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## **OFFICIAL RFA End-of-Season NATIONAL RANKINGS**

London, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2015

There will be doubtless be dancing on the streets of West London – and perhaps some parts of Brazil – tonight, as the official RFA rankings (prepared by Dave Hebden) have confirmed that Dan Tristao ended the 2014/15 season on top of both the singles and doubles rankings.

Mind you, it could literally not have been closer between Dan and the other player who has been dominating championships over the last couple of years, Will Ellison. In the singles, for example, Dan was only 0.1 points ahead, while the difference was just 0.6 in the doubles.

In both sets of rankings, Dan Grant ended up in third position, and these three are now creating something of a gap between themselves and the chasing pack. In the singles rankings, fourth-placed James Toop is more than 25 points adrift of the man ahead of him, while only two other players are within 10 points of third place in the doubles rankings.

The biggest riser in the last 12 months has been Cambridge student Ben Beltrami, who's now jumped into the Top 10 in both singles and doubles. Also new in the singles Top 10 are David Butler and Richie Murby, while Ed Kay jumps five places to fourth in the doubles, and his fellow Light Blue Matt Shaw fills the final place in the top 10 doubles list.

However, perhaps the most notable newcomer in either list sits proudly at equal 65<sup>th</sup> in the doubles rankings. That may not sound that remarkable, but courtesy of a typically gutsy performance in the South West Open, Alexandra Steel has made history by becoming the only woman ever to feature in the national rankings.

## **CAMBRIDGE CUPPERS – a new format for team Fives?**

13<sup>th</sup> July 2015

'Cuppers Fives' – i.e. an inter-college competition – finally returned to Cambridge this season after more than a decade where the magnificent 1930s trophy remained uncontested. Organised by Wilson Lau the tournament attracted 7 college teams: Ben Beltrami's III from Selwyn, Jacob Ader's from Pembroke, Aurelien Gueroult's side from Corpus, Wilson Lau's from Trinity, Cameron Jenkins' side from Churchill, Ed Kay's from Emmanuel and Jacob Brubert's III from Queens'. Each team consisted of two gentlemen and one lady, otherwise two men and one woman!

The format of play was as follows: one game of singles each against their opposite number, followed by one game of doubles for each possible combination. So, one match featuring 1 & 2 against 1 & 2, one game 1 & 3 versus 1 & 3, and a further game 2 & 3 against 2 & 3. All games to 15.

In the final the team from Emmanuel College comprising Ed Kay, Laurence Cook and Georgina Shepherd beat their opponents from Queens' College – Jacob Brubert, Tom Bury and Sacha Hajnalcorob – by some 8 points.

Is this a new way forward for team Fives? Let us know what you think via the 'Contact Us' option.

## **SOUTH WEST OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Blundell's School, Tiverton, 12/13th July 2015

### **Brooks and Ellison sweep the board at the South West**

Organiser Wayne Enstone writes: This year's event drew another superb entry, with a mix of so many present- and ex-National Champions in attendance, covering our women's, men's, university and senior schools levels of fives.

With a good number of players travelling on the morning of the tournament, play started roughly on time, but unfortunately a power cut caused a delay of 50 minutes shortly after the first matches. It was in the second round that the fifth seed and five-times previous winner Hamish Buchanan was beaten by Julian Aquilina in a closely contested three-gamer. Also, Ed Hatton, the eighth seed, was beaten in a thrilling three-gamer by Antony Goodwin. Jim Hughes showed some vintage shot-play to push Theo Parker into the other three-gamer in this round.

That set the scene for four quarter-finals of good quality play, the 4 top seeds winning through to the semi-finals. The question was: could Ben Beltrami and Ed Kay upset the seeding? To answer that, while Ben produced some fine shots and played well above his age, Mr Ellison yet again produced those devastating winners when required to win the match. In the other semi, as much as Matt Cavanagh, twice a winner in this event, tried to outwit his younger opponent, he couldn't find the game to beat Ed Kay, who looked very impressive indeed.

The doubles began after the second round of singles and saw the first all women's partnership of Claire Knowles (present and 12-times national champion) and local player Alexandra Steel (current mixed doubles champion) play very well against John Beswick and Ed Hatton. However, John and Ed proved too experienced and won the match.

After his fine performances in the singles, Anthony Goodwin teamed up with fellow Derby Moor player Rob Whitehorn (National Schools' doubles champion) and beat the local pairing of 'Fists of fury' Dan Hill and Keith Kennerley to set up a match with the number one seeds Charlie Brooks (2013 and 2014 National Doubles winner) and the current champion Will Ellison.

Below them Alex Rew (Old Blundellian) and long-time partner Jim Hughes flew the flag for the SW by upsetting the seeding and beating the fourth seeds, Julian Aquilina and James Tilston, to move through to the semis.

In the lower half of the draw, Ben Beltrami (Present BUFS doubles champion) and Ed Kay (former BUCS doubles winner) moved convincingly through to the quarter-finals after beating the youngest pair, Jai Singh and Craig Baxter, who were both playing extremely well and showing great promise for the future. Ben and Ed then faced two experienced players, John Beswick (three-time National Doubles champion) and Ed Hatton. They had their opponents concerned in the second game, but the younger pair's fire power carried them through to the semis.

The last two pairs in the quarter-finals kept the most consistent scores of the day, all their games ending in 7 points. Once again there was a seeding upset with the once-invincible (eight-times National Doubles champions) Hamish Buchanan and Robin Perry losing in the third to 7 to Adam George and Theo Parker.

This set the scene for relatively late semis. Alex Rew and Jim Hughes had expended their energy in the previous match, and Charlie and Will were not showing any mercy – Will had a taste for the steak he had ordered, and so their match finished very quickly.

In complete contrast, the other semi was a 'battle royal' between the 'young guns' pairs, and what a pleasure it was to watch, thanks to the spirit in which it was played. Remarkably, Adam and Theo

were involved in their fourth and fifth 7-point games, but unfortunately it was not for them. Instead, their delighted opponents Ben and Ed could look forward to their first South West final on the Sunday morning.

Plate: After power cuts and three-game hold ups, President Bob Dolby very kindly organised the plate competitions. First, in the singles, Claire Knowles showed the form that has seen her win 12 National championships, with Brian Kirk unfortunately on the receiving end. Also, Alexandra Steel used her local knowledge to give a very creditable performance in the plate, losing narrowly. Birmingham University players Chris Davey and Dan Sorensen proved worthy opponents in their matches, but a lack of practice proved their downfall. Next year, they could be contenders?

At the end of the day, it was left to a rejuvenated Stuart Kirby to contest the Plate Final with Hamish Buchanan. This was new territory for Hamish, who has previously been used to the main draw final on Sunday morning. As always, Stuart showed great determination and resilience to give Hamish a very entertaining match, but Hamish produced too many championship shots to win his first Singles Plate.

In the Doubles Plate, Claire and Alexandra once again showed how the standard of women's fives has developed over the past few years, winning many rallies in their matches. All the pairs seemed very evenly matched and there were no easy games. In the final, Stuart Kirby, already very warm from the singles final, played with Chris Davey against Stuart's Derby Moor charges (and current schoolboys), Jai Singh and Craig Baxter. Stuart's energy levels seem endless and at match point, it looked as though Stuart and Chris had finally done enough for victory, only to find the younger pair had other ideas, miraculously turning the match in their favour and winning 16-14.

A short prize-giving for the Plate Doubles winners was a wonderful and fitting end to a very long day of fives for both players and spectators, before Saturday evening saw 26 sit down to the usual Butterleigh Inn meal and social catching-up. A toast was fittingly conducted in memory of ex-President Alastair Mackenzie and his great contribution to fives in general, especially his wonderful record as schoolmaster and fives coach at St Paul's School for so many decades.

Thus fully refreshed, the singles finalists Ed and Will were warmed up for the usual 10.30am start. Ignoring the scores, the final was a fascinating and exciting two-gamer. Will, it has to be said, looked very much in control of the first game, but Ed certainly extended him and most rallies were – surprisingly – extremely long, considering both players were attacking, their defence being top quality.

In the second game, the early rallies produced more even scoring, and at just 3-2 to Will, Ed really was in the match. Will's experience then kicked in and Ed, as he commented later, misjudged a few volleys and shots that could quite easily have produced a different outcome to the game. With the luxury of a 9-2 lead Will was able to resist Ed's come-back to 10-5 and close the game to win his fifth SW Championship.

After a short break, Ed and Will joined their partners, Ben and Charlie respectively, on court to contest the Doubles final. In the first game, there were some excellent rallies, with all players showing their fine hitting and retrieving prowess, but unfortunately for Ben and Ed, most rallies were won by Charlie and Will, taking the game 11-1.

The second game began like the first, but at 2-0 up Ben and Ed found the nicks that they can hit; and, at 2-2, this game looked as if it was going to be more evenly contested. However, Charlie and Will then seemed to go into overdrive and slowly built a lead that resulted in them winning 11-2, a fine performance. One had to feel for Ben and Ed, as they too put in a terrific performance, which indicates the quality of doubles is certainly on the rise.

The Sunday American Doubles tournament had eight players from Saturday playing a round-robin tournament of one game to 15 points. Alexandra Steel and Adam George won, but two of their three games went to 16 points, showing that the pairings were very even. Thanks must go to Keith Kennerley and Alexandra for their help organising this event.

This concluded the weekend and our President Bob Dolby duly awarded the winners their Dartington glasswear and cups. Finally, thanks go again to: Nigel Gordon (G6 Balls) for his continued sponsorship; Blundell's School for the use of courts and facilities; Chris Hedley-Dent for setting up their use; and, once again, Lesley Enstone and Lisa Beswick for their sterling work in providing us all with refreshments over the weekend. Think about joining us next year for a great weekend. All welcome!

## **Scores**

### **Singles**

First Round: J.Singh bt C.Knowles 11-3, 11-4; A.Goodwin bt K.Kennerley 11-2, 11-4; E.Hatton bt S.Kirby 11-0, 11-2; R.Perry bt C.Baxter 11-3, 11-0; R.Whitehorn bt A.Steel 11-0, 11-2; J.Hughes bt D.Sorensen 11-3, 11-0; T.Parker bt N.Geere 11-0, 11-1; A.Rew bt C.Davey 11-4, 11-3; A.George bt J.Milnes 11-2, 11-1; J.Tilston bt S.Watson 11-0, 11-7

Second Round: W.Ellison bt Singh 11-4, 11-1; Goodwin bt Hatton 11-8, 5-11, 11-8; J.Aquilina bt H.Buchanan 11-6, 6-11, 11-3; B.Beltrami bt Perry 11-2, 11-1; E.Kay bt Whitehorn 11-5, 11-3; Parker bt Hughes 11-9, 9-11, 11-3; George bt Rew 11-8, 11-4; M.Cavanagh bt Tilston 11-6, 11-1

Quarter-finals: Ellison bt Goodwin 11-4, 11-1; Beltrami bt Aquilina 11-5, 11-4; Kay bt Parker 11-5, 11-2; Cavanagh bt George 11-7, 11-3

Semi-finals: Ellison bt Beltrami 11-4, 11-4; Kay bt Cavanagh 11-3, 11-0

Final: Ellison bt Kay 11-2, 11-5

Plate: Buchanan bt Kirby 15-5

### **Doubles**

First Round: Goodwin & Whitehorn bt Hill & Kennerley 11-4, 11-5; Hughes & Rew bt Kirby & Davey 11-6, 11-9; Aquilina & Tilston bt Enstone & Watson 11-5, 11-7; Beltrami & Kay bt Baxter & Singh 11-5, 11-7; Beswick & Hatton bt Steel & Knowles 11-3, 11-4; George & Parker bt Geere & Sorensen 11-1, 11-1; Buchanan & Perry bt Kirk & Milnes 11-1, 11-5

Quarter-finals: Ellison & Brooks bt Goodwin & Whitehorn 11-1, 11-7; Hughes & Rew bt Aquilina & Tilston 12-10, 11-5; Beltrami & Kay bt Beswick & Hatton 11-5, 11-8; George & Parker bt Buchanan & Perry 11-7, 7-11, 11-7

Semi-finals: Ellison & Brooks bt Hughes & Rew 11-2, 11-0; Beltrami & Kay bt George & Parker 11-7, 11-7

Final: Ellison & Brooks bt Beltrami & Kay 11-1, 11-2

Plate: Baxter & Singh bt Davey & Kirby 15-13

American Doubles : George and Steel

## **The RFA is sad to announce the death of ALASTAIR MACKENZIE**

4th July 2015

The RFA is sad to 2015 announce the death of Alastair Mackenzie on Monday 29th June, aged 82. He was a towering and much loved figure in the world of Fives, well known as a first-class player, especially at singles, and legendary for what he termed “après-Fives”, which comprised great enjoyment of well-brewed beer and most especially wine, particularly the red-coloured variety.

Alastair was a distinguished writer on the subject of wine – with three books on the subject to his name – who took great pleasure in tasting and relishing wines of all kinds. He most especially enjoyed introducing others, however resistant, particularly after club matches, to the qualities (and frequently quantities) of good wines.

During his time as a very popular RFA President 1983-85, he toured around the country playing in every national and regional doubles tournament – offering himself as a partner to anyone who was unpaired.

He was also President of the RFA Club 1983-89, President of Oxford University Rugby Fives Club for many years, and a long-standing and enthusiastic Jester.

His crowning Fives achievement, as master in charge at St Paul’s School when it moved from Baron’s Court to Barnes, was to persuade the planners to build not two or four, but a row of six Fives courts in the new gymnasium complex. On these marvellous courts many of our national tournaments, junior and senior, are played in comfort. In his day as master i/c and subsequently, they have nurtured many Pauline champions.

What he achieved for SPS, he then repeated for Oxford University, running an appeal with John East and Ron Swash to establish two Fives courts on the Iffley Road Sports Complex, to replace the courts at Worcester and Keble which had been pulled down.

Alastair learnt his Fives at Clifton College, where he became the captain and number one player (with fierce battles against Bristol Grammar School’s John Evans, later his partner at Oxford University).

He won the North of England Singles in 1954 and 1955; Scottish Singles 1961; Scottish Doubles 1961 (with D Morton); was National Doubles Runner-Up 1955 (with John Evans) losing in the final to Birmingham & Smith.

When he reached 45, he won the Veterans Singles (1979); and the Veterans Doubles 1984 (with Roger Freebairn). When he turned 55, he won the Vintage Singles three times, in 1988, 1989, and 1991.

In 1988 he won the President’s Cup with Jeremy Schroeter, having already won the Mate’s Plate in 1984 with Neil Butterfield.

Alastair leaves his most supportive wife Pauline, who nursed him devotedly as his health declined in recent times, and two Fives-playing sons: Bruce, an Oxford Blue, and Stuart, a former West of England Schools and National Schools champion (with Gideon Bierer) in 1985.

There will be a private funeral for the family only on 15th July. There will be a full obituary in the RFA Annual Review. Please join in celebrating this great man with stories, thoughts, and reflections, in the Review and on the website, by sending them to Dick Warner <dick@class.co.uk>

## **New format for the OWERS TROPHY**

3rd August 2015

The RFA has today announced a change in the format of the Owers Trophy, the Old Boys tournament, which has been played since 2004.

Thus far, the competition has been contested by four-man teams, but in recognition of the fact that getting four players has sometimes been quite an obstacle for some teams, the RFA has decided on a new format.

So, the 2015 Owers Trophy will be organised as follows:

- A one-day competition for three-person teams
- The team's three players must have attended the same school
- Each team can be a combination of genders and can include one current sixth-former
- Schools can enter more than one team
- Each team is placed in a group and will initially play matches against the other teams in their group
- Each match will be doubles-only and consist of one game of doubles against each possible pairing – ie 1&2 v 1&2, 1&3 v 1&3, and 2&3 v 2&3. A match will consist of three games, and the result is decided on points. Games will be to 11 or 15, depending on the size of the groups
- Teams may change their members between matches, but not during one
- After the group games, winning teams will play knockout finals/semi-finals (depending on time and numbers), and other teams will compete for the plate

The Owers Trophy was created to encourage players from the same school to stay in contact, keep playing and to provide a format where different combinations of teams and pairs would play, in a structure rather different to the more common knockout doubles and singles tournaments.

Over the past 10 years, a great variety of ages and standards of players have played, with teams from Alleyn's, St Pauls, Eastbourne, Derby Moor, St Dunstan's, Oundle, Bedford, Rugby, Christ's Hospital, St Olave's, Pilgrims' School, Winchester College, Tonbridge, Merchant Taylors', Clifton, Bradfield, and Blundell's.

This new format is designed to allow more flexibility, more combinations of pairs and more fun. Above all, the RFA hopes that more teams will be able to enter, and that schools will look into contacting sixth-formers and any lady players from their schools to make up their squad.

Club captains are advised to put the date in their diary and start contacting their school's old boys. Organiser Alex Smith will circulate the official entry form later this month, and it will also appear here on this website,

## **NEW NATIONAL RANKINGS**

### **Ellison regains top rankings spot in both Singles and Doubles**

5th August 2015

Dave Hebden writes: Will Ellison took advantage of Dan Tristao's absence from the South West Championships to regain top spots in both Singles and Doubles in the first rankings updates for the new 2015-16 season.

Will won the Singles comfortably but the event did throw up one or two surprises. Julian Aquilina and Anthony Goodwin both had good wins to reach the quarter finals and rise to positions 17 and 25 respectively. Plate finalist Stuart Kirby rises to number 30, while in the top 10, semi-finalist Ben Beltram edges past Richie Murby to rise to number 9.

Will Ellison teamed up with Charlie Brooks to win the Doubles without too many scares. It's good to see Charlie back after injury, and his win sees him move up to no. 7 spot. Ed Kay and Ben Beltrami were rewarded for reaching the final by rising to positions 3 and 8 respectively. Semi-finalists Adam George & Theo Parker and Jim Hughes & Alex Rew all make significant upward strides, with Theo entering the top 10 and Adam the top 20. Anthony Goodwin & Rob Whitehorn move upwards after reaching the quarter-finals, whilst Derby Moor were also well represented elsewhere, monopolising the the Plate Final in which Craig Baxter & Jai Singh beat Stuart Kirby & Chris Davey. Craig, Jai and Chris enter the rankings for the first time.

## **SOUTH EAST CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Christ's Hospital 22/23rd August 2015

### **Ellison, Hatton & Pringle win titles at South East Open**

A strong entry of 19 contested the singles this year, including 5 of the top ten and 8 of the top twenty in the land, writes organiser Ed Hatton. The second-round matches went according to seedings, although James Tilston pushed his long-standing partner Julian Aquilina hard in their second game and Ed Hatton survived a determined onslaught from Chris Waller to progress in three games.

The quarter-finals were tougher for all except Will Ellison, who conceded only one point against Hatton. Tristao needed two very close games to defeat Aquilina, and Kay and Butler were similarly tested against Maconie and Beltrami respectively. Will continued his imperious progress by conceding only one point against Butler in his semi-final. The other semi was a strenuous encounter, with Kay taking the first game and at times looking on top against Tristao in the second. Dan dug deep and managed to hang on and withstand Ed's energy to progress in three games.

This gruelling semi must have had an impact on the final, as once again Tristao bravely chased down Ellison's aggressive volleying, audacious reverse angles and general relentless pressure, but could only delay the inevitable. In the end, Will was a worthy winner, in a game which will soon be available to view online.

In a very gruelling and hard-fought plate competition involving a round-robin and a final, Giles Munn battled through six games, conceding only 15 points in total to claim his first individual silverware.

The doubles followed the same handicap format as the President's Cup and Scottish Open. Despite various poorly-justified and inevitable grumbles about the pairings, almost all of the games in the round-robin stage proved to be close. Aquilina and Hamilton made assured progress through their group, only troubled by Cook and Kay, who were a close second. Beltrami and Geere were the



outstanding pair in the other group, and despite strong challenges from the other pairs held them off comfortably.

The semi-finals were somewhat more unpredictable. Beltrami and Geere had a tough challenge against Cook & Kay, but on the other side of the draw, Hatton and Pringle made surprisingly quick progress, conceding only one point against Aquilina and Hamilton.

The final was understandably a tougher affair. In a war of attrition, Geere defended valiantly and Beltrami produced some typically powerful shots off the back wall and clever reverse angles, but both were eventually unable to withstand the relentless pressure of Hatton & Pringle. As Andy remarked, this was 'fifth time lucky' – his fifth open final and first success. The full final will be available to view online, but you can watch the second game below.

In the plate, Ellison and Mathias held off a strong challenge from Spillane & Tilston to win in three games. This is only the second plate that Will has won, while her win means Louise becomes only the second woman to enter the national rankings.

## **RESULTS**

### **SINGLES**

1st round: M.Spillane beat C. Davey 11-3, 11-2; G. Munn beat B. Chua 11-1, 11-0; L. Cook beat L. Mathias 11-3, 11-4

2nd round: Ellison beat Spillane 11-3, 11-2; Hatton beat Waller 11-0, 8-11, 11-6; Beltrami beat F. Thomas 11-7, 11-9; Butler beat Geere 11-2, 11-4; Kay beat Munn 11-5, 11-6; Maconie beat A. Hamilton 11-3, 11-3; Aquilina beat Tilston 11-4, 11-9; Tristao beat Cook 11-5, 11-1

Quarter-finals: Ellison beat Hatton 11-0, 11-1; Butler beat Beltrami 11-8, 11-5; Kay beat Maconie 11-5, 11-9; Tristao beat Aquilina 12-10, 12-10

Semi-finals: Ellison beat Butler 11-1, 11-0; Tristao beat Kay 8-11, 11-8, 11-6

Final: Ellison beat Tristao 11-1, 11-3

Plate: Munn

### **DOUBLES**

Round-robin

Group 1: Aquilina & Hamilton beat Butler & Davey 15-3, beat Chua & Munn 15-6, beat Cook & Kay 15-14; Cook & Kay beat Chua & Munn 15-12, beat Butler & Davey 15-8; Chua & Munn beat Butler & Davey 15-14

Group 2: Beltrami & Geere beat Ellison & Mathias 15-10, beat Hatton & Pringle 15-9, beat Spillane & Tilston 15-11; Hatton & Pringle beat Ellison & Mathias 15-11, beat Spillane & Tilston 15-13; Spillane & Tilston beat Ellison & Mathias 15-13

Knockout stage

Semi-finals: Hatton & Pringle beat Aquilina & Hamilton 11-0, 11-1; Beltrami & Geere beat Cook & Kay

Final: Hatton & Pringle beat Beltrami & Geere 11-8, 11-7

Plate: Ellison & Mathias

## **JOHN HOWE (1946-2015)**

7th September 2015

The RFA is sad to report the death in August of John Howe, National Singles champion in 1966 and 1968 and National Doubles champion in 1967 and 1968 with Stan Holt. John was also National Veterans Singles champion from 1988 to 1993, winning the Veterans Doubles three times with Geoff Sherratt and once with David Barnes.

An Old Dunstonian, John was a creative left-hander who left his opponent wondering frequently where the next shot might come from or, indeed, be going to. He was as colourful a character on court as off it, and more than one young player would admit to having aspired to play the game as John did.

A fuller appreciation will appear in the next Federation Newsletter.

A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday November 21st at 11 am in the Chapel of New Beacon School, Brittain Lane, Sevenoaks TN13 2PB.

## **LONDON OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Alleyn's School, Dulwich, 12/13th September 2015

### **Ellison & Tristao dominate at London Open**

Alleyn's hosted the London Open for the first time since 2012, writes organiser Will Ellison, and it was encouraging to see the best turnout since 2008, with many students and players in their early to mid-20s taking part.

The singles tournament kicked off on Saturday morning, and the pick of the first-round games was between Nick Geere and Angus Hanton, with Angus ultimately prevailing in three games. In the second round, a tight battle between the 8th and 9th seeds – Matt Shaw and Julian Aquilina – saw Julian pull through 11-7 in the third.

The quarter-finals all went to seedings, with the exception of a long three-gamer between 2002 champion Matt Cavanagh and current National U25 champion Ed Kay. As in the South West Open, Ed came through, although this time he was pushed all the way by Matt. In addition, Dave Butler pushed Dan Grant hard to take the first game in their quarter-final, although the more experienced Grant ultimately prevailed.

The semi-finals saw 2010 and 2014 champion Ellison take on Kay. This proved to be a classic battle with Ed's deft touch, reverse-angle drop shots and accurate volleying seeing him claim the first game 11-7. However, Ellison tweaked his strategy and won the following two games for the loss of just three points. In the other semi-final, Tristao took on Grant. This turned out not to be their most classic encounter, although Grant's lengthy summer break – partly due to qualifying as a doctor and partly to champion UK Wallball's efforts – may have contributed to this!

The final was played on Saturday morning between Will and Dan, and once again the match was an exciting three-gamer with many turning points. Will came out of the blocks fast, whilst Dan made several uncharacteristic errors in the first game, leading to Will winning this 11-2. In the second game, the momentum of the game kept changing; with Will receiving 8-6, Dan won a rally that video evidence has confirmed included no less than 131 (yes, one hundred and thirty-one!!) shots. This was considered by many spectators to be the key turning point in the match. Will couldn't maintain his level in the third, and with Dan finding some great length on his shots, this led to the 2013 champion reclaiming his title.

The singles plate was well contested with nine entrants. Tony Hamilton and Alan Bowden both came through their groups undefeated and faced off in the final. Alan withstood a late comeback by Tony to win 15-11 and claim his first open singles silverware.

In the doubles tournament, the first round went with the seedings. In the second round the pick of the matches was a three-gamer between 8-time National Doubles champions Hamish Buchanan and Robin Perry (who are also the 2002-2004 London Open doubles champions) against Theo Parker and Ollie Arnold. Ultimately the hard-hitting Bristol University students prevailed in three games to consign Buchanan and Perry to what must be their first open plate tournament in many years (or ever!).

Ollie and Theo then faced off against Grant and Kay in one of the semi-finals; this was a close match, with the second seeds coming through 11-8 in the third, having dropped the first game 11-9. Meanwhile, Ellison and Tristao progressed to the final with a comfortable 11-4, 11-4 win over Charlie Brooks and Matt Shaw.

