

## Results and Reports from the RFA Website 2017-2018

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## **South West Open Championships**

Blundell's School, Tiverton, 8/9<sup>th</sup> July 2017

### **STOP PRESS**

While we wait for a full report on the weekend's events from organiser Wayne Enstone, we have pleasure in publishing the results from the 2017 South West Open Championships. As you'll see, some very familiar names won the silverware, with Dan Tristao beating Will Ellison to take the singles championship, before Will & Dan Grant beat Dan T & Gareth Price to win the doubles title.

*Wayne Enstone reports:*

Spectators, including Geordie (Dan Grant's lovely dog), were treated to some exhilarating and exceptional performances on both days at this year's championships. The top three seeds have certainly taken fives to another level this season, and I am taking this opportunity to say what a pleasure it is for me to see so many front-court shots being played; it has certainly added a new dimension to our wonderful game. I can hear Fred Beswick saying 'Great shot', being a master and advocate of the drop shot himself! On with the report:

Saturday began with young Addie Chai (Blundell's), who was competing in his first senior tournament, beating Bhaswar Baral in two good games, while Ed Hatton warmed up by beating local Keith Kennerley in two hard fought games. In other first round games, Alexandra Steel (Old Blundellian) gave a very good account of herself by pushing Ashley Hill (Derby Moor) in many rallies, but losing in two. Vintage and local player Stuart Watson began his day with a boxing session, but unfortunately this didn't deter Rob Whitehorn (Derby Moor) from winning the match, hitting some thunderbolt winners in the process.

In the second round, Maddy Raynor (Old Blundellian) had a very entertaining match with Dan Tristao, Dan winning in two. Henry Jefferies showed how he is developing into a fine player by dispatching a power-hitting Gareth Price in two. Similarly, Julian Aquilina showed great attack and movement to keep Rob Whitehorn down to win in two games. Anthony Goodwin came up against an in-form Theo Parker, who managed to close the second game out to nine, when a third was looking possible. Ed Hatton did have many fine rallies with Will Ellison, but Will produced his outlandish winners to move into the quarters.

In the top half of the draw, while Henry Jefferies produced some excellent shots and played very well, Dan Tristao remained calm and produced equally deceptive shots to win in two. He had to wait quite some time to know who his semi-final opponent would be, as David Butler had to work extremely hard against an ever-improving Julian Aquilina in two very closely fought games.

In the lower half, Dan Grant frustrated Ollie Arnold by producing so many winning serves after Ollie had fought hard to win the previous rally; and, with Dan's unreadable shots, the match ended quite quickly. An even quicker match, unfortunately, saw Theo Parker have to retire at 3-all with Will in their first game after turning his ankle.

So, the semis were set according to seeding, and Dan and Dave had a wonderful first game, with Dave chasing around the court, picking up many conceivable winners. However, Dan's excellent control and front court play eventually won the game and match. In the lower half, Dan and Will produced what I feel must have been the best ever semi, with Will seeming set to win the first game at 9-3 up; however, Dan served a marvellous number of winners to claw back and miraculously win the first to 9. In the second, Will's determination to keep Dan down was clear to see and rewarded him with an 11-3 win. The third, again, was hard to call, with both players taking their fives to another, absolutely breathtaking, level, playing magnificent shots throughout, Will taking it eventually 11-6. One had to feel for Dan, whose wonderful shot play I predict will win him an open championship in the near future. So, Will would be defending his championship against Dan Tristao in yet another final, the outcome of which would be decided on the Sunday morning.

The doubles, as usual, started on the Saturday after the second round of the singles, with some interesting new pairings and the most significant question being asked, could any of them give Will Ellison & Dan Grant a run for their money? A first round three-gamer saw young guns Lewis Keates and our youngest competitor Vish Singh (Derby Moor) win against local ladies Maddy Raynor & Alexandra Steel.

In the bottom half of the draw local vintage pair Tim Lewis & Stuart Watson had many entertaining rallies with Stuart Kirby (National Vintage Champ) and power hitting Ashley Hill (after six years in HMS), champ & youth winning through in two games. Quarter-final matches went according to seeding, which set up for Will & Dan against Julian & Henry in the top half and Ollie & Dave taking on a very impressive Gareth & Dan pairing. Considering these matches were being played after some exhausting singles play earlier, the standard of rallies was exceptional — all credit to the four pairs. Will & Dan never really looked in trouble despite being pushed to play at their best especially in the first game and eventually finished the match winning in two games. Similarly, Gareth & Dan were under pressure during many rallies with Ollie hitting some ferocious left-handers and Dave attacking from the right but Gareth & Dan matched them with their own fine winners to win the match in two games.

So this set up for an interesting Sunday with the two singles finalists playing each other before then playing against each other in the doubles final.

In between the main tournaments, the Plates were being contested. In the singles Anthony Goodwin won through to the final comfortably beating Maddy Raynor and Bhaswar Baral, Bhaswar being taken all the way earlier by Keith Kennerley. In the lower half of the draw Lewis Keates also reached the final by firstly having a battle with now local player Nick Geere, then comfortably beating a rather tired Addie Chai, who now knows what a senior tournament is all about. Even though Lewis made a contest of it Anthony had too much energy and experience and won the final 15-9.

In the doubles, with six pairs involved a round robin competition took place, 3 pairs in each pool. Pool A was won by Ashley Hill & Vishal Singh and Pool B by Brian Kirk & Lewis Keates. Ashley & Vishal being a right and left hand partnership took full advantage and beat Brian & Lewis with some fine doubles play, 15-9.

A long and enjoyable day had been had by all, and so we were ready for a much deserved drink and meal at our usual social venue, the Butterleigh Inn. A special mention should go to Kanika Baral, five year-old daughter of Bhaswar and Uma, who attended her first of hopefully many social fives occasions — never too young to recruit, Alexandra Steel was showing us how to do it. We have the gloves ready for next year! I must also mention 'Geordie', who enjoyed his evening with the three dogs at the Inn!

The finals on Sunday were action-packed. The singles final was virtually three matches in one. Game one going to Dan after a great deal of high energy/intensity and high risk play by both players, especially Dan's exceptional drop shot play, wonderful to witness. In the second game the first point was won after 10 rallies. Will then played many fine winning shots to turn the tables and, helped by errors from Dan, he eventually won the game with room to spare. At 2-all in the third game and each player playing some wonder shots that the other returned time and time again, eventually Dan started to gain the advantage and closed the game out to two. Well done also to both players for declaring balls down, whilst we spectators thought them up — fairness personified.

In the doubles final, Will & Dan set off at a blistering pace, with Gareth & Dan matching them for most of the early rallies but Will & Dan slowly edged ahead to finish the game off 11 to 4. In the second game it was Gareth who moved him and Dan to a 7-2 lead. Unfortunately, against anyone else their lead would have been more than enough to close out the game but Will & Dan had other ideas and shots to deny them, pulling back to seven all only for Gareth & Dan to move ahead 9 to 7. The

intensity of play was such that before the scorer could record the score Will & Dan G had won 11-9 and the final. Marvellous fives.

In between the main finals there were four players up for the challenge of the Sunday American Doubles competition. This year the players chose to play best of three to 15 points. Julian Aquilina and Nick Geere played against Addie Chai and Keith Kennerley and whilst both games seemed to last for ever, Julian and Nick managed a win in two.

To conclude proceedings the usual trophies to winners and prize giving of the local Devon Dartington Glassware took place.

Finally, it is once again a privilege and pleasure for me to write this report after witnessing yet again fives of the highest standard. A massive thanks to Dan and Will for supporting the Championship as current National Champions and providing us with such a wonderful standard of play over the weekend. Also, thanks go to: Chris H-D for booking me the facilities of Blundell's School and the school's continuing support of fives in general; to Tim Lewis for booking the Saturday meal and his on the day support in general, to Lesley on the catering side and lastly to Nigel Gordon for his generous and continued Sponsorship of his G6 balls, which made for some great performances and wonderful play.

Do think about joining us next year for a fun weekend of fives.

## RESULTS

### Singles

**1st round:** M.Raynor bt A.Wheatley w/o; R.Whitehorn bt S.Watson 11-1, 11-3; A.Hill bt A.Steel 11-0, 11-0; A.Chai bt B.Baral 11-1, 11-0; E.Hatton bt K.Kennerley 11-0, 11-2

**2nd round:** D.Tristao bt Raynor 11-5, 11-1; H.Jefferies bt G.Price 11-0, 11-2; J.Aquilina bt Whitehorn 11-2, 11-2; D.Butler bt Hill 11-3, 11-5; D.Grant bt Chai 11-3, 11-6; O.Arnold bt N.Geere 11-0, 11-0; T.Parker bt A.Goodwin 11-3, 11-9; W.Ellison bt Hatton 11-4, 11-1

**Quarter-finals:** Tristao bt Jefferies 11-7, 11-4; Butler bt Aquilina 11-9, 11-8; Grant bt Arnold 11-6, 11-2; Ellison bt Parker 3-3 rtd

**Semi-finals:** Tristao bt Butler 11-7, 11-4; Ellison bt Grant 9-11, 11-3, 11-6

**Final:** Tristao bt Ellison 11-7, 2-11, 11-2

**Plate:** Goodwin

### Doubles

**1st round:** Keates & Singh bt Raynor & Steel 11-4, 9-11, 11-0; Goodwin & Whitehorn bt Baral & Geere 11-1, 11-0; Aquilina & Jefferies bt D.Hill & Kennerley 11-0, 11-5; Chai & Hatton bt Keates & Kirk 11-6, 11-2; A.Hill & Kirby bt Lewis & Watson 11-3, 11-3

**Quarter-finals:** Ellison & Grant bt Keates & Singh w/o; Aquilina & Jefferies bt Goodwin & Whithorn 11-2, 11-9; Arnold & Butler bt Chai & Hatton 11-4, 11-7; Price & Tristao bt Hill & Kirby 11-4, 11-5

**Semi-finals:** Ellison & Grant bt Aquilina & Jefferies 11-9, 11-4; Price & Tristao bt Arnold & Butler 11-4, 11-5

**Final:** Ellison & Grant bt Price & Tristao 11-4, 11-9

**Plate:** Hill & Singh

## South East Open Championships

Christ's Hospital, Horsham, 19/20th August 2017

In the absence of organiser Ed Hatton, Morgan Spillane kindly stepped in to run the South East Open Championships, and we have great pleasure in publishing his report.

### Singles highlights

At the business end of the competition (the quarter-finals), Dan Tristao and Will Ellison progressed with relative ease to the semi-finals. However, the other quarter-finals were tougher affairs, with Dan Grant and Ed Kay both requiring three games to progress. In the semi-finals, Dan Tristao won through over Dan Grant, Dan clearly suffering from the three-setter in the earlier round against Julian.

The surprise of the competition, though, was in the other semi-final, where Ed Kay, for the first time in his competitive career, prevailed over Will Ellison. Will was clearly suffering in the later part of the match with cramp in both legs, and Ed exploited this to maximum effect.

The final was a classic. Fives of the highest quality was played, with Dan's accuracy and deft touch equally matched by Ed's remarkable court movement and rescue shots. Ed had game point in the first game only for Dan to prevail 12-10. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> game, Ed led 5-1, but Dan clawed his way back in. Again, Ed had the chance to close this game out but Dan, fatigued as he clearly was, scrambled for every shot and prevailed over Ed to win 11-9. An exhibition it was, loudly acclaimed by those who witnessed it.

In the Plate Nick Woolfenden beat Masters Doubles champion Tony Hamilton in two games.

### Doubles highlights

A mammoth 21-match round-robin was enjoyed (endured?) by all. Nick Woolfenden & Tim Hebblethwaite were the stand-out team, winning all their preliminary matches. Whilst Bart Callaghan & Morgan Spillane pushed them closest in the round-robin, losing 14-16, Nick and Tim prevailed more convincingly in the final, winning 15-9. In the Plate final, Andy Pringle and Peter Winzeler had too much in the locker for James Tilston and Louise Mathias, winning comfortably 15-2 in the end.

## RESULTS

### Singles

**1st Round:** D Tristao bt Z Moxon 11-1, 11-0; J Tilston bt N Woolfenden 11-5, 11-6; J Aquilina bt N Geere 11-0, 11-1; D Grant bt B Callaghan 12-11, 11-6; E Kay bt P Winzeler 11-1, 11-0; M Shaw bt M Spillane 11-3, 11-2; S Russell bt A Hamilton 11-3, 11-4; W Ellison bt L Mathias 11-1, 11-1.

**Quarter-finals:** D Tristao bt J Tilston 11-2, 11-5; D Grant bt J Aquilina 10-12, 11-8, 11-8; E Kay bt M Shaw 11-7, 9-11, 11-0; W Ellison bt S Russell 11-3, 11-1.

**Semi-finals:** D Tristao bt D Grant 11-3, 11-5; E Kay bt W Ellison 11-6, 5-11, 11-3.

**Final:** D Tristao bt E Kay 12-10, 11-9.

### Plate

**Group 1:** B Callaghan bt L Mathias 15-6; bt N Geere 15-4; lost to A Hamilton 14-16. A Hamilton bt L Mathias 15-0; bt N Geere 15-13. L Mathias lost to N Geere 10-15.

**Group 2:** N Woolfenden bt M Spillane 15-3; bt P Winzeler 15-3; bt Z Moxon 15-2. M Spillane bt P Winzeler 16-14; beat Z Moxon 15-0. P Winzeler bt Z Moxon 15-0.

**Final:** N Woolfenden bt A Hamilton 11-7, 11-3.

### Doubles

#### Round-robin

N Geere & T Webster lost to J Aquilina & Z Moxon 13-15; lost to J Tilston & L Mathias 12-15; bt S Russell and R Kay 15-6; lost to A Pringle & P Winzeler 6-15; lost to B Callaghan & M Spillane 2-15; lost to N Woolfenden & T Hebblethwaite 2-15. J Aquilina & Z Moxon lost to J Tilston & L Mathias 5-15; bt S Russell & R Kay 15-9; lost to A Pringle & P Winzeler 14-16; lost to B Callaghan & M

Spillane 5-15; lost to N Woolfenden & T Hebblethwaite 5-15. J Tilston & L Mathias bt S Russell & R Kay 15-5; bt A Pringle & P Winzeler 15-10; lost to B Callaghan & M Spillane 7-15; lost to N Woolfenden & T Hebblethwaite 6-15. S Russell & R Kay lost to A Pringle & P Winzeler 1-15; lost to B Callaghan & M Spillane 5-15; lost to N Woolfenden & T Hebblethwaite 4-15. A Pringle & P Winzeler lost to B Callaghan & M Spillane 10-15; lost to N Woolfenden & T Hebblethwaite 7-15. B Callaghan & M Spillane lost to N Woolfenden & T Hebblethwaite 14-16.

**Final:** N Woolfenden & T Hebblethwaite bt B Callaghan & M Spillane 15-9.

**Plate:** A Pringle & P Winzeler bt J Tilston & L Mathias 15-2.

## **Nigel Gordon (1951-2017)**

**23rd August 2017**

We regret to report the sudden and unexpected death of Nigel Gordon at the age of 66. Nigel has hand-made the stitched G6 Fives ball for us for some two decades.

A full tribute will appear in the next Fives Federation Newsletter.

The funeral is at 12.30 pm on Tuesday 29th August at the Beetham Hall Crematorium, Beetham, Milnthorpe, Cumbria LA7 7BQ. Bright clothing is encouraged!

## **America discovers Fives!**

**September 2017**

First it was Timbo Gonzalez, the 25-year-old from the Bronx with a claim to being the world's best one-wall handball player, who came to the UK earlier in the year and was filmed experiencing the game of Eton Fives on the hallowed steps of Eton College Chapel.

But in August it was another American champion of the game who came to Durham University and had a taste of Rugby Fives: Mathieu Pelletier, who works for the World Players of Handball (WPH), a Tucson-based organisation who champion several versions of the sport, but predominantly 4-wall handball.

Through the good offices of Alex Wordley, captain of Rugby Fives at Durham University, Mathieu was introduced to the game by our very own Tom Wakelam.

Of Mathieu's foray into the game of Rugby Fives Tom reported: Mathieu is a great sportsman who grasped the game very quickly — showing how transferable the skills were from another 4-wall game. The ball they use is a smaller, more solid version of a wallball ball which moves very fast and is even allowed to ricochet off the roof. Less placement and a lot more power! Equally the lack of a bar means the perfect shot is to kill the ball at the base of the front wall — involving a very different mindset from fives!

Mathieu himself had the following to say: "It's a really fun game. I'm definitely looking forward to playing again on my upcoming business trips to England."

The WPH have kindly put an article together which you can read on their website at

<http://wphlive.tv/wph-rfc-outdoor-director-pelletier-learns-rugby-fives/>

## London Open Championships

St Paul's School, Barnes, 9/10th September 2017

*Organiser Will Ellison writes:* The 23rd London Open was held at St Paul's School and, this year, there were several new champions' names to be etched onto the trophies.

Ed Kay backed up his win in the South-East Open semi-final against Will Ellison to win his second open singles title in a hard-fought match over three games. Meanwhile, debut pairing Will Ellison & Matt Shaw lived up to their top seeding to win the doubles title against Dave Butler & Dan Grant, themselves playing together for only the second time.

Ed's win was his fifth in an open Rugby Fives tournament, whereas Matt's doubles title was his second, following his win with Ed in the North-West Open in January. Will's doubles title was his seventh here – one behind Hamish Buchanan's record of eight – and fifth in a row. It saw him increase his overall tally to 38 open doubles titles.

The singles on Saturday started out according to seeding, although Alan Bowden and Rob Whitehorn's marathon three-gamer in the round of 32 must be acknowledged. In the end, Alan appeared to run out of steam in the third game, having come back from losing the first game to win the second to five points. Overall, it was a titanic effort from both players!

The depth of the draw was evident in the round of 16 – which featured 13 of the top 20 ranked singles players in the country. Amazingly, three of the eight games went the distance, with Matt Shaw battling through against Ollie Arnold, and Charlie Brooks overcoming an 11-1 deficit in the first game to come through the final two games relatively comfortably against James Tilston. However, the game between Ben Beltrami and Sam Russell was a true classic; and, with Ben only winning 12-11 in the third, having saved a number of match points, it was a match that could quite easily have gone either way. Ben's spider-like reach saved the day on a number of occasions.

The quarter-finals again went to seedings, although Matt Shaw pushed Will Ellison hard in the second game to force him to dig deep – Will eventually came through 12-11. Charlie Brooks and Dave Butler locked horns in a long and gruelling game that Charlie eventually won 12-10, 12-10, leaving him a tough job to recover for a semi-final against Ed Kay.

In the semi-finals, Will recorded an 11-6, 11-6 victory over Dan Grant, while Ed beat Charlie comfortably 11-3, 11-3 – the second game had finished during the break of the other semi-final!

On Sunday morning, Will and Ed played for the 11th time in an open tournament, with Ed claiming his second win over Will and first in a final. Ed had a strong start, quickly gaining a 6-2 lead in the first game. Will pushed hard to get back into the match – after many long rallies, two of which must each have been around 100 shots, Will pulled the game back to be all square at 7-7. Ed hit several deft reverse-angle drop shots and a few round-the-walls winners to eventually clinch the game 11-9. The second game started very close, but once the score went to 4-4, Will found a great patch of rhythm to take the game 11-4 in dominant fashion. Will pushed through to a 2-0 lead in the decider, but at this point started to make several errors and this – coupled with several lethal drop shots from Ed – led to a quick run of points, sealing Ed his first singles title here.

It was great to have so many enthusiastic participants in the singles Plate, and encouraging to have so many students take part alongside some of the more experienced players on the tour! In the end, youth beat experience, with James Smith (formerly Winchester College, now Manchester University) taking on Pete Winzeler (who learnt his fives at KCS Wimbledon and is now back in the UK, teaching in Guildford) in the Plate final, once Alan Bowden and Tony Hamilton, respectively, had been seen off in the semi-finals. James ended up prevailing 15-12 to win his first open silverware.

The doubles tournament started while the singles final was being played, so the organiser sadly missed some of the opening action! From what he has heard, though, the pick of the games has to be Anthony Goodwin & Ash Hill's epic battle against Peter Hanton & Henry Jefferies, with the latter pair prevailing in three games.

The quarter-finals went to seeding, although Dave Butler & Dan Grant had to battle through in three games against an on-form pairing of Julian Aquilina & James Tilston. Meanwhile, Hamish Buchanan & Sam Russell had a very tight second game against current Yorkshire Doubles champions Ollie Arnold & Theo Parker. In fact, Hamish & Sam had a 10-4 lead, but somehow the Bristol students managed to recover to win 12-10 and book their place in the semi-finals.

In the next round, Will & Matt Shaw, the top seeds, managed to come through in straight games against Ollie & Theo – weathering a storm of powerful and accurate hitting from the students. However, the other semi-final was a closer affair: Dave & Dan were quickly beaten to 3 in the first game by Ben Beltrami & Ed Kay, but managed to hold on in a tense second game to take it 11-9. In the decider, Dave & Dan nearly squandered an 8-0 lead, with Ed & Ben taking the score back to 9-8. However, after several changes of serve with no points, Dave & Dan eventually sealed the game to 8 to set up a final with Will & Matt.

In the final, Will & Matt exhibited a largely error-free display to take their first title together 11-4, 11-1 – Dave & Dan's tough semi-final may have helped with the scoreline.

In the doubles Plate, a round-robin format was used for the four pairs that had lost their first matches. There were several close matches – including two that ended up 16-14. In the end, the final was played out (in an all-Alleyn's match) by Angus Hanton & Nick Geere against Julian Hanton & Ben Kirwan, with the younger pair winning fairly comfortably.

Many thanks to all the participants and spectators for making this one of the most memorable and exciting regular fixtures on the circuit – it was great to see many of the players who played for the first time last year at Alleyn's come back again this year, and we hope that they play in many years to come! We must of course thank St Paul's School and their generosity in letting us use their courts and facilities once again.

We look ahead to next year, when the 24th tournament looks set to return to Whitgift!

## RESULTS

### Singles

**1st round:** R Whitehorn bt A Bowden 11-3, 5-11, 11-0; O Arnold bt A Hamilton 11-2, 11-0; M Shaw bt P Winzeler 11-4, 11-5; S Russell bt W Rentoul 11-0, 11-1; J Tilston bt B Chua 11-3, 11-7; P Hanton bt N Geere 11-2, 11-2; T Parker bt J Hanton 11-1, 11-3

**2nd round:** W Ellison bt Whitehorn 11-3, 11-1; Shaw bt Arnold 11-0, 7-11, 11-3; B Beltrami bt Russell 6-11, 11-0, 12-11; D Grant bt H Jefferies 11-4, 11-4; C Brooks bt Tilston 1-11, 11-0, 11-2; D Butler bt Hanton 11-0, 11-3; J Aquilina bt Parker 11-1, 11-1; E Kay bt J Smith 11-1, 11-0

**Quarter-finals:** Ellison bt Shaw 11-5, 12-11; Grant bt Beltrami 11-6, 11-2; Brooks bt Butler 12-10, 12-10; Kay bt Aquilina 11-3, 11-3

**Semi-finals:** Ellison bt Grant 11-6, 11-6; Kay bt Brooks 11-3, 11-3

**Final:** Kay bt Ellison 11-9, 4-11, 11-2

**Plate:** Smith

### Doubles

**1st Round:** A Bowden & T Hebblethwaite bt A Cochrane & W Rentoul 11-7, 11-0; H Buchanan & S Russell bt J Hanton & B Kirwan 12-11, 11-3; J Aquilina & J Tilston bt N Geere & A Hanton 11-1, 11-0; P Hanton & H Jefferies bt A Goodwin & A Hill (11-6, 6-11, 11-4)

**Quarter-finals:** W Ellison & M Shaw bt Bowden & Hebblethwaite 11-2, 11-9; O Arnold & T Parker

bt Russell & Buchanan 11-4, 12-10; D Butler & D Grant bt Aquilina & Tilston 11-7, 4-11, 11-7; B Beltrami & E Kay bt Hanton & Jefferies 11-4, 11-7  
**Semi-finals:** Ellison & Shaw bt Arnold & Parker 11-8, 11-7; Butler & Grant bt Beltrami & Kay 3-11, 11-9, 11-8  
**Final:** Ellison & Shaw bt Butler & Grant 11-4, 11-1  
**Plate:** Hanton & Kirwan

## **Rankings following the South West, South East and the London Championships**

19<sup>th</sup> September 2017

These rankings reflect the changes resulting from the first three championships of the 2017-18 season.

Dan Tristao consolidates his position at the top of the Singles rankings following his wins in the South West and South East events. But the main interest at the top is Ed Kay's rise to threaten Will Ellison's no. 2 spot. Ed managed wins against Will at both the South East and London events, and picked up the winner's trophy at the latter. Dan Grant takes over from Charlie Brooks at no. 4 after semi-final appearances in all 3 events.

Plate winners Nick Woolfenden (South East) and James Smith (London) benefit with rises to Nos. 34 and 42 respectively. In addition to Nick, other new entries are veteran Tim Lewis, and at the opposite end of the age spectrum, Peter Winzeler & Julian Hanton.

In the Doubles Will Ellison doesn't seem to mind much who he plays with, the result tends to be the same, a convincing win. Will won the South West with Dan Grant and the London with Matt Shaw, and as a result is top of the Doubles rankings by a comfortable margin. Dan benefits from his SW win by rising 2 places to take second spot, while Matt rises to No. 5.

Two players enter the top 20 for the first time. Henry Jefferies rises to No. 15 after reaching the SW semi-final with Julian Aquilina, and the London QF with Peter Hanton. Tim Hebblethwaite at No. 17 reached the London QF with Alan Bowden and also won the "invitation" South East event with Nick Woolfenden, who enters the rankings at No. 21.

Good results in the South West see Anthony Goodwin, Robert Whitehorn, Lewis Keates, Jai Singh, Stuart Kirby, Ashley Hill and Addie Chai all make good progress, whilst Alan Bowden, Julian Hanton, and Ben Kirwan benefit from their results in the London.

The South East is a "draw for partners" event and as such carries reduced rankings points. However, Bart Callaghan, Andy Pringle, Morgane Spillane, Peter Winzeler, Louise Mathias, and Zac Moxon all pick up useful points from this event.

These first 3 events of 2017-18 see a total of 10 new players enter the Singles & Doubles rankings, a healthy prospect for the game of fives.

I plan to publish the next update to the rankings following the West of England Championships to be held Oct 28th/29th.

Dave Hebden

## **The Owers Trophy**

St. Paul's School, Barnes, Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017

After a week in which the number of expected entrants once rose as high as 10, in the end, seven teams took the courts at St Paul's for the annual Owers Trophy event for teams of Old Boys. And, the first shock was that the defending champions – the Old Paulines – weren't one of them.

Then, there was further drama on the morning of the tournament itself, when it emerged that one of the Wykehamists wasn't going to turn up. This left Winchester with the potentially fatal issue of having just five players to play in two three-a-side teams. However, Fives tournaments thrive on such complications and, thanks to some leniency from the organiser and the other competitors, it was agreed that the two teams could share one player – albeit on the condition that the player in question wasn't Will Ellison(!).

While this player-sharing arrangement meant that progress was occasionally slow during the morning's play, there was never any let-up in the keenness of the competition – which was witnessed by no less a luminary than Mr Owers himself.

The seven teams were split into two round-robin groups, and the first match to go court – Old Eastbournians against Old Whitgiftians – was certainly the closest of the day. Eastbourne were the more highly fancied squad, but with one of their players struggling to acclimatise to the St Paul's courts, Whitgift played very well to push them very hard.

Eastbourne held a slender lead going into the third (and final) game of the match, and after several heart-stopping moments, only just managed to scrape together the eight points they needed to win the match. By a single point...

By contrast, elsewhere in the group, the top Wykehamist side was making ominously easy progress, following a comprehensive win over the second Alleyn Old Boys team with an equally comprehensive win over the Whitgiftians.

That meant that their final game – against the Eastbournians, who also overcame the AOBs comfortably – would decide first and second places in the group. However, the outcome of the match was never in doubt, with the OEs seemingly happy to concede first place and save their players from any injury!

In the second group, a similar pattern emerged: the top Alleyn Old Boys team and the Old Bradfieldians were sure to make the semi-finals, but with the match between them would decide first and second places.

It was a close encounter, but the Bradfieldians (last year's runners-up) won through 44-33 to claim a semi-final spot against the Eastbournians, while the AOBs had the envious task of tackling the Wykehamists.

The two matches couldn't have been more different. Indeed, so comprehensive was the Wykehamists' demolition of the AOBs that their whole match took less time than one game in the other semi!

