

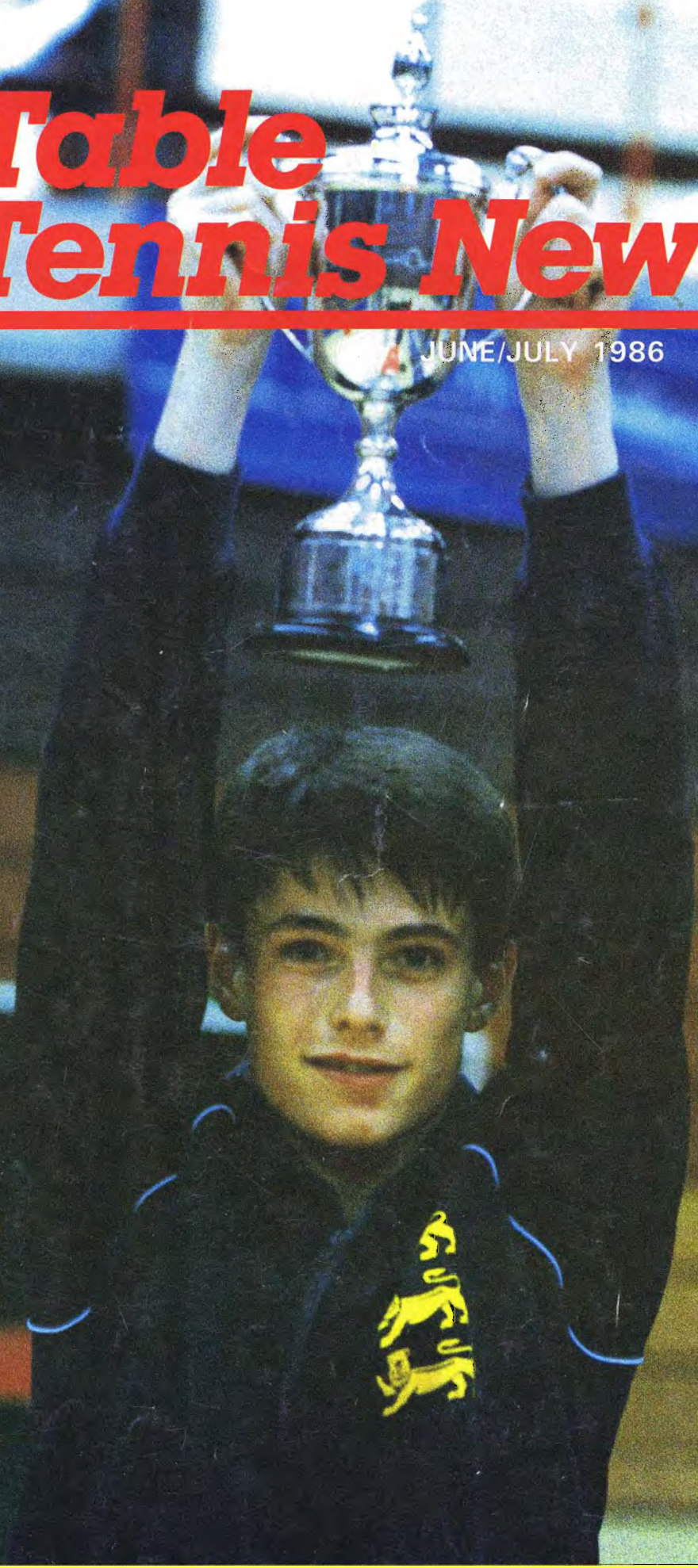


Table Tennis News

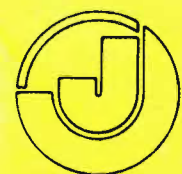
No. 158

JUNE/JULY 1986

80p



*English junior
open champion
Jimmy Stokes,
enjoys his
moment of
triumph*



League and Championship
tables . . . from Jaques

**John
Jaques**

Best foot forward

It has been a long season and one which has restored faith in English table tennis. Internationally our players have scooped 14 medals in senior competition and there is certainly cause for optimism.

Carl Prean secured his first Open title in Belgium, Desmond Douglas finished an honourable 2nd in the fiercely contested Europe Top 12 and Lisa Bellinger took her first step onto the European Championships rostrum.

With Sweden's Jorgen Persson at 19 and Hungarian Csilla Batorfi a mere 17 years old, capturing the European titles it has certainly been a year of youth and in this respect we should feel some confidence.

Michael O'Driscoll, our leading Cadet, from Yorkshire, has earned his first major title in France and Reading's Jimmy Stokes leaves the junior ranks with a clutch of titles, including the English Junior Open and his second Beneficial Trust Grand Prix.

Talking of Beneficial Trust, it is with some sadness that we bid them farewell. They have given tremendous support to junior table tennis during the past three seasons — needless to say great efforts are being made to secure a replacement sponsor and it is hoped that we shall be able to make this welcome announcement before the new season gets underway.

Another sponsor leaving us after six years is Halex, the Hertfordshire based equipment manufacturer. In their place we welcome Schildkrot of Germany who are to support the 'Schildkrot British League'. Formerly known as the national league this competition promises to be even bigger and better next season with a highly commercial approach being given to its promotion.

Newly crowned premier division champions, Steelstock Wolverhampton, have secured the services of Desmond Douglas for a further twelve months and English table tennis will undoubtedly be the benefactor.

Although table tennis is essentially about those who play, leading coach Tony Russe has offered, in this issue of Table Tennis News, an interesting insight to the world of coaching at the highest level — the frustrations and the rewards of a knife edge existence. John Prean questions the system of selections and reassesses his opinion of the national trainer coach. While many sports now place selection in the hands of their professional staff, table tennis has, thus far, elected to maintain the time honoured format of "the committee". But change is not a million miles away — indeed the new approach to grant aid document recently presented to the Sports Council, calls for this very move.



The official magazine of the English Table Tennis Association. Published eight times a year.

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HASTINGS TN34 1HF.
Tel: 0424 433121.

COPY DATES

25 July 1986
Issue 159 August/September 1986

12 September 1986
Issue 160 October 1986

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European Championships

Young champions but no pretenders



John Woodford at the 15th European Championships in Prague

Jörgen Persson, 19, and Csilla Batorfi, 17, are the new European champions. Young heads to wear the crowns but it needed strong teenage legs and an abundance of skill to reach the final rounds.

Both are worthy young champions. They kept their heads high and their top-spin shots booming away when the older men and women felt their legs would never be the same again.

Famous names, some old, some young - Desmond Douglas, Jan-Ove Waldner, Erik Lindh, Mikael Appelgren, Dragutin Surbek, Milan Orlovski, Jacques Secretin - crashed out long before the final curtains.

The Polish challenges from Andrzej Grubba and Leszek Kucharski were there until the last gasp. However Grubba is not the player he was. Kucharski has certainly improved.

Although, astonishingly the Swedish Big Three - Waldner, Lindh and Appelgren - had shot their bolts before the late rounds. Sweden always seems to have an ace up its sleeve, in this case Persson.

No doubt there are readers who have barely heard of the names of the new champions Persson and Batorfi. In fact, when I arrived home to a series of telephone calls and supplied the names of the winners to enquirers, the usual reply was "Never heard of them". Happily, I feel, they will be with us for the next decade.

Some would say that the strength of Sweden is that they have four men stronger than Desmond Douglas and although individuals might fail, Sweden will still rule.

It did at the 15th European championships, I think it will in Paris. Further than that we have to wait and see.

Reflection

Seated uncomfortably on most occasions or squatting Red Indian style behind the England captains on the cold concrete of the Prague stadium floor, British hearts like mine had time to ponder on the rising tide of table tennis success on the continent whilst in England our sport suffers a lean time.

The wind of change is in the favour of table tennis on the continent. The strength in numbers, the tumultuous but usually fair ap-



At 19 Swedens Jörgen Persson outshines: from left to right Kucharski, Carlsson and Grubba.

All photos by Brian Webster, Dundee, Scotland (0382) 642503.

plause from the huge crowds up to 8,000 strong, the many hours of television coverage and the new young champions Persson and Batorfi, could almost have had some of the 40 Brits in Prague wishing they could stay on the continent!

I have covered four European events in the past two and a half years, two championships and two Top 12's. With the possible exception of Moscow, the support from the crowds and the media, television, radio and the press has been exceptionally good.



Fluida Bulatova

I cannot recall the crowd figures for the 1977 World Championships in Birmingham, but I am sure that the size of the crowds in Prague went beyond it.

My theory in a nutshell is that there are so many other things going in Britain by way of entertainment both in sport and in other fields, music, the arts, theatre, the enormous boom especially on TV of snooker, darts and another dozen sports or pastimes that TV producers seem to like as all media people like something new.

And of course, a lack of Chester Barnes type personalities. Skylet Andrew is the nearest we have come to an extrovert character that appeals to all sections of the media.

In communist countries like Czechoslovakia and indeed communist countries in Asia, the amount of entertainment is only a fraction of what is available here. Ninety-two teams in the Football league is a good example of that and the laziness of the average Brit is well known worldwide.

He would rather sit back and watch it all happen in his lounge on the box where he can watch a selection of sports in warmth and comfort - who wants to stand in a draughty stadium watching the same sport for hours on end?

Team improvements

Former Table Tennis News editor George Yates wrote in May 1984 that the England team returning from Moscow had "met with abject failure", no medals and relegation for the men.

Happily, this was not the case in Prague. Some will say that the vast improvement was the result of strategic planning by the England selectors, top administrators and coaches. Some will dispute that.

Whatever the truth, there were no blunders in the mens team event this time - like resting Desmond Douglas and playing him in the wrong order.

England men cut seven nations down to size, 5-0 against Holland, Scotland, Spain, Wales, Faroe Islands and Turkey. Only Belgium took a game - this down to Skylet Andrew but he had two set points for a two straight win.

Belgium have gained promotion along with England mainly through the skills of their young star Jean-Michel Saive, so Belgium will become one of England's chief targets to stay in the top flight in Paris in 1988.

Our women did not have such a happy time but they proved strong enough to finish in sixth position, the same as before. They

European Championships

stopped Yugoslavia and Finland but lost to Hungary, Czechoslovakia and France.

Later in the second stage they beat Holland who were without Vreisekoop due to a shoulder injury.

The mens final when Sweden predictably lashed France 5-0 was disappointing. But watch for the new French star Jean-Philippe Gatien. He could be the next Secretin.

Hungary finally triumphed 3-2 over Russia in the womens final with Edit Urban overpowering the classy defender Elena Kovtun 21-16, 21-18 in the fifth deciding set. Interesting that the Russians often produce female defenders. The three best female choppers in the hall were Fliura Bulatova, Kovtun and Lisa Bellinger.



1986 English Open Champion, Elena Kovtun (r), celebrates her first European title with partner Fliura Bulatova



Consolation for Czechoslovakia as Marie Hrachova and Jindrich Pansky capture the mixed doubles.

How did they get on?

John Woodford reviews the English performances

Let's glance at the performances of the England squad of ten players. The tenth player was the perky young man from Reading, Jimmy Stokes, 17, who persuaded a group of local businessmen to invest a largish sum of Swiss francs in him so that he could join the England team.

Jimmy Stokes

Young Jimmy whose two tremendous wins at Farnborough over John Souter and David Hannah helped him to make the journey or at least boosted his morale, ran through two qualifying rounds whipping Daniel Wintersdorff (Lux) and the Dutch No 4 Rob Turk, another juicy slice of revenge over Holland.

After his wins he said, "Sitting on the bench for four days, I was ready for anyone." At the third hurdle however the Reading professional went under to Patrick Renverse (Fra), a player of vast experience.

Carl Prean

I thought Carl Prean had a tremendous tournament. In his quiet, unassuming way he scorched through the rounds past Josef Dvorak (USSR) until in the fourth round he went two games down to Erik Lindh (Swe).

"Preano" fought back like a tiger winning the next two, but could not quite hold on in the fifth. Alan Ransome said this of Prean: "He is a rare specimen, a technician. And, outside China,

the leading expert in long pimples."

"When the rules were changed he still came back making the most out of skill and his equipment which includes bicycle glue. He has been born and bred since the age of 11 on the skills and spins that can be achieved with various surfaces, a true professional even at 18", he said.

Lisa Bellinger

The Belle of the Ball in Prague! Not always at her best in the team events, Lisa made up for everything in the womens singles winning a bronze for reaching the semi-finals after lifting herself to record another magnificent win over Olga Nemes - the top seed from West Germany - in the quarter-finals.

Lisa was involved in a number of long games, often coming back from apparently impossible positions on the scoreboard, wearing down her opponents with her defence.

Sometimes she reminded us of Jill Parker in her hey-day, banging her bat on the old-fashioned wooden floor as she recovered the big hits from the back of the court but often coming in with smart attacking strokes that usually left her opponents standing.

Lisa, 19, has now declared another time-consuming interest apart from table tennis - she intends to marry next year to a Bedfordshire printer and footballer. How that will affect her professional career is something that only time will tell.



Csilla Batorfi hoists the womens singles trophy, Lisa Bellinger collects a well earned bronze medal. L to r: Bulatova, Batorfi, Bellinger, Badescu.

Joy Grundy

The reigning English champion from Preston who has made a remarkable recovery from injury in the last twelve months had an impressive tournament. She was called on to replace an off-form Alison Gordon in the team events.

Joy performed well and looked as professional as many of her opposite numbers in the teams of the 28 nations competing.

She had a bad draw in the womens singles going straight in but losing with honour to Zsuzsa Olah of Hungary.

It was said in Prague (and I cannot reveal the source) that "Joy is really our best player" - in the womens team. Her problems are that she has no sponsor and no ETTA contract.

She helps out in her parents' fruit and vegetable shop in Preston, but there is a strong feeling that instead of weighing up the potatoes people should be assessing her excellent chances of joining Lisa Bellinger amongst the Top 12 in Europe.

Desmond Douglas

Books could be written and no doubt will be on Des and his career and why he still has yet to win a really major title. The closest he has ever been was one step away at the last Top 12.

In Prague there were the highest hopes ever that this was his opportunity. As the tension mounted and the late rounds of

European Championships

the mens singles approached, it looked "all systems go for Des".

He had just managed to hold off the old warhorse Dragutin Surbek; Waldner had been capsized by Mazunov; and Orlowski was powered out by Ulf Carlsson.

So, in the quarters it only remained for Des to stop what appeared to be a tiring Carlsson but he went under in four games. Once again, the team had suffered a blow just when they were hoping that Des was going through. The pressure was too much, mentally and physically.

Said Des, "Playing three big games a day and some doubles at this level is absurd".

Tournament schedules will always be criticised. In Prague, the final rounds of the singles were the top attractions and they were pushed into the week-end much too close for comfort for the older players.

It could be argued that is why the youngsters triumphed. Des, for one, would support that theory.

John Souter

"Sooty" is a young man of few words who fully earned his place in the England squad. In Prague he was also an impressive player - calm on court with positive strokes that had opponents dashing all over the rear of the courts often in vain.

He recorded a fine win over Nemeth of Hungary but lost to Bela Mesaros of Yugoslavia in the second round.

The Prague experience will, I believe, help to further mature his game although of course he has young rivals waiting to step into his England squad place say for New Delhi next February they are Nicky Mason and now Jimmy Stokes to name but two.

Alan Cooke

"Cookie" was another second round faller in the mens singles. In the first round the Derbyshire ace eliminated the Swiss No 1 Thierry Miller in four games and then also in four went down fighting hard to the top-seeded Waldner who at one stage looked extremely hard-pressed indeed.

Alan Cooke is a sheet-anchor at No 3 in the England team, also as it happens No 3 on the computer rankings. He is the man to rely on when possibly his great rival Skylet Andrew is digging holes and often escaping.



Fiona Elliot learnt a lot in Prague

Eileen Langsley (0246) 882376

I am confident that in the next decade there will be plenty of chances to describe his performances.

Skylet Andrew

"Sky" Andrew, the personality of the England team. Suave, stylish, man-about-town, "fancied" by most of the ladies, a Man for All Seasons. But what about his table tennis?

After playing well in the team events Skylet found himself up against Henk Van Spanje and this time it was the Dutchman who came through in four - later to beat Boris Rosenburg (URS) and lost to Zoran Kalinic (YUG).

I watched the Essex man from the courtside on three occasions. He is a formidable figure. He seems to get himself into precarious situations and frequently fights back into conten-

tion to win. But occasionally he loses out when he goes beyond 20-20.

A flamboyant, popular figure often flashy and brilliant at times but always entertaining and that is on what the future of this sport in Britain may depend.

Alison Gordon

"Ali" from Reading, renowned as the fighter of the England team, was not very pleased with her performances in Prague, especially in the early stages of the team events when she lost both singles and was dropped by team captain Paul Day.

The clouds rolled away for Alison however in the womens singles. She hammered out Eva Calinska (POL) and Marie Svensson of Sweden before losing to the Bulgarian girl now of some note Daniella Guergueltcheva.

Fiona Elliot

Before Prague I had only seen Fiona Elliot on court on two brief occasions, though I had watched her improving results. Having no chances to display her talents in the team events she went into eager action in the womens singles and returned home with two fine wins - against Suzane Wenzel (FRG), the stocky blonde, and then against the willowy Barbara Wiltsche from Vienna.

Resigned by then to have to face someone with a high ranking she even played gallantly as she lost to Bettine Vriesekoop (HOL) who then beat Marie Alboiu (ROM) but lost in the quarters to Csilla Batorfi.

My verdict is that Fiona protected well her position in the team and it will need some tremendous form by Mandy Sainsbury or someone else to shift Fiona down. In fact she could even move up.

The Captains

Few people envy the workload of an England captain. Don Parker really did all a captain and head coach could be expected to do on the courts and off. He seemed to weld the team together, engaging firm discipline in a situation where it would be easy for a player to succumb to the pressures. Paul Day did a similarly good job for the womens team with Jill Parker heavily engaged with the video equipment but still managing on occasions to coach her fellow chopper Lisa Bellinger.

Bad press

The press centre at the European championships in Prague was well appointed; the telephone and telex services were magic and a further plus were the press refreshment facilities.

But quite unforgivable, unheard of at any major racquet sport event was the lack of draw charts on the press centre walls showing the progress of the players in the individual events.

Journalists had to employ a runner if they could find one, to check players progress or wait an hour or more for the results on paper, or walk to the public display which was usually two hours behind play.

I am sure Dennis George the new chairman of the ETTU Press and Publicity will make sure that does not happen again, anywhere.

John Woodford
Daily Telegraph correspondent



Carl Prean - a true professional

European Championships

Mens team

England results in detail

First Round (Second category, Group B)
ENG 5 TUR 0 (Douglas b Oktay Cimen 10, 14; Andrew b Ismael Ozelcik 15, 15; Preat b Gurhan Yaldiz 5, 12; Andrew b Cimen 18, 13; Douglas b Yaldiz 18, 13);
ENG 5 ESP 0 (Cooke b Sanchez Casares -12, 16, 13; Preat b Marin Caymel; 15, 15; Douglas b Pon Pales 13, 8; Preat b Casares 14, 10; Cooke b Pales 17, 7);
ENG 5 FAR 0 (Souter b Eydun Luid 9, 9; Andrew b Birgir Carlsson 5, 7; Cooke b Peter Niclasen 7, 12; Andrew b Luid 10, 9; Niclasen 7, 8);
ENG 5 WAL 0 (Preat b Nigel Thomas 8, 16; Douglas b Alan Griffiths 17, 10; Andrew b Nigel Tyler 15, 14; Douglas b Thomas 12, 9; Preat b Tyler 13, 11);
ENG 5 BEL 1 (Andrew b Thierry Cabrera -12, 4, 20; Douglas b Jean-Michel Saive -18, 10, 18; Preat b Remo De Prophetis 15, 12; Andrew lost Saive 16, -20, -18; Preat b Cabrera -12, 16, 8; Douglas b De Prophetis -16, 18, 7);
ENG 5 SCO 0 (Cooke b John Broe 16, 18; Douglas b David Hannah 12, 13; Andrew b Jan McLean 15, 11; Cooke b Hannah -16, 14, 11; Andrew b Broe 14, 15);
ENG 5 HOL 0 (Douglas b Ron van Spanje 10, 15; Cooke b Henk van Spanje 19, 17; Preat b Rob Turk 16, 16; Douglas b Henk 24, 9; Preat b Ron 13, 13).

Semi-final Round

13-16 Play-offs

ENG 5 BEL 0 (Douglas b Jan Harkamp 10, 16; Cooke b Claus Pedersen 23, -12, 18; Preat b Lars Hauth -15, 13, 5; Douglas b Pedersen 12, 9; Preat b Harkamp 13, 15).

Final Round

13/14 Play-off

ENG 5 BEL 2 (Andrew b Dany Christophe 13, -22, 14; Souter lost Cabrera 15, -11, -14; Cooke b Didier Leroy 10, 13; Souter b Christophe 11, 10; Andrew b Leroy 9, 14; Cooke lost Cabrera 15, -20, -19; Souter b Leroy 19, 12).

Bronze for Bellinger

(Action images 01-822-8484)

Individual Events Results

English results only for early rounds:

Mens singles

Qualifying rounds

Jimmy Stokes (ENG) b Daniel Wintersdorf (LUX) 12, 12. Stokes b Rob Turk (HOL) 18, 19.

First round: John Souter (ENG) b Karoly Nemeth (HUN) 12, 16, 20; Alan Cooke (ENG) b Thierry Miller (SUI) 9, -15, 16, 16; Stokes lost Patrick Reverse (FRA) -18, -14, -16; Skylet Andrew (ENG) lost Henk van Spanje (HOL) -18, -18, 8, -19.

Second round: Alan Cooke (ENG) lost Jan-Ove Waldner (SWE) 20, -14, -7, -13; Souter lost Bela Mesaros (YUG) 17, -10, -22, -20; Desmond Douglas (ENG) b Bruno Parietti (FRA) 19, 16, 13; Carl Preat (ENG) b Ron Pales (ESP) 15, 16, 13;
Third round: Douglas b Erich Amplatz (AUT) 10, 10, 15; Preat b Vladimir Dvorak (URS) 13, 15, 15.

Fourth round: Douglas b Dragutin Surbek (YUG) 13, -14, 23, -19, 12; Preat lost Erik Lindh (SWE) -18, -13, 22, 20, -15.
Quarter-finals: Jorgen Presson (SWE) b Lindh -16, 18, -17, 23, 17; Andrzej Grubba (POL) b Mikael Appelgren (SWE) 17, 14, 18; Leszek Kucharski (POL) b Andrei Mazunov (URS) 19, 18, 19; Douglas lost Ulf Carlsson (SWE) 17, -10, -15, -17.

Semi-finals: Persson b Grubba; Kucharski b Carlsson.
Final: Persson b Kucharski -19, 10, 16, 19.

Womens team

England's results in detail

First Round (First category, Group A)
ENG 3 YUG 2 (Gordon lost Branka Batinic -20, -17; Bellinger b Vesna Ojstersek 16, -14, 19; Gordon/Grundy b Batinic/Gordana Perkucin 18, 16; Gordon lost Ojstersek -11, 20, -18; Bellinger b Batinic 18, -20, 10);
ENG 1 HUN 3 (Grundy b Edit Urban -16, 18, 20; Bellinger lost Csilla Batorfi -16, -14; Bellinger/Grundy lost Batinic/Urban -12, 16, -13; Grundy lost Batorfi -15, -12);
ENG 0 TCH 3 (Bellinger lost Renata Kasalova -13, 11, -12; Grundy lost Marie Hrachova -19, 20, -10; Gordon/Grundy lost Hrachova/Kasalova -13, -22);
ENG 3 FIN 0 (Grundy b Sonja Grefberg -13, 12, 17; Bellinger b Sari Suomalainen 10, 21; Gordon/Grundy b Grefberg/Pia Malmberg 23, 15);
ENG 1 FRA 3 (Gordon lost Brigitte Thiriet -14, -18; Grundy b Nadine Daviaud 10, 20; Gordon/Grundy lost Daviaud/Thiriet -19, -14; Grundy lost Thiriet -16, -21).

Semi-final Round

5-8 Play-offs

ENG 3 HOL 1 (Elliot lost Patricia de Groot -19, -15; Grundy b Ellen Bakker 13, -12, 18; Bellinger/Elliot b de Groot/Mirjam Kloppenberg 16, 15; Grundy b de Groot 16, -20, 12).

Final Round

5/6 Play-off

ENG 1 FRA 3 (Bellinger b Daviaud 9, 14; Elliot lost Thiriet -15, -12; Bellinger/Elliot lost Daviaud/Thiriet -21, 15, -19; Bellinger lost Thiriet -12, -17).



Womens singles

First round

Joy Grundy (ENG) b Katja Nolten (FRG) -19, 12, -19, 13, 16; Fiona Elliot (ENG) b Suzanne Wenzel (FRG) 12, 20, 19.

Second round: Fiona Elliot (ENG) b Barbara Wiltche (AUT) 18, 16, -19, 14; Lisa Bellinger (ENG) b Vera Kottek (AUT) 19, -18, 20, 12; Alison Gordon (ENG) b Marie Svensson (SWE) -18, 19, -13, 8, 18; Joy Grundy (ENG) lost Zsuzsa Olah (HUN) 20, -12, -20, -12.

Third round: Bellinger b Patricia de Groot (HOL) 8, 9, 17; Elliot lost Bettine Vriesekoop (HOL) 21, -12, -14, -12; Gordon lost Daniella Guerguelcheva (BUL) -11, -16, -22.

Fourth round: Bellinger b Branka Batinic (YUG) 8, -16, 8, 16.

Quarter-finals: Otilia Badescu (ROM) b Edit Urban (HUN) 19, -15, 17, 20; Fliura Bulatova (URS) b Olah 6, 20, -20, 12; Csilla Batorfi (HUN) b Vriesekoop 19, 13, -12, 18; Bellinger b Olga Nemes (FRG) 22, 18, -16, -14, 17.