In the final, National Doubles champions Ellison and Tristao closed out the first game to a fairly comfortable 11-5. The second was a closer affair, with Grant and Kay pulling the game back from 5-0 down. It was nip-and-tuck from then on, with Will and Dan T reaching 10-9 after several long rallies. Dan G and Ed held on to save two match points and pull the game back to 10-10, but this proved to be in vain as Will and Dan T then finished the game off to win their third consecutive London Open doubles title – and preserve their unbeaten record when playing together.

In the plate final, Hamish and Robin came through against Ed Hatton and Dave Butler in a tense three-gamer.

Special mentions for the weekend go to Dan Grant, for the best pun (“Lemon was squeezed out of the draw”); to Ed Hatton, for the best all-red outfit (leading to the moniker “Red Ed”); to Gareth Price, for making the trip down despite not playing (and despite him being under the age of 60!); to Will Ellison, for organising his first fives tournament, and providing many sandwiches for the players (despite Grant’s feedback on these); to Dan Tristao’s engraver, for (temporarily) losing the doubles trophy; and to all supporters for making the effort to come along.

We hope to see many of you down next year – let’s try for an even bigger entry!

## RESULTS

### Singles

**1st Round:** P Hanton bt A Hamilton 11-0, 11-4; J Aquilina bt J Hanton 11-6, 11-0; M Shaw bt B Chua 11-0, 11-6; E Hatton bt F Thomas 11-9, 11-7; C Waller bt O Even 11-2, 11-4; A Hanton bt N Geere 7-11, 11-8, 11-0; A George bt J Smith 11-1, 11-3; T Parker bt A Bowden 12-11, 11-0; O Arnold bt J Malde 11-6, 11-1

**2nd Round:** W Ellison bt P Hanton 11-0, 11-4; J Aquilina bt M Shaw 6-11, 11-2, 11-7 E Kay bt E Hatton 11-8, 11-1; M Cavanagh bt C Waller 11-1, 11-2; D Grant bt A Hanton 11-2, 11-5; D Butler bt A George 11-1, 11-3; R Murby bt T Parker 12-11, 11-0; D Tristao bt O Arnold 11-5, 11-3

**Quarter-finals:** W Ellison bt J Aquilina 11-0, 11-6; E Kay bt M Cavanagh 11-5, 5-11, 11-0; D Grant bt D Butler 9-11, 11-3, 11-3; D Tristao bt R Murby 11-5, 11-9

**Semi-finals:** W Ellison bt E Kay 7-11, 11-3, 11-0; D Tristao bt D Grant 11-3, 11-6

**Final:** D Tristao bt W Ellison 2-11, 11-8, 11-1

**Plate:** Bowden

### Doubles

**1st Round:** George & P Hanton bt Chua & Smith 11-2, 11-6; Aquilina & Dean bt Geere & Hamilton 11-1, 11-1; Arnold & Parker bt Jefferies & Thomas 11-5, 11-2

**Quarter-finals:** Ellison & Tristao bt George & Hanton 11-6, 11-8; Brooks & Shaw bt Aquilina &

Dean 11-8, 11-4; Arnold & Parker bt Buchanan & Perry 11-5, 8-11, 11-2; Grant & Kay bt Butler & Hatton 11-8, 11-7

**Semi-finals:** Ellison & Tristao bt Brooks & Shaw 11-4, 11-4; Grant & Kay bt Arnold & Parker 9-11, 11-3, 11-8

**Final:** Ellison & Tristao bt Grant & Kay 11-5, 12-10

**Plate:** Buchanan and Perry

## **ALL CHANGE AT THE RFA!**

18th September 2015

This year's AGM saw big changes on the Board of Directors of the RFA. Bernard Atkinson (centre) was elected to the post of President in succession to Bob Dolby. David Bawtree (right – wearing the RFA tie!) was elected as Bernard's Deputy. It was the first AGM for Philip Atkinson (left – no relation!) who had taken over as General Secretary from Ian Fuller in April of this year. Ian remains, however, as Treasurer.

With Dick Warner retiring from the Board, Chris Burrows and Kathleen Briedenhann were also invited to stand and were duly elected.

**Bernard Atkinson:** Bernard learned the game at Christ's Hospital and Cambridge University. After a break from serious play for some years he returned to the game to pair up with Bob Dolby (once) and John Robertson (twice) to win the Vintage Doubles. He then won the Masters Doubles five times with David Bawtree between 2005 and 2011. Bernard was most recently seen in competitive play doing the running for Dave Butler as they won the T-Pot at Merchant Taylors' in December. Expect to see him dashing around on court at many of the upcoming events in the RFA calendar!

**David Bawtree:** David learnt his Fives at Christ's Hospital when our President was a few years behind him but had to leave it behind as there were no fives courts on Royal Navy ships! He started playing again some 25 years later and teamed up with our esteemed President for the Masters competition, which he initiated and which they won in the early years. There are now about 12 active members of this over 65s group, with numbers increasing annually. David still plays at Christ's Hospital, particularly encouraging the girls, who have been increasingly successful in national tournaments.

**Philip Atkinson:** Phil started playing Fives as a boy at Bedford Modern School. He has been a stalwart of the Old Bedford Modernians since those days and is probably best known to Fives players for his annual participation in the President's Cup, which he has won twice, most recently in 2007 with Jon Abecassis. Phil is bringing to the role of General Secretary a wide experience of administration and management in both the private and public sectors, as well as a familiarity with the work of various local clubs and councils. He has specialised knowledge of employment law and business restructuring and says he is "well used to organising meetings and supporting associated activities in a timely and efficient manner".

**Chris Burrows:** Learned his Fives on the new courts at Oundle. He has been pursuing his doctoral studies at Imperial College, during which time he has also been organiser of the National U25s championships. He will bring valuable organisational and IT skills to the Board.

**Kathleen Briedenhann:** Kathleen, a keen player of both Rugby and Winchester Fives, has been our National Ladies Singles champion twice and National Doubles champion for the past three years. She is about to embark upon a Level 2 Coaching course under the care of Wayne Enstone. Kathleen is also captain of the Great Britain Ladies Wallball team who recently won bronze at the European Wallball championships.

## **UPDATED NATIONAL RANKINGS following the South East and London Championships**

by David Hebden on 25th September 2015

Will Ellison remains at the top of the new Singles and Doubles rankings, but after Dan Tristao's win in London, the gap at the top of the Singles is very much smaller. Ed Kay (semi-finalist in both the South East and London) moves up two places to occupy no. 4 position. Elsewhere in the top 10 Richie Murby moves up to no. 8, whilst Julian Aquilina moves up 5 place to no. 12. Further down the list we have 5 new entries. Giles Munn (Plate winner in the South East) is the highest entry at no. 29, and Alan Bowden (Plate winner in London) is in at no. 38. Morgane Spillane, Ben Chua and James Smith complete the new entries in the Singles list.

In the Doubles, the top 10 remain unchanged. Ed Hatton moves into the top 20 at no. 16 following his win with Andy Pringle in the South East, whilst Andy moves up to no. 23. Nick Geere is also a high mover (at no. 35) following his appearance with Ben Beltrami in the final of the South East. We have 3 new entries including Louise Mathias, our third ever female to appear in the rankings. Louise partnered Will Ellison to win the South East Plate and enters at no. 85. South East semi-finalists Tony Hamilton and Laurence Cook also enter the Doubles rankings at no. 69.

## **THE OWERS TROPHY**

St Paul's School, Barnes, 26th September 2015

### **Old Paulines retain their title in new-look Owers Trophy**

The new three-player format was greeted with interest and enthusiasm, writes organiser Alex Smith, and with nine teams, we had three groups of three in the group stages. This allowed a lot of socialising, tea-drinking and spectating as there was always one team not playing as well as some team's spare players in the gallery. All players agreed that this made for a very sociable atmosphere and gave the players a much-needed rest between some intense games over what is always a long day.

The group rounds got started by not long after 10am, although there were delays in one group as a team only arrived after mid-day. Games to 15 in the group stage also made for a longer set of group rounds in this case, but there were no complaints as the players got stuck in to some cracking doubles games. There was much enjoyable chat and speculation about the results in each group, which would be won by teams on the points scored.

The three highest-seeded teams – that is the two Old Paulines teams and the Old Eastbournians – expectedly dominated their respective groups, but there were some very close matches for second and third places: Alleyn Old Boys managed to beat Old Blues by just one point, while the Old Wykehamist teams used their experience to rack up good points tallies against their opponents. Old Derby Moor pushed the Old Wykehamists II all the way, and so it was Old Wykehamists I who made it through to the knock-out stages with the next highest points total of 64.

The senior Old Pauline team dominated their semi-final, but the young 2012 OP side had rather more work to do, with the Old Eastbournians desperate to repeat their feat of a few years ago in preventing an all-Pauline final. However, after each side took one game each, the young Paulines were looking strong and the OEs did not quite have the legs to push the third game to a win; and so it was the senior OPs against the 2012 Pauline leavers for the final. The senior OPs were not ready to relinquish their dominance to the young turks, and so the senior Old Paulines, with a virtuoso display, retained the Owers Trophy for 2015 – which was presented by Mr Owers himself, attending 'his' tournament for the first time.

Meanwhile, in the Plate, there were further close games, with Alleyn Old Boys sneaking through by one point for the second time, this time against a young Derby Moor side. The Old Wykehamists, who had fresh firepower with Ben Hale coming in, had a slightly easier win against a tiring Old Whitgiftian side, and the men from Winchester finished with a deserving final victory, to retain the Barnes Plate, fittingly donated by David Barnes, himself an OW and great supporter of Winchester Fives.

## **RESULTS**

### **Group Rounds**

Group A:

1. Old Eastbournians (Pringle, Meek, Compton) 89,
2. Old Wykehamists (Watkinson, Wylde, Hale M) 64,
3. Old Whitgiftians (Hamilton, Higgins, Norman) 33

### **Group B**

1. 2012 Paulines (Parker, Russell, Thomas) 90,
2. Old Wykehamists II (Kelly, Chua, Woollard) 62,
3. Old Derby Moor (Goodwin, Baxter, Taylor) 40

### **Group C**

1. Old Paulines (Tristao, Beltrami, Aquilina) 90,
2. Alleyn Old Boys (Geere, Sulkin, Carr) 39,
3. Old Blues (Hatton, Lebon, Webster) 38

### **Knock-out Stages**

**Semi-finals:** 2012 Paulines (Parker, Russell, Thomas) beat Old Eastbournians (Bate, Pringle, Meek) 30-22

Old Paulines (Tristao, Beltrami, Aquilina) beat Old Wykehamists (Watkinson, Wylde, Song) 33-7

**Final:** Old Paulines beat 2012 Paulines 33-tbc

### **Plate:**

**Semi-finals:** Alleyn Old Boys beat Old Derby Moor 27-26, Old Wykehamists II (Kelly, Chua, Hale B) bt Old Whitgiftians (Hamilton, Higgins, Hillier) 30-21

**Final:** Old Wykehamists II beat Alleyn Old Boys 33-17

## **YORKSHIRE OPEN FIVES TOURNAMENT**

Giggleswick School, 10/11th October 2015

### **Wins for Ellison, Tristao & Butler in Yorkshire**

For the second year, writes organiser John Hawke, the tournament comprised both singles and doubles, with doubles played on Saturday and singles on Sunday. Late entries ensured a quality field for both days, with participants travelling from London, Scotland and the Borders, Derby and even some from Yorkshire itself.

New faces to the competition included Andy Boyd and Ben Jourdan from Edinburgh Academy, who surprised the more established players on both days with their expertise and tenacity, showing maturity beyond their years as they won points, games and matches, both jointly in the doubles, and individually on Sunday. In addition, Richard Murby had a stellar maiden visit, reaching the singles final at the expense of more experienced players. Although all the cup games in the doubles competition were of the highest quality, they were overshadowed by the final, in which late entrants Butler and Tristao, as expected, played the incumbent champions, Buchanan & Ellison.

Often, finals completed in two games are a disappointment, but this one was riveting. In both games, Buchanan and Ellison eked out a small lead as their score rose to double figures, only to be pegged back by the tenacity of their opponents, losing the first game 16-15 after having game point. The score at the end of the second game was identical, this time with Tristao and Butler reaching game point first, and then going on to win.

The organiser always likes the plate competition to satisfy the desire of the participants for Fives. This year, the chosen torture was a round-robin of four pairs each playing two games to 15, the results to be decided on points difference. As Bob Sandie had neglected to provide himself with a partner for the day, Andy Boyd and Ben Jourdan were drafted in to assist him in different games once their semi-finals were over. In the first round of the cup, Richard Christie had the honour of that supporting role. Winners of the plate were the sometime Halifax pairing of Ed Hawke and Tim Widdop, whereas the second place, and second plate, went to the juvenile Derby pair of Craig Baxter and Lawrence Taylor.

Sunday's play started early in order to let those travelling a distance return home at a reasonable hour. Once the complaints about having to forego the Full English had died away, another day of Quality Fives started. Finalists Ellison and Murby eased their way through the early rounds, devouring all with the minimum of points lost. Again, the young Edinburgh Academy pair shone, with Boyd beating Roberts and Jourdan forcing Buchanan into a third game before losing his first-round match.

In the final, Ellison was merciless, although the eventual score of 11-2, 11-5 did not reflect the sternness of his competition. Again, a masterclass of Fives.

The plate competition was another round-robin, this time with five protagonists playing a single game to 15. The winner was again Ed Hawke, who went through the robin undefeated. A filial relationship with the organiser had no bearing on his weekend of success, which was won with sheer determination and ability.

To those who withdrew their entries late in the day, you missed a great tournament. Please ensure that, next year, wife's birthdays and children's start of college terms are rescheduled to a different weekend.

One sad event to report, however, was that Bob Sandie has announced that this will be the last singles tournament to be played by him. He has decided to bow to the pressures of age and a gammy knee and stop playing competition singles. We assume, however, that he will continue to attend post-tournament meals. The organisers' match-day food spreadsheet will require substantial amendment;

and, his mates from the White Rose Club will miss trying to prise him out of the car after a gruelling day of competition.

## **RESULTS**

### **Doubles** – Saturday 10th October

First Round: Buchanan & Ellison beat Sandie & Christie 15-1, 15-2; Boyd & Jourdan beat E Hawke & Widdop 15-7, 9-15, 15-10; Beswick & Roberts beat Christie & Kirby 15-7, 15-9; Butler & Tristao beat Baxter & Taylor 15-3, 15-4

Semi-Finals: Buchanan & Ellison beat Boyd & Jourdan 15-5, 15-9; Butler & Tristao beat Beswick & Roberts 15-8, 15-10

Final: Butler & Tristao beat Buchanan & Ellison 16-15, 16-15

Plate: E. Hawke & Widdop

2nd Plate: Baxter & Taylor

### **Singles** – Sunday 11th October

Preliminary Round: Ellison beat Sandie 11-3, 11-1

First Round: Ellison beat E. Hawke 11-0, 11-0; Boyd beat Roberts 11-5, 11-6; Buchanan beat Jourdan 7-11, 11-2, 11-6; Murby beat Widdop 11-2, 11-2

Semi-Finals: Ellison beat Boyd 11-1, 11-4; Murby beat Buchanan 11-0, 11-3

Final: Ellison beat Murby 11-2, 11-5

Plate: E. Hawke

## **THE LADY'S CUP**

Cambridge, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2015

14 pairs lined up for this second playing of the Lady's Cup. They came from Rugby, Christ's Hospital, Aldenham, Edinburgh, Cambridge and Eastbourne; comprised pupils, students and adults of both sexes; and ranged in age from early teens to nearly senior citizenry.

Given the wide range of ability it made little sense to construct a traditional draw, especially as the twin aims of the event are for the female beginners, schoolgirls and recent leavers to go away thinking "I really enjoyed that; I want to play more Fives!" and knowing that they were much better at the game by the end than they were when they started: Not much fun, or use, then in losing 15-0 in the first round of a knockout. So the organiser drew up three groups of similar ability and/or experience. And by and large it worked.

Some of those with the least experience formed a round robin of 4 pairs, playing for the Egg Cups on court 3. Though she may have come 4th in the end Cambridge student beginner Sasha, playing with National Ladies Doubles Champion Tessa Mills, made huge strides and left with a broad smile. Rugby pupils Olivia and Seb enjoyed two wins but didn't quite have enough points to get above Rugby's Alice and her two partners (Jacob Brubert filled in for an injury), who also got two W's on the board and came second. By a quirk of the scoring system the eventual winners won just the one match and lost the other two 15-16, but actually came out with the most points: Aldenham's Milly and last year's Oxford Secretary Tom Hoskins, playing his first Fives since the Varsity Match. Welcome back, Tom!

On court 2 five pairs consisting of partners with very varying ability fought it out for the Teacups and Coffee Cups. Initially things looked not so good for Richie Murby & Alley, but once the nerves (hers) were overcome the shots began to flow. Ben Beltrami nursed an initially bemused and increasingly bruised New Yorker Caroline through the opening games, as did Alex Smith with his protégée Zoe. Phoebe & Zac from CH showed great promise in winning two of their 4 games, but the stars of the group were the unbeaten Freya and her master i/c, Trevor White.



On court 1 the five pairs playing for the Cups and Plates were a very distinguished bunch indeed. British Number 4 Ed Kay helped Georgina, a fellow Cambridge Cuppers winner, through to a new level of play; and multiple National Ladies champion Kathleen Briedenhann gave her partner Kirsty from Rugby a lesson in footwork. Tension grew as the final matches meant that any of the other three pairs could win the most points. In the end two pairs tied for second place: Ed Hatton & Beatrix from CH and Lottie & Vlad from Rugby. As the organiser had just three plates to award Mr Hatton had to make do with a warm glow. Just one point separated these four from the winners of the Philip-Malt-Cup-as-was/Lady's-Cup-as-is: last season's schoolgirls champion Louise Mathias & CH stalwart Ross Stuart. Somehow one felt that the moral victory was Lottie & Vlad's, as they had beaten Louise & Ross – and were giving away a few years!

During a lunch break Kathleen Briedenhann demonstrated Wallball, which went down well; Kathleen also arranged for T-shirts for all (even if Ben Beltrami's was a shade short round his midriff). At the end of the day Kathleen & Tessa demonstrated their prowess as National Ladies Doubles champion in a super demonstration match against Louise and Ed H.

### **Honours:**

**Lady's Cup:** Louise Mathias & Ross Stuart

**Plates:** Beatrix Crinnion & Ed Hatton, Lottie Harbottle & Vlad Shirokiy

**Teacups:** Freya Harrison & Trevor White

**Coffee Cups:** Alley Scott & Richie Murby

**Egg Cups:** Milly Gall & Tom Hoskins

Other players: Ben Beltrami, Kirsty Martin, Zac Moxon, Phoebe Thornhill, Sasha Hajnal-Corob, Tessa Mills, Olivia Bruce, Seb Somervail, Alice Day, Jacob Brubert, Ed Kay, Georgina Shepherd, Caroline Calloway, Alex Smith, Zoe Freedman.

### **WEST OF ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Clifton College, Bristol; 24/25th October 2015

There was a strong entry of 29 singles players in the championships, which were held over the weekend of 24/25th October at Clifton College, Bristol. Notable absentees from previous years were James Toop, John Minta and Matt Cavanagh, providing evidence of the march of time.

In the first round, there was a close encounter between Ollie Arnold of Bristol University and Peter Hanton of Alleyn Old Boys, with Ollie's hard-hitting game finally paying dividends in the third. Another game to catch the eye was the experienced Marcus Bate taking on last year's National Schools winner, Tom Watkinson, now at Bristol University. Marcus needed all his experience and guile to just get through in the third 12-11.

In the second round, Theo Parker (also of Bristol University, and seeded 9) had a fine victory over eighth seed Matt Shaw of Cambridge University in two very closely contested games. Another game to catch the eye was third seed Dan Grant's encounter with Giles Munn – best known as Fives Master at Winchester, but now displaying his talents in national tournaments. Giles was always snapping at Dan's heels, and while Dan came through in two games, there was no doubt that he had to work hard for his victory.

In the quarter-finals, the first and second seeds, Will Ellison and Dan Tristao, overcame the challenges of Theo Parker and Julian Aquilina, and Ed Kay held sway over Richie Murby, although Richie challenged strongly in the second game, only losing 11/12.

The quarter which really caught the eye, however, was the victory by Ben Beltrami of Cambridge University over Dan Grant. Former National Schools winner Beltrami is a force to be seriously

reckoned with and, although Dan fought hard to close out the second game, Beltrami – with his long reach and strength on both hands – held the game to 11.

In the semis, Beltrami came up against second seed Tristao and, although Ben pushed hard in the first, Tristao displayed his usual knack of keeping cool to see a game out and proceeded to the final. Meanwhile, Will Ellison looked in sharp and determined fettle and Ed Kay was unable to halt his progress to yet another final.

The final between Will and Dan was inevitably of the highest calibre and almost inevitably went to three games. It appeared that Will was on his way to retaining the trophy when he took the first to 5, but you write off Dan at your peril and he came back coolly and strongly to take the next two games. Will first won this competition in 2010 and since then he and Dan have taken it in turns to be victorious – it will be interesting to monitor the progress of these two fine players who do so much good for the image of the game.

Twelve pairs competed the Doubles competition, which was played on Sunday. The game in the first round that caught the eye was Francis Thomas and Henry Jefferies (Oxford University) just giving way to the talents of Tom Watkinson and Inigo Ackland of Bristol University in a match that seemed to take up half the morning.

After that, the four top-seeded pairs duly made their way to the semi-finals. In the first semi, top seeds Ellison and Kay finally proved too consistent for Arnold and Parker, although the Bristol University pair came close to seeing out the second game. And, in the other semi, Tristao and Grant were pushed hard in the first by Beltrami and Shaw but gradually asserted themselves to take their place in the final.

This was a high-class affair, with the top four players in the country on court at the same time. Almost inevitably, there was very little to choose between the two pairs, and although it appeared that Will and Ed might be on the way to victory after taking the first game, the two Dans dug deep to snatch the second to 10 and then rounded off a pulsating third 11-8 to take the trophy.

Thanks are due to Simon Werkshagen for setting up the draw and arrangements for the competition and to Lionel Lawson for organising the event over the weekend.

## **RESULTS**

### **Singles**

**1<sup>st</sup> round:** O Arnold bt P Hanton 11-7, 3-11, 11-4; M Shaw bt N Geere 11-2, 11-3; T Parker bt K Kennerley 11-1, 11-4; E Kay bt C Davey 11-4, 11-3; C Waller w/o A Rew; R Murby bt M Hale 11-1, 11-1; M Bate bt T Watkinson 5-11, 11-8, 12-11; F Thomas w/o I Ackland; J Aquilina bt J Sumner 11-1, 11-1; A George bt B Smithson 11-1, 11-2; G Munn bt B Chua 11-1, 11-3; B Beltrami bt S Bhushan 11-2, 11-1; E Hatton bt S Moger 11-6, 11-8

**2<sup>nd</sup> round:** W Ellison bt Arnold 11-1, 11-3; Parker bt Shaw 11-8, 12-10; Kay bt Waller 11-4, 11-8; Murby bt Bate 11-7, 11-1; D Tristao bt Thomas 11-9, 11-3; Aquilina bt George 11-4, 11-4; D Grant bt Munn 11-8, 12-10; Beltrami bt Hatton 11-5, 11-4

**Quarter-finals:** Ellison bt Parker 11-7, 11-2; Kay bt Murby 11-2, 12-11; Tristao bt Aquilina 11-7, 11-7; Beltrami bt Grant 11-4, 12-11

**Semi-finals:** Ellison bt Kay 11-3, 11-7; Tristao bt Beltrami 11-9, 11-5

**Final:** Tristao bt Ellison 5-11, 11-8, 11-5

**Plate:** Hanton

### **Doubles**

**1<sup>st</sup> round:** Ackland & Watkinson bt H Jefferies & Thomas 8-11, 11-7, 11-8; Aquilina & Hanton bt Davies and D George-Carey 11-2, 11-0; H Buchanan & George bt Kennerley and T Lewis 11-4, 11-0; Bate & Hatton bt Smithson & Munn 12-11, 11-4

**Quarter-finals:** Ellison & Kay bt Ackland & Watkinson 11-1, 11-3; Arnold & Parker bt Aquilina &

Hanton 11-4, 11-5; Beltrami & Shaw bt Buchanan & George 11-5, 11-7; Grant & Tristao bt Bate & Hatton 11-9, 11-5

**Semi-finals:** Ellison & Kay bt Arnold & Parker 11-3, 11-9; Grant & Tristao bt Beltrami & Shaw 12-10, 11-5

**Final:** Grant & Tristao bt Ellison & Kay 6-11, 12-10, 11-8

**Plate:** Jefferies & Thomas

### **Dan Tristao tops the NEW NATIONAL RANKINGS following the West of England Championships**

by David Hebden, 30th October 2015

These rankings, which take account of results from the Yorkshire and West of England Championships, are the last rankings to be published ahead of the forthcoming National Singles Championships. As such, they determine the four players exempt from qualifying (Tristao, Ellison, Grant, and Kay), and will also be a primary input into the seeding for the Qualifiers and for the Finals weekend.

Both lists see Dan Tristao take over from Will Ellison in top spot following his double success in the WofE. In both the Singles and the Doubles (partnering Dan Grant) Dan triumphed in close 3-game matches with Will featuring as opposition in both finals (in the Doubles with Ed Kay).

In the Singles there was some interest to see how far Ben Beltrami would climb up the Singles after his QF win in the WofE against Dan Grant. Ben has ended up at No. 7, but the gaps between the players ranging between Ed Kay at No. 4 to Richie Murby at No. 9 are close, and there may well be further shuffling amongst these players in future rankings. Elsewhere, WofE Plate Winner Peter Hanton moves up into the top 30, whilst Yorkshire Plate Winner Ed Hawke, Ben Jourdan (who defeated Neil Roberts at Giggleswick) and Ben Smithson (who defeated Adam George in Bristol) are new entries.

In the Doubles, David Butler enters the top 10 following his win with Dan Tristao in Yorkshire. Ben Beltrami (at No. 6) and Ollie Arnold (at No. 13) also make upward progress in the top 20. Further down the list, significant rises are achieved by Ben Jourdan, Tom Watkinson, Peter Hanton, and Ben Smithson. Giles Munn and Lawrence Taylor are new entries.

