



Double joy for Ackworth at schools finals

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Ackworth School won a double in the under-16 category at the Butterfly School Team Championships in Hinckley.

There were seven winning schools across the eight categories – boys and girls at Under-11, Under-13, Under-16 and Under-19.

All pictures by Stephen Pover – more will appear on [our Flickr page](#) in the next few days

Under-19 Boys



Ernest Bevin College from Wandsworth and Nottingham's Carlton-le-Willows went to the wire in pursuit of the Norman Cook Cup.

Having won their earlier matches, they met in the final round and it ended 4-4 after a proverbial see-saw.

Ernest Bevin led 2-0 but Carlton-le-Willows came back to take the lead 3-2. The next two went to Ernest Bevin to put them on the brink of the title and although Carlton's Alex Pringle made the match all square by beating Adam Benmohamed, Ernest Bevin had done enough by the margin of their victories in the previous ties to take it 18-11 on countback.

Whitgift were third, defeating St Mary's 5-3 in the final round of matches.

In the earlier matches, both Ernest Bevin and Carlton le Willows defeated Whitgift 6-2, and it was the same score for Carlton le Willows against St Mary's – a match which included a 14-12 in the decider victory for Alex Pringle over Jake Hewitt.

Ernest Bevin won their match against St Mary's 8-0, but needed Nahom Goitom to recover a 2-0 deficit to beat Che Goulbourne 3-2 (9-11, 7-11, 11-5, 12-10, 11-5).

For the winners, Zion Boumpoutou said: "It feels pretty amazing to win. We've got to this stage a lot of times and not come up successful, so this year means a lot, especially for me as it's my last year.

"There's strong belief in the team and we always give our utmost and support each other and have fun."

Winning squad: Zion Boumpoutou, Nahom Goitom, Howard Onweng, Adam Banmohamed, Romanie Hilton, Kagethan Kanthakumar.

Under-19 Girls



Norwich School's duo of twin sisters Michelle and Rachel Wong edged out Okehampton to take the Claud Kichenside Cup by virtue of a 3-2 victory in the first round of matches.

Despite Mari Baldwin – silver medallist at the Mark Bates Ltd National Championships earlier this month – winning her two singles matches, victory in the doubles was key as the two Norwich players added a singles match apiece against Zoe Bennett. Baldwin's second victory was a very narrow 3-2 (9-11, 11-9, 9-11, 11-9, 14-12) over Rachel Wong.

Both teams went on to beat Southend 5-0 with no alarms, and it was also 5-0 for Norwich against Benton Park, though Rachel Wong needed five to beat Catherine Balshaw 3-2 (11-6, 8-11, 12-14, 11-6, 11-9).

Okehampton made sure of the silver as they overcame Benton Park 4-1, while Benton Park were third, their 3-2 win over Southend going down to the final match after Southend fought back from 2-0 down to level – starting with a five-set win in the doubles. Balshaw won it for Benton by defeating Joanna Gaudini in the deciding tie.

Michelle Wong said of the victory: "I think it's great, it's my first time in the tournament and I didn't expect to win."

Rachel Wong added: "I'm so happy and surprised as well because the opponents were quite strong."

Winning squad: Michelle Wong, Rachel Wong.

Under-16 Boys

Ackworth School were the perfect champions and clinched an age-group double with three 8-0 victories to lift the Leach-Carrington Cup.

The key one was against London Academy, both teams having won their opening two matches and Ackworth always had the edge.

Not that it was all one-sided as three matches went to the fifth and only one was decided in three straight. Octavian Aparaschivei came close to getting a point on the board for London Academy, leading both Jack Tsoi and Jie Fu Tham 2-1 before going down in five.

Third place went to Wallington thanks to their 5-3 win over St Mary's.

Earlier, In London Academy's 8-0 win over St Mary's, Aparaschivei came from 2-0 down to defeat Lennon Maughan-Staves 3-2 (9-11, 9-11, 13-11, 15-13, 11-8).

London then won the last four matches to defeat Wallington 6-2, with Sajad Ali fighting back from 2-0 down against Chid Egbeama to win the seventh tie 3-2 (12-14, 8-11, 11-8, 11-7, 11-6).

