

Academy and Northfield lead honours at ESTTA champs

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Posted On: March 24, 2014



Under-16 girls' champions Northfield receive their awards from Darius Knight

London Academy and Northfield School & Sports College are aiming to continue their winning form on the international stage after retaining their English titles.

The two teams respectively clinched the under-16 boys' and girls' crowns at the Butterfly National School Team Championship finals at Hinckley – and have now set their sights on the International School Sport Federation World Schools' Championships to be held next month in France.

The boys from London Academy impressed with victories of 7-1, 7-1 and 8-0 to finish ahead of Morpeth School, whose edged the rest of the opposition to take second place with a 5-3 victory and 4-4 draw.



The winning London Academy under-16 boys' team with Darius Knight

In the girls' event, Northfield School & Sports College, Billingham, recorded an emphatic 8-0 victory over second-placed Walton Girls' High School from Grantham. Jazmin Johns remained unbeaten for King Edward VI College, who were unlucky to finish fourth, while Hiba Feredj won five of her six matches in leading London Academy to third place on countback.

A total of 32 school teams were competing in Hinckley, having played their way through county, zone and regional rounds to reach the final stage of the championships, which are in their 48th year.

Reigning under-19 boys' champions Calday Grange Grammar School fought hard to retain their title but could only draw 4-4 with both the College of Richard Collyer, Horsham and London Academy. They also lost 6-2 to Guthlaxton College, Wigston, who finished in second place. The Academy took the title, recording wins of 6-2 over Richard Collyer and 7-1 over Guthlaxton, with Gabriel Achampong unbeaten throughout the day.

Horsforth School from Leeds failed to reach last year's national finals – not through their quality of play but because of snow. This year, they beat the weather and the opposition to become under-19 girls' champions, recording victories of 7-1, 7-1 and 6-2.



The under-19 girls' champions, Horsforth School

St Mary's College, Hull were unbeaten on their way to taking the U13 boys' event, with Harry Dai proving to be an excellent No 1 player. Kidi Martin Paulo fought hard for London Academy, who finished in second place but went down 7-1 to the champions.

In the girls' event at the same age group, Burlington Danes Academy of Hammersmith and Conyers School from Stockton on Tees both beat all-comers before drawing 4-4 with each other. On games countback, Conyers were declared victors 18-15. Holly Williams is to be congratulated on winning all her matches without dropping a game.

The under-11 girls' championship produced the most evenly matched competition with three drawn matches (4-4) and victories by 5-3 and 6-2. Great Wood Primary School, Morecambe, led by unbeaten Naomi Collins, came to defend their title but had to be content with second place, conceding to the unbeaten Park School from Bournemouth.

Victoria Dock Primary School, Hull; Fox Primary School, Notting Hill; St Mary Magdalene Academy, Islington and Bramley Sunnyside Junior School, Rotherham – all under-11 boys' 2013 finalists – returned to play out an excellent final, setting a standard which augers well for the future of table tennis. St Mary Magdalene recorded three victories to take the title and the three other teams tied on match points – Bramley Sunnyside pipping the others with a 31-30 individual match ratio.

After the day's play, all players received a plaque and the champions received trophies from guest presenter Darius Knight (England No 5), Alan Ransome OBE (Managing Director, Ransome Sporting Goods), Keith Thomas (ETTA Financial Director), Margot Fraser (Championship Referee), Richard Hudson (ESTTA Team Championship Organiser) and John Blackband (ESTTA Chairman).

[Click here for a full list of participating schools and finishing positions](#)

Please visit the ESTTA website www.estta.org.uk for more on this event.

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