



Emily's artistry earns design prize

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Fitting 41 flags on a table tennis ball has earned Emily Ireland top prize in the Aerobic Table Tennis design a ball competition.

Emily, from Blackpool, was selected as the under-16 winner of the competition, organised by Steve Rowe, the founder of Aerobic Table Tennis.

Her colourful design features the national flags of 41 member associations of the ITTF, arranged in a jigsaw design around the whole surface of a ball.

There were more than 100 entries in all three age groups. Table tennis manufacturer Butterfly shortlisted 20 names in each category and the final decision on the winners was made by ITTF President Thomas Weikert.

Azna from the United Kingdom was named the winner of the youngest category, the under-fives, while Japan's Yumeta Koyama was the under-11s winner.

As well as receiving prizes courtesy of Butterfly, world top 20 player Marcos Freitas of Portugal recorded a video message for the winners.

Steve Rowe said:

It was so good to see how creative kids can be, we had some amazing entries. I am so pleased that kids embraced the competition.

The design a ball competition was an idea to get more kids involved with table tennis somehow. What happened was, once they made a drawing on a ball, the kids then wanted to play with it on a table. This is exactly the result we wanted.

I must give huge thanks to Butterfly for providing the prizes, Thomas Weikert for choosing the winners and

Marcos Freitas for his video message.



Yumeta with his winning design, now on display in his club in Japan



Azna's winning design in the youngest age group

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