Semi-finals: Batorfi b Bellinger -19, 15, 18, 16; Bulatova b Badescu 12, 23, -18, 18.

Final: Batorfi b Bulatova -11, 15, 14, 11.

"Well done England, but now forward into the 20th Century!"

John Preat congratulates the England Team and its Captains

Whilst Moscow (1984) was an unmitigated disaster, Prague was an undoubted success. Our girls retained sixth place in Category 1. I heard some criticisms which I find hard to understand. If sixth place was good in Moscow, why is it bad in Prague? Lisa's semi-final was a stupendous performance after all that hassle with the rule change.

The men did all that was asked of them and returned to Category 1 in some style. Only Belgium, the surprise package in Category 2, held them to 5-1. The rest were beaten 5-0. I exclude the meaningless place match, won 5-2.

Back where they belong

It showed how ridiculous and avoidable was the failure of Moscow. Our men are back where they belong. Friends who were there (I was not) tell me that they played well enough not just for Category 1, but for a medal. It was not to be. The sins of 1984 had to be paid for.

Dreadful scheduling

The Douglas jinx continued and the title again eluded Europe's most consistent player of the last decade. After a 5 game epic against a still magical Dragutin Surbek he had to go on again after quarter of an hour. For the previous two days very little went on. Then everything was rushed.

Administratively convenient no doubt, but was it fair to the players? Do I hear the old parrot cry: "It's the same for everybody?"

It certainly is not. It penalises the players who have fought the hardest in the previous round. Everybody is entitled to a reasonable rest and a minimum of two hours is not much to ask in a championship that goes on for more than a week.

Mens doubles

First round

Souter/Stokes lost Christian Ignat/Calin Toma (ROM) -13, -17; Douglas/Preat b Thomas Busin/Thierry Miller (SUI) 20, 18.

Second round: Andrew/Cooke lost Tibor Klampar/Kriston (HUN) -17, -8; Douglas/Preat b Parietti/Reverse (FRA) 22, -21, 11;

Third round: Douglas/Preat lost Milan Orlovski/Jindrich Pansky (TCH) -19, 21, -15.

Semi-finals: Lindh/Waldner b Zoran Kalinic/Surbek 15, 16; Appelgren/Carlsson b Ilie Lupulescu/Zoran Primorac (YUG) 18, 19.

Final: Lindh/Waldner b Appelgren/Carlsson 13, -13, 16.

Womens doubles

Second round

Gordon/Grundy b Fotini Galanou/Maria Louka (GRE) 7, 10;

Third round: Gordon/Grundy b Margit Freiberg/Vanja Staleva (FRG/BUL) -15, 16, 15.

Quarter-finals: Gordon/Grundy lost Hrachova/Vriesekoop (TCH/HOL) -11, -16.

Semi-finals: Hrachova/Vriesekoop b Alboiu/Badescu 8, 13; Bulatova/Elena Kovtun (URS) b Svensson/Barbro Wiktorsson (SWE) 12, 8.

Final: Bulatova/Kovtun b Hrachova/Vriesekoop -13, 16, 12.

Mixed doubles

Qualifying rounds

Andrew/Elliot b Frank Boute/Patricia de Groot (HOL) 13, 16.

First round: Cooke/Bellinger lost Vasile Florea/Otilia Badescu (ROM) -18, -18; Douglas/Gordon b Konert Fejer/Maria Alboiu (ROM) 15, 12; Andrew/Elliot lost Zolt Kriston/Batorfi (HUN) -10, -11.

Second round: Preat/Grundy lost Miller/Monika Frey (SUI) -17, -17; Douglas/Gordon b Jorgen Rebel/Wenzel (FRG) 15, 15.

Third round: Douglas/Gordon b Miroslav Cecava/Daniela Davidkova (TCH) 11, 13.

Quarter-finals: Douglas/Gordon lost Milan Orlovski/Alena Safora -14, -16.

Semi-finals: Pansky/Hrachova b Surbek/Batinic 14, 19; Lupulescu/Gordana Perkucin (YUG) b Orlovski/Safarova (TCH) 18, 15.

Final: Pansky/Hrachova b Lupulescu/Perkucin 18, 9.

European Championships

Des was not alone. Erik Lindh, victor in 5 games over young Carl Prean (who led 11-7 in the 5th) was similarly disadvantaged. It is not a European problem. The same thing happens here. Time for officials to get their act together.

Waldner

Europe's Player of the Year went earlier. Nobody can do it all the time. It seems almost impossible to win the Top 12 and this title in the same year.

England's other hero

It was a triumph for England's captain Don Parker, who brought the players to the table fit to play for their lives after two very good training camps. When they appointed him, the ETTA did something right for once.

I was - some years ago, in junior days - among his critics. I am very glad I was wrong. Don is now one of the top team managers in the world. For a list of England achievements this season, see another space.

Time for a Supremo

The time has come to give Don full powers exactly as enjoyed by an American Football coach or England's soccer team manager Bobby Robson, because this is the only way to run a team in the 20th Century.

It is not a task remotely suited to the committee environment. In Prague we may have been spared the consequences of such ineffi-

ciency, because the teams, in the main essentials, picked themselves. There never was any need for five people to travel the country at some expense as a prelude to selection debates. Let us now do things in the rational and modern manner.

I have no doubt that Don would continue to seek advice when he feels he needs it, but the final responsibility must be his and he must stand and fall by his own achievements and, if they continue on this level, he must be recognised and rewarded.

With honour and dignity

The proposal is not new. It draws on the experience of other sports and more on what was advocated by Ron Crayden, one of England's best captains, who, when Chairman of Selectors in effect offered to make himself redundant, because he favoured the principle of one team manager selector adopted by so many successful sports.

Let's do it. There is plenty of work for the members of the selection committee in other fields. Today they can depart with dignity and honour. There will never be a better opportunity to accept this historical inevitability.

I hope my proposal will be regarded as completely non-controversial as a step forward, not as a slap in the face for selectors past and present, who should see this is an opportunity for greater service to the sport.

Joy milks the Irish

Joy for Joy Grundy, the Lancashire Lass, is an understatement after her ravaging of the Wedgie Irish Open in Belfast in February writes Alan Strong. A hat-trick of titles in the individuals, after a gold in the team event, saw the World No 39 complete an undefeated run in the Milk Marketing Board for Northern Ireland sponsored event which attracted seven nations.

English domination of the female honours was in no way repeated in the mens encounters, with a dynamic young French side taking the Maysfield Leisure Centre mens team trophy, and an even more spectacular Jean-Michel Saive, 16, from Belgium taking the Wedgie singles title.

Grundy survived a tense three-gamer against the diminutive Patricia de Groot (HOL) to take the Loughside Recreation Centre womens team trophy after de Groot had levelled the final with a 2-1 victory over Fiona Elliot (ENG). Grundy and Elliot, under npc David Fairholm, had easily eliminated Ireland B (3-0) and Belgium (3-0) before the 3-1 win over the Netherlands.

Elliot and Grundy accounted for the attractive French pair Emmanuella Coubat and Isabelle Delepine in the womens semis, with Grundy using her left-handed guile and power tooust the Wolverhampton girl in the final. The English pair took the womens doubles and fought out an all English mixed final for John Souter to join Grundy on her fourth trip to the winners rostrum.

In contrast Saive's progress through the Wedgie Cheese Irish Open was less consistent. He allowed his spectacular returns to rule his head in the mens team final such that Didier Mommessin had to win the all important rubber to give the French a 3-2 victory over Belgium.

The young Saive, under criticism from Belgian coach Milan Stencil, left his opposition in no doubt of his will to take the mens title.

He stormed past title holder Nigel Tyler (WAL) in the quarters, and added to the dismay of John Souter in the semis (Souter and Nicky Mason had failed for England in the team event, losing to France 3-1).

Meanwhile, Irish eyes were smiling for their own German-

based Colum Slevin had taken out Mason in the quarters and Dutchman Frank Boule in the semis.

In a thrilling final, Saive ended Slevin's run with an array of Secretin-like lobs and Klampar-like smashes. Saive's glory was complete when he partnered Danny Christophe to the mens doubles title with a win over surprise finalists McIlroy/Wright (SCO).

The Wedgie Irish Open is well and truly back on the table tennis circuit, with fine organisation and a galaxy of satisfied international stars.

WOMENS TEAM

Quarter Final

ENG 3 IRL B 0 (Fiona Elliot b Nora McEvoy 12, 17; Joy Grundy b Ellen McManus 15, 18; Elliot/Grundy b McEvoy/McManus 11,13.); BEL 3 SCO 0; FRA 3 WAL 1; HOL 3 IRL A 0.

Semi-finals

ENG 3 BEL 0 (Grundy b Nathalie Higue 14, 6; Elliot b S. Thirion -15, 14, 19; Grundy/Elliot b Higue/Thirion 19, 17); HOL 3 FRA 1.

3rd/4th play-off

FRA 3 BEL 1

Final

ENG 3 HOL 1 (Grundy b E. Noor 18, -13, 9; Elliot lost Patrice de Groot -12, 17, -16; Grundy/Elliot b Noor/De Groot 20, 18; Grundy b de Groot -19, 18, 17).

MENS TEAM

Quarter final

ENG 3 HOL 1 (John Souter b Frank Boule 19, 25; Nicky Mason b B Van Haren 16, -19, 10; Souter/Mason lost Boule/Van Haren -18, -16; N Mason b Boule 14, 17.) BEL 3 SCO 0; WAL 3 IRL B 0; FRA 3 IRL A 0.

Semi-final

FRA 3 ENG 1 (Olivier Marmurek b Souter 18, -13, 20; Didier Mommessin b Mason 10, 12; Marmurek/Mommessin lost Souter/Mason -15, -15; D Mommessin b Souter -14, 16, 21); BEL 3 WAL 1.

3rd/4th play-off

ENG 3 WAL 0 (Souter b Nigel Tyler 14, -16, 13; Mason b Alan Griffiths 19, -20, 9; Souter/Mason b Tyler/Griffiths 19, -20, 9).

Final

FRA 3 BEL 2

Mens singles

Semi-finals

Saive b J Souter 15, 14; Slevin b F Boule -19, 15, 17.

Final

Saive b Slevin 9, 19.

Womens singles

Final

Grundy b Elliot 17, 17.

Mens doubles

Final

Saive/D Christophe b Darren McIlroy/David Wright (SCO) 19, -17, 12.

Womens doubles

Final

Grundy/Elliott b Higue/S Thirion (FRA) 15, 14.

Mixed doubles

Final

Grundy/Souter b Elliot/Mason 18, 19.



Jean-Michel Saive (Belgium) spectacular winner of the Wedgie Irish Open Men's title. (Photo - courtesy of Belfast Telegraph Newspapers Ltd).

Beneficial Trust English Junior Open

Second success for Stokes

Fiona Brown

English Junior No 1, Jimmy Stokes, earned his second national title of the season and his second successive Beneficial Trust Junior Grand Prix title with victory in the boys singles of the 1986 Beneficial English Junior Open Championships at the Mountbatten Centre, Portsmouth on Sunday 11th May.

Although hopes of an English success in the ten nation team events, held on Saturday, had been high, it was a story of 'nearly but not quite'.

England's boys team of Jimmy Stokes and Bradley Billington edged into the semi-final with a 3-2 victory over the French second team of Charles Bourget and Nicholas Chatelan but a 2-0 semi-final deficit against Federal Germany soon dampened their aspirations. Success in the doubles kept English hopes alive but the deceptively casual approach of the quiet German No 1, Rudiger Klein, proved totally effective as he swept back to take the last two games against Jimmy Stokes to ensure a 3-1 victory.

The Germans went on to win the International Club Trophy in an entertaining final against the Netherlands; despite the latter's 3-0 semi final defeat of the No 1 seeds, France.

In the final, Dutch No 1 Frank Boute, who had earlier been elevated to the No 1 seeding in the boys singles event when Belgian Jean-Michel Saive failed to appear, made a spectacular recovery to claim the opening set from the astonished German, Peter Auwarter.

Leading 19-11 in the final game Auwarter was left standing as Boute smashed eleven consecutive winners to scrape home 21-19. For the Netherlands this marked their solitary final success as Rudiger Klein took control of the German challenge.



Stokes, a man for all seasons?

A narrow victory over Bart van Haren was followed by deft German teamwork in a two game doubles victory. Klein concluded the proceedings with a businesslike demolition of the demoralised Boute who could not repeat his Houdini routine.

In the girls team event England had two teams in the semi finals but neither could offer any effective resistance to their continental adversaries. England's first team of Andrea Holt and Claire Potts lost out 3-0 to the Netherlands, whilst our second team of Juliet Houghton and Debbie Soothill made their exit at the hands of Federal Germany.

In the final the Netherlands team of Patricia de Groot and Gerdie Keen were in a class of their own as they advanced to a 3-0 victory without the loss of a single game.

In Sunday's boys singles Stokes benefitted from the luck of a draw which brought Boute and Klein together in a fierce semi-final battle whilst he faced the promising but less experienced Dutch cadet, Bart Van Haren.

Van Haren had earlier despatched Federal Germany's Peter Auwarter with a demonstration of the natural flowing movements and excellent anticipation which led England's Chairman of Selectors, Peter Charters, to prophesise

a bright table tennis future for him. But Stokes, with the final in his sights swept the young Dutchman aside in convincing fashion.

By the time Stokes came to the table to meet Boute in the ultimate final of the day he could have been deemed to hold a double advantage. While Stokes, playing with Israel's Tal Mitrani in the boys doubles and England teammate Juliet Houghton in the mixed doubles, had exited from both events in the early stages Boute had exerted himself to reach both finals only to suffer the psychological damage of defeat on each occasion.

Against Stokes he raced to a 21-13 win in the first game - tak-

performance of England's young players can only be described as mediocre, in view of the standard of competition which lacked any Asian interest or that of most of the stronger European nations.

Although it was Federal Germany who boasted the biggest trophy cache, with three titles, Holland certainly deserve special mention for having provided a finalist in all seven events. The unlucky Boute played in four finals but ended the weekend without a single winners trophy.

His teammate Patricia De Groot enjoyed somewhat greater success in her four final appearances. Having taken the girls team title with Gerdie Keen she proceeded to justify her European



Frank Boute (HOL), four finals but no trophy.

All photos Stephen Line (0273) 453867

ing full advantage of his massive reach and power — but thankfully for Stokes and the eager English supporters, Boute's accuracy deserted him in the second game and the score levelled with a 21-15 Stokes victory.

The final game started with a point for point challenge but Stokes pulled away after the change of ends. As he stood poised to capture the title the crowd held its breath, half expecting a repeat of Boute's magnificent recovery against Auwarter - he could not do it and Stokes celebrated yet another magnificent victory in what has been his most successful season to date.

Despite this victory the overall

junior ranking by adding the girls singles crown and looked to be well on her way to triumph in the girls doubles before the aggravation of an old injury to her left leg which forced the Dutch girls to concede to Belgian rivals Elke and Els Billen.



Patricia de Groot



Beneficial winners Jimmy Stokes and Andrea Holt. Their prize includes a training scholarship in Duisberg

European League

Bulgaria on top

Bulgarian No. 1's Mariano Loukov and Daniela Guerguelcheva, both unbeaten during the 1985/86 European League season, have led their team into the Premier Division. The Bulgarian team completed the season with an impressive 100% record which included a 4-3 victory over England at Mansfield in November 1985.

Although England went on to complete the season with four consecutive wins their second place finish means that they must fight the promotion battle once again in 1986/87 when their most serious rivals for the coveted Premier Division place are expected to be newly relegated Federal Germany.



The German squad likely to threaten England's supremacy in 1986/87. Top: Ralph Wosik, George Bohm; centre: Anke Schreiber; below: Olga Nemes



Super Division

Final Table		P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Poland		7	7	0	31	18	7
Czechoslovakia		7	6	1	35	14	6
Sweden		7	5	2	32	17	5
Hungary		7	3	4	27	22	3
France		7	3	4	17	32	3
Yugoslavia		7	2	4	22	27	2
Netherlands		7	1	6	14	35	1
Federal Germany		7	1	6	18	31	1

Poland: Champions 1985/86

Federal Germany: Relegated to First Division

First Division

1st Round (21.9.85)						
Bulgaria	6	Norway				1
England	5	Austria				2
Finland	4	Denmark				3
Italy	4	Belgium				3
2nd Round (16.10.85)						
Austria	5	Denmark				2
Belgium	1	Bulgaria				6
Finland	4	Italy				3
Norway	0	England				7
3rd Round (23.11.85)						
Austria	3	Finland				4
Denmark	5	Italy				2
England	3	Bulgaria				4
Norway	5	Belgium				2
4th Round (14.12.85)						
Belgium	2	Austria				5
Bulgaria	7	Italy				0
Denmark	7	Norway				0
Finland	3	England				4
5th Round (18.1.86)						
Belgium	3	Finland				4
Bulgaria	5	Austria				2
England	7	Denmark				0
Italy	5	Norway				2
6th Round (22.2.86)						
Belgium	3	England				4
Denmark	2	Bulgaria				5
Italy	3	Austria				4
Norway	2	Finland				5
7th Round (15.3.86)						
Austria	7	Norway				0
Denmark	7	Belgium				0
Finland	2	Bulgaria				5
Italy	3	England				4

Final Table

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Bulgaria	7	7	0	38	11	7
ENGLAND	7	6	1	34	15	6
Austria	7	4	3	28	11	4
Denmark	7	4	3	28	11	4
Finland	7	4	3	28	11	4
Italy	7	2	5	20	29	2
Norway	7	1	6	10	39	1
Belgium	7	0	7	14	35	0

Bulgaria: Promoted to Super Division

Belgium: Relegated to Division Two

Division Two (Group A)

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Switzerland	3	3	0	13	8	3
Spain	3	2	1	12	9	2
Luxembourg	3	1	2	10	11	1
Greece	3	0	3	7	14	0

Division Two (Group B)

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Turkey	3	3	0	17	4	3
Ireland	3	2	1	11	10	2
Wales	3	1	2	9	12	1
Scotland	3	0	3	5	16	0

Division Two: Turkey: Promoted to First Division after beating Switzerland 5-2 at home and again 4-3 away.

Greece: Relegated to Third Division after losing 3-4 to Scotland.

Division Three

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Guernsey	5	5	0	26	9	5
Jersey	5	4	1	27	8	4
Iceland	5	2	3	18	17	2
Isle of Man	5	2	3	14	21	2
Malta	5	2	3	19	16	2
San Marino	5	0	5	1	34	0

Guernsey: Promoted to Division Two

Magazine Concern

Tom Blunn, ETTA Chairman



It would be useless not to acknowledge that many subscribers are very dissatisfied with the arrangements for the magazine this season.

Whilst the question of content is not an important issue and in any event is a matter of opinion, delays in publication are a matter of great concern, along with the reduction in reading content.

During the previous nineteen years of George Yates' editorship the magazine had been financially viable except in the last year 1984/85 when financial stability disappeared and the magazine lost £6,083. In fact, the last issue before the change contained fifty-six pages and alone lost £1,500.

Drastic action was required, particularly as a further loss of advertising was projected. The Management Committee therefore decided to increase the subscription from 60p to 80p per issue for this season and to restrict the content to thirty-six or, at the most, forty pages, including cover.

For a long time the magazine relied heavily upon the goodwill of first Wallace's and then Sluggs printers. It meant that when the last printers were invited to submit a new quotation the estimated cost of production had risen considerably for this season and much was reliant upon the new editor to reduce costs to a minimum by typesetting material personally.

Although the higher subscription rate had brought in an additional £3,000, each issue was losing money and a potential loss even higher than in the previous season was possible.

The delays in publication were causing complaints but the main problem was still a financial one and once again drastic action was necessary. With the agreement of the editor and the treasurer, I therefore negotiated advantageous terms with a new printer - their first issue being the March/April issue. The saving on production costs in a full year will be significant.

Meanwhile, the question of advertising was still a matter of great concern and in need of attention. In 1984/85 the total revenue from advertising was only £9,000 and, even under the new conditions, it was going to be necessary to raise at least £15,000 to break even.

I approached our friends in the trade who have come to our rescue on so many occasions in the past. The first agreement was to sell the front cover for a full eight issues as an advertisement.

The next step was to secure regular advertisements for every issue rather than to wait and see what turned up each month. This meant coming to arrangements for special prices and to date the position is looking good.

I am quite confident that the revenue from advertisements for the eight issues commencing October 1986 will reach the target of £15,000.

These measures will allow the magazine to break even and eliminate the large losses that would otherwise have accrued on an annual basis but the extra advertising will have to take up some of the reading matter.

I expect the magazine next season to be thirty-six or forty pages - of which advertising will take up approximately one third, leaving about 27 pages for reading content.

If finances permit the Management Committee to agree to an annual investment in the magazine of £1/2,000 per annum, then additional pages for reading matter will be available.

There is little alternative to these proposals if the magazine is to continue in its present form. I am not conducting an inquest or putting the blame onto anyone. Circumstances changed for the worse and action was needed to put the matter right.

On publication delays the new editor, Rob Oldfield, has had a difficult job to do along with his other commitments and has fought a losing battle. Acknowledging those commitments he does not wish to continue beyond the current season and a new editor is being sought for next season - to commence with the October 1986 issue. Anyone interested should write to the ETTA office at 21, Claremont, HASTINGS.

Rob Oldfield deserves our thanks for offering to take on the job in the first place and I can sympathise with him in his disappointment at not being able to meet publication dates at the high level he sets himself. Reduction in reading content inevitably brings increased editorial effort.

I hope subscribers will understand the situation I have described and will put it behind them. With the new changes we can look forward to stability once more next season.

There is no point in calling for the old days ... costs and lead times have increased. We cannot put back the clock but hope to make the best of present circumstances.

A full report regarding the magazine finances and editorial problems was circulated to National Councillors in April. Copies of the document NCS59 may be obtained by members from the ETTA Office.

Officers re-elected

All the Officers were re-elected at the recent English Schools' Table Tennis Association Annual General Meeting.

ESTTA President Tom Matthews was elected as the Association's fourth Life Member with best wishes to him for a speedy recovery from a recent major operation.

Arrangements are well advanced for the annual Dunlop Schools International Championships (England v Ireland v Scotland) which are being staged at the Broughton Recreation Centre, Salford on July 5th and 6th. Almost 100 players will be taking part.

Douglas stays home

Nine times English national champion, Desmond Douglas has confirmed that he will be playing regularly in England during the foreseeable future and has renewed his contract to play for Steelstock Wolverhampton in the Schildkrot British League.

Des has also agreed to extend his endorsement contract with equipment manufacturers, Butterfly UK Ltd.

Butterfly produce a range of Des Douglas bats for the mass market priced between £15.99 and £24.99. Their lone rollaway table which Des endorses is the company's biggest selling table.

Ever thought of Sport awards?

The *Ever thought of Sport?* campaign was launched in 1985 to promote sport amongst the under 25s.

Now, the Sports Council have announced the Sport for All awards competition for schemes that have successfully boosted participation in the *Ever thought of Sport?* age group.

There will also be special awards for projects which have had the best response from young women, coupled with a photography award for the photograph that best depicts the theme 'Ever thought of Sport for Girls'.

The competition is open to any project that is providing sporting opportunities and encouragement for young people - so enter now. Tell us about your initiative and hard work and your scheme may receive the welcome boost of one of the many cash prizes!

Any organisation is eligible to enter for the competition which closes on 31st December, 1986.

Details from: Jackie Warrington at The Sports Council (Greater London and South East Region), P.O. Box 480, Crystal Palace National Sports Centre, Ledington Road, London SE19 2BQ. Tel: 01-778 8600.



Desmond Douglas promotes Butterfly equipment.

World Veteran Championships

The Golden Oldies

Reviewed by Mike Watts

The 3rd World Veterans table tennis championships were held in Rimini, Italy, from the 2nd to the 7th June 1986 a record entry of over 1100 players from 38 countries competed. 87 players went from England but, with standards improving all the time, the tally of medals for England was the lowest yet. However there were many sterling performances from the English players particularly Ron Etheridge (Kent) who fought so hard to hold onto his Over 60 mens singles title which he had won in both the previous championships. Peter D'Arcy pulled a calf muscle in the opening encounters of the over 50 mens doubles final and struggled on with Henry Buist before finally going down in a close third game.

This was the first championships that I have attended but the camaraderie from players of every country made it a visit never to be forgotten and already plans are being made for the 4th World's in Zagreb, Yugoslavia in 1988 - but that is another story.

What a pity that the organisation did not come up to the standard expected of a championships of this nature. On the first day we arrived - five days before the beginning of the World's - it took six of us nearly two hours to book in with the organisers and at 9.00 a.m. on the first morning of the championships there was a long queue of players most of whom had only arrived late the previous evening trying also to book in.

The writing on the individual draw sheets was appalling and Matt Sheader was scratched twice when on Friday morning he turned up at a table only to find that the writing was so bad he should have been at another table. Hardly any of the officials spoke

English which made communication almost impossible. Other complaints centred around refreshments - almost non-existent and a free shuttle bus service that never arrived when you wanted it and did arrive when you didn't want it. However, the organisers did manage to keep the tournament running reasonably smoothly on 60 tables and finals started to time on the last day.

Of the 38 countries present Sweden proved to be the most successful followed by Federal Germany and Japan.

English successes

Over 40 mens singles

Both Connie Warren (Sy) and new VET Roger Hampson (Ch) reached the last 32. Warren lost 14, -20, 19 to Valentin Lagehegermann from Luxembourg and Hampson -7, -8 to Austrian Anton Hold. Peter Hubner (FRG) winner at both the previous championships crashed -17, 10, -15 to the eventual winner Edo Vecko (YUG) in the semi final. Vecko went on to beat Eberhard Scholer (FRG) in the final.

Over 50 mens singles

Chaos! Matt Sheader (Li) scratched twice and reinstated twice, played then replayed with different players. Matt eventually reached the semi finals before losing to Arne Persson (SWE).

