Alex makes light of age and experience gap with a treble

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From the Coventry League comes an amazing illustration of why ours is truly a sport for all, for life.

The division three match between Beechwood Seasiders and Phoenix Jutes was the first experience of competitive action for 14-year-old Alex Richards, who only started playing in the summer.

His first match was against 91-year-old Frank Gassor – an age gap of an incredible 77 years between the two players. The match went the distance as Alex won 3-2 (6-11, 11-9, 5-11, 11-5, 11-3).

Alex was drafted in to the match due to injury and non-availability of regular players, but exceeded all expectations to win all three of his singles matches, and then added the doubles for good measure.

Club secretary Keith Roberts said: "I arranged a bit of time with him before the match to run through what to expect.

"I said if he won one match I'd be delighted but if he didn't win any then I didn't care because we were no worse off than if we went with two players.

"Then he went and won all three and the doubles as well. Once he got that first win under his belt, his confidence rose and he did incredibly well."

Alex said: "I was quite nervous before the match but after I won my first couple of games I was quite excited and had a lot of adrenalin. I didn't expect to win any, to be honest.

"I started playing in the summer outside at my old school with a couple of friends and I decided to sign up to the club.

"Keith's been coaching me every Wednesday and I picked it up pretty quickly and I enjoy playing. It's really fun,

I'd like to play in some bigger tournaments once I get better."

Do you know of a bigger age gap between local league opponents? if so, let us know via
marketing@tabletennisengland.co.uk