

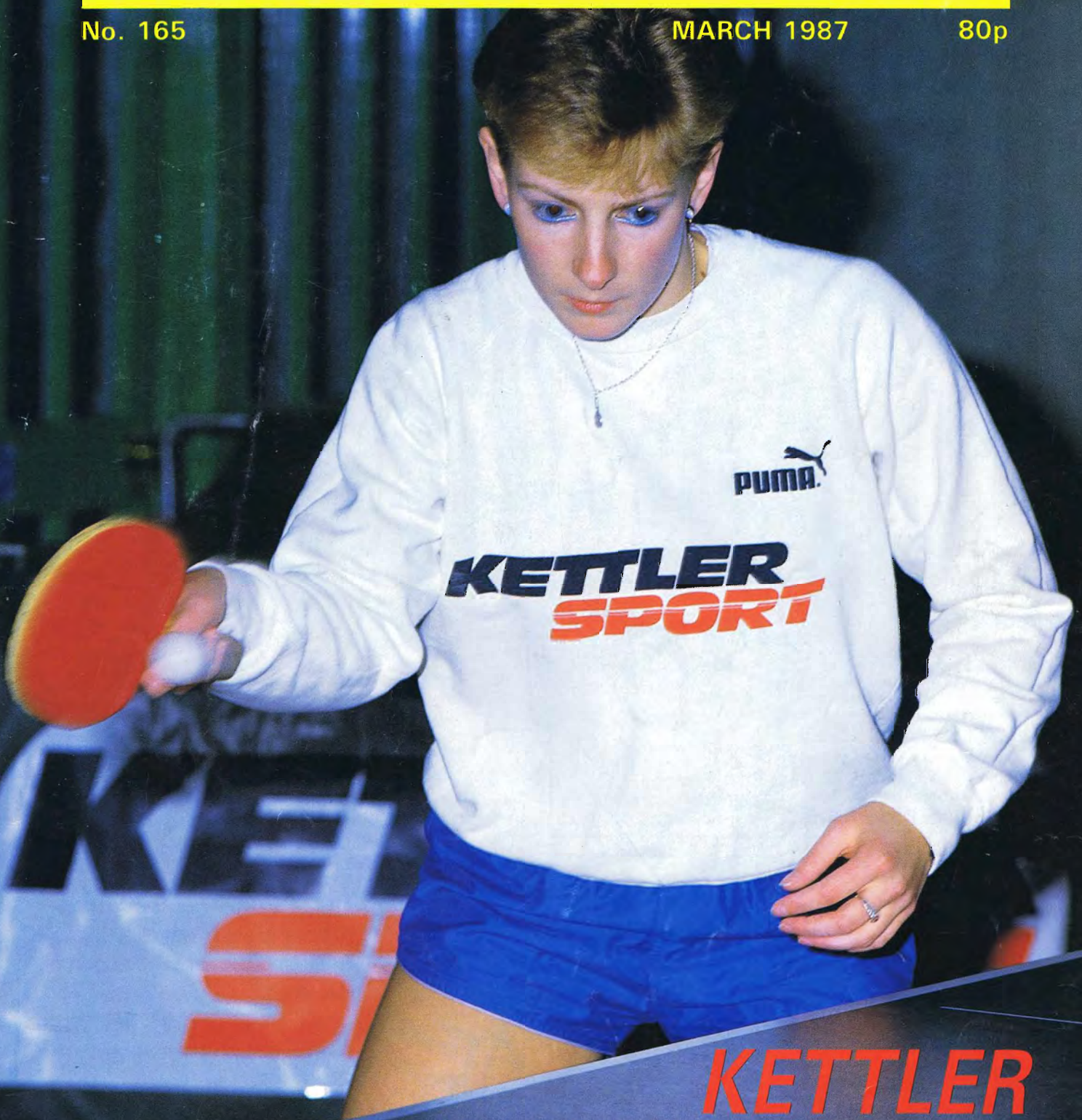


Table Tennis News

No. 165

MARCH 1987

80p



**KETTLER
A CHAMPION'S CHOICE**

Now the chips are down ...

WHEN it became clear last autumn that John Prean was the voters' choice to take over the chairmanship of the English Table Tennis Association few people inside the sport in Britain thought that the new style of leadership would bring an easy life for players, administrators and fans.

For five years the dedicated gentleman from Ryde, Isle of Wight, slammed the administration without mercy and it has to be said that some of his criticism was on target, because nothing is perfect in this life. In true democratic fashion, the long time editor of this magazine, ETTA deputy chairman George Yates, allowed the continuous onslaught to continue in what is the official organ of the ETTA, until finally the Prean offensive was halted to a cry of "censorship".

As editor, I am considerably less influenced in my decisions than my predecessors because I am not a part of the administration. It is better that way. No pressure is put on me by the chairman or anyone else. The columns are open to all as long as we are not asked to print material that could be approaching the minefield of libel action.

The recent dismissal of the selection committee and the heaping of huge new commitments on the shoulders of Donald Parker plus the demotion of director of coaching David Fairholm has been seen as a devastating blow by a number of people, especially the coaching fraternity.

At the last national council meeting the chairman suffered a reverse when his request to bring in Bernard Rowley as coaching vice-chairman was turned down. The chairman is reported, accurately I am sure, as having the entire management committee behind him on the latest moves elevating Parker and moving down Fairholm. For days after the announcement of the shake-up, my telephone hardly stopped ringing. One gentleman was so incensed that he kept the conversation going for nearly half-an-hour — there are no prizes for guessing his identity.

But before the national council goes into session in April it is vital for everyone to realise that the sport in England is at stake. Diplomacy and constructive speaking is needed, lost tempers and threats of resignations can only lead to the sort of publicity we do not really want.

When the council meets the wrath of councillors is expected to show. There could be a showdown. But, the chips are down, surely the objectors target should be the management committee and not just the chairman.

JOHN WOODFORD



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Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Courtside — all the latest gossip	2
World Championships — the first report from John Woodford on New Delhi	3
Coaching Changes — Tony Russe resigns	4
Planning for the future . . . Donald Parker	5
Picture Parade . . .	6
Lentec Senior Rankings	7
Fiona Elliot — John Woodford provides a profile of our new women's champion	9
Schildkrot British League . . . a review by Fiona Brown	10-11
European League — England on top form	13
Schildkrot British League — ideas for the future from Rea Balmford	15
Lentec Junior and Cadet ranking lists	16
Chairman's Corner — up to the minute news from John Prean	17
County Championships . . . Doug Moss	18
County Notes	19, 20, 22, 23, 37
English Records — Champions over the past 28 years	21
Regional Leagues	24
Coaching 1 — Rowden Fullen explains the coaching rationale behind his success	25
Coaching 2 — Tony Russe reviews the Triumph Adler National Championships	25
The Pioneer in 1902 — Gerald Gurney retells the origins of table tennis magazines	27
Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Schools	28
Players protest — the facts and a reply	29
Crossword — another super Stiga prize at stake in Eric Hall's latest brain teaser	31
Mailbox — Hughes, Muhr, Pettitt, Prean, Spraggs etc.	34
Cotswold Select — Bradley Billington in focus	35
Tournament Scheduling — Colin Clemett introduces some points to ponder	36



SIDE COURTSIDE

Compiled by
**FIONA BROWN &
JOHN WOODFORD**

HILDA'S PIE

ONE of the best rules or recommendations put in at the start of the Schildkrot British League was about serving hot food to teams after matches. When teams have to travel long distances it is not right that on a Sunday evening they should have to break their journey to find food at Little Chef or Happy Eater.

It is not easy to find kitchen accommodation at venues and even more difficult to find folk prepared

to give up their Sunday afternoons to cook food but it should be done.

One of the few clubs still serving a hot meal in the league is Erreys Print in East Sussex, where "chef de cuisine" Hilda Watts regularly cooks her Shepherd's Pie, peas and carrots to the always delighted players, visitors, home men and umpires.

When a recent match against Ashford ended more sharply than expected with an Erreys victory, there were some rude words in the

kitchen when at the vital moment of serving the popular pie, Hilda managed to kick a bucket of water all over the kitchen floor!

Undaunted and singlehanded Hilda carried on serving her hungry customers who like Oliver Twists came back for second helpings.

As an exercise in PR hot food soothes many a savaged loser. Shame on the clubs who cannot be bothered to put on hot refreshments for their visitors.

in the minerals found in water and the unfortunate price we pay for travelling the world."

The 22 English people now returned from Delhi are going to be glad that the mystery has now been solved at last.

★ ★ ★

ONE FOR THE GIRLS

ENGLISH junior champion Andrea Holt left a few red faces behind her in a recent Bolton League match. Interleague players Clive Heap, Keith Rudd and Jack Evans were all beaten by Andrea whose team Telecom North West are league leaders.

★ ★ ★

LUCK OF THE IRISH

ONLY the irish could ask us to print two reports of every event they hold! Imagine the chaos if everyone submitted on this basis — Please make your minds up and nominate an official PO!

★ ★ ★

BONNINGTON BOOM

AFTER many years of ETTA meetings at the Bonnington Hotel, London, it seems that the hotel's management are inspired by our sport. In addition to preferential rates for the Association, they are now installing a table tennis table for staff leisure use.

★ ★ ★

'LET PLEASE'

An end of 'order'

NATIONAL Councillors showing over zealous enthusiasm at the January meeting were swiftly silenced by our new chairman's gavel accompanied by the request to 'Let please' - gone are the stuffy days of "order, order."

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VACANCIES

SOUTHAMPTON'S Brian Lamer-ton has spotted a highly unusual advertisement in a Building Design publication. A firm of architects called Archer Boxer Partners is or was looking for two "further talented table tennis players for their Hertford office." They also need to be Architect-Technicians for "lunch-time matches - architectural experience and ability will also be required for extra-mural activities during the rest of the day."

Sounds like an interesting lunch-time scene at this Hatfield office, except for indigestion probably suffered by table tennis enthusiasts bolting their sandwiches to get into action in the table tennis room. Let's hope the run-back is more than 4ft!

★ ★ ★

DELHI BELLY

ENGLAND'S gallant internationals fell foul of various tummy bugs during their visit to the World Championships in New Delhi but as the ETTA's much travelled General Secretary, Albert Shipley, confirms it seems to be a common problem for teams far from home. "My good friend Dr Helios Farrell, President of the Mexican Association suffers from 'Montezumas Revenge' when he visits England — it's not so much poor hygiene as a change



New PLAYBAK, League and

CHINA STILL RULES But they were lucky

by JOHN WOODFORD flying back from New Delhi

CHINA still dominates the table tennis world after the 39th World Championships at the Indira Gandhi Stadium, New Delhi that ended on March 1st, with victory for a few, defeat for many and with nearly every player and many others suffering from the dreaded stomach complaints that seem as much a part of India as the Taj Mahal itself.

The Chinese coaches admitted before the trek to India that the rest of the world was catching them up and the Peking coaches were right on target. This time it was not a case of the inevitable boring friendship clashes when the Chinese met, they met less often in the final rounds of the individual events so there was much to admire in the way they handled their opponents from other nations.

Jan-Ove Waldner of Sweden now looks like the only European who can in the years ahead, expect to win the world singles title. After almost scratching through sickness before taking out Desmond Douglas in Round 4, Waldner gradually pulled himself together to defeat two Chinese top men before losing in the final to the reigning world champion Jiang Jialiang, one of the few men in recent times to retain the crown.

China should have lost the mens doubles final. Lupulesku and Primorac from Yugoslavia held two match points before losing in the third game to Chen Longcan and Wei Qingguang. China could also have lost the womens singles crown. A fabulous young counter-hitter from South Korea Yang Young Ja was beaten in the final 21-17, 21-19, 21-18 by Guan Jianhua whose experience just managed to save her.

A quick glance at the team events both won by China, men by 5-0 over Sweden and the women 3-0 over South Korea. Sweden were starting to wilt on the way to the final - they only beat West Germany 5-4 after Georg Bohm took a stunning triple - and then when Ulf Carlsson appeared in the final, the writing was on the wall for the Swedes who took the precaution of shipping out to Delhi all their water supplies! But they still caught the Delhi bug that lies in wait for all and sundry, including all members of the England team.

Without making a complete list only two members of the 22-strong group from England to brave the trip managed to escape some form of stomach upset - George Yates the seasoned traveller, deputy chairman of the ETTA, general secretary of the ETTU and myself. Most serious British casualty was former England captain Ron Crayden who was so bad that he could hardly walk to the Boeing 747

that brought us home.

There was one player who was sent home in the middle of the tournament through illness - Mikael Appelgren of Sweden. He was not able to walk to the aeroplane!

So, on the playing side, China repeated their 6 out of 7 successes at Gothenburg, but 4 out of 7 would have been a fairer reflection on how the rest of the world are catching them up.

England went to India with one world class star, Desmond Douglas who took 14 out of 16 wins in the Swaythling Cup, and returned with two - Alan Cooke, after beating Chen Xinhua in the team event and reaching the last sixteen can now expect his first World and European rankings and hopefully his career will now be airborne.

The Hazards

They were many for all. But the sun was shining most of the time - those with the time came back bronzed. Those without the time were either playing, attending meetings or spending long periods inspecting the crude plumbing in bathrooms and toilets. The venue - the arena looked good, nearly circular it would hold 25,000, but the top crowd at the finals numbered about 7,000 with 2,000 an average on other days.

Delhi is said to have a bad record for attendance at many sports and this was borne out. A well-known English sports journalist who I shall not name said that overall it was the worst organised racquet sports event he had ever encountered round the globe. It seems that in India journalists are not well-received in their own country. This was reflected in Delhi. The press facilities were crude, dirty, smelly, totally inadequate with no alcoholic refreshment (anywhere in the stadium). Six telephone lines were used to contact the whole world operated by men who were so confused by the whole thing that phones were hurled across the telegraph and telephone room and tempers became so frayed that violence was not far away, even in the stadium where the press seating was insufficient on finals day causing a situation that took four members of the Indian army to restore order!

Results

Swaythling Cup: Final:

China b Sweden 5-0.

Corbillon Cup: Final:

China b South Korea 3-0.

England men finished 12th, England women 11th.

Mens singles: Final:

Jiang Jialiang (China) b J.O. Waldner (Sweden) 14-21, 21-18, 21-11, 24-22.

Womens singles: Final:

Guan Jianhua (China) b Yang Young Ja (South Korea) 21-17, 21-19, 21-18.

Mens doubles: Final:

Chen Longcan and Wei Qingguang (China) b I. Lupulescu and Z. Primorac (Yugoslavia) 21-17, 12-21, 22-20.

Womens doubles: Final: Hyan Jung Hwa and Yang Young Ja (South Korea) b Dai Lili and Li Hui Fen (China) 21-23, 21-13, 21-19.

Mixed doubles: Won by China but the appalling results service did not supply results to all journalists!

STOP PRESS!

THIS PAGE has been hastily prepared as the first story on New Delhi, the drama, the frustrations that epitomize world championships. The further stories in the April and May editions will give more facts on India and some opinions, some that may startle readers, so make sure of your copy now.

Alan Cooke 20, from Chesterfield, Derbyshire, and coached by Derek Marples was one of the stars to emerge into world class at Delhi. Marples predicted that Alan would reach the last 16 in the mens singles but few thought he would beat a Chinese player, Chen Xinhua, who is coming to live in Manchester!

Photo: Mike Loveder



Championship tables

Jaques

Coach Tony Russe resigns

The way forward?

Tony Russe

On 12th February, 1987, I read in 'The Guardian' of the wide-sweeping changes in personnel that affected the E.T.T.A. Coaching Scheme. This decision had been taken by the Management Committee and the word is that the decision was *unanimous*. Mark that well, there were no dissenters, to date no resignations. One must therefore assume that every member of the Management Committee was in favour and accepts responsibility for the decision.

What was it that the Management Committee did that prompts this article? First, the post of Director of Coaching held effectively by David Fairholm for some few months only was discarded and David is now returned to National Coach. Secondly, the post of Chairman of Selectors held by Paul Day for only three months was taken from him. Thirdly, the responsibilities for these jobs have now been vested in Donald Parker, the National Trainer/Coach, thus making him a very vulnerable professional, now much aware of the winds of change. Don would be an extraordinary man indeed if he can remain completely impartial to the pressures that will be put upon him from all directions. Too much is being asked of him.

These decisions which directly

affect the Coaching Scheme were taken without consultation with the National Coaching Committee, indeed the meeting planned for the 14th February was hastily cancelled. There was no need, the St. Valentine's Day massacre had already been executed in advance. As Regional Coaching Chairman for the South West I saw no alternative but to resign. What is the point of having a National Coaching Committee if it is not consulted on coaching matters? Remember fellow coaches that we had no voice on the Management Committee as the post of Vice Chairman of Coaching/Selection is vacant after Peter Charters' resignation.

Now I am sure that all these moves will be hotly defended in the name of rationalisation and they may yet work, provided all

persons cooperate in the furtherance of the cause. But it was only last September that all the top coaches in England, professional and amateur, were gathered at Crystal Palace and over a weekend of sane speeches and forward planning, those present went away elated and motivated to further coaching and to produce a successful National team. I regret to say that our plans have now been overridden by the Management Committee, some of whom were present at the Crystal Palace conference.

Whenever there is a crisis in the E.T.T.A. it seems that the Coaching Scheme is used as a whipping boy to the exclusion of other areas. The latest cry is that the Sports Council have stated that our coaching system is appalling. That is what is said. How dare Sports Council or Management criticise the coaches who week in, year out give their time and services willingly for table tennis? I, among many, many coaches, am always out of pocket on behalf of coaching. I do it for the players not for the system. If such large sums of Sports Council money have been paid to the E.T.T.A. for coaching why have I been hamstrung over the past

months in my Region for lack of funds? There are many such questions which I am sure readers could put forward.

Enough. If the Coaching Scheme is to survive the present shock then Management must now take positive steps to remotivate its professionals as well as its amateurs. It should be easy as motivation is now "zero". Humpty Dumpty has had a great fall and we all know what happened to him.

However, one great plus has arisen out of the recent upheavals in the E.T.T.A. hierarchy. The mould has been broken. There is now no going back to the complacency of the past. The way is open for other men and women of like beliefs who feel strongly enough that they want to further the cause of table tennis and its players. The way is through the ballot box. The membership has already spoken for improvement. What I disapprove of is poor man management and the complete disregard of the National Coaching Committee on important issues affecting the whole Coaching Scheme. This is the way forward?



Jan Ove Waldner's Personal Choice from

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Swedish Champion

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PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

by Donald Parker, ETTA National Trainer & Senior England Captain

A VERY satisfactory season it is still necessary to evaluate and plan for the future. The International Opens, the European Senior and Junior Championships could be regarded as a success with the only dark spot being the defeat by Bulgaria in the European League costing us promotion into the Super League.

Looking at technical developments from a general point of view we still need to put a lot of work on service and receipt. At the European Senior Championships Csilla Batorfi spent one hour every morning serving to her father who simply caught the ball and placed it in a bag. Maybe a little boring, but certainly a major factor that contributed to her becoming the ladies singles champion whilst still being a junior. At least 80% of her serves were with the forehand from the backhand side using a high toss throw-up and this was typical of the majority of players. A very loose grip is used, the ball is struck very close to the body, about four inches above the table with the first bounce being near the servers baseline. The wrist is used excessively to impart varying degrees of speed and spin with the bat "laid back" and the free arm used to shield the point of contact from the receivers vision.

It is of slight concern to me that the coaching manual does not emphasise the use of wrist in general play. It does stress the non-use at the beginners stage but after a very short period I believe it should be encouraged as at International level it is undoubtedly the most crucial part of the body and early use may develop a players "feel", something that is very difficult to do, if not impossible at a later stage.

It was very pleasing to see the hard work put in with O'Driscoll and Oldfield on their backhands, developing more power, paid off. With topspin players now it is equally important to have a strong backhand as forehand and if I had to identify one aspect of Persson's game which contributed to his success it would be his backhand. Players are now taking, in certain circumstances, a side to square stance for the backhand, lengthening the swing and rotating the upper body especially when the ball is wide down the backhand. It is therefore my belief that the coaching manual should introduce this technique as soon as movement is introduced. Instead of the body behind the ball at all times the side to square stance and the "power backhand" be encouraged. Obviously this stroke is not played every time especially when close to the table.

Of course players are still taking the ball off the bounce, a technique difficult to master but when played successfully it is very effective.

Basically when playing "off the bounce" the elbow must be angled so that the natural swing of the arm is almost parallel to the table surface. The elbow and wrist in particular are used to a great extent keeping the length of stroke fairly short to enable a quick recovery and contact is made almost on top of the ball. Often the right hander when using this technique on the forehand will step in with the right foot (or the wrong foot) to get nearer the bounce of the ball. With all strokes it is vital to play them to any part of the table. In other words a top class topspin player will be capable of playing a strong topspin irrespective of where his opponent places the ball to any target on the table ie. from anywhere to anywhere. A very basic statement but one with fundamental implications on coaching and practise.

In the case of male defensive players ie. Matthew Syed, it is vital to develop a good third ball attack to put the receiver under more pressure and also to develop a strong topspin for when the smash is not on against a pushed ball. At the moment against Syed players are comparatively relaxed receiving serve as there is little threat behind them and also when in trouble during a rally they can afford to push long and start again. Of course we are now talking about being the best in Europe something I am hoping Matthew will be striving to achieve.

It goes without saying that all top players play positively. By that it is meant they are playing to win and not relying on their opponent losing. Each stroke is played with a purpose and not just a case of returning the ball back hoping the opponent will make a mistake. This does not mean hitting the ball as hard as possible at the first opportunity but by playing percentage strokes all the time ie. the short push return of the short serve. Players should be encouraged to go for their shots when the ball is there even if this does result in a few early defeats. Pushing around allowing the opponent to take the initiative whenever they like is a tactic at International level only the extremely gifted can do, at the moment we have no one who fits into this category. Players should be encouraged for playing positively even if a particular point is lost, however, it is important to make sure losing does not become a habit.

It is always difficult to express fully in an article the technical, tac-

THIS ARTICLE should have appeared in an earlier edition but its contents are still valid and well worthy of publication.



England No. 2 Carl Prean, master exponent of the close to the body, well concealed service.

tical etc. developments. May I once again remind all coaches that they are welcome to attend the training camps at Lilleshall to observe. There will be an opportunity to talk to the coaches and players as well as watch the various practises. Last season some 30-40 coaches took up the of-

fer and I am confident they all had an enjoyable and informative time. Should you be interested please contact Donald Parker 0524-791866 and arrangements can be made.