Henry Buist (K) reached the quarter finals before losing to Persson. The eventual winner being Ernst Gomolla (FRG).

Over 60 mens singles

Third time unlucky for Ron Etheridge (K). Beaten on expedite in the final by Yujiro Tsujita

(JAP) 14, -20, -19. Ron Bolton (Ng) also did well to reach the quarter final.

Over 70 mens singles

Whilst no English player excelled in the main event, Dick Satchell (S) reached the final of the consolation singles before losing to a very useful Japanese player.

Over 40 mens doubles

Also won by Yugoslavs. No English successes beyond the last 32. Biggest hopes Ralph Gunnion (Wa) and Connie Warren beaten in the 3rd round by Schreiber/Grasserbauer (AUS).

Over 50 mens doubles

Derek Schofield (Ch) and Matt Sheader were beaten in quarter finals. David Jones and Brian Halliday (Bk) also did well to reach the quarters before losing to Peter D'Arcy (Ch) and Henry Buist -18, 16, -15 who then beat another English pair in the semi finals Stan Battrick and Fred Lockwood (E) 16 and 15. In the final D'Arcy pulled a calf muscle early on and eventually they lost to Mellstrom and Larsson (SWE) -29, 18, -15.

Over 60 mens doubles

Ron Etheridge (second medal) partnered Les D'Arcy (Y) only to lose to Forsberg and Lanz 14, -12, -13 in the final.

Over 70 mens doubles

No success here for England. Event again won by Sweden.

Over 40 womens singles

Ex world womens doubles champion Marie Alexandru was untouchable but what a performance Gill Knightley (Bk) put up against her in the group before losing -26, -12. Gill went on to reach the last 16 and Doreen Schofield (Ch) went one better, reaching the quarter final.



Over 50 womens singles

Another ex World champion Kazuko Ito (JPN) won this title. The best English performance came from Mary Symes (Mi) who reached the quarters before losing to Ito.

Over 60 womens singles

This event was won by the Japanese. No England successes.

Over 70 womens singles

Phyllis Lauder (Ex) just failed to make it three medals when she went down at the quarter final stage.

Over 40 womens doubles

Alexandru with Tegner (SWE) won this event. Our main hopes Schofield and Connie Moran (Li) lost first time out.

Over 50 womens doubles

Pam Butcher and Joan Beadle (K) fought their way through to the quarter finals before losing. Ito/Omari (JPN) being the eventual winners.

Over 60 womens doubles

Dolly Harmer (Bu) and Margaret Jones (Ch) did well to qualify but lost in the first round.

Over 70 womens doubles

Phyllis Lauder was paired with Lillie Dahlberg (SWE) but lost in the quarter finals.

Over 40 womens doubles

Janet Hunt and Linda Reid (Wo) were delighted to win the Consolation Doubles in this event.

MEDALS

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1. Sweden	6	3	13	22
2. Federal Germany	2	7	7	16
3. Japan	6	1	7	14
4. England	—	3	2	5
5. Yugoslavia	2	—	—	2
6. Rumania	2	—	—	2
7. Poland	2	—	—	2
8. Austria	—	—	2	2
9. France	—	1	1	2
10. U.S.A.	—	1	—	1
11. Italy	—	1	—	1
12. Luxembourg	—	—	1	1
13. Belgium	—	—	1	1

Of the 1100 players competing the Federal Republic of Germany had 218 players in attendance, Sweden 216, England 87 and the host country Italy 93.



Maria Alexandru in her younger days.

National Leagues Finals

Results

Mens Singles

Over 40 Semi-finals

E. Vecko (YUG) b P. Hubner (FRG) - 17, 10, 15.

E. Scholer (FRG) b V. Langehegermann (LUX) - 20, 14, 19.

Final: E. Vecko (YUG) b E. Scholer (FRG) 9, 14.

Over 50: E. Gomolla (FRG) b A. Persson (SWE) 14, 12.

Over 60: Y. Tsujita (JAP) b R. Etheridge (ENG) - 14, 20, 19.

Over 70: O. Blomkuist (SWE) b P. Helzer (FRG) 6, 14.

Over 80: G. Heronymus (SWE) b G. Milden (SWE) - 18, 20, 19.

Mens Doubles

Over 40: Vecko/Nisavic (YUG) b Martin/Bergmann (FRG) 14, -18, 15.

Over 50: Mellstrom/Larsson (SWE) b Buist/D'Arcy (ENG) 20, -18, 15.

Over 60: Forsberg/Lanz (SWE) b Etheridge/D'Arcy (ENG) -14, 12, 13.

Over 70: Larsson/Blomkuist (SWE) b Eguchi/Ide (JPN) 14, 16.

Womens singles

Over 40 Semi-finals:

M. Alexandru (ROM) b L. Borg (SWE) 12, 14.

M. Trupkovic (FRG) b Y. Kanamura (JPN) 17, 15.

Final: M. Alexandru (ROM) b M. Trupkovic (FRG) 13, 11.

Over 50: K. Ito (JPN) b K. Skuratowicz (POL) 8, 17.

Over 60: K. Tasaka (JPN) b J. Delay (FRA) 15, 12.

Over 70: Y. Uchida (JPN) b F. Frauenkron (FRG) 18, 14.

Womens doubles

Over 40: Alexandra/Tegner (ROM/SWE) b Meyerblock/Kunstein (FRG) 18, 19.

Over 50: Omori/Ito (JPN) b Santifaller/Skuratowicz (ITA/POL) 10, 16.

Over 60: Takeda/Naksuka (JPN) b Neumann/Bihl (USA/FRG) -19, 16, 18.

Over 70: Frauendron/Sammer (FRG) b Engvall/Engstrom (SWE) 17, 17.

Quick fire finals

Reviewed by Mike Watts

A strong Willesden League team consisting of England internationals Alan Cooke (I thought he came from Chesterfield!) Skylet Andrew and Nicky Mason completely whitewashed Leicester 5-0 to claim the Wilmott Cup at the Mansfield Leisure Centre on Sunday 25th May 1986.

The Wilmott final lasted a little under one and a half hours with only Chris Rogers providing any real opposition from the Leicester camp. Chris went down -12, -19 to Mason and -17, -19 to Cooke.

In the womens Rose Bowl, Bradford, cheered on by a coachload of supporters, stormed to a similarly impressive 5-0 win over Newbury. Admittedly Newbury were weakened by the absence of Mandy Sainsbury but the combined strength of Melody Hill, Sally Shutt (nee Midgley) and Helen Shields made them worthy winners on the day. In Mandy's absence it was Newbury's Julie Norman who offered the strongest challenge.

Yorkshire enjoyed its second success of the day with the acquisition of the Carter Cup. The young squad of Chris Oldfield, Neil Simms and Mark Ward overcoming a spirited effort by Ipswich as they progressed to a

5-1 victory. The solitary Ipswich set came from Paul Gooding over Neil Simms.

Fixture Fiasco

For the first time in many seasons the Bromfield Trophy final was not contested. Hull, whose best players were away on holiday, elected to concede the title to the Bridgwater girls team.

Just in case any of you are about to book your summer holidays for 1987 you may like to know that the National Leagues finals will take place on SUNDAY 31st MAY 1987. Thankfully the sponsors, *Nottinghamshire County Council*, have not taken

exception to the above fiasco and will once again give their substantial support to the Championships which will return to Mansfield Leisure Centre.

Results

Wilmott Cup

Willessden 5 Leicester 0

Alan Cooke b David Gannon 9, 12; Skylet Andrew b Graeme Hall 13, 15; Nicky Mason b Chris Rogers 12, 19; Andrew b Gannon 11, 12; Cooke b Rogers 17, 19.

J M Rose Bowl

Bradford 5 Newbury 0

Helen Shields b Julie Norman 15, -16, 18; Melody Hill b Jackie Godwin 9, 13; Sally Shutt b Janet Parker 8, 16; Hill b Norman 18, -17, 10; Shields b Parker 19, 9.

Carter Cup

Sheffield 5 Ipswich 1

Neil Simms b Richard Hutchinson 16, 16; Mark Ward b Paul Gooding 14, -17, 18; Chris Oldfield b Wayne Shaw 13, 16; Simms b Gooding -19, -18; Oldfield b Hutchinson 15, 19; Ward b Shaw 13, 10.



Alan Cooke.

Photo: Alan Cuzzi (0279) 39480

O'Driscoll triumphs in La Roche-Sur-Yon

Paul Day

Michael O'Driscoll was the star of the England Team which won the cadet boys singles in the French Junior Open held in the ice rink at La Roche-Sur-Yon, 30th May/1st June 1986.

This was Michael's first international tournament win and was achieved in fine style. He won all seven of his matches, defeating the French No. 1 Tran, the German No. 1 Hong, and Philip Saive of Belgium in the final, all two straight. The semi-final win over Hong - a Chinese resident in Germany who is coached by Liang Ke Liang and whose mannerisms and style resemble a Chinese player - was particularly impressive. The final itself was quite close but Michael always looked the better player and edged home 21-18, 22-20.

The other three England players - Matthew Syed, Debbie

Soothill and Claire Potts - all performed creditably, with Matthew reaching the quarter final of the boys singles. The two girls achieved a good win over Yugoslavia in the team event and reached the semi-final of the doubles.

Czechoslovakia's Josef Braun and Renata Kasalova triumphed in the junior singles but both had some very hard matches throughout the tournament. The French hope, Jean Phillippe Gattien, an exceptional player, was defeated by Josef Vimi, the Czech No 5, who then went on to defeat Matthew Syed in a close but hard fought quarter final. The standard of the boys from Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Germany, France and Russia was exceptional and, I believe, showed the rate of improvement that will be necessary to maintain a strong

challenge in the mens game in a few years.

The girls events were dominated by the Czechs Kasalova and Davidova although challenged by Katja Nolten and Ilka Bohning of Germany and Timina and Komrachova of Russia.

Although Hungary did not have their best junior girls competing in this tournament, they unveiled another brilliant player in the 13 year old girl, Wirth. She was by far the best cadet and her service and topspin technique were the most advanced I have ever seen from a girl so young. I believe she will reach the standards set by Ottilia Badescu and Csilla Batorfi and continue the eastern European domination of junior girls table tennis.

There is no doubt that Hungary have shown tremendous improvement in their female players and they have achieved this by concentrating even more time on developing services. The Hungarian girls are now practis-

ing services only for up to one hour every day and some of their girls have developed exceptional services. Since the general standard of serving is relatively poor in the European womens game, this development has had a tremendous effect on their performances and resulted in them becoming the No 1 team in Europe.

We travelled to La Roche-Sur-Yon, which is 50 miles south of Nantes by ferry and car. We arrived without problems but the car would not start on Saturday evening and, on top of this, we lost the car keys, there were several worried English people! However an announcement over the referee's microphone produced our keys and a kind Frenchman recharged our car battery - Vive L'entente cordiale!

There were no further mishaps and all the players benefitted from this enjoyable trip.

Junior Top 12

Bradley and Andrea — First among equals

By Mike Watts

The Junior and Cadet Top 12 ranking tournament took place in the majestic surroundings of the National Sports Centre at Lilleshall over the weekend of 5th/6th April 1986.

This was the third year the tournament has been held - twice before in Shotley - and on each occasion the standard of play has been good. Tension, nerves and tiredness all played a part in the endeavours of each of the contestants but all gave of their very best and were a credit to themselves, their parents and coaches and to the sport in general.

From the original invitations Jimmy Stokes (Bk) withdrew from the junior boys to go to the European Championships in Prague and his replacement was Matthew Connell (Y). On the day before the tournament Andrew Syed (Bk) withdrew through injury but at that late stage it was not possible to replace him.

In the junior girls Louise Davies (Wo) and Tanya Holland (E) withdrew and were replaced by Julie Billington (Dy) and Nicola McGrath (La). And with the top two cadet boys and girls opting to play in the junior events Andrew Eden (La), Graham Cook (Y), Tina Sadler (So) and Alison Ledwitch (Wa) happily replaced them.



The junior boys title slipped away from Matthew Syed.

DAY ONE

Junior boys

Matthew Syed headed the boys after the first day being untroubled in winning all his seven games for an impressive 14-0 games average. Adrian Dixon (St) came next with a single defeat to Shaun Gibson (La), and he was closely followed by Bradley Billington (Dy) with five wins from six matches; his only loss being Chris Oldfield (Y).

Junior girls

Julie Billington (Dy) caused the first big shock beating top seed Andrea Holt (La) 21-19, 21-16 in session two but at the end of the day there was a four-way tie with Claire Potts (Ch), Debbie Soothill (La), Juliet Houghton (K) and Holt all level on six wins from seven games. Kerry Hall (Dy) and Billington were close behind with five wins.

Cadet boys

No real surprises on the first day with the three top seeds ahead. Leigh Jeffries (Wa), Damian Holland (E) and Jonathan Taylor (Ch) all unbeaten with seven straight wins with Jeffries only dropping three single games and Taylor two.



Andrea Holt.

Cadet girls

Right from the beginning it was obvious there would only be one winner. Debbie Toole (Y) outplayed all her opponents for seven straight wins with a 14-0 games tally and only 158 points conceded. Anne Pashley (Cv) was the best of the remainder with five wins and provided Toole with her best match before going down 21-18, 21-17.

DAY 2

Junior boys

Syed started day two in the same fashion winning two straight but then ran into trouble losing to Billington 22-20, 21-18 and then finally Dixon 21-14, 9-21, 21-19 to finish third. The category therefore rested on the confrontation between Billington and Dixon which Billington won 22-20, 21-18 to round off a great weekend for the Derbyshire lad. Dixon took the silver medal with Syed and Gibson the two bronze medalists.

Junior girls

The morning session saw Soothill and Holt advancing their claims with two wins each but Potts lost both, first to Hall 22-20, 21-17 then to Soothill 11-21, 21-17, 21-14. While Billington and Hall both remained close, Houghton lost ground after losing to Holt but with two sessions left any of six girls could take the title.

In the afternoon Holt made certain of the top slot when beating Soothill 21-14, 21-14 and rounded this off with a 21-10, 15-21, 22-20 win over Potts.

Soothill finished second with nine wins ahead of Julia Houghton; the second place being decided by virtue of a 21-13, 19-21, 21-11 win by Soothill over Houghton in the sixth session on Saturday night.

European League ENGLAND v TURKEY

Saturday 27th Sept., 1986
at

Mary Webb Comprehensive
School, Pontesbury,
nr. Shrewsbury, Shropshire
commencing at 7.00 p.m.

Tickets: £2.50 available from
JOHN MORRIS 0743 731340 (h)
0743 790303 (b)

Cadet boys

The tension continued to mount as Jeffries, Holland and Taylor all produced their eighth win in the first morning session but Taylor was the first to go, beaten by Holland 21-14, 22-20 in the next match. However Taylor immediately struck back after lunch downing Jeffries 21-17, 15-21, 21-14 and Holland followed this up beating Jeffries 21-11, 22-20 to clinch the top spot.

Taylor took the silver with ten wins whilst Jeffries had to content himself with a bronze on nine wins. Fourth place went to Neil Bevan (Co) with six wins just getting the better of Neil Simms (Y) also with six wins.

Some consolation for last place Graham Cook (Y) who up to the very last session had lost all ten sets with a 3-20 games average but always smiling. In the last session, to his great delight, he finally broke the ice with a 23-21, 17-21, 21-14 win against Mark Bawden (Co).

Cadet girls

No doubt about the winner here; Toole continuing in her winning sequence with four more wins and a final tally of eleven straight wins and a 22-0 games average. A truly remarkable performance.

However the remaining positions were entirely different and with two sessions to go any of eight players could have clinched the seven places. Needless to say that the final results were too close for comfort with the calculator needed to sort out seventh and eighth places - the difference being 0.005.

For the record Pashley maintained her consistency with eight wins with Ellen Meddings (Y) third on seven wins and Caroline Buckley (Bd) fourth also on seven wins. Four players tied for fifth place on six wins.

Junior Top 12

RESULTS

Junior boys		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	SYED	—	1-2	0-2	—	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0
2	DIXON	2-1	—	1-2	—	2-0	1-2	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-1	2-0	2-0
3	BILLINGTON	2-0	2-1	—	—	2-1	2-0	1-2	2-1	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0
4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	O'DRISCOLL	0-2	0-2	1-2	—	—	1-2	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-1	2-0	2-0
6	GIBSON	0-2	2-1	0-2	—	2-1	—	2-0	1-2	2-1	2-1	2-0	2-0
7	OLDFIELD	0-2	0-2	2-1	—	0-2	0-2	—	2-0	2-0	0-2	2-0	2-0
8	AMOS	0-2	0-2	1-2	—	0-2	2-1	0-2	—	2-1	2-0	2-0	2-0
9	GOODE	0-2	0-2	0-2	—	0-2	1-2	0-2	1-2	—	2-1	2-0	0-2
10	CARSE	0-2	1-2	0-2	—	0-2	1-2	2-0	0-2	1-2	—	2-0	2-0
11	MORRIS	0-2	0-2	0-2	—	1-2	0-2	0-2	0-2	0-2	—	0-2	—
12	CONNELL	0-2	0-2	0-2	—	0-2	0-2	0-2	0-2	2-0	0-2	2-0	—

Junior girls		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	HOLT	—	2-1	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-1	2-0	2-0	0-2	2-0
2	POTTS	1-2	—	1-2	0-2	1-2	2-1	2-1	2-1	2-0	2-1	2-1	2-0
3	SOOTHILL	0-2	2-1	—	0-2	2-1	2-0	2-1	2-0	2-0	2-1	2-0	2-0
4	HALL	0-2	2-0	2-0	—	1-2	2-0	2-0	1-2	2-1	2-0	2-1	2-1
5	HOUGHTON	0-2	2-1	1-2	2-1	—	2-1	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-1	2-0
6	CAREY	0-2	1-2	0-2	0-2	1-2	—	2-1	2-1	2-1	2-1	1-2	2-1
7	HAYDON	0-2	1-2	1-2	0-2	0-2	1-2	—	2-0	2-0	2-1	2-0	2-0
8	LOWER	1-2	1-2	0-2	2-1	0-2	1-2	0-2	—	2-0	0-2	0-2	2-1
9	BRAY	0-2	0-2	0-2	1-2	0-2	1-2	0-2	0-2	—	1-2	1-2	2-1
10	PERROTT	0-2	1-2	1-2	0-2	0-2	1-2	1-2	2-0	2-1	—	1-2	2-0
11	BILLINGTON	2-0	1-2	0-2	1-2	1-2	2-1	0-2	2-0	2-1	2-1	—	2-0
12	MCGRATH	0-2	0-2	0-2	1-2	0-2	1-2	0-2	1-2	0-2	0-2	—	—

Cadet boys		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	JEFFRIES	—	0-2	1-2	2-1	2-1	2-1	2-0	2-0	2-1	2-0	2-0	2-0
2	HOLLAND	2-0	—	2-0	2-1	2-1	2-1	2-0	2-1	2-1	2-0	2-0	2-0
3	TAYLOR	2-1	0-2	—	2-0	2-1	2-0	2-0	2-1	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-1
4	KNIGHTS	1-2	1-2	0-2	—	0-2	2-0	2-0	1-2	1-2	2-0	0-2	2-0
5	SIMMS	1-2	1-2	1-2	2-0	—	2-0	0-2	1-2	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0
6	RYDER	1-2	1-2	0-2	0-2	0-2	—	2-0	2-1	2-0	1-2	2-0	2-0
7	BAWDEN	0-2	0-2	0-2	0-2	2-0	0-2	—	1-2	2-0	0-2	0-2	1-2
8	BEVAN	0-2	1-2	1-2	2-1	2-1	1-2	2-1	—	1-2	2-1	2-1	2-0
9	MILEHAM	1-2	1-2	0-2	2-1	0-2	0-2	0-2	2-1	—	1-2	0-2	2-1
10	CONNOLLY	0-2	0-2	0-2	0-2	0-2	2-1	2-0	1-2	2-1	—	0-2	2-0
11	EDEN	0-2	0-2	0-2	2-0	0-2	0-2	2-0	1-2	2-0	2-0	—	2-1
12	COOK	0-2	0-2	1-2	0-2	0-2	0-2	2-1	0-2	1-2	0-2	1-2	—

Cadet girls		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	TOOLE	—	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0
2	FORSTER	0-2	—	0-2	0-2	2-0	2-0	1-2	2-1	0-2	2-1	2-0	2-0
3	MEDDINGS	0-2	2-0	—	2-0	0-2	2-1	0-2	2-0	1-2	2-0	2-1	2-0
4	BUCKLEY	0-2	2-0	0-2	—	2-1	2-0	0-2	0-2	2-0	2-1	2-0	2-0
5	ROBERTS	0-2	0-2	2-0	1-2	—	2-0	2-1	0-2	2-0	1-2	2-0	2-0
6	KEIGHLEY	0-2	0-2	1-2	0-2	0-2	—	0-2	1-2	0-2	0-2	1-2	1-2
7	PASHLEY	0-2	2-1	2-0	2-0	1-2	2-0	—	2-0	0-2	2-0	2-1	2-0
8	POTTS	0-2	1-2	0-2	2-0	2-0	2-1	0-2	—	2-0	0-2	2-1	2-0
9	PENNELLY	0-2	2-0	2-1	0-2	0-2	2-0	2-0	0-2	—	0-2	2-0	2-0
10	LAWTON	0-2	1-2	0-2	1-2	2-1	2-0	0-2	2-0	2-0	—	0-2	2-0
11	SADLER	0-2	0-2	1-2	0-2	0-2	2-1	1-2	1-2	0-2	2-0	—	2-0
12	LEDWITCH	0-2	0-2	0-2	0-2	0-2	2-1	0-2	0-2	0-2	0-2	0-2	—



L to R
Chris Oldfield
Kerry Hall
Claire Potts

FINAL POSITIONS

Junior boys		P	W	L	F	A
1.	Bradley Billington (Dy)	10	9	1	19	5
2.	Adrian Dixon (St)	10	8	2	18	6
3.	Matthew Syed (Bk)	10	8	2	17	4
4.	Shaun Gibson (La)	10	7	3	15	10
5.	Michael O'Driscoll (Y)	10	6	5	14	9
6.	Chris Oldfield (Y)	10	5	6	11	11
7.	Paul Amos (K)	10	5	6	10	12
8.	David Carse (La)	10	3	7	9	14
9.	Matthew Connell (Y)	10	2	8	4	16
10.	Jonathan Goode (Mi)	10	2	8	6	17
11.	David Morris (Sp)	10	0	10	1	20

Junior girls		P	W	L	F	A
1.	Andrea Holt (La)	11	10	1	20	4
2.	Debbie Soothill (La)	11	9	2	18	8
3.	Juliet Houghton (K)	11	9	2	19	8
4.	Kerry Hall (Dy)	11	8	3	18	9
5.	Claire Potts (Ch)	11	7	4	17	13
6.	Julie Billington (Dy)	11	6	5	15	13
7.	Melonie Carey (So)	11	5	6	13	17
8.	Lisa Haydon (E)	11	5	6	13	13
9.	Helen Perrott (Av)	11	3	8	11	17
10.	Helen Lower (St)	11	3	8	9	18
11.	Ruth Bray (Y)	11	1	10	6	21
12.	Nicola McGrath (La)	11	0	11	4	22

Cadet boys		P	W	L	F	A
1.	Damian Holland (E)	11	11	0	22	5
2.	Jonathan Taylor (Ch)	11	10	1	20	6
3.	Lee Jeffries (Wa)	11	9	2	19	8
4.	Neil Bevan (Co)	11	6	5	16	15
5.	Neil Simms (Y)	11	6	5	16	10
6.	Nicholas Ryder (Y)	11	5	6	13	13
7.	Andrew Eden (La)	11	5	6	11	13
8.	Gary Knights (St)	11	4	7	12	14
9.	Graeme Connolly (Sy)	11	4	7	9	16
10.	Brian Mileham (K)	11	3	8	9	19
11.	Mark Bawden (Co)	11	2	9	6	18
12.	Graham Cook (Y)	11	1	10	5	21

Cadet girls		P	W	L	F	A
1.	Debbie Toole (Y)	11	11	0	22	0
2.	Anne Pashley (Cv)	11	8	3	17	8
3.	Ellen Meddings (Y)	11	7	4	15	10
4.	Caroline Buckley (Bd)	11	7	4	14	10
5.	Helen Potts (Ch)	11	6	5	13	12
6.	Julie Forster (Le)	11	6	5	13	12
7.	Sarah Pengelly (Dv)	11	6	5	12	11
8.	Hoanne Roberts (Y)	11	6	5	14	11
9.	Susanne Lawton (C)	11	5	6	12	13
10.	Tina Sadler (So)	11	3	8	9	17
11.	Alison Ledwitch (Wa)	11	1	10	2	21
12.	Joanne Keighley (Y)	11	0	11	4	22

Stokes flies high at Farnborough

The Stiga South Of England 3-Star championships held at Farnborough over the weekend of 15th/16th March produced some sensational upsets writes *Michael Green*.

The mens singles sponsored by Lambeth Building Society witnessed seed after seed fall to unrated opponents. Fifth seed Graham Sandley (Mi) lost in the first round to New Zealander Malcolm Temperley. Dave Wells (Mi) seeded at three could not overcome former European Champion John Hilton and also went out at the first hurdle.

But the most sensational performance of the season let alone of the tournament was to come from the unseeded Berkshire youngster Jimmy Stokes. This Boris Becker of the table tennis world cruised past Phil Bradbury (Bu) the sixth seed and Adrian Moore (Sx) seeded at sixteen on his way to the quarter-final. There, he amazingly tore the second seed John Souter (Mi) apart winning 21-7, 21-16.

His semi-final opponent Horatio Pinteá from Canada seeded at seven proved a tougher nut to crack. The Canadian matched Stokes point for point until well into the third game but the determined Stokes held his nerves together triumphing 21-16.