The closeness of the tie between the OEs and OBs was shown by the fact that two of three games went to 11-10, with one game apiece. However, the 11-6 win by Bradfield's top pair in the opening game was enough to ensure their passage into the final.

From the off, though, it was clear that the Wykehamists were in no mood to hang around, and a virtuoso display of attacking Fives from Will Ellison, more than ably backed up Tom Watkinson, gave them a nine-point advantage in double-quick time.

The Bradfieldians were much closer to their rivals in the second game, but with Tom & Ben Chua eventually going on to record an 11-6 win against Jez Sinton & Tim Hebblethwaite, it put the result of the match beyond doubt before the third game was played. So, the title went to the men of Wessex, and gave Will the distinction of being the first player to win this trophy with two different teams, after he first won it with the Old Pilgrims in 2009.

The final piece of the day's action was the Plate, although if anyone understood the format, they weren't letting on! What was certain was that the Old Whitgiftians won it, but that was despite the facts that one of their team had to leave early to get to a football match, and the day's final match was a doubles between the OWs' pair of Tony Hamilton & Cameron Low and a Wykehamist/Oundelian pair of Ben Hale & organiser Alex Smith.

All the Whitgiftians have to do now is to work out how to get the Plate itself from Derby, where it still resides after Derby Moor won it last year...

### **Squads**

**Old Wykehamists I:** Will Ellison, Ben Chua, Tom Watkinson

**Old Wykehamists II:** Ben Hale, Ed Wylde, Ben Chua/Tom Watkinson

**Old Bradfieldians:** Ed Ronan, Jez Sinton, Tim Hebblethwaite

**Old Eastbournians:** Andy Pringle, Marcus Bate, Charles Compton, Joe Tickle

**Alley Old Boys I:** Hamish Buchanan, Ben Kirwan, Billy Rentoul

**Alley Old Boys II:** Nick Geere, Ed Carr, Alex Cochrane

**Old Whitgiftians:** Tony Hamilton, Jon Higgins, Cameron Low

### **RESULTS**

**Group A:** Old Eastbournians lost to Old Wykehamists I 9-33, bt Alley Old Boys II 33-9, bt Old Whitgiftians 29-28; Old Wykehamists bt Alley Old Boys II 33-9, bt Old Whitgiftians 33-8; Alley Old Boys II lost to Old Whitgiftians 27-31

**Group B:** Alley Old Boys I bt Old Wykehamists II 27-19, lost to Old Bradfieldians 33-44; Old Wykehamists II lost to Old Bradfieldians 22-44

**Semi-finals:** Old Wykehamists I bt Alley Old Boys I 33-4; Old Bradfieldians bt Old Eastbournians 32-27

**Final:** Old Wykehamists I bt Old Bradfieldians 33-10

**Plate:** Old Whitgiftians

## **Cambridge Cuppers unites the two codes**

Cambridge, 14th October 2017

Ever inventive — last year it was Mixed Cuppers — the Cambridge University Rugby Fives Club this year organised a Joint Mixed Cuppers with their male and female friends in the CU Eton Fives Club, playing the event across both codes.

*Captain Matt Shaw reports :* Saturday October 14th marked the first ever joint cuppers between CURFC and CUEFC. There were few who'd played both sports before and certainly none who'd played them in this format. All five pairs faced off against each other in first-to-five matches on both sets of courts. It was great to see that often the winner on the Eton fives court was not the winner on the Rugby fives court, which went to show that, although there were transferable skills between games, experience shone through. Particularly surprising, though, were the results, where we ended up with three separate pairs gaining the most points in their respective fields of Eton fives, Rugby fives and overall

The end scores were as follows:

Lottie Simpson & Philip Wilkinson (36 pts)  
Alice Tebboth & Akhil Shah (32 pts)  
Daisy Jones & Laurence Cook (30 pts)  
Joe Schwarzmann & Will Turner (28 pts)  
Jonathan Rosser & Sam Turner (13 pts)

\*\*\*\*

Eton Fives winners – Alice & Akhil  
Rugby Fives winners – Daisy & Laurence  
Overall winners – Lottie and Philip

Thanks from me to Nathan Turnbull, the Eton Fives captain, for helping me run the event. Hopefully we will make this an annual fixture that will strengthen the relationship between the two clubs

## **The Lady's Cup goes Rugby's way once more**

Cambridge University Sports Centre  
Saturday, 21st October 2017

*Bob Dolby reports:* 12 pairs vied this year for the Lady's Cup, presented 80 years ago in memory of National Champion Philip Malt but played for these days as part of the RFA programme of Ladies' Fives events. It was the fourth time that players had gathered at Cambridge for this competition, in which each pair consists of one schoolgirl, a female beginner, recent school leaver or undergraduette (if there is such a word!) partnered by literally anyone. And this time it was Freya Harrison from Rugby School who won with Old Rugbeian Dick Warner (who won in 2014 playing with Rugby schoolgirl Milly Richards), the pair of them beating Emily O'Malley, now coaching Eton Fives at Wrekin College, and her partner, Derby Moor's Lewis Keates, in the final.

The entry was the most diverse yet. Apart from the 8 players from Rugby, there were 2 from Cambridge University, one from London University, two from Oxford, two from Rossall School, two from Alleyn's, one from Bedford Modern, three masters-in-charge, plus Dick, Lewis and Emily. Three had never played Rugby Fives before; one was setting foot on court for only the second time; one master-in-charge has been playing for just a matter of weeks. Most were new to the splendid Cambridge courts where a multitude of parents and other supporters were able to watch in comfort through the glass back walls.

While play progressed on the three Rugby Fives courts the non-players were able to take part in the Ball-in-the-Box Challenge. All competitors had ten chances to score points hitting a ball into a box placed halfway up an Eton Fives court. The three top-scoring pairs were all eventually disqualified because they had either had too much practice (Emily & Lewis), used an unacceptable technique (Dick) or scored no points to back up their partner (the President). The challenge was won by Arte & Daisy from Rugby with Rugby parent Peter and younger brother Hugh – yes, families joined in — coming an honourable second. All four received SLEEP-EAT-PLAY FIVES-REPEAT mugs.

Meanwhile Anastasia & Arun from Rugby won the Lady's Coffee Cups; Katie & Rob the Lady's Bowl; Honor & Lee the Lady's Egg Cups; and Claudia and JJ Lady's Medals.

My warmest thanks to all for their support of this event, which for some involves a lengthy trip and even an overnight stay. It gives me great pleasure to see the enthusiasm of the players and the progress they make in the course of a day's play. I look forward to seeing all again soon.

## **The Yorkshire open titles go to Tristao and Kay – in Manchester**

Giggleswick and Manchester, 14/15<sup>th</sup> October 2017

*Organiser John Hawke writes:* After the usual intimidation by the organiser, an excellent entry was forthcoming for the tournament. Unfortunately, he had obviously not put as much effort into control of the weather, so an extremely wet Friday coupled with a rapid increase in temperature left the courts in poor condition. Cover had been arranged with Manchester to use the Y Club courts, but luckily the Derby Moor contingent, including one R Dolby, had failed to realise that the tournament start time had been set later than in previous years. Their arrival some two hours before the intended start, their hard work with brooms, newspaper and tissue, and the usual late arrival of all other entrants meant that play was possible as soon as competitors were ready.

Although the courts were slippery in places, matches were played with the usual enthusiasm in the first two rounds of the cup, and in the Plate competition. Most players managed to avoid the slippery areas, and those who failed in the main managed to keep their footing. The one exception was Richard Christie, who seemed to spend a fair amount of time lying down, luckily with no reported or visible injuries. As the afternoon wore on, the playing surface deteriorated, so the decision was made to exercise our option on the Y Club courts for the Sunday and play the doubles cup semi-finals and finals there. As soon as this arrangement was made, however, part of it was reversed when it was realised that Neil Roberts would have to travel to Manchester for a single match (he had decided not to enter the Singles) which, form indicated, his partnership was unlikely to win. With the agreement of all involved parties, the one semi-final was played. The form book did not lie.

Plate players are made of stern stuff. Throughout the afternoon, the Plate took place with no moans or mishaps. All losers up to and including the semi-finals were eligible. The eventual winners were Hawke & Roberts, overcoming Geere & Sandie in the final.

After a superb evening in the Hart's Head, where the staff always seem to manage to arrange a huge table to accommodate all the players, the entourage moved on to Manchester for the remains of the doubles and for the singles. Start of play was initially set at 9 o'clock in order to complete the doubles before the singles got underway in earnest. This caused problems with the breakfast time at the Hart's Head, so tripartite negotiations were started between players, organiser and a waitress representing the pub. The result was a change in start time to 9.30 on Sunday morning.

Play eventually started at 10.30 on Sunday, when it was discovered that all but one of the first-round singles matches involved a player tied up in the doubles. A solution had to be found that would prevent play continuing late into the evening so, much to the credit of the 'lesser' players, the singles Plate was started between those likely to lose in the first round of the cup. This occupied one court while the other was used by the remaining doubles semi-final and then the final. Hard-fought doubles games resulted in Tristao & Kay being victorious over Russell & Arnold.

When the singles cup got under way, it was to the great relief of the organiser that none of the first-round matches caused an upset, so the Plate games already played could stand. A highlight of the early rounds was Butler versus Russell. Sam Russell seemed on the way to an easy win in the first game when Dave Butler started to claw his way back, eventually winning that game 12-11. The second game was no less tight, with Dave eventually overcoming Sam 12-10, before being soundly beaten himself in the semi-final by a rampant Ed Kay. Dan Tristao had an easy passage on the other side of the draw, setting up an excellent final. Superb athleticism, tactics and ball control held the spectators in thrall, with Ed eventually wearing down Dan to take a well earned win 11-9, 12-10. Sam Russell has posted videos of both games on YouTube; well worth a watch.

In the Plate, Ed Hawke completed a great weekend, adding the singles trophy to the doubles Plate.

The organiser and players owe a huge debt of gratitude to the Manchester Y Club who allowed us to use the Fives courts for the day, and to Wayne Enstone for arranging the takeover. I hope we did not create too much extra work for reception or the cleaners.

## RESULTS

### Doubles

The doubles was played in the main at Giggleswick on damp and slippery, but not dangerous, courts. Only the Arnold/Russell versus Butler/Buchanan semi-final and the final were held over to the Sunday and played on the Manchester courts.

### Cup

**First Round:** Kay & Tristao beat Geere & Sandie 15-2, 15-3; Roberts & E Hawke beat Marshall & Savage 15-5, 15-1; Arnold & Russell beat Wakelam & Alex Wordley 15-0, 15-0; Buchanan & Butler beat Christie & Keates 15-11, 15-7

**Semi-Finals:** Kay & Tristao beat Hawke & Roberts 15-6, 15-13; Arnold & Russell beat Buchanan & Butler 15-4, 15-4

**Final:** Kay & Tristao beat Arnold & Russell 15-11, 15-9

**Plate:** Roberts & Hawke

### Singles

All the singles matches were played at Manchester.

### Cup

**Preliminary Round:** Geere beat Alex Wordley 15-9; Buchanan beat Savage 15-2; Arnold beat Marshall 15-0; Russell beat Wakelam 15-1; E Hawke beat Julie McIntyre 15-0

**First Round:** Tristao beat Geere 11-0, 11-2; Arnold beat Buchanan 11-0, 11-1; Butler beat Russell 12-11, 12-10; Kay beat Hawke 11-0, 11-1

**Semi-Finals:** Tristao beat Arnold 11-5, 11-2; Kay beat Butler 11-1, 11-0

**Final:** Kay beat Tristao 11-9, 12-10

**Plate:** Hawke

## The RFA beat the Winchester Fives Association

Winchester College

Sunday, 22nd October 2017

**Victory for the RFA team in this annual fixture means the score now stands at 4-3 to the RFA. For the results in previous years, see end of this post.**

*Harry Akerman reports:* Our annual match against an RFA team that seems to be getting stronger every year was not as one-sided as the WFA organiser had feared. This was mainly thanks to some fine play by the Andy Passey/Ed Hawke pair and by Steve Coffey & James Bristow, the latter playing for the first time this season, thus proving that all this practice can be overrated. With the WFA putting all their eggs (and everything else) in the Will Ellison/Dave Butler basket it was a relief to see them win their matches 88-37; however, the 'second' Wessex pair of Mike Crompton & Harry Akerman lost by exactly the same score, effectively meaning that the match would be decided by how Andy/Ed and Steve/James would fare against a mighty RFA team.

Thanks very much to all the players from both teams who travelled from Malvern, Cambridge, Bristol, London, Devon, King's Somborne.... and Winchester for this annual match, which is a real highlight of the Wessex year. As ever The Queen provided some resuscitation before the long drives home.

| <b>WFA</b>         | versus | <b>RFA</b>             | 22.10.2017   |
|--------------------|--------|------------------------|--------------|
| Butler & Ellison   | v.     | Price & Tristao        | 11-8, 11-5   |
|                    | v.     | Buchanan & Kay         | 11-2, 11-9   |
|                    | v.     | Beltrami & Russell     | 11-2, 11-2   |
|                    | v.     | Arnold & Parker        | 11-9, 11-0   |
|                    |        |                        | <b>88-37</b> |
| Akerman & Crompton | v.     | Price & Tristao        | 2-11, 0-11   |
|                    | v.     | Buchanan & Kay         | 5-11, 9-11   |
|                    | v.     | Beltrami & Russell     | 3-11, 8-11   |
|                    | v.     | Arnold & Parker        | 8-11, 2-11   |
|                    |        |                        | <b>37-88</b> |
| Bristow & Coffey   | v.     | Price & Tristao        | 7-11,8-11    |
|                    | v.     | Buchanan & Kay         | 3-11, 11-7   |
|                    | v.     | Beltrami & Russell     | 11-2, 5-11   |
|                    | v.     | Arnold & Parker        | 4-11, 5-11   |
|                    |        |                        | <b>54-75</b> |
| Hawke & Passey     | v.     | Price & Tristao        | 9-11, 5-11   |
|                    | v.     | Buchanan & Kay         | 10-12, 5-11  |
|                    | v.     | Beltrami & Russell     | 5-11, 7-11   |
|                    | v.     | Arnold & Parker        | 4-11, 6-11   |
|                    |        |                        | <b>51-89</b> |
|                    |        | <b>RFA win 230-289</b> |              |

## **Results of the previous six years:**

2011 WFA win 248-217  
2012 WFA win 252-223  
2013 RFA win 237-217  
2014 RFA win 258-230  
2015 WFA win 266-257  
2016 RFA win 249-214

## **Denise Hall-Wilton (1943-2017)**

The RFA is sad to announce the death of Denise Hall-Wilton, following a short illness caused by a brain tumour.

Denise and her playing partner Paula Smith were pioneers of women's fives, especially the Rugby and Winchester varieties, in the 1980s and 1990s. Denise was the organiser of women's competitions for many years and served both the RFA Club as Hon. Secretary and the RFA as Club Manager. She, like her close friend Joan Wood, was an ever-present at the President's Cup each December.

**Denise Hall-Wilton's funeral will be held at the West Berkshire Crematorium at Thatcham on Friday 1st December at 12.45. All are welcome to attend, but family flowers only, please. A memorial service for Denise will be held in the New Year at Bradfield College, probably at half-term – exact date and time to be announced.**

A full tribute to Denise will appear at a later date.

## **Big Guns dominate the West of England Open**

Clifton College, Bristol  
Saturday/Sunday, 28/29 October 2017

STOP PRESS: It was the same four players who figured in the last stages of the Singles and in the final of the Doubles: Will Ellison, Dan Grant, Ed Kay and Dan Tristao. As it was last year. But not entirely the same outcome.

In the Singles Will Ellison won a tough three-game semi-final, for him a successful rematch of the recent London Open final, against Ed Kay, but then Will went on to lose in the final to a perhaps fresher Dan Tristao, playing all the shots in his repertoire. It was Dan's 40th victory in an open event.

Will and Ed teamed up later in the day, however, to resist a ferocious challenge from Bristol University pair Ollie Arnold and Theo Parker in a three-game doubles semi-final, but were then able to beat the two Dans in a two-gamer. It was Will's 67th open victory and Ed's 7th

The Plates saw perhaps the youngest ever Singles victor in Ben Kirwan from Oxford University, who beat Giles Munn in the decider, and on Sunday Nick Geere reached his second Doubles Plate final in a fortnight, this time winning the non-existent silverware. He was partnered by Ben Beltrami against the Derby Moor pair of Richard Christie & Aaron Wheatley.

*Organiser Ollie Arnold reports:* A fantastic entry of 28 singles players and 16 doubles pairs contested the West of England Championships this year, which culminated in top seed Dan Tristao reclaiming the singles trophy he last won in 2015, and the combination of Will Ellison & Ed Kay defending the title they won last year.

The large draw meant that a number of high quality matches took place in the first round, notably Pete Hanton's closely-fought match with Peter Winzeler. Hanton won in two, fending off a second-set comeback and Winzeler's many drop-shots to earn a second round match vs. fourth seed Dan Grant. The younger members of the draw also showed promise, schoolboy Addie Chai playing well in defeat by James Tilston, and Oxford first-year Ben Kirwan showing his powerful shot-making in his loss to Theo Parker.

The second round saw the arrival of the top seeds, with a fresh-looking Dan Tristao made to work hard by Bristol's Tom Watkinson, a new addition to the fives-playing bandana-brigade. There were two three-game matches: Matt Shaw defeated Ollie Arnold in a tight 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> seed encounter and Dave Butler overcame an in-form Sam Russell, having lost the first set 12-11. Sam has now been close to upsetting higher seeds at all three of the recent tournaments, establishing himself as a major threat in the singles draw.

Ed Kay has been in great form of late to win both the London and Yorkshire Opens, and his ruthless streak continued with a 11-0, 11-1 demolition of Butler in the quarter-finals. Dave admitted to not knowing how to play Ed, prompting the invaluable advice from second seed Will Ellison: 'Just hit it into the nick.' Apparently fives is as simple as that. Will demonstrated his ground-breaking approach to the game with a 11-1, 11-2 dispatching of Julian Aquilina. The other two quarter-finals were tighter affairs, Tristao wearing the scars of battle (on his arm and neck) to better Shaw in two games, whilst Grant proved too consistent for Ben Beltrami.

The result of all this was that the top four seeds reached the semi-finals, where they delivered two nail-biting matches; both Tristao and Ellison came from a set down to prevail. Ed Kay showed the form of recent months to take the lead against Will, but ultimately experience told, with the fast Clifton courts suiting Will's hard-hitting. Having watched this semi-final unfold, Dan and Dan timed their entry onto court perfectly to ensure peak viewing figures. Grant raced out of the blocks to take a one-sided first set, his powerful serve preventing Tristao from making an impact. However, DT's short-game and retrieval proved too much for DG, and he won a tough third game to 7.

Whilst the main draw was played out, a high-quality Plate competition got underway. In total there were 28 matches played, a testament to the depth of talent and enthusiasm on show. An exhausting group stage fittingly culminated in an exhausting final, finishing way after 7pm, with youngster Ben Kirwan triumphing 16-14 over Giles Munn in front of an appreciative crowd. This allowed us all to go to enjoy a fantastic meal, after what had been a long day of singles; thanks must go to the West of England Club's Ben Smithson for organising this!

As the doubles commenced on Sunday morning, Will and Dan started the singles final, competing for a title they have shared since 2010. A high quality first set see-sawed to 10-all before Dan clinched it, and the second followed a similar path, with Will's powerful hitting finding its match in Dan's relentless accuracy. Dan came through 11-8 – his 40<sup>th</sup> open win.

The highlight of the doubles first round was Tristao & Grant's epic versus the unparalleled experience of Stewart Watson & Tim Lewis. The Exeter pair's enviable combination of guile and flair almost stole the second set, though the four-time previous champions came through, 12-10.

Aquilina & Hanton played well to defeat the Cambridge pair of Boyd & Shaw in two close sets, and otherwise the top seeds progressed to the semi-finals comfortably. This saw the defending champions Kay & Ellison come up against top Bristol pair Arnold & Parker, who had shown their form in a one-sided quarter-final win over Butler & Gareth Price. On their home courts, Ollie & Theo won the first set with their powerful, hard-hitting game, though could not match their opponents' consistency as the match continued. Ed & Will came through a tough final set, winning to 7 to progress. The other semi-final saw Tristao & Grant comfortably see off Aquilina & Hanton in two games to set up a rematch of the 2016 final.

Meanwhile, the doubles Plate had reached its climax, with representatives from the West of England Club, Derby Moor and Marlborough Town on show. The final saw Nick Geere & Ben Beltrami beat Aaron Wheatley & Richard Christie in three games, having lost a tight first set to 10.

With a hardy group of spectators remaining, the main final began. Immediately, Will's power and Ed's consistent pressure proved difficult for the Dans to manage, even with DG's winners and DT's variety of shots. With few errors from the defending champions, it was hard to see a different result to the final, although the top four ranked doubles players once again delivered in their quality of play. Will's 67<sup>th</sup> and Ed's 7<sup>th</sup> open victory was secured, the 11-4, 11-5 score-line belying a closely-fought match.

Thanks must go to Clifton College for the use of their courts, Kevin Brice for the smooth running of the Plate competitions, and all the entrants for what was a fantastic weekend of fives. As with every year, it was fine preparation for the BUSF Championships later this month, and the National Singles Finals, taking place at the Y Club in December. Judging by the standard of the singles played in Bristol, it promises to be a hard-fought tournament!

## Results

### Singles

**1st round:** T Watkinson bt G Munn 11-6, 11-3; O Arnold bt B Mills 11-1, 11-4; M Shaw bt A Jones 11-7, 11-2; B Beltrami bt T Owen 11-6, 11-3; H Jefferies bt S Bhushan 11-6, 11-0; P Hanton bt P Winzeler 11-2, 11-8; J Tilston bt A Chai 11-2, 11-9; S Russell bt N Geere 11-0, 11-2; D Butler bt C Davey 11-1, 11-1; J Aquilina bt K Brice 11-1, 11-2; T Parker bt B Kirwan 11-4, 11-5; A Boyd bt R Whitehorn 11-5, 11-2

**2nd round:** D Tristao bt Watkinson 11-6, 11-8; Shaw bt Arnold 11-3, 7-11, 11-2; Beltrami bt Jefferies 11-6, 12-11; D Grant bt Hanton 11-1, 11-5; E Kay bt Tilston 11-1, 11-5; Butler bt Russell 11-12, 11-7, 11-5; Aquilina bt Parker 11-4, 11-4; W Ellison bt Boyd 11-0, 11-3

**Quarter-finals:** Tristao bt Shaw 11-7, 11-6; Grant bt Beltrami 11-9, 11-6; Kay bt Butler 11-0, 11-1; Ellison bt Aquilina 11-1, 11-2

**Semi-finals:** Tristao bt Grant 2-11, 11-4, 11-7; Ellison bt Kay 7-11, 11-5, 11-7

**Final:** Tristao bt Ellison 12-10, 11-8

**Plate:** Kirwan bt Munn 16-14

### Doubles

**1st round:** I Ackland & T Watkinson bt A Boyd (for Beltrami) & N Geere 11-2, 11-4; W Ellison & E Kay bt H Bishop & B Davison 11-1, 11-5; D Butler & G Price bt B Kirwan & T Owen 11-3, 11-2; O Arnold & T Parker bt C Davey & A Jones 11-2, 11-1; A Boyd & M Shaw bt K Brice & B Smithson 11-5, 11-3; J Aquilina & P Hanton bt S Bhushan & B Mills 11-7, 11-4; H Jefferies & J Tilston bt R Christie & A Wheatley 11-1, 11-2; D Grant & D Tristao bt T Lewis & S Watson 11-9, 12-10

**Quarter-finals:** Arnold & Parker bt Butler & Price 11-2, 11-4; Ellison & Kay bt Ackland & Watkinson 11-1, 11-0; Aquilina & Hanton bt Boyd & Shaw 12-11, 11-7; Grant & Tristao bt Jefferies & Tilston 11-5, 11-7

**Semi-finals:** Ellison & Kay bt Arnold & Parker 6-11, 11-6, 11-7; Grant & Tristao bt Aquilina & Hanton 11-1, 11-4

**Final:** Ellison & Kay bt Grant & Tristao 11-4, 11-5

**Plate:** Beltrami & Geere bt Christie & Wheatley 10-12, 11-2, 11-2

## **Daniel Tristao tops the new Singles rankings – Ed Kay moves up to 2**

November 2017

Updated rankings reflecting results from the Yorkshire and West of England Championships held in October have now been posted. These rankings will be eagerly awaited by some since they form the basis for seeding the forthcoming National Singles Qualifiers.

Since the end of 2013 Dan Tristao and Will Ellison have occupied the top 2 positions in the Singles Rankings. Dan Grant has knocked on the door but no-one until now has broken into this duumvirate. Deservedly Ed Kay is that man, overtaking Will Ellison at no. 2. Ed won both the London and Yorkshire events, in the course of which picking up wins against both Dan and Will. Dan Tristao won the other 3 trophies held so far in the 2017-18 season and maintains a clear lead at the top.

Other changes in the top ten are minimal. Ed Hawke moves into the top 20 after winning the Plate in Yorkshire (actually, so it seems, in Lancashire). And congratulations to Ben Kirwan for winning a tough Singles Plate in the WofE — he enters the rankings at no. 33. Other new entries are Chris Davey and Ali Jones, who both picked up good wins at Bristol. Other players making good progress are Peter Winzeler, Sid Bhushan and Nick Geere.

My apologies to Lewis Keates, who was omitted from the last rankings in error. This arose due to a mix-up of Lewis Keates with Tim Lewis, a mistake that is not often made.

The Doubles Rankings see Will Ellison maintaining a strong lead at the top, with Dan Grant a rather distant second. Charlie Brooks, who has been absent from the scene so far this season, drops down to no. 5, allowing Dan Tristao and Ed Kay to move up.

Sam Russell enters the top 20 at no. 16 after reaching the Yorkshire final with Ollie Arnold. Elsewhere there are upward moves from Nick Geere, Tom Watkinson, Neil Roberts, Andrew Boyd, Ed Hawke and Inigo Ackland. Bob Sandie re-enters the rankings at no. 58 — I look forward to seeing a photo of his celebratory meal on Facebook — and Richard Christie is another new entry.

Before closing I will take a little time out to summarise the seeding process for the National Singles. The highest ranked top four players will get byes to the Finals and will be seeded 1-4. The rankings published today will be used for seeding in each of the Regional Qualifying events. A “re-ranking” adjustment (too complicated to explain here) is made following the Qualifiers. This rewards success (or otherwise) in these events. The resulting rankings are then used to seed positions 5-16 for the Finals. If required, reserves will be offered places based on their ranking. Good luck!

The official RFA rankings are prepared by Dave Hebden.

## **Winchester retain the Schools Winchester Fives Doubles title**

Winchester College, Sunday 5th November 2017

*David Barnes reports:* Ten pairs, the same number as last year, contested the sixteenth edition of the Schools’ Winchester Doubles. Marlborough and Radley each brought two pairs, and the rest of the entry came from St. Paul’s and Winchester. A last-minute gap in the draw was filled at very short notice by a fourth Winchester pair, who eventually made it to the final of the Plate.

The competition as a whole proceeded much more rapidly than last year’s, with few closely contested matches, an exception being the quarter-final encounter between St Paul’s II and Marlborough I. Here

the rallies were long and exciting to watch, with the Paulines just doing enough to win in two games. The Marlburians had the consolation of deservedly winning the Plate competition.

The first semi-final saw a clear victory for the impressive top seeds, Winchester I, who powered their way to victory over over the second St Paul's pair. The other semi was a rather closer match, but St Paul's I proved too strong in the end for Winchester II.

The first game of the final went the way of the home side, with Kidner – the only survivor from last season's epic final – dominating the play with his hard, low hitting. St Paul's managed to stem the flow for a while in the second game, but the Wykehamists always had the edge and came home to win comfortably.

My particular thanks this year go to Jamie McManus for his help and support; and to Winchester College for the use of its superb courts, still playing as true as ever.

### Scores

**First round:** Winchester IV bt Radley II 15-1, 15-0; Winchester III bt Marlborough II 15-6, 15-8.

**Quarter-finals:** Winchester I bt Winchester IV 15-1, 15-1; St Paul's II bt Marlborough I 15-13, 16-15; Winchester II bt Radley I 15-1, 15-1; St Paul's I bt Winchester III 15-2, 15-2.

