

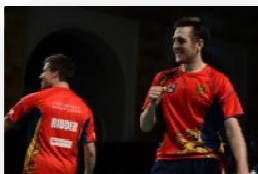


## Progress and Achievement Report - May 2015

In March I had the pleasure to report medal winning performances at the U15 8 Nations (Freya Patel-Redfearn), National Championships (Gary Fox), U19 nationals (David Jones) and the Masters national championships (Alistair Jones). Myself, Gary and Daryl have been very happy to see the squad continue to transfer the hard work from practice and training into



impressive tournament performances all over Europe to top off a fantastic season of badminton for EPT Wycombe. Players have concentrated well, in a period where long-term development sometimes gets neglected in favour of short-term wins. Thankfully, I am working with the type of players and coaches who value both. For the last 8 weeks the squad have struck a balance, preparing well for competition, giving their best in order to prove themselves and secure medals and titles whilst also keeping an eye on their long-term goals, building themselves as athletes so they are prepared for bigger challenges in the future.

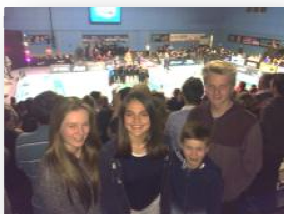


This busy period has involved good progress by all, including

Ollie Thompson who is now back to full fitness and was recently selected as reserve for the Surrey Smashers! Our star coach and national silver

medalist Gary Fox, maintains a 75% win ratio in the NBL for Birmingham Lions but sadly had pull out of the final match

against Surrey Smashers to the disappointment of fans in the crowd (pictured below). Well done to Adam Lam who won bronze at U17 nationals and helped Buckinghamshire win gold at ICT; Lucy Dong, who battled hard to earn Berkshire a



Silver at ICT; Kishan Hathi, Warwickshire U14 Rising Star Champion and Kaylan Jensen, who

have both been making good strides with their stability and strength training with Evan Jenkins at Bisham Abbey. Big mention to Alex Cook who, according to the girls in the squad



"has the best legs in EPT", and has used them well to put in some personal best performances against his rivals recently and lead out Oxfordshire at ICT. Well done Dan Blair who joined

the squad recently and has really stepped up his level, great stuff. Well done also to Sam Andrews and former EPT players Paige Butler, Jamie Kilgariff and Stewart Burnett for fighting to secure promotion for Buckinghamshire in the Premier League next season, a great bounce back to the top flight. Well done the fittest



coach in our team, Daryl Jacobs who has gained entry into his first IRONMAN Triathlon in September, big summer training block - good luck! But the recent standout achievements go to Abigail Holden, Freya Redfearn, David Jones and young-gun Charlie Castle... more details below.

**Abigail Holden** has established herself amongst the top girls of her age in Europe. Having won the Swiss International earlier this season, she has just got back from the 6 Nations in Germany where she reached the quarter-final and then helped England win bronze, beating the best girls that Germany, Holland, and Sweden had to offer. Despite competing well at the Senior and U19 national championships, Abigail's first national title still eludes her. At the U17 nationals, Abigail showed what great progress she has made in her semi-final performance, beating the number one seed but then after leading in the final, her opponent fought back in what became a painfully close three-set match that just got away from Abigail 20-22 in the 2nd and 3rd. Another log to throw on the fire! Abigail bounced back the following week, and played her part in a remarkable achievement for the Berkshire U17 squad at the ICT Championships. Abigail avenged her loss at the nationals with a convincing win against Surrey and remained unbeaten on the singles court to help Berkshire achieve a historic silver medal, narrowly losing to winners Buckinghamshire on a 5-5 count-back. Overall a good season for Abigail, lots of experiences to use for bigger challenges in the future.

Congratulations to **David Jones** who having shown star potential at the U19 nationals, was selected to represent England at the Junior Europeans in Poland and was part of a silver medal winning experience. To be part of such a strong national junior squad a year young is credit to David's maturity, competitive instincts and his effort to do additional off-court work with support from strength coach Matt Jaggard. Well done to his teammates who battled hard to beat France to get to the final. Sadly, David did not manage to defend his U17 national title, losing narrowly in the semi-final in what viewers described as a flat performance, which David himself admitted was 'a result of complacency and poor mental preparation'. Still, the Danish Cup champion bounced back with energy at ICT to avenge his nationals loss and lead his team out with confidence to secure silver, an amazing achievement from the royals. David has since won his 3rd senior title with a more physical yet intelligent performance at the Berkshire Open: less bark more bite! This season, having been sat on the bench with the Surrey Smasher squad, having trained at the NBC with the senior squad, and having been exposed to some of the best U19 players in the world at Dutch and Europeans, David now has more awareness of what it really takes at the top of the game, and will be focusing even more on his overall athletic development in order to step-up to senior international level next year. Exciting things to come... but exams come first!