\*\* Nov 2nd 2015: A minor update has been made to the singles rankings following receipt of the results of the Yorkshire Singles Plate. This affects the rankings of Ben Jourdan, who is now a new entry in the revised rankings, and Neil Roberts who drops down a couple of places.

## **RFA v 'Winchester Fives Association'**

Winchester College, Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2015

*Harry Akerman writes:* We had a cracking match at Winchester, with the RFA sending a strong team to try and repeat their victory from last year against the 'WFA'. This has proved to be a tightly fought match over recent years with the RFA winning 258-230 in 2014 and 237-217 in 2013.

High-quality Fives was played throughout the match, with never more than a few points in it, and the result still very much in the balance going into the second game of the final round of matches. However, in the end, the WFA held on to win by a very comfortable (!) 9 points (266-257).

It's hard to pick out individual performances from such a good match, but the young pairing of Tom Watkinson (2015 schools champion) and Winchester schoolboy Alec Younger played fantastically to not get blown away by such high-quality opposition, and their valuable points probably proved to be the difference between the two sides.

The Queen's sandwiches were a welcome finish to a really enjoyable day. And, last, but not least, thanks to those who travelled so far (Malvern, Bristol, London and Brighton) to make it such a great match.

### **RESULTS (WFA names first)**

W. Ellison & J. Marshall bt D. Tristao & S. Roberts 11-1, 11-8; bt O. Arnold & T. Parker 11-9, 11-6; bt A. George & H. Buchanan 11-4, 11-2; bt T. Dean & C. Burrows 11-2, 11-0

S. Coffey & H. Akerman bt D. Tristao & S. Roberts 11-4, 8-11; lost to O. Arnold & T. Parker 7-11, 9-11; bt A. George & H. Buchanan 11-7, 11-7; bt T. Dean & C. Burrows 11-4, 9-11

G. Munn & J. McManus lost to D. Tristao & S. Roberts 4-11, 9-11; lost to O. Arnold & T. Parker 9-11, 2-11; lost to A. George & H. Buchanan 9-11, 10-12; bt T. Dean & C. Burrows 11-4, 11-1

T. Watkinson & A. Younger lost to D. Tristao & S. Roberts 4-11, 0-11; lost to O. Arnold & T. Parker 7-11, 5-11; lost to A. George & H. Buchanan 2-11, 1-11; lost to T. Dean & C. Burrows 12-10, 5-11

**Overall Result: Winchester Fives Association win 266-257**

## **RFA SCHOOLS WINCHESTER DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP**

Winchester College, Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2015

*David Barnes reports:* Thirteen pairs from seven schools entered for the Schools Winchester Fives Doubles this year and all enjoyed a thoroughly good day's fives. It was encouraging to see two pairs from each of Malvern and Radley in the draw as well as three from Winchester, since this event was started fourteen years ago partly to cheer up the 'butress boys'!

The first round saw generally clear-cut victories. The losers of these five matches went into a round-robin plate competition which resulted in some very competitive matches. Marlborough eventually emerged as the winners, just ahead of Radley I.

Meanwhile, the quarter-finals of the main draw saw the unaccustomed early elimination of all three St. Paul's pairs, leaving the last four places to Winchester's first and second pairs, Derby Moor and

Malvern I. The quarter-final losers then had a topsy-turvy plate competition of their own – the Super Plate – , resulting in a win for St. Paul’s III.

Of the eight players on court during the semi-finals, six had already got their names on Schools’ Rugby Fives trophies at some level, so it was a high-class field. Winchester I had a solid two-game victory over Derby Moor, directing their attack more purposefully than their opponents. The second semi could have gone either way, but after Malvern I and Winchester II had each won a game, Nelson, one of the Malvernians, pulled a muscle and the Wykehamist pair came through in the third.

The final was a good one, lacking only a little of the tension that can characterize an interschools match. Winchester I (Song and Kullavanijaya) won the first game with something to spare, but the second game was much closer. In the end, harder hitting probably made the difference, but the retrieving and persistence of Kidner and Younger was admirable. And by the way, all four will be back next year!

Many thanks to Winchester College for the use of their courts, now 105 years old and still playing well, and to Giles Munn and Bob Dolby for their help in the organisation of the event.

## Results

**1st Round:** St. Paul’s III bt Radley II 15-1, 15-3; St. Paul’s II bt Bedford Modern 15-4, 15-8; Derby Moor bt Malvern II 15-5, 15-3; Winchester II bt Radley I 15-0, 15-0; Winchester III bt Marlborough 15-1, 15-1.

**Quarter-finals:** Winchester I bt St. Paul’s III 15-3, 15-2; Derby Moor bt St. Paul’s II 15-5, 15-7; Winchester II bt St. Paul’s I 15-4, 15-12; Malvern I bt Winchester III 15-9, 15-6.

**Semi-finals:** Winchester I bt Derby Moor 15-9, 15-8; Winchester II bt Malvern I 15-12, 12-15, 15-1.

**Final:** Winchester I (A Song & P Kullavanijaya) bt Winchester II (T Kidner & A Younger) 15-7, 15-12.

**1st round plate:** Marlborough.

**2nd round plate:** St. Paul’s III.

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## COLQUHOUN TROPHY

Sherborne, Dorset, Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2015

The Colquhoun Trophy benefitted from its new timing in November with a record number of players, and in the end boys from Malvern and Blundell’s took away the day’s big prizes.

The move from March to November was planned partly in response to fixture congestion in March, but also in an effort to inspire players ahead of the main season next term; and the latter certainly seemed to be the case: Sherborne’s five courts were in constant use throughout the initial round-robin section of the event; players volunteered for unofficial games (a third/fourth place play-off, for example); and, at the end of the day, much of the talk centred on the forthcoming West of England Schools’ Championships.

As ever, the boys from the four schools (Malvern, Blundell’s, Marlborough and Sherborne) played with tremendous spirit and admirable sportsmanship, whether they were relatively seasoned campaigners or – in one instance – had only been playing the game a few days.

In the Colts section, Addie Chai (from Blundell’s) dominated the first pool, and comfortably secured his place in the semi-finals alongside Marlborough’s Ben Lederman, who also put up a strong performance. In contrast, the second pool was much closer; and, although Addie’s fellow Blundellian James Maclaurin eventually won the group, he was pushed very hard in two of his three games.

Behind him, the big battle for second place was between two boys from Marlborough, with Arthur Rigg pipping Oscar Waters 15-11 in their crucial encounter.

Oscar at least had the consolation of winning the plate, but had to work very hard for that: in the closest game of the day, he beat fellow Marlborough boy Harry Powell 16-15 in a thrilling match.

After the round-robin, the Colts semis were both Blundell's/Marlborough encounters; and, in both, the Blundell's boys won through, leaving Addie to face James in the final. It was a match of hugely contrasting styles, but in the end, Addie's greater touch and variety overwhelmed James' power, and secured him the title.

In the meantime, the Open tournament was taking shape, with the record number of players split into four pools. The winner of each group went into the knockout section, and the runner-up qualified for the late.

Right from the word go, a couple of players stood out – Malvern's Andrew Tudor and Blundell's Tobias Francis – and they both won their groups comfortably. They were followed into the semis by another Blundellian, Ben Clarke, but the closest pool was the third pool. Here, Sherborne's Will Shardlow eventually topped the group, but only after winning two of his three games 11-8; and, the difference between second and third place couldn't have been smaller: Marlborough's Rupert Shingleton eventually took second place, but only after a 12-11 win over Jack Lockwood from Blundell's.

Rupert later went on to reach the Plate final – completing a clean sweep of Marlburian Plate finalists – but lost out to his schoolmate Archie Wheeler.

Meanwhile, in the main competition, the draw pitted Andrew against Tobias in the first semi-final, and it was a cracker of a match, with some excellent play and fine shot-making. Overall, though, Andrew just had the edge, and secured his place in the final. Here, he would face Will Shardlow, who became the first boy from Sherborne to make a final in this event.

The score may give the impression that the result was a whitewash for Andrew, but it doesn't give the full story of a match in which Will played extremely well. However, while there were plenty of long and closely-fought rallies, it was always Andrew who could find the winner or force a mistake from his opponent. Deservedly, he won the title without conceding a point in the final. Indeed, such was his dominance that he only conceded points in one of the six games he played all day. Clearly a man to watch...

Finally, the RFA wishes to thank Sherborne for their generosity and hospitality in hosting the event.

## **RESULTS**

### **Open**

#### **Round-robin section**

**Pool 1:** 1st Andrew Tudor (Malvern); 2nd Archie Wheeler (Marlborough); 3rd Alastair Findlay (Sherborne); 4th Christian Cabburn (Blundell's)

**Pool 2:** 1st Ben Clarke (Blundell's); 2nd Giles Williams (Malvern); 3rd Toby Smith (Sherborne); 4th Angus Mayes (Sherborne)

**Pool 3:** 1st Will Shardlow (Sherborne); 2nd Rupert Shingleton (Marlborough); 3rd Jack Lockwood (Blundell's); 4th Tristan New (Malvern)

**Pool 4:** 1st Tobias Francis (Blundell's); 2nd James Barrows (Marlborough); 3rd Edward Pyman (Sherborne); 4th Advait Manur (Malvern)

#### **Knockout section**

**Semi-finals:** Tudor (Malvern) bt Francis (Blundell's) 15-6; Shardlow (Sherborne) bt Clarke (Blundell's) 15-9

**Final:** Tudor bt Shardlow 11-0, 11-0

**Plate:** Wheeler (Marlborough)

### **Colts**

#### **Round-robin stage**

**Pool 1:** 1st Addie Chai (Blundell's); 2nd Ben Lederman (Marlborough); 3rd Harry Powell (Marlborough); 4th Will Brodie (Malvern); 5th George Gibbs (Blundell's)

**Pool 2:** 1st James Maclaurin (Blundell's); 2nd Arthur Rigg (Marlborough); 3rd Oscar Waters (Marlborough); 4th Matthew Bruce (Malvern)

#### **Knockout section**

**Semi-finals:** Chai (Blundell's) bt Rigg (Marlborough) 15-0; Maclaurin (Blundell's) bt Lederman (Marlborough) 15-8

**Final:** Chai bt Maclaurin 11-4, 11-1

**Plate:** Waters (Marlborough)

### **Refurbishment of courts at RADLEY COLLEGE, Abingdon, Oxford**

29 November 2015

After a period of some years where one court was used for the storage of theatrical props the College has now restored the two courts to full use. The entrance hall and gallery have been carpeted, display boards and viewing facilities improved and the walls painted black.

On Sunday November 29th an Old Radleian IV consisting of Duncan Neale, Tom Maconie, Rory James Duff and Peter Gwynn played and coached a group of Upper Sixth players and their master in charge, Dave Cox.

## 2015 BUSF CHAMPIONSHIPS

Cambridge University Sports Centre, Friday-Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> November 2015

**STOP PRESS:** Cambridge University confirmed its position as the strongest Rugby Fives-playing university by taking a clean sweep of the major titles at this weekend's championships. The singles title was won by Ed Kay – finally winning the championships after being runner-up on more than one occasion – but runner-up Ben Beltrami didn't go away empty-handed, teaming up with fellow Light Blue Matt Shaw to retain the doubles title they won last year.

Cambridge also won the Team Event using the system of ranking devised by David Hebden.

[See below for organiser David Gardner's report]

### Scores

#### Singles

**Round 1:** C Blackaby (Durham) w/o D Casey (UCL) scr.; F Thomas (Oxford) bt O Hamlet (Durham) 15-0, 15-1; I Ackland (Bristol) bt Z Jopling (Warwick) 16-14, 15-12; T Parker (Bristol) bt T Raikes (Durham) 15-2, 15-2; J Pinder (Cambridge) bt S Bhushan (Oxford) 15-4, 15-7; M Hale (Oxford) bt A Ibbetson (UCL) 15-6, 15-8; M Shaw (Cambridge) bt A Wordley (Durham) 15-2, 15-0; C Davey (Birmingham) bt B Ashraf (Durham) 15-1, 15-9; T Watkinson (Bristol) bt B Mills (Oxford) 15-4, 15-2; S Russell (Durham) bt L Cook (Cambridge) 15-3, 15-3; O Arnold (Bristol) bt O Sale (Oxford) 15-0, 15-1; O Quarry (Cambridge) w/o H Fry (Durham) scr.; N Whitney (Oxford) bt C Jenkins (Cambridge) 15-1, 15-2.

**Round 2:** E Kay (Cambridge) bt Blackaby 15-2, 15-2; Thomas bt Ackland 15-7, 15-4; Parker bt Pinder 15-6, 15-1; Shaw bt Hale 15-1, 15-0; B Beltrami (Cambridge) bt Davey 15-3, 15-1; Watkinson bt Russell 15-11, 15-15, 15-13; Arnold bt Quarry 15-2, 15-7; D Butler (Durham) bt Whitney 15-5, 15-5.

**Quarter-finals:** Kay bt Thomas 15-2, 15-2; Shaw bt Parker 15-3, 8-15, 15-11; Beltrami bt Watkinson 15-2, 15-1; Arnold bt Butler 15-6, 8-15, 15-8.

**Semi-finals:** Kay bt Shaw 15-8, 15-1; Beltrami bt Arnold 15-1, 15-1.

**Final:** E Kay (Cambridge) bt BMJ Beltrami (Cambridge) 15-12, 15-3.

**Plate:** SL Russell (Durham).

#### Doubles

**Round 1:** Beltrami & Shaw (Cambridge) bt Casey & B Chua (London) 15-1, 15-2; Jopling & M Nunes (Warwick) bt Hale & Sale (Oxford) 15-3, 15-12; Ackland & Watkinson (Bristol) bt Cook & Jenkins (Cambridge) 15-4, 15-0; Butler & Russell (Durham) bt W Capstick & I Salim (London) 15-0, 15-1; Kay & Quarry (Cambridge) bt Hamlet & Raikes (Durham) 15-0, 15-4; Bhushan & Thomas (Oxford) bt Blackaby & Davey (Durham/Birmingham) 15-8, 15-4; Mills & Whitney (Oxford) bt D Chandra & Ibbetson (London) 15-3, 15-4; Arnold & Parker (Bristol) bt Ashraf & Wordley (Durham) 15-4, 15-1.

**Quarter-finals:** Beltrami & Shaw bt Jopling & Nunes 15-2, 15-3; Butler & Russell bt Ackland & Watkinson 15-11, 15-5; Kay & Quarry bt Bhushan & Thomas 15-2, 15-12; Arnold & Parker bt Mills & Whitney 15-1, 15-2.

**Semi-finals:** Beltrami & Shaw bt Butler & Russell 15-6, 15-7; Arnold & Parker bt Kay & Quarry 15-9, 9-15, 15-9.

**Final:** BMJ Beltrami & MJR Shaw (Cambridge) bt OR Arnold & TRD Parker (Bristol) 15-8, 15-2.

**Plate:** BFA Ashraf & AD Wordley (Durham).

*David Gardner gives his take on BUSF 2015:* The recent University Championships concluded on Sunday, with resounding victories in both the Singles and Doubles Finals for players from the host university, Cambridge.

The Nr. 1 seed, Ed Kay, proved to be too strong for fellow Light Blue Ben Beltrami, when, after faltering a little at the start, he took total control of events. As the 'heir apparent' to the title, after



coming second to Dan Grant last year, Ed was not really stretched throughout the tournament and thoroughly deserved his victory in the final.

In the Doubles Ben was partnered by Matt Shaw. As holders of the title, Ben & Matt were rightly seeded at the top and were not seriously challenged in the early rounds nor in the final where they forced too many errors from the Bristol combination of Theo Parker & Ollie Arnold who had had a tough battle in the semi-final against the Cambridge 2nd pair of Kay & Quarry. In the final the Cambridge 1st pair thoroughly deserved their victory, with more positive shot selection and powerful hitting.

The Plate events were more evenly balanced, but in the end both Singles and Doubles titles went to Durham, with Sam Russell winning the Singles against Oli Quarry, while Ben Ashraf & Adam Wordley took the Doubles, defeating Chris Davey (Birmingham) and his partner Christian Blackaby from Durham.

Although the tournament was originally planned as a dual-venue event, with the first day's play at Oundle as well, the entry was a little smaller than usual and we were thus able to condense play onto the three courts at Cambridge in two long 11- and 10-hour days of exhausting play for both players, spectators and organisers! However, it was well worth the effort in order to be able to take advantage of the superb new facilities for players and spectators alike. It also proved to be much easier for organisers to keep a closer watch on things and ensure that courts rarely, if ever, remained empty for more than a few minutes.

Our first venture onto glass-walled courts was undoubtedly a huge success. However, whilst there were so many excellent aspects to the week-end there was also a less pleasant side: we were hit by one or two bouts of LAS, the adult disease which has sadly hit many senior fives events over the last few decades (Late Arrival Syndrome!) This led to enforced withdrawals from some events and further irritation for patiently waiting opponents and also for organisers when objections were raised – and turned down. Ah well, such is the life of an organiser in the modern day!

Sadly, too, the Finals Day proved to be rather a 'damp squib': continuous play was not possible because the programme got so well ahead of schedule that both Plate Finals could be played on the Saturday. Other contributory factors were that, I am delighted to report, the first shots of the main Singles final were played a full two minutes before the match was scheduled to start and the match only lasted about 40 minutes. This was followed by an extremely long gap between the two finals, made greater by the late arrival of one player due to 'double booking' his morning activities!

We may well have to look at this aspect of event planning in the future.

As always, there are thanks to give, as these events do not happen without a lot of time and effort by many unpaid workers. The efforts, enthusiasm and co-operation of the Staff at the Sports Centre were enormous and deserve the grateful thanks of the RFA. David Barnes must be singled out for his continuous effort pre-event, his superb historical displays and non-stop organisation during the tournament; likewise Chris Horrocks for his constant effort in 'masterminding' the plates; and Ed Kay, who gave helpful comment at the pre-planning stage and great assistance during the championships – when he was not playing either Fives or Real Tennis!

Finally, of course, our thanks go to RFA President Bernard Atkinson for travelling from Lymington to Cambridge for the day to present the trophies.

## **NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP for the Jesters Club Cup**

St. Paul's School, Barnes, 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> December 2015

**STOP PRESS:** Will Ellison has mounted a successful defence of his national singles championship, sealing the title with a typically narrow win over Dan Tristao in what is already being regarded as one of the greatest finals ever.

There was perhaps no surprise that the seedings held true – as they had done pretty much throughout the event – to produce an Ellison/Tristao final; but, the crowd that gathered was treated to a match that exceeded even their high expectations. Will won a tight first game, before Dan struck back to take the second game easily against an apparently tiring opponent.

That led into a deciding game, which ebbed and flowed, with umpteen changes in momentum and never more than a few points between the players. First, Will was able to capitalise as Dan tired and cramped up, but Dan would not admit defeat and came back to lead 13-10, seemingly with one hand on the magnificent Jesters trophy, only for Will to score an unanswered run of five points that made him the national champion.

These words scarcely do justice to the drama of the match and the efforts of the players; and, ahead of a full report, we recommend that everyone read the sequence of Tweets that was published during the final – which you can do by clicking on this link. Even when you know the result, they make a superb read.

### **RESULTS**

**1st round:** D.Tristao bt A.Boyd 15-5, 15-6 ; J.Aquilina bt R.Murby 14-16, 15-2, 15-7 ; M.Cavanagh bt T.Parker 15-3, 15-10 ; E.Kay bt H.Buchanan 15-3, 15-2 ; D.Grant bt O.Arnold 15-9, 15-7 ; D.Butler bt C.Brooks 15-9, 7-15, 15-3 ; T.Maconie bt H.Jefferies 15-5, 15-3 ; W.Ellison bt P.Hanton 15-2, 15-10

**Quarter-finals:** Tristao bt Aquilina 15-3, 15-2 ; Kay bt Cavanagh 15-8, 11-15, 15-13; Grant bt Butler 15-4, 15-12 ; Ellison bt Maconie 16-14, 15-0

**Semi-finals:** Tristao bt Kay 2-15, 15-9, 15-11; Ellison bt Grant 15 -8, 15-10

**Final:** Ellison bt Tristao 15-13, 3-15, 15-13

**Plate:** Arnold

### **JERRY COOPER 1935-2015**

We are sad to report the death of Jerry Cooper, aged 80. Jerry was President of the RFA from 1997 to 1999, having been in charge of Fives at Bedford School from 1963 to 1993, during which time Bedford won the Schools' Singles title seven times and the Doubles twice.

A preliminary tribute to Jerry can be found at <http://rugbyfivesassociation.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/2015-Jerry-Cooper.pdf>

## **THE PRESIDENT'S CUP**

Merchant Taylors' School, Northwood, Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2015

At the end of the usual 12-hour marathon day Mark Kiteley and Dan Grant emerged victorious, in a tense three-gamer, over first-time finalists Alan Bowden and Henry Jefferies. Gareth Price's report – of a day on which the venerable President of the RFA, Bernard Atkinson, played at one end of the age-range and the youngest member of the RFA, 17 year-old Lewis Keates, won the Mate's Plate with Will Ellison – will follow when Gareth has recharged his batteries. See the Gallery for 'Latest photographs' and 'Action Photographs' – you may be there!

### **Results**

The President's Cup: Grant & Kiteley beat Bowden & Jefferies 14-16, 16-14, 15-6

The Mate's Plate: Ellison & Keates beat Stubbs & Tristao 16-14, 15-12

The Love Mug: Dean & Matthews beat Parker & Smith 15-13, 15-11

The T-Pot: Hanton J & Minta beat Atkinson P & Whitehorn 15-10, 15-4

## **END-OF-YEAR NATIONAL RANKINGS**

December 2015

New "end of year" rankings are now available following the recent National Singles and the University Championships (held end of November). As expected, following his narrow victory to win the Jesters Club Cup, Will Ellison takes over from Dan Tristao at the top of the Singles. The National Singles carries more ranking points than any other event and so there are usually some interesting changes following this event, and this year is no exception.

As reported elsewhere, the amazing Singles Final between Will Ellison and Dan Tristao was admired by all spectators, and the closeness of the match is reflected nicely by the closeness of these two players at the top of the Singles Rankings. Below them by some margin, the two losing semi-finalists, Dan Grant and Ed Kay, cement their positions at Nos. 3 and 4, with Ed also picking up points as University Champion. At Nos. 5 and 6, Matt Cavanagh and Ben Beltrami benefit from James Toop's absence from recent competitive fives, while Quarter Finalist Julian Aquilina makes an entry into the top 10 for the first time.

Further down the list, after a run of very good results including winning the Plate, Ollie Arnold moves right up to No. 12, while Andrew Boyd (Plate Runner-Up), Peter Hanton (who qualified in a very strong London group), and Henry Jefferies (another National Singles Qualifier), all enter the top 20. In particular, Andrew (from Edinburgh Academy) is to be congratulated in making the transition to the Senior game amazingly quickly! We have 3 new Singles entries, Tom Watkinson (University Quarter Finalist) at No. 35, and further down, Rob Whitehorn and John Sellar who both had good wins in their National Qualifier events. Francis Thomas, another University Quarter Finalist, also makes good upward progress to No. 38.

This Doubles Rankings update only takes account of the University Doubles. This event does not carry a large number of ranking points, since it is not an open event, so the changes in the list are not substantial. Dan Tristao remains at No. 1 while Will Ellison is very close behind at No. 2. However, Matt Shaw who won the University Doubles with Ben Beltrami moves into the top 10 at No. 9, and Oli Quarry (semi finalist with Ed Kay) and Ben Ashraf (Plate Winner with Adam Wordley) are both high risers to Nos. 48 and 64 respectively. In addition to Adam Wordley, we have 5 other new entries, Sid Bhushan, Zac Jopling, Bertie Mills, Matt Nunes, and Nick Whitney, all of whom made the University Quarter Finals.

The official RFA rankings are prepared by Dave Hebden.

## WEST OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sherborne School, Dorset, 9-10 January 2016

Giles Munn's young players from Winchester College produced a remarkable set of results at the West of England Schools championships this year, winning all 4 major trophies.

In the Open (U18) Singles Albert Song repeated his success of last year in the Colts category by beating Monty Evans of St. Paul's in the final. Winchester had had a second semi-finalist, Pete Kullavanijaya, along with Ben Kirwan from Alleyn's.

In the Colts Singles Winchester's dominance was even greater: Tom Kidner beat his fellow Wykehamist Seb Byers in the final, thus gaining revenge for his defeat in the National U14 event of 2014. Winchester had a third semi-finalist, Mackison, along with a representative from Blundell's.

In the Senior Doubles Winchester 1 (Kullavanijaya & Song) beat Malvern (Nelson & Tudor). Winchester's 2nd pair also figured in the semi-finals, along with St. Paul's 1. All four finalists are a year young.

The Colts Doubles final produced an unsurprising result: Winchester 1 (Byers & Kidner) beat Blundell's. The other two semi-finalist pairs were Winchester 2 and Winchester 3. Blundell's (Chai & MacLaurin) had done very well in beating St. Paul's 1 and Winchester 2 on their way to the final.

There were competitors from 10 schools playing. A smallish entry for the Colts may well be explained by the imminence of GCSE mocks; likewise looming exams and university interviews may have restricted the number of players from the Upper Sixth, but it is encouraging to see the standard of the many players in the senior event who were a year young.

The RFA would like to record its thanks to Peter de Winton and David Hebden who stepped in to run the championships in the enforced absence through illness of organiser Lionel Lawson. Also our thanks to masters i/c, coaches, parents and supporters, most of whom made a long round trip to facilitate the event.

