

Home Nations Swansea 15th & 16th August 2009

Junior Squad Report

EPA 9 Gary Atkinson Josh Littley Alex Bruce Ben Littley
EPA 10 Amy Huntley Daniel Baker Georgie Wright Emma Stockbridge

The format of the Junior competition was run on the same basis as the EPA Junior Qualifiers with a Triple and a Single followed by 2 Doubles.

EPA 9 Single was Alex and EPA 9 Triple was Josh, Ben and Gary. They split into Doubles as EPA 9A of Josh and Alex and EPA 9B of Ben and Gary.

EPA 10 Single was Amy with Georgie, Emma and Daniel as the Triple. EPA 10A was Emma and Georgie with Amy and Daniel as EPA 10B.

The Saturday morning went well for our Junior team with the first 2 rounds being won 3-1, which gave us a 6-2 lead at the lunch break. It was pleasing to see that all the Juniors had lunch together as they all went to the KFC across the road. Nobody asked them or encouraged them to do so; it was just what they wanted to do and was a sign of how well they, as a team were interacting.

The afternoon Triples/Singles was shared 2-2, but disappointingly the Doubles was lost 3-1, so at the end of the day the EPA held a slender 9-7 lead.

The teams had bonded well and Daniel, who, as a late replacement for Emma Longstaff was accepted without question by the other, more established juniors.

There was only one game, where Mike and I felt it was necessary to intervene and give practical encouragement. I was at one end of the terrain and Mike at the other, and we encouraged a team that were struggling. It was pleasing to see that they responded in a positive manner to this more hands-on approach, and although the game was eventually lost, the improvement in confidence and morale justified the action.

Sunday, was to be where the Junior competition was to be won or lost and it was important to get a good start. The first round of the day was won convincingly 4-0 giving an overall score of 13-7. The second round was more closely contested ending 2-2 and leaving the match score at 15-9. Just 2 more wins after the lunch would see the EPA Juniors win the title once again.

The lunch break seemed to galvanise the team spirit once more and the 3rd round was won convincingly 3-1 securing the title. Having secured the title, some of the team could have subconsciously decided to relax a little, which would give the Welsh team some confidence. The result of the last round was 2-2, with some closely fought games, so certainly no thoughts of relaxing, every game was as competitive as it could have been.

Team results were as follows:

	Wins	For	Against	Difference
EPA 9 Triple	2	46	37	9
EPA 9 Single	3	48	38	10
EPA 10 Triple	4	52	43	9
EPA 10 Single	2	40	39	1
EPA 9A Double	4	52	25	27
EPA 9B Double	3	47	28	19
EPA 10A Double	1	21	51	-30
EPA 10B Double	1	40	45	-5
Totals	20	346	306	40

This was a very satisfying result, especially given the unpredictable nature of the terrain and the variable weather conditions that were encountered. The team spirit was commendable, and players from the Adult teams were encouraged to support the Junior teams at every opportunity.

The close nature of the Adult competition made it very difficult to spend a sufficient amount of time with the Junior teams, but they coped well. They were ably supported by a mix of parents, England adult players, spectators and Mike and myself.