**Freya Patel-Redfearn** has shown great progress on the domestic and international circuit. At the U17 nationals Freya played a clever match to beat 5/8 seed and tough competitor, Ciara



Lindsay but frustratingly had to pull out in the next round with an injury. With one week to recover and prepare for the U15 nationals, a tournament Freya had been targeting for many months, the task suddenly looked painfully difficult. However, Freya's maturity and determination showed that week in her work with Evan Jenkins and

physiotherapist Jean-Peirre. Freya committed to a new set of exercises and a positive plan for the upcoming weekend and was ready to compete. On day one Freya, and everybody else, was saddened by a horrible injury sustained by the number one seed,

Grace King who we wish her a quality recovery. On paper, Freya

was then the favourite for the tournament, but it would be no

easy feat. It required a focus on her tactical plans and strict management of her body in between matches. At the end of a very long day, Freya had reached all three

semi-finals! On the Sunday, Freya played a tiring and tense semi-final against Molly Chapman. After controlling and winning the first set, Freya then had to deal with the pressure of expectation and a gritty fight back from Molly. At a tight change of ends in the third set, Freya turned to George Bevan... "There is no way I am losing this". As George describes, he then "just sat back and watched Freya make it happen". She stormed to a decisive lead to book her place in the final. Having lost both doubles and mixed semi-finals, she had it all to play for in the singles final against tough Yorkshire girl, Hannah Boden. Freya imposed herself well in the first set and despite a fight back from Hannah in the second; Freya clinched the title on her first championship point! This is Freya's first national title, well done! Then, as if to



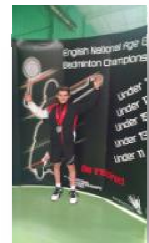
make up for her doubles losses at the Nationals, Freya flew straight out to Denmark to compete at the Aros Cup 2015, where she and her mixed partner Jack MacGregor (pictured



above) beat seeded pair after pair and won the title 22-20 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the final – fantastic result both of you! A summer fitness block ahead for Freya, focusing on the athletic development so she can approach next season with some ambitious performance targets!



It is great to see how the focus and commitment shown by the EPT squad is inspiring younger players to learn and build on such success... Massive congratulations to young rising star **Charlie Castle** who has gone from strength to strength this season and topped it off by winning his first National Championship title – 2015 U11 national boys singles champion! Charlie had to deal with the weight of his own expectation, having established himself as the clear favorite with dedication to training and good progress throughout the season. Charlie used the expectation to his advantage, prepared well for every match and won the title without dropping a set. A very professional performance from such a young lad, it was great to see the focus turn into a massive smile at the end of the day, very well deserved Charlie. Charlie has a well-balanced approach to his training on-court and also off-court with Evan Jenkins at Bisham Abbey, and the hard work clearly pays off! Not long after nationals, Charlie travelled to Belgium to compete against some of the best players in Europe and came away with two silver medals and lots of confidence for future internationals.



Great to see England squad youngsters Safia Khimji and Christian Mitchell, who have joined Wycombe in collaboration with Oxfordshire Performance Centre, both improving well and medalling at the U13 National Championships, well done! This means that Team Wycombe has helped players achieve a clean sweep of national podium finishes: U11, U13, U15, U17, U19, Senior & Masters! Well done all! Extraordinary achievements require extraordinary preparation and an extraordinary team! The progress we make is a result of people working together. Thank you **Gary Fox, Daryl Jacobs, Evan Jenkins, Matt Jaggard, Alistair Jones** and all the **committee, staff and members at Wycombe Badminton Centre** for your efforts to provide the players with top support and encouragement. A big thank you and well done to all the **parents** for going that little bit further every week to ensure that convenience doesn't get in the way of developing performance habits, you play a central part in the squad's achievements! Thanks to **BADMINTON England and Yonex** for supporting our programme here at Wycombe. Good luck to all players who now focus on achieving a balance between their training and revision. Education is empowering, and we hope that you can approach your exams with quality preparation. We have an exciting summer to look forward to, many players are off at camps all over the world, while the coaching team will be delivering a fitness training block here at Wycombe and Bisham Abbey with the support from S&C coach Evan Jenkins. Little details, big steps!

