

CHESHIRE COUNTY LTA JUNIOR HANDBOOK 2020-2021



CHESHIRE TENNIS

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JUNIOR COUNTY HANDBOOK INTRODUCTION

Cheshire LTA's Competition & Tournaments and Junior Performance Committees produce this handbook for the benefit of all Cheshire tennis clubs, as well as targeting junior players and their parents.

Under normal circumstances we like to give news about some of our junior tennis players as well as the various age group County teams. As tennis at all levels has been severely disrupted since March, the contents of this year's handbook will be different in that we have very few results to include but hopefully the changes we have made will prove both interesting and informative.

We thought it would be a change to ask some of our junior county players to write about their tennis experiences so we asked Rhona Cook (18U Cheshire Junior Champion) to give an insight into what it was like playing in the 18U Junior County Cup event (played in February). Alfie King (12U Cheshire Junior Champion) was asked a variety of questions about his tennis journey so far. We also thought it would be useful for you to read about what it's like to go to an American University on a tennis scholarship so we approached Hannah McColgan and she kindly agreed to write about some of her experiences. Finally, we've included the results of a Q & A with Stuart Murray who is Head Coach at Alderley Edge LTC and Captain of our 14U Boys county team. He was interviewed by our Junior Performance Co-ordinator Simon Thornewill.

It's always pleasing when junior players are selected to play for the Ladies and Men's County teams and back in pre-Covid times (November 2019) some of our top juniors deservedly gained selection for the Cheshire Winter County Cup. It was great to see Ben Nicol and Tom Owen playing in Group 2 and competing against some of the best players in the country. Special praise, however, goes to Ellie Aldrich, Jemma Cave, Rhona Cook, Maldini Simic and Ella Walker. To have five juniors picked for the Ladies squad is exceptional and they were part of an undefeated team that deservedly gained promotion to National Group 2. Well done girls!



We continue to be interested to hear the views of our junior players and their parents as well as from our club coaches regarding any tennis matters. Please do not hesitate to speak to or get in touch with any of our Committee members should you have any ideas as to how we might improve upon the current work we are undertaking. Maybe you are even interested in volunteering to sit on one of our County committees. Please let me know if you would like details as to what it involves. My e mail address is jhilton35@hotmail.com

The Junior Performance Committee members are Mark Hunter (Widnes Tennis Centre), Debbie McKeever (Bramhall Lane LTC), Liz Sweeting (Bramhall Lane LTC) & Simon Thornewill (David Lloyd Cheadle).

The Competitions & Tournaments Committee comprises Barbara Bloor (Heswall LTC), Esme Laing (Birkenhead LTC), Russell Lawrence (Cheadle LTC), Debbie McKeever (Bramhall Lane LTC), Barbara Newnes (Birkenhead LTC), Linda Simpson (Heswall LTC), Liz Sweeting (Bramhall Lane LTC), Anthony Wilding (Hoole LTC) and Clive Young (Alsager LTC)

I hope to see you all competing soon and enjoying your tennis.

John Hilton - Chair, Junior Performance Committee and Competitions & Tournaments Committee

COUNTY JUNIOR PERFORMANCE COORDINATOR

I really believed as a County we were set for an extremely successful year competitively at all county levels before they unexpectedly got cancelled due to the pandemic. The last three years we have significantly improved as a County and I strongly felt that the hard work of all the players and coaches was more and more evident and paying off in all County matches, especially our doubles play and our team ethos, which has been a key focus with our players. Obviously, we're all disappointed they were cancelled as I know County Cup means so much to the players and coaches.



You will be pleased to know we have been busy planning for September and I am hopeful that the camps will begin again as soon as possible in preparation for County Cups in 2021.

The County has seen over 100 players take part in County Training over the last year over all the age groups. All age groups have played at least one County match, including the 8U boys' and girls' team who competed in their first ever triangle event vs Yorkshire and Lancashire. The 18U teams completed their County Cup back in February and kicked off the year strongly with the girls gaining promotion from Division 3 to Division 2 and the boys staying in Division 2. Our aim is to get both teams competing in Division 1.

We sent three boys and three girls to watch the final of Teen Tennis at Bolton which is one of the best 14U Tennis Europe events. They were fortunate enough to watch the boy's and girl's final and take part in a Q&A session with the players and their coaches. The County had over 70 players attend the 8U County Open day at Birchwood Tennis Centre in November 2019, from where players are filtered into 8U County Training.

Everyone, like myself will be disappointed that the Junior County Championships were cancelled by the LTA. I really enjoy this week of tennis and it's most definitely one of the highlights to my year. It enables me to watch the players closely to see how their game is developing and gives me the opportunity to catch up with parents. On a positive note the County has created the Cheshire Junior Challenge which will give the players a chance to get back to competing against each other and create a buzz around County tennis again.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR CHESHIRE?

- 1 Continue with County matches for all age groups
- 2 Planning County Training for all age groups to commence as soon as possible
- 3 Two squads for 18U Boys County Training (Gold and Blue)
- 4 Planning 8U weekly County Training from January 2021
- 5 Reserve list for County Training if players can't attend.

If you have any questions regarding Cheshire Tennis please contact me on:

Simon@cheshirecountyta.org.uk

Simon Thornewill

ANNUAL JUNIOR COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

During the last week of August, every county runs a Junior County Championships. Cheshire County LTA is keen to provide opportunities for aspiring young tennis players from the age of 8U to 18U to compete against each other. We aim to attract players from as many clubs as possible. Players from 12U are welcome to enter up to 3 events (maximum of 2 singles/2 doubles). All players who enter receive a free tennis related gift.

