

Kent Tennis Awards 2024 Sponsored by



Awards Presented on Saturday 15 February 2025

Hosted by Craig Allen at





JUNIOR COUNTY COLOURS

Presented by Jacqueline Darby

Junior County Colours are awarded to players who have consistently represented Kent over a number of years and/or age groups.

They are also awarded to players in age groups 11U and above who are part of a National Title winning team.

Finlay Gratton

Henry Harrison

James Meachen

Eva Hutchins

Milena Nahornaya

Julie Oprchal

Leticia Romanova

Isla Smith

Charlotte Spratling

Bella Thomson

Judy Zhang

JUNIOR PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Mary Evans

2024 Finalists

Chloe Cleaver

Quarter finalist in National 18U Doubles, runner-up in one ITF 18U Junior tournament and semi finalist in two others. Won 12 out of 14 rubbers for Kent Ladies at County Week and has consistently played all matches in all teams through every junior age group for Kent.



Ruben Harris

ITF World Ranked No.4 Winner, Roland Garros Junior Boys Wheelchair Doubles, and Men's Wheelchair Singles. Played in the Wheelchair Boy's Singles and Doubles at the US Open.



Eloise Newberry

Semi-finalist in National Girl's 16U Doubles.

Reached 4 ITF Junior Girl's 18U Singles finals, winning one ITF J60 and J30 Final each, and Won an ITF J60 Doubles event.



JUNIOR TEAM OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Mary Evans

2024 Winners

Boys 12U County Cup Team

Kent Boys 12U County Cup Team are National Champions. The boys were unbeaten beating Dorset, Middlesex and Oxfordshire each 5-1 and Surrey 3-3 in a shootout win in the final.



YOUNG PERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Andy Candler

2024 Finalists

Jack Pegden

Infinity Tennis and Faversham Tennis Club

Jack is a passionate coach and role model, achieving top qualifications while mentoring players of all ages. He volunteers extensively, running social sessions, organising tournaments, and supporting club development across East Kent. As vice-captain of his club's Men's 1st Team, he leads with dedication and teamwork. Jack's unwavering commitment to growing tennis, padel, inspiring young athletes, and giving back to his community sets him apart.



Luke Saunders

Hayes (Kent) Lawn Tennis Club

Luke Saunders is an inspiring young volunteer at Hayes Tennis Club, dedicating his time to coaching despite personal tragedy. Over the past two years, he has helped grow coaching programmes, encouraging players of all ages with patience and enthusiasm. Even while his brother battled terminal illness, Luke remained committed, earning his Level 1 coaching badge at 17 and nearing Level 2. His resilience, kindness, and leadership make him a role model, uplifting young players and fostering a supportive community. Despite his loss, Luke continues to inspire with his unwavering dedication, making him truly deserving of this recognition.





Presented by Andy Candler

The winning school will be presented with a prize from Head

2024 Finalists

Chislehurst & Sidcup Grammar School

Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School (Chis and Sid) has become a beacon of achievement, innovation, and inspiration in tennis over the past two years. The school's teams have excelled, with the Year 7/8 boys placing third in the LTA Youth Schools' Competition and the Year 9/10 boys winning their division. Girls' teams have also achieved key victories, and students shined at the Kent Doubles Championships. With 900 students now engaging in tennis, Chis and Sid has transformed into a hub of achievement and inspiration in school tennis.

St Richard's Primary School, Dover

St Richard's Catholic Primary School has around 200 pupils with a 34% pupil premium rate and is registered with LTA Youth Schools. After their P.E. lead teacher completed LTA Primary School Teacher Tennis Training in March 2024, SRCPS embraced tennis opportunities, forging strong links with the local accredited coach. The school offers curriculum tennis, playtime tennis, and a new weekly after-school KS2 club funded by the East Kent Community Tennis Programme. SRCPS also engages with Connaught Park courts, attended the Dover Schools Games KS1 Tennis Festival, and plans Youth Start for KS1 in January 2025. Their enthusiasm is inspiring.

