

England come through with flying Primary colours

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The ESTTA delegation in Blackburn

England teams took gold and bronze, and there were individual medals for Amirul Hussain and Joshua Weatherby as England hosted the annual Primary Schools' International Championships.

Teams from Jersey, Guernsey, Ireland, Isle of Man, Scotland and Wales joined the host country for the tournament held at St Bede's RC High School, Blackburn from April 10 to 12.

England Boys were represented by Jamie Liu (The Hill Primary School, Reading), Weatherby (Fulwell Junior School, Sunderland), Hussain (Greenacres Primary School, Oldham) and Louis Moyes (Framlington Earl High School, Norwich) – a strong squad looking to retain the title won last year in Jersey.

This showed in their first matches against Jersey, Isle of Man and Guernsey when the English boys recorded 10-0 victories. Ireland provided stiffer opposition in both singles and doubles matches but could not prevent a 9-1 victory to England.

Scotland, who have in the past pushed England hard, were no match for the boys who had the championship in their sight. However, they had to beat Wales. At 1-1, with the Welsh No 1 Joseph Roberts playing with flair, the match looked in the balance but apart from a second victory by Roberts, the England team won 8-2 to be crowned champions.

[Click here for Boys' results grid](#)

Final standings: 1 England, 2 Ireland, 3 Wales

England Girls' squad of Scarlett O'Neil (Fairview Community Primary School, Gillingham), Ruby Chan (Western Primary School, Harrogate), Amy Marriott (Bramley Sunnyside Primary School, Rotherham) and Helena Dicken (Newhall Community Junior School, Swadlincote) played their first match against the Isle of Man with a resounding 10-0 victory but came down to earth with a 5-5 draw against Scotland.

They then faced Ireland (winners of this event for the last five years) and could do little to prevent a 9-1 victory to the Irish girls – Ruby Chan winning the one match.

The team regained their composure to record a 10-0 victory over Guernsey before their final match against Wales. A win for England would secure second place in the championships – a loss fourth place. The English girls trailed 1-3 after the first four singles matches and lost both doubles, increasing the deficit to 1-5 with four singles to play.



Amirul Hussain with his individual trophy

However, a determined fightback with victories for all four girls gave a 5-5 result, with both Amy Marriott and Helena Dicken winning the last two matches in five games.

Countback was needed to determine third and fourth place. This 5-5 draw gave a 22-22 equality in games – calculators out – victory for England by 407 to 406 points!

[Click here for Girls' results grid](#)

Finals standings: 1 Ireland, 2 Scotland, 3 England

The two days of team championships were followed by individual events. A large group of supporters showed their appreciation of excellent standards of play.

The four England boys, following the group stage, finished in the same half of the draw for the quarter-finals, where Weatherby beat Moyes and Hussain beat Liu.

In the semi-finals Joseph Roberts (Wales) beat Art McLaughlin (Ireland) and Hussain beat Weatherby 3-2 (7-11, 11-5, 11-9, 2-11, 11-6). In the final, Hussain beat Roberts 3-2 (9-11, 11-9, 5-11, 11-8, 11-8).

Boys' Individual results: 1 Amirul Hussain (England), 2 Joseph Roberts (Wales), 3= Joshua Weatherby (England) and Art McLaughlin (Ireland)

Girls' Individual results: 1 Faye Leggett (Scotland), 2 Anna Hursey (Wales), 3= Wiktoria Smolarek (Scotland) and Mia O'Rahilly Egan (Ireland).

All countries declared their intention to send full squads to the next event to be held in Guernsey.

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