

Saints squash the rest

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LYME PARK – The St Stithians Girls' College squash team has plenty to boast about, being champions of Gauteng and the fourth best girls squash team in the country.

The group of five girls all started training under coach Cindy Purchase about seven years ago, and Purchase helped the girls grow individually as well as into a strong team, earning respect from the players in the process.

Cailin Doyle (18), Tyla Barker (16), Kathryn Humphrey (15), Lexi Galatis (15) and Gaby Beauchamp (16) all either play or

have played for Gauteng's U16 girls' and U19 women's teams.

The group beat their strongest local rivals, St Mary's School Waverley and Northcliff High School to win the Gauteng Top Schools tournament in June, and represented the province at the SA Top Schools tournament in Pietermaritzburg recently.

There, they came second in their pool to progress to the knockout stage where they finished fourth overall. "It was our first time ever making it to nationals," said an excited Doyle, the team captain.

"We all worked hard as a team and motivated each other to play well."

Purchase said it was a privilege to have coached such a dedicated

and talented team for so long. "They are a remarkable group, and to have all of them at one school is phenomenal," she said, adding that she actually did not play a major role in the team's success. "It was not me – they wanted success, they were all motivated and came to training at 6am."

Deputy sports director at the college, Nicky White said, "There is so much camaraderie in the team. When one girl has a bad match, the others pick her up. The success this year has made them hungry to win again next year."

Doyle is the only team member in matric and will leave the school at the end of the year. So next year, SA's girls squash teams will still face the fury of four of these squash stars.



Team captain, Cailin Doyle says the players all motivate each other to play well.



Back: Lexi Galatis, Cindy Purchase (coach), Cailin Doyle (captain), Nicky White (deputy sports director) and Gaby Beauchamp. Front: Tyla Barker and Kathryn Humphrey make up the squash team.



Tyla Barker is one of St Stithians Girls' College's five fantastic squash players.
Photo: Sebastien Arnold



Lexi Galatis is another member of the successful squash team.