**Semi-finals:** Winchester I bt St Paul's II 15-1, 15-0; St Paul's I bt Winchester II 15-4, 15-9.

**Final:** Winchester I (T.Kidner & K.Mackison) bt St Paul's I (M.Cheveley & H.Jackson) 15-2, 15-7.

**Plate:** Marlborough I (H.Powell & A.Rigg)

### Eric Marsh (1940-2017)

The RFA is sad to report the death, at the age of 77, of Eric Marsh. One of a generation of leading Fives players to emerge from St. Dunstan's College in the late 1950s, Eric was Amateur Singles Champion in 1960, 1961, 1962 and 1963. He was three times runner-up: in 1959 to Jonathan Smith; in 1967 to John Watkinson; and in 1968 to fellow Old Dunstonian John Howe.

Eric was a winner of the Cyriax Cup for Amateur Doubles in 1965 with David Gardner, another of the fine players to be produced by the College. He also was the winner of both the Singles and Doubles (with Stuart Tovey) at the first Universities Championships in 1960, representing Bristol University.

Eric was one of only two players ever to hold the Universities title and the Amateur Singles title (as the National Singles was known in his day) in the same season.

Eric was a schoolmaster. As master-in-charge of Fives at Alleyn's School in Dulwich in the 1960s Eric was instrumental in setting David Hebden and his partner George Baker on the road to their many successes.

Eric was last seen by the Fives-playing community at the Memorial Service for Rick Wilson earlier this year. There, as always, Eric proudly wore his RFA tie.

A full tribute will be published here in due course.

## Cambridge maintain their grip on Universities Fives

Marlborough College, Wiltshire

Friday-Sunday, 17-19 November 2017

As largely expected, Ed Kay and Matt Shaw contrived a clean sweep of Singles and Doubles titles at this year's British Universities Rugby Fives Championships. In the Singles final Ed Kay beat last year's Cambridge captain Ben Beltrami, now at London City Law School, as he had done the previous two years. Matt Shaw went one further in winning the Doubles title for the fourth year in a row, this time partnered by Ed Kay. The previous three years Matt's partner had been Ben Beltrami.

The Plate Singles title went to Sam Russell (London Law BPP) for the second time in three years and the Plate Doubles contest was won by Tom Owen & freshman Dan Whitham from Oxford.

**A full report by organiser David Gardner can be found after the full scores below. It was David Gardner's 58th time of organising an event he himself started in 1960.**

### Full Scores:

#### Singles

**Preliminary round:** J Hanton (Sheffield) bt E Aldous (Bristol) 15-5, 15-0; T Owen (Oxford) bt J Sissons (Durham) 15-0, 15-2; C Davey (Birmingham) bt B Rich (Durham) 15-1, 15-1; R Whitehorn (Exeter) bt C Shepherd (Durham) scr.; B Kirwan (Oxford) bt Glover (Bristol) scr.

**1st round:** E Kay (Cambridge) bt C Kengeter (Oxford) 15-3, 15-0; Hanton bt W Hosking (Durham) 15-5, 15-1; B Jourdan (Edinburgh) bt Owen 15-7, 15-10; I Ackland (Bristol) bt G Muscat (Oxford) 15-3, 15-1; O Arnold (Bristol) bt E Pyman (Cambridge) 15-2, 15-2; S Bhushan (Oxford) bt Davey 15-6, 15-6; T Watkinson (Bristol) bt A Naumenko (Oxford) 15-0, 15-4; M Shaw (Cambridge) bt Al. Wordley (Durham) 15-4, 15-0; D Butler (Edinburgh) bt D Law (Durham) 15-0, 15-0; J Smith (Manchester) bt J Savage (Durham) 15-7, 15-2; Whitehorn bt A Taylor (Durham) 15-5, 15-10; T Parker (Bristol) bt G Marshall (Durham) 15-0, 15-7; S Russell (London Law BPP) bt L Cook (Cambridge) 15-1, 15-4; A Boyd (Cambridge) bt D Whitham (Oxford) 15-7, 15-6; Kirwan bt J Sellar (Durham) 15-9, ret.; B Beltrami (London City Law) bt A Petrenco (Oxford) 15-0, 15-2

**2nd round:** Kay bt Hanton 15-3, 15-0; Jourdan bt Ackland 15-11, 15-8; Arnold bt Bhushan 15-1, 15-1; Shaw bt Watkinson 15-11, 15-10; Butler bt Smith 15-7, 15-2; Parker bt Whitehorn 15-6, 15-6; Boyd bt Russell 15-5, 15-6; Beltrami bt Kirwan 15-10, 15-5

**Quarter-finals:** Kay bt Jourdan 15-1, 15-2; Shaw bt Arnold 15-11, 15-10; Butler bt Parker 15-7, 6-15, 15-4; Beltrami bt Boyd 15-4, 15-7

**Semi-finals:** Kay bt Shaw 15-5, 15-1; Beltrami bt Butler 15-7, 15-7

**Final:** E Kay (Cambridge) bt BMJ Beltrami (London City Law) 15-7, 14-16, 15-9

**Plate:** SL Russell (London Law BPP) beat RJ Whitehorn (Exeter) 15-7, 15-11

#### Doubles

**Preliminary round:** Davey & Whitehorn (Bir/Exe) bt Barrows & Chua (LSE) 15-13, 15-1; Ackland & Watkinson (Bristol) bt Cook & Pyman (Cambridge) 15-4, 15-3; Hanton (Shef/Man) & Smith bt Aldous & Sissons (Bri/Dur)

**1st round:** Kay & Shaw (Cambridge) bt Marshall & Law (Durham) 15-6, 15-1; Davey & Whitehorn bt Owen & Whitham (Oxford) 15-10, 15-9; Ackland & Watkinson bt Sellar & Taylor (Durham) 15-6, 15-3; Butler & Jourdan (Edinburgh) bt Kengeter & Naumenko (Oxford) 11-1, 11-2; Beltrami & Russell (London Law) bt Savage & Wordley (Durham) 15-7, 15-2; Boyd & Manger (Cambridge) bt Hosking & Rich (Durham) 15-0, 15-2; Bhushan & Kirwan (Oxford) bt Smith & Hanton 15-5, 15-10; Arnold & Parker (Bristol) bt Muscat & Petrenco (Oxford) 15-0, 15-4

**Quarter-finals:** Kay & Shaw bt Davey & Whitehorn 15-6, 15-6; Ackland & Watkinson bt Butler & Jourdan 15-7, 15-11; Beltrami & Russell bt Boyd & Manger 15-10, 15-6; Arnold & Parker bt Bhushan & Kirwan 15-5, 15-2

**Semi-finals:** Kay & Shaw bt Ackland & Watkinson 15-6, 15-7; Arnold & Parker bt Beltrami & Russell 15-9, 15-8

**Final:** EI Kay & MJR Shaw (Cambridge) beat OR Arnold & TRD Parker (Bristol) 15-2, 15-11

**Plate:** T.Owen & D.Whitham (Oxford) bt J.Hanton & J.Smith (Shef/Man) 15-11, 15-3

*David Gardner writes:* Marlborough College was again the gorgeous setting for this year's championships. Not only are the facilities for Fives extremely good, but it is so close to the High Street that all are able to enjoy the delights of this most attractive of ancient market towns.

For the statisticians here are the facts: the number of entries was again good, with 38 entries for the Singles and 20 pairs for the Doubles, with twelve universities represented. Compared with 2016, this was marginally up on numbers but slightly down on universities. There are still a lot more individuals hibernating around various educational establishments and we must try and get them involved in future events!

A total of 56 matches of 'proper fives' were played (best of three to 15) whilst there were 63 one-game matches in the Plate events — all this in a grand total of 25 hours of play on four courts, over two and a half days, quite a tall order for both organisers and competitors. Perhaps that is why players consumed something like 150 litres of water in that time. If nothing else is a record, then that certainly must be!

At the top end, the quality of play was often quite remarkable, whilst in the middle order there was a very competent standard, which gave rise to many tough and hard fought matches. Whatever the level, all competitors seemed to enjoy their matches, and the Plate singles, with some 29 entrants, attracted some very keen competition!

Selecting particular matches or players is always difficult at such an event, but I think that mention must be made of the Singles final, which was special, to say the least. The score sheet tells the story, but the phrase 'the best final ever' was heard from a number of viewers. Such a statement would probably be disputed by players from every era who would consider theirs as 'the best'. I can only say that, having watched all 58 finals, I might just agree with the comments on the BUSF 2017 final. Congratulations to both players, Ed Kay and Ben Beltrami, who, in their third consecutive clash, gave us a match to remember!

The Doubles was perhaps less eventful but still of a very high standard. The hopeful Bristol pairing of Ollie Arnold & Theo Parker eased comfortably through to the final, as did their opponents, with Matt Shaw partnered this year by Ed Kay. However Ollie & Theo fell at the last hurdle to the superior accuracy and skills of the Cambridge pair, who never allowed the Bristolians to take charge of the match. Special mention must be made here of the super doubles play of Matt, who cruised through to his fourth consecutive title.

Plate honours were spread around the country with Bristol's Inigo Ackland & Tom Watkinson involved in singles semis, and Sam Russell from the London BPP Law school taking the title for a second time from Rob Whitehorn of Exeter. The Doubles semis involved Durham and Cambridge, but it was Oxford, represented by Tom Owen & Dan Whitham, who succeeded in defeating the combo pairing from Sheffield & Manchester, Julian Hanton & James Smith.

The event concluded with the Presentations to the winners by RFA President Bernard Atkinson and an additional bit of ceremonial: presentations made by Ed Kay and the President to the Organiser, to mark his 58 years overseeing the event.

Finally our thanks, yet again, to Marlborough for hosting the event; to staff at the College for their invaluable assistance with arrangements; to David Barnes for masterminding the historical displays; and to Chris Horrocks for his untiring efforts both prior to and during the event.

## **New champions at the Ladies U23 Championships**

St. Paul's School, Barnes

Sunday, 19th November 2017

*Bob Dolby reports:* This was just the second running of this championship, which this year attracted 17 contestants. Sadly, both last year's Singles finalists, champion Tessa Mills and runner-up Shinan Zhang, were unable to play. We missed the quality they would have brought to the event but their absence gave others the chance to make their mark and for new champions to emerge.

We began with three pools of Doubles, giving players from Bristol University, Fettes College, Rugby School, Marlborough College, Bedford Modern School and Alleyn's School the chance to acclimatise to the courts and to the unaccustomed heat. For the two players from Marlborough it was also a chance to get used to play in courts of standard dimensions.

From the pools we progressed to a knock-out, where the match between Katie Sumner & Maddie Kent (BMS) and Rugby's Anastasia de Clermont & Maisie Harte stood out as a contest worthy of a later round. The semi-finals produced, firstly, a match where defending doubles champion Freya Harrison and her new partner Arte Denton dismissed the BMS pair with surprising ease and, secondly, a contest where 2017 Girls' U18 champions Ibbey Lee & Anna Laakkonen from Marlborough found themselves outmanoeuvred by Bristol University player Louise Mathias and outgunned by her scratch partner, Under 13 champion Martha Nugent from Alleyn's.

And it was the same story in the final, where Freya & Arte fought hard but found themselves constantly under pressure from the experienced Louise and the hard-hitting Martha. It was not unexpected to find 20-year-old Louise carrying off the silverware but it is a rare and impressive thing to find someone as young as Martha winning gold at this level.

The losing semi-finalists played for the Plate, with Ibbey & Anna winning.

After lunch we moved to Singles. The organiser decided to run two competitions: a knockout for the 10 strongest and a 'Feast of Fast Fives' for the remainder. In the latter event nine players played each other matches consisting of just nine rallies, with American scoring. The reward for the four most successful was an RFA mug. Jessica Cheadle from Fettes now has a set of two! The jury is out on whether the Triple F will be repeated next year. Perhaps a contest involving 81 rallies for each player is too much — or perhaps too little?

While the 'fast fivers' were trooping in and off court at regular intervals the knock-out Singles took place. Anastasia was too strong for Jessica in one quarter-final; Louise likewise for Freya; and left-handed Anna posed too many problems for Arte. Match of the Day, though, was Ibbey versus Katie, a see-sawing game which Katie won 16-15, both players looking the champions they are in their respective age-groups. Katie's exertions in this game cost her dear, however, in the semi-final against Anastasia, while Anna found Louise simply too consistent in the other half of the draw.

The first game of the final had the numerous spectators enthralled as first Louise, then Anastasia developed small leads. When it mattered, at 9-9, Louise found the extra accuracy needed in Singles and then in the second game she displayed the experience of the multiple champion she is, giving Anastasia little chance to get back in the match. Louise thereby followed Tessa Mills in holding all junior titles — U13, U14, U16, U18 and now U23 — at some point in her playing career.

Katie meanwhile was forced to withdraw from the Plate game for the losing semi-finalists, leaving Anna to take a second trophy back to Marlborough.

We shall see some of these players again soon, I hope, at one or others of the Ladies Nationals in January, the Ladies Winchester Fives in March and the Mixed Doubles in May, not to mention the Girls' Championships in April. The more these young people play, the better they will get.

## Results

### Doubles

**1st round:** Scarlett Gray & India Minto bt Cora Simmons & Lucie Worlledge 15-9

**Quarter-finals:** Arte Denton & Freya Harrison bt Jessica Cheadle & Catriona Sutton 15-0; Maddie Kent & Katie Sumner bt Anastasia de Clermont & Maisie Harte 15-9; Anna Laakkonen & Ibbey Lee bt Arte Denton & Daisy Woodley 15-1; Louise Mathias & Martha Nugent bt Gray & Minto 15-1

**Semi-finals:** Denton & Harrison bt Kent & Sumner 15-5 ; Mathias & Nugent bt Laakkonen & Lee 15-2

**Final:** Mathias & Nugent bt Denton & Harrison 15-3

**Plate:** Laakkonen & Lee bt Kent & Sumner 15-5

### Singles

**1st round:** Denton bt Kent 11-2; Sumner bt Sutton 11-4

**Quarter-finals:** de Clermont bt Cheadle 15-4 ; Sumner bt Lee 16-15; Laakkonen bt Denton 15-2; Mathias bt Harrison 15-3

**Semi-finals:** de Clermont bt Sumner 15-6; Mathias bt Laakkonen 15-2

**Final:** Mathias bt de Clermont 11-9, 11-0

**Plate:** Laakkonen bt Sumner w/o

## Both Colquhoun titles successfully defended

Colquhoun Trophy (South West Schools Regional Tournament)

Sherborne School, Dorset, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2017

For the second year running, history was made in the Colquhoun Trophy: a year after we saw the first player follow a Colts title with the Senior title, and the first boy from Sherborne win a title, in 2017's event, for the first time, both 2016 winners successfully defended their titles.

In truth, both players – Blundell's Addie Chai in the Open event and Benedict Mercer from Sherborne in the Colts – were firm favourites from the start, but they had to work hard for their titles this year. Indeed, in his first round-robin game, Addie was well behind Marlborough's Harry Powell before eventually coming through 15-9.

After that, though, he made ominously good progress to the final, comfortably topping his round-robin group and only conceding two points in the semi-finals.

By contrast, the second pool in the Open category was far closer. The three players were very closely matched, as the scores showed: no one scored less than 13 points in any one game; and, even the third-placed boy, James Maclaurin of Blundell's, scored 27 points in losing his two games, so it seemed just reward for his efforts that he went on to win the Plate.

In the end, Marlborough's Arthur Rigg topped the group, winning his games 16-14 and 15-13. Effectively, it was a repeat performance of last year, when Arthur had also reached the semis after a series of hard-fought games. However, at this stage this year, he went one better than in 2016, winning 15-10 against fellow Marlburian Harry Powell to claim a place in the final.

That game was far closer than the scoreline suggests, with lots of long, hard-fought rallies and some excellent play from both boys. However, by the same token, the scoreline doesn't lie, and Addie was a clear winner, again displaying all the qualities that won his first senior title last year: a very mature and calm game, working his opponent hard with excellent line and length.

Equally comprehensive was the way in which Benedict won his way through to the Colts final. For the second year running, he had a 100% record in the round-robin, only once conceding more than two points in any game. His semi-final against fellow Shirurnian was also over very quickly, meaning he would face Blundellian George Gibbs (2016's runner-up) in the final.

George, like Benedict, had a 100% record in the round-robin, but it was much harder work. However, his 12-10, 11-9 and 11-8 wins showed a great deal of mental resilience, and he secured his place in the final with a solid semi-final win over fellow Blundellian Boris Ames.

The final was a cracking encounter, and in the first game there were never more than a couple of points between the two boys. However, Benedict just sneaked it 11-9 and that seemed to boost his confidence, as he went to take the second game more comfortably, with his power in particular telling towards the end. He fully deserved his second title, and it'll be interesting to see how he fares in the Open category next year.

As ever, the RFA wishes to express its thanks to Sherborne School for allowing us to use their courts, and for the hospitality shown to players, coaches and parents alike.

## **RESULTS**

### **Open**

Round robin results to come

#### **Knockout section**

**Semi-finals:** Chai (Blundell's) bt Conte (Marlborough) 15-2; Rigg (Marlborough) bt Powell (Marlborough) 15-10

**Final:** Chai bt Rigg 11-0, 11-1

**Plate:** Maclaurin (Blundell's)

### **Colts**

Round robin results to come

#### **Knockout section**

**Semi-finals:** Mercer (Sherborne) bt Harvey (Sherborne) 11-0; Gibbs (Blundell's) bt Ames (Blundell's) 11-4

**Final:** Mercer bt Gibbs 11-9, 11-2

**Plate:** Peck (Marlborough)

## **National Singles Draw published for the Finals: Manchester Y Club, December 2/3rd**

Organiser Charlie Brooks has today published the draw for the final rounds of this year's National Singles Championship; and, as ever, it looks set to be an enthralling tournament.

Top seed – and defending champion – is Dan Tristao, but he certainly won't have an easy ride if he's to retain the Jesters Club Cup. Will Ellison, who has featured in the last seven finals in this event, is of course in the running, but if there is a shock even before the first point is played, it's that he isn't second seed this year.

Instead, that position goes to Ed Kay, who also has to be seen as a potential champion after a superb run of tournament results in the first part of this season. In that time, he has beaten both Will and Dan, and secured titles at both the London and Yorkshires Open championships, as well as retaining his BUSF title.

If the seedings go to form, Ed and Will will meet in the semis, and that should be an intriguing clash. The form book says Ed should win, but Will has won the North West Open singles title in three of the last four years, so he clearly likes the Manchester courts...

Arguably, that match could just make Dan the favourite, as he looks to have a slightly easier route to the final. But, with the likes of Charlie Brooks, David Butler and former champion Matt Cavanagh all in the top half of draw, there will be no easy games.

Indeed, one of the most fascinating battles in the first round could well be the match between Ollie Arnold and eighth seed Matt, the current National Veterans singles champion. There may be a few years between their ages, but experience could well be crucial.

It says something for the youthful feel to the event that, in the bottom half of the draw, Will is the oldest player. In fact, all four matches involve at least one student, with Will's first opponent being reigning National Schools Champion (and fellow Wykehamist) Tom Kidner.

There is also some local interest, with Manchester student James Smith earning a place in the draw – although his reward is the rather dubious honour of facing Ed Kay in the first round.

For full details of the draw click on the link below. And, all being well, there will be regular updates on the day's events on the RFA's Twitter feed and Facebook page.

## **National Singles 2017**

Manchester, Saturday/Sunday 2-3 December 2017

**STOP PRESS:** Dan Tristao won the 2017 National Singles title in Manchester this weekend, beating long-time rival Will Ellison in yet another tight final. Dan came through in two games, 15-11, 15-11, to win the Jesters Club Cup for the third time.

*Organiser Charlie Brooks reports:* Dan Tristao won the 2017 National Singles title in Manchester, beating long-time rival Will Ellison in yet another tight final. Dan came through in two games, 15-11, 15-11, to win the Jesters Club Cup for the third time. The final may not have been a 3-game epic that we have become accustomed to, but the skill level and the shot-making that set these two apart were very much evident.

The finals weekend had started in ominous fashion. All trains out of Euston were cancelled, meaning the organiser and a handful of other London finalists were delayed. Having bundled themselves into cars, a rather speedy trip up north ensued, with remarkably few speeding fines along the way (zero).

As a result, the first round rather stuttered into life, but once it got going, there were some corkers. The obligatory (and sole) 3-gamer duly arrived when Matt Shaw took on Theo Parker: Theo took the first, Matt stormed back in the second, but Theo was resurgent in the third and took the honours for his maiden quarter-final appearance. There were also mature performances from Julian Aquilina and Dave Butler to come through their openers strongly.

Unsurprisingly, the closest quarter-final was between Charlie Brooks (4th seed) and Dave Butler (5th), with Charlie coming through rather more comfortably than in his quarter-final last year.

But it was after the quarters that the drama really started. With all semi-finalists eager to get stuck in, we were informed that the courts would be closing and we had to vacate the Y Club within a few minutes. Not to be deterred, the first semi-final kicked off (Ed Kay v Will Ellison), while the organiser confidently explained the importance of the tournament to the would-be turners-out. It didn't work. At 7-5 to Ed, play was abandoned, to be resumed on Sunday morning.

Did the unexpected postponement affect the players? Possibly. Will emerged emboldened in the morning and gave up only 10 further points in the contest, turning the 7-5 deficit into a 15-12, 15-5 triumph. Ed has had a breakthrough season, but Will played his best fives of the year when it mattered most. In the other semi, Dan Tristao beat Charlie in a repeat of last year's match. It was very much closer this time — the first game going to 16-14 — but once again, Dan's quality carried him through.

Dan continued this form into the final and didn't give an inch in the face of Will's usual retrieval and consistency. He managed to find more winners throughout and deservedly took the crown.

The Plate, as ever, provided fantastic fives with very close matches. In the groups, Ollie Arnold and Sam Russell won all their games, but honourable mentions must go to Ben Jourdan and Tom Kidner for some great performances. Returning on Sunday, Ollie regained the title he won in 2015, beating Sam in two.

Finally, the tournament was notable for its youth. The average age was 24 — surely the youngest ever — and the draw contained only five taxpayers! Those feeling a little elderly will be happy to hear, however, that experience did tell and the three oldest players made it to the semi finals.

## RESULTS

**1st round:** D.Tristao (1) bt J.Hanton 15-4, 15-2; O.Arnold bt M.Cavanagh (8) w/o; D.Butler (5) bt B.Jourdan 15-9, 15-2; C.Brooks (4) bt A.George 15-1, 15-0; W.Ellison (3) bt T.Kidner 15-6, 15-0; J.Aquilina (6) bt S.Russell 15-8, 15-4; T.Parker bt M.Shaw (7) 15-11, 4-15, 15-11; E.Kay (2) bt J.Smith 15-2, 15-4

**Quarter-finals:** Tristao bt Arnold 15-11, 15-6; Brooks bt Butler 15-11, 15-8; Ellison bt Aquilina 15-0, 15-7; Kay bt Parker 15-4, 15-0

**Semi-finals:** Tristao bt Brooks 16-14, 15-4; Ellison bt Kay 15-12, 15-5

**Final:** D.C. Tristao bt W.A.Ellison 15-11, 15-11

**Plate:** O.Arnold bt S.Russell 15-11, 15-4

## The President's Cup 2017

St. Paul's School, Sunday 10th December 2017

This was an extraordinary day of Firsts and Seconds, of Youngests and Oldests; of all manner of NUMBERS from 0 to 25 and beyond.

It was the FIRST President's Cup since the death of Denise Hall-Wilton, whose absence was keenly felt by many participating. In her memory David Barnes mounted a photographic tribute to this player, supporter, administrator, photographer and great champion of Fives for Men and Women. The tribute can be seen at the end of this report, along with David's account of the history of the Cup.

It was the FIRST President's Cup to be held at St. Paul's, there no longer being any courts at Merchant Taylors' School, the long-standing home of this annual event.

Though not the ONLY time that weather conditions had delayed the arrival of players, it was the FIRST time that the Organiser, Gareth Price, had spent FOUR hours immobile on the snow-ridden M-TWENTY-FIVE in a car full of provisions. It was the FIRST time Mark Kiteley had spend ONE AND A HALF hours getting out of Bedford and the FIRST time that Chris Davey had ever abandoned his car by the M-ONE and taken a train to central London with his passengers, the Sorensen brothers. All FIVE players were cheered when they arrived in early afternoon and never have SO MANY starving volunteers helped Gareth to unload the copious catering.

Meanwhile the designated reserve Chris Blakeley had gamely volunteered himself to play FIRST in ONE pair, then in ANOTHER, and Julian Aquilina likewise, in order to get the bulk of the FIRST

round underway. And Peter King kindly came along to ensure we were not booted out at FIVE o'clock.

With SIX courts available there was not a SECOND to lose and in no time at all matches were being played in the LOVE Mug as well as in the Cup. By FIVE o'clock even the T-Pot was underway and there were high hopes of a finish by SEVEN pm or so.

Among the enthralled spectators, marvelling at the standard of play, was Peter Mellor, who had never been to St. Paul's nor to the President's Cup — or put another way, it was the FIRST time he had been there. For those who didn't know who Peter was, it is he and he ALONE who won the National Schools Singles THREE times in a row. The likes of Ed Kay and Dan Tristao bowed down.

Among the players were James Birch and Jolyon Griffiths, both of who have come back to the game after a long absence, in Jolyon's case an absence of TWENTY-FIVE years. Only a HANDFUL of those present could remember when Jolyon was the organiser of this competition, SEVERAL were not even born.

As the various competitions ran their course it became obvious that some very significant NUMBERS were coming into play. SIXTY-THREE year old Mark Kiteley was heading for his UMPTEENTH final in the Mate's Plate. He and Dave Butler lost it, though, to Jonny Baker & Chris Davey in THREE l-o-n-g games. By which time it was nearly EIGHT THIRTY.

In the T-Pot Will Ellison ran nearly TEN THOUSAND metres covering for his partner, Bernard Atkinson, who at SEVENTY-SEVEN must surely be the oldest winner of the T-Pot, even if for the SECOND time he had to be content with the Kettle.

In the LOVE Mug Ed Hawke added to his growing collection of Plateries this season — he did the DOUBLE at Giggleswick — partnering Howard Wiseman, playing for (perhaps) the FIRST time in this tournament, chaperoning his son Gwydion. Even the much decorated UNDER TWENTY-FIVE champion Ed Kay could not stem the success of Ed & Howard

But the most striking numbers came into play in the main final where Dick Warner claimed (loudly) to be the oldest finalist yet at SIXTY-SIX. He was partnered by Hamish Buchanan, who has been in literally MILLIONS of finals (well, almost). Try as they might, however, they could not match the power and consistency of FOURTEEN year old Gwydion (the youngest winner since SIXTEEN year old Jay Gravatt in TWENTY-O-EIGHT) and his partner James Tilston, who has entered this Cup but TWICE and won BOTH times. It must be the FIRST time that a father and son have enjoyed a DOUBLE success in this event; perhaps father and son have NEVER entered before (#ONLYHebdenKnows).

And if it was not a SURFEIT of FIRSTS it was the FIRST time the RFA had been invited to send someone to be interviewed on BBC Radio Wales about the 'FIVES Ball Situation', the Sunday Times having chosen that day to run a short story on the death of Nigel Gordon, maker of the G-SIX. The Past President duly turned up at Broadcasting House at SEVEN FIFTY-FIVE the next day to do his bit. Perhaps now DOZENS of potential ball-makers will come out of the woodwork.

## Results of finals

**The President's Cup:** James Tilston & Gwydion Wiseman bt Hamish Buchanan & Dick Warner 15-10, 15-11

**The Love Mug:** Ed Hawke & Howard Wiseman bt Jolyon Griffiths & Ed Kay 15-7, 15-9

**The T-Pot:** Bernard Atkinson & Will Ellison bt Ben Hale & Tim Hebblethwaite 15-9, 15-4

**The Mate's Plate:** Jonny Baker & Chris Davey bt Dave Butler & Mark Kiteley 15-5, 11-15, 15-8

**Also played and made this the great day it was:** James Birch & Laurence Cook; Morgan Spillane & Rocco Sulkin; Jon Peterson & Rob Whitehorn; Dan Tristao & Ben Yass; Julian Aquilina & Jamie Sorensen; Guy Matthews & Sam Russell; Charles Compton & Nick Geere; Gareth Price & Dan Sorensen and Chris Blakeley.

## **Charles' Walk: Charles Compton walks round the entire coastline of Britain, January 2nd-November 30th (est.)**

People talk about new resolutions and new plans to usher in a new year, but very few will be following in the footsteps of former Cambridge Rugby Fives captain Charles Compton in 2018. On January 2nd, he will start a walk at London's Tower Bridge that will take him around the whole coastline of the UK – and take him most of the year to complete.

The route covers over 6000 miles – more than the distance from London to Tokyo – and Charles (pictured above, right, when winning the 2017 Executioners doubles tournament) is undertaking the walk for a few reasons, but one of the most important is to raise money for the Mental Health Foundation.

