

## **LEWIS GRAY RECLAIMS ENGLAND CADET TOP SPOT & BREAKS THROUGH INTO JUNIOR TOP 10**

Following his triumph in recently winning the England Cadet Masters competition and performing well in the European Cadet Six Nations tournament in Sweden, 15 year old Lewis Gray from Benenden has regained the top position he last held in October, in the latest England cadet (under 15) boys' ranking list published this week. The Angley School, Cranbrook pupil moves up from no.3, displacing Zak Zilesnick (Middlesex) and Sam Walker (Nottinghamshire).

Gray also breaks into the England Junior (under 18) top 10 for the first time, taking a huge leap from no. 17 to no.5. Weald Club colleague Yolanda King, 14, a pupil of St Bede's School, Hailsham, retains her position as England no.2 cadet and no.6 junior girl. Therefore both Weald Club players are very well placed in the national junior rankings for next season, as they move out of the cadet age group.

Lewis Gray commented: "My coach at the club, Ken Muhr, always said that I had to get into the England junior top 10 whilst I was still a cadet, if I was going to be any good as an international player!"

He has also been selected for two major schools events. He will represent English Schools under 16 boys at the Schools' Invitation International in Largs, Scotland on 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> June. And he will captain the England - South East team at the The UK School Games on 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> September at Cardiff, Newport & Swansea. Yolanda King will play for England – South East girls in the same event.

Meanwhile, at the University of East Anglia, Norwich over the weekend, another Weald Club, Cranbrook, member, 11 year old Dan Lawrence from Tonbridge, did well to reach the under 12 boys' singles quarter-finals of the National Under 11/12/13/14 Championships. Although he lost 5-11, 4-11, 11-5, 4-11 to Jack Bennett of Polegate, East Sussex, who also regularly attends South East High Performance Centre training sessions at Angley School, Cranbrook, there were plenty of spectacular topspin loop-the-loop rallies.

Bennett in turn lost 11-8, 5-11, 9-11, 11-7, 6-11 in the semi-finals to Sam Mabey (Northamptonshire) the eventual event winner, but he had good chances. Mabey struggled with his service and bustling, all out, attacking style, but in the third game when it was 9all, Bennett served off and then missed a fairly easy kill to lose what was a crucial game. Jack also reached the last 16 of the under 13 boys' singles.

Bennett's brother Josh, likewise a member of the SE Performance Centre, had also impressed in reaching the semi-finals of the under 11 boys' singles. But, like his brother, he also dropped what might have been a vital 3<sup>rd</sup> game from 10-8 up, going down 7-11, 12-10, 11-13, 5-11 to the eventual title winner, Matthew Leete (Lincolnshire).

One national title did go to a Kent player. Ross Wilson from the Howard Club, Gillingham, who in the past regularly trained at Angley School, Cranbrook, partnered Igor Morais (Middlesex) to lift the under 14 boys' doubles. In an exciting and

entertaining final, they defeated the Middlesex pairing of Zak Zilesnick and Connor Neenan, 9-11, 10-12, 11-8, 11-8, 11-8.