

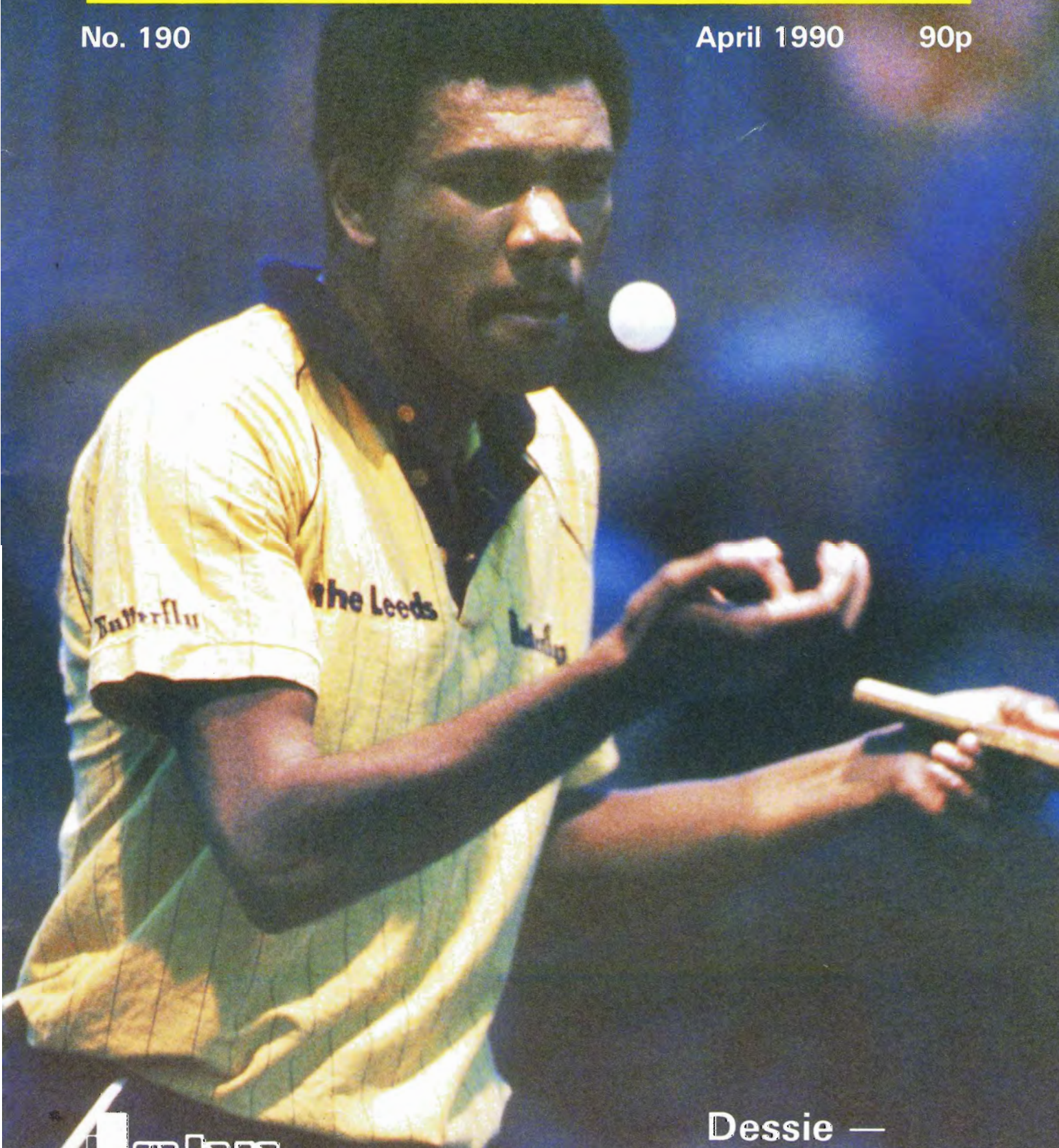


Table Tennis News

No. 190

April 1990

90p



Jaques

Dessie —
back in the running
on Jaques... of course!

A Family Affair

This edition of Table Tennis News seems full of the latest news and views of ETTA members on the continuing 'Chen issue'. As in all family disputes there are diametrically opposed points of view being propounded by groups whose sole concern is for the good of the sport. The 'Chen for England' faction genuinely believe that Table Tennis will benefit from his selection for his adopted country. The 'English Citizens only' supporters are genuinely disturbed by the vision of a Chinese national becoming European Champion or Luxembourg winning the World Championships with three imported players.

Healthy Debate

There is no doubt that constructive debate is healthy. In this case it is heartening to see the amount of effort and thought being put towards ensuring that the decision reached by National Council on 21st April truly represents the view of the member on the Clapham omnibus. But there are dangers in too open a debate. Much of our Press coverage for the past two months has concentrated on the controversy, sometimes to the detriment of factual sports reporting and, at a time when we are searching for a new national sponsor, the impression might be given of a sport divided — a certain turn-off for many potential supporters. So when the result is known let us all present a unified face to the outside world. After all, it was only a family argument.

Going, Going... ?

England's defeat by Germany in the Super Division match of the European League seemed to ensure certain relegation to Division One next season. If the Swedes had lost too we would have stayed up — but they won. So it's the end of the road — or is it. The whole structure of the European League is being debated by the ETTU BGM in Gothenburg, could a new system emerge which would ensure that we stayed amongst the elite? Come back Harry Houdini, all is forgiven.

Much better late...

If we publish on time in May there will be only a last minute report from the European Championships and no coverage of the Leeds National Championships from Oldham. So we will be bringing out a combined May/June bumper edition of Table Tennis News in the third week of the month to round off the season in style. Worth waiting for, I promise you.

ALAN PICKARD



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ALAN PICKARD

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★ **COVER
PICTURE**

★ **DESMOND DOUGLAS** — Winner of the Wiltshire 5 Star and unbeaten in singles for England against Czechoslovakia and Federal Germany (European League), proving once more that, despite a curtailment in playing appearances, he is still a World force to be reckoned with. (Photo by Action Plus Photographics)

A Thank-you from our Chairman

ETTA Chairman John Prean re-elected unopposed for another year



Dear Colleagues,

First, may I please thank you for electing me Chairman of our Association for another year, particularly the Counties and Leagues who went to the trouble of nominating me.

The coming season will not be without problems. We shall miss the LEEDS sponsorship and all that this brought. Our Chief Executive is actively looking for a replacement; there is interest and support in a number of directions, but the current economic climate has not made things easier. If we do not succeed in the near future, we shall be able to do less than in the past, but a substantial programme will still be developed. More of our fellow citizens will have to be convinced that ours is the great sport we already know it is.

In an earlier issue I called next season "The Year of the Member" and much of our effort will be devoted to real grass roots development and up to £100,000 can be ploughed into that task. We hope that very many good local schemes will be born, that there will be what Professor Wolf calls a "quickening of minds and spirits" and that all over the country members will get together to think actively about the future of the game and how we can advance it. Not only funds but the active assistance of our Development Officer Diccon Gray will be available.

It took us two years to put right the rather desperate financial and general situation of the E.T.T.A. The third year produced the profits that we are now able to put back into the sport.

I always took the view that immense talent and goodwill existed in our member Associations. Let us now put all that to work and map out a real future for the sport at the grass roots.

Let this be the start of a real partnership of the local Associations and the E.T.T.A.

JOHN PREAN

Spot Bradley's Ball

This month Table Tennis News brings you a superb opportunity to win a Donic Tracksuit of your choice with the compliments of **FAST BAT HOUSE** Reepham Norfolk (Tel: **Norwich 871102**)

This is what you do!

Just study this photograph of England's Bradley Billington, snapped in action by ace photographer Mike Loveder. Then use your skill and judgement to decide just where in the photograph the ball is located.

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to arrive **before 16 April 1990**.
Please ensure your name and address
is marked clearly on the entry.

The solution and winner's name will
be published in May's edition of Table
Tennis News.

Many thanks to Mike Loveder for a
superb Spot the Ball pic.



Magic Ball in Europahalle

by GEORGE R. YATES

FIRST visited for the singles qualification tournament for the Seoul Olympics my second sojourn in Karlsruhe, over the period March 1/4, 1990, was in respect of the Federal German Open.

And what an Open it proved to be with Belgium winning the men's team title beating the host association 3-1 in the final and Jean-Philippe Gatien of France taking the men's singles crown with a final 3-1 win over Jorgen Persson of Sweden.

The counterpart victor on the distaff side was Canada's Geng Lijuan who, in the final, beat Csilla Batorfi of Hungary while in the women's team event Hungary had a 3-1 win over the Soviet Union.

In the women's doubles Batorfi and Gabriella Wirth of Hungary had a final win over Marie Hrachova and Renata Kasalova of Czechoslovakia and the host nation's Jorg Rosskopf and Steffen Fetzner had a final win over Jan-Ove Waldner and Mikael Appelgren of Sweden.

But, back to the men's team event in which Jean-Michel Saive and Thierry Cabrera caused such havoc as they proceeded to wipe out Greece (3-0), Czechoslovakia (3-0), Sweden (3-2) and Poland (3-2) before their final triumph against Federal Germany in which the scores were :-

Saive bt G. Bohm 19, 16
Cabrera bt J. Rosskopf -17, 20, 19
Saive/Cabrera l Rosskopf/Fetzner -17, -16
Saive bt Rosskopf 15, 18

What then of England's men's team who began with a comfortable 3-0 defeat of Norway — one each for Carl Prean and Alan Cooke and Prean and Skylet Andrew in the doubles. But then defeat at the hands of Yugoslavia's Zoran Primorac and Ilija Lupulescu, both beaten by Cooke but no other breakthrough.

In the women's team event Alison Gordon and Fiona Elliot began, like the men, with an easy 3-0 defeat of Sri Lanka, subsequently beating Bulgaria 3-2, Daniella Guerguelcheva winning their two, and then taken out 3-0 by the Soviet Union's Valentina Popova and Jelena Timina with Galina Melnik partnering Popova for the doubles. But they did reach the quarters unlike Poland, Yugoslavia, the Netherlands, East Germany and Czechoslovakia.

INDIVIDUALS

England had nine men in the singles event but only one, Prean, succeeded in reaching the third round there to be taken out by Zolt

Kriston of Hungary after an opening round bye and a win over Torben Wosik of Federal Germany.

Cooke fell at the first hurdle in failing to get the better of Austria's ace defender Dietmar Palmi while Andrew had his moment of glory in despatching the host nation's Fetzner 12, -21, 18 and 17, only to succumb to Sweden's Johan Falby in Rd 2.

And no better fortune in the women's singles with Alison Gordon, on her first visit to the table, being eliminated by Ilka Böhning of Federal Germany and Fiona Elliot, in her first encounter, losing to the Soviet Union's Galina Melnik who took the first game 32-30 but thereafter 11 and 13.

Prean and Cooke in tandem raised hopes in the men's doubles by reaching the quarter-final stage but after an opening game win lost to Andrzej Grubba of Poland partnered by Gatien. No other English



Gatien of France played outstanding table tennis to capture the Mens Singles title (Photo by John F.A. Wood)

Bradley Billington opened with a win over Sandro Caenaro of Luxembourg thereafter falling to Austria's Ding Yi and Sean Gibson had the misfortune to be drawn against Dmitrij Mazunov of the USSR who whistled through 16, 12 and 9.

Steve Dorking lost to Frank Boute of the Netherlands and Glenn Baker to Olivier Marmurek of France both in the first round in which Chris Oldfield survived in beating Tilekeratney of Sri Lanka only to take his departure at the hands of Gurhan Yaldiz of Turkey. John Holland was beaten by Petr Korbek of Czechoslovakia yet another first round faller. Thus, from an England point of view — end of story!

combination reached the second round, nor did Andrew, paired with Philippe Saive of Belgium, beaten by Ding Yi and Ulf Bengtsson of Sweden.

And, in the women's doubles, Alison and Fiona took their departure at the first time of asking losing to Valentina Popova and Melnik of the USSR. There was no mixed event. It was not a happy excursion for an 11-player English representation whose play, overall, left a great deal to be desired albeit the field was a strong one. And so will it be in Gothenburg!

Men's Team

Quarter-finals:

Belgium 3 Sweden 2; Poland 3 Japan 2; FR Germany 1 3 France 1; USSR 3 Yugoslavia 1.

Semi-finals:

Belgium 3 Poland 2; FR Germany 1 3 USSR 0.

Final: BELGIUM 3 FR Germany 1.

Women's Team

Quarter-finals:

USSR 3 England 0; FR Germany 1 3 Belgium 1; France 3 Romania 2; Hungary 3 Sweden 0.

Semi-finals:

USSR 3 FR Germany 1 1; Hungary 3 France 2.

Final: HUNGARY 3 USSR 1

Men's Singles

Quarter-finals:

U. Bengtsson (SWE) b J-O. Waldner (SWE) 22, 15, 19;
J-P. Gatien (FRA) bt A. Grubba (POL) -12, 14, -21, 16, 22;
J-P. Saive (BEL) bt M. Appelgren (SWE) 16, 18, -15, -16, 21;
J. Persson (SWE) bt G. Bohn (FRG) -10, 12, 18, 15.

Semi-finals:

Gatien bt Bengtsson 17, 12, -9, 21; Persson bt Saive 10, -15, 12, 11.

Final:

GATIEN bt Persson 14, -21, 14, 19.

Women's Singles

Quarter-finals:

Geng Lijuan (CAN) bt D. Guerguelcheva (BUL) -18, 20, 17, -18, 16;
M. Kloppenburg (HOL) bt N. Struse (FRG) -20, 8, -17, 8, 22;
O. Nemes (FRG) bt M. Hrachova (TCH) 17, -17, 7, 8;
C. Batorfi (HUN) bt E. Noor (HOL) -19, 18, 11, 17.

Semi-finals:

Geng bt Kloppenburg 10, -19, 11, 14; Batorfi bt Nemes 18, -22, -11, 14, 18.

Final:

GENG bt Batorfi 11, 16, -12, 13.

Men's Doubles

Semi-finals:

J. Rosskopf/S. Fetzner (FRG) bt I. Lupulescu/Z. Primorac (YUG) 15, -17, 17; Appelgren/Waldner (SWE) bt Gatien (FRA)/Grubba (POL) 18, 17.

Final:

FETZNER/ROSSKOPF bt Appelgren/Waldner 13, -10, 22.

Women's Doubles

Semi-finals:

Batorfi/G. Wirth (HUN) bt G. Melnik/V. Popova (URS) -12, 18, 11; Hrachova/R. Kasalova (TCH) bt Guerguelcheva (BUL)/O. Badescu (ROM) 12, 17.

Final:

BATORFI/WIRTH bt Hrachova/Kasalova -19, 12, 21.

Vive la France

by GEORGE R. YATES

FRANCE duly wrapped up the championship title of the European League's Super Division with an emphatic 6-1 win over the Netherlands in Huizen on March 6.

Spearheaded by Jean-Philippe Gatien, who figured in four successes, the only home win was accomplished by Paul Haldan in the very first set when the ex-Romanian beat Olivier Marmurek. Thereafter it was very much one-way traffic.

Although equating on points with the Federal Republic of Germany — 4-3 winners over England on the same night in Bexleyheath — the fact that when these two countries met in St. Avold in October last the French victory by 5 sets to 2 was the all-important factor in determining the champion winners. Scores in Huizen were:-

P. Haldan bt O. Marmurek 18, 17;
D. Heister l J-P Gatien -11, 18, -17;
M. Kloppenburg l Wang Xiaoming -14, -15;
Haldan/Heister l Gatien/Marmurek -16, 21, -17;
G. Bakker/Kloppenburg l Gatien/Wang 14, -18, -15;
Haldan l Gatien -11, -10;
Heister l Marmurek -18, -17.

In Bratislava, Czechoslovakia were beaten 4-3 by Sweden and Poland in Gdansk had a like result against Yugoslavia the final table being:-

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
FRANCE	7	5	2	31	18	5
F. R. Germany	7	5	2	31	18	5
Netherlands	7	4	2	23	26	4
Sweden	7	3	4	35	24	3
Poland	7	3	4	19	30	3
Yugoslavia	7	3	4	23	26	3
Czechoslovakia	7	3	4	23	26	3
England	7	2	5	21	28	2

Shock result in Division 1 was the 7-0 win for Austria over Belgium in Wels on March 6 the scores being:-

Ding Yi bt T. Cabrera 18, -19, 18;
D. Palmi bt J-P Saive -9, 16, 14;

E. Maier bt Els Billen 17, 17;
Ding/P. Eckel bt Carbrera/Saive -21, 19, 9;
Ding/Fichtinger bt P. Saive/Billen 9, 15;
Ding w.o. J-M Saive;
Palmi bt Carbrera -15, O.O. (conceded).

But with one match still to play at home to Turkey on March 10 Belgium must remain the firm favourites to gain promotion to the Super Division, with Hungary finishing the runners-up.

Division 1

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Belgium	6	5	1	27	15	5
Hungary	6	5	1	31	11	5
Austria	7	5	2	36	13	5
Bulgaria	7	4	3	25	24	4
Turkey	5	2	3	12	23	2
Italy	7	2	5	25	24	2
Finland	6	1	5	8	34	1
Denmark	6	1	5	11	31	1

Remaining fixtures are:-

Belgium v Turkey, Finland v Hungary, Denmark v Turkey

In Division 2 all depends on the outcome of the match between Switzerland and Spain. Both countries are undefeated to date and all roads must lead to Geneva when these two associations meet.

Meantime Portugal won the Division 3 round robin beating Liechtenstein (6-1), Jersey (7-0), Guernsey (7-0), Isle of Man (7-0) and Malta (7-0).

England's tough draw for European Championships

ENGLAND'S men face seven tough ties in their bid to win the gold medal in the 17th European Table Tennis Championships, to be played in Gothenburg from 8th - 16th April.

In the 1988 Championships England took silver, narrowly losing to Sweden in a close final, and the Swedes then went on to win the World Team title in Dortmund in April 1989.

The top 12 nations are drawn into two groups of six for the initial rounds of the European Championships and England's misfortune has been to be matched with USSR, Federal Germany and Poland, all of whom showed dramatic improvement in Dortmund, finishing 4th, 7th and 8th respectively.

Donald Parker, England team manager, said 'The draw certainly hasn't worked out the way I would have wished. The groups are drawn in pairs and we could just as easily have been matched against Hungary, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. They have undoubtedly weakened in the past two years while the Soviets, Germany and Poland have all improved. But it's just the luck of the draw and we are determined to fight through to another final'.

In the women's event England, who finished eighth in the last European's, have been drawn in the opposite group to current Champions USSR but have an equally tough task to the men.

FULL DRAW:

MEN

Group A	Group B
1 ENGLAND	1 SWEDEN
2 USSR	2 HUNGARY
3 FR GERMANY	3 CZECHOSLOVAKIA
4 POLAND	4 YUGOSLAVIA
5 BULGARIA	5 FRANCE
6 NETHERLANDS	6 AUSTRIA

WOMEN

Group A	Group B
1 USSR	1 CZECHOSLOVAKIA
2 NETHERLANDS	2 YUGOSLAVIA
3 HUNGARY	3 FR GERMANY
4 FRANCE	4 ENGLAND
5 POLAND	5 ROMANIA
6 SWEDEN	6 ITALY

YOUTH CUP 1990/91

As the Leeds Permanent Building Society Sponsorship agreement ends this season, the Youth Cup event will not be staged next season unless an alternative sponsor can be secured.

JENNY HUGHES
ETTA EVENTS MANAGER

The European Scene 2

Europe Club Cup of Champions - 1989/90 Results of Semi Finals

Men's Section

Levallois UTT (FRA)	-	Borussia Düsseldorf (FRG)	5:3
Secretin	-	Roskopf	-17, 11, -10
Gatien	-	R. Wosik	18, 17
Lo Chuen Tsung	-	Fetzner	12, -15, 14
Gatien	-	Roskopf	-7, -21
Secretin	-	Fetzner	-15, -21
Lo Chuen Tsung	-	R. Wosik	14, 10
Gatien	-	Fetzner	20, 9
Lo Chuen Tsung	-	Roskopf	19, 16

TSK Partizan Belgrade (YUG) - ATSV Saarbrücken (FRG) 3:5
(played in Germany)

Lupulescu	-	Engel	17, -19, 18
Primorac	-	Podpinka	15, 13
Gavrilović	-	Xie Saike	-12, -18
Primorac	-	Engel	20, -19, 14
Lupulescu	-	Xie Saike	-14, 19, -17
Gavrilovic	-	Podpinka	-12, 21, -16
Primorac	-	Xie Saike	-12, 18, -15
Gavrilovic	-	Engel	-19, -6

The venue for the final match between LEVALLOIS UTT and ATSV SAARBRÜCKEN will be determined by lot by the Executive Committee of the ETTU during the German Open Championships in Karlsruhe (1-4 March, 1990).

The FINAL SHALL TAKE PLACE ON 28th April, 1990.

