

## National Success for Stonehaven Duo

Two promising youngsters from Stonehaven, Matthew Duguid and Stuart Holley, have lifted the coveted Bank of Scotland National U11 doubles title. Over 70 athletes from throughout Scotland descended on the National Badminton Academy, Scotstoun, on Saturday 30 May for what proved to be a day full of surprise and upset. The unseeded pair from Mill O' Forest and Dunnottar proved that the North East is a force to be reckoned with. After a tough pool stage which saw 3 pairs on equal points, all losing one game, progression to the knockout proper was not automatic. 2<sup>nd</sup> seeds Anthony Grimley and Shaun Kavanagh secured their passage while Matthew and Stuart had to wait for a count back of points to decide if they or Brad Habberley and Jack Riddell would claim that final qualifying place. Identical points difference forced the decision to be made on the winner of the head to head between them, fortunately Matthew and Stuart were the victors, 21- 17. This placed them in the quarter finals against Glen Lewington and Rory Allardice, a close match ensued with Matthew and Stuart winning through 21 – 16. A battle against top seeds, Alex Dunn, Motherwell (singles winner) and Stuart Dyce, Mauchline was their reward. This was not the first time the two pairs had met but Matthew and Stuart were yet to get the better of Alex and Stuart. It always promised to be an exciting and entertaining match and the spectators were not disappointed. Superb teamwork, a variety of shots and sheer determination all combined to provide a fantastic display. Although the match ended 21 – 16, Matthew and Stuart were always in the driving seat. 2<sup>nd</sup> seeds Grimley and Kavanagh were also disposed of in the semis by siblings Matthew and Christopher Grimley, 3<sup>rd</sup> seeds. By this stage Duguid and Holley were unstoppable and went on to win the final in fine fashion, 21 – 8, very worthy winners. The boys were also joined by Jack Murray, Eilidh Craigen and Holly Thomson at the event. Eilidh and Holly won two and lost two of their pool matches in the girls doubles event, finishing in 3<sup>rd</sup> place, just missing out in a place in the A event. They went on to win the B event comfortably. Jack played well in his singles pool losing only one match to the seeded player, Shaun Kavanagh. This earned him a place in the B knockout event along with Stuart Holley, both boys exiting at the quarter final stage. Matthew, seeded 3/4 in the singles event, had an easy passage to the main knockout event however he met unseeded Brad Habberley in the quarter final and was to lose out 21 – 19 in a keenly fought match. Eilidh and Holly had very strong groups in the pool stages of the singles event, both finishing in 4<sup>th</sup> place, qualifying them for the D knockout stage. Unfortunately they met each other in the semi-final, Holly taking the honours on this occasion, 21 – 13. Her final opponent, Hazel Wilson, proved too strong on the day, but Holly was a worthy runner up. Joan Prieur, Badminton Development Officer said “these results prove that Stonehaven really has a lot of badminton talent and credit must go to all the coaches and parents who have supported these children throughout the season. Aberdeenshire Council’s approach to structured badminton coaching is paying dividends for many local children and as a group we are very proud of them all.”

