

EDGBASTON JUNIOR OPEN 1ST/2ND FEBRUARY 2014

The competition, which took place at the prestigious, and recently fully-refurbished Edgbaston Priory Club attracted entries from four Derbyshire juniors, amongst a field of talented juniors from across the Midlands, East Anglia and the North West.

Joe Harrison (Brampton Manor), playing his first national sanctioned event at U17 finished a very creditable 5th in an exceedingly competitively fought age group. Beating the highly rated Cambridgeshire county champion Gregory Goodwin, along the way, Joe exhibited mature squash, well beyond his 14 years, and did himself and his county proud. He certainly provided a number of far more experienced and older competitors with a wake-up call. Joe moves up from U15 in a few months' time and if he can continue to play the mature, thoughtful squash he played all weekend, he is sure to provide quite a few upsets.

Oliver Lowe (Duffield) was also very well placed in his age group, eventually finishing 4th to the more experienced Max Sharpe in his final match. Ollie, playing with his usual endeavour and enthusiasm, lost 3-1 but contested every game against a hard hitting opponent who gave little in the way of cheap points. It was clear to all who were watching that Oliver enjoyed providing stiff opposition to a much more experienced competitor who took maximum advantage from his extra year playing tournament squash. Oliver played well all week-end and can now look forward to his final year at U15 with a good degree of confidence that he will achieve good results. As usual, he was a credit to his club and county.

Derbyshire were represented in the Girls U13 event by Hannah Hicken (Brampton Manor). In a very evenly matched competition, Hannah achieved her seeding with a hard fought 3rd placed finish. Hannah, who conceded tournament experience to both opponents who finished above her, found herself up against competitors who routinely achieve high placed tournament finishes. However, she was unfazed and did her best to keep her opponents on their toes. Hannah was the only girl from Derbyshire in this tournament but despite that she applied herself in every respect, stayed focussed on the task in hand and conducted herself in a mature and respectful manner.

The U13 Boys competition was contested on behalf of Derbyshire by Oliver Hall (Brampton Manor). In a tournament which contained two very highly fancied boys playing in their home club, Oliver had to overcome both of them if he was to win the event. In a 50 minute semi-final he beat Worcestershire county player Declan Bradley 3-2, and then only 90 minutes later found himself on court to play the final against Edgbaston club champion Harry Lucas. In his semi-final victory, Harry had played for 22 minutes, but Ollie made him play a full hour to claim his final victory, going down 3-2 in the match, 13-11 in the fifth game. Sixty minutes is a long time for U13 Boys to play each other and both players were a credit to the competition.