

Seventeen-year-olds Brad Huggell and Andrew McEwan demonstrated their increasing stature by making their mark at the Braintree Table Tennis League individual preliminary events at the weekend.

Huggell won the major plaudits for beating two seeds in the men's singles while McEwan and his partner Andy Doshier upset predictions by knocking the holders and No.1 seeds Ian and Peter Hayden out of the men's doubles.

Huggell's excellent win in the group stage over No.3 seed Paul Davison upset the order of things in the men's singles.

It meant that he was protected from meeting a seeded player in the second round while Davison was called upon to face Gary Young, the equal No.5 seed.

But fired up by his earlier reverse, Davison was in determined mood, removed Young and went on to put out his Bocking teammate and fellow No.3 seed Kevin Gowlett in the quarter final.

Huggell meanwhile beat Ian Whiteside then came from two games down to conquer last year's runner-up Ian Hayden.

At finals night tomorrow (Thursday), Huggell will be faced with the even sterner task of a semi final meeting with former champion Steve Kerns who had earlier been severely tested by McEwan before coming through 7-11, 11-8, 11-7, 12-10.

Kerns booked his semi final place with a quarter final win over Ken Lewis.

Davison will face champion Peter Hayden who had a comfortable win over Andy Doshier in his quarter final.

Doshier and McEwan's win over the Haydens (11-5, 3-11, 14-12, 12-10) earned them a place in the final against Davison and Gowlett, winners over Young and Lewis who were themselves stretched to 11-9 in the fifth game by Kerns and Hudgell in the second round.

If Hayden and Kerns make it through to the men's final it will be a repeat of the veterans' singles which will be played earlier in the evening.

Kerns put out the older Hayden in the semi final while Peter Hayden again met Doshier and again dealt with him in straight games.

The men's doubles will be McEwan's fourth appearance on finals night. He is through to the junior singles, where he faces Philip Lawson, the division one singles, which will be against Lewis, and the junior doubles where he and Lawson take on Stevie Pell and Adam Pitt.

Lawson is in action three times as he also won his way through to the restricted singles final with a semi final win over Duncan Elloy.

He faces No.1 seed Mark Lewis who needed five games to come past Mike Johnston.

The division three singles between Stuart Ascott and Chris Ciniglio will also be played on finals night but the other two divisional events were settled at the weekend.

Johnston beat Robin Armstrong in the division two final while in the division four singles Peter Foster saved four match points before coming past Adam Clift 11-6, 9-11, 8-11, 14-12, 11-8.

Three other events were also decided at the weekend.

The over 50s singles was won by Ken Lewis, the holder, over Ian Whiteside, while the consolation singles was won by Larte Lawson. He had a win in the final over Keith Martin who had earlier scored an excellent win over first division player Laurie Sapiano.

The handicap singles as usual produced some of the more interesting matches before the trophy ended up with Duncan Elloy. He had a comfortable win over Mark Lewis in the final but was stretched considerably further by Trevor Carter in the semi final before emerging 11-3, 12-10, 9-11, 7-11, 13-11.