

Butterfly Schools Individual results

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Liam McTiernan triumphed in the under 19s

BUTTERFLY SCHOOLS' INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

The English Schools' Table Tennis Association's 40th Individual Championships were celebrated in style at The Doncaster Dome on Saturday 20th April 2013. Not only were a record number of 313 players fighting to be crowned Butterfly Schools' Individual Champion but past players and officials mingled with the spectators.

First to compete on the 21 tables were players from almost every county in the country from the Under 11 and Under 13 age groups.

The Under 11 boy's event was dominated by the victorious ESTTA team members, who recently won the British Primary Schools' International Championships in Ireland. The semi-finals were hard fought with Ethan Walsh (Hertfordshire) beating Sam Walsh (Merseyside) and Amirul Hussain (Greater Manchester) beating Tom McIntosh (Nottinghamshire) to reach the final where Hussain beat E. Walsh 3-2 (16-14, 11-7, 12-14, 1-11, 11-9). Trophies were presented by Alex Murdoch (ETTA Chairman).

The event for Under 11 girls clearly showed how the sport for young girls has developed and where players new to this level of competition can make their mark. Alice Dillon (Lancashire) beat Felicity Raud (West Yorkshire) and Grace Firkens-Edwards (Essex) beat Anna Raymakers (London Central) in the semi-finals.

Firkens-Edwards went on to win the final 3-1 (11-4, 3-11, 11-3, 11-9) to become the Butterfly Schools' Individual Champion. The presentation was aptly made by Alison Broe, who 40 years ago as Alison Gordon (Berkshire), won the 1974 Under 11 ESTTA title with further wins in 1976, 1978 and 1980.

Tom Jarvis (Lincolnshire) retained the Under 13 boys' title he won in 2012 by defeating Hugo Pang (Dorset) 3-0 (11-6, 11-7, 11-8). They had respectively beaten Alex Ramsden (Northamptonshire) and Joshua Bennett (East Sussex) in the semis.

Stepping up from Under 11 success in 2012 to Under 13 success one year later is no easy feat. However, Denise Payet (London North) – winner and Kate Cheer (West Sussex) – third achieved this. They were joined on the podium by Amy Blagbrough (Hampshire) – second and Stephanie Cross (Essex) – equal third. Guest presenters were Alison Boxall (1979 U11 Champion) and Caroline Boxall – both members of the Under 19 team from Goffs School, Cheshunt (Hertfordshire) who won the 1981/2/3 Team Championships.



The Under 13 Girls Presented with their trophies by Alison & Caroline Boxall

The presentation party consisted of Sally Shutt (nee Midgley) who, in 1979, won both the ESTTA title and the Home Countries International title for Senior Girls. She will be best remembered for representing ESTTA at the International School Sport Federation (ISF) Gymnasiade in 1978 in Turkey where, with her doubles partner Malcolm Green, she won the gold medal in the World School Games.

Sally was joined by Eddie Mitchell who was Manager of the Delegation playing in the ISF Championships. He was also Competition Manager for ESTTA for 17 years. Appreciation for past players and officials was shown by the spectators but mostly for the young players at U11 and U13 – names to watch for in the future.

Play became more predictable as the Under 16 players came to 'do battle'. Top four seeds in both events reached the semi-finals with first seed Tin-Tin Ho (London East), having a comfortable victory over Maria Tsapsinos (Berkshire) 3-0 (11-8, 11-8, 11-6). Emma Torkington (Kent) and Yuki Wat (East Sussex) were equal third. Tin-Tin was congratulated not only upon her victory but on achieving the status of No. 1 Cadet player in Europe.

Things were much the same in the boy's competition with former triple Butterfly Champion Helshan Weerasinghe (Kent) adding the Under 16 title to those of U13 and U11. Gabriel Achampong (London North) pushed him hard in the first two games of the final 13-11 and 14-12 but succumbed 11-6 in the third.

Marcus Giles (London South), the 2012 Under 13 Champion, played well in this higher age group and should be pleased with his third place, shared with Joseph Langham (London Central). Trophies were presented by Alan Ransome OBE, Managing Director of Ransome Sporting Goods. He was thanked for the provision of the excellent Butterfly equipment used for the championships.

Emma Tovey (Kent) impressed in her Under 19 girl's final victory over Nicole Finn (West Yorkshire). Naomi Jackson (Devon) and unseeded Lea Dickinson were worthy semi-finalists. Surprises were in store in the boys' event with No. 1 seed Danny Lawrence (Kent) losing in the first round of the knockout having previously won his group.

Bryan Kwan did the damage and progressed to the final, achieving the silver medal. Luke Walsh (Hertfordshire) and Jamie Trevillion disposed of higher ranked players to reach the semi-finals but Liam McTiernan (Berkshire), holder of the 2012 Under 16 Championship was the worthy winner with an early evening victory over Kwan 3-0

(11-5, 11-8, 11-9).

The final presentation was made by John Blackband, ESTTA Chairman. He expressed gratitude to Gail Johns (Championship Organiser) and her team of volunteer officials, umpires and table controllers.



The Under 13 Boys presented their awards by Sally Shutt & Eddie Mitchell

Players and Officials look forward to the Senior Schools' International (Under 14, 16 & 18) to be held in the Isle of Man where the hosts will welcome teams from Jersey, Guernsey, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England (ESTTA) on 28th/30th June 2013).

A list of finalists for the Butterfly Schools' Individual Championships can be found on the ESTTA website www.estta.org.uk.

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