

Tennis Scholarship

Marley Whiteley – Tennis Scholarship Winner

Marley Whiteley, at the grand age of eight, has just secured a tennis coaching scholarship worth £450, jointly sponsored by the Courtside Sports Tennis Academy (CSTA) and Steep Lawn Tennis Club. The sponsorship comprises of group and individual coaching lessons as well as club membership at Steep Lawn Tennis Club, plus a new tennis racket.

Marley lives with his mum Amy Blackman in Coombe Road and attends East Meon CofE Primary School. You may well have seen Marley practising with Amy on Coombe Road or at the Village tennis court.

Since Marley was two years old he has been keen on any activity that involved playing with balls of various sizes and anything to hit them with! People in the village have commented on what excellent hand eye co-ordination he has. He started receiving tennis coaching at the Taro Centre when he was five, but due to the availability of the coach, this was curtailed after a year.

After the Taro sessions he played at the Don Perrin Petersfield sessions. One of the Don Perrin head coaches came out specifically to watch him. Last autumn following this, he was moved to the advanced group in Alresford, playing on Saturday mornings. The Don Perrin Tennis organization has been fantastic at bringing his talent out.

All this training must have stood him in good stead when he attended the 'Search for a Tennis Star' Open

day on March 25th at the Steep Lawn Tennis Club. The prize on offer was one of the full scholarships detailed above. Marley was one of only eight children who were awarded these scholarships.

Marley may have inherited his Mum's sporting talents. Amy was very sporty when she was younger, playing football, tennis, cricket, hockey, badminton, squash. Now she only gets time to go out for a run. Mark, Marley's dad, is very supportive of Marley and was also a very keen footballer in his day!

Marley is also very keen on, and good at, football and cricket, so there may be a clash/choice further down the road to see what he likes to do best. Whatever he concentrates on later, the coaching has not only been very good for his tennis skills, but has also increased his general confidence as a person in entering new and challenging situations.

Brian Biggs

