

National Junior League Report 28th Jan

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Runaway leaders: Kidlington Forum Girls Chloe Yau, Kristelle Brook, Teisi Tamming and Evie Foster (Kent)

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Twelve Kidlington Forum players took part in the third series of National Junior League (South) matches, organised by Mike Atkinson and played at Cippenham on Saturday. Most successful was the trio of girls, Chloe Yau, Kristelle Brook and Teisi Tamming, who along with team-mate Evie Foster (Kent) have swept all opposition aside and are running away with the title.

Bournemouth provided the stiffest opposition on this occasion (4-2), but closest rivals Horsham were beaten 6-0. Evie dominated proceedings with her powerhouse play (8/8), but Chloe was also on good form, winning 5/6, while Teisi won 4/6 and debutante Kristelle (13) took 3/4.

The Boys' A team has levelled off after their magnificent start to the league back in November. They won 2/4 matches, but are now barely hanging on to third spot in Division 1, after losing to Southampton West 1-5 and Chiltern A 1-5. Top scorer was Jonah Stott with 5/8.

Late in the day Jack Shardlow pulled off an excellent win over Lewis McFarlane, while no 1 Lewis Sumner had an indifferent day, not really grafting when on the receiving end against the top players. Chiltern A (Ben Woodbridge, Jamie Trevillion and Lewis McFarlane) lead the way, with Reading (Sam Ricks, Hanson Xu and Danny Ricks) in pursuit.

With Simon Price withdrawing through illness, 13-year-old Ethan Ball suddenly found himself promoted from the C team (just relegated to Division 3) to the B team, which had won Div 2 and reached the dizzy heights of Div 1! Not surprisingly they had a tough time of it, losing 0-6 to both Reading and Chiltern A, then 1-5 to their own A team, but they managed to keep heads held high and defeated North Herts 5-1 at the end of the day, to prolong their stay in the top division. Niall Harris (also 13) won 2/8, Cameron Patterson 1/8 and Ethan Ball 3/8.

Ben Neumeier (14) was drafted into the C team, who went 0-2 down to Leo-Long-led Kingfisher, but clawed their way back to win 5-4. Easier victories over Cippenham B (9-0) and Chiltern C (8-1) followed, leaving them at the top of the table and thus finding their way back to Division 2, which will be a much harder proposition. Luke Jobling (13) gave a fine display to win 8/9, while James Rowan won 7/9, as did Ben.

Topping the girls' section and with two boys' teams in Div 1 and another one back in Div 2, Kidlington have come a long way with their young players since last season, for most of which they just had one team in Division 2 and no females in sight! Credit goes to the team of coaches, led by Karl Bushell and regularly assisted by multi-ball purveyor Alison Broe.

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