DONALD PARKER
E.T.T.A. National Trainer

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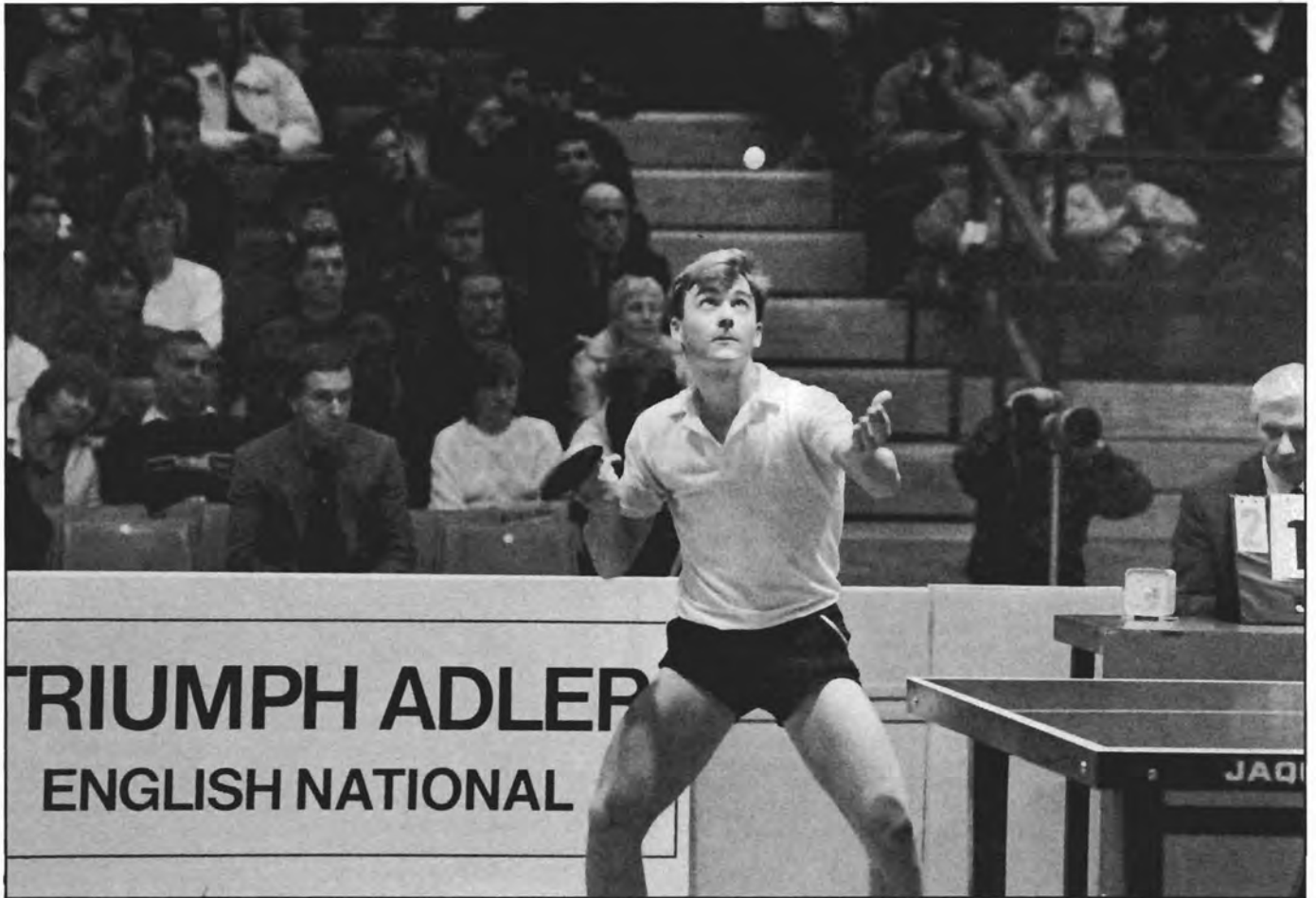
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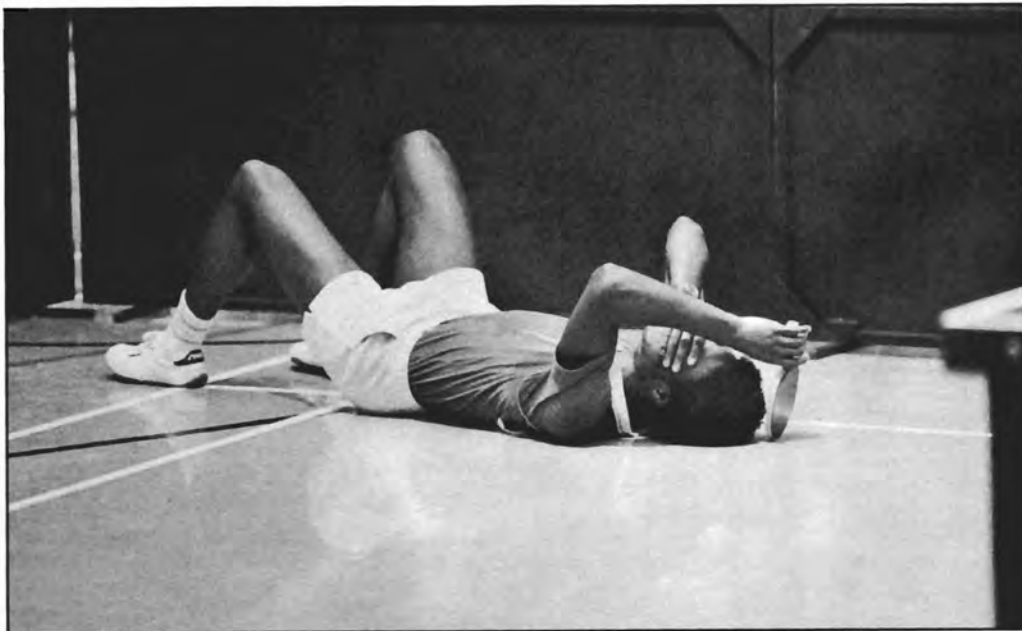


Picture parade

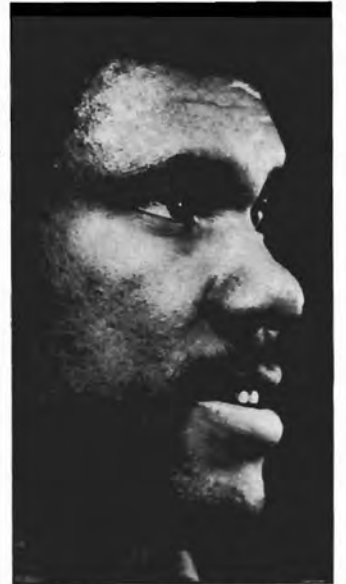


Future champion? Alan Cooke has toughened up thanks to the Swedes.

Photo: Stephen Line

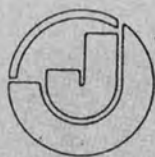


Skylet Andrew, down but not out. No men's national title in 1987 but definitely a star in the making.



Still the champ but Des Douglas has plenty to think about.

Photo: Courtesy Crawley News.



Why buy foreign when

England ranking lists — February 1987

LENTEC COMPUTER RANKING LISTS

MEN

1. Desmond Douglas	(Birmingham)	3199	39. Andrew Syed	(Reading)	415
2. Carl Plean	(Ryde)	1818	40. Neil Taylor	(Cirencester)	415
3. Skylet Andrew	(London E15)	1558	41. Phil Smith	(Horley)	414
4. Alan Cooke	(Chesterfield)	1518	42. Brian Johns	(Northwich)	401
5. John Souter	(Neasden)	1120	43. Philip Gunn	(Birmingham)	398
6. Nicky Mason	(Bexhill)	1111	44. David Gannon	(Leicester)	397
7. Jimmy Stokes	(Reading)	1014	45. Joe Kennedy	(London SE15)	390
8. Steve Mills	(Sheffield)	836	46. Stuart Palmer	(Lakenheath)	386
9. Philip Bradbury	(Aylesbury)	749	47. Andrew Rich	(Wolverhampton)	362
10. Graham Sandley	(Potters Bar)	679	48. Graham Toole	(Fareham)	360
11. Kevin Satchell	(Frome)	677	49. Dipak Topiwala	(London N17)	356
12. Matthew Syed	(Reading)	626	50. Mark Mitchell	(London N9)	346
13. Steven Scowcroft	(Bolton)	615	51. David Harding	(Carshalton)	345
14. Chris Rogers	(Leicester)	596	52. Stephen Turner	(Preston)	339
15. Colin Wilson	(Cuffley)	586	53. Kevin Beadsley	(Bradford)	336
16. Nigel Eckersley	(Warrington)	585	54. Steven Sharpe	(Wakefield)	335
17. John Hilton	(Manchester)	577	55. David Newman	(Maldon)	333
18. Steven Dorking	(Hornchurch)	562	56. Craig Bakewell	(Stoke on Trent)	331
19. Paul Whiting	(Plymouth)	555	57. Rupert Bole	(Esher)	330
20. Adrian Dixon	(Wolverhampton)	549	58. Percy Collino	(London SW5)	329
21. David Wells	(Milton Keynes)	545	59. John Green	(Nuneaton)	328
22. Bradley Billington	(Chesterfield)	539	60. Stephen Moore	(Bexhill)	325
23. Tony Taylor	(Manchester)	523	61. John Payne	(London N19)	325
24. Glen Baker	(Guildford)	514	62. Ritchie Venner	(Crawley)	324
25. Max Crimmins	(Wimbledon)	513	63. John Taylor	(Golders Green)	318
26. Andrew Wellman	(Reading)	501	64. Keith Samuels	(St Neots)	317
27. Sean Gibson	(Chorley)	493	65. Russell King	(Lowestoft)	317
28. David Dodd	(London SE7)	492	66. Michael Harper	(Biggleswade)	315
29. Michael Hammond	(Surbiton)	486	67. Paul Amos	(Ashford)	314
30. Andy Creed	(Bristol)	480	68. Philip Logsdon	(Norwich)	311
31. John Burleton	(London SE15)	473	69. Geoff Davies	(Waterbeach)	311
32. Carl Morgan	(Birmingham)	465	70. David Barr	(Newbury)	309
33. Desmond Charlery	(London E13)	464	71. Andrew Dodd	(London SE7)	309
34. Michael O'Driscoll	(Mirfield)	450	72. David Goode	(Hayes)	308
35. Paul Giles	(Plymouth)	442	73. Ramesh Bhalla	(Guildford)	308
36. Adrian Moore	(Bexhill)	438	74. Darren Griffin	(Gloucester)	306
37. Edwin Smith	(Gosforth)	429	75. John Kitchener	(Ipswich)	305
38. Barry Johnson	(Birmingham)	424	76. Ian Robertson	(Newcastle)	301

WOMEN

1. Lisa Bellinger	(Dunstable)	1857
2. Fiona Elliot	(Wolverhampton)	1597
3. Alison Gordon	(Reading)	1524
4. Joy Grundy	(Preston)	1515
5. Mandy Sainsbury	(Newbury)	866
6. Jill Harris	(Walsall)	669
7. Andrea Holt	(Ramsbottom)	534
8. Jean Parker	(Preston)	493
9. Juliet Houghton	(Tonbridge)	486
10. Karen Smith	(Leicester)	476
11. Joanne Shaw	(Normanton)	471
12. Jackie Bellinger	(Dunstable)	469
13. Susan Collier	(Maidenhead)	358
14. Suzanne Airey	(Grantham)	350
15. Carol Butler	(Plymouth)	347
16. Claire Potts	(Chester)	336
17. Teresa Moore	(Bexhill)	300
18. Helen Bardwell	(Ware)	284
19. Kerry Hall	(Chesterfield)	256
20. Debbie Soothill	(Carnforth)	233
21. Helen Lower	(Wolverhampton)	216
22. Helen Perrott	(Bristol)	212
23. Claire Maisey	(Swindon)	198
24. Jane Barella	(Surbiton)	196
25. Sandra Roden	(Dudley)	195
26. Karen Burrows	(Castleford)	193
27. Elaine Short	(Plymouth)	191
28. Kim Mudge	(London E13)	184
29. Cheryl Buttery	(Lincoln)	154
30. Debbie Toole	(Normanton)	153
31. Rachel Knight	(Twickenham)	146
32. Julie Dimmock	(Dunstable)	135
33. Connie Moran	(Grimsby)	121
34. Elaine Sayer	(London E12)	118
35. Lisa Haydon	(Brentwood)	117
36. Diane St Ledger	(Birmingham)	111
37. Melonie Carey	(Puriton)	110
38. Lesley Popkiewicz	(Purley)	103

NATIONAL JUNIOR RANKING TRIALS



Peter Charles lines up with the cadet girls medal winners. Left to right: Suzanne Lawton (Cv), Joanna Roberts (Y), Helen Wright (Dv) and Caroline Buckley (Bd).

British is best?

FRUSTRATION FOR FIONA Indian bug bites England champion!

by JOHN WOODFORD flying home from Delhi.

IN THE history of English table tennis it is doubtful if any English champion has ever been frustrated as 21-year-old Fiona Elliot of Wolverhampton after travelling 5,000 miles to India to play at the World Championships and then to be unfit to compete in the individual events.

On the way home Fiona told me "This has been the biggest disappointment of my table tennis career so, especially as it was my first world championship. I played in seven matches in the team events before I became ill."

"I was in bed for three days after being sick one hour before I was due to play" she said.

As reported elsewhere, all three women in the England squad were ill during the 16 days they were in Delhi but that is no consolation to the new champion who is extremely keen to succeed with her aggressive attacking game.

Her most important assignment ahead seems to be the showdown match against West Germany in Wurtzburg next month when a past victory over Katja Nolten might move her selection. Other tournaments ahead for her are the Cleveland international event at Thornaby and the Stiga Essex 3-star open.

Fiona's coach for all of her career (10 years) has been Mr Roy Durnall, deputy head-teacher of her school at Penn, a district of Wolverhampton. Fiona is extremely keen on the physical fitness side and what can be more important?

Sponsor

Sponsorship of a personal nature is so important to top players. Fiona Elliot is sponsored by Kettler (Great Britain) Ltd manufacturers of sports goods including table tennis tables. They are based at Redditch.

Apart from Mum and Dad at home, Fiona has four older sisters,

two of whom Dawn (28) and Alison (24) have teachers coaching badges for table tennis.

For top-class practice Fiona travels down on odd occasions to visit Lisa and Jackie Bellinger at Dunstable. Other well-known players among her practice partners are Andy Rich, Trevor Washington, Jill Harris and Janet Dunning.

Fiona first played when she was 11, developing into a right-handed counter-hitter, a style that seems to be nicely suited to modern play. Her first major title was the Essex 3-star in 1984.

One of her most important wins for her personally she says, was the Wolverhampton Closed title. In 1985 she won a team gold medal at the Commonwealth Championships at the Isle of Man. Her Schildkrot British League club is Steelstock, Wolverhampton; she was born at Old Windsor, trains up to 10 hours weekly and enjoys socialising, walking, squash and badminton and to really relax, reading.

ETTA chairman John Prean has said recently that "defensive players following the advent two-colour bats are becoming obsolete." That typically sweeping statement having watched the world championships in Delhi has a lot of value.

Fiona Elliot is a player who believes that attack is the best form of defence. Better still, counter-hitting in other words speed is the best tactic to defeat the opponent. Fiona with her speed and fitness after recovering from India, could have a great future over the next 10 years.



Eyes front - Fiona Elliot enroute to her first National singles title playing against Lisa Bellinger.

Kettler catch a champion

WITHIN a few days of her victories in Crawley Fiona Elliot had signed a superb sponsorship deal with Kettler (GB) Ltd., one of the country's top table tennis and keep fit equipment companies.

The deal gives Fiona the financial backing to maintain her relentless programme of training. "My sponsorship by Kettler allows me the freedom I need to practise and to attend training camps."

Kettler's sales and marketing director, Geoff Burrows, said after signing: "We have provided financial help for Fiona in the past, but the two year sponsorship stresses the backing we are not giving to table tennis and follows a period when we have seen a massive increase in the sales of our own tables."

Fiona Elliot will be making guest appearances at selected sports retail outlets during 1987 on behalf of Kettler (GB) Ltd.

West Midland Cadets League

AN excellent match between leading teams Pontesbury A and Wrexham resulted in an honourable draw. Wrexham had to thank Welsh No. 1 cadet Spencer Harris for his unbeaten three games, while the locals were best served by Alistair Corfield and Mathew Alexander with two wins each. Gloucester A, without No 1 Andrew Harris, were well beaten by the Welshmen. Pontesbury B with a full team on duty managed two wins, including an excellent derby win of 6-4 over Grove.

The final session, scheduled for Saturday April 18th, sees the teams play their last match and an individual league championship.

Organiser: John Morris, 2 School Bank, Pontesbury, Shrewsbury. Venue: Mary Webb School, Pontesbury.

Results	League table	P	W	L	D	P
0; Hereford 0, Grove 10; Grove 4, Pontesbury B 6; Pontesbury B 10, Hereford 0; Gloucester B 0, Grove 10; Hereford 0, Gloucester A 10; Wrexham 7, Pontesbury B 3; Pontesbury A 9, Stroud 1; Wrexham 5, Pontesbury A 5; Gloucester A 1, Wrexham 9; Stroud 10, Gloucester B 0; Stroud 4, Gloucester A 6.	Pontesbury A Wrexham Gloucester A Grove Stroud Pontesbury B Gloucester B Hereford	6	5	0	1	11
		6	5	0	1	11
		6	5	1	0	10
		6	3	3	0	6
		6	2	4	0	4
		6	2	4	0	4
		6	1	5	0	3
		6	0	6	0	0



Mum's the word - Mrs Elliot Fiona's Mother took a reluctant step into the limelight at Crawley. Photo: Stephen Line.



Promoted by the English Table Tennis Association

Outstanding Ormesby

"OUR best performance for some time" was Ormesby manager Alan Ransome's modest analysis of his team's outstanding performance which earned a 4-4 draw and effectively ended Grove Market Drayton's premier division title dreams in early February.

The Ormesby squad had travelled south with very limited expectations, as Ransome points out: "Their No. 4 is ranked higher than our No. 1 so on paper we were heading for an 8-0 defeat." At the end of the afternoon Grove were forced to rely upon their vastly experienced, former England international, Graham Sandley, to save face with victory over Scottish star David McIlroy.

Grove's problems began in the first set when English world championship team member John Souter was effectively stifled by the effervescent Nigel Eckersley. John Hilton then showed young Jimmy Stokes a trick or two to win in straight games. Indeed it was a disappointing day for Stokes who also succumbed to John Broe. Ormesby's point winning performance came from the in-form Eckersley who took full advantage of a less than accurate day for Steve Mills. Ormesby are now aiming to finish the season with a claim in the premier division prize pot.

Devastating Denis

Former English champion Denis Neale helped to complete a successful Ormesby weekend with

two fine wins for the clubs second team in their 6-2 victory over title hopefuls, EAE Waveney. Neale dissected Waveney No. 1 Phil Lodgson before showing young Neil Pickard what experience is all about in two straight games, 9 and 10.

Lower down the second division there are two teams making a desperate eleventh hour bid to avoid relegation. Kingbro Insurance clinched another vital point in their 4-4 draw with Steelstock as captain Malcolm Corking showed the way with wins over Trevor Washington and Steve Dunning.

Oldham savoured their first win of the season 6-2 over Sincil Lincoln as No. 1 Mike Owen pushed the northerners ahead at important stages in the match.

Rejects hammer Ramlosa

South Londoners, Rejects, have now placed both hands firmly on the third division south trophy following a spectacular 7-1 win over arch rivals Team Ramlosa Essex. Man of the match was Rejects' No. 1 Mike O'Leary, who dealt efficiently with Stuart Gibbs and the highly ranked Des Charlery. Over 100 spectators enjoyed the match but could not lift Ramlosa beyond a consolation win by Ian Attridge over Trevor Campbell.

According to both team managers the match was played in exceptionally good conditions with tremendous sporting spirit

and spectacular style so anyone finding it difficult to promote their team may be well advised to seek help from either of these clubs.

Unstoppable Ashford

League leaders Ashford seem set to cruise through their remaining second division south fixtures if their 8-0 win over Jaques

Fareham is anything to go by. English international Alison Gordon was elevated to the first team in the absence of David Goode and acquitted herself admirably in two games against Dave Pilcher and Mark Wilding.

Alas, the Ashford story in the third division south is less captivating, they fell pray to Erreys Print, 6-2, to leave themselves only two points away from the bottom of the table.

SCHILDKROT PLAYER OF MONTH

NOVEMBER

HENRY BUIST

For proving yet again that ability is more important than equipment in contributing straight game wins over Keith Willett and Andrew Trott to lead Trebor Dagenham FC to a 5-3 win over third division east opponents MBS St Neots.



Henry is pictured receiving his award from Essex County Secretary, Mrs Gill Squier.



Schildkröt distributed by Butterfly



British League 2

SCHILDKROT FIXTURES

March

- 15 P Ormesby v Omega Reading
 P Rotherham v Steelstock Wolverhampton
 P MBS St Neots v Butterfly Cardiff
 P Panoramic Bath v Grove
 1 Trebor Dagenham FC v TCB Dolphins
 1 Express Torbay v TSP Larkhall
 1 Omega Claw v Byker Newcastle
 1 Chan Construction v West Warwicks/Birmingham

April

- 5 P Steelstock Wolverhampton v Ormesby
 P Omega Reading v MBS St Neots
 P Butterfly Cardiff v Grove
 P Panoramic Bath v Rotherham
 1 TSP Larkhall v Trebor Dagenham FC
 1 TCB Dolphins v Omega Claw
 1 Byker Newcastle v Chan Construction
 1 West Warwicks/Birmingham v Express Torbay



Ashford's winning team, from left to right: Dave Welsman (team manager), David Goode, Max Crimmins, Glenn Baker, Kenny Jackson.

RESULTS FROM EIGHT DIVISIONS

Premier

Omega Reading 1, Panoramic Bath 7; Steelstock Wolverhampton 4, Grove 4; Steelstock Wolverhampton 7, Rotherham 1; Grove 7, Panoramic Bath 1; Grove 4, Ormesby 4; Panoramic Bath 0, Steelstock Wolverhampton 8; Butterfly Cardiff 6, Omega Reading 2; MBS St Neots 2, Rotherham 6; Butterfly Cardiff 0, Steelstock Wolverhampton 8; Rotherham 3, Grove 5; MBS St Neots 0, Grove 8.

First

Trebor Dagenham 8, Omega Claw 0; TSP Larkhall 3, Chan Construction 5; Chan Construction 6, Trebor Dagenham 2; West Warwicks/Birmingham 2, TSP Larkhall 6; Byker Newcastle 4, TSP Dolphins 4; Omega Claw 0, Express Torbay 8; Byker Newcastle 8, Omega Claw 0; Trebor Dagenham FC 4, West Warwicks/Birmingham 4; TSP Larkhall 5, Byker Newcastle 3; Express Torbay 4, TCB Dolphins 4.

Second North

Bradford Investments 6, Kingbro Insurance 2; March 1, Sincil Lincoln 7; EAE Waveney 2, Ormesby 6; Kingbro Insurance 2; Steelstock Wolverhampton 5, March 3; Sincil Lincoln 1, Bradford Investments 7; Oldham 1, EAE Waveney 7; Kingbro Insurance 4, Oldham 4.

Second South

Gunnersbury Triangle 2, Global Plymouth 6; C and L Nittaku 8, Fellows Cranleigh 0; TSP Larkhall 0, Ashford 8; Jaques Fareham 5, Gunnersbury Triangle 3; Global Plymouth 5, Medway 3; Fellows Cranleigh 7, Gunnersbury Triangle 1; TSP Larkhall 6, C and L Nittaku 2; Jaques Fareham 0, Ashford 8; Medway 6, Fellows Cranleigh 2; Gunnersbury Triangle 4, TSP Larkhall 4; Ashford 6, C and L Nittaku 2; Jaques Fareham 2, Global Plymouth 6.

Third North

Chan Construction 6, Grove 2; Grove 7, Ormesby 1; Vickers Barrow 2, Chan Construction 6; Crusaders Lincoln 2, Leicester 6; City of Leeds 7, Byker Newcastle 1; Leicester 8, Vickers Barrow 0; Ormesby 8, Vickers Barrow 0; Chan Construction 7, Crusaders Lincoln 1; Byker Newcastle 0, Leicester 8; City of Leeds 5, Grove 3.

Third South

Countryman Tunbridge Wells 7, Erreys Print 1; Rejects 2, Thorn EMI Ellenborough 6; Abeng Warriors 3, Team Ramlosa Essex 5; Deptford Rams 5, Ashford 3; Thorn EMI Ellenborough 5, Countrymen Tunbridge Wells 3; Deptford Rams 4, Abeng Warriors 4; Erreys Print 6, Ashford 2; Team Ramlosa Essex 1, Rejects 7; Countrymen Tunbridge Wells 3, Team Ramlosa Essex 5; Rejects 8, Deptford Rams 0.

Third East

Witham Town FC 3, Britannia Ipswich 5; Trebor Dagenham FC 8, Smith Motors Peterborough 0; Norwich Foxwood 4, AHW Pioneers 4; MBS St Neots 2, Well Connected Wellingborough 6; Britannia Ipswich 6, Trebor Dagenham 2; Smiths Motors Peterborough 0, Norwich Foxwood 8; Well Connected Wellingborough 5, AHW Pioneers 3; MBS St Neots 6, Witham Town FC 2.

Third West

Opella Leominster 6, Omega Reading 2; Duchy Launceston 4, Panoramic Bath 4; Express Torbay 2, Doleq Carpets 6; KCD Stiga 2, Opella Leominster 7; Panoramic Bath 1, Jolliffe Poole 7; Express Torbay 5, Duchy Launceston 3; Omega Reading 0, Doleq Carpets 8; Doleq Carpets 6, KCD Stiga 2; Opella Leominster 5, Panoramic Bath 3; Doleq Carpets 8, Duchy Launceston 0; Omega Reading 8, KCD Stiga 0.

