

12U Girls County Cup Finals – Nottingham 2023



The 12U Girls Finals was held at Nottingham 29th September-1st October. We took a fantastic team up to the finals consisting of (from left to right) Eloise Doumbia, Olivia Adamska, Lara Treen, Emma Fitzgerald, Amalie Johnston and Febe Kenna.

We got up to the centre in the most fancy van I think I have ever seen for the county for a team practice on the Thursday evening where the girls got used to the courts and the surroundings before dinner at our hotel. The cookie explosion desert with little to no cookie in left some of the girls a little disappointed but they seemed to power through it nonetheless.

Day 1: Surrey:

We had a very tough 1st match lineup verses Surrey on Friday morning, kicking off with Amalie and Lara in singles putting up good fights but losing out to a strong 3 and 4 of Surrey. Febe followed with an epic battle of a 10 point tiebreak 3rd set but again unfortunately losing out 7-10 in that final set. That left Olivia with the last singles, fighting hard to this time take the win in the 10 point tiebreak against Surrey's number 1 Ginny, 10-8 in the tiebreak. 1-3 after singles. Our doubles line up saw the youngsters Eloise and Emma step in to 2nd pair doubles and Olivia and Amalie team up at 1st pair. It was to be a day of tiebreaks with both pairs narrowly missing out in 2nd set tiebreaks. 5-7 in the second pair and 2-7 in the first pair. 1-5 loss to Surrey after our first fixture but a great display of fight and determination from the girls.

Day 1: Suffolk:

With the singles of the next match to be played on day one as well, for the Suffolk matchup Emma and Eloise came in as 4th and 3rd players respectively. After a close tiebreak win in the first set Emma swept the 2nd set 4-1 to take Avon 1-0 up. Eloise fought hard at 3 but was pipped in another championship tiebreak 7-10. Febe stormed in at number 2 singles taking that match 4-2, 4-2 leaving the match at 2-1 up with Olivia to play. Shockingly we were presented with another championship tiebreak for this match which was full of simply outstanding tennis. Olivia clinched the match 19-17 in an incredible tiebreak with the Avon supporting team going wild, the Suffolk dads finally going quiet, and Olivia casually dropping in that she lost the score at some point in the tiebreak. Avon ended the day 3-1 up with doubles to be played the following day.

Day 2: Suffolk continued:

The day kicked off with Lara and Febe in at 2nd pair and Olivia and Amalie at 1st pair. Olivia and Amalie lost out in the 2nd set tiebreak 5-7 but Lara and Febe clinched the match and the fixture with a 4-2, 4-2 win. The girls secured the 4-2 overall win verses Suffolk!

Day 2: Middlesex:

Our 3rd and final opposition of the group were another strong looking team in Middlesex. For this match Lara played first at number 4 singles. Following some great tennis again and an absolutely flawless 2nd set from Lara, Middlesex player Emily took the championship tiebreak 5-10. Eloise faced another strong opposition in Sasha at position 3, with Middlesex taking that rubber 4-2, 4-0. Febe faced a rather lively and vocal player at number 2 singles but she brilliantly dealt with the somewhat amusing distractions coming from the other side of the net and clinched the championship tiebreak 10-6. Olivia managed to play one game of her number 1 singles matchup before the heavens opened and play was suspended. It was not a surprise at the end of September for rain to stop play and the girls occupied themselves well during the break – mostly playing Amalie's zoo game on their phones; they were not impressed with my suggestion of the old Nokia classic 'Snake'. We eventually resumed Olivia's match but with a very different type of atmosphere inside a very noisy bubble. Olivia played some very smart tennis to take the Middlesex number one to a second set tiebreak but eventually lost out 4-7. 1-3 down after singles. Following a short break Olivia teamed up with Emma at 2nd pair to keep the tie alive. Despite some excellent teamwork, communication and tactical play, the Middlesex pair proved too strong taking the match 7-2 in the 2nd set tiebreak. Although we still had one match to play; the centre was closing and Middlesex conceded the 1st pair doubles due to it being a dead rubber going in to day 3. A long day of tennis for the girls and the managed to continue to fight on court and support off court really well, ultimately finishing 3rd in the box at group stages.

Day 3: Essex

Play started late on the last day following overspill of matches from the day before. The girls had an epic game of big point little point to warm up and we were ready for Our 5th/6th playoff fixture verses Essex. Lara was first on at number 4. Her opposition was an exceptional player who plays in Spain therefore had a very misleading ranking and Essex took the win 4-0, 4-1. Eloise went in at 3rd singles, and fought hard but the win went to Essex 4-2, 4-2. At 2nd singles Febe went down a set but then fought back to be 2-1 up whilst Olivia at number was on court just having gone a set down before rain, again, stopped play (no way on October 1st!)

Unfortunately the girls did not get back on court. With the weather not improving and only a few courts in use in the bubble prioritising the 1st and 2nd play offs, it was decided that the fixture would be a draw as there was no guarantee of a return to play in the day.

Although it was disappointing to not finish the last fixture and complete all matches, overall the weekend was a great success. The girls showed determination, resilience and teamwork on the court and care and support of each other off court. It was so enjoyable as coaches to go away with this group who gelled together so well- whether it be on the tennis court or off the tennis court; using the squeegees to try and dry the courts while all the other counties hid inside, playing volleyball tennis between matches, adding baby pandas to their zoos on the app game, singing Taylor Swift in the van, or annoying 'Zesty Boy' from Yorkshire, these girls will remember this trip fondly which will motivate them to continue to represent their county in the future. The parents will also remember the trip following the media team, sorry, Adams' play by play on the Whatsapp group - I have never seen so many messages!

An incredible weekend with an incredible team, thank you very much from us as coaches, we are very proud of these young ladies.