### Scores

#### U18 Singles

**1st Round:** Barnard (Alleyn's) bt Clemence (Tonbridge) 15-5; Rehman (Derby Moor) bt Francis (Blundell's) 15-9; Patel (Tonbridge) bt Findlay (Sherborne) 15-8

**2nd Round:** Song (Winchester) bt Byford (Tonbridge) 15-1; Nelson (Malvern) bt Naumenko (Alleyn's) 15-0; Kim (St. Paul's) bt Barnard 15-4; Tudor (Malvern) bt Rentoul (Alleyn's) 15-1; Manur (Malvern) w/o; Younger (Winchester) bt Sabburn (Blundell's) 15-0; Kirwan (Alleyn's) bt Luk (Malvern) 15-4; Hughes (St. Paul's) bt Pyman (Sherborne) 15-1; Kullavanijaya (Winchester) bt Clarke (Blundell's) 15-2; Hanton (Alleyn's) bt Williams (Malvern) 15-0; Shardlow (Sherborne) bt Rehman 15-9; Whitham (St. Paul's) bt Buchanan (Malvern) 15-1; Evans (St. Paul's) bt Yang (Alleyn's) 15-5; Heidrich (St. Paul's) bt Patel 15-6; Taylor (St. Paul's) bt Keates (Derby Moor) 15-5; Halligan (Derby Moor) bt Malton (Tonbridge) 15-1

**3rd Round:** Song bt Nelson 15-2; Tudor bt Kim 15-13; Younger bt Manur 15-2; Kirwan bt Hughes 15-10; Kullavanijaya bt Hanton 15-13; Whitham bt Shardlow 15-5; Evans bt Heidrich 15-5; Taylor bt Halligan 15-6

**Quarter-finals:** Song bt Tudor 11-7, 11-2; Kirwan bt Younger 9-11, 11-9, 11-5; Kullavanijaya bt Whitham 11-1, 11-8; Evans bt Taylor 11-9, 5-11, 11-9

**Semi-finals:** Song bt Kirwan 11-2, 11-4; Evans bt Kullavanijaya 11-5, 11-9

**Final:** A Song (Winchester) beat M.Evans (St. Paul's) 11-6, 11-1

**Plate:** T.Francis (Blundell's)

## U18 Doubles:

**1st Round:** Derby Moor II bt Blundell's II 15-7; Alleyn's II bt Malvern III 15-10; Blundell's I bt Tonbridge I 15-9; Sherborne II bt Tonbridge II 15-12

**2nd Round:** St. Paul's I bt Marlborough 15-6; Alleyn's I bt Derby Moor II 15-8; St. Paul's II bt Alleyn's II 15-4; Winchester I bt Sherborne I 15-3; Derby Moor I bt Blundell's I 15-3; Winchester II bt Malvern II 15-7; St. Paul's III bt Sherborne II 15-0; Malvern I bt Alleyn's III 15-0

**Quarter-finals:** St. Paul's I bt Alleyn's I 11-5, 11-9; Winchester I bt St. Paul's II 11-0, 8-11, 11-3; Winchester II bt Derby Moor I 3-11, 12-10, 11-8; Malvern I bt St. Paul's III 11-0, 11-4

**Semi-finals:** Winchester I bt St. Paul's I 11-2, 9-11, 11-4; Malvern I bt Winchester II 11-3, 12-10

**Final:** Winchester 1 (Kullavanijaya & Song) beat Malvern (Nelson & Tudor) 11-3, 11-3

**Plate:** Marlborough (Barrows & Wheeler)

## Colts Singles:

**1st Round:** Kullavanijaya (Winchester) bt Davies (St. Paul's) 15-1; Liu (St. Paul's) w/o; Powell (Marlborough) bt Lam (Tonbridge) 15-12; Huh (Winchester) bt Mok (Tonbridge) 15-4; MacLaurin (Blundell's) bt Brodie (Malvern) 15-1; Rigg (Marlborough) bt Choo-Choi (Tonbridge) 15-5; Hughes (Tonbridge) bt Bruce (Malvern) 15-12

**2nd Round:** Kidner (Winchester) bt Jackson (St. Paul's) 15-0; Chai (Blundell's) bt Kullavanijaya; Sumner (Bedford Modern) bt Liu 15-5; Cheveley (St. Paul's) bt Powell 15-2; Mackison (Winchester) bt Huh 15-2; MacLaurin bt Poyntz (Winchester) 15-8; Matvienko (Winchester) bt Rigg 15-8; Byers (Winchester) bt Hughes 15-2

**Quarter-finals:** Kidner bt Chai 11-0, 11-9; Cheveley bt Sumner 11-6, 11-5; Mackison bt MacLaurin 11-2, 11-1; Byers bt Matvienko 11-6, 11-2

**Semi-finals:** Kidner bt Cheveley 11-1, 11-1; Byers bt Mackison 11-5, 11-6

**Final:** T.Kidner (Winchester) beat S.Byers (Winchester) 11-5, 11-4

**Plate:** H.Jackson (St. Paul's)

## Colts Doubles:

**1st Round:** Marlborough I bt St. Paul's II 15-7; Malvern bt Tonbridge II 15-13; Blundell's bt Marlborough II 15-0;

**Quarter-finals:** Winchester I bt Marlborough I 11-2, 11-0; Winchester III bt Malvern 11-1, 11-2; Blundell's bt St. Paul's I 11-6, 5-11, 11-8; Winchester II bt Tonbridge I 11-2, 11-0

**Semi-finals:** Winchester I bt Winchester III 11-0, 11-0; Blundell's bt Winchester II 11-6, 11-2

**Final:** Winchester 1 (Byers & Kidner) beat Blundell's (Chai & MacLaurin) 11-3, 11-1

**Plate:** St. Paul's 1 (Cheveley & Jackson)

## NORTH WEST OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Y Club, Manchester, 16/17th January 2016

### Two titles for Ellison

Reigning National singles and doubles champion Will Ellison had a perfect return to Manchester – the scene of his first National singles championship in 2014 – winning both the singles and doubles titles in the first Open event of 2016.

He took his second North West singles title with a win over Ed Kay, who did very well to reach the final, recording his first win over Dan Grant in the semi-finals. However, Dan didn't go home empty-handed, as it was he who partnered Will to the doubles title, winning the championship in two very close games against the new partnership of veteran Hamish Buchanan and Cambridge student Ben Beltrami.

Finally, special mention must go to Marcus 'Plate' Bate, who lived up to his nickname by winning both the singles and doubles plates.

## RESULTS

### Singles

**1st round:** Hanton bt Sinton 11-1, 11-6; Aquilina bt Bate 8-11, 11-7, 11-6; Beltrami bt Widdop 11-0, 11-2; Kay bt Jourdan 11-3, 11-0; Murby bt Fox 4-11, 11-5, 11-3; Boyd bt George 11-7, 12-10

**Quarter-finals:** Ellison bt Hanton 11-4, 11-2; Beltrami bt Aquilina 11-7, 11-3; Kay bt Murby 11-0, 11-0; Grant bt Boyd 11-5, 11-4

**Semi-finals:** Ellison bt Beltrami 11-8, 11-7; Kay bt Grant 11-5, 12-10

**Final:** Ellison bt Kay 11-4, 11-2

**Plate:** Bate

### Doubles

**1st round:** Boyd & Jourdan bt Lidiard & McKinney 11-0

**Quarter-finals:** Ellison & Grant bt Boyd & Jordan 11-7, 11-4; George & Hanton bt Widdop & Sinton 11-2, 11-1; Aquilina & Kay bt Bate & Murby 11-0, 11-4; Beltrami & Buchanan bt Beswick & Roberts 11-3, 11-2

**Semi-finals:** Ellison & Grant bt George & Hanton 11-7, 11-2; Buchanan & Beltrami bt Aquilina & Kay 11-9, 11-8

**Final:** Ellison & Grant bt Buchanan & Beltrami 11-8, 11-8

**Plate:** Bate & Murby

## LADIES' NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

St. Paul's School, Barnes, Sunday, 17th January 2016

**STOP PRESS Briedenhann does the Double:** From a field of record-breaking size, it was Eastbourne College teacher Kathleen Briedenhann who ended up the day with both the Ladies National Singles and Doubles titles to her name. After teaming up with former National schoolgirl champion Tessa Mills to win the doubles title in a hard-fought final against Alexandra Steel and Maddy Raynor, Kathleen then beat Tessa in the singles final.

*Bob Dolby reports:* Organiser Alex Steel's decision to move the event to January was fully vindicated by a record turn-out and an impressive quality of play. Sadly, the 2014 Singles champion, Claire Knowles, was unable to defend her title, leaving twice-champion Kathleen Briedenhann as The Lady To Beat.

25 players contested the championships. In addition to regular adult players Maddy Raynor and Alex Steel we were delighted to have all three schoolgirl champions: Tessa Mills (2010-13), Shinan Zhang (2014) and Louise Mathias (2015), plus two post-doctoral students from Cambridge University and two members of the teaching staff at Rugby School. Schoolgirls were represented by two from the Lower Sixth at Christ's Hospital (CH), six young players from Aldenham School (A) and a group ranging through the years at Rugby (R). Former Doubles champion Melanie Whitehead teamed up with her daughter Jess from Blundell's (B).

The morning began with Doubles played in a knock-out format, with first- and second-round losers going into a competition for the (French) Plate. There teachers Dani Black & Liz Tilley emerged from one pool to play, and defeat, Cambridge's Sasha Hajnal-Corob & Cassi Henderson from the other. In the main competition defending champions Briedenhann & Mills beat schoolgirls Beatrix Crinnion & Phoebe Thornhill in one semi-final while second-seeded Raynor & Steel came through comfortably against scratch pair Zhang & Harbottle.

The Doubles final was perhaps the closest yet. Raynor & Steel forced enough mistakes out of Tessa Mills to shade the first game 16-14. Kathleen Briedenhann began to dominate the front of the court in the second game sufficiently to force a third game. There the defending champions managed to keep their noses in front all the way and win the title for the fourth consecutive year.

The Singles competition was conducted in three formats. The main competition was a knock-out; the contest for the (French) Bowl consisted of three pools from which two young Rugby School players emerged to fight it out. The winner was Harriet Fagan but the runner-up Anastasia de Clermont got a bowl too! In the unfinished 4-woman Plate competition Phoebe Thornhill was accorded the non-existent trophy after two victories out of two.

In the main competition Kathleen reached the final via victories over Liz Tilley and Maddy Raynor, while Tessa beat Shinan Zhang and then Louise Mathias. Unfortunately Number Three seed Alex Steel had to scratch. Undoubtedly Tessa was the more tired of the two finalists but Kathleen's superior court-craft was the deciding factor, not fitness, in a final played in an exemplary spirit. It was Kathleen's third Singles title, having previously won in 2012 and 2013.

On a sartorial note the RFA's thanks must go once more to Kathleen for commissioning t-shirts for the occasion, celebrating a season of Ladies Fives. They went down very well!

## **SINGLES**

**Round 1:** LTilley bt D.Black 15-6; L.Harbottle (R) bt M.Whitehead 15-10; S.Zhang bt P.Thornhill (CH) 15-8; L.Mathias bt B.Crinnion (CH) 15-3

**Quarter-finals:** K.Briedenhann bt Tilley 15-4; M.Raynor bt Harbottle 15-3; T.Mills bt Zhang 15-6; Mathias w/o A.Steel

**Semi-finals:** Briedenhann bt Raynor 15-0; Mills bt Mathias 15-7

**Final:** Briedenhann bt Mills 15-7, 15-6

**Plate:** Thornhill (CH) **Bowl:** Fagan (R)

## **DOUBLES**

**1st round:** S.Hajnal-Corob & C.Henderson bt Whitehead & J.Whitehead (B) 15-4; Crinnion & Thornhill (CH) bt Zia & I.Wilson (A) 15-0; A de Clermont & M.Hart (R) bt E.Conway & D.Okeowo (A) 15-0; H.Fagin & F.Harrison (R) bt M.Gall & Z.Freedman (A) 15-0

**Quarter-finals:** Briedenhann & Mills bt Hajnal-Corob & Henderson 15-4; Crinnion & Thornhill bt D.Black & L.Tilley 15-7; M.Raynor & A.Steel bt de Clermont & Hart 15-1; Harbottle (R) & Zhang bt Fagin & Harrison 15-0

**Semi-finals:** Briedenhann & Mills bt Crinnion & Thornhill 15-5; Raynor & Steel bt Harbottle & Zhang 15-3

**Final:** Briedenhann & Mills bt Raynor & Steel 14-16, 15-5, 15-9

**Plate:** Black

## **DAVE PARLBY appointed Treasurer of the RFA**

January 2016

The RFA is delighted to announce the appointment of David Parlby to the Board, subject to confirmation at the AGM on September 7th. He will be liaising with Ian Fuller over the next few months with the intention of taking over as Treasurer as from that date.

Ian Fuller has given 14 years of dedicated service to the RFA while covering both the roles of Treasurer and General Secretary. We are extremely grateful to Ian for the sterling work he has done during a period in which Rugby Fives has made considerable strides and the Association has grown in membership. He has been instrumental in the conversion to Charitable Status and in the consequent improvement in our financial position. We shall miss his calm dealings with all matters concerning the game of Fives.

Most Fives players will know Dave Parlby as a fearsome left-hander whose Doubles partnership in the 1980s with the late Jeremy Schroeter and Dave Hebden brought a whole array of titles: in the West of England Championships, the South West Open, the North of England Championships, the North West Open, the Scottish Championships, the National Winchester Doubles and the Puckle Cup. Dave was twice a winner of the President's Cup and, with Jeremy, three times runner-up in the Cyriax Cup.

In recent years Dave has been a distinguished director of the Plymouth Chamber of Commerce. There is a tribute to his work at

<http://www.plymouthherald.co.uk/Plymouth-Chamber-Commerce-chief-retire/story-20823715-detail/story.html>

We look forward to working with Dave, benefiting from his experience in the world of business as well as from the undoubted energy revealed by his impressive curriculum vitae!

## **VISIT TO WARMINSTER SCHOOL A report by David Barnes**

20th January 2016

Warminster School, known until 1973 as Lord Weymouth School, has a precious rarity in its care: an 1860 Fives court whose origins date back to the late 18th Century. Some would call it a Fives wall, similar to other such structures in West Country villages; but in contrast to these, it has a concrete apron in front of it and has been played on in living memory. What's more, it has a prospect of being played on again in the near future, as the School authorities are keen to resurrect the game and put the court to good practical use.

Marlborough Fives supremo Tom Kiggell and I were kindly invited to visit the School, inspect the court and provide some advice as to the game or games which might be played on it. The wall itself is Grade II listed and cannot therefore be extended or built onto in any way, thus limiting the options, but it is in good condition and fully capable of withstanding the impact of a fives ball or handball. There is a shallow ledge running across the front wall at about 3 feet from the ground, and short side walls (more like wings) project from the front wall at about 45°.

Warminster has another trump card: a set of rules for the game that was played there. So little is known of the way in which West Country fives was played that these rules, even if merely local, are of considerable interest. In the Warminster game there were three players per side, called in the local jargon 'squi' (left), 'centre' and 'skunk' (right), and games were played up to 21 points. Only the serving side could win points, and each member of the side served in turn. The servers' advantage was



such that the side serving first immediately conceded three points to the other side. It must be said that one or two of the rules are a bit ambiguous and will need to be tested to see what they really mean!

Rugby School's most famous headmaster, Thomas Arnold, attended both Warminster School (from 1803-07) and Winchester College (from 1807-11) as a boy and according to his own account played fives at the former. This has led to speculation as to the origins of both Rugby and Winchester fives. Early forms of fives were certainly played with hand and bat at both those schools in the early 19th Century, but the eventual structure of Rugby and Winchester Fives courts owes little or nothing to West Country forms of the game, and certainly not to Arnold, who had died two decades before the first 'proper' Rugby and Winchester courts were built in the 1860s. Nonetheless, the link is of interest and gives the court at Warminster further historical distinction.

For the immediate future, the hope is that reciprocal visits between Marlborough and Warminster, enabling both sets of pupils to see and experience different types of court in use, will lead to the re-invention of Warminster Fives!

David Barnes

### **THE JESTERS TOUR TO SCOTLAND, January 2016**

Fives-packed and fun-packed: that was this year's Jesters Tour to Scotland. Below are some photographs relating to this tour, an annual fixture which began in 1992, making this the 25th of its kind. It was the biggest yet; over the long weekend of 8-10 January some 38 players contested 11 matches, plus four internal and very hard fought pairs competitions and a further tournament involving six of the best boys. The Jesters also put on coaching sessions for the younger boys and girls at the four Fives-playing schools in the Scottish capital: Edinburgh Academy, Fettes College, Loretto School and Merchiston Castle School. Notably, it was the first time that girls had figured among the opposition.

Two players flew in from New York to take part, and one from the Bahamas. It is only fitting to acknowledge, also, the impressive record held by Duncan Neale of playing in all tours so far, and Tony Metcalf-Gibson, Andy Williamson, Ed and Robin Thompson have missed only a handful between them.

Warmest thanks must go to Fettes College and their bursar and master in charge, Peter Worledge, for their hospitality: not just a reception but "even a refreshments bar in the gallery of the courts stacked with croissants, tea and coffee, which was an unbelievable sight to long-suffering Fives-players more usually accustomed to outdoors conditions", says organiser Frank Akerman.

The first four action pictures relate to the Select VI tournament in which the best six boys available from the four schools (one player at least must come from each school) pair up with a Jester and then play five games up to 11, one game against each of the other pairs. On this occasion the pairs were (1) Grant Spirling (Fettes) with David Butler (42 points), (2) Lewis Baird (Merchiston) with Jez Sinton (17 points), (3) Andrew Boyd (Edinburgh Academy) with Ben Chua (54 points), (4) Ben Jourdan (Edinburgh Academy) with Mike Crompton (48 points), (5) Archie McCreath (Fettes) with Hamish Buchanan (44 points), and (6) Gary Lemon (Loretto) with Harry Akerman (32 points).

Invitations to the parents of the boys playing, to the headmasters of the four schools, to the masters i/c and to the small Fives-playing community, i.e. those who play with the Caledonian Club, the Merchistonians and the University, were sent out suggesting they might like to watch some of this tournament and then join us at the Reception which Fettes kindly arrange for us. The response was as good as ever. There was the customary small engraved award to the boys in the winning and runner-

up pair which were presented at the Reception: this year to Andrew Boyd and, in second place, to his school partner Ben Jourdan. As it happens, it was the other way round last year!

The remaining two photos feature stalwart Hamish Buchanan and newcomer Roger Layton: so good to see him back on a Fives court now he is living in Edinburgh.

### **REEVE WOOD – former Secretary of the RFA Club**

RFA members, particularly those who knew him from his RFA Club days, will be shocked and saddened to hear of the death on January 25th of Reeve Wood, son of Tom and Joan and Honorary Secretary of the RFA Club from 1991-95.

Reeve was only 60 but had been undergoing treatment for a brain tumour diagnosed nearly a year ago. He and his wife Reggie celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary in November and had lived in County Wexford in Ireland for the past sixteen years.

Reeve greatly enjoyed his fives – he was a President’s Cup winner in 1987 with Jeremy Schroeter – and his huge loyalty to his parents was shown by his willingness to go on safari to play fives across Britain and in the USA, and by assuming responsibility for the RFA Club in 1991.

He helped Reggie and his sister Cherry to achieve a good standard of fives, too: they had success in both a National and a Winchester Ladies’ Doubles. Reeve and Reggie won the Winchester Mixed Doubles in 1998, the second husband-and-wife team to do so, following their great friends Keith and Mary Love.

David Barnes, January 2016

## **THE NATIONAL Under 25 CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Oundle School, 7-8 February 2016

### **STOP PRESS**

It was all 'doubles' at the U25s this year as Ed Kay successfully defended the Singles he first won last year and Ed Kay & Matt Shaw made it two in a row in the Doubles. Tom Watkinson won the Doubles Plate for the second successive year, partnering Rob Whitehorn, who doubled up with a Singles Plate victory. And spare a thought for Ben Beltrami, who was runner-up in the Singles for the second year in a row.

In the Singles Ed had too much experience for Ben — “four school years”, as one contemporary noted —, dominating the front of the court and keeping his opponent under constant pressure. In the Doubles Ed & Matt had that little bit more variety that comes with two right-handers and made just a shade fewer errors than Ben and his partner Ollie Arnold.

The entry was huge: 38 players, with just one dropping out through illness at the last moment, and more universities represented than at BUSF. In addition to the Plate there was a PlatePlate and keen competition to win the Flair Shot Award offered by organiser Ed Kay. More of that in the latter's eagerly awaited report.

### **And here it is!**

#### **Ed Kay does the double at his own tournament**

Ed Kay followed in the footsteps of his namesake Hatton, by winning the tournament that he himself organised. It is hoped that less controversy will follow his victory.

A massive entry of 38 showed that fives is on the rise among the youth in this country: there was some great talent on show. The pick of the first round matches was Laurence Cook vs Tom McCahon. Laurence's aversion to mornings showed as Tom took the first 15-3, but Laurence wiped the sleep from his eyes and rallied to take it to 15-14 in the second. Tom then showed a cool head to close it out 16-15.

Onto the last 16 and there were few shocks, except James Smith beating Anthony Goodwin. James is now under the tutelage of the great Wayne Enstone at the Y Club and this appeared to help him to a 15-10, 16-15 victory. Round 3 again produced shocks, with Jacob Brubert, in his final year here, using all his experience to take down 5th seed Ollie Arnold 15-6, 15-9. There was also a strong showing by schoolboy Andrew Boyd, who downed U25s veteran Adam George 15-7, 15-3.

In the quarter-finals Kay and Beltrami cruised past Parker and Boyd respectively. The other two games were cracker-jackers: firstly Matt Shaw beat Dave Butler 15-11, 15-16, 15-10 in a match where tempers flared and the atmosphere was gladiatorial; secondly Julian Aquilina showed a cool head that his hero, Roger Federer, would have been proud of. Julian clawed back from 14-4 down to take the first game 16-15 against Jacob Brubert. Jacob came out like a raging bull in the second to secure a simple 15-2 game, but Julian proved just a bit too consistent and accurate in the third, winning 15-9.

Due to these marathon quarter-finals, the semis were a damp squib, with Julian barely able to move against Ed and Matt only able to secure one point — a down serve from Ben — after initially showing strong signs by taking an 8-0 lead. In the final Ed proved too strong for Ben, showing slightly better consistency and experience to win 15-4, 15-7.

The best-of-3-to-6 format in the Singles Plate gave rise to some classic games, notably Christian Blackaby chucking away a 6-1, 5-0 lead against Laurence Cook, to lose 6-1, 5-7, 0-6. There was a

strong showing from Oxford freshman Sid Bhushan who made it all the way to the final. However, Rob Whitehorn was far too strong for the whole field in the Plate and secured victory in the final 11-3, 11-4.

This year showed the first introduction of the PlatePlate: a tournament for those who fell short in the first round of the Plate. The first semi-final was between the wily Cameron McKelvie (recently returned to the game after a few years' hiatus) and talented Oundle schoolboy Charlie Rodgers. McKelvie proved way too experienced and served up a double bagel to the schoolboy. The second semi was an all-Durham affair with Tom McCahon taking on the rapid improver Thomas Raikes. McCahon's greater consistency showed as he went through in two sets. Come the final it was McCahon who went home with the creme egg as McKelvie proved that you need more the wile to win the PlatePlate.

A huge 18 pairs for the Doubles meant another early start on Sunday. The day started with an epic first round as Singles PlatePlate winner McCahon and his Durham teammate Blackaby came from one game down to secure an historic victory against Oxford pair Mills & Hale 13-15, 15-12, 15-5. In the second round there was one upset: Oxford first pair Thomas and Bhushan pulled out all the stops to take down the new pairing of Watkinson and Whitehorn 15-9, 15-6. Theo Parker (Watkinson's coach and mentor) was not happy, blaming Watkinson's overtraining in the gym during the past few months. The pick of the quarters was Parker & Butler vs Jefferies & Waller, with the ex-Oxford underdogs taking the first game 15-4. However, they were unable to sustain the pressure and Parker & Butler pulled through 4-15, 15-7, 15-11. Meanwhile Kay & Shaw and Beltrami & Arnold made serene progress and managed to set up the final that all the pundits were predicting, despite the best efforts of Aquilina & Tilston. In the final Shaw looked like an upgrade from Kay's previous partner (Dan Tristao) as he ran around the court like a madman, making every ball. As in the Singles final, superior consistency won the day and Kay & Shaw took the Doubles title 15-11, 15-8.

In the Doubles Plate Watkinson & Whitehorn blitzed the competition, with only Chua & Smith managing to get close to them in the final. Meanwhile in the Doubles PlatePlate McKelvie went one better than in the Singles to take the title with Matt Hale as they beat hybrid pairing Ben Bowry & Thomas Raikes 15-11 and 15-year-old schoolboy pairing Colbert & Sumner 15-13.

By popular demand the Flair Shot Award was re-instated this year: a prize generously donated by Dan Grant to encourage shot development in young players. There were five entries this year, but it was again wily campaigner Cameron McKelvie who took home the spoils, adding to his Doubles PlatePlate victory and doing the coveted "double". Cameron's return-of-serve-volley-drop-shot-winner scored 10/10 for intentionality and 10/10 for match importance (it was the only point he and Hale won against Chua & Smith), and although he got no points for calling it before hitting it or for gloating/celebrating afterwards, the double points on offer for a winner meant that his total of 40 was enough to beat 2) Dave Butler's deliberate hit into partner Theo's two veg (32 pts), 3) Arnold for something I didn't see (18 pts), 4) Arnold's behind the back shot (17 pts) and 5) Matt Shaw's on-the-knees volley (11 pts).

Special mention must to go to Joseph Sumner and Oliver Colbert who, at 15, played in their first (of hopefully 11) Under 25 tournament. They proved that they can already compete at this level and hopefully this tournament will give them good experience going into the schoolboy championships.

Finally, many thanks go to Mike Case of Oundle School for letting us hold this event in their fantastic venue and to the Jesters Club for their generous sponsorship of this event.