Women's Section

Statistika Budapest (HUN)	-	Spvg Steinhagen (FRG)	5:1
G. Wirth	-	Cords	15, 14
Oláh	-	Struse	-16, 19, 14
Nagy	-	XU Wei Yu	-15, 15, 19
G. Wirth	-	Struse	-18, 21, -18
Nagy	-	Cords	-17, 15, 20
Oláh	-	XU Wei Yu	19, 14

ASTK Mladost Zagreb (YUG) - Trade Unions Moscow (URS) 1:5
Detailed results not received yet!

The final match between TRADE UNIONS MOSCOW and STATISZIKA BUDAPEST shall take place on the 28th April 1990 in Moscow because Statistika Budapest were the HOME TEAM in last season's final.

Bohumil Vana

One of table tennis' greatest champions died at the age of 69. Bohumil Vana, many times World Champion, was not only a great player but one who made a major contribution to the development of the game.

His famous duels with Johnny Leach, Ferenc Sido, Ivan Andreadis, Dick Miles, Zarko Dolinar, Jozsef Koczian, Tage Flisberg, Ferenc Seos, Guy Amouretti, Vaclav Tereba, and especially against Richard Bergmann, are among the most memorable that ever took place.

Vana was born in Prague and played table tennis from the age of 12, making his debut in the World Championships in London in 1935. At the age of 17 he was the World Mixed Doubles champion with Vera Votrubeova, and at the age of 18 became Singles World Champion.

His attacking forehand and service were quite unique and his brilliant footwork enabled him to play at the highest level without using backhand.

The first transmissions of table tennis on the BBC were in the 38th World Championships where, in a crowded Albert Hall in London, Vana beat Richard Bergmann 3-1. In 1947 in Paris he defeated the Hungarian master Ferenc Sido after an epic struggle with Tage Flisberg. His last appearance at World Championships was in Utrecht in 1955 when he was defeated by the new young Japanese ace.

He was in retirement in recent years in his native Prague.

Reprinted from ITTF Bulletin



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English Schools T.T.A. REGIONAL FINALS

by DAVID LOMAS

ALL three Regional Finals of the Dunlop National School Team Championships were staged on February 17th.

In the North Region Finals, held at Pontefract, West Yorkshire, it was a highly successful day for Parkview School, Barrow-in-Furness. The Cumbrian Champions won no fewer than four of the eight events. Last year Parkview got three teams through to the National Finals at Matlock but only their Boys Under-16 team were successful.

Parkview's Girls Under-13 team were in convincing form. They won their three matches by maximum 8-0 margins. Two members of their line-up, twins Joanne and Julie Baker will be making their third consecutive appearance in the National Finals. They were winners of the Girls Under-11 event in 1988, when pupils at Yarlside School.

The Girls Under-16 quartet of Caroline Watt, Fiona Harris, Carrie Lowes and Rebecca Holland hope to go one better than last year's runners-up spot but face a strong line-up from the Grove School, Market Drayton, winners of the Midlands and West event, held at Stroud.

The closest contested event at Matlock could probably be the Boys Under-16 competition (for the Leach-Carrington Trophy). Parkview will not relinquish their title without a struggle. They have an experienced squad, including Justin Brunton, Kevon Hodgson and Gareth Brunton. They face opposition from Whitgift School, Croydon (South & East) and Mary Webb School, Pontesbury (Midlands & West).

Archbishop Cranmer C.E. Middle School, Leeds, are, according to Yarlside's teacher, Martin Holland, the "best-ever standard in Girls Under-11 I have ever witnessed". The Leeds girls edged out Yarlside, 5-3.

Yarlside also went down 5-3 against Dronfield Junior School (Derbyshire) with Dronfield's No. 3 & 4 players unbeaten.

Alsager School (Cheshire) were due to make their first appearance at Matlock, where their Boys Under-19 quartet of Gary and Paul Pickford, Ben Seel and Simon Edbury qualified by virtue of convincing performances against King's School, (8-0), Royal Grammar School, Newcastle (7-1) and Thornleigh School, Oldham (7-1).

Samantha Marling of Wyke Sixth Form College, Hull, was unbeaten in the Girls Under-19 event at Pontefract but her efforts were insufficient to prevent Kesteven and Grantham Girls School (Lincolnshire) racing through to their fourth consecutive finals appearance.

Garry Knights of Burton Technical College (Staffordshire) was the outstanding player on view at Stroud. He saw his team qualify in the Boys Under-19 event.

Two teams from Bristol were also in winning mood. Brislington (Boys Under-13) and Holymead (Boys Under-11) are no strangers, having made several previous appearances, but none successful.

Peniel Academy's hopes of success were dashed in the South & East Regional Finals, held at



Yorkshire & Humberside Region: Winners of Junior events, with Mr Ken Davison, Selby Branch Manager of the 'Leeds', Mark Stephenson (Halifax) and Samantha Marling (Hull)

Monks Hill Sports Centre, Croydon. Only two of their seven teams involved got through. They are very strong at Girls Under-19 level and thrashed Thomas Peacocke School, Rye (East Sussex). It was much closer in the Girls Under-11 event, however. Peniel knew that a 4-4 draw in the final against North Borough Junior School, Maidstone, would be sufficient. The Brentwood girls pulled out all the stops to recover from a 4-2 deficit to qualify.

Bedford Modern School scored an unexpected win over Peniel in the Boys Under-19 category and Whitgift School, Croydon were convincing winners in the Boys Under-16, including Jason Blake and John Blasco in their line-up.

It was also a doubly-successful day for another local Croydon School, Cumnor House. They saw off challengers from Peniel in the Boys Under-13 and Under-11 events. Cumnor's No. 1, 13 year old Darren Blake (ranked at No. 4, in the England Cadet list) led from the front whilst his younger school mate, James Furner (Boys Under-11 No. 1) guided Cumnor to another win over Peniel, after trailing 2-1 at one stage.

Malden Erleigh School, Reading, were surprise winners in the Girls Under-16 event and another well-known name in the shape of the Grove won the Girls Under-13 event at Croydon. But this team is the Grove School, St. Leonards-on-Sea (East Sussex). They have Sara Coggon at No.1 and, following in the steps of Thomas Peacocke are only the second East Sussex School to qualify for the "Nationals".

The Finals were due to take place at Lea Green, Matlock, on Saturday, March 17.

Many County Schools individual championships are taking place this term, with winners going forward to the Dunlop English Schools Individual Championships at Mansfield



Yorkshire & Humberside Region: Winners of Cadet events Andy Nicholls (Selby) and Sally Marling (Hull), with Mr Ken Davison, Selby Branch Manager of the 'Leeds'.

Regional Finals - cont.

on Saturday, April 28th. It could well be that entries will be up on last season's total. Organiser, Paul Birch (0234 41988) told me that increased interest in counties such as Buckinghamshire, East and West Sussex was most encouraging.

The inaugural East Sussex schools individual championships got off to a great start last season, with 135 entries from 20 schools, but this season's event — again sponsored by St. Leonard's Timber Merchants, Stamco, have attracted a massive total of 231 players from 26 schools throughout the county. The surge in interest meant that three venues were used on March 10th and 18th.

West Sussex's inaugural championships are also under way. 15 schools provided 70 competitors at Southwick Sports Centre, Brighton, with crucial sponsorship from Adur District Council Leisure Services. Winners of the Lancashire Schools individual championships, held at Claydon Green Leisure Centre on 10th February, included Maria Thornley, Albany School, Chorley (Girls Under-16) and Howard Whewell (Boys Under-19) Burnley College. The Boys Under-11 event was the most popular, with 35 entries.

Joe Walk, Secretary of the Greater Manchester Schools Association, told me that his area's individual championships are going from strength to strength. "Sponsorship from Rosebank Sports, plus invaluable Press coverage in the Sports "Pink" (Jim Beckley) and the Manchester Evening News (Geoff Garnett) have enabled us to increase the involvement to over 40 schools", said Joe. Karen Richardson (Hathershaw, Oldham), however had a walk-over in the Girls Under-19 event. Other winners included Susan Doolan (Girls Under-13) and Zoe Buchanan (Girls Under-16) whilst Darren Howarth (Audenshaw High School) and Robin Falkener (Bury College) were winners of the Boys Under-16 and Under-19 events, respectively.

Lack of interest amongst girls is a National problem. Whereas the ESTTA has equal opportunities for boys and girls in all its competitions it is not unusual for boys to outnumber girls in some instances by as much as a 10-1 ratio. Come on, girls!

Pictured right are Sarah Holmes and Tristan Newman who lifted the British Telecom sponsored trophies for the best girl and boy "player of the day" at the ESTTA Inner London Area championships.

Revival in Inner London

by DAVID LOMAS

ALMOST one hundred London schoolchildren thoroughly enjoyed a non-stop day of table tennis at the George Green Sports Centre, Tower Hamlets, on 19th February.

They were taking part in the Inner London Schools Table Tennis Association's tournament to determine individual winners — for boys and girls, ranging from Under-11 to Under-19. Consolation events were played in each of the eight events.

Demonstrating an ability to be flexible the Association took a unique step in organising the Championships on a Monday during the half-term break and

accommodating at least half the entries on the day of the event!

Fourteen tables were in use: unfortunately to make it possible for the singles events to be completed the main doubles event had to be cancelled.

Finalists were presented with trophies donated by British Telecom (Docklands). The Association is most grateful to Alan Grant of Elmbridge Leisure Centre who was "poached" from his more accustomed role of organiser of the annual Elmbridge tournament and also newly-recruited referee of the Surrey Schools Championships. He organised and refereed the Inner

London event with his usual efficiency and good humour.

There was generous support from the soon to be disbanded ILEA, London Dockland Development Corporation, British Telecom, Tower Hamlets (Isle of Dogs Neighbourhood), Rotherhithe Community Sports Project and the Sports Council.

The event was a great success and thanks are due to Bernie Cunningham and Pauline Barham and the other officers and supporters of the Inner London Schools TTA who are putting London schools back on the table tennis map.



*Standing (l to r): Ian Slater (General Manager British Telecom - Docklands), Desiree Joseph, Tim O'Leary, Simon Jablon, Mike Maybee (Chair ILSSTA).
Front (l to r): Natasha Barham, Joanne Barham, Carrie Blake, Gordon Logan, Paul Jablon.*



One School's Progress in 10 years...

ALSAGER COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL, on the Cheshire/Staffordshire border has just reached the Dunlop National Schools Competition Finals for the first time, but it has taken 10 years of commitment, encouragement and many miles of travel to get this far. But it is a story that may give encouragement to other schools who start from nothing, or who are just beginning the sport seriously.

When Philip Clarke, who had been at the School for two years as a newly appointed Deputy Head, took over Table Tennis in 1980, it was in a sorry state. The teacher normally in charge had no real interest or experience and there were no inter-school matches or entries into even the County competitions. That changed with entries into the County Individual and Team competitions, involving treks of up to 40 miles for away fixtures in darkest Warrington!

By the 1984-5 season the School Under 13 Boys team won the County Team Competition and played in the NW regional finals at Fleetwood — they were soundly defeated! One of the team members was Ben Seel, now 18 and in the Upper Sixth, he has helped to steer the Under 19 Boys to their first National Final.

In the period between 1985 and 1990 Alsager has grown to become the strongest school in Cheshire,

winning the Boys Under 19 and Under 13 groups, and the Girls Under 16 groups in their County competitions in 1989-90.

As well as this they have supplied County champions at each age group for Boys, with Ben Seel leading the way by winning the Boys Under 16 title in 1988, followed by successes for Gary Pickford, the current School No.1 at Under 16 level (1989) and by Simon Edbury at Under 19 level (1989).

As to Girls — development has come later, in the absence of an energetic lady teacher! Philippa Clarke, whilst at a local Primary School, won the Girls Under 11 title in 1987, and is now the current Under 13 title holder.

Sponsorship followed by a local company "B & B Vending" so the school play in shirts adorned with "Golden Service"!

The School enters four teams in the local Crewe & District Junior League and has won the title in 3 of

the last 4 years. From here youngsters progress in the lower divisions of the Crewe or Potteries Leagues playing with, and against adults.

Alongside all this is regular coaching, with Philip Clarke taking the "beginners", and with ETTA Coach Peter Hancock, who lives in Alsager, taking coaching sessions for the "intermediate" and "advanced" players. Unfortunately Peter missed the Northern Area finals at Pontefract through a previously booked holiday in Tenerife! The boys and girls also undertake the Dunlop Skills Award.

One of the recent highlights was the "Exhibition Roadshow" put on by Don Parker and Jill Hammerley, ably assisted by Sean Gibson — sponsored by the ETTA. Held in December, this captured the imagination of many potential players, as well as attracting local Press coverage.

The Alsager Club only began in 1988, but now has four sides in the

local Crewe League, including a team in Division 1. Club nights on Fridays are attended by upwards of 40 players, including the coaching session for the Under 11s from 6.30 — 7.30 pm. Sponsorship of shirts and shorts by the local Royal Ordnance factory has helped — even if the shirts carry the logo "Defence systems, sub-systems and components"!

This year the School stages the County Schools Championships for the first time at Alsager Leisure Centre where the Potteries Championships have been held in 1989 and 1990.

Whatever happens at Matlock on March 17th Table Tennis is well on the map in S.E. Cheshire!

Above all, though, the School hopes that other schools, where Table Tennis may be in the infancy stage, can benefit from their experiences!



From Left: Paul Pickford, Simon Edbury, Gary Pickford and Ben Seel. (Photo courtesy D. Sant)

International Stars support Training Weekend

by MICHAEL HILTON



THE weekend of 20/21 January saw the North West Region play host to a coaching spectacular that attracted players from Scotland, Wales and the many Regions of England.

The course was organised by our friend Dave Hewitt, a senior ETTA coach, and he was ably assisted by current international stars and quality coaches from around the North West.

Saturday's course ran from 12.00 until 5.00pm and concentrated on mastering the basic four strokes and practise techniques. At 5.00pm all trooped to the Crest Hotel to register, get changed and rest before returning to the West View Leisure Centre for the evening socialising. The evening proved unique with Syd Fryer (Sydvision) showing a selection of Table Tennis videos and John Hilton (no relation, but the 1980 European Champion) commenting on his performances in various tournaments. John later went into a question/answer session that engrossed the audience with his comments on attitude, styles of play and bat rubbers.

Sunday proved to be informative and entertaining. The session ran from 10.00am until 3.00pm and commenced with the techniques required for developing spin. Following this was the highlight of the weekend when Chen Xinhua played an exhibition match with England's Michael O'Driscoll and then described the various methods of service. On the receiving end were Richard Reading and Gordon Shields before a "sit-down" challenge was arranged with James Rawson of the East Midlands. James got the biggest cheer of the day when he actually beat the Chinese ace. A buffet lunch was followed by more "hard graft" which included video replays and the use of a service robot.

Thanks must go especially to Dave Hewitt and also to the following coaches and players who gave at least a day of their time to the event:-

John Hilton, Brian Gooddy, Chen Xinhua, Mark Gibson, Mikey Malcolm, Pete Dixon, Tony Rigby, Caroline Rigby, Jim Higham, Michael O'Driscoll, Dave Hope, Syd Fryer, Rupert de Rigg, Mike Yardley and Eddie O'Hara (robot men), Steve Turner and Anne Sweeney.

The event was reported in *The Times* on Wednesday 24th February 1990.



Chen Xinhua samples table tennis from a wheelchair against James Rawson.

Franglaise Pongiste

WE KNOW the French frown upon the use of English words in their language — 'le weekend' and 'le sandwich' are being outlawed throughout the country. So it came as a surprise to read in the official magazine of the Federation Francaise that 'les pongistes' have a choice between 'le backside adherent' and 'le caoutchouc backside', not to mention the ultimate 'le caoutchouc backside adherent'.

Our Franglaise expert informs us that 'adherent' means sticky, while 'caoutchouc' translates as 'rubber'. So we appear to be discussing sticky backsides or rubber backsides. Surely more suited to Tobogganing or Trampolining than 'Tennis de Table'?

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British League

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A Challenge for Chen

by MIKE LOVEDER

NICKY MASON provided Chen Xinhua's toughest challenge of the season as he led 19-12 in their third game. However, Chen clawed back to win 24-22 completing a 17 minute marathon for both players to receive a standing ovation. Matthew Syed was unable to play due to yet another injury and Bath lost out 3-5 again to Ormesby. Grove I consolidated their top position with an 8-0 win over Kettler and did the same to the Dulwich Rams earlier in the month. Ellenborough have chalked up two wins this period, beating Kettler Sport 6-2 and Butterfly Cardiff 5-3 to move up to fifth. All the team positions in the Premier look unlikely to change with the possible exception of Cardiff and Kettler in their bid to avoid relegation. They meet each other on 13th May to decide their fate for another year.

Expedite at Ashford

Ashford remain top of Division 1 South with wins over Britannia and Rejects. They convincingly gained revenge over the latter as Gary Spencer recorded their sole win over Joey Kennedy. John Taylor and Dave Barr played an expedite to extend the match by 45 minutes. Expedite was called at 20-20 in the first and Dave Barr won 29-27. From 12-12 in the second John Taylor won 21-12 and then, to cap it all, from 10-9 in the third Dave Barr won 21-11! Neil 'glue' Charles beat Taylor at deuce in the third and beat Percy Collino 19 & 19 for two useful wins. Ashford are still to meet old rivals Chelmsford on the run in and any three teams could win the division depending on this result. Team Peniel are one point behind the leaders having beaten Britannia after being at 3-3. Peniel seem unlikely to drop any more points and will prefer their closest rivals to draw. Colley Toyota move up from 7th to 4th with two wins this period. Horsham Dolphins are still a dangerous team but they have developed the knack of losing 3-5 too.

Win for Bradford

In Division 1 North Grove II will not be caught but it is still anyone's guess who will be runner-up and take promotion. West Warwickshire are just one game ahead of St. Neots. They both beat Lincoln 6-2 this period. Well Connected Menswear gave Bayer Bradford their long-awaited win which livens up the bottom of the division. I have no results received from City of Leeds at this stage and these missing results will have considerable influence on the promotion and relegation battles. Division 2 North is a bit of a jumble but it is Ormesby II who look the favourites at present. Norwich are down to 4th

place with the fewest results recorded at the time of writing. Liverpool beat Norwich 7-1 and Cambridge 6-2 to upset the applecart and they could finish as the runners up assuming Ormesby beat Norwich Foxwood. Chan Construction beat Oldham 8-0 to move off the bottom.

Lead Narrowed

Burslem were held to a draw by VPM Mazda, in Division 2 Midland, which reduces Burslem's lead to two points. Cheltenham are chasing in second place but they dropped a point to Grove III. Bathwick Tyres II have recorded two 5-3 wins to hang on to third place. At the other end of the table White

Hart Launceston celebrated their first point of the season which was taken from Royal Mail Leicester. Birmingham remain in the relegation zone with two convincing losses.

Nigerians Collapse

The all Nigerian team, Concord Flash, have plunged into fourth position in Division 2 South following two losses. Fellows Cranleigh scraped through 5-3 against them to secure top spot but the real surprise was a 1-7 loss inflicted by Jolliffe Poole who are sixth. Tonbridge move up to second place, only one point adrift, with two 6-2 wins over Rejects II and TSP Larkhall II. Horsham Dolphins 'pooled' their resources to beat Jolliffe 7-1 but



they remain in 7th place with 8 points.

Early Winners

Congratulations to Seat Peterborough who have already won Division 3 East with three matches to spare! At the bottom end Levi's Westfield secured a point against City of Milton Keynes — who are third — and this should see them safe. Crusaders Lincoln are left at the bottom with 4 points and 29 games to their credit. However, if they make April fools of Levi's and wrestle a point elsewhere they could do a Houdini... Congratulations too to Humberside Andro who have now won Division 3 North with two 7-1 wins, one of which was against third-placed Ormesby III

Nicky Mason led Chen 19-12 in 3rd... but Chen clawed his way back to win 24-22.



Schildkröt distributed by Butterfly



Leeds British League 2

who also lost 0-8 to Vymura International II. The 'booby' prize of bottom spot is far from decided with Durham, Telford and Blaydon having 4 or 5 points each. Telford beat Durham and Durham beat Blaydon this period to edge off the bottom.

Gunnersbury's late run

Dulwich Rams II crashed out 2-6 to Amity Generation Fareham and saw their lead narrowed to one point. Gunnersbury Triangle move up to second place with a late run beating Marley Ashford and Fareham 5-3. Their match with the Rams on March 18th should see the title decided. Pillinger Air Croydon are joint third with Fareham and they should both have a relatively easy run in. With this division in two clear halves the outcome remains far from certain.

Toyota Racing

Colley Toyota II remain unbeaten at the top of Division 3 West. They meet their closest rivals, AHW Comets, on 1st April and they are both still to play third place Kingfisher Reading who have some potential to cause an upset. Bude Surfers continue with only one point despite having won 24 games. Thorns can relax in the knowledge that Bude need two wins and they too meet each other on 1st April. Grove IV and Bath III both cling on to mid-table positions. Grove beat Bath and drew with the Comets this period and they could move up to third place by the end of the season. Leckie look very safe having pinched a point from Reading.

