**Lillington Graded Tournament**

**Courier, 17th May, 2019**

**Lillington Free Church table-tennis club held its final tournament of the season at St Nicholas Leisure Centre in Warwick last Saturday. The event attracted a full entry including two Frenchmen based in Kidlington and players from as far afield as Kings Lynn and Blaenafon.**

**Worcestershire County player, Hawley Ellicott, a tournament regular, was again in sparkling form winning his group to progress to the semi-finals of the knock-outs. He then swept aside Pierre-Olivier Colard of Kidlington to face Steve Bertie of Birmingham’s Continental Stars club. Bertie had beaten Free Church’s top junior, Ricardo Bolanos in his semi. True to form there was no stopping Ellicott who lifted the trophy.**

**The Junior event was played in a round robin and, unusually, contained few juniors as many of Free Church’s younger players opted for the challenge of a tougher event. Their bravery did not go unrewarded as they filled the top four places. Eduardo Bolanos clinched the winners trophy, Tom Yarrow grabbed the runners-up spot and Chris Ho and his brother Nicholas claimed the third and fourth placed medals respectively.**

**The cadet event (under 15) emphasised the conveyor belt of Free Church youngsters as the club provided three of the four semi-finalists despite a healthy outside interest. Toby Dow of Bodicote won one semi against Joe Shrimpton and George Barnes defeated his club-mate Owain Jones in the other. Barnes had lost to Dow in his group but roared back to take the Final in impressive fashion.**

**In the under 13 singles Wajid Wafiq of the Smithswood club in Birmingham defeated Joseph Fisher of Bodicote in one semi final and then went on to overcome Free Church’s Daniel Stone who had enjoyed a fine semi final win over Yingke Xu of Kidlington.**

**The afternoon events saw Ellicott confirm his reputation as the top player when winning the Grade A Final. His greatest scare had come earlier in the competition when Free Church’s Dave Ramsey took him to 5 but there was no stopping his quest for a second title as he beat Sam Weaving of the host club in his semi. He then faced Colard for a second time and once again emerged as the winner. Colard had beaten another Free Church player in Harry Purewal in the other semi.**

**Young Tom Yarrow enjoyed a tremendous run in the Grade B singles romping to the final with a win over Dow in the semis. He was to face Eduardo Bolanos who defeated Iestyn Howells from Blaenafon in his semi. In the morning events Bolanos had proved the victor but the roles were reversed this time around with Yarrow snatching the win.**

**In Grade C Barnes maintained his good form to reach the semi-finals where he overcame Rugby’s Oliver Ferguson. Josephine Bennett of Continental Stars won the other semi after beating another Free Church rising star in Nathan Jackson. In a close contest Barnes showed the mental toughness needed to take the spoils.**

**The Improvers event showcased many strong players and was won by Wajid Wafiq who mastered Chloe Ramsey of Kings Lynn in the semi. His Final opponent was Zein Ali of Kidlington who had beaten a club-mate Yingke Xu in his semi. However, the experience of Wafiq told in the Final.**

**The Beginners event saw Arnav Mulay of Free Church reach the semi finals where he edged a 5 set thriller against Zain Hussain of Streetly. In the other semi Ethan Zhang of Kidlington beat Sam Byrne, also of Kidlington, in his semi. However, the confidence Mulay had shown to get him through the semis proved key as he top-spun his way to success.**

**The Lillington tournaments have been hugely successful this season and a mention should go to organiser Jill Weaving and her team of helpers whose expertise is second to none.**

**Consolation Singles**

**Winners Runners-up**

**Seniors: Craig Allen ( Arrowvale, Redditch) Pawel Zukowski (Kidlington)**

**Cadets: Thomas Waters (Colebridge) Nathan Jackson (Free Church)**

**Under 13: Zain Hussain (Streetly) Cai Bristow (Blaenafon)**

**Grade A: Livvy Fletcher (Free Church) James Robertson (Free Church)**

**Grade B: Kristof Bolhuis (Warwick Uni) Steve Proctor (Nomads)**

**Improvers: Jun Chung (Free Church) Moragan Page (Free Church)**

**Beginners: Ann Taylor (Continentla) Mia Chan(Free Church)**