Under 21 GC World Champs – Day 1

Everyone was at Cairnlea at 7.45am ready for their hit up before an 8am start. The first round included lots of top matches that provided interest. The first 15 minutes of play was full of nervous mistakes but after that the quality was higher than any previous event.

Felix Webby was the pick of the players in his first match, winning 7-2, 7-4 against Hemi McLaren. Angus Coulter made one of the most impressive World Championship debuts I have seen to stretch defending champion Josh Freeth who won 7-4, 7-5. Angus followed this with a 7-2, 7-2 win against Ali Kamal who is playing in his first tournament. Ali had won his first match against Kaleb Small 5-7, 7-2, 7-5.

NZ Open Champion Edmund Fordyce took 3 hours to beat Connell Leahy in straight games. George Coulter won in 3 against Lachy Hughes in a match where both players shot well, but took position poorly.

Jack Williams had what may go down as the most impressive shot of all time when he “jumped” over a ball in hoop 4 from corner 2. Despite this, he lost to Caitlin Smith in straight games – a really good win for the bottom seeded Caitlin. Jack bounced back with a 3 game win against Omar El Said.

Jakob Smith had an excellent win against Charlie Sharpe, but Charlie bounced back to beat Nadine El Menoufi 7-6, 7-6. Jason Hodgett won both his games to end the day undefeated.

The manager has changed the format from 2 rounds per day for each block to 3 rounds today for blocks 2 and 4 followed by 3 rounds tomorrow for everyone.

In block two, Edward Wilson finished the day on 3 match wins, including beating both Hemi McLaren and Ahmed El Nahas – he is now in excellent shape to make the knockout. Felix Webby also finished with 3 wins, despite dropping a game to rapidly improving Grace Mohi.

Block 4 ended with George Coulter on 3 wins and a surprise loss for the top Egyptian player Mohamed Rashad against Jeff Gatchell. The final match of the day ended at 3.45 and was another upset with James Gumbrell beating Lachy Hughes 7-5, 2-7, 7-6.

Some of the entrants to the main event qualifier arrived today and were able to use all 12 of the free lawns from 3.45 onwards – indeed 5 lawns were empty by 2pm.

Day 2 starts at 8am tomorrow.

Chris