

Dorchester Tennis & Squash Club held its annual Junior Club Tennis Championships during the half term week. A total of 62 children took part with ages ranging from 7 to 18 years old, playing in their own age category and some played in two age groups. The standard of tennis was very good. It was both competitive but friendly at the same time. All those that played take part in the tennis coaching groups that take place at the Club, but overflow onto the courts at St Osmund's Sports Centre, and Sunninghill School.

The match of the week was between 16 year old Kayleigh Budge, who has been the Girls Champion for the last 4 years, and 13 year old Emily Noel. This was a repeat of last years final when Kayleigh easily over powered Emily. But a years more experience on Emily's young shoulders really pushed Kayleigh and had her very worried at times. However the experience showed through and Emily couldn't quite achieve what she desperately wanted, but did say that she had played her best tennis and couldn't have done more!

The 8 & under players play their tennis matches on mini tennis courts, and play just a 10 point tie break for each of their matches. It is a mixed competition with the boys competing evenly against the girls. The two youngest competitors came through to play each other in the final. It was a tense affair between the two 7 year olds, with Orlando Henshaw, in his first ever tournament, going 8 points to 3 up, but the slightly more match experienced Noah Mayers, snuck back to take the title by 10 points to 8.

The 9 and unders play on a proportionately smaller court, and play the best of three 7 point tie breaks for their matches. A very tight final saw Nathan Sloley beat Noah Smith 5-7 7-4 7-5.

The 10 and unders is also played as a mixed competition and Kiara Gannaway held her own against the boys, to finish in 4th place in a round robin format. Ethan Robinson's exceptional technical skills and good footwork demonstrated how he was in a league of his own in this age group and he took the title without losing a game.

The girls were divided into two groups depending on their playing experience. 13 year old Nuala Arthy held onto her Girls B title by beating 10 year old Kiara Gannaway in the final by 6 games to 2. The improvement shown by the 7 girls playing in this category is pleasing to see, and they will continue to get better. The Girls A event consisted of 12-18 year olds, playing the shortened scoring system of sets to 4 games. It was great to see six girls playing a really good standard of tennis, and they are coming through to play in the ladies teams. Kayleigh Budge beat Emily Noel 5-3 5-4.

Predictably the Boys 12 & unders had the largest amount of competitors. Most of these boys take part in two coaching groups throughout the week, and some are playing regularly in tournaments, and team competitions representing the Club. In the final Cameron Robinson beat Tauhid Ahmad 4-0 4-1.

The boys 14 & under competition was a good standard of tennis, with Joe Chambers defeating Charlie Barnett 4-1 4-2. These two players regularly play tournaments around the country. They train hard, and represent the Club in the junior teams, and they will both go on to play regularly in Club teams for the rest of their playing times. They are a good advertisement for the Club.

The 16 & under boys event had just 5 boys playing in it, so they all played each other with the top two players playing out the final. 13 year old Joe Chambers again came through to take his second title beating 14 year old Alex Baker in a closely fought match, which Alex reckoned he lost, by making too many unforced errors. The score in the final was 4-0 5-3.

It was great to have a Boys 18 & under event for the first time in a couple of years. Two of the 14 year old boys were brave enough to take on the might of 17 year olds Will Channon and James Warne, who play with large amounts of power but not enough consistency yet. Tom Bradbury fought well, and came third but the final came down to a little and large competition with 6ft 5 in

Will Channon blasting his serve down to 14 year old Alex Baker. However Alex's consistency won through and he was able to beat Will without the loss of a game, 4-0 4-0. Hopefully the older boys will learn that power isn't everything.

A very good weeks tennis for the Junior section of the Club. Thank you to the parents and siblings for all their support.