There are separate 8U, 9U and 10U singles events as well as a doubles event for 10U. The 8U and 9U events are usually played at Birchwood Tennis Centre, Warrington. All other events are played at Hoole LTC, Mickle Trafford near Chester.



COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT EXACTLY ARE THE JUNIOR COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS?

County Closed tournaments have traditionally catered for aspiring junior players. They are open to players of all ages and abilities. The Junior County Championships marks the finale to the summer holidays and should provide enjoyment for competitors and spectators alike.

WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA?

A player has to compete in his/her own County Championships. A player's county is defined by his/her place of birth or place of permanent residence (for at least 6 months).

WHAT HAPPENS IF A PLAYER LOSES THEIR FIRST SINGLES MATCH?

We offer all players the opportunity to play in a bonus draw to guarantee players have at least two matches.

WHAT IS A PROGRESSIVE DRAW?

The aim of a progressive draw is to try to match players of a similar standard in the first/early round(s), therefore avoiding playing the highest rated players who are introduced into the draw later in the competition.

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CAN A PLAYER JUST ENTER DOUBLES?

Yes, doubles entries are welcome although we do like players to enter both singles and doubles events if possible.

IS THERE A CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES?

Yes, make sure you read the specific tournament information on the LTA's website to find out about the entry process and closing deadlines.

WILL THERE BE PRIZES?

The winners in the 18U singles events are also offered automatic entry into the main draw of the Ladies and Men's County Championships which start immediately after the Junior Championships.

The 12U singles winners are offered the opportunity to compete in the Babolat Cup which is usually held at Edgbaston Priory LTC, Birmingham in September. This is a special National tournament where County Champions compete against each other.

FAIR PLAY

Fair Play is an essential value in tennis. We are committed to ensuring that tennis is played in a fair, open and inclusive nature at all levels.

Just as relevant in a fun game with friends as it is in a Grand Slam or major tennis tournament, Fair Play includes:

- Good sportsmanship, honesty and respect whether you win or lose
- Learning to challenge yourself and improve social skills
- Taking responsibility for your actions, calling scores and lines clearly and fairly even if it costs you the point
- Learning and following the rules and being a role model to younger people
- Enjoyment of the sport

It is important for everyone to uphold Fair Play both on and off court whether it be players, parents, coaches, officials or volunteers.

In 2013, Cheshire County LTA introduced an annual Fair Play Award, kindly sponsored by Mr and Mrs Davey.

RECENT WINNERS:

2019 – Werner Zimmermann

2018 – Harrison Taylor

2017 – Oliver Critchley

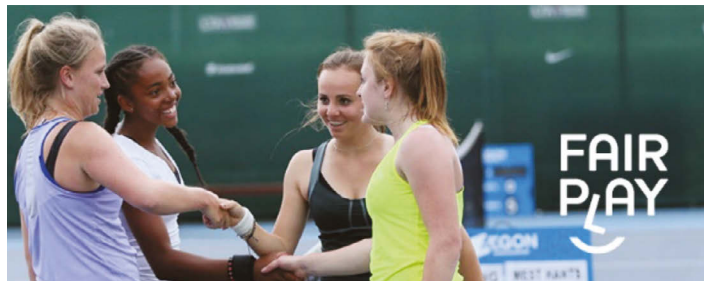
2016 – Jac Goodall & Matthew French

2015 – Daniel New

2014 – Oliver Hague

2013 – Harry Doyle

If you wish to find out more about the Fair Play initiative, please visit www.LTA.org.uk/fairplay



THE DICK FONTES CUP

This trophy was presented to the then Junior Tennis Committee by Nancy Fontes, in memory of her late husband Dick. Both Nancy and Dick had been responsible for the formation of a Cheshire Committee solely in charge of all aspects of junior tennis.

The trophy is awarded annually to the junior player who, in the opinion of the Competitions & Tournaments Committee, has contributed most to Cheshire Junior tennis in the previous year.

At the time it was stressed that this was not necessarily the best player, but was open to any junior. Certain criteria were laid down amongst which were commitment to Cheshire, shown by a willingness to represent the County and to compete in the Junior County Championships.

Consideration was also to be shown to participation in school and club tennis. At clubs, those who are eager to help and encourage other juniors are important factors in selection. It goes without saying that good behaviour on and off court is considered.

There have been many worthy winners of this cup and long may the tradition flourish.

RECENT WINNERS:

2019 – Rhona Cook
2018 – not awarded
2017 – Amy Redman
2016 – Hannah McColgan

2015 – Saleem Rizvi
2014 – Adam Jones
2013 – Sean Sivewright

LTA Performance Strategy 2018 – 2028

The LTA launched a new Performance Strategy for 2018 to 2028 with the vision ‘to make GB one of the most respected nations in the world for player development’ and the aim ‘to create a pathway for British champions that nurtures people, teams and leaders’.

KEY AREAS IN THE STRATEGY:

National Academies: Two new full time National Academies located at the University of Stirling and Loughborough University provide full time residential training for the very highest potential junior players aged 13 to 18 years of age.

Regional Player Development Centres (RPDC): There are 14 RPDCs where high potential juniors aspiring for selection for a National Academy have the opportunity to receive subsidised training, coaching and support. There is one RPDC in the North West at Bolton. Players selected can expect high quality training and competition in a local and affordable setting.

