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What a racquet

New England Junior Open Badminton Tournament takes over MHS gym this weekend

No less than 110 junior badminton athletes are about to leap into action at Marblehead High School this weekend, Nov. 20-21 to compete in the New England Junior Open — NEJO 2010.

Registration response was overwhelming for this year's premier, action-packed tournament, hosted by Marblehead Youth Badminton.

Junior players, in age categories from U-9 through U-22, are coming from all over, including New York and North Carolina, as well as throughout Massachusetts to play in NEJO 2010.

Play begins at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 20, with singles, doubles and mixed doubles events, winding up around 7 p.m. Each match will last between 15 minutes to an hour. Consolation rounds will also be played.

The tournament resumes at 9 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 21 with the quarterfinal matches leading ultimately into the championship encounter at about 3 p.m., depending upon when the last game ends.

Badminton shuttles are capable of reaching speeds of over 200-MPH in this, the fastest racquet game in the world.

Admission is free to watch these shuttles soar over 12 courts. Spectators are encouraged to join in on the fun of a toss the birdie game, take chances in a racquet raffle, or enjoy a delectable homemade treat from the bake sale.

Come witness the speed and intensity of this Olympic sport, and support your friends, badminton peers and the junior athletes of NEJO 2010.



Members of the Marblehead Youth Badminton's brown team go through footwork exercises during a practice at the Marblehead Community Center Nov. 15, as they get ready for this weekend's New England Junior Open at Marblehead High School.



Clark Uhl and Chris Colcord, from left, make sure their badminton racquets are ready to go as they begin practice with their Marblehead Youth Badminton teammates at the Marblehead Community Center Nov. 15. All of their hard work will hopefully pay off with wins this weekend in the New England Junior Open at Marblehead High School.



WICKED LOCAL PHOTOS BY IAN HURLEY
Phillip Donlon, 17, of Marblehead practices with his Marblehead Youth Badminton teammates at the Marblehead Community Center Nov. 15. The team will be competing in this weekend's New England Junior Open at Marblehead High School.