FEBRUARY RESULTS

Premier:		
Dulwich	0 8	Grove I
Ormesby	8 0	Armada
Bath	7 1	Cardiff
Ellenbro I	6 2	Kettler
Cardiff	3 5	Ellenbro I
Bath	3 5	Ormesby
Armada	3 5	Dulwich
Grove	8 0	Kettler

1 North:		
St Neots	2 6	Grove II
WWarwicks	6 2	Lincoln
Leeds		Chan
WellConnM	3 5	Bradford
Leeds		WellConnM
Chan	2 6	WWarwicks
Lincoln	2 6	St Neots
Grove II	5 3	Bradford

1 South:		
Rejects I	3 5	Ashford
Britannia I	3 5	Ashford
Horsham I	3 5	Peniel I
Chelmsford	8 0	Larkhall I
Horsham I	3 5	Chelmsford
Peniel I	5 3	Britannia I
Ashford	7 1	Rejects I
Colley I	6 2	Larkhall I

2 North:		
Liverpool	7 1	Norwich
Ormesby II	5 3	Cambridge
Chan II	8 0	Oldham
Vymura I	3 5	Ormesby II
Cambridge	2 6	Liverpool
Norwich	8 0	Oldham

2 Midland	
Birmingham	2 6
Grove III	4 4
Bath II	5 3
Leicester	2 6
Launceston	4 4
Bath II	5 3
Cheltenham	8 0
Mazda	4 4

2 South:	
Rejects II	2 6
Concord	3 5
Horsham II	7 1
Ellenbro II	4 4
Horsham II	3 5
Poole	7 1
Cranleigh	5 3
Tonbridge	6 2

3 East:	
Peterbro	7 1
Brentwood	4 4
M Keynes	4 4
Peniel II	6 2
M Keynes	7 1
Westfield	0 8
Cranleigh II	3 5
Britannia II	8 0

3 North:	
Blaydon	2 6
Ormesby III	1 7
Byker	3 5
Hudders'd	7 1
Byker	5 3
Vymura II	8 0
Humberside	7 1
Durham	3 5

3 South:	
Rejects III	5 3
Dulwich II	4 4
Gunnersb'ry	5 3
Marley	7 1
Gunnersb'ry	5 3
Fareham	6 2
Croydon	6 2
Harlesden	

3 West:	
Thorns	3 5
Grove IV	4 4
Bath III	5 3
Reading	4 4
Bude	1 7
Bath III	3 5
Comets	7 1
Colley II	6 2

Mazda	
Cheltenham	
Launceston	
Burslem	
Leicester	
Grove III	
Birmingham	
Burslem	

Tonbridge	
Cranleigh I	
Poole	
Larkhall II	
Ellenbro II	
Concord	
Rejects II	
Larkhall II	

Britannia II	
Cranleigh II	
Westfield	
Lincoln	
Peniel II	
Brentwood	
Peterbro	
Lincoln	

Durham	
Humberside	
Vymura II	
Telford	
Hudders'd	
Ormesby III	
Blaydon	
Telford	

Harlesden	
Croydon	
Fareham	
Lambeth	
Marley	
Dulwich II	
Rejects III	
Lambeth	

1 North:	
Grove II	11 9 2 0 20
W Warwicks	11 7 1 3 15
St Neots	11 7 1 3 15
Well Con Men	10 6 0 4 12
Leeds	9 3 1 5 7
Bradford	11 3 0 8 6
Chan	10 3 0 7 6
Lincoln	11 1 1 9 3

2 North:	
Ormesby II	9 7 2 0 16
Liverpool	10 7 1 2 15
Vymura I	9 5 2 2 12
Norwich	8 6 0 2 12
Cambridge	9 2 1 6 5
Chan II	9 1 0 8 2
Oldham	10 1 0 9 2

2 Midland:	
Burslem	11 8 2 1 18
Cheltenham	11 7 2 2 16
Bath II	11 6 2 3 14
VPM Mazda	11 5 3 3 13
Grove III	11 6 0 5 12
Leicester	11 2 5 4 9
Birmingham	11 2 1 8 5
Launceston	11 0 1 10 1

2 South:	
Cranleigh I	11 6 4 1 16
Tonbridge	11 7 1 3 15
Ellenbro II	11 5 3 3 13
Concord	11 5 2 4 12
Rejects II	11 5 0 6 10
Poole	11 3 3 5 9
Horsham II	11 2 4 5 8
Larkhall II	11 1 3 7 5

3 East:	
Peterbro	11 11 0 0 22
Brentwood	11 6 2 3 14
M Keynes	11 5 2 4 12
Cranleigh II	11 4 3 4 11
Peniel II	11 5 0 6 10
Britannia II	11 3 2 6 8
Westfield	11 2 3 6 7
Lincoln	11 1 2 8 4

3 North:	
Humberside	11 11 0 0 22
Vymura II	11 7 1 3 15
Ormesby III	11 6 2 3 14
Byker	11 6 0 5 12
Huddersfield	11 5 2 4 12
Durham	11 2 1 8 5
Telford	11 1 2 8 4
Blaydon	11 2 0 9 4

3 South:	
Dulwich II	11 8 1 2 17
Gunnersbury	11 8 0 3 16
Fareham	11 7 1 3 15
Croydon	11 6 3 2 15
Marley	11 4 0 7 8
Rejects III	11 3 0 8 6
Lambeth	10 3 0 7 6
Harlesden	10 1 1 8 3

3 West:	
Colley T II	11 9 2 0 20
AHW Comets	11 8 2 1 18
Reading	11 6 2 3 14
Grove IV	11 4 5 2 13
Bath III	11 5 0 6 10
Leckie	11 3 1 7 7
Thorns	11 2 1 8 5
Bude Surfers	11 0 1 10 1

LEAGUE TABLES AS AT 1 MARCH 1990

Premier	P	W	D	L	Pts
Grove I	11	10	1	0	21
Ormesby I	11	9	1	1	19
Bath I	11	8	0	3	16
Dulwich I	11	7	0	4	14
Ellenbro I	11	4	0	7	8
Kettler	11	2	1	8	5
Cardiff	11	2	1	8	5
Armada 400	11	0	0	11	0

1 South:	P	W	D	L	Pts
Ashford	11	9	0	2	18
Team Peniel I	11	8	1	2	17
Chelmsford	11	7	2	2	16
Colley Toyota	11	4	2	5	10
Horsham	11	4	1	6	9
Rejects I	11	4	1	6	9
Britannia I	11	2	4	5	8
Larkhall I	11	0	1	10	1

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Women in Table Tennis 1

THE LEEDS WOMEN'S BRITISH LEAGUE

A Strong Challenge from Grove

The Grove Table Tennis Club of Market Drayton, who are strong favourites to take the Leeds Men's British League, are making a major attempt to do the double by signing England No. 1 Alison Gordon, who played for the women's champions, Linda Farrow, last season.

Alison will make her debut for her new club when the first rounds of the Leeds Women's British League are played at Bletchley Leisure Centre, Milton Keynes, on 12/13 May. Alison's inclusion in the Grove team whose squad also includes England No. 3 Fiona Elliot and No. 5 Jill Harris ensures that Grove must stand an excellent chance of achieving their ambition.

The first champions, Linda Farrow, managed by Julian Jablon, are keeping their No. 1 squad under wraps for the present time. Last

World of Sport have retained the services of Britain's two leading defensive girls, English Champion, Lisa Lomas and England No. 4 Andrea Holt, and in addition they will rely this year on England No. 1 cadet, Nicola Deaton, and the championship may depend on Nicola's rapid rate of improvement.

Other teams in the Premier Division are **Roses**, who have a strong squad of Northern girls, including the former international, Joy Dean, **Western Belles** led by England No. 7, Carol Giles and the

venue for the conclusion of this year's expanded league of 30 club teams from all parts of the United Kingdom.

New Clubs

This year the League will be organised in a five division pyramid and will welcome several new clubs, including Bayer of Bradford represented by Sylvia Broadbent, Joanne Keighley and Caroline Bentley. Sally Marling and her sister Samantha will be playing for the new team from Hull and we are also delighted to learn that a team from the British Sports Association for the Disabled led by Janet Swann of County Durham will compete for the first time in the British League.

Promotion/Development Campaign

It has been the Women's Committee's hope that this high level of

competition for women would not be run without some benefit to the areas in which it is staged and this year, with the format and procedure of the league established, we are hoping to achieve some "spin off" in the Milton Keynes and Stourbridge areas with a series of exhibitions and coaching sessions for women in conjunction with the local league.

Come and join us

As ladies table tennis comes to the fore, the Women's committee are issuing a **Special Invitation** to former players... why not join the party? Arrange with your friends to come along to Bletchley or Stourbridge and support the Leeds Women's British League. We shall be delighted to put together an attractive package for you to include special rates at the hotels and the opportunity to join in with the social aspects of the Women in Table Tennis weekend as well as watching the exciting play.

For further information contact: Mrs. Jose Ransome, "Conifers", Church Lane, Ormesby, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS7 9AU, Tel. 0642 322223

Top right: Wendy Cunningham and Councillor Maurice Howell, Chairman of the Milton Keynes Recreation Committee with the Sunderland Echo team, winners of the Third Division.

Bottom right: Jill Hammersley Parker, Captain of the England Women's team, made a special presentation to the Team of the Weekend, Guestling from Hastings. (Photographs courtesy Charlie Wooding of the Milton Keynes Mirror)



Top left: Jose Ransome presented the Butterfly Bowl to the first League Champions, Linda Farrow of London.

Bottom left: Wendy Cunningham, The Public Relations Manager for the Leeds Permanent Building Society with the World of Sport Team of Chesterfield who took second place.

year they brought in two impressive French internationals to boost their strength and as Julian is keen to establish his new London club amongst the top in the country, it will be interesting to see who he signs for this season's matches.

Another club with strong designs on the championship after finishing a close second last year are the Chesterfield Club, **World of Sport**,

Graham Spicer Club led by Jane Barella and supported by good all-round strength.

Brand New Venue

The Leeds Women's British League championship on 9/10 June will climax in the second weekend of play which will be hosted in the brand new luxurious Crystal Leisure Centre in Stourbridge, West Midlands. This will be a fitting

Women in Table Tennis 2

Sweden — the Opposition

JILL PARKER has confirmed arrangements for another Women's International series, this time against the much improved Swedish Women's team. The match dates will be September 11, 12 and 13 and anyone interested in sponsoring the series or staging a match is invited to contact Jenny Hughes, the E.T.T.A. Events Manager.

The first series against West Germany last October created good interest and attracted excellent audiences who really appreciated the high standard of play by the girls on both teams. The event also generated useful press coverage in the national press and ETTA News.

It would also be appreciated if a local organiser could participate in a women's promotional and development project for the surrounding area in schools, sports centres, shopping centres, etc.

Bayer boost for Women

BAYER UK have been sponsoring the men's team in the Leeds British League for nearly three years, and they are now extending their interest to a Bradford women's team.

The Bradford team comprises Joanne Keighley, Sylvia Broadbent and Caroline Bentley at the moment, and they will play five matches on each weekend, so it is possible one or more players could be added.

Simon Dawe, who plays for Bayer in the Bradford League has had much to do with the sponsorship provided by the company.

Bayer are a German firm whose business is unconnected with sport, but they have some talented sportsmen in their ranks. In the Seoul Olympics they collected one gold, two silver and six bronze medals for West Germany in various events.

Since 1987 Bayer have provided the platform for the men's team to play against the top players in the country, and Michael O'Driscoll in particular has benefited from the experience. Now the women are to get a similar opportunity.

Australia's No.4 Lady Table Tennis Player returns home to Wolverton and the Agora Centre

WOLVERTON'S Agora Centre and its main sports and leisure hall is to be the new table tennis base for the former Australian No. 4 ranked Lady player — 24 year old Nikki Cowley, who as Nikki Hamilton, enjoyed a very successful cadet and junior career in the sport before emigrating 'down under' in 1983.

Nikki, born in Wolverton and husband Steve, a Commonwealth level table tennis coach, have returned to Milton Keynes so that Nikki can stake her claim for a top British ladies ranking.

The couple were introduced to the excellent facilities at the Agora through Alternative Promotion, who are themselves based in the building, a company run by Brian Ashton, himself no stranger to the very highest levels in table tennis, having run 'the extremely successful Sealink Milton Keynes Club in 1979/80 — winners of English table tennis's first ever National Premier League.

He said "Since moving my Company into the Agora last June, I have always considered the main sports hall under-utilised for the purpose for which it was built. Bringing Nikki and Steve here is the first step in developing it to its full sports and leisure potential, all with the fullest co-operation of the centre's management".

Said Nikki, "I'm only too pleased to be able to train in such surroundings. The Agora is also an excellent matchplay facility, and being based here does give me every chance of reaching a very high ranking position in England".

The presence of top table tennis players at the Agora will also serve to attract other local players to the Centre, a move that is being carefully planned by Alternative Promotion in order to provide Wolverton with a very strong table tennis club in the very near future.



The Bayer line-up Caroline Bentley, Joanne Keighley and Sylvia Broadbent (Photo courtesy: Yorkshire Evening Post)

Yorkshire set for return to Premier

by DOUG MOSS

Lincs put up a good fight against Yorkshire. Suzanne Airey and Cheryl Buttery won their singles and Dave Skerratt beat Mick Stead in the 3rd game. Yorks have more or less alternated Michael O'Driscoll and Chris Oldfield in their team and no County is really capable of restricting their return to Premier Div.

SENR 1A:

Warwicks	.....9	N'berland	....1
Lancs 2	.....5	Worcs	.....5
Yorks	.....7	Lincs	.....3
Cambs	.....3	Suffolk	.....7

Worcs were 3-5 down against Lancs 2nds. Sandra Roden (Wo) then beat Amanda Goodwin 15 and 21 and Trevor Washington got the draw with a deuce in 3rd win over Keith Williams, who previously had lost only one singles this season.

SENR 2A:

Leics	.....10	Cumbria	....0
Ches	.....5	Warwicks 2	..5

Leics gave Cumbria the "whitewash". The nearest the Cumbrians came to taking an event was in the mens doubles when Stephen Temple/Roger Stewart lost to Keith Fellows/Maurice Newman 19, -15, -16. Warwicks 2nds did well on their visit to Ellesmere Port to get a draw against Cheshire. The visitors went into a 2-0 lead but slipped back and were eventually 4-5

down. Lyndon Douglas beat Simon Jones 19 and 15 in the final event to earn a point for Warwick.

SENR 2B:

Worcs 20	Wilts10
---------	--------	-------	---------

A "whitewash" for Worcs but there were some close matches. Ken Walton lost to Trevor Lloyd at 19 in the 3rd game and Steve Morton and Mark Brookes both lost to Eddie Roofe at -15 in the deciding games.

SENR 2C:

Hunts	.....3	Cambs 2	....7
Norfolk 1	...10	Suffolk 2	....0

Hunts, without a win, started well when Phillip Cole and Andrew Hilliard both had wins at deuce in 3rd games. But their only other win came when Simon Pryke beat K. Gray 6 and 15. With their 10-0 win over Suffolk 2nds the Norfolk team go to the top of the Table with a 1 set average lead over Herts.

SENR 2D:

N'thants 1	...10	Berks 2	.....0
Surrey 2	.....7	Essex 3	.....3
Kent	.....5	Oxon	.....5

Northants, at bottom of the table, certainly "went to town" with a 10-0 win over Berks 2nd. Kieron Dabbs was a success for Northants on promotion from the Junior team. Surrey 2nds played well against Essex 3rd and stormed into a 6-0 lead. Mike Hammond and Steve Davis (Sy) won their 5 events. Debbie Simmonds and Maria Taylor-Woodward (Sy) lost their singles to Linda Radford and Ruth Clemenson but won the doubles at 17 in 3rd.

SENR 3A:

Beds 2	.....10	Ches 2	.....0
		(conceded)	
Clwyd	.....8	N'thants 2	...2

Clwyd, at the foot of the table, did well to beat Northants 2nd so convincingly. Clive Parry, Philip Jones and Dave Norris won their 6 singles events.

SENR 3B:

Hants 2	.....4	Glam	.....6
Herts 2	.....6	Devon 3	....4

Glamorgan also did well on their visit to Southampton to retain their unbeaten record. Mark Bleakley won his 2 singles for Hants. A vital factor for Glamorgan was Mark Simon's and Warwick Armstrong's doubles win at deuce in 3rd game. Herts 2nd take over at the top of the table with their win over Devon 3rd. Herts won both doubles events although, as often happens, the ladies — Carolyn Seaholme and Maria Williams (He) — lost their singles events 2 straight to Helen Wright and D. Kratochvila.

JUNR 1A:

Lincs2	Yorks 28
-------	--------	---------	--------

Yorks 2nds continue unbeaten. They went into a 5-0 lead over Lincs. James Stroud and Sally Johnson improved the situation with wins over Andrew Nicholls and Debbie Newman. Just 3 events went into a deciding game and these were won by Yorks.

JUNR 1B:

Avon	.....1	Cornwall	....9
Berks	.....5	Middx	.....5
Oxon	.....4	Herts	.....6
Surrey	.....9	Sussex	.....1

With Middlesex dropping a point to Berks, and Herts getting a 6-4 win against Oxon, the Herts team take over the lead in this Division. Martin Adams played a significant part against Middlesex by winning his 3 events. The Middlesex team was 3-5 down but Sara Williams



and Doy Katz got wins to secure the draw. Despite Dawn Barnett and Sally Hughes winning their 3 events for Oxon the team went 4-6 under to Herts. Ian Black and Morris Greenberg (He) won their singles matches. Cornwall, at the foot of the Table, did very well at Bristol to beat Avon 9-1. Neil Bevan and Mark Bawden (Co) won their 5 events and the Cornish girls — Rachel Boon and Nicola Bray, won their singles at 18 and 19 in deciding games.

JUNR 2A:

Leics	.....2	Clwyd	.....8
Lancs 3	.....6	Derbys 2	....4
Ches 2	.....6	Leics	.....4
Clwyd	.....7	Warwicks 2	..3
Clwyd	.....8	Ches	.....2
Clwyd 2	.....3	Warwicks 2	..7

This period of matches was excellent for Clwyd 1st team. They had 3 good wins, including defeats of Cheshire and Warwickshire 2nds, the top 2 teams in the Table. As a result Clwyd now take the lead. Clwyd started the season with a 9-1 defeat at the hands of Ches. 2nds but the 5 players representing Clwyd in that match have not since appeared in their team! Spencer Harris, Susan Lees and Natasha Williams (Cw) were undefeated in these recent matches.

JUNR 2B:

Herts 2	.....6	Berks 2	.....4
N'thants 2	.....0	Worcs	.....10
Wilts	.....1	Glos	.....9

Herts continue their unbeaten record with another 6-4 win. Duncan Taylor was again to the fore with 2 singles wins and the doubles with Robert Barrasso. Worcs beat Northants 2nds 10-0 but it was a much closer contest than the score suggests with 6 events going to a decider, including Tom Rowe (Np) losing to Lee Horton at -24 in the 3rd game. The Worcs/Herts match on 3 March will be absolutely vital in deciding the championship.

JUNR 2D:

Norfolk 1	...10	Norfolk 2	...0
Suffolk 1	.....7	Surrey 3	.....3
Suffolk 1	.....7	Surrey 2	.....3
Middlesex 2	..7	Kent 2	.....3
Sussex 2	.....1	Essex 3	.....9
Suffolk 2	.....5	Surrey 3	.....5
Suffolk 2	.....0	Surrey 2	.....10



Chris Oldfield — a major factor in Yorkshire's drive for promotion.

the Leeds County Championships — 2

Suffolk 1st got 2 good wins against the Surrey teams and go to top of the Table. Essex 3 also had a good 9-1 win over Sussex 2. The Essex team is 1 point adrift of Suffolk and have already played the leaders and won 9-1! It seems Essex 3 will not be able to catch the Suffolk 1st team. There were certainly some close matches in the Suffolk 1/Surrey 2 match. Graham Watts (Sk) lost to Stephen Crouch 20, -22, -21 and, in the following event Suzanne Burdette beat Claire Ashley -12, 20, 20!

VETS 1A:

Worcs	1	Lincs	8
Warwicks	5	Yorks	4
Essex 2	7	Norfolk	2
Lancs 1	7	Ches 2	2

Lincs got an 8-1 win over Worcs, soar away at the top of the Table and are well set for return to Premier Division. There were some close matches — Matt Shearer (Li.No.1) beat Mervyn Wood 21 and 20 and Roy Norton at 19 in the 3rd game! Warwicks made a bad start to the season but have now won their last 2 matches. Pat McCabe (Wa) won his 2 singles and Ann Lloyd did very well to beat Carol Judson 17, -12, 17. It was a hard fought match between Essex 2/Norfolk. At 3-2 Essex won the next 4 events but there were 5 deuce games and all were close in the 3rd game.

