

REPORT ON KENT JUNIOR FIRST TEAM MATCHES ON 25 OCTOBER 2008

The County Championships kicked off to a good start for the Kent Junior 1st team at the Howard Table Tennis Centre in Rainham on 25th October. Being in division 1B it was going to be more difficult this year, but the team, consisting of Jide Owolabi, Ross Wilson, Philip Thomas, James Glass, Harry Lumb, Kirsty Wilson and Jasmin Ould rose to the challenge.

Their first match was against Surrey 1. Both girls played brilliantly and won their matches in fine fashion against Lucy Burks and Fei Fei Pe, Jasmin Ould pulling out some outstanding shots to beat Fei Fei in the 5th. The boys had a harder task. Jide beat Myles Collins, and then Ross faced Wing Yung Chan. He was 2-1 down in legs and in the fourth leg lost 12-10 in a nail biting game, on an edge. Phil Thomas then had to play Michael Ho who was on good form and narrowly lost out. Wing Yung Chan then came through against Jide and Phil had to face Myles Collins. Myles played well and beat Phil and then it all hinged on Ross playing Michael Ho. Ross lost the first leg and things looked bleak but then he came through to win the second leg. The next two legs were very close with some wonderful top spinning rallies away from the table but Ross came through to clinch the overall win for the team of 6-4.

The next match was against Middlesex. Kirsty played brilliantly, dismissing Dipa Tamang and Charleigh Kirby. Jasmin also swept aside Dipa not phased by her pimples at all, and then had a mighty 5 setter against Charleigh with some wonderful rallies away from the table. The left-handed Charleigh Kirby clinched it but it was so close. Ross then faced Raphael Marom and had a similar match to Jasmin against Charleigh, narrowly losing 12-10 in the 5th. Igor Morais, in fine form, beat James Glass and Ross. Jide had to face Myles and came through and beat him, but then Raphael proved just too strong for him and Myles came through against James.

The final match for the day was against Hertfordshire. Again, the girls played exceptionally well, both having good wins. Hertfordshire's number one girl Hayley Potts could not play as she had obtained a shoulder injury. All the boys performed brilliantly, Harry and Jide winning both of theirs convincingly. Guy Ben Araya came through narrowly in the fourth to beat Ross and then Ross went on to beat their 3rd player. The overall score was 9-1 to us – a good solid team effort.

There is everything to play for in the next set of matches which take place on the 21st March 2009.