**Lillington Free Church Graded Tournament**

 **18th May 2018**

Lillington Free Church Table-tennis club staged its final Graded Tournament of the season at St Nicholas Leisure Centre in Warwick on Saturday. Amongst the strong entry there were several players and clubs who were new to the event.

Despite the strength of competition, the host club dominated the Senior event providing the four semi-finalists. Lee Dorning defeated Sam Wiggins in one semi with Dave Ramsey overcoming Sam Weaving in the other. In a thrilling final Dorning pipped Ramsey 11-8 in the 5th. A special mention must go to 13 year old Free Church starlet, Nikit Sajiv who entered the Senior event and clinched the Consolation trophy when beating club-mate Michael Ho.

At this time of year Junior representation is always low owing to school exams. The Junior event was therefore combined with the Cadet singles and it was a Cadet who claimed the champion’s trophy. Josh Yarrow (FC) overcame Lewis Waddup of the Drayton club in Oxfordshire in his semi and took the plaudits with his win over Callum Ball of Rugby in the Final. Ball had enjoyed an excellent win over Colebridge’s Henry Belcher in his semi.

In the under 13 Singles, Harry Simcox of Colebridge beat his club-mate Cyrus Harris in one semi whilst the other semi was an all Church affair with Chris Ho defeating Erin Darwen. Ho held an 8-4 advantage over Simcox in the Final but Simcox fought back to win.

In the afternoon the Grade A contest saw Dorning facing and beating Ramsey for a second time but in the semi-final. Hawley Ellicott of Colebridge thwarted the complete domination of the top events by the host club as he beat Weaving in the other Final but there was no stopping Dorning who pocketed another winner’s trophy.

Boosted by his morning success, Josh Yarrow romped to the semi-final of Grade B where he proved too potent for club-mate Emily Beasley. Henry Belcher was to be his Final opponent after defeating Waddup but this did not deter Yarrow who took the title.

In Grade C Christelle Rajapaska of Kidlington edged Ethan Morgan of Millennium in the first semi and met Church’s Joe Shrimpton who collared Simcox in the other. Newcomer Rajapaska won the Final.

The Improvers saw Richard Yomi-Fadehi beat Erin Darwen in the first semi and Zain Ali of Kidlington overcome Baptiste Lamont of Phoenix (Coventry) in the other. In a tense final Yomi –Fadehi was the victor.

There was an all Church semi-final in the Beginners where Jun Chung came from behind to defeat Nathan Jackson. Morris Wong of Oxford earnt his place in the Final by beating Rhys Raji-Lamprey of the Continental club in Birmingham. Chung raced to the title in straight sets.

Consolation Results:-

Junior/Cadets

Rajapanska beat Morgan

Under 13 Singles

Harvey Wilson (FC) beat Morgan Page (FC)

Grade A

James Robertson (FC) beat Tom Hunt (FC)

Grade B

Jerry Chung (FC) beat Katie Singleton (FC)

Grade C

Cyrus Harris beat Nick Darwen (FC)

Improvers

Chris Ho beat Oliver Ferguson (Rugby)

Beginners

Jack Bradbury (FC) beat Ben Brady (FC)

**Inter-regional Tournament**

There was a late call-up on Saturday for Lillington Free Church’s Eleanor Fletcher to represent the West Midlands Girls under 13 team. Eleanor, newly installed as number 24 in England in this age group, travelled to RAF Cosford for the competition sharing matches with Megan Jones of Shropshire, (England number 7) and Anya Sompura.

The day began with a 3-2 success over North-West with Fletcher beating Charlotte Higgins. The East Midlands were swept away 4-1 with Fletcher just appearing in the doubles win, partnering Jones, to defeat Lucy Brindle and Sacha Withers. In the next match against Yorkshire Fletcher again just played the doubles with Jones and overcame Rebecca Savage ( 4) and Isabella Crooks (33) 3-0. It meant her team secured a 3-2 win. In the final group match the North pipped her side 2-3 though Fletcher was unlucky to lose to Ruby Bennett 9-11 in the 5th. The doubles was also ceded in 5.

All this resulted in a 3rd/4th play-off against the South East which was lost 4-1. However, Fletcher enjoyed an excellent victory over England number 21 Sasha O’Halloran to cap a heartening competition.

Club –Mates Eduardo Bolanos and Tom Yarrow were selected for the Under 13 Boys team but found the going tough, losing to London, the South-East and the South 5-0. They did manage 2 points against the East Midlands with Bolanos defeating Tom Chesworth and Yarrow overcoming England number 43 Michael Spence-Durrant. They were unfortunate to lose the doubles 12-10 in the 5th.

Ricardo Bolanos represented the area in the Boys under 15 team competition alongside Alex Lee of Staffs. They beat the North-East 4-1 with Bolanos getting the scalps of Hayden Gilmour and Matthew Pearson as well as combining with Lee for the doubles. They lost 3-2 to Yorkshire, Bolanos beating Nichola Miller and 3-2 to the South-West with a win for Bolanos over Herbie Sage (30).

The Bolanos brothers played in the individual event on the Sunday. Ricardo (19) overcame Miller from Yorkshire 3-1, Flynn Connolly of Lincolnshire 3-0 and Liam Bibby (41) from Cheshire 3-0 to top his group. This gave him a bye to the semis where he lost to Ben McDonald (21) of Cumbria 9-11 in the 5th after being 2-0 up and holding a match point in the 4th.

Eduardo (37) was runner-up in his under 13 group beating Henri Montana of Notts 3-2 and Luke Mitchell (44) 0f Durham 3-0. In the last 16 he lost to Ehsan Jawadi (31) of Yorkshire 3-1.