The LTA staff involved in our region are:

Richard Plews – National Age Group Coach North & 14U Boys Captain
Chris Peet – Regional Pathway Coach North
Andrew Wilkinson – Lead County Pathway Co-ordinator North

Michael Bourne has recently been appointed as the LTA’s new Performance Director and we wish him success in his new role.

CHESHIRE COUNTY LTA JUNIOR COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019

Girls Singles Events	Winner	Runner - Up
18U	Rhona Cook	Olivia French
16U	Jemma Cave	Ashira Murray
14U	Phoebe Mitchell	Elena Asgill - Whalley
12U	Eva Senior	Susanna Thompson
10U	Susanna Thompson	Amy McMahon
9U	Annabel Wong	Guste Butkute
8U	Poppy Oneill	Aaliyah Hammad

Boys Singles Events	Winner	Runner - Up
18U	Daniel Urey	Archie Blacklock
16U	Oliver Hague	Matthew Cooper
14U	Andy Brisdon	Ilias Hirani Worthington
12U	Alfie King	Joseph Evans
10U	Tom Herbert	Dominic Poulston
9U	Sam Warburton	Joshua Van Dellen
8U	Gabriel Okeke	Nathan Macauley

Doubles Events	Winner	Runners - Up
Girls 18U	Rhona Cook & Olivia French	Ellie Aldrich & Amy Redman
Girls 16U	Jemma Cave & Lara Wedd	Debra Abraham & Ashira Murray
Girls 14U	Florence Helsby & Abigail Yate	Ashley Baglin & Beth Lomas
Girls 12U	Ruby Roberts & Eva Senior	Korinne Roberts & Lucy Trescott
Boys 18U	Archie Blacklock & Matthew Cooper	Mason Dace & Danny Urey
Boys 16U	Mattias Matellini & Werner Zimmerman	Nicholas Bradley & Lewis Wilson
Boys 14U	Ethan Barrett & Andy Brisdon	Rafael Kiss & Jacob Popplewell
Boys 12U	Alfie King & Daniel Longshaw	Regan O'brien & Zach Thompson

Doubles Events	Winner	Runners - Up
18U Mixed	Rhona Cook & Danny Urey	Olivia French & Matthew French
14U Mixed	Holly Jackson & Toby Jackson	Lola Smith & James Spindler
12U Mixed	Ruby Roberts & Regan O'brien	Susanna Thompson & Zach Thompson
10U Mixed	Tom Herbert & Aran Selvaraasan	Charlie Knight & Joshua Van Dellen



JUNIOR COUNTY TEAMS

The Junior County Cup gives players the opportunity to represent their county in team competition in regional and national stages. There are separate competitions for six age groups 18U, 14U, 12U, 11U, 10U and 9U which are held at different times of the year. In order to compete in these events, players have to be selected by the County.

The 44 competing counties are organised into groups according to their performance in the previous year's event. In the 12U, 11U and 10U events, the counties are organised into groups on a regional basis with winning teams progressing to a national finals stage. The 9U age group is solely a regional event. Team composition and match formats vary from event to event with singles matches qualifying for ratings wins and ranking points. All these team events involve doubles matches as well as singles.

Cheshire has a Junior Performance Committee (JPC) which has responsibility for all matters relating to the Junior County teams. This includes the appointment of the Captains and Vice Captains as well as deciding upon the players who are invited to take part in the various age group training programmes. The JPC is involved in the selection process when Captains nominate players for the Junior County Cup events. The JPC ratifies the players selected by the Captains.

The Captains and Vice Captains for 2020-21 are:

18U Boys: Matthew Chadwick (Captain) & Jordan Young (Vice)

18U Girls: Mark Hunter (Captain) & Sarah Lawton (Vice)

14U Boys: Stuart Murray (Captain) & Andy Beswick (Vice)

14U Girls: Jordan Young (Captain) & Alex Day (Vice)

12U Boys: Mark Hunter (Captain) & Toby Palin (Vice)

12U Girls: Brent Parker (Captain) & Alex Day (Vice)

11U Boys: Allan Morton (Captain) & Michael Armstrong (Vice)

11U Girls: Ed Rowland (Captain) & Amanda Twigg (Vice)

10U Boys: Tony Green (Captain) & Peter Leatherbarrow (Vice)

10U Girls: Amanda Twigg (Captain) & Ed Rowland (Vice)

9U Boys: Simon Thornwill (Captain) & Tony Green (Vice)

9U Girls: Amanda Twigg (Captain) & Cerys Hughes (Vice)

8U Boys: Simon Thornwill (Captain) & Scott McCormick (Vice) & Joe Hudson (Vice)

8U Girls: Amanda Twigg (Captain) & Cerys Hughes (Vice)

LTA RATING AND AGE GROUP SYSTEM

NEW LTA RATING SYSTEM

As part of the LTA's work to grow the sport and open tennis up to more people, a series of changes have been announced to competitions that are to be introduced.

This will mean the introduction of a new player ratings system. The LTA will be launching the brand-new **World Tennis Number (WTN)** player rating system. It is intended to make it easier for players of all abilities to find appropriate players to play with and against.

The World Tennis Number (WTN) is designed to meet the needs of all players from a recreational level through to the performance end of the sport. It will replace the current ratings system and for the first time ever will provide ratings for doubles as well as singles. Last year the County announced these changes in the junior handbook, because of Covid-19 the start date for the new rating system has been put back. We have been told that full details about the World Tennis Number will be announced later this year, including launch date.

COUNTY TEAM SELECTION

The County has tried to make the selection policy as transparent as possible for players for the County Training Camps and County Cup teams.

