



# RUGBY FIVES ASSOCIATION

**ANNUAL REVIEW 2023-24**



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## The Rugby Fives Association 2023-24



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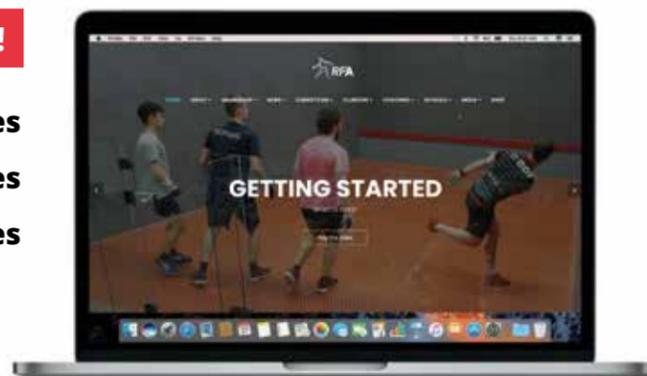
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# A welcome from the President

A very warm welcome to this season's Annual Review. This year we've been looking at how we can support and grow our special sport. In September, a group representative of our whole community met at Missenden Abbey to plot the way forward for Rugby, Winchester and Squash Fives. The board is busy promoting these ideas in order to keep our sport alive and keep our playing estate intact, while working on opportunities to expand. We know that courts are a vital part of the future of the game and in this edition of the Review Stuart Kirby runs through current ideas on court construction. Competition entries were down a little overall; however, there is a team of people working on improving numbers. We have a new WhatsApp group for tournament communication and are making it easier for youngsters to get financial assistance, so everyone has a chance to enter as many competitions as possible.

The Jesters tour of Edinburgh was a great success again, and a wonderful opportunity to meet players from far and wide. Bringing together such an eclectic group of people and making them feel part of a tour is no mean feat. I'd recommend anyone who enjoys playing (a little or a lot) to join in the weekend, where you can take a break from normal life and immerse yourself in Fives.

There are so many aspects to our game and community. We have a league of teams playing in London now. An Under 16 has won the Open titles at the National Schools and an Under 18 at the Women's Nationals.

National Schools again gave me an appreciation of the enthusiasm of so many juniors who play and love this game. Many of our top young players are avid watchers of Fives videos, and I was pleased that we could provide footage of the full U18 Singles and Doubles, and U16 Singles matches this year via YouTube. Also, it should be noted that both our Women's champion and the U16



boys' and girls' champions are state school educated and come from community clubs.

I have so many people to thank, such as those who turn up at events, or who - week in, week out - take sessions and enthuse others. There are some particular mentions this year: Ian Jackson is retiring from Tonbridge after more than

30 years as master in charge, keeping up a high level of interest and enthusiasm in his protégés. Sam Roberts is retiring from St Paul's School after more than a decade of service to the game. Tony Burrows is taking a well deserved retirement after some 20 years of involvement with Oundle Fives, much of it as master in charge. Multiple Masters Champion Tony Hamilton is hanging up his gloves after years as a stalwart of Fives in the South East. Bob Dolby has stepped down as President of Cambridge Fives, where he has helped to develop the women's game through the Lady's Cup after raising the money for the superb University courts. Wayne Enstone, a wonderful supporter of Fives in the North West and South West, was presented with a framed collage of photos as a memento of his 40 years of running the SW Open. Lionel Lawson, another stalwart of Fives in the West of England for many years, has scaled down his involvement with Bristol Fives.

I also wish to thank Chris Blakeley for his tireless work as the lynch pin holding operations together, following leads and investigating ideas, on top of going to almost every tournament. Thanks to Shinan Zhang, Helena Tunks and all our other tournament organisers for all their work, to Penn Chai for his great work on social media, to Dave Butler and Ben Hale for their Jesters organisation. Finally, to the board of the RFA, a great source of support during my presidency.

As I hand over to Andy Passey, I wish you pleasure in reading this upbeat edition of the Annual Review.

# The 2023-24 Season in Review

**Andy Pringle** reviews a season where Three became Four but some things never change



**LEFT: Ben Beltrami wins his first open Singles title - the National Singles**

**BELOW: Old Derby Moor win their third Owers Trophy in a row**

Several competitors in the draw had current titles to their name, including Scottish Open champion Richie Murby and University champion Marcus Cloke Browne, but in the end it was the top four seeds who made it through to the semis - which is where the shocks began.

First, Dan - who was unbeaten at this event since 2015 - lost to Ben in the semis. And once Ed had beaten Will Ellison in the other semi, we were guaranteed a new name on the trophy.

In the end, that name was Ben's - after a magnificent final in which he notched up 19 clean winners to Ed's eight. Amazingly, this was Ben's first open Singles title - but a pretty good one to open his account with.

To no one's surprise, it wasn't to remain his only title for very long. In fact, his next title came at the first time of asking, as he beat Julian Aquilina to win the North West Open in February. However, Dan Tristao did gain some revenge for his defeat in the Nationals by beating Ben in Durham to take the North of England Open.

It all leaves a sense of real anticipation as we look ahead to next season. There's no doubt that we now have a Big Four, but the chasing pack behind them are closer than ever. The likes of Julian Aquilina, Richie Murby, Marcus Cloke Browne and Lewis Keates have all performed well this season and will be keen

**C**all us Nostradamus, if you like, but forgive us taking some pride in our prediction. In last year's review, we confidently proclaimed "There is a real prospect of the Big Three expanding next season" - and lo and behold, here we are 12 months later with one of the Big Three no longer in the top three of the National Singles Rankings, and new names being engraved on trophies.

Mind you, there was no real sign of such a shift in the opening exchanges of the 2023-24 season. Ed Kay secured Singles titles at the South West and South East Opens, and it wasn't until the London Open in October that results started to make seasoned observers pinch themselves.

The reason was that not only did someone from outside the Big Three take the Singles title at Allyn's, they also did so by beating Dan Tristao in the final. The person in question was Tom Watkinson, but his success should have come as no surprise. He'd already claimed the Yorkshire Open Singles title and reached the semi-finals in the South West and South East Opens before his Allyn's triumph. There was a sense of normal service being resumed at the next event in Sherborne, where Dan Tristao beat Ben Beltrami to take the West of England Singles title. But the long and short of it was that we came to the final rounds of the National Singles with no clear favourite - and several players clearly in good form.



to continue their rise up the Singles rankings.

When it comes to Doubles, though, it's far harder to establish any sort of pattern, primarily because there are few established pairs. As if to prove the point, the first five Doubles events of the season saw nine different players win titles. Dan Tristao was the only man to win two - in the London and West of England Opens - although after the turn of the year Ben Beltrami also scored a double Doubles success (in Manchester and Durham), before going to add the Winchester Fives Doubles title (with Theo Parker) for good measure. It shows the versatility of Ben's game that these three titles came with three different partners. However, this wasn't to be the year that Ben added his first National Doubles title to his first National Singles championship. He (again partnering Theo) bowed out to Charlie Brooks and Tom Watkinson in the semis, but they in turn lost out to Dan Tristao and Ed Kay in the final, who claimed their third National Doubles title as a pair.

It was Dan's sixth win in this event, in his 11th consecutive appearance in the final. But as impressive as that is, it's not a record - in fact, Dan has some way to go to match Messrs Hebden and Fuller, who appeared in more than 20 consecutive finals. Instead, the game's statisticians had to rewrite the record books after unique feats in some of the seniors' events.

True, on the face of it, when the Veterans championships saw Dave Fox winning the Singles title, and the Doubles title going to Morgan Spillane and Andy Pringle, there were no eyebrows raised. But after some in-depth research (i.e. we asked Dave Hebden), it turns out that Morgan is the first person ever to win his first Vets (over 45) title after securing championships at Vintage (over 55) level first.

When many of the same players regrouped



**ABOVE: Tom Watkinson wins his first regional Singles title at the Yorkshire Open**

**BELOW: Dave Fox seals the Vets/Vintage double at Cambridge**

in Cambridge a few weeks later for the Vintage Championships, the amazing thing was that the trophies ended up in the same hands: Dave took the Singles, while Morgan and Andy won the Doubles. It marks the first time in almost 20 years since the same players were Vets and Vintage champions at the same time. For the record, the last time was in 2005, when the aforementioned Mr Hebden won the Singles before teaming up with Keith Puckle to secure the Doubles crown.

The Masters (over 65) championship, too, produced a first this year, although sadly that was thanks to injury preventing Spencer Beal from defending the title which he and Tony Hamilton have held since 2017. However, super-sub Peter Ross stepped in at short notice and did the perfect job, winning his first ever title, partnering Tony, who secured a record-breaking sixth Masters title.

Finally, at Grand Masters (over 75) level, Bernard Atkinson continued his domination. He has appeared in every final since the event's inception in 2019, and this year was his third triumph, while partner John East secured his second title at this level.

Last but not least, there was more déjà vu in the season's two team events. First, Old Derby Moor won the Owers Trophy for the third consecutive year - again at the expense of the Old Wkyehamists - while the Old Paulines justified their status as top seeds and firm favourites with an emphatic win in the Club Championship, lifting the Wood Cup for the second year in a row - and the seventh time since 2011.

Overall, it's been a fascinating season, with titles going the way of seasoned campaigners and new names alike. And 2024-25 will bring more of the same. Are we sure? Oh yes - mark our words!



The Ladies' Winchester Fives Championships at Bradfield College



Zara wins the Women's U25s



behind the new London League.

Mixed Doubles has now established itself as a popular and rewarding fixture on the RFA programme. There are two events: a President's Cup-style contest played at Alleyn's and won this year by Helena Tunks and Toby Chan, and an Open tournament played at Cambridge in which Shinan and Penn beat Camille and Theo Parker in the final. There was also the long-established Winchester Fives Mixed Doubles, played this year at Malvern, where Shinan and Penn notched up another title, beating the Derby Moor combination of Karen Hird and Lewis Keates. Sadly it has not been possible to fit in a Schools Mixed Doubles, which Alex Smith started last year, but the event is very much in mind for next season.

The Ladies' Winchester Fives Championships are another long-standing part of the programme of Women's Fives. Here Shinan triumphed once more, beating Helena in the Singles final, and then winning the Doubles with Helena against organiser Maddy Raynor and her partner Phoenix Fleming from Marlborough College. If we had a medal table for the season Shinan would top it with five golds just ahead of Helena with three.

Looking to the future, as Camille leaves school, there remains tremendous talent and enthusiasm among the school-age

players. In the regional events we have seen very promising players at the City of Durham Club, including the National U16 Singles Girls' Champion Eleonora Vallascas, several champions in the U14 and U13 categories from Alleyn's School, and the year-young National U18 Girls' champions, Jemima Mitchell

**"THE LADY'S CUP HAS ACHIEVED ITS AIM AND WILL BE TRANSFERRED NEXT SEASON TO SCOTLAND TO ENCOURAGE SCHOOLGIRL FIVES"**

and Natalia Talbot from Blundell's School in particular. Sadly, impending examinations prevented the excellent school leavers from the Edinburgh Academy taking part in the National Girls' Championships at Oundle School - we hope very much to see Rosa, Olivia, Chrissie and the others continue playing post-school. And we look forward to seeing our National Women's Champion Camille Beattie continue to set the standard for our young women. ■

# Women's Season Review

**Bob Dolby** reviews a year where young players and mixed doubles flourished

It's been a busy, exciting and somewhat different season for the ladies' game. We have missed four-time National Women's Champion Louise Mathias, working in Australia, and also keen Executioner Ibbey Lee, currently in an area of the country with difficult access to a Fives Club, and Martha Nugent, studying abroad. Difficulties with finding a suitable date and venue affected the turnout for the U25 Championship and the pressure of exams reduced the entry at U18 level in the National Girls' Championships. The degree of enthusiasm and competitiveness has nevertheless been as great if not greater than ever.

