

Central Juniors Titles decided

On Saturday the 21st May at SquashGym Palmerston North juniors from around the district competed for the Central Junior Age Group Titles. The sought after U19 titles were taken out by SquashGym pair Corbin Faint and

Kaitlyn Watts who both won their finals in 3 sets proving their dominance. Full results were:



Under 11 Girls - 1st Abbie Treder, 2nd Annabel Romero
 Under 13 Girls - 1st Genevieve Bell, 2nd Sophie Bell
 Under 15 Girls - 1st Annaleise Faint, 2nd Rebekah Turner, 3rd Natasha McMillan
 Under 17 Girls - 1st Kaitlyn Watts, 2nd Courtney Trail, 3rd Diya Joukani
 Under 19 Girls - 1st Kaitlyn Watts, 2nd Diya Joukani, 3rd Emma Dowman
 Under 11 Boys - 1st Reece Holmes
 Under 13 Boys - 1st Connor Fortuin

Central Doubles

The 2016 Central Doubles titles were decided over Easter Friday. The Central Doubles took place at SquashGym Palmerston North on Easter Friday. It was a full on day for players with all games best to 3 and sudden death at 10/10.

Mixed doubles were the most popular with two divisions. Div 1 being won by Victor Romero and Danielle Fourie of SquashGym PN and Div 2 won by Matthew Ratcliffe and Pauline Slovak of Rangitikei. The womens competition was a quick one with SquashGym Duo of Danielle Fourie and Rebecca Clifford easily taking out their only competition of Annaleise Faint and Sally Stantiall. The mens competition was a little closer with the calm and collected couple of Kashif Shuja and Victor Romero showing off how comfortable they were with pairing up on court and taking on the dynamic duo of Luke Jones and Rod Bannister winning in the third set. A big thanks to Ballie Construction of Palmerston North who sponsored the event.



SquashGym Claim Mitchell Cup



SquashGym were seeded 4th going into the 2016 Mitchell cup. There were 9 teams entered so we were put into 3 pools of 3 teams, with the team who topped the pool then going on to compete with the other two top teams in their pools for the Mitchell Cup. On Friday we were first up against 3rd seeds, Royal Oak. On paper we were strong at 4 and 5, but the top 3 were all up against much higher ranked opponents. First on court was Kaitlyn Watts who was playing A1 graded Jo Shanks. Jo beat her 3/0 last year, so Kaitlyn knew she had to be playing her best to be competitive. Kaitlyn played very focused and determined squash, and despite breaking 2 sets of strings and not been able to

convert 3 match balls in the 3rd (losing the 3rd 14/16), found herself finally beating Jo 11/7 in the 5th. Fantastic start to the tournament and this win gave the team some momentum to go and produce some other huge results. We ended up beating Royal Oak 3/2 with the other matches going to the form guide with Daniell and Mickayla both losing, and Holly and Courtney both winning. We then beat 9th seeded Masterton later that day to top our pool and progress to the top pool of 3, and play for the Mitchell cup.

On Saturday at 4pm we played the top seeds Remuera, and once again the form guide was not in our favour – but we have learnt to ignore that. This time it was Mickayla Kerr who was first up playing Rebecca Borman. Mickayla had to fight hard to once again set the team up winning in 5 tough games, 7/11, 11/8, 13/11, 5/11, 11/8. Our lower order was our strength with both Holly Donnelly (3/1) and Courtney Trail (3/0) defeating their higher ranked opponents, with the team once again winning 3/2 against the top seeds!