The other half of the draw was much less complicated and seeds one and four reached the semi-final. Top seed David Hannah Scottish and Surrey No 1 was much too good for Andrew Syed here.

Could an unseeded player win a major 3-Star title... the final was absolutely gripping. Stokes narrowly took the first game. Hannah narrowly the second. The deciding game could not have been closer.

Hannah saved two match points having trailed 20-18. He himself had two match points before trailing 22-23. Then Hannah had some luck. Trying a ferocious forehand loop the ball hit his fingers and went in entirely the opposite direction wrong footing Stokes completely.

Hannah saluted the heavens. But Stokes would not be put off and with some breathtaking play he took the next two points and the South of England singles title.

There was also a major surprise in the womens singles. This involved Jane Barella from the

Graham Spicer Club in Surrey. In the second round Barella faced the awesome prospect of playing Alison Gordon (Bk).

Amazingly the Surrey player was always in control. Well known for being of a nervous disposition at times, she had the luxury of having five match points in the second game and won 21-17, 21-18. Kent's Juliet Houghton put a stop to any thoughts of further glory comfortably defeating her in the next round.

Top seed Lisa Bellinger (Bd) won the event with some considerable ease.

MENS SINGLES

Final
Jimmy Stokes (Bk) b David Hannah (Sy) 19, -18, 23.

WOMENS SINGLES

Final
Lisa Bellinger (Bd) b Jill Harris (St) 13, 13.

MENS DOUBLES

Final
David Wells/Philip Bradbury (Mi/Bu) b Nigel Eckersley/Horatio Pinteá (Ch/CAN) 15, -16, 17.

WOMENS DOUBLES

Fiona Elliot/Harris (St) b Alison Gordon/Mandy Sainsbury (Bk) 14, 8.

VETERANS SINGLES

Final
Ralph Gunnion (Wa) b Ram Bhalla (Ha) 11, 14.

CLASS TWO SINGLES

Final
Percy Collino (Mi) b Bobby Brown (K) 17, 17.

Cooke champion

In the last of Lancashire's open tournaments — the Donic Lancashire 2-Star Open at Lastock — Alan Cooke was the winner of the mens singles with a final victory over Jimmy Stokes, writes *George Yates*.

Joy Grundy took the equivalent womens title with a final win over her Preston colleague Jean Parker.

RESULTS

MENS SINGLES

Alan Cooke (Dy) b Jimmy Stokes (Bk) 18, 13.

WOMENS SINGLES

Joy Grundy (La) b Jean Parker (La) 18, 17.

MENS DOUBLES

Cooke/Steven Mills (Dy/Y) b Steve Dorking/Nicky Mason (E/Sy) 16, 19.

WOMENS DOUBLES

Grundy/Parker b Jane Barella/Jill Harris (Sy/St) 10, -16, 12.

VETERANS SINGLES

Derek Schofield (Ch) b Matt Shearer (Li) 20, -22, 19.

CLASS 2 MIXED JUNIOR SINGLES

Sean Gibson (La) b Brian Carney (La) 20, 16.



Sun Life promotions manager, Tony Lewis, presents Fiona Elliot, David Dodd and David Hannah with their prizes in Bristol.



1st for Bristol

Bristol's drive to attract visitors to the city had a considerable boost by 300 competitors entering the first Sun Life Open Championships at Thornbury sports centre on 17/18 May 1986.

Players from thirty counties and three countries, including Dave Hannah, Scotland's No 1 and England No 11 Kevin Satchell took part. With the England duo of Alison Gordon and Fiona Elliot — fresh from success in Prague — they all enjoyed first class competition and conditions in this tournament organised by England's largest league and made possible by support from Bristol-based Sun Life Assurance.

In Saturday's junior events, West country girls excelled, providing four of the last eight quarter-finalists in Jane Wright (Plymouth), Melanie Carey (Bridgwater), Kirsty Withyman (West) and Helen Perrott (Bristol).

But Carey and Perrott clashed in the semis, preventing an all-South West final and Wolverhampton's Helen Lower won the final against Perrott.

However, South West success came in the cadet finals with Tina Sadler's (Yeovil) sparkling win against the Welsh No 4 Sian Evans and the boys final where Michael Auchterlonie (Wi) disposed of Yorkshire's Gary Knights in straight sets.

The junior boys final was as much of a physical struggle as skilful. Early favourite Jonathan Goode (Mi) appearing drained of energy after his tough semi-final with John Holland (No) and could not produce the extra effort needed to penetrate Steve Slater's immaculate control.

Highlight of Sunday's senior events was the very high standard of play maintained throughout. Accurate seeding and tournament organisation was shown in the final rounds — despite hiccups caused by John Hilton's non appearance and Carol Butler's fine result in disposing of England No

6 Mandy Sainsbury in round two.

But the greatest cheer was reserved for local veterans finalist Tony Brown — a Bristol league player of 30 years standing — when he defeated Babs Adedayo to take the title. A victory that must rank as a career best for a very worthy competitor.

RESULTS

MENS SINGLES

Semi-finals
Nicky Mason (Sx) b P Gunn (Wa); David Hannah (SCO) b Keven Satchell (Wi).

Final
Mason b Hannah.

WOMENS SINGLES

Semi-finals
Alison Gordon (Bk) b Jill Harris (Wa); Fiona Elliot (St) b Carol Butler (Dv).

Final
Elliot b Gordon.

MENS DOUBLES

Final
David Dodd/Hannah (K/SCO) b Steve Dorking/Mason (E/Sx).

WOMENS DOUBLES

Final
Elliot/Harris b Gordon/Mandy Sainsbury (Bk).

JUNIOR BOYS SINGLES

Semi-finals
Steve Slater (St) b Peter Harris (He); Jonathon Goode (Mx) b John Holland (Ng).

Final
Slater b Goode.

JUNIOR GIRLS SINGLES

Semi-finals
Helen Lower (Dv) b Nicola McGrath (La); Helen Perrott (Av) b Melanie Carey (So).

Final
Lower b Perrott.

JUNIOR BOYS DOUBLES

Final
Robert Fearn/Holland (Ng) b Vlendra Chaunan/Darren Smith (Wo).

JUNIOR GIRLS DOUBLES

Final
Katrina Baker/McGrath (La) b Kristina Cox/Lower (La/Wa).

CADET BOYS SINGLES

Final
Michael Auchterlonie (Wi) b Gary Knights (Y).

CADET GIRLS SINGLES

Final
Tina Sadler (So) b Sian Evens (WAL).

U12 BOYS SINGLES

Final
G. Knights b B. Forster.

U12 GIRLS SINGLES

Final
S. Hughes b H. Wright.

Tournaments

Essex Junior Open

An outstanding match caught the eye at the Beneficial Trust Essex Junior Open writes *Laurie Darnell*. It was a quarter-final between the No 2 seed Matthew Syed (Bk) and Chris Oldfield (Y).

Oldfield showed how a defender should be played when he won the first 21-17 but I suspect that the Berkshire lad needed more spin-back. A challenging comeback with a counter-hitting ploy from Matthew made spectators wonder and hope for a third game.

But it was not to be. Oldfield took the set 21-19 although he later fell to his Yorkshire teammate Michael O'Driscoll 18-21, 15-21 in the semi-final.

Neil Pickard (Nk) suffered from cramp during his semi-final against Andrew Syed (Bk) who won 11, 11. Pickard had a hard fought victory over Sean Gibson (La) - 20, 20, 19 to earn the right to face Syed.

The finalists were not overawed by the occasion and displayed their shots without any inhibitions in the staged arena. In the end the consistent play of Syed showed spectators the value of maintaining composure and, by sticking to a game plan, how to wear down an opponent. The final started with O'Driscoll tending to over-hit too quickly when serving while Syed looked relaxed and comfortable.

But in the second of this hard fought match Syed was under tremendous pressure and survived it well. Trailing early on he recovered to 15-15 and then served himself to 18-17. Winning against service he took the title 21-18, 21-18.

In the junior girls singles Juliet Houghton (K) lost the lead until, at 13-14 down on her own serve, she gained three winners and then

four more against her opponent's service advantage.

Debbie Soothill (Ca) fought hard but could not contain the Kent left-hander in the second game as she sped from 4-1 to 11-4. Wearing her opponent down by spreading her from wing to wing, Houghton maintained the points difference between them to run out a worthy winner by 21-15, 21-13.

Paired up by the control table the Veerendra Chauhan (Wa)/Steven Slater (La) combination faced the fourth seeds O'Driscoll and Oldfield in the final of the junior boys doubles.

In the first game the Yorkshire pair let 5-0 and 7-3 leads erode to 11-9 but then won ten points to four.

In the second, the unseeded partnership never lost the lead. The third game, however, turned at 10-9 when O'Driscoll and Oldfield cruised ahead to win 21-13, 17-21, 21-17.

In both games of the junior girls doubles between Andrea Holt (La)/Houghton and Lisa Hayden (E)/Rachel Knight (Mi), the points were evenly shared until it was Houghton's turn to serve.

The advantage to the Lancashire and Kent pair was immediate and they won quite comfortably 14, 16.

The ECTTA wish to thank Beneficial Trust Ltd. for sponsoring the Junior Grand Prix and regret that they are leaving the table tennis scene.

The Essex Junior Open will return next year on a different date - 14th/15th February 1987 - we hope to see another tremendous entry!

RESULTS

JUNIOR BOYS SINGLES

Semi-finals
Andrew Syed (Bk) b Neil Pickard (Nk) 11, 11; Michael O'Driscoll (Y) b Chris Oldfield (Y) 18, 15.

Final
Syed b O'Driscoll 18, 18.

JUNIOR GIRLS SINGLES

Semi-finals
Juliet Houghton (K) b Julie Billington (Dy) 15, 8; Debbie Soothill (La) b Claire Potts (La) 18, 12.

Final

Houghton b Soothill 15, 13.

JUNIOR BOYS DOUBLES

O'Driscoll/Oldfield b Veerendra Chauhan/Steven Slater (Wa/St) 13, -17, 17.

JUNIOR GIRLS DOUBLES

Andrea Holt/Houghton (La) b Lisa Hayden/Rachel Knight (E/Mi) 14, 16.

CADET BOYS SINGLES

Oldfield b Nick Ryder (Y) 7, 16.

CADET GIRLS SINGLES

Debbie Toole (Y) b Julie Forster (La) 17, 11.

CADET BOYS DOUBLES

Damien Holland/O'Driscoll (E/Y) b Leigh Jeffries/Gary Knights (Wa/St) 8, 14.

CADET GIRLS DOUBLES

Ellen Meddings/Toole (Y) b Billington/Rebecca Fisher (Dy/Mi) 13, 15.

U12 BOYS SINGLES

Neil Bevan (Co) b Knights (St) - 21, 16, 14.

U12 GIRLS SINGLES

Meddings (Y) b Mellisa Muller (HOL.) 6, -15, 17.

Coaching handbooks

The National Coaching Foundations have published a series of three coaching handbooks - for coaches who want the best for their performers. These handy pocket-sized books link in with the NCF level 2 courses for coaches.

The information is presented in a clear, lively style, complemented by diagrams and cartoons. The three titles are *The Coach at Work*, *Safety First for Coaches and Physiology and Performance*.

The coaching handbooks cost £5.50 each, or £13.50 for the set of three.

Details from: The National Coaching Foundation, 4 College Close, Beckett Park, Leeds LS6 3QH. Tel: 0532 744802.

Table Tennis in London — Working for the future

A new association, the London Table Tennis Federation, has been launched by Brentwood promoter Bernard Chatterley. In good standing with the ETTA it's hopeful aim is to revitalise the sport in the capital city which is currently a barren area.

"The LTT has no aims to take over the functions of the ETTA, Middlesex, Essex, Kent, Surrey, Hertfordshire associations", "Nor those of the many local leagues and clubs within the boundaries of the old G.L.C. It has no aims to offer alternative competition" says Chatterley.

"But the LTT wishes to harness the energies of all in the sport within the area to the mutual benefit of all sections of the community," he continues.

"Initially we are writing to all counties and leagues within the area in an endeavour to assess

accurately the number of players actually competing in the area. We are all fully aware that many players are registered in one, two, three, four and even more leagues, often in different counties - this gives a false picture. Once we have fairly accurate figures it will be much easier to plan any marketing or recruitment strategy."

"Then it is our intention to hold a conference of all interested parties to ascertain the main problems and possible methods of eliminating them and considering promotional ideas."

"If you live or play your table tennis in the London area make sure your club and league show an interest in London Table Tennis," says Chatterley. "Write now with your views and opinions to: London Table Tennis Federation, c/o S.D.L. Ltd., P.O. Box 402, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4UQ."

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Stokes powers through

Chesterfield's Bradley Billington was again amongst the medals in the Beneficial Trust Derby Junior Select on 26th/27th April, writes Mike Payne. He beat Matthew Syed in a junior boys semi final which was a wonderful exhibition of attacking and defensive play.

In the final the title holder Jimmy Stokes powered through to win a match full of attacking play. The crowd particularly enjoyed the angle shots from both players and their sportsman-like attitude to each other.

The girls singles saw a procession of seeds going out earlier than expected. In the bottom half Claire Potts was beaten by Helen Perrott leaving Debbie Soothill a clear run to the final.

And in the top half Kerry Hall lost to Katrina Baker in her group while the unseeded Nicola McGrath beat Andrea Holt (1), Melonie Carey (6) and Louise Davis (7) before losing in the final to Debbie Soothill in three close games.

In the junior boys doubles Michael O'Driscoll partnered with Chris Oldfield came through to beat unseeded Adrian Thorp and Stephen Slater.

Chesterfield's Kerry Hall and Julie Billington had local success in the cadet girls doubles with a fine final win over Ellen Meddings and Debbie Toole. They were in action again on the Sunday in the junior girls doubles beating No 2 seeds Juliet Houghton and Andrea Holt before losing the final to Claire Potts and Debbie Soothill.

The cadet boys singles was dominated by the two leading cadets — Michael O'Driscoll retaining his title by beating the No 1 seed Chris Oldfield in two straight games.

In the cadet girls Scotland's Sarah Hurry extinguished local hopes by beating in turn Julie Forster, Kerry Hall and then Julie Billington in the final.

Both under 12 singles justified the seedings as far as the finals. Whilst top seed Gary Knights (Burton) won the boys event, it was No 2 seed Helen Potts who beat top seed Ellen Meddings in two tight games in the girls.

The cadet boys doubles provided the upset of the first day from local boys Robert Scott-Birchall and Stephen Hanks. They beat Brian Mileham and Andrew Eden (seeded 4) after a tense start in the

quarters. They then overcame top seeds Damian Holland and Michael O'Driscoll. In the final they succumbed in three games to Chris Oldfield and Chris White.

The tournament was the biggest staged by the Derby Association and local players had probably their best performances since the start of the event 9 years ago. The inclusion of an under 12 singles event played a great part in bringing the total entry up to 355 and forced a programmed earlier start on both days.

RESULTS

JUNIOR BOYS SINGLES

Jimmy Stokes (Bk) b Bradley Billington (Dy) — 20, 15, 15.

JUNIOR GIRLS SINGLES

Debbie Soothill (Cu) b Nicola McGrath (La) — 18, 11, 15.

JUNIOR BOYS DOUBLES

Chris Oldfield/Michael O'Driscoll (Y) b Adrian Thorp/Steve Slater (St) 14, 9.



L-R ETTA Treasurer, Aubrey Drapkin, Chris Oldfield, Chris White and Derby President Jack Hughes. Stephen Booth

JUNIOR GIRLS DOUBLES

Claire Potts/Soothill (Ch/Cu) b Julie Billington/Kerry Hall (Dy) 15, — 16, 19.

CADET BOYS SINGLES

O'Driscoll b Oldfield 20, 20.

CADET GIRLS SINGLES

Sarah Hurry (Sco) b Billington 18, 17.

CADET BOYS DOUBLES

Oldfield/Chris White (Y) b Robert Scott-Birchall/Stephen Hanks (Dy).

CADET GIRLS DOUBLES

Billington/Hall b Ellen Meddings/Debbie Toole (Y) 12, 23.

U12 BOYS SINGLES

Gary Knights (St) b Brian Mileham (K) 11, 13.

U12 GIRLS SINGLES

Helen Potts (Ch) b Meddings (Y) 18, 17.



Nichola Deaton

£25,000 Schildkrot boost for British League



Schildkrot Managing Director Klaus Albrecht (L) joins English Table Tennis Association Chairman Tom Blunn (R) to finalise the £25,000 deal which will give the Schildkrot British League a real boost over the next twelve months.

(L-R) League Administrator Keith Ponting, ETTA Competitions Vice Chairman, Colin Clemett and Alan Ransome, Managing Director of Butterfly Schildkrot's UK distributor, look on.

Full details next issue



Nichola 9, wins Open title Malcolm Allsop

Have Derbyshire produced the smallest Open tournament champion in the country following the success of nine-year-old Nichola Deaton in winning the U12 girls singles at the Devon and Exeter 1-Star Open?

Nichola was certainly the youngest competitor in the tournament, according to her father Colin Deaton, and she did not drop a game during the event.

Nichola is already an experienced competitor having taken up the sport two years ago whilst on a world cruise with her father, a former Derbyshire county player and England junior international.

Nichola is the Derbyshire Schools U11 champion.

Colin has coached many leading players during his career, and considers Nichola to be the best prospect Derbyshire has ever had. This is strong praise indeed since Alan Cooke is now ranked No 3 in England, whilst Julie Billington and Kerry Hall are ranked No 1 and 2 in the England cadet ranks.

Lucky for some

The 1986 Lincoln Handicap ETTA Lottery achieved nearly £6,900 in ticket sales and, of this, nearly £3,500 was returned to participating leagues and counties to help their finances.

The No 1 sales spot was retained by the South West Middlesex League with a magnificent £617 or 2468 books or 12,340 tickets - congratulations to them and their band of dedicated and enthusiastic helpers. Their rebate cheque for £318 should prove very useful!

Second spot went to Norwich with tremendous sales of £380, and Reading again achieved over £300.

Lady Luck smiled on 45 people at the Draw, performed by Hastings league chairman Colin Hyland, though only 26 horses actually ran on the day.

The winner was K-Battery and the first prize of £500 went to Mr P Smith of Bucks with the second prize of £250 going to Mr C Downing-Waite of Sussex. Total prize money distributed was £1310.

As a method of fund-raising the lottery could not be easier as: 1) you risk no financial loss at all, 2) the ETTA provide the prize money and, 3) the ETTA pay all printing costs.

Full details are circulated each September to member leagues. What could your league have done with that £318 rebate cheque?

Time and a place

Geoff James of the National Umpires and Referees Committee appeals to players and coaches to stop time-wasting.

Play is required to be 'continuous during a match' - so says the ITTF's 'Handbook for Match Officials'. Umpires know all about this part of the good book, but do the players?

Surely this is not another 'them and us' case although some umpires have been known to suggest that players have sufficient knowledge of laws and regulations to stretch regulations to the ultimate and what they think are particular umpires' limits!

There are special regulations about towelling. Unfortunately, they do not seem to cover the escalation of apparent need for it by the losing player at a critical stage.

Also nothing seems to cover the head start the bespectacled contestant has, knowingly or unwittingly, breaking his opponent's concentration by delays for wiping glasses - few players seem to turn to contact lenses.

The responsibilities of the leading players are obvious. Undoubtedly lesser lights follow the stars and a new delaying tactic seems to have crept in.

Following our older brother

sport tennis, where the server frustratingly delays his service by continually bouncing the ball before launching his onslaught, our own is now following suit, with the ball, prior to being served, being bounced from hand to racket, hand to table or on to the floor.

But here there is a difference between the two sports. In one the size of the ball and area of the court might be said to allow the conclusion that the server is 'composing' himself and not seeking an unfair tactical advantage by confusing the receiver as to when the service will be made. Also, with several balls being used against our one, perhaps he is assessing any variation.

Unsettling

In our sport the margin of size and time factor are so small that however innocent the mannerism may be its effect must be unsettling to the receiver. Perhaps, however, more serious is the frustrating effect it has on the spectator.

Few players appear to be con-

cerned about this compared with 'in the old days', because competition is much greater for the small winnings available and the game is admittedly much more difficult. But our public, albeit a small one, is important and must be respected. Any mannerisms tending to distract or detract from the spectacle have to be discouraged.

How does the poor umpire handle this? One can sympathise with those who call "fault" on the premise that the ball is in play from the moment it leaves the hand. And, of course, the umpire, as sole judge of fact, decides when an action is a service and when it is not.

But such judgements can become based on opinions which can vary and lead to inconsistencies between different umpires. Because of this, there is hesitancy to issue any official decree in support of this interpretation.

Obviously some actions cannot possibly be said to be mistaken for a service, particularly the bouncing of the ball on the table or even the floor - so evident by the two Soviets in the English

Open womens singles final. Then it seems that the only remedy is to fall back on the time wasting provisions and warn the offending server in a quiet and unofficial way. If it persists then report to the referee who has far wider powers of dealing with offenders than does the umpire.

Players & Coaches

However, it is the players with whom the main responsibility lies. They need public support just as much as officials and to alienate with this irritating and time wasting habit is in no-one's interests.

Surely we do not have to ape those from another sport where money is in such abundance that little consideration needs to be given to those who provide it?

So, an appeal to the top players that others follow: please set the right example by removing at least one of the frustrations of our modern game.

And an equally strong cry to coaches who are vital to the process that turns the promising junior into a top player and bear a heavy responsibility for the ultimate conduct of the finished product.

Please see that those most susceptible to the actions of the seniors are discouraged from imitating them.



Sponsors, Coca Cola, had no problem giving away their free samples.



"All the fun of the fair" was the mood surrounding the highly successful 1986 Capital Radio Venture Day in London's Battersea Park on Sunday 15th June.

Table tennis was one of 84 sports and pastimes on offer to over 100,000 Londoners who turned out to 'Have a Go'. The day proved to be one of the finest of the summer, with hardly a breath of wind and the temperature soaring above 70°F.

Mark Mitchell, Sarah Sandley and New Zealander Malcolm Temperley gave demonstrations, faced challenges and encouraged

the crowds who kept three tables in constant use from 9.30 am to 6.00 pm (the event didn't officially start until 11.00 am!)

The Greater London and South East Sports Council Liaison Officer, Andy Sutch, called in to check that his £50 participation grant was being put to good use and appeared to be well satisfied with our efforts. Leaflets outlining both the Dunlop awards and table tennis opportunities in and around London were distributed.

Who said this was the quiet time of year? It seems that there is always someone new waiting to pick up a bat!

The famous



...and the not so famous





Des does the trick

By Fiona Brown

The long awaited return of National No 1 Desmond Douglas to regular competition in England has certainly brought welcome rewards to National League team GKN Steelstock Wolverhampton. Desmond took over the GKN helm which was vacated by the departure of fellow international Skylet Andrew. He has certainly led by example and the supreme achievement of a 100% record from his participation in the full set of fourteen matches makes him the National League Committee's choice as Halex National League Player of the season. The award carries with it a cash prize of £100.

Although controversy still surrounds the GKN v Thorn EMI Ellenborough fixture the Wolverhampton side have been confirmed as premier division champions and their £2,000 prize will help to ensure that Douglas and his team mates return to defend their title in 1987.

Welsh winning ways

The experience of Alan Griffiths has undoubtedly played a significant part in taking Butterfly Cardiff to the first division title a mere twelve months after they wallowed in seventh place. Griffiths, who finished second in the first division averages with team mate Nigel Tyler, will now have the opportunity to prove that his all Welsh squad is an even match for England's leading teams as they enter the premier division competition.

Despite a valiant attempt by John Hilton to take Target Gold Salford in to the upper echelon the squad must take up the challenge once again. Whether Hilton will stay faithful is yet to be seen for the former European Champion remains a favourite with the crowds and could undoubtedly justify his place in a premier division side.



Will John 'the entertainer' Hilton stay with Salford Target Gold?

*Final League Tables — Season 1985-86

Premier Division	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.
GKN Steelstock Wolv I	14	11	3	0	74	38	25
Ormesby I	13	9	3	1	71	33	21
Grove I	14	7	2	5	60	52	16
Thorn EMI Ellenborough	14	4	5	5	54	58	13
Bath Toyota	14	3	6	5	54	58	12
Omega Reading I	14	5	1	8	51	61	11
South Yorkshire I	13	3	2	8	44	60	8
Omega Reading II	14	0	4	10	32	80	4
First Division	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.
Butterfly Cardiff	14	11	2	1	77	35	24
Target Gold Salford	14	10	2	2	81	31	22
Airmaster St. Neots I	14	7	3	4	62	50	17
W. Warwick/Birmingham	14	8	0	6	63	49	16
Dagenham FC I	14	6	3	5	56	56	15
TCB Dolphins	14	3	4	7	42	70	10
TSP Larkhall I	14	1	3	10	40	72	5
Ormesby II	14	1	1	12	27	85	3
Second Division North	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.
Chan Construction I	14	11	2	1	78	34	24
Byker Newcastle I	14	11	1	2	71	41	23
GKN Steelstock Wolv II	14	5	4	5	58	54	14
Unity Bradford	14	5	3	6	53	59	13
Sincil Lincoln	14	5	3	6	53	59	13
March	14	6	0	8	54	58	12
Byron Roofing "Stute"	14	4	2	8	51	61	10
City of Leeds (Unity)	14	1	1	12	30	82	3
		Unity Bradford 129/155		Sincil Lincoln 113/142			
Second Division South	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.
Pengeley Torbay I	14	13	1	0	84	28	27
EAE Waveney	14	8	2	4	69	43	18
TSP Larkhall II	14	5	4	5	59	53	14
Medway	14	4	4	6	53	59	12
Jaques Fareham	14	5	2	7	48	64	12
Gunnersbury Triangle	14	5	1	8	49	63	11
Norwich Foxwood	14	4	3	7	48	64	11
Pengeley Gwent	14	3	1	10	38	74	7
Third Division North	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.
Kingsbro' Insurance Serv.	14	13	1	0	89	23	27
Oldham	14	9	2	3	78	34	20
Crusaders Lincoln	14	8	3	3	68	44	19
South Yorkshire II	14	8	1	5	65	47	17
Ormesby IV	14	5	1	8	49	63	11
Vickers Sports Barrow	14	3	3	8	45	67	9
Byker Newcastle II	14	3	1	10	36	76	7
Ormesby III	14	1	0	13	18	94	2
Third Division South	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.
Ashford	14	13	0	1	89	23	26
C & L Nittaku Ruislip	14	12	0	2	89	23	24
Rejects	14	10	1	3	75	37	21
Abeng Warriors (Stiga)	14	7	1	6	57	55	15
Errey's Print '84	14	5	1	8	54	58	11
Deptford Rams	14	4	1	9	44	68	9
Omega Reading III	14	3	0	11	26	86	6
Spicer New Malden	14	0	0	14	14	98	0
Third Division East	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.
Fellows Cranleigh	14	10	1	3	71	41	21
AHW Pioneers	14	9	2	3	63	49	20
Britannia Deepure	14	7	5	2	65	47	19
Airmaster St. Neots II	14	6	2	6	60	52	14
Playrite Northampton	14	3	6	5	51	61	12
Soham	14	4	3	7	49	63	11
Witham Town F.C.	14	3	2	9	46	66	8
Dagenham F.C. II	14	2	3	9	43	69	7
Third Division West	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.
Global Sports Plymouth	14	13	1	0	85	27	27
Leominster	14	12	0	2	82	30	24
Leicester	14	6	3	5	63	49	15
Jolliffe Poole	14	6	2	6	59	53	14
Grove II	14	5	4	5	58	54	14
Chan Construction II	14	6	0	8	48	64	12
Duchy Launceston	14	1	1	12	34	78	3
Pengeley Torbay II	14	1	1	12	19	93	3

*The premier division table will be finalised following an appeal.

