



Tough start for England teams in Eilat

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Teams representing 17 countries from around the world were welcomed to Eilat, Israel, for the ISF World Schools' Championships, at an opening ceremony full of spectacular performances in music, dance and gymnastics.

This warm welcome was mirrored by the temperature of some 30°C – not only that, but some of the opposition also proved to be rather too hot to handle.

In the Girls' School Team event, Grantham College were drawn against Armenia for their first group match. Emily Bolton led from the front winning her two singles matches but both Grace Potter and Beth Cook found the standard hard making a final score of 2-5. They rallied for their second match to beat Israel (2) 6-1 before preparing to play their final group match against Greece.

London Academy are no strangers to ISF Championships having sent a team to the last event staged in France in 2014. This year's squad (Theo Achampong, Eren Gozcu, Omar Khassal, Valentin Sepsi) faced tough competition from Poland, Belgium (French Speaking Community) and the Czech Republic. They all competed well but were unable to convert the 8 or 9 points each situation into wins, respectively losing 0-7 and 3-4 in their first two matches.

ESTTA had high hopes of success for the Boys' Nationally Selected Team (Billy Forster, Tom Jarvis, Alex Ramsden and Alec Ward). However, they lost 3-4 to Brazil after being 3-1 up – Jarvis winning one of his matches and losing the second in five games. Ramsden was 2-1 up with game point in the fourth but was unable to secure victory.

In their second very close match they beat India 4-3 – Jarvis winning two matches and Ramsden one with these two combining to win the doubles. They followed this with a 4-3 victory over Israel (1) with Ward beating the Israeli No 1.

The Girls' Nationally Selected Squad (Kate Cheer, Gauri Duhan, Letitia McMullan, Denise Payet) started their group match against India only to have it stopped whilst groups were re-drawn following the non arrival of

Greece. A 3-4 loss against Israel (1) was followed by a 0-7 table tennis lesson provided by the team from Chinese Taipei.



Flag-bearer Tom Jarvis with one of the Israeli hosts

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