

Report for the Southland Times

Southland Open Snooker Title to Alan Gill.

The 2009 Gore RSA Southland Snooker Open will long be remembered for the many upsets that led to Alan Gill (Dunedin) winning his first title since the 2000 City of Invercargill Open more than nine years ago. He had previously won this title in 1995 and 1999 and been runner-up in the inaugural event in 1991. Gill had won the City of Invercargill Open on four occasions but since 2001 had played in very few tournaments until 2006 and only since then as a "player to make up the numbers."

His opponent in the final, held late last Sunday afternoon at the Gore RSA, Wayne Elliott (Invercargill) was a late entry and a reserve player only, he joined the field of 35 with a day to spare with the late withdrawal of an Auckland player. The events that followed were beyond any reasonable prediction.

In the round of 16, Gill defeated young Gore Star, Shannon Swain after struggling to make the playoffs as the 14<sup>th</sup> qualifier. Meanwhile, Swain was 3<sup>rd</sup> top qualifier and was playing a confident brand of positive Snooker but was undone by the miserable and frustrating tactics of Gill.

In the Quarterfinals, Top qualifier and tournament favourite Gary Gillard (Christchurch) found himself 0-2 down to Elliott and although he fought back to level up at 2-2, Elliott got going again and won the deciding frame. Lee Barris (Bluff) upset more fancied Jason Todd (Oamaru) 3-1 and Gill then surprisingly beat Dave Witehira (Christchurch) 2006 Open winner, and a player everyone except Gill saw as a semi-finalist. Jimmy Ryan (Bluff) beat his son 3-2 in another close family affair.

The semi-finals saw Elliott 0-2 down to Barris and when it appeared all over, Elliott suddenly found his game return and he won the next 3 frames to reach the final. Gill reversed an earlier loss to Jimmy Ryan in the Section play to reach the final, full of confidence.

The final then proved to be an anti-climax with Gill gaining control early and giving Elliott few chances to get into the match.

## RESULTS

Last 16 matches

G Gillard beat R Dawson 3-0, W Elliott beat S White 3-1, L Barris beat C Bradbury 3-0, J Todd beat K Wright 3-1, A Gill beat S Swain 3-1, D Witehira beat T Sherriff 3-0, J Ryan beat S Bond 3-2, D Ryan beat K Brooks 3-2.

Quarterfinals

Elliott beat Gillard 3-2, Barris beat Todd 3-1, Gill beat Witehira 3-0, J Ryan beat D Ryan 3-1.

Semi-finals

Elliott beat Barris 3-2, Gill beat Ryan 3-1.

Final

Gill beat Elliott 4-0, 19-60, 25-62(33), 31-61, 31-84.

Championship Plate - S Swain beat K Wright 2-0

RSA Consolation - G Roy beat B Edhouse 2-0

Consolation Plate - P Normanton beat H White 2-1

High Breaks - D Ryan 51(Cl) 46, 47, S Swain 51(Cl), G Gillard 48, 65.

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