Ackworth beat Wallington 8-0, though Felix Thomis had to fight to overcome Ojasvii Borah 3-2 (7-11, 12-10, 6-11, 11-5, 11-5). They then defeated St Mary's by the same score, though the final match saw Jaco Lu recover a two-set deficit against Luke Hodgson – the score 7-11, 6-11, 11-9, 12-10, 11-0.

Felix Thomis of the winning team said: "We were very confident and came in with a mindset that we were going to win.

"Against London Academy there were difficult moments, a couple of fifth-setters, but we fought through. I think we've learned how to deal with pressure quite well."

Winning squad: Amirul Hussain, Jie Fu Tham, Felix Thomis, Jaco Lu, Jack Tsoi, Vincent Kessler.

Under-16 Girls

Ackworth School from Pontefract won the Mick Betts Memorial Cup as they dropped only three individual matches all day.

One of those was in the decisive match against George Spencer Academy from Nottingham, who took the lead when Erin Green beat Kate Ashley 11-8 in the fifth set.

But Ackworth shifted up a gear to win the next seven matches, dropping only two more sets, to run out worthy winners. Green made Ruby Chan work hard in their tie, Chan completing a 3-1 win 18-16 in the fourth.

Both Ackworth and George Spencer beat Wood Green 6-2. It was the same score for George Spencer against Prince Henry's, against whom Ackworth won 8-0 without dropping a set.

The battle for third place was won by Wood Green, who defeated Prince Henry's 5-3. After four matches it was 2-2, Prince Henry's from Evesham having come from 2-0 down, including a win in a deciding set for Abi Ingles over Aaisha Islam. Kirsty Maull's 3-2 victory over Beth Pye – 11-9 in the decider – put Wood Green in front and they made sure by winning the next two matches to take an unassailable 5-2 lead.

Sandy Choong from Ackworth said: "We expected to win but we knew it was going to be difficult because it's national level and we felt a lot of pressure because of that. We all stuck together and cheered each other on."

Winning squad: Ruby Chan, Kate Ashley Tsoi, Sandy Choong, Hoi Tung Lee.

Under-13 Boys



A thriller between Whitgift and Fortismere decided the destination of the T Austin Harrison Cup and the verdict went in favour of Whitgift on countback after a 4-4 draw.

Fortismere, from Muswell Hill in north London, twice led, but Ollie Maric-Murray's second victory put Whitgift 3-2 up. Still it wasn't finished as Fortismere levelled through Ishay Haim's second victory, and then took the lead when Noah Hacking beat Kai Sun You.

It was left to David Aboagye to make it 4-4 by beating Cody Sweet-Purcell in three, which meant the Croydon school won it 15-12 on countback and ensured south London had beaten north.

Aboagye said of his win: "I knew what I had to do. I stayed calm and tried not to get frustrated if I wasn't playing my best.

"We had an idea we could win the trophy – we've trained very hard and this felt like the year."

Earlier, Whitgift and Fortismere both beat Carlton le Willows 5-3. Fortismere were never behind in their match, but Whitgift were – coming from 1-0 and 2-1 down and then winning the last two matches from 3-3.

It was 6-2 for Fortismere against Toot Hill, against whom Whitgift got a clean sweep of 8-0. Ollie Nicholson came close to getting a point for Toot Hill against Thomas Sullivan Ferrarin, the latter shading the match 12-10 in the decider, having trailed 2-1 in sets.

Carlton le Willows' 7-1 win over Toot Hill saw them end in third place.

Winning squad: Ollie Maric-Murray, Jacky Lee, Kai Sun Yiu, David Aboagye, Thomas Sullivan Ferrarin.

Under-13 Girls



Addey & Stanhope took home the Hartshill Cup to Lewisham thanks to three victories, including a tight 5-3 in their final match against Wade Deacon.

They were never behind in that match but saw their opponents level three times to leave it delicately poised at 3-3 – the third ‘equaliser’ coming from Anna Hartley beating Tatianna Hoang 3-2 (9-11, 7-11, 11-7, 11-9, 11-5).

Sharon Bimbi put Addey & Stanhope back in front, defeating Rachel Lane in four, and Mya Mary Michaels completed victory in five sets against Edie McGuinness.

Anaiya Ali from the winning school said: “Teamwork was important. It didn’t just take one of us to win, we all needed to play well and we all had our role to play. It was a joint effort.”