Warden House, Primary School, Deal

Warden House Primary School is dedicated to expanding tennis opportunities for its 400 pupils, 42% of whom are on pupil premium. Integrated into the P.E. curriculum, Years 1-6 receive tennis lessons, with Year 3 also benefiting from accredited coaching. They embrace initiatives like the East Kent Community Tennis Programme, training staff for after-school clubs, and utilising free court bookings at Marke Wood Park. They promote tennis through events, social media, and the Schools' Wimbledon ballot. They have an inclusive and proactive approach in making tennis accessible to all.



UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Paolo Cuomo

2024 Finalists

Canterbury Christ Church University

Canterbury Christ Church University Tennis Club has grown significantly, earning the "Most Improved Club" award last year. The club has introduced a women's team, expanded coaching with Level 3 and Level 2 coaches, and offer both competitive and social sessions. Strong ties with Polo Farm Tennis Club provide members with affordable access to top facilities. Recently, they competed in BUCS doubles. Committed to inclusivity, the club is hosting a charity sponge ball tournament to introduce beginners to tennis. Through leadership, teamwork, and community focus, the club has transformed into a thriving, welcoming space for all players, ensuring continued growth and opportunities for everyone.



SENIOR COUNTY COLOURS

Presented by Hazel Lindfield

Senior County Colours are awarded to players who represented Kent in Women's age groups of 40 and above , Men's age groups of 45 and above , on 25 or more occasions .

Kate Hands



ADULT PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Hazel Lindfield

2024 Finalists

Jasper Cooper

World Masters Over 70s Mixed Doubles Champion and Men's Doubles semi finalist.

National Indoor Over 70s Men's Doubles Champion.

National Clay court Over 70s Men's Singles Champion.

National Grass Open Over 70s Men's Singles Champion.



Alice Gillan

614 Career high WTA Singles ranking.

Winner - ITF W15 Singles event in Dublin. Runner-up in 2 more ITF W15 singles tournaments



James Davis

James has won many doubles titles and is Kent's highest ranked ATP player since Lewis Burtin 10 years ago. Ranked 270, starting the year on 523. He has reached 11 doubles finals on futures and challengers' tours winning 5 titles.



ADULT TEAM OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Nigel Jordan

2024 Finalists

Men's O45's County Cup

National Champions for the first time



Women's County Cup Winter

6th National Winter title in 8 years





CLUB OF THE YEAR AWARD (1 - 4 COURTS)

Presented by Andy Candler & Tom Freeman, Trevor May
The winner will receive a voucher for £500 from Trevor May Contractors
2024 Finalists

Bridge Lawn Tennis Club

Bridge Tennis Club, celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2025, is thriving with a forward-thinking committee and recent facility upgrades. Membership is growing through strong community outreach, including schools, local residents, and the Sadie Bristow Foundation. Hosting 120 juniors weekly, the club nurtures young talent, supporting volunteers and future coaches. Proactive marketing has expanded inclusivity, competitive opportunities, and local business partnerships. With a welcoming environment for all ages and abilities, Bridge Tennis Club is a vital community hub, offering social and competitive tennis in a friendly village setting. Its dedication to accessibility and engagement makes it truly deserving of recognition.

Harrietsham Lawn Tennis Club

Harrietsham LTC celebrated its Centenary Year with exciting initiatives. Chairman Andrew Rogers led efforts to become an LTA-registered club, introducing a £5.00 family membership and free summer coaching, attracting 40 children. A Family Cup tournament followed, supported by a LTA grant. On August 17th, Kent Tennis President Mary Evans unveiled a Centenary Plaque. For winter, the club introduced Pickleball, mini tennis, and partnered with the local GP surgery for a walking group and social prescribing.

Dan James Tennis

Founded in February 2022 by Danny French, Dan James Tennis (DJT) runs a year-round coaching programme with 80 weekly juniors and 33 adult members. DJT supports LTA coaching qualifications, offers sanctioned competitions, and partners with the local council for Health and Food Half Term camps. With a welcoming ethos and growing participation, DJT continues to expand.