What ended up being a final for us against 2nd seeds North Shore was played on a very cold Sunday morning at 9am. Although all our players were up against much higher ranked opponents, the team was up for it - they had gotten up early to eat well and warm up properly. The theme of the day was to enjoy the experience – how many ladies get to play for the Mitchell Cup – not many, so let's enjoy everything about it. Kaitlyn was once again on first playing the top junior in NZ Abbie Palmer. Kaitlyn started in a very confident manner, and despite breaking her 4th set of strings for the weekend (it was really cold), she dominated Abbie to win 3/0. Another huge start to what was looking like a very special day for these ladies. Mickayla was on 2nd against Suk Hee Kim. Mickayla was fighting hard, but found herself down 2/1 and two match balls down in the 4th. The next few rallies saw Mickayla play very determined squash with zero errors to win the 4th 12/10. Momentum was now on her side, winning the 5th 11/8, and we now knew this was turning into a very special day. Special as it was, the next game showed how important confidence and momentum is to a player – Danielle Fourie who was the only survivor of the 2013 Mitchell Cup win went on against Shelley Kitchen. Shelley was ranked 315 points ahead of Danielle, but today all that did not matter. Danielle went on to play accurate and positive squash, and finally beat Shelley 11/8, 5/11, 12/10, 11/8 – the Mitchell Cup was ours!!! Holly and Courtney completed the whitewash 5/0, with Courtney winning 3/0, and Holly coming back from 2/0 down to show her fighting spirit to win in 5 – the perfect way to finish what was an amazing weekend.

Holly, Courtney and Diya were all unbeaten, with Holly playing all 4 matches, Courtney 3, and Diya 1. The lower order certainly did their job well.

Final placings were: SquashGym 1, Remuera 2, North Shore 3, Royal Oak 4, Tokaroa 5, Hamilton 6, Devoy 7, Masterton 8 and Khandallah 9.

Story by Grant Watts (Coach)

Newbiggin Shield returns home to Squash Central



Squash Central got their Rep season off to a winning start on Saturday 2nd April by winning its first of three One Day fixtures for the year against neighbours Squash Eastern for the Newbiggin Shield. After losing it last year for the first time in 32 years the home district was able to send a stronger team this year and it worked especially on the Men's side as they only lost one match out of the twelve available. Both teams were without a number of their top players but it really hindered Squash Eastern's lineup particularly. Central

had a number of players on debut for the district, some of which were out of the newly established Zone Squads within the district that is taking care of the next tier underneath its High Performance and they all competed well.

Leading the way were Central's top four Men, Jason van der Walt, Stephen Bennett, Corbin Faint & Brandon Keenan were all too strong for their opponents, only dropping 2 sets between them all. Zone Squad members Allan Bailey & James van Kerkhoff also played well to pull off 3 wins between them. On the Womens side, Holly Donnelly who has moved to Palmerston North from Tauranga this year and will certainly help strengthen the Senior side over the course of the year played well to record a couple of wins. She battled hard in her second match after being 2-1 down to come back & win against Eastern's on form Rhiarne Taiapa. Centrals number 2, Rebecca Clifford also played well in her second match, again coming back from 2-1 down & winning some nail biting sets 13/11, 11/9 in the 4th & 5th against Mel Goodchild. Centrals 3 & 4, Diya Joukani & Annaliese Faint managed to pick up a win each, while Di Tasker & Sally Stantiall, the two Rangitikei players at 5 & 6 for the district battled hard all day long, Tasker unlucky in losing both matches in 5 sets & Stantiall nailing one tight four setter.

Manager Kent Darlington (Wanganui) was pleased with the result. "It was great to be able to bring the Shield back to Central as it has a long history between the two district's dating back to 1971 when it was first played for. It was great also to see our Zone players Bailey, van Kerkhoff, Tasker, Stantiall and newbies Donnelly & Joukani get a taste of rep team clashes. It also showed us the training our HP & Zone Squads are doing is on track for this time of the year as players start to get into tournament mode".

Overall Score: Central 17 Eastern 7

Waikato too strong for Central team

Squash Central Senior team was well beaten by Squash Waikato 17 matches to 7 in their latest rep match on Sunday 29th May at the Hamilton Squash & Tennis Club. Central had a number of its High Performance Squad members unavailable and up against a powerful Waikato side on paper it told in the end.

