

## Lionel Cox Report

**U12 Boys Team: Finlay, Oscar, Noah**

**U12 Girls Team: Jemima, Zoe, Amelia**

**County Captains: Ben Collingwood, Sam Hickman, Ann Nicholls**

An early morning for most Norfolk players, parents and coaches who travelled to Queenswood tennis centre for the annual Lionel Cox county team event. The event hosts 3 group stage and play-off tournaments for 10 counties across U9, U10 and U12 age groups for both boys and girls. A base camp was set up for all age groups and the team spirit was high.

### **DAY 1**

#### **U12 BOYS**

The first match-up for the U12 boys was Northamptonshire, Norfolk got a great start with a 2-1 with wins from Finlay (4-0 4-0) and Oscar (4-0 4-1).

The next match was against Berkshire, Finley comes against a tough opponent and Berkshire take the lead, up steps Oscar and Noah who battle for well over 90 mins each and Noah gets a point on the board for Norfolk with a 4-2 4-3 (7-4) win in calm and composed fashion. Unfortunately, it wasn't to be for Oscar who battled hard but came up short in a 3rd set tie break, Berkshire win that match 12-10 taking the tie 2-1 Berkshire.

### **Day 2:**

The U12 boys found themselves ranked 3rd in their group after day 1, they knew they had a tough challenge ahead of them with 3 matches against Essex, Bedfordshire and a position play-off match.

Norfolk vs Essex kicked off day 2, it wasn't to be for Norfolk as the boys lose the tie 3-0 to a strong Essex team but the boys responded quickly to the defeat and were soon supporting the other Norfolk teams and debriefing with the Norfolk coaches.

The final group match was vs Bedfordshire, Finley got Norfolk ahead with a 4-0 4-0 win on the clay with excellent use of his net skills. Oscar followed this up with a 3rd set tiebreak win 1-4 4-0 4-10 and a great display of competitive attitude for all the younger Norfolk players to see. Noah closed off the group stages with an epic win and a true test of character by facing a handful of challenges thrown his way by his opponent, Noah winning 3-4 (3-7) 4-3 (7-2) 10-6 giving Norfolk the 3-0 win.

A Norfolk vs Suffolk derby was scheduled for the boys to close their Lionel Cox event for 5th or 6th place. Up steps Finley storming the first set 4-0 and responding to a fightback from his Suffolk opponent who took Finley to a set tiebreak but Norfolk take the first rubber 4-0 4-3

(7-3). 1-0 Norfolk. Oscar continued his form in attitude and battled through 3 sets against a tough opponent, Norfolk taking the win 4-2 3-4(5) 6-10. 2-0 Norfolk, the tie is won, Noah battled hard in his final match of the event vs the Suffolk no.1 and loses out this time in a 4-1 4-2 win for Suffolk. Norfolk wins the tie 2-1 and came away with an overall 5th place out of the 10 county teams.

## **U12 GIRLS**

U12 Norfolk girls were in a group box of Essex, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Buckinghamshire B. After an early start the girls had their first matchup against Cambridgeshire, the team were warmed up and focussed on the task ahead, Jemima kicked Norfolks campaign off with a composed performance at no.3 with a 4-2 4-2. 1-0 Norfolk, Zoe follows in Jemima's footsteps with a seals the first match win for Norfolk with a 4-2 4-1 win at No.2. Amelia is last to play in this match at No.1 after coming back from a previous injury, she steps up and she played a difficult opponent, Amelia battled hard to seal the 3-0 win for Norfolk with a 4-3(3) 4-3(5) victory.

After a busy break in between matches of supporting, charting matches and debriefing the girls step back on court against Buckinghamshire. A superstar performance for Jemima having to go the distance in 2 tie break sets and maintaining a strong competitive attitude throughout taking the win for Norfolk 3-4(9) 3-4(4). Zoe faced a difficult opponent at no.2, Zoe bounced back after losing the first set and took the Bucks No.2 to a set tie break in the second but Bucks take the win in an extremely tight 2nd set, Zoe's result was 4-2 4-3(7). Norfolk 1, Buckinghamshire 1. Amelia fought hard on court but it wasn't to be this time for the girls as Bucks No.1 beats Amelia 4-2 4-1 meaning the match tie goes to Buckinghamshire 2-1. The girls head back to rest up in preparation for the second day of tennis. Norfolk U12 girls find themselves in a similar position to the boys in 3rd place in their group.

### **Day 2:**

The Norfolk U12s started day 2 vs Buckinghamshire B Team, Jemima was on court first at No.3, battled hard but lost against a strong opponent, on court next to her was Zoe. Zoe had a rollercoaster of a match which went to 3 sets, Zoe having multiple match point and also saving multiple match points... but with some gutsy tennis and solid ball striking Zoe takes the win for Norfolk 12-10 in the 3rd set. 1-1 in the tie, Amelia takes on the no.1 and takes the first set with ease and had to face multiple tests from her opponent to close the match out in a 2nd set tiebreak which closes the match tie, Norfolk 2, Buckinghamshire B 1.