## Singles

**First Round:** Jourdan bt Manger 15-5, 15-2; Rodgers bt Raikes 15-5, 15-3; Blackaby bt M.Bhushan 15-2, 15-7; Sumner bt Varesteh 15-2, 15-6; McCahon bt Cook 15-3, 16-15; Barlow bt Wordley 15-5, 15-7

**Second Round:** Kay bt Jourdan 15-7, 15-3; Tilston bt Hale 15-1, 15-4; Jefferies bt S.Bhushan 15-2, 15-; Parker bt Whitney 15-1, 15-6; Arnold bt Rodgers 15-3, 15-3; Brubert bt Thomas 16-14, 15-5; Waller bt Chua 15-7, 15-6; Aquilina bt Blackaby 15-2, 15-2; Butler bt Sumner 15-6, 15-3; Smith bt Goodwin 15-10, 16-15; Shaw bt McCahon 15-2, 15-0; Boyd bt McKelvie 15-3, 15-0; George bt Owen 15-2, 15-1; Watkinson bt Mills 15-4, 15-0; Beltrami bt Barlow 15-0, 15-0

**Third Round:** Kay bt Tilston 15-2, 15-3; Parker bt Jefferies 16-15, 15-7; Brubert bt Arnold 15-6, 15-9; Aquilina bt Waller 15-11, 15-8; Butler bt Whitehorn 15-7, 15-4; Shaw bt Smith 15-0, 15-2; Boyd bt George 15-7, 15-3; Beltrami bt Watkinson 15-7, 15-4

**Quarter-finals:** Kay bt Parker 15-8, 15-3; Aquilina bt Brubert 16-15, 2-15, 15-9; Shaw bt Butler 15-11, 15-16, 15-10; Beltrami bt Boyd 15-2, 15-3

**Semi-finals:** Kay bt Aquilina 15-2, 15-2; Beltrami bt Shaw 15-8, 15-1

**Final:** Kay bt Beltrami 15-4, 15-7

**Plate:** Whitehorn

**PlatePlate:** McCahon

## **Doubles**

**First Round:** Varesteh & Rodgers bt Sumner & Colbert 15-6, 15-13; Blackaby & McCahon bt Mills & Hale 13-15, 15-12, 15-5

**Second Round:** Kay & Shaw bt Raikes & Bowry 15-3, 15-7; Goodwin & Davey bt Barlow & Manger 15-3, 15-11; George & Brubert bt Chua & Smith 15-6, 15-9; Aquilina & Tilston bt Whitney & Owen 15-0, 15-4; Parker & Butler bt Varesteh & Rodgers 15-3, 15-0; Jefferies & Waller bt McKelvie & Cook 15-0, 15-1; Thomas & S.Bhushan bt Watkinson & Whitehorn 15-9, 15-6; Beltrami & Arnold bt Blackaby & McCahon 15-3, 15-3

**Quarter-finals:** Kay & Shaw bt Goodwin & Davey 15-6, 15-9; Aquilina & Tilston bt George & Brubert 15-8, 15-11; Parker & Butler bt Jefferies & Waller 4-15, 15-7, 15-11; Beltrami & Arnold bt Thomas & S.Bhushan 15-7, 15-11

**Semi-finals:** Kay & Shaw bt Aquilina & Tilston 15-2, 15-4; Beltrami & Arnold bt Butler & Parker 15-9, 15-8

**Final:** Kay & Shaw bt Beltrami & Arnold 15-11, 15-8

**Plate:** Watkinson & Whitehorn

**PlatePlate:** Hale & McKelvie

**Flair Shot Award:** McKelvie

## **THE VARSITY MATCH: Oxford v Cambridge**

Played at St. Paul's School, Barnes on Saturday, 20th February 2016

**Singles.** (Oxford names first): FR Thomas (St. Paul's & BNC) (*Capt.*) lost to EI Kay (St. Paul's & Emmanuel) 2-15; S Bhushan (St. Paul's & Pembroke) lost to BMJ Beltrami (St. Paul's & Selwyn) (*Hon. Sec.*) 4-15; NA Whitney (Tonbridge & Magdalen) lost to MJR Shaw (St. Paul's & Homerton) 7-15; MW Hale (Winchester & St. Hilda's) (*Hon. Sec.*) lost to JB Brubert (Alleyn's & Queens') 0-15.

**Doubles.** Thomas & Bhushan lost to Brubert & Kay 3-15, 3-15; lost to Beltrami & Shaw 6-15, 7-15; Whitney & Hale lost to Beltrami & Shaw 1-15, 0-15; lost to Brubert & Kay 0-15, 3-15. AN Mills (Highgate & St. Edmund Hall) & WJ Yates (St. Paul's & Regent's Park) lost to ORJ Quarry (St. Paul's & Selwyn) & AMJ Guérout (St. Paul's & Corpus Christi) 12-15, 15-13; lost to JW Pinder (Winchester & Robinson) (*Capt.*) & LW Cook (Bishop's Stortford HS & Emmanuel) 9-15, 6-15. OED Sale (Eton & Wadham) & TRG Owen (St. Dunstan's & St. Hilda's) lost to Pinder & Cook 7-15, 5-15; bt Quarry & Guérout 15-12, 15-4.

**Result: Cambridge bt Oxford 284-120.**

### **Oxford Beavers v Cambridge Sparrows**

**Singles.** (Oxford names first): HD Hutchinson (Oundle & New) (*Capt.*) lost to EL Tebboth (Merchant Taylors' & Selwyn) 1-15; GC Muscat (Tonbridge & Balliol) bt CR Jenkins (Gower College & Churchill) (*Capt.*) 15-7, EP Benson (St. Paul's & St. Edmund Hall) lost to BJ Bowry (Clifton & Fitzwilliam) 1-15; HDS Lucas (Westminster & St. Edmund Hall) lost to NR Turnbull (RGS High Wycombe & Trinity Hall) 7-15.

**Doubles.** Muscat & Hutchinson lost to Tebboth & Bowry 8-15, 16-14; bt Jenkins & Turnbull 15-8, 15-12. Benson & Lucas lost to Jenkins & Turnbull 1-15, 10-15; lost to Tebboth & Bowry 2-15, 1-15.

**Result: Cambridge Sparrows bt Oxford Beavers 161-92.**

### **Oxford Ladies v Cambridge Ladies**

**Singles.** (Oxford names first): LKA Hotson (Oundle, Durham University & Corpus Christi) (*Capt.*) bt CJ Henderson (Elizabethtown Area HS & Queens') (*Capt.*) 15-12; RM Parr (Shrewsbury & Christ Church) lost to GE Shepherd (Oakham & Emmanuel) 6-15; EM Haseldine (St. Paul's Girls' School & St. Edmund Hall) lost to SJ Hajnal-Corob (Highgate & King's) 0-15; D Huleatt-James (Benenden & St. Edmund Hall) lost to CL Simpson (Rugby & Robinson) 1-15.

**Doubles.** Hotson & Parr bt Henderson & Hajnal-Corob 15-10, 15-8; bt Shepherd & Simpson 15-6, 15-6. Haseldine & Huleatt-James lost to Shepherd & Simpson 0-15, 0-15; lost to Henderson & Hajnal-Corob 1-15, 0-15.

**Result: Cambridge Ladies bt Oxford Ladies 147-83.**

*David Barnes reports:* Thirty-two young players came to St. Paul's this year for the biggest Varsity Match in the history of the event. Some were seasoned competitors, others relative beginners in the arena of Rugby Fives, but the levels of effort put in were impressive across the board, and the atmosphere one of healthy rivalry. Congratulations are due to team captains Francis Thomas of Oxford and James Pinder of Cambridge for getting them all together!

The extremely high standard of this year's top Cambridge four was always likely to bring victory to the Light Blues in the main event. Messrs Kay, Beltrami, Shaw and Brubert have gathered a fine collection of titles between them in various events, and together in singles and doubles they amassed a

darts maximum against Oxford's hard-won 36 points. One could only feel for the Oxford players who came under such relentless pressure, but they coped with it as best they could.

The third and fourth pair matches were more even, the pick of the pairs being Cambridge 4 (Pinder & Cook) who won all their games. Oxford 3 (Mills & Yates) and 4 (Sale & Owen) both had their moments, winning three games and competing hard in the others. The final margin of victory was wide, but it was a much better match than last year. A matter of interest for next year: the bottom four felt rather left out, as everyone else played a single as well as four doubles. It might be a good idea to include this in next year's match, provided the captains agree and time is available, as it was this year.

The reserves match was cheerfully noisy at times, but not a bad contest. The outstanding players on the day were Muscat (Oxford) and the Cambridge pair of Tebboth and Bowry. Cambridge won three of the singles and clinched matters with a solid doubles performance, winning five games and getting to deuce in a sixth. Oxford lacked the depth to reverse their singles deficit, but their first pair scored well.

This was the first year to see a Ladies' four-a-side match in this event, a well-contested encounter resulting in a Cambridge victory. The top singles match between the two captains, won 15-12 by Louisa Hotson (Oxford) against Cassie Henderson (Cambridge) was a terrific battle and attracted the largest gallery of the day. The other singles went Cambridge's way by quite a large margin, but the Oxford first pair came back to win all four of their doubles games. Unfortunately their second pair was unable to match them, and Cambridge's greater depth told in the end. A shining new trophy was presented to the Cambridge Ladies for their victory, but not to worry, Oxford – last year's pair's win is also recorded on it!

My thanks go to Owen Toller, who stood in faithfully for the unusually absent Peter King (in South Africa with the cricket team, lucky man) and made sure that everything went smoothly in the St. Paul's Sports Centre. The school has provided its excellent facilities – and many superb players – for the Varsity Match every year since 1983, and Rugby Fives is greatly in its debt. We are also indebted to Pol Roger Champagne for their continued and most generous support of the Match.

## **SOUTH EAST SCHOOLS REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

February 2016 at Christ's Hospital

### **U18**

**Singles:** C.Mabbutt (Whitgift) bt J.Byford (Tonbridge) 11-4, 11-8

**Plate:** Aziz (Whitgift)

**Doubles:** Whitgift I (J.Grut & C.Mabbutt) bt Whitgift II T.Aziz & D.Burton (Whitgift II) 15-5

**Plate:** Tonbridge II bt Christ's Hospital I 15-7

### **U16**

**Singles:** H.Anbukumar (Whitgift) bt W.Hanley (Tonbridge) 11-4, 11-4

**Plate:** Lam (Tonbridge)

**Doubles:** Tonbridge (W.Hanley & C.Lam) bt Whitgift (H.Anbukumar & R.Etwaroo) 15-7

**Plate:** Eastbourne bt Christ's Hospital I 15-3

## **NORTH OF ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Durham; Saturday/Sunday, 27/28th February 2016

A huge draw of 29 players in the singles descended upon Durham Racecourse for the 2016 North of England Open – most notably including a record entry of two women. Also present, 11 students from the Durham club and three schoolboys from Scotland. With the first ball to be struck at 9am and the final scheduled for 7pm, it was going to be a long day. All went smoothly in Round 1, with just one three-gamer that saw Ben Chua book his place in against three-times champion Will Ellison. Matches continued to run to schedule, until James Tilston took Julian Aquilina into a third and looked to be on for an upset – however, the organiser snuck through 11-9. Andrew Boyd also closed out Tom Dean in three games, and so the eight seeds would feature in the quarter-finals.

The top four seeds comfortably made it through to the semis, setting up what was probably the most eagerly anticipated clash of the tournament – Grant vs Beltrami. Some suggested that Dan was out of practice coming into this contest, but it did not show. He stormed through the first game 11-3, but came off court with concern on his face. The second game had barely got underway when, unfortunately, he had to retire with a back injury. Not the way that Ben wanted to reach his first Open final, in his words, but the greatest challenge lay ahead.

As the last warm up of the day concluded at 7pm, a look of relief crept across the organiser's face. A small (but appreciative) crowd gathered, before witnessing a stellar performance from the top seed; the pressure was relentless, and Will quickly claimed his fourth Ferens trophy with an 11-6 11-1 victory.

In the plate, Alley Scott triumphed in the all-ladies clash against Katy Hulm to take the unofficial title of women's champion, while Christian Blackaby and Jez Sinton made their way to the final with relative ease. Jez took the first game but could not quite hold off the young challenger who has made the transition from Eton Fives just this year – Christian picking up the singles plate on his Open tournament debut.

Sunday saw 13 pairs compete, and after a straightforward set of first rounds it was onto the quarterfinals. Edinburgh schoolboys Boyd and Jourdan, last year's doubles plate winners, came close to taking a game off Beltrami and Minta, but it was not to be. In the adjacent quarter, Buchanan and Dean took on a spirited Durham side of Blackaby and current captain Russell. Splitting a lengthy first two games, Hamish and Tom eventually stamped their authority on the match in the third. In the top quarter, Ellison and Grant got their tactics spot on – Dan simply standing in the corner letting Will do the work – though the Scottish pairing of McCreath and Murby put in a good showing. The four most recent Durham captains featured in the final quarter; Aquilina and Tilston coming through against Butler and Hanton in a tense three-gamer.

We wondered whether Dan's back injury would prove too significant a hindrance for the top seeds, but Will looked to be in his element under the authorisation to take every shot. All his 2v1 practice was paying off as he struck winner after winner, particularly around the front of the court; Aquilina and Tilston had no answers. Although Dan did not see much of the ball, when it did come into his path he was blasting winners himself – probably racking up the highest winners:shots ratio ever seen! Meanwhile, the second and third seeds were locked in a tight affair, with the third game going down to the wire. Eventually Beltrami and Minta edged Buchanan and Dean 12-10 to set up a final showdown with Ellison and Grant.

In much the same way as their semifinal, Will and Dan motored on, racing through the first game 11-2. Ben and John kept plugging away, and there were moments in the second game when Will actually appeared to be tiring(!), but they could not quite take advantage of the situation. For all Will's efforts and to wows and laughs from the crowd, the match finished with a sublime dropshot from Dan: final score 11-2 11-7. This was Will's fifth doubles title at the North and Dan's first.



The doubles plate saw Durham pairing Tom-squared (McCahon and Wakelam) win all three of their round robin matches to emerge victorious.

## Results

### Singles

**1st round:** B Chua bt T Wakelam 11-8 10-12 11-2; H Buchanan bt A Scott 11-0 11-1; P Hanton bt J Whitbread 11-0 11-0; J Aquilina bt J Werling 11-0 11-0; J Tilston bt C Shepherd 11-2 11-2; B Jourdan bt T Raikes 11-2 11-0; D Butler bt A McCreath 11-1 11-7; O Quarry bt H Fry 11-3 11-1; S Russell bt J Sinton 11-1 11-6; R Murby bt K Hulm 11-0 11-2; A Boyd bt J van Nieuwkerk 11-0 11-0; T Dean bt C Blackaby 11-4 11-2; T McCahon bt J Smith 11-4 11-6

**2nd round:** W Ellison bt Chua 11-1 11-0; Hanton bt Buchanan 11-0 11-2; Aquilina bt Tilston 11-5 10-12 11-9; Butler bt Jourdan 11-1 11-7; B Beltrami bt Quarry 11-8 11-3; Murby bt Russell 11-8 11-6; Boyd bt Dean 8-11 11-4 11-1; D Grant bt McCahon 11-3 11-2

**Quarter-finals:** Ellison bt Hanton 11-1 11-0; Butler bt Aquilina 11-4 11-5; Beltrami bt Murby 11-1 11-4; Grant bt Boyd 11-2 11-7

**Semi-finals:** Ellison bt Butler 11-3 11-3; Beltrami bt Grant 3-11 1-0 ret.

**Final:** Ellison bt Beltrami 11-6 11-1

**Plate:** Blackaby

### Doubles

**1st round:** McCreath & Murby bt McCahon & Wakelam 11-1 11-1; Butler & Hanton bt Werling & Whitbread 11-0 11-0; Boyd & Jourdan bt Rich & Shepherd 11-0 11-0; Blackaby & Russell bt Fry & Raikes 11-1 11-5

**Quarter-finals:** Ellison & Grant bt McCreath & Murby 11-6 11-5; Aquilina & Tilston bt Butler & Hanton 6-11 11-8 11-5; Beltrami & Minta bt Boyd & Jourdan 11-5 12-10; Buchanan & Dean bt Blackaby & Russell 11-9 8-11 11-0

**Semi-finals:** Ellison & Grant bt Aquilina & Tilston 11-4 11-5; Beltrami & Minta bt Buchanan & Dean 11-9 4-11 12-10

**Final:** Ellison & Grant bt Beltrami & Minta 11-2 11-7

**Plate:** McCahon & Wakelam

## THE MIDLANDS SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Bedford Modern School and Bedford School, Sunday 28th February 2016

*Bob Dolby reports:* The 4th Midlands Schools championships were conducted as usual on the courts of the two Bedford schools, with the final stages of both sets of Singles played at Bedford School. The 20-strong U18 tournament began with the Doubles. Three schools reached the semi-finals: Rugby I versus Bedford Modern II was the better contest, ending with a 15-11 win for Rugby's Romain & Skirokiy, while the Oundle pair of Manger & Barlow came through comfortably against Rugby II. Oundle were then too strong in the final, winning 15-5. Meanwhile in the Plate competition for first round losers it was Derby Moor, represented by Bally Singh & Lewis Keates, who added to their collection of silverware.

The same three schools provided the semi-finalists in the U18 Singles, with Oundle's Tom Barlow and Jeremy Manger working their way through to the final with wins over Rugby's George Romain and James Attwood from BMS. The final was the closest match of the day: Barlow muscled his way to an 11-8 win in the first game but then ran out of steam over the course of the next two games under pressure from Manger's accurate left-handed attack. There was no time for Romain and Attwood to play for the Plate, which was entrusted to the latter for engraving.

The U15 event featured 15 young players of varying ages and included two girls from Rugby. The Rugby contingent dominated the event, providing three of the four pairs in the semi-finals of the

Doubles and all four players in the semi-finals of the Singles. The Doubles ended with victory for Rugby's 1st pair of Jacob Drabble and Arun Mehta, the latter sticking it out through a three-game match with an obviously painful ankle injury. In the Plate competition for first round losers the young pair of Awan & Sorensen picked up the silverware for Bedford School.

Doubles-winner Drabble did not have the same success in the Singles, losing in the final by a wide margin to Noah Martle. The Plate match between losing semi-finalists Miles Shaw and Sam Stoddart was a close-fought, topsy-turvy affair won by the latter once he rediscovered his service after a period in the middle of the game when it went AWOL.

The RFA's thanks go to Bedford School and to Bedford Modern for hosting us, to masters i/c Michael Croker and Phil Smith for their help with the organisation, to Stuart Kirby for running the U18 event, and to the catering staff of Bedford School who provided excellent lunch and tea, plus ice-packs for the walking wounded. There is no doubt that this event, along with the Colquhoun Trophy and the South East Regional Schools competition, helps to boost the standard of play to be seen some weeks later at the National School competition at St. Paul's. Which we now look forward to.

### **U18 Singles**

**Quarter-finals:** Attwood (BMS) beat McKay (Rugby) 15-12; Barlow (Oundle) beat Sumner (BMS) 15-1; Manger (Oundle) beat Keates (Derby Moor) 15-0; Romain (Rugby) beat Larrington (BMS) 15-6  
**Semi-finals:** Barlow beat Attwood 15-2; Manger beat Romain 15-3  
**Final:** Manger beat Barlow 8-11, 11-0, 11-3  
**Plate:** Attwood and Romain (shared)

Also competed: Colbert, Pradhan, Rees-Bidder (BMS); Beard, Hutchings, Jones, Msindo, Rogers (Bedford); Farren, Skirokiy, Somervail, (Rugby); Singh (Derby Moor)

### **U18 Doubles**

**1st round:** Rugby II bt Bedford III w/o; Bedford I bt BMS III 15-8; BMS II bt Rugby III w/o  
**Quarter-finals:** Rugby II bt BMS I 15-11; Oundle bt Bedford I 15-0; Rugby I bt Bedford II 15-1; BMS II bt Derby Moor 16-14  
**Semi-finals:** Oundle bt Rugby II 15-0; Rugby I bt BMS II 15-11  
**Final:** Oundle (Barlow & Manger) bt Rugby I (Romain & Skirokiy) 15-5  
**Plate:** Derby Moor (Keates & Singh)

### **U15 Singles**

**Quarter-finals:** Drabble (Rugby) bt Williamson (Bedford) 11-7; Stoddart (Rugby) bt Ali (Derby Moor) 11-5; Martle (Rugby) bt Pong (Bedford) 11-7; Shaw (Rugby) bt Fagan (Rugby) 11-2  
**Semi-finals:** Drabble bt Stoddart 11-3; martle bt Shaw 11-3  
**Final:** Martle bt Drabble 11-3, 11-3  
**Plate:** Stoddart

Also competed: Knox (BMS); Denton, Sloan (Rugby); Awan, Singer, Sorensen (Bedford); Singh (Derby Moor)

### **U15 Doubles**

**Quarter-finals:** Rugby I bt BMS w/o; Bedford II bt Rugby IV 15-7; Rugby III bt Derby Moor 15-1; Rugby II Bedford I 15-3  
**Semi-finals:** Rugby I bt Bedford II 15-1; Rugby II bt Rugby III 15-2

**Final:** Rugby 1 (Drabble & Mehta) bt Rugby II (Martle & Stoddart) 9-11, 12-11, 11-5  
**Plate:** Bedford I (Awan & Sorensen)

## **THE NATIONAL LADIES' WINCHESTER FIVES CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Sedbergh School, Cumbria; Saturday 5th March, 2016

On a snowy weekend in Cumbria, Kathleen Briedenhann was able to regain the Ladies Winchester Fives Singles title she lost to Tessa Mills last year at Winchester. It was her third Singles title. In the afternoon Kathleen and Tessa made a successful defence of their Doubles title against Maddy Raynor & Katie Sumner.

*Organiser Maddy Raynor reports:* This year the Ladies' Winchester Fives Championship was held at Sedbergh School, Cumbria on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> March, with the competition changed from the normal Sunday to Saturday so as to give competitors time to travel to Sedbergh and make the most of visiting the stunning Yorkshire Dales (and the Lakes only just down the road). With a few hiccups on the way it was with great anticipation that the nine players took to the courts at Sedbergh where Jonathan Lidiard and the school had done a great job with cleaning the courts in preparation of this event.

We had some returning faces as well as a few new ones this year, with players travelling from across the country; Kathleen Briedenhann and Tessa Mills from Eastbourne, Jessica Morton and Maddy Raynor from Devon, and Katie Sumner from Bedford, plus Ruby Page, Polly Bell, Imogen Boddy and Jemima Cookson from Sedbergh. It was great to have a group of schoolgirls competing again this year, with a lot of talent on show.

The competition kicked off with the singles tournament. The first round saw Page and Morton play against each other. This was a good match, with both players using this game to get used to the courts and get rid of the competition nerves. It was Page who was victorious, beating Morton 15-4, and then went on to face Raynor. Here Page showed great potential and ability to hit the buttress on her serves, catching Raynor out, but Raynor was too strong and went on to win 15-1. In the other court Sumner dominated her first game against Bell to win 15-2 to then go on and face Mills, which was a close contest, with Sumner playing some great shots, but it was Mills who went on to win 15-3. Whilst Mills vs Sumner and Page vs Raynor were playing, Boddy faced Cookson in a very close match with both players showing great ability and canny placement; it was Boddy who eventually managed to secure the win 15-13 to go into the semi-finals to face Briedenhann.

The semi-finals saw Boddy, who only started playing fives 5 weeks before the competition, face Briedenhann and Mills face Raynor. Briedenhann dominated her semi-final to win 15-0, 15-1 despite Boddy's best efforts. Whereas in the Mills vs Raynor semi-final the score was initially refusing to budge. It was a battle of serves, with both players showing grit and determination. The match seemed never-ending, but eventually, when the score was 8-8, Mills managed to pull away to beat Raynor 15-9. Mills then went on to dominate the second game, winning 15-3.

The singles plate competition was being played at the same time as the semi-finals; it was a round robin with Bell, Cookson, Morton, Page and Sumner all battling it out. There were some close and competitive games, but it was Sumner who was victorious, winning all her matches. This was an impressive mini-tournament to watch, as it was all the players first time entering a Ladies' National Competition and they all played really well, demonstrating some great shots and tactical play.

So it was Briedenhann (attempting to regain her title) and Mills (defending champion) battling it out again in the singles final. Mills took the lead first, using the buttress to her advantage, but it was Briedenhann who then managed to pull the score in her favour to take the first game 15-8, with both players playing some amazing shots and looking very equal on the court. In the second game Briedenhann took the lead, but Mills digging deep, started to reel the score back in, and it was

beginning to look like a repeat of last year's epic gruelling match. However, Briedenhann managed to keep ahead and won 15-9 to regain her title. This was a brilliant singles final to watch with some fantastic fives being played and hopefully it has given some of the younger and less experienced players a taster of Ladies' Fives at the top level and inspired them to continue to play and improve to the best of their ability.

After the singles saw the doubles played in a round robin format. Briedenhann & Mills won their first match against Bell & Boddy 15-0, whilst scratch pair Raynor & Sumner (with a few communication errors) beat Cookson & Page 15-2. The second matches in the round robin saw Briedenhann & Mills beat Cookson & Page 15-2, whilst Raynor & Sumner beat Bell & Boddy 15-2. Due to the points scored the last matches in the round robin were scratched, as the pairs would be facing each other in their respective finals.

Bell & Boddy faced Cookson & Page in the plate doubles final, where they were battling it out for the 'Keep Calm and Play Winchester Fives Mugs', so it was all to play for. This was a closely contested match with some great fives played and the girls using the buttress to their advantage. In the end it was Bell & Boddy, the older and more experienced Sedbergh pair, who were victorious, winning 15-4, 15-5. Congratulations!

Sumner & Raynor faced the defending champions in the final. It was Sumner's first Ladies' National Final. They started off very determined and started to make progress against the champions, but Briedenhann & Mills' experience of playing together proved too strong and they went on to win 15-9, 15-3.

Thank you to all the players who participated: it was truly a very enjoyable day of fives and it was lovely to see the young players improving so much throughout the tournament. I look forward to next year's competition at Malvern College. Also a big thank you needs to go to Kathleen for organising the 'ladies fives' t-shirt which you can see everyone in the group photo wearing proudly.