The China Syndrome

The chance of a lifetime, an all expenses paid trip to China, proved too great a temptation for the Byker Newcastle squad who sacrificed the second division north title and certain promotion to Chan Construction.

Knowing that the absence of the entire Byker first team would jeopardize the chance of a win in the final match of the season an appeal was made for permission to alter the date of the fixture. Alas, league rules make no specific mention of such an instance and whilst Committee sympathy swayed in favour of the Byker boys, common sense dictated that the match must go ahead as planned.

Although this may appear harsh, consider the chaos which would have ensued if an exception had been made. Avoidance of such a dangerous precedent has ensured the status quo which, for all but the very odd exception, serves us all quite nicely.

Going up again

Top form from the two teams promoted in 1985 has led them to success in their first season of second division north play. Both Pengeley Sports Torbay, in the shape of Malcolm Francis and runner up, EAE Waveney in the Shape of Trevor Bunn, provided players who earned Halex National League player of the Month awards.

Torbay manager Brian Pengeley is naturally delighted with the success which has vaulted his squad from 3rd to 1st division status in 2 seasons. Plans are already underway to introduce local youngsters through the ranks in order to sustain the south western successes. In East Anglia, Waveney captain Russell King is not too disappointed by his teams second place which he feels was an honourable finish to their first season in a higher division.

Second bite of the cherry

Twelve months after completing what could only be described as a fairly miserable season in the second division north, Stockton side Kingbro Insurance Services have something to smile about. They remained undefeated throughout the past season. Two timely Kingbro defeats of young pretenders, Oldham, dispelled the Lancastrians title hopes but a second place finish in their opening

Halex National League

season of national league play remains an achievement worthy of note.

Recent match reports suggest that Oldham veteran Derek Schofield is improving with age, an idea which gives the term 'seasoned campaigner' a whole new meaning. Joking aside though Oldham may find it difficult to retain Schofield's services in the coming season unless they can offer him the top half place which his ability obviously deserves.

Ashford's firecracker

The neck and neck battle of the bats between eventual 3rd division south winners, Ashford, and runners up Nittaku Ruislip is exemplified by the domination which their players displayed in capturing the first nine places in the end of season averages.

Ashford, strengthened mid season by the arrival from Abeng Warriors Stiga of Glen Baker, secured the title with the eleventh hour signing of former England international Kenny Jackson. Whilst I have heard from one or two sceptics that Jackson, now a full-time fireman, will never again don an Ashford shirt, team manager Ray Tucker assures me that this was not just a flash in the burning chip pan - he will return!

First time lucky

Newcomers, Fellows Cranleigh, have tasted early success in the third division east. Under the leadership of Jeff Drew, Cranleigh dished out a double dose of trouble to rivals AHW Pioneers in the form of two 6-2 defeats, the second of which demolished the Luton lads' title challenge.



Oldhams Phillip Aspinall, an award in his first National League season. Photo courtesy of Oldham Evening Gazette.

**see page 33
for March & April
awards.**

Plymouth on top of the world

It has been a high scoring season in the third division west as Leominster will testify. Despite the accumulation of a hard earned twenty-five points they find themselves beaten into second place by Global Sports Plymouth, the team who took the only three points which Leominster conceded.

It has been a successful but, I would imagine, difficult season for the Plymouth team who completed all but one of their fixtures with the same four man line up from a five man squad - a tale to encourage the smaller clubs amongst you.

Table Toppers

Premier	P	W	%
1. Desmond Douglas (GKN)	28	28	100
2. Alan Cooke (ORM)	26	23	88.5
3. Nigel Eckersley (ORM)	26	22	84.6
4. Philip Bradbury (SY)*	22	15	68.2
Jimmy Stokes (OR)	22	15	68.2
6. Carl Morgan (GKN)	28	19	67.9
7. Chris Rogers (SY)	24	16	66.7
8. Steve Turner (G)	28	17	61.7
9. David Dodd (OR)	28	17	60.7

*Played 6, won 4 for Omega Reading

First	P	W	%
1. Tony Taylor (TGS)	26	24	92.3
2. Alan Griffiths (BC)	28	25	89.2
Nigel Tyler (BC)	28	25	89.2
4. John Hilton (TGS)	28	24	85.7
5. Stuart Palmer (A St N)	26	21	80.8
6. Nigel Thomas (BC)	25	18	72.0
7. Adrian Dixon (W W/B)	24	17	70.8
8. Brian Jones (TGS)	28	17	60.7

Second North	P	W	%
1. Richard Tanner (CC)	18	15	83.3
2. Philip Gunn (CC)	28	23	82.1
3. Bradley Billington (SL)	26	20	76.9
4. Craig Bakewell (GKN)	24	18	75.0
5. Neil McMaster (BN)	26	19	73.1
6. Murray Jukes (CC)	28	20	71.4
7. Michael O'Driscoll (UB)	20	14	70.0
8. Richard Jermy (BR)	18	12	66.7
9. Steven Sharpe (UB)	26	17	65.4
10. Sean Gibson (UB)	20	13	65.0
11. Thomas Blackman (BN)	18	11	61.1
Mark Evans (GKN)	18	11	61.1
13. Graeme McKim (M)	28	17	60.7

Second South	P	W	%
1. Malcolm Francis (PT)	22	20	90.9
2. Paul Whiting (PT)	28	25	89.3
3. Paul Giles (PT)	28	24	85.7
4. Philip Logsdon (EAEW)	24	20	83.3
5. Paul Amos (M)	26	21	80.8
6. Steven Davis (TSPL)	24	17	70.8
7. Neil Pickard (NF)	26	18	69.2
8. Richard Darnell (EAEW)	26	16	61.5
Simon Proffitt (GT)	26	16	61.5

Third North	P	W	%
1. Derek Schofield (O)	16	16	100
2. Michael Emmerson (KIS)	18	17	94.4
3. Steven Cooper (KIS)	16	15	93.8
4. Terry Murphy (KIS)	20	18	90.0
5. Brian Hill (CL)	22	18	81.8
6. Graham Clarke (O)	26	20	76.9
7. Malcolm Corking (KIS)	28	21	75.0
Matt Shearer (CL)	16	12	75.0
9. Jevon Chan (O)	14	10	71.4
Nicky Newton (SY)	14	10	71.4
11. David Blackburne (BN)	16	11	68.8
12. Philip Aspinall (O)	26	17	65.4
Glen Roberts (SY)	26	17	65.4
14. Mark Hankey (O)	20	13	65.0
15. Brian Allison (CL)	22	14	63.6
John Healy (ORM)	22	14	63.6
17. Ian Plummer (KIS)	20	12	60.0

Third South	P	W	%
1. David Goode (A)	28	26	92.9
2. John Taylor (NR)	24	21	87.5
3. Raymond Tilling (NR)	24	20	83.3
4. Dipak Topiwala (NR)	26	21	80.8
5. Jonathan Goode (A)	14	11	78.6
Daryll Windsor (A)	14	11	78.6
7. Glen Baker (A)*	22	17	77.3
8. John Burleton (NR)	28	21	75.0
David Welsman (A)	24	18	75.0
10. Michael O'Leary (R)	26	19	73.1
11. Gordon Holmes (R)	18	13	72.2
12. Joseph Quansah (AWS)	16	10	62.5
13. Trevor Campbell (R)	26	16	61.5
14. Martin Shuttle (AWS)	20	12	60.0

*Played 8, won 5 for Abeng Warriors Stiga

Third East	P	W	%
1. John Kitchener (BD)	28	26	92.9
2. Jeffrey Drew (FC)	24	22	91.7
3. Peter Taylor (A ST N)	24	17	70.8
4. David Sharpe (AHWP)	26	18	69.2
5. Les Wooding (AHWP)	24	16	66.7
Damien Holland (DFC)	18	12	66.7
7. Paul Gooding (BD)	26	17	65.4
Simon Griew (S)	26	17	65.4
9. Peter Norcott (FC)	20	13	65.0
10. Paul Sayer (FC)	28	18	64.3
11. Helen Bardwell (A ST N)	18	11	61.1

Third West	P	W	%
1. Andrew Castle (LEO)	18	16	88.9
2. Tony Sweet (GSP)	28	24	85.7
Gary Wilson (GSP)	28	24	85.7
4. Michael Short (GSP)	28	23	82.1
5. John Robinson (JP)	28	21	75.0
Steven Moreman (LEO)	24	18	75.0
Jill Harris (LEO)	16	12	75.0
8. Darren Griffin (LEO)	26	19	73.1
9. Claire Potts (G)	14	10	71.4
10. Martin Pickles (LEI)	28	19	67.9
Jeremy Williams (DWL)	28	19	67.9
12. John Ellis (G)	26	17	65.4
Mark Owen (LEO)	26	17	65.4
14. Leigh Jeffries (CC)	14	9	64.3

Stiga County Championships

Yorkshire triumph

Doug Moss

The second series of matches were again played and well staged at St. Neots. I predicted there would be a good deal of excitement with Yorkshire or Staffordshire, who had met in a drawn match in the first series, likely to win the championship.

This was certainly how things worked out. There was a tremendous atmosphere with matches well fought and a competitive spirit throughout; even from the teams not involved in the final outcome.

Three boys - Bradley Billington (Dy), Adrian Dixon (St) and Matthew Connell (Y) did very

well to win 13 of their 14 singles matches. In boys doubles Michael O'Driscoll and Chris Oldfield won 6 of their 7 matches.

In the girls doubles Derbyshire did the best by winning 6 of the 7 events. Kerry Hall won four matches with Julie Billington and two out of three with Julie Forster.

Sussex and Middlesex, are the teams due for relegation. Ironic, considering that Middlesex's senior team won that Premier Division! Nottinghamshire and Glamorgan are the teams destined for promotion to the premier division.

With the last round of matches Staffs had to make up three sets on Yorkshire. It went to the very last set to decide the issue with Yorks leading 7-2 and Staffs at 9-0 against their opponents.

The Yorks player lost the first game. Across the hall, the Staffs player won his first game. It was touch and go. Yorks then went on to win the next two games and the Staffs player lost his two. The

championship went to Yorkshire *by one event* over Staffordshire.

There were just two drawn matches of the 28 played, one being that between Yorks and Staffs. However a further 10 matches ended at 6-4. The only players with 100% wins over the whole series of matches were Andrea Holt (La), playing as No 1 girl, and Helen Lower (St), playing as No 2 girl.

The complete results were:

	Derby	Essex	Kent	Lancs	M'sex	Staffs	Sussex	Yorks
Derby.	—	4-6	4-6	6-4	5-5	4-6	8-2	4-6
Essex.	6-4	—	4-6	4-6	6-4	1-9	9-1	2-8
Kent.	6-4	6-4	—	7-3	8-2	3-7	10-0	1-9
Lancs.	4-6	6-4	3-7	—	7-3	4-6	10-0	4-6
M'sex.	5-5	4-6	2-8	3-7	—	1-9	9-1	1-9
Staffs.	6-4	9-1	7-3	6-4	9-1	—	10-0	5-5
Sussex.	2-8	1-9	0-10	0-10	1-9	0-10	—	0-10
Yorks.	6-4	8-2	9-1	6-4	9-1	5-5	10-0	—

1985/86 Final League Tables

SENIORS

Division 2A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Derbyshire	7	7	0	0	48	22	14
Yorkshire 2nd	7	5	1	1	50	20	11
Warwickshire	7	4	0	3	41	29	8
Cambridgeshire	7	3	1	3	33	37	7
Worcestershire	7	3	0	4	37	33	6
Cheshire	7	3	0	4	31	39	6
Lancashire 2nd	7	2	0	5	30	40	4
Buckinghamshire	7	0	0	7	10	60	0

Division 2B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Middlesex 2nd	7	6	0	1	52	18	12
Sussex	7	5	1	1	45	25	11
Devonshire	7	5	0	2	43	27	10
Wiltshire	7	2	3	2	33	27	7
Essex	7	3	1	3	29	41	7
Dorset	7	1	2	4	29	41	4
Somerset	7	1	1	5	30	40	3
Hampshire	7	1	0	6	19	51	2

Division 3A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Northumberland 1st	8	8	0	0	65	15	16
Warwickshire 2nd	8	5	2	1	55	25	12
Lincolnshire	8	5	1	2	47	33	11
Cheshire 2nd	8	4	1	3	45	35	9
Clwyd	8	4	0	4	42	38	8
Nottinghamshire	8	3	1	4	36	44	7
Durham	8	2	1	5	32	48	5
Northumberland 2nd	8	1	0	7	22	58	2
Cumbria	8	1	0	7	16	64	2

Division 3B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Devonshire 2nd	9	9	0	0	77	13	18
Avon 1st	9	7	1	1	70	20	15
Somerset 2nd	9	5	1	3	53	37	11
Cornwall 1st	9	5	1	3	52	38	11
Dorset 2nd	9	5	1	3	48	42	11
Avon 2nd	9	5	0	4	46	44	10
Glamorgan	9	4	0	5	45	45	8
Hereford	9	1	1	7	26	64	3
Cornwall 2nd	9	1	1	7	25	65	3
Isle of Wight	9	0	0	9	8	82	0

Division 3C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gloucestershire	9	9	0	0	67	23	18
Norfolk	9	7	0	2	58	32	14
Hertfordshire	9	6	0	3	47	43	12
Northamptonshire 1st	9	4	2	3	49	41	10
Bedfordshire 1st	9	5	0	4	49	41	10
Worcestershire 2nd	9	3	2	4	47	43	8
Oxfordshire	9	3	1	5	43	47	7
Buckinghamshire 2nd	9	2	1	6	38	52	5
Northamptonshire 2nd	9	1	2	6	28	62	4
Bedfordshire 2nd	9	0	2	7	24	66	2

Division 3D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Surrey 2nd	9	6	2	1	65	25	14
Cambridgeshire 2nd	9	6	1	2	59	31	13
Essex 2nd	9	6	0	3	59	31	12
Suffolk 1st	9	5	2	2	55	35	12
Sussex 2nd	9	5	1	3	50	40	11
Berkshire 2nd	9	5	0	4	53	37	10
Kent 2nd	9	4	0	5	36	54	8
Essex 3rd	9	3	0	6	36	54	6
Kent 3rd	9	1	0	8	25	64	2
Suffolk 2nd	9	1	0	8	11	78	2

JUNIORS

Junior Premier Division	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yorkshire	7	6	1	0	53	17	13
Staffordshire	7	6	1	0	52	18	13
Kent	7	5	0	2	41	29	10
Lancashire	7	3	0	4	38	32	6
Essex	7	3	0	4	32	38	6
Derbyshire	7	2	1	4	35	35	5
Middlesex	7	1	1	5	25	45	3
Sussex	7	0	0	7	4	66	0

Division 2A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yorkshire 2nd	7	7	0	0	60	10	14
Nottinghamshire	7	4	2	1	42	28	10
Cheshire	7	5	0	2	37	33	10
Staffordshire 2nd	7	3	1	3	34	36	7
Suffolk	7	2	2	3	34	36	6
Warwickshire	7	2	1	4	34	36	5
Northamptonshire	7	0	2	5	22	48	2
Lincolnshire	7	0	2	5	17	53	2

Stiga County Championships

Division 2B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	VETERANS	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Glamorgan	7	5	1	1	40	30	11	Premier Division	7	6	1	42	21	12
Surrey	7	5	0	2	44	26	10	Lincolnshire	7	6	1	41	22	12
Berkshire	7	4	0	3	34	36	8	Cheshire	7	5	2	36	27	10
Devonshire	7	3	1	3	38	32	7	Sussex	7	3	4	32	31	6
Cornwall	7	3	1	3	35	35	7	Kent	7	3	4	32	31	6
Hertfordshire	7	2	2	3	37	33	6	Middlesex	7	3	4	32	31	6
Middlesex 2nd	7	2	1	4	30	40	5	Essex	7	3	4	27	36	6
Wiltshire	7	0	2	5	22	48	2	Buckinghamshire	7	2	5	30	33	4
Division 3A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Nottinghamshire	7	0	7	12	51	0
Derbyshire 2nd	6	6	0	0	48	12	12	Division 2A	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Leicestershire	6	5	0	1	46	14	10	Essex 2nd	7	5	2	39	24	10
Huntingdonshire	6	4	0	2	37	23	8	Worcestershire	7	5	2	36	27	10
Cheshire 2nd	6	2	0	4	25	35	4	Yorkshire	7	4	3	38	25	8
Cumbria	6	2	0	4	23	37	4	Hertfordshire	7	4	3	34	29	8
Warwickshire 2nd	6	1	0	5	19	41	2	Cheshire 2nd	7	4	3	32	31	8
Clwyd	6	1	0	5	12	48	2	Leicestershire	7	2	5	27	36	4
Division 3B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Oxfordshire	7	2	5	26	27	4
Bedfordshire 1st	7	6	0	1	51	19	12	Huntingdonshire	7	2	5	20	43	4
Cambridgeshire 1st	7	6	0	1	51	19	12	Division 2B	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Oxfordshire	7	5	0	2	38	32	10	Kent 2nd	7	5	2	39	24	10
Worcestershire	7	4	1	2	44	26	9	Middlesex 2nd	7	5	2	37	26	10
Berkshire 2nd	7	3	1	3	39	31	7	Hampshire	7	4	3	34	29	8
Bedfordshire 2nd	7	1	0	6	20	50	2	Berkshire	7	4	3	32	31	8
Buckinghamshire	7	1	0	6	19	51	2	Dorset	7	4	3	32	31	8
Cambridgeshire 2nd	7	1	0	6	18	52	2	Surrey	7	3	4	32	31	6
Division 3C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Sussex 2nd	7	2	5	25	38	4
Gwent	6	5	1	0	43	17	11	Avon	7	1	6	21	42	2
Somerset	6	5	0	1	41	19	10	Division 3A	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Gloucestershire	6	3	1	2	31	29	7	Yorkshire 2nd	6	6	0	47	7	12
Hampshire	6	3	0	3	31	29	6	Northumberland	6	4	2	30	24	8
Cornwall 2nd	6	1	1	4	24	36	3	Northamptonshire	6	3	3	26	28	6
Dorset	6	1	1	4	19	41	3	Cheshire 3rd	6	3	3	26	28	6
Avon	6	0	2	4	21	39	2	Hertfordshire 2nd	6	3	3	23	31	6
Division 3D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Norfolk	6	1	5	24	30	2
Essex 3rd	6	6	0	0	42	18	12	Huntingdonshire 2nd	6	1	5	13	41	2
Kent 2nd	6	4	1	1	40	20	9	Division 3B	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Essex 2nd	6	4	0	2	42	18	8	Essex 3rd	6	5	1	39	14	10
Sussex 2nd	6	1	2	3	21	39	4	Berkshire 2nd	6	5	1	35	19	10
Surrey 2nd	6	1	1	4	23	37	3	Buckinghamshire 2nd	6	4	2	31	23	8
Hertfordshire 2nd	6	1	1	4	22	38	3	Bedfordshire	6	3	3	28	26	6
Norfolk	6	0	3	3	20	40	3	Hertfordshire 3rd	6	3	3	27	27	6
								Herefordshire	6	1	5	19	34	2
								Huntingdonshire 3rd	6	0	6	9	45	0

A New Approach

Things are about to change says ETTA chairman Tom Blunn

"A three year plan is to be submitted to the Sports Council hopefully for complete approval and implementation - shortly", says ETTA chairman Tom Blunn. "We are already starting to implement the two most important aspects of the plan."

The first was the appointment of a full-time Director of Coaching David Fairholm who, in the first instance, will be based in Hastings and will be in full control of the national coaching scheme.

His job is to see that the members derive as much benefit as possible from the activities of the national and local coaches and to assist all coaches to become more effective.

"The national coaching scheme at present costs about £75,000 per

annum and the bulk of the activities are directed towards benefitting the members at league level", continued Blunn. "Some leagues participate more than others but there is ample evidence to show that the areas with good coaching facilities produce the best players."

"International players now come from all over the country but essentially from those areas with good coaching schemes and a league with a good player reaps benefits in media coverage, local interest at player and spectator levels and inevitably becomes larger and stronger. The Director will see that the leagues are given every opportunity to benefit from the national coaching scheme."

"The new development in the Dunlop Skills Award scheme is

well under way, with around 3,000 badges having been awarded in just over a year. The Director will be taking a very keen interest in developing this scheme much further!

The second exciting development will be the appointment of a Chief Executive at head office in Hastings towards the end of the year. "The appointment will require a lot of re-thinking in the manner in which we currently conduct our business and some important decisions may have to be made and some very necessary changes accepted," says Blunn.

"Both these appointments are expected to be made possible by the financial support of the Sports

Council and without any call for further funding by the members," he said. "The Sports Council will expect to see expansion of the game in the future, particularly when other aspects of the plan are brought into operation."

"The plan itself is to be circulated to the leagues for information. It is not confined to national affairs but puts great emphasis on regional administration and local priorities. Every member should be able to benefit".



CUMBRIA

The Barrow league once again dominated the Cumbria closed championships held at Kendal with nine winners out of the ten events and also nine runners-up.

Honours were shared however between the senior and junior players in that the mens and womens singles titles went to well established players, Neil Smith (B) and Clarice Rose (W) while juniors Karen Griffiths, John Backhouse and Jonathan Lowes (all B) showed their potential in taking seven titles between them.

Four titles, namely the mens dables, junior boys singles, junior girls singles and womens doubles were retained by their previous holders.

Smith beat Roger Stewart (C) by the narrowest of margins in the mens singles final 22-24, 21-18, 24-22. Stewart had an equally narrow win over Tim Pachul (B) in his semi-final with the score 24-22, 16-21, 22-20. Smith beat Ian Sharp (B) 21-19, 21-18 in the other semi-final.

Clarice Rose proved she is still as hard to beat in taking the womens singles with victories over No 2 seed Karen Backhouse (B) and in the final beating Karen Griffiths 21-7, 21-19.

Griffiths got plenty of consolation however in taking the junior girls title against Margo Lewis (B) 17-21, 21-15, 21-18 and sharing the mixed doubles title with Smith, victors over brother and sister combination of John and Karen Backhouse 21-17, 21-13.

The two Karen's combined to retain their womens doubles title with a 2-18, 2-10 win over Paul Eddy (B) and Margo Lewis.

Andrew Pachul (B) and Ian Sharp were rewarded for their efforts in the mens singles with the retention of their mens doubles title beating youngsters, John Backhouse and Jonathan Lowes 21-15, 21-9.

The final senior event, the veterans singles, went to Stan Halesworth (B) beating the perennial Eddie O'Hara (B) 21-13, 21-18.

The remaining three junior events were shared between John Backhouse and Jonathan Lowes; Backhouse beating Gavin Boyd (B) in the junior boys singles 21-14, 13-21, 21-13; Lowes beating Boyd in the U14 singles 21-19, 17-21, 21-16; and Backhouse/Lowes beating the luckless Boyd and David Holmes (B) 21-15, 21-17 in the junior doubles.

The county championship teams found the going very tough after a good start. The juniors fared the better of the two sides with two wins from the first five matches played. The outstanding player of the season is John Backhouse who has won 7 singles out of 8 and is undoubtedly one of the leading players in his division.

The junior side was weakened somewhat by the senior inclusion of Karen Griffiths. Griffiths has done well in the seniors but has been overshadowed by the performances of Karen Backhouse who has won four out of her six singles matches and is by far the best player in the team on results alone. Backhouse has made the transition from junior to senior level look easy.

Tim Pachul has battled hard in the No 1 position on the male side and has been rewarded with four wins out of ten singles. Andrew Pachul also did well to register three wins from six played.

Westmorland league leaders Queen Katherine A are virtually sure of the league title with a 100% record and just three matches to go. Natland A, Queen Katherine B and Melling are left to fight out the runners-up position. Dave Hillbeck reigns supreme at the top of the averages with 100%. Queen Katherine A teammate Geoff Baines lies second on 91%.

Second division leaders Dallam A could well be pipped at the post by Queen Katherine C who have matches in hand. Mike Ainsworth heads the averages for Dallam with 97%, just keeping ahead of Roy Duckett (90%) and David Lambert (89%) for Queen Katherine.

