

## Top Seeds Triumph in Schools Finals for 2009

The final night of table tennis competition for the primary and secondary school players with the singles championships decided.

Thirty-two players lined up to have a shot at winning the **Secondary School boys** title and after a series of hard fought pool play matches the quarter finalists consisted of **Tom Deeley** (1) v **Kyle Uys** (16), **Jessi Drake** (13) v **Hamish Race** (3), **Josh Rooney** (4) v **Tristan Cooper** (6) and **Tom McCann** (7) v **Richard Simpson** (2). With Deeley winning his match comfortably he looked well on track to justify his top seeding. The match of the quarterfinals was Drake against Hamish Race. Drake, having found some of his 2008 form in beating the 3<sup>rd</sup> seed Henry Race in pool play, started strongly against Henry's brother, Hamish, winning the first 11-7 before Hamish won the second 11-8. In the deciding game form again deserted Drake with Race winning 11-4 to move into a semi-final against Deeley. The other semi-finalists were Rooney, who beat Cooper 11-9, 11-8 and Simpson, who beat McCann 11-7, 11-9.

In the first semi-final Deeley maintained his momentum with a strong performance in the first game 11-6 however there was a change in the match with Race taking the second 11-9 and keeping the pressure on Deeley in the decider. It was a very relieved Deeley that took the game 11-6 to move into the final.

In the second semi-final Rooney took out a close opening game 13-11 before Simpson appeared to take control of the match winning the second 11-5. The third was a seesaw affair before Rooney earned a bit of a cushion and maintained it to win 11-8.

In the final a confident Deeley again seemed to have the title in his grasp with a well-played 11-6 opening game however this confidence was severely dented when Rooney played equally as well to take the second game 11-7. With Rooney continuing his attacking play, which proved successful in getting him into the final, Deeley started to lack confidence in his shot making and quickly found himself behind in the third. Some wayward shots from Rooney and a brilliant forehand from Deeley saw the scores locked up at 9-9. First match point went to Deeley however this could not be converted then Rooney also saw a match point wasted with a smash into the net. Deeley found himself on match point again and secured the title when a forehand from Rooney went long. This was an excellent finale to the season and good reward for Deeley who went through the season unbeaten.

The girls' title race saw **Moe Nakamura** (1) against **Emily Fanning** in one semi-final and **Kelsie Ellis** (2) against **Gemma Coutts** (4) in the other. Both matches had their share of drama and excitement with Nakamura edging out Fanning 12-10, 8-11, 11-8 and Ellis (a previous title holder) defeating Coutts 6-11, 11-6, 11-6.

Top seed Nakamura made no race of it in the final and despite a stronger showing by Ellis in the second game it was a comfortable 11-1, 11-9 victory for Nakamura.

**The Primary School championships** played earlier in the day saw no surprises through pool play with all four top seeds progressing to the semi-finals with **Jack Deeley** and younger brother, **Ben**, strong favourites to meet in the final. As with their older brother Tom in the secondary school competition they had been totally dominant throughout the primary schools team competition. Both players had nervous starts in their semi-finals before taking control and winning through to the final, Jack beating **Marc Rooney** (3) 11-8, 11-4 and Ben beating **Ethan Robinson** (4) 11-6, 11-4. Jack and Ben had met twice before in friendly matches with the score sitting 1-1 so the final was expected to be as close and entertaining

as the previous matches, and so it was. Jack was confident in easing through the first game 11-6 before appearing to ease off in the second while Ben went on the attack. This attacking style earned Ben the second game 11-8 and an early lead 5-1 in the decider. Not to be outdone Jack started to find some winning shots of his own and with Ben starting to hit long it was all square at 9-9. Successive match points for Ben were lost with a smash finding the net and then another going long however on the third match point a smash finally found its mark and Ben took the third game 13-11 and the title.