

Toni Denham Update

Team Plymouth sponsored Toni Denham attended her final British Youth Championships on Monday 2nd May, the championships have been an annual pilgrimage for the 17 year old Plymouth High pupil since 2004 where she has represented the South West each year firstly at foil, then both foil and Epee before moving solely to Epee.

This year saw Denham advance undefeated to the semi finals of the U18 Girl's Epee, her impressive run of victories showed the Great Britain fencer at her best. In the poules she won her fights 5-0, 5-1, 5-2, 5-2, 5-3 which left her seeded third behind fellow GBR and England team mates Caitlin Chang (Yorkshire) and Amy Radford (West Midlands).

With a Bye into the 32 she dispatched her first DE opponent Louise Naude (North West) 15-0, her last 16 fight was against Elinor Robinson (Wales), which she won with a convincing 15-7 in the first three minutes, and the last 8 bout was against fellow south west fencer Megan Woodrow of Plymouth Fencing Club, who was defeated 15-8.

The semi-final was against 2nd seed Amy Radford who has had an impressive season including a trip to Singapore for the Youth Olympics and winning both the U17 and U20 British Girl's Epee titles.

The fight started with the first hit going to Denham and followed with a trio of doubles before Radford managed to even the score at 4 all, another double followed before Radford started to pull away with series of single hits, with the score at 10-5 to Radford, Denham regained her rhythm and started to pull back with the score standing at 12-14 to Radford the next hit was a double leaving the final score at 13-15. Radford then went on to defeat Chang to become the U18 British Girls Epee champion, her third British title this year.

Denham and coach Ian Lichfield were both pleased with her performance, her second bronze medal in two weeks, the first at the Birmingham International, which is a senior ranking competition. Lichfield has been working hard with Denham over the last twelve months improving her skill base and fitness levels and both are pleased to see the fruits of their labour beginning to pay off.

Denham is looking forward to her next competition The Gateshead International a senior FIE World Cup Satellite event in June where she managed a last 16 in 2010, she is hoping to match this result if not improve on it as with the changes being implemented to the Senior British Championships this year she is eager to maintain her top 20 senior ranking as this will give her a direct entry into the finals in December.

At the beginning of September Denham will join Chang and Radford along with Leonora Mackinnon to fence for England at the UK School Games in Sheffield. The girls hope to repeat their impressive results of last year where they took team gold, as well as collecting Gold (Mackinnon) Silver (Radford) and Bronze (Denham) individual medals.

The girls will then be going all out to maintain their GBR junior rankings of 1 through 4 in a bid to represent England at the Junior Commonwealth Fencing Championships being held in Jersey in February 2012.

Toni has fenced in 4 internationals this season as a member of the GBR U20 Women's Epee Team as well as the nominated domestic competitions, and also received offers to

attend four other internationals as a member of the senior GBR Women's Epee team as she has remained consistently within the Top 20 of the Senior Rankings for the whole of the 2010/11 season, unfortunately these caps were deferred due to educational commitments.



