



TENNIS BOYS SMASH AEGON TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS



Pictured from the front are Daniel Stephenson, Matthew McDaid, Mohammed Ayub and Ethan Barrett.

St. Ambrose College's youngest tennis players have smashed the Aegon Tennis championships winning the Cheshire under 11 title even though the sport was reintroduced at the Hale Barns school only two years ago.

It is now fastest growing sport at St. Ambrose with over 60 boys training and taking part in eight teams each week. The youngest boys lifted their section in an unbeaten season taking the scalps of Cheadle Hulme, Altrincham Grammar, King's Chester and Wilmslow High School among others.

Pictured from the front are Daniel Stephenson, 12, from Sale who plays his tennis at Brooklands; the team's number one Matthew McDaid, 12, Heald Green who plays at David Lloyd Cheadle.

Mohammed Ayub, 12, from Warrington who plays at Grappenhall and Ethan Barrett, 12, from Sale who plays at Northern, Birchwood and Brooklands.

Even though St. Ambrose is the envy of many of schools with multi-million pound fourth generation rugby and hockey pitches and a new swimming pool, their success has been founded on reopening three old tennis courts originally built in 1947 when the old school was established to educate Catholic evacuees from the Channel Islands.

The boys know who to thank for this opportunity: "It's down to Sir," said Daniel Stephenson, "he organises training and gives us coaching and sets up all the games."

'Sir', also known as Physical Education teacher and tennis coach Alex Evans, said: "That's very nice of the boys to say but it's been very much a team effort among the staff with one member of staff allocated to take training and practice sessions every day of the week during the summer so the boys always have a chance to play and develop their skills."

He added: "Our courts have been refurbished but a massive vote of thanks also goes to the Hale Barns Tennis Centre who let us play our matches on top class courts and we feel have made a very positive contribution to local education."

The boys also have an inspirational role model in Peter Alam, 15 from Bowdon who has been ranked number one in the country and whose exploits on the national stage inspire the younger players.