CLUB OF THE YEAR AWARD (5+ COURTS)

Presented by Andy Candler and Tom Freeman, Trevor May
The winner will receive a voucher for £500 from Trevor May Contractors

2024 Finalists

Canterbury Lawn Tennis Club

Canterbury Tennis Club has thrived in 2024, adding three new courts (now nine in total) to expand Pay-and-Play, university access, coaching, tournaments, and mix-ins. A free practice wall was built, and clubhouse expansion is planned. The club incorporated member protection by securing a stronger lease, enabling future developments like Padel. Inclusive initiatives like walking tennis and discounted memberships boost participation. Coaches lead sessions for 400+ juniors, adults, and disability tennis. A Big Tennis Weekend attracted new players, and community outreach grew. Over 200 attended Finals Day, reflecting club pride. A dynamic committee drives continued growth and innovation.

The Sundridge Park Tennis Club

Sundridge Park has expanded facilities and community programmes using LTA funding. A £440,000 investment added a floodlit tiger turf, padel court, upgraded tarmac courts, and eco-friendly clubhouse improvements. Coaches trained with Bright Ideas for Tennis to support disability and mental health programmes, receiving outstanding feedback. New offerings include Walking Tennis, Pickleball, and major Kent LTA events. Membership has grown in both tennis and padel. An inclusion review improved the women's membership journey. Crowdfunding raised £7,000 for community outreach, reinforcing the club's commitment to accessibility and growth.

Tunbridge Wells Lawn Tennis Club

Tunbridge Wells Lawn Tennis Club (TWLTC) fosters an inclusive environment, growing membership from 783 to 900. A new liaison officer ensures every new member meets the Head Coach, enhancing engagement. Over 500 players participate weekly in coaching, camps, and school outreach, while pay-and-play sessions boost accessibility. Junior programmes, social events, and pickleball expansion (200+ sessions) enrich club life. IT upgrades have improved booking systems. The LTA rated TWLTC's safeguarding standards as outstanding. Clubhouse refurbishments, clay court resurfacing, and fencing upgrades reflect member feedback. TWLTC is a progressive, community-focused club committed to accessibility, innovation, and inclusivity.







COACH OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Anna Wilson 2024 Finalists

Greg Hill

Canterbury Tennis Club

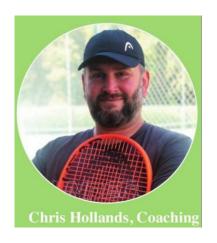
Greg Hill, from Canterbury Tennis Club, is a dedicated and innovative leader in junior tennis. As the lead mini-red coach, he creates engaging, inclusive sessions that inspire young players from beginner to county level. His creativity ensures every lesson is fun and tailored to individual needs. Greg's Mini Tennis Insight platform shares coaching ideas widely, benefiting players, parents, and coaches. He organises team events, supports player development, and fosters a love for tennis. His passion, commitment, and personalised approach helps young players progress while making tennis enjoyable for all.



Chris Hollands

Hythe Lawn Tennis Club

Chris Hollands, LTA Level 4 Head Coach, has transformed the coaching programme since his 2021 appointment at Hythe. Membership has grown from 392 to 830, with four courts dedicated to group coaching six days a week. Juniors benefit from LTA Youth programmes, home-school tennis, holiday camps, and competitions. Adult coaching from beginner to advanced levels, plus Walking Tennis, Ladies' sessions, and Drill & Doubles. In 2025, free disability-inclusive sessions will be launched, funded by a 2024 Open Day. Chris mentors young leaders, oversees a team of 10 coaches, and ensures top-tier safeguarding and welfare standards, strengthening the club's tennis community.



Lucy Morice-Jones

Avenue Tennis

Lucy is a key member at Avenue Tennis and leads the red programme, introducing innovative sessions and pathways, expanding the 8U programme by 42% to 126 weekly participants. She also coaches the Kent Tennis 8U and 9U county teams. Lucy shows commitment to ongoing personal development, completing a female leadership course. She runs the tots programme with passion and precision, ensures structured sessions. She has also developed a syllabus for leaders, providing biannual training. Her dedication to youth tennis and coaching excellence continues to make lasting impact.



PERFORMANCE COACH OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Jason Sigba

2024 Finalists

Simon Grieve

Canterbury Tennis Club

Simon began coaching Ruben in early 2024 when he was struggling on court, despite being a top European wheelchair player. As an experienced coach and psychologist, Simon helped Ruben manage his emotions and technical challenges, particularly his serve—reducing double faults from 12–23 per match to just 1–2. He also studied trauma-related mental health to build Ruben's resilience. The impact has been immense: Ruben has won multiple titles, played in two Grand Slams, and reached world No. 4 in Junior wheelchair rankings. Now competing in adult ITF events, he's pushing top players—all thanks to Simon's dedication and expertise.



