



Friday Photos 68: Our boys on top of the world!

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We tend to think of English World Champions as being from eras in the past so I thought we should remind ourselves that 11 years ago, in 2005, four young English players took on the world and won.

The squad was Paul Drinkhall, Gavin Evans, Darius Knight and Damien Nicholls with Jie Yi Liu the coach. The occasion was the World Cadet Challenge in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, held in October 2005.

The Cadet Boys' Team Final was England against Europe. First on the table was Darius Knight and despite a real fight went down to Pierre Bezard 7-11 in the fifth game. Next up was Paul Drinkhall who defeated Patryk Chojnowski, taking the fifth 11-4. With the score levelled at 1-1 Gavin Evans came to the table and by the closest of margins 12-10 in the fifth defeated Tomas Tregler, a crucial match to give England the advantage. Paul and Darius then went on to secure an impressive 4-1 victory to become World Cadet Challenge Champions.

In the individual events medals were won but not the gold this time. Paul (who was European Cadet Champion at this time) again went to a five-setter in the final of the Cadet Boys' Singles but lost 14-16, 11-4, 13-11, 12-10, 11-9 to Kenta Matsudaira of Asia. Similarly in the Cadet Boys' Doubles Finals, Paul and Darius came home with silver medals, losing to Kenta Matsudaira and Jung Young Sik of Asia.

Several players at the event are now at the top of the World Rankings: Jun Mizutani (JPN) 7th, Marcos Freitas (POR) 11th, Jung Young Sik (KOR) 13th and Kenta Matsudaira (JPN) 28th, so it certainly was a quality field.

Photo 1



Paul Drinkhall

Photo 2



Gavin Evans

Photo 3



Darius Knight

Photo 4



Damien Nicholls

Photo 5



Paul and Darius in the doubles

Photo 6



Gavin and Damien in action

Photo 7



The team on the top step of the podium

Photo 8



The winning squad with the ITTF dignitaries

Photo 9



How Table Tennis News covered the victory

Photo 10



The venue in the Dominican Republic

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