Selection Criteria for 8U & 9U Players

County Training Camps	County Teams
Attendance at one County Open Day	Attendance at one County Open Day
Performance at previous County training camps	Performance at County training camps
Performance in County matches	Performance in County matches
Performance at Junior County Championships	Performance at Junior County Championships
Competitive activity throughout the year	Competitive activity throughout the year

Note

- 1 Players need to regularly attend County training camps in order to be considered for the County team.
- 2 Players can be selected for more than one age group team. i.e. an 8U player can be chosen for both the 8U and 9U team if considered good enough.
- 3 A long-term injury or illness will always be taken into consideration if it causes a player to miss a number of training camps or if it makes them unable to compete regularly in tournaments.

We hold a **County Open Day** every year for 6U – 8U players. This is an important part of Cheshire's Junior Performance Programme. All club coaches across the county are contacted with the date and encouraged to speak to the parents of their most promising young players with a view to taking them to this special event. They are held on the indoor courts at Birchwood Tennis Centre, Warrington.

Selection Criteria for 10U to 18U Players

County Training Camps	County Teams
Performance & attendance at previous County training camps	Performance & attendance at previous County training camps
Performance in County matches	Performance in County matches
Performance at Junior County Championships	Performance at Junior County Championships
Ranking	Ranking
Rating/World Team Number*	Rating/World Team Number*
	Competitive profile compared to peers in the 6 months prior to the Junior County Cup

*World Team Number will replace Rating once it is introduced by the LTA.

Note

- 1 Players may be selected for more than one age group
- 2 Performance at all County training camps and County matches is important. When captains select players for the Junior County Cup they will take the following into account:-
 - A Head: consistently makes good decisions, finds solutions (and ways to win) and retains focus in match situations
 - B Heart: competes well at all times in both training and competitive situations
 - C Legs: demonstrates good levels of fitness and physical resilience
 - D Weapons: has emerging strengths that can be developed into a game style that has the potential for success in the future
- 3 If a player decides not to accept a place at County training or fails to attend regularly, then it should be understood that this is likely to impact on their selection for the Junior County Cup team
- 4 Captains will have the option of one discretionary “Captain’s pick” which means that they can select a player for the County Cup team who may not be one of the top ranked players. The selection will still have to be justified to the Junior Performance Committee using the set criteria
- 5 There is an expectation that all players who are chosen for County training intend to play in tournaments throughout the year
- 6 A long term injury or illness will always be taken into consideration if it causes a player to miss a number of training camps or if it makes them unable to compete regularly in tournaments.

COUNTY TRAINING PROGRAMME 2020-21

All of the Junior age group training camps are organised by the County Junior Performance Co-ordinator, Simon Thornewill. The most promising players across the 8U – 18U age range are invited and each camp of approximately 8 players (9U – 18U) and 16 players (8U) will be taken by the age group County Captain along with their Vice Captain.

This year we will be using a reserve list for players to ensure all squads are full for every session and allows the County to offer more opportunities for players. The County will be introducing a second squad for the 18U boys County training which will be called the blue squad.

The camps occur approximately every month hopefully starting in September. Most of the age groups run for 10 months of the year through to June, with the exception to this being the 18U group which finishes near Easter. All the camps will take place at an indoor venue across Cheshire, either at David Lloyd Cheshire Oaks, Birchwood Tennis Centre or David Lloyd Cheadle.

There is always strong competition for places and all players who receive invitations are expected to commit to attending regularly (i.e. at least 75% of the camps). If regular attendance does not occur then players will be withdrawn from the programme. Letters inviting players to be part of a County age group squad will be emailed to parents in August or September

JUNIOR COUNTY CUP RESULTS 2020

Unfortunately, only the 18U Junior County Cup events have taken place this year.

Age Group and Venue	Captain and Vice Captain	Players	Opponents and Results
18U Boys Wirral	Matt Chadwick and Jordan Young	Robin Bloomer Andy Brisdon Matthew Cooper Mason Dace Jonah Gethin Oliver Hague Ben Nicol Danny Urey	Middlesex Lost 6-3 Hertfordshire Lost 6-3 Warwickshire Won 5-1 Remain in Group 2
18U Girls Cambridge	Mark Hunter and Sarah Wilson	Ellie Aldrich Jemma Cave Rhona Cook Phoebe Mitchell Amy Redman Maldimi Simic Ella Walker Lara Wedd	Wiltshire Won 7-2 Cambridgeshire Won 8-1 Nottinghamshire Won 6-3 Promoted to Group 2



JUNIOR CHESHIRE SHIELD 2019

A miracle gap in the weather allowed the Junior Cheshire Shield to go ahead at Lymm Tennis Club on Sunday 22nd September. After a beautiful day on Saturday, the weather broke and Sunday morning was greeted with thunder, lightning and heavy rain with the forecast of heavy showers all day. Despite misgivings, all the entered teams arrived, and the rain stopped at 09.30 allowing play to start at 10.00 on schedule.

There were only 4 teams of boys and 4 teams of girls entered this year, which was disappointing, but it allowed the organiser to adjust the format so that every player played against all the other players in their event. Each team played all the other teams in a round robin format. The no 1 pairs played 6 games against each other and the no 2 pairs did the same. Then the no 1 pairs played 6 games against the number 2 pairs. The games were no ad scoring with receiver's choice. The number of games won by each team were totalled and the winners of the Cheshire Shield were the team with the most games.

As it worked out, the final matches in both the girls' and boys' events were between the two leading teams from the first 2 rounds. Neston faced Widnes in the girls' event. Widnes proved too strong for Neston, but there was stunning tennis on display and the Widnes team had to work hard to retain the title.