Most of the competitions have taken place since Christmas. The only event run before that date was the Durham Ladies Championships, where the Open

Singles was won for the third time by Camille Beattie and the Doubles once more by Camille and her partner Imogen Wright. The entry was substantial, with players from both Durham clubs, from the London Executioners and from the Edinburgh Academy, and as usual organiser Julie McIntyre arranged for some subsidiary competitions to give younger players valuable experience of tournament Fives, though, of course, open to all as ever.

One traditional autumn event, the Lady's Cup, was not played. Set up in 2014 to promote undergraduate Fives on the new Cambridge University courts, the tournament has now achieved its aim and will be transferred next season to Scotland to encourage schoolgirl Fives in the North East and north of the border.

The other established pre-Christmas

Shinan and Camille at the Women's Nationals



tournament, the Ladies' U23s, was moved to February for various logistical reasons and rebranded as the U25s to match the Open U25 Championships. Oxford captain Lena Barton took on the organising in Ibbey Lee's absence and, with the General Secretary's help ran what turned out to be a small entry. Zara Elliot, after a period out of the game and now playing seriously with the Executioners, won the Singles and shared the Doubles title with Lena. Lena also had the satisfaction of leading the Oxford University VI to their first victory in a full Women's Varsity Match, ending an eight-year run of success for Cambridge.

From January on there was a regular programme of events involving women players. It began with a well attended and highly successful Women's National Championships on the Manchester courts, won for the first time ever by a player of school age - Camille Beattie from the City of Durham Club - at Shinan Zhang's expense. Shinan, though, went on to partner Helena Tunks in winning her fifth Doubles title. It was the beginning of an extraordinarily successful season for Shinan, who is the driving force, along with Penn Chai,

Helena and Toby at the RFA Mixed Doubles





The U18 finalists at the National Schools Championships

# Schools Season Review 2023-24

**Bob Dolby** reviews a season with a large amount of Fives crammed into a short time

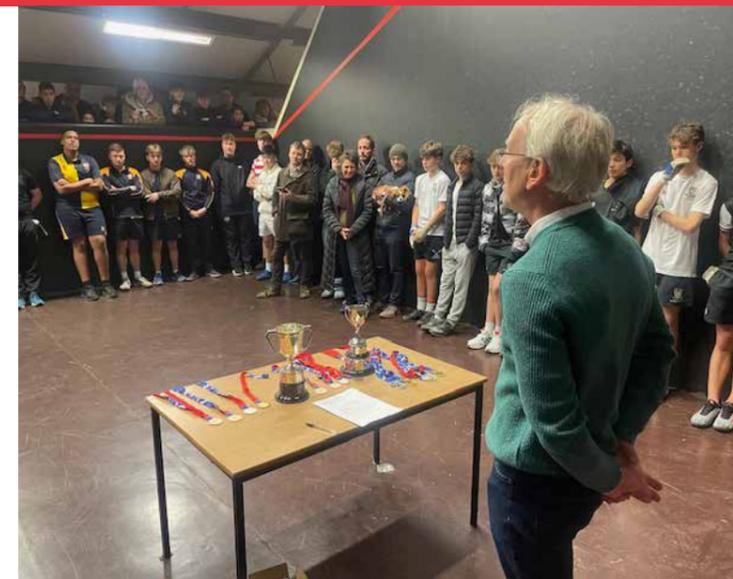
Most of the competitive Fives in the schools' calendar is played after Christmas in the Spring Term. How much of the game is played in the Autumn Term varies to some extent. Most schools start to introduce the game to new, younger pupils while maintaining a regular pattern of practice for the established squad. Competitive

**BELOW:** Competitors at the Northern Schools Championships



Fives, however, may be limited to just the occasional match against a IV from the RFA or Jesters, or perhaps a traditional fixture involving an Old Boys team. We haven't yet reached the stage where much competitive Girls' Fives is played in the first term. One pre-Christmas event, played since 2002, is the Schools Winchester Fives Doubles at Winchester College, but that could not be staged this season for logistical reasons. Instead, we had to wait until January for the West of England Schools Championships at Sherborne to get a feel for the standard and strength of schools Fives this season.

The entry for U18 and U16 was substantial and the quality of play high, with Winchester College and St Paul's School dominating. Arthur James-Duff from Winchester won the U16 Singles, then paired up with James Kennedy to win the Doubles. Freddie Hammond Giles from St Paul's, eligible for that event, chose instead to enter the U18 Singles, which he duly won, playing along with another year-young partner, Josh Ferro, in the Doubles to win that too. As is always the case the various Plate competitions were keenly fought and shared broadly amongst the other schools competing.



**ABOVE:** Ian Jackson presents at the West of England Schools Championships

There followed a very busy schedule of regional events and tournaments, kicked off by the feast of Fives that is the Jesters Tour to Scotland. Over a period of three days a whole series of matches are concocted so as to involve a maximum of players of both sexes and all ages, pitting Jesters and pupils against one another in varying combinations. This tour kick-starts a highly competitive period of Fives in and around Edinburgh, with James Milburn winning the U18 Singles for Fettes College and pairs from the Edinburgh Academy taking the U18 and U16 Doubles titles. There was no Girls' competition this year, but we hope that transferring the Lady's Cup from Cambridge to Edinburgh will help to promote female Fives in Scotland next season.

Christ's Hospital and Tonbridge School dominated the South East Schools Championships at Tonbridge, with Charlie Lacewing taking the U16 Singles title for CH and Tonbridge the remaining three trophies on offer. In the Midlands it was Rugby School and Stamford School who took the four titles on offer at a championship played at Oundle School, with Arthur Noble winning U18 Singles and Doubles for Rugby and Hari Jones the U15 Singles for Stamford. In the South West the Colquhoun Trophy competition consists of Singles only at U18 and U16 level, won respectively by Anthony Cloke Browne and Plum Mannion-Miles, both for Winchester.

There is at present just the one Girls' regional championship, for South East Schools. It was dominated by players from Alleyn's - read more in their season review on p10. However, the Northern Schools Championship in Durham had the usual menu of U18 and U16 Singles while the Doubles was a mixed event, with Camille Beattie winning the U18 Singles and the Doubles, playing with Angus Hogarth. Meanwhile Eleonora Vallascas won the U16 Singles, but it was a Sedbergh School pair of boys who won the U16 Doubles. It was not possible in the crowded term to stage the Schools' Mixed Doubles but it is hoped to do so in September, as the inaugural event proved popular last season.

**BELOW:** Action from the National Schools 2024



The season ends with the National Schools competitions at U13, U14, U16 and U18 level. National Women's Champion Camille Beattie opted to play in these championships in her final school year rather than in the Girls' competition. In the end the eight titles went to five different schools. In the U13s James Dunn from Merchiston Castle School was the stand-out Singles player and also won the Doubles with his partner Will Gordon. The same double was achieved in the U14s by Will Henry from the Edinburgh Academy, who won the Singles and then the Doubles with Freddie Murray. The pattern was broken in the U16s by Val Fikhter from the Manchester Y Club winning the Singles, but lacking a club partner to contest the Doubles. This gave a chance to the Winchester pairing of James-Duff and Kennedy to repeat their West of England victory.

In the U18s history was made by Hammond Giles and Ferro from St Paul's winning the Doubles, the first U16 pairing to do so, it is thought. Even more notable, however, is the fact that Hammond Giles, who had won the U16 Singles title a year young in 2023 and now won the U18 title, could possibly replicate Peter Mellor's achievement in the 1960s of winning the Jesters' Cup three years in a row, an unmatched feat which eluded even Gwydion Wiseman in recent years.

The standard of play on view at the various schools championships this season was remarkable. Another factor worthy of note was that this year sees the retirement of Sam Roberts as master in charge of Fives at St Paul's after 14 years of service to the game there and also the retirement of Ian Jackson after 35 years running the Fives at Tonbridge School. We are so fortunate to have the commitment of such people, themselves fine players of Fives as well as successful coaches. ■

# Around the schools 2023-24

Individual schools report on a season full of matches and tournaments

## ALLEYN'S SCHOOL

**Rob Ody reports:** It was yet another most enjoyable season of Fives at Alleyn's, starting with the West of England Championships where Laurie Milner won the Bowl and Theo Vernacchio Silver in the main Singles. Then came the SE Regional Girls' Championships where Anna Ratto won the U14 Singles and then the Doubles with Kirsten Eley, both finals all-Alleyn's contests. The same occurred in the U18s with Taylor-Rose Foo winning the Singles and Diva Tiwari and Annabel McAllister the Doubles. In March we had a Fives Day involving students and alumni from the 1960s onwards. It was a wonderful day, which set the tone for the Nationals. The Nationals produced runners-up medals for Rumi Kohashi-Khan and Fred McAllister at U14 level, and the same for Laurie Milner and Theo Vernacchio at U18, plus the U16 Bowl for Archie Shaw and the 2nd Plate at U14. At the Girls Nationals we won Gold and Silver medals and Plates at all four age groups: Anna Ratto and Isla Lewis starred at U13; Annabel Brown, Frieda Hebblethwaite, Kirsten Eley and Issy De Soyza at U14; Diva Tiwari and Annabelle McAllister at U16; and Annie Guo and Emily Erdmeier at U18. In addition to tournaments we

enjoyed weekly inter-school fixtures at all age groups, our teams led by our outstanding co-captains, Laurie Milner and Theo Vernacchio. They have been great role models and have contributed

so much to Alleyn's Fives: we thank them most sincerely.

### Alleyn's stalwarts and co-captains Laurie and Theo



## BEDFORD SCHOOL

**Henry Vann reports:** Fives at Bedford continues to thrive as a full games option for boys in all years. We are delighted that, in our third year of offering Fives all year round, numbers in summer have increased from four to almost 30 this summer. There are regular tournaments run between boys in Year 9 and 10 as senior years headed into exam leave – we hope this will prove a useful recruitment tool in the future. We played regular fixtures against Oundle, Bedford Modern, Rugby and the Old Bedfordians, as well as contesting regional and national championships, with a variety of wins and losses. The highlight for the boys was the fixture

against Cambridge; this year OB Rob Menhart welcomed our First IV to play on the superb indoor courts. Meanwhile our 1892 (refurbished in the 1950s) courts continue to function well and plans for their development are being costed and considered.



## BEDFORD MODERN SCHOOL

**Ben Kirkpatrick reports:** Fives continues to thrive at Bedford Modern School. Coaching is now delivered by OBM Matt Leydon, whose passion and enthusiasm for the sport has been a key factor in the increasing engagement of the students. BMS have enjoyed fixtures with Berkhamsted, Oundle and Bedford School. Fives played a key role in the Alumni sports weekend held earlier in the year, where current and former students competed against each other, 'semi competitively'! BMS also competed at the regional finals held at Oundle School.

## BLUNDELL'S SCHOOL

**Richard Moore reports:** Blundell's has had another wonderful season of Fives. However, we must start this report with the historic day that Jemima Mitchell won our first ever Girls National U18s Singles title. In addition Jemima and Natalia Talbot then partnered each other to win the National U18 Doubles title.

Over the two terms we have had excellent numbers of both boys and girls playing Fives. Even on wet days, with unplayable courts, we kept Fives going by using our squash courts, with thanks to Howard Wiseman for supplying his Squash Fives ball.

The season began early in September with our annual Reichwald Doubles

fun tournament. This encourages the Blundell's Community club and Exeter Fives Club players to partner one of our students and compete for the Reichwald trophy: a good way to generate enthusiasm for continuing to play at all ages.

A squad of eight players competed at the West of England Schools in January. Whilst we didn't win any of the trophies all the players gained valuable experience to go on and compete for the Colquhoun Trophy in early March and then the National Schools later in the month. To conclude our season the annual Old Blundellians match took place, which is more of a social occasion and enables non-squad players to participate.