It's an organisation very close to Charles' heart, because his own life has been significantly affected by mental health issues over the last four years. We would try and describe the impact, but he details everything on his own website in language more eloquent, evocative and moving than we could ever manage, and we urge you to read what he has to say. (You can visit his website by clicking on the link at the bottom of this article)

Charles remains an active Fives player, both with the Executioners and the Old Eastbournians, and the RFA is fully behind his efforts to highlight what can all too often be a hidden issue in today's society; and, we urge all our members to support him in any way they can.

In the first instance, Charles is looking for donations – and he is already more than 10% of the way towards his target of £10,000 – but he would also welcome offers of a meal, bed, or a camping pitch along any of the route. And, we imagine, he would be delighted if anyone wanted to join him at any step of the way.

During the course of the walk, Charles will be keeping everyone updated through a blog on his website and via Instagram. Sadly, we think there are precious few Fives courts on the coast (those in Edinburgh are perhaps the closest), but we hope that any RFA members who live on or near the planned route will be able to help him on this most audacious and worthy of challenges.

For more details, click on these links:

[The Charles' Walk website](#)

[Visit this page to donate](#)

[Charles' Instagram feed](#)

[Charles' page on Facebook](#)

## **David Hebblethwaite (1933-2017)**

December 2017

The RFA is sad to report the death, at the age of 84, of Past President David Hebblethwaite. David had been ill with heart disease for many years, which did not stop him from playing until late in life, when cancer curtailed his involvement in the game.

David learnt to play Fives at Bedford Modern School and was a loyal and committed member of the Old Bedford Modernians; in addition he was a member of the RFA Club and of the RFA for virtually all of his adult life. He was President of the Rugby Fives Association from 1981 to 1983 and was a longstanding Jester.

A left-hander with a delicate touch David enjoyed his greatest success as a doubles player. In 1958 he reached the final of the National Doubles, playing with Derek Bristowe: they lost to the 4-time champions Silk & Pretlove. Then came successes in the Scottish Open, which David won twice, in 1966 and 1967, with Bob Dolby, followed by victory in the West of England Doubles in 1971 with David Barnes.

In subsequent years David won the Veterans Doubles six times between 1979 and 1985, each time with Geoff Prigmore; together they then won the Vintage Doubles four years running from 1989 to 1992. Aged over 70 David was twice runner-up in the Masters Doubles as well.

David was also a winner of the RFA President's Cup on four occasions.

Partners and opponents will well recall David as an ample presence on a Fives court but also as a considerable personality off it, full of stories (and jokes), with an unforgettable laugh. He will be remembered as one of the great characters of the Fives world.

(A full tribute will be posted in due course)

## **New Year Rankings**

### **Rankings following the National Singles and University Championships**

January 2018

Updated rankings reflecting results from the University Championships (November) and National Singles Qualifying and Finals (December) have now been posted. National champion Dan Tristao ends the 2017 calendar year with a clear lead at the top of the Singles Rankings. Ed Kay, despite losing to Will Ellison in the semi-finals of the Nationals, retains number 2 spot but the gap to Will at no. 3 is narrowed.

Elsewhere, semi-finalist Charlie Brooks moves up to number 4, overtaking Dan Grant who was unable to take part in the Singles. Theo Parker moves into the top 10 after good results in the Bristol Qualifier and a QF appearance in the finals. Another Manchester finalist Ben Jourdan moves into the top 20 at no. 16.

But the highest mover is National Schools champion Tom Kidner from Winchester who enters the rankings for the first time at no. 23. Tom qualified in 5th place in a very tough London Qualifier and then acquitted himself well in the Finals. Certainly a name to watch out for in the future.

John Minta, James Smith, Julian Hanton and Dave Fox from the Manchester Qualifier all make progress. Charlie Barnett, Archie McCreath and Jonathan Lee all picked up points in the Scottish Qualifier and are new entries in the rankings. The final new entry is Joe Savage from Durham, who picked up ranking points with a good win in the University Plate event.

The Doubles Rankings show less change at the top since the only new results are from the Universities Doubles where the points awarded are less than those for an Open championship. Rob Whitehorn, Inigo Ackland, Ben Jourdan, Ben Kirwan and Jeremy Manger all make strong upward moves, while Tom Owen and Dan Whitham are new entries.

The next rankings update will be in early February following the North West and U25 Championships.

The official RFA rankings are prepared by Dave Hebden.

## **West of England Schools 2018**

Sherborne School, Dorset

6-7 January 2018

STOP PRESS: There were victories for players from Winchester College and Alleyn's School in the U18s and the U16s respectively. Players from 9 schools took part.

*The Organisers report:* The tournament was held at the Sherborne courts over a pleasantly dry and sometimes sunny weekend and the Fives drew plenty of interest from many and varied supporters, including at one point a group from the Junior School. Though the overall entry was down on 2017, particularly at Under 18 level, the fast courts produced some excellent action. We are once again most grateful to Sherborne School and particularly to Nick Scorer for the use of the courts and for Nick's unfailing cooperation and enthusiasm.

In the Senior event, whilst Winchester came away with the spoils in both Singles and Doubles, St. Paul's and Blundell's were rewarded with runners-up medals and the Doubles Plate, and Marlborough with the Singles Plate.

In the main Singles three of the top four seeds came through to the semi-finals, with Kidner (Winchester), the number one seed, dropping only six points en route. The other semi-final player was fifth seed Jackson (St Paul's) who overcame fourth seed Cochrane (Alleyn's) in a tight match, 11-6, 11-6 with some long rallies. The semi-finals saw a further upset as third seed Chai (Blundell's) showed steadiness and speed around the court to overcome number two seed Cheveley (St Paul's), thus setting up a Kidner vs. Chai final. Remarkably no matches had run to a third game at this point. The final started badly for Kidner, who could not find his rhythm and lost the first game 4-11 but composed himself to deliver some fine shots to take the second and third games, in spite of Chai fighting back at every opportunity. In the Plate, Rigg of Marlborough played consistently to overcome Skoczylas of St Paul's.

The U18 Doubles was a little depleted by Alleyn's being unable to take part and Winchester and Blundell's fielding just a single pair each, resulting in eight pairs in the contest. However, the Fives was no less hard fought and Winchester showed their class by losing only four points in the four games en route to the final. St Paul's I experienced more resistance on their road to the final stage, including an entertaining and hard hitting encounter with Blundell's. In the final it was a run-away first game of 11-1 for Winchester to go ahead but St Paul's ran them close in the second 12-10. In the Plate, St Pauls II achieved three clear victories to take the winners' medals.

In the Colts (U16) events Alleyn's did the double but not without having to overcome some stiff competition, particularly from the Winchester contingent. In the Singles the four top seeds of Winchester (Percival), Sherborne (Mercer), St. Paul's (Odgers) and Alleyn's (Wiseman) all progressed to the semi-finals, with only Percival suffering a scare with an exciting 3-gamer in the quarter-finals against Ali from Derby Moor. He was also pressed hard by Mercer in the semis and perhaps these exertions told somewhat in the final against Wiseman. This was a superb contest, with

the first game going to 9-9 before Wiseman edged it with some powerful hitting. In the second game with Percival tiring, Wiseman pushed on to win in the end comfortably, a well deserved champion, and the first Alleyn's winner of this event for 10 years. Ames from Blundell's, who had only narrowly lost his first match in the main competition, went on to win the Plate by beating Redfern from Winchester in the final.

The Colts Doubles produced some more excellent fives. The semi-finals took a familiar look with pairs from Winchester, Sherborne, St. Paul's, and Alleyn's making the semi-finals, i.e. the same four schools as in the Singles semis. This time it was Sherborne who had the tough earlier matches with a 16-15 win over St. Paul's II, and then a good quarter-final win against Blundell's I. There was another tense first round match, with Tonbridge I also achieving a 16-15 victory, this time over Winchester II. Sherborne pressed Winchester I hard in their semi-final but the top seeds showed their class to come through 11-3, 11-9. As expected, the final was a close encounter with Winchester (Percival & Fraser) taking the early lead. But Alleyn's (Wiseman & Scott) started to take control with Wiseman dominating and Scott playing an important supporting role. After many exciting rallies the Alleyn's pair won through by 11-9, 11-7, to put their school name on the trophy for the first time since 1978!

The Doubles Plate was played as a round-robin amongst the five pairs. The event was remarkable for the number of close matches, with all pairs acquitting themselves well. Finally St. Paul's II (Jobson & Monro-Davies) won through, edging out Winchester II (Hawkey & Redfern) into 2<sup>nd</sup> place.

Winchester were therefore unlucky in coming a close second in all four Colts events, but they took their defeats with the good sportsmanship that was evident in all the matches played over the weekend.

*Lionel Lawson, Peter de Winton & Dave Hebden*

## Scores

### U18 Singles

**1st round:** Choo-Choy (Tonbridge) bt Hirth (Alleyn's) 15-8; Powell (Marlborough) bt Skoczylas (St. Paul's) 15-8; Hanley (Tonbridge) bt Ames (Blundell's) 15-7; Parsapour (St. Paul's) bt Beswick (Marlborough) 15-3; Davies (St. Paul's) bt Rigg (Marlborough) 15-4; Liu (St. Paul's) bt Sholapurkar (Alleyn's) 15-1

**2nd round:** Kidner (Winchester) bt Choo-Choy 15-0; Sumner (Bedford Modern) bt Powell 15-8; Jackson (St. Paul's) bt Hanley 15-10; Cochrane (Alleyn's) bt Parsapour 15-1; Chai (Blundell's) bt Buxton (Sherborne) 15-3; Mackison (Winchester) bt Davies 15-12; McLaurin (Blundell's) bt Liu 15-8; Cheveley (St. Paul's) w/o Gill (Alleyn's)

**Quarter-finals:** Kidner bt Sumner 11-3, 11-0; Jackson bt Cochrane 11-6, 11-6; Chai bt Mackison 11-4, 11-2; Cheveley bt McLaurin 11-5, 11-0

**Semi-finals:** Kidner bt Jackson 11-2, 11-3; Chai bt Cheveley 11-2, 11-8

**Final:** Kidner bt Chai 4-11, 11-6, 11-7

**Plate:** Rigg bt Skoczylas 11-2

### U18 Doubles

**Quarter-finals:** Winchester I bt St. Paul's III 11-0, 11-2; Marlborough I bt St. Paul's II 11-5, 11-4; Blundell's bt Tonbridge 11-0, 11-6; St. Paul's I bt Marlborough II 11-0, 11-7

**Semi-finals:** Winchester I bt Marlborough I 11-2, 11-2; St. Paul's I bt Blundell's 11-0, 11-2

**Final:** Winchester I (Kidner & Mackison) bt St. Paul's I (Cheveley & Jackson) 11-1, 12-10

**Plate:** 1st St. Paul's II; 2nd Marlborough II

## Colts (U16) Singles

**Preliminary round:** AR (Derby Moor) bt Nolan (Tonbridge) 15-10; Ryder (Blundell's) bt Parker (Tonbridge) 15-11; Lewis (Tonbridge) bt Banisha (St. Paul's) 7-3 ret.

**1st round:** Scott (Alleyn's) bt Grubb (Blundell's) 15-2; Ali (Derby Moor) bt Knight (Tonbridge) 15-4; Pymont (St. Paul's) bt Peck (Marlborough) 15-7; Hawkey (Winchester) bt Rackham (Blundell's) 15-2; Fraser (Winchester) bt AR 15-4; Harrison (St. Paul's) bt Ryder 15-5; Harvey (Sherborne) bt Bucknell (Blundell's) 15-4; Mahmood (Derby Moor) bt Pring (Sherborne) 15-11; Jobson (St. Paul's) bt Redfern (Winchester) 15-10

**2nd round:** Percival (Winchester) bt Scott 15-1; Ali bt Pymont 15-8; Monro-Davies (St. Paul's) bt Hawkey 15-2; Mercer (Sherborne) bt Fraser 15-2; Odgers (St. Paul's) bt Harrison 15-7; Harvey bt Ames (Blundell's) 15-13; Lewis bt Mahmood 15-5; Wiseman (Alleyn's) bt Jobson 15-2

**Quarter-finals:** Percival bt Ali 10-12, 11-6, 11-6; Mercer bt Monro-Davies 11-2, 11-2; Odgers bt Harvey 11-2, 11-4; Wiseman bt Lewis 11-0, 11-4

**Semi-finals:** Percival bt Mercer 11-5, 11-9; Wiseman bt Odgers 11-1, 11-1

**Final:** Wiseman bt Percival 11-9, 11-2

**Plate:** Ames bt Redfern 11-3

## Colts (U16) Doubles

**1st round:** Derby Moor I bt Tonbridge II 15-8; Sherborne bt St. Paul's II 16-15; Blundell's I bt Derby Moor II 15-3; Tonbridge I bt Winchester II 16-15; St. Paul's III bt Blundell's II 15-3

**Quarter-finals:** Winchester I bt Derby Moor I 11-5, 11-7; Sherborne bt Blundell's I 11-2, 11-9; St. Paul's I bt Tonbridge I 11-5, 11-4; Alleyn's bt St. Paul's III 11-7, 12-10

**Semi-finals:** Winchester I bt Sherborne 11-3, 11-9; Alleyn's bt St. Paul's I 11-5, 11-5

**Final:** Alleyn's (Scott & Wiseman) bt Winchester I (Fraser & Percival) 11-9, 11-7

**Plate:** 1st St. Paul's II (Jobson & Monro-Davies) ; 2nd Winchester II (Hawkey & Redfern)

## The North West Open 2018

Manchester Y Club,

Saturday/Sunday 13/14 January 2018

**STOP PRESS:** In a repeat of the recent National Singles final, played on the same courts, Dan Tristao beat Will Ellison once more but this time not before Will was receiving at 11-5, 10-10. In the Plate, Cambridge student Andrew Boyd claimed the prize, beating the defending Plate-holder Henry Jefferies. In the Doubles National Champions Brooks & Ellison, undefeated together to date, were too strong for defending champions Kay & Shaw, while — much to organiser John Beswick's delight — locals Ged Darlington & Shaun Shaw took the Fred Beswick Plate in a close contest with Keith Kennerley & Brian Kirk.

*Organiser John Beswick reports:* The standard of fives was simply fantastic.

The singles final between Dan T & Will was totally absorbing. Both players have everything: power, shots, movement, speed, fitness — and they play the game with total sportsmanship,

Dan won in three but Will and partner Charlie Brooks won the doubles against last year's winners Ed Kay & Matt Shaw in another fascinating game.

Andrew Boyd won the singles Plate. He's one to watch for the future, as long as he gives up the kebabs!

... and Ged Darlington & Shaun Shaw from the YM won the doubles Plate, which is great news for the Y-Club.

There is only one thing better than the fives — the atmosphere off-court. I cannot remember a group get on so well ever; moreover they have introduced to fives the “Pre Match Chat”, i.e. you ask a pair to go on court, then they take 20 minutes putting their gloves on and having general banter!

I would say Dan Grant is the top of the PMC rankings, followed closely by Dave Butler.

It would be remiss of me to not mention Lewis & Watson’s 65-year-tour\*. I’m not too sure if that is the length of time they have been playing (!) but it should be noted they won their first match.

\* Probably longer than that! No, seriously: it’s a round-the-circuit double-birthday tour of all the events in the 2017-18 season, showcasing their skills, commitment, friendship, love of the game and expertise in banter [Ed.]

## Scores

### Singles

**1st round:** D Tristao bt D Fox 11-8, 11-3; M Shaw bt O Arnold 11-4, 11-6; B Beltrami bt P Hanton 12-11, 11-3; D Grant bt A Boyd 2-11, 11-5, 11-0; W Ellison bt J Smith 11-0, 11-1; D Butler bt H Jefferies 11-4, 11-5; J Aquilina bt B Jourdan 11-6, 11-1; E Kay bt K Kennerley 11-4, 11-2

**Quarter-finals:** Tristao bt Shaw 11-6, 11-4; Beltrami bt Grant 11-7, 11-5; Ellison bt Butler 11-0, 11-0; Kay bt Aquilina 11-4, 12-10

**Semi-finals:** Tristao bt Beltrami 11-5, 11-7; Ellison bt Kay 11-5, 11-4

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

**Plate:** Boyd bt Jefferies 15-8

### Doubles

**1st round:** Lewis & Watson bt Annett & Fairbank 11-2, 11-4; Arnold & Beltrami bt Kennerley & Kirk 11-3, 11-4; Boyd & Jourdan bt Hanton & Jefferies 9-11, 11-3, 11-6; Lidiard & McGuire bt Darlington & Shaw 11-9, 11-2

**Quarter-finals:** Brooks & Ellison bt Lewis & Watson 11-0, 11-2; Arnold & Beltrami bt Aquilina & Grant 11-4, 11-5; Butler & Tristao bt Boyd & Jourdan 11-3, 11-3; Kay & Shaw bt Lidiard & McGuire 11-0, 11-1

**Semi-finals** Brooks & Ellison bt Arnold & Beltrami 9-11, 11-5. 11-3; Kay & Shaw bt Butler & Tristao 10-12, 11-5, 11-3

**Final:** Brooks & Ellison bt Kay & Shaw 11-12, 11-0, 11-7

**Plate:** Darlington & Shaw bt Kennerley & Kirk 15-13

## LADIES’ NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

St. Paul’s School, Barnes,  
Sunday, 14th January 2018

**STOP PRESS: A change of names on both trophies this year as Kathleen Briedenhann regained the Singles title she had previously won three times, while Alexandra Steel & Maddy Raynor finally secured the Doubles title in their 4th consecutive final.**

*Organiser Alexandra Steel reports:* A much smaller entry of 9 players this year led the way for an intense day of fives, showcasing the truly great standard of the ladies at the top of their game. Many thanks go to Emily O’Malley and to Aiysha Alli and her father for coming along at such short notice to partner Louise Mathias.

The morning began with Singles, due to an odd number of players and wanting all to be on court. We played a round robin format within two pools. We also managed a Singles Plate. The matches in the two pools were very interesting to watch, especially as two players had definitely upped their game this year and achieved some fantastic wins during the round robin. Most notably Maddy Raynor beat defending champion Tessa Mills 11-5 while U23 champion Louise Mathias beat Kathleen Briedenhann 11-5: absolutely superb games to watch. The semi-finals saw Maddy against Kathleen, a gripping match of strength and stamina with an end result of 11-8 to Kathleen. In the other semi-final Louise was pitted against Tessa, another truly gripping match, with Louise victorious 11-9. The Singles final saw Kathleen play a newcomer in her first National Final: Louise Mathias. It was best of 3 to 15 and a fantastic match to watch, with both ladies showcasing shots with great strength and interesting angles. Despite a tremendous effort from Louise, Kathleen displayed her experience and skills to win the match 15-3, 15-5. An impressive show from both ladies. Many congratulations to Kathleen on her win.

The Singles Plate was again very interesting to watch and saw Cassi Henderson beat Emily O'Malley 11-1, while Lottie Simpson beat Aiysha Alli 11-5. The Plate Final was therefore between friends and partners, Cassi and Lottie from Cambridge University. As it was a tough match to play after all the singles that morning, the final was played as best of 3 to 11. Both ladies played so well, with Cassi eventually beating Lottie 11-3, 11-1.

The Doubles was also played as a round robin with just 4 pairs. After a hard day's fives the Doubles final was once again going to be a battle of strength, stamina and sheer determination, as it was between stalwart finalists Steel & Raynor and Mills & Briedenhann! This year there was a new feeling in the air for Steel & Raynor: they have been training regularly with their club (Exeter Rugby Fives Club – at Blundell's) and they seemed to have the edge on Mills & Briedenhann. The first game was more or less point for point and then Steel & Raynor started to edge ahead, each playing long corner shots, utilising their skills in hitting the ball close to the wall. Mills & Briedenhann played their beautiful low shots and, with Tessa's strong right arm, gave great chase in the first game, but it ended with a score in favour of Steel & Raynor 15-13. After a few pieces of dried mango and Haribo Steel & Raynor were ready for a second battle against Mills & Briedenhann. Whether it was the sheer determination and will from Steel & Raynor or their new and improved strength and skills on court, the game was already in their favour after just a few points. Mills & Briedenhann began to tire and hit the ball under the bar, so Steel & Raynor took advantage of this, winning the Ladies' National Doubles with a second game score of 15-7. They were absolutely elated at finally winning the title after so many years. Many congratulations go to them.

## **SINGLES**

### **Group A:**

T.Mills bt C.Henderson 11-1, bt A.Alli11-2 and lost against M.Raynor 5-11.  
M.Raynor bt T.Mills 11-5, bt C.Henderson 11-3 and bt A.Alli 11-6.  
C.Henderson bt A.Alli 11-6 but was beaten by T.Mills 11-1 and M.Raynor 11-3  
A. Alli was beaten by T.Mill to 2, M.Raynor to 6 and C.Henderson to 6.

### **Group B:**

K.Briedenhann bt L.Simpson 11-0, E.O'Malley 11-0 and was beaten by L.Mathias 5-11.  
L.Mathias bt K.Briedenhann 11-5, L.Simpson 11-0 and E.O'Malley 11-0  
L.Simpson bt E. O'Malley 11-1 and was beaten by L.Mathias 11-0 and K.Briedenhann 11-0.  
E. O'Malley was beaten by L.Mathias 11-0, K.Briedenhann 11-0 and L.Simpson 11-1.

**Semi-finals:** Briedenhann bt Raynor 11-8; Mathias bt Mills 11-9

**Final:** Briedenhann bt Mathias 15-3, 15-5

**Plate:** Henderson bt Simpson 11-3,11-1

## DOUBLES

### Round Robin

Briedenhann & Mills bt Simpson & Henderson 11-4, bt Mathias & Alli 11-4.  
Steel & Raynor bt Simpson & Henderson 11-2 , bt Mathias & Alli 11-6

**Semi-finals:** not played due to players leaving, went straight to the Final.

**Final:** Steel & Raynor bt Briedenhann & Mills 15-13, 15-7

## Bob Dorey (1939-2018)

January 2018

The RFA is sad to report the death this month of Alleyn Old Boy fives player Bob Dorey. In 1957 he won the Public Schools Singles at Whitgift School.

A left-hander of notable elegance, Bob Dorey went on to be a successful senior player, reaching the final of the National Doubles with his school partner Pat Badmin in 1960. There they lost to Old Dunstonians Stan Holt and David Gardner in the final, having knocked out the 4-time defending champions Pretlove and Silk in the second round. An occasional player thereafter, Bob reached the semi-final in 1967 playing with Cambridge undergraduate Bob Dolby: they lost to previous champions John Pretlove and Bob Smith — all four players were AOBs.

A very talented sportsman, whose pursuit of fives, football and cricket in particular was curtailed at an early stage by heart disease, Bob worked for the London Underground. Like many people of talent and commitment he found many activities in retirement to keep him busy. A full tribute will be published in due course.

(A full tribute will be published in due course)

## Jesters Fives Tour to Scotland 2018

Edinburgh, 18-20 January 2018

**The 28th Jesters Fives Tour to Edinburgh proved to be the biggest ever, with 38 players in total, including 8 undergraduates, 2 postgraduates and 2 ladies, themselves students.**

**This year the tour was run by Ben Hale and Dave Butler, having taken over from Frank Akerman and his son Harry, who had masterminded this event for all of its previous existence.**

*The organisers report:* The tour started on Friday with the traditional Cumberland Lunch, where new tourist Louise Mathias controversially had salad alongside her mac and cheese unlike the seasoned campaigners, who went straight for the chips.

The Fives commenced with a Jesters vs. Durham University fixture at Fettes – the Jesters won 158 to 153 – and a Jesters vs. the Edinburgh Academy Juniors and then Colts. Naturally the only winner here was the game of Fives itself. Visits were also made to Merchiston and Loretto to take on their Colts sides – one further victory each for the Jesters and the game of Fives.

The highlight of Friday's play is always the Select VI tournament held in the evening at Fettes. The evening was its customary great success: all six schoolboys played wonderfully well, especially the eventual winner, Doug from Merchiston, and the runner-up, Evan from Fettes. Commiserations to Grant, who found himself partnering Ben Hale – some sabotage involved here but we won't go into details.

Friday concluded with the wonderful curry reception at Fettes, where it was lovely to see such a gathering of Fives players, staff and parents. The brand new Akerman Cup was awarded to Doug (see photo below), along with a Jesters shirt that they had been kind enough to donate as a prize. A visit was then made to The Shack. Unfortunately no record was kept of individual matches played on the dance floor but we understand that there was Doubles as well as Singles – with coaching provided to the locals. We plan to return next year.

Saturday morning saw the entire tour party on court except for Ed Hawke and Alex Smith – they had of course planned a Singles but alas, no court space. A Jesters VIII took on a RFA VIII across the Fettes and Edinburgh Academy courts. We don't have the results of the matches between the first and second pairs but, excluding those, the Jesters have a 207 to 206 lead. We can only presume the RFA edged those matches by a point, thus ensuring a tie.

Things were not so even at Merchiston, where both Southampton University and the Edinburgh Schools handed out comprehensive defeats to the Winchester IV, with the Scots then taking their game against Southampton 54-50. Up at Loretto the serious stuff was underway and a Jesters VI prevailed 146-138 over the Caledonian Club.

Lunch was taken at The Antiquary – a new venue secured at late notice by Jez Sinton following a slight organisational mishap that we won't go into. It was a resounding success and we hope to return for years to come. The Jesters spent the early afternoon at Fettes playing alongside their Under 13s and Girls sides. This was great fun, and many victories for the game were recorded particularly by Alex Smith. We left Alex and James Pinder playing the leading Fettes Girls pair and are yet to hear of that particular scoreline.....

These games were followed by a clash with the Combined Universities and, sadly, our first loss of the tour by 98-96. Special mention here must go to the Universities second pair of Shinan Zhang and Louise Mathias, who defeated the Jesters second and third pairs. Our understanding is that they outmanoeuvred the more experienced opposition with Akermanesque dropshots and length play.

Saturday afternoon at the Academy was the turn of the Old Boys sides. First, the hotly contested Sinton-Matthews Cup between the Old Bradfieldians and the Old Blues. No scorecard exists but we gather that the five Old Blues defeated the three Old Bradfieldians – surely Guy and Jez can provide further information (but see photos below) – was followed by our second loss of the tour, this time by a single point to the Edinburgh Academy Old Boys, 96-95 (see photo below). This is a new fixture and one we very much hope to keep next year and hopefully win! Matches were also played against the Loretto Colts and Girls and Merchiston Junior Colts and 1st IV – two wins for Fives and two more for the Jesters.

We once again returned to La P'tite Folie for dinner. Virginie and her team looked after us as wonderfully as ever and we very much hope to enjoy their hospitality next year. A few words were said by Matthews and Smith and glasses were raised to absent friends particularly, but not exclusively, Frank Akerman, Bev Boag, Andy Passey, Tony Metcalfe-Gibson, Andy Williamson, Richard Guthrie and Robin Thompson.

Sunday morning saw a second match against the Caledonian Club at Loretto and a second Jesters win, this time by 148-135. Many thanks to Mike Kemp and the rest of his players who provide us with the toughest of opposition each year and will no doubt be back next year to avenge this double. We followed this up with a full Scottish breakfast at the local café and an extraordinary pairs tournament alongside the Loretto 1st IV. Congratulations go to Patrin for managing to get some winning Fives out of Rich Lebon.

Merchiston hosted the inaugural Layton classic. The scorecard for this makes confusing reading – we understand the snow had a part to play in this – but it looks like the Jesters picked up the victory here, too. At the Academy we took on their 1st IV and prevailed 111-83 – with Smith and Matthews then

retreating to Edinburgh's finest Thai restaurant, having staged a dramatic comeback from 12-3 down in one particular game.

Sunday at Fettes saw games with their Junior Colts, Colts and 1st IV. Once again the records show only victories for the game of Fives; however, we fear next year we will not be so lucky – Harry kept the boys on court to carry out a dropshot clinic; sounds like a match for Smith and Matthews next year...

Overall it was a thoroughly enjoyable weekend and it only remains for us to thank our drivers for their sterling efforts and sobriety and all of the tourists for bearing with us in our first year. There were no major mishaps, with all fixtures being fulfilled and a vast number of schoolboys and -girls involved in matches either with or against Jesters. One final mention to the debutants, especially the six lads from Durham: they were an absolute pleasure to have all weekend, we hope they all return for years to come.

## **National U25s: Clean sweep for Kay and Shaw**

Oundle School,  
Saturday/Sunday, 3-4 February 2018

STOP PRESS: Organiser (for the last time) Ed Kay went out on a high by defending his Singles title once more against Ben Beltrami — that makes four in a row; and then Ed and Matt Shaw went on to win their fourth Doubles title in as many years, beating Ben and his partner Ollie Arnold.