Brooklands boys were playing in the competition for the first time and they went into the last round with one more game won than Alderley Edge. The games were close, and the tennis was excellent, but Alderley had the edge and won the title.

The trophies were presented by Alice Shields, a player in the last three winning teams for Widnes who was unable to play because of injury. We wish her a full and complete recovery.

Thanks were expressed to Lymm Tennis Club for the use of their club and for the excellent refreshments provided for the competitors. The trophies for the event were supported by Angela Meir-Jones.

Girls Junior Cheshire Shield 2019

	Team	Match v A	Match v B	Match v C	Match v D	Total	Rank
A	Widnes		22	24	19	65	1
B	Heswall	2		17	7	26	3
C	Alderley Edge	0	7		2	9	4
D	Neston	5	17	22		44	2



Widnes Team: Amy Redman, Hannah Rylatt, Florence Helsby, Abi Redman

Boys Junior Cheshire Shield 2019

	Team	Match v A	Match v B	Match v C	Match v D	Total	Rank
A	Alderley Edge		17	23	18	58	1
B	Alsager	7		12	1	20	3
C	Heswall	1	12		6	19	4
D	Brooklands	6	23	18		47	2



Alderley Edge Team: Jonah Gethin, Mason Dace, Max Green, Leo Cullis

Unfortunately, the Junior Cheshire Shield 2020 will not be taking place due to the pandemic.

NATIONAL LEAGUE 2020-21

The National League is a competition open to all LTA Registered venues. It aims to provide players of all ages (8U – 18U) with regular league matches, against players of a similar standard in a competitive team environment. Cheshire has 2 amazing organisers for the Winter and Summer leagues:

League	Timescales	Organiser
National League – Winter	Entries open 20th July to 24th August Matches Sept 20 to March 21	Michael Atherfold point-onetennis@hotmail.com 07984 973887
National League – Summer	Entries open Dec to Feb (details tba) Matches April to July	David Paterson pato@talktalk.net 07860 671774

Find out more about the National Leagues here:

<https://lta.org.uk/play-compete/competing/adult-tennis-competitions/national-league/>

LTA YOUTH

Never held a racket? No problem, our specially trained LTA Youth coaches will adapt to each individual, to help bring out their best in a safe, secure environment. All kids need to bring is their creative energy, because the programme is designed to grow as they do. Smaller courts and softer balls develop into the real deal as they pick up all the skills and know-how they need.

It will take your youngster to the next level; you'll see it in their confidence, their skills and even their concentration at school. Not to mention keeping them fit and active. Add some healthy competition to teach them about good sportsmanship (because we all have bad days) and you've got a set of skills for life.

LTA Youth has 6 stages:

Tennis for Kids: 4-11 years - Introductory offer

Blue: 4-6 years - Learn the basics

Red: 6-8 years - Serve, rally and score

Orange: 8-9 years - Develop a rounded game

Green: 9-10 years - Test your skills

Yellow: 10+ years - Take your skills further



N.B. Although we've assigned ages to each stage these are just a guide. We'll always put players in the relevant group based on their ability. Find out more about the LTA Youth Programme here:

<https://lta.org.uk/play-compete/lta-youth-youth/youth-programme/>

FAST4 TENNIS

FAST4 Tennis provides a simple, exciting way of speeding up a conventional tennis match. The fundamentals of tennis remain the same, but here are four rules that ensure matches are fast, competitive, exciting and can be completed in a reasonable period of time.



From September 2019, the rules of FAST4 changed following feedback from players, parents, coaches and officials.

The rules of FAST4 Tennis (effective from September 2019)

1. First to four games wins

It doesn't matter how you get there, just make sure you do before your opponent does!

2. Tiebreaker at 3 games all

At 3 games all a tie-break is played to 7 points, 2 clear at 6-6.

3. Match tie-break at 1 set all

If the score reaches 1 set all, a match tie-break is played to 10 points, 2 clear at 9-9

4. No ad scoring

If the score reaches deuce, it's a sudden death point. The receiver chooses which side to take the serve on. This also applies in doubles with the receiving pair deciding who receives the serve. However, the pair cannot change positions. In mixed doubles the player of the same gender shall receive.

Where can I play FAST4 Tennis?

FAST4 Tennis was introduced to the British Tennis competition structure from September 2015 with the winter county tour (Grade 4 and 5) events using this format for 10U-18U. Some other competitions across Great Britain will also use this format including the British Tour.

CHESHIRE INSIGHTS

There are so many players and coaches that make up the Cheshire tennis community, we thought it would be nice to get to know a few of them a bit better and have an insight into their experience, what makes them tick and their ambitions for the future.

ALFIE KING 12U CHESHIRE JUNIOR CHAMPION

How long have you been playing tennis? Why did you pick up a racket?

I've been playing tennis since I was around four years old. I started playing with balloons just hitting with my hands to my Mum. When I had my first racket, Mum would take me to Irby Park to play, they did a 4 week tennis trial for kids so my Mum took me every week and the coach Tom Boon (from Heswall LTC) played with me all the time. I joined Heswall LTC and that's when I was coached by Sue Davies, Charlie Fachari, Tom Boon and Richard Snelson. My friends and I won the 8U Aegon for Heswall which was great.

What do you love about the sport?

I love the competitiveness and the way everyone really wants to be the best. It's good that you have to work hard and the way that you've got no one else to blame. I also like that you get to travel all over the place and get to see new things as well as eat different food and speak to new people and make new friends.



How has County training and County Cup helped your development through the years? What do you like about training and County Cup?

