



Young champions reflect on their achievements

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Our youngest national champions were crowned over two days in Preston this weekend – here are their reactions to winning the trophies.

All photos by Steve Parkin

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Jasmin Wong

Summary: Won the Under-13 Girls' Singles, beating Darcie Proud 3-1 (11-6, 8-11, 11-3, 11-2).



Jasmin Wong

"I'm happy. I was nervous when I started but after the semi-final I was quite confident. I was improving during the day.

"When I lost the second game in the final, I tried to be confident and win the next set."

Amirul Hussain

Summary: Won the Under-13 Boys' Singles, beating Jaime Liu 3-1 (11-9, 8-11, 11-5, 11-1).



Amirul Hussain

"I feel great. I've been training every day with my coach and working on topspin, backhand and forehand and being very proactive.

"The England Youth Squad has helped me improve my game as well.

"(After I lost the second game) I needed to change it and not let him get in so I was pushing it wide."

Sophie Chiang

Summary: Won the Under-11 Girls' Singles, beating Amy Marriott 3-2 (12-10, 10-12, 7-11, 13-11, 12-10) and the Under-12 Girls' Singles, beating Scarlett O'Neil 3-0 (11-7, 11-9, 11-2).

"I'm really, really proud of myself because I was 2-1 down against Amy and I was really nervous but in the end I got the gold medal.

"I just kept fighting and winning a national title is really good, it's my best achievement."

"In the under-12s, I didn't really believe I could win it at the start but when I got to the semi-finals I thought I could do it."

Jamie Liu

Summary: Won the Under-12 Boys' Singles, beating Louis Price 3-1 (11-0, 11-13, 11-4, 11-8); previously lost in the Under-13 Boys' Singles final.

"I was playing strongly on the first day and I played a good semi-final against Josh Weatherby who's a tough opponent.

"But when I played Amirul I wasn't playing my absolute best and he played well.

"In the other final, I wasn't giving any chances. I didn't want that horrific feeling of being up by so much and

losing, so I wanted to finish it as soon as possible.”

Bertie Kelly

Summary: Won the Under-11 Boy's Singles, beating Adam Szabo 3-1 (12-10, 11-7, 12-14, 17-15).



Bertie Kelly

“I missed my serve (on match point) and that was a horrible feeling, but then I got an edge to win it and that must be horrible for him.

“It’s amazing, I can’t describe how good I’m feeling.”

Lucy Gent

Summary: Won the Under-10 Girls' Singles (round-robin)



Lucy Gent

"It's really good. My coach (at Ormesby) is Hong Hong Peebles and I couldn't do it without her, we did extra training every single day.

"The last match was the best one because I won 3-1 but I didn't know I'd won the gold medal until the end."

Connor Green

Summary: Won the Under-10 Boys' Singles, beating Oliver Maric-Murray 3-1 (10-12, 11-6, 11-5, 11-5)



Connor Green

"I feel so excited to win the trophy. When I lost the first game I was quite upset but I managed to win the next one and I thought I could go all the way.

"Being the No 1 seed there is a lot of pressure because anyone you lose to is lower ranked than you."

Josh Weatherby & Ben Fillingham

Summary: Won the Under-13 Boys' Doubles, beating William McCarthy & Fraser Kent 3-0 (11-9, 12-10, 13-11).



From left: Tom Purcell (Table Tennis England Director), Ben Fillingham, Josh Weatherby, Fraser Kent, William McCarthy, Nick Jarvis (Table Tennis England Head Coach)

Josh: "I think I played quite well in the doubles and actually I played well in the singles but I didn't do enough in the last little bit (against Jamie Liu).

"It was quite hard to get my mind off that match before the doubles final but after the first end I was fine."

Ben: "It's really good – I never thought I would win anything at the Nationals. I think me and Josh are very good tactically and our coach Alan Dickinson has really helped us."

Ruby Chan & Darcie Proud

Summary: Won the Under-13 Girls' Doubles, beating Gemma Kerr & Holly Smithson 3-0 (11-2, 11-6, 11-8). Darcie won singles silver; Ruby won singles bronze.



From left: Sandra Deaton (Table Tennis England Chairman), Darcie Proud, Ruby Chan, Holly Smithson, Gemma Kerr, Karen Tonge MBE (Table Tennis England vice-president)

Darcie: "I would say the singles medal is better because I've never got that far before and you're all by yourself and have to do it on your own.

"It's really, really good to have a National title."

Ruby: "I think the best medal is the singles one because in doubles you have each other and help each other along, but in singles you've got to fight for yourself and work harder.

"But it's amazing to have a national title."

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