

**Bank of Scotland
U11 National Junior Badminton Championships
Saturday 17 May 2008
Scotstoun, Glasgow**

Once again Stonehaven had quality representation at the U11 National Junior Badminton Championships held at the National Badminton Academy, Scotstoun, Glasgow, on Saturday 17th May 2008. Eilidh Craigen, Kaitlin Andrew, Elliot Johnson and Mark Leith, pupils at Mill O' Forest Primary School, all made the journey south and acquitted themselves admirably. In the singles the quartet had mixed fortunes. Eilidh found herself in a tough group with 5th seeded Bethany Cook (Mauchline), and unknown quantity Ciara Lindsay (9) from Bournemouth, who took everyone by storm by making the final in her first appearance. Although quite inexperienced at this level of competition Eilidh played extremely well taking 12 points off Cook and 15 from Emily Dick (Highland). Kaitlin also had a difficult pool including 3rd seeded Holly Newall (Mauchline) and doubles partner Shannon Logan (Paisley). Kaitlin won one game and was desperately unlucky to lose out 21-19 in another however this meant she would compete in the "D" group knock out stage where she progressed comfortably through to the final. The final was nip and tuck all the way but Kaitlin managed to hold on and win 21- 18. Elliot played well in his group losing only one game to 5th seed Andrew Milton (Mauchline), and securing a place in the "B" group quarter-final where he met eventual "B" group winner Dean Spittal (Mauchline). This was a keenly contested match with Elliot only losing out 21-17 in the end. Finally Mark seeded 9th for singles, had a very comfortable passage to the knock out, winning all four of his matches in the pool stage, dropping only 24 points in total over the four games. Mark then went on to cause upset by beating 8th seed David Moffat (Catrine) in a spectacular match only finally taking the lead at 20-19 and winning the match 21-19. The quarter final however was where his journey would end losing out to 3rd seed Callum McMillan (Mauchline), eventual finalist, 21 – 11, sweet victory for Callum who had recently lost out to Mark in the doubles final of the Scottish Primary Schools Championships in Perth. The doubles event saw Eilidh team up with Hannah Ross (Highland), strong opposition and experienced partnerships in their group made it difficult for Eilidh and Hannah to progress but they put up a good fight and displayed some entertaining play. Kaitlin partnered Shannon Logan and although the pair had never played together before they only lost one game in their group to 3rd seeds Bethany Cook (Mauchline) and Sarah Findlay (Erskine). This meant they progressed to the "B" group knock out. Unfortunately Kaitlin picked up an injury during the last pool stage game and it was unsure if she would continue. After a break and some pain relief she was not only able to take to the court again but found form with partner Shannon and they managed to coast through the semi-final. They then met experienced duo Emma Caughey and Shona Whillans (Longniddry) in the final. This was however to be Kaitlin's day as she pulled off another victory 21-16 to win her second final of the day, a great achievement against such high standards of opposition. Elliot and Mark were delighted to be seeded 4th in the boy's doubles competition although the pressure of expectation that seeding can bring can be quite daunting. They sailed through their first 3 group matches comfortably dropping only 35 points in total. Their last group game was against old rivals Andrew Milton and Matthew Crawshaw of Mauchline. An entertaining battle ensued with very exciting play from both pairs but Johnson and Leith struggled to find winning form and lost out narrowly, 21-16 to the Ayrshire duo, who finished runners up at the end of the day. Elliot and Mark then faced singles semi-finalist, Alex Dunn (Motherwell) and his partner Anthony Grimley (Glasgow) in the semi-final of the "B" knock out event. Again they fought hard to find winning form but lost out 21-18 to the eventual "B" group winners. Aberdeenshire Badminton Development Officer Joan Prieur said: 'This event brings the national competition circuit to an end for this season with the Stonehaven youngsters putting the town firmly on the national badminton map as they all look forward to building on their form next season. Recognition as always should go to the many coaches and parents who continually offer their help, support and encouragement to give the youngsters these opportunities.'



Mark Leith, Kaitlin Andrew, Eilidh Craigen and Elliot Johnson(left to right)