Schildkrot British League

(as at 22.2.87)

Premier division	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Steelstock Wolverhampton	11	9	2	0	79	9	20
Grove Market Drayton	11	8	3	0	68	20	19
Panoramic Bath	10	5	1	4	45	35	11
Butterfly Cardiff	10	4	1	5	32	48	9
Rotherham	8	3	2	3	33	31	8
Ormesby I	7	3	1	3	22	34	7
Omega Reading	8	0	0	8	11	53	0
MBS St Neots	9	0	0	9	6	66	0
First division							
Express Torbay	10	8	2	0	57	23	18
Chan Construction	10	7	1	2	54	26	15
Trebor Dagenham FC	11	7	1	3	56	32	15
TSP Larkhall	11	6	0	5	47	41	12
TCB Dolphins	10	4	2	4	40	40	10
Byker Newcastle	10	4	1	5	38	42	9
West Warwicks B'ham	10	1	1	8	27	53	3
Omega Claw	10	0	0	10	9	71	0
Second division north							
Bradford Investments	11	9	0	2	58	30	18
EAE Waveney	10	7	1	2	55	25	15
Ormesby II	9	7	0	2	45	27	14
Steelstock Wolverhampton	10	4	3	3	44	36	11
Sincil Lincoln	10	4	1	5	39	41	9
March	11	3	1	7	35	53	7
Kingbro Insurance	12	1	4	7	34	62	6
Oldham	11	1	2	8	26	62	4
Second division south							
Ashford	11	11	0	0	79	9	22
Global Sports Plymouth	11	7	1	3	52	36	15
C & L Nittaku	11	5	3	3	48	40	13
Fellows Cranleigh	11	5	1	5	43	45	11
Medway	10	3	2	5	37	43	8
Jaques Fareham	10	3	0	7	29	51	6
Gunnersbury Triangle	11	2	2	7	32	56	6
TSP Larkhall	11	2	1	8	24	64	5

GAMBLE PAYS OFF AT ESJBERG

ONE of the last selections the ETTA seven-strong selection committee made before it was dismissed by chairman John Prean with the unanimous backing of the entire management committee was to send a European League side to Esjberg in Denmark without our top three players, Douglas, Carl Prean and Bellinger.

Another slightly astonishing happening was the appointment of a woman captain, Jill Parker — the first time that a lady has been in charge of a European League team for England. But those insiders know that Jill is a master tactician and had the full respect of all members of the team who just managed to scrape through 4-3 against quite a strong Danish team.

However, Alan Cooke, Skylet Andrew and Fiona Elliot were the chosen trio and they did what was asked for, namely secure the point needed to keep England on top, although they only lead West Germany by a single game, having lost three in Denmark.

The man who did the damage by stopping both Andrew and Cooke was Lars Hauth, a man who last season beat Ulf Carsson, the Swedish ace. Fortunately for England the Danish No. 2 Erik Sonnichsen was not of the same calibre, losing to the English pair.

After Skylet went down in the

opening game, England recovered ground when Cooke won his match but Fiona Elliot lost to the experienced Charlotte Polk.

Happily, two fine doubles wins by England put the promotion challengers back on course. After the men's doubles win for England Andrew and Elliot snatched the vital mixed doubles.

The Danes struck again when Hauth beat Cooke 19, 13 but the day ended nicely for England when Andrew hammered Sonnichsen 16, 12 to give England the 4-3 scoreline.

Comment from Jill Parker was: "It was a tough match, Hauth is certainly a class player, but England players fought hard and we got the result we were after."

Results: L Hauth b S Andrew 19, 19; A Cooke b E Sonnichsen 11, 15; C Polk b F Elliott - 15, 16, 11; Andrew/Cooke b Junge/Sonnichsen 20, 18; Andrew/Elliot b Hauth/Polk 16, 22; Hauth b Cooke 19, 13; Andrew b Sonnichsen 16, 12.



Cooke was equal to the challenge of leading England in Esjberg.

EUROPEAN LEAGUE TABLES

(as at 9.2.87)

SUPER DIVISION	P	W	L	F	A	P
Poland	5	5	0	27	8	5
Yugoslavia	5	4	1	20	15	4
Sweden	4	3	1	18	10	3
Czechoslovakia	5	3	2	20	15	3
Hungary	4	2	2	14	14	2
Netherlands	5	1	4	12	23	1
Bulgaria	5	1	4	13	22	1
France	5	0	5	9	26	0

Sweden play Hungary in Ronneby on April 8.

FIRST DIVISION	P	W	L	F	A	P
ENGLAND	5	5	0	30	5	5
F.R. Germany	5	5	0	29	6	5
Austria	4	2	2	12	16	2
Finland	5	2	3	12	23	2
Turkey	5	2	3	12	23	2
Italy	6	2	4	17	25	2
Denmark	5	1	4	13	22	1
Norway	5	1	4	15	20	1

SECOND DIVISION	P	W	L	F	A	P
Belgium	5	5	0	34	1	5
Wales	6	4	2	25	17	4
Scotland	5	3	2	22	15	3
Spain	5	3	2	21	14	3
Luxembourg	5	3	2	18	17	3
Switzerland	4	2	2	18	10	2
Greece	5	1	4	8	27	1
Guernsey	7	0	7	1	48	0

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International Table Tennis ----- International Table Tennis

Thoughts on the Schildkrot British League

WITHIN my own county of Yorkshire I have something of a reputation for being 'anti' Schildkrot British League, formerly the National League, but this reputation is not wholly deserved - what would be a more accurate assessment is that I am 'anti' the 'S.B.L.' in its present form. If the competition could be integrated into the whole table tennis pattern from the grass roots to the very top, I could well become one of its greatest supporters.

Looking in from the outside, there were a number of reasons for the setting up of the National League, the most laudable objectives being to provide 'top' competition for the 'top' players, to increase spectator interest and thus to expand our sport and give prospective sponsors a platform from which they could benefit both themselves and table tennis.

In other words, to increase the 'professionalism' - an expression which, in my part of the country, is one to be respected and not frowned upon - although I cannot completely draw a veil over what many felt to be another objective - the prevention of a 'drain' to the continent.

So, how far is the League serving its purpose? Alan Cooke, Carl Preat and Skylet Andrew, ranked Nos 2-4 in the November list, are all playing much of their table tennis abroad, with both Carl and Sky unable to compete in the Yorkshire and Humberside 3*, the first of the new Stiga Grand Prix series, at Halifax in late October.

Looking at the line-up of the Premier Division of the League and the rankings of the players in the then current list (T.T. News, October 1986), the 32 listed players, which included four Welshmen and two Scots, ranged between Nos 1 and 51 on the Lentec list - probably not an unreasonable spread, but not one calculated to bring the uncommitted spectators flocking in and to cause prospective sponsors to fidget in their plush chairs.

This appears to be borne out by a disappointing spectator response while, on the sponsorship front, only the equipment manufacturers and distributors appear to stay the course for any length of time.

Not a lot of pluses there, so let us consider the points on the other side.

No less than fourteen Sunday dates are taken out of the calendar, which makes the task of trying to fit in other fixtures - County, Inter League, National Cup, County Cup, Closed Championships, etc. - near impossible, and I have not mentioned tournaments, the area where the ordinary player has traditionally broadened his experience to become a better player.

There is no 'local loyalty' in teams with players imported from the four corners of the country, while managers have a knack of taking players from a county to which many, particularly in the case of 'County of Birth', have a passionate attachment. Here I make no secret of the fact that I would like to see this particular tradition of the Yorkshire County Cricket Club spill over into table tennis.

The value of not only County competition, but also Inter League competition is debased - the players either do not play at all, or a secretary gets the familiar reply - 'Sorry, I can't play that weekend, there is a National League Match'.

Finally there are the number of players lost to the tournament circuit, which, of course, reduces the possibility of sponsorship, for the sponsors naturally want the big names to help advertise their product.

So, have we got to the stage of the 'tail wagging the dog'? Eight divisions, each of eight teams, making a total of 256 players, with many of those in the lower divisions being well below the standard which was once demanded in most Inter Town sides.

So far my comments have been wholly critical, but we have to go no further than the Western European countries to see how a national league can operate. Let us spread the jam more thickly at the top, making the S.B.L. a real elite, axe the ordinary club competitor at the bottom (who would get as good, if not better competition in his League's Intern Town side) and have the likes of Cooke, Preat and Andrew parade their talents in this country.

England is not overflowing with T.T. players of the highest class, but a full British Premier League of twelve clubs, each fielding a team of three players in seven (yes - seven) game matches could - I dare not say would - attract the public.

Matches should be played on a midweek date - say Thursday - thus leaving the stars available for major tournaments, where the prize money, and there is room here for a greater spread of this commodity, must be made attractive County Championship Premier weekends, Top Twelve, National Knock Out competitions, challenge matches, etc.

Why teams of three? Simply that there are not enough top men to produce teams of four of the high standard demanded; why seven games? This is not too many to maintain the interest of the 'man in the street' spectator.

In addition, the No 3, already a good player, but probably still improving and aiming for the top, will have the incentive of meeting a contestant of his own calibre at No 3 and one slightly better at No 2.

Where would these teams be based? In the major centres of population in the country, now all accessible by Motorway (why not use the R.C.C.



Rea Balmford - a lifelong table tennis supporter.

regions as a basis?) with the three extra teams in the great centres of population not already covered (two in London, one each in Manchester and Liverpool?) or in the geographically far flung areas (Plymouth, Norwich?).

So give us the best of both worlds - top spectator T.T., played largely by adequately rewarded professionals, in midweek, and flourishing Inter Town Leagues attracting good players with a loyalty to a League which has probably introduced them, coached them and provided them with competitive T.T. since that early introduction.

Add to this a popular tournament circuit as a proving ground where the ambitious player can come up against, and occasionally beat, a household name, and we may help to slow down, if not to halt the drift away from our sport.

And, of course there will be movement from one area to the other - talent scouts from the big National League sides looking for raw material to be groomed for the 'big time'. This, surely, is what it is all about!

NO - I am not satisfied with the present absolute domination of table tennis by the S.B.L., but I do feel very strongly that there is an important place for it.

YES - I would like to see a return to loyalty to League and County, where nailbiting matches have given me so much pleasure in the past, and I would like to see the ladder restored by which Tony Clayton, from my own League of Hull, made his way from school T.T. team, through club, Yorkshire League and County side to that never-to-be-forgotten England squad which made history as the first Westerners to be accepted into China for many years.

I have tried to be constructive in my comments which could be summed up as placing the S.B.L. into a pyramid structure just one level below the top - the national side - and seeing it operate as an integral part of, and not in competition with, other areas of T.T.

Everybody will not agree with these views, and there will no doubt be a number of errors of fact, but please, if you wish to pull the concept to pieces, be constructive and try to put forward a solution which will keep the sport alive and moving forward at every level from grass roots to the very top.

REA BALMFORD,
Hull

Editor's Note:

Our man in Hull has made some excellent and constructive points in this article which I hope will be studied closely by the Management Committee of the ETTA and everyone else. It is true that ordinary tournaments are finding it extremely difficult to find sponsors mainly because star players have other more pressing engagements.

England Junior & Cadet ranking lists - January 1987

LENTEC COMPUTER RANKING LISTS

JUNIOR BOYS

1. Matthew Syed (Reading)	1221	64. Ian Black (St Albans)	150	28. Susanne Lawton (Ormesby)	128
2. Bradley Billington (Chesterfield)	1013	65. Jeremy Krzystiniak (Croydon)	146	29. Mary Allan (Reading)	124
3. Michael O'Driscoll (Mirfield)	884	66. David Butler (Tun. Wells)	141	30. Katherine Goodall (Yorks)	123
4. Sean Gibson (Chorley)	701	67. David Thomas (Rugby)	135	31. Tracy Scott-Pawson (Bournemouth)	117
5. Chris Oldfield (Sheffield)	633	68. Richard Jones (Morden)	128	32. Maria Williams (Herts)	102
6. John Holland (Nottingham)	527	69. Andrew Bevan (Bude)	126	33. Allison Gower (Ingatstone)	102
7. Matthew Pernet (Esher)	476	70. Robert Ettridge (Newbury)	123	34. Julie Clegg (Preston)	97
8. Andrew Ball (Wakefield)	464	71. Paul Burgess-Allan (Frimley)	119	35. Penny Corden (Derby)	97
9. Jonathon Taylor (Manchester)	463	72. Paul Smith (Bridgwater)	119	36. Caroline Dada (Bradford)	95
10. Adrian Thorp (Wolverhampton)	457	73. David Stedman (Arundel)	118	37. Lisa Pritchett (Kingston)	95
11. Mark Ward (Sheffield)	426	74. Richard Pike (Wetherby)	116	38. Caroline Seaholme (Watford)	92
12. Neil Pickard (Reepham)	413	75. Nicholas Felton (Birmingham)	115	39. Sharon Norman (Birkenhead)	85
13. David Carse (Bury)	406	76. Martin Adams (Ascot)	114	40. Louise Sherratt (Stafford)	83
14. Darren Smith (Birmingham)	379	77. Robert Marles (Frimley)	109	41. Emma Hurling (Herts)	79
15. Damien Holland (Billericay)	364	78. Richard Grant (Nottingham)	109	42. Rosemary Rainton (Hastings)	78
16. Tommy Cutler (Willesden)	362	79. Joel Roodyn (Finchley)	107	43. Natalie Riley (Stoke-on-Trent)	77
17. Leigh Jeffries (Birmingham)	342	80. Dale Saunders (Cinderford)	104	44. Rebecca Fisher (Tottenham)	76
18. Richard Hutchinson (Ipswich)	326	81. Sean Gaylard (Plymouth)	101	45. Joanne Keighley (Yorks)	74
19. Richard Aitken (Torquay)	307	82. Scott Solder (Barking)	101	46. Amanda Dawkins (Mickleover)	68
20. David Morris (Pontesbury)	299	83. Mark Beaumont (L. Buzzard)	99	47. Karen Richardson (Oldham)	64
21. Neil Bevan (Bude)	293	84. James Patterson (Hatfield)	98	48. Elizabeth Connell (Yorks)	61
22. Stuart Miller (Stockton)	290	85. Simon Pryke (Ramsey)	96	49. Allison Ledwitch (Birmingham)	61
23. Gary Knights (Burton-on-Trent)	288	86. Ian Collier (Durham)	94	50. Helen Stephens (Grantham)	59
24. Neil Simms (Pontefract)	283	87. Chris Nicholls (Ipswich)	93		
25. Wayne Renton (Oldham)	281	88. Gavin Black (Bedford)	92		
26. Andrew Eden (Preston)	276	89. David Ball (Wakefield)	91		
27. Michael Aucterlonie (Salisbury)	266	90. Stephen Bettison (Nailsea)	89		
28. Michael Oakley (Sheffield)	255	91. Howard Whewell (Lancs)	83		
29. Phillip Szekeres (Enfield)	249	92. Richard Todd (Coventry)	83		
30. David Carter (Coulson)	243	93. Paul Ward (Rochdale)	82		
31. Andrew Horsfield (Yorks)	236	94. Nicholas Csillag (Wallington)	81		
32. Mark Stephenson (Halifax)	232	95. Ian Windle (St Ives)	81		
33. Scott Greenbrook (Crawley)	231	96. Karl Albon (St Neots)	80		
34. Robert Lowe (Formby)	229	97. James Maciver (Barnsley)	79		
35. Adrian Bolton (Nottingham)	219	98. Gregory Moore (Southampton)	79		
36. Jasinder Singh (Swindon)	217	99. Richard Pratley (Worcester)	77		
37. Michael Parker (Stockport)	215	100. Thomas Parker (Stockport)	76		
38. Ian Bird (Rushden)	209				
39. Michael Malcolm (Preston)	208				
40. Robert Till (Walsall)	207				
41. Jason Clarke (East Ham)	205				
42. Stephen Hanks (Burton-on-Trent)	202				
43. Keith Hodder (Reading)	197				
44. Michael Harrison (Tun Wells)	196				
45. Peter Bowler (Dunstable)	195				
46. Andrew Houghton (Tonbridge)	194				
47. Martin Cole (Brentwood)	186				
48. Christopher White (Ippelpen)	181				
49. Alan Cole (Crawley)	181				
50. Rajinder Singh (Birmingham)	173				
51. Graeme Connelly (Camberley)	171				
52. Darryl Sneyd (Oldham)	169				
53. Stephen Baggaley (Milton Keynes)	167				
54. Grant Solder (Barking)	164				
55. Kevin Pickles (Bradford)	164				
56. Matthew Boon (Ashford)	164				
57. Robert Fearn (Nottingham)	163				
58. Jason Tendler (Ilford)	159				
59. Christopher Glossop (Chesterfield)	158				
60. Stuart Grassick (Edmonton)	156				
61. Stephen Horsfield (Sheffield)	154				
62. James Nicholson (Stockton)	151				
63. Ian Harris (Woodford Grn)	151				

CADET BOYS

1. Leigh Jeffries (Birmingham)	925
2. Neil Bevan (Bude)	656
3. Andrew Eden (Preston)	566
4. Gary Knights (Burton)	471
5. Brian Mileham (Margate)	454
6. Mark Stephenson (Halifax)	426
7. Peter Bowler (Dunstable)	425
8. Michael Aucterlonie (Salisbury)	362
9. Grant Solder (Barking)	350
10. Mark Bawden (Launceston)	288
11. Alan Cole (Crawley)	287
12. James Patterson (Hatfield)	275
13. Craig Smith (Selby)	242
14. Ian Black (St Albans)	234
15. Paul Davison (Worksop)	214
16. Howard Whewell (Rossendale)	200
17. Martin Adams (Ascot)	185
18. Peter France (Doncaster)	182
19. Paul Carter (Coulson)	153
20. Kevin Horsfield (Sheffield)	150
21. Jason Blake (S Croydon)	143
22. Gregory Bridget (Plymouth)	118
23. Steven Riggins (Washington)	112
24. Garry Tendler (Ilford)	108
25. Gavin Yates (Oxon)	108

CADET GIRLS

1. Joanne Roberts (Leeds)	914
2. Ellen Meddings (Harrogate)	548
3. Helen Potts (Chester)	514
4. Caroline Buckley (Luton)	444
5. Helen Wright (Plymouth)	442
6. Kate Goodall (Leeds)	390
7. Susanne Lawton (Ormesby)	388
8. Sarah Pengelly (Paignton)	378
9. Samantha Marling (Hull)	338
10. Elizabeth Bryant (Leicester)	285
11. Nicola Meddings (S. Coldfield)	279
12. Alison Gower (Ingatstone)	220



Tables that last buy Jaques

NO BED OF ROSES

WHEN I ran for the Office of ETTA Chairman I knew that success would not give me a bed of roses. Vigorous critic though I had been, what I found was much worse than I had expected - far more problem areas and much greater problems in each. There is unfortunately a small committed clique anxious to interpret each step in the worst possible light, totally ruthless and often a stranger to the truth. There is no reason why they should not nominate a candidate in the next election to run against me. That opportunity will come in less than a year. In the meantime I need a few months in which everybody gets behind me.

CASH FLOW

Since my election there have been very few days when I have not put in a 12 or 14 hour day 4 or 5 times each week. The financial problems alone have been monumental. We still need substantial sponsorship income to balance our books. Immense efforts are being made in that direction. The Office Repairs at the end of our lease in Hastings will adversely affect our cash flow by some £25,000. It is no comfort now that we have had the benefit of a very cheap rent for so many years. We MUST get our financial base right. We owe that to the sport and to our Treasurer, an excellent man.

RED TAPE

I have made the point that the Association often seems to be drowning in formalities and red tape, costly to produce and time-absorbing to read. We must become more business-like and trust people more. I hope that the majority will accept that I am trying to move the sport forward and that the election slogans of "abrasive" and "seeking confrontation" will be shelved for a year or so. I have, in fact, been trying to build bridges and have gone out of my way to let 'election opponents' know that there are no problems on my side and that I want everybody to work together.

CHANGE NEEDED

I was not elected to sit around in unchanged and unchanging surroundings. There have to be changes if the ETTA is to survive. We have lost a third of our members in a few years. What further warnings do we need? We are working very hard to improve the image of the sport, to gain Television exposure and to win the respect of the media. We have made strides on all these fronts. The Membership Committee will begin work soon to battle against the decline in numbers. We are trying to right the trends of at least two decades.

SHOOTING OURSELVES IN THE FOOT

We must stop shooting ourselves in the foot. It makes little sense for me to spend days enlisting the support of Fleet Street if the tournament the following week-end finishes too late to get even the results into the papers, nor if this late finish produces a 'crowd' of less than 50, because everybody has gone home, unable to postpone the journey any longer. That does not please present sponsors and does not make the sport look good. Neither can it make sense to stick rigidly to scheduling which ensures many boring hours for the ones who have come to watch and support. It has to be a three dimensional partnership - Player, Organiser and Spectator. THEN the sponsor will be pleased to join in and support will come that makes it possible to expand the sport.

COACHING

Much has been made of the Management Committee's efforts to restructure our Coaching Scheme and my own ideas and discussion points which I threw in as a contribution to the debate were hotly criticised. I don't mind that. We are now on the way to a better structured and managed Coaching Scheme which will serve our members better as well as affording better opportunities to many excellent civilian and professional coaches. I am grateful to the Sports Council for their input. Perhaps they saw our problems earlier than we did. We are trying to define a clear road to the top for both the ambitious player and coach. Few get to the very top, but it is one of the charms of the sport to find out how far you can go.

A SET-BACK

You will have read how the National Council vetoed my nomination for Vice-Chairman of Coaching, Bernard Rowley. It remains my opinion that Bernard is a fine man, a Vice-President of the Association, a great honour bestowed by my predecessors, a 2 Star coach, Regional Coaching Chairman, Organiser of the famous Littlehampton Summer Camp and tireless worker for the sport. The present England Captain relates how his father took him to Bernard's camp all the way from Preston when he was 12 years old! (The press and others placed various interpretations on this, even connecting it to my expressed hope that we would have an England Captain who would have sole charge, which would mean the end of the committee system in selection).

I want Bernard by my side in the difficult days ahead and I hope my colleagues on the National Council will take that on board. Most of us are elected for only one year, our freedom to act restricted by many factors including constant financial constraints. What we do need in that brief period is the support and confidence of our members.

FANTASTIC!

Finally, we enjoyed a resounding and notable success in the staging of our National Championships in Crawley. My very warm thanks to all concerned. An excellent venue, a fantastic men's final, very good, helpful organisation and, above all, a good committed crowd, all made it an occasion to remember. It was standing room only. We sent free tickets to every league and county and still doubled the previous year's box office receipts. It was the start - and only the start - of our new marketing strategy. To use an old phrase: It was a glimpse into the future and it worked. A time to be proud to be part of the sport, the shape of things to come. Proof, which I never needed, that this is a great sport.

£800 sponsorship for Yorkshire Junior Open

NALGO have joined forces with the Yorkshire TTA by injecting an £800 sponsorship into the Yorkshire Junior Open to be held at Northbridge Leisure Centre, Halifax on April 25 and 26. The event is restyled as the NALGO Yorkshire Junior Select Open, reports our Yorkshire scribe Rea Balmford.

TRAGEDY

A shadow was cast over the Southern Veterans open at Brighton on February 28th. David Jones, 52 from Reading, Berkshire, a heart patient, collapsed and died on court from cardiac failure. A full report by Mike Watts, the organiser, will be in the April Edition.

..... that's good!!

John Jaques

County championships - Doug Moss

WEATHER CREATED HAVOC WITH FIXTURES

HEAVY snow and ice made travelling very difficult over the weekend 17/18 January and led to two-thirds of matches being postponed. One match secretary on being asked about notification of postponement said 'phone lines down and he couldn't even find the postbox! Matches played were:

SENIORS

2A: Warwicks 4, Leics 6 — Warwicks put up a good fight against a strong Leics team. Phil Gunn and Micky Browne (Wa) beat Phil Smith. The ladies got the other two events — Di StLeger beat Julie Revill and, partnered by Sandra Peakman, inflicted the first doubles defeat on Karen Smith and Julie — 17, 19, 20!

2B: Middlesex II 5, Kent 5 — Middlesex II — Graham Sandley, Colin Wilson, Mark Mitchell, and the result a draw! Kent ladies took three events. At 2-4 Lesley Popkiewicz beat Gillian Blanch 9, — 18, 22 and at 3-5 Juliet Houghton won against Angela Mitchell — 8, 15, 17. Joe Kennedy secured a draw for Kent with a 19, 19 win, in the last event, over Mark Mitchell.

3A: Clwyd 6, Warwicks II 4 — A close match and Clwyd's first win.

3C: Northants 6, Cambs II 4 — Graeme McKim and Keith Jones won five for the home team and, despite losing their singles, Margaret Maltby and Joyce Porter (Np) beat Yvette Hooks and Alison Edge in the ladies doubles.

