

LEWIS GRAY SELECTED FOR ENGLAND

In a further advancement of their careers, Weald Table Tennis Club, Angley School, Cranbrook members Lewis Gray, 14 from Benenden and Yolanda King, just 14, from Hastings, who both attended England training last weekend, have been selected to represent England in the prestigious Stockton on Tees 4 Star Junior Open Championships on 15th and 16th November.

Lewis, England's top cadet (under 15), from Benenden, is a pupil of Angley School, a Sports College, and gets considerable support for his table tennis from the school. As well as flexible use of the table tennis facilities, including the opportunity to be trained by specialist coach Martin Jezisek in school time, Lewis has the use of a school laptop to keep up with homework while he is away and the occasional driver to get him to activities and rendezvous. He has attended 'Gifted & Talented' workshops at Angley.

Likewise, Yolanda, the current England schools' under 13 champion who celebrated her 14th birthday last Saturday, is well supported by St Bedes, an independent school near Hailsham, Sussex, to which she won a scholarship. St Bedes have planned a specific fitness programme, plus positive mental preparation, for her, while she has the opportunity for service practice in school time. In addition, former Sussex (and latterly Kent) and England cricketer Alan Wells, is a keen table tennis enthusiast who runs a club at the school and will give Yolanda individual practice.

Weald Club coach Ken Muhr commented: "Table tennis is very skilled and demanding sport at the high level but has relatively low status in this country. Therefore the support of parents, schools and coaches, as well as strong personal commitment, are vital if young players are to succeed. Lewis and Yolanda are very fortunate to have the right back-up of supportive parents and schools."