



## Midlands and South East retain School Games crowns

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England South East girls scooped the School Games team title for the fourth year running, while England Midlands boys completed a hat-trick.

Both title favourites had to battle at times during the play-off stages at Loughborough University, but ultimately strength in depth proved telling.

North East boys took silver, ahead of South East, while Midlands were the girls' runners-up and Northern Ireland won bronze.

The disability title was won by England South East ahead of Wales and England South West.

## Team Final Standings

Boys' Team		Girls' Team		Disabilities Team	
1st	 England Midlands	1st	 England South East	1st	 England South East
2nd	 England North East	2nd	 England Midlands	2nd	 Wales
3rd	 England South East	3rd	 Northern Ireland	3rd	 England South West
4th	 Scotland	4th	 Scotland	4th	 England North East
5th	 Northern Ireland	5th	 Wales	5th	 England Midlands
6th	 England South West	6th	 England South West	6th	 Scotland
7th	 Wales	7th	 England North East	7th	 England North West
8th	 England North West	8th	 England North West	8th	 Northern Ireland

**Overall Winner: England South East**

The team results at a glance

[Click here to see the full results from the table tennis competition](#)

## Boys

England Midlands saw off a strong North East line-up to complete a hat-trick of team triumphs.

Alex Ramsden overcame James Hobson in a first match characterised by some brilliant and varied shot-making from all around the court – particularly in a second set which Ramsden won 16-14.

The second game was also high quality as Alec Ward twice came from behind to win 3-2 against Nathan Butler (10-12, 11-6, 6-11, 11-1, 11-6).

Matt Leete only needed three against Joe Clark but the doubles went to five as Ramsden & Leete had to stave off a comeback by Hobson & Ward, taking it 11-6, 12-10, 10-12, 9-11, 11-6.

It was left to Ramsden – the only team member to have been present for all three title wins – to seal it 3-1 against Ward. The Midlands line-up included Timmy Cooper, with Adam Harrison the non-playing captain.

South East took the bronze medals with a 4-1 triumph over Scotland, Josh Bennett winning his two singles and the doubles in concert with James Smith. Omar Khassal added the other point, with Dylan Curry picking up the Scots' win against Ben Foster.

The semi-finals saw North East defeat Scotland 4-0, though it was tighter than that scoreline suggests. James Hobson had to work hard to shake off Calum Morrison 3-2 (11-8, 7-11, 12-10, 11-13, 11-5) and Josh Harland then defeated Keir Morton in four.

Alec Ward also needed four against Curry, while the doubles went all the way – Hobson & Ward defeating Morton & Morrison 3-2 (11-3, 11-4, 8-11, 9-11, 11-9).

Midlands, meanwhile, found South East a tough nut to crack before ultimately prevailing 4-2.

Ramsden's three-set win over Smith was matched by Bennett against Butler to make it 1-1. And, after Leete

defeated Khassal in four, South East again levelled in the doubles as Bennett & Smith came from behind to beat Ramsden & Leete 3-2 (11-9, 7-11, 6-11, 11-8, 11-7).

But Ramsden and Leete were too good for Bennett and Smith respectively in the reverse singles, both winning in three to see Midlands into the final.

In the play-offs for fifth to eighth, Northern Ireland started their day by defeating Wales 4-1. Owen Cathcart and Zak Earley beat Marc Castro and Cade Short respectively, both in three straight, but Josh Stacey narrowed the gap in four sets against Thomas Earley.

But Cathcart & Zak Earley won the doubles over Castro & Stacey, and Cathcart clinched it 3-0 against Short.

South West set up a meeting with Ireland for fifth when they overcame North West 4-2. The foundations were laid in the singles when Ben Cawston beat James Chappell, Hugo Pang saw off Zak Cantor and Carl Baldry defeated Harry Watson to put SW 3-0 ahead.