3D: Hants 7, Herts 3.

4A: Essex III 9, Beds II 1.

VETERANS

Premier Division

The teams in this division, with the exception of Essex and Worcs, got together at Ashford TTC for the weekend 24/25 January. Cheshire, who so narrowly lost the championship last season dominated the scene. They lead the table and are the only unbeaten team. There were some surprising results, the most outstanding being the 9-0 defeat of Middlesex by Sussex. To recompense I must mention the Middlesex 6-3 win over Lincs (last season's champions). The Sussex team had a very good weekend — they also beat Lincs — and are second in the league table. Andy Meads was introduced to the Sussex team and he won 7 of his 8 singles matches.

There are just three players with 100% records at this stage, namely Doreen Schofield (Ch), Connie Moran (Li) and Roger Hampson (Ch). The nearest Roger came to losing this was against Robin Stace, whom he beat at 22-20 in the third game. Keith Horton and Robin Stace have 100% in doubles but had a very close shave against Mat Shearer and Brian Allison (Li) winning — 13, 20 and 22!

2A: Yorks 8, Cheshire II 1; Leics 3, Notts 6; Essex II 8, Northants 1; Northants 4, Herts 5 — Yorks in fine form. Only one event went to a decider when Brook/Walmsley beat Timewell/Powell — 19, 16, 17. Unfortunately Pat Hammond (Ng) had to retire hurt in her singles and the mixed doubles was not played. Dave Marsh (Np) won the final event against Essex II to save a "whitewash".

2B: Middlesex II 6, Dorset I 3; Wilts 2, Bucks 7; Berks I 9, Hants II 0 — Les Wooding (Bu) was involved in two close finishes versus Wilts. He beat Brian Powell — 13, 15, 18 and in the doubles, with Alec Watson, beat Basil Thompson/Mike Oxley 21, — 18, 19.

3A: Lancs 6, Norfolk 3; Cheshire III 1, Yorks II 8 — Lancs got their first win — a convincing one, as they led 6-1. Each of Lancs men (R. Ashley, N. Pearson, A. Chase) won a singles. M. Neary won her singles and mixed doubles with A. Chase.

3B: Hunts II 6, Berks IV 3; Beds 3, Herts III 6 — Brian Spittlehouse (Hu) was in good form winning two singles and the doubles with Christine Albon. Chris also won her singles over Marion Dyke 9, — 18, 20! A good team effort from Herts — the men each won a singles; Keith Hartridge/Dick Emmerson won the men's doubles; Brian Gill/Gill White won the mixed. Gill also kept her 100% singles record.

3C: Herts II 4, Oxon 5; Berks III 2, Sussex II 7; Essex II 9, Beds I 1 — Oxon involved in their third 5-4 match — this time a win! A. Davies and J. Paul (Ox) won four singles and Mrs A. Wotherspoon beat Mrs S. Tyler — 16, 20, 18!

3D: Herts IV 0, Surrey II 9; Dorset II 5, Berks II 4 — Not so easy for Surrey as the result suggests. Four events needed a decider — the ladies singles the closest when B. Winn beat S. Bax — 9, 14, 21.

(Veteran's teams — please give Christian names).

JUNIORS

Premier division

The second weekend of matches were on 7/8 February at the excellent St. Neots Club. A vital match to decide the championship was the Yorks/Lancs clash, coming in the first round. Yorks dominated with a 9-1 win. Sean Gibson got the only event for Lancs with a 19, — 14, 8 win over Chris Oldfield. And it was virtually over — Yorks champions again! Last season they piped Staffs by one sets average. This season, over 7 matches, Yorks dropped five events! One naturally thinks of Yorks as Michael O'Driscoll and Chris Oldfield. But Andrew Ball won 13 of 14 matches and Debbie Toole got 100% in singles and doubles (with Ellen Meddings and Joanna Roberts). Joanna lost only one singles. What a team!

Highlighting other individual performances — Bradley Billington (Dy) was the only boy to achieve 100% in the singles — beating both Michael O'Driscoll and Chris Oldfield at 16 in the third game. O'Driscoll suffered just the one defeat. John Holland played very well to win 11 out of 14 singles including a win over Sean Gibson (La). In the girls singles Helen Lower (St) came next to Debbie Toole — Debbie inflicting her only defeat. Helen had a good 17 in the third win over Kerry Hall (Dy). Kate Gower (E) did very well to win six of seven singles. Her only loss was at 19 in the third to Julie Forster (Dy). The doubles were dominated by O'Driscoll/Oldfield with 100%; Sean Gibson/David Carse lost only to them. After the Yorks girls came three pairs dropping just two events — Holland/Gower, Hall/Forster, McGrath/Clegg.

The main excitement concerned relegation. Notts, one of the two promotees, managed to stay in the Premier. In the final match Notts came from 2-4 to force a draw with Kent. This means Kent join Glamorgan (the other promotees) for demotion.

League table

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Yorks	7	7	0	0	65	5	14
Lancs	7	6	0	1	46	24	12
Derby	7	5	0	2	44	26	10
Staffs	7	3	1	3	33	37	7
Essex	7	3	0	4	32	28	6
Notts	7	1	2	4	28	42	4
Kent	7	1	1	5	24	46	3
Glam	7	0	0	7	8	62	0

2B: Surrey 7, Herts 3 — Caroline Seaholme and Maria Williams played well to win the three for Herts, all needing a decider. Matthew Pernet, Richard Jones, Graeme Connelly got seven wins for Surrey.

3A: Lancs II 5, Durham 5; Cheshire II 8, Clwyd 2 — Lancs versus Durham was a hard fought match throughout. Darryl Sneyd (La) retained a 100% singles record with a 16, — 13, 27 win over Ian Collier!

3B: Hunts I 10, Hunts II 0 — Hunts first team showed no mercy and strengthened their position at the top of the table. Three events did go to a decider.

3C: Worcs 3, Somerset 7 — Worcs first defeat and Somerset strengthened their bid for the championship. Tina Sadler and Jo Weber retained their 100% singles and doubles. Richard Pratley (Wo) again in good form with two wins including the defeat of Paul Smith — 16, 16, 17.

3D: Berks II 0, Middlesex II 10; Herts II 3, Surrey II 7 — A "whitewash" for Berks but girls (Becky Fisher/Sandy Lynes) put up stout resistance in doubles against Karen Slafford/Nicola Cracknell — 12, 15, — 20.

SENIORS

3A: Cheshire II 1, Clwyd 9 — Ron Vose lt John Ellis 15, — 12, — 14; Tony Vaughan lt Paul Griffiths — 17, 18, — 20; Tim Malkin b Trevor Manning 20, — 19, 12; Lynne Harrison/Anne Williamson lt Evelyn Wright/Justine Thomas — 15, 16, — 14; T Malkin/Vose lt Manning/Ellis 10, — 15, — 18; Vose lt Griffiths — 21, — 21; Williamson lt Thomas — 11, — 11; Malkin lt Ellis — 13, — 19; Harrison lt Wright — 17, — 15; Vaughan lt Manning — 14, — 18.

An excellent away win for Clwyd with just Trevor Manning losing their one set. John Ellis and Paul Griffiths winning both their singles and Clwyds ladies also winning with both Evelyn Wright and Justine Thomas on top form.

The Table Tennis Association of Wales' ranking lists for 1 February 1987 show North Wales players ranked in most sections. Men's — Mark Thomas (joint 2nd), Trevor Manning (7th), Paul Griffiths (14th), Justice Evans (25th). Ladies — Heidi Cotter (2nd), Evelyn Wright (3rd), Justine Thomas (4th). Junior boys — John Ellis (1st), Spencer Harris (8th), Kris Mouldsdale (16th), Gary Jones (28th), Andrew Jones (31st), Nigel Roberts (18th). Junior girls — Justine Thomas (1st), Natasha Williams (5th), Tracy Sambrook (7th), Claire Elliot (12th), Susan Lees (13th). This is a great improvement on a few years ago when North Wales hardly ever had any players in the ranking lists, and shows a greater involvement in national events.

JUNIORS

3A: Clwyd 3, Leics 7 — Spencer Harris lt Cris Kinsey — 19, 17, — 7; Andrew Jones lt Andrew Clark — 9, — 13; Kris Mouldsdale lt Richard Grimley — 15, — 13; Tracy Sambrook/Natasha Williams b Liz Bryant/Jayne Freer 16, — 21, 15; Mouldsdale/Harris lt Kinsey/Clark — 16, — 13; Harris b Clark — 15, 11, 17; Williams b J Freer 15, 14; Mouldsdale lt Kinsey 16, — 16, — 16; Sambrook lt Bryant — 14, — 17; Jones lt Grimley — 9, — 15.

In a very exciting match at one stage it looked like Clwyd would manage to take a drawn match, however with the score at 3-5 Kris Mouldsdale after winning the first game 16, then lost the next two by the same score. This win was a turning point in the game and the final score was a 7 sets to 3 win for Leics. For Clwyd their wins came from Spencer Harris who won his singles against Andrew Clark and Natasha Williams who beat Jayne Freer and with Tracy Sambrook also won the girl's doubles. A much improved display from the Clwyd side and with a little more good luck they could have got something from the match.

County Notes 1

BEDFORDSHIRE

Dawn Campbell

AFTER reporting in my last notes the disappointment of entrants in the County Senior Tournament, I have to report yet another disappointment in the County Junior Tournament - only 27 entrants.

Results

Girls singles U-14: M Davidson b K Cotterill 7, 13; **Boys singles U14:** C Bowler b T Brown 14, 17; **Girls singles U17:** K Cox b A Cotterill 9, 10; **Boys singles U17:** P Bowler b T Harris 10, 16; **Boys doubles U14:** S Wilkin/C Bowler b T Brown/P Dunn 16, 16; **Boys doubles U17:** M Simmonds/T Harris b M Wilkin/M Bowler - 14, 10, 10; **Girls doubles U17:** A Cotterill/K Cox b S Dawson/J Strode 12, 12; **Mixed doubles:** P Bowler/J Green b M Wilkin/S Dawson 14, - 16, 14.

The Bedford League held again their annual Derby and Joan Handicap Tournament. Despite a rather poor turn out enjoyment was had by all.

The tournament was won by Division 6 player, Delroy Codrington who beat Tim Sparrow of Division 5.

The tournament raised £50 towards the British Heart Foundation.

In the Veteran Inter League, Bedford beat North Herts 7-2 but lost to Hunts Central 6-3.

Results of Luton League Divisional Tournaments which were held early in the new year.

Division 1 Singles: M Hussain b D Willis 15, 15; **Doubles:** M Hussain/R Taylor b G Sharpe/T Harris 13, - 19, 19.

Division 2 Singles: I Marquis b M Blackburn 10, 17, 19; **Doubles:** I Marquis/B Bailey b C Tilcock/D Champken 19, - 18, 11.

Division 3 Singles: K Thompson b S Cartwright 16, 14; **Doubles:** K Thompson/D Hawkins b S Cartwright/M Farrow 17, - 11, 17.

Division 4 Singles: C Clark b L Gresham 15, - 22, 20; **Doubles:** D Patel/L Gresham b R Marriott/S Webb 17, 18.

Division 5 Singles: T Marsh b J Hassall 18, 19; **Doubles:** A Hassall/J Hassall b M Horton/R Horton - 19, 20, 19.

Division 6 Singles: S Trevanion b R Penn 11, 16; **Doubles:** A Nolan/R Penn b S Pinnon/G Phillips 14, 18.

BERKSHIRE

Bob Adams

THE 1986 Berkshire Closed Championships could scarcely be said to have produced a crop of surprises, since despite an entry of close to 200 only 2 events were contested by other than the No 1 and 2 seeds. By

the end of the first day Dave Jones had managed to defeat No 1 seed Alec Watson but all others had gone completely to the seeding committee's predictions. Easily the most spectacular match of the day was the Junior Boys Singles final where Robert Ettridge treated the spectators to some amazing Boris Becker dives before going down (literally) to Keith Hodder's all powerful hitting. On day two Alec Watson had his chances of reversing his earlier losing finalist position when he battled through to the finals of the Mens Doubles (with Frank Earis) and the Mens Singles. Alas, poor Alec, it was not to be, since club mates Graham Kemp and Paul Savins cleaned up all the senior mens titles between them, including the under 21. The other names to feature on this year's trophies will be Jane Cohen in the Ladies Singles, Gill Knightley and Mary Stafford who returned after a three year break to Ladies Doubles success, Martin Adams who won the Cadet Boys title for the third successive year, Lisa Crick in the Cadet Girls, and Mary Allan who after winning the Junior Girls teamed up with Diana Spindlow for the Girls Doubles.

Both Bracknell and Maidenhead have recently held their Closed Championships, with many of the above names cropping up. In Bracknell, County Champion Paul Savins swept through to the Mens Singles title, but must have been slightly surprised to go down in two straight sets to Martin Adams in the under 21. Jane Cohen as well as successfully partnering Sue Stoute in the Ladies Doubles, also triumphed in the Singles. Ted Cripps won the Mens Veterans for the ninth time, whilst Bob Sym and Mike Lennon took the Doubles. The divisional titles went to Mark Hudson (Premier), Frank Winnard (Div 1 and 2), Mark Armstrong (Div 3 and 4). Keith Norman from Division 3 devoured all that were put in his way to take the Handicap after a hard final against Steve Dorrell. A special mention must be made of shortly to be wed Sean Toman and Linda Green, well known in Berkshire Table Tennis circles, since despite losing in the final of the Mixed Doubles to the aforementioned Jane Cohen and Bob Sym, must consider their success in reaching the final a good omen!

Any Leagues currently bemoaning a lack of interest on the part of spectators should take a trip to Maidenhead to find out how they manage to get an audience of 200 to their final. One can only assume that it is not the Cabaret, free booze or Green Shield stamps which does it, but fine organisation under Mike Davis with sponsorship of The Anglian Building Society to help, plus good entertaining Table Tennis over a number of years. This year carried on the tradition with wins for Mark Curtis in the Mens Singles and Sue Collier in the Ladies Singles.

CUMBRIA

Colin Taylor

ROGER STEWART of Carlisle has been deservedly recognised for his efforts in reviving interest among the junior players of the Carlisle area. Roger was recently named as Sports Personality of the year at the Sands Centre where he coaches four times a week. Assistant Centre Manager David Gill said, "Roger has shown outstanding commitment to his sport and the Sands".

Roger won the award ahead of other nominees including a Commonwealth high jumper.

Much to Roger's delight the young up and coming Carlisle players did him proud at the Cumbria Closed Junior Tournament held at Carlisle. Stephen Temple (No 3 seed) provided the biggest shock of the day by defeating the No 1 seed from Barrow, John Backhouse, in the final of the U17 boys singles, - 23, 13, 18. Temple's aggressive style of play never let Backhouse settle down and resulted in an exciting final.

Other Carlisle players to shine were Nicholas Thompson who beat the No 2 seed, Gordon Dwanne from Kendal, as early as the 2nd round of the U17 singles, 15, - 19, 19. Thompson was in fact losing 16-19 in the third game.

Mark Nanson also claimed a seeded players scalp by comfortably beating Stephen Watt, the No 4 seed from Barrow - 18, 18, 11.

In the semi-finals Backhouse beat Mark Temple (Carlisle) 11, 12 and Stephen Temple beat Nicholas Thompson 17, 19. In the doubles Backhouse and Watt gained some revenge by defeating the Temple brothers 17, 16 in the final. The U17 girls singles resulted in an easy win for Paula Sloane (Carlisle) over Amanda McKie (Carlisle) 6, 8. The U14 singles title came to the south of the County thanks to Tony Dawson (Barrow) who came from behind in both games for a creditable 21, 18 win over Michael Greenop (Carlisle).

In the Carlisle league Division One no team has emerged from the pack as yet and this is reflected in individual performances. The averages leaders have all lost at least three times. Top names are Geoff Birch (Wigton), Julie McLean (TM Windows), Colin Powell (Spartans) and Roger Stewart (Spartans).

Division Two is being dominated by the young Sports Centre teams with Stephen Temple at the top of the class.

The County Junior side have won two of their three matches so far this season. The latest was an 8-2 win over Cheshire in which John Backhouse, Stephen Temple and Margo Lewis excelled to win all their singles. Paula Eddy helped Margo to a girls doubles win and Stephen Watt added a singles win.

DERBYSHIRE

Malcolm Allsop

THE Derby League combined the Divisional and Individual Closed Championships into a crowded day at the St Benedicts School, with 16 events being contested in two Halls.

Jane and Philip Vickers took the major honours with three Titles each. The Mens and Ladies Doubles events were combined into a Senior Doubles event. Philip and Jane combined to become the first winners of the Senior Doubles, and retained their Mixed Doubles title.

Stephen Yallop was an early casualty when he hurt his back picking a ball off the floor! This left Martin Simpson a clear run through to the final where Philip Vickers proved too strong.

Jane Vickers fought off the challenge of Julie Forster and Marilyn O'Sullivan to win the Ladies Singles.

Most popular winner of the day was hard-working Dave O'Donnell who took the Division Four Singles with victory over experienced Stuart Russell.

Derby Mens team have started magnificently in the Senior Division of the Midland Table Tennis League and have won their opening four matches. Derby have gained 7-3 wins over Gloucester and Chesterfield; 9-1 against Wolverhampton and 8-2 against Coventry.

Philip Vickers has led the Derby team strongly winning 11 of his 12 singles sets, and combining with Stephen Yallop to win all 4 doubles sets. Derby's title hopes could rest on the result of the crucial final match against Birmingham on 4th April.

Geoff Gill won the Mens Singles at the Matlock League's Closed Championships, with his biggest challenge coming from the improving Ian Burton, whose hard hitting extended Gill in the semi-finals.

Pat Thorley won the Ladies Singles, and then teamed up with husband, Mick, to win the Mixed Doubles.

Mick Thorley was hard-pressed in the Veterans Singles, beating the holder, Harvey Flint, in an entertaining semi-final. In the final, Geoff Birch pulled back from 16-19 down in the third game to lead 20-19 before Mick clinched the title by 22-20.

Matlock Closed Championships:

Results:

Mens singles: Semi-finals: Geoff Gill b Ian Burton 17, - 16, 15; Dave Fearn b Tony Gregory 11, 17.

Final: Gill b Fearn 7, 16.

Womens singles: Pat Thorley b Jill Burton 13, 17.

Eastwood Juniors travelled to Knighton Park, Leicester and came close to winning the Junior Division of the Midland Table Tennis League against a strong Leicester team.

County Notes 2

DURHAM

Harry Black

FOLLOWING their creditable 5-5 draw away to Lancashire II at Preston, Durham juniors went on to beat local rivals and league leaders Northumberland 7-3.

Mandy Naisbitt (16) from Shiney Row who plays for Houghton YM-CA in the Philadelphia League made a successful debut for Durham and a winning formula in the girls events has hopefully been found.

Sunderland are through to the last eight of the Carter Cup following a 5-1 win away to Ormesby.

Paul Swift, Steven Riggins and Ian Collier played very well indeed and fully deserved their win.

The Durham County Closed Tournament took place at Lawhills Road Sports Centre, Peterlee on 22nd February. A report will appear in the next issue.

Another tournament in the area is the Maureen Kerry Memorial Tournament being held on 8th March at Consett Sports Centre which was sponsored by local firms Professional Flooring Services and Paul and Laughran Ltd.

Around the Leagues South Shields

Reyrolles A are the only unbeaten side and currently lead the division by two points over Brinkburn A and have two matches in hand.

Leading positions:

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Reyrolles A	9	8	1	0	76
Brinkburn A	11	8	2	1	74
Brinkburn D	12	7	1	4	70
Tyne Dock B	9	6	2	1	61
Tyne Dock A	8	5	2	1	57

Sunderland League

North Centre 'A' extend their lead at the top of the first division following a 7-5 victory against second placed St. Gabriel's A. Echo A are closely tucked behind in third place.

Burn Park Meths and Silksworth CC B are the front runners for the second division title. In division three Ryhope Road B lost their unbeaten tag when they lost to Emplex A 7-5.

Red House Y.W. could pose a threat to both St. Gabriel's CC B and M.C.F.E. as they have games in hand over both of them.

Division 1	P	W	D	L	Pts
North Centre A	17	16	1	0	63
St. Gabriels A	17	15	0	2	58
Echo A	15	13	0	2	54

Division 2	P	W	D	L	Pts
Burn Park Meths	12	10	2	0	43
Silksworth CC B	11	8	3	0	38
Belford House B	11	8	1	2	33

ESSEX

Laurie Darnell

PHYLLIS LAUDER had a surprise Christmas present. On the 24th December 1986 she received an invitation to attend the World Championships! Phyllis will fly out with the official ETTA party on 17th February and will return on the 2nd March 1987.

I understand that the host country selects about ten people of all nationalities who are members of the Victor Barna inspired Swathling Club. Provided each member pays the air fare it is an expense-free experience.

Phyllis Lauder, who has been the Essex Veteran Match Secretary for very many years, was recently invited to watch a Schildkrot British League match. It was after meeting John Prean at the Pitsea Leisure Centre. She refused, confessing that she was not an admirer of the fast, all-attack game. She much prefers the pace and guile exhibited by Veteran match-play.

It will be interesting to hear her views and comments on the play and the people she will see in New Delhi.

The Essex County Schools Individual Championships will be held on Saturday 14th March 1987. The organiser Mrs Esther Coleman has obtained sponsorship from Macartney and Dowie Financial Services Ltd. Telephone: 0277 74036.

The Championships will be held at the new Peniel Academy Sports Hall, 49 Coxtie Green Road, Pilgrims Hatch, Essex CM14 5PS.

Three weeks earlier Peniel Academy will host the Brentwood & District League's Junior 'Closed' Championships. A huge entry of 60 Under-17 year olds owes much to Coaches within the League and the Tournament Committee of Margaret Darnell, Sally Shepherd, Ted Knight and Peter Roden, who will Referee both events at Peniel Academy.

The Ramlosa Silver Award is a good idea! At each home match of Team Ramlosa Essex a guest adjudicator will award the player, from either team, who in his or her opinion has made the most significant contribution to the match.

It does not necessarily follow that the nomination for the British League 'Man of the Match' is the same player.

Guests have so far come from other sporting spheres: Roy Dwight (Football); Mark Cox, MBE (Tennis); Tosh Chamberlain (Football); Darren Hall (Badminton) and Peter Edwards (Essex County Cricket Club Secretary/Manager).

The following have been made winners: Miss Lesley Tyler, Alex Abbott, Richard Darnell, Stuart Gibb and Gary Spencer. There are still two more Ramlosa Silver Awards to be made - who will receive them could it be you!

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Alf Pepperd

County Teams

Our Senior Match v Yorkshire had to be postponed because of bad weather (guess it was not the only one put off that terrible weekend) and to date of writing has not yet been re-arranged. Likewise our Juniors in Div 3C fared the same fate against Dorset, however that match has been now arranged for March 28th.

More recently our Seniors lost to Warwicks 8-2 at home and the Juniors in Div 3C, still unbeaten, beat Warwicks seconds 7-3.

Providence Capitol County Premier League

To date this League has only met once this year, early in February we are now at the half way stage, having played five matches out of ten.

	P	W	L	Pts
Rudford	5	5	0	40
Cheltenham	5	3	2	26
C.E.G.B.	5	2	3	23
Forest	5	3	2	20
Stroud	5	2	3	20
Newent	5	0	5	6



Could this be Alf hard at work?

HAMPSHIRE

David Cosway

BACK into the County A team, Graham Toole inspired a 7-3 win over Hertford with two single wins. Ramish Bhalla and Mark Wilding each won a singles while Cheryl Buttery and Sarah Hammond won their singles and combined to win the doubles. Although the veterans A team lost heavily in all four encounters over the block match weekend they picked up a few useful sets against highly ranked opponents. Against Sussex the 2/7 defeat included wins for Ken Giles over A Rowden and for Christine Davies over B Bayford. Against Cheshire (2/7) Ken Giles beat E Griffith and combined with Christine to beat no less a partnership than the two Schofields in the mixed. Ray Lush had his glory wins against Kent (2/7) when he beat H Buist and combined with George Philpott to beat Buist and Fairley in the doubles. George won the only set in the 1/8 loss to Lincoln beating B Allison. The veteran B team went down heavily 0/9 to Berkshire. A disappointing 4/6 defeat to Wiltshire Juniors with the girls Rachel Cheffey and Lisa Rice winning their 3 but Bryant Gonsalves won the only Boys singles.

