



Trio celebrate back-to-back Jack Petchey titles

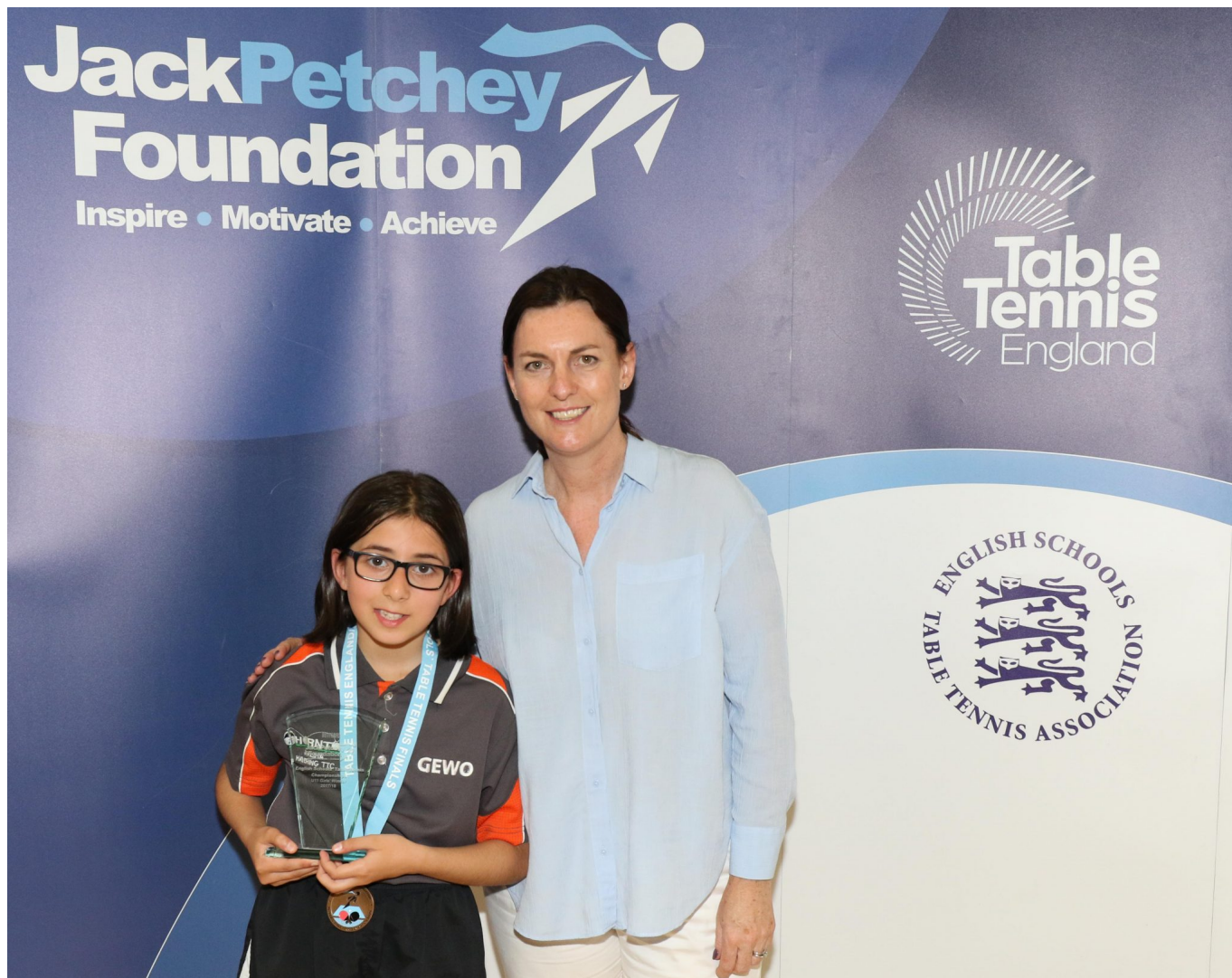
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Maliha Baig, Patricia Ianau and James Smith all repeated their title triumphs from last year at the Jack Petchey Schools' Table Tennis Finals.