But Chappell & Cantor won the doubles 3-2 (11-8, 11-9, 10-12, 9-11, 14-12) against Cawston & Olly Tyndall and Chappell then beat Pang as North West closed the gap.

The comeback was stemmed by Cawston's 3-0 win over Watson which clinched the overall match for South West.

The battle for fifth place was the last match to finish and it went the distance between South West and Northern Ireland – the latter shading it 4-3 when Zak Earley defeated Cawston in a decider (7-11, 11-9, 6-11, 11-7, 11-6).

The match had zig-zagged before that as Ireland led 1-0, trailed 2-1 and led again 3-2. Cathcart's two singles victories over Tyndall and Pang proved important.

Wales condemned North West to the wooden spoon with a 4-2 triumph, though Chappell gave the English side a good start by sinking Castro in four. Wins for Stacey and Benedict Watson put Wales in front, but North West took the doubles to level the tie.

The pivotal match was the fifth and Stacey beat Chappell 3-2 (5-11, 12-10, 11-5, 2-11, 12-10) to put the Principality back in front. And Castro sealed it in four against Harry Watson.

**Final order:** 1 England Midlands, 2 England North East, 3 England South East, 4 Scotland, 5 Northern Ireland, 6 England South West, 7 Wales, 8 England North West.

## Girls



Action from the key match between Kate Cheer and Mollie Patterson

Charlotte Bardsley won both her singles matches but could not prevent South East from keeping the title for a fourth year running.

Bardsley gave Midlands the ideal start with a five-game win over Kate Cheer (13-11, 9-11, 11-4, 11-13, 11-9) in a high-quality match, but South East won the next three – Denise Payet against Chloe Lingard, Zahna Hall against Mollie Patterson and Cheer & Payet in the doubles against Patterson & Bardsley.

Bardsley raised her game brilliantly against Payet, winning it with an eye-catching 3-0 (11-3, 11-2, 11-9) scoreline.

But it only delayed a South East victory as Cheer held Patterson off in five (11-9, 5-11, 11-7, 3-11, 11-8). The South East team also featured Isabelle Joubely, with Yolanda King the non-playing captain.

The Midlands side had trouble shaking off a determined Irish squad in the semi-finals, eventually winning 4-3 in the deciding set of the deciding match.

It was Patterson who clinched it, saving a match point in the fourth against Lucy Craig before triumphing 6-11, 11-9, 8-11, 12-10, 11-2.

Craig had earlier shaded another thriller, against Charlotte Boston, with neither player backing down as the score of 9-11, 11-8, 15-13, 10-12, 18-16 in Craig's favour demonstrates.

Boston was also beaten in five in the sixth match by Sophie Earley as Ireland came from 2-0 and 3-2 down to level. But Bardsley's two victories and Patterson's defeat of Rebecca Finn proved crucial.

By contrast, South East had stormed into the final by making relatively light work of Scotland, winning 4-0. Cheer opened up with a 3-1 (11-9, 12-10, 7-11, 11-9) defeat of Rebecca Plaistow and Payet and Hall then respectively beat Alisa Khalid and Jenny Yang in three straight.

Hall then teamed up with Isabelle Joubely to seal the result with a 3-1 doubles scoreline over Plaistow & Khalid.

The Irish girls won the battle of the defeated semi-finalists to take bronze with a 4-1 scoreline, despite losing the

first match as Plaistow defeated Finn in four.

It was all Ireland from then on, Sophie Earley clinching the podium place in game five, defeating Plaistow in four.

In the first round of play-offs for positions five to eight, Wales' 4-1 win over North West featured some close sets, not least Anna Hursey of Wales taking the first of the match 18-16 against Hannah Burrows and Beth Richards having a 16-14 game in her favour against Rachel Scott.

Both of those were Welsh victories, but Megan Dillon narrowed the gap by beating Lydia John in four.

Wales won the doubles in five – John & Lara Whitton overcoming Dillon & Scott 12-10 in the decider – and Hursey sealed it 3-1 against Scott.