In the Bournemouth Premier division Merton A lead but a loss to North A and a draw with Kinson A

has allowed Winton to draw level on points. North B lead the first division after beating a weakened GPO A 8/2 to overtake their closest rivals. Good to have news from Portsmouth! At the end of the first half Generation Aces lead the first division by a single point from Hambleton with Cowplain Gold and Blue teams close behind. Unbeaten Colts lead the second division from Co-Op Dukes and Schroder A.

Some upsets in the Hampshire Junior Closed with number 1 seed Greg Moore and number 2 Jason Hicks going out at the group stage and number 3 Bryant Gonsalves losing to Mark Thorne in the quarter finals. Jeff Giles took out number 5 seed Edward Connell in the semi. This left the numbers 4 and 7 seeds contesting the final and clearly ranking changes are imminent. Although from my own Club and City I was surprised at Martin Johnson's excellent form to win this event. It just shows Martin the standards you can reach when you put your mind to it and give 100% effort - well done! In the girls event played on a group basis No 1 seed Lisa Rice emerged the unbeaten winner but Elizabeth Schubrook beat No 2 seed Rachel Cheffey to take second place.

ENGLISH NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RECORDS

— the last 28 years

EVERY YEAR the programmes at the English Championships contain the fascinating lists of past winners. We thought it would be an idea to print them in TTN, giving principally our senior readers some nostalgic material and showing the youngsters who were the top people in the last 28 years in England.

MEN'S SINGLES

1959-60	B.R. Merrett (Glos)
1960-61	I.O. Harrison (Glos)
1961-62	R.J. Stevens (Essex)
1962-63	G.C. Barnes (Essex)
1963-64	G.C. Barnes (Essex)
1964-65	G.C. Barnes (Essex)
1965-66	D. Neale (Yorks)
1966-67	I.O. Harrison (Glos)
1967-68	D. Neale (Yorks)
1968-69	D. Neale (Yorks)
1969-70	D. Neale (Yorks)
1970-71	G.C. Barnes (Essex)
1971-72	T. Taylor (Essex)
1972-73	T. Taylor (Essex)
1973-74	G.C. Barnes (Essex)
1974-75	D. Neale (Cleve)
1975-76	D. Douglas (Warks)
1976-77	D. Neale (Cleve)
1977-78	P.E. Day (Camps)
1978-79	D. Douglas (Warks)
1979-80	D. Douglas (Warks)
1980-81	D. Douglas (Warks)
1981-82	D. Douglas (Warks)
1982-83	D. Douglas (Warks)
1983-84	D. Douglas (Warks)
1984-85	D. Douglas (Warks)
1985-86	D. Douglas (Warks)
1986-87	D. Douglas (Warks)

WOMEN'S DOUBLES

1959-60	Miss D. Rowe (Middx) and Miss J. Rook (Surrey)
1960-61	Mrs E. Carrington and Mrs J. McCree (Essex)
1961-62	Mrs A.R. Mills and Miss D. Rowe (Middx)
1962-63	Miss D. Rowe (Middx) and Miss M. Shannon (Surrey)
1963-64	Miss D. Rowe (Middx) and Miss M. Shannon (Surrey)
1964-65	Miss D. Rowe (Middx) and Miss M. Shannon (Surrey)
1965-66	Miss K. Smith (Middx) and Mrs M. Wright (Surrey)
1966-67	Miss K. Smith (Middx) and Mrs M. Wright (Surrey)
1967-68	Mrs J. Billington and Mrs E. Carrington (Essex)
1968-69	Miss J. Heaps (Cheshire) and Mrs P. Piddock (Kent)
1969-70	Mrs K. Mathews (Middx) and Mrs M. Wright (Surrey)
1970-71	Mrs K. Mathews (Middx) and Miss J. Shirley (Bucks)
1971-72	Mrs K. Mathews (Middx) and Mrs J. Hammersley (Bucks)
1972-73	Miss L.C. Howard (Surrey) and Mrs K. Mathews (Middx)
1973-74	Miss L.C. Howard (Surrey) and Mrs K. Mathews (Middx)
1974-75	Miss C. Knight (Cleve) and Mrs K. Mathews (Middx)
1975-76	Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks) and Miss L.C. Howard (Surrey)
1976-77	Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks) and Miss L.C. Howard (Surrey)
1977-78	Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks) and Miss L.C. Howard (Surrey)
1978-79	Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks) and Miss L.C. Howard (Surrey)
1979-80	Miss C. Knight (Cleve) and Miss A. Stevenson (Leics)
1980-81	Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks) and Mrs L.C. Jarvis (Cleve)
1981-82	Miss C. Knight (Cleve) and Miss A. Stevenson (Leics)
1982-83	Mrs J.P. Hammersley-Parker (Bucks) and Miss K. Witt (Berks)
1983-84	Miss A. Gordon (Berks) and Mrs M. Sainsbury (Berks)
1984-85	Miss L. Bellinger (Beds) and Miss J. Bellinger (Beds)
1985-86	Miss J. Grundy (Lancs) and Miss J. Parker (Lancs)
1986-87	Miss L. Bellinger (Beds) and Miss J. Bellinger (Beds)

WOMEN'S SINGLES

1959-60	Miss D. Rowe (Middx)
1960-61	Miss D. Rowe (Middx)
1961-62	Miss D. Rowe (Middx)
1962-63	Miss M. Shannon (Surrey)
1963-64	Miss D. Rowe (Middx)
1964-65	Miss M. Shannon (Surrey)
1965-66	Mrs M. Wright (Surrey)

1966-67	Mrs M. Wright (Surrey)
1967-68	Mrs M. Wright (Surrey)
1968-69	Miss J. Williams (Surrey)
1969-70	Mrs M. Wright (Surrey)
1970-71	Mrs K. Mathews (Middx)
1971-72	Mrs K. Mathews (Middx)
1972-73	Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks)
1973-74	Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks)
1974-75	Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks)
1975-76	Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks)
1976-77	Miss C. Knight (Cleve)
1977-78	Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks)
1978-79	Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks)
1979-80	Miss C. Knight (Cleve)
1980-81	Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks)
1981-82	Miss C. Knight (Cleve)
1982-83	Miss K. Witt (Berks)
1983-84	Miss A. Gordon (Berks)
1984-85	Miss L. Bellinger (Beds)
1985-86	Miss J. Grundy (Lancs)
1986-87	Miss F. Elliot (Staffs)

MEN'S DOUBLES

1959-60	J.A. Leach (Essex) and M.H. Thornhill (Middx)
1960-61	I.O. Harrison (Glos) and B.R. Merrett (Glos)
1961-62	R.F. Raybould (Essex) and R.J. Stevens (Essex)
1962-63	R.F. Raybould (Essex) and R.J. Stevens (Essex)
1963-64	D.O. Creamer (Middx) and J.A. Leach (Essex)
1964-65	G.C. Barnes (Essex) and I.O. Harrison (Glos)
1965-66	G.C. Barnes (Essex) and I.O. Harrison (Glos)
1966-67	G.C. Barnes (Essex) and I.O. Harrison (Glos)
1967-68	G.C. Barnes (Essex) and I.O. Harrison (Glos)
1968-69	A. Hydes and D. Neale (Yorks)
1969-70	A. Hydes and D. Neale (Yorks)
1970-71	G.C. Barnes and T. Taylor (Yorks)
1972-73	D. Neale and T. Taylor (Yorks)
1973-74	A. Hydes and D. Neale (Yorks)
1974-75	A.A.J. Barden (Middx) and P.E. Day (Camps)
1975-76	D. Douglas (Warks) and D. Neale (Cleve)
1976-77	D. Douglas (Warks) and D. Neale (Cleve)
1977-78	P.E. Day (Camps) and A.A.J. Barden (Middx)
1978-79	D. Douglas (Warks) and J. Walker (Cleve)
1979-80	P. Day (Camps) and N. Jarvis (Cleve)
1980-81	D. Douglas (Warks) and P.E. Day (Camps)
1981-82	D. Douglas (Warks) and P.E. Day (Camps)
1982-83	D. Douglas (Warks) and P.E. Day (Camps)
1983-84	D. Douglas (Warks) and P.E. Day (Camps)
1984-85	D. Douglas (Warks) and C. Prean (IoW)
1985-86	D. Douglas (Warks) and C. Prean (IoW)
1986-87	S. Andrew (Essex) and N. Mason (Surrey)

MIXED DOUBLES

1959-60	J.A. Leach (Essex) and Miss D. Rowe (Middx)
1960-61	M. Maclaren (Surrey) and Miss M. Piper (Surrey)
1961-62	J.A. Leach (Essex) and Miss D. Rowe (Middx)
1962-63	B.D. Wright (Middx) and Miss M. Shannon (Surrey)
1963-64	I.O. Harrison (Glos) and Miss D. Rowe (Middx)
1964-65	G.C. Barnes (Essex) and Miss D. Rowe (Middx)
1965-66	B.D. Wright (Middx) and Mrs M. Wright (Surrey)
1966-67	S.R. Gibbs (Essex) and Miss B. Sayer (Essex)
1967-68	D. Neale (Yorks) and Miss K. Smith (Middx)
1968-69	D. Neale (Yorks) and Mrs K. Mathews (Middx)
1969-70	D. Neale (Yorks) and Mrs M. Wright (Surrey)
1970-71	G.C. Barnes (Essex) and Mrs K. Mathews (Middx)
1971-72	D. Neale (Yorks) and Mrs K. Mathews (Middx)
1972-73	A. Hydes (Yorks) and Miss L.C. Howard (Surrey)
1973-74	D. Neale (Yorks) and Mrs K. Mathews (Middx)
1974-75	N. Jarvis (Cleve) and Mrs J.P. Hammersley (Bucks)
1975-76	D. Douglas (Warks) and Miss L.C. Howard (Surrey)
1976-77	P.E. Day (Camps) and Miss M. Ludi (Yorks)
1977-78	N.A.S. Eckersley (Ches) and Miss K. Witt (Berks)
1978-79	D. Douglas (Warks) and Miss L.C. Howard (Surrey)
1979-80	J. Hilton (Lancs) and Mrs J. Hammersley (Bucks)
1980-81	D. Douglas (Warks) and Mrs L.C. Jarvis (Cleve)
1981-82	D. Douglas (Warks) and Mrs L.C. Jarvis (Cleve)
1982-83	N. Eckersley (Ches) and Miss J. Grundy (Lancs)
1983-84	S. Andrew (Essex) and Mrs C. Moore (Cleve)
1984-85	G. Sandley (Herts) and Miss A. Gordon (Berks)
1985-86	S. Andrew (Essex) and Miss F. Elliot (Staffs)
1986-87	S. Andrew (Essex) and Miss F. Elliot (Staffs)

County Notes 3

HERTFORDSHIRE

John Wood

FLYING the flag for Wales and Hertfordshire was Cheshunt's Nigel Tyler, at the World Championships in New Delhi during February.

Nigel, who is a professional table tennis player sponsored by Donic, has played for Wales for the past five years since he was 14, during which time he played at the World Championships in Sweden and the European Championships in Prague.

Young Tyler also plays for Butterfly Cardiff in the Premier Division of the British League, and with his sister Lesley and John Lennon for Phoenix in the local Barnet League.

Nigel's sister Lesley also plays for Wales, but unfortunately they are not sending a Womens Team to the World Championships.

Lesley has played for Wales for the past six years and represented her country at the 1984 Moscow and 1986 Prague European Championships, as well as the World Championships in Sweden and the World University Games in Poland in 1984.

Lesley also plays in the British League, with Ellenborough in the Third Division South.

Welsh International Nigel Tyler



HUNTINGDONSHIRE

David Deller

HUNTS table tennis is enjoying it's most successful season yet, with thirteen gains from the thirteen county fixtures to date. The juniors are riding high with wins over Cambs., Oxfordshire, Norfolk firsts and seconds, plus our own junior second team, who in turn have recorded two good wins in the initial season. The senior team are also unbeaten after their opening two encounters, whilst both veteran teams are showing signs of success. Long gone are the days when our county senior team played for most of the sixties without a win to their credit.

The St. Neots club held a christmas get together (pictured a number of the clubs younger players plus coaches and senior players). The group held a coaching session in the morning, with matches during the latter part of the day. Obviously a good days table tennis was had by all.

Forms are now available for the St. Ives Inter Club team tournament which will be played over the weekend of September 26th/27th. Teams of three in age groups of under 12, under 14 and under 17. 72 club teams representing 20 counties entered last September. More information plus forms can be obtained from myself at 17 Tennyson Avenue, St. Ives, Cambs. (St. Ives 0480 66607).

ISLE OF WIGHT

Brian Lamerton

FIRST, on our first appearance in these notes this season, congratulations to John Preat on being elected to the chairmanship of our National Association. Your scribe, who is both honoured and privileged to follow John onto the National Council, has also promised to bring occasional news to these notes from 'over the water' - water which incidentally has shrunk this season, the new style ferries having reduced the journey time Portsmouth - Ryde to 12 minutes; not even time for a cup of tea!

It was a happy party that made the long journey back from Hereford on February 7th. Our 6 sets to 4 victory was rather special in that it was the first time without either Carl or Jim Daly (almost unbelievably retired) that we had won a championship match and every member of the team won a singles; Steve Harris, Ralph Duke, Sharon Urry, Chris Angus and Heike Kulsdom; the latter two on their debut. Further the team travelled without either Roger Hookey or Mike Turner who between them had won 5 of the previously won 7 sets this season; this from the round robin trip to Southampton in October for a 5 all draw with Cornwall II and a 8-2 defeat at the hands of Hampshire II.

Last seasons Island champions Sandown 'A' again lead our first division and the 7-3 defeat of their nearest rivals Shanklin 'A' should see another set of medals for Roger Hookey, Keith Taylor and Kevin Attrill. Ironically the leading individual player, Steve Harris plays for Sandown 'B'. Steve who has lost once this season (to Keith Taylor) has returned this season after a 'lay-off' and it was decided not to disturb a winning team.

League leaders

				Pts	
Sandown 'A'	13	13	0	0	51
Shanklin 'A'	12	11	0	1	41
Rookley 'A'	13	7	2	4	32
Sandown 'B'	11	6	2	3	27
Newport					
Vics 'A'	13	6	2	5	27
Ryde School 'A'	13	4	3	6	24

The Island junior championship, held at Wroxall turned out to be an Urry family benefit with Ian and Sharon, both of Rockley winning the under 17 singles events and combining to win the 'open' doubles. Singles runners-up were Bernie Ely (Coves H.S.) and Nicky Porteous (Ryde). The cadet champion is Mathew Roberts (Shanklin) and the intermediate (non first division) winner was the unseeded Graham Hughes (Haven Street) who won the hard way, defeating the numbers 1, 2 & 3 seeds.

LEICESTERSHIRE

Terry Bown

MAY I open this month with sincere apologies to those concerned for missing last month's deadline. I can offer no excuses for this lapse on my part, plenty of reasons, but no excuses.

With the last eight weeks of the season being a particularly busy period for both the County and City associations, it would seem appropriate to inform you of the various tournaments that are taking place.

Sunday the 8th of March is the date for the Rose Johnson Memorial Trophy which is being staged at the Knighton Park T.T.C. commencing at 3.30 p.m. This will be the 26th consecutive year that this ladies handicap competition will have been staged and also the 26th year that Audrey Watson has been the organiser. A truly marvellous achievement. It has always amazed me that this tournament rarely attracts more than 25 or so entrants but, nevertheless, those ladies that do enter thoroughly enjoy the occasion and Audrey's teas have to be sampled to be believed.

The Leicester League's Closed Championships take place on Sunday March 15th and will take somewhere in the region of 10 hours to complete the thirteen scheduled events. Last season this tournament attracted it's biggest entry in anyone's living memory with well over 300 entrants. Naturally the Leicester League are hoping to do even better this year. The tables for these championships are borrowed, having suitably insured, from clubs within the League. The shifting to and fro of these tables therefore is an arduous task in anyone's language, so I would like to thank in advance the incredible work of that intrepid duo, Mike James and Terry Yeomanson, for their hard work in organising this vital part of the tournament.

The Hinckley Leisure Centre is the setting for this season's Leicestershire Closed which is to take place on Sunday March 22nd. After last year's non-event it was reassuring to learn that with a great deal of hard work by the County Chairman, Mike Holt, that this year's event would take place. To cut costs etc., the tournament is to run in conjunction with the Hinckley League's own Closed Championships. A super idea but it will mean, due to the time factor, a few events will be cut from the normal schedule. The Hinckley firm, BYRON ROOFING & CLADDING, are sponsoring not only this year's event, but also for a further 2 years to the tune of well over £300.

County Notes 4

NORTHUMBERLAND

Pauline Long

THE freeze-up during the week preceding January 17 prevented both the seniors travelling to Cheshire and the juniors entertaining Cumbria in their County matches, and had the veterans not already played their home match in November at Essex II's request, this fixture would surely have suffered the same fate.

Happily the weather conditions had vastly improved by the time the February 7 matches were played. The seniors, minus Peter McQueen due to a shoulder injury, beat Worcestershire 7-3, with Eddie Smith, Neil McMaster and Ian Robertson all gaining maximums in singles and doubles. Unusually, Clare Mouzon and Caron Guthrie failed to win a set between them!

The juniors lost their first match of the season in the local derby away to Durham. The two Stephens, Coverdale and Penman, each won a singles, and Penman and Michael Curry took the boys' doubles, but no further sets were forthcoming meanwhile, the veterans travelled to meet Leicestershire with high hopes of success against a team who had yet to record their first victory. However, after a dream start, with wins from Fred Short and Larry Cartmell to put the visitors 2-0 up, the home team got into their stride and it was not until the very last set that Maurice Cheek gained Northumberland's third victory. This result was extremely disappointing after some very encouraging performances earlier in the season.

The Northumberland League representative teams both advanced to the next round of their respective competitions. The Wilmott Cup team of Smith, McMaster and Robertson whitewashed Stockton 5-0 to win the regional area final and are now in the quarter-finals, where they are due to travel to either Trafford or Bolton. In the Rose Bowl, Clare Mouzon (2), Margaret Morley (2) and Karen Wilkinson (1) dropped only one set to score a 5-1 victory over Ormesby. The men's veteran team of Short, Cheek and Cartmell entered their team competition for the first time, but had to fight all the way to win a 5-4 thriller at York, with Short taking all three sets and Cheek two.

Byker CC 'A' kept up their title challenge in the Premier Division of the Northumberland League with wins over Electrics 'A' and Gateshead 'A'. Eddie Smith and Jeremy Musselwhite were both unbeaten in the first match while Musselwhite, Maurice Cheek and Michael Thomas scored two wins, each plus the doubles in the 7-3 victory over Gateshead. Blyndon Y.C. 'A', leaders of Div. 1 also consolidated their position with a 7-3 win at home to Byker C.C. 'C'. Alan Matthewson (3), Dave Watson (2), Tom Hagan (1) and the doubles made up their sets total.

SURREY

Frank Hams

I HOPE most of you who read last month's notes realised that they were written in early December for the January issue and were printed a month late. Anyway I have to thank Nicky Mason for making one of my predictions happen almost before it was written. By winning the South of England 3 Star tournament he became one of a very few Surrey players who have won our local tournament. Dave Hannah lost last year but can anyone tell me Surrey's last winner, man or lady - or come to that any other 3 star tournament?

After being beaten by Bucks 8-1 the veterans welcomed Middlesex II knowing on paper it looked a difficult game. But Connie Warren changed all that by making his debut. We assumed he would win two. He did. We assumed that whoever he played doubles with they would win. They did. He inspired Gordon Chapman to play his best match for Surrey and with Brian Simmonds and Jennie Vass we won 8-1. Even after this win, however, the veterans have a problem - we haven't got a venue. The "official" home for our County matches is now no longer available to us if two other matches are being played on the same day. In the past we have been able to play in the evening but this is now no longer at our disposal. Let's hope that next season's fixture list can be arranged so that only one other team is at home. Even so if we do play at home we can't now get a cup of tea so I'm indebted to 'Vourne Simmonds for supplying the kettle and making the tea in the Middlesex game and for the players supplying the food.

The unbeaten Vets II team travelled to Brighton to play the only other unbeaten team, Sussex, in a top of the table clash. Any luck that was going apparently went against us; quite a few games were lost at deuce and eventually we lost 2-7. Dave Crowley, Mike Pearson (1), Ron Laughiem (1) and Barbara Winn played for us.

David Lomas has advised me that the Surrey School's Individual Tournament are due to take place at the Crystal Palace Sports Centre (indoor cricket school) on Sunday 22nd March. Play will commence at 9.15 a.m. and finish about 5.00 p.m. John Wright is the referee and anyone umpiring sets will receive a refreshment voucher of 20p per set.

Norman Hooper is now organising our inter-league competitions. Croydon Business Houses league are defending the Percy Johnson Cup (3 men). The Harding Cup (2 men and 1 woman) and The Sutton Trophy (2 boys and 1 girl) have not been played for several seasons but now make a welcome return. All competitions are now almost completed and the finals of the Sutton Trophy will take place on Saturday 28th March at Tweedale School.

SUSSEX

John Woodford

THE SCHILDKROT British League continues in its role, many would say of the cuckoo in the nest of England table tennis event organisers.

In Sussex, virtually every event, large and small is threatened in some way of losing top players because of clashes with the two Sussex British League clubs fixtures. But, it is not only their fixtures as scheduled, it is the fact that throughout the British League matches are being postponed and played on other dates.

The 14 Sundays now booked for British League has because of postponements become 20 Sundays and that is most of the season. I have a lot of sympathy for tournament organisers and especially where sponsorship is involved - sponsors want the top players involved for their money's worth but it is just not working out that way - further proof is the growing list of tournament cancellations now being carried in this magazine.

Most absurd of all is the rule that allows British League clubs to postpone matches because of being one (star) player short. I for one would like to know the name of the person who put the rule forward - no doubt trying to protect sponsors.

Sussex is claiming two mid-season successes - the comparatively huge crowd of a thousand present at Crawley Leisure Centre for the Triumph Adler English National Championships and the fact that



Stephen Moore, eldest of the Sussex Moore family from Bexhill is currently ranked No. 50 on the England list.

veterans table tennis is still booming. Veterans are falling over themselves to enter the newish range of veterans events and even Sussex veterans have finished second to Cheshire in the premier division of the county championships.

The team for the vets week-end matches had two star players - Andy Meads and Robin Stace. Meads, the Crawley schoolmaster taught his opponents a thing or two with eight wins, with England No 5 Stace on the ball with his heavy top-spin winning six times.

WARWICKSHIRE

Jenny Heaton

PRIDE was felt by all Birmingham and Warwickshire players and officials when the news of Des Douglas' triumph in the European Top 12 was received. No one deserves it more than Des, as he is one of the hardest working and most dedicated of players. A great example to everyone.

Warwickshire Closed

This was held at the West Midland Centre for the disabled in Coventry on 8th February.

Phil Gunn (Birmingham) was unstoppable in the mens singles event and played well all day. He chopped his way to the final but then hit against Barry Johnson (Birmingham) to win the title comfortably. Last year's surprise winner, Mike Browne, lost in the semis to Barry.

The Ladies singles final was a repeat of last year's final and had the same result when Sandra Peakman (Birmingham) beat Di St. Ledger (Birmingham). Di did go on to win the ladies doubles with Sue Culbertson. Sandra nearly took the

mixed title with partner Lester Bertie but was denied this by Kevin Pilgrim and Lyn Brison (Coventry).

In the absence of Leigh Jeffries, Darren Smith (Birmingham) took the U17 title beating Raj Singh (Birmingham) in the final but Raj did get some consolation when he won the junior boys doubles with partner Dave Ameghino.

Alison Ledwitch (Birmingham) dominated the girls U17 event defeating Nicola Meddings (Birmingham) comfortably in the final. Nicola, however, won the cadet girls singles which was played on a group basis and Dave Clarke (Coventry) won the cadet boys title.

I hope to include results of the Coventry Closed in the next issue.

County Teams

All matches due to be played on 17th January were cancelled because of the dreadful weather but it looks as if it will take more than bad weather to stop our Vets team winning division 3B. The Junior A team are still in with a chance of gaining promotion but the Senior A team continues to struggle.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 37

Lancashire/Cheshire & South West Leagues

SWEET SUCCESS



The first Connacht Open titles ever won by Connacht players. Terry Dolan (left) won the Mixed Doubles (with Jennifer Reid) and Sean Spelman won the Boys Singles (A & S Roofing Shield).

