

Captains Reports for 10U Girls County Cup Final 2023

Playing at Aldershot

Date: 10/11th June 2023

Captains: Pete Evans and Ali Blackett

Team: Isobel, Lena, Valentina, Ayesha and Alba

The girls did a fab job of qualifying for the finals through the regional stage beating off strong players from teams of Devon and Somerset.

Day 1 v Middlesex and Surrey

Lost to Middlesex 6-0

Middlesex, were tough, some great girls and an incredibly strong team together. This team didn't drop a rubber all weekend and were head and shoulders above the rest. A difficult start for our Avon girls.

Lost to Surrey 5-1

Another tough team, but the girls traded well and fought hard, pushing their singles matches to tiebreaks and 3 sets. Isobel being so close at 8-8 in the third, going back behind her opponent but missing it wide after an incredible rally.

Alba stepped in with Valentina for the doubles, finishing the day on a positive note, winning the team's first rubber. Great teamwork and communication from the girls.

Day 2 v Berkshire and Cambridge

Lost to Berkshire 5-1

Every team had good depth and Berkshire were no different. Some great battles in the single but none more so than Ayesha's match as she bounced back from a poor second set to play some amazing tennis in the third set to take the match. Plenty of 'Come on's' showed she was in the mood to win.

In the doubles, our girls were right there, playing some great volleys, intercepting and working well as a team. Both doubles went to a 3rd set but unfortunately we couldn't secure the wins, even though the girls played excellently.

Lost to Cambridgeshire 4-2

Some great singles, the girls came out firing! Cambridgeshire who eventually came 2nd, were tested by our girls. Lena keeping to her gameplan, playing solid tennis and making balls, blocking balls back against a big server. Pushing her opponent to a 2nd set tiebreak but just couldn't get the match level.

The doubles, our last two matches of the weekend and the girls were on fire. Everyone was clearly tired, mentally and physically but Avon still very hungry in their final matches, winning both the doubles in a battling 3 setter. Amazing work!

The girls played with their heads and their hearts all weekend. Playing at this level was challenging, but the girls were right there. They should be proud of themselves!

Avon at the U10 Girls County Cup Finals 2023

Players Report by Lena and Alex Shields

This year's U10 girls County Cup Finals in Aldershot were a great opportunity for our five girls to play against some of the top players of our age group in the country. It was a character-building weekend, full of fantastic fight and fun team bonding on and off court.

On our first day of competition, we didn't win much but we still had a very good time. We played against Middlesex, who were a class above everyone else there and won every match they played, and Surrey who were also a very strong team. Our highlights were Izzy and Ayesha managing to bring their singles matches to a match tiebreak but just losing them, while Alba and Valentina played amazingly in their doubles match against Surrey. They got a well-deserved victory, winning our only match that day.

We fared better on the second day. Ayesha was so solid that her Berkshire opponent just couldn't beat her, meaning she won our only singles of the weekend. Both of our doubles matches against Berkshire went to a nail-biting match tiebreak, but had the same result: a loss. But Pete and Ali, our supercoaches, got our heads up again immediately. We were straight back on and this time managed to succeed, winning both in the match tiebreak at almost exactly the same time with almost identical scores. It was great that we could end on a high with each player having won at least one match. Not just the players were great though. The parents were incredibly supportive, shouting encouragement from the balcony all weekend, with the familiar chant, 'Let's go, Avon, let's go!' Alex (Lena's brother) did an amazing job as our private photographer and hitter.

Our team socialising was also memorable. It included a night at Lena and Valentina's Airbnb with a Domino's order – actually two, as our first order was accidentally delivered to Bristol, to the delight of Izzy's brother. The players got some downtime watching a film, whilst the adults chatted and Alex battled with Pete over the chess board. On Saturday night, we all went out to a restaurant. There was much joy when the girls saw the pool table, and they got straight down to work. In the meantime, (some of) the adults were watching the Champion's League Final, while others were having interesting conversations over the food.

A huge thank you to Ali and Pete for getting us to this stage. Can't wait for the next County training session!
Lena and Alex Shields

Avon at the U10 Boys County Cup Qualifiers 20/21st May 2023

Players Report by James Tierney

Finally, the day of the County Cup was here! We were all so proud to be representing Avon.

When we arrived in Burnham, Ollie and Matt were ready to take us to warm up. After we finished warming up, we got the privilege of getting to hang up the Avon flag.