Mark Ruffle

The Park Langley Club

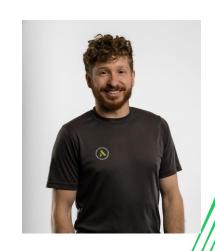
Mark has played a crucial role in Alex Mirrington's development, helping him transition from domestic 14U tournaments to junior internationals. He revamped Alex's training programme, ensuring it was challenging and appropriate to his needs. Mark leveraged his network to secure Alex a trial with the Elite performance programme, arranged high-quality practice sessions with top-level players, and accommodated early morning sessions. His commitment extends to supporting Alex at tournaments, building immense trust and respect. Alex values Mark's ability to understand his goals and maximise his potential, saying, "He knows how to get the most out of the player."



Alex Woolmington

Avenue Tennis

Alex is the Head of Tennis at Avenue Tennis, and he has overseen the development of many junior players on to the national pathway and in junior international events. Alex has also developed the coaching team. The club have recently been awarded the LTA 10U performance programme badge which shows the commitment Alex has in inspiring players within Kent.



OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Mary Evans

2024 Finalists

Jason Baker

Jason shows exceptional dedication at Tunbridge Wells by managing tournaments, enhancing engagement, and ensuring smooth, professional events. As chair of the Teams and Tournament Committee, Jason innovates and fosters improvement. He single-handedly handles financials, mentors new referees, and creates a welcoming atmosphere for all participants. A R2 Referee, Jason has officiated numerous prestigious tournaments while maintaining his ABTO licence. He's a key driver of inclusive events like the Kent County Championships. His passion, professionalism, and mentorship make him an invaluable asset to TWLTC and the tennis community.



Andy Lucey

Andy has for a long time officiated at Wimbledon and other major events. He has often been seen on TV as well as being interviewed for the news during the Wimbledon Fortnight. Andy has contributed a great deal to the Kent Officials' Network particularly by setting up a mentoring scheme to help and encourage new officials. This idea was entirely his own.



Nick Wibberley'

Nick manages the club programme at Canterbury Tennis Club, organising tournaments and match play year-round. As a mentor Nick's guidance is invaluable. He is known for hosting engaging, well-organised tournaments that prioritise fun and safety for children, incorporating activities like the "Fun Zone." His unique officiating approach emphasises coaching skills and mental focus, fostering player confidence. Nick's partnership with Infinity Tennis launched "East Kent Compete," boosting youth participation. His dedication is unmatched—whether refereeing, coaching, or organising tournaments, Nick is truly irreplaceable.



COMPETITION OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Keith Gill and Jane Smith, Natixis

2024 Finalists

North West Kent Rural Box League

This summer, a collaboration of North West Kent clubs launched a singles box league involving Meopham, Gravesham, Trottiscliffe, and New Ash Green. Players sought a new challenge beyond internal club leagues, with a focus on local, free, and quick matches. The league is open to men, women, and invited juniors, with safeguarding rules in place. Matches follow the "Fast4" format, with results entered into the LTA competition system. Organisers from each club manage the league, including match facilitation and disputes. The league culminates in a competition day, with positive feedback so far, and expansion is planned for the future.

Meopham Lawn Tennis Club School Games

Meopham Tennis Club, in collaboration with the Gravesham and Dartford School Games Organiser, hosted an outstanding inclusive tennis event for local primary schools, targeting Year 3 and 4 students who typically lack competitive opportunities. The event offered a new experience for children with varying tennis backgrounds and focused on inclusivity. Over 30 children participated, with Young Leaders from a local secondary school assisting as mentors and officials. The fun, relaxed atmosphere fostered skill development and a love for tennis. The success of this event paves the way for expanding opportunities, including an event for children with disabilities in 2025.

