

## West Bridgford players star at National event

Players based at West Bridgford Tennis Club as part of the Special Olympics East Midlands Group won four gold medals, two silver medals and a bronze medal in singles events at the fifth annual National Learning Disability Tennis Event at the City of Nottingham Tennis Centre, which was organised by The Tennis Foundation, in association with Special Olympics Great Britain.

Meanwhile, there were an additional two gold medals and a bronze medal in doubles events for the players, who train at West Bridgford under the guidance of local coach Lesley Whitehead.

In the Men's Singles West Bridgford's Joseph Eccles and Arnold's Alex Eustace each won all their round robin pool matches to clinch gold medals in the Group 3 and Group 4 events respectively.

Meanwhile, with the record entry of 38 players each banded in to a series of groups with those of like tennis ability, Leicestershire's Tom Styles and Patrick Cox, who also train in West Bridgford, won silver and gold medals in the Men's Group 2 Singles and Men's Group 1 Singles events.

Styles, a double gold medallist at the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Shanghai, China, gained a personal best performance in Nottingham after beating Scotland's Alistair Daniels for the first time in his career, but Styles had to give second best to Kent-based newcomer and eventual gold medallist Ben Wilson.

Meanwhile, Cox remained unbeaten in his three Men's Group 2 matches to clinch gold, with Hucknall's Michael Clarke clinching bronze behind Cox.

While Keyworth's Peter Norton, Nottingham's Steven Uttley and Cotgrave's Leigh Foster just missed out on the medals in the Men's Group 3, Group 4 and Group 5 singles events, in the Women's singles there was another resounding success for Leicestershire's Zara Jurenko.

Jurenko, 21, is unbeaten in the National Learning Disability Tennis Event over the past five years and has also won gold medals at the last two Special Olympics World Summer Games. She again remained unbeaten in Nottingham this year, winning gold in both the Group 1 Women's Singles and the Women's Doubles.

Meanwhile, West Bridgford's Katherine Ashcroft won silver in the Group 2 Women's Singles, as well as clinching a bronze in the Women's Doubles.

Cox won another gold medal in the Men's Group 2 Doubles, while Clarke and Eccles won bronze in the Men's Group 1 Doubles.

"I am very proud of all them," said coach Lesley Whitehead, who was also Head Tennis Coach for last year's Special Olympic GB tennis squad that went to the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Shanghai. "They all work very hard in training and we are working towards the 2009 Special Olympics National Summer Games, which are being held in the region, in Leicester."