

UK Schools Games 2009

The Scots felt right at home when there was not so much of a warm but more of a wet welcome to the UK Schools Games 2009.

The Volleyball was to be played in the spectacular Welsh indoor athletics arena which had been kitted out with two taraflex courts and a 2000 seat grandstand.

The first games the courts would both include teams from Scotland West with girls facing one of the favourites England Central. The boys hoped to break there duck against Scotland East, having lost to them both years prior to this.

For me the first game against the boys from the East was full of nerves and when the final point was won there was as much a sense of relief than anything else, having beaten our bogey team it was surely upwards from there.

That night we faced the hotly fancied England South. We quickly put them in their place with a comprehensive 25-15 win in the first set as a result of a strong team performance and some big outside hitting from Euan Duncan and Stevie Cruse. The team again shone in the second set and the crowd roared as the second was won 25-14.



On day 2 came in win against Northern Ireland then a disappointing loss to England Central.

The final day brought up a must win clash against England North. A win here would mean reaching the final and a pot at bringing the title back to Scotland for a second consecutive year.

A complacent start resulted in losing the first 26-24. However a resurgence in the second and third sets earned that much needed win and a place in the coveted final.

Two hours later the boys marched onto court with a packed grandstand willing both teams on. Just as we had marched on to the court we marched to a 25-22 victory in the first set. The second was lost poorly and one to forget. This meant it came down to a winner takes all

decider. The crowd knew this and raised the roof as the teams walked on court for the final time. Central raced to a 6-2 lead early in the set but we showed guts and determination to bring the teams together at 12-13. However an extremely unlucky point then an intelligent hit from there opposite finally killed the dream for good.

Although a wee peck on the cheek from Denise Lewis as she presented the medals began to soften the blow of getting sliver, it was claiming the overall team trophy that allowed both the guys and girls to come away from Cardiff with our heads held high. Even though we headed home disappointed that the medals round our necks were not gold we were satisfied with the overall trophy and a bag full of free kit. So boys of Scotland west get into the gym and earn your place for Newcastle next year, let's go one better!