DERBYSHIRE

Malcolm Alsop

A Billington take-away

The Billington family dominated the Derbyshire closed championships on Sunday 16th March, held at the Lea Green Sports Centre near Matlock.

Julie Billington won the womens singles, U17 GS and U14 GS defeating Kerry Hall in all three events. Julie combined with Kerry to win the womens doubles.

Bradley Billington won the U17 BS, mens doubles with Geoff Gill, and mixed doubles with Kerry Hall. Bradley completed the day by retaining his mens singles title with victory in the final over father, Maurice.

The shock of the day came in the semi-finals of the veteran singles when Maurice Billington lost to Derek Marples. Retribution came in the veteran singles final, when Derek lost to Eric Hall.

Eric Hall was the last player to retain the mens singles title - in 1974.

The only title to elude the Billington clan was the U14 BS won by Robert Scott-Birchall in straight-games sets.

Robert also played very well to reach the final of the U17 BS before losing to Bradley.

Unluckiest player in the tournament was Jane Vickers, who reached two finals before losing by the

narrowest of margins in the third and deciding game of both.

Jane combined with To Thuy Zung in the womens doubles and held three championship points in the third game of the final. Jane also teamed up with husband, Philip, to reach the final of the mixed doubles - the title they won last season.

MS: Bradley Billington b Maurice Billington 11, 11. WS: Julie Billington b Kerry Hall - 16, 20, 8. MD: B Billington/Geoff Gill b Terry Bull/Phil Vickers 16, 19. WD: J Billington/K. Hall b To Thuy Zung/Jane Vickers 12, - 13, 20. XD: B Billington/K. Hall b P & J Vickers 16, - 15, 20. VS: Eric Hall b Derek Marples 12, 13.

JBS: B Billington b Robert Scott-Birchall 12, 12. JGS: J Billington b K Hall 14, - 12, 16. U14BS Group: Winner - Scott-Birchall; Runner-up - Stephen Plater. U14GS Group: Winner - Julie Billington; Runner-up - Kerry Hall.

Derbyshire Inter-League:

The honours are being spread around the county in the Derbyshire Inter-Towns League, with Matlock looking certainties to win senior division one and the veterans titles.

Geoff Gill led Matlock 1st to an 8-2 victory over Burton 1st with nearest challengers, Eastwood 1st being held to a 5-5 draw by Derby 1st, despite Bill Fowkes winning three singles and combining with Tony Holland to win the doubles.

Matlock were idle in the veterans division allowing Eastwood to go to the top of the division with a 6-4 victory over Chesterfield. Chesterfield, despite their possible veteran strength, have not won a match in this division for three seasons (!) and were quickly 0-4 down before staging a comeback. Eastwood were denied victory until the ninth set when Colin Cheetham overcame Geoff Levers 21-16, 10-21, 21-10.

Ron Rapley was in good form for Buxton in a 7-3 victory over Derby which ended Derby's hopes of regaining the veterans championship.

Burton have won the womens division, but the support for this is disappointing with only Burton (2 teams) and Matlock competing.



Bradley Billington

DEVON

Dot White

At the time this issue goes to press, Plymouth Headquarters should be completed. They are now ready to start work on their approved Manpower Services Scheme for the promotion of table tennis.

The scheme is to consist of two teams of three workers; each team will be made up of a coach, a promoter and a clerk.

The positions have already been advertised and interviews are being arranged - I am told there has been a good response and a lot of interest has been created.

The E.T.T.A. have agreed for the newly-appointed team coaches to be trained by national coach, Bryan Merrett, to Club coach standard.

With Devon's first and second senior teams in contention for promotion in their respective divisions this season, spirits have been very high in the senior squads. Co-operative teamwork and practice is the recipe for their success, along with the backing of Plymouth's committee, who are making training facilities available to them.

News from the junior team has not been so good, but, with Jane Wright back in the No 1 girls slot and Sarah Pengelly at No 2, they have come back from their last two fixtures with a promising draw and a well earned win.

Halex National League

Pengeley Sports Torbay One have pulled off promotion in fine style. They are already sure of a position in the first division next season.

Global Sports Plymouth are sitting top of the Third Division West and have also got an outstanding chance of promotion, thus keeping Devon's flag flying in the second division.

Pengeley's second team have signed on Somerset's No 1 Phillip Payne and on his first appearance he notched up the only win of the day, against Leicester's No 2.

In the team's previous match, against their local rivals Global, Devon's junior No 1, Richard Aitken took on Devon senior No 1 Gary Wilson.

Richard played with great determination and tenacity, to claim an unexpected win against Gary in an exciting three-gamer.



Julie Billington

County Notes

Tournament Travel

Devon girls were prominent in the closing stages of the Cornish 2-Star. Twelve year old Helen Wright reached the semi-finals of both the under 17 and under 14 events, being put out by Melonie Carey and Tracey Logg respectively.

Tracey then met Sarah Pengelly in the final of the under 14 event. Tracey went on to defeat Sarah in three games. The star of the day, however, was young Claire Pengelly, who in her first season of competitive play put up a fine performance to win the under 12s.

Snowed up

Devonian players in particular, look forward to the T.S.B. Exeter 1-Star Junior Open tournament, so it was most unfortunate that heavy snow stopped many of our promising players from attending.

But it was encouraging to hear that the entry was up by 30% on previous years and that the under 11 entry had actually trebled.

Even without some of our top players, we had four representatives in the finals. Sarah Pengelly lost to Tina Sadler in three. Richard Aitken made his second appearance running the under 17 final, only to lose to Phillip Payne, and Chris White and Kevin Rowe lost to the Cornish pairing of Kevin Stevenson and Howard Williams in the junior doubles.

Results:

U11BS: Ewan Finlayson b Mark Smith 10, 11. U11GS: Nicola Deaton b Katherine Gent 10, 13. CBS: Neil Bevan b Stephen Bettison 19, 12. CGS: Tina Sadler b Sarah Pengelly - 19, 14, 18. JBS: Phillip Payne b Richard Aitken 10, 16. JGS: Andrea Wood b Tina Sadler 19, 16. JBD: Kevin Stevenson/Howard Williams b Kevin Rowe/Chris White. JGD: Sarah Webb/Kirsty Withyman b Sarah Kettle/Fiona Stuart.

New name

The North Devon league has now adopted the title of 'North Devon Motors' in recognition of the sponsorship gained from them. This season the league is running three divisions with thirty-one teams competing.

It is hoped that Devon will host the popular team and individual event of the Western Counties Championships rather than let the inter-regional tournament drop from the calendar. The proposed date is the 31st May.

Closing note

One five year old aspiring table tennis player to her father during their 'play session',

"Daddy, we've played on top of the table, can we play underneath now please?"

DURHAM

by Harry Black

Peter McQueen, won the mens singles title at the Durham County Closed championships sponsored by the Sun Alliance Insurance Group when he beat Philip Stafford in the final at Seaham Leisure Centre.

Number one seed McQueen beat the holder Tony Gelder in the semi-finals while Stafford the seventh seed beat second seed Darren McVitie.



Peter McQueen

Of the eight seeds only one failed to reach the quarter finals, Tom Robson, the No 8 seed. His place was taken by Chris Blake after his 21-17, 21-15 victory over Robson.

Lynne Yarnell, last years runner-up, went one better when she beat team mate Shirley Gelder in the womens singles final.

The mens doubles holders, No 1 seeds Cliff Olsson and David Godbold lost to second seeds Peter McQueen and Tom Robson.

In the womens doubles final - a repeat of last year - holders Lynne Yarnell and Lynne Bainbridge lost their title to Linda Spensley and Shirley Gelder.

The veterans singles final also involved last years finalists but this time Tom Bainbridge retained the title when he beat Gordon Bissett.

The junior events were a personal triumph for Washington's Paul

Senior Division

Peterlee	7	7	0	0	28
Sunderland A	7	5	0	2	20
Philadelphia A	7	5	0	2	19
Darlington	7	4	0	3	17
Sunderland B	7	4	0	3	14
Philadelphia B	6	1	0	5	5
Sunderland C	7	0	1	6	3
Bishop Auckland	6	0	1	5	2

Junior Division

Sunderland A	7	6	0	1	24
Sunderland B	7	6	0	1	24
Bishop Auckland	7	3	0	4	12
Peterlee	7	2	1	4	10
Philadelphia	8	0	1	7	2



Alf in action for Severn Sound

Swift 14, who cleared the board in the three events. In both the U15 Youth Singles and U17 Youth Singles the No 2 seed beat the top seed 12 year old Ian Collier.

Swift and his partner Ian Telford, who were the top seeds defeated the unseeded pairing of Ian Collier and Graeme Sanderson in the junior doubles.

Durham won their first match of the season when they defeated Northumberland II in the bottom of the table local derby by six sets to four.

Thanks again are recorded to the ladies, Lynne Yarnell and Lynn Bainbridge who were unbeaten and accounted for three of the sets, the others being Philip Stafford and Tom Robson's victories over Malcolm Lusk plus a mens doubles to add to the total.

Durham County League

As I write these notes it looks likely that a play-off is needed to decide the junior division title as both Sunderland's A and B teams are level at the top with one match each to play. On paper both the sides should gain maximum points but table tennis can open up some surprises.

Peterlee are the new title holders of the Senior Division. In their last match of the campaign they defeated Sunderland C 7-3. Last seasons champions Sunderland A finished runners-up.

P	W	D	L	Pts
7	7	0	0	28
7	5	0	2	20
7	5	0	2	19
7	4	0	3	17
7	4	0	3	14
6	1	0	5	5
7	0	1	6	3
6	0	1	5	2

P	W	D	L	Pts
7	6	0	1	24
7	6	0	1	24
7	3	0	4	12
7	2	1	4	10
8	0	1	7	2

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

by Alf Pepper

As this report is actually being written at the end of yet another season I am indeed pleased and proud to mention that our sport is without question or doubt - on the up and up in Gloucestershire.

Visiting the Glo'shire Schools Championships a few weeks ago in Cheltenham not only was I greatly impressed by the high entry but equally by the high standard of enthusiasm and play shown by all of the youngsters that were taking part, perhaps some of the Lads & Lassie's displayed certain elements not quite akin to the game, but the important thing is that - "THEY WERE THERE", enjoying themselves and above all keeping the game alive, and that's what table tennis is all about.

A little under two years ago, The Rudford & Highleadon T.T.C. in the City League took new playing premises, prior to this the Sports Council had enough faith in the club and its Administrators of the day to advance a £2,000 cash grant, The E.T.T.A. Chairman - Tom Blunn came down and opened this old club, with a new building. Today this club sports eleven teams in the Gloucester City League, can also truthfully say that the County's No-1 - 2 & 3 ranked men all belong to it, this season alone Rudford have won the Providence Capitol County Premier League completely unbeaten, and where-as last year they were Runner's-up in the City 1st Division this year they have won that also, quite a success story.

Late in January Cirencester formed a T.T. League after about 26 years, Andrew Alridge was appointed Chairman, Mike Savage Secretary and Bob Davis got the job of Chancellor of the Treasury. At the present time they have nine teams taking part in one Division. I'm told that for next season plans are afoot for another Division - Cirencester at the moment are not affiliated to Gl'shire, they are still finding their way and treading carefully - but hopefully well prior to next seasons start, I for one Sincerely hope that they will Affiliate. To further improve their status - quo, Cirencester simply cannot afford to remain OUTSIDE the affiliation zone.

Yes Gloucestershire is far from being a dead table tennis County as I think my previously mentioned facts point out.

County Teams

The seniors at the moment are top of their respective Division 3C and with Beds 1sts and 2nds and Oxford yet to play, are in with a very good chance, but we must not count our chickens before they are hatched.

County Notes

The juniors are not doing quite so well and currently lie around fifth place. They had a real disaster match with Dorset losing out 3-7 to a team who had not won one game this season. Now, with one game left to play against Avon, my guess is that they will finish up in fifth of sixth position.

Craig Saunders and Lawrence Symonds age-wise will be out of junior status next season and will undoubtedly be missed, whoever takes their place will have to raise their game considerably to do anything at all in this respective division.

Severn-Sound Independent Local Radio

I have once again enjoyed broadcasting all aspects of our sport on a regular weekly basis this season. ETTA Deputy General Secretary Mike Watts gave a 9½ minute interview during the Cotswold Junior Select at the Gloucester Leisure Centre in February, which, Severn-Sound played twice over the air in the sports programme.

NORFOLK

Ray Hogg

Between the Cleveland and the English Open we had the pleasure of entertaining the Japanese national team in Norwich - and entertaining it certainly was. It was decreed that only Norwich Foxwood players would play against the Japanese, in other words no imports to artificially strengthen the team.

Before a sell-out crowd of about 600 we had the thrill of seeing some of the world's best players in action in a relaxed manner not needing to bring out some of their armoury of services and shots against the Norwich players.

The result is not important - suffice to say that an excellent evening's entertainment was had by all finishing with an exhibition between the top two Japanese men that had the audience asking for more.

Apart from the match, it was good to see the cooperation between the city, county and national league Foxwood in staging the match. Also a nice profit for all three.

The Norwich league staged a veterans day and a hard bat tournament at their Miller Hall recently to test the interest in such things and also to make full use of this excellent facility.

26 entered the veterans day including some who had not lifted a bat in anger for many years. Stan Honor won both the over 40 and over 50 events but had a close call in both finals from Ken Hollingsworth and John Mansi who in the semi finals beat Doug Ribbons in the best game of the day. I anticipate a much bigger entry next year.

The hard bat day attracted 43 players and some most peculiar bats which the ITTF would have banned.

Some of our younger players seemed quite at home with hard bats and 13 year old Mark Wilson got to one of the finals but Doug Bennett was untouchable on the day and won both events with ease.

Norwich Foxwood national league in division 2 have picked some valuable points in their last few matches. As Richard & Martyn Stevenson have been out of action for most of the season we expected to be candidates for relegation but the re-vitalised Doug Bennett and continually improving Neil Pickard are enabling us to pick up points.

The county veterans team came back from Northampton with a 5-4 defeat and **Frostbite!**

NORTHANTS

by Dennis Millman

Fourteen hours of play in the Kettering Closed tournament ended with Graeme McKim clinching the mens singles for the fourth time in succession.

And he did it in style, to sustained applause from an appreciative crowd, after a first-ever tournament confrontation with Keith Nicoll - the only other player ever to record four straight singles wins.

Earlier, spectator acclaim had been limited by the speed of the rallies and the eagerness of the participants to gain the initiative. But in a contest which illustrated all that is best in the modern game, it was McKim's slight edge in speed and confidence which enabled him to maintain the upper hand.

For once the winner's passage had not been such an easy one, and in the quarter-final he had dropped an end to Steve Kendall, while, at an earlier stage, Nicoll was taken the full distance by Richard Elliott. In the semi-finals both big guns had anxious moments against Andy Trott and Andy Edmonds respectively, before emerging to embark upon their classic confrontation.

Edmonds and Trott who seem destined to join McKim and Nicoll as the country's top quartet of players also had their successes. Edmonds joined McKim to take the mens doubles, while Trott retained the boys singles and also linked up with Richard Ambrose to lift the doubles, an event which has fallen to Ambrose three times in a row with a different partner on each occasion.

Trott also came through in the premier division handicap where in the final he conceded one point to Chris Hamdshaw and after losing the first end fought back to a hard-earned success.

Revelation

A revelation in the mens doubles was the form displayed by Mark Nannery and Steve Brown who ousted John Palmer and Graham Ball plus the Nicoll-Handshaw pairing before falling at the final hurdle.

Nicoll however came out on top in the mixed doubles, where he and Debbie Kimbell got the better of two deuce games against Edmonds and Ann Woolston. Debbie featured in three finals, teaming up with Anne Nicoll in the womens doubles to record a third successive victory; victims this time being Jackie Rowson and Shirley Everard. But she failed to hold on to the singles crown in which she was well beaten by Glenis Hooper who produced her best form at the right time to collect her first title.

The veterans singles also provided highlights with Palmer and Dave Marsh locked in a titanic battle at the semi-final stage which went to expedite with Palmer leading 19-11 in the first.

Palmer took this, Marsh the second, with Palmer getting away in the third to reach the final of an event he won five times from 1978 to 1982.

It was not to be another Palmer success story, for the in-form Geoff Atkinson hit through his renowned defence to retain the crown.

Over 350 matches were completed during the event at Kettering Recreation Centre, a tribute to the skill and durability of organiser Phil Slade who was stationed at the tournament desk throughout the fourteen hours.

Other results:- Consolation singles - Richard Ambrose; First division handicap - Richard Elliott; Second division handicap - Charlie Hickman; Third division handicap - Jackie Rowson; Girls singles - Ruth McLaren; Mystery doubles - Glen Robertson & Matthew Pitts; U15 singles - Neil Atkinson; U13 singles - Rob Filik.

Comfortable

The firsts warmed up for their match with Hertfordshire with a comfortable win against the seconds with Andy Edmonds, Iain Randle, Mandy Brown and Margaret Maltby all unbeaten.

Herts provided sterner opposition particularly in the shape of John Taylor, who defended brilliantly and the highlight of the match came when Edmond's rapier attack just got the better of Taylor's masterly defence.

Iain Randle also scaled the heights to beat Keith Samuels; Andy Trott again made the transition from junior to senior ranks; and Margaret Maltby and Mandy Brown contributed three wins in straight games as Northants won 8-2 for the second time in the month.

Meanwhile the seconds troubles continued but the juniors showed promise as they shared the spoils with Suffolk with Trott, Elliott and Raymond Jacobs all contributing to a competent performance.

The veterans, too, have had a good season for although they suffered a heavy defeat against Yorkshire it was sandwiched between narrow wins against Cheshire II and Norfolk, as Keith Jones, Joyce Porter and Geoff Atkinson made the most of some newly-found sponsorship from the Cheltenham and Gloucester Building Society.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Pauline Long

Peter McQueen and Clare Mouzon retained their mens and womens singles titles in the Northumberland county closed championships at Scotswood Sports Centre. They also combined to win the mixed doubles, and McQueen completed a notable hat-trick by also taking the Premier/Div. 1 handicap title.

Results

MS: McQueen b Ian Robertson 20, 12. **WS:** Mouzon b Christine Burke 15, 9. **VS:** Fred Short b Maurice Cheek 11, 15. **MD:** Robertson/Neil McMaster b McQueen/Thomas Blackman - 11, 12, 18. **WD:** Burke/Caron Guthrie b Mouzon/Pauline Long 19, - 13, 21. **XD:** McQueen/Mouzon b Robertson/Guthrie 22, 18.

H/Cap (Premier/Div. 1): McQueen (scratch) b Robertson (+2) 15, 19. **H/Cap (Div. 2, 3 & 4):** Steven Riggs (+8) b Burke (+4) 15, 19.

In the Wilmott Cup the Northumberland League side of McQueen, McMaster and Robertson advanced to the quarter-finals with a 5-1 win over the Bradford League, and were next due to meet the Warrington League.

The Rose Bowl and Carter Cup sides, however, both went down 4-5 to Bradford and Ormesby respectively, but not without a great fight.

Mouzon's two wins in the Rose Bowl match included an outstanding performance to beat Melody Hill (9 in the third!), while Darren Shaw scored a fine maximum in the junior match. It was unfortunate that in both cases their efforts were not quite enough.

The latest County ranking lists show very little change, the only one of note being in the junior boys list, where Shaw has taken over the top position from Stephen Penman, who is pushed into second place.

However, the top five men (McQueen, McMaster, Robertson, Smith and Blackman) and the top three women (Mouzon, Guthrie and Burke) were involved in the trip of a lifetime during April, when they visited Newcastle's twin town of Taiyuan in China.

County Notes

They spent two-and-a-half weeks seeing the sights, playing tournaments and receiving instruction from some of the world's top coaches.

The trip was linked with a civic visit organised by Newcastle City Council, and officials included the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress as well as some local councillors and other officers.

It is hoped that the journey will have paid real dividends for North-East sport in general as well as table tennis. While in China they hoped to persuade English-speaking coaches to come back to Newcastle with them, and possibly even establish this as an annual arrangement.

Unfortunately the trip means that Mouzon (DHSS) and Burke (Inland Revenue) missed both their Department and the Civil Service National competitions. Nevertheless it is hoped that the experience will stand them in good stead for next year.

STAFFORDSHIRE

by Jack Chalkley

Our junior second team ensured their survival in Division 2A of the county championships with an away win over Warwickshire. Although not at full strength, the home side was a first team selection so the 6-4 victory was very creditable.

Once again, Adrian Thorp scored two singles successes and earned the trip with our first team to the second premier weekend at which we had great hopes of gaining our first major title in the championships.

Matthew Harvey also had two good wins, and, but for his absence during part of the year, he might also have been considered a first team possibility.

Louise Sherratt gained our other wins in her singles and, with Jane Winter, in the doubles. Robert Till was brought in as No 3 to give him experience, and he showed up well, taking both his singles to three sets.

This year, the Potteries Closed acted as a curtain raiser to the County Closed. Craig Bakewell retained his mens title (Finney Cup) with a 21-8, 12-21, 21-15 win over Eddie Wilkes and Trish Brookes took the womens title (Baker Cup) again with a 21-14, 21-17 win over Cara Rowe.

Craig had two further victories in the mens doubles (Leeding Cup) with Stephen Slater and mixed (Proctor Cup) with Carrie Filmer, and Trish had her second title with a win in the womens doubles (Upton Cup) with Anne Williamson.

Stephen Slater took the junior title (Beryl Broad Cup), beating Martin Riley 21-13, 21-18, but the Riley family collected two honours, Natalie winning the junior girls and father John retaining the veterans Beryl Thorpe trophy. Matthew Parr beat Richard Clark in the cadets, 21-19, 11-21, 21-18.

Craig Bakewell repeated his success at the County Closed with a straight sets win over Mark Evans in the final of the mens singles. Seeds Stan Deakin and Dave Hanney failed to reach the quarter-finals, and unseeded John Hancock had a good win over Tony Isaac to reach the semi-final.

Nerves again prevented Andy Rioch from achieving his ambition of taking the county title, Mark Evans coming back to win a close semi-final. Helen Lower took the junior girls title and then staged a recovery to win the womens singles final against holder, Janet Dunning.

Juniors Adrian Thorp and Stephen Slater dominated the junior and intermediate events, with Thorp getting the better of Slater, playing with an injured shoulder, in both finals. Most other events went according to expectations, although Bakewell and Isaac prevented Evans and Hancock from taking the mens doubles for the third time in a row.

Results:

MS: Bakewell (P) b Evans (P) 12, 19. WS: Lower (W) b Dunning (W) - 12, 21, 15. IS: Thorp (W) b Slater (P) 15, 18. JBS: Thorp b Slater 19, 15. JGS: Lower b Angela Sanders (W) 16, 7. CBS: Gary Knights (WB) b Steve Hanks (L) 16, 14. CGS: Louise Flaherty (Ws) b Joanne Foxall (P) 17, 17. VS: John Riley (P) b Peter Smith (P) 13, 16. MD: Isaac/Bakewell b Evans/Hancock 21, - 20, 14. WD: Dunning/Sanders b Rachel Roberts (S)/Tracey Spencer (W) 18, 19. XD: Dunning/Greg Hallam (P) b Bakewell/Roberts 14, - 20, 17. JD: Thorp/Slater b Knights/Hanks 19, - 18, 11. (P-Potteries, W-Wolverhampton, Ws-Walsall, WB-West Bromwich, S-Stafford, L-Lichfield).

In the county league, with the programme nearing completion, West Bromwich are the unexpected winners of the first division, with last year's top team, Potteries A, runners-up.

Potteries B head Division 2 with Walsall B in second place, and down in Division 4, Stafford D take first place above Potteries C.

Final positions in Division 3 are not to hand, but Tamworth A, so far unbeaten, look likely winners.

The success of Fiona Elliot over the last few years in reaching the top flight of the national ranking list and gaining representative honours for England has not received mention so far in this column.

Like all her Wolverhampton colleagues, her friends around the county are extremely proud of her achievements. We extend to her our congratulations and best wishes for her continued success, and, of course, we are grateful for her contribution which helped our county side retain their place in the premier division.

Unfortunately, Fiona, and several others of our top players, were missing from our County Closed due to a clash of events, but we hope that before long she will be able to enter and gain a county title, something which has eluded her up to now.

SATURDAY TREBLE FOR SURREY

Frank Hams

In March three Surrey teams played at home in important games and all won.

The second team in their top of the table clash with Essex won emphatically 7-3. For Dave Harding, Rasul Farhat, Rue Bole, Michele Hams and Debbie Simmonds their remaining games were most significant in their fight for promotion. This was Michele's first game of the season and her appearance at the end of any table tennis table these days is as rare as her father's loop.

After a good closed tournament, Mike Pearson also made a rare appearance for the vets team in their relegation battle with Avon. He won two in the 5-4 win, with eases relegation fears.

The juniors (1st team) beat Middlesex II 6-4. But however well Matthew Pernet, Richard Jones, Simon Philips, Tracy Pritchett, Catherine Binks and Cheryl Bateman (who didn't play against Middlesex), play in their next match, the best they can do is to finish second in the division. But for a team with at least one further year in the juniors this is most encouraging.

Ham-fisted

Spare a thought for Mike Hammond. In the Essex 3-Star he arrived at Harlow for a 9 am start only to find his group opponents had failed to arrive. He returned homeward took a wrong turn and ended up near Maidstone.

Next morning, just after 9 am he lost his first set.

In the Kent 2-Star Dave Harding travelled early to Gillingham only to find his group opponents absent. Other players in the South of England tournament suffered the same galling experience.

The entry forms for all these events state that play will commence in groups. Organizers, of course, cannot guarantee that players turn up. But they should take steps to ensure that no one leaves without their full quota of matches (unless they do not want to) particularly as the cost of entering tournaments is so high.