Central were missing Luke Jones, Stephen Bennett, Ben Calvert, Danielle Fourie, Holly Donnelly and Rebecca Clifford from the SquashGym club and Nick Stretton from Kawaroa Park, all of which have played for the district at NZ Nationals in recent times. The teams which are made up of 6 women & 6 men has the players who are 1 & 2 in their line-up play their counterparts in the opposite team, same goes for the 3 & 4 and 5 & 6s. Central had some big battles, no more so in the morning round when they went down 9-3 in matches. As is always the case in the One Day fixtures the five set matches become crucial to the overall score and this was evident in the first round as Central lost all 4 five setters. Again a number of players from the Districts Zone squad programme were exposed to some rep play and showed that the next tier underneath the HP programme is coming along.

Performances to stand out were from Centrals number 1 Women, Kaitlyn Watts (SquashGym) who was the only women to win & she beat both her opponents in a couple of gutsy efforts. Her win against Waikato's number 1 Anika Jackson, 18/16 in the fourth set, produced a number of rally saving dives. It showed her unbelievable determination for a 15yr old to close it out in four sets, showing that she is getting back into the swing of things after being out with injury for a couple of months. Jason van der Walt (SquashGym) also produced his best result to date in beating Waikato's number two Phil Buscke 12/10 in the fifth set. After losing to Buscke at NZ National teams event last year, van der Walt played some clinical squash late in the fifth set to storm back from 10-8 match ball down to close it out 12/10. The other gigantic effort for the weekend came from Central's number five, Harald Askevold (Kawaroa Park) after he came back from being 2 sets down to win a five set thriller against Fergus McKinnon. After dropping the first two sets, winning the 3rd easy, Askevold was down 10-6 match ball in the fourth and somehow managed to scramble to win it 12/10 & then closed out the fifth in a gutsy effort 9/11, 14/16, 11/2, 12/10, 11/5. SquashGym's Brandon Keenan & Allan Bailey also played well at four & six for Central in picking up 1 win a piece against higher graded opponents.



Coaching Segment – In season Prep

Plan

Squash training is a lot of fun in the season. Being winter, we can focus all our training inside and mostly on the Squash court. Plan your events carefully for the season so that you can prepare and perform well. Working backwards from the event you want to peak at works very well. Given yourself ample practice matches before that event and a good 3 week training block to prepare for the event itself. Two weeks of training hard and smart with the last week of matches, tweaking things and working on speed and agility while keeping physically and mentally fresh for the event.

Prepare

A week of training in the season can have a multiple number of sessions. However, I like keeping mine mostly on court. Solos for ball control, consistency and accuracy. Drills to practice strategic play and hitting under pressure. Match play to get the mind aligned with the body on performance. And courties, ghosting and planks to work on speed endurance and strength. Depending on your weakness and time, these sessions would be included according to priority. If you were really serious, you could film your practice matches and review with your coach or by yourself. Its all about learning.

Pursue

Sometimes it's not easy to get games at a higher level. I would go anywhere I would need to get the games I would need to test myself under pressure. Tie up a match against someone better and test all aspects of your Squash. As an example, Evan Williams would always come to Palmerston North for hits before he would travel to Europe. Once there, he would keep finding better hits to get himself ready for events. Back at home, he would be tweaking things and working on the weaknesses that might emerge under pressure. No reason for anyone else not to follow the same formula and enjoy success at an event.

Persist

Sticking to one's guns or hanging in there is the key to success. Once you have done all your work at your club, its time to test yourself at a warm up event. Bring back the lessons learnt and improve a little bit more before your main event to peak for. It could be a slight fitness top up, a bit of hitting practice or could even be a fresher mind that you might need. The warm up event shows your needs well. After a four week period, you are at your event. Things will be better for most of your squash because you have put in the work. however, the results are not in your control. You might win or you might lose - or a bit of both. Its time to get back, have a break, analyse and work even better to come back stronger.

And one day you might become a Squash Oak - as my favourite quote goes 'The Mighty Oak of today is a nut of yesterday that held its ground'

Kashif Shuja

Zone Squads Update

The 2nd of five Zone Squad Camps were held on 30th April & 1st May at the Wanganui & Kawaroa Park Squash Clubs which were run by Squash Central's Sally Stantiall (District Coach) and Kent Darlington (HP Convenor & Senior Manager). The three Zone Squads are based out of New Plymouth, Wanganui & Palmerston North and have been introduced this year to cater for those players underneath the High Performance Squad.