Addey & Stanhope won their two earlier matches 7-1 against both Ashlyns and Toot Hill – though Mya Mary Michaels was taken to five by both Phoebe Tomlinson and Sophie Lager of Toot Hill.

Wade Deacon overcame Ashlyns 6-2 in round 1 but then saw Toot Hill close from 4-2 down to draw their tie in the second round. Toot Hill had led 1-0 and 2-1 but needed Evie Ferrer to win the seventh match in a deciding set against Lane and then Gabrielle Cooke beat McGuinness to complete the comeback.

The verdict on countback was 16-15 in favour of Wade Deacon, which saw them in second place ahead of Toot Hill, who defeated Ashlyns 7-1 in the final round of matches.

Winning squad: Anaiya Ali, Sharon Bimbi, Tatianna Hoang, Mya Mary Michaels, Emmanuella Okekumalator.

Under-11 Boys



St Edwards's made a fast start to their crucial final match against Fox Primary, going 4-0 up as they closed in on the Irene Elliott Cup.

They were made to wait when Tristan Madavag beat Saxon Kostidis, but Philipp Snell won the next one against Ernest Fransolet to give St Edward's, from Westminster, an unassailable lead.

For the winners, Kostidis said: "A strong team spirit and sticking by each other helped us to win. We had to play our hardest and try our best."

St Bede's edged third place on countback from St Peter's after a 4-4 draw, and it was only 15-14 when the sets were counted up. So Billy Rowlands taking two sets in defeat in the final match against Robert Atkinson was crucial – Atkinson won 13-11, 11-13, 11-9, 7-11, 11-8 but that fourth game going to Rowlands was what clinched the third place overall.

In the earlier results, St Peter's Jack Mitchell ran Alfie Pordage of St Edwards's close before losing 11-9 in the fifth as St Edward's went on to win 8-0 – they also defeated St Bede's by the same scoreline, and Teagan Kazhal needed five to see off Sam Davies in that match.

Fox had a 7-1 win over St Bede's and followed up by defeating St Peter's 5-3. In that match, they saw their determined opponents come from 1-0 and 2-1 down to level and then close the gap from 4-2 to 4-3, before Joel Pinto beat Dylan Hawkes to seal the result.

Winning squad: Teagan Kazhal, Saxon Kostidis, Phillip Snell, Vincent Kostidis, Alfie Pordage, Albert Hyseni.

Under-11 Girls



Fox Primary were in dominant form as they won the Martin Foulser Cup for the loss of only two individual matches.

Defending champions Redlands Primary actually took the lead against Fox in the first round of ties, when Promise Osahenmwinda beat Daphne Beebe 11-9 in the fifth, but Fox recovered to win all seven remaining matches.

They followed up with an 8-0 win over St Peter's, completed by Esme Brady-Rogerson beating Jessica Tansur 11-9 in a decider.

And they sealed the gold when they beat nearest challengers Earls Hall in the final match by a 7-1 margin. That obscures the fact that it was 1-1 – Evie Knappen levelling for Earls Hall 11-8 in a decider against Beebe – and that Fox won the fourth and fifth matches in deciding sets. Three other matches were won 3-1, so it was closer than the final scoreline suggests.

Hayat Osseiran-Pistecky of the winning team said: "We knew we could do it at the start, because we knew we had a good team and we're all very supportive of each other."

Both Earls Hall and Fox beat St Peter's 8-0. Evie McDowell came close for St Peter's in their 8-0 defeat to Earls Hall, seeing opponent Jasmine Guler turn it around to win 3-2 (13-15, 9-11, 11-1, 11-4, 11-3).

Earls Hall earned the silver with a thrilling 5-3 win over Redlands. Having trailed 1-0, 2-1 and 3-2, Earls Hall won the final three matches, culminating in Ava Harding's 14-12 win in the deciding set of the final match against Amie Shenton.

Redlands finished third thanks to a 5-3 win over St Peter's, with Shenton taking the all-important final match after St Peter's had closed from 4-1 down to a 4-3 deficit.

Winning squad: Hayat Osseiran-Pistecky, Daphne Beebe, Isabella Turner-Samuels, Esme Brady-Rogerson.

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