

TABLE TENNIS

NEWS



ISSUE No. 262
JULY/AUG 1999

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CHAMPION...**



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Table Tennis News

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July/August 1999

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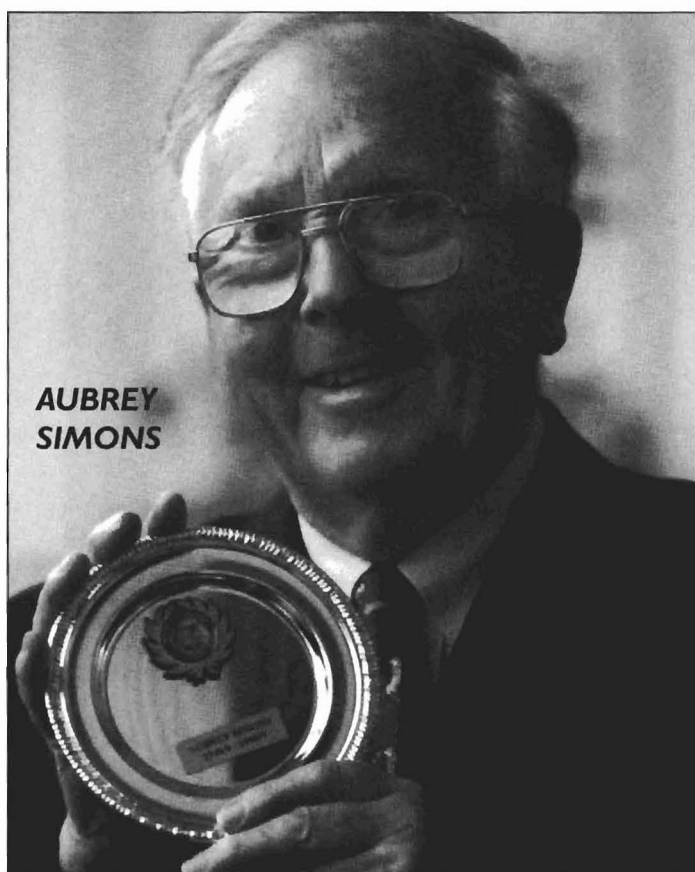
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TRULY A SPORT FOR LIFE

IF living proof is needed that the sport of table tennis is truly a sport for life, then the presentation of commemorative plaques to 27 of its members for 50 years, continuous service at the Bristol and District Table Tennis Association's 80th Anniversary on May 21st is that proof. Amongst the 27 honoured was English International and Bristol's President Aubrey Simons who still produces his magic at the table for Horfield Civil Service side in Division 3. Aubrey's lifelong devotion to table tennis started when he followed his father into table tennis and had risen to fourth in the World Rankings after



superb, vital wins against Andreanis, Koczian, and Vana which ensured

England winning the Swathling Cup in 1953.

Few know that Aubrey's prowess is not just confined to one sport however, he won his cricket cap for Gloucestershire seconds the same day as Arthur Milton, England's double international, and still plays golf at Henbury where he once played off 10, all this despite under going a serious hip operation six years ago.

Aubrey's 26 colleagues at the awards ceremony were Sheila Aston, John Banfield, Ron Bowles, Reg Brown, Graham Brown, Bill Bruton, Maurice Cole, John Cox, Jim Davies, John Davis, Tony Dimambro, Pete Dominey, Dick Hawking, Jim Hawking, Roger Haydon, George Heard, Keith House, Ken Loader, John Longhorn, John Nash, David Payne, Terry Risdale, Ken Simmons, Reg Sims, Ken Vowles and June Watts.

Honourable Service Indeed.

WORLD TEAM TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS

THE Executive Committee of the ITTF has selected MALAYSIA as the site of the 2000 World Team Table Tennis Championships to be held for seven days within the period of 12 to 20 February 2000.

WOODY'S World

LEGENDARY JOHNNY LEACH was honoured at the ETTA 100 Club dinner, held after the AGM in Sheffield, for the 50th anniversary of his first World Mens Singles triumphant.

After the dinner he was presented with a replica of the St. Brides Vase that he won in Stockholm by ETTA Chairman Alan Ransome.

Receiving this replica trophy was a very special moment for Johnny, as the original went missing at the 1977 World Championships in Birmingham.

For those of you who were not fortunate enough to witness this magical evening, Table Tennis News proudly publishes reports and pictures on this tribute to England's best known table tennis player, in Alan Ransome's 'From the Chair' pages 3 and 4, Brian Halliday's column on pages 8 and 9, and John Woodford's 'A Night to Remember' page 11.

The Grand Prix Finals report and pictures appear on pages 18 and 19, where once again the victors were Terry Young and Kubrat Owolabi.

John Wood

Three associations from Sweden, France and Malaysia applied to host the Team World Championships. The Executive Committee examined the three applications and was impressed by the high quality of all the bids.

The Malaysian Table Tennis Association has been granted the right to host the event in Kuala Lumpur within the same facilities as the 1998 commonwealth Games.

RESEARCH

ROY WILLIAMS is researching the history of Table Tennis in Wales from 1923.

If any readers could assist him with the International Programmes, news cuttings or any other item of interest please contact:

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TABLE TENNIS NEWS

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SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO JOHNNY LEACH



Alan Ransome OBE,
Chairman of the English
Table Tennis Association



ETTA Chairman Alan Ransome presents a replica of St. Bride Vase to Johnny Leach

FOLLOWING the ETTA Annual General Meeting in Sheffield on 3rd July the ETTA 100 Club organised a special tribute dinner for over 80 guests to celebrate 50 years since the ETTA President, Johnny Leach M.B.E. won his first World Men's Singles title. The evening turned out to be much more than simply a celebration of a World Championship won in Sweden in 1949, but identified more than fifty years successful contribution, not just to the Association, but to the whole sport in general, by Johnny.

A procession of speakers paid tribute to Johnny's contribution to many aspects of the sport:

Aubrey Simon, who was in the team in 1949 when Johnny won his first title in Sweden, Michael Thornhill and Ken Stanley who were in the team in 1951 when he won his second world title recalled the matches and performances that led to the World Championship. Denis Neale talked about Johnny's days as an England men's team captain in the 1960's. Ralph Gunnion and Richard Yule recalled happy memories of working for Johnny both in the Halex/S.W. Hancock sports distribution business in Clapham in the 70's, and Jill Parker recalled the support that Johnny had given her as a sponsored player and of the day that she won the European Championship in 1976 using a Johnny Leach bat. In addition to

these testimonies there were many letters of congratulation from people who were unable to be present on the evening including the Rowe Twins, Ebby Scholer, Emlyn Jones, Susi Barna, Elsie Carrington and Ann Hayden Jones. Ron Craydon wrote a Commemoration in the Celebration Menu. Mike Holt, the Eamon Andrews of table tennis, introduced the speakers and with his Red Book made a "Johnny Leach - This is Your Life" presentation.

It was my honour to make the final presentation in which I was able to refer to the enormous success of Johnny's promotional and development work, in particular the highly successful News of the World/Butlins Holiday Camp scheme which introduced tens of thousands of

youngsters to table tennis over the 15 years that it ran, the Nationwide/Eagle Girl competition and Johnny's success in persuading the television companies in the 70's and 80's to cover table tennis. In addition the evening celebrated 10 year's of Johnny being President of the English Table Tennis Association where he has been a very high profile and important figurehead, assisting the Association in the acquisition of two World and the European Championships and acting behind the scenes giving positive motivation and advice to the Management Committee and National Council. I was then very pleased to have the opportunity on behalf of the ETTA of presenting Johnny with a suitably inscribed replica of the St. Bride Vase that he won fifty years ago in Stockholm.

Johnny was accompanied at the dinner by his wife, Daisy, who was also praised by several speakers for the support that she had given Johnny for more than fifty years, and by his sons, John and Jeff, daughter in law Lesley and grandchildren.

In his acceptance speech Johnny recalled the enjoyment and comradeship that he had enjoyed with his friends in table tennis for over sixty years, but on a more serious note felt that the sport with the glue and fast bats was not as attractive now from a spectator point of view as it was in the 50's and 60's. Interestingly the ITTF will be discussing this whole subject at the forthcoming World individual Championships in Eindhoven in August when there are proposals to increase the size of the ball and reduce the

thickness of the rubber in order to improve the spectacle of the sport.

The event was organised by the ETTA 100 Club Secretary Doreen Stannard and Jose Ransome who put together an evening that will never be forgotten by those present.

CADET BREAK- THROUGH IN HOLLAND

Writing these columns over the last two years or so I have been keeping the membership updated with the progress which has been made with the World Class Performance plan whereby we have been in receipt of Lottery Funding to the approximate value of £1,000,000 per annum and have been able to establish a National Training Centre at Nottingham with many of our main players resident and with a number of top coaches to work with them. The first real signs of progress with new young players have emerged over the last month or so when the England Cadet team



JOHNNY and DAISY LEACH pictured at the ETTA 100 Club Dinner in Sheffield

produced one of their best ever performances in the Cadet Six Nation Championship in the Netherlands in June.

In recent years our teams have finished well into the lower order at the end of the Championship. This time with victories over the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark the Cadet Boys team finished 3rd, and with wins against France, Denmark and the Netherlands and a draw with Sweden the Cadet Girls team finished 2nd. Katy Parker was our best performer in the individual events reaching the semi-final before losing to the eventual winner, Alexandre Urban of Germany.