## **Scores:**

### **Singles**

**1<sup>st</sup> Round:** Ruby Page bt Jessica Morton 15-4; Katie Sumner bt Polly Bell 15-2

**Quarter-finals:** Imogen Boddy by Jemima Cookson 15-13; Maddy Raynor bt Ruby Page 15-1; Tessa Mills bt Katie Sumner 15-3

**Semi-finals:** Kathleen Briedenhann bt Imogen Boddy 15-0, 15-1; Tessa Mills bt Maddy Raynor 15-9, 15-3

**Final:** Kathleen Briedenhann bt Tessa Mills 15-8, 15-9

**Plate:** 1<sup>st</sup> Katie Sumner (44 points), 2<sup>nd</sup> Polly Bell (36 points), 3<sup>rd</sup> Jemima Cookson (30 points), 4<sup>th</sup> Ruby Page (29 points), 5<sup>th</sup> Jessica Morton(6 points)

### **Doubles**

**Round Robin:** Kathleen Briedenhann & Tessa Mills bt Polly Bell & Imogen Boddy 15-0; Kathleen Briedenhann & Tessa Mills bt Jemima Cookson & Ruby Page 15-2; Maddy Raynor & Katie Sumner bt Polly Bell & Imogen Boddy 15-2; Maddy Raynor & Katie Sumner bt Jemima Cookson & Ruby Page 15-2; Maddy Raynor & Katie Sumner v. Kathleen Briedenhann & Tessa Mills: match carried to final due to points score; Polly Bell & Imogen Boddy v. Jemima Cookson & Ruby Page: match carried to final due to points score

**Final:** Kathleen Briedenhann & Tessa Mills bt Maddy Raynor & Katie Sumner 15-9, 15-3

**Plate final:** Polly Bell & Imogen Boddy bt Jemima Cookson & Ruby Page 15-4, 15-3

## **British Universities and Student Fives v. Rugby Fives Association**

Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2016, Cambridge Sports Centre

**STOP PRESS:** For only the third time in the 49-year history of the event, a British Universities team has defeated a representative side from the Rugby Fives Association. With a convincing display on the Cambridge courts, one of the strongest student teams for many years won five out of six singles matches and then proceeded to take nine of the twelve games of doubles to achieve a comfortable victory.

*Match Manager David Gardner reports:* For the first time for many years the Universities were able to field their strongest team, although players recovering from injuries meant that the final decision on this was only possible just days before the event. Not only was this the strongest team available, but arguably the strongest team ever to appear on court to represent British Universities in this annual match versus the Rugby Fives Association.

Hopes were high amongst the students and there was a confidence from the word 'go' that a victory might be possible. After all, the team did contain all the National U25 Champions and finalists and a number who had already performed well at National levels.

A lot depended on the Singles, where the students traditionally perform better, but the question was: could they get a sufficient points lead to put the RFA under pressure in the Doubles, which normally favour the senior and more experienced players?

The answer to this was positive – a lead of almost 30 points after the six matches was much better than usual but there were still lots of points to be won and lost in the nine doubles matches to come. The students actually won 5 out of the 6 singles matches, with Charlie Brooks securing the lone RFA victory against Matt Shaw. However, perhaps the highlight was the stunning victory of Ed Kay against National Champion Will Ellison, which greatly assisted the students in their quest for a suitable early lead. Ed stormed into a commanding lead in the early part of the match, which he managed to hold on to despite sterling efforts from Will, who, perhaps not at his very best, was never really allowed to be in control against a very determined opponent.

The early round of the doubles could have been decisive. An anticipated haul of points from the RFA would have narrowed the gap considerably and put the match back on an even keel. However, the students were resilient and came out three more points to the good overall. An excellent effort, with notable performances from Ollie Arnold & Ben Beltrami, the student 2<sup>nd</sup> pairing, who, incidentally, were to remain undefeated in all their doubles matches throughout the afternoon, having also won their singles! In terms of games the BUSF pairs won two out of three matches.

With the second round it was definitely the RFA who were playing 'catch up'. The students managed to consolidate their lead, win all three matches and add further points to their tally, leaving the RFA a deficit of some 50 points to make up in the final round – an unlikely task, but there were still 90 points at stake! By now, however, the younger players had the bit between their teeth and were not going to let victory slide away, even though in past years this has been the round where lots of points have been lost by tiring students facing the guile of their seniors. The RFA first pair of Hamish Buchanan & Will Ellison took both games off their faltering opponents in the final minutes of the event, but it was not enough to alter the inevitable march to victory by the University players, who again won the final round by two matches to one.

The RFA were hampered by an on-court arm injury to Matt Cavanagh which certainly restricted his performance and perhaps by an 'ultra fast' fives ball in one match, which certainly favoured the power play of Ollie & Ben! However, the overall performance of these young players can only be encouraging for the future of the game. Let's hope that they all continue playing for many years yet.

Incidentally, for advance warning, five of the students could be available for the team next year, which will be the 50<sup>th</sup> match of the series.

### **Singles**

(BUSF Names first): E Kay (Cambridge) bt W Ellison 15-7; B Beltrami (Cambridge) bt M Cavanagh 15-7; D Butler (Durham) bt J Aquilina 15-5; M Shaw (Cambridge) lost to C Brooks 5-15; T Parker (Bristol) bt T Dean 15-9; O Arnold (Bristol) bt H Buchanan 15-9.

### **Doubles**

Kay & Shaw lost to Buchanan & Ellison 11-15, 9-15; bt Brooks & Cavanagh 15-13; bt Aquilina & Dean 15-7. Arnold & Beltrami bt Brooks & Cavanagh 15-2, 15-6; bt Buchanan & Ellison 15-6; bt Aquilina & Dean 15-5. Butler & Parker bt Aquilina & Dean 15-10, 15-13; lost to Buchanan & Ellison 6-15; bt Brooks & Cavanagh 15-13.

**Result: BUSF bt RFA 241-172**

## **WINCHESTER FIVES DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP**

Malvern College, 13th March 2016

After the concerns of potential leaky roofs, wet courts and a possible late move of the competition to Bradfield we were greeted to a stunning day weather-wise at Malvern for the 35th Winchester Fives Barnes Bridge competition. The draw made a week in advance had 20 pairs entered, but sadly in the run up to the competition we lost the 5th seeds and one half of the top seeds, making the top half of the draw somewhat easier than the bottom half.

There were many good games in the first and second rounds, although no major upsets, but we had a near shock as Thomas & Luk took the first game off the number one seeds Tristao & Fox. Chris Thomas was understandably disappointed by the organiser's lack of confidence in him when, on walking off court for a breather after his victorious first game, he found himself already drawn into the plate competition!

Coffey & Hale managed to squeeze past the Winchester first pair (Song & Kullavanijaya) 15-13 in the third whilst the Malvern first pair (Tudor & Nelson) only narrowly lost to Buchanan & George 15-12, 15-11. The quarter-finals were all won reasonably comfortably although Watkinson & Arnold, being perhaps harshly seeded, played Ellison & Kay and managed to get nearly as many points as anyone else did on the day.

The first semi-final saw Tristao's speed and Fox's steadiness plus his ability to serve into the 'nick' hold firm in beating Akerman & Butler, whilst in the second semi-final Ellison & Kay beat the experienced Winchester pair of Munn & Hawke, who as usual spent the majority of the game sliding and diving around the front of the court.

The final was an enjoyable game to watch and whilst not the classic of the last few years, was filled with fast action packed rallies and plenty of buttress play around Malvern's larger than normal buttress. The power and consistency of Kay & Ellison proved too much for Tristao & Fox (stepping into Dan Grant's large shoes with less than 24 hours' notice – thanks, Dave), giving Will his 7th title (halfway to Dave Hebden's 14) and Ed Kay his first.

The plate competition was dominated by the Malvern first pair (Tudor & Nelson) and the Winchester first pair (Song & Kullavanijaya). During their school match just 72 hours earlier, after an hour and

half of playing the pairs were separated by a single point, so quite why the organiser decided the final should be a best of 3 to 15 was a mystery to all watching! Winchester took the first 15-6 but Malvern sneaked the second 15-13 and came home strongly to win the decider by 15-9 and in doing so got revenge for the school match. Their likely meeting at St Paul's at the National Schools Championships in a couple of weeks' time should be a classic.

Thanks very much to Chris Thomas and all at Malvern for hosting us on a busy day for the school when they also hosted the National Prep School cross country championships with more than a 1,000 runners. There is also a special mention also to one of Malvern's former pupils, Shinan Zhang, who very much held her own whilst being the first lady entrant in the Barnes Bridge.

## RESULTS

**First Round:** Thomas & Luk bt Lidard & McKinney 15-7, 15-6; Thompson & Lee bt Zhang & Reeves 15-9, 15-4; Tudor & Nelson bt Arnott & Harrison 15-0, 15-0; Thompson-Green & Bentley bt Ward & Ward 15-7, 8-15, 15-9;

**Second Round:** Tristao & Fox bt Thomas & Luk 13-15, 15-2, 15-1; Coffey & Hale bt Song & Kullavanijaya 16-15, 5-15, 15-13; Younger & Kidner bt Goodwin & Davey 15-7, 16-14; Akerman & Butler bt Thompson & Lee 15-1, 15-1; Buchanan & George bt Tudor & Nelson 15-12, 15-11; Hawke & Munn bt Sinton & Neal 15-3, 15-1; Watkinson & Arnold bt Akerman & Passey 15-5, 15-1; Ellison & Kay bt Thompson-Green & Bentley 15-0, 15-0

**Quarter-Finals:** Tristao & Fox bt Coffey & Hale 15-5, 15-9; Akerman & Butler bt Younger & Kidner 15-1, 15-9; Hawke & Munn bt Buchanan & George 15-13, 15-7; Ellison & Kay bt Watkinson & Arnold 15-7, 15-5

**Semi-Finals:** Tristao & Fox bt Akerman & Butler 15-7, 15-12; Ellison & Kay bt Hawke & Munn 15-8, 15,7

**Final:** Ellison & Kay bt Fox & Tristao 15-4, 15-6

## Plate Competition

**First Round:** Thomas & Luk bt Thompson-Green & Bentley 15-6; Lidard & Mckinney bt Sinton & Neal; Arnott & Harrison bt Zhang and Reeves; Goodwin & Davey bt Ward & Ward

**Second Round:** Song & Kullavanijaya bt Thomas & Luk 15-3; Lidard & Mckinney bt Thompson & Lee 15-13; Akerman & Passey by Arnott & Harrison 15-0; Tudor & Nelson bt Goodwin & Davey 15-6

**Semi-Finals:** Song & Kullavanijaya bt Lidard & Mckinney 15-6; Tudor & Nelson bt Akerman & Passey 15-13

**Final:** Tudor & Nelson bt Song & Kullavanijaya 6-15, 15-13, 15-9

## THE NATIONAL Under 13 CHAMPIONSHIPS at St. Paul's School

Sunday, 13th March 2016

*Peter de Winton reports:* With 46 competitors from nine schools, it was a healthy field of players, with all the usual competitive spirit and enthusiasm. We missed having boys from Shrewsbury House School, but welcomed St Olave's and St Dunstan's back and were pleased to see Bedford Modern and Colet Court for the first time. We also welcomed boys from Year Six onwards to widen the age/experience mix and give them competitive experience.

In the pool stage of the Singles, St Olave's and Alleyn's were to the fore, providing eleven of the sixteen seeds for the knockout stage, with St Dunstan's and Pilgrims' also well in evidence. Gwydion Wiseman of Alleyn's and William Ellington of Pilgrims' (last year's runner up) were seeded one and two. In the games that followed, Isaac Jochim of St Olave's, the third seed, made short work of his opponents, not dropping a point till the quarter-final. Meanwhile, Wiseman had progressed via tighter contests and overcame Yoann Bleunven of St Olave's in 3 games to face Jochim in the final. In the end Wiseman's technique and fluency versus Jochim's strength and stamina provided a classic match,

with Jochim winning 15-4. No Singles Plate or third/fourth place playoff was staged in the interest of sustaining boys' energy for the Doubles.

We started the Doubles after a lunch break, with the first match losers going into the Plate. Alleyn's demonstrated their skills at Doubles by getting 3 of the 4 semi-final places and would have crossed the line if they hadn't come up against determined and hard hitting of Bleunven & Jochim from St Olave's in the final. For the second year running, Pilgrims', consisting of William Ellington & Benedict Smailes, won the Doubles Plate, this time from St Olave's III.

My thanks to St. Paul's School for allowing us the use of the courts, to the coaches for their input into the running of the day, to all the parents who turn up to support, feed and nurture their charges, and to Bob Dolby, Frank Akerman and Bernard Atkinson for their tireless support and PR activity. Thanks also to the competitors, who demonstrated a quality of coaching evident in their skill, commitment and sportsmanship.

It is still my wish that one day we can grow the entry to include the many other schools who have players of this age group and run the championships over a weekend, but I fear this will clash with busy school timetables unless a slot is found in the holidays. This year we started 45 minutes earlier, which helped finishing sooner and will be repeated in future, but I am open to perhaps capping the number of players in total and/or the size of teams. The aim is as always to enable as many boys from as many schools to take part. I look forward to next year's Championships with confidence, knowing that it is going to be as enjoyable as always to organise and run.

## Scores

### Singles

#### Pools

- (1) Johnston and Casanova Pagola (Alleyn's Senior), Ames (Blundell's), Harrison (Colet Court), Dulai (Merchant Taylors'), Ellington (Pilgrims'), Surey (St. Dunstan's), Prashra (St. Olave's)
- (2) Fong (Alleyn's Junior), Taylor Schindler (Alleyn's Senior), Hoan and Brown (Blundell's), Gunusen (Merchant Taylors'), Ellis (Pilgrims'), Blacknell (St. Dunstan's), Adebekun (St. Olave's)
- (3) Kirwan and Nicoll (Alleyn's Senior), Swarbrick (Blundell's), Holden (Colet Court), Phillips (Merchant Taylors'), Beardmore-Gray (Pilgrims'), Byrne (St. Olave's)
- (4) Harrison (Alleyn's Junior), De Brunner (Alleyn's Senior), Rackham (Blundell's), Mathews (Merchant Taylors'), Fowler (Pilgrims'), Penfold (St. Dunstan's), Bleunven (St. Olave's)
- (5) Knox (Bedford Modern), Mahendran (Alleyn's Senior), Tait (Blundell's), Onillon (Colet Court), Harvey (Pilgrims'), Sheikh (Merchant Taylors'), Jochim (St. Olave's)
- (6) Barrow (Bedford Modern), Wiseman (Alleyn's Senior), Mumford (Blundell's), Hodes (St. Dunstan's), Roberts (Colet Court), Bub (Merchant Taylors'), Ujoodia (St. Olave's)

#### Knock-out

**1st Round:** Wiseman (Alleyn's) bt Taylor Schindler (Alleyn's) 15-4; Byrne (St. Olave's) bt Casanova Pagola (Alleyn's) 15-7; Blacknell (St. Dunstan's) bt Hodes (St. Dunstan's) 15-8; Bleunven (St. Olave's) bt Nicoll (Alleyn's) 15-2; Jochim (St. Olave's) bt Mahendran (Alleyn's) 15-0; Beardmore-Gray (Pilgrims') bt Harvey (Pilgrims') 15-11; De Brunner (Alleyn's) bt Adebekun (St. Olave's) 15-6; Ellington bt Ujoodia (St. Olave's) 15-2

**Quarter-finals:** Wiseman bt Byrne 15-11; Bleunven bt Blacknell 15-0; Jochim bt Beardmore-Gray 15-0; Ellington bt De Brunner 15-4

**Semi-finals:** Wiseman bt Bleunven 11-4, 5-11, 11-5; Jochim bt Ellington 11-3, 11-2

**Final:** Jochim bt Wiseman 15-4

### Doubles

**1st Round:** St. Olave's II bt Merchant Taylors' II 11-0; Bedford Modern bt Colet Court II 11-0; St. Dunstan's II bt Blundell's III 11-0; Alleyn's Senior III bt St. Olave's III 11-6; Pilgrims' III bt Blundell's II 11-4; Pilgrims' II bt Alleyn's Senior IV 11-5



**2nd Round:** Alleyn's Senior I bt St. Olave's II 11-7; Bedford Modern bt Blundell's I 11-4; St. Dunstan's II bt Merchant Taylors' I 11-5; Alleyn's Senior III bt Pilgrims' I 11-6; St. Olave's I bt Pilgrims' III 11-1; Pilgrims' II bt Merchant Taylors' III 11-5; Colet Court I bt Alleyn's Junior I 11-7; Alleyn's Senior II bt St. Dunstan's I 11-4

**Quarter-finals:** Alleyn's Senior I bt Bedford Modern 11-6; Alleyn's Senior III bt St. Dunstan's II 11-6; St. Olave's I bt Pilgrims' II 11-1; Alleyn's Senior II bt Colet Court 11-0

**Semi-finals:** Alleyn's Senior I bt Alleyn's Senior III 11-0; St. Olave's I bt Alleyn's Senior II 11-10

**Final:** St. Olave's I (Bleunven & Jochim) bt Alleyn's Senior I (Mahendran & Wiseman) 15-4

**Plate:** Pilgrims' I (Ellington & Smailes) bt St. Olave's III 11-6

## **NATIONAL VINTAGE (Over 55) CHAMPIONSHIPS at Cambridge**

Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2016

**STOP PRESS:** Ian Fuller retained both his Singles title and his Doubles crown with Dave Hebden. In the Singles final against Neil Roberts it was the story of cross-court angles and delicate dropshots from Ian doing the damage, while in the Doubles against Stuart Kirby & Neil Roberts it was a case of the defending champions forcing a string of errors out of their opponents once the initial attacks had been weathered. It was Stuart Kirby's first appearance in a national final; goodness knows how many Fuller, Hebden and Roberts must have been in!

*Brian Kirk reports:* The Vintage (over 55's) Rugby Fives Tournament was held on Sunday 20th March on the new courts at the Cambridge University Sports Centre. The format for the day was Singles in the morning with six players, followed by Doubles in the afternoon with seven pairs.

The Singles began with two pools of three players fighting for the chance to play in a semi-final and then a final. Ian Fuller forged ahead in pool one, comprehensively winning both his matches against Messrs. Phil Atkinson and Tony Hamilton. The second pool sported new entrant, Neil Roberts, who won both his games against Stuart Kirby and then Dickie Warner. In the semi-final Ian beat Stuart and Neil Tony, leading to a much anticipated final. Despite Neil's court dominance, Ian's consistency and accurately placed shots took their toll, with him winning relatively easily by 15-9. Who is capable of breaking Ian's dominance in this category, we speculated.

The Plate final between Phil Atkinson and Dickie Warner proved one of the most engaging matches in recent history. Phil took an early lead 8 to 2, which he extended to 13-5, but effervescent Dickie maintained his cool and slowly chipped away at Phil's lead until they were neck and neck. Game points came and went, with Phil having at least three chances to claim the trophy. Dickie recovered shot after shot from Phil and eventually pounced, winning 16-15. Phil claimed boredom overcame him but the crowd speculated that Dickie's persistence suggested he must be the Stig in disguise.

The Doubles kicked off with two pools of three and four pairs. The seedings proved accurate, with Ian Fuller & Dave Hebden beating Atkinson (B) & Passey and Sandie & Sutcliffe in pool A and new pairing Neil Roberts & Stuart Kirby beating Warner & Hamilton, Atkinson (P) & Kiteley and finally Kirk & Blakeley. Again the seedings proved correct, with Fuller & Hebden beating Warner & Hamilton in the first semi-final and Roberts & Kirby beating Sandie & Sutcliffe in the second. This led to a much anticipated final between champions Fuller & Hebden and new pairing Roberts & Kirby, Stuart celebrating his first ever national tournament final after many years of dedication to our sport. The final started cagily, with each pair winning hard fought points. At 4-all Ian and Dave pulled out a lead, consolidated their position and began to forge ahead as Neil and Stuart tried to up the pace but began making unforced errors. Ian and Dave maintained their cool, played the percentage game, with Dave retrieving particularly well, and gained point after point until they reached the winning post. Another Doubles title to their names.

The Plate final proved less competitive, with the guile of Bernard Atkinson & Andy Passey overwhelming the efforts of Chris Blakeley & Brian Kirk, the former new to the rigours of over 55's competition and the latter still trying to relearn Rugby Fives after playing Eton Fives for the last five months (can someone please tell him to stop trying to hit the buttress: that does not work in RF). Excuses, excuses!

## **Singles**

**Pool A:** Fuller bt Atkinson P 15-2; bt Hamilton 15-5; Hamilton bt Atkinson 15-10

**Pool B:** Roberts bt Kirby 15-7; bt Warner 15-8; Kirby bt Warner 15-3

**Semi-finals:** Fuller bt Kirby 15-3; Roberts bt Hamilton 15-5

**Final:** Fuller bt Roberts 15-9

**Plate:** Warner bt Atkinson P 16-15

## **Doubles**

**Pool 1:** Hebden & Fuller bt Atkinson B & Passey 15-4; bt Sandie & Sutcliffe 15-5;

Sandie & Sutcliffe bt Atkinson & Passey 15-13

**Pool 2:** Kirby & Roberts bt Atkinson P & Kiteley 15-8; bt Hamilton & Warner 15-4; bt Blakeley & Kirk 15-3; Hamilton & Warner bt Blakeley & Kirk 15-10; bt Atkinson & Kiteley 15-10; Atkinson & Kiteley bt Blakeley & Kirk 15-9

**Semi-finals:** Kirby & Roberts bt Sandie & Sutcliffe 15-2; Fuller & Hebden bt Hamilton & Warner 15-3

**Final:** Fuller & Hebden bt Kirby & Roberts 15-5

**Plate:** Atkinson B & Passey bt Blakeley & Kirk 11-4, 11-2

## **THE RFA LAUNCHES WOMEN'S RANKINGS**

March 2016

The RFA is delighted to launch Women's Rankings for Rugby Fives.

The rankings have been prepared by a director of the RFA, Chris Burrows, using a specially designed programme, and will be up-dated after each of the 7 ranking events which we have identified:

The Ladies National Singles and Doubles in January; the Ladies Winchester Fives Singles and Doubles in March; the National Girls' U18 Singles and Doubles in April; and the Mixed Winchester Doubles in May.

They are restricted to players aged 16 and over.

The initial set of rankings published here reflects participation and performance in the above events since January 1st 2015. We expect the number of players listed to increase over the next years as female players enter more tournaments.

This season has been a record-breaking one for Women's Fives, with larger-than-hitherto numbers playing in the above events and in the Lady's Cup in October. We have seen female players taking part in the South West Open at Blundell's and in the National Winchester Fives Doubles championships at Malvern. We have also seen the first IV-a-side Ladies Varsity Match between Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

We very much hope that this trend will continue and that we are entering an exciting period in the history of the game.

**See next page for first Women's Rankings**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Points</b>
1	K. Briedenhann	79.85
2	T. Mills	77.15
3	M. Raynor	59.83
4	A. Steel	56.11
5	L. Mathias	46.51
6	S. Zhang	46.44
7	P. Thornhill	45.91
8	B. Crinnion	44.10
9	L. Harbottle	37.68
10	L. Tilley	34.82
11	P. Bell	31.56
12	E. Shilina	25.23
13	M. Richards	19.60
14	I. Boddy	18.66
15	M. Whitehead	16.49
16	K. Broad	14.65
17=	S. Hajnal-Corob	13.15
17=	C. Henderson	13.15
19	D. Treloar	8.18
20=	K. Martin	7.30
20=	J. Jones	7.30
22	A. Flood	6.71
23	J. Morton	4.56
24	D. Black	3.91
25	K. Rolls	3.37
26	W. Carling	2.46
27=	M. Cole	2.06
27=	K. Hird	2.06

## THE NATIONAL SCHOOLS FIVES CHAMPIONSHIPS

St. Paul's School, Barnes, 29<sup>th</sup> March-1<sup>st</sup> April, 2016

*Peter King reports:* This year's tournament was again played over four days with three age-groups; nineteen schools were represented, with over 110 competitors in all (the U14 entry being down on recent years) and although Winchester were again the dominant force across the three competitions there were winners from a further six establishments. There was a very high standard of play, of sportsmanship and genial enjoyment of the occasion.

The Open singles tournament went largely with the seeding, and Andrew Boyd became the first Edinburgh Academy pupil to lift the trophy. The final featured a long and hard-fought first game, in which Albert Song of Winchester made Andrew work extremely hard for his points. Only one other game in the singles went to three games, but the overall standard was encouragingly high, and many of the Plate quarter-finalists might in other years have graced the last 16 of the main competition. The Plate final was won by Ben Jourdan of Edinburgh Academy in an epic three-game final against Charlie Mabbutt (Whitgift) and the second plate went to Jussi Grut of Whitgift. In the doubles St Paul's I (Harveer Mahajan & Archie Taylor) came through as champions, defeating the top-seeded Edinburgh pair in a three-game semi and the tough Winchester pair in the final 11-6, 11-8.

The Colts' singles event was always a matter of whether anyone could get close to Tom Kidner, the top seed from Winchester; and the answer was a fairly emphatic "no"! Cameron Low of Whitgift made him work in the semi-final, as did Matthew Cheveley (St Paul's) in the final, but this was a class act and a well-deserved win. And in the doubles it was Kidner and his partner Alex Poyntz (a junior colt who enjoyed his singles win against the reigning U14 champion) who proved strongest, defeating Whitgift's second and first pairs in the semi and final respectively. Both Whitgift pairs had won epic three-gamers against the equivalent Pauline pairs to reach the Winchester match and, as in the Open, the standard of fives played was encouragingly high.

The U14 tournament arrives on the third day and, despite slightly lower numbers this year, proved extremely enjoyable for all who took part. Winchester dominated the later stages of the singles, with three semi-finalists, and they provided the eventual winner in Dominic Percival who was pushed all the way in the final by Teddy Monro-Davies of St Paul's, who took the middle game and led 8-0 in the third before succumbing to sustained excellence of serving and pressure from the right. St Paul's had three pairs in the doubles semi-finals, but it was Winchester who took the trophy in an exciting three-game final.

Many thanks to all involved in organisation and support, especially Ian Jackson, who again shouldered the burden of managing the U14 events, to parents, fanclubs, and some extremely devoted staff without whom the school players would not be developing such an obvious love of the game and skilful enjoyment.