Fives Coaching staff are most grateful this season to Activator Fives Coaches Angus Rackham, Charlie Tomlinson-Hodge and Jemima Mitchell, who supported staff and helped develop players' understanding of how to play and enjoy Fives.

### National U18 Singles and Doubles Champions from Blundell's



## BRADFIELD COLLEGE

**Jeremy Ball reports:** Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, this has been a very difficult year for Fives at Bradfield. Now there are six or even seven boys' U14 football teams running regularly alongside up to five girls' netball teams, close to 70% of the year 9 pupils

are involved in formal team sports. Thus, there is a much smaller pool of pupils available for whom squash, fencing, shooting etc also compete. Combined with illness on my part that kept me out of school for a good chunk of the Lent term, there was little Fives played in February and March

and, unfortunately, fixtures fell by the wayside. I think that we are at a crossroads for the future of Fives at the College because if you cannot generate interest in the first year then there is nothing to build on in future years. However, we shall fight the good fight with all our might!

## CHRIST'S HOSPITAL

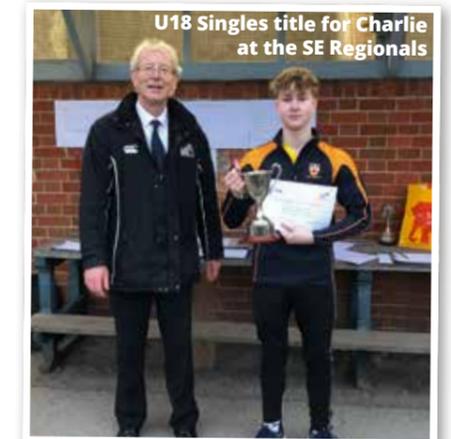
**Michael Lacey reports:** After a brief hiatus following Bart Callaghan's departure, fixtures that had been pencilled in were agreed for teams at U18 and U14 level.

The senior boys continued their strong run of the last two years, starting with Oscar van Huet Lindemann's winning the Plate at the West of England tournament. Charlie Lacey made the quarter-finals, and later in the term, claimed the South East U18 Singles Cup. It was particularly sweet that the trophy is in Tony Hamilton's name, as Charlie plays regularly with him in the CH Club. The 1st IV, of Oscar, Charlie, Hugo Gammon and Ziyad Mukhayer, had a successful season, with wins against Alleyn's and Tonbridge and close matches against Winchester and St Paul's. Unfortunately,

we say goodbye to Oscar, Hugo, Ziyad and a good number of others who have flown the flag for us these past three years.

Our other teams demonstrated great progress in their match-play skills, with two boys and most of the girls getting their first taste of fixtures at the U18 level, all but one having previously only played 'recreationally'. I am delighted to report that, by prevailing in their one and only fixture against Eastbourne, who kindly adapted their team, they achieved an undefeated record representing the school! In the South East Regionals, they demonstrated great spirit, with Charlie Diggins, playing at number four, achieving two wins in her matches, while our number one Manuela Musanga, put in a great performance. Our U14s demonstrated great progress over the

term, from a complete wipeout in their first match to three out of the four players winning at either singles or doubles in their last.



**DERBY MOOR JUNIORS**

**Stuart Kirby reports:** This year has been a little slow for the juniors – a situation of our own making. We’ve been investigating the possibility of re-rendering our two courts. With the possibility of them being shut down for months during the process, the decision was taken not to recruit into the junior club and so numbers have remained low. The soaring cost of the project and some local issues have led us to conclude that we should do the minimum to keep the courts playable rather than renew. Also relevant to the decision to limit recruitment was my need for two partial knee replacements which took place at the beginning of May. Having fully recovered, I will start recruiting again at the start of the new term through taster sessions during PE classes.

Regular junior attendance on Saturday morning had included the stalwarts of Max Staryk, his sister Sofiia, Zack Winson Yates and Dylan Wright, who has helped with the coaching. Juniors at the adult sessions have included Dylan, Cody Greaves, Kristians Davins and Daniel Moore, with all but Cody transitioning to the adult club at the start of the new term in September.

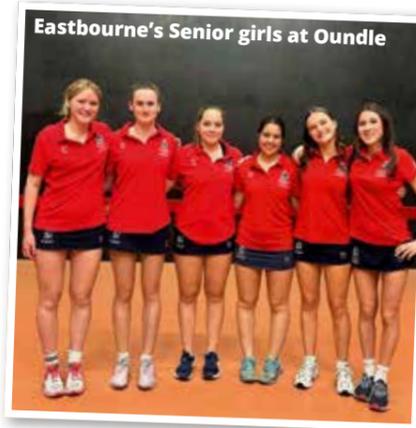
**Saturday morning at Derby Moor**



**EASTBOURNE COLLEGE**

**Simon Beal reports:** Eastbourne College has enjoyed another successful year of Fives, with good numbers of boys and girls from years 9-13 playing in all three terms, some competitive fixtures and some success in tournaments. In fact, we were at full capacity for numbers of years 11-13 choosing Fives as their sport in the Lent and Summer terms – great to see and encouraging for the future.

Pupils enjoyed matches against Tonbridge and Christ’s Hospital, and had some success at the two SE regional competitions – the boys winning the U18 Doubles Plate at Tonbridge and the girls coming away from Christ’s Hospital with both U18 Plates and the U14 Doubles Plate. We held inter-house competitions for the senior boys and girls – well attended and fiercely competitive, as always. In May eight girls travelled to the National Schoolgirls competition at Oundle, progressing well in the U18 and U14 competitions (with our U17 girls



and Isabella D meant we didn’t go home empty-handed.

Tom J and James T retained their U16 Scottish Schools Doubles title in an all-Academy final and made the quarter-finals in the Nationals at St Paul’s. In the National U14s it was a clean sweep of Cup and Plate: Weems H was imperious as he stormed to the Singles title and took the Doubles with Freddie M, while Josh T won the Singles Plate, and Frank B and Benjamin M the Doubles Plate – the future certainly looks bright for EA Fives!

**The Academy’s Scottish U18 Doubles Champions**



**FETTES COLLEGE**

**Peter Worledge reports:** After a reasonably successful Autumn Term, we welcomed the 36th annual Jesters tour. Aside from the sheer volume of Fives played over the weekend by the entire Club, highlights must include success by James M and Orla-Rose MR, runners-up respectively in the Select VI and Select VIII tournaments. Normal Jesters play was then interrupted by an impromptu Battle of the Siblings (and extended families) involving the McCreath brothers, father/son Fraser pairing, and a very close overall win for the Chans.

We saw growing interest in the girls game this year and the U18 and U16 teams continued to impress. The younger teams once again found

it challenging against older hands at other schools on the circuit. And so it came to the Scottish Schools Championships: firstly, the U18 Singles, where after a highly competitive series of games James M won the Cup and Jack H the Plate. Both U18 and U16 Doubles competitions were very tight this year but Mitchell T and Seamus Y won the senior Plate.

Finally, the Nationals, with a great Scottish turnout across the board. James M and Jack H secured the U18 Doubles Plate and Lochie F and Louis M were runners-up in the U16 Plate. There continues to be very much to be proud of and I am so very grateful to all the players for their commitment, effort and good humour over the season. Fives at Fettes remains in good heart!

**Fettes at the Nationals**



**MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE**

**Tom Kiggell reports:** Two stars of the year – firstly, Phoenix Fleming, who practised with dedication and competed with commitment, despite also being captain of Fencing and in the Upper Sixth. She went down fighting in the semis of the Girls’ National Singles, and played like a trojan to take Bronze with rising star Charlotte Grader in the Doubles. Plate winner at the National U25s, Phoenix has zoomed up the Ladies rankings to 21st and will surely rise further. Secondly, Isaac Bradbury ended last year winning the Singles Plate at the National U14s and made his first mark on U16 Fives by winning the Plate at the West of England Schools. There is more to come from Isaac too, when

he is not playing one of his many other sports or even doing the odd GCSE. Max Di Gleria (next year’s captain), Max Wyman and Henry Fletcher also played with distinction at various points. Triumphs of a different sort were recorded by a good number of players-for-pleasure who stepped up from Tuesday afternoon option to actually represent the College in a team. Sadly, though, it proved harder to mobilise the first-year girls into a competitive unit.

We enjoyed fixtures against Radley, Malvern, Allyn’s, Winchester and Sherborne, with planned matches against the RFA, St Paul’s and Rugby not quite coming off. So – no trophies, and



**Keen senior competing with the master in charge at Malvern**

**MALVERN COLLEGE**

**Chris Thomas reports:** The school team has played several matches this year against the usual suspects of Blundell’s, Winchester and Marlborough. A very good match saw us play Sherborne at Marlborough, and we reignited the Derby Moor fixture, roping in some OMs. Some U16s competed in the Colquhoun Trophy and found this excellent experience; they are developing into a useful quartet. Max and Seb Wilson are now able to give the master in charge a decent game. Highlights of the year are a real enthusiasm in some of the Year 9 pupils, who I hope will continue playing in years to come; a very close and well fought House Competition graced by many occasional players; and hosting the National Winchester Doubles. It was excellent to see Malvern represented at this event at every level – current pupils, ladies, members of staff and OMs ranging in age from Stephen Coffey to Andy Passey.

nothing to make the sports editor hold the back page, but enjoyment of the great game on a weekly basis and appetite renewed for September.



**MERCHISTON CASTLE SCHOOL**

**Matt Hillier reports:** Another excellent year for Merchiston Fives at Scottish and National level. In the U18 Scottish Schools Singles William Gale and Oliver Gordon both impressed, winning their respective groups before losing in the semi-finals. Jack Dunn, William Gordon, Alan Tang and Logan McKean competed in the U13 National Schools Championships. All four reached the quarter-finals, where Jack was drawn against William, and Alan against Logan. Jack and Logan were both victorious, won their semi-finals and met in the final, which Jack won 11-2, 11-2. In the Doubles, Alan and Logan lost in the quarter-finals but then won the Bowl. Jack and William progressed smoothly through the rounds, dropping just one point, before defeating St Paul's in the final to become the National U13 Champions. A very successful day and two trophies never previously won in the school's history!

Two weeks later, a squad of eight competed in the U18 and U14 National Championships. In the U18s Oliver Gordon and William Gale got as far as the last 16, then entered the Plate and eventually met in the final, where Oliver emerged the winner with a 15-5 victory over William. Day two saw the start of the U14 Singles, as well as the U18

Doubles. Oliver and William worked hard to reach the U18 Plate final, but had to make do with runners-up. In the U14s, five out of our six won their group to proceed to the last 16; four reached the quarter-finals, and James Robertson and William Gordon eventually made the semi-finals. The final day brought the U14 Doubles, where all three pairs reached the quarter-finals: Angus Jamieson and Angus Rankin lost but went on to win the Bowl; our other two pairs lost in the semi-final. All in all, a very impressive tournament record for our players.



**MOUNT KELLY**

**Guy Ayling reports:** Fives has been resurrected at Mount Kelly in Tavistock. A young squad trains every week, with the first matches planned for next year, as well as entries to National Schools Championships in 2026. Members of the Deep West Club support in the coaching of the squad.

**The Mount Kelly squad training for the future**



**OUNDLE SCHOOL**

**Victoria Brown reports:** Another busy and successful season, the number of pupils playing Fives ever increasing. In Michaelmas and Lent, the courts were occupied with First and Second Form boys and girls trying out the game for the first time. They enjoyed trying out the gloves, learning to serve, using both their dominant and non-dominant hand, and playing in mini matches and tournaments. The seniors have gone from strength to strength, playing home and away fixtures against Bedford, Stamford and Rugby. We have had successes, overall winning more games than we have lost during the season. One of the highlights of the year

was the very tense and competitive match between the School and the Old Oundelians, at which the Oundle pupils narrowly won the inaugural Roger Freebairn Trophy. Roger was a pupil at Oundle, Captain of Fives and both National Singles and Doubles Champion, a wonderful legacy and a real inspiration for our current Fives players. It was a win we celebrated.