Photograph by Joe Shaughnessy 091-67251

Lancashire and Cheshire League

by George R. Yates

FLEETWOOD, now deprived of the services of Steve Mills on his relocation in Kent, would appear to have blown their expectations of the first division championship title when, at home to Warrington, they were beaten 6-4.

Two wins each for Peter Flint and Terry Turner, plus a solo from veteran Jack Evans against junior Paul Borrett and the doubles brought about this disastrous result for the seashiders whose Brian Carney won three but only supplemented by one from Steve Bevan.

This result brought joy to the Bolton camp who, with just one point dropped — to Fleetwood — would now seem on course to retain their title with two home matches remaining against Trafford and Stockport.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Bolton	5	4	1	0	34	16	9
Fleetwood	5	3	1	1	32	18	7
Stockport	5	3	0	2	29	21	6
Warrington	5	3	0	2	29	21	6
Oldham	5	2	1	2	21	29	5
Trafford	5	2	0	3	23	27	4
Liverpool	5	1	0	4	24	26	2
Manchester	5	0	1	4	8	42	1

Last season's demotees, Blackburn and Bury, are both on course for a speedy return to the top flight neither having yet been beaten although Bury, in Division 2 (South) dropped a point to Stockport A and much could depend on the result of their final match away to Macclesfield.

Division 2 (South)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Bury	5	4	1	0	35	15	9
Macclesfield	4	3	1	0	25	15	7
Liverpool A5	2	1	2	24	26	5	
Farnworth	5	2	0	3	24	26	4

Division 2 (North)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Blackburn	5	5	0	0	40	10	10
Wirral	5	3	1	1	27	23	7
Burnley	5	1	3	1	26	24	5
Blackpool	4	2	1	1	23	17	5

Oldham hold pole position in both the women's and junior first divisions but just one set elevates Oldham from Liverpool in the top female division, the respective front line teams being: Mandy Goodwin, Carey Whitehead and Marjorie Riddle for Oldham, and Paula French, Barbara Kirkman and Brenda Buoy (nee Williams) for Liverpool.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Oldham	4	4	0	0	32	8	8
Liverpool	4	4	0	0	31	9	8
Crewe	5	2	1	2	26	14	5
Warrington	5	2	1	2	25	25	5

Both Oldham and Stockport boast nine points from five matches in the junior first division, the point being dropped when the two sides met on December 12.

In this vital encounter Stockport had a treble winner in Jonathon Taylor with Michael Parker supplying the other two as against two for Darryl Sneyd, one each for Wayne Renton and James Bradbury, and the doubles won by Renton and Sneyd.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Oldham	5	4	1	0	40	10	9
Stockport	5	4	1	0	33	17	9
Preston	5	3	0	2	34	16	6
Wirral	5	3	0	2	26	24	6
Bury	5	2	1	2	22	28	5

South West regional leagues

COMPETITION in the South West's highly successful leagues has reached very interesting positions at the halfway stage. Swindon veterans' slender lead over Global Plymouth may well disappear when they clash on February 22nd, but shared points could let in Bristol or Exeter just two points behind.

West Cornwall still reign supreme top of the Cadet league and 12 points clear of Bournemouth, but with tough matches to come against Bristol, Launceston and Global Plymouth, will need to stay on top form if they are to lift the cup from last year's winners Bristol A.

South West Veterans League (positions at 25-1-87)

	R1	R2	R3	R4	F	A
1 Swindon	5	5	9	6	25	15
2 Bristol Sports	4	8	5	6	23	17
3 Exeter H.	7	9	4	3	23	17
4 W. Cornwall	8	4	5	5	22	18
5 Global Sports	5	5	4	8	22	18
6 Nailsea	4	4	6	3	17	23
7 Launceston	2	1	3	4	10	30
8 Knightstone	1	0	0	1	2	38

Leading individual scores

	Played	Won
B. Powel (Swindon)	12	12
B. Davis (Global Sports)	6	6
D. Bazell (Exeter)	12	9
G. May (Global Sports)	12	9
R. Smith (Bristol Sports)	12	9
P. Dominey (Bristol Sports)	12	8
M. White (W. Cornwall)	12	8
J. Bright (Swindon)	12	8
P. Butterworth (Nailsea)	12	8

South West Regional Cadets League (positions at 25-1-87)

	P	F	A
1 West Cornwall	6	50	4
2 Bournemouth	6	38	16
3 Global Sports	6	38	16
4 Inter-City A	6	38	16
5 Bristol	5	36	9
6 Gloucester	6	34	20
7 Launceston A	4	27	9
8 Swindon	3	21	6
9 Coombe Dean	6	20	34
10 Devon and Torbay	5	16	29
11 Inter-City B	6	16	38
12 Holymead A	6	14	40
13 Launceston B	4	9	27
14 Chilton Trinity	2	6	12
15 Mendip	5	3	42
16 Holymead B	6	3	51

Leading individual scores

	Played	Won
J. Menzel (W. Cornwall)	18	18
M. Rushton (W. Cornwall)	18	17
R. Plummer (W. Cornwall)	18	15
R. Moore (Gloucester)	18	14
J. Shipman (Inter-City A)	18	14
M. Piper (Inter-City)	18	14

Jill Hammersley-Parker Table Tennis Foundation

THE main purpose of this article is to thank most sincerely the people and organisations who have joined or rejoined the Foundation.

So far this season I have received over 60 new or renewed memberships from players, ex players, coaches, parents, enthusiasts, officials, leagues, national league clubs, counties, businesses etc. Should you fall into any of these categories and would like to help our young potential stars gain invaluable international experience then you could join the Foundation by donating £10 (payable to Jill Hammersley-Parker T.T. Foundation) and sent to The Barn, Common Bank, Dolphinholme, Lancaster LA2 9AN.

Carl Pream won a challenge match on the Isle of Wight and donated the £100 he won to the Foundation. Desmond Douglas opened a school exhibition and donated his fee to the Foundation. Support such as this from our top players is very much appreciated.

With the money raised so far we have plans to attend two international tournaments and hopefully if more money is forthcoming this can be increased to three. Please note that any recommendations for selections by members should be made in writing to myself and these will be considered by the Foundation selection committee.

JILL HAMMERSLEY-PARKER

The Barn
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TWO YEARS TO THE TOP

INTERVIEW between Les Darcy and Rowden Fullen, ETTA two star coach and chief trainer at the Wakefield Dunlop Centre — players from this centre won 73 open titles in 1985/86 season and in the current season have so far captured 33 titles. Rowden has been involved in the coaching of a number of England-ranked players including the last three successive No. 1 cadet girls.

Les: I recall quite clearly that you first noticed Joanna Roberts at our August course in 1984. She was pretty much a beginner then.

Rowden: Jo had actually been brought to me a year or so before that — a young player has to be ready to be coached, at that time she wasn't.

Les: What was it that moved you to include her in the Wakefield Dunlop squad? Was she very talented?

Rowden: I don't set much store by talent. Jo was gutsy and determined and still is — she just doesn't realise when she is beaten.

Les: I am sure many coaches would be interested in the programme which has turned a virtual beginner in August '84 into England No. 1 today. I understand that this season

she has won just about everything: 4 two star titles, 3 titles at the Cleveland, the England junior closed, the national ranking trial and even a bronze in the junior trials.

Rowden: If I am honest about it I feel that many coaches in this country play at coaching. To produce good players requires a systematic and professional approach all the time, both in squad and one to one situations — plus back-up at all major events and a clear line of development in areas such as style and specialisation. Jo is solid in the five basic areas. *Technically* her strokeplay is simple and direct, *tactically* she is able to vary her game to cope with differing opponents, *stylewise* she knows how she should play and adheres to her own game plan, *physically* she is durable and



Joanna Roberts - determination and commitment could lead her to further success.

lasts well over a long event, *mentally* she is strong and has good concentration. In addition she plays with the equipment best suited to her game.

Les: If a coach has to work in all these areas which do you consider most important?

Rowden: All champions must be strong mentally. I feel style is the next important consideration. Players must be true to their own style and play the sort of game their instincts tell them is right for them — otherwise sooner or later they will crack up. This means unfortunately specialising quite early for the better younger players and equally unfortunately some styles are more acceptable at international level than others.

Les: You mentioned equipment. What does Jo use?

Rowden: Jo plays with Donic which is promoted by Jarvis Sports in this country. I arranged sponsorship through Linda Jarvis last summer when we found out that the Donic

rubbers most ideally suited her game. Linda obviously had an eye for a good player.

Les: I thought most rubbers were pretty standard nowadays.

Rowden: True, but quite a few are just a little spongy and more suited to the topspin game. If you think about it most girls are drive players, and the Donic rubbers being that bit sharper and with good wood effect complement Jo's natural style.

Les: What particular blade and rubbers does she use?

Rowden: Vario 2.0mm on the forehand and Slick 1.5mm on the backhand on a CarboPlay blade — this combination is a little fast but gives her good stability back from the table and good power against the better junior players, where she needs that bit extra help from the equipment.

Les: I am aware from past experience that you know your equipment but do you think this should be tailored to the individual player?

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FOR PLAYERS WITH TASTE

CONTINUED ON PAGE 36

COACHING COMMENTS FROM CRAWLEY

by Tony Russe

THE two day event of the English Senior Closed provides an excellent opportunity for coaches to study our top players at close quarters. All the player's attributes are on display, technique, temperament and physical and mental fitness.

This year was a cracker. I came away with the feeling that we are really on the way up again. For one thing the crowd support on both days was excellent and the spectators were not disappointed by the players. Here we were able to see our players performing 'best of five', being tested in the same way as some of the players were to experience in Delhi. It is interesting to see how various players pace themselves over the five. Obviously everyone would like to 'go for it' three straight but the best laid plans can come unstuck. It needs a good temperament to deliver the business over five and this was seen quite clearly in the early rounds and during the finals stages.

The standard of play is, I believe, also improving. One can only gauge by how our best players are tested and here there are indications that some of our senior players are closing the gap on the best. The most eye catching performance in the Mens' event was the semi-final clash between Desmond Douglas and Skylet Andrew. It was nail biting stuff. Sky first leading 2-0, Des-

mond recovering to 2-2 and then a tingling third which finally went to Desmond during deuce. Sky had his chance and felt that he had blown it. In a way he had but probably not in the way that he would think. One of the criticisms of Sky in the past is that having achieved a winning position he would play safe, go negative, and would lose a match because of it. Sky has learned his lesson, but at certain vital stages he went ultra-positive and made mistakes because of it. To continue to make those sort of attacking mistakes is also negative, because it produces a negative result. The line is very fine indeed and Sky put everything into that game. He may have lost the match but he would have won a lot of new friends and admirers, and there will be other times.

Taking a line through Sky, what about Matthew Syed's performance in the quarters? He went down to Sky 17 in the fifth. Much has already been said about this talented junior. All I can say is that I have never seen an English chopper of his age display such mastery of techni-



Nicky Mason - victor over Carl Preat at Crawley.
Photo Stephen Line 0273 453867

que and raw courage. Sky had to throw everything at Matty, including a little needle, and there really was nothing in it at the end. Matty is gradually including an excellent 'snap hit' technique from both wings which will become stronger. He needs to acquire a little more variation in service and in length of chop. He is working on these points and it is nit picking at this stage of his development, but if you want to be the best etc. etc.

Bradley Billington caught the eye, taking out experienced Colin Wilson over five and so did young Sean Gibson. Our No. 4 junior came face to face with Chris Rogers, who is a good all round performer, with lots of experience and a good game. Sean went at him like a thing possessed and Chris wound up shaking his head and wondering what had hit him. When Sean's experience catches up with his game he is going to be quite a player.

Another fine game was Nicky Mason's close win over Carl Preat in the quarters. Mason is a grand type who insists on doing things the 'macho' way and it paid off. Carl worried his way over the five games and went negative at deuce in the fifth, both playing wise and I suspect mentally. Nick was completely uninhibited, went for his shots and carried the day. Carl is struggling in England at the moment. The lads at home are really starting to stoke up and there is no easy ride whoever you are or whatever your reputation. This is good and I am sure that everyone would welcome this. And what of our champion, Des Douglas? He will remember 1987 as the year he really had to earn his title. Not only did Sky extend him fully but so did Alan Cooke in the final. Alan fought back from 2-0 down to square it at 2-2. I felt that Des just about deserved to win the fifth but, my word, the lads have announced

their intentions.

The ladies too showed that they mean business. The semi-final between Joy Grundy and Lisa Bellinger took on the shape of last year's final but this time Lisa held her own and Joy had to give her best in the end. But Joy put everything she had to give into the game and let us hope that she will fully recover from her injury problems and soon return to her full form. So Lisa was looking good, moving well, timing her chops after some early mistakes, picking out her winners in a positive way. She was entitled to think that this year the title was hers.

Meanwhile in the other semi-final Alison Gordon was battling with Fiona Elliot. My initial impression was that I have seen Ali playing better. Later I came to believe that she had been 'blotted out' by Fiona. Fiona was sharp, very sharp. Her game is technically very correct and she is a positive attacker on both wings. At one time I thought that she may be a little too correct in her lines of play, keeping strictly to the accepted percentages with no one-off shots that can pick up the big points. But I would not carp on this performance, because having disposed of Ali, she then set out to 'do' Lisa in no uncertain terms. She never allowed Lisa into the game. I have never seen Fiona play so well. Mentally she is excellent. She knows what to do and will not let anything distract her. When that kind of temperament is allied to fine strokeplay, anything is possible. What is more, Fiona put to rest the whispers that she was at the Worlds at Joy's expense only on sufferance. She is now there as of right. Go to it girl, you are a member of one of the best squads that we have sent abroad for some time. Success to you all.

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The Pioneer in 1902

A weekly table tennis magazine in 1902!

by Gerald N. Gurney

HOW many of today's readers have even heard of the *Table Tennis and Pastimes Pioneer*, hereinafter *The Pioneer*? The first issue of this weekly journal appeared on 18 January, 1902, at the height of the phenomenal craze for the new game which was then sweeping across Great Britain and much of Europe. John Jaques and Son, already the major manufacturers for the game, reported at about this time that 1,500 or more of their boxed sets were being sold every day.

Issues number 1 and 2 of *The Pioneer* extended to only four pages, but number 3 - aided by a full-page advertisement for Ayres (Jaques' major competitors) - showed a 100% increase. And already the editor was claiming 20,000 readers, though without disclosing the more revealing figure of copies sold.

Astonishingly, this issue contains nearly all the features of today's magazine, lacking only "County Notes" - there being no county set-up at the time. This did not evolve until the 1920s. The anonymous editor made weekly appeals for copy, but it had to arrive six days before publication each Saturday. Coming events and tournament reports were fully covered as well as

news from abroad, and a small piece on "Hints to Players" appeared each week. Advertisements and cartoons soon made their demand for space, and satirical comment, often culled from newspapers, added to the variety.

Correspondents were much engaged - at this time when the Laws were very unsettled - with the service, the question of volleying and "stonewalling" (pushing play). Service during this period was direct over the net but this gave far too much dominance to the server, and many games were won merely by how the coin fell before the first ball was even struck. Many ingenious (and some bizarre) solutions were offered by readers, (one of which - simply to allow the receiver a second chance - might even be a useful addition to today's Laws.) Eventually the Ping-Pong Association introduced the "double-bounce" service which we know today, but the rival Table Tennis Association continued as before.

The possible introduction of volleying was much discussed and, perhaps not surprisingly, was supported by a commentator in *Lawn Tennis* - on the grounds that the game needed more variety. But volleying was never written into the Laws.

"Stonewalling" was a widespread problem in tournaments; in the Oxford open championships of 1901/1902 a Mr. Batten and a Mr. Turner took two hours over a match which included a rally of 715 strokes. A time limit very much like the modern "expedite" law was proposed as well as reduction in the size of the racket.

One feature in *The Pioneer* which, for obvious reasons, we no longer have, was a "Directory" to all the British clubs, then some 113, including two with engaging titles - the Moonlighters and the Hottentots.

After a mere nine issues *The Pioneer* came to an abrupt and unannounced end, and one can only surmise that the publishers had a premonition of the decline, and near extinction, of the game, and decided to get out smartly. By 1905 the two Associations had collapsed, competition had all but ceased and ladies everywhere had reclaimed possession of the dining-room, though no doubt some "domestic" play continued.

The Pioneer cost only one penny per copy (plus one halfpenny for postage), but the enthusiasts who had paid out six shillings and sixpence for an annual subscription had a poor deal.

Gerald Gurney will be pleased to correspond with readers on any aspect of the early history of table tennis.

Debbie and Ian lift six titles at Pontefract

ENGLAND No. 4 junior Debbie Toole of Normanton won three titles at the Pontefract 1-star Open. Ian Robertson of Gateshead landed the men's singles title, the men's doubles and the Class 2 mixed singles.

The major upset was the defeat of Karen Burrows of Castleford, the defending champion. She went under in the first round of the women's singles to Kathryn Bray of Hull. Organiser was Mr E. Ward.

Results — MS: I Robertson b P McQueen 19, 9. **WS:** D Toole b H Kavanagh 16, -15, 10. **MD:** Robertson/McQueen b M Stead/C Render 17, 7. **WD:** Toole/Burrows b E Meddings/K Goodall 17, 10. **JBS:** J Taylor b M Ward 17, 13. **JGS:** Toole b Meddings 13, 17. **XS:** Robertson b M Stead 18, 10. **VS:** C Judson b R Norton -12, 19, 8.

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Irish Snippets

by Francis Kennedy and Tony Martin

MANY eyebrows were raised at the omission of Irish closed champion, South County champion and Munster open champion Kevin Keane from the Irish team for the world championships in New Delhi. The team is Colum Slevin, Andrew Dennison, Hilton Meneally and Jim Dill. A ladies team will not take part.

There were a few upsets at the Munster open in Cork, Terry Dolan (ranked 15) defeated Anthony Redmond (9) and Jim Dill (7) before losing to Hilton Meneally (3) in the semi-final. Sean Spelman (10) defeated Tom Heasley (6) before going out to Keane (4) in the other semi-final. Keane added the Munster title to the South County which he won in October, defeating Meneally in both finals.

Mens singles - Semi-finals: H Meneally b T Dolan 11, 20; K. Keane b S Spellman 11, 10. **Final:** K Keane b H Meneally 9, 16.

Ladies singles - Semi-finals: J Reid b G Redmond 16, -12, 19; N McEvoy b C Leonard 17, 23. **Final:** J Reid b N McEvoy 16, 14.

Ladies doubles final: Reid/McEvoy b P Monaghan/S Akal 16, 17.

Mens doubles final: T Caffrey/C Caggrey b Keane/O Molloy - 14, 18, 20.

Mixed doubles final: Redmond/Akal b T Heasley/Reid 12, -20, 20.

In the junior boys event top seeds Sean Spellman, Gary Neilson and Owen Molloy were all beaten in the quarter-finals by Billy Marshall, Darren Perris and Martin O'Flaherty respectively. Marshall clinched the title beating James Mullen, Ireland's No. 1 cadet, in the final 14, -16, 17.

Grainine Redmond won the cadet and junior titles which adds up to a very successful weekend for her, and a bright future ahead of her.

Results

Junior boys final: B Marshall b J Mullen 14, -16, 17. **Cadet boys final:** J Mullen b J Langan 14, 15. **U12 boys final:** R Gavin b M Anderson 10, 16. **Junior girls final:** G Redmond b O Stevenson 15, 17. **Cadet girls final:** G Redmond b A Cooke 17, 11. **U12 girls final:** P Barton b J Davey 16, 16.

All-Ireland team tournament - Dublin

Sixteen of the top teams competed in the All-Ireland team tournament held in Dublin. Top seeded team, Craigiovon, from Ulster won the title after a very close and exciting final, beating Galway 4-3. Galway had to overcome a tenacious challenge from Cameron Park in the semi-final to come out victors 4-3.

For the Inter-Provincial championships in Limerick (February 13 and 14) Connacht applied to ITTA for permission for Sean Spelman to represent his province at both senior and junior level (Junior Inter-Provincials April 24th), but were refused permission with only three players from the western province being ranked at senior level, Connacht again having to field a weak team.

The Irish junior team to travel to the Derby Select on March 7th and 8th is as follows: **U17:** Sean Spelman, Gary Nielson, Kirsteen Stafford, Roslyn Comerford. **U14:** James Mullen, Jim Langan, Grainne Redmond, Imelda Fottrell. **U12:** A. Byrne, P. Barton, N. Strong, O. Redmond.

North Wales table tennis round-up

Wrexham Lager table tennis closed tournament

HELD at Castell Alun Sports Centre, Hope, near Wrexham, 1st February. Organised by the Wrexham & District Table Tennis League.

Mens singles - Final: Justin Evans (McAlpine Quarries) b Paul Griffiths (McAlpine Quarries) - 14, 9, 13. **Ladies singles - Final:** Joyce Jones (Malpas) b Natasha Williams (Wrex OB) 18, 14. **Veterans singles - Final:** Roy Williams (Wrex OB) b Geoff Jones (Gresford) 13, 14. **Handicap singles - Final:** Neil James (Telecom) b Roy Williams (Wrex OB) 42-30 (one game final). **Division two singles - Final:** Williams b Kristian Mouldsdale (Telecom) 17, 9. **Division three singles - Final:** Nigel Roberts (Caergwrle BBO) b Gary Jones (Caergwrle BB) 17, 13. **Cadet boys singles - Final:** Spencer Harris (Caergwrle BB) b Andrew Jones (Caergwrle BB) 11, 13. **Cadet girls singles - Final:** Natasha Williams (Wrex OB) b Susan Lees (Castell Alun) 18, 7. **Junior boys singles - Final:** Harris b Mouldsdale 12, -13, 15. **Junior girls singles - Final:** Tracy Sam-

brook (Telecom) b Williams 18, -17, 19.

Mens doubles - Final: Griffiths/Evans b James/Hadyn Young (Telecom) 9, 11. **Ladies doubles - Final:** Jones/Cris Watkins (Telecom) b Anne Walker/Beatty Walker (Wrex Vic YC/WSCD) 12, 17. **Mixed doubles - Final:** Walker/Jones b Griffiths/Sambook 18, 16. **Junior doubles - Final:** Harris/Jones b Jones/Roberts 20, 10.

RDC Cup, team event - Final: James Tapp/Evans (Telecom/McAlpine Quarries) b Griffiths/Jones (McAlpine Quarries/Caergwrle BB) 3-2.

Llandudno & District Table Tennis League

Finals night held Saturday 31 January 1987, at the Queens Head, Llandudno. Sponsored by Rhos County Garage. Tournament referee Mr Ken Jones (international umpire).

Senior singles - Semi-finals: Karl Harrison (CBTTC) b Llion Evans (CBTTC) - 18, 19, 8; Arthur Roberts (Rowen) b Don Hobbs (Llandegai) 19, 23. **Final:** Roberts b Harrison - 16, 18, 18.

Division two championship - Final: Rob Walker (CBTTC) b John Taylor (Llanwrst) 18, -14, 18. **Division three championship - Final:** Adrian Salisbury (JK Smit) b Alan Pullin (CBTTC) 16, 19.

Veteran championship - Final: Karl Harrison (CBTTC) b Don Hobbs (Llandegai) 10, -9, 17. **Junior championship - Final:** Natasha Williams (Cricket Club) b Steven Nicholls (Llandudno YC) 16, 19. **Ladies championship - Final:** Barbara Williams (CBTTC) b Karen Ashton (Llandudno YC) 16, 11. **Doubles championship - Final:** Ray Howland and Karl Harrison b Arthur Roberts and Ken Jones 16, 19.

Official umpires: Dennis Hunt, John Johnson, Bill Rushton, Marshall Smith, Mike Steen, Ken Jones, Bill Curtis, Roy Williams.

East Flintshire Table Tennis League Closed Tournament

Held at Castell Alun Sports Centre, Hope, near Wrexham. Tournament organiser: Mr Harry Maddison, assisted by Mr David Kay.

Mens singles - Semi-finals: Simon Jones (BSC) b Clive Parry (North West District); Ivor Jones (BSC) b Dave Morris (North West District). **Final:** Simon Jones (BSC) b Ivor Jones (BSC) 10, 20.