A total of 112 players competed in four age groups – boys and girls – at Brunel University Sport in Uxbridge, with London Academy students winning three of the eight titles (including for sisters Patricia and Natalia Ianau) and Whitgift School pupils two.

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Maliha Baig receives her trophy from Table Tennis England Chief Executive Sara Sutcliffe

Baig, representing Warren Juniors, successfully defended her Under-11 Girls' title as she defeated Emily Cheung of Latchmere School 3-0 (11-2, 11-2, 11-2) in the final.

She had earlier beaten Kayleen Hadebe-Prentice of Earls Hall Primary 3-0 (11-3, 11-4, 11-3) in the semi-finals, while Cheung came through 3-1 (11-8, 11-7, 6-11, 13-11) against Annie Williams of Barnes Primary.



Oliver Maric-Murray with Sara Sutcliffe

The corresponding boys' event was won by Oliver Maric-Murray of Whitgift, who beat Francesco Bonato of Fox Primary 3-0 (11-8, 11-7, 11-6).

Maric-Murray also won his semi-final in three (11-7, 11-3, 11-4) against Ralph Pattison of Harlowbury Primary, while Bonato defeated Sam Gabriel of Coldfall Primary 3-1 (11-4, 11-7, 9-11, 11-6).

The under-13 winners were Joseph Hunter of Alexandra Park and Yuvathi Kumar of Wallington School for Girls.



Joseph Hunter with Sara Sutcliffe

Hunter's final opponent was Adam Palmer of Sutton Grammar and he beat him 3-0 (11-6, 12-10, 11-8). He earlier ended the challenge of last year's under-11 champion Harry Derecki (Chelsea Academy) in the semi-finals, by a score of 3-1 (11-1, 11-5, 9-11, 11-7).



Yuvathi Kumar receives her trophy

Kumar defeated Halle Toulon of Sacred Heart 3-1 (11-5, 11-4, 7-11, 11-7) in the final, having overcome Olivia Jones 3-0 (11-5, 11-7, 11-4) in the last four. Toulon beat Lucy Adams (Tiffin Girls) 3-0 (11-9, 11-7, 11-4).



Mihnea Dascalu receives his trophy from Jack Petchey Foundation Grants Officer Jane Evans

The closest final of the day was a real battle between Mihnea Dascalu of London Academy and Nahom Goitom of Ernest Bevin in the under-16 boys' category.

The winner was Dascalu, but he trailed twice in a match in which three points was the biggest difference between the boys in any game, eventually claiming a 3-2 (8-11, 11-9, 13-15, 14-12, 12-10) victory.