**RUGBY SCHOOL**

**Ben Lane reports:** Like managerial change in a Premier League football team, taking over from the brilliant Trevor White after so many years in charge of Fives at Rugby School was never going to be easy. Fortunately, the team had a well-established captain in Arthur Noble and the flexibility of the new Rackets combination sports option allowed a strong cast of supporting players to join him. In the Advent Term the players benefitted from frequent visits from Derby Moor players and home and away fixtures versus Oundle. The Midlands Schools Championship in March was the highlight of the season. Arthur Noble and Will Milne were victorious in the U18 Doubles, retaining the trophy for Rugby. Arthur Noble also won the U18 Singles in a very narrow 16-14 victory contested at a very high standard. With all the top four players moving on to university next year the search for their replacement begins.

As a school we have enjoyed hosting a National Qualifier Tournament and a Challenger Tournament on our courts; ensuring the courts remain well used is the usual priority for next season.

**Rugby's Midlands U18 Champions**



**SEDBERGH SCHOOL**

**Rupert Follett reports:** Sedbergh Fives has enjoyed another good season. A reasonable crop of beginners have graced the courts most afternoons during the Lent term. The season opened with the Northern Schools Championships, again held superbly in Durham. All six Sedbergh players won medals, with Fernando Diaz winning the U16 Singles competition, then pairing with Toby Follett to win the U16 Doubles. In the U18 tournament Ollie Griffin and Phoenix Ogilvie-Robertson were runners-up in the Doubles.

Subsequently an away trip to the Manchester Y Club was an enjoyable afternoon. Great hosts, their players were just too strong for us. However, the

'coaching whilst winning' was greatly appreciated by the boys. Then, in a repeat of last year's format, Sedbergh hosted Strathallan, who came to us having played at Durham, stayed the night in Powell House, and played the match on Sunday morning. Over almost three hours of competitive Fives across our four courts, the teams were very equal. After 36 singles matches, the difference between the two school was just five points and after nine doubles games just four. Strathallan won by nine points. In the staff match Strathallan were comprehensive winners. The gauntlet for next year has already been thrown down.

**Sedbergh at the Northern Schools**



**ST PAUL'S SCHOOL**

**Sam Roberts reports:** Our season got off to a fine start in Sherborne in January, when Freddie Hammond Giles and Josh Ferro, both U16s, cruised to victory in the U18 Doubles, with a marvellous display of power, accuracy and inventiveness. This was after Freddie had won the U18 Singles, with his phenomenal anticipation and speed around the court. In the U16s, Tom Ritchie and Elyas Efthimiou showed great maturity to win a marathon semi-final against Winchester II, before running out of steam in the final. U15 Nadim Cortas got better and better as the weekend went on - winning the Singles Plate and then the Doubles Plate with Nick Fezer Brown.

To round off a stellar, unbeaten season Freddie duly won the National U18 Singles, three years early, before he and Josh then won the U18 Doubles. Josh's power and accuracy were at times absolutely astonishing. Freddie and Josh have both continued to improve even after the school season has ended, learning by playing in adult tournaments against some of the best players in the country. Tom and Elyas made it to the final of the U16 Doubles and Josh lost in the semi-final of the U16 Singles. Our U14s battled hard, with Ranvir Puri, consistently our stand-out player, making it to the quarter-finals of the Singles.

Our seniors were led by Will Freebairn and Euan Lim, a new convert to Fives, supported by a great group of players keen to represent the school and improve their game. Lots to look forward to at next year's competitions!

**The National U18 Singles Champion from St Paul's**



**SHERBORNE SCHOOL**

**Nick Scorer reports:** It was a busy season for Sherborne Fives, starting with our hosting the West of England Schools' Championships in January. We had a number of players involved in the seniors, where Alex U and Theo A-G won the Doubles Plate. They, along with Gareth K and Rudi B played a further seven school fixtures through the term. The Old Boys match was an especially enjoyable occasion, with eight OBs joining the boys and staff for a mini-tournament which involved an Old Boy and a current pupil pairing up. The ultimate winners from the eight pairs

were Old Shirburnian Nick M and Year 7 Johnny M. There was also a healthy fixture list for Colts, Junior Colts and Mini Colts teams, with a fixture against Malvern a particular highlight, as we had not been able to play them for some years. Alongside fixtures we have a regular group of senior and junior players who enjoy Fives three or four times a week. To finish the season Alex and Rudi headed to the National Schools Doubles and enjoyed being a part of that excellent event.

**Medals for Alex and Theo at the West of England Schools**



**STAMFORD SCHOOLS**

**Alex Smith reports:** Fives at Stamford Schools has continued successfully with regular practice on the squash courts. We have had a quieter year in regard to trophies, but our girls and boys have competed with great spirit in every event they have entered. Our season began well with a strong showing at the Midlands Tournament, where Hari Jones won the U15 Singles. In the U18s our first pair (H Jones and C McNaughton) reached the final while our second pair (R Jones and C Sharpe) won the Plate. When it came to the Nationals, our players competed at U13, U14 and U16 level, playing hard and long in Singles and Doubles, without winning any silverware but

gaining valuable experience. Again it was Hari Jones who did well, making it to the U16 Singles Plate final, where he lost, however, at the end of a long and exhausting day.

Finally, Sophie Dobson and Bella Wienand (Y9) entered the National Schools Girls' Championships at Oundle. Sophie reached the U14 Singles final, where she was beaten by the same opponent as last year, Annabelle Brown. And in a re-run of last year's U13 Doubles final, Sophie and Bella had a hard-fought game which was won by the Alleyn's 1st pair, Annabelle and her partner Frieda. The girls were very pleased with their silver medals after a hard day's play.



The Stamford squad on the road

**STRATHALLAN SCHOOL**

**Ewan Lee reports:** I am pleased to report that this has been another very successful season for Fives at Strathallan, where we have been able to welcome more new players on court to try the game for the first time. Meanwhile the more experienced were able to enjoy competitive and very exciting matches against the Jesters, The Edinburgh Academy, Durham City and University and Sedbergh School, in addition to all the doubles and singles matches which they played during Games sessions and their free time throughout the academic year. The House Competition again also proved to be very popular this year, with many newcomers turning up to play some great matches on our squash courts. I would like to thank Robbie Walsh, the Captain of Fives, and his fellow players in the Upper Sixth for all their hard work and enthusiasm while recruiting and coaching, and to our friends on the wider circuit: Julie McIntyre and the players at Durham, Dave Butler and the usual suspects among the Jesters and to Rupert Follett at Sedbergh School, for their generosity of spirit and Fives fellowship.

**Strathallan at The Edinburgh Academy**



**WINCHESTER COLLEGE**

**Jamie McManus reports:** Winchester College Fives enjoyed another successful season in 23/24, with a strong start at the West of England tournament: JP Cheng and Jeffrey Chan were losing semi-finalists in the U18 Singles, JP teamed up with Anthony Cloke Browne to reach the final in the U18 Doubles, and Arthur James-Duff and James Jennedy won the U16 Doubles after Arthur had beaten James in the U16 Singles final. Our U14 squad went undefeated in school matches – we wonder what might have been if a full-strength squad had been able to participate in the Nationals. Those championships saw more fine performances from our U18s (Jeffrey and JP both made the semi-finals in the Singles and teamed up to make the Doubles final) and more success for Arthur and James in the U16s, where they won the Doubles after Arthur had lost a three-game Singles final to Fikhter from the Manchester Y Club. Ricky Zhou won the prize for most improved player across the season; JP Cheng also wins a commendation for having encouraged Ricky back to Fives and for being an excellent example to all as club captain.

The other significant event of the season was the completion of construction work on the six Fives courts in the school's new sports centre. The courts look magnificent, and the intention is for them to be in play from the start of the new academic year.

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE SCHOOL**

**Chris Blakeley reports:** Despite having access to only one court, and a coach on just one day of the week, UCS Fives continues, principally for sixth formers. The regular afternoon session has had between four and eight players, and we have managed to play two (away) matches against Alleyn's and St Paul's. One of our enterprising players also ran an informal lunchtime knockout Fives doubles competition for the sixth formers, to which he attracted 50 pairs (yes, 50, not a misprint, representing over half of the entire sixth-form!), which completed within the Spring term. Additionally, each term we have had house competitions for a different school year, allowing younger age groups to try out Fives. Some of these matches have been streamed to the School Hall to attract some attention. There has also been a weekly after-school open session for anyone who wanted to try out Fives.

**TONBRIDGE SCHOOL**

**Ian Jackson reports:** 2024 was another busy year for Fives at Tonbridge, with over 60 boys in the club and over 50 of those able to play a school match. Once again Tonbridge attended the West of England Schools Championships in Sherborne, where the captain Felix Edelman and Oliver Wilson were runners-up in the senior Plate Doubles. In the South East Regionals Tonbridge won four of the five trophies. Oliver Woolf and Lucas Saunders-Aroma did well to win the Senior Doubles, while Oliver Carroll won the U16 Singles and the U16

Doubles with Devan Radia. There was no silverware won at the National Schools Championships, but it was great to watch the captain, Felix, run a scratch Doubles Plate on the final afternoon for those players (mostly from Scotland) who were at a loose end. I reach the end of 35 years at Tonbridge in July and look forward to playing at Bristol in retirement; I hand on a club in good form to an excellent successor in John Shafer. It has been a great pleasure to coach so many wonderful boys over those years and meet so many other pleasant players and amazing staff from other schools.

**Tonbridge's South East U18 Doubles champions**



# The Long-Term Future of Fives

**Stuart Kirby** reflects on the vital role that courts play in the promotion of Fives

A great deal of effort is quite rightly put into preserving Fives at its existing locations. This means worrying about the state of the courts and the coaching together with much else. But even with such activity, we are looking at an inevitable if slow decline as courts are converted for other uses and demolished to make way for the new. Against this background we need a plan of how to build new courts in new locations, which will be treasured by the institutions that control them and so be both used and maintained.

### What, where and how to build

The first question is **what type of organisation** should control the courts and **how do we get people playing?** There has been some talk of building courts within sports centres, but these generally work on a 'build it and they will come' basis and convincing a developer of the viability of including Fives does not seem practical. A part-time coach would be required on a permanent basis as part of a comprehensive programme to recruit new players.

My conclusion is that a better option is to build within schools where there is a plentiful supply of children, and to ensure that the school will do the coaching for which they already have a budget – both the recruitment and ongoing finances can be guaranteed. Many schools, particularly state schools, open their estate to the public after school hours and so the essential public access would not be too difficult if planned from the start.

The second question is **what to build?** A big problem with the old courts was that there were often only one or perhaps two built which can be used to occupy no more than a dozen children. This was OK in my day when as a 14 year-old I was taught the basics and pointed at our one court.

Today's safeguarding rules mean that the children must be supervised at all times and so a single coach dealing with a small class is required, which is not

practical on financial grounds. Hence the requirement is for four or even six courts to occupy typical PE class sizes of 24 to 30 pupils.

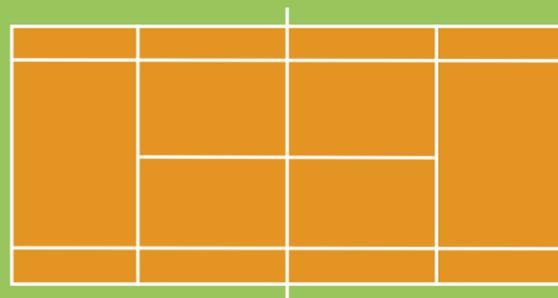
The third question is **how to build** the courts? Typically, courts were brick-built with concrete floors, rendered walls and solid back-walls. This is very expensive due to the high skill levels required, the specialist nature of the processes, and the fact that the 300mm thick walls are massive. Howard Wiseman, John Reynolds and myself flew to Cologne several years ago to visit a sports exhibition and particularly to talk to a producer of squash courts. The squash world has long since converted to using a modular construction in which 100mm

hollow-wall panels are factory-made, transported to site and assembled into a court. The walls are then filled with dry sand to provide solidity and glass backs come as standard.

