

Big Numbers for Parsons Junior Open

It took 65 players, 142 games of squash, over two days to sort out, but come late Sunday afternoon, the 2009 Parsons Junior Open saw titles headed to all corners of the State, with clubs Smithton, Devonport, Eastside, Kingston and host club Parsons all taking out divisions.

The weekend got off to a great start with the doubles on Saturday. All of the games were played with zest, and provided excellent entertainment for spectators. The afternoon was an enjoyable one, and a good lead in to the more serious stuff to be played the next day.

The singles kicked off early on Sunday, and whilst many of the parents went straight for the coffee room, the players launched themselves into a big day of squash. Many of the players competing had only returned from the nationals a week earlier, and the development in their games was apparent to all. The resulting squash was captivating for the many first time players who crowded around the glass.

The top event for the day was the Division 1 Open, which was fought out between Eastside's Leigh Ellis and David Molyneux of the Kingborough squash club. Both juniors play regularly in the senior men's Southern Premier League competition and this experience was evident in their fast paced final. Leigh however, justified his number one seeding, by exhibiting too much polish for the younger player.

Division 2 went to Brendan Ward of Smithton, who managed to hold off surprise packet finalist, Parsons player, Declan Hickey. It was a physical game with both players determined to emerge on top. It was a fitting reward for Brendan, who again is another player to keep an eye on.

Lee Mansfield defeated Cameron Ward in the final of Division 3, making a mockery of his state ranking and demonstrating that he should be a real threat over the next few years. Cameron however, put up a good fight in the final, and made sure that Lee had to work for the win.

Kingborough's Liam Woodleigh-Hardinge was the winner of Division 4. Liam is a real student of the game, and this dedication helped him defeat the promising Parsons player, Edward Strugnell. One suspects that these two eleven year olds may play off in more finals in the years to come.

Kingston's success continued with Juan Kritzinger, who overcame talented Devonport player, Grace Pattison. It was a successful weekend for Juan who got to add a singles title to his doubles title from the previous day.

In a day which featured many promising players, Division 6 winner, nine year old Jack Hudson from Eastside, must rank amongst the most promising. Jack showed enough ability to have dad Mark more than a little worried about just how long he will remain the top player in the Hudson household. The runner up was William Parker of Parsons, who excelled in what was his first ever competition.

With many first time players featuring on the day, the novice divisions were taken out by Harry Palfreyman, and brothers, Solomon and Jordan Abrahams. The novice courts were popular with spectators all day, as the beginners threw themselves into their games with energetic enthusiasm. Many of them are already eyeing off the divisions above.

The day finished with the presentations, and as if the Division One title was not enough for Leigh Ellis. Leigh's name was drawn in the lucky draw prize. Yet, keeping in the spirit of the weekend, Leigh gave the prize, a brand new squash bag, to young up and comer, Jack Hudson.

With such a growth in entry numbers this year, and the continued support of major sponsor Prince, the Parsons Junior Open should be back even bigger and better next year.