Mens doubles - Final: Richard Lloyd/Simon Jones (BSC) b John Bowen/Clive Parry (NW District) - 18, 18, 13. **Veteran singles - Final:** Ivor Jones (BSC) b John Bowen (NW District) 14, 13. **Ladies singles:** Justine Thomas (Castell Alun) winner; Tracy McKeown (Sealand YC) runner-up; event ran as round robin. **Division two singles - Final:** Russell Thomas (Hawarden) b Peter Heath (Sealand YC) 18, 9. **Mixed doubles:** Russell Thomas/Justine Thomas winners; Heath/McKeown runners-up; event played as a round robin. **Junior singles:** Justine Thomas winner; Russell Thomas runner-up; event played as a round robin. **Team event:** Jack Hutton/Justine Thomas (NW District/Castell Alun) winners; Simon Jones/Sylvia Health (BSC/Sealand YC) runners-up.

English Schools' Table Tennis Association

by David Lomas

NO less than five teams from Shropshire will be involved in the Dunlop National School Team Championships Finals which are due to take place at Lea Green, Matlock, Derbyshire, on Saturday March 21st.

As well as the familiar names such as The Grove, Mary Webb and Market Drayton Junior there will be some debutants challenging for honours in the eight events. Three schools from Greater Manchester-Stockport School (B19), Hathershaw, Oldham (G16) and Woodley Junior, Stockport (G11) were amongst the winners in the North Region Finals at Pontefract on February 22nd. Cumbria is well represented with Parkview, Barrow-in-Furness, (B16 & G13) and Yarlside (B11) - also from Barrow amongst the finalists. Derbyshire and Lincolnshire are also in with a shout in the shape of Gosforth, Dronfield, (B13) and Kesteven & Grantham Girls GS (G16).

Northamptonshire Schools have their first-ever finalists in Wellingborough School who were winners of the Midlands & West Region Boys' U19 event. But they face a stiff task in parting South & East Region winners, Bedford Modern, from their national title. Market Drayton Junior School extended their record of having reached the Under-11 Girls Final for the last seven years, winning the title twice.

Hopes are high that teams from the South & East Region will do well at Lea Green. Cumnor House, Croydon, return to defend their Boys' U13 and U11 titles whilst Ifield Community College (West Sussex) look to improve on their third-place last year in the Boys' Under-16 event. Thurleston, Ipswich are newcomers in the Girls' U16 event. They are strong at 1 & 2 but past experience has shown that invariably the No 3 & 4 players can make the difference between defeat and victory.

Special celebrations are planned to mark the 21st staging of the National Finals.

Regional Finals winners:

NORTH (Pontefract)

B19 Stockport School (G. Mcr)
G19 Kesteven & Grantham (Li)
B16 Parkview, Barrow (Cu)
G16 Hathershaw, Oldham (G. Mcr)
B13 Gosforth, Dronfield (Dy)
G13 Parkview, Barrow (Cu)

MIDLANDS & WEST (Gloucester)

B19 Wellingborough (No)
G19 Highfields, Wolverhampton (WM)
B16 Mary Webb, Pontesbury (Sh)
G16 The Grove, Market Drayton (Sh)
B13 Mary Webb, Pontesbury (Sh)
G13 The Grove, Market Drayton (Sh)

SOUTH & EAST (Croydon)

B19 Bedford Modern (Bd)
G19 Luton 6th Form College (Bd)
B16 Ifield College (W. Sx)
G16 Thurleston, Ipswich (Sk)
B13 Cumnor House, Croydon (Sy)
G13 Hillcross Middle, Morden (Sy)



First in the field - since 1795 - still top of the

Players protest - and a reply

PLAYERS PROTEST FOR JOY GRUNDY

By ATTP Co-ordinator Derek Baddeley

AS readers will have seen from recent media coverage, the ATTP has criticised the ETTA over the selection of only three women for the world championships team to India, a country notorious for the debilitating bouts of sickness it inflicts on visiting Europeans, and in particular stating our view that ATTP member Joy Grundy appeared to have been harshly treated by her omission from the team.

We did not accept the reason given of cost-cutting as being pertinent, when two reserve men have been selected to travel, and we understood that the chairman of selectors was also going with the ETTA teams; we did not feel this last expense could be justified in preference to sending a reserve player, which must be of paramount importance.

We furthermore asked to be informed of any other ETTA officials, umpires or administrative staff being sent, and for what reasons, excluding of course the two men's and women's team captains, whom we agree are absolutely essential.

Neither do we agree with the premise of the need to cut costs on this trip in order to send a minor team to the Czechoslovakian Open — in our view it is vital for the prestige of the game in England that we send the strongest possible team and reserves to the World Championships, the most important event in every two years play.

Because of this we also criticised the selection of Matthew Syed as replacement for the injured Carl Prean; Matthew is of course a very promising young player indeed, and it may not be too long before he is able to challenge of right for a place in the Swaythling Cup team, but this top honour and responsibility should in our opinion be awarded only to those who have earned it.

We do not think his results or ranking justify selection this time, a view endorsed by many of our top-ranking members, the majority of whom nominated Nicky Mason as the player who should have been picked.

With regard to the question of expenditure, we know that many enthusiasts share with us grave doubts concerning some priorities in the utilization of ETTA funds generally, and would point out that more finance than ever before is being brought into table tennis, including the largest ever grant from the Sports Council to the ETTA of £360,000 over the next two years.

Additionally, sponsorship is increasing, and we are perturbed that very little financial planning or allotment of these resources has been made available; in particular we have again asked for details and breakdown of the £100,000 three year sponsorship deal with Stiga.

We regret the necessity of publicly confronting the ETTA with these

issues, but it has become apparent that our previous attempts at achieving diplomatic solutions to a number of problems through discussion have not borne fruit, and our suggestions of various changes and improvements seem to have been largely ignored, except for one or two ideas such as the top 12 and scoring up to 11, which it appears were seen as a quick opportunity to re-establish the ETTA image.

This apparent complacency and lack of regard for players' requirements is what has caused so much dissent amongst leagues up and down the country, and between players and officials over the past two seasons, and in our view lead directly to the election of the ETTA's fiercest critic, John Prean, to the post of ETTA chairman, where we hope he is now assessing the actions needed to remedy the situation.

We at ATTP are certainly going to continue to press for a change in attitude from the governing body of our sport. In a letter to our association last year, John Prean quoted to us former European champion Hans Alser's comment: "In Sweden, it is the players who are important; in England it is the officials who are." We know John will be striving hard to change this, and we shall help all we can.

However, let's be quite clear that we and all our members know the debt we owe to the large number of dedicated people up and down the country who, without reward or thanks, run all our leagues and tournaments and serve on committees simply because they love the game as much as we do.

Without officials there would be very little properly organised and structured table tennis, but also let no-one forget that playing is the game, and that without players there would be no game over which to officiate — an obvious statement of fact, but one that sometimes seems in danger of being forgotten by the powers that be.

To look at the brighter and more positive side of things, we are continuing with our efforts to obtain substantial sponsorship for various events and tournaments we have in mind for next season, notably a novel series of international matches involving top English and Japanese players, sponsored by Japanese companies that we have approached, several of whom appear to be interested.

We also hope to stage a series of "North v South v West v Midlands" mixed matches involving the countries best players from these regions.

THE ANSWERS

by Paul Day

Chairman of Selectors

12th February 1987.

Dear Mr. Baddeley,

Having read your letter to Mr. Shipley dated the 1st February 1987, I must make the following comments.

The selections you are complaining against were made in early December. Selection committee policy was on the agenda for National Council meeting on January 10th, which your representative was entitled to attend. If you felt that the selections were in any way unjust, why did you, or even one of your officers, not take up your invitation and question me there?

You state in your letter that your committee considered the matter. I have, however been informed that one of the officers of your association and some of the committee were unaware of the contents of your letter. I question the extraordinary timing of your letter, which arrived just prior to the world championship and just prior to a management committee meeting, at which our chairman overrode National Council and changed selection procedure. Add to this our chairman's veiled criticisms of the selection committee in the Daily Telegraph article on the 9th February, stating that basically things would be better under single man selection, I just wonder whether you really did your considering with your committee.

I honestly do appreciate your personal concern for the players and can assure you that in our case, the committee did give the

matters very serious thought before reaching the decisions. The selection committee vehemently believe that the serious allegation of discrimination against a player must, and can only, be answered in front of the governing body of our sport. The allegation is so serious that I believe we would all feel that if any member of our committee, or anyone holding any position of authority in our sport, discriminates against, or even hints at discrimination against a player, they must be immediately disgraced and removed from office. You may feel I am over-reacting but I accept that our position dictates that we are having considerable influence on player's lives and, as such, the honesty and integrity of anyone making selections, or even influencing selections as the case may be with advisors, must be beyond question. As National Council dictated that I should be responsible for the selection committee until the new Vice Chairman is elected and that I was chairman of the selectors at the time of the selections, I believe I should be at the next National Council meeting to give detailed answers to your allegations.

I hope this will satisfy you and your committee and I hope you accept that your allegations are far too serious for just a reasoned reply.

PAUL DAY

Wyndale,
Hall Street,
SOHAM,
Ely,
Cams. CB7 5BN.

tables for quality and price

The logo for Jaques, featuring a stylized building icon above the brand name "Jaques" in a bold, serif font.

Crossword

1st Prize — 2 sheets of rubber (of your choice) from the **STIGA** range
 Supplied by DSR Leisure, distributor of the complete Stiga range of table tennis equipment

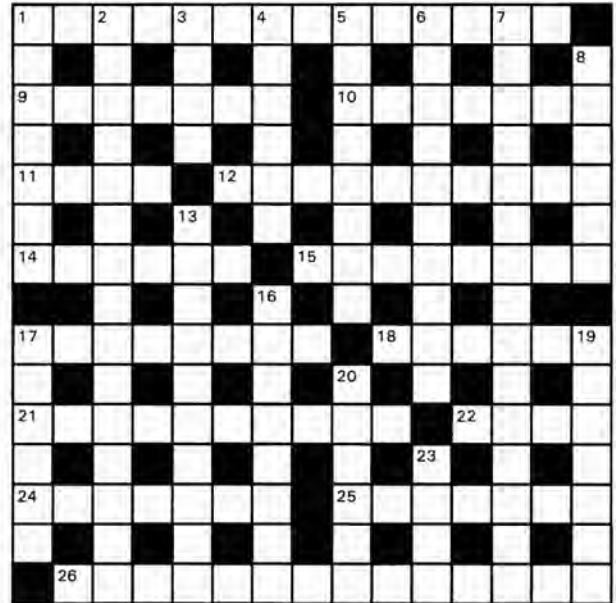
CLUES

ACROSS

1. Most definitely declined lift aboard well known elephant! (3,2,4,5)
9. Soldiers' leader and Sailor go to a Somerset spa on the day of rest (7)
10. S.O.S. - A ban for an ex Yorkshire Junior (7)
11. Cheap flight to the top (4)
12. Hew, tug iron maybe necessary when golfer is here after rain (2,3,5)
14. Be sure to find a landmark in Antarctica (6)
15. A pain in the cranium is a real nuisance (8)
17. Surrender Hampshire initially to one of its towns (8)
18. Caught following in the Territorials, but left untouched (6)
21. We take street to the capital - or part of it! (4,6)
22. Sharp reminder to 20 to get a move on? (4)
24. Cave Del chopped meat in? (7)
25. Added bonus when loopers miss the table (4,3)
26. Top security in the building trade? (2,4,2,6)

DOWN

1. Neat ass disturbed on the tennis-court (7)
2. Ban wet lines sent to this publicatin (5,6,4)
3. French tennis player who served on the Ark? (4)
4. In place, with the ball ready to serve (2,4)
5. Prepared bat for play with eraser Editor used! (8)
6. Oriental sat uncomfortably in the saddle making for where Hull used to be (4,6)
7. What National Clubs entrants have in common with Dalglish & Co. (6,9)
8. Hope is dashed for this girl (6)
13. Temporary home of the Oldroyd Cup? (10)
16. Found on razor of enthusiastic barber? (4,4)
17. Heave ball to Scottish Rugby town? (6)
19. RAF fits reconconditioned barriers (7)
20. They shoot them in the movies - don't they? (6)
23. Veteran Czech playing in the Mikado, with no publicity (4)



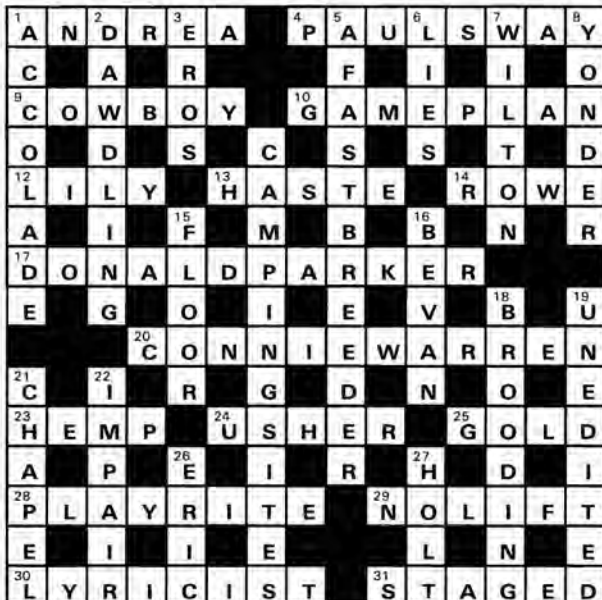
Name

Address

plus three consolation prizes of professional mini bats supplied by

CLIVE OAKMAN Table Tennis

Entries should be sent to Mr Eric Hall, 38 Littlemoor Crescent, Newbold, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 8QJ.
 Closing date: APRIL 12th. Answers published: MAY 1987



WINNERS OF CROSSWORD No. 3 January Issue

First prize, (Blade): H.A. Spraggs, 18 Fern Drive, Church Crookham, Aldershot, Hants. GU13 ONW.

Runners-up: Clive Oakman mini-bat 1, Anne Holland, 37 Norsey View Drive, Billericay, Essex CM12 0QR; 2, Robin Harding, 11 Hordle Gardens, St. Albans, Herts AL1 1JW; 3, P.J. Capewell, 23 Firwood Road, Melton Mowbray, Leics. LE13 1SA.

FORTHCOMING FIXTURES

March

- 14 County Championships (7)
Selby Junior 1 Star (Selby)
- 15 SCHILDKROT BRITISH LEAGUE (13)
- 21 ESTTA National Team Finals (Lea Green)
- 19/22 COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS (Senior Premier Weekend)
- 28 Bedford 1 Star (Bedford)
International Hard Bat (Barnet)
- 28/29 Cleveland International Championships (Thornaby)
- 31 EUROPEAN LEAGUE: ENGLAND v Norway (Braintree)

April

- 4/5 National Junior Top 12 (Lilleshall)
- 5 SCHILDKROT BRITISH LEAGUE (14)
- 9 EUROPEAN LEAGUE: Federal Germany v ENGLAND (Wurzburg)

Disquiet on coaching

I AM using the medium of the Table Tennis News, so well utilised by John Prean, to express my small disquiet at a few of his early pronouncements on becoming chairman. But first I must recognise the good things that have been happening since his election.

For example, press coverage has greatly improved. There are possibilities of table tennis on TV, albeit on Channel 4; and there is reason to believe that John Prean may be able to work small miracles in the sponsorship field. These things are essential to revitalise our sport. Prean was elected because people felt it was 'time for a change'. Table tennis needed rescuing and he was the man to do it. There is still optimism. The signs are generally good. But I feel a little uneasy and need my anxiety allaying.

I shall give just one example of what worries me. This regards the coaching scheme. In the new ETTA Newsletter (January 1987) — which is itself an excellent idea — John Prean lists some early achievements. Good to start on a positive note.

But wait! After a few items which show promise ahead, he comes to coaching. What words of recognition and encouragement will he offer to us coaches? "An urgent in-depth study of the coaching scheme will be undertaken. Despite many good coaches the Sports Council is unhappy about organisation and achievement. I share their concern ... If that house is not put in order, we shall lose Sports Council support, financial as well as moral."

And in 'The Chairman Reports ...' from the January Table Tennis News he states: "I am unhappy about the coaching scheme and some of the things I have learned since being elected have horrified me. I put it as strongly as that. Urgent reforms are required. Action will be taken."

The impression given is that the coaching scheme is in chaos, a disaster area. If this is so, then the Sports Council which along with its larger grant, contributes substantially to the national coaches salaries, is rightly concerned. Now it is true that a serious situation has been identified, monitored and action taken in part of the country. But my impression of the overall picture nationally is different. Prean's statements are particularly inopportune as they come precisely at the time that the coaching scheme is moving forward.

Where I live and operate I have been most fortunate in having the services of excellent national coaches. First David Fairholm and now Nicky Jarvis. Whether in running sessions for 'stars' or learners, exhibitions or coaches' courses, they are always welcome by me. They make a strong impact. And they are highly respected by the Regional

Sports Council. Recently, and unsolicited, some London PE teachers told me that Dave and Nick had run the best sports course that they had ever attended.

A few months ago David Fairholm became Director of Coaching. It is still early days for him, as for Mr Prean, and too soon to make a proper judgement. However, the first indications auger well for coaching. He has been working on training, up-dating and improving liaison with coaches in the field. In September he organised the best conference I have attended (and in my work I have been to many). Every speaker at this National Conference at Crystal Palace was of top quality and the mood of optimism, enthusiasm and buoyancy was terrific to behold. In that lecture hall there was a wealth of coaching talent, including many top players. But in total the pool of good active coaches is too few.

That is the essential problem which faces the coaching scheme. Too few people operate it. We have excellent full-time national coaches/trainers, but they work grossly excessive hours and have to cover ridiculous miles. They can take on no more. There are also some superb player coaches but their first priority has to be to playing. At local level there are many (but still too thin on the ground) dedicated and overworked amateur coaches. They too are doing more than can reasonably be expected of them. The coaching house is largely in order but it is too small a house. If we ever have a sudden upsurge in interest, we will not be able to cater for it.

I am not complacent. Some coaches use outmoded methods. A few have unfortunate personality traits and are inadequate. Others need nurturing or prompting back to action. However, most active coaches are doing the right things but there needs to be much more of the same. More people to do the same; not the same people to do more.

Therefore, I would like to see John Prean striving for more national coaches to inform, support, motivate, enthuse and inspire local effort; not just to train top players. Full-time professional coaches to do the essential public relations and developmental work which amateurs mostly haven't got the time (and sometimes know how) to do; meeting directors of education, headteachers, sports hall managers, recreation officers, sports councils, etc., visiting local leagues, giving exhibitions, running special sessions and taking coaches/teachers' courses.

Coaches/teachers' courses are vital. Any interest generated to learn to play table tennis needs to be channelled, but in many places coaching does not exist. A huge and realistic investment must be put into training coaches. As in any sport, there is a huge fall out in coaches. Thousands have to be trained to produce hundreds, hundreds to pro-

duce tens. Although only a small percentage will eventually be productive, over the years they prove their worth.

This training work is going on but must be expanded so that in every locality and not by chance, there is good coaching. It is a slow process that does not produce instant results. A long-term strategy; but remember that coaching is still a most effective way to introduce people to table tennis.

So I return to John Prean's comments. No good comes from criticising the coaching scheme unfairly. Prean has many great qualities articulated in his beautiful clarity or written prose. His passion and commitment to table tennis are undoubted. But his frequent use of stark words of doom and gloom can demoralise, demotivate and undermine and give a negative impression to outsiders.

Fair enough, identify problem areas and challenges, but let us also hear more of what he thinks is good about the coaching scheme. More words of praise for achievements made. We all need support and encouragement for the hard task ahead and our sport needs a positive image.

Maybe I have misunderstood him. Or, perhaps, there is something dreadfully amiss that I don't know about. If so, our chairman should spell out exactly what he is getting at and the premises on which his conclusions are based. We might then differ in our ideas about what should be done. But we all want table tennis to go forward and must work together towards that end. Inspire us Mr Prean! Motivate us! Unite us in spirit! Don't knock the coaching scheme without very good cause.

KEN MUHR
23 York Road
Stony Stratford
Milton Keynes MK11 1BJ

Another satisfied customer

I MET John Woodford at a recent county meeting and he asked me for my views on the new format for the Magazine. My subscription had lapsed (although I did not tell him that), because I was doubtful if I was getting value for money. Having knocked around in the game for over 40 years his remarks awakened my loyalty and conscience and I sent a cheque.

Arrival was awaited with interest, the easily identifiable envelope arrived. Very thick and heavy: I was getting my money's worth! Opened. Two issues: A little dismayed I pressed on because I took an instant liking to the November and December cover photographs.

Reading on I found two purposeful editorials. The picture content was wider than hitherto, and the Editor's claim that there were

regular columns in the Daily Telegraph is so far, true. Forthcoming events are clearly shown, the Mailbox is interesting — although I was surprised at Carl Prean's pique remarks in the last paragraphs of his letter published in the November issue.

From what I have read so far I have been converted to the view that our new chairman, John Prean, deserves a chance to achieve his aims through the structure of the ETTA. I think there is still scope for a wider range of contributors.

Maybe it's me! I have tried Clive Oakman's seemingly simple recipe for the twelve stage rubber change. No good. Sticky fingers and rough edges! I shall apply to go on the course!

On league match club nights I take along my copy of TT News and leave it on the scorers table. Very few people fail to pick it up and have a read. There is dormant interest there. Question and suggestion on how to increase circulation. How can we (you) urge each affiliated club to buy a copy for the benefit of its members? Through the magazine, via the ETTA, by approaching league and/or club secretaries? It is perhaps worth some consideration if it is not an avenue previously explored.

Looking forward to the next issues.

BRIAN PETTITT
176 Tivoli Crescent North
Brighton
Sussex BN1 5NA

The chairman on selection

I HAVE received a number of protests about the selection of the England teams for the world championships in New Delhi, some privately, some via the national press.

I understand what members are saying, but for the chairman of the association all members are equal and have equal rights. If I were to enter into selection controversies, I would have to express preferences for player A over player B which may undermine the confidence of players selected. It would be wrong of me to do this.

It is well known that I am not an admirer of the committee system in the selection process. Teams should be cohesive units not only in terms of skill, but team spirit and compatibility. I cannot see how this can be achieved by majority verdicts and compromise which is the way committees work, particularly such large ones as have been assembled in the more recent past.

JOHN PREAN

We were there

DID it go unnoticed that on Tuesday February 3 1987 in the English National Badminton Championships held at Crawley the winner of the women's singles was Fiona Elliot who beat Gillian Clark 11-8, 11-3 in the final. I seem to remember that at Crawley on Sunday January 25 1987 in the English National Table Tennis Championships finals the winner of the women's singles was Fiona Elliot who beat Lisa Bellinger 21-19, 21-13, 21-16?

HARRY SPRAGGS
International umpire
18 Fern Drive
Church Crookham
Aldershot

Editor's note: We were at both events at Crawley, Harry, and we did notice that the two Fiona's were successful at both table tennis and badminton. But perhaps you did not spot that the new badminton all-England champion has two "i's" in her surname and not one!

**ALL LETTERS SHOULD
BE SENT TO:**

**THE EDITOR
TABLE TENNIS NEWS
21 CLAREMONT
HASTINGS
E. SUSSEX
TN34 1HF**

Umpire's concern

I AM writing in connection with your article which appeared in your January edition of "Table Tennis News" concerning "Foul Service".

Firstly I would like to draw your attention to my article which appeared in "Table Tennis News" in one of the earlier editions during 1986 concerning the same points.

Before I go any further may I explain that I am a qualified county umpire and I travel all round the country to junior tournaments umpiring from groups up to finals and I wholeheartedly agree with every word that you say as I have on numerous occasions pulled players up for foul serving and have been confronted by all sorts of comments. Players have turned round and stated why do I pull them up when other "national" and "international" umpires have let them do the same services and said nothing.

The next two instances relate to two junior county matches played at the Barnet Table Tennis Centre during the current season, namely against Kent II and Surrey II. At the start of the current season we decided in Herts to do something about this problem but unfortunately things all went wrong when we played hosts to Kent II.

At the start of the match both

Golden Quill

Magazine story - Des pessimistic

I HAVE just read the interview with Desmond Douglas by Ian Stafford in Sportsweek magazine and I was very disappointed in what Des had to say.

He is critical of the state of the game, especially in England, and accuses the ETTA in the past of appearing to not want to improve the game.

I would agree that he is entitled to be critical of the ETTA in the past, and that the 1977 World Championships were not capitalised on, but to be pessimistic about the future is surely not going to help our cause.

The election of a new chairman is touched upon and he appears to dismiss this lightly. He is quoted as saying: "I'm just waiting to see if he puts right all his criticisms. It's too early to judge yet, but I'd be surprised if the game is any healthier in a couple of years time."