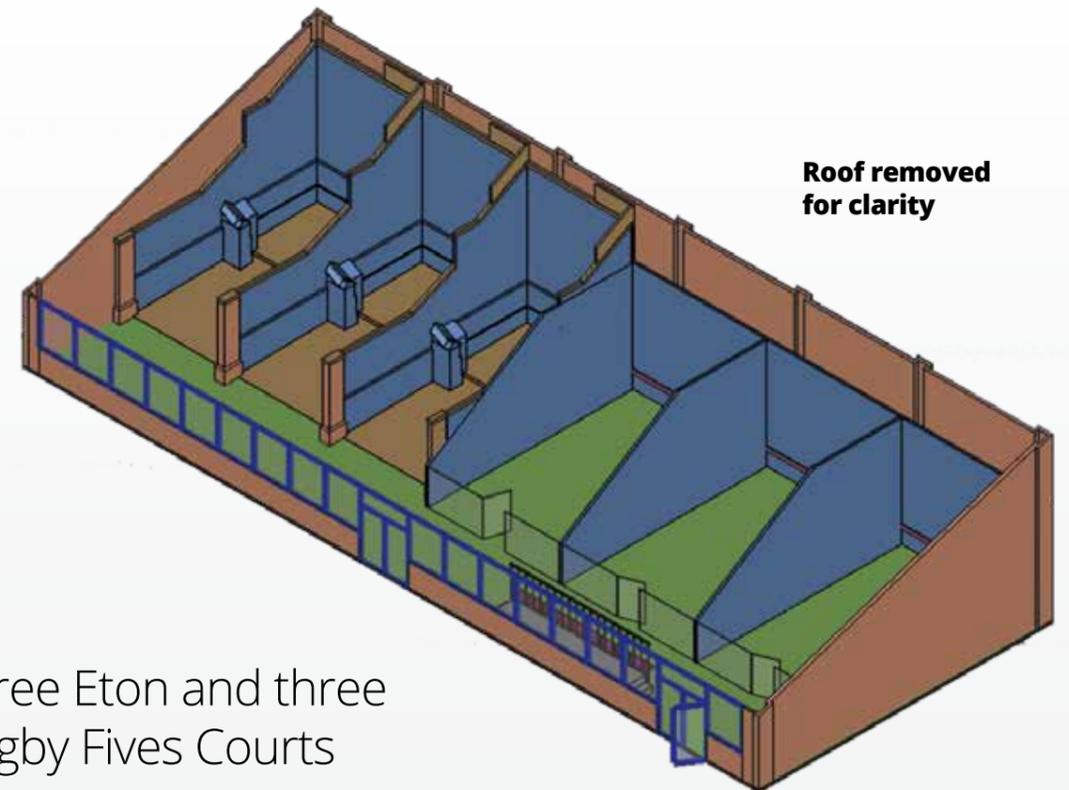
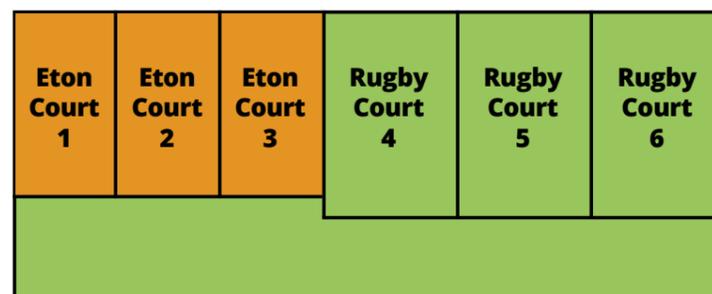
Hollow-wall courts need to be located inside a building which protects them from the elements. The best and least expensive option for this is to follow standard practice for similar tall but single-storey buildings such as industrial units or supermarkets, being a metal-framed building with panels and perhaps a single-skin brick wall around the outside. There are many competing companies that provide all of these services and so prices are competitive.

## Space requirements of Fives versus Tennis

### One Tennis Court



18.3 by 36.6 metres versus 12.5 by 31.1 metres



Three Eton and three Rugby Fives Courts

### Picking the perfect spot

The next part of the puzzle is to decide **in which schools would such a facility be successful?** The problem with most schools, including many independent ones, is that they have an excess of sports facilities and so it becomes a political issue as to which sports are promoted and which are ignored.

When the new director of sport decides that everyone is going to play hockey then Fives suffers and the courts are eventually demolished or re-purposed. We must place the facilities within schools that would value them, leading to the obvious conclusion that candidate schools must have a shortage of sports facilities, perhaps having to bus children to and from outside venues. This is a typical situation for inner-city schools with no room for playing fields and a requirement for compact local facilities. This plays to the strength of Fives, in which a sufficient number of courts can be fitted within the footprint of a single tennis court.

Howard Wiseman attended an RFA conference on the future of Rugby Fives at Great Missenden last year and proposed that the best facility would

consist of three Rugby Fives courts and three Eton courts all placed within an inner-city school. Howard emphasised that the building of fives courts needs to solve a problem for a school in order that they value and cherish the courts. This proposal was well received by all but particularly by the Derby representatives, who regularly play Rugby Fives on our Derby courts and Eton Fives on the newly refurbished courts at Repton.

### Weather protection

An aspect of the design which greatly enhances the value of the facility is that the courts are enclosed so as to protect the players and spectators from the weather but are open to being viewed from outside the building through the use of glass. This advertises the activity within and allows the courts to be used during break times without the presence of a supervisor within the building. Thus Fives is returned as a playground activity while meeting the requirements of safeguarding.

This facility can be used to make Fives available in locations where it is now absent, with the first potential location being an inner-city school within Brixton.

It is also attractive for use at universities where Fives is currently absent, through placing the facility within an accessible local inner-city school.

### The question of money

The final part of the problem is **how to finance?** It will probably be possible to access some grants, but the bulk of the money would have to come from donors to cover the estimated cost of £600k per facility – perhaps a little more for the first one. It's intended that the buildings will be standardised with the only variation being of the foundations and external appearance to fit in with local conditions. Thus much of the architectural work would not need to be repeated on subsequent builds.

Such a facility, if donated to a school, would require the school to meet strict requirements as part of a contract. This would include training their professional PE staff to play both Rugby and Eton Fives. They already have six Inset days set aside per year for such training with budgets to pay for them and so this proposal solves the problem of finding suitable coaches.

# RFA Club Report

**Hamish Buchanan** reflects on a season where Club Fives was reinvigorated by matches in the London League

**A**nother poor year for completed Club matches, but thanks must go to Tony Hamilton, Tim Hebblethwaite, Jeremy Ensor, Alex Smith, Stephen Walsh, Sam Roberts, Rupert Mathieu, Andy Pringle and Bob Dolby for getting matches played.

In the main these were against schools, which are the essential fixtures we must maintain. This helps keep contact with Fives masters, allows us to support the schools where necessary and shows to their players that there is a future for the game after school and university.

It seems that the appetite for playing Club matches has dwindled hugely in recent years; whether this is purely down to a lack of free time to travel and play matches or an actual shortage of players to make up teams it is difficult to know. Certainly our very full calendar of tournaments keeps a large number of players very busy on weekends and it is understandable that many players already commit a great deal of time to the game and struggle to find more time for matches. With this in mind the RFA Club will look to prioritise school and university fixtures in the coming seasons. If you are able to play or even organise a school fixture please contact me, hamish.buchanan@rugbyfives.com, and I will put you in touch with the relevant people.

The RFA v BUSF match took place during the Jesters Edinburgh Tour and was a close 115-110 win for the students, with RFA player/manager Ben Hale either underestimating the strengths of the student opposition or his team's ability to recover from the excesses of the previous night.

The President's Cup at its new Marlborough College home proved to be very popular this season, with at one point possibly 40 names going into the hat to make the cut for the final 32. One or two injuries and some Christmas time double booking reduced that number to 35 and as priority is given to RFA members in the Cup, we could reduce that to the 32 required. The motto here is Join the RFA to be in with a chance and to support the game.



**Seddon and Keates win the President's Cup**



**The inaugural match in the London League - Executioners v UCS**



**Old Bradfieldians v the RFA Club**

After a long day of very competitive Fives the final was contested by the two pairs that the experienced Cup watchers had predicted from the first round. Winners Lewis Keates and Roland Seddon beat the explosive but tiring pair of Inigo Ackland and Will Bishop in two games to win the Cup for the first time, in Roland's case at the first attempt. This is not that unusual for the President's Cup as some players go under the organiser's radar when the seeding is done.

Will's dad, Harvey, had also lost to Lewis and Roland in the semi-final, but in the President's Cup there is always a chance for more silverware and Harvey

with partner Yarin Negyal won the Mate's Plate. The T-Pot was won by George Fox-Edwards and Sarthak Garella with a customary tournament late finish of 16-15 in the third game against Nicks Geere and Whitney. Finally, the Love Mug was won by the not particularly lovely pair, aesthetically at least, of Richard Christie and James Hughes. Proving that age and grumpiness are no hindrance when a trophy is up for grabs.

Whilst the number of RFA Club matches against club teams was very low this season we have seen a new initiative in London that may help increase club team Fives and could be a model to be

played in other regions in the future. The 'London League' is the brainchild of Shinan Zhang, who invited four clubs — the Executioners, the Edward Alleyn Club, the Stoke Newington Swifts and UCS — to play home and away matches against each other over the whole year.

The format of matches is agreed between team captains in advance depending on court numbers, players available and time. The standard four-a-side, singles and doubles, was the most commonly seen, but we have had six-a-side matches and even Owers Trophy-style three-a-side at UCS who have only one court. Here three singles precede three doubles, which makes for an interesting dynamic and there is not too much time spent off court.

The main aim is to play some competitive Fives and have fun, possibly with a beer afterwards and the team with the most match wins tops the League. This season that was the Edward Alleyn Club, who remained unbeaten but had very close matches home and away to the Executioners, who came in second, and away to UCS. There is a planned League get-together for the summer where prizes can be awarded by each club to their respective 'most committed player', 'best newcomer' etc — all in all a fun addition to the year.

This concept was tried in the 1990s and only lasted a couple of seasons, but this time there is a much stronger format and hopefully it will become a regular event. The enthusiasm of most of the teams this season should help that happen.

My thanks to Shinan for organising the London League, to Marlborough College for hosting the President's Cup and to Bob Dolby for huge amounts of chasing match managers and collating results.



**Checking the scores after the Executioners v Stoke Newington Swifts**

# Around the clubs in 2023-24

A season where players of all ages played their Fives competitively and socially as best suited them

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

**Marcus Cloke Browne reports:** The Club has been very active, with a strong intake of beginners. 11 players entered the Universities Championships: Marcus Cloke Browne won the Singles while Emrys Thursfield reached the quarter-finals; Marcus and Emrys were runners-up in the Doubles, while Archie Glover and Jack Pyman made the quarter-finals and Rob Menhart won the Plate. Earlier in the season we also celebrated the 10th anniversary of the new courts with a match against the Jesters, winning 147-124. Other highlights from the season include Cloke Browne qualifying for the National Singles finals and coming runners-up in the U25 Doubles.

The Past versus Present match was a friendly but competitive affair, but the

more experienced Past took victories in both the Men's and Ladies' matches. The Varsity Match gave our new players their first taste of competitive Fives, but Oxford's greater experience in the lower order enabled them to score sizeable victories. However, for the first time a six-a-side Women's Match was played, and we had some heroic efforts in the Sparrows/Beavers Match.