One way to give everyone all their games is to have 'reserve' players. They would become an accepted part of the draw and would attend at the same timings of the groups. They would *not* be late entries, be-

ing drawn with everyone else. Absentees would be substituted by these players. If everyone attended, the 'reserve' players would play themselves in groups in the normal way and take their place in the first round, or in the place of byes. Experienced organisers would know how many 'reserves' to allow for.

There may be disadvantages to this scheme that are not apparent to me but I feel there is an obligation to look after the interests of the main body of players who make up the tournaments. Alun Garraway (Essex) Dave Harding (S of England) Ron Wilde (S of England-Vets) all gained maximum points for good wins in these events, but pride of place goes to Jane Barella who got a sackful of points when beating Alison Gordon!

In a national league match recently Martin Shuttle after losing a match playing for Abeng, threw his bat at a wall. (I assume he was aiming for his bag!) He missed, and hit a window - what you might call a smash hit.

Alun Garraway, in Germany to watch the German open, was allowed to enter the tournament when another English player, Chris Bartram, was injured and unable to play. He lost his first round match which was officiated by two English umpires who faulted him on his services - they have ways of making you serve correctly! But I wonder why they are not as strict over here?

Garbet fit for comeback?

Lorraine Garbet has been seen recently helping with coaching, and at Surrey tournaments. So long one of our leading players, she played with immense determination. Can she be persuaded to make a comeback?

Anyway, it was good to see her looking so fit. Jayne Packington also looked fit and well at the South of England tournament. Jayne is another 'old' player who has given Surrey many valuable playing hours. Mike Kercher was noticed speaking to her; was he thinking she may be needed for another County game?

During the national league match between Graham Spicer and Nittaku Ruislip, Jimmy Cartwright had an unusual decision to make when Frank Hams served to John Burleton.

The return hit the net and dropped immediately onto the net support which grips the edge of the table and ricocheted away without touching the actual playing surface.

The incident happened at the beginning of the third game and both players agreed, after a short discussion, with the decision of the referee. But, without checking your rule book first, what decision would you have made if it had been 20-20 in the third?

County Notes

SUSSEX

John Woodford

If only junior talent was emerging at the same rate as star players are suddenly appearing in the ranks of the veterans, Sussex would have few problems.

There are one or two hopeful signs for the young ones. Scott Greenbrook and his brother Marcus are at last emerging as powerful players at Crawley, the town where no-one can be found willing to run their closed championships, so there will not be one this season.

Over at Hastings and Bexhill two girls are emerging as fine prospects Rosemary Rainton, the Hastings ladies champion at 16 and Bexhill-based Julie Lawrence, the Sussex No 1 junior and victor at the recent Hastings Youth Championships.

I have lost count of the number of veterans teams Sussex is running in the county championships, possibly it is three. The first team is running up with three other leading teams and can now call upon such skilled newcomers as Robin Stace (who recently up-ended Henry Buist), Keith Horton and Roger Chandler should he elect to be available. Not to mention the men with a fine record over the past ten years as a Sussex veteran Alan Rowden and of course Mike Watts the intrepid ETTA Deputy General Secretary whose admin duties frequently interfere with his playing ambitions.

Phil Smith has finally gained his reward for a great campaign by being awarded the Sussed No 2 ranking under Adrian Moore, a move that should have taken him to the final of the all-Sussex championships at Lancing on 16th April. Stephen Moore is now No 3 so the Smith wedge operates between the brothers for the first time.

Rankings:

1	Adrian Moore	(2)
2	Phil Smith	(3)
3	Stephen Moore	(1)
4	Ritchie Venner	(4)
5	Malcolm Francis	(5)
6	Roger Chandler	(6)
7	Keith Horton	(8)
8	Jon Green	(-)
9	Paul Elphic	(13)
10	Andy Walker	(15)
1	Teresa Moore	(1)
2	Sally Weston	(2)
3	Sheila King	(3)
4	Clare Hewett	(-)
5	Sally Haffenden	(-)
6	Claire Wicks	(8)
7	Z. Hussein-Ellis	(6)
8	Sally Lucas	(12)
9	Lynn Trussel	(9)
10	Angela Maskell	(-)

A commemoration award was made to George Halversen after the Midland Open in appreciation of his valuable work as chairman of the executive committee of the Warwickshire Association.

Congratulations to Mrs Veronica Jackson (Birmingham) Stan Lenton and Jack Elliott (Coventry) whose nominations for the Merit Award have been approved by the ETTA's National Council in recognition of their hard work in promoting table tennis in the Warwickshire Area.

County Defeats

All three matches were lost 6-4 on March 1st due, in the main, to the inability to field the strongest teams; one reason being Closed tournament events clashing with county fixtures.

The senior A side lost to Worcester, junior A to Staffs, and the junior B to Clwyd.

As both junior sides have had to play reserve players making their first county appearances, they performed very creditably.

The reluctance of some players to play for the county has caused disappointment and it is apparent from the latest results that there is little hope of any teams winning their division.

It was all change at the Swindon senior closed table tennis championships.

The absence of last year's mens and womens champions signalled changes in every name on the trophies - the first time for years this has happened.

And two players steamed in to line-up a couple of trophies each. Ray Hughes and Claire Hunter both scored double tops.

Hughes became the new mens champion when he defeated Steve Davies in the final.

But it was Hughes's semi-final against Ernie Howell which will be remembered as the match of the championships.

Howell, who last won the title more than 20 years ago, shed the years to take the opening game.

And it looked as if the fairytale was to come true for the veteran who was out of the game for years through injury. He held a match point with the second game only to see Hughes snatch it away from him with some searching forehands.

Howell battled back to 2-all in the deciding game - and then served a fault. It was a shattering blow and Howell never recovered.

WARWICKSHIRE

Mary Rose

Ranking list amendments

Boys

- 1 Jeffries
- 2 Chauhan
- 3 Smith
- 4 Thomas
- 5 Todd
- 6 Singh
- 7 Felton

Girls

- 1 A Ledwitch
- 2 T Green
- 3 L Spilsbury
- 4 K Ryan
- 5 N Meddings
- 6 C Woodward
- 7 Hollihan

Twelve boys and five girls participated in a junior trial at Coventry. Missing were Leigh Jeffries, Williams, Rashid, Liza Spilsbury and Alison Ledwitch.

The finishing order was:

Boys - Chauhan, Smith, Tod, Singh, Felton, Thomas, Ameghino, John, J Perry.

Girls - Green, Meddings, Woodward, Hollihan, R Ledwitch.

A feature of the trial was the tremendous improvement of Nicola Meddings (Birmingham) who at 10 years old should have a very bright future.

Player Focus

After last months feature on a veteran player, Anne Lloyd of Birmingham, I will this time look at one of our junior talents.

Kate Ryan of Leamington produced a fine performance in the national Under 14 cadet girls trials at Luton. The talented 13 year old won four of eight singles in her group which should give her a place in the national top 20 ranking lists.

Kate also enjoyed a notable achievement on reaching the cadet girl (Under 14) final at the Cardiff Open. In the final she took No 1 seed Tina Sadler from Wales to three games before losing 21-17, 31-21, 21-23 in a well contested final.

It was the first time that a Warwickshire cadet had reached a major final outside the county area which suggests well for the future.

Junior Coaching Rallies

After the success of the first Rally on 22nd December when 50 players took part, comments from players and coaches alike seemed to indicate that it should be a regular event.

A second rally was organised for 2nd March and it was hoped to hold others on April 20th, June 1st, June 29th and August 31st.

It is hoped that at least one of the sessions could be used for the beginner more than the advanced player.

WILTSHIRE

Laurie Selby

Claire Hunter was quick to take her chance to grab the womens singles title in the absence of Claire Maisey - winner of the previous three years.

Claire's greater control and patience put her in the driving seat against Brenda Lee in the final.

Brian Powell, the top seed, took the veterans singles with Howell again the runner-up.

And it was third time unlucky for Howell in the mens doubles final. He and Brian Powell went down to Hughes and Graham Oxley.

The mixed doubles went unexpectedly to the young pairing of Raymond Powell and Jenny Neale who beat veterans Brian Powell - Ray's dad - and Sylvia Morse.

Claire Hunter picked up her second title when she teamed with Helen Wilson to win the womens doubles which was played on a group basis.

The divisional singles final, for players in the second, third and fourth divisions, turned out to be an all-junior battle between Paul Timmis and Neil Everden. Paul won in straight games.

Only one trophy stayed in the

same hands in the junior tournament.

That was the under 13 championship which Nathan Pickett kept firmly in his grasp.

He grabbed the title for the second year in a good, sporting, final against Stuart Fry.

Raymond Powell, runner-up last year, stepped up to take the major prize in the under 17 singles.

He was much too sharp for Jasvinder Singh, the improving left-hander who ended the chances of last year's winner Paul Tuck repeating his success.

Singh had the consolation of taking home the boys doubles trophy with Steve Ely.

Colin Worgan sneaked out in two deuce games against Paul Timmis to take the under 15 singles.

Sarah Devine snapped up the under 13 singles which was played on a round-robin basis.

The most exciting final was between Peter Fry and Peter Collar for the junior divisional trophy. Fry just collared it in a three game thriller.

Raymond Powell has been finding out about the ups and downs of the Wiltshire rankings which, like the national rankings, are now done on a points basis.

County Notes

He races up the senior list to number three after winning the latest ranking tournament.

But he is toppled from number one spot in the under 18 section by Michael Auchterlonie who won the junior tournament.

Satchell and Miss Maisey show no sign of releasing their grip at the top of the senior sections.

Getting there

Dad was chuffed and his son was puffed when the British Rail Western Region All-Line table tennis championships were decided.

Dad, Brian Powell of Swindon, beat his son Raymond in the finals to get the trophy back again.

It was sweet revenge for Brian who saw Raymond take the cup after beating dad in last year's final.

Brian reached the final by beating Oxfordshire's Gerry Collins and Raymond scored a narrow win over Berkshire veterans' champion Johnny Morris.

This set the scene for a family confrontation between the Swindon veteran champion and the town's junior champion.

This time dad's steady play and wise head tamed the brilliant but patchy hitting of Raymond.

But Raymond was on the winning side when he teamed up with his father and Maurice Neate to take the team title.

The Swindon side beat the home team, Didcot, 5-2 in the final.

Gwen clocks another honour

There was an honour for another Swindon player at the tournament.

Gwen Hazell, eight times winner of the Swindon singles championship, was presented with a pendulum clock to make her 25 years' playing for the Western Region.

Gwen has also played for Great Britain in the railways world championship. She first played in York in 1964 and was in the teams which played in Yugoslavia in 1970 and in Czechoslovakia in 1978.

She has competed in the inter-county championships for Wiltshire for 26 consecutive years.

In that time Gwen, who now plays for the veterans' team, has chalked up 12 county titles, including the singles championship three times.

She was also in the Wiltshire side which won the South West championship in 1964.

Bitter defeat

Wiltshire table tennis teams salvaged only two points in their latest round of county championship matches.

The senior and junior teams each picked up points with 5-5 draws but the veterans went down 4-5 to Berkshire.

And that was a bitter defeat for the home side who were neck-and-neck with Berkshire in the race for their championship. Neither had previously lost.

Ironically Berkshire sneaked home with the help of former Swindon player Mike Harris who won both of his singles for the visitors.

Brian Powell, Swindon's veterans champion, was the only undefeated Wiltshire player in the match which was played at Churchfields School.

The seniors travelled to Essex where they were made to battle hard for a point.

Kevin Satchell - now a full-time table tennis player - was in superb form, snapping up his two singles matches with a class display.

Claire Hunter, playing in her first county match of the season, also did well to finish the day undefeated.

There was little between the two sides throughout the match and Wiltshire snatched a point when Kevin Edwards won the last with a cliff-hanging 22-20 win in the deciding game against Stuart Gibbs.

And it took a tremendous last-ditch effort from Wiltshire juniors to get them out of a hole in their game against Cornwall in Swindon.

The home team were 3-5 down but Lorraine Cox and Ray Powell chalked up wins in the last two matches to pinch a point.

Powell had a good day, winning his other singles and partnering Paul Tuck to victory in the doubles.

SPORTING SCHOLARSHIPS AT SWANSEA

The University College of Swansea have established six cultural and sporting scholarships (worth £500 per term for up to three years) (for undergraduate students entering in to the college during 1986).

The scholarships, available to

those who have already reached a high national standards of excellence, allow students to pursue and develop their natural talents while reading for a degree.

Bath University and Edinburgh already have similar schemes for leading sports men and women.

Fairholm family favourite



Director of coaching, Dave Fairholm and wife Cheryl with daughter Elisha

MARK'S DAY AT HALIFAX

Yorkshire's Rea Balmford

Robertshaw added the womens doubles with Hayley Gillespie and the mixed doubles with Stansfield to a singles success in which she beat Barbara Gee.

VS: Brian Cadman Div 2/3 singles: N Blackburn Div 4/5 singles: S crowther Div 6/7 singles: D Crossley.

The signing of England's top cadet Michael O'Driscoll from Mirfield by Unity only emphasizes that the Bradford league is the Mecca for the top plays in Yorkshire. Unity, who currently lead the race in the top division, can now call upon Tim Dyson (Huddersfield), Steve Sharpe (Wakefield), and Matthew Connell (Leeds), in addition to O'Driscoll.

Their closest challengers - the two teams of Clayton Heights - field more native Bradfordians, but also number Harrogate's Mick Emmerston in their ranks.

Top players playing outside their home league has long been a bone of contention, but every credit must go to Bradford. They have the razor keen competition to offer which attracts players to the city from as far afield as Harrogate in the North and Sheffield in the opposite direction.

Grass Roots enthusiasm at Leeds

In a national magazine bouquets usually find their way in the direction of the top players, whether it be at national, county, league or even club level. But table tennis is played just as enthusiastically at the grassroots, and a story of dedication comes from division 8 of the Leeds league.

Alison Hardy, Ray Wildman and Graham Spackman, representing TSB No 2, returned to competitive play at the beginning of the 1982/3 season and, midway through that season earned their first draw.

That one minor success apart, the side played some 73 matches without a win to their credit, but the enthusiasm of the players never waned as they continued their fixtures in a true spirit of sportsmanship.

An unenviable record after 3½ years came to an end recently when TSB ran out winners for the first time.

The Leeds league are rightly proud of the Bankers' trio and, in these days of diminishing leagues and decreased commitment, Yorkshire add their warm congratulations.

Horses for courses

Tony Russe explains the trainers role

The close proximity of the dates of the English senior closed and the Cheltenham national hunt festival may be accidental but it did remind me of the similarity of the job of the table tennis coach and the racehorse trainer. The object of the exercise being to get one's charges to the races fit enough to do themselves justice and to ensure that final preparation before the off has them ready to win. So it was with a heart full of hope and no little confidence that this coach set off for Oldham on 7th March, 1986. My runners, Adrian Moore, Colin Wilson and John Souter travelled in separate boxes.

The first indications were good. The journey was uneventful, the "stabling" arrangements at the Belgrade Hotel were excellent - one up to the admin. team, who only get remembered when things go wrong! The venue at Oldham sports centre was well chosen - chalk up another plus. The lighting was good, arena well laid out, comfortable seating for spectators and resting players, solid Dunlop tables and the advance going on the floor good to firm. I hope I am not getting deaf as the years advance but I heard no adverse comments at all on these matters. So far so good.

One of the problems for a coach with a number of players at a tournament is that you cannot be in two places at the same time, you do have to make a choice if you are going to give your full attention to a game. You have to decide whether a player can get through his round with the broad brush strokes of tactics and motivation ringing in his ears and pray that he remembers them under pressure.

So Saturday dawned bright and early and I girded up my loins for a working day. Careful study of the programme overnight gave me my indications where I expected my runners to finish. Off to the races!

Immediate problem! At 9.00 a.m. Adrian is on table 7 and Colin is on 3. Colin has a cold, is feeling sorry for himself and has Brian Johns to contend with. Adrian is happy and goes off armed with his little sister to ensure that no evil befalls him. The odd glance across to him from time to time satisfies me that he is doing the business and he wins

three straight. Not so on table 3. Brian Johns whether or not he knew of Colin's indisposition or, dare I say, really cared, was giving him one hell of a roasting. Colin was unable to apply himself and was punished to the extent of being 2 games down. Certain exhortations on my part before the third carried Colin through to the five minute rest.

Now this is the period where the coach must work really hard. The danger is to over talk, to make too many points. It has to be resisted. Anyway, Colin back on table to win fourth and confidence is back. The cold is forgotten and blood lust has taken its place. Brian continues to put up a great fight but Colin runs out the winner. So far so good.

'John' on table at 10.00 a.m. Nothing has been said between he and I and we did not have to read the programme notes to know that the fifth place in the Men's team for the European Championships is up for grabs. John is sharp, well motivated and does his job three straight, getting it all working.

The hour of 11.00 a.m. brings a choice again. This time I opt for Adrian who is up against Andy Syed. Now Andy has had a painful knee problem and is not in full practice. A real opportunity for Adrian. The plan is set, good service and power follow up, where a rally threatens to switch wings on him and remind him of his knee. All goes well, for Andy is naturally tentative and Adrian gives it a 'whack' and takes the

first comfortably. In the second, Adrian falters at a vital stage and its one all. I remind him again of his tactics and Adrian is back in business to be 2-1 up at the break.

As his coach I did not want the break but it is not up to me. Both Andy and Adrian are highly intelligent young men. Andy has, or appears to have, excellent composure. Adrian can easily go over the top by trying too hard. I try to work on this during the interval but Adrian has dreamed up some tactic of playing into Andy's backhand. I advise against it - remember the 'knee'. The fourth almost starts to become a backhand to backhand exercise and Adrian pays the penalty. I try to get Adrian settled and composed for the fifth - switch the angles, remember the 'knee'. Off we go backhand to backhand. Have I lost the power of speech? Do I think one thing and say another? No, the player's stress can undo all the plans that the coach lays. Adrian pays the penalty, he is full of self deprecation - "I'm a botler!" No he's not, he's a good player who tries too hard. He still has improvement in him and hopefully will come to terms with himself in due course. One down, two to go.

Good grief its 11.30 a.m. and its John and Paul Whiting. No time for coffee, on with the job. Paul is an excellent quick hitter who can trouble some of the best men. John will have none of it. We agree, power, power, power. At two games up and Paul wilting the third looks a formality. Oh



Stephen Scowcroft...never say die

hell, what's all that noise? Alarms, excursions, doors flung open, people rushing about, have the Russians invaded? No, false alarm. I don't know if Paul's supporters set it off, heaven forbid that I should think it, but now he's a new man. John has a fight on his hands but manages to win on 'deuce' to save the coach further discomfort. Break for lunch and to gather up the resources. Find Ladbroke's to no avail. I must remember to buy their shares instead of trying to break them!

Afternoon, 2.40 p.m. John and Steve Scowcroft, Colin and Des Douglas. I wish Colin well, having been in his corner three times already this season when he has played Des. Des is in no mood to dally and it was a three straight death. Des is sharp. John and Steve cause the coaches more concern. I have admiration for any player who 'plays his socks off' and Steve certainly can do that. His efforts at the English top twelve this year were Homeric. I need not have worried. Steve was below his best and John used his power and speed to good effect. Another three games straight win, and singles are over for the day.

Time to reminisce on games not directly involved in. Jimmy Stokes and Nicky Mason deuce in the fifth to Nicky. Matthew Syed and Chris Rogers, another desperately close in the fifth to Chris but not before the 'Dancing Destroyer' had made him sweat for every point. Two marvellous juniors, young Michael O'Driscoll and Chris Oldfield putting in some sterling work against hardened seniors.

Leave the lads to their doubles and back to the hotel for feet up and contemplation of a fiery Indian Curry for the evening repast. So far so good. Everyone has done what I had expected of them. Only John left for tomorrow and Skylet Andrew looming



Andrew Syed . . . plagued by injury

in the quarters. Worry about that tomorrow!

Sunday brings another good breakfast and a certain reluctance to pack the bags and leave the comfort of the hotel. Could this but go on for ever, etc., etc.. Anyway, 10.40 a.m. seems a civilised time for John to play Skylet. John has already had a warm up winning the quarter final doubles with Colin over Adrian and Steve Moore. Stayed well away from all parties and let them get on with it.

Now Sky has matured into a hardened campaigner, naturally talented, able to deliver the goods in a five setter. He is now a business player and consequently must be respected as such. Remind John that Sky is prepared to take the long view and that he must not burn himself out over the first two. We decide that 80 percent effort for a couple of games might be beneficial. John wins the first reasonably comfortably but is suitably chastened when Sky replies by winning the second. Now urge John to step up his work rate, which he prefers anyhow, and he takes the third and the break. Time for straight talking, remind him to stay sharp, play the previously discussed percentages and above all, that he has earned the right to win. John is a 100 per cent man. Sky is similarly revived and, no doubt, advised and the two lads play a blinder with Sky winning the leg on 'deuce'.

So its all down to the fifth. Remind John again of the 'plan' and his right to win. Sky serves and John goes 5-0 down. I am aware now how much depends on the corner feedback. If I mistime my exhortations disaster will envelope him. John keeps his cool despite his deficit, all the time beavering to get on terms. He achieves it at 18-18 with the serve. Sky pulls out a big one 18-19, then its 19-19, 20-19. Sky has the hunted look and the game goes to John on an unforced error. He is delighted, his coach is over the moon, but spare a thought for Sky. He conducts himself in a perfect manner, a true professional and honour to him.

John is immediately called for doubles. Leave them be, I need the rest. Doubles lost and after a five minute break he is called for the semi-final with Carl Prean. John's tactics are agreed, his motivation is good but the legs are going. He plays well, gives everything he's got but his tank runs out of petrol. Carl emerges

a worthy three straight winner. John has done well, I am proud of him and I tell him so. Later I spot Peter Charters shaking hands and guess the good news. He's off to the Europeans. My job is done - for a while, John's begins.

Time to relax and enjoy the finals. Good crowd and well staged. Joy Grundy and Jean Parker turn a first game loss into victory in the ladies doubles and Des Douglas and Carl Prean take the men's doubles. The ladies final is Lisa Bellinger and Joy Grundy. Lisa settles in the first and takes the game as Joy struggles mentally with her tactics and her touch. Lisa is coasting steadily in the second and then somehow lets her lead slip away. Assurance becomes not so certain, accurate snap hitting turns to "I've got to break her rhythm, hell I missed another!" Joy takes the second. I wonder if her resolution can last for five games. It can and it does, for she takes the next two to win comfortably. All praise to Joy. Lisa has done much already and we tend to forget yer youth. Another three to four years before we see the complete player. Meantime she must continue to work on her game - chop and float from preferably middle distance, maximising spin variation and keeping in touch with the table to launch counter attack. It'll come, she works.

The mens final after an initial spurt by Carl Prean was all Desmond Douglas. Des is in no mood to be dethroned and he will abdicate when he's ready, not before. Carl's turn will come, but all honour to Des for being the true professional, setting an example to all who care to learn from him.

So a happy coach's farewell to Oldham. Thinks, must thank the umpires for their forbearance of a noisy corner man. Now let my thoughts turn to Cheltenham.

Simpson succeeds in East Anglia *writes Club Coach, David Holland*

Lowestoft Table Tennis Centre was a hive of activity on 7th-9th March 1986. This was the result of senior National Coach Peter Simpson's first visit to the town. Eighteen enthusiastic players were instructed on advance techniques within the game, also a video was shown and throughout the course general discussions on stroke play took place. Peter had the assistance of Lowestoft's own club coaches Bill Sissons, Trevor Pull, Bob Peek, Cindy Peek and David Holland.

Positive play

Ken Muhr Coaching Officer of the Milton Keynes league takes a personal view

Whilst thoroughly agreeing with Paul Day (Table Tennis News, January 1986) about the need for young players to develop stronger backhands and a two wing power attack, and to play point winning shots rather than relying on safety first, I don't think that he takes enough account of the practical difficulties inherent in this. The influences towards negative play should not be underestimated. How often under pressure players revert back to it!

The emphasis of English table tennis at league level and, to a lesser extent, at inter-league, county and minor tournaments' level, is on playing safe. A young player who 'goes for his shots' in the local league is more likely as not advised by an experienced team mate to "push more", "just push", "take your time", "wait for the right ball", "work for the point", "don't rush", "don't smash", "slow down", etc etc, particularly if the player in question is losing.

The difficulty in criticising this kind of advice which comes from team mates, coaches and parents etc., is that it is sound advice to some extent. Clearly a player should not charge wildly into a game trying to crash a winner off every ball. (Being positive does not mean that).

But it is a matter of emphasis or degree. Too often the balance veers towards stifling a player's aggressiveness, risk taking and flair and, therefore, his/her future development.

Secondly, the encouragement of negative play often does lead to short term (and short lived)

success, as Paul himself notes. If you play safe at cadet or local league level you are more likely (initially) to win and, if you win, you are more likely to continue playing safe. Moreover, successful players around you will be seen doing the same thing.

But the player's horizons will be limited. A player has to have a positive attitude to go far and, if her/she is talented and positive, it won't be long before there are few in the local league to stop him/her.

However, although not theoretically affecting future prospects adversely, frequent losses are discouraging for the player and those associated with him/her. It may be no good an enlightened coach saying to that individual "keep on playing positively, even though you are now losing, and you will be much better in the long run", if success never appears to come. The youngster may even rely on this advice as an excuse. "You told me it doesn't matter if I lose".

The dilemma for coaches, therefore, is whether the confidence and encouragement a child gains by winning playing the 'wrong way' is more important for him/her than losing playing the 'right way'. The youngster may also be confused and torn between a coach who advises positive play and, for example, a locally respected player who, not having been on the open tournament circuit for many years to know any different, says this is nonsense. Parents and players who want instant success may quickly see that the latter is 'proved' to be correct.

I have been considering the kind of youngsters who have the potential to make at least a mark on the national scene. Realistically, however, most young players will not/cannot make this grade. Perhaps, for some of these, a more negative style of play would be more suitable so that they can go on enjoying the game at a more local level.