County Cup and county training is good for me. I've been playing County Cup and taking part in county training since 9U and I'm now part of the 14U squad. The last couple of years training has been so much fun and I've enjoyed playing in matches against other counties but especially our big rivals Lancashire! County Cup every year has been a great experience playing with friends, because I don't normally play with them in the tournaments I go to. County Cup is also good for me because I not only play some good players but it is great having a coach on court with you to help and I've learnt a lot from them.

Describe your journey so far through the pathway of performance tennis.

I started going to Widnes Tennis Academy when I was 8 years old. In the 3 years I was with Tony Green I improved so much. I went from playing club tennis to winning my first National G2 tournament and it was great. It was then decided I would be coached by Elliot Chang at Bolton Arena in the hope this would give me the best opportunity to progress to the next level. I moved to secondary school in September 2019 and they allow me time off for training providing I catch up with any work missed. I think I have made more progress with Elliot, achieving some pleasing results against some of the best players in the UK in my age group and I only just lost to the GB No.1.

Tell us about your weekly training schedule.

On 'A week' I do twelve and a half hours all together. This is split into ten hours in squads and two and a half hours individual coaching. I spend three and a half hours on strength & conditioning (S & C). The next week (B) my training is split to nine hours with squads and four hours of individual coaching. I also do a further four hours S & C.

How do you manage/fit in school and homework into your weekly schedule?

My new school has been good to me. They let me miss French lessons so when I'm back in school, instead of doing French I do my homework and catch up on missed work. I normally get all my work done doing this so it's great. (EDITOR'S NOTE – French is a really useful language so don't try to miss it!!!)

ALFIE KING 12U CHESHIRE JUNIOR CHAMPION - continued

What has been your best highlight been so far?

I can't choose between three. One of my best highlights was when I played at Wimbledon. It wasn't even because I won the doubles event or anything like that it was just the feeling of playing at Wimbledon that was great. The next might sound strange because I lost this match. I played Ben Gusic Wan, the GB No.1, and it was the closest of matches and I only lost to him by two points and that was amazing. My final highlight was winning a Grade 2 event at Bath.

Quick Fire

1. **Favourite tennis player?** It was Stan Wawrinka but is now Roger Federer
2. **Best professional tournament?** Roland Garros
3. **Favourite shot?** I like all my shots
4. **Do you play other sports?** No, I don't play any other sports
5. **Singles or doubles?** I like both singles and doubles but at my age I still have time to work out which I prefer
6. **Do you have any targets for the next 2 years?** They are just to keep improving and getting better and better. I don't want to set an exact target because if I get there, I might feel I've done it but if I don't get to my target, I'll be disappointed.

RHONA COOK (18U CHESHIRE JUNIOR CHAMPION)

Hearing that I was selected for County Cup was fantastic as only 8 people from the county were chosen. County Cup always creates an energy that isn't found in the average tournament – a team spirit and the added excitement of playing for, and supporting Cheshire. Before the county cup event, I prepared as I would for a tournament and attended the County training sessions where we worked on tactics and experimented with doubles pairings.

On Thursday we had our last training session at Birchwood before we headed off on our journey to Cambridge in a minibus. On arriving, we headed out for a tasty dinner at Nando's then returned to the hotel for our first team meeting which consisted of talking tactics and confirming timings for the next day. We were all feeling really enthusiastic and ready to go. For me, the chance for promotion back up to Division 2 was here at last!

On each of Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings everyone met for breakfast, the captains announced who was playing singles and doubles and at what positions, and we left for the tennis centre together.

We always warmed up and hit on court for half an hour and, by this time, with music getting us pumped, we would feel eager to face the challenges and emotional rollercoasters that the day would bring for Cheshire. Over 2 courts, singles always start the day with players 6 and 5 going on first. Other team members supported our players by clapping their good points and cheering them on. Playing at 1 meant that four singles matches had already finished by the time I went on court, so both counties were thinking about their scores and tensions were starting to rise. Before my match, I always prepared with a physical warm up, checked water and food in my tennis bag, and was eager to get on and play.



RHONA COOK (18U CHESHIRE JUNIOR CHAMPION) - continued

It is a really unique experience playing in County Cup. With support to motivate you if you're behind, and to urge you on when you hit a fantastic shot, it adds to the buzz in the air. Coaches give advice at change of ends which adds another dimension, as everyone is working together. When I'm off court watching my team-mates, I love encouraging them throughout their match – it feels as though I am playing alongside them. It's great fun sharing tactics to help your team compete against specific opponents and then to watch those matches. Inevitably you feel pressure in some matches/situations on court as you really want to win for Cheshire, but team-mates and coaches help you along the way, and pressure becomes replaced with excitement on the court - for me anyway.

Doubles matches start straight after the singles matches, and are always enjoyable; the overall win is often decided by the doubles, so it is extremely important to bring a liveliness to our team. Despite people feeling tired towards the end of the day, the last 3 matches are crucial, so as a squad we pushed through every day knowing that the potential reward of winning would be excellent. As I was always the last singles match on, I often had a quick turnaround before doubles. I stretched, rolled, and had some food to refuel, all whilst supporting the doubles pairs that were already on court. The emotions that I felt during and after my singles match needed to be put aside to consider later, while I focused on my upcoming doubles match.

On Friday and Saturday, Cheshire beat Wiltshire and Cambridgeshire, so we were fighting Nottinghamshire for promotion on the final day. Despite this being a very positive situation, some members of the team did get upset occasionally due to match outcomes or issues on court, and I always tried to help make sure that they forgot those negative thoughts and focused ahead. It helped that we went out for a meal each evening to rest and recharge for the next day. My roommate and I discussed the day's competition, and anticipated what the next day would hold; talking about potential opponents was always fun.