VETS 1B:

Middx	4	Wilts	5
Surrey 2	5	Sussex 2	4
Glos	4	Kent 2	5
Oxon	5	Berks	4

All hard fought matches in this Division and all finished at a 5-4 match score. The top 2 teams — Wilts and Kent 2 — both got wins. Terry Bruce (Wi) was in fine form against Middlesex winning his 3 events comfortably in straight games. Keith Clark was the most successful Kent player also getting 3 wins. John Calcutt (Sy) had similar success and, in the final event against Sussex 2, he beat John Millward 15, -16, 15.

VETS 2A:

Lincs 2	2	Lancs 2	7
Ches 3	3	N'berland	6

Lancs 2 keep up their unbeaten record. Yorks 3, their nearest rivals, are also unbeaten but did not have a match. The teams meet in the last match of the season. N'berland got a good win over Ches. 3. Fred Short (Nd) won his singles and doubles. The mixed doubles was hard fought with Maurice Cheek/Pauline Long beating Terry Donlon/Eileen Edwards -19, 21, 21!

VETS 2B:

Hunts 1	2	Essex 3	7
Leics	8	Beds	1

Essex 3 are another unbeaten team and look well set to win this Division. Leics were in good form and took the first 8 events against Beds. Jim Woolliscroft saved the "white-

wash" with a -16, 14, 10 win over Graham Hughes.

VETS 2C:

Bucks 2	6	N'hants	3
Surrey 3	6	Wilts 2	3

Their win over Northants, and with Middlesex 2nd being without a match, takes Bucks 2nds to the top of the Table. Peter Leckie (Bu) was the only unbeaten singles player in this match. Ron Langheim and Mike Pearson were involved in all the 6 events won by Surrey against Wilts 2nds.

VETS 2D:

Somerset	3	Dorset	6
Hants 1	6	Herts 2	3

Dorset continue unbeaten and look well set for promotion. Against Somerset Mike Toole (Do) lost his first singles of the season — to John Crabtree. Joyce Coop (Do) is unbeaten in singles and doubles. Graham Lynch and Ken Giles played well for Hants to win their 4 singles and combined to take the doubles. All the events versus Herts were won in straight games.

VETS 3A:

N'hants 2	4	Beds 2	5
Herts 4	5	Hunts 2	4

Hunts 2nds, without a win, visited Barnet and were unlucky to come away pointless. Sid Burgess (Hu) did well to win his 2 singles and to take the doubles with Brian Spittlehouse. In the deciding event Alan Kirsop (Hu) lost to Derek Caulder -21, 14, -18. Beds 2nds win at Northampton was down to Dave Randall and Doug Folds who won their 4 singles and combined to win the doubles.

VETS 3B:

Sussex 4	3	Hants 2	6
----------------	---	---------------	---

Hants 2nds have won all their matches and are champions of the Division. Bob Cox and Ray Lush were responsible for 5 of the Hants wins. Bob Cox, in fact, went through the season unbeaten in singles.



League tables as at 11th March 1990

SENIORS

Premier Division	P	W	Pts
Lancashire	3	3	6
Middlesex	3	3	6
Derbyshire	3	1	2
Devonshire	3	1	2
Essex	3	1	2
Leicestershire	3	1	2
Surrey	3	1	2
Berkshire	3	1	2

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the Leeds County Championships — 3

REMINDER: All outstanding matches have to be played by no later than APRIL 14th.

Division	P	W	Pts
Division 1A			
Yorkshire	6	4	10
Warwickshire	6	4	9
Suffolk	6	4	8
Lancashire 2nd	6	2	7
Northumberland	6	2	6
Worcestershire	6	1	5
Cambridgeshire	6	1	3
Lincolnshire	6	0	0
Division 1B			
Sussex	6	5	11
Avon	6	5	11
Essex 2nd	6	3	7
Devonshire 2nd	7	3	6
Kent	6	3	6
Middlesex 2nd	6	3	6
Hampshire	6	0	2
Cornwall	7	0	1
Division 2A			
Leicestershire 2nd	4	3	6
Cheshire	3	2	5
Yorkshire 2nd	3	2	5
Nottinghamshire	4	1	3
Warwickshire 2nd	4	1	3
Cumbria	4	0	0
Division 2B			
Wiltshire	5	4	8
Gloucestershire	4	3	7
Somerset	4	2	5
Dorset	4	1	4
Avon 2nd	5	1	2
Worcestershire 2nd	4	0	0
Division 2C			
Norfolk	4	2	6
Hertfordshire	4	3	6
Bedfordshire	3	2	5
Cambridgeshire 2nd	4	2	5
Suffolk 2nd	3	0	0
Huntingdonshire	4	0	0
Division 2D			
Sussex 2nd	5	4	9
Essex 3rd	6	3	7
Surrey 2nd	5	3	7
Oxfordshire	5	2	4
Berkshire 2nd	5	2	4
Northamptonshire	5	1	3
Kent 2nd	5	0	2
Division 3A			
Staffordshire	4	4	8
Bedfordshire 2nd	4	3	6
Durham	4	3	6
Cheshire 2nd	5	2	4
Clwyd	4	1	2
Northamptonshire 2nd	5	0	0
Division 3B			
Glamorgan	6	5	10
Buckinghamshire	5	4	8
Hampshire 2nd	5	4	8
Hertfordshire 2nd	6	4	8
Devonshire 3rd	6	2	4
Dorset 2nd	6	1	2
Cornwall 2nd	6	0	0
JUNIORS			
Premier Division			
Lancashire	7	7	14
Essex	7	6	12
Yorkshire	7	5	10
Devonshire	7	3	7
Kent	7	3	6
Bedfordshire	7	1	3
Derbyshire	7	1	2
Warwickshire	7	1	2

Division 1A			
Yorkshire 2nd	3	3	6
Durham	4	2	5
Essex 2nd	5	2	5
Lancashire 2nd	4	2	4
Lincolnshire	4	2	4
Northumberland	3	2	4
Nottinghamshire	5	0	0
Northamptonshire withdrawn, record deleted			
Division 1B			
Hertfordshire	6	4	10
Surrey	6	4	10
Middlesex	6	3	9
Berkshire	6	2	7
Oxfordshire	6	1	4
Sussex	6	1	3
Cornwall	6	1	3
Avon	6	0	2
Division 2A			
Clwyd 1st	7	6	12
Warwickshire 2nd	7	6	12
Lancashire 3rd	6	4	8
Cheshire 1st	5	3	6
Cheshire 2nd	6	2	5
Derbyshire 2nd	6	1	3
Leicestershire	6	1	2
Clwyd 2nd	5	0	0
Division 2B			
Worcestershire	6	5	10
Gloucestershire	5	4	8
Hertfordshire 2nd	5	4	8
Buckinghamshire	5	2	4
Berkshire 2nd	5	2	4
Wiltshire	5	0	1
Northamptonshire 2nd	5	0	1
Division 2C			
Glamorgan	8	8	16
Somerset	7	5	11
Devonshire 2nd	6	5	10
Hampshire 1st	7	4	9
Gwent	7	2	5
Hampshire 2nd	7	2	4

Devonshire 3rd	7	1	3
Dorset	7	1	3
Cornwall 2nd	8	1	3
Division 2D			
Essex 3rd	9	7	15
Suffolk 1st	8	7	14
Middlesex 2nd	6	5	10
Norfolk 1st	7	4	9
Surrey 2nd	8	4	8
Kent 2nd	7	3	7
Norfolk 2nd	7	2	4
Suffolk 2nd	5	1	3
Sussex 2nd	7	0	1
Surrey 3rd	8	0	1
VETERANS			
Premier Division			
Cheshire	7	6	12
Yorkshire	7	5	10
Essex	7	5	10
Kent	7	4	8
Sussex	7	4	8
Surrey	7	2	4
Hertfordshire	7	1	2
Buckinghamshire	7	1	2
Division 1A			
Lincolnshire	6	6	12
Lancashire	6	3	6
Norfolk	6	3	6
Worcestershire	6	3	6
Warwickshire	6	3	6
Cheshire 2nd	6	2	4
Essex 2nd	6	2	4
Yorkshire 2nd	6	2	4
Division 1B			
Wiltshire	6	5	10
Berkshire	6	4	8
Kent 2nd	6	4	8
Middlesex	5	3	6
Sussex 2nd	5	2	4
Surrey 2nd	6	2	4
Oxfordshire	6	2	4
Gloucestershire	6	1	2
Division 2A			
Lancashire 2nd	4	4	8
Yorkshire 3rd	4	4	8
Northumberland	5	3	6
Cheshire 3rd	4	1	2
Lincolnshire 2nd	3	0	0
Clwyd	4	0	0
Division 2B			
Essex 3rd	4	4	8
Leicestershire	4	3	6
Huntingdonshire	4	2	4
Norfolk 2nd	4	1	2
Nottinghamshire	4	1	2
Bedfordshire	4	1	2
Division 2C			
Middlesex 2nd	4	4	8
Surrey 3rd	4	3	6
Buckinghamshire 2nd	5	3	6
Northamptonshire	5	2	4
Wiltshire 2nd	4	1	2
Herefordshire	4	0	0
Division 2D			
Dorset	4	4	8
Hampshire	5	4	8
Berkshire 2nd	4	2	4
Sussex 3rd	4	1	2
Hertfordshire 2nd	4	1	2
Somerset	5	1	2
Division 3A			
Berkshire 3rd	5	5	10
Hertfordshire 3rd	4	3	6
Hertfordshire 4th	4	2	4
Northamptonshire 2nd	4	1	2
Huntingdonshire 2nd	4	1	2
Bedfordshire 2nd	5	1	2
Division 3B			
Hampshire 2nd	4	4	8
Dorset 2nd	3	2	4
Sussex 4th	4	2	4
Berkshire 4th	4	1	2
Wiltshire 3rd	3	0	0

Table Tennis Top Trio Returned Unopposed

ELECTION of CHAIRMAN, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN and TREASURER for SEASON 1990/91

I hereby give notice that there will be no ballot in the elections for the above Offices.

Anthony J. H. Wickens
Returning Officer

RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS are as follows:

CHAIRMAN: J. PREAN (opposed) ELECTED
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: A.E. RANSOME (unopposed) ELECTED
TREASURER: P.H.M. HILLIER (unopposed) ELECTED

Anthony J. H. Wickens
Returning Officer

John Prean, the Chairman of the English Table Tennis Association, has been re-elected to his post unopposed, as have Deputy Chairman Alan Ransome and Treasurer Peter Hillier.

Since his election in 1986 John Prean and his management team have engineered a remarkable turn around in the sport's fortunes.

Taking over a near bankrupt governing body they improved its finances to such a degree that a £100,000 fund to be used for developing table tennis participation at local league level was recently created.

Table tennis, under the new administration, has prospered at all levels and over 20 hours of national television coverage of top events in the past two years is fuelling increasing grass roots participation.

All three chief officers of the ETTA are elected annually. With no other nominations being received by the 15th February deadline, Prean, Ransome and Hillier are returned unopposed.

Scintillating Show by Des

by LAURIE SELBY

QUIETLY-SPOKEN Des Douglas let his bat do the talking in the Wiltshire Burmah Petrol Five Star Tournament. The message it rapped out was: Don't write me off yet.

The 34 year-old, whose perch at the top of English table tennis has been rocked by players such as Carl Prean and Chen Xinhua, found the touch and inspiration to beat both as he picked up the £500 top prize.

Even the modest Douglas could not hide the pleasure his win gave him. "This is the fifth final I have been in recently and the only one I have won" he said. "I really enjoyed this one", and well he might for he played superbly to beat Prean and Chen.

Douglas gave Swindon the best table tennis ever seen in the town as he first ousted top seeded Carl Prean, in the semi final in a three game thriller. He continued his stunning performance in the final against Chen from China, the former world number four who has now settled in this country and is hoping to qualify to play for England.

It was a match to remember with the great defensive wall of China manned by Chen being pierced by the thunderbolt forehands of Douglas.

Chen, who whetted the appetite of millions of TV viewers with his superb display in the English open, took an early lead before Douglas raced to 19-15.

Chen, seeded two, is a cheerful entertainer and even when he pulled up to lead 20-19 only to serve a fault he still had a smile on his face. But Douglas had the last laugh with a scintillating forehand to clinch the game.

Douglas forged a 19-16 lead in the second, but Chen, whose serve gave Douglas a lot of trouble, caught up to 19-20 before another rapier forehand gave Douglas the title.

Talking about the tournament, Douglas said: "It is a nice set up and the standard is almost as strong as the English Closed."

Top seed Alison Gordon went out in the semi-finals and Lisa Lomas took full advantage to win the women's singles, her clever and athletic defensive game — at times she knocked over the barriers around the court to retrieve the ball — bamboozled Fiona Elliot.

Both losing semi-finalists had the consolation of winning the women's doubles. Gordon and Andrea Holt teamed up to defeat Lomas and Elliot in straight games.

Wiltshire's best performance came predictably from Kevin Satchell. Satchell, ranked 15th in England, went through two rounds before being eclipsed by Chen 21-12, 21-11.

Satchell partnered Douglas in the doubles but that man Chen

Satchell won the Burmah trophy for the best performance by a Wiltshire player and the women's trophies were shared by Brenda Lee and Claire Hunter.

The tournament, at the Link Centre, Swindon, was the first Five Star organised by the Wilt-

magnificently and gave both the spectators and the sponsors, Burmah Petrol, a superb show".

Trophies were presented by Bob Craven-Jones, managing director of Burmah Petrol, and his wife Eileen and John Prean, chairman of the English Table Tennis Association.



Plenty to smile about... Desmond Douglas celebrates his victory with Kevin Satchell and Brenda Lee who won trophies for the best performances by Wiltshire players.

put paid to a title for the Wiltshire player when he and Matthew Syed won the final in straight games.

shire TTA. Organiser Bill Willson said: "We never had one complaint and everything went off well. The players performed

RESULTS

Mens singles:

Semi Finals

D. Douglas bt C. Prean 22, -11, 15

Chen Xinhua bt N. Mason 19, 13

Final

Douglas bt Chen 20, 19

Women's singles:

Semi Finals

Lisa Lomas bt Andrea Holt -18, 16, 12

Fiona Elliot bt Alison Gordon -17, 17, 16

Final

Lomas bt Elliot 14, 17

Class 2 Singles:

Semi Finals

A. Creed bt A. Eden 12, 14

M. Owens bt G. Clarke 12, 20

Final

Creed bt Owens 18, -16, 16

Mens Doubles:

Semi Finals

Chen Xinhua/M. Syed bt C. Oldfield/M. O'Driscoll 18, 13

D. Douglas/K. Satchell bt S. Gibson/B. Billington 19, 13

Final

Chen/Syed bt Douglas/Satchell 15, 13

Womens Doubles:

Semi Finals

Andrea Holt/Alison Gordon bt Jill Harris/Janet Smith 19, 17

Lisa Lomas/Fiona Elliot bt Joanne Shaw/Juliet Houghton 19, 13

Final

Holt/Gordon bt Lomas/Elliot 14, 14

Picture Parade



This superb picture showing the England Ladies team of Fiona Elliot (top left) Jill Parker - Captain (top right), Lisa Lomas and Alison Gordon (Picture courtesy Express & Star, Wolverhampton)

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Veteran returns...

Table Tennis Veteran makes striking come-back on Isle of Dogs



AFTER five years in Table Tennis exile because of injury, former Silvertown and District League Veteran champion Micky Briggs swept all contenders aside to become the Isle of Dogs number one in both the Mens and Veterans ranking tournament for 1989.

Micky's unorthodox style, coupled with his 'twiddling' skills, bemused his younger opponents, who have been constrained to develop new techniques in order to take the occasional game from this seasoned Veteran. Micky's late registration with the George Green 'A' team has inspired a new impetus among his colleagues who are fighting to keep in the top three of the League.

The picture shows Micky receiving the DAILY TELEGRAPH SHIELD from the West Ferry Printer's General Manager Graham Webb who sponsored the event.

The Printing Company keeps a keen eye on the youngsters progress and encourages them with generous sponsorship.

A Fare Cop

Derek Tremayne, past secretary of the ETTA and currently Director of Lilleshall National Sports Centre, had an unfortunate experience during his visit to the Leeds English Open in Manchester. Exiting from Bowlers into the wilds of Trafford Park he discovered his car had been stolen, with much subsequent personal disruption.

One week later the car was found in Dolgellau and the culprits taken into custody. Why had they taken a car in Manchester and driven to Mid-Wales? Because they had to appear in court... to face a charge of car theft!

Nice Here, Innit!

THE Chief Executive was passing the old ETTA premises in Claremont, vacated over a year ago, when he noticed sundry curtains and mattresses decorating the upper windows.

While he was reading a letter stuck to the front door a slim young man, smelling strongly of ale, emerged. "That's from our solicitor saying this is a legal squat" he volunteered. "Many of you in there?" asked Ted. "Hundreds" came the reply "it's really comfy in 'ere". "So it should be" said Ted "It cost us nearly £30,000 to refurbish it".

"Money well spent Chief!" said the legal occupant. Strange world, innit!

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JOHN PREAN ON ENGLAND'S RELEGATION FROM EUROPE'S SUPER LEAGUE

Paradise Lost !

AS I remarked, after we lost 4-3 to Holland, a week is a long time in table tennis (not only politics!). A year, however, proved a very short time. It seemed only yesterday that we gained those two breathtaking victories against Austria and Belgium or, if you like, Ding Yi and Saive. Today we contemplate another season in the Second Division, which we insist on calling the 'First'. A thrilling victory in Cornwall against Czechoslovakia had given us every chance of survival. All we had to do was to beat the Germans in Bexleyheath on March 6th. We did not manage this, losing 4-3 for the third time this season.



Douglas' Indian Summer

It has to be said that the ever-green Des was our hero. 35 next season, he is having a real Indian summer, often playing as well as ever, beating the years as well as his opponents. He gave us the best of starts, with a 16 and 21 victory against Steffen Fetzner, Germany's rising though still inconsistent star. Carl Prean, not at his best after illness, lost a strange match to Jorg Roskopf -13, 8, -7. The German was in scintillating form, hitting some 'impossible' balls. Grubba was dispatched by a similar 3rd game score recently.

Double Trouble

Alison Gordon had beaten Olga Nemes in 5 remarkable games in the Dortmund World Championships. This time she managed only two 13's — unlucky indeed. Don Parker had intended to field Lisa Lomas against Nemes' relative weakness against defensive players, but Lisa was ill during the night. We shall never know whether Lisa could have repeated earlier successes against the great Olga. The virus was too strong for Lisa, who was bitterly disappointed.

Our doubles weakness continued. With Roskopf/Fetzner almost unbeatable, we tried Des and Skylet Andrew, two left handers, never an ideal combination. However, they had done well in the Olympics and we hoped that they might disturb the world champions' rhythm with sheer unorthodoxy. It did not work, but nothing else would have done either. The score-line of 12 and 14 tells the story. Neither were the 'Mixed' a better scene, ending in defeat by 13 and 9. We fielded Alison and Skylet yet again, but no evidence was offered that they are a good pair. We paid for years of neglect of this art and, of course, for not taking it seriously for so long. I myself do not find it the most enthralling of events, but in the European League it decides matches and provides the best of explanations why we lose so often in the best company.

The art of doubles...

Neither do I regard men's doubles as something I feel deep compulsion to see, a view shared by most of my countrymen. I noted how the

benches emptied to near-zero at the recent admirable Burmah Wiltshire 5 Star when the doubles were played and this despite the presence of Chen Xinhua and Matthew Syed. I think Des was also involved — so it was hardly a cast of no-hoppers. Only a handful of spectators remained.

Those who blame Don Parker for not developing world beating doubles partnerships therefore ignore part of our national character which seems turned off by doubles, which became a minority sport within a minority sport.

To lose both doubles in the European League means courting disaster. Being 2-0 down as a result means that you have to win the remaining 5 singles 4-1, which is hardly an inviting or realistic prospect.

Are Doubles a good idea?

When I was an active and enthusiastic player, I certainly enjoyed my

doubles, but mainly as a social exercise at the end of the evening. Most league matches had been settled by then and the doubles were for relaxed fun. Currently international theories to develop doubles more and more as part of team events I view with disdain. I might be more enthusiastic if we had a team like Roskopf and Fetzner, who are quite superb. Why this is so I may perhaps develop in a future article. However, their excellence is of a quite brutal kind, best likened to Mike Tyson before other diversions robbed him of his awesome invincibility. By way of proof I offer the following statistics: The average number of balls per rally in the second game of R. & F vs Des and Skylet was 2.8 (yes, less than three!) 35 points were played. The longest absorbed 5 balls. Even the third ball rallies were not (on average) fully played out! The Germans quite clinically played the percentages. They are superb, but it was a most

dreadful spectacle. Have legislators forgotten that quite recently doubles in World Championships and other major events were played to 'best of 5'. This was reduced to 'best of 3' in the fullness of time precisely because the spectator value was poor. What short memories our sport has! Suffice to say that I view the inclusion of doubles in proposed Swaythling Cup formats with horror. I readily admit our own poor record, but as a spectator I find doubles a good opportunity for a coffee break in the course of a long day. It is not the stage on which I like to see my Waldners and Lindhs. I confess that I enjoyed playing doubles, but mainly as a social and fun activity. Sad though it may be, top table tennis is more serious.