This has all sorts of implications for coaches. Should a different playing approach be instilled in players not so much according to their natural inclinations, but according to their ultimate potential? Can we spot this potential?

I believe that somehow coaches have to try to achieve for each individual an appropriate balance between aggression and patience, recognising and taking into account both the player's temperament and potential. They should also avoid putting on pressure to win every time. It is not easy.

Finally, there are all sorts of side issues to this debate. For example, the quick and easy success sometimes still to be achieved by using combination bats is a concern. And positive play is not just for attackers - defensive players also need to play positively.

Even the push shot should be aggressive and/or varied. Girls will still tend to push more. Positive play means, to me, doing whatever is necessary to win the point as opposed to waiting for an opponent to lose it. It means taking the initiative. It does not mean recklessly blasting everything in sight.

The prospects for positive play are not too bleak in this country. I have merely tried to identify difficulties. Coaches should play their part in trying to ensure that the forces of change permeate even the most reactionary enclave. When, in the local league, positive play is the accepted norm, we will have won the battle!

Boost for womens table tennis

The National Federation of Women's Institutes is to organise and promote a national table tennis event for its membership, commencing in September 1986.

Many Institutes have their own facilities but it is hoped that entries will also be forthcoming from those who do not. Copies of the ETTA address book are to be circulated to the participating Institutes and members advised to contact their local league for advice on possible venues and coaching opportunities.

"Nationally, the Womens Institute is becoming increasingly prominent in the area of sports promotion", says ETTA Development Officer Fiona Brown. "Indeed this table tennis event is one which has been made possible by their sporting sponsorship from the Milk Marketing Board. It is most encouraging that table tennis has been selected as a part of this programme and naturally we hope that this 1986/87 season will be the first in a long partnership between our two organisations."

Halex Players of the Month

The selections agreed by the national league committee are

JOHN ELLIS

John Ellis of Grove second team who plays at No 1 in the third division west was nominated Halex National League Player of the Month for March. John showed great improvement in winning all four sets in Groves fixtures against Chan Construction and Duchy Windows Launceston.

ANDY RICH

Andy Rich of first division team West Warwickshire/Birmingham was awarded the Halex National League Player of the Month for April. Andy was voted man of the match for gritty performances and calm temperament in all sets against Dagenham FC and Tibhar Larkhall.

Join the professionals

by Derek Baddeley, ATTP coordinator

A very successful and constructive meeting was held with principal officers of the ETTA at the English Closed Championships and the-ATTP Committee were pleased with the positive response given to several of our proposals.

The discussions were felt by both sides to be so helpful that it was agreed to arrange further meetings on a regular basis in order to make continuous progress on a number of initiatives, particularly the proposed new County Championships format, Stiga sponsored 3 Star tournaments (scheduling of matches, prize money distribution, advertising etc) and general development of the game.

Our AGM was held earlier at the same venue, the past year's progress reports were given by the Chairman, Secretary and Coordinator, various aspects of our work and future efforts were discussed. There were no new nominations for the officers posts or to the committee and all were therefore elected to serve for the next year. Keir Donaldson was appointed as assistant to Secretary Colin Wilson, and assistants to the Chairman and Coordinator will be appointed shortly.

The ATTP intends to run its own inaugural tournaments towards the end of this summer,

probably incorporating changes in the scoring system and an increase in net height as an evaluation experiment. ATTP printed sweatshirts and T shirts are now in stock and can be obtained from Colin Wilson or Keir Donaldson. These are royal blue with our table tennis ball logo central on the chest in white, approximately 6" in diameter, and our slogan "we are on the ball" beneath in 3/4" white lettering.

All members are now entitled to a free box of new type "Halex" balls - see Colin or Keir or ask them to post to you. Our President Johnny Leach would be pleased to have your comments when you've tried them.

Our membership is steadily increasing, and in view of the benefits we are now to give, this isn't surprising. More importantly, we hope our members (and all you non-members!) can see from the actions we are pushing on a number of fronts that we really are determined to live up to our slogan!

So why don't you join us and show your support even if you're not prepared to take an active part - remember we are always pleased to receive constructive suggestions and ideas!

Roll of honour 1985/86

Belgian Open

Gold MS: Carl Prean
Silver WD: Alison Gordon/Joy Grundy
Silver XD: Grundy/Prean
Bronze Mens Team: Prean/Alan Cooke

Hungarian Open

Bronze MS: Desmond Douglas

Finlandia Open

Silver MD: Prean/Cooke
Silver Mens Team: Prean/Cooke

English Open

Gold XD: Gordon/Douglas
Gold WD: Gordon/Grundy
Silver Mens Team: Douglas/Prean
Bronze WS: Lisa Bellinger
Bronze XD: Grundy/Prean

European Top 12

Silver Mens event: Desmond Douglas

European Championships

Bronze WS: Lisa Bellinger
Promotion to category 1: Mens team

ATTP MEMBERSHIP FORM

Enclose £2.00 cheque or postal order made payable to "ATTP" and post to: Colin Wilson, Hon Sec ATTP, 25 Brookside Crescent, CUFFLEY, Herts.

Name

Address

Postcode Tel.

Club

League Signed

You will be issued with a numbered membership card.

Sky rise

Dear Rubberneck

I personally think that your column is good for table-tennis because it adds a bit of spice and interest to the sport. But honestly; although I expect to get more stick than anyone-else, your article in the March/April issue was not fair.

You said in that article that I had got ranked in Europe and had not had an international result of any note to warrant it. Well I'm afraid that your informant is manipulating your ignorance of the international circuit because to get ranked I beat a fair player called Boris Rozenberg of Russia in the Hungarian Open who was ranked at No 15 in Europe at the time.

You may have seen him at the English Open; he was the one that beat Des Douglas 3-0. And on top of that I beat another European ranked player Bruno Parietti of France in the English Open, I also beat Englebert Hugging of Germany (who was ranked 22 in Europe) in the World Championships.

So, as you can see I accumulated quite a few points and contrary to what I was supposed to have said, deserved my ranking.

It makes me laugh to think that there are certain people who would do anything to try and bring me down but, anyway, your column like I said before is generally good. But don't be scared to write about everybody although you know as well as I do that most people can't take it.

Good luck with the column,

Skylet Andrew
30 Ranelagh Road
Stratford
London E15 3DP

Marathon man

Success is the key to new vice chairman public relations Brian Spicer's appointment. Working in sales and marketing, he has a track record second to none as he clocks up the miles on table tennis admin in his spare moments.

England players make themselves scarce at training camps when "Brian" turns up. The Sussex fitness fanatic was seen crossing the line at the recent Mars London marathon in just under three hours!

Aggressive play

George Bohm from West Germany found himself sent home in the middle of the Prague tournament after being accused and admitting "violence of the tongue" to the top German coach.

The former Rumanian was invited to withdraw the remark applied to the gentleman in question but declined. Indeed, Rubberneck understands he went further by repeating the offence.

No doubt Bohm will soon face a disciplinary inquiry.

Make that call

Another riddle for readers: What's the difference between ESTTA public relations officer David Lomas and ETTA vice chairman Peter Charters?

One makes sixty calls in one minute.

TV coverage

Two days after the start of the European championships in Prague Rubberneck was collapsed with laughter at the predicament of top journalist Richard Eaton.

Eaton had jetted in from the European badminton championships in Sweden, dumped his luggage at the Hotel Olympic and then rushed to the stadium to join fellow press correspondent John Woodford already at the tournament.

Hours later, arriving back at the hotel around 1.30 a.m., he opened his case to find piles of ladies underwear. Worse still, they were not even the right size!

Frantic phone calls and the careful of knickers was on its way back to the airport where a distraught Czech lady was waiting almost in tears.

But in a country where lingerie opens doors faster than the local lucre, it was debatable who was the more upset.



Professional photographer

The British contingent and indeed the whole tournament had the pleasure of the intrepid Scottish photographer from Dundee, Brian Webster, a man who once seen is never forgotten.

Webster took some 400 photos at the tournament but a plot to keep him out of the finals night party did not succeed.

He eventually got in resplendent in tuxedo on the ticket of Alan Griffiths the Welsh national coach.

The deputy prime minister of Czechoslovakia was presenting some of the prizes at the finals party. But he was under-dressed compared with our Scottish friend!

Webster is always good value for a laugh - well-known for his penchant for kissing attractive ladies. Swedish eye-witnesses saw him doing just that in a Prague nightspot during the championships.

But his companions were not interested in a photo-modelling career it seemed. The photographer took his leave when friends advised that the ladies attentions were neither voluntary nor honorary!

Stuck up

England international Fiona Elliot got stuck at Manchester Airport on her way to the Wedgie Irish Open earlier this year. And all because of some table tennis rubber glue.

Despite Fiona's explanation that it helped her play better, air officials refused to allow it on the Belfast British Airways' flight believing it to represent a fire hazard.

Earlier in the week, at

Heathrow, John Souter was able to keep his glue. But only after he had shown air staff the tin was clearly labelled "non-flammable".

Meanwhile, table tennis players are waiting anxiously to see whether inhalation of the glue fumes while changing rubbers between matches might cause them problems under the new drug and doping regulations to be introduced by the English association.

School Report

Few upsets at schools championships

David Lomas

Upsets were few and far between as the seeded players shared the honours at the Dunlop English Schools Individual Championships which took place at Mansfield Leisure Centre on Saturday, May 3rd.

Only one of the eight titles was successfully defended. Bradley Billington retained his U16 crown in a close-fought final against a rare finalist in local Nottinghamshire player, John Holland, with a score of 22-20 in the third game.

John - No 5 seed - had seized his chance when No 2 seed, his cousin Damian Holland from Essex, had been forced to withdraw because of an injury sustained a few days earlier.

The other seven winners are all new names on the list of honours gained since the championships began in 1974.

The established format of the championships was again employed — contestants being county champions from a possible 50 ESTTA county association areas playing in a straight knock-out competition.

The biggest upset came in the senior (U19) boys event where No 1 seed, Mark Randle (Wa) was eliminated by Martin Stanley (Co) in the quarter-final. Stanley then went out to eventual winner Jonathon Bult (Humb) in the semi-final.

The withdrawal of No 1 seed, Joanne Shaw (WY) left the way clear for No 2 seed, Debbie Soothill (La) to lift the girls U19 title.

Another Lancashire player, Nicola McGrath, had a good day but lost to Helen Lower (W Mid) in the girls U16 event. Caroline Buckley (Bd) confirmed her No 1 status in the U13 event. And in the boys U13 category a west country final between Michael Auchterlonie (Wi) and Neil Bevan (Co) went Wiltshire's way. Darren Blake of Croydon - at the tender age of nine - took over the U11 boys title held by brother Jason, without losing a game. Organiser Paul Birch looked back with some satisfaction in seeing the four seeded players in each of the U11 events reach the semi-finals.

There was keen competition amongst the 250 players involved,

as places for the Dunlop Schools International Championships teams (Salford, July 5th and 6th) were "up for grabs".

RESULTS

U19 BOYS SINGLES

Semi-finals

Jonathan Bult (Humb) b Martin Stanley 12, 13; Andrew Ball (WY) b Peter Harris (Bu) 22, 11.

Final

Bult b Ball 7, -15, 15

U16 BOYS SINGLES

Semi-finals

John Holland (Ng) b Gavin Black (Bd) 19, 15; Bradley Billington (Dy) b Matthew Pernett (Surrey County) 7, 12.

Final

Billington b Holland 15, -18, 20

U13 BOYS SINGLES

Semi-finals

Michael Auchterlonie (Wi) b Gary Knights (St) 18, 19; Neil Bevan (Co) b Andrew Eden (La) -18, 10, 12.

Final

Auchterlonie b Bevan -16, 12, 20

U11 BOYS SINGLES

Semi-finals

Darren Blake (S Met) b Rod Manwaring (La) 13, 18; David Baker (Mi) b Martin Dawson (Dy) 17, 17.

Final

Blake b Baker 18, 19

U19 GIRLS

Semi-finals

Helen Perrott (Av) b Louise Davis (Sp) -18, 20, 19; Debbie Soothill (La) b Susan Butler (Dv) 16, 12.

Final

Soothill b Perrott 16, -17, 13

U16 GIRLS

Semi-finals

Nicola McGrath (La) b Melonie Carey (So) 19, 18; Helen Lower (W Mid) b Julie Billington (Dy) 21, -17, 10.

Final

Lower b McGrath -17, 13, 15

U13 GIRLS

Semi-finals

Caroline Buckley (Bd) b Samantha Marling (Humb) 17, 18; Joanne Roberts (WY) b Sarah Pengelly (Dv) 18, 20.

Final

Buckley b Roberts 15, 13

U11 GIRLS

Semi-finals

Sally Marling (Humb) b Caroline Watt (Ch) 12, 11; Katharine Goodall (WY) b Nicola Meddings (W Mid) 19, 15.

Final

Goodall b Marling -20, 19, 10

Consolation event winners:

U11 BOYS

Owen Sherborne (WY)

U13 BOYS

Paul Carter (Sy Met)

U16 BOYS

Scott Greenbrook (W Sx)

U19 BOYS

Paul Smith (W Mid)

U11 GIRLS

Kiersty Shaw (E Cty)

U13 GIRLS

Sally Hughes (Ox)

U16 GIRLS

Jane Wright (Dv)

U19 GIRLS

Karen Backhouse (Cu)



Girls' U19 (l to r): Louise Davis, Debbie Soothill (Winner), Mr. Paul Birch (ESTTA Competition Sec), Helen Perrott (2nd), Susan Butler (Devon).



Girls' U16 (l to r): Melonie Carey, Helen Lower (1st), Mr John Arnold (ESTTA Chairman), Nicola McGrath (2nd), Julie Billington.



Girls' U11. Katherine Goodall (West Yorkshire) receives congratulations from the Referee, Tony Chatwin.



Sean Spelman.

Spelman the Irish wizard

15 year old Sean Spelman, last season's Irish No 1 cadet, has been selected in the Irish junior team for the forthcoming European Youth Championships in Belgium, 20th-27th July.

The other junior boys are Andrew Dennison (Ulster) and Anthony Redmond (Leinster). The junior girls are Ellen McManus and Lorraine Cullen (both Leinster) and the cadet boys are James Mullan and Gary Nielson (both Leinster).

Sean's selection is somewhat special however, as he comes from a Connacht club, almost a "backwoods" as far as success at table tennis is concerned. And also for the fact that, of all five juniors, he is the only one who will be a junior again in 1987, and in 1988!

He was bitterly disappointed last season, when after totally dominating Irish cadet boys tournaments, it was decided not to send any team to the Europeans. This year he has his just reward!



1,2,3 testing

We used the experimental scoring system for our hard bat tournament in May.

In a brief survey of the players' views 90% expressed a definite view and 85% were in favour of the system of playing up to 11 points, best of seven games. There was some confusion as to whether we were just referring to the hard bat event, but on rechecking only a few changed their minds! It certainly is a system which should be tried out on a wider scale.

As to the more general impressions — it also keeps a match more lively in the spectators' eyes. There seems to be a lot more happening, and, even in a one-sided match, the weaker player has an occasional purple patch to take a game.

When the match goes to the seventh game it's almost equivalent to a drawn out deuce-in-the-third game and it becomes very tense and exciting. Matches were very entertaining - but of course this was partly due to use of hard bats and perhaps a slightly more good humoured approach to the tournament.

The scoring system seemed to discourage players from ex-

cessively long rallies of defensive play. This may be due to creating a mental attitude that each game, by itself, does not have that 'at-all-costs' level of importance. But, on the other hand, there were still many good, skillful and exciting rallies with the hard bats.

One other point made was the advantage that would be given to a player with a strong service serving first. I am not sure that this is significant, it is not often that the server goes into a 5-0 lead. But it does prompt some thought on a change in the serving pattern, such as serving alternatively, or in threes, or the first server serving twice and then five apiece. Some of these ideas present problems of mental arithmetic!

I think this scoring system has some merit in moving table tennis towards becoming more of a spectator sport. In this tournament we had the double interest of using hard bats which in itself many believe is another move in the right direction.

Perhaps others might like to try out the system.

Yours sincerely,
Jack Chalkey
Chairman & Tournament Secretary
Staffordshire CTTA
Chumleigh, Cross Street,
Gnosall, Stafford ST20 0BX

Pointer for success?

We have been carrying out experiments with the 11 point game similar to Mike Prior's thoughts on the scoring system in Table Tennis News (March/April) and recently staged a full 'German style' national league match to test fully player and spectator reaction.

Seventy-five spectators, good for a sunny Sunday at the end of April, watched Ashford's National League team, strengthened by Jon Green of Errey's Print, take on a specially formed team called Surrey Internationals. The latter consisted of three current playres: Dave Hannah, Nicky Mason and Max Crimmins, and three past players: Dave Welsman, Connie Warren and Emile Emez.

This was deliberate to see how the views of current tournament players compared with those of the past. In fact we have to report that the message received from all the players and the spectators was an unreserved "yes", and "when will it come into general use". The games were certainly more exciting to watch and the players had to concentrate throughout.

In the first half of the match, played on two tables, the sets were the best of five games of 11 points and in the second half the best of 7 games. Players and spectators agreed that the best of 7 games will be the minimum required at whatever standard of play.

As to the result Ashford, led by new No 1 Kenny Jackson, did well, losing 6-9 in the end after holding Surrey 4-4 at the half-way stage.

It is now most likely that the 11-point game will be played in the coming season of the Playrite Premier League. Presumably we will be the first league to introduce it.

Our, now extensive, 'market' research indicates that it will be welcomed and warranted. We firmly believe that it could just possibly be a turning point in the history of table tennis.

Ray Tucker
Secretary
Ashford Table Tennis Club
The Centre
Woodthorpe Road
Ashford
TW15 3JX

Protest

Yet again I feel I must protest about the so called official magazine of the ETTA. Your editorial in the March/April edition complains bitterly about the lack of coverage in the national press - agreed. But what about the coverage in our own magazine - to put it mildly it's disgusting. Reports that are months out of date ie. Europe Top 12, Des. Douglas great achievement we read about in May - over three months after the event. Hardly any tournament results, just the barest county championship results, no match reports, so far not a single result from this seasons Rose Bowl and Wilmott cup competitions. Surely these are more important than a half page spread about a 14 year old acting as an umpire!

No wonder county secretaries are reluctant to forward copy as they just do not know as and when the next issue will be coming out. Look at this latest issue (March/April) copy for the June edition is required by the 30th April, yet my copy was not delivered until the second week in May.

Articles such as International News, and Official News from ETTA have been dropped in preference of comments by Rubberneck - nothing but rubbish.

With the hap-hazard issuing of our magazine the subscriptions will fall and keep on falling.

The season is now over and done with, yet we do not yet know half of what has gone on - a thoroughly disgusting state of affairs. Bring back the old style of the magazine and lets have an issue on the 10th of each month October to May as in the old days. This new move has failed miserably to awake new interest, in fact you have put us back twenty years or more.

I am sorry to be so critical at your first efforts but this is what the grassroots of our sport are saying especially when we receive the draw for the English Open only when the tournament has been played.

Yours behind the times,
Frank Jackson
8 Cruxby Grove
Scartho
Grimsby
South Humberside DN33 2NP

Colour Crazy

Multicoloured equipment to replace the traditional dark green and white colour scheme and a new system of scoring to limit games to a target of 11 points vice 21 - that's the crazy pattern some English officials have dreamed up to try and attract interest in the Stiga National Top 12 tournament scheduled to take place at the Soham Sports Centre from 10-12 October.

Frankly, it's a load of rubbish smacking of desperation. There's nothing whatever wrong with our traditional scoring system and dressing up players and their equipment in all colours of the rainbow won't make a scrap of difference to the skills, thrills and entertainment value of the play - which is what the fans come to see.

There is a far superior and simpler formula for selling the Top 12 to the crowds, the media and hopefully to the rulemakers for the benefit of our sport as a whole. You do it by insisting that all those selected to contest the £2,100 Stiga tournament use

a bat standardised by having the same type of covering on either side of the blade. Players would then be obliged to rely on their own ability instead of switching from one side of the bat to the other to vary pace and spin artificially.

I've just returned from the highly successful and enjoyable Veteran World Championships in Rimini, Italy where the majority of us 'golden oldies' used old-fashioned standard bats to produce a taste of table tennis the way it was. We made spectators bubble and squeak with enthusiasm at the spectacular rallies which ensued.

Imagine the scope for such modern magicians as Des. Douglas and Carl Prean, Lisa Bellinger and Alison Gordon under similar conditions - believe me, TV, the press, the crowds and the players would love it. And the Stiga Top 12 would set an example the rest of the world might soon be persuaded to follow.

Johnny Leach MBE
15 Manor Links
Bishops Stortford
CM23 5RA

A Thank You to Beneficial Trust

With the successful conclusion of the third Beneficial Trust Yorkshire Junior Select championships and the severing of the sponsor's links with our sport at the end of an agreed three-year term, I feel that it is appropriate to summarize the impact which Beneficial Trust have made on table tennis at junior level.

With the six-tournament link-up including the national 'Closed' and 'Open' championships - the circuit for ambitious and talented juniors has been mapped out. These major events have been a 'must', augmented by a number of Junior 1-Star and 2-Star events in a player's own geographical area.

Looking at our own county of Yorkshire, the Beneficial Trust Grand Prix has played a major part in the development of a number of youngsters - unheard of three years ago - but now a major influence in the junior game.

To name but a few, Michael O'Driscoll and Chris Oldfield have come through from obscurity to the county's premier division squad, with the former meriting a No 3 European ranking at cadet level. With Matthew Connell, Andrew Ball, Neil Simms and John Bult also in the top twenty nationally, the future is in good hands.

Debbie Toole, Ruth Bray and Helen Broomhead occupy the 15-17 slots with the junior girls, while, moving across to the cadets we can add Nicky Ryder, Graham Cook, Mark Stephenson, Simon Holmes, Ellen Meddings, Joanna Roberts and Joanne Keighley.

All dedicated and talented players, I am sure that they would wish to be associated with the members of the Yorkshire tournament committee in saying to Beneficial Trust at the end of their connection with table tennis: 'Thank you very much for the generous help you have given and the professional way in which you have worked with us to further our sport.'

'We in the game will do our best to see that the input is not wasted, and we wish Beneficial Trust every success in their future business ventures as our ways part.'

Rea Balmford
Hon Tournament Secretary,
Yorkshire Table Tennis
Association.

Select watches

People leave all sorts of things behind - I have two watches from the Beneficial Trust Derby Junior select tournament that could be returned to their owners if they would care to contact me.

Mike Payne
534 Duffield Road
Allestree
Derby
DE3 2DL



2-man option

I was interested to read in Table Tennis News (March/April) that the Bournemouth super league "has been more of a replacement to the usual league matches rather than a supplement to them".

This was one of the areas of concern when we at Ashford were discussing the formation of a Premier League. Our concept of a two man team playing alternate weeks, eleven matches in all, not only proved extremely popular but meant that the league was not seen as a straight replacement.

It achieved what it set out to do and that was to strengthen the standard of play in the area which had never been particularly high. Of the 32 players who participated in its first season 18 still played in one or both of the local leagues on a regular basis and 10 were from outside the area.

One of the local leagues is now seriously considering introducing its own premier division because of the demand from players who want shorter matches of a consistent standard.

I hope this experience will provide further encouragement to others to rethink current formats.

Ray Tucker
Secretary
Ashford Table Tennis Club
The Centre
Woodthorpe Road
Ashford
TW15 3JX

CLASSIFIED ADS

For Sale

ITTF BOOKS. *Official Handbook* (constitution, laws in full and international regulations) - £3.00; *Handbook for Match Officials* - 65p; *Rules Booklet* (laws and international regulations) - 50p. Prices (c.w.o) include p&p from: *ETTA, 21 Claremont, Hastings TN34 1HF.*

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What IS going on?

According to "Rubberneck" a former ETTA Staff Coach was known as "The Invisible Man", another was in line for that title and a third had let down a local league or someone felt or said that he had. If true, disturbing revelations.

Clearly this cannot go on. The full-time professional coaches are part of the department of which Peter Charters is the head (Vice-Chairman Selection/Coaching). I cannot understand his silence. Let him state now whether what

"Rubberneck" writes is true or false.

If true, further questions require asking about management, about supervision, because the buck stops at the top, not at the bottom. If false, a very handsome apology will be due. I trust it will be given unreservedly.

John Prean
12 Marlborough Road,
RYDE,
Isle of Wight
PO33 1AA

Stop the knock

I found it interesting to read the articles by Mike Prior and Keith Davies under the "Grassroots" section of the March/April edition of the magazine, if only to realise that their articles expressing concern over the future of the game were similar but viewed from a different angle. Reading on further one notes Mr John Prean, yet again, felt the need to write a destructive article in what he obviously feels is in a constructive form.

I think there is a saying that if you tell people something often enough and loud enough they will begin to believe what they hear and it saddens me to read the number of articles that continually appear in this magazine which appear to do nothing less but criticise the state of the game.

I can appreciate that the articles submitted are written for the best of intentions but I do not consider this magazine should be used as a platform to continually destroy and present an image which in a number of cases is completely untrue. I am sure that other sports may have similar problems but I would hope that they do not, through their own publications/magazines, take the opportunity to continually depress their interested readers with what I can only suggest is destructive material.

The downward slippery slope is a difficult one to climb back up and if you continually knock the sport you will find that those who give their time, dedication and enthusiasm may much prefer to quietly fade away.

If people outside the game wish to criticise then so be it, but I would suggest that much more can be gained by promoting articles which inform their readers of the various initiatives which are continually taking place in the hope that they too may wish to be involved.

M. Sweeting
54 Paradise Road
Writtle
Chelmsford

Officer, staff and contributors will be aware of my editorial commitment to innovative ideas which will stimulate the development of the sport. In the fullness of time, if production difficulties are forgotten, perhaps some of the constructive ideas proposed during this brief tenure may be introduced - Ed.