### Results

#### Open (U18) Singles

**Pool A:** 1st A.Boyd (Edinburgh Academy); 2nd A.Younger (Winchester); 3rd T.Aziz (Whitgift)

**Pool B:** 1st J.Hanton (Alleyn's); 2nd W.Stevens (Bradfield); 3rd L.Jones (Bedford)

**Pool C:** 1st N.Hughes (St Paul's) 2nd A.McCreath (Fettes); 3rd T.Barlow (Oundle)

**Pool D:** 1st J.Halligan (Derby Moor); 2nd C.Barnett (Merchant Taylors'); 3rd J.Lee (Rossall)

**Pool E:** 1st A.Tudor (Malvern); 2nd S.Yang (Alleyn's); 3rd J.Savage (Merchant Taylors')

**Pool F:** 1st A.Taylor (St Paul's); 2nd C.Mabbutt (Whitgift); 3rd J.Hutchings (Bedford)

**Pool G:** 1st S.Drennan (Edinburgh Academy); 2nd J.Manger (Oundle); 3rd G.Barnard (Alleyn's)

**Pool H:** 1st P.Kullavanijaya (Winchester); 2nd J.Kim (St Paul's); 3rd H.Howard (Rossall)

**Pool I:** 1st H.Mahajan (St Paul's); 2nd C.McKinney (Sedbergh); 3rd C.Rogers (Oundle)

**Pool J:** 1st G.Romain (Rugby); 2nd T.Francis (Blundell's); 3rd H.Russell (Whitgift)

**Pool K:** 1st E.Taberham (Merchant Taylors'); 2nd D.Shaw (St Paul's); 3rd J.Bate (Rossall)  
**Pool L:** 1st L.Nelson (Malvern); 2nd B.Jourdan (Edinburgh Academy); 3rd D.Cox (Bedford)  
**Pool M:** 1st M.Evans (St Paul's); 2nd J.Sellar (Edinburgh Academy); 3rd G.Marshall (Oundle)  
**Pool N:** 1st J.Byford (Tonbridge); 2nd B.Singh (Derby Moor); 3rd S.Braidford (Rossall)  
**Pool O:** 1st D.Whitham (St Paul's); 2nd A.Hopkins (Merchant Taylors'); 3rd J.Grut (Whitgift)  
**Pool N:** 1st A.Song (Winchester); 2nd B.Kirwan (Alleyn's); 3rd H.Beard (Bedford)

**Round 1:** Boyd beat Hanton 11-1, 11-5; Hughes beat Halligan 11-5, 11-4; Tudor beat Taylor 11-9, 11-8; Kullavanijaya beat Drennan 11-7, 11-4; Mahajan beat Romain 11-5, 11-2; Nelson beat Taberham 11-2, 10-12, 11-8, Evans beat Byford 11-0, 11-2; Song beat Whitham 11-2, 11-1  
**Quarter-finals:** Boyd beat Hughes 11-2, 11-0; Tudor beat Kullavanijaya 11-8, 11-7; Mahajan beat Nelson 11-7, 11-9; Song beat Evans 11-8, 11-9  
**Semi-finals:** Boyd beat Tudor 11-1, 11-1; Song beat Mahajan 11-1, 11-9  
**Final:** Boyd beat Song 11-4, 11-0  
**First plate:** Jourdan (Edinburgh Academy)  
**Second plate:** Grut (Whitgift)

### Open (U18) Doubles

**Preliminary round:** Winchester II beat Rossall I 11-4, 11-0; Whitgift I beat Bedford II 11-3, 11-3; Oundle I beat St Paul's IV 11-7, 7-1, rtd.; Sedbergh II beat Merchant Taylors' I 9-11, 11-8, 11-9; Tonbridge beat Oundle II 12-10, 11-2; Edinburgh Academy II beat Merchant Taylors' II 11-1, 11-0; Alleyn's II beat Blundell's 12-10, 11-6; Sedbergh I beat Whitgift II 11-2, 11-5; Derby Moor beat Rossall II 11-0, 11-0; St Paul's III beat Bedford I 11-0, 11-3  
**1st round:** Edinburgh Academy I beat Winchester II 11-1, 11-2; Whitgift I beat Oundle I 5-11, 11-9, 12-10; Alleyn's I beat Sedbergh II 11-1, 11-1; St Paul's I beat Tonbridge 11-0, 11-2; Malvern beat Edinburgh Academy II 11-7, 11-8; St Paul's II beat Alleyn's II 9-11, 11-2, 11-9; Derby Moor beat Sedbergh I 11-3, 11-5; Winchester I beat St Paul's III 11-8, 12-10  
**Quarter-finals:** Edinburgh Academy I beat Whitgift I 11-0, 11-0; St Paul's I beat Alleyn's I 11-5, 11-8; Malvern beat St Paul's II 8-11, 12-10, 11-9; Winchester I beat Derby Moor 11-5, 11-5  
**Semi-finals:** St Paul's I beat Edinburgh Academy I 7-11, 11-5, 11-3; Winchester I beat Malvern 11-7, 11-9  
**Final:** St Paul's I (Mahajan & Taylor) beat Winchester I (Kullavanijaya & Song) 11-6, 11-8  
**Plate:** Merchant Taylors' I (Taberham & Savage)

### Colts (U16) Singles

**Pool A:** 1st T.Kidner (Winchester); 2<sup>nd</sup> O.Colbert (Bedford Modern); 3rd N.West (Alleyn's); 4th J.Gibson (Bradfield)  
**Pool B:** 1st R.Etwaroo (Whitgift); 2nd J.Abbott (St Paul's); 3rd O.Mawdsley (Alleyn's)  
**Pool C:** 1st W.Hanley (Tonbridge); 2nd M.Henry (Winchester); 3rd J.Anand (Merchant Taylors')  
**Pool D:** 1st A.Chai (Blundell's); 2nd Z.Murphy (Merchant Taylors'); 3rd J.Zealley (St Paul's)  
**Pool E:** 1st H.Jackson (St Paul's); 2nd M.Bruce (Malvern); 3rd T.Davey (Alleyn's)  
**Pool F:** 1st C.Low (Whitgift); 2nd S.Bagnell (Winchester); 3rd T.Toalster (Tonbridge); 4th W.Awdry (Christ's Hospital)  
**Pool G:** 1st M.Cheveley (St Paul's); 2nd H.Anbukumar (Whitgift); 3rd B.Kullavanijaya (Winchester); 4th R.Rhode (Alleyn's)  
**Pool H:** 1st S.Garella (Merchant Taylors'); 2nd T.Liu (St Paul's); 3rd A.Cochrane (Alleyn's)  
**Pool I:** 1st J.Sumner (Bedford Modern); 2nd B.Howman (Winchester); 3rd Z.Nurzhanuly (Tonbridge)  
**Pool J:** 1st A.Poyntz (Winchester); 2nd S.Prakash (Whitgift); 3rd W.Hirth (Alleyn's)  
**Pool K:** 1st J.Davies (St Paul's); 2nd A.Nelson (Malvern); 3rd E.Townshend (Merchant Taylors')  
**Pool L:** 1st T.McGuire (Sedbergh); 2nd I.Hudis (St Paul's); 3rd C.Hughes (Tonbridge); 4th C.Hudson (Bradfield)

**Round 1:** Etwaroo beat Hanley 11-1, 11-2; Chai beat Jackson 11-4, 11-1; Garella beat Sumner 11-5, 11-7; Poyntz beat Davies 2-11, 11-4, 11-3

**Quarter-finals:** Kidner beat Etwaroo 11-0, 11-0; Low beat Chai 11-3, 11-0; Cheveley beat Garella 11-1, 11-3; Poyntz beat McGuire 11-3, 11-5  
**Semi-finals:** Kidner beat Low 11-2, 11-5; Cheveley beat Poyntz 11-0, 11-0  
**Final:** Kidner beat Cheveley 11-1, 11-2  
**First plate:** Prakash (Whitgift)  
**Second plate:** Cochrane (Alleyn's)

### Colts (U16) Doubles

**Preliminary round:** St Paul's IV beat Alleyn's II 11-0, 11-0; Winchester III beat Merchant Taylors' II 11-3, 11-2  
**First Round:** Winchester I beat St Paul's IV 11-0, 11-1; Tonbridge II beat Merchant Taylors' I 11-7, 12-10; Whitgift II beat Alleyn's I 11-4, 11-8; St Paul's II beat Tonbridge I 11-2, 11-9; Whitgift I beat St Paul's III 11-0, 11-0; Bedford Modern beat Winchester II 11-6, 11-7; Malvern beat Alleyn's III 11-0, 11-1; St Paul's I beat Winchester III 11-2, 11-2  
**Quarter-finals:** Winchester I beat Tonbridge II 11-1, 11-0; Whitgift II beat St Paul's II 11-3, 9-11, 11-9; Whitgift I beat Bedford Modern 11-3, 11-1; St Paul's I beat Malvern 11-3, 11-6  
**Semi-finals:** Winchester I beat Whitgift II 11-3, 11-4; Whitgift I beat St Paul's I 10-12, 11-5, 11-7  
**Final:** Winchester I (Kidner & Poyntz) beat Whitgift I (Low & Prakash) 11-7, 11-4  
**Plate:** Tonbridge I (Hanley & Hughes)

### Under 14 Singles

**Pool A:** 1st D.Percival (Winchester); 2nd C.Jobson (St Paul's); 3rd A.Daya (Merchant Taylors')  
**Pool B:** 1st J.Griffiths (St Paul's); 2nd F.Filleul (Tonbridge); 3rd T.Price (Alleyn's) 4th T.Pearce (Blundell's)  
**Pool C:** 1st J.Watson-Gandy (Alleyn's); 2nd Z.Hussain (St Paul's); 3rd C.Crooke (Tonbridge)  
**Pool D:** 1st S.Fraser (Winchester); 2nd J.Graham (Merchant Taylors'); 3rd S.Bavisha (St Paul's)  
**Pool E:** 1st L.Odgers (St Paul's); 2nd T.Mangat (Merchant Taylors'); 3rd S.Pigott (Tonbridge)  
**Pool F:** 1st F.Smith (Winchester); 2nd G.Ward-Jackson (St Paul's); 3rd A.Singh (Merchant Taylors')  
**Pool G:** 1st V.Matthews (Merchant Taylors'); 2nd S.Sharma (St Paul's); 3rd J.Tritton (Alleyn's) 4th D.Vause (Blundell's)  
**Pool H:** 1st T.Monro-Davies (St Paul's); 2nd H.Gujadhur (Winchester); 3rd M.Mangat (Merchant Taylors')

**Quarter-finals:** Percival beat Griffiths 15-4; Fraser beat Watson-Gandy 15-9; Smith beat Odgers 15-11; Monro-Davies beat Matthews 15-3  
**Semi-finals:** Percival beat Fraser 15-7; Monro-Davies beat Smith 15-5  
**Final:** Percival beat Monro-Davies 11-9, 5-11, 11-9  
**First plate:** Graham  
**Second plate:** Bavisha

### Under 14 Doubles

**1st round:** St Paul's IV beat Tonbridge II 15-9; Alleyn's I beat Merchant Taylors' II 15-11; St Paul's II beat Tonbridge I 15-11; Merchant Taylors' I beat Alleyn's II 15-2; St Paul's III beat Blundell's 15-4; Winchester II beat Merchant Taylors' III 15-2  
**Quarter-finals:** Winchester I beat St Paul's IV 15-0; St Paul's II beat Alleyn's I 15-10; St Paul's III beat Merchant Taylors' I 15-12; St Paul's I beat Winchester II 15-1  
**Semi-finals:** Winchester I beat St Paul's III 11-1, 11-6; St Paul's I beat St Paul's III 11-2, 12-10  
**Final:** Winchester I (Percival & Fraser) beat St Paul's I (Monro-Davies & Griffiths) 5-11, 11-8, 11-7  
**Plate:** Tonbridge I (Pigott & Crooke)

## **THE NATIONAL DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS for the Cyriax Cup**

Alleyn's School, Dulwich, April 9/10th

On paper, the results may suggest that the 2016 National Doubles Championship was a rather uneventful affair, with no three-game matches and hardly any close games. However, there was no lack of quality on show, which was no great surprise, given that the field contained the top ten from the doubles rankings and thirteen of the top sixteen.

In the end, Will Ellison and Charlie Brooks – the 2013 & 2015 champions, who were reunited after injury forced a temporary separation last year – took the title relatively easily, but it didn't look as if things would go that way at the start.

For instance, the Cambridge pair of Ben Beltrami and Ed Kay looked like they were a threat in dispatching Ollie Arnold and David Butler without much alarm, but they failed to apply much pressure in the semi, when they allowed far too many errors to creep in.

Likewise, Tom Dean and Matt Shaw cruised past veterans Hamish Buchanan and Robin Perry, who by their own admission were slow to get out of first gear. However, the younger men only achieved any parity with the top seeded Charlie and Will late on in the second game of the semi when, rather bizarrely, they swapped sides to play on their weaker hands.

By contrast, although they reached the final, the two Dans looked rather less assured, with Dan Grant severely restricted by a back injury that meant he always looked vulnerable. However, a telling attack didn't come until the final, when Will and particularly Charlie exposed his lack of mobility. So, although the final was close in the early stages, as the match wore on, the former champs turned up the pressure and found the winners to claim their third title.

The plate also looked pretty high-quality on paper, but in the end, the winners – Arnold & Butler – proved to be a class apart. However, a mention must also go to Carr and Hebblethwaite, who played some powerful fives and were by no means outclassed in such a high-class field.

### **RESULTS**

**Quarter-finals:** Brooks & Ellison bt Carr & Hebblethwaite 15-1, 15-5; Dean & Shaw bt Buchanan & Perry 15-5, 15-10; Beltrami & Kay bt Arnold & Butler 15-7, 15-10; Grant & Tristao bt Aquilina & Tilston 15-8, 16-15

**Semi-finals:** Brooks & Ellison bt Dean & Shaw 15-4, 15-11; Grant & Tristao bt Beltrami & Kay 15-12, 15-6

**Final:** Brooks & Ellison bt Grant & Tristao 15-5, 15-2

**Plate:** Arnold & Butler

## **NATIONAL CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP for the Wood Cup**

St. Paul's School, Barnes, Sat/Sun April 16/17th

**STOP PRESS:** There was a slight air of Deja Vu in the final of the Club Championship this year. Not only did the match feature the same two teams, no less than seven of the eight players were the same as in 2015; and, perhaps most importantly, the rest was the same: the Wessex Club scored a fine win over the Old Paulines.

However, it was a closer match this year, with the eventual winning margin for the Wessex Boys (Will Ellison, David Butler, Harry Akerman and Giles Munn) being only 20 points. Mind you, the Wessex Club always had their noses in front after taking three of the four singles matches and going into the doubles with a 12-point lead. Here, things were much tighter – indeed, the eight doubles games were shared – but a dominant performance by the Wessex top pair (Ellison and Munn only conceded nine points in their four games) helped to Wessex to slightly extend their advantage and clinch a second title.

### **Teams**

Cambridge University : from Beltrami, Brubert, Pinder, Quarry and Shaw

Old Paulines : Aquilina, Dean, Tilston and Tristao

RFA: from Buchanan, Compton, Geere, Maconie and Russell

Wessex Club 1 : Akerman, Butler, Ellison and Munn

Wessex Club 2 : Bristow, Hale B, Hawke and Passey

West of England Club : Arnold, Brice, Parker and Watkinson

### **RESULTS**

Pool A

Wessex 1 bt RFA; West of England bt RFA; Wessex 1 bt West of England

Pool B

Old Paulines bt Wessex 2; Cambridge University bt Wessex 2; Old Paulines bt Cambridge University

**Final:** Wessex Club 1 bt Old Paulines by 99-79

## **NATIONAL GIRLS' FIVES CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Marlborough College; Sunday, 17th April 2016

**STOP PRESS** There were a record-breaking 68 competitors from 11 schools playing in this year's 7th National Girls' Rugby Fives championships at Marlborough College. Among the winners in the four age categories a different school was represented each time, and in every case the winner of the Singles was able to pair up with a schoolmate to win the Doubles as well.

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In the U18s it was a case of Rugby, a little more experienced, taking on last year's Malvern U16s, with Christ's Hospital's pair in the mix in both Singles and Doubles. In the end it was Malvern who swept the board, with both Singles finalists – Amelia Law and Maggie Wong in a great match – and that combination winning the Doubles. They will be the pair to beat next year, too!



In the large U16 competition the squad from Rugby stood out, providing three of the semi-finalists in the Singles. That final set Rugby's Harriet Fagan and Anastasia de Clermont against each other, with Harriet winning comfortably. Harriet then teamed up with Freya Harrison, deemed to be Rugby's second pair, and duly won the Doubles title with some ease from Christ's Hospital's pair.

The U14s provided some of the closest matches of the day, with the two players from Bedford Modern – Katie Sumner and Maddy Kent – fulfilling the promise they showed last year in roundly dismissing all opposition in the Doubles, after Katie had won the Singles event with victories in the closing stages against strong players from Malvern and Marlborough.

In the U13s last year's champion from Christ's Hospital Aiysha Alli was too strong for all who encountered her, but defeated finalist Martha Nugent of Alleyn's showed promise, especially in the Doubles where she and her partner lost a close and exciting first game against Alli and Lisa Thwaites.

The total entry of 68 this year was a record. It set off discussions about the future of the tournament, now difficult to complete comfortably in one day on four courts. We hope to see the same sort of entry next year, perhaps even bigger, when we may have to consider seriously other option for its format.

## Results

### U18 Singles

**1st round:** B Crinnion (Christ's Hospital) bt T. Gordon (Alleyn's); M Nugent (Alleyn's) bt R Patel (Aldenham)

**2nd round:** L Harbottle (Rugby) bt L Calman-Grimsdale (Alleyn's); I Boddy (Sedbergh) bt F Porter (Alleyn's); Crinnion bt L Dan (Alleyn's); M Wong (Malvern) bt N Ross (Aldenham); K Martin (Rugby) bt Nugent; A Law (Malvern by M Ward (Christ's Hospital); C Bedford (Malvern) bt V King-Forbes (Alleyn's); P Thornhill (Christ's Hospital) bt M Ivanova (Aldenham)

**Quarter-finals:** Harbottle bt Boddy 11-1; Wong bt Crinnion 11-2; Law bt Martin 11-4; Thornhill bt Bedford 11-2

**Semi-finals:** Wong bt Harbottle 11-7; Law bt Thornhill 11-3

**Final:** A Law (Malvern) bt M Wong (Malvern) 15-12

**Plate:** M Ward (Christ's Hospital) bt L Dan (Alleyn's)

### U18 Doubles

**Group A:** 1st Rugby; 2nd Sedbergh; 3rd Alleyn's II

**Group B:** 1st Malvern I; 2nd Alleyn's I; 3rd Aldenham

**Group C:** 1st Christ's Hospital I; 2nd Malvern II; 3rd Alleyn's III

**Semi-finals:** Malvern I bt Sedbergh 15-5; Rugby bt Christ's Hospital 15-13

**Final:** Malvern I (Law & Wong) bt Rugby (Harbottle & Martin) 11-5, 12-11

**Plate:** Malvern II bt Aldenham

### U16 Singles

**1st round:** S Gray (Fettes) bt E Conway (Aldenham); P Bell (Sedbergh) bt I Minto (Fettes); I Lee (Marlborough) bt H Gale (Sedbergh); A Denton (Rugby) bt E Stevenson (Christ's Hospital); A Laakonen (Marlborough) bt R Page (Sedbergh); C Kloepfer (Christ's Hospital) bt C Sutton (Fettes); Y Barnard-Masterson (Christ's Hospital) bt L Worlledge (Fettes); J Cookson (Sedbergh) bt D Woodley (Rugby); E McGuire (Sedbergh) bt H Hashiba-Charlton (Aldenham)

**2nd round:** H Fagan (Rugby) bt J Joseph (Christ's Hospital); Bell bt Gray; Lee bt M Harte (Rugby); S Saunt-Hills (Christ's Hospital) bt Denton; F Harrison (Rugby) bt Laakonen; Kloepfer bt Barnard-Masterson; A Green (Christ's Hospital) bt Cookson; A de Clermont (Rugby) bt McGuire

**Quarter-finals:** Fagan bt Bell 11-3; Lee bt Saunt-Hills 11-0; Harrison bt Kloepfer 11-5; de Clermont

bt Green 11-5

**Semi-finals:** Fagan bt Lee 11-5; de Clermont bt Harrison 11-2

**Final:** H Fagan (Rugby) bt A de Clermont (Rugby) 15-5

**Plate:** C Sutton (Fettes) bt D Woodley (Rugby)

### U16 Doubles

**Group A:** 1st Marlborough; 2nd Christ's Hospital I; 3rd Rugby III

**Group B:** 1st Rugby II; 2nd Sedbergh I; 3rd Christ's Hospital II

**Group C:** 1st Rugby I; 2nd Sedbergh II; 3rd Fettes II

**Group D:** 1st Christ's Hospital III; 2nd Fettes I; 3rd Aldenham I

**Quarter-finals:** Marlborough bt Fettes I 11-1; Rugby II bt Sedbergh II 11-1; Rugby I bt Sedbergh I 11-0; Christ's Hospital I bt Christ's Hospital III 11-2

**Semi-finals:** Rugby II bt Marlborough 11-5; Christ's Hospital I bt Rugby I 11-8

**Final:** Rugby II (Fagan & Harrison) bt Christ's Hospital I (Kloepfer & Saunt-Hills) 15-2

**Plate:** Rugby III bt Fettes II

### U14 Singles

**1st round:** G Labdon (Blundell's) bt M Sharp (Christ's Hospital); L Barton (Marlborough) bt A Hassell (Eastbourne); A Wood (Marlborough) bt E Hitchcock (Christ's Hospital)

2nd round: K Sumner (Bedford Modern) bt Labdon; L Gonder (Malvern) bt J Whitehead (Blundell's); B Ransome (Marlborough) bt H Thornton (Christ's Hospital); A Doroshenko (Malvern) bt Barton; R Sykes (Marlborough) bt A Day (Rugby); L Browne bt P Turner (Christ's Hospital); K Bell (Marlborough) bt E Hemming (Eastbourne); M Kent (Bedford Modern) bt Wood

**Quarter-finals:** Sumner bt Gonder 11-1; Doroshenko bt Ransome 11-1; Sykes bt Browne 11-2; Bell bt Kent 11-9

**Semi-finals:** Sumner bt Doroshenko 11-9; Sykes bt Bell 11-9

**Final:** K Sumner (Bedford Modern) bt R Sykes (Marlborough) 11-1

**Plate:** A Day (Rugby) bt J Whitehead (Blundell's)

### U14 Doubles

**Group A:** 1st Bedford Modern; 2nd Eastbourne; 3rd Marlborough I; 4th Christ's Hospital II

**Group B:** 1st Malvern I; 2nd Marlborough II; 3rd Blundell's; 4th Christ's Hospital I

**Semi-finals:** Bedford Modern bt Marlborough II 11-2; Malvern I bt Eastbourne 11-3

**Final:** Bedford Modern (Kent & Sumner) bt Malvern I (Doroshenko & Gonder) 11-0

**Plate:** Marlborough I bt Eastbourne

### U13 Singles

**Group A:** 1st Z Freedman (Aldenham); 2nd K Innes (Alleyn's); 3rd L Thwaites (Christ's Hospital)

**Group B:** 1st A Alli (Christ's Hospital); 2nd M Nugent (Alleyn's); 3rd T Holding (Aldenham)

**Semi-finals:** Nugent bt Freedman 11-8; Alli bt Innes 11-4

**Final:** A Alli (Christ's Hospital) bt M Nugent (Alleyn's) 11-2

**Plate for losing semi-finalists:** Freedman bt Innes

### U13 Doubles

**Round robin:** Christ's Hospital bt Aldenham,; bt Alleyn's. Alleyn's bt Aldenham.

**Final:** Christ's Hospital (A Alli & L Thwaites) bt Alleyn's I (K Innes & M Nugent) 12-11, 11-5

## **NATIONAL VETERANS' (Over 45) CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Marlborough College, April 23rd/24th

The entry for this year's Veteran's singles was not as big as in some previous years, though the quality was superb. Newcomers to the event included Rick Carr, playing his first games for 18 years, Matt Cavanagh, and Raoul Sbaiz. Raoul's interest in Fives has been inspired by Jeremy Stubbs, who lives in France and spreads the Rugby Fives word by encouraging the natives of Reims to play the squash court version of the game. Before Saturday morning, Raoul had seen neither a real Fives ball, a proper Fives court, nor, indeed, England. Jeremy had to act as his translator, although it was evident to all from the big grin he carried that he was enjoying himself.

Generally as expected, the Cup competition saw a semi-final line up of Minta versus Kiggell and Buchanan versus Cavanagh. Carr had the misfortune to be drawn against Cavanagh in the quarter-finals, and while looking a class player was defeated partly by Matt's superb play and partly by unforced errors caused by his severe lack of practice. Tom Kiggell put up a good fight against John Minta in the semis, taking him to 3 games whilst complaining that his sixth formers did not really prepare him for John's unremitting onslaught. On the other side of the draw Matt Cavanagh was made to work hard by Hamish Buchanan, but eventually won with comfort.

Some incredibly long rallies made the final exhilarating to watch and debilitating to play. John's superb fitness could only benefit him to a limited extent and in the end Matt ran out a comfortable, though tired, winner.

Neil Roberts added to his lifetime haul of trophies by winning the Plate in fine style, defeating Nick Geere in the final. Keith Kennerley won the Bottle of Beer (aka the Second Plate). After a superb Saturday evening meal, the result of the well directed local knowledge and managerial ability of Tom Hillman, Sunday was a busy day, with 20 pairs entered for the doubles.

Everybody appeared ready when the organiser arrived just before the start time. In a noticeable break from Fives tournament tradition, players were on court warming up before the event was due to start.

Again the competition went as expected, with semi-finals between Buchanan & Perry (his first Veteran's tournament) and Sutcliffe & Walter on one side of the draw, and Minta & Pringle and Bruce Hanton & Roberts on the other side. The Buchanan & Perry pairing made short work of Sutcliffe & Walter, who had little answer to the awesome power of Robin's right hand, while Minta & Pringle suffered some stiffer opposition from Bruce Hanton & Neil Roberts, eventually winning 11-4, 11-6.

The final was a match which, without belittling the efforts of the singles players, made the whole weekend worthwhile on its own. In the first game it looked as if Buchanan & Perry were likely to shade it, until Minta & Pringle crept up to take it by 16-15. Then there was a lower key second game, which Buchanan & Perry won at a canter, 15-5, looking as if the challenge was all but over.