Back to the Singles

Having lost the match (4-1 down), we produced our brightest moments. Des came back from the



Roskopf in scintillating form at Bexleyheath (Photo courtesy Mike Loveder)

The Big Match 2

dead to trounce Roszkopf (game and 16-19 was the deficit). No praise could be too high. Carl also found the going tough against Fetzner, a recent victor against Xie Saike, but battled through 20, -9 and 18. It was good to see so many spectators remain when the match was dead.

Three singles out of four should really have been enough to give us the match, but it was not. Again, our doubles weakness put the match totally beyond our grasp.

The Inquest

So what went wrong? As I have said, we lost three matches 4-3 and won two more. It was absurd that we should go down on a record like that, though it was a season in which there were many strange results. It was also a season of which some countries should not be proud, fielding sub-standard teams in selected matches. This was not only unfair to the team against whom they had fielded their best side, often it was unfair on spectators who had come to see the best, only to be presented with the worst.

I cannot proclaim a day of national mourning, since salvation was in our own hands, but it is hardly a good day for table tennis when 2,000 people turn up expecting to see Grubba and Kucharski only to see two unknowns, which is something that happened to the German organisers. It is sad when colleagues treat each other with such disrespect and such lack of concern for each others' well being.

Changes are now contemplated in the European League to 'force' countries to play their best teams! A knock-out or group system is thought most likely. I can only say that this strikes me as a rather lame and indirect way. English Football deals with such transgressions more competently. Teams which field substandard teams are levied heavy fines. In European Table Tennis the wrong-doers are being rewarded by a changed format!

Where do we go from here? We won only four of fourteen doubles (Gordon and Prean against Sweden and Poland, Cook and Prean against Sweden, Andrew and Prean against France). We only won two out of seven ladies' singles. However, with our ladies ranked at No. 17 and 18 in Europe, obviously at this time other countries have better players. I kept hearing that Alan Cooke should have been replaced by Des Douglas sooner. This has the benefit of hindsight and overlooks that it was Alan who played an immense part in our promotion, also that Des previously lost a lot of vital matches in the survival and promotion matches. Des was, of course, quite brilliant in the two matches in which he eventually played.

I make no apologies for leaving Carl to the last. Apart from being in every winning doubles we DID manage, he won 9 out of 12 of his singles. Only Gatien won more (11 out of 14). Don Parker felt that, if his overall performance had been matched we would have been close to the No. 1 spot.

More politics...

I read somewhere that my own opposition to the inclusion of foreign nationals in England Teams is due to my fear that Carl will lose his place to Chen Xinhua, although Carl has defeated the Chinese star on each of the three occasions they met and, presumably, despite the record quoted above. One cannot be surprised if our players go abroad or feel depressed about the situation at home if such are the sentiments to which they are so regularly exposed. I have to record also the sense of betrayal felt by some younger players which they have expressed to me. A number have asked what their chances are of playing in Germany and elsewhere. Such is the chaos and confusion caused by the attempt of some to overturn Management decisions via National Council, in effect to include foreign nationals in England Teams. So well has this campaign been orchestrated that it may well succeed. I have been asked whether I can continue (though only just re-elected) under such circumstances. I have said that I shall honour the promise to serve another year, but it will be likely to be my last under those circumstances. There was much talk about all this before and after the match, and I feel you should have the full picture.

Back to Bexley: My warm congratulations yet again to Graham Sopp and his team for a wonderful, well organised evening. The gate was 700 — perhaps a few more would have been nice, but the 700

were a wonderful and knowledgeable bunch. Perhaps next time we shall provide the victory they deserve.

RESULTS

EUROPEAN LEAGUE

Super Division:

England 3, West Germany 4.
D. Douglas (Warwicks) bt S Fetzner 21-16, 23-21; C. Prean (IoW) lost to J Roszkopf 13-21, 21-8, 7-21; Miss A Gordon (Berks) lost to Miss O Nemes 13-21, 13-21; Douglas/S Andrew (Essex) lost to Roszkopf/Fetzner 12-21, 14-21; Gordon/Andrew lost to Miss N Struse/Roszkopf 13-21, 9-21; Douglas bt Roszkopf 13-21, 21-19, 21-17; Prean bt Fetzner 22-20, 9-21, 21-18.

Yorkshire Junior Open Championships

PLEASE note that due to a printing ERROR, the date of eligibility for the Under 12 events has been incorrectly stated on the ENTRY FORMS.

It should, of course, READ after 30th June 1977.



Left: A superb action shot of Carl Prean. Right: Steffan Fetzner lost in singles to both Prean and Douglas. (Photos courtesy Mike Loveder)

Chen — in class of his own at Woking

by MICHAEL GREEN

WOKING Leisure Centre provided the setting for the South of England Three Star, which attracted a truly international field of nearly 300.

Surrey spectators turned out in force to see whether the top seed and, hopefully, brand new Englishman Chen Xinhua could live up to the grandiose praise in the programme of S.T.T.A. President Ron Crayden.

Unfortunately for the tournament as a spectacle, I can readily confirm that Chen was, quite simply, in a different class to everyone else. He romped home without apparently exerting himself and did not lose a set in the process. The most anyone achieved was John Holland's (Dy) fifteen points in the second set of his defeat by Chen.

The final itself was eagerly anticipated. Second seed and defending champion Nicky Mason had made it through the bottom half and we all hoped he could extend Chen somehow. As it turned out, he couldn't. Chen allowed Mason a few attacking moments but only to illustrate his own impressive defensive qualities. A one-sided final if ever there was one.

Mason himself had struggled earlier against an inspired Craig Bakewell (St) who lost out in the third set 21-18.

John Hilton had an impressive tournament. He triumphed over Connie Warren in the Vets final, Connie having removed top seed Henry Buist earlier on. In the main event, John's guile and experience attacked the confidence of fourth seed Bradley Billington to such an extent that the young man from Derbyshire lost out to the old man from Lancashire.

Graham Sandley eventually stopped Hilton's progress. Only just though. The Middlesex man is playing with his old enthusiasm for the game and it was good to see him reaching the semi-final.

The ladies singles event produced few surprises. However, Linda Radford (E) had an excellent win over fourth seed Jill Harris (St) and Teresa Moore (Sx) will have been pleased with her performance only losing out to the eventual winner and top seed Alison Gordon in the semi-final.

The tournament's finances were assisted by Vic Odden's of London Bridge who are specialist camera suppliers, and also by Carpenter & Co a firm of Wallington solicitors. Noel Carpenter is an ETTA Club Coach with Wallington Crusaders (A Christian Youth Organisation). Clive Oakman negotiated the

supply of the Butterfly equipment.

Time and personalities move on. Tournament organiser Don Beesley will be sorely missed. It does seem to me that someone in the hierarchy has not consulted enough about the allocation of "Five Star" status.

For those of us retiring from the tournament committee, best wishes to those remaining and any newcomers who will ensure that this fine event remains as part of the English table tennis calendar.

RESULTS

Mens Quarter Finals

Chen Xinhua (Cr) bt Steve Ward (Wal) 21-10, 21-11

Matthew Syed (Bk) bt Chris Oldfield (Y) 21-7, 21-12

Graham Sandley (Mi) bt Chris Rogers (Le) 21-6, 25-27, 21-18

Nicky Mason (Sy) bt John Souter (Mi) 21-16, 21-13

Mens Semi-finals

Chen bt Syed 21-14, 21-14

Mason bt Sandley 21-14, 21-5

Final

Chen bt Mason 21-8, 21-13

Womens Semi-Finals

Alison Gordon (Bk) bt Teresa Moore (Sx) 21-12, 21-9

Lisa Lomas (Bd) bt Andrea Holt (La) 21-18, 21-17

Final

Gordon bt Lomas 21-14, 21-10

Mens Doubles Final

Steve Dorking (E)/David Hannah (Sco) bt Richard Darnell (E)/Andrew Eden (La) 21-11, 21-18

Womens Doubles Final

Alison Gordon (Bk)/Andrea Holt (La) bt Julie Billington (Dy)/Alison Gower (E) 21-16, 21-18

Restricted Class 2

Paul Ranford (K) bt Damian Holland (E) 21-17, 22-20

Veterans

John Hilton (La) bt Connie Warren (Sy) 21-16, 21-15

Top: Chen Xinhua, Mens Singles Champion 1990.

Centre: Alison Gordon, Women's Singles Champion 1990, with the new trophy donated by Challenge Awards of North Cheam. Presenting the trophy David Greenfield, a partner in Carpenter & Co. (Solicitors)

Bottom: Nicky Mason, Runner-up Men's Singles with Noel Carpenter of Carpenter & Co (Solicitors) who sponsored the Mens Singles event. (Photos courtesy Mike Loveder)



Hectic Time for Kevin

KEVIN Beadsley, who created quite a stir twelve months ago when he took two titles at the Yorkshire 2 Star Graded Championships and progressed well in the Mens Singles, again left his mark on this season's event at the Huddersfield Sports Centre when he reached the finals of all three events open to him.

This time, however, the strain told — he was on court almost continually for well over three hours in the later stages of the tournament — coming away with only one title, the Class 3 in which he beat Tony Bottomley in an all-Halifax final.

In the Class 2 he went down to the Middlesex County man Colin Wilson who, despite losing the first game 9-21, went on to avenge the earlier straight sets defeat in the Mens Singles, and Beadsley then conceded the major final to Chris Oldfield, who had had an untroubled passage through the bottom half.

Oldfield was seeded at 2 behind holder Michael O'Driscoll, but the top seed was called to report to Bath on Saturday afternoon to prepare for Ormesby's Leeds British League encounter with Bathwick Tyres the following day and had to withdraw.

Elsewhere in the Mens Singles, joint third seeds Tony Taylor and John Holland fell to Wilson (Round 1) and Andrew Eden (Round 2) respectively, with the Lancashire teenager making the semi-final before going down to Oldfield.

Only hiccup in the Ladies Singles was the defeat of Carol Hewett, ranked 30, by Yorkshire's teenager Samantha Marling, but the top two seeds, Joanne Shaw and Joanna Roberts lined up in the final with the verdict going comfortably the way of the former.

There was an abundance of interesting play in the three Graded events, with the Class 4 Singles producing a thrilling three set final between local man Tim Dyson and Horst Baermann, a German who has played at a high level in his own country, and is presently working in Essex.

Each player held the advantage in turn with Baermann finally edging home at 23 in the decider, but, with the object of this category of tournament being to provide a full day's enjoyable match play, with all competitors involved in plenty of games, the overall measure of success must be the answer to the question 'Was it a worthwhile day's table tennis?'

Ladies Singles:

Joanne Shaw (Y) bt Samantha Marling (Y) 9, 14
Joanna Roberts (Y) bt Alison Gower (E) 10, -19, 13
Shaw bt Roberts 9, 12

Class 2 Singles:

Colin Wilson (Mi) bt Matt Sheader (Li) 13, 10
Beadsley bt Paul Moore (Li) 10, 20
Wilson bt Beadsley -9, 17, 19

Class 3 Singles:

Beadsley bt Chris Ford (La)
Tony Bottomley (Y) bt Paul Wood (Ng) 17, -20, 18
Beadsley bt Bottomley 18, 12

Class 4 Singles:

Horst Baermann (E) bt Billy Russell (La)
Tim Dyson (Y) bt Sally Marling (Y) 10, 14
Baermann bt Dyson -22, 19, 23

SKILLS AWARD SCHEME REVISION

A revision of the current Dunlop Skills Award Scheme to make them simpler, more attractive and of wider use is in the early stages of consultation between the ETTA and ESTTA.

A novice or rookie award is likely to be introduced. Anyone who would like to have an input on the revision is invited to write to Diccon Gray, National Development Officer at the ETTA Office.

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RESULTS

Mens Singles:

Chris Oldfield (Y) bt Andrew Eden (La) 16, 9
Kevin Beadsley (Y) bt Mick Stead (Y) 9, 19
Oldfield w/o Beadsley

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The Role of the Coach

by JILL PARKER

IN MODERN table tennis, the coach is someone who wears many different hats. Manager, mentor and motivator, psychologist and physiologist, teacher and trainer, diplomat and van driver. The coach can be many things but above all the main aim should be to raise the general standard of performance at all levels and to encourage the talented player to reach full potential. It may well be that in fulfilling this aim, the coach must act in one or more of the parts listed above.

For someone who is coaching at a grass-roots level and is involved with the same group of players, the role of the coach changes according to how the players develop. Perhaps the best way to look at the involvement of the coach in this development is to take the hypothetical situation where the complete novice progressed through to international standard. We will assume for sake of argument that the same coach has stuck by the player throughout.

The Beginner

At this stage the coach is the teacher and demonstrator, showing how the four basic shots are played and grooving in a sound technique. There is little involvement in competition so tactics and matchplay are not important. Simple things like explaining the rules of the game, how to serve correctly and which bat to use are all instances where the coach's knowledge and experience are important.

Two to Three Years

By now, our protégé is beginning to master the more advanced shots. The coach might not be a sufficiently good enough player to practice with and it is important that he is aware of his own limitations in this department. Better players are brought in to practice with and the coach begins to adopt more of a background role but still ironing out faults as and when they emerge. The player is probably competing in the local league and entering the occasional tournament. It is for the coach to encourage the correct approach to the game, ensuring that the player gets into the habit of warming up properly. Respect for the umpire and for the opposition along with good table manners are qualities which the coach should instil in the player.

At this stage in competition, winning is not always important. It is a period where basic experience is acquired. If the player is beaten simply because the opponent has intelligently exploited a fundamental weakness, then the coach should be able to spot this and work on the deficiency.

Three to Four Years

By now a style of play should be emerging and it is important that the coach should appreciate this and be aware of the player's natural inclinations. We must be wary of producing stereotyped players. All the top players are stylists of one form or another and I cannot help but feel that the age of the all-rounder is finished.

The coach as a teacher of stroke play has almost totally diminished. Now it is motivation that is important, ensuring effort and application in the player and an attitude of playing to win and not, playing not to lose. There is a subtle difference the former is the positive way while playing not to lose can mean

that the coach simply has a retriever on his hands. In the long run this will not be good enough to get to the top. The coach is now almost exclusively involved with the player as a competitor. He is teaching him how to compete effectively.

Six to Seven Years

By now, the player is representing the County and is pushing up the national ranking list, perhaps vying for a place in the national squad.

The player should be correctly aroused for a match, not too nervous and not too confident. For the purposes of this discussion we have assumed the same player/coach relationship throughout and as you know, this is very rare. The player will frequently come across many coaches as I have in my playing career. It is for the coach to spend a long time getting to know the player's personality and mind. On England Junior Training Camps, I spend days getting to know the players. This is important because it can sometimes be dangerous if you misjudge a player's character. For example, it may appear at first sight that a player is too relaxed when in fact the opposite may be the case and the condition is one of extreme anxiety. To say 'this match is vital' could be disastrous. More appropriate would be words of encouragement, along the lines of 'you've nothing to lose, so do your best'.

Tactics are now an important factor and the coach must be able to examine the opponents game and discuss this with the player. In particular, attention should be given to the service and receive, which services are the most suitable and where and how best to return the ball.

There is always a danger, however, that players can become too reliant on the coach for advice so it is no good if they are always turning during a match to the coach seeking inspiration. You never see Desmond Douglas or myself doing that. While on the table it is for the players to get themselves out of difficult situations. The coach then should beware of the mentally weak players.

There should always be encouragement when they have lost, assuming of course there has been one hundred per cent effort. Discussions on what went wrong can usually wait until emotions have returned to normal. Only in very rare instances would I reprimand a player after a match and this is invariably when they have not tried.

By now our player is quite a celebrity with all the attendant pressures of being a top class athlete. It is for the coach to see that it stops that way by helping to deflect all these outside influences. The coach's role is now one of allowing the player to

concentrate entirely on the game ahead. Officials, sponsors, press and photographers are dealt with by the coach who now plays the part of Manager and diplomat, taking any unnecessary pressure off the player.

At the end of the day a well balanced, mature individual should emerge, both a promising table tennis player and a sociable person. The coach should not have been party to breeding a table tennis moron who knows the game and nothing else. The sociological development should leave ample room for schoolwork and other interests. After all, it is very few players who make it to the top, so there has to be something to fall back on.

In Conclusion

Coaching is a vast subject and could make a book in itself. Unfortunately, we cannot explore in detail all the arguments and angles in this small chapter. The English Table Tennis Association runs a first class coaching awards scheme and anyone who fancies their chances in this field of the game only has to get in touch with them for further details.

You might want to consider these final few points before you do, though. Do not go into it thinking that coaching will become a vehicle for your own aspirations or desire for prestige and fame. By their very nature, coaches are secondary to the player as the critic is to the artist, and that is how it should be. Unlike football, coaches are fairly anonymous albeit important figures. So, please do not think you can become a Brian Clough.

Coaching is not exclusively about finding worldbeaters but about raising the general standard throughout the game. A lot of coaches I have come across are very wary of releasing their players to work with other coaches. What they are doing is stifling the players' developments by preventing them benefiting from different practice or new approaches. Two heads are better than one, so try not to hang on the backs of the players and be prepared to see them go their own way, hopefully to the top. They will remember you if they are good enough to get there.

Extract from 'Top-Class Table Tennis' by Jill and Don Parker. Now out of print.



Jill in action for England.

BERKSHIRE

Bob Adams

BOTH Bracknell and Reading have held their Closed Championships during February although Bracknell, realising that the Leeds Youth Cup Regional Finals were to take place on the same day as their event, thoughtfully rearranged their Junior events for a later date in March. The name that will appear most times in the 1990 Bracknell record will be Ian Schwartz, who won the Division 1/2, Veterans, and Mixed Doubles (with Ruth Champion) and was runner-up in the Mens Doubles with Paul Savins, having been beaten in that event by Chris Forrest and Malcolm Hayes. Paul also regained the Men's singles and Amanda Westwood defeated Maureen Allchurch in the Ladies Singles. Maureen, whilst having a very good tournament, was distinctly unlucky to be the losing finalist in three events, including the Ladies Doubles which was won by Sylvia Spielberg and Pam Law. The Division 3/4 contest was won by Cedric Dias. Martin Adams retained his Premier Division and Ken Fellingham Trophies. The Hardbat was, as usual, fiercely contested with Chris Forrest the ultimate winner. I am sure Chris will not resent a mention of Paul Ellis, who he was perhaps a little fortunate to beat in the semi final. Finally the Handicap brought about a situation which is not supposed to happen, namely an all Premier division final which was ultimately won by Steve Dorrell.

On to the Scottish Provident Reading Championships with a few familiar names coming up, or more accurately one particular one, namely Schwartz. (Didn't they get into the column last month?) The same Ian won the Mixed Doubles with niece Gemma, who cleaned up on almost everything else, including the u-13 and u-15 girls, the Ladies Doubles with Nicola Cracknell (winner of the u-17 girls), and was only narrowly defeated in the Ladies Singles by the relatively unknown (up to now) Gillian Galloway, who deservedly also won the Chronicle Trophy for best performance. Martin Adams retained the u-17 singles and doubles (with Marc Priddle) and also took the £75 prize for the Mens Singles (new suit for Dad?). Michael Childs (the losing Mens finalist) won the Mens Doubles with Alan Dines, rivals Ben Johnson and Marcus Horth took the u-13 and u-15 boys respectively, and Marcus also grabbed the Division 2 title. Dave Wise took the Veterans and the wily Brian Halliday the Senior Veterans. The other Divisional titles went to Steve Everard (1), Mark Winter (Youth and 4), Mike Cunningham (5) and Roland Marslin (6).

Finally a word for the real heroes of these two tournaments, namely the organisers, Mike and John Stickland for Bracknell, and John Freeman and Robin Lockwood for Reading, plus of course their various helpers. Well done and thanks!

CUMBRIA

Gordon Brown

WHEN it comes to persuading women players to stand in for the County team, Cumbria seem to be thin on the ground. Number two, Karen Backhouse (Barrow) cried off for the trip to Leicester on February 17 with the result that the home team were given a walk-over in the women's doubles, and one singles. Out of eight women seeded for the Cumbria Closed in March, the county could find only captain Julie McLean able to turn out in a 10-0 whitewash for Leicestershire 2nd. Only two sets went to three games. Number two Mark Temple took number one Mark Illingsworth to a decider, while Mark's brother Stephen, Cumbria's number one man, and the evergreen Roger Stewart took the first game against Keith Fellows and Maurice Newman.