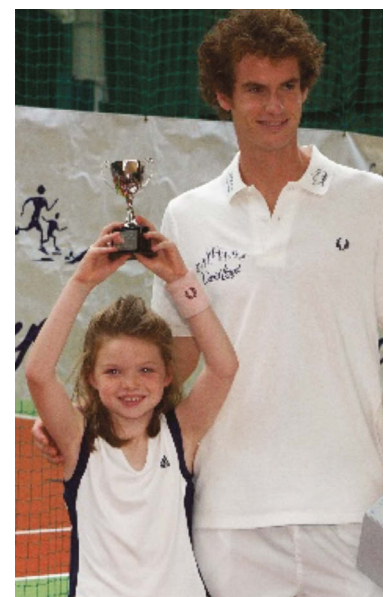
Sunday was our last day, and we needed to pull out all the stops and go for the win. Everyone fought to the end, and...we won! This meant we were promoted into Division 2, which was, and still is, a great feeling (I knew all along we could do it!). The journey home was full of exhausted, happy people, after three and a half days of high intensity emotional and physical effort, though it is always a sad time too, as County Cup is coming to an end.

This was my last Junior County Cup after playing in all age groups along the way. I still remember each one fondly, as they were all different and every one holds different memories for me. Looking back at these events, I have definitely found that ANYTHING is possible for you and your team to achieve, if everyone believes it. The whole buzz of Junior County Cup is amazing - being away from home with your team, the tasty food, competing in thrilling matches, making friendships, seeing friends from other counties who you may not have seen for a while - and the winning's pretty good too :)

HANNAH MCCOLGAN (COUNTY PLAYER)

Background, where did you start playing? Age? Which clubs?

I started playing tennis when I was 7 years old. I played at Bramhall Lane Lawn Tennis Club and David Lloyd Cheshire. I always remember Friday club night at BLLTC being a highlight of my week. After a couple of months playing, I remember playing my first tournament and I loved the competitive side and have been competing ever since.



HANNAH MCCOLGAN (COUNTY PLAYER) - continued

How many years have you represented the County? Junior and Senior?

My first memory of representing Cheshire was in 10U's County Cup at Bolton Arena and I have represented the County every year since. I especially enjoyed playing 14U and 18U County Cup getting to travel and compete as a team; it has always been one of my favourite competitions each year. When I was 14, I played my first Ladies County week at Eastbourne in Division 1 and have played each year since.

Best highlight playing for Cheshire?

My highlight of playing for Cheshire was Ladies County Week in Division 1 at Eastbourne. It was an amazing week, playing on the grass, being by the sea and having a great time with teammates. Each year I really look forward to playing for the County on the grass.

What University do you attend? City? State?

I currently am a rising junior at Northwestern University, Chicago, Illinois. I have had a great past two years. It is in the B1G conference, the standard of tennis is high, and it is lots of fun getting to travel the country for matches and play at home with fans supporting.

What made you pick American University over a British University?

Since being 12 years old going to an American University was always one of my long-term goals. I loved the way it combined tennis and academics. The team environment is incredible, you have so much support from academic advisors to athletic trainers to strength coaches. Another thing I have really liked is having a head coach and assistant coach between 8 players.

What does a typical day look like at University? How do you combine your studies with playing tennis?

A typical day for me starts with a team lift in the weight room at 7:50am for just over an hour. Then I head to class for 9:30am, this will be followed by another class which normally finished around 12:20pm. I'll then head to Walter Athletic Centre and have an individual lesson with my coach before heading to the student athlete dining hall and have lunch with teammates or other athletes. At 2:15pm we start our team practice which consists of lots of different drills and some match play but varies a lot depending on upcoming matches. After practice and cool down I will go for an ice bath in the training room and then head back to the locker room to hang out with teammates. Normally I will leave the athletic building at 6pm and go for dinner with friends before either going to the library or back to my room to study the rest of evening.

What is the best part about playing University Tennis?

I think the best part about playing University tennis is game day. Playing and winning for your team is an amazing feeling. The atmosphere on game day is great and support from teammates and coaches is great too.

Biggest challenge at University?

During my first year I was playing mainly doubles as I had not made the singles line up. This was super challenging as all week I would be working so hard and then not competing at the weekend and only watching. However, I used this to motivate me to train harder and near the end of my first year I was in the singles line up and continued to play in the singles and doubles line up this year.

If you could give one bit of advice to a player looking to go to America, what would it be?

When looking into universities make sure you like the coach and agree with their values and aims. You spend so much time with the coach and the team, so they really make the experience. Most of my favourite memories are linked with the team and coach.

Favourite Tennis player

My favourite player is Andy Murray, #Backthebrits

STUART MURRAY (14U BOYS CAPTAIN)

Which club/centre do you work at?

I'm the Head Coach at Alderley Edge Tennis.

Who is your favourite tennis player and why?

I have two! In my opinion Roger Federer is the 'G.O.A.T'. You can't tire of watching his effortless style and class on court and his ability to evolve and stay ahead of the game has seen him at the forefront of the Men's game for so long. My second is Andy Murray. What he has done for British Tennis is enormous and his heart, drive and desire to succeed is inspiring. He also has an amazing surname!!

How long have you been coaching?

It's scary to say that I've been a Coach for 25yrs now!

How long have you been involved in Cheshire County Training?

