No 1 Paul Leck (Kingshurst) 11-8 in the fifth in an exciting final. Leck gained some consolation in the cadet boys event, beating team-mate Alan Caffery at the last stage. Andy Lebutt (Colebridge) took the veteran singles title, while John Ludford (Kingshurst) had a magnificent win over Phil Paine in the over 50's final. Other Winners: Mens Restricted: Alan Jones beat Chris Burgess 11-7, 4-11, 8-11, 11-6, 11-9, Women's Restricted: Turner beat Dickens 11-9, 11-8, 13-15, 11-4, Womens Doubles: Julie Richardson/Tracy Fletcher beat Turner/Dickens 12-10, 11-6, 11-7, Men's Over 60's: Alan Healey beat Bert Banks 11-7, 11-8, 7-11, 11-7, Veterans Doubles: Alan Jones/Mike Bishop beat Sweeney/Paine 11-7, 12-10, 11-6, Junior Girls Singles: Pilgrim beat Stephanie Hawkins 11-7, 11-1, 11-8, Junior Boys Restricted: Caffery beat Edward Freeman 8-11, 11-5, 9-11, 11-9, 11-9, Junior Girls Restricted: Hawkins beat Kelly-Jane Walden 19-17, 8-11, 11-5, 9-11, 14-12, Cadet Girls Singles: Pilgrim beat