The club must thank Bob Dolby for his many years as President. Cambridge Fives has Bob to thank for the strong state that our club is in, the quality of our facilities, and for all the help and guidance he gives to our players. He will be succeeded by Gareth Quarry, whom we look forward to seeing at future events.

**Marcus Cloke Browne wins the Universities Singles title**



## CHRIST'S HOSPITAL CLUB

**Michael Lacewing reports:** The Christ's Hospital Club, ably organised by the ever-supportive and ever-challenging Nick Woolfenden, has built on past success this year to claim ever more titles and placings. With club members on home turf for the South East Open, we got off to a strong start, with two wins for Bart Callaghan, taking the Plate in the Singles and the Cup in the Doubles (paired with Anthony Goodwin), beating fellow club member Charlie Lacewing and partner, while Morgan Spillane took the Doubles Plate with his partner.

Two months later, at the West of England Open, Charlie won the Plate in both Singles and Doubles (this time playing with Dwight Murdoc). Based on ranking points accumulated, Charlie was seeded number one for the Challenger Tournament in December, much to his own surprise! He put in a commendable performance, losing in the semi-final.

Come the summer term and it was the turn of the more experienced players to show that neither the competitive spirit, nor the body, was diminished. Following their win at the Veterans' Doubles in

April, Morgan Spillane and Andy Pringle successfully defended their Doubles title in the Vintage Championship. Meanwhile, Tony Hamilton had defended his Masters Doubles title once again, partnering Peter Ross. Very sadly, we have just learned that Tony is leaving his illustrious Fives career behind now, but we must applaud him for how much he has contributed nationally and to the Christ's Hospital Club.

## CITY OF DURHAM CLUB

**Julie McIntyre reports:** The 2023/24 season has been very positive for the City of Durham club. In October we linked up with Durham Johnston School who allowed us to promote Fives to their 240 Year 7 pupils. This has resulted in a new group of juniors starting, adding to our group of Year 10 girls. We've very much benefitted from having Camille and Angus still with us for their last school year, and various students and adults like Leah, Ed, Mattias, Stuart Scott and Tony Hicks, so there has been a good range of age and experience. Eight members have become Activator coaches, which will help coach new players. Tom Wakelam has returned to regular coaching, a huge asset.

It has been fantastic for us to have Camille win the Women's title this year, and many congratulations go to her, and to Imogen and Camille for their silver medal in the Doubles. Eleonora continues to improve, winning the Girls' U16 Singles and the U16 Plate with Emily. Several of our juniors won medals in the Northern Schools competition and in the Durham Ladies tournament. In the North of England Open Camille and Oscar won the Plate, in a hard-fought game against a Derby Moor pair. The season ended with Dan Swinbank and Eleonora playing in the Derby Moor Doubles, and Camille was runner-up in the Open Mixed Doubles with Theo Parker.

## Success for Durham in the Girls' National U16s



## DEEP WEST CLUB

### Charles Hattersley reports:

Notwithstanding the availability of only one court, weekly Fives has taken place throughout 2023 and 2024. With our age profile – particularly of Chairman Ogle and Legal Eagle Hattersley – injuries have taken their toll and limited some attendances to liquid refreshments after the game.

However, an input of younger players representing the National Grid and a local College of Knowledge has provided more consistency and helped complement the silky skills of the Professor (Dance), Garry (Sparky) Macaulay and Luke (Trader) Newman-Taylor – all of whom are hitting a clean ball, when such a thing is available.

Highlights were the Professor assisting in a comprehensive victory over players a quarter of his age at the annual Old Bedfordians reunion and the Chairman reaching the semi-finals of the Grand Masters Championships (he assures us that there were more than four entrants!).

The Mount Kelly Head, Guy Ayling, and his maintenance team have worked wonders in making the court fit for service – which is a minor miracle given the monsoon we endured in the winter and spring months. The dimensions of the court make it one of the most player-

friendly in the South West and, whilst the superior court-craft of our Tiverton neighbours is acknowledged, we remain the only club playing on a regular basis west of Exeter. With our inclusive ethos, we look forward to a growing membership and further successes in the coming season.

## DERBY MOOR FIVES

**Bob Dolby reports:** It has been a very, very busy season for the Club, with members playing Rugby Fives at Derby Moor, enjoying Eton Fives at Repton, and entering RF tournaments around the country on more days of the week than not. Lewis Keates has competed in almost every event on offer, often accompanied by

Anthony Goodwin or Bally Singh – these three together won the Owers Trophy for the third consecutive year – and has consolidated his 9th and 12th place in the National Singles and Doubles rankings respectively. Richard Christie, Stuart Kirby and Brian Kirk have played in both open

and age-restricted competitions; Karen Hird, Callum Yates, Aaron Wheatley and Kristians Davins have dipped in and out of competitions depending on their availability, with the improved Kristians deservedly winning his first Derby Moor Invitation Doubles in June. The Club website lists 'Successes' – cups and plates won, finals made: there have been quite a few. At the top of the list are Anthony Goodwin winning the South East Doubles and Lewis Keates winning the President's Cup, not to mention that third Owers Trophy.

## Kristians wins his first Derby Moor Invitation Doubles



## DURHAM UNIVERSITY

**Isaac Weaver reports:** Durham University Fives has again had a strong season, after warding off a serious scare of losing the courts. We as a club thank each and every one of the Fives community who gave their support so that we could continue to play. With that crisis averted we began the year with several new faces, many of them new to the sport. All members of the club have made a marked improvement over the year with every training session focused on specific aspects of the game that players have been keen to work on.

We have seen tournament success once again as the club retained the Universities Doubles title, successfully defended by Stuart Scott and Isaac Weaver, although unfortunately the latter was unable to retain the Singles title. Kirsten Bell also put on a strong showing in the National Women's Championships Singles and Doubles, cementing her place as a top 10

player. Meanwhile Isaac won a fiercely competitive U25s tournament and now sits just outside the top 10 with every chance to improve over the coming year.

The end of this year sees both the men's and women's captains, Isaac and Kirsten, depart as they finish their university career here along with other stalwarts of the club. Fortunately next year the club falls into Stuart's competent hands along with co-captain Meg

Wells, and I am confident that the sport will continue to thrive under their leadership.

## Durham University's Doubles champions



**EASTBOURNE COLLEGE CLUB**

**Spencer Beal reports:** Unfortunately our multiple Masters Champion Tony Hamilton has made the decision to hang up his gloves. He is regarded as a legend here on the south coast, not only for his supreme talent on the Fives court, but also because he played such a large part in reviving and regenerating the Club, raising the standard, recruiting fresh blood and spreading the gospel to all and sundry. That the Club continues to move forward is all thanks to his initial input, and during this last year we have worked hard to build the profile of the game through the College, especially with the provision of a glass back wall on the one St Andrew's court – with generous support from the RFA and OAs – which we hope to see in action by September.

We aim to play every Tuesday evening through the whole year, come rain or shine, although heavy rain finding its way through the leaky roof may precipitate a cancellation. Invitations are sent out weekly via email (spencerjbeal@gmail.com) and

WhatsApp. All are welcome to join us, any standard from beginner to national champion, male and female, gloves provided if necessary, and we are sometimes joined by College students and staff members. An hour or two of great fun on the Fives court, then off to Bibendum for some refreshment.

**Tony wins his sixth Masters title**



**EDWARD ALLEYN CLUB**

**Hamish Buchanan reports:** Another solid year of Fives at Alleyn's for the Edward Alleyn Club. A few new faces have joined, a few old faces have returned and the odd one or two have left for pastures new. Unfortunately we did not manage to field a team for the Owers Trophy, with both School and University players not able to make that weekend. However, we did field a strong team of six for the Wood Cup and were eventual runners-up to the Old Pauline's in a well contested final that was ultimately decided at the singles stage where the OPs took a convincing and unassailable lead.

The Club played in the inaugural London League competition: this entailed home and away matches against the Executioners, Stoke Newington Swifts and the UCS club. The games were great fun and there were some close matches throughout the year. We remained unbeaten to take the title in its first year with strong commitment and excellent performances, especially from Yarin Negyal and Tim Hebblethwaite. Everyone is looking forward to defending the title next season.

Earlier this year Alleyn's School committed to clean the courts with increased regularity and with this in mind the EAFC have donated an industrial floor scrubbing machine as recommended by the flooring surface manufacturers. Hopefully this will help keep the courts in top order for years to come. Turn up on Tuesday evenings for some spotless Fives!

**The top teams clash in the London League**



**EXECUTIONERS**

**Andy Pringle reports:** The Executioners is a club with a proud history, yet this may well have been its greatest ever season with its number of active players and the amount of silverware won. Not for the first time in the club's recent history, it was our women who led the way. Shinan Zhang won no less than five tournaments and was backed up by the successes of Helena Tunks and new member Zara Elliot. Between them, they won national titles in Rugby and Winchester Fives with Helena and Shinan claiming open titles, and Zara completing a clean sweep at U25 level. Not content with that, Shinan also teamed up with Penn Chai to claim two Mixed Doubles titles – one Rugby Fives, one Winchester – as well as achieving the unique feat of retaining the Plate at the Barnes Bridge. The pair were also responsible for the successful running of the re-formed London League, a competition we were delighted to take part in.

Competition was very much the theme of our Wednesday evening sessions. The singles ladder saw plenty of matches, with veterans such as Messrs Pringle, Mathieu, Bridge, Davies and Warner crossing swords with relative newcomers such as Wyman and Toby Chan, Sebastian Ion and Joe Garratt. It soon became clear that the fight for the top spot would be a two-horse race between Penn and Freddie Hammond Giles, who started training with the club this season. Freddie can look back on a hugely successful first year with the club, claiming four schoolboy titles as well as topping the club's singles ladder. Meanwhile at the other end of his career, Andy Pringle also picked up the Veterans and Vintage Doubles titles.

In the end club members claimed a total of 14 titles this season – and quite a few plates and runners-up medals – a record-breaking season, and we'll be looking for even better results over the next 12 months!



**Penn and Shinan collecting silverware!**

**EXETER AND TIVERTON CLUB**

**Wayne Enstone reports:** The number of regular Club players was reduced this season due to player injuries, but there are promising signs of recovery for a return next season. Our competition season began with the usual Chris Reichwald Tournament in early September 2023. This helps us play with Blundell's School players in a fun doubles competition similar in format to RFA President's Cup. We conclude the afternoon with trophy awards presented by the Head and a social tea event provided by the OBs Association.



External fixtures were limited; however, matches versus the Old Whitgiftians and RFA Club did take place, with Blundell's School players participating and gaining match experience. We lost both matches but all enjoyed the fixtures. To conclude the season we played in the Old Blundellians match against the School Squad, who had improved massively over the season. If you are in the area, do feel welcome to join us, Wednesday evenings from 6pm.

**The Chris Reichwald Tournament**

**JESTERS CLUB**

**Ben Hale reports:** We once again took a touring party of more than 50 north to Edinburgh in January for the traditional weekend of Fives, playing 30 odd matches on the courts at Edinburgh Academy, Fettes, Loretto and Merchiston Castle. We again sent a IV up the road to Strathallan for a game there too, a new match that receives excellent reviews. Many thanks to Fettes for hosting the Friday night reception for staff, coaches, school players and parents, and tourists, again enjoying an excellent curry. A great weekend of Fives for ages from 13 to 70 with opposition including boys and girls teams, combined British Universities and Durham University and, of course, the Caledonian Club and the Accies.

Many thanks to all the match managers who got fixtures played this season. We started with the now traditional tie with the RFA as part of the Strawson Vaughan but picked up a victory against a second very strong RFA side later in the year at Alleyn's School and also gained a win against Rugby in a match featuring Jesters and opponents of all ages. We didn't quite beat Oxford but did acquire a new Jester. We spent a fantastic afternoon at Cambridge taking on a combined Rugby and Eton Fives team celebrating 10 years of their courts with representation from past and present Varsity players, local players and Jesters from further afield. It was a tough year of scheduling with my biggest disappointment being not making it to Tonbridge, where we still haven't managed to finish early enough for a Tuesday night curry before heading back to London – maybe next year...