The England Cadet Boys Team consisted of Dale Barham, Michael Gomersall, Louis Rosenthal and Lee Barham, while the girls were represented by Natalie Bawden, Katy Parker, Lucy Pointer and Georgina Walker.

Another junior success was the performance of Andrew Baggaley who reached the semi-final in the Danish Youth Open. Unseeded he beat Sakamoto of Japan, Asamoab of Sweden before losing to Mitamura of Japan. The winner was the Danish player, Michael Maze.

The ETTA Annual General Meeting was held in Sheffield on 3rd July when the Management Committee Report and the Statement of Accounts were presented to the membership. Any members wishing to receive a copy of the Annual Report should contact the General Secretary, Robert Sinclair on Telephone 01424 722525. In addition the Honours Committee recommended that awards be given to the following: Honorary Life Member to Mike Holt; New Vice Presidents to John Jermyn, Richard Scruton, Stuart Sherlock, John Freeman; Ivor Montagu Award to Malcolm Macfarlane; Leslie Forrest Memorial Award to Bob Gale OBE; and the Malcolm Scott Award to Mike Watts.

TABLE TENNIS on TV

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POST BAG

BLACK-LISTED?

JOHN WOODFORD, in his column in the May/June issue of Table Tennis News, said that he had received a report "that umpires who help out at Grand Prix events could be black-listed by the National Umpires and Referees Committee." This allegation was discussed at our committee meeting in June and none of the members could imagine how such a ludicrous suggestion arose. We would never discourage an umpire from officiating at any event under the jurisdiction of the ETTA and one of our main objectives is to ensure an adequate supply of competent officials for all table tennis competitions in this country. I can assure you that there is no "NURC blacklist", for this or any other reason.
*Colin Clemett, Secretary
ETTA National Umpires and Referees committee*

DELIGHTED

I WAS delighted to see photos of Leigh Iles and Rachel Willis in Table Tennis News, issue May/June 1999, following their awards of 'Players of the Weekend' at the recent Woolwich Junior British League event at Potters Leisure Resort at Hopton-on-Sea.

Both Leigh and Rachel learned to play table tennis at Holymead Junior School in Bristol.

It is a pleasure to know that not only are they still playing and enjoying their sport, but that they are upholding the traditions of good sportsmanship of which Holymead School has always been proud.

Mark Hoskins,

Holymead Junior School, Bristol

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admin@ettahq.freereserve.co.uk

- I LEARN that the Editorial Board of "Table Tennis News" are determined to make this magazine more interesting in several ways. One suggestion is to expand this column, which I am happy to do, another is to increase the amount of letters to the Editor. Perhaps some letters from readers will be replying to views in this column.

- BUT often Mailbox letters are far too long. Readers often turn over the page when the words extend to 500 or more. When at one stage in my Journalistic career I was editing the letters page for a local newspaper, the Golden Rule was "no more than 250 words". I feel that for TTN, except in special circumstances, 300 words should be the maximum. Most people who have enough interest in our sport to write letters should be able to get their thoughts into 300 words. Recent examples were letters from Keith Wilson and Tony Meredith, excellent material, but far too long and rambling.

- THIS column has I understand, put the cat amongst the pigeons on the subject of umpiring at Grand Prix tournaments. I implied that the national committee were not happy with local umpires helping out. I now understand that this problem is being studied carefully and a compromise will be found.

- WATCHING courtside at Bath at the Grand Prix finals, I was amazed at the displays of bad temper by mainly "lady" players. Indiscipline rears its ugly head at Grand Prix events, especially when players are umpiring. At Bath, with a player umpiring, a lady from Essex deserved yellow and red cards for kicking over court screens, failing to replace them when requested to do and then responding loudly to the referee Mick Strode with a four-letter word starting with "p", coupled with "off". Surely, this class of behaviour should be reported and action taken by the ETTA Disciplinary Committee.

- PLAYERS who cannot control their emotions on court when losing, are showing such a bad example to the young players and spectators. We all know how we feel after being 20-16 up in the third game and then losing 20-22. A similar situation happened at Bath to a young Yorkshire lady, who then had a public stand-up row with her father who was her coach when she lost after leading.

- STILL on discipline - something has to be done about a young member of the Academy. His behaviour is so bad that his name is well-known. At the Aston Villa Sports Centre for the Schools individual events he was sent home before the event started by referee Les Smith for foul and abusive language - and that was just knocking-up!

- THE Disciplinary Committee has work to do. Too much of their work is done behind closed doors. Reports are made months afterwards and with no names of offenders. Justice has got to be seen to be done.

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT SEASON

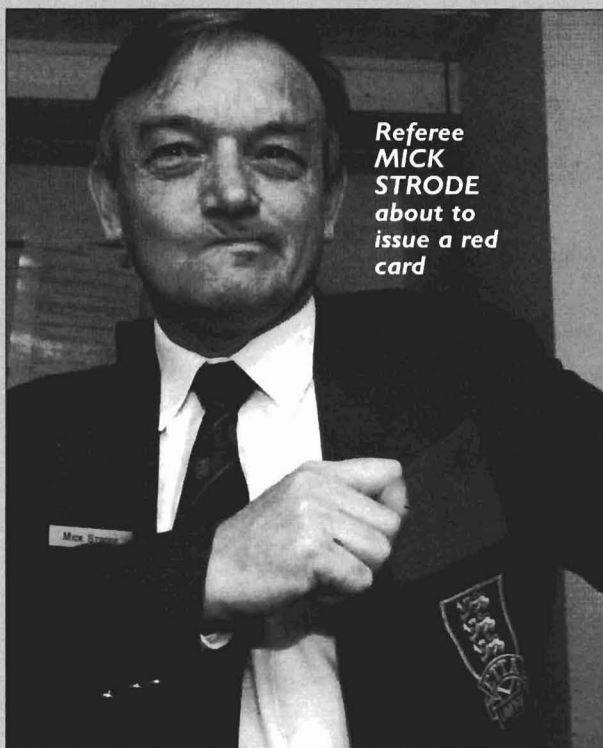
- AS Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia is announced as the venue next February for the Swaythling and Corbillon Cups, I retain memories of the most tropical playing conditions I have experienced in Singapore not too long ago at the Commonwealth Championships. I can recall Carl Prean and Matthew Syed almost overcome by heat in a hall with no adequate air-conditioning and almost wanting to change shirts every five points.

- MALAYSIA, in the same area, is a hot and sticky place. I can recall Carl returning from "KL" and saying it was the hottest place he had played in. However, we are assured that next February, the indoor stadium used for the 1998 Commonwealth Games was up to Olympic standards in air-conditioning and we hope, every other facility.

- BALKANS WAR - every cloud has a silver lining. The ITTF must be privately standing on their hands that the world individual events have been separated from the team events. Now they have to fight to keep it that way, but you can be sure the Japanese organisers of the 2001 world's in Osaka will fight to play all together.

- TWENTY-ONE clubs were absent from the recent British League conference held recently in Birmingham. I think that is appalling. The meeting voted on a vital proposal that all matches should be 14 games on two tables. Two of the most prominent clubs with teams in several divisions Darlington and Horsham, voted against 14-game tables. Their votes amounted to nine, whilst 14 votes were cast for the 14-game matches. The required majority was a high 75 per cent, so the motion failed.

- THE way ahead now in the British League is a proposal to increase the number of matches in the lower divisions from eight to ten, by adding two doubles. At least this means that players will play two singles and one doubles. But I doubt if this compromise will be universally popular. Mike Johns, the front-rank Hastings club player told me that he could not justify the time involved in a long journey of more than 100 miles just to play one extra doubles.



Referee
**MICK
STRODE**
about to
issue a red
card

John Woodford

VERY SUCCESSFUL 1998/99 SEASON



Mike
Johns,
ETTA
Events
Manager

ALTHOUGH, from an events point of view, the 1998/99 season is over the Events department at Hastings has been extremely busy making arrangements for next season. Looking back I think it is fair to say that the last 12 months have been very successful, writes Mike Johns.

Last June the ETTA in conjunction with the VETTS, staged the extremely successful World Veterans Championships at the G-Mex Centre in Manchester. In March we staged, in the words of the ITTF, the best ever English Open, at Potters Leisure Resort, and the ETTA Grand Prix continued to go from strength to strength with 12 events plus the finals.

Unfortunately, next season's English Open will not be held at Potters. The only dates Potters could offer us coincided with the rearranged World Team Championships in Malaysia. We are now searching for an alternative venue, whilst talks are continuing with Potters with regard to the 2001 Open.

The Grand Prix will again consist of 12 tournaments plus the finals, but of the 12, 5 will be classified as 'Majors' with increased prize money and Grand Prix points. Michel Gadat will use these events for selecting England teams, consequently all the leading players will be expected to play. We are hoping that in addition to the normal method of distributing entry forms, we will be able to post them on our web site and allow entry by E Mail.

In addition to the events that we normally run, next season will see the ETTA staging the Home Countries Internationals, possibly in Sheffield on a date to be arranged and a group of the European Women's League Division One, featuring Belgium, Luxembourg, Lithuania and England at Bury St Edmunds on 30/31st October.

