



with
**STEVE
WALSH**

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TennisSpecial



■ **SO CLOSE** – Jemima Potter (left) on her way to the runners-up spot in the mini tennis at King's Park, which was won by Imogen Hoxley (above)

Pippa and Jo shine to deny Kettering

THE Northampton A ladies team shocked their Kettering counterparts to earn a 4-4 away draw in the Town League Ladies Division One last week.

Performance of the week came from youngsters Pippa Fisher and Jo Horne who won all four of Northampton A's points, with the two up-and-coming players proving to be the thorn in Kettering's side.

The result is a major boost for the travelling side, who had lost their opening game 7-1 to Abington.

Kettering are expected to challenge for the title this season after being fast-tracked to the top league, and this result was a setback for the home team.

In men's division one, Charlie Swallow came back to haunt his old side as Dallington A were thrashed 8-0 by Kettering.

Swallow switched from Dallington to Kettering in the close season, and starred for his new side in the demolition.

Both sides are expected to challenge for honours this season.

NICK COWEN won his first County Mini Tennis title with victory over Cormac McCooey in the final of the Orange under-nines mini tennis tournament.

The Dallington ace overcame seven-year-old George Frankle of Oundle for a place in the final, and proved too strong for his counterpart McCooey in the showdown.



■ **ANYONE FOR TENNIS** – the competitors at the under-9s tennis tournament at King's Park

McCooey beat Northampton County team-mate Chris Simons for a place in the final.

In the girls event, Corby's Imogen Huxley overcame Market Harborough's Jemima Potter in a closely fought final.

A total of 23 under-nine players took part, with the overall standard of play very high.

DUSTON's mini red side of Jessica Kay, Adam Heartgrove, Adam Price and Stefan Gilder picked up the team title at the recent mini red tournament.

The foursome finished with nine wins, level with

the County team, but were awarded the title because they had won more sets than their counterparts.

The side, coached by David Barr, will now play Corby in the Northants Final on the June 11.

KILSBY held a strong Friendly Inn side to a draw last week in a fiercely-contested match.

Experienced heads Tim Rose and Bob Dunn teamed up with youthful pairing Ben Street and Tim Morris for the match, with the youngsters leading the way, taking the points in a 4-4 leveller.

Street and Morris were comfortable winners 6-3, 6-

3 in their first match. Friendly seemed to be struggling with the Street serve and Morris was once again king of the acute angles.

Rose and Dunn put up a good fight in their first match, but unfortunately went down 6-2, 6-2 to a resourceful Friendly pairing.

The second matches were more evenly-fought with Rose and Dunn getting off to a great start, but they unfortunately lost their first set 6-4, and went down 6-2 in the second.

Street and Morris maintained their aggressive tennis taking their first

set of their second match 6-4.

Friendly fought their way back to a tie break in the second but Street and Morris eventually took the tie break 7-4 and the second set 6-5 to complete the stalemate.

KINGS PARK Tennis Centre plays host to the LTA's 'play tennis' drive today between 10am-5pm.

People of any age can turn up and play for free as part of a national campaign to get more people into the sport. Anyone interested can call Northampton 797900 for more information.

Happy Walsh bounces back with a victory

STEVE WALSH returned to international action with a win last weekend.

The Northants Academy ace helped Great Britain to gold in the four nations international against Portugal, Denmark and Czech Republic. It was his first international competition in three years.

Injury has hampered Walsh since his last call up in 2003, but coach Tracy Whittaker says he is now back on form, and she was delighted with his performance in Sunderland last week.

"Steve competed extremely well," said Whittaker. "Being the oldest member of a young team he wanted to lead by example and the pressure was on to perform."

"He possibly dealt with it a little better than I expected, but only because it has been so long without Great Britain representation."

"The ability to perform well was never in question, it was just ensuring a good international competition strategy."

Walsh has been making steady progress since his return from injury in late 2004. The 20-year-old had six weeks out earlier this year after a training injury left him crooked, but targeting further call-ups to the international team, something that Whittaker says is more than within his grasp.

■ Trampolining

"Steve has a great technical base and performance consistency in competition to work from," she added.

"The experience he has gained and his commitment to living the athlete's life will put him in a good position to compete at the highest level."

"He's member of the British Gymnastics & UK Sports World Class programme and continuing to secure results such as this should ensure more future call ups."

Meanwhile, Jaime Moore and Yasmin Gumbs have jetted off to France where they are expected to challenge for medals at the European Championships this weekend.

Moore will take part in the senior event whilst Gumbs is part of the junior team, and Whittaker is hopeful that they can both make their mark.

Whittaker said: "Jaime and Yas with their respective GB partners should be among the favourites for medals in the synchronised events."

"In the individual they will both be looking to secure a top eight final place. They should also make a major contribution for the team finals where again GB would be looking to secure a medal."

Win double for NSC youngsters

SOME of Northampton Swimming Club's young stars of the future were in action in the Nuneaton & District Junior Swimming League.

The A team were swimming at Rugby, where they came under some early pressure from a confident Oakengates team. But it didn't take long for NSC to establish a comfortable lead and by event 10 they were 12 points clear, eventually winning 35 of the 51 events to take victory.

NSC's final total was 286 points to Oakengates' 220 with Droitwich finishing third on 176.

There were many outstanding swimmers from NSC, but those swimmers with two wins apiece were; Charlotte Milligan, Jack Howarth, Harrison Barnsfield-Jones, Freddie Little and Zoe Gidden.

The NSC B team were up against it in their round, falling behind the storming start made by the Court Club and hard

■ Swimming

pressed for second spot by Foxhollies (Birmingham).

The turning point came at event 34, when 10-year-old Alex Marriot touched first in the 50m backstroke edging NSC into the lead.

Court fought back and the lead swapped places for 10 events until NSC forged a strong lead to emerge as 12-point winners.

There were 21 wins for NSC from F Denton (2), D Yuill, M Martin (2), H Proud (2), C Heyworth (2), A Marriot, C Bradbury, Z Garlick, C Freeman, L Haywood and S Denton.

Meanwhile, at the Midland District Youth championships there were some outstanding performances from an unrested squad of swimmers from Northampton.

With over 30 finals, the eventual medal winners were: Simon Panting: Gold in 400, 800 and 1500m freestyle; Cara Moody: Gold 200 medley, 200 backstroke, bronze 200 freestyle and 100 m freestyle. Silver: Liam Marshall 200 freestyle and Luke Pearson 100 freestyle and bronze 50 freestyle. Bronze, Becky Dudley 1500 freestyle.