

Sainsbury's School Games returns this weekend

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The Sainsbury's School Games returns to Sheffield's Ponds Forge this weekend (September 13-15, 2013) with the individual competitions returning to the programme.

The School Games welcomes back the individual competitions for both the disabled and non-disabled players with a high-calibre field of young players stars from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The School Games are a fantastic advert for junior table tennis and give the players the experience of playing intensive matches in a bustling atmosphere. For some, it will be the pinnacle of their careers, while for others it will provide a stepping-stone for greater occasions.

While the England Midlands team will hope to defend their team title from 2012, their players will have their work cut-out when they begin the individual event on Saturday afternoon with a number of big names ready to challenge for the top spot.

Leading the charge is 2011 Girls' Singles runner-up Tin-Tin Ho, who is full of confidence following her burgeoning international career and recent success at the [Bribar Guildford Grand Prix](#).

She's the firm favourite for the Girls' Singles ahead of her South East teammates Yuki Wat, Lois Peake and Emma Torkington and her long-term rival and friend, Maria Tsaptsinos (SW), who has, on past occasions, been the England star's main stumbling block.

The Boys' Singles winner could be much harder to predict with several high-class juniors involved from a range of School Games teams.

Top of the pile is England South East's Helshan Weerasinghe who, like Tin-Tin in the Girls' Singles, will face stiff competition from his teammates Daniel Lawrence, Marcus Giles and Jared Patel.

Also in the frame will be the England Midlands trio of Sam Mabey, Adam Harrison and Tom Jarvis who can all have reasonable claims on at least a semi-final finish at Ponds Forge.

However, it is not just about the English players, as the other home nations have their own strong contenders, especially Wales and Scotland who can look to Conor Edwards and Christopher Wheeler for success.

Edwards has been in fine form for Wales over the past year, including an appearance in the final of the Men's Band 1 at the [Bribar London GP 2012-13](#), while Wheeler, who stood out at the School Games in 2011, is set to make a big mark on the international stage if his career continues on the same path.

At this year's School Games there will also be a new batch of young umpires and volunteers including four

recently qualified County Umpires aged 16–19 who will be attending the games in their first major Home Country competition. Daniel Jackson is joined by James & Robert Garbett and Lyndsey Simpson from Lancashire who recently qualified at the Liverpool Grand Prix, all will be mentored and supported at the event by National Referee Brian Jackson as they work with experienced umpires throughout the competition.

The English Table Tennis Association will provide full coverage and pictures from the event over the course of the weekend. You can follow updates on Twitter with [@ettatabletennis](#) or stay in touch using the hashtag #SchoolGamesTT

You can see a full version of the Sainsbury's School Games Table Tennis Programme by [clicking here](#).

Written by Russell Moore (September 11, 2013)

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