



## Double delight for North East and South West

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North East and South West won two finals each, and there was also glory for teams from London and West Midlands, as the team champions were crowned at the Inter-Regional Finals in Kettering this morning.

North East Under-11 Boys were the first winners as Leo Pontone and Tommy Hawkes overcame Shem Lejarde and Harry Yip.







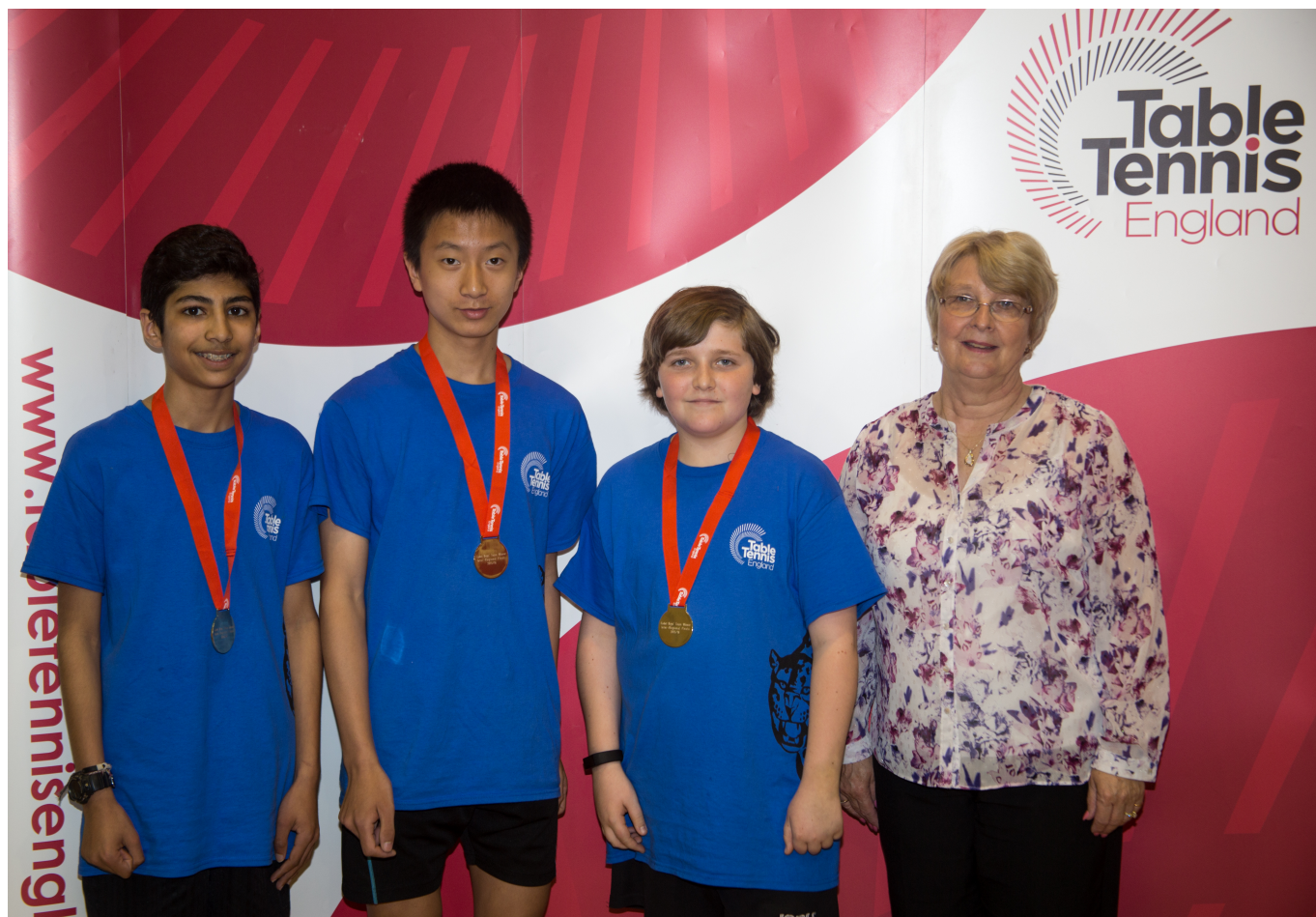
Leo Pontone and Tommy Hawkes with Table Tennis England Chairman Sandra Deaton (picture by Michael Loveder)

Pontone had to work hard to win his first set 16-14 against Lejarde but after that, North East won another eight successive games to take the title.

Leo, 10, said: "It feels good after all our hard work and we'll be back again next year!"

Tommy, aged 11, added: "It feels good to be winners. It's my first tournament and I can't believe we've won. We've done good teamwork."

Next to finish was the Cadet Boys, in which Zaiim Premji and George Long teamed up to defeat East's Kian Burgess and James Davies-Stokes.



Winning London team Zaiim Premji, George Long and Robert Pelc (picture by Michael Loveder)

It was not as one-sided as the 3-0 scoreline suggests as Burgess took the first against Premji and the doubles went to five.

Zaiim, 14, said: "It's good to win the first year of this championship. We did really well as a team to get through the group and we played really well in the final."

Fifteen-year-old George said: "We were seeded second in the group so we did well to win it. We won most of our doubles matches and I think that was the key."

Neither was the 3-0 scoreline in the Cadet Girls' final indicative of a stroll for South West over South East. Gemma Kerr needed three close sets to beat Lois Perryman, Nina Kadir beat Alice Hazell in five and the doubles went to four as Emily Haskell joined Kerr in the winning line-up.