Organiser Elect James Smith had the galling experience of reaching both Plate finals but losing the Singles Plate to Tom Watkinson and, with Julian Hanton, the Doubles to Chris Davey & Rob Whitehorn.

In the Plate-Plates Joe Sumner beat Ed Pyman for the cream egg and RFA mug, while Douglas Law & Alex Wordley put one over on Durham Uni team-mates, George Marshall & Jack Sissons, in the Doubles.

*Organiser Ed Kay reports:* The Under 25s returned for its 2018 edition on the weekend of 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> February at Oundle School. The 1<sup>st</sup> round of the Singles produced only one 3-gamer, with Alex McGee coming back from a 15-11 loss against Ben Rich in game 1 to take the next two 15-4 15-2. Unfortunately, this was end of Rich's participation due to a nasty hand injury sustained on the Jesters tour.

The last 16 returned the top 8 seeds to the quarter-finals. There were strong performances by Smith against Whitehorn and Watkinson against Russell but Whitehorn and Russell both made it through in the end.

In the quarter-finals Shaw got revenge on Parker for the Nationals and Ollie Arnold upset the seeding to beat Dave Butler, while Kay and Beltrami also made it through. In the semis Shaw decided not to tire his doubles partner out by going for broke, which turned out to be the wrong strategy. Meanwhile Beltrami took down his doubles partner, Arnold, in 2 games. The final was a repeat of the last four years: Beltrami got close but eventually lost to Kay 15-10 15-13.

The Plate was hotly contested and gave some great matches with its innovative scoring system of best of 3 games to 6 points. It was eventually won by Tom Watkinson, beating James Smith in the final. The Plate-Plate threw up some great contests and was eventually won by the youngest player in the draw, Joe Sumner, who beat Ed Pyman in the final.

The Doubles 1st round all went to seeding, with the top seeds making it through comfortably. However, this round proved too much for the Oxford team, who had to pull all three pairs from the

competition due to injury: Bhushan (blister); Kirwan (elbow and knees); Petrenco (elbow); Whitham (arm); Longden (arm); McGee (still standing but no partner). This meant that Marshall & Sissons became the only unseeded pair to make the quarter-finals. Unfortunately, they didn't quite have enough to beat Beltrami & Arnold. The other three quarter-finals went to seeding.

In the semis Kay & Shaw beat Russell & Watkinson 15-4 15-2 in a match significantly more competitive than the scoreline would suggest. On the next-door court Parker & Butler almost caused a shock against Beltrami & Arnold, but weren't able to keep up the momentum after the first game and eventually went down 14-16 15-4 15-5. The final was a hard-hitting affair, but Beltrami and Arnold both appeared fatigued from their Singles exploits and weren't able to match the Cambridge pair for consistency, with 15-5 15-2 the final score.

With 5 pairs in the Plate, we eventually ended up with a well-contested final where Whitehorn & Davey just got the better of Smith & Hanton. In the Plate-Plate final it was Durham v Durham, with Wordley & Law winning in 3 against Marshall & Sissons.

All the players would like to thank Oundle School for their great hospitality, not only this year but over the past seven years.

## Results

### Singles

**1st round:** A McGee bt B.Rich 11-15, 15-4, 15-2; J.Smith bt E.Pyman 15-1, 15-0; R.Whitehorn bt J.Sissons 15-0, 15-1; J.Hanton bt J.Manger 15-9, 15-2; S.Bhushan bt J.Sumner 15-6, 15-4; C.Davey bt J.Longden 15-4, 15-4; B.Kirwan bt G.Marshall 15-1, 15-0; S.Russell bt D.Whitham 15-8, 15-7; A.Petrenco bt D.Law 15-1, 15-3; T.Watkinson bt Al.Wordley 15-2, 15-1

**2nd round:** E.Kay bt McGee 15-1, 15-1; Whitehorn bt Smith 15-11, 15-13; M.Shaw bt Hanton 15-3, 15-2; T.Parker bt Bhushan 15-3, 15-4; D.Butler bt Davey 15-0, 15-1; O.Arnold bt Kirwan 15-10, 15-5; Russell bt Watkinson 15-2, 15-1; B.Beltrami bt Petrenco 15-0, 15-0

**Quarter-finals:** Kay bt Whitehorn 15-2, 15-2; Shaw bt Parker 15-6, 8-15, 15-2; Arnold bt Butler 15-9, 15-7; Beltrami bt Russell 15-6, 15-10

**Semi-finals:** Kay bt Shaw 15-3, 15-1; Beltrami bt Arnold 15-6, 15-1

**Final:** Kay bt Beltrami 15-10, 15-13

**Plate:** Watkinson bt Smith 11-2, 11-3

**Plate-Plate:** Sumner bt Pyman 6-2, 6-1

### Doubles

**1st round:** Manger & Pyman bt Law & Wordley 15-5, 15-0; Davey & Whitehorn bt Longden & McGee 15-2, 15-2; Hanton & Smith bt Petrenco & Whitham 15-3, 15-10; Marshall & Sissons w/o Bhushan & Kirwan 5-15, 8-14

**Quarter-finals:** Kay & Shaw bt Manger & Pyman 15-1, 15-4; Russell & Watkinson bt Davey & Whitehorn 15-11, 15-3; Butler & Parker bt Hanton & Smith 15-10, 15-6; Arnold & Beltrami bt Marshall & Sissons 15-2, 15-5

**Semi-finals:** Kay & Shaw bt Russell & Watkinson 15-4, 15-2; Arnold & Beltrami bt Butler & Parker 14-16, 15-4, 15-5

**Final:** Kay & Shaw bt Arnold & Beltrami 15-5, 15-2

**Plate:** Davey & Whitehorn bt Hanton & Smith 11-6, 11-8

**Plate-Plate:** Law & Wordley bt Marshall & Sissons 11-5, 8-11, 11-8

## **South East Schools Regional Fives Championships**

Whitgift School, Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2018

Christ's Hospital, Eastbourne College, St. Dunstan's College, Tonbridge School, Whitgift School contested this year's Regional Championships for South East Schools at Whitgift.

Cameron Low of Whitgift successfully defended his U18 Singles title. Whitgift dominated in the Doubles also.

Likewise Tonbridge performed a clean sweep in the U16s but not before a very close challenge from the Christ's Hospital pair.

### **Results**

#### **U18 Singles:**

**Cup Semi-finals:** C.Low (W) bt N.Jerome (W) 11:1 ; W.Hanley (T) bt S. Kendrick (W) 11:6

**Cup Final:** Low bt Hanley 11:2

**Plate Semi-finals:** W.Audry (CH) bt C.Mok (T) 11:6 ; P.Lam (T) bt C.Lam (T) 12:11

**Plate Final:** P.Lam bt Audry 12:11

#### **U18 Doubles:**

**Cup Final:** Whitgift I bt Whitgift II 11-7

**Plate Final:** Tonbridge (C.Mok & E.Toalster) w/o

#### **U16 Singles:**

**Cup Semi-finals:** B.Burgess (T) bt J.Blacknell (SDC) 11:9 ; W.Redgate (T) bt J.Pope-Saffer (T) 11:0

**Cup Final:** Burgess bt Redgate 11: 4

**Plate Semi-finals:** M.Dare (CH) bt O.Heath (CH) 11:1 ; T.C-Lynch (SDC) bt J.Lewis (EC) 11:2

**Plate Final:** Dare bt C-Lynch 11:1

#### **U16 Doubles:**

**Cup Final:** Tonbridge I (Burgess & Redgate) bt Christ's Hospital I (Dare & Heath) 12:11

**Plate Final:** St. Dunstan's I bt Whitgift I 11-6

## **Oxford and Cambridge warm up for the Varsity Match**

Cambridge and Barnes

Saturday, 10th February 2018

**As is now traditional the two universities warmed up for this week's Varsity Match with matches against sides consisting of former players. Both universities lost by small margins and gained valuable experience for a fixture which promises to feature several new players and some fresh pairings.**

The Cambridge 'Past versus Present' kicked off with 8 individual Singles matches, as that is the format to be adopted in next week's Varsity Match. While Ed Kay, Matt Shaw and Charlie Mabbutt won their matches well for the Present, the Past had too much firepower in the remaining Singles to take a lead of 89-63.

As is the custom with so many members of the Past volunteering to play in this fixture, four new players entered the first round of Doubles, which proved to be very close, with the Past picking up just 8 additional points.

In the second round of Doubles the Past's experience shone through, with Elliott Malone & Tom Chase in particular having a great tussle with the Cambridge first pair. In the end the Past beat the Present 267-218 to win the Trapnell Tankard.

During the second half of the afternoon a Mixed Match was played for the Ted Isaacs Trophy. Cassi Henderson's team beat Lottie Simpson's side by 70-57.

Meanwhile at St. Paul's, 30 players were gathered to play in the largest Oxford 'Past versus Present' match on record.

Former Cambridge player, now Oxford Present number 1, Jacob Brubert put up a strong fight against the Past's Matt Cavanagh, losing only narrowly to the former National Singles champion. However, thanks to some hard fought wins further down the order, Sid Bhushan's Present team were ahead 100-84 after the Singles.

The Doubles was closely fought throughout, although the Past's experience eventually came to bear as they overturned the 16 point deficit to win the match 239-224 and retain the Mackenzie Bowl for another year.

For the first time in the Oxford match, there was a ladies' round robin fixture, with Lisa Haseldine and Phoebe Thornhill coming out on top.

## **The 88th Varsity Match: Oxford v Cambridge**

Played at St. Paul's School, Barnes on Saturday 17th February 2018

*David Barnes reports:* In the closest Varsity Match for more than a decade, Oxford ended Cambridge's seven-year-long domination of the event with a well-earned 38 point victory.

Despite Cambridge's expertise at the top, with Kay and Shaw playing in their final Varsity, the Dark Blues had the strength in depth to build a solid lead in the eight singles matches – an innovation requested by both captains this year. As it turned out, this was greatly to Oxford's advantage, their bottom four singles players (Mills, Owen, Muscat and Petrenco) winning 60 points to their opponents' 17. There were singles wins, too, by Bhushan, the Oxford captain, and freshman Whitham, while Kirwan, also in his first Varsity Match, fought hard for his 5 points against Shaw, the Cambridge captain. The top singles match was between two former partners for Cambridge, Kay and Brubert, each in their eighth Varsity Match. Kay, with seven consecutive wins for Cambridge behind him, came through relentlessly to win by a distance, making his total points score in Varsity singles 120-22. Brubert, appearing for the first time for Oxford after a distinguished Cambridge career, had despite his loss played a valuable role in strengthening Oxford's singles line-up. In the process Jacob became the 6th player in the history of the fixture to represent both universities.

In the doubles, the honours were shared, with Cambridge's first and second pairs winning all their games, and the reverse happening in pairs three and four, where Oxford won all theirs. Kay & Shaw, with less experienced partners, were given stiff opposition by Brubert & Kirwan, but the real stars were the Oxford third and fourth pairs, with Owen & Whitham outstanding at three: they scored 60 points to their opponents' 9.

There was a good reserves match in which Oxford Beavers defeated Cambridge Sparrows by 139 points to 113. The outstanding performance came from Shardlow (Oxford) who won all his games; his singles win was impressive and he and his partner Kengeter gave little away in the doubles. Cambridge fought hard and won two of the singles and three games of doubles, but Oxford were more consistent and took the 'Fist of Iron' back to Oxford for another year.

The Ladies match was won easily by the more experienced Cambridge side, but there was a terrific top singles between Cassi Henderson and Phoebe Thornhill which went all the way to 16-15 and attracted an enthusiastic gallery. As last year, greater experience was a key factor in the result; but the top singles match showed how the confidence and standard of play between two evenly matched athletic players can improve dramatically in the course of just one game. As the great South African golfer Gary Player memorably said when accused of having had a lucky round to win a tournament: ‘The more I practise, the luckier I get!’

My thanks go to the unflappable Peter King, who helped greatly with arrangements for the day; to St Paul’s School, who hosted the event for a remarkable 36th consecutive year; to the magnificent mums of both captains who provided a healthy amount of food to sustain the players and spectators; to all the family members and others who came to support; and to Pol Roger Champagne for their continued and generous support of the Match.

The score now stands at Cambridge 57 wins, Oxford 31.

### **The Varsity Match**

**Singles.** (Oxford names first): JB Brubert (Alleyn’s & St Peter’s) lost to EI Kay (St Paul’s & Emmanuel) 1-15; BB Kirwan (Alleyn’s & Magdalen) lost to MJR Shaw (St Paul’s & Homerton) (*Capt.*) 5-15; S Bhushan ((St Paul’s & Pembroke) (*Capt.*) bt CDB Mabbutt (Whitgift & Girton) 15-7; DS Whitham (St Paul’s & St Benet’s Hall) bt J Manger (Oundle & Downing) (*Hon. Sec.*) 15-9; AN Mills (Highgate & St Edmund Hall) bt LW Cook (Bishop’s Stortford HS & Emmanuel) 15-3; TRG Owen (St Dunstan’s & St Hugh’s) (*Hon. Sec.*) bt ECS Pyman (Sherborne & Corpus Christi) 15-2; GC Muscat (Tonbridge & Balliol) bt TJD Bennett (RGS Guildford & Emmanuel) 15-4; AO Petrenco (Westminster & LMH) bt AJF McPherson (Judd School & Homerton) 15-8.

**Doubles.** Brubert & Kirwan lost to Kay & Manger 11-15, 12-15; lost to Mabbutt & Shaw 9-15, 4-15. Bhushan & Mills lost to Mabbutt & Shaw 2-15, 0-15; lost to Kay & Manger 3-15, 3-15. Owen & Whitham bt Cook & Pyman 15-2, 15-3; bt Bennett & McPherson 15-0, 15-4. Muscat & Petrenco bt Bennett & McPherson 15-6, 15-5; bt Cook & Pyman 15-11, 15-8.

**Result: Oxford bt Cambridge 260-222.**

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

**Singles.** (Oxford names first): WJR Shardlow (Sherborne & New) bt A Ahuja (St Paul’s & Gonville and Caius) 15-0; CDJ Kengeter (St Paul’s & St John’s) lost to BS Yass (St Paul’s & Downing) 7-15; JAH Longden (Eton & Pembroke) (*Capt.*) lost to AG Spencer (KCS & Trinity) 12-15; AG McGee (Radley & St Hugh’s) bt OP Smart (Merchant Taylors’ & Downing) (*Capt.*) 15-5.

**Doubles.** Kengeter & Shardlow bt Ahuja & Yass 15-3, 15-6; bt Smart & Spencer 15-2, 15-10. Longden & McGee lost to Smart & Spencer 6-15, 15-12; lost to Ahuja & Yass 11-15, 8-15.

**Result: Oxford Beavers bt Cambridge Sparrows 149-113.**

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

**Singles.** (Oxford names first): PS Thornhill (Christ’s Hospital & Somerville) (*Hon. Sec.*) lost to CJ Henderson (Elizabeth Town Area HS & Queens’) 15-16; EM Haseldine (St Paul’s & St Edmund Hall)

(Capt.) lost to HCM Nugent (Alleyn's & Selwyn) 0-15; MM Wild (Chesham GS & St Catherine's) lost to CL Simpson (Rugby & Robinson) (Capt.) 0-15; O Laidler (UCS & St Catherine's) lost to HG Tunks (Chigwell & Newnham) 0-15.

**Doubles.** Haseldine & Thornhill lost to Henderson & Tunks 2-15, 3-15; lost to Nugent & Simpson 9-15, 3-15. Laidler & Wild lost to CJ Bar (reserve) (St Swithun's & Newnham) & Tunks 0-15, 0-15; lost to Nugent & Simpson 0-15, 1-15.

**Result: Cambridge Ladies bt Oxford Ladies 181-33.**

## **Latest Women's Rankings**

20th February 2018

The RFA is delighted to publish the latest rankings for Women's Fives following the Ladies National Singles and Doubles championships 2018.

They see Kathleen Briedenhann regain the top spot from Tessa Mills after her victory in the National Ladies Singles. Similarly Louise Mathias leapfrogs Shinan Zhang after her success in the championships.

Following her victory in the Singles Plate competition Cassi Henderson rises from 21st to 16th; her opponent in that final, Lottie Simpson, also rises by 5 places to 26th

There is just one new entry: Emily O'Malley, who enters at 52nd.

The next rankings will appear after the Ladies Winchester Fives Championships at Bradfield College on March 4th.

## **The Inaugural Scottish Schools Girls Doubles Championships**

Fettes College, Edinburgh; Thursday 22nd February 2018

We are delighted to report the success of an inaugural Doubles championship for Scottish Schoolgirls. 8 pairs contested the event, which was held on the courts of Fettes College. The competition was won by the 1st Pair from Edinburgh Academy, Meryl Smith & Olivia Tofts, who beat the Fettes top pair in a well fought three-game final.

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The first ever playing of this competition saw eight pairs from three schools and one club take part in what proved to be a superb evening of high quality, competitive and entertaining Fives.

Edinburgh Academy and Fettes College each entered three pairs, Loretto School one and a scratch pair represented the Caledonian Club. The semi-finals saw two Academy/Fettes contests, while the Plate competition ended in a match between the Caley Club duo and a young 3rd pair from the Academy

In the final of the main competition the Academy pair of Meryl Smith & Olivia Tofts got off to a slow start in the first game against the Fettes 1<sup>st</sup> pair but came back to level the match at 1-all. Then with the score at 6-3 to the Academy one of the Fettes players hurt her ankle and was unable to continue. Rather than the game end in a retirement a replacement took her place so as to enable the match to be played to a finish. The Academy pair won 11-3 and thus became the inaugural winners of this new trophy.

Massive thanks to Richie Murby, who helped in organising the competition and continues to spend so much time boosting the popularity of our sport for both girls and boys north of the border!

## **Latest National Rankings following the North West Open and the National U25 Championships**

February 2018

Updated rankings reflecting results from the North West and Under 25 Championships have now been posted.

Dan Tristao's win in Manchester strengthens his position at the top of the Singles, but there is very little to separate U25 champion Ed Kay and Will Ellison at numbers 2 and 3. Will reached the final in the NW beating Ed in the semi-final but this was not quite enough for him to close the gap. The order of the top ten remains as it was at the end of 2017 so we need to look a little further down the list for more interesting moves. Andrew Boyd enters the top 20 after winning the North West Plate, while Tom Watkinson's win in the U25 Plate takes him into the top 30.

Some of you may know that in the singles rankings I take into account results for the previous 2 seasons. Good wins against higher ranked players can help your cause, while a bad defeat or two can drag a player back. However, the effect of these adjustments diminishes gradually over time until they disappear altogether. These February rankings are the first ones where the results from the 2015-16 season are wiped from the calculation completely. This will be cause for celebration for some who have been regretting the odd bad day in that season, but equally, some who had some glorious wins 2 years ago will lose out a bit. This explains some of the other ups and downs in this new rankings list.

In the Doubles Will Ellison, who won in the North West with Charlie Brooks, retains his comfortable lead at the top, but there is close competition for the next five places. Dan Grant holds on to 2nd spot but Ed Kay, who was a North West finalist with Matt Shaw, overtakes Dan Tristao at no. 3. Ben Beltrami, who with Ollie Arnold reached the semi-final in Manchester and the final in the U25s, moves up one place to 9th overtaking Theo Parker.

Chris Davey and Rob Whitehorn won the U25 Plate and make good progress, as do their opponents in that final, Julian Hanton and James Smith. Amongst a batch of nine new entries are North West Plate winners from the YM Ged Darlington and Shaun Small, and also veterans Tim Lewis and Stuart Watson, who did not get their points in the Under 25s.

The official RFA rankings are prepared by Dave Hebden.

## **Title retained and title regained at the North of England Open**

Durham, Saturday/Sunday, 24-25 February 2018

At this year's North of England Open, with a record-breaking entry, Dan Tristao retained his Singles title, which he has now won 5 times, by beating Will Ellison in the final. In the Doubles Dan Tristao and Dave Butler combined to regain the title they won in 2015, beating Will Ellison & Dan Grant, who had held the trophy for the past two years.

Julian Hanton won the Singles Plate from Alex Wordley, the University Club captain, while John Sellar & Archie Taylor won the Doubles Plate for the Club, beating George Marshall & Tom Wakelam.

Several members of the City of Durham Fives Club — of both sexes and aged 11 and upwards — took part in this year's competition, swelling the numbers and gaining valuable and inspirational experience.

## Scores

### Singles (The Ferens Trophy)

**1st round:** G.Marshall bt Al.Wordley 12-11; J.Tilston bt D.Law 11-1; J.Aquilina bt O. McIntyre 11-2; T.Watkinson bt J.Sellar 11-2; J.Smith bt B.Rich 11-0; D.Butler bt K.Mendelson 11-1; A.Taylor bt J.Hanton 11-9; P.Hanton bt E.Wardle 11-2; R.Murby bt J.McIntyre 11-0; S.Russell bt C.Beattie 11-5; A.George bt S.Tustin 11-1; T.McCahon bt W.Hosking 11-6

**2nd round:** D.Tristao bt Marshall 11-1, 11-0; Tilston bt H.Buchanan 11-3, 11-1; Aquilina bt Watkinson 12-10, 6-11, 11-1; Butler bt Smith 11-4, 11-1; D.Grant bt Taylor 11-4, 11-3; Murby bt P.Hanton 10-12, 11-3, 11-2; Russell bt George 11-3, 11-1; W.Ellison bt McCahon 11-2, 11-0

**Quarter-finals:** Tristao bt Tilston 11-5, 11-2; Butler bt Aquilina 11-7, 11-0; Grant bt Murby 11-2, 11-3; Ellison bt Russell 11-4, 11-3

**Semi-finals:** Tristao bt Butler 11-5, 11-8; Ellison bt Grant 11-6, 11-9

**Final:** Tristao bt Ellison 11-6, 11-9

**Plate:** J.Hanton bt Al.Wordley 11-0, 11-3

### Doubles (The Fuller Cup)

**Preliminary round:** C.Beattie & S.Tustin bt B.Marville & E.Wardle 15-3

**1st round:** W.Ellison & D.Grant bt Beattie & Tustin 15-3; J.Hanton & R.Murby bt G.Marshall & T.Wakelam 15-5; S.Russell & Ad.Wordley bt D.Law & J.Sissons 15-1; P.Hanton & J.Tilston w/o J.Allan & C.Shepherd; J.Aquilina & H.Buchanan bt S.Beattie & O.McIntyre 15-4; J.Smith & T.Watkinson bt B.Rich & W.Hosking 15-0; A.George & T.McCahon bt J.Sellar & A.Taylor 15-13; D.Butler & D.Tristao bt P.Bracken & J.McIntyre 15-1

**Quarter-finals:** Ellison & Grant bt J.Hanton & Murby 11-8, 11-7; P.Hanton & Tilston bt Russell & Ad.Wordley 11-5, 11-2; Aquilina & Buchanan bt Smith & Watkinson 7-11, 11-9, 11-3; Butler & Tristao bt George & McCahon 11-1, 11-9

**Semi-finals:** Ellison & Grant bt P.Hanton & J.Tilston 11-1, 11-8; Butler & Tristao bt Aquilina & Buchanan 11-1, 11-1

**Final:** Butler & Tristao bt Ellison & Grant 11-4, 11-9

**Plate:** Sellar & Taylor bt Marshall & Wakelam 11-4, 11-8

## Winchester Doubles: Ellison & Kay win their second Barnes Bridge

Bradfield College and Winchester College

Sunday, 11th March 2018

*Organiser Harry Akerman reports:* With 9 of the top 10 ranked players in the draw for this year's Barnes Bridge it was the most eagerly awaited Winchester Fives competition in years. There were 9 previous winners, including a first appearance for many years for Roger Layton, the 5-time winner of this tournament (last victory 1996!). Roger, who this year was playing with his son Max, was supported from the sidelines by his winning partner from those days, Mike Tremellen (possibly regretting not entering himself??), and it was great to see two other members of their school team, Philip Last and Tony Brown, also joining in.

Concerns over the potential for sweating were raised when the courts started getting damp during a practice session played after Denise's Memorial Service on the Saturday evening. However, we were met with slightly cooler weather on the Sunday and bone dry courts, so we started the tournament with optimism. Early round matches of note saw Mike Crompton & Rory James Duff push Tom Watkinson & Jez Sinton close before losing 15-10, 16-15. Ben Hale & Steven Coffey would have claimed a game off Hamish Buchanan & Adam George had we been playing to 11, but they eventually went down 15-13, 15-5.

With the courts now sweating badly and with every likelihood they would get worse, a decision was made to take the Plate and remainder of the tournament down to Winchester. Sadly, not all Plate players were able to make the journey but we still had all those in the main draw plus seven pairs for an excellent Plate.

On restarting the competition at the quarter-final stage in Winchester our top eight seeds were all still in the competition as expected. The only real fright for the top four seeds saw Dan Tristao & Dan Grant given a tough time by Sam Roberts & Giles Munn, but the second seeds eventually went through in two games 16-14, 15-11. The first semi-final saw a reasonably comfortable victory for number 1 seeds Will Ellison & Ed Kay against Theo Parker & Matt Shaw by 15-5, 15-10 but there were some excellent rallies, and Theo and partner did make Will and Ed look rushed for the first time in the day. The Dans' route to the final was much harder work: they first had to come through a very tough semi-final against last year's winners, Dave Butler & Ben Beltrami, 15-10, 7-15, 15-6. The top two seeds therefore reached the final and for the first time in this tournament we had the sight of Ellison & Kay versus Tristao & Grant. The two Dans had lost 60 points on the way to the final compared to Ed & Will's 17 and, as a really exceptional game of Winchester Fives developed, fatigue started to play its part. However, the quality of the rallies remained exceptionally high and exciting. Eventually Will (for his 8<sup>th</sup> time) and Ed (for his 2<sup>nd</sup>) came out winners in the end 15-8, 15-11.

The Plate was played in a round-robin format of one game to 11 against each pair and was won by Ben Hale & Steve Coffey, who won all their matches. They were pushed hard though by Rory James Duff & Oliver Bruce (11-10), by Tony Metcalf-Gibson & Harry Akerman (11-9) and by James Birch & Joe Gribble (11-8).

Thanks very much to Bradfield for kindly hosting us and of course to Winchester College for stepping in to save the day when it was all getting a little slippery! Next year we will be in Winchester — hopefully for all of the tournament!

## Scores

**Preliminary Round:** M. Crompton & R. James Duff bt N. Arnold & M. Stoddard 15-2, 15-1; R. Layton & M. Layton bt D. Shepherd & J. McIntyre

**First Round:** W. Ellison & E. Kay bt J. Birch & J. Gribble 15-2, 15-0; J. Sinton & T. Watkinson bt Crompton & James Duff 15-10, 16-15; J. Tilston & J. Aquilina bt L. Nelson & L. Amery 15-4, 15-2; T. Parker & M. Shaw bt T. Brown & P. Last 15-0, 15-0; B. Beltrami & D. Butler bt Layton & Layton 15-2, 15-3; H. Buchanan & A. George bt S. Coffey & B. Hale 15-13, 15-5; G. Munn & S. Roberts bt A. Metcalf-Gibson & H. Akerman 15-4, 15-8; D. Grant & D. Tristao bt N. Geere & A. Smith 15-2, 15-2

**Quarter-finals:** Ellison & Kay bt Sinton & Watkinson 15-1, 15-0; Parker & Shaw bt Tilston & Aquilina 15-6, 15-8; Beltrami & Butler bt Buchanan & George 15-2, 15-4; Grant & Tristao bt Munn & Roberts 16-14, 15-11

**Semi-finals:** Ellison & Kay bt Parker & Shaw 15-5, 15-10; Grant & Tristao bt Beltrami & Butler 15-10, 7-15, 15-6

**Final:** Ellison & Kay bt Grant & Tristao 15-8, 15-11

**Plate:** Coffey & Hale

## **RFA VI v. British Universities VI**

St. Paul's School, Barnes  
Sunday 4th March 2018

In a match moved from Cambridge to St. Paul's because of the bad weather an extremely strong RFA side reversed the result of the previous two years in their annual match against a representative student team.

The RFA side — the RFA All Stars — selected and captained by Hamish Buchanan featured national singles champions Dan Tristao and Will Ellison, plus Will's Cyriax-winning partner Charlie Brooks. They were joined by Julian Aquilina and Dan Grant, himself a former national doubles champion and 4 times BUSF Singles champion.