They are mostly made up of B Graders(Juniors, Seniors & active Masters) and C Grade Juniors who the district see could be a part of Squash Central teams in the future.

So far to date it includes about 20 players from Tararua, SquashGym, Wanganui, Ohakune, Inglewood & Kawaroa Park Clubs and already

has seen the two camps (March & April) attended well. The one day camps which run for a 4hr duration, has shown plenty of commitment and the right attitude already by the players which has backed up Darlington's idea of getting it started. "With three more between now & September prior to the NZ Junior Nationals there will no doubt be some higher graded players by the end of the year, and the fact that the young ones coming through this system will benefit our Senior teams in the future" Darlington said. Also for the players is the chance of a One Day Senior Rep honour in any of the three One Day fixtures against Eastern, Waikato & Wellington as the selected line-ups generally get a few from the Zone Squad in the final selection as not all HP players are available.

Squad Members:

New Plymouth: Harald Askevold, Sam George, Jarrod See, Kaye Carter, Chelsea Aim, Jacinta Harrison, Jasmine Demchy, Tia Pauro

Wanganui: James van Kerkhoff, Brett McKenzie, Matt Laursen, Nathan Wall, Dylan Budge, Di Tasker, Sally Stantiall, Ngakuira Osborne, Emma Dowman

Palmerston North: Allan Bailey, Daniel Foster, Jordan Bell, Richard Bell, Nathan Swanson



Junior Prince Series Update

The Junior Prince Series is fast approaching the mid way mark but its never too late to enter. Competition is tight at the top of the series leader board. The top 10 after round 6 at Inglewood are:



| Place | Points | Name |
|-------|--------|------------------|
| 1 | 49 | Terence Wright |
| 2 | 45 | Samuel Partridge |
| 3 | 41 | Brooke Reid |
| 4 | 40 | Ben Smith |
| 5 | 36 | James Stanyon |
| 6 | 34 | Abbie Holmes |
| 7 | 33 | Reece Holmes |
| 8 | 31 | Grace Stanyon |
| 9 | 30 | Kayla Ryan |
| 10 | 29 | Dylan Smith |



Player Profile

Meet Tamsyn Leevey **Age – old enough to vote**

Club - Kawaroa Park Squash Club **Grade – A1**

When and how did you get introduced to squash? The whole family played squash in Taumarunui - I was a squash brat from an early age.

What is the highlight of your squash career to date? Being selected to play in the NZ Squash Team for the 2006 Commonwealth Games and winning the silver medal with Shelley Kitchen for the Women's Doubles

Favourite person you have ever played and why? Kashif Shuja - he always made me feel I needed a bit more training.

Most embarrassing squash moment? Getting skunked by Jade Wilson 27/0, when I was 11!

Top tip for other players? Hard work and dedication will get you everywhere and anywhere.

What are your Squash goals for 2016 and onwards? To win the Central Open this year.

Do you have a Favorite or Signature shot? Backhand volley crosscourt drop

What have you found most difficult? I have never found it difficult because I believe that having a positive perspective overcomes any difficulties

You have achieved some amazing results and won awards and titles over your years as a top squash player - what do you attribute your success to? Hard work, great family support and a really positive can do attitude.



District Events and Hosts for 2016

| Event | Location | Date |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Central Doubles | SquashGym PN | 25 - 27 March |
| NZ Doubles | SquashGym PN | 13 - 15 May |
| Central Juniors | SquashGym PN | 20 -22 May |
| PSA | SquashGym PN | 10 -12 June |
| Central Open | Kawaroa Park | 1 - 3 July |
| District Super Champs | See below | 29 -31 July |
| Central Masters | Wanganui SC | 12 -14 August |
| Champion of Champions | Ohakune | 16 - 18 September |
| D Grade SC Nationals | Kawaroa Park | 21 - 24 September |

District Super Champs hosts are; B Grade - SquashGym Palmerston North, C Grade - Inglewood, D grade - Levin, E grade - Dannevirke and F grade - Rangitikei.



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