The final game also appeared to be going the same way, with Buchanan & Perry getting off to a good start, only to be pegged back. They got away again, only to stall at 11 points as Minta & Pringle made a late surge to take a well earned win. Had the game been less exciting, this report might have been better. As it was, the see-sawing of the score is what can be remembered, but the detail has been expunged by the sheer excitement of the bout and awe at the athleticism of the protagonists.

At a lower level, though just as important in the minds of the participants, the plate rumbled along. Points of note are the two wins of the French Sbaiz & Stubbs pairing. This must be the first wins recorded by such a pair in a Rugby Fives tournament. They were finally knocked out in the semi-final by Geere & A Hanton, who themselves were vanquished by Mathieu & Oscroft in the final.

The Bottle of Beer was played as two round-robin groups, the winners of each playing for the coveted bottles. Suffice to say, those bottles were taken home by the organiser & his magnificent partner, Bob Sandie.

A wonderful weekend of Fives made great by those who played to their utmost and participated fully. Let us hope next year's tournament is as good.

## **RESULTS**

### **Singles**

#### **Cup**

**First Round:** Geere bt Kennerley 11-9, 11-5; Roberts bt Stubbs 11-3, 11-6; B Hanton bt Bishop 11-5, 11-8; Carr bt Sbaiz 11-0, 11-0

**Quarter-Finals:** Minta bt Geere 11-1, 11-2; Kiggell bt Roberts 11-6, 11-2; Buchanan bt B Hanton 11-0, 11-3; Cavanagh bt Carr 11-1, 11-2

**Semi-Finals:** Minta bt Kiggell 9-11, 11-7, 11-8; Cavanagh bt Buchanan 11-1, 11-5

**Final:** Cavanagh bt Minta 15-5, 15-4

#### **Plate**

**Quarter-Finals:** Roberts bt Sbaiz 15-4; Bishop bt Kennerley 15-12; Carr bt Stubbs 15-5

**Semi-Finals:** Roberts bt Bishop 15-5; Geere bt Carr 15-13

**Final:** Roberts bt Geere 15-4, 15-0

#### **2nd Plate (round-robin)**

Kennerley bt Sbaiz 15-0; Stubbs bt Sbaiz 15-10; Kennerley bt Stubbs 16-15  
(Kennerley 31 points, Stubbs 30, Sbaiz 10)

### **Doubles**

**Preliminary Round:** Hawke & Sandie bt Blakeley & Fernley 15-6; Boddington & Davies bt Hendry & Thompson 15-9; Mathieu & Oscroft bt Jenkinson & Sharp 15-2; Hillman & Sanders bt Sbaiz & Stubbs 15-7

**First Round:** Buchanan & Perry bt Hawke & Sandie 15-0; Davison & Kiggell bt Geere & A Hanton 15-6; Carr & Warner bt Boddington & Davies 15-4; Sutcliffe & Walter bt Mathieu & Oscroft 15-7; B Hanton & Roberts bt Hillman & Sanders 15-1; Butterfield & Kirby bt B Atkinson & Kitley 15-4; P Atkinson & Ryan bt Kennerley & Kirk 15-7; Minta & Pringle bt Bethwaite & Folland 15-1

**Quarter-Finals:** Buchanan & Perry bt Davison & Kiggell 11-4, 11-0; Sutcliffe & Walter bt Carr & Warner 11-5, 11-4; B Hanton & Roberts bt Butterfield & Kirby 11-5, 12-10; Minta & Pringle bt P Atkinson & Ryan 11-1, 11-0

**Semi-Finals:** Buchanan & Perry bt Sutcliffe & Walter 11-1, 11-1; Minta & Pringle bt B Hanton & Roberts 11-4, 11-6

**Final:** Minta & Pringle bt Buchanan & Perry 16-15, 5-15, 15-11

#### **Plate**

**Preliminary Round:** Jenkinson & Sharp bt Blakeley & Fernley 11-9; Sbaiz & Stubbs bt Boddington & Davies 16-14; Bethwaite & Folland bt Hendry & Thompson 15-8; Hawke & Sandie bt Hillman & Sanders 11-4

**Quarter-Finals:** Geere & A Hanton bt Jenkinson & Sharp 11-3; Sbaiz & Stubbs bt B Atkinson & Kiteley 11-8; Kennerley & Kirk bt Bethwaite & Folland 15-9; Mathieu & Oscroft bt Hawke & Sandie 11-2

**Semi-Finals:** Geere & A Hanton bt Stubbs & Sbaiz 11-0; Mathieu & Oscroft bt Kennerley & Kirk 11-7

**Final:** Mathieu & Oscroft bt Geere & A Hanton 11-9, 11-9

#### **Second Plate (2 round-robin groups)**

**Group 1:** Hawke & Sandie bt Jenkinson & Sharp 12-10; Hawke & Sandie bt Bethwaite & Folland 11-4; Bethwaite & Folland bt Jenkinson & Sharp 11-5

(Hawke & Sandie 23 points, Bethwaite & Folland 15, Jenkinson & Sharp 15)

**Group 2:** Blakeley & Fernley bt B Atkinson & Kiteley 11-6; Blakeley & Fernley bt Hendry & Thompson 12-10; Blakeley & Fernley bt Hillman & Sanders 11-7; B Atkinson & Kiteley bt Hendry & Thompson 11-6; B Atkinson & Kiteley bt Hillman & Sanders 11-2; Hillman & Sanders bt Hendry & Thompson 11-6

(Blakeley & Fernley 34 points, B Atkinson & Kiteley 28, Hendry & Thompson 22, Hillman & Sanders 20)

**Final:** Hawke & Sandie bt Blakeley & Fernley 15-3

## **NATIONAL MASTERS' DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Marlborough College, Wiltshire; Saturday, 23rd April 2016

Martin Wilkinson and Dave Hebden successfully defended the Master Doubles title they first won together last year, but for Martin it was his fifth in a row, having previously won three years in succession in tandem with John East. Runners-up were Bernard Atkinson and John Ogle. One piece of history passed quietly, unnoticed in the hubbub of the day's play: it was Dave Hebden's 100<sup>th</sup> Doubles title!

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*David Bawtree writes:* On a bright sunny April day, the Elders gathered at Marlborough College for their annual exhibition displaying a collective five hundred and fifty years of Fives-playing experience. That is assuming they started to play Fives before they could walk. Following the calling notice some months ago it was hoped that there might be eight pairs, but such is the nature of the event, four pairs were unable to attend for a variety of reasons. Last year's winners, David Hebden and Martin Wilkinson, displayed their usual outstanding proficiency and won the 2016 competition with style. Bernard Atkinson and John Ogle were the runners up, closely followed by John Sanders and Tom Hillman. John Hawke and Bev Boag completed the round in which each pair played the others, two games of up to 11. It was a great delight to see the spirit and enjoyment of those playing, all of whom had spent many years on the courts. Perhaps next time we will see an increase in their number. There are now a few Vets who will soon qualify for entry by being over sixty-five on the day of the tournament. The picture shows our President, Bernard Atkinson, presenting the Admiral's Cup to the winners.

## **THE SCOTTISH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Loretto School, Musselburgh

Saturday-Sunday, 30th April and 1st May 2016

The Scottish Open 2016 demonstrated its international appeal by attracting entrants not only from the traditional Scottish and English powerhouses of fives but also players from Spain and the United States, writes organiser Neil Roberts. It also showcased the emerging talent in Scottish Fives, with three Edinburgh-based schoolboys, including national schoolboy singles champion Andrew Boyd, performing admirably in the singles, and all four doubles finalists being based north of the border.

In the first round of the singles, Archie McCreath (Fettes College) took tournament organiser Neil Roberts to three games, while Ben Jourdan (Edinburgh Academy) defeated Jez Sinton in three closely contested games. James Tilston beat Alexandra Scott (USA) before losing in three to Andrew Boyd in

the quarter finals. Eventually the top two seeds made it through to the final, where Dave Butler defeated local coach Richie Murby 6-11, 11-1, 11-3 to lift the Cuthbertson Quaich singles trophy (albeit with a bit of imagination required here, as the trophy hadn't actually been returned by last year's winner Dan Tristao) for the first time. Congratulations to James Tilston for winning the plate competition.

The pairings for the doubles tournament proved to be very well selected with six of the eight matches – including both the final and the plate final – going to three games. Eventually, Jez Sinton and Archie McCreath prevailed (despite losing in the group stages to Adam George and Grant Sperling) to defeat evergreen Caledonian club stalwart Mike Kemp and Edinburgh Academy emerging star Ben Jourdan. In the plate final, Evan Li (Fettes) assisted by Richie Murby defeated Neil Roberts and Enrique Castillo (Spain).

Former RFA president Bob Dolby was present to congratulate the winners on the 50th anniversary of when he first won the Scottish doubles partnering David Hebblethwaite (there was another notable English sporting success in the summer of 1966 but I can't remember what it was!).

Many thanks must go to Loretto school for allowing their courts and changing facilities to be used for the tournament.

## Scores

### Singles

**1st round:** B.Jourdan bt J.Sinton 11-5, 7-11, 11-3; N.Roberts bt A.McCreath 3-11, 11-3, 11-0

**Quarter-finals:** D.Butler bt M.Kemp 11-2, 11-0; A.Boyd bt J.Tilston 3-11, 11-6, 11-6; A.George bt Jourdan 11-7, 11-7; R.Murby bt Roberts 11-0, 12-10

**Semi-finals:** Butler bt Boyd 11-3, 11-2; Murby bt George 11-0, 11-1

**Final:** Butler bt Murby 6-11, 11-1, 11-3

**Plate:** Tilston bt Roberts 15-6

### Doubles

**Pool A:** Murby & E.Li bt George & G.Sperling 7-11, 11-6, 11-2; Sinton & McCreath bt Murby & Li 11-8, 11-5; George & Sperling bt Sinton & McCreath 11-9, 7-11, 11-6

**Pool B:** Kemp & Jourdan bt Roberts & E.Castillo 11-5, 11-5; Roberts & Castillo bt E.Hatton & P.Maddison 12-11, 3-11, 12-11; Kemp & Jourdan bt Hatton & Maddison 11-8, 3-11, 11-1

**Final:** Sinton & McCreath bt Kemp & Jourdan 11-7, 3-11, 11-7

**Plate:** Murby & Li bt Roberts & Castillo 9-11, 11-4, 11-8

**WOMEN'S RANKINGS – the 2<sup>nd</sup> set**  
**The Rugby Fives Association, May 2016**

The RFA is delighted to publish the second set of Women's rankings below.

The rankings have been prepared by a director of the RFA, Chris Burrows, using a specially designed programme. They are up-dated after each of the 7 ranking events which we have identified:

The Ladies National Singles and Doubles in January; the Ladies Winchester Fives Singles and Doubles in March; the National Girls' U18 Singles and Doubles in April; and the Mixed Winchester Doubles in May.

They are restricted to players aged 16 and over.

These rankings follow the National Girls' U18 Singles and Doubles 2016 which were played in April at Marlborough College. A total of 14 new players have entered the list.

Kathleen Briedenhann, the National Singles and Doubles champion, remains at Number 1, closely followed by her partner Tessa Mills. Significant newcomers in the top 10 are Amelia Law, the Girls National U18 Singles champion from Malvern College, and her partner Maggie Wong, who come in at nos. 7 and 8 respectively. Two other schoolgirl players enter the top 20.

**See next page for Rankings**

Current	Previous	Name	Points
1	1	K. Briedenhann	79.85
2	2	T. Mills	77.15
3	3	M. Raynor	59.83
4	4	A. Steel	56.11
5	5	L. Mathias	46.51
6	6	S. Zhang	46.44
7	-	A. Law	43.98
8	-	M. Wong	42.90
9	9	L. Harbottle	41.37
10	7	P. Thornhill	40.64
11	8	B. Crinnion	36.06
12	10	L. Tilley	33.97
13	14	I. Boddy	29.14
14	11	P. Bell	28.11
15	-	C. Bedford	26.33
16	12	E. Shilina	25.23
17	20	K. Martin	21.17
18	13	M. Richards	19.60
19	-	M. Nugent	17.26
20	15	M. Whitehead	16.49
21	16	K. Broad	14.65
22	-	L. Browne	13.26
23=	17	S. Hajnal-Corob	13.15
23=	17	C. Henderson	13.15
25	19	D. Treloar	8.18
26	-	I. Dan	7.42
27	-	M. Ivanova	7.32
28	20	J. Jones	7.30
29	-	T. Gordon	6.90
30	22	A. Flood	6.71
31	-	F. Porter	6.58
32	-	L. Calman-Grimsdal	6.25
33	23	J. Morton	4.56
34	-	N. Ross	4.36
35	-	R. Patel	3.95
36	24	D. Black	3.91
37	-	M. Ward	3.84
38	-	V. King-Forbes	3.42
39	25	K. Rolls	3.37
40	26	W. Carling	2.46
41=	27	M. Cole	2.06
41=	27	K. Hird	2.06



## **WINCHESTER FIVES MIXED DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP**

Bradfield College, Berkshire; Sunday May 8th

Two new names will be engraved on the Mixed Doubles trophy this year, after Ben Beltrami and Kathleen Briedenhann emerged as champions from a record-breaking field of 11 pairs – and Kathleen set a record of her own.

Now that she holds this title – which had previously eluded her – it means she has completed a ‘Grand Slam’ of ladies titles this season. As well as mixed doubles champion, she is also singles and doubles champion in both Rugby and Winchester Fives – a feat that has never been achieved before, not even by the great Paula Smith in her prime.

Truth be told, in this year’s Mixed Doubles Ben and Kathleen had looked the pair to beat right from the off, and they raced through their round-robin games in quick time, securing a place in the semi-finals with a 100% record. That meant the race was on for second place – and it was a tough battle, with a huge variety of players and styles in the group.

Ed Kay – recent winner of the open Winchester Fives doubles title – and his fellow Cambridge student partner Georgina Shepherd were a tough pair, while the unfamiliar tactics of Eton Fives pair Gareth Hoskins and Karen Hird posed some real challenges for those more accustomed to Rugby Fives. In the end, though, it was the ex-Malvern pair of Steven Coffey and Shinan Zhang who finished in second place in the group and also secured a semi-final place – their greater experience of the buttress game proving crucial.

Their opponents would be the winners of the second (six-pair) round-robin group, and with just one game to 11 points between each pair, it made for some frenetic action. Ed Hatton and schoolgirl champion Louise Mathias had a long, very close game with Alex Rew and Maddy Raynor, with the latter just winning it, and in the end that result proved crucial in settling second place in the group; so, Alex and Maddy earned the dubious delight of facing Ben and Kathleen in one semi. Winners of the group were defending champions Alex Steel and Andy Pringle, who matched Ben and Kathleen by topping the table with a 100% record.

Both semi-finals followed a similar course, with the first game of the best-of-three matches ending 11-9 in the favour of the table-topping pairs, Alex & Andy and Kathleen & Ben. Both pairs then went on score much more comfortable wins in the second games to seal their places in the final.

Meanwhile, the plate competition was being played – and the competition was no less fierce here. In the end, the final was between Ed K/Georgina and Ed H/Louise, and it was the latter pair who ended up as winners, picking up the silverware (well, ceramics) with a 15-10 win.

That left the stage clear for the final, and it was a great game, albeit a masterclass by Ben and Kathleen. They started strongly, and although the defending champions pegged them back to 7-7 in the first game, from then on it was pretty much one-way traffic. The first game finished 15-7, with Alex and Andy having no answer to their opponents’ increasingly accurate use of the buttress and the sheer power in Ben’s shots.

The second game continued where the second one ended, and although Andy and Alex picked up a few points towards the end, that merely made the scoreline look a little more respectable. The outcome of the match was never in doubt and Ben and Kathleen were deserved champions.

## **RESULTS**

### **Round-robin**

#### **Group A**

Alex Steel & Andy Pringle bt Louise Mathias & Ed Hatton 11-4; bt Maddy Raynor & Alex Rew 11-4; bt Sasha Haco & Laurence Cook 11-3; bt Lottie Simpson & Tony Barker 11-0; bt Ashley Lumbard &

Chris Ballingall 11-1. Louise & Ed lost to Maddy & Alex 8-11; bt Sasha & Laurence 11-4; bt Tony & Lottie 11-2; bt Ashley & Chris 11-1. Maddy & Alex bt Sasha & Laurence 11-5; bt Lottie & Tony 11-1; bt Ashley & Chris 11-8. Sasha & Laurence lost to Lottie & Tony 1-11; lost to Ashley & Chris 10-12. Lottie & Tony lost to Ashley & Chris 9-11

**Final standings: 1st Alex/Andy; 2nd Maddy/Alex; 3rd Louise/Ed H; 4th Ashley/Chris; 5th Lottie/Tony; 6th Sasha/Laurence**

### **Group B**

Kathleen Briedenhann & Ben Beltrami bt Georgina Shepherd & Ed Kay 15-10; bt Shinan Zhang & Steven Coffey 15-6; bt Karen Hird & Gareth Hoskins 15-5; bt Katie & Joe Sumner 15-0. Georgina & Ed lost to Shinan & Steven 13-15; bt Karen & Gareth 15-9; bt Katie & Joe 16-15. Shinan & Steven bt Karen & Gareth 15-2; bt Katie & Joe 15-11. Karen & Gareth bt Katie & Joe 15-1

**Final standings: 1st Kathleen/Ben; 2nd Shinan/Steven; 3rd Georgina/Ed K; 4th Karen/Gareth; 5th Katie/Joe**

### **Knockout section**

**Semi-finals:** Alex & Andy bt Shinan & Steven 11-9, 11-1; Kathleen & Ben bt Maddy & Alex 11-9, 11-4

**Final:** Kathleen & Ben bt Alex & Andy 15-7, 15-4

### **Plate**

**Quarter-finals:** Louise & Ed H bye; Karen & Gareth bt Lottie & Tony 15-4; Ashley & Chris bt Katie & Joe 15-12; Georgina & Ed K bt Sasha & Laurence 15-7

**Semi-finals:** Louise & Ed H bt Karen & Gareth 15-4; Georgina & Ed K bt Ashley & Chris 15-13

**Final:** Louise & Ed H bt Georgina & Ed 15-10

## **NATIONAL END-OF-SEASON RANKINGS**

by David Hebden, 15th May 2016

Will Ellison finishes the 2015-16 season at the top of both the Singles and Doubles rankings following some great results over the year, including wins in both the National Singles & National Doubles. This is the first time that Will has headed both lists at end of season. Dan Tristao achieved that distinction last season, but before that, the last occurrence was Hamish Buchanan way back in 2005-06.

Unusually, we have the same sequence of players in both lists at positions 2, 3, and 4. Dan Tristao, Dan Grant, and Ed Kay occupy these positions giving perhaps a clear “pecking order” across the two disciplines of the game for the past season.

In the Singles, Will picked up 6 of the 9 open trophies on offer, only losing twice, both times to Dan Tristao, in the London and the WofE. The other event, in Scotland, was won by David Butler, his first ever, and the first by a Bradfieldian since Roger Layton won the NofE back in 1992. Ed Kay picked up both the University and U25 titles. Elsewhere, Ben Beltrami continues his progress moving up to No. 5, and Julian Aquilina, who was a quarter-finalist in the National Singles, comes into the top 10 at No. 9. Matt Shaw rises to No. 11, while Ollie Arnold, Andrew Boyd, Peter Hanton, and Henry Jefferies all move into the top 20. We have 12 new entries in total, the highest being Giles Munn who comes in at No. 29.

The seven open Doubles trophies were shared around a little more. Will Ellison picked up 5 titles, Dan Tristao and Dan Grant both 3, Charlie Brooks 2, and David Butler 1. The two “Invitation” events were won by Ed Hatton with Andy Pringle (South East) and Jez Sinton with Archie McCreath (Scotland). Matt Shaw won both the University and U25 Doubles, the former with Ben Beltrami, and the latter with Ed Kay. Outside of these title winners, Ollie Arnold, Theo Parker, Julian Aquilina,

James Tilston, and Adam George make good progress in the top 20. Ben Jourdan from Edinburgh Academy deserves mention for moving up to No. 22, whilst the somewhat more battle scarred Alex Rew moves up to No. 24 after his semi-final appearance with Jim Hughes in the WofE. We welcome as many as 24 new entries into the rankings this season, including Louise Mathias, who joins Alexandra Steel as the second female player in the Doubles Rankings.

It's good to report that 2015-16 produced an all time record for total singles entrants over the season, and by some margin. Interestingly, the total Doubles entrants was only an average year. One factor in this was the record National Singles entry (59), whilst maybe the current youngish profile of tournament attendees is reflected by these good singles numbers.

The official RFA rankings are prepared by Dave Hebden.

### **END-OF-SEASON RANKINGS FOR WOMEN'S FIVES**

The Rugby Fives Association, 17th May 2016

The RFA is delighted to publish end-of-season rankings for Women's Fives for the first time. These are the third set of rankings to be published since the inception of Women's Rankings in March of this year.

They show Ladies National Champion Kathleen Briedenhann, who recently won the Winchester Fives Mixed Doubles with Ben Beltrami, having consolidated her lead over second-placed Tessa Mills, who did not enter.

Alexandra Steel moves up to third after her silver medal in the Mixed event.

Georgina Shepherd, Ashley Lumbard and Lottie Simpson enter the rankings at 13, 17 and 27 respectively, while Karen Hird rises 21 places, all four of them after playing in the Mixed Doubles.

Two of the top ten, Alexandra Steel and Louise Mathias, also figure in the National end-of-season doubles rankings.

**The next set of Women's Rankings will be published in January 2017 after the Ladies National Championships in Singles and Doubles.**

**See next page for full End-of-Season Women's Rankings 17<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

<b>Current</b>	<b>Previous</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Points</b>
1	1	K.Briedenhann	84.59
2	2	T.Mills	77.15
3	4	A.Steel	68.16
4	3	M.Raynor	63.18
5	6	S.Zhang	54.25
6	5	L.Mathias	53.78
7	7	A.Law	43.98
8	8	M.Wong	42.90
9	9	L.Harbottle	41.37
10	10	P.Thornhill	40.64
11	11	B.Crinnion	36.06
12	12	L.Tilley	33.97
13	-	G.Shepherd	31.83
14	13	I.Boddy	29.14
15	14	P.Bell	28.11
16	15	C.Bedford	26.33
17	-	A.Lumbard	25.77
18	16	E.Shilina	25.33
19	17	K.Martin	21.17
20=	19	M.Richards	19.60
	41	K.Hird	19.60
22	18	M.Nugent	17.26
23	20	M.Whitehead	16.49
24	21	K.Broad	14.65
25	22	L.Browne	13.26
26	23	C.Henderson	13.15
27	-	L.Simpson	11.35
28	23	S.Haco	10.41
29	25	D.Treloar	8.18
30	26	I.Dan	7.42
31	27	M.Ivanova	7.32
32	28	J.Jones	7.30
33	29	T.Gordon	6.90
34	30	A.Flood	6.71
35	31	F.Porter	6.58
36	32	L.Calman-Grimsdale	6.25
37	33	J.Morton	4.56
38	34	N.Ross	4.36
39	35	R.Patel	3.95
40	36	D.Black	3.91
41	37	M.Ward	3.84
42	38	V.King-Forbes	3.42
43	39	K.Rolls	3.37
44	40	W,Carling	2.46
45	41	M.Cole	2.06

## **Derby Moor Invitation Doubles Sunday, 26 June 2016**

Lewis Keates should be doing the Pools this week: he clearly knows how to pick a winner! Will Ellison in the Mate's Plate; now Hamish Buchanan in the DM Doubles. Or perhaps it's time to lower his handicap.

9 pairs contested this year's "Premier Fives Event in the East Midlands" [Grem McIntyre]. The smart money looked to be on Buchanan & Keates (Hamish won the second such competition back in 2005) or Richard Christie with Bob Sandie, who's won it twice. Three-time winner Anthony Goodwin playing with Martin Robinson looked a good outside bet, as did any of Lawrence Taylor & Brian Nithsdale, John Halligan & Mark Kiteley, and Aaron Wheatley & Stuart Kirby.

In the first round Lewis and Hamish got off to a gentle start against John Hawke & Hasan Rehman, while Anthony & Martin developed an effective understanding by the end of their first match, against Lawrence & Brian. Stuart & Aaron, now playing regularly at Club nights and coaching too, had a bit too much in the bank for Mark & John, while Richard & Bob got warmed up with a preliminary match against U15s Dean Ali & Vishal Singh, then more serious stuff against Hasan & Jai Singh.

The semi-finals were the usual close encounters, with Hamish & Lewis coming through after a very tight second game against Anthony & Martin, while Richard & Bob managed to come out on top of a predictably dour struggle against Stuart & Aaron, winning 15-12 in the third.

The final looked comfortable for Hamish & Lewis in the first game but then they had to dig deep in the second, defeating Richard & Bob 16-14 to win the pitcher and saucer.

In the Plate, played as a round robin, John Halligan & Mark Kiteley won all four of their games to claim the boules but not without a close shave against Lawrence Taylor & Brian Nithsdale. For once both boules were available for presentation!

With the courts enclosed food and drink were provided on site, the atmosphere as congenial as ever. Huge thanks have to go to Stuart Kirby, who took over organising the event from the absent Brian Kirk. Above all, the day was an appropriate way to mark the end of a 13-year project to refurbish and enclose the courts.

### **Scores:**

**1st round:** Christie & Sandie bt D.Ali and V.Singh 15-1, 15-7

**2nd round:** Buchanan & Keates bt Hawke & Rehman 15-1, 15-6; Goodwin & Robinson bt Nithsdale & Taylor 15-5, 15-10; Kirby & Wheatley bt Halligan & Kiteley 15-7, 15-10; Christie & Sandie bt Rehman & J Singh no score recorded

**Semi-finals:** Buchanan & Keates bt Goodwin & Robinson 15-5, 16-14; Christie & Sandie bt Kirby & Wheatley 15-5, 7-15, 15-12

**Final:** Buchanan & Keates bt Christie & Sandie 15-7, 16-14

**Plate:** 1st Halligan & Kiteley; 2nd Nithsdale & Taylor; 3rd J Singh & Wheatley