



Inter-Province Duo Emerge as Winners of Mixed Doubles

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(By Natasha Carr-Harris)

2018 Butterfly Canadian Junior Championships

Once thought obsolete, the mixed doubles event has been reinstated for the 2018 Championships due to a planned reinstatement of the event for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

In the end, it was the pairing of **Jeremy Hazin** (ON) and Ivy Liao (BC) who emerged as the gold medal winners, defeating the Ontario duo of Terence Yeung (ON) and Joyce Xu (ON) 3-1.

The two were acquaintances for years before growing closer throughout chance encounters at various tournaments and a shared ambition: qualifying for the Youth Olympics. “I consider Ivy to be my very good friend [now]—especially after winning,” Hazin remarks.

When asked how they felt entering the match, Liao touches on the traditional pitfalls of the doubles game. “I felt nervous—more nervous than [playing] singles because in singles I can control the game.” In doubles, however, each player relinquishes half of their control to their partner.

The two concur that the key, then, to combining their dexterity as individual players, is trust. “Throughout the game, Jeremy really set my mind,” says Liao. Hazin’s next remark confirms this. “Before the match, I told [Ivy] to pretend it’s going to go all the way [to] the fifth match.” He says he encouraged her to foster a mentality of not underestimating their opponents.

Both will play their respective singles categories in the next few days. “I just want to play my own game, bring what I practiced to the court. I want to be able to leave this tournament saying I tried my best [and] put it all out there,” Liao says of the upcoming event. Hazin is unapologetically frank when he says he wishes to defend his title as champion. “But no guarantees, I just have to do my best,” he concludes modestly.