THE 1999/2000 GRAND PRIX CALENDAR IS AS FOLLOWS:

28/29 August	Merseyside Open	Liverpool
25/26 September	Clare Pengelly Memorial	Paignton
9/10 October	Sussex Open	Hastings
30/31 October	Western Open	Bath GP Major
*4/5 December	Middlesex Open	Enfield
*18/19 December	Southern Open	Windsor
8/9 January	West Midland Open	Stratford on Avon GP Major
19/20 February	Potters East Anglian Open	Hopton on Sea
25/26 March	Eastern Open	Kings Lynn GP Major
8/9 April	Blackpool 4 Star	Blackpool GP Major
22/23 April	South West Open	St Austell
13/14 May	South Yorkshire Open	Sheffield GP Major
10/11 JUNE	GRAND PRIX FINALS	BATH

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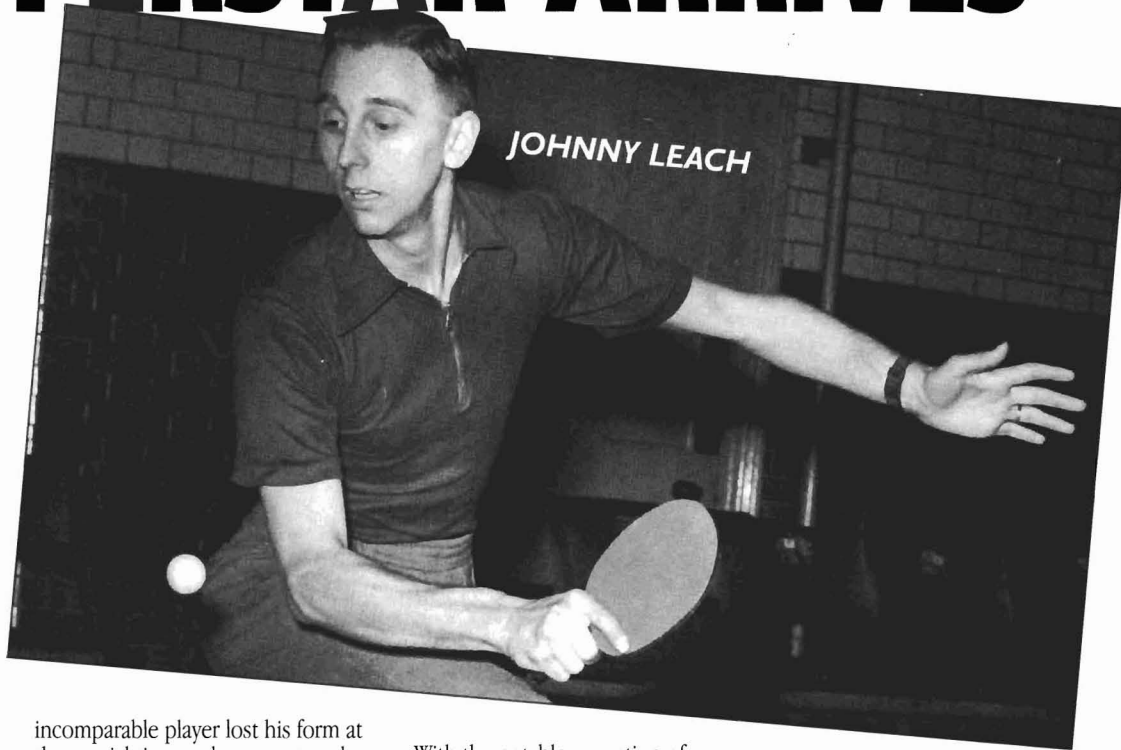
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We ask all members of the association to support the above companies who are in turn supporting table tennis.



N I M A

A SUPERSTAR ARRIVES



THIS year we celebrate a special anniversary. It is 50 years since our President Johnny Leach won the first of his two World Singles titles. Brian Halliday reports on those memorable years.

Stockholm, February 1949, the Table tennis Championships of the World. The entry for the men's singles read like a Who's Who of the game, but there were major shocks in store.

First Victor Barna went out in the 1st round to Guy Amouretti of France. Flisberg, Stipek, and those two fine Americans Jimmy McClure and Doug Cartland were eliminated. The favourite to retain his title was Richard Bergmann but rather surprisingly this

incomparable player lost his form at the crucial time and went out under the time limit rule to Soos.

With the notable exception of Bergmann himself there were few

who thought that Johnny Leach

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stood a chance of achieving his lifelong ambition, and a glance at the draw seemed to confirm his supporters worst fears. In his battle with the massive Hungarian Ferenc Sido he used clever tactics to slow up his opponents fierce forehand attack. Against Soos he reversed his strategy with an all out attack - but it took him five gruelling games to win through.

His semi-final opponent was Dick Miles, probably one of the sharpest and hardest hitters of a table tennis ball up to that time. Johnny's retrieving was incredible as well as his ability to counter hit the strong drives of his opponent. The tension of a truly great match reached a climax as Miles twice had match point in the fifth and deciding game. Twice Johnny rose beautifully to the occasion and saved them imperturbably to win 24-22.

Bohumil Vana was a formidable final opponent indeed. Twice a World Singles Champion, the Czech player was certainly the most consistent player in the game at that time. He came to the match with a 100% record against Leach, but there was just a glimmer of hope for the Englishman. Vana had not quite been at his dominating best in the tournament and Leach intended to undermine his opponent's confidence and patience. The Englishman took the first game but lapsed into errors in the next and it was quickly one game all. Leach was brilliant in the third to lead 2 games to 1. Back came Vana now back to his brilliant best scoring superbly with verve and inimitable technique and wide angled and perfectly placed drives. Vana had levelled at two games all. In the deciding game Leach just refused to be beaten and with some excellent counter hitting on both wings won the match - and that coveted title.

A superstar had arrived, and among the first to congratulate him was his great rival and personal friend, Richard Bergmann.

It was Bergmann himself who won the title the following year and now some doubts were beginning to be expressed that perhaps Leach's success owed more to luck than an enduring expertise.

In 1951 the championships went to Vienna. The English sent a strong team but this time were without the services of Bergmann who was suspended. Hopes were centred around Johnny Leach and of course everyone hoped for a repeat of his triumph of two years ago. The way he rose to the

occasion is the stuff of legend. In what was a golden era for the game he came right through the team and individual events with a 100% record. Ron Crayden wrote at the time "His confidence was supreme. His fighting spirit "Churchillian".

The 2nd round saw him beat Bhandari of India. Cafiero of France managed to take a game from him in the next round. A great match was expected next when he came on to play Marty Reisman but it proved a real anti climax because Johnny was simply far too good putting away the American 9, 17, and 17. Roothoft was his next opponent and that shrewd judge Victor Barna remarked that this match would probably decide who would win the overall title. Roothoft was always a difficult player for Johnny. The Frenchman had a brilliant defence and could retrieve with uncanny accuracy. The match reached the fourth game and two match points to Leach. Roothoft saved them both and then levelled at two games all. He went on to lead 10-7 at the change of ends, but Johnny did not panic, and with a combination of great play and great courage he led 20-15. It still wasn't all over as Rootholt hung on grimly and picked up to nineteen. Then to our great relief Johnny acquired that vital last point.

In the semi-final he eased past Tereba, although the Czech took the first 25-23. His final opponent was Ivan Andreadis. It is unlikely that the game has ever seen a player with quite the flair and brilliance of Andreadis. His touch and graceful flowing game has never been surpassed. As brilliant as he undoubtedly was he was never the best of match players, and in that department he was up against the best in the world. A fine match ensued but Leach was always the master. Andreadis won the first game and although he had five edge points he played really well passing Johnny on several occasions with beautiful forehand and backhand drives. Leach then started to open the game out and gradually Andreadis was held in a vice like grip. The third Leach won 21-18, and the Czech now realised that defeat was inevitable. Leach ran away to an 18-3 lead in the fourth and the game finished at 21-13. World Champion again. The doubters had been routed.



INFORMATION OFFICER MESSAGES from Ken Muhr

I am most grateful to those Press Officers or enthusiasts who have sent me copies of their local cuttings. I have been firing off reports all over the country on major events I have attended but with little idea how much my efforts have born fruit - all evidence is of value and will help justify my position to Sport England!. Trying to compose reports during and immediately after events and then send them off everywhere against press deadlines, is extremely time intensive and pressured and I would be more effective if I could build up a network of people to whom I could provide the raw data for the compilation of local reports. Having people such as Adrian Hall (Kent), Colin Deaton (Derbyshire), John Cunningham (Berkshire) Rae Balmford (Yorkshire), John Woodford (Sussex), Jim Beckley (Cheshire/Lancs) and others, to work through and with makes an enormous difference. I apologise to those active people I have yet to be in touch with - but please don't wait for me to make the contact!

MORE VISIBLE & ACCESSIBLE

All County Associations and Leagues and Clubs are encouraged to appoint or re-appoint Press/Publicity Officers, not only to help me, but more important, to publicise table tennis activities held locally or of local interest so that our sport is more visible and accessible. A parent of keen youngsters has recently complained to me how difficult it was in her area to find out anything about local table tennis activity - nothing in the library, in local authority leisure services directories or publications, on sports centre information boards, in community education/evening class prospectuses or from the local paper! Other areas are more switched on but there is a role for a good Press/Publicity Officer everywhere! Public recognition for success encourages and motivates players, coaches and organisers (and sponsors!), so give them credit when it is due. (The Public Relations Department is discussing ways of recognising table tennis journalism!) And please keep on giving me your local stories that may be of wider interest.