South West booked their place in the play-off for fifth courtesy of a 4-3 victory over North East. They trailed 1-0 as Jasmin Wong beat Gemma Kerr in five but won the next three – Katie Holt over Holly Williams, Nina Kadir over Sophie Barlow and the doubles as Kerr and Amy Blagbrough beat Williams and Barlow.

North East were not yet beaten, however, and Wong's defeat of Holt, followed by Barlow's of Kerr, levelled the score.

Kadir versus Williams was the match to decide it, and it went Kadir's way in four (11-5, 12-14, 11-8, 11-8).

Wales went on to take fifth thanks to a 4-2 victory over South West, despite Richards losing the first match to Blagbrough. Hursey and Whitton won their singles but South West came back to take the doubles from 2-0 down – Holt & Blagbrough the pairing as they overcame Hursey & John.

The key fifth match went the way of Hursey, beating Blagbrough 3-2 (7-11, 11-8, 11-7, 7-11, 11-9), and Richards sealed fifth overall by defeating Kadir in four.

Seventh position went to North East, who beat their rivals from the other side of the Pennines 4-0, sealing it with a 3-2 doubles win for Barlow and Williams over Scott and Megan Dillon (7-11, 11-8, 11-9, 3-11, 11-9).

**Final order:** 1 England South East, 2 England Midlands, 3 Northern Ireland, 4 Scotland, 5 Wales, 6 England South West, 7 England North East, 8 England North West.

## Disability

South East's duo of Shae Thakker (standing) and Hamish Friell (learning) kept their unbeaten record throughout to take the gold medal ahead of Wales and South West.

The bronze medallists had been unbeaten on day one and had designs on the title themselves but they were pushed by North East in the first match of Saturday. Billy Shilton won 3-0 over Alex Bland in the standing class – though the third went to 16-14 – and in the learning section, Alfie Armstrong needed five against Ben Robinson before winning 3-2 (11-6, 11-8, 8-11, 7-11, 11-9). North East had a walkover in the wheelchair match.

The South East duo kept their unbeaten record intact by seeing off North West 2-0 in their first match of the day.

All three matches were contested when Wales took on Scotland, and the former line-up of Tam Eastwood, Sid Mohnaty and Cellan Hall all won in three straight.

Northern Ireland's results were all pre-determined 3-0 defeats – their only player, Kenny Cloke is normally a standing player but was playing in the wheelchair section, therefore his results were void. He won two matches yesterday but found Midlands' Dan Bullen too strong today.

Round six saw the South West unbeaten run ended by Wales, who leapfrogged them into second place. Shilton beat Eastwood in style, but Mohnaty's defeat of Armstrong in three tight games (9, 9, 11) meant South West, with no wheelchair player, had to default the final match.

North East's Robinson was on the right side of a five-setter in their next match, beating Scotland's David Morrison 11-9, 11-9, 6-11, 8-11, 11-8 in the learning match. That added to Bland's victory over Declan Tobin, and Andrew Green completed a 3-0 scoreline in North East's favour by defeating Andrew Berry in three.

Thakker's three-set win over Thomas Spicer was the only match played when South East took on Midlands. Walkovers dictated the final score as 2-1 to South East.

With a walkover 2-0 win against Northern Ireland in round seven, that left South East as the victors.

Wales finished strongly with a 3-0 win over North East which ensured the silver medal. Eastwood was taken to five by Alex Bland before emerging victorious 6-11, 12-10, 5-11, 11-8, 11-4. Mohnaty and Hall then defeated Robinson and Green respectively in three

South West were bronze medallists as Shilton and Armstrong both won their matches against Scotland.

And Thomas Spicer's 3-0 win over Joe Davis was enough, when walkovers were factored in, for Midlands to beat North West 2-1.

**Final order:** 1 England South East, 2 Wales, 3 England South West, 4 England North East, 5 England Midlands, 6 Scotland, 7 England North West, 8 Northern Ireland.

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