

Harefield and King Edward take Schools' titles

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The Harefield Academy team receive the trophy from Alan Ransome OBE (all pictures by Ted Cottrell)

Harefield Academy sealed their first Under-19 Boys' title in thrilling fashion at the Butterfly National Schools' Team Championships at Hinckley Leisure Centre.

After both they and the reigning champions London Academy had both recorded comfortable victories over Altrincham Grammar School for Boys and The de Ferrers Academy (Burton on Trent), they effectively played off for the title.

The match was evenly poised at 3-3 with four of these matches decided in five games, before the Harefield Boys (Mitchell Jones, Danny Lewis, Ben Naylor-Smith, Nicholas Li, Gaurav Aravind) took the two remaining games to win the event.

It was their first Under-19 victory but follows Under-16 victories in 2010, 2011 and 2012.



Under-19 Girls' winners King Edward VI Community College receive their trophy from Sandra Deaton

The senior girls' event for Under-19 players was dominated by SRC Bede Sixth Form (Billingham) and King Edward VI Community College (Totnes) before the final match in which King Edward (Jaz Johns, Holly Johns, Elsa Perry, Lily Goddard, Teya Shepard) triumphed 5-3.

The minor places were decided on countback with Trinity School (Brentwood) taking third place, edging out Eastbury Comprehensive School (Barking) into fourth.



London Academy under-16s with Richard Hudson

London Academy Under-16 Boys (Omar Khassal, Eren Gozcu, Theo Achampong, Ryan Barnett, Kareem Bandaogo) were in top form, beating Northfield School & Sports College (Billingham) 7-1, St Mary's College (Kingston upon Hull) 8-0 and Morpeth School (Tower Hamlets) 6-2 to be crowned champions for the third consecutive year.



The under-16 Girls' winners from Lancaster Girls' Academy with Alan Ransome OBE

It is not always the match played by title winners which catches the eye. After two defeats each in the Under-16 Girls' competition Haygrove School (Bridgwater) and West Kirby Grammar School (Wirral) played a highly competitive match for third and fourth place. The match concluded 4-4 with countback on individual games 13-13. Calculators out – with a superior points total of 231-227, Haygrove took third place.

Meanwhile, Lancaster Girls' Grammar School and London Academy, following two wins each played off for first place. This was another 4-4 draw but with a greater games difference of 18-16, Lancaster Girls Grammar School (Megan Dillon, Alice Dillon, Sruthi Rajakarier, Naomi Collins) triumphed.



Coleridge Community College, the Under-13 Boys' winners, with Sandra Deaton

Coleridge Community College (Cambridge) eased their way to be crowned Under-13 Boys' Team champions,

defeating Wallington County Grammar School (Sutton) and Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys 8-0 and defending champions St Mary's College (Kingston upon Hull) 5-3. Coleridge were represented by Sam Chesterman, Jack Leader, Ollie Salmon and Herbie Ross.



Tom Jarvis presents the Under-13 Girls' trophy to Okehampton College

It could be said that the Girls' Under-13 competition was the biggest 'draw' of the day with five of the six team matches tied 4-4. The only win of 5-3 recorded in the group by Okehampton College (Emily Haskell, Zoe Bennett, Megan Brogan, Shani Kirk) was enough to make them champions.

On games countback, St James' Catholic High School (Barnet) finished as runners-up, recording three drawn matches. South Hunsley School & Sixth Form College took third place having a points difference of 215-213 in their drawn match against fourth place Conyers School (Stockton on Tees).



Under-11 Boys' winners Southwater Junior Academy with Tom Jarvis

The Under-11 championships give many players their first opportunity to play in a team competition representing their school at national level. Southwater Junior Academy from West Sussex (Zach Hodges, Charlie Graham-Adams, Oliver Michell, Sheel Maude, Samuel Watts) recorded wins of 6-2 over Barnes Primary School (Richmond upon Thames), 5-3 over Bramley Sunnyside Junior School (Rotherham) and 6-2 over The Perse Preparatory School (Cambridge) to become the 2015 Boys' champions.



John Blackband presents the Under-11 Girls' cup to Fox Primary

Fox Primary School from London Central (Laura Wharton, Eva Periera, Rose Bourdier, Nadia Zoppor, Valentina Weinstein, Louise Pradayrol) were undefeated with victories of 5-3 over Barnes Primary School, 7-1 over Cliffedale Primary School (Grantham) and 6-2 over Great Wood Primary School (Morecambe) making them the Under-11 Girls' champions.

Presentations were made by Sandra Deaton (Chair, Table Tennis England), Alan Ransome OBE (Managing Director, Ransome Sporting Goods), Richard Hudson (ESTTA Team Championship organiser), John Blackband (Chair, ESTTA) and Tom Jarvis (Current Under-19 Butterfly Schools' Individual Champion and previous winner of the Under-16, Under-13 and Under-11 titles).

A full list of group match scoresheets and links to official photographs can be found on the ESTTA website www.estta.org.uk under Events/Results.

Next year ESTTA will celebrate the 50th playing of the National Championships for school teams.

John Arnold MBE
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