

SAILING STAR SARAH CHEQUES IN WITH LEWIS GRAY

Benenden's rising table tennis star Lewis Gray met Double Olympic gold medallist Sarah Webb when she visited P&O Ferries to mark the start of the second year of a sponsorship deal for promising Kent athletes.

Sarah presented Lewis with a cheque worth £3,000, which is the second instalment in a five year programme that aims to support five young Kent athletes in their ambitions for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Sailing superstar Sarah won gold in the Yngling class at the 2004 Olympic Games, with Shirley Robertson and Sarah Ayton - the squad famously tagged 'three blondes in a boat' by the media. She won gold again at the Beijing Olympics in 2008, and got this year off to an award winning start with an OBE in the Honours List.

Simon Johnson, director of tourist sales and marketing at P&O Ferries, said: "In addition to handing over the sponsorship money and some new sports kit, Sarah offered the athletes an insight into what it takes to hit the summit of sporting success. We appreciate her taking time to visit us and help inspire the next generation of sport stars."

The athletes sponsored under the scheme are:

Lewis Gray, 15, from Benenden (table tennis)
Hannah Moon, 18, from Deal (rowing)
Vicky Silk, 17, from Folkestone (athletics)
Chloe Martin, 18, from Tonbridge (sailing)
Nathan Milgate, 21, from Herne Bay (shooting.)

The squad members were identified through their national coaching bodies, working closely with the county council's Sports Development Unit. The P&O Ferries Talented Athlete Programme is part of the company's £250,000 sponsorship of Kent County Council Sport, Leisure and Olympics Service.

