

Yorkshire Junior & Cadet Trials

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FAVOURITES COME UNSTUCK IN TRIALS

The Yorkshire Junior Trials took place at Richmond Hill TTC, Leeds recently and with it a fine share of surprises. In the boys singles of the Blue Riband event, the favourites James Foster and Matthew Stephens of Halifax were beaten into the minor placings by a batch of up and coming stars.

With four groups of five players featuring in the junior event, the top three in each group qualified for phase two and things looked to be going well for the Halifax pair as they eased through their groups without any problems. In phase two it was each group winner who qualified for an A group final and the runners-up went through to the B final.

Top seed Stephens found Thomas Bell of Leeds too hot to handle in his phase two group as did Foster who found Hull's AJ Mishra in splendid form. Also, last seasons' cadets representative player Marcus Reynolds and Jacob Barber topped their phase two groups so it was those four players who qualified for the A group final (positions 1-4) while the Halifax pair were joined by Selby player Jake McCarthy and Adam McKay of Haworth in the B group final for positions 5-8.

With Bell having already beaten Mishra in an earlier group match in four games, further victories against Reynolds and Barber saw the Leeds player take top spot followed by Mishra, Reynolds and then Barber. All four players will figure highly in the selectors minds when county teams are selected in the next few weeks.

The junior girls event was won by the stylish Ellen Auty of Pudsey, who won all her five sets without being really challenged. Behind her there was a tie on sets for the second and third places between Imogen Barber of Hull and Hull St Mary's player Jenny Wood, but it was Wood who took the runners-up spot by virtue of her victory over Barber when the players met earlier in the tournament.

The top two places in the cadets' boys was a reverse of the junior event with Mishra taking top spot from Bell and with James Garrod of Hull and Dewsbury's James Hobson taking the next two places below that. They will also feature strongly in the selectors' plans for the cadets' county team when it is announced just prior to Christmas.

Imogen Barber took the cadets' girls from Kate Nixon of Dewsbury, where fittingly the top two played out a five game thriller which saw Barber come from behind to take top spot with an 8-11, 8-11, 12-10, 11-8, 11-7 victory, although third place Ffion Myers of Keighley also made Nixon fight hard for her runners-up spot with Nixon just getting home 9-11, 11-4, 11-8, 9-11, 11-5.

The under 11 events saw wins for Harry Dai of Hull St Mary's in the boys' event and Shristi Ghoshi of Leeds in the girls' section. In the under 13 event James Hobson celebrated a fine weekend with victory in the boys while Ghoshi was the only double winner of the weekend when she also took the under 13 girls section.

Barry Snowden

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