Nina Kadir, Emily Haskell and Gemma Kerr receive their gold medals (picture by Michael Loveder)

Gemma, 13, said: "It's amazing. We just worked as a team and it's a great feeling."

Nina, 14, said: "We're really happy. We weren't quite sure what could happen at the start of the tournament but we worked as a team and supported each other."

Emily, aged 13, said: "We just wanted to try as hard as we could and we're really happy to win."

North East made it a double when they won the Under-13 Boys, and it was also a double for the Pontone family as Luca added to Leo's Under-11 win.





Gold medallists Adam Gent and Luca Pontone (picture by Michael Loveder)

His team-mate Adam Gent won both singles matches, including beating Ben McDonald in five in the opening tie, and he and Pontone also took the doubles.

Adam, aged 12, said: "I've been training for months for this tournament and it feels great to win."

Luca, also 12, added: "This is amazing, it's the biggest achievement I've ever had and I'm so glad I got to play with Adam in the doubles. We were undefeated in doubles and it felt so good."

The Under-11 Girls' gold medallists were Erin Richards and Lauren Loosemore for the South West, beating East 3-1.







Lauren Loosemore and Erin Richards receive their medals from Sandra Deaton (picture by Michael Loveder)

They had to do it the hard way as three of the four matches went the distance. Richards edged out Isabelle Lacorte but Malina Baig beat Lauren Loosemore in the decider to level the tie.

The South West girls went back in front after coming from 2-0 down to win the doubles 12-10 in the fifth, and Loosemore then sealed the title against Lacorte.

The girls had only played doubles together for the first time last weekend and 11-year-old Erin said: "It feels amazing. This is our first proper tournament and we didn't know we were going to get this far. We trained really hard."

Lauren, 10, said: "We just kept going and never stopped trying. When you lose a point you have to throw it out of your head and try to win the next one."

The final match to finish was a thriller as West Midlands beat South West in the deciding set of the deciding match in the Under-13 Girls.



Champions Sophie Rinnhofer, Kirsty Maull and Amillia Baker (picture by Michael Loveder)

Twice West Midlands took the lead as Amillia Baker beat Angharad Beman in five and then joined Kirsty Maull to win the doubles against Beman & Mari Baldwin.

But twice Baldwin levelled the overall score by beating first Sophie Rinnhofer and then Baker in three straight.

It left Rinnhofer and Beman to decide who would be champions and it went the distance as Beman twice levelled the score. But Rinnhofer shaded the last set 11-9.

The 11-year-old said: "It's really good. We just kept calm and didn't panic."

Kirsty, also 11, added: "We didn't think we were going to get through to the final, but supporting each other was important."

Amillia, who is also 11, said: "We're excited to win it, we didn't think we could go all the way through."

Attention now turns to the individual events for the rest of the day.

## **Results**

### **Cadet Boys**

#### **London 3 East 0**

Zaiim Premji bt Kian Burgess 3-1 (8-11, 11-9, 11-8, 12-10)

George Long bt James Davies-Stokes 3-0 (11-8, 11-7, 11-9)

Premji & Long bt Burgess & Davies-Stokes 3-2 (7-11, 11-6, 11-5, 9-11, 11-7)

### **Cadet Girls**

#### **South West 3 South East 0**

Gemma Kerr beat Lois Perryman 3-0 (15-13, 11-6, 12-10)

Nina Kadir bt Alice Hazell 3-2 (11-7, 8-11, 7-11, 11-6, 11-9)

Kerr & Emily Haskell bt Perryman & Hazell 3-1 (8-11, 11-7, 11-5, 11-7)

### **Under-13 Boys**

#### **North East 3 North West 1**

Adam Gent bt Ben McDonald 3-2 (7-11, 11-8, 11-8, 9-11, 11-8)

James Courtney bt Luca Pontone 3-1 (11-8, 11-7, 3-11, 11-8)

Gent & Pontone bt Alex Darlington & Matthew Westworth 3-1 (11-5, 8-11, 11-9, 15-13)

Gent bt Courtney 3-1 (9-11, 11-5, 13-11, 11-3)

### **Under-13 Girls**

#### **West Midlands 3 South West 2**

Amillia Baker bt Angharad Beman 3-2 (11-8, 16-18, 11-6, 8-11, 11-8)

Mari Baldwin bt Sophie Rinnhofer 3-0 (11-5, 11-6, 11-7)

Baker & Kirsty Maull bt Beman & Baldwin 3-1 (12-10, 7-11, 11-6, 11-7)

Baldwin bt Baker 3-0 (15-13, 11-7, 11-9)

Rinnhofer bt Beman 3-2 (11-9, 7-11, 12-10, 11-13, 11-9)

### **Under-11 Boys**

#### **North East 3 South East 0**

Leo Pontone bt Shem Lejarde 3-0 (16-14, 11-7, 11-7)

Tommy Hawkes bt Harry Yip 3-0 (11-7, 11-5, 11-5)

Pontone & Hawkes bt Lejarde & Yip 3-0 (11-9, 11-9, 11-8)

### **Under-11 Girls**

#### **South West 3 East 1**

Erin Richards bt Isabelle Lacorte 3-2 (7-11, 14-12, 11-7, 8-11, 11-9)

Malina Baig bt Lauren Loosemore 3-2 (8-11, 11-3, 6-11, 11-8, 11-7)

Richards & Loosemore bt Lacorte & Baig 3-2 (9-11, 9-11, 11-7, 11-6, 12-10)

Loosemore bt Lacorte 3-0 (11-8, 11-8, 11-6)

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