Leicestershire names first: Mark Illingsworth bt Mark Temple 22-20, 21-23, 21-12, bt Stephen Temple 21-12, 22-20. Maurice Newman bt Stephen Temple 21-14, 21-13; bt Roger Stewart 21-17, 21-10. Keith Fellows bt Roger Stewart 21-17, 21-15; bt Mark Temple 21-9, 21-16. Fellows and Newman bt Stephen Temple and Roger Stewart 19-21, 21-15, 21-16. Julie Potts bt Julie McLean 21-13, 21-15. Jane Heath w.o. Potts and Heath w.o.

Congratulations to Parkview School, Barrow, on getting four teams, at boys and girls under 13 and boys and girls under 16, to the finals of the Dunlop National Schools Championships at Matlock in March.

Barrow have been doing very well in the Lancashire and Cheshire League second division and by the time you read this may well have clinched promotion to the first.

Cumbria Closed Championships

BARROW players almost dominated the Cumbria Closed Table Tennis Championships at Millom Recreation Centre.

Jonathan Lowes took the men's singles, Caroline Watt the women's, and junior girls, Lowes and Tim Pachul the men's doubles, Kevin Hodgson the boys' and under-14 singles, Hodgson and Watt the junior doubles and Neil Honeyman the veteran singles.

All four men's singles semi-finalists were from Barrow, which also

provided the runners-up in the women's, mixed and junior doubles, junior boys, under-14 and veteran singles.

Major results:

Mens singles: Jonathan Lowes (Barrow) bt Tim Pachul (Barrow) 22-20, 22-20

Semi-finals: Lowes bt Ian Reed (Barrow) 16-21, 21-13, 21-17; Pachul bt Kevin Hodgson (Barrow) 21-15, 21-19

Women's singles: Caroline Watt (Barrow) bt Julie McLean (Carlisle) 19-21, 21-12, 25-23

Men's doubles: Pachul and Lowes bt Roger Stewart & Jimmy Cummings (Carlisle) 29-27, 21-15

Women's doubles: McLean & Joanne Burgess (Carlisle) bt Watt & Beta Edwards (Barrow) 21-15, 15-21, 21-17

Mixed Doubles (round robin): Stewart and McLean bt Watt & Neil Yardley (Barrow).

Junior boys' singles: Hodgson bt Nic Hill (Barrow) 21-16, 19-21, 21-19

Junior girls' singles: Watt (only one entry)

Under-14 singles: Hodgson bt Watt 21-15, 21-17

Junior doubles (round robin): Hodgson & Watt bt Andrew Page & Hill (Barrow)

Veteran singles: Neil Honeyman (Barrow) bt John Proudfoot (Barrow) 21-18, 21-14

The Big Match

BURTON-ON-TRENT is the setting for the Easter Wedding of Ray Harrison and Vi Wright. Ray and Vi are a very popular couple in T.T. circles and all their many friends, especially in Burton and Derbyshire, send them their best wishes for many happy years together.

Not only do our players feature in the top rankings, so does our chairman, Good Luck and Good Health to you both.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Alf Pepper

FOR quite a few years now both Stroud and Gloucester Closed Championships have been held on the same day, this has purely been done for financial reasons - i.e. the availability of tables (after the Cotswold Junior Tournament).

Whilst agreeing that the aforesaid reasons are perhaps a sound venture, I do nevertheless hear rumbles of discontent coming from players who are registered and play in both mentioned Leagues, me-thinks perhaps that these rumbles might surface at AGM's to be held

THE NEW ETTA TIE

The new, redesigned ETTA members' tie is now available. It is attractively woven with the Association emblem in gold on a navy background enhanced with a fine blue stripe.

"The designer has done an excellent job. I shall be delighted to wear this tie on all occasions, not merely those connected with table tennis. Excellent quality and very attractive," John Prean, ETTA Chairman.

This stylish tie is available at £4.95 including p&p.

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at the end of the season. Perhaps some Stroud & Gloucester players do have a genuine grievance — if so, then they should pursue them at the appropriate time.

Always a tower of strength over the years where any form of organisation or administration is required, former County Chairman Jack Reeves last year at the Cotswold Junior managed to raise £213.00 for the Soviet Armenian disaster fund, Jack received a letter of thanks for his efforts from Comrade Zamyatin the USSR Ambassador.

Still fired with enthusiasm to support worthy causes — this year at the Cotswold Tournament Jack again ran a raffle in aid of "The all-England Mentally Handicapped Table Tennis team, who will represent England at the "European Special Olympics" at Strathclyde between 20th & 27th of July this year.

I am informed that at the time of writing, just over £130.00 has actually been raised, but the raffle will still continue to run for several months yet, and that all four Leagues in the County will be approached to help support this very worthy cause of the mentally handicapped.

A nail-biting situation confronts the Cheltenham T.T. Association, for well over a decade a series of hard-working editors have kept the local media well informed through the columns of their Newsletter "Net and Edge", now it appears that N. & E. is struggling and perhaps even in its death throes.

In the very last copy published, the front page caption read as follows — "WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE — AN EDITOR". Well a dead ain't much good Cheltonians, but I'm sure that there are plenty of live uns still left around — it only requires just one to get up from his/her backside and do something — easy said isn't it?

Played on seven tables at St. Benedicts School, Arle Road, Cheltenham, the annual County Championships involving 38 of the best U14's & U12's in the County was a great success, ages of participants ranged from 8 to 14, and there were five entries from Cirencester the County's latest affiliated League.

RESULTS

Boys U14 Singles:

Peter Hayward (Stroud) bt Martin Cheung (Ciren) 15, 16

Girls U14 Singles:

Michelle Hogarth bt Kerry Hogarth (both Glos) -16, 12, 17

Boys U12 Singles:

Jamie Day (Glos) bt Arron Mortimer (Chelt) 13, -15, 18

Girls U12 Singles:

Michelle Hogarth bt Kerry Hogarth (both Glos) 13, 19

U14 Open Doubles:

P. Hayward/K. Hogarth bt M. Cheung/A. Smith 16, 20

The Hon Referee was
Mr. Peter Cruwys of Cheltenham.

HAMPSHIRE

David Cosway

THE Young Hampshire 'B' team's excellent run of wins came to an end with a narrow 4-6 defeat to Glamorgan. Mark Bleakley won two and Jeff Giles and Kathy Ridgard one each. The Veteran 'A' team, still in with a chance of promotion, had a 6-3 win over Hertford with Graham Lynch and Ken Giles winning two and Ken Burton one. The 'B' Veterans team kept their unbeaten record with a 6-3 win over Sussex 'B' and are now champions of Division 3 'B'. Ray Lush and Bob Cox won their two singles and Maurie Shave one. The Veterans are having a very good season marred only by the wranglings between players and officials over the selection and rankings. What a pity when veteran table tennis more than any other level is at such a high ebb.

Southampton Closed

Few surprises in the early rounds of the Men's Singles. In the quarter finals holder Terry Bruce (Snows) had a convincing win over Alan Charles (Wadhams) 9 and 15, whilst Chris Shetler (Snows) was taken to a third game by Mark Thorne (Snows) before winning 14, -19, 9. Mark Bleakley (Sholing) repeated his Hampshire Closed win over Jeff Giles (Snows) and Andy Ely (Alpha) made up the quartet by beating Richard Morgan (4 T's) -20, 16 and 14. The Semi's, played on the staged Finals night, provided some good entertainment for a surprisingly large crowd. Bruce lost the first game at 14 to Ely but scraped through the second at 19. Again at 16/19 in the third Bruce looked out



Andy Ely

of it, but came back to hold a match point at 20/19 before going down 24/26. The other Semi was an equally see-saw affair. Shetler, who last held the title in 1984, lost the first convincingly to County champion Bleakley at 14 and trailed 13/17 in the second only to win the next 8 points and the game. Shetler however ran out of steam in the third losing at 10. The Final went to a third game but did not produce the good rallies of the Semi's and was a somewhat scrappy affair. Andy Ely just did enough to beat Bleakley -14, 15 and 17 and win his fourth title in five years. His return of the lethal "Bleakley serve" was a major factor in his win. Andy always saves his best table tennis for this event and seems to find the motivation his game sometimes

lacks in other competitions. A remarkable record in view of his relatively low ranking. He lost nine sets in the first half of the Southampton Premier Division.

The Womens Singles was a disastrous event with both Sarah Hammond and Sarah Turner opting out of their home tournament in favour of computer points at Bournemouth. This gave seventeen year old Tina Caws the opportunity of winning her first Senior title with a convincing 8 and 8 win over Meg Stapenhill. She gained her second title when she joined Jeff Giles in the Mixed to beat David Dobson and Caroline Cook 7 and 10. The Mens Doubles final was really a match of errors. Chris Shetler and Jeff Giles waltzed through the first game at 11, led Andrew Ely and



David Cosway (Chairman of the Southampton T.T.A.) presenting the Womens Singles trophy to Tina Caws.

Hants continued —

Tony Catt 16/9 in the second, only to lose at 19. In the third Shetler/Giles led 17/13, were caught at 18 each but just held on to win at 19 when Ely missed an easy kill. An interesting Veterans Final with "new" veteran, Terry Bruce, being unable to read Graham Lynch's game to lose the first at 18, having match point against him in the second before scraping through at 24/22 but sweeping his opponent aside at 9 in the third. Martin Cheffey had a convincing win over Lee Rosamond in the Junior Final.

The much better entry, apart from the Womens and Juniors, and the very encouraging attendance for the Finals night, which I hope will make referee/tournament secretary Brian Lamerton decide to give it another season before retiring.

HERTS

John Wood

BARNET Veteran team rose triumphantly to take the Hertfordshire Inter-League trophy, at the Barnet Table Tennis Centre, last February.

The golden oldie trio of Brian Gale, Terry Wilson and Derek Holden, saw off the opposition in style, beating St. Albans 6-1, Hemel Hempstead 1st team 6-1, and Hertford 7-0, on the second Sunday of the competition.

Barnet's only hiccup was when Hemel Hempstead 2nd team, the surprise package of the tournament finishing 3rd in the table just one point behind the winners, beat them 4-3 on the first Sunday.

This season's runners-up are Watford who themselves, were beaten 4-3 by Barnet.

The leading percentages, by players having played 50% or more games were; Dave Seaholme (Watford) 100%, Derek Holden (Barnet) 83%, Graham Jaynes (Hemel Hempstead 2nd) 80%, Keith Hartridge (Welwyn and Hatfield) and Dave Wackrill (Hemel Hempstead 1st) 78%.

Meanwhile, the real big surprise of the month was when St. Neots 'A' team of Mick and Sandra Harper and Keith Samuels, were knocked out of the Herts and Beds Cup, in the Quarter Finals by Bedford Modern, 5-3.

St. Neots, who were this year's favourites to retain their trophy, were beaten by the combined talents of Graham McKim and Andy Trott, the stars of Bedford Modern's unexpected win, and morally assisted by Paul Birch.

Bedford Modern's opponents in the semi finals are Adeyfield 'B', who beat Kents of Luton 9-0.

Shining brightly for Adeyfield from Hemel Hempstead were Graham Witchalls, and Jerry and Robert Barrasso.

Adeyfield's 1st team of Glen Wilkes, Rob Liquorish and Ian Black, marched stylishly into the other semi final, beating Warren Sports 9-0.

Adeyfield's opponents are St. Neots 'B', who had a walkover at the expense of DeHavilland of Hatfield.

HUNTS

David Deller

THE Huntingdonshire County Tournament was held at St. Neots Table Tennis Centre. Philip Cole was again the outstanding player winning the mens singles, sharing both the mens mixed doubles event. Cole defeated Simon Pryke in the final, won the mens doubles with Alan Smith and the mixed with Barbara Pace. The latter took the ladies singles defeating Diane Gutteridge at the final stage. Tracey Slater and Chris Albon won the ladies doubles. Eddie Haslop did a Houdini act in the veterans final taking the last eight points in a row against Jim Sizer to lift the crown. The Paul Charlton Memorial Trophy for players under 21 saw a good win for Andrew Hillyard. The Tournament was again well organised by Gordon Cockram.

The County Junior tournament will be held at the same venue on Saturday April 7th.

KENT

Adrian Hall &
Brian Etherington

FOLLOWING last month's Senior County Championships, the Selection Committee have issued the following Senior Ranking List:

Men

1. A. Cunningham
2. A. Dodd
3. P. Rainford
4. J. Kennedy
5. B. Mileham
6. G. Spencer
7. P. Cox
8. D. Dodd
9. M. Brown
10. I. Girdler

Womens

1. J. Houghton
2. L. Popkiewicz
3. J. Lawrence
4. T. Stewart
5. J. Mersh
6. K. May
7. J. Thorn
8. M. Dignum
9. L. Hollingworth
10. J. Beadle

After two weekends of knockout play, the Maidstone League once again staged their finals at the Larkfield Club. This proves a very successful formula with over 150 spectators watching the evening's performances.

Margaret Dignum, in the best final of the evening, gained revenge over Alison Pearson to take the Women's Singles title. Pearson, the

reigning champion, had fought back from a 10-3 deficit to level the final leg at 13-13, but Dignum went on to win 21-16.

Mark Brown took the Men's Singles titles for the third successive year after comfortably beating Chris Ross 21-11, 21-12.

Martin Hewett's block and counter-hitting saw him overcome Miles Willey's loop and smash in an exciting Junior Boy's final 21-14, 21-19.

RESULTS

Mens Singles: Mark Brown bt Chris Ross 21-11, 21-12

Women's Singles: Margaret Dignum bt Alison Pearson 22-20, 20-22, 21-16

Junior Boys' Singles: Martin Hewitt bt Miles Willey 21-14, 21-19

Junior Girls' Singles: Carly Riggs bt Crystal Hall 21-14, 21-14

Men's Doubles: Mark Brown & Chris Ross bt Gordon Harris & Dennis McConkey 21-15, 21-16

Women's Doubles: Julie Robb & Gloria Dowding bt Margaret Dignum and Bernadette O'Gorman 16-21, 21-14, 21-13

Mixed Doubles: Paul Woollven & Alison Pearson bt Mike Porter & Margaret Dignum 21-23, 22-20, 21-12

Veteran Men's Singles: Ted Tydeman bt Dennis McConkey 12-21, 21-19, 21-17

Veteran's Women's Singles: Margaret Dignum bt June Woollven 21-17, 21-18

Would League Officials throughout the county please let me have relevant information from their areas. Adrian Hall — Home 0732-844756, Office 0634-687141.



Barnet, the victorious Hertfordshire Inter-League Champions, (left to right) Brian Gale, Terry Wilson, and Derek Holden. (Photo: Courtesy John F.A. Wood)

LANCASHIRE

George R Yates

CONGRATULATIONS are in order for Lancashire's top junior side who, at Pontesbury over the weekend of March 3/4, won the Junior Premier Division title of the Leeds County Championships.

6-4 wins over Devon, Essex, Yorkshire and Derbyshire did the trick after wins over Warwickshire, Kent and Bedfordshire, back in November at St. Neots.

Take a bow Andrew Eden, Howard Whewell, Darren Howarth, Maria Thornley and Karen Richardson who brought about this Red Rose success, not forgetting Tamar Connolly who, in only being called on once, lent valuable support from the bench and one must not forget the n.p.c. Stuart Sneyd whose weekend away from his native Oldham was not one to forget.

Now it is a question of looking forward to a double when the senior team resume their programme at Stantonbury over the weekend of March 24/25, having held pole position at the first encounters back in January.

Not to be overlooked are the performances of Lancashire's second senior team in Division 1A wherein, to date, they have won 2, drawn 3 and only lost once in six matches. Playing in Liverpool on March 3 they sped to a 7-0 lead to eventually win 8-2 against Cambridgeshire whose Mick Harper and Yvette Hooks stopped the rot in beating Graham Clarke and Amanda Goodwin.

No such defeats for Paul Hutchings and Keith Williams as well as Brenda Buoeu, a trio of Liverpoolians.

Lancs & Cheshire League

STOCKPORT are still going strong in Division 1 of the Lancs & Cheshire League and brought off their fifth consecutive win in beating Blackpool 6-4 at the seaside. Three wins for Derek Schofield, two for Roger Hampson and a solo for Brian Kean did the trick against two for Dave Bunting, one for Martin Ireland and the doubles won by Bunting and Barry Crook against Hampson and Kean at a time when this supreme veteran was recharging his batteries before recording his treble with a final 16-5 win over Crook.

A home match against Macclesfield and an away fixture at Bolton now stand between Stockport's accession to the throne now likely to be vacated by Liverpool. Not so Liverpool's ladies who, in beating Macclesfield 8-2 have retained their title thanks to Justine Thomas, Brenda Buoeu and Paula French.

Oldham juniors had their fond dreams of retaining their first division title well and truly shattered when beaten at home 8-2 by Preston, whose title seems now to be theirs. Maria Thornley had a field day at Oldham's Cardinal Street with wins over Chris Campbell, Matthew Coombe and Karen Richardson as well as partnering Ron Pennington to a doubles success. Pennington lost only to Coombe in singles while Rod Manwaring got the better of Miss Richardson.

Three teams are vying for the Vets 1st Division title the current leaders being Warrington, closely followed by Preston and Stockport, beating Wirral 5-0 in the semi-final of the Norman Cook Memorial Trophy. Bolton now await the result of the Glossop/Liverpool semi to have knowledge of their final opponents.

MIDDLESEX

Iris Moss

WHAT is the matter with Middlesex players? With a minimum of 1400 registered players, we have got 55 entries for the Middlesex Senior Closed Championships. We have changed the venue and no-one can complain about the playing conditions at Ashford with 5 tables; found a date which only clashes with the County Championships and Middlesex team players would have been excused from playing on the Saturday; and still you don't enter. Why? I know that the venue is on the periphery of the County area, but the distance you have to travel is minimal compared with the other Counties, some of whom get entries four times the size of ours. And although I occasionally get the reported murmur through a Committee member, you will not even tell me why you don't enter. If you don't tell me what is wrong, the Committee cannot put it right so PLEASE WRITE TO ME. The result of this is that the event will be played on Sunday 4th March (we won't need the Saturday). I will include the results in next month's notes.

On a happier note, Middlesex Juniors did not do too badly in the London Regional Leeds Youth Cup, appearing in the following semi-finals and finals. In the Cadet Boys Singles, Richard Hyacinth beat Simeon Zefferit in the S-F and then lost to Darren Blake (Surrey) in the Final. In the Junior Girls Singles, Sara Williams beat Esme Kottasz in the S-F and then lost to Linda Radford (Essex) in the Final. In the Junior Boys Doubles, David Baker and Doz Katz lost to J. Blake and J. Blasco (Surrey) in one S-F and Richard Hyacinth playing with Gary Tendler (Essex) lost to the eventual winners Paul Carlon and Darren Blake in the other. The Junior Girls Doubles was won by Esme Kottasz and Joanne Jablon who beat Linda Radford and Sara Williams in the Final. The Restricted Junior Boys Singles was won by James Sprackling who beat David Dyer (Surrey) and the Restricted Cadet Boys Singles winner was Rakesh Subharwal when he beat Andrew Taylor (Essex). Well done, all of you.

On Sunday 6th May, a seminar entitled "Peak Performance" on Psychology in Sport will be held at Edison Youth Table Tennis Club at Hornsey. Times 10 am to 4 pm approximately. The cost for the day will be £6 per person and light refreshments and lunch will be available at reasonable prices. I know this has become quite a big thing in countries that take sport very seriously and anyone who is interested should send a stamped addressed envelope asking for further information to Reg Rockall, 85 Coleridge Road, Hornsey, London N8 8EG (Telephone 01-341 9081).

Finally just a reminder to come and support YOUR team in the Challenge match against Lancashire. It will be taking place on Saturday 21st April at Ashford Table Tennis Club, commencing at 2.30 p.m.

NORFOLK

Ray Hogg

CHEN for England — after that photo on front cover of issue 188 of him and family he cannot fail to get the vote if it comes to that. Best photo I have seen on front cover in many an edition.

We held the regional Leeds Junior at Long Stratton in February — overall a very interesting day with virtually no tantrums from the parents and referee Barry Weston escaped uninjured. Umpiring and watching the up and coming talent of the Cadets particularly makes me realise that the standard is constantly improving and several of these lads and lasses are going to make their mark on the game. Should we help to run this event next year I am sure there are going to be some new names amongst the winners. I must compliment the Peniel Academy on the discipline of their players both on and off the table — but even their girls were not past a few tears on occasion. Norwich Foxwood British League team travelled to Liverpool for a vital match and lost 7-1. Could lack of sleep the night before and/or lack of top class practise be anything to do with it? Their previous match home to Ormesby was eagerly awaited and the room was ready, the meal prepared and even the Umpires had brushed their jackets when a phone call was made to all saying that Ormesby couldn't get to Norwich. When I got my call the time was when they should have already been here for practise. Now I hear that the match has to be played on April 29th. One law for the rich and one law for the poor! Gerry Cockburn who runs our two Junior teams is worried that next season he may only manage one team, although we have plenty of boys coming through girls are thin on the ground, and if



Kent No.1 — Andy Cunningham (Photo: Courtesy Mike Loveder)

Norfolk continued —

as I have heard one of them is only interested in playing in home matches that is not on. Our Veterans (without Mick Broughton who was resting for the trip to Liverpool) took on Essex 2, and although losing 7-2 felt that they had done enough to warrant a closer score. A magnificent match played in the usual veteran manner. No complaints about the table area, but the rest of the facilities leave a lot to be desired.