NATIONAL MEDIA

I feel that in the national media things are just beginning to happen for table tennis. More media people are contacting me. There has been a fair amount of exposure, mainly incidentally, of our sport on television recently. John Woodford in the Daily Telegraph has long given the best national press coverage, but the two features on the Progress Club in the Daily Express are very encouraging and Matthew Syed's excellent article in the Times with the promise of regular features to come is a real coup! We are hopeful that the excellent racket sports journalist with a broadsheet reputation, Richard Eaton, will be joining our strong media team covering the World Individual Championships in Eindhoven.

THE MIGHTY WALZER

Notwithstanding the particular Jewish, 1950s and Manchester TT League perspective of Howard Jacobson's new book, 'The Mighty Walzer: A Story of Sex, Death and Ping-Pong', to be launched on 26th August, as an affectionate, perceptive and amusing look at local league table tennis it rings true for everywhere and reminds me of the incredible characters I knew in the Cambridge League in the sixties. A terrific read and as Howard is so well known as an author, it should significantly raise the profile of our sport, albeit as ping-pong! Watch out for the 'South Bank Show' on ITV in mid-September.

At ETTA headquarters I am to develop a photo library and would be very grateful for action photographs of all types, but particularly of 'grass roots' players of all ages (especially young), sex and ethnicity.

BAKER & PARKER SHOW PROMISE FOR THE FUTURE

STAFFORDSHIRE'S Gregory Baker and Surrey's Joanna Parker are this year's National Under 12 Singles Champions, when they won their respective events, plus the doubles, at Widnes in May.

The Championships, which were supported by Hulton Borough Council, were officially opened by the Mayor of Hulton Councillor Bob Gilligan.

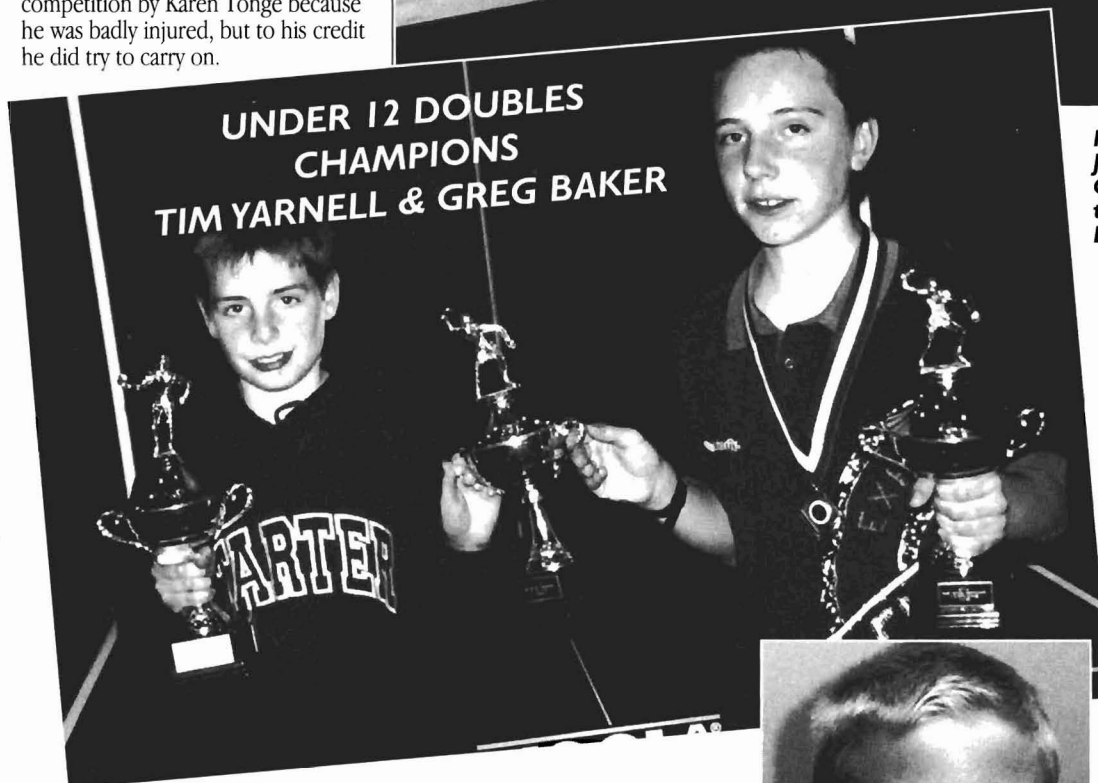
In the Boys Under 12 Final Baker defeated Neil Cartwright from Dorset 16 and 12.

Baker beat his doubles partner Yarnell in the semi-final, whilst Cartwright defeated Thomas Mitchell of Buckinghamshire.

Unfortunately No.4 seed James Fletcher was withdrawn from the competition by Karen Tonge because he was badly injured, but to his credit he did try to carry on.



Pictured above is the victorious Joanna Parker, the new Under 12 Girls Champion, whilst bottom is the new Under 10 Boys Champion Bradley Evans.



The Girls Under 12 Final was a much closer affair with the deciding third game so very close that it could have gone either way. This nail biter was finally won by Joanna Parker when she defeated Cheshire's Karen Shepherd -14, 18, 21.

The semi-finalists in this event were Abigail Embling and Lisa Calcutt.

Baker teamed up with Yarnell to win

the Boys Under 12 Doubles final, beating Adam Bleakley and Chris Gregory, 17,-18, 6.

Under 12 Girls finalist paired-up to take the Doubles title, beating Sarah Brown and Abigail Embling, 14, 12.

The Under 11 Singles were won by both No.1 seeds, Yarnell took the Boys trophy beating Lincolnshire's Shaun Rogerson, whilst Embling won the Girls crown when she defeated

Lauren Spink of Norfolk.

Both the No.1 seeds also took the Under 10 titles also. Bradley Evans won the Boys, beating Daniel Rees from Essex, in three, whilst Lauren Spink bounced back from her Under 11 defeat to beat Heather Shutt from Yorkshire, two straight.

RESULTS

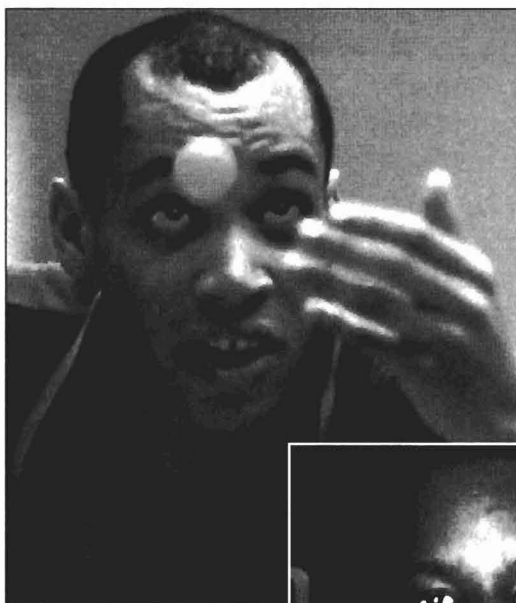
UNDER 10 FINALS
BOYS SINGLES: B. Evans b. D. Rees -20, 16, 18.
GIRLS SINGLES: L.Spink b. H. Shutt 13, 12.
UNDER 11 FINALS
BOYS SINGLES: T. Yarnell b. S. Rogerson 13, 15.
GIRLS SINGLES: A. Embling b. L. Spink 16, 15.
UNDER 12 FINALS
BOYS SINGLES: G. Baker b. N. Cartwright 16, 12.
GIRLS SINGLES: J. Parker b. K. Shepherd -14, 18, 21.
BOYS DOUBLES: Baker/Yarnell b. A. Bleakley/C. Gregory 17,-18, 16.
GIRLS DOUBLES: Parker/Shepherd b. S.Brown/Embling 14, 12.



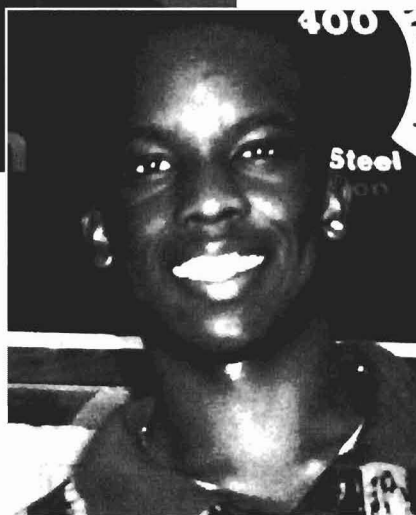
PREMIER PROGRESS *are* CHAMPIONS

BRENT SPORTS PROGRESS are the champions of the British League 1998/99, after lifting the title when they defeated Horsham on the last day of the season, writes Aubrey Drapkin.