Together they inflicted a 222-178 defeat on a student side missing multiple BUSF champion Ed Kay but which nevertheless included the very best of what was referred to on Will's scoresheet as 'The Next Generation': Ben Beltrami, Dave Butler, Theo Parker, Matt Shaw, Ollie Arnold and Sam Russell.

The match was close until the final round of doubles, the RFA's lead of 24 points after the singles having been cut to just 14 at that stage. As so often in this fixture the greater experience of the RFA side eventually told.

## **Success for St. Olave's, Alleyn's and Pilgrims' at the National U13s**

St. Paul's School, Barnes  
Sunday, 18th March 2018

STOP PRESS: There were 37 representatives, boys and girls, from Alleyn's Junior and Alleyn's Senior School, Bedford Modern, Blundell's, Pilgrims' and St. Olave's at this National Championship. In the Singles 16 players emerged from 6 pools to contest the main knock-out. Eventually there was one all-Alleyn's semi-final and another, all-St. Olave's. Both were close-fought affairs. In the final Caleb Boy from St. Olave's had too strong a left-hand serve for his opponent and ran out a comfortable winner.

In the Doubles the same two schools dominated, but the Blundell's first pair made their way to a well-deserved semi-final appearance, while two pairs from Pilgrims' played out the Plate final. Victory in the main final for Franklin Baron & Caleb Boy meant that both trophies returned to St. Olave's.

The event was run for the first time by Sam Russell, ably assisted by Dave Butler, who did some coaching and put on an exhibition match with Julian Aquilina. The RFA would like to thank all of these warmly for their work on the Association's behalf.

*Organiser Sam Russell reports:* As you brewed your morning cup of tea and glanced over the headlines of The Sunday Times on 18th March, you might have decided that you would spend this uncharacteristically cold spring day relaxing in the warmth of your home. But no such luxury was afforded to 37 young fives players and their respective coaches that morning, nor did they want it to be, as they braved the cold and travelled to London in search of one thing: victory in the National U13 Rugby Fives Championships.

Due to the snowy conditions and the fact that this was a fives tournament, the majority of the schools playing (including Pilgrims', Blundell's, St Olave's, Bedford Modern, Alleyn's Senior and Junior) turned up late. This gave Mr. Hammond, head coach of Pilgrims', time to give his players an

animated team talk, pointing at nicks and demonstrating intricate footwork, in a display that might well have inspired Will Ellison to beat Dan Tristao. As the clock chimed ten and it became clear that the heroic effort by Blundell's to arrive from Devon was further delayed, the organiser decided to get proceedings underway, standing on a chair and declaring: 'Let the hunger games begin.'

### *The Singles*

And begin they did, with, in the singles, six pools of players battling for a place in the last sixteen. These early rounds of the tournaments made for gripping viewing, as nearly every match-up was happening for the first time. Davies (Pilgrims') eased out Harrison (Alleyn's Junior) 11-10 in a nail-bitter of an encounter and Akerman (Pilgrims') lived up to his pedigree in beating Fitzherbert (Blundell's) in an important clash of pool 2, also 11-10. It soon became clear that the key question of the day was: *'Power or placement? A discourse between big hitting and tactical nous in U13 Fives'*. The answer would soon become clear.

By lunchtime, the tournament was on fire, as sixteen players had qualified for the knockout stages of the singles, still representing all schools apart from Alleyn's Junior, who in spite of being a couple of years younger than everyone else had played some winning fives. Perhaps due to growing tiredness in what is a marathon day of sport, the matches in the knockout stages started to become increasingly one-sided, with the exception of one titanic encounter in the last sixteen between Baron (St Olave's) and Pesaro (Alleyn's Senior) which I had the pleasure of watching. At 10-10, it was anyone's game, only for Baron to take on a left hand down the line off the serve, a shot seldom played throughout the day, and make crisp contact to take the score to 11-10. At this stage, the players shook hands and left the court, only for organiser, quickly realising an important communication error, to run downstairs and inform the players that they had to play to 12. Back on court, the atmosphere was tense: the players exchanged serves for about five points until Pesaro managed to level things up with a cool drop shot, 11-11. Baron, however, dug in. He had won the game once and, in his mind, he was more than capable of winning it again. One big serve brought up match point number four. This time he successfully converted it to the rapturous applause of the on looking crowd, which included me and his mother. Game of the tournament.

Elsewhere, everyone else was making slightly smoother progress through the draw, and the semi-finalists had been decided in emphatic fashion: Baron (St Olave's) v Boy (St Olave's) and Bavington (Alleyn's Senior) v Pryce-Lloyd (Alleyn's Senior). The narratives underlying these contests added an undeniable edge and emotion to the occasion. Who would be able to best put their friendship aside and focus on being ruthless? Who would stake a claim to being the undisputed number one for their respective school? And, ultimately, who would be best at hitting a ball with their hands above a wooden bar two and half feet above the ground utilising all four walls of a rectangular court?

In the first semi, the answer was Boy, who used his preferred left hand to great effect on the return of serve, often creaming the ball out of the reach of his opponent before the rally had even started. Baron, who had already been involved in many hard games of fives, lacked the power to trouble Boy and ultimately never managed to get his doubles partner on the back foot, 11-3. The second semi-final, however, was a far closer affair. Bavington, who had been making a name for himself throughout the day as the player with the biggest right hand, was for the first time facing someone who could deal with his power. Pryce-Lloyd managed to use his touch and tactical ability to move his opponent around the court, thereby preventing him from winding up his power shot on a regular basis. The game was finally poised at 5-5, when Pryce-Lloyd, not a powerful player himself, slightly ran out of steam, giving his opponent too many mid-court balls, which were successfully dispatched. Bavington secured his place in the final, 11-5.

After an epic day of fives, the final itself was, perhaps inevitably, not as evenly contested as it could have been. Boy, who was undeniably the best player on the day, ran out a comfortable winner, 11-1, 11-4. Unlike Bavington and many of his peers, he confidently took on shots with his weaker hand at every opportunity and that, combined with a very powerful stronger hand, ultimately proved to be the

difference. In the third/fourth play-off, Baron beat Pryce-Lloyd in another impressively close match, 12-10.

### *The Doubles*

Meanwhile, in the doubles, some of the early rounds saw some colossal matches, with games to 11 lasting up to 30 minutes. Most notably, Pilgrims' 1 v Bedford 2 (11-9) and Alleyn's Junior 1 v Pilgrims' 3 (11-8) were the longest matches of the day, with winners coming from all angles. The surprise success of the doubles came from Blundell's. Their first pair, vociferously cheered on by GOAT Wayne Enstone, quietly eased their way into the semi-finals via two displays of grit and teamwork. In the end, however, the familiar faces from the singles also prevailed in the doubles, with St Olave's (Baron/Boy) and Alleyn's 2 (Bavington/Marshall) making it through to the final. Any speculation as to why Alleyn's 2 were not in fact Alleyn's 1 remained unanswered.

In the final itself, Boy, buoyed by his success in the singles, put in a thoroughly dominant display. He predominantly took up a position on the left-hand side of the court, hitting the ball down the line, cross-court and boasting into the nick with consistent ease. He even regularly stepped across court to take on right-hand volleys, which, although on his weaker hand, were often winners. His partner Baron was mostly left as a spectator, but maintained his focus to keep a good line and length when called upon. The Alleyn's pair struggled to find answers to this sophisticated style of play and at no point managed to unleash their main weapon, which was Bavington's powerful right hand. As a result, St Olave's won comfortably, 15-2.

The Plate competition, happening at the same time, was arguably the best contested tournament of the day. In almost every game, the losing pair scored more than 5 points, which was a testament not only to the quality but also to the competitiveness of the fives being played. The stand-out pairs, however, both came from Pilgrims', as Pilgrims' 1 beat Pilgrims' 3 in the final, 15-6.

### *Thanks*

Before everyone left to get some well deserved rest, there was a little time to hand out some general thanks. As ever, Bob Dolby proved to be an unwavering supporter of the game and similarly Dave Butler helped ensure that everything ran smoothly on the day.

The biggest thanks, however, must go to the teachers and coaches, who had successfully engaged a considerable number of pupils with the sport and gave up their Sunday to allow them to play and have fun. The players themselves were also incredibly enthusiastic and a pleasure to organise, with Davey, Dorokhov and Bedford Modern all taking home coveted chocolate egg awards for outstanding play and sportsmanship (although these really could have gone to anyone — someone had to eat the chocolate!)

The competitive season is now over for the U13s. However, I anticipate an even bigger and more competitive tournament next year, so stay tuned.

### **Scores**

#### **Singles**

**1<sup>st</sup> round:** M.Bavington (Alleyn's Senior) bt H.Hanson (Pilgrims') 11-3; O.Fox (Pilgrims') bt D.Weatherall (Blundell's) 11-4; A.Davies (Pilgrims') bt F.Stone (Blundell's) 11-3; M.Pryce-Lloyd (Alleyn's Senior) bt H.Akerman (Pilgrims') 11-0; W.Marshall (Alleyn's Senior) bt E.Harrison (Alleyn's Junior) 11-3; F.Baron (St. Olave's) bt J.Pesaro (Alleyn's Senior) 12-11; B.Fitzherbert (Blundell's) bt H.Bain (Pilgrims') 11-5; C.Boy (St. Olave's) bt M.Griffith (Bedford Modern) 11-0

**Quarter-finals:** Bavington bt Fox 11-1; Pryce-Lloyd bt Davies 11-3; Baron bt Marshall 11-1; Boy bt Fitzherbert 11-0;

**Semi-finals:** Bavington bt Pryce-Lloyd 11-5; Boy bt Baron 11-3

**Final:** Boy bt Bavington 11-1, 11-4

**Plate** (for losing semi-finalists): Baron bt Pryce-Lloyd 12-10

Also played: E.Arie, C. Davey, A.German, L.Mcmellin, L.Milner, I.Pryce-Lloyd, A.Dorokhov (Alleyn's Junior); L.Milner, T.Vernacchio (Alleyn's Senior); F.Bradley, J.Cleary, A.Noonari, J.Thompson, L.Walsh, A.Williams (Bedford Modern); J.Cole, B.Hull, D.Pugsley, H.Southgate, C.Tomlinson-Hodge (Blundell's); J.Boissier (Pilgrims')

## Doubles

**Preliminary:** Alleyn's Senior III bt Alleyn's Junior/BMS 11-4; Alleyn's Junior III bt Bedford III 11-8

**1st round:** Alleyn's Senior I bt Blundell's IV 11-0; Alleyn's Junior I bt Pilgrims' III 11-8; Bedford Modern I bt Alleyn's Senior III 11-1; St. Olave's bt Blundell's III 11-0; Blundell's I bt Alleyn's Junior II 11-2; Bedford Modern II bt Pilgrims' I 11-9; Pilgrims' II bt Blundell's II 11-1; Alleyn's Senior II bt Bedford Modern III 11-2

**Quarter-finals:** Alleyn's Senior I bt Alleyn's Junior I 11-6; St. Olave's bt Bedford Modern I 11-6; Blundell's I bt Bedford Modern II 11-5; Alleyn's Senior II bt Pilgrims' II 11-4

**Semi-finals:** St. Olave's bt Alleyn's Senior I 11-7; Alleyn's Senior II bt Blundell's I 11-3

**Final:** St. Olave's bt Alleyn's Senior II 15-2

**Plate:** Pilgrims' I bt Pilgrims' III 15-6

## Neil Roberts wins his first Vintage Singles title

Cambridge, Sunday 11th March 2018

*Organiser Brian Kirk reports* — Singles: From the two pools Stuart Kirby and Neil Roberts eventually emerged to contest the final. Defending champion Stuart found Neil's service difficult to cope with and was forced into more errors this year. Neil also appeared to have greater mobility than last year when Stuart enjoyed great success playing the ball relentlessly into the back corners. This time Neil won their match 15-10 and thus took the title for just the first time.

In the Plate Angus Hanton played a brilliant final with Nick Geere, winning 16-15 after match point had passed to and fro several times.

In the Doubles the final was, once more, between defending champions Stuart & Neil and Richard Christie & Brian Kirk. The latter pair reached the final for the second year in a row after a testing encounter with Tony Hamilton & Bob Sandie, with long rallies and multiple discussions concerning court positioning. In the final Stuart & Neil gradually wore down their tiring opponents and won 11-9, 11-4. The doubles Plate was contested by a very consistent Hanton & Geere and Robert Dalman & Chris Blakeley, with the AOBs winning comfortably.

## Singles

**Preliminary round:** R.Sandie bt B.Kirk 15-5

**1st round:** S.Kirby bt Sandie 15-0; A.Hamilton bt P.Atkinson 16-15; R.Christie bt N.Geere 15-10; N.Roberts bt A.Hanton 15-4

**Semi-finals:** Kirby bt Hamilton 15-9 ; Roberts bt Christie 15-1

**Final:** N.Roberts bt S.Kirby 15-10

**Plate:** A.Hanton bt N.Geere 16-15

## Doubles

**Pool A:** Kirby & Roberts bt Atkinson & Kiteley 15-4, bt Geere & Hanton 15-3; Atkinson & Kiteley bt Geere & Hanton 15-12

**Pool B:** Christie & Kirk bt Hamilton & Sandie 15-12, bt Blakeley & Dalman 15-0; Hamilton & Sandie bt Blakeley & Dalman 15-8

**Semi-finals:** Kirby & Roberts bt Hamilton & Sandie 0-11, 11-4, 11-6; Christie & Kirk bt Atkinson & Kiteley 9-11, 11-4, 11-0

**Final:** Kirby & Roberts bt Christie & Kirk 11-9, 11-4

**Plate:** Geere & Hanton bt Blakeley & Dalman 11-4, 11-6

## RFA Development Officer

### Interviews in London, 25/26th April

The RFA is looking to employ a Development Officer who can help to promote the game all over the country. The primary aims of the role – which is being advertised here and on LinkedIn – are to get more people playing Rugby Fives and to get more money coming into the Rugby Fives Association. Working with a wide range of partners, including the RFA board and existing clubs, as well as newly established contacts, the officer will be expected to:

1. Publicise and promote Rugby Fives.
2. Encourage more people, especially the young, to play the game.
3. Help the RFA raise money to support the development of the game and in particular to fund the building of new courts.

The RFA is looking to employ an experienced sports development professional on a two-year contract. And, while the role is part-time and based at home, it will take between two and three days a week (possibly out of hours), and the officer will be expected to travel all over the country.

Travel time is not included in the hours of work, but expenses will be reimbursed, and the officer will report to a Board member as their line manager.

The successful applicant will be able to work with a wide range of partners, be equally happy to work collaboratively within a team and independently, be proactive in building partnerships and able to make decisions quickly.

IT literacy is essential, as are enthusiasm and communication skills, and the officer will have to make use of social media. However, while PR skills are desirable, they are not essential.

The salary will be between £10,000 and £18,000, depending on the time commitment and experience. Initially, the contract will be for a two-year period, but that could be extended if the officer can raise funds to continue the role.

You can see the full job description by clicking on the link below, and if you're interested in applying for the role – or just learning more about it – all the relevant details can be found on the job advert, which you can view by clicking on the link below.

Applications must be received by 9am on Wednesday April 18, and interviews will take place in London on April 25 and 26.

RFA Development Officer – relevant documents:

Job Description [Opens in separate window]

Job Advert [Opens in separate window]

## **Robert's Ride 18000 — Rob Cleave cycles round the world for charity**

We are delighted to report and support the second major initiative undertaken this year by a Fives-player to raise funds for charity, namely Rob Cleave's bike-ride round the world: *Robert's Ride 18000*. Rob's quest to cover 18,000 miles on a bike in aid of two charities follows Charles Compton's 6,500 mile walk around the coast of Britain (*Charles' Walk*) to raise funds for the Mental Health Foundation.

*Rob explains:* Having spent 40 years running around Fives courts and on other leg-impacting sports such as squash and marathon running, one of my hips finally wore out. Fortunately medical science came to my rescue with a total hip replacement, which has been transforming. I can now cycle, swim and walk but sadly not return to impact sports.

Having retired last year as an IT Manager at Boots, I have decided to take on the ultimate challenge of cycling around the world. This involves 18,000 miles, 25 countries and 5 continents. As well as being a physical and mental challenge it has been great fun so far planning it.

I'll not be camping but staying in guest houses, hostels and hotels. Age does have to have some benefits. It should take between 15 and 18 months. I'm hoping to cover 50 miles a day. Across Europe to Istanbul, then India, south-east Asia, including China, Australia, Japan and finally the United States west coast to east coast.

Through the ride, called RobertsRide18000, I'll be aiming to raise money for two very worthwhile charities. The ride itself is self-funded, so all money donated will go to the charities.

Firstly, Cancer Research UK. Sadly, my mother recently died from stomach cancer. I've always been one for root-causing a problem and dealing with the issue so that the problem doesn't arise in the first place. Just imagine how many billions the NHS would save on palliative care if cancer was defeated the way so many other serious diseases were defeated in previous generations.

Secondly, Traidcraft Exchange. I have always been impressed by Traidcraft's approach to fighting global poverty through trade to help people transform their lives. I was one of the first Traidcraft representatives in the early 1980s and was responsible for bringing Traidcraft and the Fairtrade movement to Nottinghamshire and the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham. I am hopeful that I may be able to visit some of the producer groups on my way through India and south-east Asia. Traidcraft Exchange is the charitable arm of Traidcraft and works with some of the world's poorest farmers, producers and artisans, helping them to work their way out of poverty, to be self-supporting and independent.

I'll be setting off on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> April from Nottingham, launched by local dignitaries and media. Those interested in following or supporting Robert's Ride can do so at:

[www.robertsride18000.com](http://www.robertsride18000.com)

Facebook: Robert Cleave

Virgin Money Giving: Robert Cleave

[robertsride18000@gmail.com](mailto:robertsride18000@gmail.com)

## **John Pretlove (1932-2018)**

6th April 2018

**The RFA is sad to report the death on Easter Sunday of John Pretlove, Alleyn Old Boy and multiple National Rugby Fives Champion.**

While at Alleyn's John Pretlove won the Public Schools Singles, as it was then known, in 1950 and 1951, and the Doubles in 1951 with JST Fletcher.

He represented Cambridge University in the Varsity Match in 1954, 1955 and 1956, each time playing at number one. He won Blues for football and cricket while an undergraduate at Gonville and Caius College. He was a loyal supporter of Cambridge fives, regularly attending the Past versus Present and playing in the last match at Portugal Place in 1995. He was also a stalwart of the Alleyn Old Boys and coached fives at Alleyn's School.

A superb left-handed striker of the Jefferies Malings and Slazenger balls John won the Amateur Singles four times, in 1953, 1955, 1956 and 1958 and was runner-up on three later occasions. He, Andrew Cowie and John East remain the only players to have won the National title while undergraduates.

Between 1952 and 1967 John won the Amateur Doubles Championships 7 times in all, with four different partners — 'Bill' Bailey, Dennis Silk (four years in a row), Roy Birmingham and Bob Smith — , and was runner-up twice.

His cricketing commitments largely precluded participation in any regional tournaments but he did win the Vintage Doubles in 1993 with fellow AOB, Roy Birmingham.

John served as General Secretary of the RFA in the 1990s and previously as President (1985-87).

## **Results from the National Schools Championships**

St. Paul's School, 3-6 April 2018

Organiser Peter King reports: The eccentricities of dates (Easter and school terms/holidays) seem to have affected the size (but not the quality) of this year's entry, and just 100 competitors from 14 schools in all were included in the draws. There was, however, a very high standard of play, with some memorable fives at all levels, and the majority of schools were represented in finals at some level. Happily the friendships and sportsmanship which characterise Fives tournaments were as much in evidence as ever; a clear example was set in the closing stages of a tough U14 doubles final when players from both pairs were seen to call a marginal "not up" against themselves.

The Open singles tournament allowed two players from each initial group into the main draw, with a further opportunity for those losing the first match there to progress in the Plate. This meant that play in both tournaments was of the highest standard, but Tom Kidner stood out, making the defence of his title look remarkably easy by the expedient of taking the ball early and hitting punishing length and width. No game in the singles went to three games, although Isaac Hudis (SPS) pushed third seed Addie Chai of Blundell's all the way to 11-9 12-10. And Addie's partner James Maclaurin, playing against Alex Cochrane from Alleyn's, took the Plate after a monumental three-game final, having previously also had two 16-14 wins against Paulines Hudis and Davies. In the doubles Winchester I came through as champions, defeating Whitgift fairly comfortably, leaving Cameron Low second-best to Kidner for the second time in the day, after an impressive week's fives..

The Colts' singles event was remarkable for being won, and fairly comfortably too, by Gwydion Wiseman from Alleyn's. Not unexpected, as he had won in the West of England, but special because he is still an Under 14 player, and this was a first. Gwydion stood out as an accomplished player with a strong all-round game. Had he not been there, the competition would have been very tight, as all the other quarter- and semi-finals went to three games: Thomas Peel from Edinburgh Academy and Paulines Teddy Monro-Davies and Louis Odgers all edged out the Wykehamists in the quarters, and then Louis outlasted his doubles partner to qualify for the final. The Plate finals both went to three, with Daniel Troup from the Academy finishing stronger against Ben Burgess of Tonbridge. In the doubles Winchester I met St Paul's I in the final, and the result went the way of the Paulines, who had also just had the edge in the singles.

The U14 tournament arrives on the third day and proved extremely enjoyable for all who took part. It was really “no contest” with Wiseman, defeated finalist last year, full of confidence and possessing all the skills needed. Much credit goes to those who pushed him hard and will be working hard to catch up in the years to come, most notably Massimo Campanale from Tonbridge. It was great to welcome players from the newly formed City of Durham club, and most encouraging for them that Oscar McIntyre went away with victory in both singles and doubles Plates, playing with Simon Beattie in the latter. The main doubles final was a splendid contest, with Tonbridge just a little stronger than the Alleyn’s pair.

Many thanks to all involved in organisation and support, especially Ian Jackson, who again shouldered the burden of managing the U14 events, to parents, fan clubs, and some extremely devoted staff without whom the school players would not be developing such an obvious love of the game and skilful enjoyment. Next year the tournament will begin on April 1st (no fooling!).

## Scores

### Open Singles

**Pool A:** 1st T.Kidner (Winchester); 2nd J.Maclairin (Blundell’s); 3rd M.Scoczylas (St Paul’s); 4th H.Turner (Alleyn’s)

**Pool B:** 1st A.Cochrane (Alleyn’s); 2nd J.Davies (St Paul’s); 3rd S.Kendrick (Whitgift); 4th L.Choo-Choy (Tonbridge)

**Pool C:** 1st S.Garella (Merchant Taylors’); 2nd W.Hanley (Tonbridge); 3rd A.Lundie (Edinburgh Academy); 4th A.Ramakrishnan (St Paul’s)

**Pool D:** 1st J.Sumner (Bedford Modern); 2nd I.Hudis (St Paul’s); 3rd B.Ames (Blundell’s); 4th M.Gill (Alleyn’s)

**Pool E:** 1st A.Chai (Blundell’s); 2nd N.Jerome (Whitgift); 3rd K.Parsapour (St Paul’s); 4th R.Hodgson (Edinburgh Academy)

**Pool F:** 1st H.Jackson (St Paul’s); 2nd E.Townsend (Merchant Taylors’); 3rd Z.Sholapurkar (Alleyn’s)

**Pool G:** 1st T.McGuire (Sedbergh); 2nd K.Mackison (Winchester); 3rd N.Heymann (St Paul’s); 4th P.Lam (Whitgift)

**Pool H:** 1st C.Low (Whitgift); 2nd T.Liu (St Paul’s); 3rd L.Hoyne (Edinburgh Academy); 4th W.Hirth (Alleyn’s)

**1st Round:** Kidner beat Liu 11-0, 11-1; Mackison beat Cochrane 11-4, 12-10; Townsend beat Garella 11-7, 11-6; Sumner beat Jerome 11-0, 11-1; Chai beat Hudis 12-10, 11-9; Jackson beat Hanley 11-1, 11-0; McGuire beat Davies 11-6, 11-9; Low beat Maclairin 11-1, 11-1

**Quarter-finals:** Kidner beat Mackison 11-4, 11-1; Sumner beat Townsend 11-0, 11-1; Chai beat Jackson 11-4, 11-4; Low beat McGuire 11-0, 11-2

**Semi-finals:** Kidner beat Sumner 11-5, 11-0; Low beat Chai 11-2, 11-3

**Final:** Kidner beat Low 11-0, 11-3

**First Plate:** Maclairin (Blundell’s)

**Second Plate:** Hirth (Alleyn’s)

### Open Doubles

**1st round:** Tonbridge beat St Paul’s IV 11-6, 11-5; St Paul’s II beat Bedford Modern I 8-11, 11-9, 12-11; Alleyn’s I beat Whitgift II 9-11, 11-3, 11-8; Whitgift I beat Bedford Modern II 11-1, 11-4; Merchant Taylors’ beat St Paul’s III 11-2, 11-5; Blundell’s I beat Alleyn’s II 11-2, 11-1; St Paul’s I beat Edinburgh Academy I 11-2, 11-2

**Quarter-finals:** Winchester I beat Tonbridge 11-0, 11-2; St Paul’s II beat Alleyn’s I 11-2, 11-5; Whitgift II beat Merchant Taylors’ 11-6, 8-11, 11-3; St Paul’s I beat Blundell’s I 9-11, 11-4, 11-4

**Semi-finals:** Winchester I beat St Paul’s II 11-3, 11-1; Whitgift I beat St Paul’s I 11-6, 11-7

**Final:** Winchester I (Kidner/Mackison) beat Whitgift I (Kendrick/Low) 11-0, 11-3

**Plate:** Bedford Modern I (O. Colbert & J.Sumner)

### Colts Singles

**Pool A:** 1st G.Wiseman (Alleyn's); 2nd M.Mulvey (Merchiston Castle); 3rd G.Goulding (St Paul's); 4th C.Clark (Edinburgh Academy)

**Pool B:** 1st J.Graham (Merchant Taylors'); 2nd O.Bruce (Winchester); 3rd C.Jobson (St Paul's)

**Pool C:** 1st X.Christopher (Rugby); 2nd W.Bucknell (Blundell's); 3rd P.Puvanendiran (Alleyn's)

**Pool D:** 1st T.Peel (Edinburgh Academy); 2nd B.Burgess (Tonbridge); 3rd S.Sharma (St Paul's); 4th T.Brimacombe (Alleyn's)

**Pool E:** 1st S.Fraser (Winchester); 2nd M.Layton (Merchiston Castle); 3rd D.Arjun (St Paul's); 4th A.Grubb (Blundell's)

**Pool F:** 1st T.Monro-Davies (St Paul's); 2nd B.Ames (Blundell's); 3rd B.Ergezer (Alleyn's)

**Pool G:** 1st H.Gujadhur (Winchester); 2nd D.Jourdan (Edinburgh Academy); 3rd A.Choi (St Paul's); 4th I.Taylor-Schindler (Alleyn's)

**Pool H:** 1st B.Ashfar (Merchiston Castle); 2nd N.Stanger (St Paul's); 3rd E.Neumann (Alleyn's)

**Pool I:** 1st L.Odgers (St Paul's); 2nd C.Crooke (Tonbridge)

**Pool J:** 1st D.Percival (Winchester); 2nd D.Troup (Edinburgh Academy); 3rd G.Ward-Jackson (St Paul's); 4th H.Rackham (Blundell's)

**1st Round:** Graham beat Christopher 11-0, 11-0; Odgers beat Afshar 11-8, 11-5

**Quarter-finals:** Wiseman beat Graham 11-4, 11-1; Peel beat Fraser 8-11, 12-11, 11-4; Monro-Davies beat Gujadhur 11-1, 9-11, 11-8; Odgers beat Percival 9-11, 11-5, 11-7

**Semi-finals:** Wiseman beat Peel 11-0, 11-3; Odgers beat Monro-Davies 9-11, 11-3, 11-8

**Final:** Wiseman beat Odgers 11-0, 11-8

**First Plate:** Troup (Edinburgh Academy)

**Second Plate:** Arjun (St Paul's)

### Colts Doubles

**1st Round:** Winchester I beat St Paul's III 11-0, 11-4; Tonbridge beat Alleyn's II 11-5, 11-2;

Merchiston Castle beat Blundell's II 11-2, 11-2; Edinburgh Academy I beat St Paul's II 11-1, 11-0; St Paul's IV beat Alleyn's I 11-7, 11-6; Blundell's I beat Winchester II 11-2, 9-11, 11-3

**Quarter-finals:** Winchester I beat Tonbridge 11-2, 11-2; Edinburgh Academy I beat Merchiston Castle I 11-0, 11-2; Blundell's I beat St Paul's IV 11-4, 11-2; St Paul's I beat Edinburgh Academy II 11-1, 11-7

**Semi-finals:** Winchester I beat Edinburgh Academy I 11-9, 11-6; St Paul's I beat Blundell's I 11-7, 11-3

**Final:** St Paul's I (Monro-Davies/Odgers) beat Winchester I (Gujadhur/Percival) 11-6, 11-5

**Plate:** Winchester II (O.Bruce & S.Fraser)

### Under 14 Singles

**Pool A:** 1st G.Wiseman (Alleyn's); 2nd G.Stonor (Tonbridge); 3rd B.Horsell (St Paul's); 4th A.Kiggell (Marlborough)

**Pool B:** 1st J.Freeman (Tonbridge); 2nd S.Beattie (City of Durham); 3rd W.Tanner (Alleyn's); 4th H.Turner (St Paul's)

**Pool C:** 1st B.Roberts (St Paul's); 2nd P.Harrison (Alleyn's); 3rd M.Mayor (Blundell's); 4th M.Matthews (Merchant Taylors')

**Pool D:** 1st M.Cloke-Brown (Winchester); 2nd A.Garella (Merchant Taylors'); 3rd B.Harrison (St Paul's); 4th J.Harrison (Tonbridge)

**Pool E:** 1st S.Scott (Alleyn's); 2nd A.Tillotson (Merchant Taylors'); 3rd O.McIntyre (City of Durham); 4th R.Ramanan (St Paul's)

**Pool F:** 1st A.Huang (Tonbridge); 2nd A.Whitham (St Paul's); 3rd E.Swarbrick (Blundell's); 4th

R.Stratton (Marlborough)

**Pool G:** 1st J.Kirwan (Alleyn's); 2nd A. Sheikh (Merchant Taylors'); 3rd J.Bartlett (Blundell's); 4th J Lim-Faghihi (St Paul's)

**Pool H:** 1st M.Campanale (Tonbridge); 2nd H.Shaw (Alleyn's); 3rd F.Clayton (Blundell's); 4th A.Adams (St Paul's)

**1st Round:** Wiseman beat Shaw 11-2; Freeman beat Sheikh 11-7; Roberts beat Whitham 11-7; Cloke-Brown beat Tillotson 11-3; Garella beat Scott 12-11; Huang beat P.Harrison 11-5; Kirwan beat Beattie 12-11; Campanale beat Stonor 11-2

**Quarter-finals:** Wiseman beat Freeman 15-2; Cloke-Brown beat Roberts 16-14; Huang beat Garella 15-12; Campanale beat Kirwan 15-9

**Semi-finals:** Wiseman beat Cloke-Brown 15-2; Campanale beat Huang 15-10

**Final:** Wiseman beat Campanale 11-4, 11-0

**First Plate:** McIntyre (City of Durham)

**Second Plate:** Matthews (Merchant Taylors')

### Under 14 Doubles

**Pool A:** 1st St Paul's I; 2nd Merchant Taylors' II; 3rd Tonbridge II; 4th Blundell's II

**Pool B:** 1st Alleyn's I; 2nd St Paul's IV; 3rd Marlborough

**Pool C:** 1st Tonbridge I; 2nd Alleyn's II; 3rd St Paul's III

**Pool D:** 1st Merchant Taylors' I; 2nd Blundell's I; 3rd City of Durham; 4th St Paul's II

**1st round:** St Paul's I beat St Paul's IV 15-6; Alleyn's I beat Merchant Taylors' II 15-9; Tonbridge I beat Blundell's I 15-2; Merchant Taylors' I beat Alleyn's II 15-12

**Semi-finals:** Alleyn's I beat St Paul's I 15-5; Tonbridge I beat Merchant Taylors' I 15-2

**Final:** Tonbridge I (Campanale/Freeman) beat Alleyn's I (Kirwan/Scott) 11-6, 11-7

**Plate:** City of Durham (Beattie/McIntyre)

## The National Masters' Championships: Beal & Hamilton are the Masters!

Marlborough College, Wiltshire

Saturday, 7th April 2018

*The President reports:* The courts at Marlborough were eerily quiet as ten members of the RFA Gerontocracy met to defy the accepted norms of geriatric sport by putting their minds and bodies on the line for the Masters' Tournament (over 65s).

