

UPDATE ON ENGLAND JUNIOR RANKINGS OF LOCAL PLAYERS FROM KEN MUHR

Yolanda King, 14, of the Angley School, Cranbrook based Weald TT Club, moves up one place, from 11 to 10, to enter the top ten junior (under 18) girls for the first time, in the latest England junior ranking list published this week. And Yolanda, from Hastings, is only 1 place and an infinitesimal 5 computer points behind her nearest rival, Lucy Davidson (Derbyshire) in both the junior and the cadet (under 15) rankings, just trailing Davidson at no.3 to no.2 in the younger age group.

Fellow Weald Club member, Lewis Gray, 14 from Benenden, an Angley School pupil, retains his position as England no.2 cadet, but moves up one place to no.20 in the junior boys.

Dartford's Helshan Weerasinghe, a member of the South East Regional Squad which trains at Angley school, moves up from no.3 to top the under 13 England ratings, while in the cadet boys he jumps from no.9 to no.6.

In the cadet girls' rankings, Jasmin Ould of the Byng Hall Club, Tunbridge Wells, moves from 12 to no.11. She does not train with SE squad members, but other squad members are featured strongly: Kirsty Wilson from the Howard Club, Gillingham is no.14 junior girl, her brother Ross is no.12 cadet boy, Lauren Beaumont from the Howard Club is no.13 under girl and Jack Bennett from Polegate East Sussex, is no.21 under 13 boy.

A feature of these England rankings is that several more Weald Club members now appear. Apart from Lewis Gray and his sister Daniella, who is now no.51 in the cadet girls, Jamie Pryor, is, at no 236 for the first time in the under 13 boys, the highest ranking local Weald Club, Cranbrook youngster since James Gibbs was no.100 in the same age category over 2 years ago. Aaron Serfaty and George Cox enter the cadet boys at no. 315 and 450 respectively. Weald Club member Dan Lawrence, from Tonbridge, is no.35 in the under 13 list.

Club coach Ken Muhr commented, "It is great that some more local youngsters are starting to make inroads into the England rankings. There is of course a huge gap between them and fellow members Lewis and Yolanda, but if they work hard I am sure that they will reduce it."

As a talent identification event London and South Regional cadet trials at Kemnal Technical College near Orpington over the weekend were not appropriate for the top England youngsters, but several others from the SE regional squad attended. The top 6 players in each category qualified the national trials in Grantham next year, while the next 6 will be reserves.

Katie Wilson (Isle of Sheppey) won the under 11 girls' singles, with Jessica Wen (Ashford) second and Holly Holder (East Sussex) 3rd. Lauren Beaumont (Gillingham) won the under girls. In the under 15 girls, Megan Sullivan (Sevenoaks) came 5th, and Clair Harvey (Meopham) was 6th.

Jack Bennett (Polegate, East Sussex) was 2nd in the under 13 boys, and Dan Lawrence (Tonbridge) came 7th. Daniel Pound (Sussex) came 9th, and Jamie Pryor (Cranbrook) 19th. Jack's brother Josh Bennett was 6th in the under 11 boys, Rory Easton (Sevenoaks and a member of the Byng Hall Club, Tunbridge Wells) was 13th, and Jackson Wen (Ashford) 18th. 42 players took part in the cadet boys, with Jamie Dunleavy (Sevenoaks) finishing 12th and Bradley Proctor (Ashford) 16th. George Cox (Cranbrook) also won a few matches in this section.

Ken Muhr, as South East Regional Coaching Chairman, remarked, "I coached Steve Giles, the father of Marcus from Kingston, Surrey, who won the under 11 boys' singles, at the Gunnersbury Triangle Club, Acton, London W3 over 25 years ago!"

Father and son Weald Club members, Diccon & Lewis Gray, represented Tunbridge Wells Club Byng Hall in the British League last weekend. They both won two singles in defeating London Progress 3rd team 8-0, but while Diccon also won his two against Bedford Modern School, Lewis narrowly lost his 2 singles, though his team still won 5-3.

This weekend, Lewis, and fellow SE regional squad members Ross Wilson, Helshan Weerasinghe and Jack Bennett will be attending England development squad training at the English Institute of Sport, Sheffield. New ETTA Regional Coach Alex Green will take the rest of the SE squad for Sunday training at Angley School, Cranbrook, with former Kent champion John Burleton supporting as player-coach.