Darren Blake gave them the start that they needed when he beat Ritchie Venner in straight games, and this was quickly followed by a victory for Gareth Herbert over Cris Sladden. Jason Sugrue then shocked the Horsham side by beating Nigel Eckersley 22-20 in the third end. Marco Essomba got in on the act with a win over Adrian Moore. Further victories for Herbert and Blake put Progress in a very commanding position and there was no way back for Horsham, as



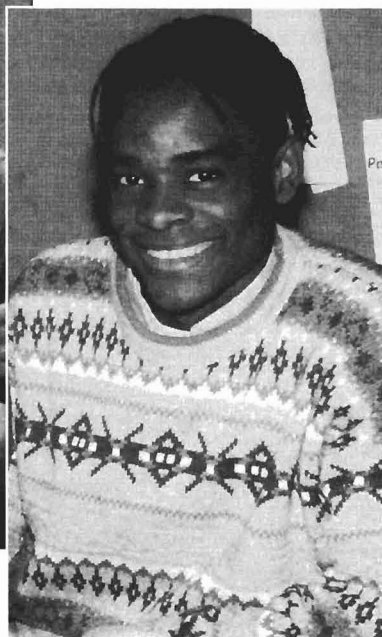
DARREN BLAKE (left) and GARETH HERBERT (below)



THE PREMIER PROGRESS BOYS



JASON SUGRUE (left) and MARCO ESSOMBA (below)



London's No.1 club eventually took the title, 10-4.

However, Horsham finished runners-up in the Premier, whilst at the foot of the table, OLOP fought hard to avoid the trap-door, following the resignation of St.Neots, but a 10-4 defeat at the hands of Grove in their last match, condemned them to finishing on the bottom.

With Darlington Seconds already having won Division 1 North, but not eligible for promotion, interest centred on second spot. This place eventually went to Derwent whose 4-4 draw at Sytegra Worcester City, was enough to keep them one point ahead of RMSC Lincoln.

The battle for the title in Division 1 South continued until the final day. Harvey Barnet made sure that they kept their chances alive by winning 8-0 away to bottom team

DML White Hart Launceston, but in the end to no avail as the Welsh club Colley Hyundai, won 5-3 at home to C & M Insurance Brentwood; to pip them at the post.

Grantham Kontak finished the season as undisputed champions of Division 2 North and kept their unbeaten record in tact, when they drew 4-4 with Rushey Mead in the final match. Rushey Mead only lost on three occasions during the season, but played a draw in no fewer than eight of their matches. Grove seconds gained their first victory of the season in their last match with a 5-3 home win over Abbeydale Park, but it was not enough to lift them off the bottom of the table.

Horsham seconds were beaten 6-2 in their final match in Division 2 South by TAD Ellenborough, for whom Martin Hughes and Jimmy Walsh were unbeaten, but they took the title finishing one point ahead of Norwich Todd Foxwood. Norwich won 8-0 at Launceston to keep Ellenborough in third spot.

In Division 3 South and West, Harvey Barnet third team finished won 6-2 away to Moonrakers seconds to make sure of second place, 5 points behind runaway winners CATSoft Puma's Adeyfield, for whom Lawrence Trumpauskas was outstanding as their player of the season.

Jack Spratt-Wellowhouse completed twelve victories from twelve of their Division 3 North fixtures, with a 6-2 home win over Derwent seconds. Craig Gascoyne and Matthew Kenny were both unbeaten with young Gascoyne once again being outstanding. Seaside's (Blackpool) finished runners-up by beating City of Leeds 7-1.

In Division 3 South, which had already been won by Harvey Barnets seconds, with De Vere Sudbury as runners-up. Ashford kept up their second half of the season form with a big 6-2 victory away to KCD Stiga seconds.

TABLES

PREMIER DIVISION	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brent Sports Progress	12	11	1	-	121	47	23 *
Horsham	12	10	-	2	110	58	20
Darlington	12	6	1	5	91	77	13
Grove	12	5	-	7	80	88	10
JAGS	12	4	2	6	71	97	10
DML W. H. Launceston	12	2	1	9	65	103	5
OLOP AWCS Ltd	12	1	1	10	50	118	3
St Neots resigned							

DIVISION I NORTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Darlington II	14	10	3	1	72	40	23 *
Derwent	14	8	3	3	67	45	19
RMSC Lincoln	14	8	2	4	67	45	18
Uxbridge (Burton)	14	7	2	5	56	56	16
Seasiders (Blackpool)	14	5	4	5	57	55	14
Syntegra Worcester City	14	4	5	5	53	59	13
Kingshurst Bribar	14	2	3	9	49	62	7
Bulldog Security	14	-	2	12	27	85	2

DIVISION I SOUTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Colley Hyundai	14	12	1	1	91	21	25 *
Harvey Barnet	14	12	-	2	73	39	24
Byng Hall Farningham Print	14	7	3	4	67	45	17
Hastings	14	6	2	6	53	59	14
C & M Insurance Brentwood	14	4	4	6	57	55	12
Limberlost Pine Poole	14	4	1	9	42	70	9
Moonrakers, Westbury	14	3	2	9	41	71	8
DML W. H. Launceston II	14	1	1	12	24	88	3

DIVISION 2 NORTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Grantham Kontak	14	9	5	-	80	32	23 *
Derwent II	14	9	2	3	68	44	20
Darlington III	14	9	1	4	63	49	19
Abbeylea	14	6	3	5	59	53	15
Rushey Mead Club	14	3	8	3	52	60	14
Ormesby	14	3	3	8	42	70	9
Drumchapel Glasgow	14	2	2	10	43	69	6
Grove II	14	1	4	9	41	71	6

DIVISION 2 SOUTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Horsham II	14	10	1	3	78	34	21 *
Norwich Todd Foxwood	14	10	-	4	80	32	20
TAD-Ellenborough	14	9	1	4	70	42	19
Cippenham	14	8	1	5	60	52	17
Aylesbury League	14	6	1	7	54	58	13
KCD Stiga	14	4	2	8	42	70	10
Fellows Cranleigh	14	2	4	8	40	72	8
DML W. H. Launceston III	14	1	2	11	24	88	4

DIVISION 3 SOUTH & WEST	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CATSoft Puma's Adeyfield	12	10	2	-	79	17	22 *
Harvey Barnet III	12	8	1	3	63	33	17
Brent Sports Progress II	12	5	3	4	46	50	13
OLOP II	12	5	-	7	37	59	10
Guildford	12	3	3	6	42	54	9
Moonrakers Westbury II	12	3	3	6	40	56	9
Cippenham II	12	1	2	9	29	67	4

DIVISION 3 NORTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jack Spratt-Wellhouse	12	12	-	-	77	19	24 *
Seasiders, Blackpool II	12	6	2	4	57	39	14
Derwent III	12	5	3	4	50	46	13
City of Leeds	12	5	1	6	50	46	11
Syntegra Worcester City II	12	5	1	6	49	47	11
Darlington IV	12	3	2	7	32	64	8
Ormesby II	12	-	3	9	21	75	3

DIVISION 3 SOUTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Harvey Barnet II	10	7	2	1	57	23	16 *
De Vere Sudbury	10	6	1	3	47	33	13
Ashford	10	5	-	5	42	38	10
Byng Hall F. P. II	10	4	2	4	40	40	10
Horsham III	10	4	1	5	35	45	9
KCD Stiga II	10	-	2	8	19	61	2

* = Division winners

Have you thanked your Coach today?

SO when the rain is falling horizontally rather than vertically, the wind howling at gale force ten and it's pitch dark at 4pm. Do you have problems turning out to coach a new group of novices?

Ideas in coaching and motivation get repackaged, renamed, rebranded, but seem fundamentally to stay the same as years go by.

The fact that we know many of the key factors in motivation tried and tested on the players we work with has surprisingly prevented many of us coaches to indulge in a little self help.

The story remains unchanged for players as well as for ourselves but each generation appears to be in need of a retelling of the fundamental principles that we can all understand. Even the brightest of people can understand the simplest of terms.

Some of the more popular terms currently in fashion are as follows:

- Give players the information they need to play well. That is, make it clear that they know what they are trying to achieve being the outcome or result. Why it is important that it is done being the tactic and not least how it should be executed.

- Make all practices you introduce as interesting as possible. Vary the exercises as much as possible and relate them to real game situations. The golden rule has to be if it happens in a match then practise it, if not then don't.

- Compliment people for what they do well rather than criticise what they do badly. A little encouragement goes a very long way when it is sincerely meant and is true.

- Demonstrate as much as possible your commitment to long term development. Quick fixes usually only produce veteran juniors. You all know the ones I mean. The junior players who look bored out of their brains during matches and practice and often display temper tantrums. They don't stay with the sport for long.

- Provide regular and specific feedback to all players about their performance. One way is to discuss areas that went well, not so well and things that need to be changed for the long-term benefit. The process is easy to do, important and motivating. Public recognition works wonders too. So why are we sometimes embarrassed by it?

- Foster a sense of team work or the fashionable term is Synergy, which brings a philosophy of sharing information and working together for the common good. You don't need to do team fire walking just provide time to discuss openly and honestly together.

- Be available to the players. Establish easy to use channels of communication, both formal and informal. Make sure that relevant information is shared and channels stay open.

- Ask players for their feedback, their ideas and involve them in the decision making process that affect their performances. Compliment them for input, which will improve both individual and group efficiency. The golden rule has to have Big Ears rather than a big mouth.