I've been involved for about 4 years now, since my move to Alderley Edge Tennis brought me into Cheshire.

What age group do you currently Captain?

I'm the Boys U14 Captain.

What has been your highlight from County Cup?

It has to be taking the Boys 14U to National Finals in 2018. The players, parents and my Vice Captain Ed Rowland were a joy to work with. It was amazing to see us grow as a Team over the year and Cheshire has a great group of lads there for years to come!

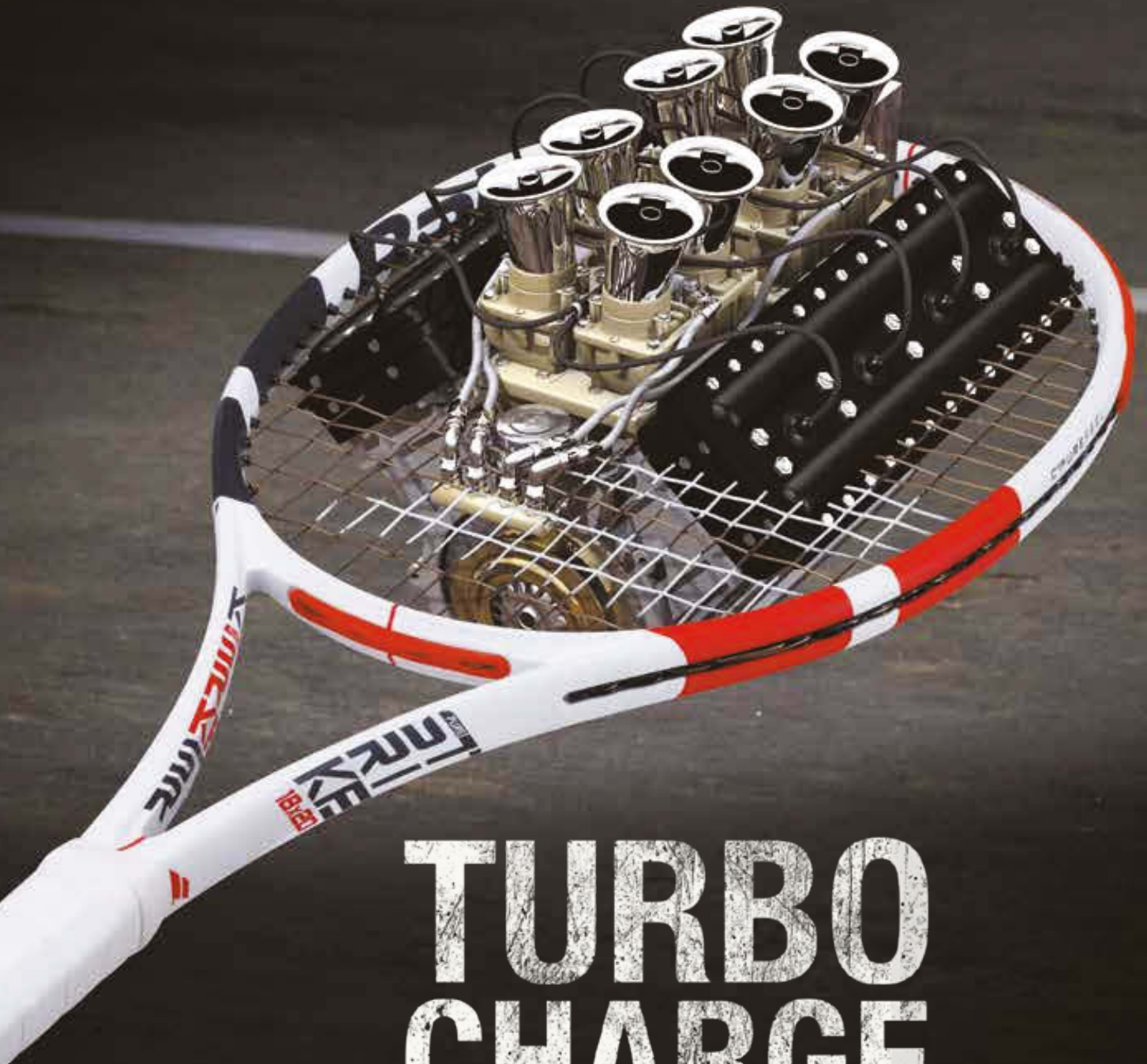
What do you enjoy the most about running a County Team?

I enjoy working with Performance Players in a team environment where they feel a part of something special. Seeing a team improve their game, learn new ideas and take responsibility to represent the County to the best of their ability gives me a real buzz.

In what way do you feel County Training helps a player's development?

County Training allows players to escape the individual nature and pressures that tennis can bring, allowing them to develop as a player in a team environment where they can enjoy competing 'with' their peers rather than 'against' them.





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**CHANGE YOUR STRING AT LEAST
EVERY 3 MONTHS FOR PEAK PERFORMANCE.**



CHESHIRE COUNTY LTA CONTACT DETAILS

Well it's been a bit strange over the last few months as the office remains temporarily closed.

Lynne Whitford, County Administrator, is working from home from Tuesday to Thursday from 9am to 3pm.

The best way to contact her is by email at lynne@cheshirecountyta.org.uk or you can leave a message on **01244 301 531**.

Our website here <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/Cheshire2/News> has all the latest news and initiatives from the County and please check our social media pages for immediate updates.



@LTACHeshire



Tennis in Cheshire

If you would like to feature your team or venue or yourself across the tennis community in Cheshire, please get in touch as we are always keen to hear from you.



CHESHIRE TENNIS