Essex were the next opponents for the U12 Norfolk girls, all girls faced tough opponents and had to dig deep to see what they could do to maintain their excellent match attitude over the weekend. Even though the tie went 3-0 to Essex, all girls performed well and left everything out there on the match court.

Another Norfolk vs Suffolk derby match was scheduled for the girls to play for position as they finished 3rd in their group. Norfolk were playing for a final position of 5th or 6th. All girls

were motivated and Jemima had yet another epic match but lost out 10-7 in the third set to the Suffolk No.3. Zoe Hyatt takes the first set in a tie break at No.2 but the Suffolk no.2 responds and takes the match to a deciding 3rd set which goes the way of the Suffolk team. 2-0 Suffolk, Amelia finishes the event off with a 4-0 4-3 (7-2) win to finish the match tie 2-1.

Norfolk U12 Girls finish 6th overall. Well done to all players and parents for a great weekend of tennis.

## **U10 BOYS**

The 10u boys and girls both fought really hard at the weekend. They all had some very tough matches but their attitudes towards and during every match were exemplary. They never gave up and gave 100% with all the boys managing to win their last matches of the weekend to finish 9th. The girls came 10th. The team spirit was also very good.

The U10 boys were drawn against Hertfordshire B, Berkshire, Suffolk and Buckinghamshire. All three boys had their Norfolk debuts, Caleb played at No.3, Aidan at No.2 and Sam at No.1. On day 1 of the event, Norfolk played against Buckinghamshire and Suffolk but it wasn't to be for Norfolk even though all 3 boys demonstrated great competitive attitudes towards representing the county.

On day 2, the U10 boys had to finish their group boxes by facing Berkshire and Hertfordshire B. With a mixture of playing on the astroturf courts and hard courts, the Norfolk boys learned lots of valuable lessons on how to play on different surfaces. To finish off the event the boys were drawn against Bedfordshire in a 9th/10th playoff match. Caleb at No.3 started the tie-off with a fantastic win to put Norfolk 1-0 up. Aidan at No.2 battled hard by taking the first set, losing the second set but unfortunately lost in a 3rd set tiebreak. Sam at No.1 battled hard and gave his all and eventually got Norfolk boys the win to ensure a 9th place position.

Well done to the three boys who had their Norfolk debuts and supporting parents who created such a good team spirit within the Norfolk camp.

## **U10 GIRLS**

On Day 1, Norfolk's U10 girls Lionel Cox campaign started with the group stages, the box consisted of; Berkshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire and Northamptonshire. The girls faced Berkshire first, Evie started the match tie at no.3 for her Norfolk debut, followed by Amelija at No.2 and Sofia at No.1. All three girls battled hard but Berkshire came away with a 3-0 win. After a busy break from the match court from supporting the surrounding Norfolk teams, the girls had to face Cambridgeshire. Sofia and Amelija both push their opponents to a tie-break in the first set but Cambridgeshire take the match.

On day 2, the U10 girls had to play Northamptonshire and Hertfordshire. All 3 girls had tough matches in both fixtures but their attitudes during every match were exemplary as they never gave up and gave 100%. The final match-up was vs Suffolk which to play for position. The girls came 10th. The team spirit was also very good and lots of lessons were learnt for the girls over the weekend to take into their next county events. Well done to all players and parents over the weekend, with players playing up age groups and a few Norfolk debuts.

## **U9 BOYS + U9 GIRLS**

The 9s were coming off the back of some good county cup results. However tough boxes and some very tight matches meant the results did quite go our way this time. The U9 Girls' team consisted of Sophia at No.3, Amelia at No.2 and Riya at No.3. The U9 girls had to face Cambridgeshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Northamptonshire. The girls all fought hard for Norfolk on the astroturf courts but with lots of tight 3-set matches and close scoring sets the girls finished 4th in the box and faced off against Buckinghamshire to finish 8th position.

The U9 Norfolk boys team were David at No.3, Lucas at No.2 and Freddie at No.1. Norfolk were drawn against Cambridgeshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire. After 4 really close matches in the group stages and lots of good conversations with the team members, the team spirit went from strength to strength across the afternoon and the boys competed well against some strong teams. The boys re-grouped and supported each other to face Bedfordshire in their play-off match for 9th/10th position. Norfolk wins this match 3-0 and finishes the event with 3 stand-out performances from the boys to finish 9th, overall a good day of development for each player. Lionel Cox was very much a positive for the team and Norfolk moving forwards into the next stages of the player's tennis journey.

Well done to all players and parents for giving their all at the event and representing Norfolk, the future is looking bright for Norfolk.