- Pay attention to individual differences and personal needs. Create opportunities within their overall development for skills they do well.

So what's new? You may ask. The answer is nothing really. So well known but so little done and still coaches complain that the players are not motivated and wonder why they themselves are tired too.

Peter A. Hurst, ETTA Coaching Director

“HERBY’S” SWERVING SERVES TAKES SEASIDE CROWN...

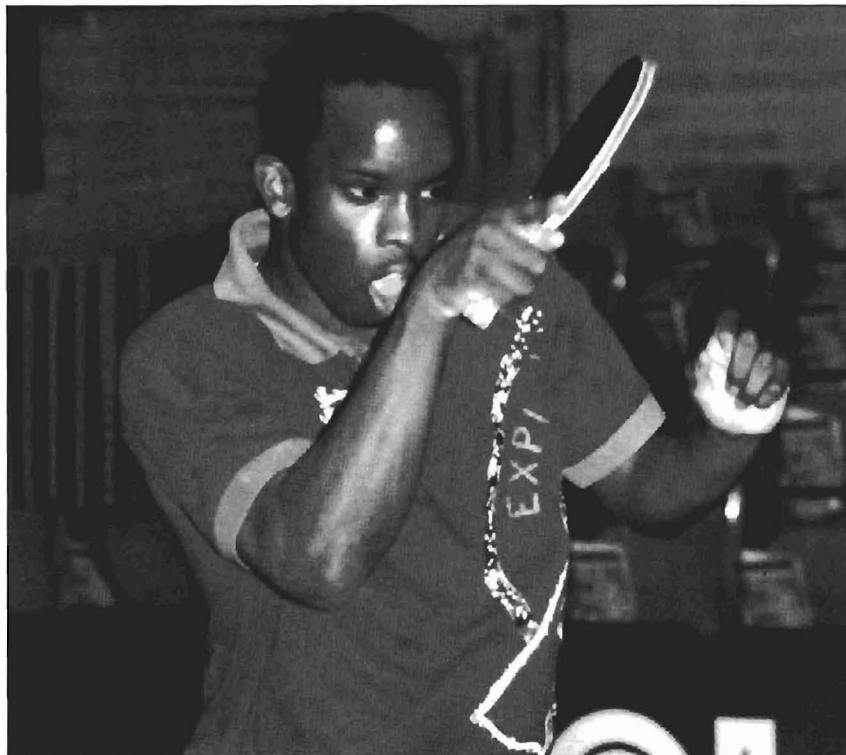
A PREDICTION made not long ago that Gareth Herbert could be the next Desmond Douglas could, in due course, prove to be not far short of the mark. In a completely spell-binding, nail-biting, edge-of-seat final thriller, the young man from Slough brought down the top seed Terry Young -23, 18, 21, writes John Woodford.

Young, enjoying his status as the England No.3, did not enjoy the tournament - he spent the Saturday in bed with a feverish, shivering cold. He did well to play at all with a temperature, and a white complexion that told the story of an unfit player battling through.

Young, whose attitude on court seems to be improving all the time, had to fight hard in the semi-finals to snuff out Andrew Eden's powerful challenge -18, 10, 20. In the other men's semi-final Herbert seemed to face a simple task against the 33-years-old Sussex printer Nicky Mason. But, Gareth still admits to lapses of concentration in the heat of battle. Those courtside can sometimes hear him tell himself "Concentrate!"

Mason, still capable of counter-hitting with power and accuracy took the first game 12 against the Slough teenager who finally got the best of his deadly serves together to win 18, 15. Herbert's swerving serves beat Mason on the last five points.

"There is no way that the England team for the world championships should be without 'Herby' as he is known in the squad. At present after losing to Andrew Baggerley in the world qualifying event, it is 'Bagger's' who has bagged Herby's place for Eindhoven!"



GARETH HERBERT, the new Desmond Douglas, wins a thrilling Mens Singles final at the Blackpool Open

JOHN WOODFORD Reports from Blackpool

NICOLA DEATON, the English champion who has just made the No.1 spot on the ranking list for the first time, made a rare appearance on the Grand Prix circuit. Apart from the absence of Andrea Holt and Helen Lower, Nicola managed to bring down two of her close rivals Gemma Schwartz 5, 20, in the semi-final and Kubrat Owolabi -8, 19, 11 in the final. Nicola's attack was non-stop and most of the time, devastating.

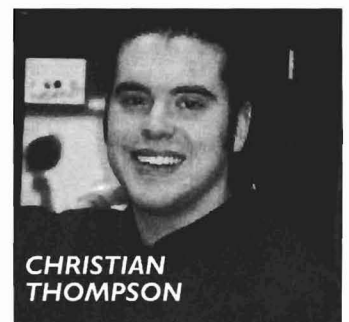
Louis Durrant is the name to watch, so I am told. She reached the semi-finals, an excellent show for one so young. She benefited from the absence of Helen Lower,

...WHILST NON-STOP NICOLA TRIUMPHS

whose injury problems now seem permanent and career-threatening. **MAJOR SHOCK**

The tournament, nearly 200 players strong, contained only one major shock - the defeat in the men's Under 21 final of Gareth Herbert by Kent's Christian Thompson 13, 24. This was a career-best show by Thompson who has been suffering all season with shoulder problems and right out of serious practice and match-play.

It maybe that Herbert does not achieve full concentration in lower age-group matches - perhaps he played in too many junior tournaments when he was strong



CHRISTIAN THOMPSON

enough by far, to be playing in senior events.

But Thompson lifted his game to a high level, counter-hitting superbly and thereby catching Herbert

wrong-footed. I suspect that he is also at home on Nicky Jarvis's Donic tables.

The Welsh national squad snatched a victory when Catherine Davies landed the Under 21 womens title with a splendid win over Caroline Reeh from the Czech Republic, 13, -17, 12. The Davies armoury contains a powerful array of backhand shots, an asset not available to many players.

A final trawl through the completed result sheets - John Hilton's advance to the quarter-finals of the main event was at the expense of Jason Sugrue 13, -10, 16. Tom Cutler seemed destined for a useful run but he ran into trouble when losing -12, -19 to Nicky Mason.

Christian Thompson also played well in the main event, reaching the quarters before losing -18, -17 to Gareth Herbert.

Catherine Davies deserves another mention for her victory in the Under 21 event. After edging through 19 -22, 20 with Siwan Davies, she took out Clare Newns - 11, 19, 11 and then one of England's brightest stars Lousie Durrant, before bringing down the Czech girl Caroline Reeh in the final.

Reeh and Kubrat Owolabi had the last laugh in the womens doubles final when they vanquished Nicola Deaton and Gemma Schwartz 20, -15, 19.

FIRM HAND

Stuart Sherlock refereed this tournament for the past six years, but pressure of work has forced him to scale down his table tennis work. Aubrey Drapkin stepped into the vacancy as referee keeping a firm hand on the tiller leading to 8.30 pm finishes on both days.

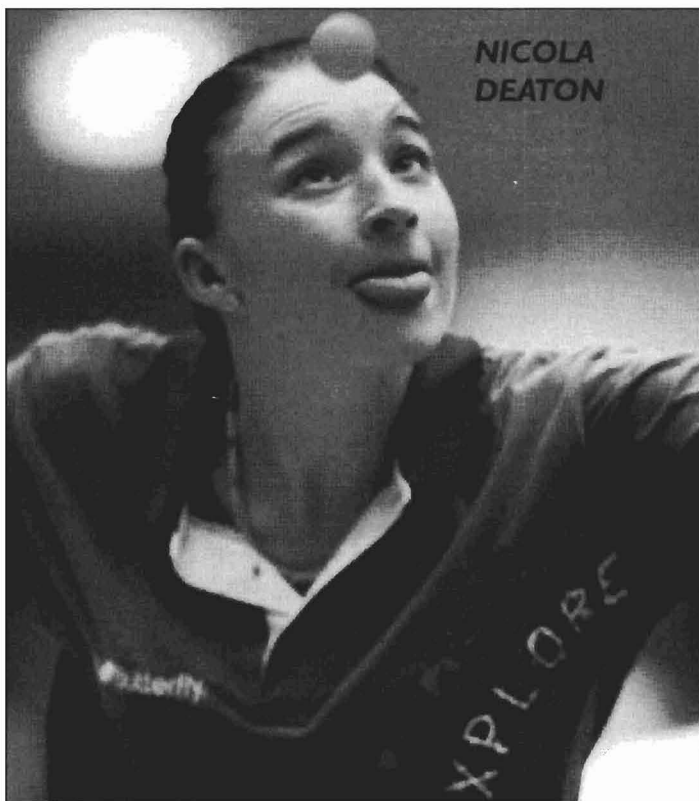
If all the regions possessed RDO's as efficient and as ice-cool as Martin Ireland, there would be little else to worry about. After the Sherlock retreat from the trenches, Martin succeeds him in my book as "Mr Blackpool and Lancashire Table Tennis!"

Seven umpires were officially recruited (expenses paid) - they were Steve Perry, Eric Pentland, Wilf Rhodes, Dave Goulden, Ron Georgeson, Mabel Neary and ace Lancashire tournament organiser Tony Meredith, with Eileen Allison in firm control of all the umpiring, players included.

Without the qualified umpires, the large entry would have added at least an hour at the end of each day and play started at 8.30 am on the Sunday.