Kent Family Cup – Wye Tennis Club

The Kent Family Cup, held annually at the Kent Club of the Year event, showcases junior talent under 10 and adults over 18. This year, Wye Tennis Club, the County Club of the Year, hosted the event, drawing over 200 attendees, including local councillors. With 37 pairs entered, the competition was run by LTA Official Sunkeon Lee. Players competed in 4 groups, progressing to semi-finals and a thrilling final, won 11-9 by Sam and John from Shooters Hill Tennis Club. The event highlighted excellent safeguarding, safety, and a welcoming atmosphere for all participants.





TENNIS OPENED UP AWARD

Presented by Keith Gill, and Jane Smith, Natixis

2024 Finalists

Gurdwara Gravesend Project

40% of households in Gravesham live in relative poverty, with deprivation concentrated in the north, including parts of Gravesend. The Sikh community, making up 15% of the population, has typically not engaged with tennis. Gravesham LTC, supported by Kent Tennis, initiated a project to engage the Sikh community by collaborating with the Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara. At the Vaisakhi Festival in April 2024, the club distributed flyers, leading to 80 new contacts and sign-ups for an Open Day. This event attracted many Sikhs, especially women and girls, resulting in new members.

Paul Kelly – Horsmonden Tennis Club

Paul has been with HotshotZ Tennis for 2 years, showing remarkable initiative in fundraising and expanding Open Tennis. Last year, he completed a 24-hour tennis challenge, raising £2,900 for new initiatives. He organises weekly SEN and Parkinson's tennis sessions at Paddock Wood Community Centre. Paul also started a wheelchair tennis group for children, sourcing necessary equipment, and plans to begin walking tennis in Horsmonden. He helped host an Open Tennis day and a fundraising event with Danny Sapsford. Additionally, Paul is introducing Pickleball sessions, engaging members of all abilities. His enthusiasm and dedication makes him an invaluable asset to the

Infinity Tennis

Infinity Tennis offer inclusive programmes like Rusty Rackets, disability-friendly sessions, and free holiday camps for children. Through initiatives like Rally for Change, they've provided opportunities for disadvantaged youths to access tennis, offering coaching, rackets, and memberships. Their commitment to inclusivity, local partnerships, and creating welcoming spaces for all has brought tennis to a wider audience.

Virtus – Coach Development Centre

Virtus has been instrumental in the success of the Level Up London (LUL) project in 2024, working to make tennis accessible to underrepresented communities. Partnering with LUL, Virtus tailored the LTA Level 1 Tennis Assistant course for activators with limited tennis experience. The course attracted 16 learners, including 11 women, and received positive feedback, with 91% rating the format as "very useful." After completing the course, 86% of participants expressed interest in continuing their tennis journey. Virtus's impactful work has empowered community activators, with 16 learners now qualified, setting a benchmark for accessible training and expanding tennis in underserved areas.









PARK VENUE OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Mary Evans

2024 Finalists

Deal and Dover Park Tennis CIC

Marke Wood's Free Park Tennis (FPT) session, launched in November 2023 at newly renovated courts in Dover, engaged 223 participants across 790 bookings throughout 2024. Nine activators were recruited through the CIC, connecting with schools, local tennis clubs, and youth leaders. Activators enjoy free cardio sessions and social events. The programme breaks down barriers, including supporting Ukrainian refugees. The CIC has expanded its reach, offering walking tennis, free school access, and sustainable court usage. The success of Marke Wood led to renovations at Connaught Park, furthering the CIC's community impact.



Park Sports Greenwich

Park Sports Greenwich has provided a welcoming environment for many to learn tennis. It's the perfect place to grow as a beginner. James Maloney, creates a fun, informal atmosphere while focusing on drills to improve players' weaknesses. He celebrates small wins, which motivates everyone. James also fosters a sense of community by inviting students to social activities like pub quizzes, adding to the enjoyment. Players' feedback experience at Park Sports Greenwich has been very positive with many citing how grateful they are for the new friendships they've made with fellow tennis enthusiasts.

CATHIE SABIN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Keith Gill

2024 Finalists

Andy Candler

(Meopham LTC)

Since joining the Kent Board in 2024, Andy has made a significant impact on our communities . He introduced tennis to Gravesend's large Sikh population, organising meetings and attending open days, which led to 40 new players. Andy also established an inter-club singles box league and supported two clubs 100-year celebrations. As a trustee, he expanded Kent Tennis' influence, fostering self-help networks and promoting inclusion. His efforts have led to 15 clubs offering walking tennis, and his work with EDI mentors has created lasting change. Andy is dedicated to supporting others.