John Prean has perhaps been the most vocal critic of English table-tennis in the past, and now that he has been voted into office as chairman, with the promise of sweeping changes and new ex-

periments, surely he requires the benefit of the doubt at this early stage.

It could be argued that Desmond Douglas has already made his contribution to English table tennis by being our best player and a fine ambassador for ten years, but if he was sufficiently satisfied to sign a three year contract with the ETTA, then perhaps he should portray a little more optimism when dealing with the media.

I have no intention of criticising Desmond Douglas personally as he has been an excellent advertisement for table tennis over the years, and he is rightly aggrieved that compared to other sports he has little to show for the high standard he has reached, but as an enthusiast of the game, I was disappointed to read such views in a widely circulated publication.

Let's be optimistic about the future and help to make our game prosper in the near future, and hope that the likes of Desmond Douglas will not leave the game through disillusionment.

MARTIN HUGHES
88 Dorset Avenue
West Parley
Wimborne
Dorset BH22 8HP

Winner of a £5 TEESPORT voucher

teams were told exactly what was required by them regarding service and neither team captain raised any objection.

However during the course of the match I had reason to pull up a certain member of the Kent team for foul serving and this was immediately objected to by one of the Kent officials.

Secondly, during the Herts II v Surrey II game played on Saturday 17 January 1987 at the Barnet Centre, we once again had a problem over service when the Surrey non-playing captain complained after one of the Surrey players had conceded 3 points in a row for foul serving.

Therefore, with the above two incidents you can see that I wholeheartedly agree with your comments and would like to see something done in the near future, otherwise there is not much point in having any rules.

S. TEASDALE
County Umpire
c/o Barnet TT Centre
Barnet Lane
Barnet, Herts.

Foul serving — Our man in Brussels

ALTHOUGH writing from outside the jurisdiction of the ETTA, I wish to comment on your January editorial. During four seasons I have been training umpires in Bruxelles, with the aid of material sent to me by Colin Clemett and then translated into French, leading to a Provincial Umpire qualification. My candidates, usually less associated with the technicalities of the laws than their English counterparts, are often appalled at the complexity of the service law. When it comes to the practical application there are so many things to watch, all at the same time, during a few fractions of a second. My trainers have a practical session with Expedite, and invariably whilst they concentrate on the application of this law the service provisions are overlooked!

One appreciates that the law-makers have a difficult time, and the conclusions of the experts are sometimes overruled. As a first step,

the imposing of a minimum height of 15cm when projecting the ball upwards in service, would give the umpire a little more time to see that the provisions were adhered to — especially as regards striking the ball as it descends. Furthermore, neither the umpire nor the assistant umpire is well placed to judge many of the requirements of the service law. I have already the experience of a European League referee, sitting in the position of the former end-line judge, declaring that certain services were illegal (but of course not intervening), but it was quite impossible to fault these services from the umpire's chair. Basically the requirements of the service law must be simplified. Perhaps this could come if the bat rubbers were standardised.

The other main point is the need to educate the players. Here in Belgium we have coaching schemes involving many hundreds of youngsters, but there is little evidence that effort is made to teach them legal services. Coaches should surely make this an early essential, to avoid bad habits which are later difficult to eradicate. At top level players should set a good example, and I deplore those coaches who advocate serving very near to the borderline of legality. There are plenty of variations available without taxing the umpire and risking losing the point immediately. How many coaches insist on a "visible service" when there is no assistant umpire?

You will agree, I am sure, that it is dangerous to pass judgement on "foreign" umpires as such. There are bad, good and excellent umpires in all countries, but not all have the benefit of training and meaningful qualification. National umpire examinations were held in Belgium for the first time last season! But to follow your generalities, the English umpire is well respected, and the West Germans — doubtless due to the influence of Hans Giesecke — are usually very efficient. Of recent years the French have taken umpiring very seriously, and most do the job efficiently. I have no experience of non-European umpires. Once the legislation is put on a reasonable footing, the responsibility is clearly with the umpires, who NOW must not shirk the application of the law. The umpire is likely to be shot at by ill-informed spectators in all sports. He must remain firm, calm and polite at all times, and receive the full support of the administrators. Some attitudes need to be changed if such a good umpire as John Masters is driven into retirement.

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Cotswold Select, Midland League

Bradley Billington wins Cotswold Select

By Alf Peppard

OF the ten titles in the Cotswold Junior Select that were up for grabs, local prestige once again took a very severe hammering at least to the extent that only one player — Howard Williams of Stroud — did actually get through his group and progressed on as far as the 4th round, where he met his Waterloo.

Bradley Billington whom I understand has just left school retained his U17 boys singles title by beating Damian Holland in the final.

The Girls U17 singles was adventurously won by Debbie Toole beating the holder Andrea Holt in a flurry of rapid exchanges which were either on or off.

The European Cadet Champions — Michael O'Driscoll and Chris Oldfield — proved yet again just what a formidable combination they have created when they swept to success in the U17 doubles at the expense of Billington and Shaun Gibson.

In the girls U17 doubles, Melanie Carey and Andrea Holt after a shaky first game got themselves sorted out to win the final against Ellen Meddings and Debbie Toole.

David Baker turned on the pressure to convincingly beat Barry Foster and take the crown in the U12 boys singles — after losing the first game.

After a close win in the first game Kate Goodall made few mistakes to emerge respective winner at the expense of Sarah Williams in the U12 girls singles.

The U14 boys singles was won by

Neil Bevan who beat Leigh Jeffries quite convincingly.

In the girls U14 singles Helen Potts, highly reminiscent of her elder sister Clair, won a much deserved battle of tactics against Joanne Roberts. This was a great victory for the Cheshire girl beating the No. 8 ranked junior player.

The U14 boys doubles was always in doubt right up to the very end when Jeffries and Gary Knights beat Mark Stevenson and Neil Bevan 18 in the third.

The U14 girls doubles went to Helen Wright and Susan Pengelly who beat Kate Goodhall and Joanne Roberts in straight games.

Footnote: During the two days of the tournament, the Gloucestershire TTA supported the Mayor of Gloucester's (Councillor Anthony Ayland) sponsored charity for famine relief in UM - KEDDAADA an impoverished part of the Sudan, many tickets were sold and I'm told that financial returns were exceedingly good and well supported.

Results of finals — U12 boys singles: David Baker (C) b Barry Foster (ND) - 13, 19, 17. **U12 girls singles:** Kate Goodall (Y) b Sarah Williams (MI) 19, 8. **U14 boys singles:** Neil Bevan (C) b Leigh Jeffries (WA) 16, 16. **U14 girls singles:** Helen Potts (CH) b Joanne Roberts (Y) 14, -18, 16. **U14 boys doubles:** Jeffries/Knights (ST) b Stevenson/Bevan (Y/C) 17, -10, 18. **U14 girls doubles:** Helen Wright/Susan Pengelly (C/DV) b Goodhall/Roberts 20, 15. **U17 boys singles:** Bradley Billington (DY) b Damian Holland (E) 10, 19. **U17 girls singles:** Debbie Toole (Y) b Andrea Holt (LA) 22, 19. **U17 boys doubles:** Oldfield/O'Driscoll (Y) b Billington/Gibson (LA) 16, 14. **U17 girls doubles:** Carey/Holt (SO/LA) b Medding/Toole (Y) 20, 16.



Bradley Billington - champion at Gloucester.

Midland Leagues

Mens section

Division 1 — Coventry A 6, Wolverhampton 4; Gloucester 9, Chesterfield 1; Chesterfield 3, Derby 7; Notts A 8, Coventry A 2; Derby 8, Coventry A 2.

Champions Gloucester were pleased to notch their first win of the season. Derby scored their fourth victory to maintain 100% success but they have to meet Nottingham, also undefeated.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Derby	4	4	0	0	39	9	8
Coventry A	5	3	0	2	24	26	6
Notts A	3	2	1	0	21	9	5
Glos A	3	1	1	1	17	13	3
Wolves	4	1	1	2	16	24	3
Birmingham A	3	0	1	2	10	20	1
Chesterfield	4	0	0	4	11	29	0

Division 2 — Bath 7, Stafford 3.

A good win for Bath who seem set for promotion for the third time in successive years.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Bath	4	3	1	0	27	13	7
Notts B	4	3	0	1	25	15	6
Nuneaton	4	2	1	1	22	18	5
Dudley	3	2	1	0	17	13	5
Stafford	4	0	1	3	11	29	1
Loughborough	3	0	0	3	10	20	0

Division 3 — Notts 4, Glos B 6; Notts C 7, Leamington A 3; Leamington A5, Cheltenham 5; Cheltenham 2, Leicester 8.

William Dane led Gloucester to a good win over promotion rivals Nottingham C. He scored a fine treble and Dave Smith supported with two more. Cheltenham achieved their first point at Leamington in a match dominated by Graham Slack who had three wins and a doubles win with John Turner. Notts C maintained their challenge to Gloucester with a good win over Leamington.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Glos B	4	4	0	0	31	9	8
Notts C	3	3	0	1	17	13	6
Lincoln	2	1	0	1	11	9	2
Leicester	3	1	0	2	14	16	2
Leamington A	3	0	1	2	10	20	1
Cheltenham	3	0	1	2	7	23	1

Division 4 — Pontesbury 6, Banbury A 4; Coventry B 2, Pontesbury 8; Banbury A 8, Banbury B 2; Banbury B 6, Stroud 4; Stroud 6, Leamington 4.

In a top of the table clash, Pontesbury edged home against Banbury A due to a fine unbeaten performance by 15-year-old David Morris. At the bottom end, Stroud narrowly lost to Banbury B.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Banbury A	5	4	0	1	39	11	8
Pontesbury	3	3	0	0	23	7	6
Banbury B	3	1	1	1	13	17	3
Coventry B	3	1	0	2	11	19	2
Leamington B	2	1	0	1	9	11	2
Stroud	5	1	0	4	16	34	2
Leamington C	3	0	1	2	9	21	1

Junior section

Division 1 — Birmingham B 3, Derby 7; Notts A 6, Birmingham A 4; Derby 3, Birmingham A 7.

In a terrific match, John Holland beat Nicky Felton to clinch a win for Nottingham over Birmingham A. This leaves Wolverhampton without a defeat followed by four teams with only one defeat.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Notts A	4	3	0	1	29	11	6
Wolves	3	3	0	0	24	6	6
Birmingham A	3	2	0	1	20	10	4
Derby	3	2	0	1	16	14	4
Coventry A	2	1	0	1	13	7	2
Birmingham B	5	0	0	5	5	45	0
Notts B	2	0	0	2	3	17	0

Division 2 — Dudley 8, Walsall 2, Eastwood 5, Stroud 5; Stroud 10, Coventry B 0; Leicester 6, Eastwood 4; Coventry B 0, Eastwood 10.

In a vital match, Leicester went 4 up against Eastwood who fought back to 5-4. In the final set Richard Grimley clinched it for the home side with 22-20 in the third. Eastwood dropped a further point at Stroud, battling back from 1-4 down. For Stroud Howard Williams took his three and the doubles.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Eastwood	5	3	1	1	34	6	7
Stroud	3	2	1	0	21	9	5
Leicester	2	2	0	0	16	4	4
Dudley	3	1	0	2	11	19	2
Walsall	3	0	0	3	8	22	0
Coventry B	2	0	0	2	0	20	0

Division 3 — Nuneaton 8, Rugby 2, Worcester 6, W. Bromwich 4, Pontesbury 8, Rugby 2.

Worcester deprived West Brom of their unbeaten record with a close win. For the third time Richard Pratley won his treble.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Leamington A	3	3	0	0	30	0	6
Worcester	4	3	0	1	22	18	6
W. Bromwich	4	3	0	1	28	12	6
Oxford	3	2	0	1	18	12	4
Nuneaton	5	1	1	3	24	26	3
Pontesbury	4	1	1	2	13	27	3
Rugby	5	0	0	5	5	45	0

Division 4 — Coventry 10, Nuneaton B 0; Leamington B 10, Nuneaton B 0; Banbury 10, Glos 0; Leamington B 0, Banbury 10; Coventry C 10, Nuneaton B 0.

A nap hand of maximum wins! In the Leamington B v Banbury five went in the third by Banbury edged home in them all.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Banbury	4	3	0	1	34	6	6
Leamington B	4	3	0	1	29	11	6
Coventry C	4	3	0	1	27	13	6
Birmingham C	3	2	0	1	18	12	4
Glos	3	1	0	2	6	24	2
Nuneaton B	4	0	0	4	5	35	0
Bromsgrove	2	0	0	2	1	19	0

National team competitions

Wilmott Cup - Quarter-finals: Bolton v Northumberland (1), Leicester v Birmingham (2), Thames Central v Willesden (3), Hastings v Plymouth (4). **Semi-finals:** 2 v 1 and 4 v 3. **Fourth round results:** Trafford 1, Bolton 5; Stockton 0, Northumberland 5; Leicester 5, Potteries 4; Birmingham 5, North Herts 1; Thames Central 5, Romford 2; Willesden 5, North Middlesex 3; Hastings 6, Tunbridge Wells 3; West Cornwall 0, Plymouth 6.

JM Rose Bowl - Quarter-finals: Northumberland v Castleford, Pont (1), Leicester v Wolverhampton (2), Chelmsford v Newbury (3), Woolwich v Plymouth (4). **Semi-finals:** 2 v 1 and 3 v 4. **Fourth round results:** Ormesby 1, Northumberland 5; Castleford Pont 9, Liverpool 0; Chesterfield 2, Leicester 5; Wolverhampton 5, North Herts 1; Harlow 4, Chelmsford 5; Thames Central 2, Newbury 5; Woolwich 6, Hastings 3; Swindon 2, Plymouth 5.

Carter Cup - Quarter-finals: Sunderland v Sheffield (1), Nottingham v Birmingham (2), Ipswich v Reigate, Redhill (3), Tunbridge Wells v Launceston (4). **Semi-finals:** 1 v 2 and 4 v 3. **Fourth round results:** Ormesby 1, Sunderland 5; Sheffield w/o v Preston; Chesterfield 2, Nottingham 5; Milton Keynes 4, Birmingham 8; Ipswich 6, Harlow 3; Willesden 4, Reigate, Redhill 5; Tunbridge Wells 5, Hastings 1; Plymouth 4, Launceston 5.

A NEW LOOK AT TOURNAMENT SCHEDULES

by Colin Clemett

UNDER ITTF Regulations the referee of a tournament is "responsible for the scheduling of matches by time and table". It is for this reason that the ETTA qualifying tests for referees have always included the requirement for the candidate to carry out a scheduling exercise for a hypothetical tournament and this is a section of the test which carries a substantial proportion of the total marks.

At the elementary level the requirements are simple. The matches in all events must be fitted into the time and table-space available in such a way that the players are given adequate intervals between successive matches without being kept waiting about for long periods, and so that the finals are held at a reasonable time. It has been shown, by the US Table Tennis Association among others, that these objectives can be achieved at least as well by a computer program as by a human planner, so why don't we delegate tournament scheduling to a trusty micro which will do exactly as we tell it?

The answer is that there is a bit more to the job than just filling the tables with matches in an order which suits the players and as the standard of the tournament rises there are additional interests which have to be taken into account. An obvious example is the need to stage a particular match at a specified time for television; if it is live television there is not much scope for inaccuracy by the scheduler, though on the day he might well have to wait until the broadcasters are ready. However, televised table ten-

nis is at present a fairly rare occurrence and there are other considerations which are usually of more immediate importance.

There is, for example, the need to provide spectators with reasonably continuous entertainment. Of course, it is impossible to forecast with certainty which will be the best matches but it is at least likely that there will be more interest in the men's singles than in a consolation event and there is no excuse for devoting all the tables for two hours of the afternoon to get the subsidiary matches out of the way. On the other hand, it can become tedious for spectators to have to watch nothing but men's singles and what is wanted is a judicious mix of men's and women's events, singles and doubles, if possible throughout the tournament.

In pre-tournament planning, it is necessary to assign tables to particular matches and even at this stage some attempt can be made to place the matches most likely to attract spectators on the most convenient tables. This is done at Wimbledon, where the best matches are normally scheduled for the two main courts, and perhaps table ten-

nis tournaments should consider designating certain tables as the equivalent of Wimbledon's Centre Court and Court One. This scheme was used with some success in the 1977 World Championships at Birmingham at, I believe, the suggestion of the referee, John Wright, but it does not seem to have been followed up either in England or elsewhere.

The fact that matches have been assigned to specified tables does not necessarily mean that the assignment cannot be changed. Ideally, the tournament would proceed according to its prearranged plan and this should certainly be so in the early rounds, so that players know exactly where to be at the start of an event. However, it is sometimes necessary to change table assignments to take account of late-running matches and there is no reason why the same flexibility cannot be applied in transferring a potentially attractive match, which may not have been foreseen from the draw, to a "show" table.

In the finals, there is not the same degree of freedom in that only one, or possibly two, tables are available but a little imagination can make all the difference to a finals programme. We have all sat through interminable sequences of worthy but dull finals while the audience gradually drifted away and what should have been the top matches were played to 20 or 30 enthusiasts. It may be regrettable but the fact is that the mixed doubles, for instance, rarely engenders the same spectator enthusiasm as the senior singles and it may be better to restrict the main

finals programme to a few of the top events, with the "minor" finals played earlier or later.

To take an extreme, why not stage the singles finals and, say, one doubles final during the afternoon of finals day with the remaining doubles and subsidiary events continuing during the evening? Sponsors and local dignitaries attending finals would probably appreciate a shorter but more attractive programme and one which was better attended. An early finish would help also to get the major results to the newspapers in time for next-day publication and thus improve the level of publicity for table tennis. There are, of course, practical problems in staging a few finals in the middle of a tournament and then reverting to the pre-finals layout, but are they insuperable?

For too long we have tended to keep to the established format for tournaments and it is time to consider changes if table tennis is to enhance its declining status. I do not think (thank goodness!) that it will ever be practicable to build into a computer programme the sort of imaginative approach to scheduling that I am advocating. There will always be the need for creative minds to deal with circumstances that are different for every tournament and to generate new ideas for the benefit of players, spectators and the sport. I am confident that in the ETTA we have officials who are capable of rising to this challenge and I look forward to their proving me right in the coming seasons.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

Rowden: Very much so. Far too often commercial interests take precedence and players are pushed into using equipment which is not 100% suited to their game. In the long run they don't get the same results.

Les: How far do you see Jo rising up the junior rankings over the next year or so? Do you predict No. 1 spot here?

Rowden: To answer would put pressure on the player which is not a coach's function. My concern is not so much with ranking positions as to ensure that Jo plays up to her potential. At the moment she is relatively successful but only playing at some 60% of full potential. I feel she has much more to give.

Les: What you say regarding ranking positions surprises me. Surely you are delighted that Jo is sitting there at No. 1 and well ahead of the field?

Rowden: Every season we have anything up to three different girls holding the cadet No. 1 spot — just think of it over the last dozen years some 30 No. 1s — many have been good competitors and quite a few have represented England. Where have they all gone? So much potential and most of it vanished into obscurity! Being No. 1 on the cadet list is the very first rung on a long ladder — it shows only that basic training is over, that's all.

Les: Surely that is a somewhat harsh philosophy for a young player to ac-

cept? It would appear that the road to success is never-ending!

Rowden: And only the professionals get there! Player and coach must work at a programme of *attainable goals*. First progress up the ranking lists and wins at tournament level, first minor ones then the big events. But once the No. 1 position is achieved it is necessary to set further aims — any player who sits back and is satisfied that they have made it, is finished — there must be progress, and this should be to a plan.

Les: Let me finish off by asking just what the plans have been for Jo this season?

Rowden: In March '86 we started working towards the goal of No. 1 by Christmas; Jo achieved this on Saturday 15 November '86. We are

now training for the Europeans in July '87. Playing cadets in this country is no preparation for Europe — that is a totally different ball game and something Jo has to be ready for. Eurocadets are more of the standard of our better juniors, most of the time they are quicker to be positive and some of their better girls play the sort of topspin game you don't come across from young players in this country. The only road to success in my opinion for our young players is proper planning and preparation at all times and much of this in the early years is the province of the coach.

Les: Thank you for your time. I have the feeling that a number of the ideas you have put forward will be of interest to other coaches with young players near the top.

Past, present and future

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

WILTSHIRE

Laurie Selby

WATCH out, I'm back - that was the message hammered out to Wiltshire's top table tennis players by Swindon's Steve McBean.

Steve, out of the game for two years, roared back to win the latest Wiltshire Ranking Tournament at Calne.

"It was great to be back," said Steve who won the tournament using a new bat because he broke his old one four days before the event.

In the final against the experienced former county champion Terry Bruce of Salisbury.

Steve battled back after losing the first game to pass his biggest hurdle so far in his come-back.

Steve's win should push him up to around number five in the Wiltshire rankings. "I'm practising and training three or four nights a week. I'm feeling a lot fitter than I used to and feel easier at the table," said Steve.

Now he is setting his sights on the Wiltshire and Swindon closed championships - and the Evening Advertiser cup for winning the division one averages in the Swindon and District League.

At present he is leading the way with a 100 per cent record.

Claire Hunter made it a double top for Swindon by winning the women's section of the ranking tournament.

With the Wiltshire number one Claire Maisey in Australia, Claire took her chance with a two games victory over Brenda Lee, also of Swindon.

Results

Mens singles - Quarter-finals:

Steve McBean b Ray Hughes - 14, 20, 15; Trevor Lloyd b Steve Davies (Swindon) 16, 17; Michael Auchterlonie (Salisbury) b Bill Moulding (Salisbury) 14, 14.

Semi-finals: McBean b Lloyd - 12, 12, 17; Bruce b Auchterlonie 11, -22, 14.

Final: McBean b Auchterlonie - 15, 18, 14.

Women's singles final: Claire Hunter b Brenda Lee 16, 11.

Jasvinder Singh became the first Swindon player to defeat McBean this season when they clashed in the Wiltshire inter-league table tennis competition when Swindon A met Swindon B. Jas went on to record another good victory over Steve Davies but his side, Swindon B, went down 6-3.

Singh put on quite a doubles act in the Cotswold Two Star Select junior tournament.

Teamed with England number 18 Richard Hutchinson of Ipswich, he reached the semi-finals where they went out 15-21, 19-21 to Chris Oldfield (Sheffield) and Michael O'Driscoll (Mirfield).

YORKSHIRE

Rea Balmford

NEWS this month comes from the south of the county where Sheffield, one of Yorkshire's biggest leagues, reports on the present and the future, and from Wakefield, where enthusiastic veteran Cleeve Judson, recent winner of the Veteran singles at the Pontefract Open Championships, seeks to bring even more togetherness to that fruitful area - Veteran table tennis.

Like most other leagues throughout the country, Sheffield has suffered some loss in membership but, with 148 teams in eleven divisions, the slump has been less marked than in many areas, and the steel city still attracts players from as far afield as the West Riding, Derbyshire and Nottingham.

A six year reign by Saint Albion as champions of the Premier Division was last season brought to an end by the Castle club, and the battle again looks to be between these two clubs.

Saint Albion who have added high-flying youngster Chris Oldfield to their squad of Clive Guest, Kevin Thompson and Tony Hunt, won the early season clash, but Castle reversed the result at the second meeting, and the sides are on level pegging, eight points clear of third placed Fletchers.

Castle rely on Paul Longstone, Bill Grant and Mark Ward, all of whom have come through the city centre club's coaching scheme, and they have high hopes of the last named a 16 year old Myers Grove schoolboy, recent winner of the Tameside Junior, and so keen to widen his experience that he makes the 60 plus mile journey to Bradford for a second weekly match.

Disappointment when the Herries coaching centre which, under the guidance of Roger Turner, had provided a steady flow of young players, closed, but, on the credit side, a new Dunlop coaching centre has been established at Intake Middle School where Barry Blackburn and a small band of helpers are fostering young talent.

Disappointing, too, the demise of the South Yorkshire Open, but Sheffield is still in the business of bringing top table tennis to the city. There are high hopes of a visit by the Chinese in the coming months, while, by the time these notes are published, the League will have staged Rotherham's S.B.L. match against powerful Grove - master-minded, incidentally by Ian Marshall, a Yorkshireman whose career began with Beverley Grammar School in the Hull Schools League and Hull Y.P.I.

This means a return to his native city for Steve Mills, now married to a Kent girl and living in that County, and with Oldfield and former Sheffield University student Chris Rogers both in the home line-up, there is plenty of local interest.

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