

Medals Galore for Great Britain Team

The Great Britain Tennis Team returned home from the World Summer Special Olympic Games 2007 with a record number of medals. The Games held in September/October in Shanghai, China involved a Great Britain team of 250 players and coaches competing in 17 sports. Over 167 countries took part and paraded at the opening ceremony at The Shanghai Stadium to a capacity crowd of 70,000 spectators. Celebrities Jackie Chan, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Colin Farrell all performed on stage and the Games were officially opened by the President of China.

The tennis team of 6 players led by West Bridgford Tennis Coach Lesley Whitehead exceeded the LTA's expectations and surpassed the number of medals won at the last games in Dublin in 2003.

The tennis competition was held in the fantastic Shanghai Qizhong Forest Sports City Tennis Centre, where next months top 8 players in the world will compete in the ATP Masters Final. Players competed in 35 degree temperatures on the 18 outdoor courts before moving inside to play on the 6 indoor courts while Typhoon Krosa produced 36 hours of non-stop rain and winds as it worked its way through Shanghai.

The players who all have a learning disability played through two days of divisioning before the main competition began.

Peter Millar from Merseyside set the ball rolling winning his first gold medal in the singles beating players from Ecuador and Chile along the way.

This was followed by gold in the singles for Thomas Styles (Leics) who beat an athlete from Germany in his final, Stephen McEwan (Glasgow) who beat an Australian and Zara Jurenko (Leics) who beat players from Thailand and El Salvador. Lucy Pethig (South Wales) won a silver and Kevin Hogan (Glasgow) won a bronze medal in their respective singles divisions.

In the doubles events, Peter and Thomas won a further gold medal to add to their singles golds when they defeated pairs from China and Chile. Lucy and Zara won the silver medal and Stephen and Kevin the bronze medal.

In total the team won 5 gold, 2 silver and 2 bronze medals, a fantastic achievement. All the players around Great Britain will now all head off to the practise courts to be ready for the next games in four years time in Athens, Greece.