

## **Captains Reports: 11U Boys County Cup Final 2023**

**Playing at:** Ivybridge

**Date:** 17/18th June 2023

**Captains:** Ollie Bendall and Ali Blackett

**Team:** Sebby, Thomas, Harley, Elliot, Archie and James

### **11U Boys County Cup - Ivybridge**

Our 11U team travelled down to Ivybridge 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> of June and were ready and raring for the competition. Our fantastic team consisted of Sebby Fry, Thomas Norwood, Harley Drake, Elliot Attwood, Archie Morley and James Tierney.

Day 1 of the event saw our lads take on a good Hampshire and Isle of White team. Strong wins at 3 and 4 singles (both 4-0, 4-0 to Harley and Elliot) set the team up well. Thomas managed to pull through an epic 10 point tiebreak 3<sup>rd</sup> set 10-8 to take the team 3-0 up. After a huge fight against a very strong player 1, Fiilip from Hampshire earned the win against Sebby to take the match to 3-1. With the fixture still live, the lads stepped up and were outstanding in the doubles. Harley and Elliot sweeping through the match 4-0, 4-1 and Sebby and Thomas partnering up and playing some very tactically savvy doubles to take the first pair 4-1, 4-1. 5-1 win, A brilliant start for Avon.

Thanks to some equally savvy work from Captain Ollie, the team were able to take on the other team in our box, Somerset on Saturday afternoon instead of waiting until Sunday which suited the team much better (well done Mr Bendall!) Our boys proved too strong across the board with a clean sweep of rubbers. Stepping up in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> singles and second pair doubles were Archie and James with impeccable performances winning those 3 rubbers comfortably. Sebby and Thomas resumed their positions at 1 and 2 singles and 1<sup>st</sup> pair doubles and also took confident wins in all 3 of those matches. 6-0 Avon and into the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place playoff!

The Sunday final was a matchup between us and Devon who were yet to drop a rubber in the tournament. Of the 12 sets played in that fixture, 6 of the sets were decided by tiebreaks which shows how competitive a match it was. The fixture kicked off with Elliot at 4 singles and Harley at 3 singles. Elliot fought back brilliantly in the second set but great play from Weichen from Devon earned him the 2<sup>nd</sup> set tiebreak and the match. At 3 singles Harley played an excellent second set tiebreak to win him the match, 1-1 after the first round. Thomas and Sebby faced the two Harrys at the top of the Devon line up, and despite digging and fighting as hard as they could unfortunately both singles went Devon's way; both sets were tiebreaks in Sebby's match. 3-1 down with everything to play for, the boys pumped themselves up and went and played some exceptional doubles. Harley and Elliot stormed through their match 4-0, 4-1 tightening up the tie at 3-2 to Devon. Sebby and

Thomas pulled back the tiebreak to 6-6 from 5-1 down but couldn't hold on with some of the best doubles points being played by the two Harrys to win Devon the set 8-6. The second set was fantastic tennis from both counties with Devon ultimately winning it 4-1. 4-2 final result to Devon and 2<sup>nd</sup> place to Avon!

The team could not have been more of a delight to work with. The effort both on and off the court by all the players was exceptional, from fighting to the last point to cheering til the last point, our boys were on it (as well as being on the chess battles between matches!) We asked the team to 'compete' and 'have fun' and they did that every step of the way. Avon had a great camaraderie across coaches, parents and most importantly players and the support of each other was phenomenal. Both Ollie and myself as captains for the weekend were extremely proud of the boys and how they represented our county.

What an exciting team for the future! Well done everyone!

