



Braintree League: Success runs in Bettley family

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The Bettley family dominated the junior events at this season's Braintree Table Tennis League individual tournament.

But unlike last year when William and Alexander took home the silverware, this time they were joined by older sister Isobel.

Twelve-year-old Isobel dominated the girls' singles in which she won all three of her sets in the round-robin event, including victories over Lydia Jackson and Mia Charles, winners of the event for the past two years.

Another newcomer, Zara Darcy Wills, also beat Jackson and Charles to finish with the runners-up medal.

William, 11, and his nine-year-old brother Alexander were in charge of the other events.

William was taken to four games by Connor Payne in the final of the cadets' singles, but was otherwise untroubled.

He also made his way through to the final of the boys' singles, which will be played on finals night, April 24.

His opponent then will be younger brother Alexander, who came past experienced league player Max Plumridge and then had a narrow 3-2 (5-11, 7-11, 12-10, 11-9, 12-10) victory over the promising Louis Jenkins, currently in his first season of coaching.

Jenkins and Payne put up stiff resistance too in the final of the junior doubles, but the Bettley brothers got home 3-1 (11-9, 11-9, 9-11, 11-7).

Alexander Bettley came into his own in the under-11 singles where he won both his matches in the round-robin event.

And there was a runners-up medal in that event for a fourth member of the clan, James, who celebrates his

eighth birthday next week.

In the league handicap cup, Sible Hedingham stood on the brink of defeat at 4-1 down to Black Notley F, but clawed their way back by winning the final four sets to take their place in the semi-final.

Giving away 10 or 11 points up to 21, Roy Hooper and Mark Brown both won twice, but the clincher was Tom Brown's close encounter with Mike Smith (+3) in which he lost the first and just nicked the second at 22-20 before taking the third more comfortably 21-15.

Netts D and Rayne D were level at 3-3 before the third division side gritted their teeth and got home in the next two sets. Joe Belsom and Max Plumridge won two each and Kierlan Richards one.

A Notley side have won the cup four times in the last five years and this year it is the D team who are keeping the club flag flying after their 5-1 win over Hedingham Lions. Adam Clift and Keith Flowers were unbeaten.

They are joined in the last four by Felsted C, who beat Notley G 6-3. Arthur Geen and Mike Pitt were unbeaten.

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