

LEWIS GRAY PLAYS WELL AT CADET 6 NATIONS

Lewis Gray, the new national under 14 boys' champion from Benenden, performed creditably while representing England 2 in the prestigious 6 (European) Nations Cadet (under 15) Competition held at Lilleshall National Sports Centre, Shropshire from 19th - 22nd June.

In the boys' team event the Angley School, Cranbrook pupil and Weald TT Club member won 4 out of 10 singles, beating one out of two players from Denmark, Germany, Sweden and France, but losing both of his singles against Holland.

However, he saved his best form for the boys' singles 6 player group, winning 3 out of his 5 matches to come equal second with two other players, but unfortunately just failing to qualify for the knockout as he came fourth on games average. Lewis had an outstanding 11-13, 13-15, 11-9, 11-7, 11-9 victory over the European no.12 cadet, Enzo Angles (France) after being two games behind. He also beat Carl Akerland (Sweden) in 5 games, Cosmin Stan (Holland) in straight games, as well as going very close, 12-10, 6-11, 11-9, 7-11, 7-11, with the group winner, Julian Mohr (Germany). His other loss was 3-1 to Nicky Marx (Denmark).

After the competition Lewis, who still has another season in this age group, commented, "When I'm on my best form I think I can beat the top Europeans!" England captain Alan Cooke was pleased: "Lewis was good on his first major international competition playing for England. He played well and sensibly."

Earlier, in the Luxembourg Youth Championships (from 13-16 June), Weald TTC, Cranbrook team mate Yolanda King found it tough going in her first major international tournament for England, winning 2 out of 7 in the cadet girls singles, to come 18th overall. The disappointed 13 year old said, "I could have won more matches even if I had been on only average form!" But England captain Katy Parker commented, "It is not easy playing abroad in your first big event, and Yolanda probably tried too hard. Her play was up and down throughout the competition but she was a good team member and will do better in the future".