

Bradford (Heaton) Junior Open - October 2011

Derbyshire Juniors taste Yorkshire success

Saturday 15th October saw three promising Derbyshire Juniors travel to Yorkshire to compete in the Bradford (Heaton) Junior Open.

The three, Libby Lievers (8), Joe Harrison (12) and Oliver Hall (9), all Brampton Manor players, came away as U11 Girls Champion, U13 Boys Plate winner and U11 Boys Runner-Up respectively.

Libby set the ball rolling with accomplished displays and particularly consistent serves against her opponents in a round robin competition. Libby's deep, high serves caused trouble all day and in the final match against Pontefract girl Eve Perrin she held her nerve in the sub-tropical heat of Heaton Squash Club's court two to close out the match 11-8, 5-11, 11-8, 5-11, 11-9.

Next up was Oliver, who despite his occasional frustration with his own game and several refereeing calls produced gutsy performances when it mattered, winning his final match of another round robin competition 11-9, having previously posted 11-5, 2-11, 13-15, 11-8 scores. With only two national ranking places between Oliver and his final match opponent, Northumbrian Andrew Shipley, this promised to be a close match and so proved to be. A previous meeting between the two at Chapel Allerton had ended in a 3-2 win for Oliver, having come from 2-0 down, and again he found himself having to win the final two games to take the match. A special mention must go to Oliver for having volunteered a double bounce to an unsighted marker at 9-8 in game 5, before finally taking the last two points legitimately.

Player of the day, Joe Harrison, crowned the afternoon's work. Despite having been picked off by the very hard-hitting eventual finalist Elliot Ridge in his opening match to go down in straight games, Joe progressed smoothly through his next two matches to set up a Plate Final against Charlie Mason of Manchester. Played in a great spirit, the final was decided 11-8, 11-7, 11-7 in Joe's favour. Both finalists produced steady, tenacious squash and gave 100% effort, each pulling off winners worthy of players much higher up the national rankings. However, it's not without good reason that Joe occupies the number one slot for Derbyshire at U13 level and with his superior court-craft and tireless running he eventually wore his opponent down to take the honours.

So, all in all, some promising performances from three youngsters who are relatively new to the junior open circuit and have much work to do, but never looked out of their depth.