The Organiser, David Bawtree, deftly took control of proceedings by slowly easing the assembly away from reminiscing and persuading those gathered that fives would be a good way of passing the next hour or so. A round robin format was agreed, with each pair playing the four other pairs one game to 15, to be followed, largely as a reprisal, by a 'Final' between the two top pairs. So it was that Hillman & Sanders, Atkinson & Sandie and Hebden & Wilkinson managed respectively to amass 24, 32 and 42 points while Enstone & Watson and Hamilton & Beal stylishly clocked up 47 and 60, leaving the lower order sad, but relieved to be free to watch the final.

The final turned out to be a contest of rare quality with long rallies and a fine array of shots; Stuart Watson was 'gifted' the opportunity to soak up a large share of the attritional rallies, resulting in Tony Hamilton & Spencer Beal accumulating a useful lead, while Wayne Enstone shed twenty years and displayed some of the magic with which he can hold spectators in awe. In the end, defending champions Tony and Spencer were more consistent and made fewer mistakes to finish 15-7 winners, leaving the gallery wishing for more.

This was a tournament of quality, all the more so when one considers that all players will at best not have another 65<sup>th</sup> birthday. One can only say Many Happy Returns to all who made this a special

occasion and especially to David Bawtree for his geniality and enthusiasm in making the Masters yet another success.

### Round Robin

|                      | Hillman/<br>Sanders | Enstone/<br>Watson | Hebden/<br>Wilkinson | Atkinson/<br>Sandie | Beal/<br>Hamilton | Total |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Hillman/<br>Sanders  |                     | 3                  | 4                    | 11                  | 6                 | 24    |
| Enstone/<br>Watson   | 15                  |                    | 15                   | 15                  | 2                 | 47    |
| Hebden/<br>Wilkinson | 15                  | 7                  |                      | 15                  | 5                 | 42    |
| Atkinson/<br>Sandie  | 15                  | 7                  | 4                    |                     | 8                 | 32    |
| Beal/<br>Hamilton    | 15                  | 15                 | 15                   | 15                  |                   | 60    |

**Final:** Beal & Hamilton beat Enstone & Watson 15-7

### National Veterans' Championships

Marlborough College, April 7/8th

#### STOP PRESS

Defending champion Matt Cavanagh made it a hat-trick of Veterans' Singles titles, while Andy Pringle paired up with Hamish Buchanan to take his third Doubles title in a row. For Hamish the win was consolation for defeat in the Singles final.

In both cases, the wins followed the seedings, and Matt was a deserving winner of the singles title, although there were plenty of hard fought games in the run up to the final. The doubles, too, saw a win for the top seeds, but the final was a great match, full of guile, power and great sportsmanship from all four players.

There wasn't much to choose between the pairs, but in each of the final's two games, local heroes Tom Kiggell and Jim Hughes suffered a crucial lapse in concentration, during which they conceded a run of five or six points. That allowed the more consistent Andy and Hamish to secure decent leads in both games, which they never looked like losing. In the end, they won 15-7, 15-7, securing a third successive title for Andy – and a sixth for Hamish.

#### Results

##### Singles

**1st round:** M.Cavanagh bt T.Chapman 15-2, 15-4; T.Kiggell bt N.Geere 15-4, ret.; S.Roberts bt J.Hughes 15-12, 15-10; H.Buchanan bt H.Bishop 15-1, 15-6

**Semi-finals:** Cavanagh bt Kiggell 15-9, 15-3; Buchanan bt Roberts 15-9, 15-11

**Final:** Cavanagh bt Buchanan 15-5, 15-3

**3rd Place Play-off:** Kiggell bt Roberts 15-1, 15-3

**Plate:** Hughes bt Chapman 15-4, 15-2; Hughes bt Bishop 15-1, 15-4; Chapman bt Bishop 15-5, 15-6. Hughes winner.

## Doubles

**Preliminary round :** T.Chapman & Davies bt Somerville & Hendry 15-1, 15-2

**1st round:** H.Buchanan & A.Pringle bt Chapman & Davies 15-2, 15-1; Jenkinson & Sharp bt Wilson & R.Sandie 15-8, 16-14; R.Christie & S.Kirby bt H.Bishop & R.Davison 15-2, 15-11; J.Hughes & T.Kiggell bt C.Blakeley & D.Neale 15-2, 15-2

**Semi-finals:** Buchanan & Pringle bt Jenkinson & Sharp 15-2, 15-2; Hughes & Kiggell bt Christie & Kirby 15-2, 15-10

**Final:** Buchanan & Pringle bt Hughes & Kiggell 15-7, 15-7

**3rd Place Play-off:** Christie & Kirby bt Jenkinson & Sharp 15-3, 15-11

**Plate:** Bishop & Davison bt Chapman & Davies 11-3, 11-1; bt Blakeley & Neale 11-3, 11-3; bt Somerville & Hendry 11-0, 11-2; bt Hawke & Sandie 11-5, 11-4

Hawke & Sandie bt Chapman & Davies 11-3, 11-0; bt Blakeley & Neale 12-11, 11-8; bt Somerville & Hendry 11-2, 11-2

Blakeley & Neale bt Somerville & Hendry 11-8, 11-4; bt Chapman & Davies 12-10

Chapman & Davies bt Blakeley & Neale 11-5; bt Somerville & Hendry 11-4, 11-5

Bishop & Davison winners.

## National Doubles Championship

Alleyn's School, Dulwich, Sat/Sun April 14/15th

### Dans Grant and Tristao win second National Doubles title

This year's contest for the Cyriax Cup figured 18 pairs, with a predictably strong showing of Old Paulines and a significant contingent of players from the Alleyn Old Boy Club, plus several with university status. Clubs from the Scottish Caledonian Club to the Winchester-based Wessex Club were represented, not to mention Stuart Watson and Tim Lewis from the South West who were coming to the end of their year-long tour of national and regional events to celebrate their 'seniority' within the game. The range of ages represented was impressive and possibly unique (#onlyhebdenknoes), with a number of schoolboys competing, including the National U14 and U16 champion and one top pairing from Whitgift. There was also something of a family feel, with father and son Wiseman and brothers Peter and Julian Hanton in the draw. It was good to see 6-time National Singles champion James Toop, free from commitments to Eton Fives, back in action, along with various schoolmasters and coaches. Perhaps it was the lure of Hamish-themed pink t-shirts that drew such a diverse assortment of players!

*Organiser Hamish Buchanan reports:* The Two Dans won their second National Doubles title as a pair today, beating defending champions Will Ellison & Charlie Brooks in an epic three-game final, 16-14, 6-15, 15-13.

This was after Will and Charlie cruised into the final with the loss of only 8 points in six games, whereas the Dans had a tough first and second round against James Toop & Gwydion Wiseman followed by Dave Butler & Richie Murby, then a three-game semi-final with Matt Shaw & Ollie Arnold. The possibly decisive moment came when Matt succumbed to cramp in the latter stages of a close, potentially match-winning second game for the younger pair.

The final, played with the usual immaculate levels of sportsmanship, was exciting and stunning in equal measure, with the usual dynamic all-court rallying and an unexpected level of composure by the usually fallible Dan G in the third game.

The Plate was won by Adam George & Peter Hanton in a determined fashion after losing out in a close three-game match to Buchanan & Dean in the first round proper. The tournament also witnessed impressive performances from the previously mentioned Gwydion Wiseman and fellow schoolboys Cameron Low and Sarath Prakash.

## Scores

**1st round:** E.Carr & R.Sulkin bt T.Lewis & S.Watson 15-0, 15-3; J.Toop & G.Wiseman bt C.Low & S.Prakash 15-7, 15-5

**2nd round:** C.Brooks & W.Ellison (1) bt T.Chapman & A.Cochrane 15-3, 15-0; H.Buchanan & T.Dean bt A.George & P.Hanton (8) 15-4, 8-15, 15-11; J.Aquilina & J.Tilston (5) bt B.Callaghan & E.Hatton 15-10, 15-4; A.Boyd & E.Kay (4) bt Carr & Sulkin 15-2, 15-6; O.Arnold & M.Shaw (3) bt E.Ronan & H.Wiseman 15-2, 15-0; T.Parker & S.Russell (6) bt J.Hanton & B.Kirwan 15-6, 15-1; D.Butler & R.Murby (7) bt C.Burrows & G.Price 15-5, 15-7; D.Grant & D. Tristao (2) bt Toop & Wiseman 15-7, 15-13

**Quarter-finals:** Brooks & Ellison bt Buchanan & Dean 15-0, 15-0; Boyd & Kay bt Aquilina & Tilston 15-11, 15-7; Arnold & Shaw bt Parker & Russell 13-15, 15-13, 15-6; Grant & Tristao bt Butler & Murby 15-8, 15-12

**Semi-finals:** Brooks & Ellison bt Boyd & Kay 15-1, 15-4; Grant & Tristao bt Arnold & Shaw 11-15, 15-9, 15-6

**Final:** Grant & Tristao bt Brooks & Ellison 16-14, 6-15, 15-13

**Plate:** George & P.Hanton bt Ronan & H.Wiseman 15-7

## Results from the National Schoolgirls' Championships

Marlborough College, Wiltshire

Sunday, 23rd April 2018

The 9th National Championships for Schoolgirls' Rugby Fives saw a healthy entry of players from 8 schools, though this year no representatives from Eastbourne, Fettes, Rossall or Sedbergh. The standard undoubtedly continues to rise, and players are improving not just from year to year but visibly develop their skills as the day goes on.

Marlborough had a very successful day in the U18s, with Ibbey Lee successfully defending her singles title and also the doubles title with Anna Laakkonen. In the U16s the Marlborough 1st pair of Barton & Bell upset the much fancied Bedford Modern partnership of Kent & Sumner in a marvellous final which could have gone either way at 12-12. Katie Sumner had the consolation of winning the U16 singles title comfortably, however.

Alleyn's dominated the U14s and U13s, with a clean sweep of singles and doubles in both, with Innes & Nugent and Davey & Stephens respectively showing great promise for the future.

Rugby were as competitive as ever, particularly in the senior category, where Anastasia de Clermont gave Ibbey Lee a real test in the final, coming back from 7-13 to 13-all before succumbing to her opponent's greater power.

Christ's Hospital brought their usual large group of beginners who will have gone away with valuable experience and increased skills, while a 10-strong contingent from Edinburgh Academy made the long trip south, with year-young Meryl Smith confirming her promise by winning the U18 singles Plate.

Aldenham fielded a junior pair who gained valuable experience in a version of fives with which they are largely unfamiliar, and Malvern managed to bring a pair at the end of a season when the courts have been out of action during a much needed refurbishment.

The RFA's thanks go to organiser Alex Smith and his team of masters-in-charge who ran the 4 categories during the day. We look forward to celebrating the 10th championships next year, with a potentially record entry.

## Scores

### U18 Singles

**1st round:** A. Denton (Rugby) bt R.Elliot (Edinburgh Academy) 11-4; N.Stokes (Edinburgh Academy) bt D.Stark (Edinburgh Academy) 11-2

**Quarter-finals:** I.Lee (Marlborough) bt Denton 11-0; F.Harrison (Rugby) bt M.Smith (Edinburgh Academy) 11-9; A.de Clermont (Rugby) bt Stokes 11-1; A.Laakkonen (Marlborough) bt M.Harte (Rugby) 11-0

**Semi-finals:** Lee bt Harrison 11-2; de Clermont bt Laakkonen 11-1

**Final:** Lee bt de Clermont 15-13

**Plate:** Smith bt Harte 15-3

### U18 Doubles

**Pool A:** 1st Rugby I (de Clermont & Harte); 2nd Edinburgh Academy I (Smith & O.Tofts); 3rd Edinburgh Academy III (Stark & Stokes)

**Pool B:** 1st Marlborough I (Laakkonen & Lee); 2nd Rugby II (Denton & Harrison); 3rd Edinburgh Academy II (Elliot & M.McWatters-Reed)

**Semi-finals:** Rugby II bt Rugby I 15-4; Marlborough I bt Edinburgh Academy I 15-2

**Final:** Marlborough I bt Rugby II 15-12

**Plate:** Rugby I bt Edinburgh Academy I 16-15

### U16 Singles

**1st round:** F.Millar (Edinburgh Academy) bt E.Macdonald (Aldenham) 11-1; S.Lambert (Christ's Hospital) bt I.de la Hey (rugby) 11-7; H.Richards (Rugby) bt A.Calder (Edinburgh Academy) 11-4; A.Doroshenko (Malvern) bt M.McWatters-Reed 11-0

**2nd round:** K.Sumner (Bedford Modern) bt Millar 11-0; K.Bell (Marlborough) bt A.Day (Rugby) 11-2; O.Tofts (Edinburgh Academy) bt Lambert 11-1; S.Lundie (Edinburgh Academy) bt L.Browne (Malvern) 11-6; A.Alli (Christ's Hospital) bt Richards 11-0; Z.Elliot (Edinburgh Academy) bt Z.Freedman (Aldenham) 11-1; Doroshenko bt Barton (Marlborough) 11-8; M.Kent (Bedford Modern) bt S.McGuinness (Rugby) 11-2

**Quarter-finals:** Sumner bt Bell 11-0; Tofts bt Lundie 11-8; Alli bt Elliot 11-8; Kent bt Doroshenko 12-11

**Semi-finals:** Sumner bt Tofts 11-0; Alli bt Kent 11-9

**Final:** Sumner bt Alli 15-3

**Plate:** Day bt Browne 11-0

### U16 Doubles

**Pool A:** 1st Christ's Hospital (A.Alli & S.Lambert); 2nd Marlborough (L.Barton & K.Bell); 3rd Rugby I (A.Day & S.McGuinness)

**Pool B:** 1st Bedford Modern (M.Kent & K.Sumner); 2nd Edinburgh Academy II (A.Calder & F.Millar); 3rd Aldenham (Z.Freedman & E.Macdonald)

**Pool C:** 1st Edinburgh Academy I (Z.Elliot & S.Lundie); 2nd Malvern (L.Browne & A.Doroshenko); 3rd Rugby II (I.de la Hey & H.Richards)

**Quarter-finals:** Christ's Hospital bt Aldenham 11-0; Bedford Modern bt Malvern 11-4; Marlborough I bt Edinburgh Academy II 11-0; Edinburgh Academy I bt Rugby I 11-5

**Semi-finals:** Bedford Modern bt Christ's Hospital 11-5; Marlborough bt Edinburgh Academy I 11-7

**Final:** Marlborough bt Bedford Modern 15-12

**Plate:** Malvern bt Rugby 11-4

## U14 Singles

**Quarter-finals:** R.Curtis (Marlborough) bt Moorcroft (Christ's Hospital) 11-5; K.Innes (Alleyn's) bt M.Hornby (Marlborough College) 11-1; L.Arie (Alleyn's) bt M.Stewart (Marlborough College) 11-2; M.Nugent (Alleyn's) bt M.Smith (Marlborough) 11-0

**Semi-finals:** Innes bt Curtis 11-4; Nugent bt Arie 11-2

**Final:** Nugent bt Innes 11-1

**Plate:** Stewart bt Smith 11-9

## U14 Doubles

**Pool A:** 1st Alleyn's (Innes & Nugent); 2nd Marlborough II (Curtis & Stewart); 3rd Christ's Hospital (Lane & Moorcroft)

**Pool B:** 1st Alleyn's/Marlborough (L.Arie & I.Price); 2nd Marlborough I (Hornby & Smith); 3rd Rugby (Harrison & Neal)

**Semi-finals:** Alleyn's bt Rugby 11-1; Marlborough I bt Marlborough II 11-9

**Final:** Alleyn's bt Marlborough I 11-1

**Plate:** Alleyn's/Marlborough bt Marlborough II 11-3

## U13 Singles

**Pool A:** 1st C.Stephens (Alleyn's); 2nd I.Rigg (Christ's Hospital) ; 3rd A.Demby (Christ's Hospital); 4th S.Agbedu (Christ's Hospital)

**Pool B:** 1st C.Davey (Alleyn's); 2nd I.Coote (Christ's Hospital); 3rd H.Spring (Christ's Hospital) ; 4th H.Caunter (Christ's Hospital)

**Semi-finals:** Stephens bt Coote 11-3; Davey bt Rigg 11-2

**Final:** Davey bt Stephens 11-7

**Plate:** Spring bt Demby 11-3

## U13 Doubles

**1st** Alleyn's (Davey & Stephens); **2nd** Christ's Hospital I (Coote & Rigg); **3rd** Christ's Hospital II (Demby & Spring); **4th** Christ's Hospital III (Agbedu & Caunter)

## Wessex Club regain the Wood Cup, the National Club Knock-out championship

St. Paul's School, Barnes

Saturday/Sunday, 21-22 April 2018

**STOP PRESS:** The Wessex Club regain the trophy from the Old Paulines in a close final. The West of England IV win the Plate competition.

*Organiser Tom Dean reports:* For any club member reading this whose club was not involved: Get next year's date in the diary — when it comes out, of course! In what is the only competition that offers matchplay it was a shame to only have five clubs enter.

Executioners, Old Blues, Old Paulines, Wessex and West of England competed the 2018 National Club Championship (aka the Wood Cup) in great spirit. The competition ended in a particularly close final and a new name on a (soon to be) new Plate.

### **Quarter-final – Executioners v. Old Blues**

In the top half of the draw, Executioners opened the day against the Old Blues. Topping the bill a tasty singles between Penn Chai and Ed Hatton. Ed served up the first lesson to young Penn — don't turn up early to a game of fives. Least of all when it involves a certain school master from Christ's Hospital. Indeed it would have been better for Penn to have had another 2 hours in bed, with Ed turning up too late for the rubber to be fitted in.

The remaining singles matches gave Executioners a healthy lead, with Ben Hale and Morgan Spillane the pick of the ties. Ben was quick to highlight that what pulled him through 11-6 was his champion diet of pizza and beer.

The doubles was looking like it would take the match further away from the Old Blues before a pumped-up Hatton with partner Louise Mathias stormed to some big wins. Sadly for the Old Blues it was only enough to tie the doubles and lose out overall 96-71.

### **Semi-final 1 — Old Paulines v. Executioners**

Executioners were rewarded with a semi-final on Saturday afternoon against holders, Old Paulines. Fortunately for Penn, his singles opponent was another early bird, Julian Aquilina. Unfortunately for Penn, his opponent was Julian Aquilina. No mercy shown, 11-1 the score.

The rest of the singles was similarly one-sided; however, the doubles was a more competitive affair. Ben Hale & Richard Bridge were close to winning a game against Tom Dean & James Tilston as were Tom Webster & Penn Chai. However, Julian Aquilina & Elliott Malone thundered through their matches, giving the OPs a 132-48 victory. OPs to the final

### **Semi-final 2 — Wessex v. West of England**

The bottom half of the draw was on the thin side. Previous winners Wessex versus semi-finalists of many a year, West of England. Could it be one step further for West of England? Sadly not. Wessex reshuffled their pack when they heard they were in for a morning game and pulled a certain Will Ellison out of a family do — they realise by now that fives takes priority and Will is Wessex to the core.

The match was relatively one-sided, although it was exciting to see Inigo Ackland back on court. His singles match against Dave Butler was particularly tight and when Inigo teamed up with Ollie Arnold it made for the hardest-hitting partnership this tournament has seen for many a year.

A margin of 123-50 took Wessex to the final and West of England to a Plate final against Old Blues.

### **Plate final – West of England v. Old Blues**

The Plate final took place directly after the semi- and quarter-finals for these teams respectively. West of England were out of the blocks quickly and rushed through the singles, dropping just two points.

The doubles was similarly one-sided and the West of England club romped to victory, only to find there was no physical prize at the end of it. In future years this won't be the case as the National Club Championship Plate will be donated by the winners. We thank you!

## **Final – Old Paulines v. Wessex**

A sunny Sunday morning saw a repeat of what has now been the same final for several years — too many for this organiser to remember. Wessex were looking to regain the trophy, while the Old Paulines were hoping to start another run.

Our organiser can only comment on one game of singles as he was locked at 2-2 when all the other games had finished. Due to starting late? No. Due to other games being quick? No. Singles matches between Dean and Munn will never win any prizes for aesthetics. Munn to Dean's right, Dean's right to Munn's left. And repeat. And repeat.

Wessex got the best of all but one game and took a 40 point to 24 lead after the singles. Into the doubles, and the Old Paulines kept clawing back points only to lose a few again — this seesaw went on right until the last round of matches in which the Old Paulines needed two healthy victories to nick the match.

Credit to both Wessex pairs — Ellison & Munn edged out Aquilina & Tilston as did Bulter & Hawke, who recovered well from their first match bagel to take their game against Brooks & Dean 12-10. With it Wessex regained the National Club Championship. Until next year...

### **Teams:**

Executioners: Richard Bridge, Penn Chai, Ben Hale, Tom Webster

Old Blues: George Boyle, Ed Hatton, Louise Mathias, Morgan Spillane

Old Paulines: Julian Aquilina, Charlie Brooks, Tom Dean, Elliott Malone, James Tilston

Wessex Club: James Birch, Dave Butler, Will Ellison, Ed Hawke, Giles Munn

West of England Club: Inigo Ackland, Oliver Arnold, Kevin Brice, Andy Lawson

### **Scores**

**Quarter-final:** Executioners beat the Old Blues 96-91

**Semi-finals:** Wessex beat the West of England 123-50; Old Paulines beat the Executioners 132-48

**Final:** Wessex beat the Old Paulines 107-95

**Plate:** West of England beat the Old Blues 133-36

## **The Scottish Schools' Championships**

Fettes College, Edinburgh

Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2018

### **Merchiston win the Boyd Trophy and retain the McKeown Plate in the second-ever Scottish Schools' Singles tournament**

*Richie Murby reports:* Due to the mid-March snow the Boyd Trophy tournament was moved to late April, but the players seemed not to have lost any momentum in the interim, with a high standard of play on offer for all who came down to the Fettes courts to watch. Moreover, 3 or 4 of the players in the draw, including the eventual winner, will still be at school for at least one more year, which is great news for the future.

Patrin Maddison of Loretto, though, will be leaving this year — but not without having made his mark, reaching the final after two gruelling and highly entertaining matches. The first, against Sean Yuille of Merchiston, seemed to be getting away from the Loretto No. 1 as Sean found his rhythm, but Patrin managed to raise the pace and find the urgency and quickness that the situation required, pegging back a 13-12 deficit to get over the line, 15-13. Thomas Peel of Edinburgh Academy, fresh

from an impressive National Schools performance at St. Paul's, competed well against Patrin in the semi-final, but the longer rallies tended to go against him in an entertaining, flowing match where experience ultimately told.

Merchiston's Doug Tidy did not have to dig as deep on his side of the draw, partly because his quarter-final opponent, Daniel Jourdan, was carrying an injury sustained earlier in the day. In the semi-final, Doug's patient, error-free attacking and unruffled defending, along with his composure and positional awareness, prevented a potentially very difficult challenge against Grant Sperling of Fettes from ever fully materialising.

In the final, Doug used disguised down-the-wall right-hand shots to devastating effect against a tiring opponent, and he was able to find winners and force errors despite Patrin's dogged resistance. Doug was a worthy winner, then, who we shall look forward to seeing play one more year at school level.

In the Plate, Sean Yuille came through an epic semi-final against the heavy-hitting, all-retrieving and visibly fatiguing Evan Li of Fettes, who at times pulled retrieves and winners out of the ether but perhaps couldn't quite match his opponent for fitness or consistent accuracy. Sean's fine technique and precision saw him through the Plate final against the rapidly improving Daniel Jourdan, who made a good game of it and made sure that Sean had to fight for his victory.

Thanks as ever go to the much-missed David Boyd and his wife Sarah for donating the Boyd Trophy and helping to create this wonderful tournament — and again to Sarah for coming to present the trophy.

### **Boyd Trophy results**

**Quarter-finals:** G. Sperling (Fettes) bt J. Cunningham (Loretto) 15-6; D. Tidy (Merchiston) bt D. Jourdan (Edinburgh Academy) 15-0; P. Maddison (Loretto) bt S. Yuille (Merchiston) 15-12; T. Peel (Edinburgh Academy) bt E. Li (Fettes) 15-6.

**Semi-finals:** D.Tidy (Merchiston) bt G. Sperling (Fettes) 15-2; P. Maddison (Loretto) bt T. Peel (Edinburgh Academy) 15-10.

**Final:** D.Tidy (Merchiston) bt P. Maddison (Loretto) 11-3, 11-3.

### **McKeown Plate results**

**Semi-finals:** D. Jourdan (Edinburgh Academy) bt J. Cunningham (Loretto) 15-6; S. Yuille (Merchiston) bt E. Li (Fettes) 15-13.

