
Team Wales Tournament Trip

Halton U12 Tennis Europe

June 2019



Team Wales

Ollie Page, Mimi Xu, Gracie Hurley, Felix Bockelmann-Evans, Seb Griffiths, Elizabeth Evans, Archie Gray

Only two weeks after the May half-term domestic national level events, Team Wales returned to the lovely Halton Tennis Centre near Aylesbury for the only U12 Tennis Europe event currently held in the UK. The event gives players the opportunity to compete against their international peers and consists of a qualifying event as well as the usual main draw singles and doubles.

There were ten Welsh entries with seven of those players getting into either the qualifying or main draw. All seven of those players opted to sign up to the Team Wales tournament trip provided by Tennis Wales as part of its 2019 tournament support calendar. It's great to have that level of buy in from both players and parents as these trips are really beneficial when they are able to happen.

The team travelled by minibus the day before qualifying and arrived in plenty of time to practise on the artificial clay and sign in with the referee. The sign in for Tennis Europe events (and ITF events at older age groups) requires players to present their

passport to verify their identity and date of birth. This was a new experience for a number of players on the trip and adds to the experience for them as well as giving them an insight into the entry procedures for these events.

The qualifying draw proved very tough to navigate through for the Welsh players involved with Seb Griffiths and Felix Bockelmann-Evans both losing 7-6 in the third set in their opening matches. Another difference with the Tennis Europe events at this age is that players play a full third set. Seb was on court for three hours in total in what would have easily been his longest ever match and no doubt learned a lot from the experience.

Archie Gray, Olli Page and Elizabeth Evans also lost in the qualifying leaving it to Gracie Hurley and Mimi Xu to represent the team in the main draw singles. Both girls played very well with Mimi finishing as runner-up and Gracie reaching the quarter finals.

All of the players stayed to sign in for doubles which was great as they experienced losing in an event and staying to train afterwards. It also meant having more time away from home as part of the trip and benefitting from the independence and confidence which that instills. The decision was a good one as all of the players were accepted into the doubles and gave them the opportunity to have more time on the match court.

Mimi won the doubles with her partner while Elizabeth Evans won her 1st round match as did Archie and Ollie who paired up together.



The team captains did a great job in looking after and managing the players around their practise and matches. A big thank you to Fran Lewis and Luke Simeone for taking the time away from their coaching programmes to work with the players over the duration of the event.

Chris Lewis (Team Wales Manager).