SPONSORS

The tournament also owed much to their sponsors AFM (Amey Facilities Management Ltd), who have offices at Warrington, Maidenhead, Wembley, Abingdon and Hertford. Their long list of services is headed by Property Management.



ROYAL VICTORY for PREAN



I ENJOY watching Carl Prean on court. In particular, his professional skill when escaping from a points deficit or when the score is at say 22-22, is a joy to watch. You can sense the tension as he regains the advantage, writes John Woodford.

If John Prean was coaching Carl at Windsor, it was again fascinating to watch the expressions changing on John's face from concern to relief as Carl fought back in the style of the famous escapologist from the USA Harry Houdini.

There were a couple of anxious phases for Carl at Windsor before he triumphed 14, 19 in the final over an improving Alex Perry, who seems to have renewed his efforts to hang on to the No.3 spot in the England squad.

Perry was way down in the second game of the final and then won a number of points in a row before Carl closed the door on him.

In the semi-finals Carl did not have too much trouble taking care of Terry Young, who is to be congratulated on reaching the No.4 spot on the England list, but was still overlooked for the England European squad.

Michael Isherwood from Derbyshire is still moving up the ranking list. He may continue his rise if he continues to attack after gaining the upper hand. He only lost the first to Prean 24-26, but in the second game it was a different story as Prean opened his box of vicious services and then smashed the loose returns. The other half contained Perry, Gareth Herbert and Darren Blake, all from the England squad. With five squad men present-by far the best Grand Prix entry so far-the four top seeds reached the semi-finals and the odd man out was Blake who battled bravely in the quarters before he lost to Gareth 16, -20, 14. Perry took care of Nigel Eckersley, Stephen Shaw and Herbert 20, 13 to reach the final.

The womens singles winner was Marianne Rolikova from Slovakia. She is a Czech student living in Surrey and of course, working out of the Gail McCulloch (mainly ethnic) stable.

The absence of the second seed Joanna Barraclough, led to Sue Collier clashing with the Czech girl in the quarters - a match that could have been the final.

No alleged equipment abuse this time from the Berkshire lady, but she still went down to the student 16, -18, 17 in the quarters.

In the same half as Sheila King hurled down the Devon flag to bring down Penny Perry 22 in the third. Rolikova then took out King 13,12. In the bottom half Siwan Davies (Wales) knocked out Rose Rainton and Ann Humble before losing 16, 19 in the final.

And of course, Rolikova, a solid player but no world-beater won the Under-21 event, whilst Gareth Herbert added to his trophy cabinet, with an Under-21 victory against Robert Pountney 10, 16.

The venue was impressive in some ways, but hardly any spectator seating did not make for comfort for players and watchers. The problem of not being able to find people to put the results on wall-sheets needs to be cracked at all future Grand Prix

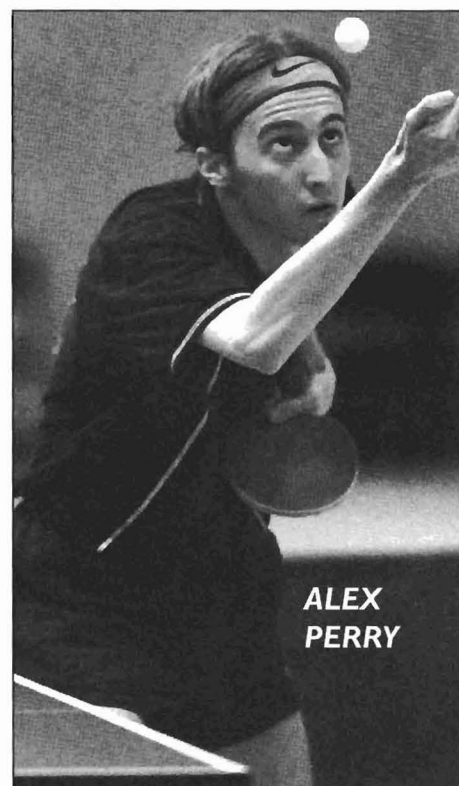
OUTSTANDING PLAY

by **TONG FEI MING**

That Tong Fei Ming (Chinese Taipei) was outstanding in the women's events was entirely expected. The outcome of the men's play was far less certain. The opposition was fierce, but this was Gareth Herbert's tournament, the occasion when everything went right for him. His service was lethal - evil! - and he used it to great effect whilst 14-20 down in the second game to Welsh International Ryan Jenkins, to win 8 consecutive points and the men's singles final 21-18, 22-20, writes Ken Muhr.



GARETH
HERBERT



ALEX
PERRY

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In the semi-finals Herbert had demonstrated newly found control, both close to and away from the table, to contain Alex Perry's (Devon) left-handed looping attack for a 15-21, 21-16, 21-16 success. In the quarter-finals he had maintained composure against a concerted Darren Blake (Surrey) effort, never really looking troubled despite the closeness of the 24-22, 21-17 scorelines. And in the under 21 men's singles final, Gareth followed up that vicious serve with awesome power - and variation - to give 15 year old Welsh hope Adam Robertson a rare 21-16, 21-10 pasting.

Underlining his dominance, Gareth combined with Alex Perry to take his third title in beating Terry Young (Berks.) and Darren Blake 21-17, 21-18 in the men's doubles, the losing finalists having come through a cracking 16-21, 21-17, 21-19 semi-final with (nearly) local boys Michael Isherwood and Stephen Shaw.

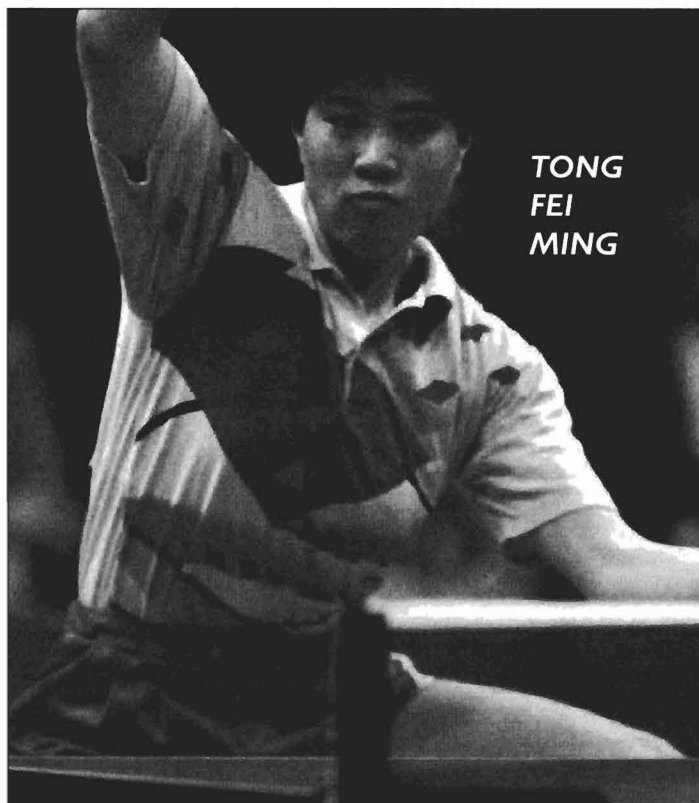
Steven Shaw (Staffs) caused the biggest shock when he knocked out men's singles top seed and title holder Terry Young, who had beaten Matthew Syed in a sensational final the previous year, 17-21, 21-17, 21-14 in the quarter-finals. In this match Steven also produced the shot of the tournament when at 15-12 up in the third game he, Waldner like, made a lightning reflex blocked return of a full blooded Young smash to his forehand! However, he was then comfortably beaten dispatched 21-11, 21-13 in the semis by the two wing spinny attack of Welsh no.1 Ryan Jenkins.

Ryan had been a little fortunate to survive his quarter-final with the vastly improved Michael Isherwood

(Derbys), coming back from behind to scrape the first game and losing the second before pulling through 22-20, 19-21, 21-19. Had not a disputed point in the third game gone in his favour, the result might have been different. In his quarter final, Alex Perry had gained some satisfaction in avenging his English Open defeat by putting out Adam Robertson in straight games, 21-17, 21-16. But Adam is possessed of such a good temperament, combined with his armoury of power backhand loop and forehand control, that he must be assured of a great future.

The women's singles was a tale of just two players Tong Fei Ming and Kubrat Owolabi (Middlesex), with a vast gap between each and between them and the rest. At no 28 woman when she entered, Tong Fei Ming had the distinction of being the highest world ranked foreign player and the highest world ranked woman ever to have entered an ETTA Grand Prix Event. And her class showed! After practising with Ryan Jenkins and watching the others, she must have fancied her chances against any of the men! Anyway, no-one, not least Natalie Bawden (Essex) 21-6, 21-17 in the quarters, Karen Lockwood (Cheshire) 21-17, 21-9 in the semis and Kubrat, 21-8, 21-8, final, really got a look in against her sharp, close to the table, orthodox attack.

Until she met Fei Ming, the former All African Champion Kubrat was almost equally dominant, thumping Terri-Anne Nolan (Cheshire) in the quarter-finals, although dropping a game to Siwan Davies in the semis before vanquishing her Welsh opponent 15-21, 21-15, 21-9. Kubrat, who is of course now part of the England squad, had a scratch



**TONG
FEI
MING**

pairing with Fei Ming to stroll the women's doubles, with a 21-12, 21-14 finals victory over Brenda Buoey (Lancs) and Gemma Lloyd (Cheshire). The latter couple had a cliff hanging 16-21, 23-21, 21-18 semi-final with the Welsh combination of Siwan and Iona Davies.