**Final:** S. Yuille (Merchiston) bt D. Jourdan (Edinburgh Academy) 15-8

And in events played earlier in the season:

**U18 Doubles:** Merchiston Castle School I (Douglas Tidy & Sean Yuille) bt Merchiston Castle School II (Max Layton & Thomas Mackintosh)

**U18 Plate:** Fettes College I (Evan Li & Grant Sperling)

**U16 Doubles:** Merchiston Castle School I (Max Layton & Thomas Mackintosh) bt Merchiston School II (Ben Afshar & Marcus Mulvey)

**U16 Plate:** Edinburgh Academy (Daniel Jourdan & Thomas Peel)

## Results from the Midlands Schools Regional Championships

Bedford School and Bedford Modern School

Sunday, 29th April 2018

Postponed from the snowy days of February this event coincided with a freezing and windy day in April. However, Messrs Croker, Dolby, Kay, Kirby and White, along with the Sumner parents, are a hardy lot and, quite apart from some excellent fives played out on the two sites, much enjoyed a visit from an ever-smiling Phil Smith who was delighted to see some of his former charges at Bedford Modern School performing so well.

A healthy entry for the U18 section at BMS went largely to plan, with the substantial contingent from the home school dominating proceedings in the Singles and Doubles. Indeed defending champion Joe Sumner carried off the Cooper Cup, defeating his partner Olly Colbert in the final, before the two of them went on to win the Doubles once more, this time in an internal battle with fellow leavers, George Larrington and Nishant Pradhan. The Plates however, both went to Rugby who duly decided to play the all-Rugby Singles final a few days later on their warmer home courts — result to be announced. Derby Moor had just the one player in this category this year, but the competition was graced by Katie Sumner and Maddie Kent from BMS, fresh from success at the Schoolgirls' championships.

Down at Bedford School a small entry this year for the U15s produced some heartening fives, especially in an exciting Singles final between A.R. from Derby Moor and Archie Gibbs from Rugby. The score 9-11, 12-10, 11-7 to the Derby Moor player gives an idea of the closeness of the contest, which was fought out in impeccable sporting fashion. As indeed were all contests. Archie got his revenge in the Doubles, where he and his partner Jamie Langham beat the Derby Moor pair first pair in another close match, while Derby Moor II picked up the Plate. The joy all these young players showed in winning their first piece of silverware vindicates the local decision to stage an U15 contest rather than an U16 one — doubtless they will all be back for more next year, including one promising player from BMS who was two years young.

### U18 Singles:

**Pool A:** 1st J.Drabble (Rugby); 2nd M.Nielsen (BMS); 3rd T.Hartshorn (BMS); scr. J.Sorensen (Bedford)

**Pool B:** 1st J.Sumner (BMS); 2nd T.Stoddart (Rugby); 3rd: V.Singh (Derby Moor); 4th C.Clark (BMS); 5th W.Jewers (Bedford)

**Pool C:** 1st T.Farren (Rugby); 2nd G.Larrington (BMS); 3rd K.Sumner (BMS); 4th J.Andrews (BMS)

**Pool D:** 1st O.Colbert (BMS); 2nd N.Pradhan (BMS); 3rd M.Kent (BMS); scr. K.Awan (Bedford)

**Quarter-finals:** Drabble bt Stoddart 15-3; Sumner bt Larrington 15-0; Farren bt Pradhan 15-4; Colbert bt Nielsen 15-1

**Semi-finals:** Sumner bt Drabble 15-8; Colbert bt Farren 15-6

**Final:** J.Sumner bt O.Colbert 15-2, 15-4

**Plate:** Farren bt Drabble 15-12 (played at Rugby)

### U18 Doubles

**Quarter-finals:** BMS I bt BMS V 15-0; Rugby/Derby bt BMS IV 15-9; BMS II bt Rugby 15-13; BMS III bt BMS IV 15-8

**Semi-finals:** BMS I bt Rugby/Derby 15-0; BMS II bt BMS III 15-6

**Final:** BMS I (Colbert & Sumner) bt BMS II (Larrington & Pradhan) 15-2

**Plate:** Rugby (Drabble & Farren)

## U15 Singles

**Pool A:** 1st K.Mahmood (Derby Moor); 2nd J.Langham (Rugby); 3rd M.Beardsley (Derby Moor); 4th H.Halsey (Bedford)

**Pool B:** 1st A.R. (Derby Moor); 2nd H.Davis (Rugby); 3rd H.Karavagelis (Bedford)

**Pool C:** 1st A.Gibbs (Rugby); C.Yates (Derby Moor); 3rd M.Griffith (BMS)

**Quarter-finals:** Mahmood bt Davis 15-3; A.R. bt Yates 15-0; Gibbs bt Griffith 15-3; Beardsley bt Langham 15-12

**Semi-finals:** A.R. bt Mahmood 15-1; Gibbs bt Beardsley 15-0

**Final:** A.R. bt Gibbs 9-11, 12-10, 11-7

**Plate:** Mahmood bt Beardsley 15-3

## U15 Doubles

**Round Robin:** 1st Rugby 60 points; 2nd Derby Moor 55 points; 3rd Derby Moor II 41 points; 4th Rugby/Derby 25 pts; 5th Bedford 8 pts

## Ladies' Winchester Fives titles for Raynor and Steel

Bradfield College

Sunday, 15th April 2018

In the enforced absence of defending champions Kathleen Briedenhann and Tessa Mills new champions were bound to emerge from this rearranged fixture. Organiser Maddy Raynor reports:

The Ladies Winchester Fives Championships were held on Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> April at Bradfield College. This was a rearranged date due to the competition having to be postponed as a result of snowy weather. Firstly I would like to give a big thank you to the College and to Jeremy Ball for their understanding, support and helpfulness with reorganising this competition. I would also like to thank everyone that entered and supported the competition, as the new date was not a date in the fives calendar.

Ladies (including schoolgirls) came from across the country for a very enjoyable and competitive day of fives. The day started off with a Doubles competition consisting initially of a round robin of one game to 15. The first games saw schoolgirls, Anna Laakkonen & Isabella Lee, play Katie Sumner & Maddie Kent. This was a good game, with both pairs getting used to the Winchester court and its buttress. After a battle it was Laakkonen & Lee that came out victorious 15-3. On the other court Maddy Raynor & Alexandra Steel took on Louise Mathias & Wendy Carling. With Mathias' strong hitting and Carling's volleying (coming from her Eton fives background) they made a strong pairing and meant business against Raynor & Steel, who had won the National Rugby Fives doubles earlier this year in January. The game lasted 45 minutes, with Raynor & Steel managing to hold off Mathias & Carling 15-10. This match set the tone for the event— it was going to be a long day. After some great and, I must say, long games of fives the Doubles finals commenced at 2pm, with the Singles still to come. Laakkonen & Lee played Sumner & Kent in the Plate final, with a trophy and mugs to win. Both pairs exhibited great fives and played some fantastic rallies — and it was clear to see that they were putting in to practice the advice that they had been given throughout the day. It was, however, Laakkonen and Lee who were victorious and regained their doubles Plate trophy 15-1, 15-7. The final saw Raynor & Steel play Mathias & Carling, At the beginning of the match it looked like it was going to be a gruelling repeat of the round robin contest, with long rallies and the scoreboard not moving. However, Raynor & Steel relied on their experience of playing together and began to pull away. Mathias & Carling did not stop battling, though, until the very end. The final point was won with Mathias hitting the buttress on her serve, which looked like an unreturnable winner, but Raynor, who had been waiting all match for this opportunity (and had failed on many attempts before), dived across the court and managed to return the ball just above the bar as a drop shot into the right-hand

corner. So Raynor & Steel beat Mathias & Carling 15-2, 15-2. After these two epic battles, there was no time to recover; it was time for the Singles competition to begin.

The Singles was a knock-out competition. The 1<sup>st</sup> round saw Lee face Sumner, two young players who were evenly matched and the score constantly changing; however, it was Lee who just edged in front of Sumner to win 15-12. The other matches saw Steel beat Kent 15-0 and Mathias beat Laakkonen 15-1. Unfortunately Carling had to pull out of the Singles due to other commitments, which gave organiser Raynor a bye into the semi-finals, where she faced Lee. Lee proved herself as a very competent and talented opponent, and Raynor had to battle hard to win eventually by 15-6. The other semi-final saw Mathias take on Steel; this was an exhibition of ladies fives at its best, with both battling hard. It was Steel who just managed to get the edge and win 15-7. Whilst the main competition was happening, Sumner, Laakkonen and Kent battled it out in a round robin for the singles Plate, with Sumner victorious, beating both Kent and Laakkonen. The level of fives that was displayed in this Plate competition shows how much talent there is in ladies fives and what a great job schoolgirls' coaches are doing.

The Singles final saw a grudge match between Raynor and Steel, who are both Old Blundellians and Exeter Rugby Fives Club members as well as doubles partners. The first game started with the two players demonstrating great fives with long rallies. It was eventually Raynor who crept ahead to 14-5, game point; however Steel kept fighting, despite the number of times Raynor managed to hit the buttress. 18 game points later and Steel had got the score to 14-9, but eventually Raynor managed to win the first game 15-9. Both Ladies were exhausted, but the final had to continue. The second game was a battle of determination where both ladies fought valiantly. However, Raynor got the edge and again it was 14-5. Raynor, now even more determined not to be on game point for as long as in the first game, finally managed after a long rally to find the buttress and finish the match. It was four years ago Raynor made her first final, which was on these courts at Bradfield. It has been a long and epic journey of fives, but she has eventually done it.

The sportsmanship and atmosphere at Bradfield on the day was amazing. I know that Denise would have been proud of all the ladies and schoolgirls who played and would have thoroughly enjoyed watching all the matches. It was a long and tiring day of great fives, but a highlight for me as organiser was to see how well the schoolgirls stepped up to the mark in a National Ladies competition and held their own.

## **Singles**

**1<sup>st</sup> round:** Lee bt Sumner 15-12; Steel bt Kent 15-0; Mathias bt Laakkonen 15-1

**Semi-finals:** Raynor bt Lee 15-6; Steel bt Mathias 15-7

**Final:** Raynor bt Steel 15-9, 15-5

**Plate Round Robin:** Sumner bt Kent 11-1 ; Laakkonen bt Kent 11-1; Sumner bt Laakkonen 11-3 —  
Winner: Sumner

## **Doubles**

**Round Robin:** Raynor & Steel bt Carling & Mathias 15-10; Raynor & Steel bt Laakkonen & Lee 15-1; Raynor & Steel bt Kent & Sumner 15-1

Carling & Mathias bt Laakkonen & Lee 15-4; Carling & Mathias bt Kent & Sumner 15-1; Laakkonen & Lee bt Kent & Sumner 15-3

**Final:** Raynor & Steel bt Carling & Mathias 15-2, 15-2

**Plate:** Laakkonen & Lee bt Kent & Sumner 15-1, 15-7

## **Latest Women's Rankings now available**

Rugby Fives Association  
4th May 2018

The latest rankings, compiled by Chris Burrows, show a gradual narrowing of the gaps at the top, with Maddy Raynor and Alexandra Steel closing in on the long-standing leaders Kathleen Briedenhann and Tessa Mills as a result of their success in the Ladies National Doubles in January and in the recent Ladies Winchester Fives championships.

Schools champion Ibbey Lee gains a place in the top 10 and her partner Anna Laakkonen gains two. The biggest jump is made by Rugby's Anastasia de Clermont, who pushed Ibbey hard in the final of the Schoolgirls' championships last month.

There are new entries: Freya Harrison and Arte Denton from Rugby School enter the top 20, while Meryl Smith of Edinburgh Academy makes spot number 30. Three other schoolgirls enter for the first time.

End-of-season rankings will follow the Mixed Winchester Fives championships to be played at Bradfield College on Sunday May 6th.

## **Scottish titles go to young players Butler, McCreath & Fraser**

Loretto School, Musselburgh  
Saturday/Sunday, 5-6 May 2018

**STOP PRESS:** 24 year-old Dave Butler wins the Scottish Open Singles for the second time, while Archie McCreath, who left Fettes last year, & U16 Winchester schoolboy Seb Fraser pick up the Doubles.

*Organiser Neil Roberts writes:*

This year's championships, held on the Loretto School courts, were blessed with the warmest early May Bank Holiday weekend temperatures since records began, making perfect viewing conditions for the capacity crowds at the back of the courts. We were also delighted to welcome three entrants from the recently formed City of Durham club (only an unfortunate and explosive bout of gastroenteritis preventing a fourth player from Durham making the trip!)

In the singles, the highlight of the first round was a keenly contested match between Camille Beattie and the tournament organizer, Camille narrowly losing two hard fought games 16-14, 16-15, but surely showing that she has a bright future and the ability to challenge for titles in the years to come. Despite creditable performances from Ben Stephens (Alleyn's and Aberdeen University), Michael Kemp (Caledonian stalwart) and Archie McCreath (Fettes old boy and last year's Scottish Schoolboy champion) the top two seeds, Richie Murby and Dave Butler, eased through to the final to set up a repeat of the final of two years ago. As in their previous final encounter, Dave triumphed in three hard fought games in a match of great quality to win the coveted Cuthbertson Quaich for the second time.

In the doubles competition on Sunday, Archie McCreath partnering Seb Fraser (Winchester College) proved too strong for the other pairs, eventually defeating Neil Roberts and Enrique Castillo (Catalonia) 15-4, 15-8 in the final. In the Plate final, Jonathan Lee (Caledonian Club) and Thomas Peel (Edinburgh Academy) beat Patrin Maddison (Loretto) and Oscar McIntyre (City of Durham) 15-7, 15-7.

Many thanks to Loretto School and, in particular, to Steve Tebbutt (master in charge of Fives) for allowing us to use the marvellous school facilities and making us feel so welcome.

## RESULTS

### Singles

**1st round:** A McCreath bt J McIntyre 15-0, 15-2; N Roberts bt C Beattie 16-14, 16-15

**Quarter-finals:** D Butler bt McCreath 15-5, 15-10; M Kemp bt B Stephens 15-4, 15-8; P Maddison bt Roberts 15-1, 15-8; R Murby bt O McIntyre 15-2, 15-4

**Semi-finals:** Butler bt Kemp 15-1, 15-2; Murby bt Maddison 15-1, 15-2

**Final:** Butler bt Murby 12-15, 15-7, 15-6

**Plate:** McCreath

### Doubles

**Pool A:** Maddison & O McIntyre bt Murby & Beattie 15-12, 1-15, 15-5; Fraser & McCreath bt Maddison & McIntyre 15-7, 15-6, bt Murby & Beattie 15-5, 15-5

**Pool B:** Castillo & Roberts bt Kemp & J McIntyre 15-2, 15-3; Lee & Peel bt Kemp & McIntyre 15-7, 15-3; Castillo & Roberts bt Lee & Peel 15-12, 15-7

**Final:** Fraser & McCreath bt Castillo & Roberts 15-4, 15-8

**Plate:** Lee & Peel

## National Winchester Fives Mixed Doubles championship

Bradfield College, Sunday May 6th

STOP PRESS Bristol students win Winchester Fives Mixed Doubles title: Ollie Arnold won his second consecutive Winchester Fives Mixed Doubles title this weekend, but this year with a new partner, fellow Bristol student Louise Mathias.

As ever, the tournament brought together a wide range of competitors, with relative veterans such as three-times champions Andy Pringle & Alex Steel, playing together for the sixth time, joined by a few Eton Fives players and some very promising schoolchildren. Indeed, it was the Alleyn's pair of Gwydion Wiseman & Martha Nugent who caused the first shock of the day, beating the fancied pairing of Maddy Raynor (fresh from winning the Ladies Winchester Fives doubles title) and her partner Keith Kennerley in the first round of pool matches.

Meanwhile, in the other pool, the Sumner siblings from Bedford Modern were also proving a force to be reckoned with, winning all of their matches, except against Ollie and Louise. It was a pattern repeated in the other pool, where eventually Andy & Alex came through with a 100% record to claim their place in the semi-finals, with Gwydion & Martha ending up as runners-up in the group.

That meant the semi-finals had a very young feel, with half of the eight players being schoolchildren, two of them students, and just two of the players in work! In the end, though, experience told, with the top two seeds — Andy & Alex and Louise & Ollie — going through to the final. However, the four youngsters should be very proud of their achievement in reaching the semi-finals of an open tournament while still at school.

As with the whole event, the final was played in a tremendous spirit, with a huge amount of respect between the four players and lots of long, hard-fought rallies. However, it quickly became obvious that the left/right-hand pairing of Ollie & Louise would be tough to break down, and they soon worked their way into a big lead in the first game of the best-of-three final.

For Andy & Alex, the problem was that, if they went for the buttress and missed, the ball fell nicely to Ollie's left hand — which proved to be quite a weapon — and, if they targeted Louise, she wasn't just equal to the challenge, she was capable of hitting winners herself off her right hand. And, if anyone thought that Ollie serving left-handed, with no butters to aim for, was a disadvantage, they soon changed their tune when they saw how often he was able to find the nick with his serve.

It meant Andy & Alex were never able to score a major run of points, and so it was that the Bristol pair took the first game to 8. The second game started a little differently, with Ollie & Louise seemingly having lost some concentration and allowing Andy & Alex to get into an early lead after a few uncharacteristic errors from the opposition. However, this was only a temporary state of affairs, and soon the Bristol pair were back in the groove, finding the winners and forcing the mistakes from the opposition that gave them the second game – and the title – with another 15-8 win.

Meanwhile, the Plate competition was every bit as keenly contested, with a variety of styles on show from the various players. However, in the end, it was Maddy & Keith who went home with the silverware – which was more than the winners of the competition did, as one of last year's winners had failed to return the trophy!

## **RESULTS** (ladies' names first)

### **Round-robin phase:**

**Pool 1:** A.Steel & A.Pringle bt A.Lumbard & C.Ballingall 15-2, bt M.Nugent & G.Wiseman 15-7, bt M.Raynor & K.Kennerley 15-4; Nugent & Wiseman bt Raynor & Kennerley 15-8, bt Lumbard & Ballingall 15-8; Raynor & Kennerley bt Lumbard & Ballingall 15-8

**Pool 2:** L.Mathias & O.Arnold bt D.Redmond & S.Scott 15-3, bt K.Hird & G.Hoskins 15-6, bt K.Sumner & J.Sumner 15-3; Sumner & Sumner bt Hird & Hoskins 15-8, bt Redmond & Scott 15-5; Hird & Hoskins bt Redmond & Scott 15-13

### **Knockout section:**

**Semi-finals:** Steel & Pringle bt Sumner & Sumner 11-5, 11-7; Mathias & Arnold bt Nugent & Wiseman 11-3, 11-1

**Final:** Mathias & Arnold bt Steel & Pringle 15-8, 15-8

**Plate:** Raynor & Kennerley

## **RFA Golf Day: Tall Pines Golf Club, Bristol, September 26th**

RFA Treasurer David Parlby is planning and trying to gauge interest for an RFA Golf Day. Scheduled to take place at the Tall Pines Golf Club near Bristol, on Wednesday 26 September, the inaugural Rugby Fives Golf Day is designed to allow Fives players to come and meet their old mates and make new ones.

The cost will be £39 for coffee & bacon bap, 18 holes and a two-course meal.

For further information and to express your interest in playing, click on this link to email David Parlby.

## **Tony Dawes (1930-2018)**

21st May 2018

**The RFA has learned of the death of Tony Dawes, our oldest National Singles Champion. He is also the youngest to have won the title, at the age of 19.2 in 1950.**

The Office of the Old Bedfordians reports: We have been informed that Old Bedfordian, ADR Dawes (Tony) sadly passed away last week at the age of 87. Although his mobility had had not been great over the last two years Tony had up to this point been blessed with good health and had lived a full and active life. He leaves behind his wife, three children, 5 grandchildren and a stepdaughter.

A full obituary will appear in *The Ousel* at the end of the year. Tony attended Bedford School from 1937 to 1949, along with his elder brother, Michael. Tony was an impressive gymnast and also **became a renowned Rugby Fives player, winning the National Schools' Singles competition in 1948 and 1949. He then went on to win the Amateur Singles in 1950, 1951, and 1952, along with the Amateur Doubles in 1950 and 1951 (with JR Nicol and ER Conradi).** Following school he joined the Royal Air Force, reaching the rank of Squadron Leader. Although it appears that he did not continue to play Fives at such a high level\*, we understand that he became a formidable opponent on the Squash court.

Tony was a great supporter of Bedford School and the OB Club, and always tried to get to reunions and events if he could.

\*We note that Tony did partner John Pretlove in the National Doubles competition at Allyn's in 1983 [Ed. RFA]

## **Derby Moor courts refurbished ahead of this weekend's tournament**

Derby Moor Academy

Saturday 9th and Tuesday 12th June 2018

Work has been completed on the refurbishment of the Derby Moor courts ahead of this weekend's final Rugby Fives tournament of the season — The Derby Moor Invitation Doubles — which will see players from Derby, Durham, Bedford, London, the Deep West Club and the Halifax White Rose Club compete for the coveted tankard and coaster.

With the blessing of the school, now the Derby Moor Academy, the work was financed and partly carried out — as is the Club's wont — by its members at a cost of £2,500

Lewis Keates led the repair of the left-hand-court side wall using a coloured epoxy render on Saturday. The lower part of the wall had become cracked and contained loose pieces of render. Foreman Stuart Kirby reports that “this is now fixed after a gruelling day for Lewis, Richard Christie and myself”.

Richard and Stuart also searched for balls in the nooks and crannies around the roof and discovered a total of 15 — most of them usable. The holes were then plugged, so hopefully no more will be lost.

On the following Tuesday, the 14-year-old fluorescent-tube lighting, which had become somewhat dim and yellowed, was replaced on both courts. The new fittings are enclosed LED units which make the courts much brighter and more inviting. They look suitably professional and will last a lot longer compared to the old ones.

See below for photos of the finished work, with Lewis displaying his plastering skills and Richard his method of measuring out equal amounts of render. Stuart, who has master-minded this operation, has also been advising on the recent refurbishment of the courts at Bedford Modern and Whitgift.

## **End-of-Season Women's Rankings published**

Rugby Fives Association

22nd June 2018

The RFA is pleased to publish the end-of-season rankings for Women's Rugby Fives 2018. To be eligible players must have entered at least one of the appropriate tournaments during the past two seasons.

National Singles champion Kathleen Briedenhann tops the list as she did at the end of 2016 when these rankings were introduced. The next four players — Tessa Mills, Maddy Raynor, Alexandra Steel and U23 champion Louise Mathias — have now pulled clear of the rest of the field.

Newcomers are National U16 champion Katie Sumner, now eligible by age, and Dominique Redmond after their performances in the recent Winchester Fives Mixed Doubles at Bradfield College.

The next rankings, kindly compiled by Chris Burrows, will be published after the Ladies' National Championships in January 2019.

## **Tristao and Ellison head the End-of-Season National Rankings**

25th June 2018

Dan Tristao and Will Ellison head the newly published End-of-Season Rankings for 2017-18. Dan regains top spot in the Singles while Will retains his lead in the Doubles.

This season sees Ed Kay joining Tristao and Ellison in a tight group heading the Singles, with Ed moving up into second place. Tristao picked up 6 of the season's 9 open singles events including the National Singles, while Ed Kay won in London and Yorkshire and also picked up titles in the Universities and U25 events. David Butler picked up the other open title in Scotland.

Theo Parker moves into the top ten at 9, while Sam Russell, James Tilston, Ben Jourdan, Ed Hawke and Andrew Boyd all make good progress in the top 20. Tom Kidner from Winchester is the highest new entry at 21. Evergreen John Minta moves up to 24, while James Smith also makes it into the top 30.

Notable new entries further down the list include Ben Kirwan, Nick Woolfenden, Archie McCreath, Peter Winzeler and Lewis Keates. In total the season sees 16 new players added to the Singles Rankings list.

In the Doubles, Will Ellison retains his top spot despite (with Charlie Brooks) losing to Dan Tristao & Dan Grant in the National Doubles final. The Dons did enough over the season to move up to positions 2 and 3 respectively.

Ellison won 4 of the 7 open titles on offer, remarkably all with different partners — Dan Grant, Matt Shaw, Ed Kay and Charlie Brooks. Dan Tristao was involved in all the other 3 titles again with different partners — Ed Kay, David Butler and Dan Grant in the Nationals. If players stuck to the same partners it would make writing these reports a bit easier! In addition to his two titles above, Ed Kay also picked up the Universities and U25 titles, amazingly each time with the same partner, Matt Shaw.

The draw for partners events (where just 50% points are awarded) were won by Nick Woolfenden & Tim Hebblethwaite (South East) and Seb Fraser & Archie McCreath (Scotland).

Andrew Boyd, Sam Russell, Henry Jefferies, Tim Hebblethwaite and Nick Woolfenden all move up into the top 20, with Nick the season's highest new entry at 20. We see good progress in the top 30 from Richie Murby, Neil Roberts, Seb Fraser (new entry), Archie McCreath, Bart Callaghan, Rob Whitehorn and Nick Geere.

Notable high risers further down the list include Morgan Spillane, Julian Hanton, Ed Hawke, Inigo Ackland, Enrique Castillo Carbonell, Ashley Hill, Lewis Keates, Ben Kirwan, Jai Singh, James

Smith, Chris Davey and Peter Winzeler. In total the season sees 27 new players added to the Doubles Rankings list.

There is cause for optimism regarding the season's Tournament entries, which were very healthy. The total Singles entries across all events (i.e. including Universities and U25) was the second highest on record, the highest being just two years ago in 2015-16. Doubles entries were also strong, the highest since 1984.

To see the full official rankings, just click on the link below.

*Official RFA rankings* (opens in separate window).

The official RFA rankings are prepared by Dave Hebden.

## **Goodwin & Sandie win the Derby Moor Doubles – again**

Derby Moor Academy

Sunday, 24th June 2018

Organiser Brian Kirk reports: On Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> June, Derby Moor Fives Club ran its summer invitation tournament. 24 players entered, with long-standing supporters of the event coming from White Rose in Halifax, plus other individuals from around the country. This year saw a strong entry from newcomers, the City of Durham Fives Club, who brought along both adult and junior players of both sexes.

The draw contained a mix of experienced and new players playing the best-of-three games to 11 points with first and second round losers migrating to two Plate pools. With a mix of abilities some of the early games proved a little one-sided, but both the semi-final and final proved competitive, with long hard games in a best-of-three-to-15 format. It took a three-setter for Anthony Goodwin & stalwart Bob Sandie to beat the nicely balanced combination of Nick Geere & Lewis Keates. The initial game was won by the latter pair, setting the scene for what many thought would be a short final. However, with Goodwin "stepping up" and Sandie playing his usual consistent defensive game, keeping the ball in play, victory was assured in the second game, thus setting the scene for a tense final contest, winner taking all. Initially the game ebbed and flowed, favouring one then the other pair. However, as fatigue set in, mistakes were made by Geere & Keates, allowing Goodwin & Sandie to move into a lead which they quickly consolidated into a win.

It was Anthony's 4th victory in this annual contest and Bob's 3rd. They previously won it together in 2013.

The Plate was a round-robin funfest in which junior players were given the opportunity to challenge more experienced players and pairs. Hamish Buchanan, partnering up-and-coming junior player A.R., won through in pool 1 while Neil Roberts and the slightly more experienced left-hander Vishal headed pool 2. The final ebbed and flowed but Hamish & A.R. finally won the contest for the silver boules.

### **Scores**

**1st round:** Neil Roberts & Vishal Singh bt Yale Brewer & Brian Kirk 11-1, 11-4; Ashley Hill & Mark Kiteley bt Camille Beattie & Stuart Kirby 11-7, 11-9; Richard Christie & Sian Tustin bt John Hawke & Julie McIntyre 11-0, 11-3; Hamish Buchanan & A.R. bt Matthew Beardsley & Callum Yates 11-2, 11-0

**Quarter-finals:** Anthony Goodwin & Bob Sandie bt Roberts & V.Singh 11-2, 11-3; Hill & Kiteley bt

Christie & Tustin 11-5, 3-11, 11-0; Jai Singh & Tom Wakelam bt Simon Beattie & Oscar McIntyre 11-5, 11-0; Nick Geere & Lewis Keates bt Buchanan & A.R. 7-11, 11-6, 11-8  
**Semi-finals:** Goodwin & Sandie bt Hill & Kiteley 15-8, 15-2; Geere & Keates bt J.Singh & Wakelam 16-14, 15-8  
**Final:** Goodwin & Sandie bt Geere & Keates 8-15, 15-7, 15-5  
**Plate Final:** Buchanan & A.R. bt Roberts & V.Singh

**This tournament marks the end of the Rugby Fives Season**