**MANCHESTER Y CLUB**

**Wendy Nicholls reports:** Well, what another year it's been for the Manchester Y Club. Firstly, with Val Fikhter winning the National Schools U16 Singles Championship – a fantastic result everyone is so proud of. Secondly, Dave Fox did it again, making history by retaining his Singles titles in the Veterans and Vintage competitions – a great achievement.

As for Fives in Manchester, we currently have 45 players on the books, the courts are being used most nights, and there are always plenty of people watching the game. We are busy on a Tuesday night for beginners and we

have a few more ladies playing, which is great news. The Junior Y on a Saturday morning is ticking over – we just need to encourage more children down – for example, we are still working on the Cubs and Scouts to try out Fives. So, all in all, it's all very positive for the Club!

**Fun aplenty on the Y Club courts**



**MARLBOROUGH TOWN**

**Harvey Bishop reports:** Another great year for the Club, with an influx of new (and somewhat younger) players, a busy social calendar, and good participation in a range of competitions from ‘friendlies’

against other clubs to some noteworthy performances in national events. We run three club nights a week with most of the four Rugby Fives courts full and sometimes one or both of our Eton courts in action.

Our healthy numbers have enabled us to support a variety of competitive events including our own Doubles tournament. We have played our usual friendly against the touring Old Whitgiftians, which was great fun; and we

successfully hosted the President’s Cup with several of our own players competing, including Harvey Bishop and James Hughes putting in great performances with partners from other clubs to win the Mate’s Plate and Love Mug respectively. We hosted the Veterans again, entering several club players across the Singles and Double tournaments. Particularly pleasing this year, two of our up-and-coming younger players, Will Bishop and Will Ashley, also entered and played strongly in the National Schools U18 and U16, with Will Bishop winning the Plate at the Colquhoun Singles.

The enthusiasm for our sport is mirrored in our social calendar, including a successful winter black-tie dinner and a great summer BBQ, in addition to our regular weekly pub meets.

**OLD TONBRIDGIANS**

**Rupert Mathieu reports:** The Old Tonbridgians have had a busy year, with the arrival of new (if not strictly OT) players – welcome Adam, Gareth and Abbie! – in addition to the stalwarts, making the courts on Tuesdays busier than ever. Competitive results have been mixed, a highlight being Ian Jackson’s hard-fought victory in the Vintage Singles Plate; Abbie Evans is to be congratulated on winning the National Mixed Doubles Plate; and Ian and Rupert Mathieu were a creditable third in the Vintage Doubles; and we were well represented in both Oxford and Cambridge Past versus Present matches. In the match against the School, however, due to late OT illness and Dr Jackson craftily starting the match before the subs arrived, the School triumphed comfortably. Less controversial, the RFA visited and beat the OTs 132-83; it was, nevertheless, a stunning advert for the growing diversity of Fives-playing, with a 60-year gap between oldest and youngest player, and Shinan Zhang winning all her matches, playing for the RFA. On a more poignant note, given his retirement, this will have been the final year of regular attendance by Dr Jackson, who has transformed Fives at Tonbridge. More words will be written elsewhere; but all OTs thank and applaud Ian for his remarkable efforts and, not least, skill on court.

**OLD WHITGIFTIANS**

**Nick Woolfenden reports:** Whilst currently generally focusing on playing social Fives on Thursday evenings at the school courts, the Old Whitgiftians Fives Club also enjoyed its annual trio of fixtures on tour. A merry band of players and supporters embarked on their annual Spring tour to the West Country in February. Matches were played against Sherborne School, the Tiverton club at Blundell’s School and the Marlborough Town Club. As ever, alongside the entertainment on court, there was equal entertainment in local hostelries, chatting, eating, drinking and watching Six Nations Rugby.

Old Whits were also successful this year in RFA competitions, including Tony Hamilton and Peter Ross winning the National Masters (Over 65) Doubles, and Cameron Low in the winning pair at the National U25 Doubles. And the OW trio of Jon Higgins,

Chris Jones and Cameron Low won the Plate competition at the Owers Trophy Old Boys’ Championship. The club plays most Thursday evenings and welcomes new members – all ages and

abilities catered for! Please contact Nick Woolfenden (nickw5s@hotmail.com) for further information.

**Old Whits at Tiverton in February**



Marlborough at the Vets



**OLD PAULINES**

**Theo Parker reports:** Another successful year for Old Pauline Fives: OPs continue to make waves on the circuit, most notably with Ben Beltrami winning his first National Singles title in December, beating fellow OPs Ed Kay and Dan Tristao along the way. Ed and Dan got their revenge in April, however, by retaining the National Doubles title, with Charlie Brooks runner-up in the final. Though it was disappointing not to enter a team for the Owers Trophy (next year!), an OP squad of Charlie Brooks, Theo Parker, Freddie Hammond Giles, Sam Roberts and Seb Ion did retain the Wood Cup in April, a win which involved a closely fought final against an experienced

Edward Alleyn team. With Freddie the convincing winner of the U18 National Schools Singles and Doubles two years young, and Seb not yet at university, the future of OP Fives certainly looks bright. Club sessions still take place as normal at SPS on a Thursday night at 7pm – all welcome!

OPs retain the Wood Cup



**OXFORD UNIVERSITY**

**Vivek Thakrar reports:** It has been a fantastic year, both in terms of engagement and success. Despite losing some key members of the squad at the end of last year, some experienced

freshers bolstered our ranks. BUSF saw Oxford once again bringing the most players to compete in the tournament. We had success in both competitions, with Shiloh Wu runner-up in the Singles, an all-Oxford Singles Plate

final, and third place in the Doubles. At the Women’s U25s Lena Barton was runner-up in the Singles tournament and won the Doubles. The annual Past versus Present is a highlight of every season and winning the event for the first time in some years set us up for the Varsity Match where we won the Men’s blues, Men’s seconds, and Women’s blues matches, the first time either university has done the treble. It’s been brilliant to see members of the club bonding, the gender divide certainly diminished, and we hope to encourage more beginners to take up the sport next year, particularly women as several of the women’s team will be leaving. It’s been an honour to lead the club.



Oxford do the treble!

**STOKE NEWINGTON SWIFTS**

The Stoke Newington Swifts have enjoyed a second full season with an increased number of both regular and occasional members, among them Ben and Matt Hale, Alex Cranstoun, Chris Blakeley, Terry McElvaney, Aitor Fadrique, Tom Maconie and Taylor McGuire. This has made it possible to represent North London effectively, and enjoyably, in the newly reinaugurated London League.

Theo Parker has been coaching at the school; four players competed in the National U13s and acquitted themselves

well, with Dylan Gilbody winning the Singles Bowl, clearly benefitting from playing with adults at the weekly in-term sessions. The Club plays on

a Tuesday evening, and anyone who fancies refreshing their acquaintance with the game should contact Matt Hale via the RFA website.



Swifts versus Executioners in the London League

**UCS OLD BOYS**

**Chris Blakeley reports:** The 'Old Gowers' Fives Club plays most Monday and Wednesday evenings with four to six attendees on our one court, with around eight regulars – now happily including some UCS students – and a similar number who come occasionally. We have taken part in the London League matches organised by Shinan Zhang, playing our home matches on an agreed reduced scale to allow for the single court – all the other participating schools have four or more.

The school has plans for a major re-development of the site starting in 2027, and the 1969 Cyriax courts are sadly scheduled for demolition. It is not yet clear whether Fives will have a future at UCS.

**WESSEX CLUB**

**Harry Akerman reports:** We had a fun season at Wessex, with new faces joining the club and becoming regulars – players both new to the game and those not having played for 'many a year'. This will probably have been our last season on the fabulous 'old' courts at Winchester College and we will be sad to see them go, but we are lucky and excited to be moving into the new courts, hopefully for the start of the 2024-2025 season.

Good representation on the Jesters Tour and the Barnes Bridge, plus matches

against Executioners and Marlborough Towen were the main external Fives this year. Closer to home, we had big turnouts for the Christmas Meal, the Letchworth Bowl end-of-season tournament and the Summer party, which was fantastically hosted in a beautiful setting by Rory and Boo – thanks very much!

**WEST OF ENGLAND CLUB**

**Kevin Brice reports:** Though still reduced to one court we have thrived as a club, with about 20 players on our records, some 14 of them regulars; using an early and a later rota, we have managed to keep an average of 10 players in action each Wednesday. Club Fixtures were sadly something we couldn't offer with just the one court; however, Pete Grant explored an alternative venue for Squash Fives, which is now being played by club members on a Monday night on the Bristol Grammar School Squash Courts.

As a Club, we have always had a strong presence at the Wood Cup. This season we were without Ollie and Louise, both Toms, Theo, Archie and Sam for various reasons, but were determined to put out a team, and so entered a IV consisting of three debutants plus our ever-reliable captain Cam. We were roundly beaten, but we were there, representing the value

of club Fives.

Finally: Lionel Lawson. He's been an absolute stalwart of the whole UK Fives community for 60 plus years. Organiser of the West of England Schools for some 20 years, a club player of considerable merit, and for 25 years the West of England Club Chairman, navigating the club through both successful years and very difficult logistical challenges, Lionel is this year finally hanging up his gloves and passing on the mantle. We thank him for all his graciousness, his warmth and his support over the years.

**Lionel Lawson, organiser extraordinaire, as remembered by so many**



# End-of-Season Rankings - Top 75

The National Rugby Fives Rankings summer 2024 as compiled by **Will Ellison**

**National Singles Rankings** As at End-of-Season 2023-2024. Previous: end of 2023 season

Current	Previous	Name	Points	Current	Previous	Name	Points	Current	Previous	Name	Points
1	2	Ed Kay	95.8	26	72	Penn Chai	24.6	51	New	Taylor McGuire	11.7
2	1	Dan Tristao	92.1	27	169	Shiloh Wu	24.5	52	53	Alec Springford	11.6
3	4	Ben Beltrami	87.5	28	22	Chris Davey	24.0	53	45	Vikram Thakrar	11.6
4	3	Will Ellison	74.7	28	64	James Milburn	24.0	54	48	Teddy Monro-Davies	11.3
5	6	Tom Watkinson	63.6	30	36	Emrys Thursfield	22.1	55	28	Rob Whitehorn	11.0
6	5	Julian Aquilina	54.7	31	15	David Butler	22.0	56	38	Max Bolt	11.0
7	9	Richie Murby	54.5	32	25	Archie McCreath	20.3	57	New	George Fox-Edwards	10.7
8	8	Charlie Brooks	49.0	33	33	Michael Suddaby	20.1	58	40	Matias Morgan	10.5
9	12	Lewis Keates	44.8	34	24	Addie Chai	18.0	59	New	Bart Callaghan	10.5
10	11	Sam Russell	43.1	35	169	Ronnie Brown	17.4	60	46	Alex Kessell-Holland	10.2
11	7	Ollie Arnold	39.4	36	69	Charlie Lacey	17.2	61	79	Aaditya Deshmuth	10.0
12	21	Isaac Weaver	39.4	37	71	Nick Geere	17.0	62	66	Vishal Singh	9.9
13	17	Theo Parker	36.2	38	58	Richard Christie	16.7	63	44	Valentine Fikhter	9.9
14	13	Joe Sumner	36.0	39	30	Douglas Law	15.9	64	68	Christian Blackaby	9.8
15	14	Ben Jourdan	35.8	40	31	Aiden Whitham	15.6	65	New	Ander Iraizoz	9.7
16	19	Oscar McIntyre	35.6	41	34	Stuart Scott	15.3	66	47	Alikhan Murat	9.6
17	16	Cameron Low	33.1	42	29	Simon Beattie	14.8	67	New	Alex Upton	9.4
18	35	Marcus Cloke Browne	32.6	43	55	Marco Skogh	14.4	68	164	Hector McFarlane	9.3
19	26	James Tilston	31.6	44	169	Enrique Castillo Carbonell	13.9	69	New	Arthur Noble	9.2
20	10	Dan Grant	30.9	45	32	James Smith	13.6	69	New	Ben Lane	9.2
21	18	Andrew Boyd	29.7	46	New	Dwight Murdoc	13.2	71	94	Rob Menhart	9.2
22	New	Terry McElvaney	29.3	47	23	Matt Shaw	13.0	72	57	Callum Yates	8.8
23	39	Anthony Goodwin	27.3	48	117	Kristians Davins	12.7	72	62	Toby Chan	8.8
24	27	Gwydion Wiseman	25.9	49	37	Freddie Kottler	12.2	74	64	Hamish Macpherson	8.7
25	20	Ben Kirwan	24.7	49	New	Malcolm Reid	12.2	74	New	Chris Evans	8.7