Nigel Jordan

(Old Wilsonians & Kent Tennis CIO)

Nigel joined the Kent County LTA Council in 2013, becoming Treasurer in 2015, and later Chair of Kent Tennis in 2024 while retaining his Treasurer role. His leadership in transitioning Kent Tennis from an unincorporated association to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) has been outstanding, requiring immense drive and dedication. He successfully communicated the transition, gained approval, and completed the process on time, helping other counties navigate similar challenges. Nigel promotes diversity and inclusivity, and brings energy, humour, and enthusiasm to every role. He's also active in organising events at Old Wilsonians and plays for Kent's over 65s Senior teams.



Vanessa Oakes

(Whitstable Lawn Tennis Club)

"this is the highlight of my week."

Vanessa has spent 20 years volunteering in the disability sector, developing an inclusive tennis programme since 2018. Passionate about accessibility, she has secured grants for wheelchair, limited mobility, dementia-friendly, and learning disability tennis. She delivers sessions with specialist coaches for mentally and physically disabled participants and has trained in sensory tennis. Demonstrating innovation, Vanessa has created outreach programmes, including taking tennis to local care homes. One summer, she brought elderly residents to her club for

a Wimbledon-themed day with participants commenting



CHARLES BAILEY AWARD FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Presented by Mary Evans

2024 Finalists

Neil Biddle

Oakwood Tennis Club

Neil began his tennis journey in 1976 and has since become an integral figure in the sport. He's played a vital role in coaching at Martin Dene, Russell Park, Swanley, and now Oakwood Tennis Club. A certified referee, he ensures fair tournaments and is known for his mentorship. Neil helped secure funding for Oakwood's new facilities, improving ground access and the clubhouse. Beyond coaching, Neil has inspired countless players, including those with learning disabilities. His remarkable ability to connect with others makes Oakwood Tennis Club what it is today, and his passion for tennis continues to motivate players of all ages.



Christine Brunger

Headcorn Tennis Club

Christine has been a dedicated member of Headcorn Cricket and Tennis Club for over 30 years. Despite a challenging vision loss and multiple surgeries, she continues to support the club, serving as Treasurer for many years. Christine has played a key role in managing finances, ensuring the resurfacing of all three courts and maintaining a healthy Sinking Fund. She facilitated smooth coordination between cricket and tennis groups, balancing budgets for both. During the pandemic, she suggested fee reductions for members affected by limited play. Her efforts were instrumental in Headcorn's "Kent LTA Club of the Year 2023" award.



Sue Greenwood

Harrietsham Lawn Tennis Club

Sue Greenwood has been an invaluable member and volunteer at Harrietsham Lawn Tennis Club for over 60 years. Always enthusiastic, she supports club activities like preparing grass courts and encouraging others to try tennis. A longstanding committee member, Sue helped expand Family Memberships and is excited about new activities like Pickleball and Paddle Tennis. She played a key role in the club's Centenary Year, contributing to displays and providing cakes for the celebration. Sue's warm welcome and dedication have kept the club thriving, and her commitment to offering diverse tennis options has made a lasting impact on the community.



Special Thanks

To our guest speakers to all those players who have contributed to today including:

- Our 8U County players
- The 12U County Team
- Wheelchair junior players: Lucas De Gouveia, Lucy Foyster – Edwards, Matthew Knoesen and Ellen Tribley
- Wheelchair tennis player Jenni Perry
 - VI tennis player Paul Ryb

Thanks

Thanks to Natixis for their kind and generous support of Kent Tennis our Awards Presentation



Thanks to the Awards Panel

Chair: Mary Evans
Andy Candler, Keith Gill, Janice White, Vanessa Webb,
Siobhan Butler and Emma Nelson

Thanks to the Organisers of the Awards

Andy Candler, Mary Evans and Emma Nelson

Thanks to our Sponsors

Trevor May Contractors who donate the prizes for: Club of the Year 1-4 courts Club of the Year 5+ courts



HEAD who donate the prize for Schools' Award winner



East West Connect Ltd who support Kent Tennis Junior Players