Just in time to catch this edition — our 1st vets team beat Lancs 6-3 to dispel any problems we had about relegation. All players shared in the win but I think Edna Fletcher and Mabel Neary must get the 'man of the match' award for their Ladies singles. Our 2nd team lost 6-3 at Bedford but did enough with 3 games to ensure their survival in Div. 2.

NORTHANTS

Dennis Millman

GRAEME MCKIM lived dangerously before completing his eighth successive Men's Singles victory at the Kettering Closed Tournament. Since he first entered the event in 1982, McKim has never tasted defeat in more than fifty matches, but there were times on this occasion when he wore his crown in precarious fashion.

Warning signals were first in evidence when he was fully extended by Geoff Atkinson as early as the second round, and then he went perilously close to defeat when facing Ian Hawes in the semi-final. Hawes, who has never won the title, despite four appearances in the final, came within a hairsbreadth of a fifth, when after a pulsating encounter, he held two match points at 20-18 in the final end. McKim's nerve held, and his continuous attacking paid rich dividends as he took four points in a row to ensure a final confrontation with Andy Edmonds, who with McKim an absentee, had already taken both the County Closed and the Northampton League's men's titles.

The final was a game of two halves, yet three ends, for Edmonds flourished in the early stages against a McKim lacking in motivation when facing his team-mate and doubles partner for the first time in two years. Edmonds took the first with ease, but there were few spectators who didn't anticipate the usual resurgence of power from McKim, who must now rank as the best player to have developed within the county boundaries. His supporters, and there were many, were not to be disappointed, for as by divine right, KcKim moved up a gear, took the game by storm and raced through the remaining ends for yet another superb triumph.

Earlier McKim, conceding points to all opponents, had already proved himself the top player of the day by winning the Premier Division Handicap, and later, partnered by Edmonds, he took his sixth doubles title in seven years, when the joint top seeds outclassed Andy Trott and Steve Brown, who had narrowly outpointed Chris Handshaw and Richard Elliott at the semi-final stage.

McKim's only failure on the day was his inability to inspire his wife Joanne and big brother Scott to further success, but elsewhere in the tournament it was a real family affair, with the mother and daughter combination of Muriel and Kristina Cox paving the way.

It was Kristina who came out on top in the Ladies Singles, which she won for the second year in succession, with mother Muriel again the beaten finalist. Then in the doubles the Cox pair teamed up to account for Helen Watts and Ann Woolston. The Mixed Doubles again found the Cox contingent at the final stage, with Muriel this time getting the upper hand in tandem with Richard Elliott, with Kristina and Steve Brown having to be content with second best. Kristina had the last word however when she mastered her handicap to add the First Division singles.

Another family to enjoy some success was the Atkinsons from Thrapston, although most of this was due to father Geoff, who after taking McKim close in the singles, could do little wrong, ending up with his fifth Veterans Singles title in the last six years, when he edged out County No. 2 Mick Edwards. Dennis Millman had won the first ever Veterans event in the 1970 season, but after being an Edwards victim at the semi-final stage, he was prevented from becoming the first winner of the Veterans Doubles, when partnered by his conqueror, they had to admit defeat to Atkinson and Tournament Organiser Phil Slade, who enjoyed some notable wins on his excursions from the tournament desk.

Stephen Atkinson did get in on the act in the Junior Doubles when he and Matthew Rowe wore down some stern opposition from Tom Stapleton and Andrew Lingley, while on this occasion elder brother Neil had to be content with eliminating one of the top seeds Richard Elliott.

At the junior end of the scale, the Thomas and Watts families took the eye, with the three sons of Allun Thomas and the son and daughter of Richard Watts featuring in the later stages of several events, with Paul Thomas successful in the Under 13 Singles, and Helen Watts, who had a most rewarding day, taking the Under 15 event.

The Watts name was also to the fore as winner of the Second Division Handicap, but this time there was no family connection, as seas-

oned campaigner Paul took the honours. Other highlights of a memorable day's play were Tom Stapleton's great win over John Moloney, his narrow defeat at the hands of Andy Trott, Derek Muggleton's stamina sapping sixteen matches culminating in a Mystery Doubles success with event specialist Peter Ainsworth, and Ian Baldock, unseeded this year, proving his point with a fine win in the popular Consolation Singles.

Cumnor House U11 and U13; Norbury Manor Girls U16 and Whitgift U16's.

SUSSEX

John Woodford

ADRIAN MOORE lifted the all-Sussex crown for the fourth time at Southwick Leisure Centre on March 4 with an impressive victory over the holder Ritchie Venner who could not cope with the very new Donic table and was defeated in the final 16, 18.

No doubt Donic tables are good — there must be thousands being used in Germany — but according to Harry Venner, "Brand new tables should not be used in tournaments, you can never be sure of the bounce". Watching the match quite close to the table, on three occasions Ritchie seemed totally puzzled by the bounce, but Adrian ignored the strange happenings on the table surface and threw caution aside to win deservedly.

Janet Smith, poised possibly to take over the Scottish No. 1 female spot from Sarah Hurry, secured a convincing win over Teresa Moore, England No. 17, in the final of the womens singles.

The revolutionary new format provided some rather large problems for the organisers on the day, although the maximum entry of 72 players overall was achieved — the main object of giving all players at least six games during the twelve hours play.

If the schedule had allowed an extra hour for happenings that always threaten administrators (like the partial failure of the public address system) all would have been well, but gradually other sports — badminton and volleyball crowded in on the table tennis, but in the end, all was well. Referee Dennis Reed explained the problems to the players at presentation time and most importantly, lessons were learned for next year's tournament.

No system will suit everyone at this type of one-day county event. The section who did not appreciate the men, women, juniors and veterans all playing each other in the groups, were the lesser lights amongst the ladies. The stronger four players reached the semi-finals of the womens event, but the remainder felt they had a raw deal. Next time, perhaps some adjustments can be made.

Scotland also influenced the men's singles — Ian McLean, No. 4 North of the Border, defeated Alan Cole -28, 7, 14 to reach the semi-finals but Ritchie Venner had to fight hard to beat the canny Scot 13, -16, 15.

SURREY

Terry Vance

Surrey Closed Championships
CONGRATULATIONS to Hazel Earl on reaching the final of the ladies doubles whilst giving her new baby her regular feeds. Surprises of the tournament were Dipan Shah age 17 (newly arrived from Kenya) ousting Derek Holman in the Mens and reaching the doubles Final. Brian Simmonds beat Frank Hams on his way to the vets Final. A good turnout from Wandsworth, Croydon and Thames Valley Leagues.

RESULTS

Mens Singles: Paul Carter bt Simon Philipsz

Women's: Jane Barella bt Debbie Simmonds

Vets: Derek Holman bt Brian Simmonds; Restricted Anthony Fitzgerald bt John Calcutt

Mens Doubles: John Calcutt/Dave Crowley bt Anthony Fitzgerald/Dipan Shah

Ladies Doubles: Jane Barella/Rachel Forster bt Hazel Earl/Jenny Nolan

Mixed Doubles: Ray Munn/Jane Barella bt Brian & Debbie Simmonds

Vets Premier Weekend

After the first weekend the team had a hard task ahead of them when they failed to win any of their 3 matches. So at the 2nd weekend they had to beat both the other bottom teams of Berks & Herts. They beat Bucks and had an unexpected win against Cheshire thus managing to stay up by the skin of their teeth.

Thames Valley League Div 1.

For the first time since joining the TVTTL Spelthorne sit proudly on top of the Division. Unfortunately Ashford are 4 matches behind and appear the likely winners. Elmbridge beat Spicer 4 in the big relegation battle with Peter Kassner and Graham Bateman winning 3. Neil Charles still has 100% with A Shepherd on 94.4%. In Div 2 Rosehill 2 lead closely followed by MMB 1 & Molesey 1. Leading the averages is Lorraine Garbet, but she is being chased by R. Evans & A. McMillan. Schools affiliations are up to 51 and the Schools through to the National Team Finals are

WARWICKSHIRE

Alan Healey

BIRMINGHAM Veterans National League Championships team won their way through to the Midland zone final at Malvern on 2nd February with a 9-0 defeat of Stafford. They recorded a splendid 7-2 win to gain a place in the last eight of the competition, organised by the Veterans English Table Tennis Society (VETTS).

With three county championship division one players as their team, Birmingham Vets were clear favourites, but Malvern made them fight all the way. Home No. 1 Brian Thompson beat Mervyn Wood and lost only narrowly to Birmingham Vet's No. 1 Ray Dixon. When teammate Neville Meredith recovered from 9-19 to defeat Neil Wheatley, making the match score 4-2, raising the home supporters' hopes. However, the Birmingham players rallied — each recording a comfortable straight sets win to clinch a quarter-final home tie against West Wiltshire.

Warwickshire Junior 'A', having gained promotion to the Junior Premier Division during 89/90 season — were seriously depleted by the absence of experienced players, due to age limit (ie. Rajinder Singh, Alison Ledwitch and Kate Ryan).

The first Junior Premier weekend was held at St. Neots Table Tennis Club, on 25/26 November against Lancs, Essex and Yorkshire, these being the strongest teams in the division. All the Warwickshire players gave a good account of themselves, although well beaten.

Special mention for Matthew Jordan of Kenilworth, who took the (then) Junior number one Grant Solder of Essex to three games, with all the young players gaining invaluable experience.

Match Results:

v Lancashire 0-10; v Essex 1-9
v Yorkshire 1-9

The second week-end match in March at Pontesbury should produce better individual performances against Devonshire, Kent, Bedfordshire and Derbyshire — although we do not expect to keep our place in the Premier Division.

For any Coventry exiles: The Coventry and DTTA will be holding their annual Dinner Dance and Presentation Evening at the Sphinx Club, Siddeley Avenue, Coventry, on Friday 18th May.

In Division 1 of the Coventry and District League, the powerful Phoenix Club lead the table. Phoenix (13/125 pts) lead from Phoenix Angles (13/108 pts). M. Randle (100%) and A. Pilgrim (97.2%) both of Phoenix are leading the individual averages. In the West Midlands League (Junior - Division one) Coventry Juniors (3/6 pts) are

ahead of Birmingham Juniors (3/5 pts) with M. Jordan and G. Woodward each achieving 100% to date.

WORCESTERSHIRE

Dave Roden

LATEST round of matches in the Leeds County Championships resulted in one win, one draw and two defeats for our four County teams. The Senior 1sts, who badly needed a win in their fight to avoid relegation from Div 1A, were held to a draw by Lancs 2nds in Liverpool. Malcolm Green, Trevor Washington, Eric Hardman and Sandra Roden won one set each, with Green and Washington winning the Mens Doubles, Washington beat Keith Williams 23-21 in the deciding game of the final set to earn the draw for Worcs.

The Senior 2nds were thrashed 10-0 at Worcester by a Kevin Satchell inspired Wiltshire, but the Juniors kept their promotion hopes very much alive with a 10-0 defeat of Northants 2nds at Wellingboro', despite six sets needing a deciding game. Carrie Hunt joined regulars Lee Horton, Jason Thompson, Craig Ward and Paula Hughes, and celebrated her first match for the County with a 13 and 12 win over Helen Watts.

Unfortunately, the Veterans last chance of promotion seems to have ended for this year following the 8-1 home defeat by the strong Lincolnshire team. With No. 1 Ray Dixon unfit, John Stafford made a rare appearance for the County. Janet Hunt beat Connie Moran, and Roy Norton pushed Matt Shearer to 19 in the third, but Lincs were too strong for Worcs on the day.

Thorns TTC played their part in a superb British League match with Colley Toyota on Feb 17th, finally losing 5-3 to the DIV 3W leaders, seven sets going to a third game. Colley must have settled for a draw when Mark Brookes led Lee Thomas by a game and 20-16 in the 2nd in the final set, but Thomas fought back magnificently to win, a victory which earned him the "Man of the Match" award. Thorns remaining home match is against Grove IV on May 13th.

YORKSHIRE

Rea Balmford

IT was a sad and subdued return to table tennis after the Christmas break at Bradford, overshadowed by the news of the death of Paul Roebuck in a car accident. Paul, who played for Ajax E in Division 8, was driving with two of his Ajax colleagues as passengers, and Andrew Town is still seriously ill in Halifax Royal Infirmary, whilst Ian Drinkwater was fortunate to escape with minor injuries.

The County's sympathies go to Paul's family, friends and colleagues, along with best wishes to Andrew for a full and speedy recovery.

On a busy weekend in North Yorkshire, the Regional Round of the Leeds Youth Cup (report elsewhere) was followed by the North Yorkshire Closed Championships in the same venue at Selby High School.

Malcolm Corking and Ellen Meddings, ranked nationally at No. 1 in the Veteran and Junior lists respectively, dominated the event. Each took three titles, with Corking

adding the Veterans title to the major Singles and Doubles honours, and Ellen taking a share in the Mixed Doubles.

Results

MS: Malcolm Corking (Northallerton), runner up — Mark Horsfield (Selby);
LS: Ellen Meddings (Harrogate), Lorraine Smith (Northallerton)
MD: Corking/Steve Cooper (Northallerton), Keith Bell/Nigel Pennock (Harrogate)
LD: Meddings/Sara Philipson (Selby), Adele Lobley (York)/Debbie Newman (Selby)
XD: Gareth Jones (Selby)/Meddings, Cooper/Lobley
VS: Corking, Vic Smith (Harrogate)
JBS: Jones, Craig Smith (Selby).

Going one better to claim four titles was Cleeve Judson, who took time away from his duties as a prison officer at Wakefield to visit H.M.P. Lindholme, near Doncaster, where the Yorkshire & Humberside Regional Championships of the Civil Service Sports Council were held.

Cleeve took the Men's and Veteran's Singles and both Doubles, the Men's with Craig Milner (Northallerton) and the Mixed with Helen Shields (Bradford). Helen was pipped in the Ladies final by Jean Newton from Sheffield, while beaten Men's finalist was Leeds VAT inspector Brian Kinsey. Leeds was the first League to take advantage of the new status of Chen Xinhua, now, in his own words, an honorary Yorkshireman, when they invited the former Chinese international to take charge of a coaching session for the city's promising youngsters.

Thanks to generous sponsorship from Clark's Brewery, the Leeds



Left to right: Organiser Richard Scruton, three times winners Mal Corking and Ellen Meddings, and Eric Hill at the North Yorkshire Closed Championships.

Regional Reports

Yorkshire continued -

League were able to mount an intensive five hour session in the club-room at Farnley Park High School.

Twenty juniors between the ages of 10 and 16 were involved, and Chen's enthusiasm, knowledge and work-rate impressed not only his pupils, but also Assistant Coaching Secretary Peter Thompson, instrumental in setting up the session, and all the local coaches who gave of their time to assist. Let us hope that Peter's comment — "This exercise was magnificent it should be the forerunner of many more throughout the County" — comes to fruition.

Back to Bradford, where County man Mick Stead, unbeaten for Hermits A in Division 1 since March 87 when he fell to Mick Emmerson, saw his winning run of 95 League matches brought to an end from an unexpected quarter.

Tom Lister from Keighley, playing for Spartans and just four wins from his previous 24 outings, produced the shock when he toppled the County man in a close, but straight sets game.

Northallerton's gallop in Veteran Division 1 of the Yorkshire League came to an abrupt halt when the side crashed to successive defeats away to Sheffield and then to unbeaten Wakefield on their own table. Malcolm Corring was responsible for both the North Yorkshire team's successes at Sheffield, but was on the wrong end of the result in the battle of the giants against Cleeve Judson in the Wakefield match. Some consolation came for Northallerton in the National Vets Championship when an 8-1 win over Northumberland took them into the quarter finals and lined up a long journey down to the South coast where Brighton will provide the opposition.

arranged the fixtures so that all will be in suspense until the last day of the season APRIL 1st (Am I to believe the results when I receive them!)

Premier Division

Cippenham A	8	8	0	49	23	18
Kingfisher A	8	6	2	44	28	16
Amity Gen. A	8	3	5	38	34	13
Purbrook	8	4	4	34	38	10
Pyestock	8	2	6	34	38	10
Isle of Wight	8	1	7	17	55	5

First Division

Kingfisher B	9	6	3	52	29	18
Burnham	8	5	3	41	31	15
Merton	8	6	2	33	39	12
Amity Gen B	8	3	5	34	38	11
OLOP	7	3	4	27	36	8
Cippenham B	8	1	7	29	43	8

Ladies Division

Kingfisher	6	6	0	26	4	16
Cippenham	6	5	1	26	4	15
OLOP	7	3	4	11	24	7
Aldershot	6	1	5	10	20	6
Isle of Wight	7	1	6	7	28	4

Clwyd Regional Report

THE Clwyd county finals of the CIS Insurance Welsh Schools Table Tennis Championship were held at the Groves Sports Centre, Wrexham on Friday, 23rd February with over 20 contestants taking part. The competition for boys and girls aged 11-14 and 15-18 started in December with nearly 500 entries from all over Wales. A new category has been introduced for beginners this year to encourage new entrants.

Winners from the Clwyd finals go forward to the national finals to be held at the National Sports Centre, Cardiff, in May.

This is the third year of the event, sponsored by the Co-operative Insurance Society and organised by the Table Tennis Association of Wales. In the championship final last year, the girls' junior champion was Natasha Williams from Prestatyn.

Certificates were presented to all players by Mr. Ken Roberts, manager of CIS's Wrexham office.

The winners of the Clwyd county finals of the CIS INSURANCE WELSH SCHOOLS TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP were:

Boys under 18:

experienced
Darren Bagnall
Prestatyn High School
novice
James Smethurst
Connah's Quay High

Boys under 14:

experienced
Martin Hopwood
Darland High School
novice
Danny Harris
Pen y Gelli Junior

Girls under 18:

experienced
Susan Lees
Darling High School
novice
Natalie Hughes
Prestatyn High School

Girls under 14:

experienced
Natasha Williams
Prestatyn High School
novice
Delyth Davies
Ysgol Terrig, Treuddyn

The Leeds County Championships Season 1989-90

MATCHES played at Castell Alun Sports Centre, Hope nr. Wrexham on Saturday 17th February 1990.

Senior Division 3A

Clwyd.....8 Northants 2...2

Junior Division 2A

Clwyd.....7 Warwicks 2...3
Clwyd.....8 Cheshire.....2
Cwyd 2.....3 Warwicks 2...7

Clwyd Seniors with Clive Parry and Dave Morris both winning their two singles and Phil Jones (1).

Alison Evans took her singles and partnered Christine Watkins in the ladies doubles to beat Northamptonshire.

Clwyd Juniors with two matches to play won their first one 7-3 against Warwickshire with Spencer Harris winning his two sets. Welsh International player Natasha Williams took her singles and teamed up with Susan Lees to take the girls doubles. Darren Dagnall won one singles and with Spencer took their doubles and Susan Lees took her singles to make it 7-3.

Clwyd in their second match versus Cheshire again came through with some excellent Table Tennis with again Spencer Harris two singles wins, with both Clwyd girls Natasha Williams and Susan Lees winning their singles. Andrew Jones and Darren Dagnall one each and the girls again took their doubles.

Clwyd 2nds against Warwickshire went down 3-7 after they had fought hard with Meinir Davies and Martin Hopwood both winning one singles each. Paul Robertson and Martin Hopwood took their doubles to make the score respectable at 3-7.

Match/Referee: Mr. Roy Williams; County Umpires: Mrs. Perta Williams, Mr. C.T. Bayliss, Mr. T. A. Harris.

South West Regional Report by ALF PEPPERD

HEARTY congratulations to Peter Hancock and his merry men (and perhaps a few Ladies as well), upon their superb organisation of the Czechoslovakia v England Super Division European match at Bude in February.

An estimated 700 spectators turned up, who says that funny rubbers have completely destroyed spectator attendance? Perhaps T.T. enthusiasts are not quite as abundant now as days in the immediate post war area, but nevertheless — if there is a well presented match on these days, one can usually expect a considerable proportion of interest from the really keen table tennis supporter.

Ken Bridle, Cirencester's Chairman informs me that all the rather expensive lighting equipment used

at the "England v Federal West Germany Womens International" last October at Cirencester has now been purchased by the Cirencester League, and further more is installed at Deer Park School presumably — for practice nights and Final's Night, the latter will take place on Sunday 8th of April.

It is gratifying to know that should another International perhaps be staged in Cirencester, all the lighting equipment would be on hand, with the Association's approval of course.

