

BDTTL Tournament Preview 2022

With two full days and a Finals night of table tennis ahead of us we all know that not every event will go to the form book, so here is our guide to the likely front runners in each of the main events.

Saturday Events

Fambridge Trophy – Division 4 players

This year being played in preliminary round robin groups and then knockout stage – so the key protagonists will be warmed up for the knockout matches so it is hard to see past the top seeds in this one. Mike Burton (1) and his dogged defensive style would seem the most likely winner, although my money would be on St Lawrence's Steve King (2) for an upset here. I have King to play the dark horse Mitch Davies (3) in the final, and I also expect Karen Braney to do well and perhaps upset the seedings.

Dan Richardson Trophy – Div 2-4 Players

Always the most competitive event, with 35+ entrants this year. Holder Barrie Delf (1) is top seed but I do not see Barry toppling the Woodham duo of Sanjay Saptarshi (3) and Dan Piggott (2). Saptarshi is the stand out player this year, although Piggott is very familiar with the Saptarshi Shuffle and has already beaten him once this year. So for me Saptarshi to be victorious, with good showings by Delf, Piggott, and West Maldon's David Gatheral (4), and Woodham's Tony Bonicci (5). Outside of the top seeds look for potential good progress from Sam Phillips, Luca Bailey, and Ken Sheard, and potential upsets from Peter Chastain and David Meah.

Mixed Open Singles – All expect Men's Seeds

Another big field with over 40 entries. No seeding for this one, just a straight draw so much less predictable. However, the Cold Norton duo of Eric Green and Sam Lowman look the most likely winners, with Maldon's Steve Whiteley and Mapledene's Colin Chatfield easily backable. Of course you can't rule out Sanjay Saptarshi from upsetting the Div One apple cart. So for this one, with a fair wind and a favourable draw I am plumping for Eric Green to come out on top.

Handicap Singles

45+ entries for this one, and handicaps have been updated for all and look well thought out although you can never please everyone. At the lower end of handicaps watch out for Phil West (+9), and Karen Braney (+7) with their good head starts. Jean Chasmer (+2) has been in excellent form of late and may upset some higher rated players based off this handicap. At the top end perhaps Steve Whiteley (-12) might fancy his chances in this one! On a limb and a prayer – but I'm going for Luca Bailey (-3), excellent fitness for the late finish.

Handicap Doubles

Drawn on day – pot luck!

Sunday Events

Men's Singles

Daniel Young (1) is the current holder, and with his recent victory at the Chelmsford Closed it is difficult to see beyond Daniel retaining his crown. Lots will have their say of course and we expect matches of the highest calibre in this event. Duncan Taylor (2) will be out to avenge his defeat to Young in the Chelmsford semi-final, and Lee McHugh (8) will be looking to book a final spot for the first time in Burnham. However for me Keith Adams (3) has been in excellent form of late and if Daniel is to be dethroned then I see Mr Adams performing this role. Others to watch out for will be the ever young John Poysden (5) who has barely lost a match all season, Gary Young (8) who always goes far in these tournaments, and from Div 2 perhaps Sanjay Saptarshi will ruffle a few tail feathers.

Women's Singles

Top seed and current holder Dawn Baldry (1) from Maldon TTC is the odds-on favourite for this title. Although the battle to challenge Dawn in the final will be hard fought with Andrea Alleyne (2), Karen Braney, and Jean Chasmer (3) all in with more than a fighting chance.

Men's Doubles

There are excellent pairings in this event and it will be fun to watch how they develop. At the top end of the seedings any one of the top 5 or 6 pairs could win this one. Keith Adams & Gary Young (1) start out as top seeds, with Duncan Taylor & wingman Kevin Read (2) not far behind them. Personally I think the youth and exuberance of new pairing Daniel Young and Sam Lowman (4) may be the one to watch, and this is where my money falls. Other pairings that may cause a seeding upset would be Eric Green and Bruce Kettle, and Ian Wall & Chris Ballard.

Women's Doubles

Will Ella Sach be able to repeat her success from the Chelmsford Open? Ella is paired with Andrea Alleyne this time and they will be a good bet to make it to the final. Veteran campaigners Dawn Baldry & Shirley Carroll will be looking to gain revenge over Ella for that Chelmsford defeat and I expect them to go all the way here.

Mixed Doubles

There will be 9 pairings on show and some great combos to watch. Top seeds are Duncan Taylor & Andrea Alleyne (1) and they would seem the best equipped to win this one. However regular in-season pairing Dawn Baldry and Colin Napper (2) may have the playing experience to overcome the odds. Of the other couples I will be keeping a close eye on Ella Sach & Lee McHugh who I think may surprise us all – and I predict a non-seed winner in this event!

Veterans Singles – Over 40s

So many of our top players fit into this category so the story will be similar to the Men's event, despite the 37 entries – but with so many other events that day perhaps fitness and fatigue will play a large part in proceedings. Top seed is the very fit Duncan Taylor (1) but he will have stiff opposition from the Fambridge trio of Keith Adams (2), John Poysden (4), and Gary Young (5). For me Keith Adams is the form guy and will take this one. Watch out for some seed upsets from the likes of George Reeves, Colin Chatfield and Sanjay Saptarshi.

Vet Doubles – Over 40s

15 pairings, some new and some old, compete in this competition. It's no surprise that the top seeds in the open doubles are also top seeds in the greying category – Keith Adams & Gary Young (1) – if they fail to live up to their top billing in the open event then I suspect they will romp home in this one. They will yet again be hard pushed by the second seeds and doubles specialists Duncan Taylor & Kevin Read (2). Outside of the formal seeds Steve Muth and George Reeves look an interesting combo and could be the apple cart upsetters.

Over 60s Singles

A nice even 20 competitors for this one, but just one winner. Eric Green (1), and the ever young John Poysden (2) are the stand-out players here, but the cast features several top players and they won't have it all their own way. Bruce Kettle (3) and George Reeves (4) make up the seeds and they should feature deep into the competition. Mapledene's John Monk has been on good form recently so perhaps he will break the seedings in this one. John Poysden for the golden crown in this one, to match his golden suntan!