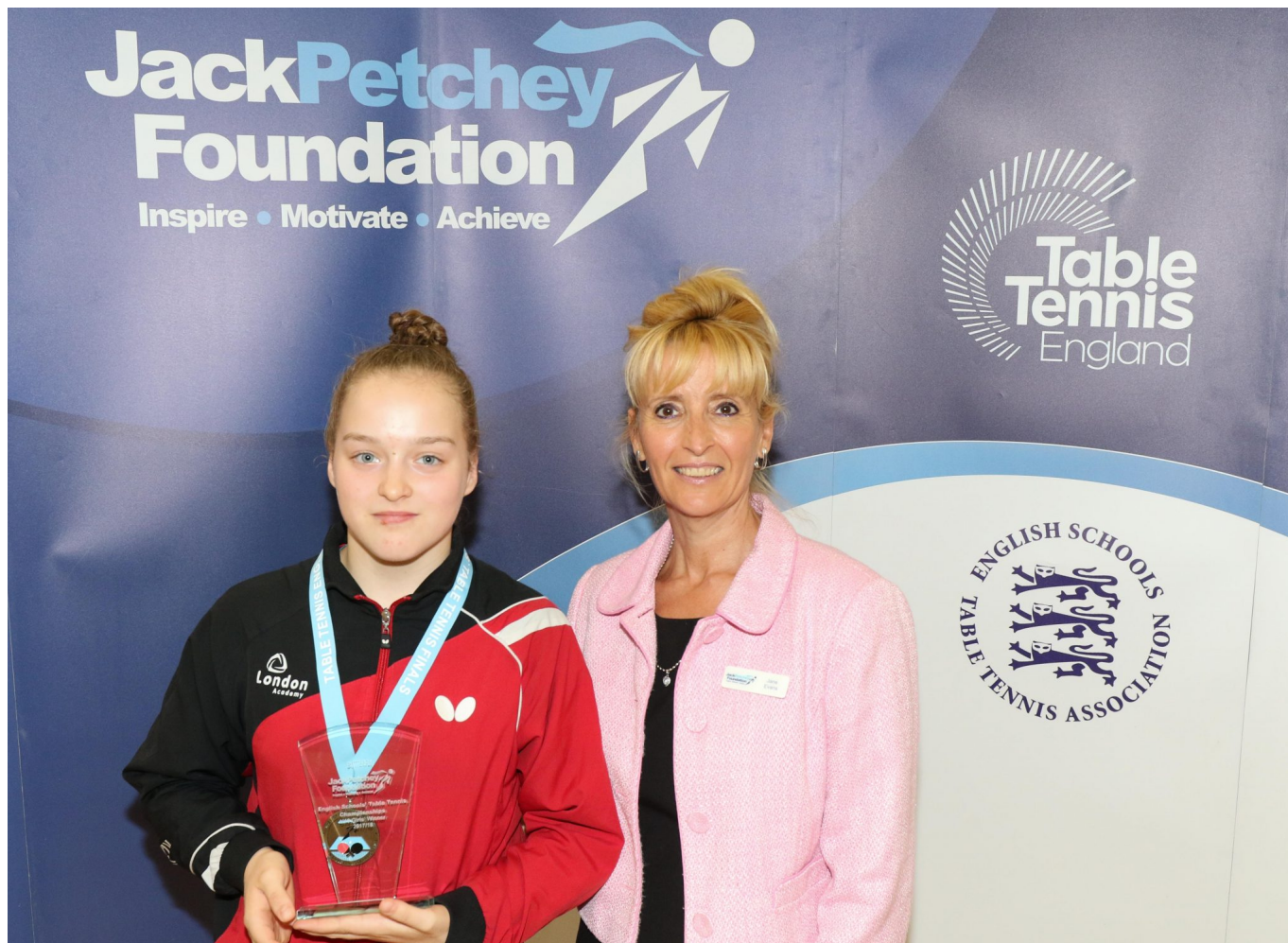
Goitom's semi-final also went to five sets as he beat Robert Pelc of Cheam High School 3-2 (11-7, 6-11, 6-11, 11-9, 11-5). Dascalu came through a semi-final against Kamal Annich of Ernest Bevin 3-1 (12-10, 7-11, 11-5, 11-7).



Patricia Ianau with Jane Evans

Patricia Ianau made it a London Academy double at that age group as she won the girls' competition, and it was a 3-0 (11-4, 11-7, 11-8) victory over Gracie Firkins of Tendring Technology College.

In the semi-finals, Ianau overcame Federica Bonato of St Paul's Girls 3-0 (11-9, 11-5, 11-6), while Firkins' margin of victory was also 3-0 against Morpeth School's Yasna Hawbash – 11-7, 12-10, 11-7.



Natalia Ianau with Jane Evans

It was a double celebration for the Ianau family as Patricia's twin sister Natalia won the under-19 title, making up for defeat in the final last year. It was a round-robin event, with Ianau defeating Medha Verma, Mya Sultan and Demi Chante Reid.

Sultan finished second as she took Ianau to four games before losing 3-1 (11-4, 8-11, 12-10, 11-6).



James Smith receives his award

The under-19 boys' competition was won by James Smith of Whitgift School, who has won several titles down the years.

He was victorious over Valerio Bucci of London Academy 3-0 (11-9, 11-6, 11-7) in the final, having beaten Bucci's school-mate Yacine Boubekeur in the semi-finals, also 3-0 (11-4, 11-7, 11-3). Bucci edged home in a tense semi-final against Cacharel Mirjah of Burlington Danes Academy, winning it 3-2 (9-11, 11-7, 13-11, 5-11, 12-10).

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