

Mill O' Forest Primary School badminton Championships 31st May 2008

Mill O' Forest Primary School Badminton Championships took place in the Mackie Academy Games Hall on Saturday. Up for grabs at the tournament was the annual shield for best boy and best girl. The competition is open to all pupils at Mill O' Forest and it attracted 36 hopefuls, 3 of which have been the youngest competitors to date: Richie Giles P1/2, Josh McKay P2 and Cristiano Magaglio P4.

All 3 disciplines - Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles were played, with the shield going to the winners of the singles boys and girls. To ensure an even performance in Doubles and Mixed Doubles, the pairings were sympathetically matched, placing an experienced player with a less experienced competitor. All pools and pairings were drawn out of a hat at the school. Thank you to the members of staff who gave their time to do the draw, it turned out to be very well balanced across all disciplines.

In the boys singles there were 4 pools of 4/5 players with the winner of each pool going through to the Semi Finals, Liam Robertson won pool 'A' with relative ease with Kieran McAllan coming a close second. Elliot Johnson won pool 'B' convincingly, Jacob Reynolds winning pool 'C' effortlessly and Mark Leith won pool 'D' with ease. The semi-final between Liam Robertson and Elliot Johnson was very close 15-13 in a very evenly matched game. In the second semi-final Jacob Reynolds and Mark Leith were point for point until halfway through the game when Jacob Reynolds started to exert his authority on the game and pulled out a decisive lead to win 15-11 In the final, a repeat of the North East Championship Final Liam Robertson took an early lead, before Jacob Reynolds took hold of the game managing to restrict Liam to only the occasional point and running out a convincing winner 21-7.

In the boys doubles there were three pools with the winners of pools A and B in a semi final play-off with the winner meeting pool C winners in the final. Mark Leith and Sam Butchart were favourites to win pool 'A' however nobody anticipated the determination of Josh McKay (aged 6) and his skill in returning the shuttle complimenting his more experienced partner Liam Robertson to win against the favourites 11-9 and going on to win their pool. In pool B there were some very close games but the strength and experience of Elliot Johnson combined with his less experienced partner Ben Kirkland couldn't be over powered and they won pool 'B' with relative ease. Jacob and Cristiano won all their games giving them a bye into the final where they would meet the semi final winners, this semi final proved to be a close game with Elliot and Ben working well together, however, Liam and Josh proved to be too strong a partnership winning 15-10. In the final Liam and Josh won some excellent rallies but Jacob and Cristiano were a stronger partnership with Cristiano following Jacobs guidance and Jacobs tactical acumen making the difference to win 21-17.

The mixed doubles were played next, as in the boy's doubles there were 3 pools with pools A and B in a play off to play pool C winners in the final.

Emma Buchanan and Sam Butchart won pool 'A' easily with Ross Borland and Kelsey Stewart having much closer games before winning pool 'B'. Kaitlin Andrew and Jack

Murray winning pool 'C'. In the semi-final Ross Borland and Kelsey Stewart just beat Emma Buchanan and Sam Butchart 15-14 in a nail biting match that could have gone either way, neither pairing deserving to lose. In the final Kaitlin Andrew and Jack Murray proved to be a well balanced partnership both players fired up to win which they did with some seriously determined play beating Ross Borland and Kelsey Stewart 21-14 in a superb match that did all the players proud.

There were 3 pools of girls, each pool headed by a seeded player who was expected to go through. Kaitlin Andrew won pool 'A' comfortably and Emma Buchanan winning pool 'B' with ease and Fiona Craigen winning pool 'C' effortlessly and getting a bye through to the final. The semi final between Kaitlin and Emma started well with Kaitlin gaining points from well disguised cross court drop shots which took Emma by surprise, but as Emma began to read Kaitlin's game she proved too strong for Kaitlin and Emma won 15-5 to meet Fiona in the final. And what a final it proved to be. Fiona and Emma went point for point until Fiona hit double figures and started to pull away then at 20-12, (match point for Fiona) Emma dug deep and battled to keep herself in the game producing tremendous winning shots down the side lines to pull back to 20-18, before Fiona Craigen finally found the winning shot ending the game at 21-18 and winning the Girls Championship for the second year in a row.

As there were only 2 pools in the girls Doubles the players using the best tactical play would top their pool and go on to the final. Emma Buchanan and Mollie McVey won pool A whilst Fiona Craigen and Lucy Ballard won pool 'B'. Both pairings were well balanced and a number of long rallies followed, but Fiona and Lucy established a lead which Emma and Mollie could not come back from and Fiona & Lucy went on to win 21-12.

All in all it was an enjoyable event, the good spirit, sportsmanship and sheer enjoyment of the children was apparent throughout the day with parents clearly enjoying the skills on display. The skills, attitude and determination to do well will no doubt provide inspiration for the younger players coming through..

Thank you to all the Children, Parents and Volunteers who have supported the club throughout the season, and to the people who helped score and line call on the day not forgetting Annette and Fiona for taking the photographs for the Aberdeenshire Badminton web site.