First up we faced Cornwall. James and Mathis played singles first whilst the rest of the team cheered us on from the side-lines. A strong start from us, 2-0 Avon! Next on Max and Harley for singles. They both dug in, 4-0 Avon! Now for the doubles! James and Max partnered up and so did Mathis and Harley. Max and James absolutely dominated and so did Harley and Mathis. 6-0 Avon! Now one county out the way two more left.

Now for Somerset, going in strong Luca and Lucas playing singles. Great performances from them both, 2-0 Avon! Quickly followed by Max and Harley who both played brilliantly. 4-0 Avon. Luca and Lucas played doubles together as did James and Max. Both were tight matches but in the end Luca and Lucas won 4-1 3-4(5) 10-7, and James and Max won 4-0 2-4 10-5. 6-0 Avon!

Now for Devon and we all knew this was gonna be tough! First up singles. Max and Harley who both battled out against two strong players but they both won. 2-0 Avon. Next on Mathis and James they both kept going and won some tight matches. 4-0 Avon. Now the doubles Luca and Lucas, and Mathis and Harley who both played well but lost in tight games.

Avon were the overall winners!

Finally, there was not a look of stress on the parents faces. It dawned on the coaches that they had to spend another weekend with us kids. After all of our hard work, Matt and Ollie gave us all a free ice cream (but not so free for the coaches.) Southampton here we come!

Captains Reports for 10U Boys County Cup Final 2023

Playing at Southampton

Date: 10/11th June 2023

Captains: Ollie Bendall and Matt Elston

Team: Max, James, Mathis, Lucas, Harley, Luca

The team was built around being resilient in big moments and working hard for every point.

The boys showed this with a brilliant display in qualifying against Cornwall, Somerset and Devon, not dropping any singles rubbers through out the tournament.

With the boys showing great work rate and resilience, we were off to the southern nationals finals.

We had some outstanding performances against Hertfordshire and Berkshire along with some very tough matches against Kent. Eventual winners Surrey, who we did take to a shoot out in a nail biting finish, which could have seen either Kent or Surrey crowned winners, Avon finished 3rd overall. A brilliant result, with valuable experiences gained and motivation to improve to go again next year.

Avon at the U10 Boys County Cup Finals 2023

Players Report by Luca Leone

At last, the long wait for the County Cup final is here!

It is early Saturday morning and we are in Southampton, ready to battle against Kent, Surrey, Hertfordshire and Berkshire.

Firstly, we play Kent.

Mathis and JT lose their first singles matches. A lot of very clever dropshots from their opponents!

Now Harley and Max are ready for the fight, but unfortunately both lose at the tie break. Such small margins!

The next county we face is Berkshire and we celebrate the first 2 wins of the day: Mathis in two straight sets and JT at tie break.

Wins do not stop here: Max and Harley win their matches too, even if Max in sad circumstances as his opponent is forced to retire due to injury. I do feel sorry for him as I have been injured for a couple of weeks and it is rubbish!

It's time for doubles against Kent now and again we lose both matches at tie break.

In the doubles against Berkshire however, we manage to win! Fantastic, tough matches and big congratulations to Lucas for his National 10's debut!

Sunday starts with a warm up at 9am. Luca is still enjoying his role as Manager (like Pep Guardiola!) 😊

Surrey is our first opponent. JT loses a very tight match and Mathis wins after a tie break (at last we win a tie break!): 1-1 after the first two matches.

Next match Max is up against Surrey's number one player: wow, what a player! Very solid and dominant performance, but well done to Max who fought non-stop for each point!

Harley levels the results: 2-2 vs Surrey.

What happens next will be remembered for a very long time: Mathis playing against Hertfordshire wins in one of the longest 2nd set tie breakers ever seen here: 17-15 to Avon!

At the end it is 4-0 for Avon.

Doubles time: 2 great wins again (and second match for debutant Lucas!)

Six hours in the games and it is time to play the last 2 doubles vs Surrey.

All players are so tired but ready for the last fight of the weekend.

3-3 after the two doubles: it is shootout time! Ooohhhhhh....

In a very cruel way, Surrey wins in another tie break: 10-8!

Overall, amazing effort from Avon team: 3rd position but all boys should be very proud of their performances.

Special thanks to our amazing captains Ollie and Matt!! Already looking forward to the next year National's Cup!