

Guernsey miss out on blue riband titles

Table Tennis

by Rob Batiste

GUERNSEY remain the dominant force in CI table tennis but the two blue-riband events – the men's and women's singles – remain the property of Jersey.

Phil Ogier played his part in a superbly entertaining men's clash but Jersey's new Polish recruit, Marcin Jurkiewicz, proved simply too good at the Guernsey Table Tennis Centre and won by four games to one.

Kay Chivers, meanwhile, was left kicking herself for finding her best form in the veterans' singles in which she beat old foe Kay Le Fevre, having earlier succumbed to the same player in the main match.

Chivers, who lost both finals to Le Fevre in 2005 but then went on to defeat her in the team match, knew where she had gone wrong and explained the transformation.

'I didn't put so much chop on the ball and floated it a bit more and was able to get in [to the table].

'It would have been nice to win both, but last year I lost both, so there was an improvement.

'She's not easy to play against . . . not my favourite player.'

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Ogier could well say the same thing about Jurkiewicz, a fresh-faced newcomer so light on his feet there was a touch of the Ali shuffle in the way he floated around the table.

In winning the Guernsey title Ogier apologised for spoiling the spectators' fun by keeping it tight to keep Peter Bretel in check.

He might have been best served to have repeated the tactics against Jurkiewicz, because too often he was drawn into wonderfully flowing slugging rallies away from the table and won very few.

To his credit, Ogier made a fist of things having been swept

aside in the first two games to four and six.

Ogier took the third 11-9 having led 6-0, but the fourth and fifth games both went Jurkiewicz's way to 10.

It was a fine match, but arguably no better than the veteran men's singles clash between Mark Pipet and Eugene Ellis.

Since they discovered a new table tennis life begins at 40, the two have dominated the competition, appearing either side of the net on no fewer than eight occasions.

Pipet had won five of the seven before this latest success, which was achieved 11-9 in the deciding seventh with a cruel serve that clipped the edge of the table and dived to the floor. Ellis had no chance.

It was the second time in the evening Pipet had put one over the exuberant left-hander, Pipet and Dawn Morgan having wrested the mixed doubles title away from Ellis and Dawn Buckley.

'We weren't afraid to trade with them,' said Pipet, who said the only difference between the win and the 2005 defeat was 'the result'.

It was the 10th time Pipet and his sister-in-law have won the mixed trophy, having claimed the first in 1989.

By the end of the evening Guernsey had won 11 of the 18 titles at stake, four of them to Alice Loveridge who won three age-group singles and teamed up with Chivers to win the doubles.