Southern Region by BRIAN P. LAMERTON

BERKSHIRE emerged as the most successful county when the Southern Region Youth Cup was played at Southampton's Redbridge Sports Centre on 11th Feb. winning 5 Gold, 4 Silver and 4 Bronze awards from the 12 events and with Martin Adams (Junior Boys) and Gemma Schwartz (Cadet Girls) taking 2 of the 4 positions on offer for the Grand Final. Others winning through to the last hurdle were Dawn Barnett, Oxford (Junior Girls), James Mason, Bucks (Cadet Boys).

Hampshire provided the winners in 3 of the 4 class 2 events — Clare Woodham (Junior Girls); Kevin Macken (Cadet Boys) and Heidi Wheaton (Cadet Girls). Ben Johnson of Berkshire was the Class 2 Junior Boys winner whilst doubles winners were Boys: Gavin Yates & Martin Haycock (Oxford) & Girls: Lisa Crick & Nicola Cracknell (Berkshire).

Total entries exceeded 70 but with Barry Yates and Mick Strode

well in control all was finished in reasonable time, the Islanders were catching the last ferry before the storm brought everything to a halt.

With at most 2 matches to go neither the top nor bottom positions of any of the three regional leagues has been decided; Kingfishers surprise double defeat, nine love by Pyestock in the Premier and 5-4 by Merton in the First really opening things up. Match secretary Graham Trimming has cleverly

T. T. in Newham

Some years ago I used to run a table tennis group at a large Newham Comprehensive. As I was a full-time coach in Newham schools I had no difficulty in obtaining numbers for this club, which was held every Sunday morning. (In the school I started an 11 year old Sky-let Andrew and, from my Sunday morning group a tiny Grant Solder).

However, in their "wisdom" this Sunday morning group was axed by the local authority in 1981 as an economy measure. I retired about the same time although I've continued coaching part-time at different clubs. Recently, it was decided to revive the Sunday morning sessions, this time run by Leisure instead of Education. Without my contact with the schools — I used to coach at eleven different schools a week both in school time and after school groups — I have struggled to get players and unless there is an improvement, this new venture will have to close. I have access to eight tables, although four is the most I have had to use. So, to anyone and everyone in Newham, East London — come and join us.

Table Tennis

The Club has just opened in Eastlea Community Schools Sports Hall, Hilda Road, Newham, London E. The club is held every Sunday morning at 10.30 to 12.50. It is open for all ages of children and adults are welcome.

All standards are catered for from beginners to established players. Balls and bats are provided, but please have suitable footwear as outdoor shoes are not permitted.

Cost is 75p. each session for children.

Adults £1.50.

Hope to see you there,

Yours sincerely,
Len Hoffman.
(Tel: 01-599-7330)

Great Expectations

THE February 1990 issue of TTN included a fascinating selection of photographs which brightened up the magazine considerably. Pages 22 & 23 illustrated what can be achieved with the benefit of television lighting, whilst pages 12 & 13 illustrated what can be done with the use of a flash gun. The pictures at the top of page 31 show what can be expected from the level of lighting normally available.

As table tennis progresses in a forward direction I hope that there will be an increase in the attention paid to levels of lighting by the various organisers. Relatively few of our domestic events attract any photographers because the lighting is simply not good enough. I still believe in the view that good photographs will make for better publicity. A good picture will always enhance an article in a newspaper, be it national or local.

I attended the Stiga Top 12 at Clacton earlier this season with some great expectations of a good

opportunity to take action shots of our leading players. A prestigious event I thought, which may see some of the best conditions. How disappointed I was! The venue was no doubt adequate for playing in, but for publicity/photographic purposes I was horrified! The layout made it impossible to take any pictures from the side of the court which meant that players were a long way away. The level of lighting could only be described as bleak. It cost me a great deal of money to travel to Clacton for a collection of very grainy photographs. The lighting available forced me to push the film to 25000 ASA! So I end with a plea — please pay more attention to lighting levels if you want to capitalise on publicity opportunities.

MIKE LOVEDER
63 Durfey House, Edmund St.
Camberwell, London SE5

Breakfast Serial of Shredded Dreams

(A futuristic tale)

(A play in one Act - by Rubberneck)

Characters:

Dad, once a famous English Table Tennis Player

Son, not following in his father's footsteps.

Dad: Now come along son, eat your breakfast. Betcha can't eat three!

Son: Yes I can, but I don't want to...

Dad: If wishes were horses, son, beggars would ride. It's not always a case of doing what we want to in life.

Son: Why should I?

Dad: Because if you don't you won't grow up big and strong like your dad.

Son: Don't care.

Dad: Well, how are you going to play for Manchester United like you told me yesterday?

Son: I've decided to knit socks instead.

Dad: All right. But machines can knit better than you, they can't play football.

Son: Anyway, you're not big and strong; you sit slumped in front of the telly watching rubbish, drinking beer and smoking those horrible fags of yours.

Dad: Look, I'm getting cross now. I'll be late for work if you don't get a move on.

Son: Shan't...

(Whack)

.....

Daddy?

Son: What did you do when YOU were young?

Dad: I fought for years to become a great English table tennis player son. But they brought in players from the other countries.

Son: Why did they do that, Daddy?

Dad: Don't know, son.

Chen for England!

When the Chairman and the President write to leagues arguing against Chen Xinhua being selected for England, they exert a powerful persuasive influence, but they do not represent (most) informed opinion.



Carl Prean made good use of his trip to Bude, where he helped England beat Czechoslovakia. On the return journey he was a guest of Rescue Co-Ordination Centre Plymouth where he presented his Table Tennis Colours to Senior Aircraftsman Stephen Buck, Strike Command and rising star of Welsh Table Tennis.

From left to right: Group Captain D. Mellin, Senior R A F Officer Plymouth, Carl Prean, E T T A Chairman John Prean, Stephen Buck, Squadron Leader I.S. Chillias, Deputy Officer Commanding Rescue Co-Ordinating Centre Plymouth, Air Vice Marshall J. Morris CBE, Air Officer Commanding Scotland & Northern Ireland.

Chen's skills, style and charisma will be great assets for the England team's fortunes, for spectators, for publicity, for marketing table tennis.

Chen a "discouragement" to promising youngsters?! Hardly, rather, an inspiration and example, someone to emulate. But his playing career for England would be likely to be short, and he would not have to be selected for every occasion. His presence would create, not limit, opportunities for developing home bred stars of the future.

Perhaps I.T.T.F. rules should be toughened up. Meanwhile, the E.T.T.A. should work to the rules as they are and not as they ought to be. The I.T.T.F. two year residential rules mean that Chen is eligible for England from May. Chen has genuine reasons for living in England and has already made a considerable contribution, particularly through coaching, to English table tennis. Why shoot ourselves in the foot by unilaterally putting further barriers in his way?

In the unlikely event that hordes of world class players flood to England to spend two years of their careers outside of international play so that they can qualify to represent this country, then Donald Parker still does not have to select them. As part of selection policy he might well question how genuine they are ("mercenaries"?) and whether they have contributed/will contribute to English Table Tennis. Would their inclusion be to the greater good? Chen's will be. Chen for England!

And Carl Prean to continue to represent England too, though he plays mostly in Germany. But he must be in the England ranking list (as Chen will have to be). By all means offer suggestions on how to make the list fairer/more accurate, including possibly taking Bundesliga results into account, but do not drop out.

KEN MUHR

23 York Road, Stony Stratford
Milton Keynes, MK11 1BJ

Pro Chen

As we look to the 1990's I say do not shut out one of the most talented and pleasant personalities living in this country. Keep an open mind. He has been faithful to us for a couple of years so let us return the compliment. One man does not make a team. English born players need not be pushed out of our team but they must surely be interested in being part of a winning team and the possible injection of cash sponsorship that could be generated. Players are frequently complaining that there is not enough money in table tennis in this country. Here is a chance to move towards solving that problem. Chen Xinhua provides a golden opportunity not to be

missed. It will certainly not last forever so we should make the most of it while we can. We probably won't get another chance like this one and no-one is suggesting that we should replace all our leading players with 'foreigners'. Chen Xinhua is a winner and thousands love him for it. So we should not let racial prejudice or pride stand in the way of continued forward progress for our sport.

MIKE LOVEDER

No to Chen

I have been following the controversy about Chen Xinhua and his playing for the English national team closely, and in my opinion Johnny Leach and John Prean are correct in their arguments, although the latter one doesn't do enough justice to the case.

As a foreign student in this country, and myself being married to a foreigner, I still believe in holding up the principle of citizenship requirement for anyone representing a national team. I am originally from Finland, and as a student in the United States I learnt about various occasions where disputes took place between an American national and his national team member from an Asian country, partly because of a language problem. Also, it seemed to be quite difficult for some Americans to accept the fact that the Asian players have become a permanent part of American table tennis. This may very well happen in England as well, and thereby it is reasonable to wait for Chen to receive his British citizenship and passport, as well as get completely adjusted to the English customs and language. Nevertheless, I believe there is something that the ETTA could do for Chen. There may be some ways to pull a few strings and speed up the process of naturalisation of Chen, especially since he is married to an English lady. This should not be too much to do, and it will give assurances to Chen that he is indeed accepted to become an essential part of British table tennis, not as a resident but as a citizen.

JUHA SUOTMAA

109 Brookhill Road,
Woolwich, London SE18 6RZ

**International News or
"Mickey Mouse, thou
shouldst be living at this
hour!"
(with apologies to Milton)**

FURTHER news of activity in the Chinese transfer market has reached us. Earlier items were related in my article in the March issue.

Since then the former world champion Guo Yuehua (1981 and 83) is reported in earnest discussions with Belgium. Li Yuxiang, Chinese national champion (1976) is reported as qualifying for Switzerland. Austria seems to be winning the race to field two Chinese, as Quian Quianli is set to join Ding Yi. The I T T F is rumoured to be contemplating a 5 year residential qualification period. A lot of horses will have bolted when that particular stable door has been shut. The Chinese Association may not look on these trends unfavourably, as Chinese players are obliged to pay a substantial part of their earnings to the Chinese Association, providing useful foreign earnings.

The German Magazine, DTS, noting these movements, asks whether a Chinese European Champion will be good for our image, indeed how this is to be explained to journalists and members of the wider public. One might add how this will look on T.V. It may, of course, be a final between two Chinese and, given a little time, a team final between two teams of three Chinese each in the clothing of two European Countries. So fast are things moving that this cannot be more than a couple of European Championships away.

We already experienced a semi-final in the Ladies Team Event in Dortmund in which both Hong Kong and (less surprisingly) China were represented by two Chinese ladies. Amidst discussions whether the service throw should be 6" (or 5 1/2") or whether referees should be issued with gloss-meters, a much greater danger appears to have been overlooked — of a sport that looks ridiculous and unsaleable, as nations chase perceived success not as a result of their own efforts but by 'signing' Chinese players who often earn their real living in a third country.

Mickey Mouse, thou shouldst be living at this hour when all these stirring contests will be played out before empty benches to decide which nation has signed the best Chinese! A true contest of skill, a feast of irrelevance.

JOHN PREAN

Open letter to the English Table Tennis Association

PERHAPS I might be allowed to contribute a little to the debate on whether Chen Xinhua should be permitted to play for England.

First I must declare my interests, for my credentials are lowly compared to many who have served the sport longer than I!

I have no political axe to grind (readers of Table Tennis News past will recall that the current chairman John Prean was treated no differently to any other contributor).

I have but a small vested trade

interest; I occasionally sell Dunlop/Slazenger squash, tennis and badminton rackets through my member's sports club. That choice is merely a personal one... just as I choose to play table tennis with a Butterfly bat, preferably on a Jaques table over a Dunlop net with TSP/Nittaku balls.

Market Competition

In trade it can be argued that the unrestricted freedom to cross national barriers is advantageous — it introduces new products and catalyses sluggish domestic industries and markets.

I do not believe those principles apply to the rights of citizenship for human beings — except in extreme circumstances such as war, political persecution or flight from natural disasters like flooding or drought.

Additionally, where parents have chosen to spend their child's formative years in a country different to that of their origin, it seems reasonable to grant those such as Desmond Douglas and Carl Prean the opportunity to represent the country whose language and culture they have unquestionably absorbed within their thinking and conduct.

If I may be blunt to the point of insensitivity, this is not an issue of skin colour; Ivor Montagu — the founder father of this great sport — might have agreed. Few can doubt that Douglas and Prean have (like Chen has for China) served their country with dignity and to the limit of their considerable abilities.

The issue is one of values, and recognition of the contribution that sport (with its philosophical trinity of: the judgemental Referee, overseeing the antics of Man as foolish players, conducting themselves in a Spirit of friendship and sportsmanship) plays in the psychological and social stability of societies throughout the world.

Constraints

The dreams of competitive beings are constrained by barriers; they act as a brake against unbridled ambition and greed and establish targets against which to assess progress.

So first one aspires for recognition within the family, then age group, school, club, league, county, country and for a privileged few, the world. Many at the times of their triumphs point skywards or sink to their knees in thanks for the fortune of circumstances that have brought them to their ultimate goal, before exchanging a gesture of mutual respect.

The role of the constraining criteria is essential to stability: banana republics confer awards and citizenship cheaply, the world views them accordingly.

Tragic consequences

And if we prostitute the conditions of those criteria for the sake of short-term gain, are the benefits worth the sacrifice? County and

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Tasmanian Table Tennis Association Inc.

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The TTTA is seeking the services of a table tennis coach to be responsible for the conducting of its Development Programme which places its main emphasis on development in schools.

The position will be on a three year contract and although based in Hobart, will involve regular travel throughout Tasmania.

It is desirable that applicants have a minimum NCAS Level 2 table tennis coaching accreditation (or its overseas equivalent). Applicants must possess a high level of communication and organisational ability. A remuneration package of \$A30,000 (including travelling allowance) is available.

Further enquiries and written applications should be addressed to:

Mr. D.L. Wilson, Director of Coaching, Tasmanian Table Tennis Association Inc,
G.P.O. Box 1457R, Hobart, TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA 7001 (Fax: 61 02 348820)

Funding assistance for this position has been provided by the Division of Sport and Recreation, Tasmania.

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league table tennis associations might think not and, in athletics, the Zola Budd fiasco served that sport (and Britain) shabbily.

Perhaps we might explore what should be the distinction between the eligibility conditions for team competitions and those for individuals...

Open for Individuals

The World Singles' Table Tennis Championships should be the premier Open tournament: Chen can play, as he did (or should have done) in the recent Leeds English Open at Manchester as a non-nominated player choosing to describe himself either as a 'stateless citizen' or under his current status as a Chinese subject.

The use of 'affiliated Association' as a label is misleading and implies an aspect of player control and permission by member Associations which is contrary to the internationally agreed principles and spirit of free trade.

Were Chen to win, the world would marvel at his skills and no doubt his adopted country of residence would be proud to bask in the reflected glory of his victory.

But for team championships the principles are different.

Governments decide

Any international sporting organisation can set down MINIMUM standards of eligibility before a player can move from one country to another in order that the credibility of its team competitions are preserved.

But the national associations DO NOT HAVE TO COMPLY with this arbitrarily agreed standard. Equality of value and achievement in national representation between different sports dictates that the parameters accepted by these associations should be those that the government of their respective countries determines as the qualification for citizenship.

Any person should not, therefore, be allowed to represent England until deemed by the British government to have earned the benefits of citizenship of our country.

To vote otherwise is to ignore the values of team competitions that many parents strive for years to instil within their sons and daughters: a pride in playing not just for themselves but for others and beyond.

No one doubts Chen's desire nor sincerity to become a full British citizen and proudly represent his adopted country. Few would not welcome him with due recognition for his delightful skill and conduct and many, quite reasonably, believe that he would be an attractive asset to the English team as he is already for the English table tennis scene.

But even with conferred citizenship I believe that a Chen, whose commitment and allegiance have already been honoured by selection for another country, should not be allowed to represent the country of adoption unless extreme circumstances prevailed at the time of transfer.

Did Ivan Lendl and Martina Navratilova defect to the USA because of threat to their own life or at a time of war-like conflict? I suggest rather that it was a decision of choice and expediency based upon an increasing dislike of their native political system and the constraints it placed upon their freedom and earning capacity.

Yet still the roots of national identity run deep and if you want to see a Swede, Chinaman and Frenchman representing England, then a Russian, Japanese and a Pole two years later, vote to take advantage

of the minimum ITTF eligibility guidelines.

Challenge

But I invite you to reflect whether a sport is best played to the letter or the spirit of its rules. Are the rules always right anyway; the frailty of human oversight allows aberrations.

For ponder whether the recent revolutions in Romania and East Germany occurred because the citizens obeyed the orders of the soldiers to disperse. Or whether they stood in the streets of Bucharest and said "we are Romanians too and we want to be free".

The extreme may seem far removed from sport but I invite you to consider whether, in a society built upon the Christian concept of freedom of choice, the sports-grounds, the free media, and the courts are not the battlefields where conflict can occur with no loss of life.

Boris Becker, realising this, once said, "I just lost a tennis match. That's all, nobody died". Nationalism taken to fanatical extreme can be a great evil. In sport, it can be a source of inspiration.

ROBERT OLDFIELD
Table Tennis Player

Watch these Events

the Leeds National Championships — SAT/SUN/MON 5/6/7TH MAY 1990

at Oldham Sports Centre, Lord Street, Oldham, Lancs Tel: 061 678 4090



From 9.00am Sat: Veteran and Qualifying Events

From 9.00am Sun: Early rounds of Main Events including Mixed Doubles Final

From 10.00am Mon: Semi Finals – Early afternoon: Finals

Ticket Prices: Sat £1.00; Sun £3.00; Mon £3.00

Rover Ticket: £5.00 Children & OAP's: Half Price

Please note that one free child ticket will be given with every adult ticket sold upon request

For further information contact ETTA Office Tel: 0424 722525



the Leeds Youth Cup National Finals

MONDAY 28TH MAY 1990

at The Queen Mother Sports Centre, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EL

Tel: 01 798 2125



the Leeds English Junior Open – FRI/SAT/SUN 1/2/3RD JUNE 1990

at The Spa Royal Hall, South Marine Drive, Bridlington, East Yorkshire Tel: 0262 678255

Qualifying Events: Fri commencing 12.30pm – Competition Proper: Sat commencing 9.00am

International Team Event: Sun commencing 9.00am. Further info. contact ETTA Office Tel: 0424 722525

The Fourth National Under 11 Championships

Sunday 29th April 1990

At Mansfield Leisure Centre, Chesterfield Road South, Mansfield, Notts

Tel: 0623 646081

Organiser: Rob Sinclair, c/o ETTA Office. Tel: 0424 722525

the Leeds Women's British League

FIRST WEEKEND Sat/Sun 12/13th May 1990

Bletchley Leisure Centre, Milton Keynes

For further information contact:

Mike Lewis 0272 730788



the Leeds Women's British League

SECOND WEEKEND – Sat/Sun 9/10th June 1990

Crystal Leisure Centre, Bell Street, Stourbridge, W. Midlands 0384 442543

For info: Mike Lewis Tel: 0272 730788



the Leeds National Team Finals — SUNDAY 20th MAY 1990

St. Neots T.T. Club, Rivermead, The Common, St. Neots, Cambs. Commencing 11.00am

Morning Session: Ormesby Cup, Gainsford Cup, Hammersley Cup, J. Leech Cup – Afternoon Session:

Willmott Cup, Rosebowl Cup, Bromfield Trophy, Carter Cup. For information contact ETTA Office Tel: 0424 722525



British League Premier Division — Top of the Table Fixtures

on Sunday 29th April 1990 – 2.30pm – Grove I v Bathwick Tyres I

at The Grove School, Stafford Street, Market Drayton, Shropshire Tel: 0630 652121

ESSEX 3 STAR

Sat/Sun 14/15th April 1990

at the Brentwood Centre, Doddinghurst Road, Brentwood, Essex (Tel: 0277 229621)

Organiser: Dick Roffe (Tel: 04024 72341)

YORKSHIRE JUNIOR SELECT

Sat/Sun 21st/22nd April 1990

at Northbridge Leisure Centre, Northbridge, Halifax (Tel: 0422 341527)

Organiser: Rea Balmford 0482 821279

BRISTOL 2 STAR SENIOR OPEN

Saturday 28th April 1990

at the Thornbury Leisure Centre, Alveston Hill, Thornbury, Bristol. Tel: 0454 418222

Organiser: Peter Sandford Tel: 0272 569381

BRISTOL 2 STAR JUNIOR OPEN

Sunday 29th April 1990

at the Thornbury Leisure Centre, Alveston Hill, Thornbury, Bristol Tel: 0454 418222

Organiser: Peter Sandford Tel: 0272 569381

West Midlands Junior 2 Star — SAT/SUN 19/20TH MAY 1990

at The Grove School, Market Drayton, Shropshire

Organiser: Contact for information Geoff Twiss Tel: 063 081 678

Dunlop English Schools Individual Championships

Saturday 28th April 1990 at Mansfield Leisure Centre, Chesterfield Road South, Mansfield, Notts.

Tel: 0623 646081

Organiser: Paul Birch Tel: 0234 41988