

2012 School Games Preview

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2011 Champions Wales: Charlotte Carey, Nicole Hall, Angharad Phillips and Megan Phillips

It's all about the teams at the 2012 School Games, this year – in it's new format, taking place at the Olympic venue, ExCeL.

With no individual title on offer this year there are just three competitions up for grabs in the team events; the men's, the women's and the disability tournaments.

As ever the School Games calls upon the excellent young regional talent from around the country with rivalries thrown up between not only English regions, but also the squads from Ireland, Wales and Scotland.

Last year at Ponds Forge in Sheffield it was the South East boys and Welsh girls that were dominant during the team proceedings.

The South East boys team, consisting of Lewis Gray, Igor Morais, Helshan Weerasinghe and Jared Patel relatively raced to the title, blowing all opposing teams clear out of the arena. Having progressed from their group with three consecutive 7-0 wins they then beat Scotland 4-0 in the semi-final to boot.



The unstoppable force of Jared Patel, Lewis Gray, Igor Morais and Helshan Weerasinghe

They were only denied a clean sweep of matches when the South West pair of Liam McTiernan and Jarred Knowles defeated Patel and Weerasinghe in the final. Despite that, the South East boys went on to triumph 4-1.

Once again, they will be favourites for the title. While Gray and Patel have passed the age limit, Morais and Weerasinghe will be joined by cadet stars Daniel Lawrence and Michael Ho ensuring their strength is maintained.

Their main rivals might come in the form of last year's runners-up; England South West, as they retain three of their squad from 2011. Joining Knowles and McTiernan are 2011 singles semi-finalist George Downing and new member Hugo Pang.

Dark horses might come in the form of Scotland who have 2011 singles finalist Scott Barton joined by Blair Fowler and the pocket-rocket Chris Wheeler – so impressive last year, as well as Connor Moran.



Despite his stature, Scotland's Chris Wheeler dominated the table in 2011

In the girls' competition Wales will hope to defend their title although they will be weaker without the twins Megan and Angharad Phillips. Leading their side will be Charlotte Carey and Nicole Hall who will be joined by Laura Edwards and Elizabeth Roberts, under the ever-watchful eye of coach Ryan Jenkins.

Potential favourites will be the South West girls who lost 4-0 in the final to Wales last time out. This year their strength is in their depth; Chrissie Slot, Megan Knowles, Vicky Smith and Maria Tsaptsinos will have high hopes of securing the title in London.

The dark horses for this event may well be the South East who have in-form cadet Tin-Tin Ho leading their assault. Joined by her fellow cadets; Lois Peake, Harriet Taylor and Lucy Zhu, they cannot be discounted from having some part in the running of this event.



In the form of her life, Tin-Tin Ho's South East team could go all the way

The disability event this year is a real open field with the standing, wheelchair and learning disability players combined into their regional teams.

There are two 2011 champions on show in the form of Jordon Abbott (learning) and Sam Bell (standing) while Nicko Anderson, the runner-up in last year's wheelchair competition, will take his place in the South East team.



2011 Champion Sam Bell will return in the search for another title

To see full player and team lists and a copy of the competition schedule [click here](#).

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