**National Doubles Rankings:** As at End-of-Season 2023-24. Previous: end of 2023 season

Current	Previous	Name	Points	Current	Previous	Name	Points	Current	Previous	Name	Points
1	2	Dan Tristao	98.7	26	19	David Butler	30.0	51	37	Helena Tunks	16.1
2	3	Ed Kay	94.9	27	141	Penn Chai	29.8	52	137	Malcolm Borthwick	16.1
3	7	Charlie Brooks	84.1	28	21	Joe Sumner	28.2	53	40	Julie McIntyre	16.0
4	5	Ben Beltrami	82.5	29	32	Addie Chai	26.4	54	41	Nick Woolfenden	15.8
5	6	Theo Parker	74.7	30	17	Matt Shaw	23.7	55	42	Eric Moody	15.5
6	1	Will Ellison	73.3	31	28	Ashwin Ahuja	22.6	56	139	Camille Beattie	15.2
7	11	Tom Watkinson	72.9	32	22	Ben Jourdan	22.3	57	100	Christian Blackaby	14.1
8	4	Ollie Arnold	72.8	33	29	James Smith	22.1	57	39	Julius Davies	14.1
9	9	Julian Aquilina	60.2	34	54	Bart Callaghan	22.0	57	New	James Birch	14.1
10	10	Sam Russell	58.3	35	25	Louise Mathias	21.6	60	132	Nick Geere	13.6
11	15	James Tilston	56.9	36	51	Stuart Kirby	21.3	61	34	Rob Whitehorn	13.4
12	12	Lewis Keates	52.8	37	48	Teddy Monro-Davies	20.5	62	50	Elliot Wardle	12.9
13	8	Dan Grant	49.2	38	44	Enrique Castillo Carbonell	20.5	63	46	John Savery	12.8
14	13	Cameron Low	47.9	39	43	Tim Hebblethwaite	20.1	64	89	Ed Pyman	12.6
15	14	Archie McCreath	47.0	40	New	Max Khurana	20.0	65	165	Andy Landon	12.5
16	18	Bally Singh	46.7	41	63	Richard Christie	19.8	66	97	James Stevenson	12.4
17	16	Gwydion Wiseman	40.4	42	26	Chris Davey	19.4	67	49	Adam Hicks	12.4
18	20	James Toop	38.5	43	77	Aiden Whitham	18.5	68	36	Douglas Law	12.2
19	30	Emrys Thursfield	36.0	43	141	Charlie Lacey	18.5	69	New	Alex Hopkins	12.2
20	35	Richie Murby	35.1	45	78	Vikram Thakrar	18.4	69	New	James Milburn	12.2
21	27	Isaac Weaver	34.4	46	23	Andrew Boyd	17.9	69	New	Ed Hodges	12.2
22	24	Oscar McIntyre	33.9	47	33	Ben Kirwan	17.3	69	54	Ed Lawrence	12.2
23	31	Stuart Scott	33.0	48	New	Shinan Zhang	16.6	69	54	Ian Purvis	12.2
24	59	Anthony Goodwin	32.6	49	122	Shiloh Wu	16.6	69	54	Magnus Moody	12.2
25	38	Marcus Cloke Browne	30.7	50	47	Ben Chua	16.4	69	54	Oliver Dean-Hart	12.2

# 2023-24 RESULTS ROUND-UP

Full details of these events can be found on [www.therfa.uk](http://www.therfa.uk)



Alex juggling four age-groups at the National Girls Championships

**NATIONAL STUDENTS' (BUSF) CHAMPIONSHIPS 2023**  
**Singles:** M.Cloke Browne (Cambridge)  
**Doubles:** S.Scott & I.Weaver (Durham)

**SCHOOLS WINCHESTER FIVES DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP 2023**  
 Not played

**CHALLENGER SINGLES Barnes 12/2023**  
 C.Blackaby

**NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP 2023**  
 B.Beltrami

**SOUTH WEST OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2023**  
**Singles:** E.Kay  
**Doubles:** O.Arnold & E.Kay

**SOUTH EAST OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2023**  
**Singles:** E.Kay  
**Doubles:** B.Callaghan & A.Goodwin

**CHALLENGER SINGLES Christ's Hospital 8/2023**  
 E.Thursfield

**YORKSHIRE OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2023**  
**Singles:** T.Watkinson  
**Doubles:** T.Parker & T.Watkinson

**OWERS TROPHY 2023**  
 Old Derby Moor

**LONDON OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2023**  
**Singles:** T.Watkinson  
**Doubles:** C.Brooks & D.Tristao

**THE LADY'S CUP 2023**  
 Not played

**WEST OF ENGLAND OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2023**  
**Singles:** D.Tristao  
**Doubles:** B.Beltrami & D.Tristao

**DURHAM LADIES CHAMPIONSHIPS 2023**  
**Singles:** C.Beattie  
**Doubles:** C.Beattie & I.Wright

**RFA PRESIDENT'S CUP 2023**  
 L.Keates & R.Seddon

**WEST OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**U18 Singles:** F.Hammond Giles (St Paul's School)  
**U18 Doubles:** St Paul's School (J.Ferro & F.Hammond Giles)  
**U16 Singles:** A.James-Duff (Winchester College)  
**U16 Doubles:** Winchester College (A.James-Duff & J.Kennedy)

**NATIONAL WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**Singles:** C.Beattie  
**Doubles:** H.Tunks & S.Zhang

**NATIONAL U25 CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**Singles:** I.Weaver  
**Doubles:** C.Low & A.McCreath



Oscar at the Women's Nationals

**NORTHERN SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**U18 Singles:** C.Beattie (City of Durham)  
**U18 Doubles:** City of Durham (C.Beattie & L.Hogarth)  
**U16 Singles:** E.Vallasas (City of Durham)  
**U16 Doubles:** Sedbergh School (F.Diez Amitriain & T.Follett)



Richie's all smiles at the North of England Open

**SOUTH EAST SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**U18 Singles:** C.Lacewing (Christ's Hospital)  
**U18 Doubles:** Tonbridge School (L.Saunders-Aroma & O.Woolf)  
**U16 Singles:** O.Carroll (Tonbridge School)  
**U16 Doubles:** Tonbridge School (O.Carroll & D.Radia)

**MIDLANDS SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**U18 Singles:** A.Noble (Rugby School)  
**U18 Doubles:** Rugby School (W.Milne & A.Noble)  
**U15 Singles:** H.Jones (Stamford School)  
**U15 Doubles:** Rugby School (H.Skailes & H.Turner-Linke)

**NORTH WEST OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**Singles:** B.Beltrami  
**Doubles:** B.Beltrami & C.Brooks

**CHALLENGER SINGLES Rugby School 2/2024**  
 G.Wiseman

**THE VARSITY MATCH 2024**  
**Men's:** Oxford  
**Women's:** Oxford

**WOMEN'S U25 CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**Singles:** Z.Elliot  
**Doubles:** L.Barton & Z.Elliot

**NORTH OF ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**Singles:** D.Tristao  
**Doubles:** B.Beltrami & T.Watkinson

**WINCHESTER FIVES OPEN DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP 2024**  
 B.Beltrami & T.Parker

**COLQUHOUN TROPHY 2024**  
**U18 Singles:** A.Cloke Browne (Winchester College)  
**U16 Singles:** P.Mannion-Miles (Winchester College)

**SCOTTISH SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**U18 Singles:** J.Milburn (Fettes College)  
**U18 Doubles:** Edinburgh Academy (R.Brown & A.Springford)  
 U16 Doubles: Edinburgh Academy (T.Jarrold & J.Toner)

**SOUTH EAST SCHOOLS GIRLS' CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**U18 Singles:** T-R Foo (Alleyn's School)  
**U18 Doubles:** Alleyn's School (A.McAllister & D.Tiwari)  
**U14 Singles:** A.Ratto (Alleyn's School)  
**U14 Doubles:** Alleyn's School (K.Eley & A.Ratto)

**NATIONAL SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**U18 Singles:** F.Hammond Giles (St Paul's School)  
**U18 Doubles:** St Paul's School (J.Ferro & F.Hammond Giles)  
**U16 Singles:** V.Fikhter (Manchester Y Club)



The multi-coloured North West Open



Andy and Morgan do the Veterans/Vintage double

**U16 Doubles:** Winchester College (A.James-Duff & J.Kennedy)  
**U14 Singles:** W.Henry (Edinburgh Academy)  
**U14 Doubles:** Edinburgh Academy (W.Henry & F.Murray)  
**U13 Singles:** J.Dunn (Merchiston Castle School)  
**U13 Doubles:** Merchiston Castle School (J.Dunn & W.Gordon)

**NATIONAL GIRLS' CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**U18 Singles:** J.Mitchell (Blundell's School)  
**U18 Doubles:** Blundell's School (J.Mitchell & N.Talbot)  
**U16 Singles:** E.Vallasas (City of Durham Club)  
**U16 Doubles:** Alleyn's School (A.McAllister & D.Tiwari)  
**U14 Singles:** A.Brown (Alleyn's School)  
**U14 Doubles:** Alleyn's School (A.Brown & F.Hebblethwaite)  
**U13 Singles:** A.Ratto (Alleyn's School)  
**U13 Doubles:** Berkhamsted School (I.Conde & R.Whitby)

**NATIONAL SCHOOLS MIXED DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP 2024**  
**U18:** postponed  
**U15:** postponed

**NATIONAL DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP 2024 (Cyriax Cup)**  
 E.Kay & D.Tristao

**RFA EQUALISER MIXED DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP 2024**  
 H.Tunks & T.Chan

**NATIONAL VETERANS' CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**Singles:** D.Fox  
**Doubles:** A.Pringle & M.Spillane

**NATIONAL VINTAGE CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**Singles:** D.Fox  
**Doubles:** A.Pringle & M.Spillane

**NATIONAL MASTERS' DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP 2024**  
 A.Hamilton & P.Ross

**NATIONAL GRAND MASTERS' DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP 2024**  
 B.Atkinson & J.East

**NATIONAL CLUB KNOCK-OUT 2024 (Wood Cup)**  
 Old Paulines

**SCOTTISH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**Singles:** R.Murby  
**Doubles:** P.Chai & M.Khurnan

**WINCHESTER FIVES MIXED DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP 2024**  
 S.Zhang & P.Chai

**WOMEN'S WINCHESTER FIVES CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**  
**Singles:** S.Zhang  
**Doubles:** H.Tunks & S.Zhang

**NATIONAL OPEN MIXED DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP 2024**  
 S.Zhang & P.Chai

**DERBY MOOR INVITATION DOUBLES 2024**  
 Kristians Davins & Oscar McIntyre

**LONDON LEAGUE**  
 Edward Alleyn Club



Brian Kirk masterminds the Vintage