Neil Charles (Middlesex) powered his way through the men's band 1 singles final, beating the higher ranked Mark Smith (Yorks) 21-15, 21-14 in a battle of lefthanders. Perhaps the burden of being the new ETTA RDO North is getting to Mark or perhaps he was badly advised by his predecessor!

Sheffield University student Angie Bristow (Kent) was the surprise winner of the equivalent women's band 1 singles, overcoming the favoured Emily Dearing (Yorkshire) 24-22, 21-19. She had had the closest of wins, 22-20, 17-21, 22-20 over Rebecca Fisher (Middlesex) in her semi-final. Emily had done her own giant killing in knocking out Slovakian Marianna Rolikova (Surrey) 21-17, 21-17 in the second round and then Sarah Smith (Notts) 21-14, 22-20, semis. Unfortunately the poor girl lost a second singles final in going down 18-21, 21-19, 21-18 to Catherine Davies (Wales) in the under 21s!

ETTA Events Manager Mike Johns (Cheshire) had a slight 22-20, 21-19 veteran men's singles edge over the well travelled Chris Brewer (Norfolk), whilst Marilyn Bawden

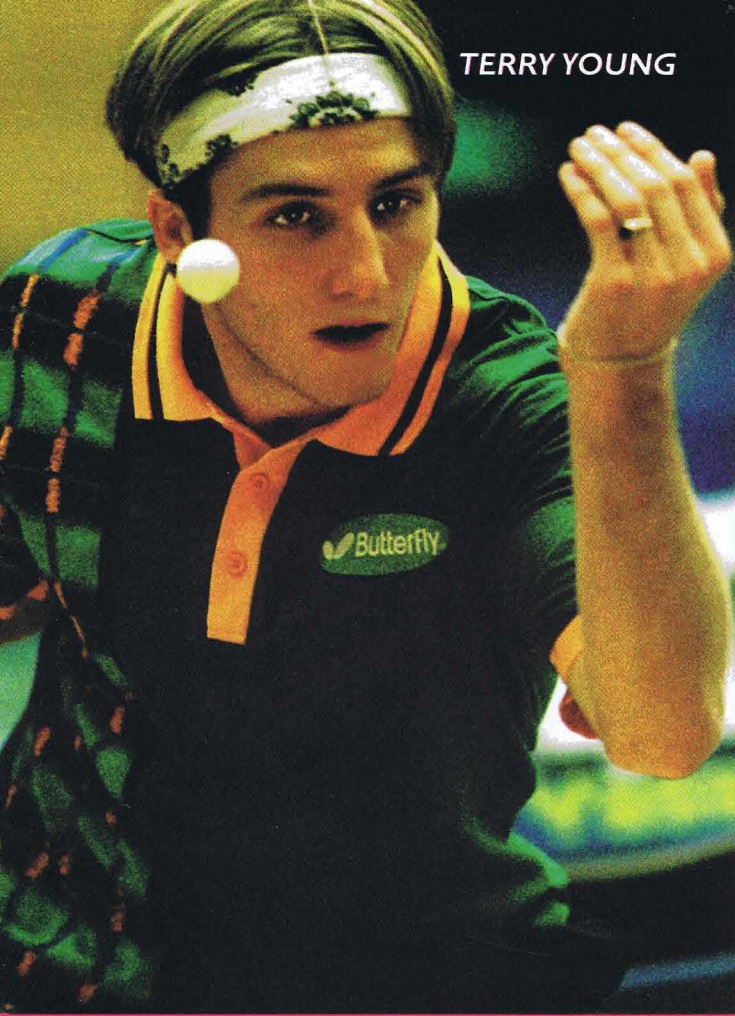
(Essex) won the veteran woman's round robin with Brenda Buoey (Lancs) second.

Combination bat defender Paul Cicchelli (Cambs) defeated Michael Malcolm (Lancs) 24-22, 21-18 in the men's band final 2 final, having overcome fellow Norwich League player Ian MacLean, the former Scottish international, 17-21, 21-15, 21-19 in the semis. The men's band 3 final was an all Kent affair, scrapped 21-13, 14-21, 25-23 by 14 year old Dominic Hall over Alastair McTavish. Steve Young (Derbys) beat Fred Dove (Essex) 21-18, 21-17 for the band 4 singles whilst Tim Yarnall (Northants), aged only 11 beat his older brother Greg, aged 14, 21-16, 13-21, 21-11 in the band 5 final.

Suzu Robinson had a straight games 21-16, 21-16 women's band 2 singles final win, over a Claire Gibbs (Somerset) possibly still exhausted after her 12-21, 27-25, 23-21 conquest of Andrea Baldi (Yorks)! Cadet Rebecca Tong (Lancs) defeated junior Zoe Cheeseman (Yorks) 21-15, 21-14 to lift the women's band 3 singles title.

The South Yorkshire (Grand Prix) Open, supported by Sheffield City Council, were well run (thank you all!) in an excellent venue, with obliging staff and good catering - I can't remember other sports centres where I have enjoyed a tasty Balti meal!





TERRY YOUNG

GRAND PRIX FINALS

YOUNG WINS WITH STYLE IN BATH.....

TERRY YOUNG took his place at the top when he won his second consecutive Mens Singles Grand Prix title, proving that he is the player of the season, when he beat the Welsh rising star Adam Robertson, in the final at Bath Sports and Leisure Centre, writes John Wood.

Young, who won last season's overall Grand Prix Mens Singles crown even though he lost in the final to Carl Prean but had accumulated more points over the season than the man from the Isle of Wight, won the 1998/99 title following his 16, 8, 15, over Robertson in the final.

Although Robertson gave a spirited display in winning the first 21-16, he was soon outplayed by Berkshire's Young, whose awesome power shows promise of better things to come.

Young, who has not only rapidly improved his playing ability but also his attitude and temperament, when asked for his comments following his great victory in winning the first two Grand Prix seasons said with humility, "It has been an up and down year for me, but an enjoyable one. I can only say that I was a little bit lucky, because I think Gareth was the top player at the end of the

season. I have to give credit to Gareth, who is my great friend and England partner, and I hope that the duel is similar this coming season."

When asked what he would spend his £1,200 prize money on, he sensibly replied, "I'm banking it, because I have Council Tax and Parking bills to pay."

Young beat Yorkshire's Mark Smith in the semi-finals and Robertson out-played Herbert.

Kubrat Owolabi also won her consecutive Womens Singles crown when she comfortably beat Bristol's Michele Cohen in the final, 15 and 8.

Owolabi, who won by a street in points from her nearest rival, beat Siwan Davies in the semis, whilst Cohen had a good victory over Rose Rainton.

Over 200 players from all over Britain took part in the Grand Prix finals, at the Bath Sports and Leisure Centre, where the total prize money was £11,000.

Gareth Herbert failed once again when faced with the rapidly returning form of Kent's Christian Thompson, who completed a double over the Berkshire boy, beating him in the semi-final of the Mens Under 21 event.

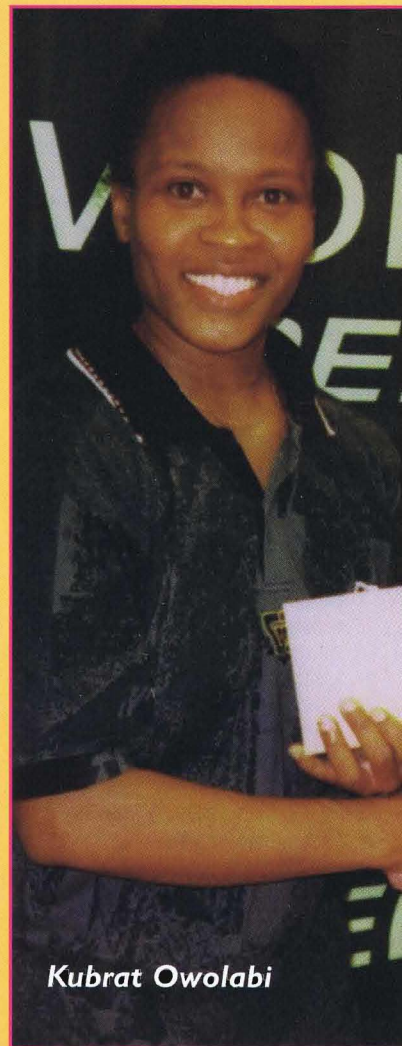
England senior international Herbert stormed into the lead winning the first leg 21-10, and looking like he would gain revenge for his defeat at the hands of Thompson in the Under 21 final in the Blackpool Grand Prix.

But Thompson proved that his earlier victory was no fluke, by living up to his pedigree and winning a stunning victory, 10-21, 21-15, 21-18.

In the final Thompson found the exceptional skills of Adam Robertson just too brilliant to combat, and went down 14-21, 3-21, to the 15 year old Welsh star in the making.

Marianna Rolikova won the Womens Under 21 Singles, beating the Welsh chopper Siwan Davies, 24 and 27, in the final.

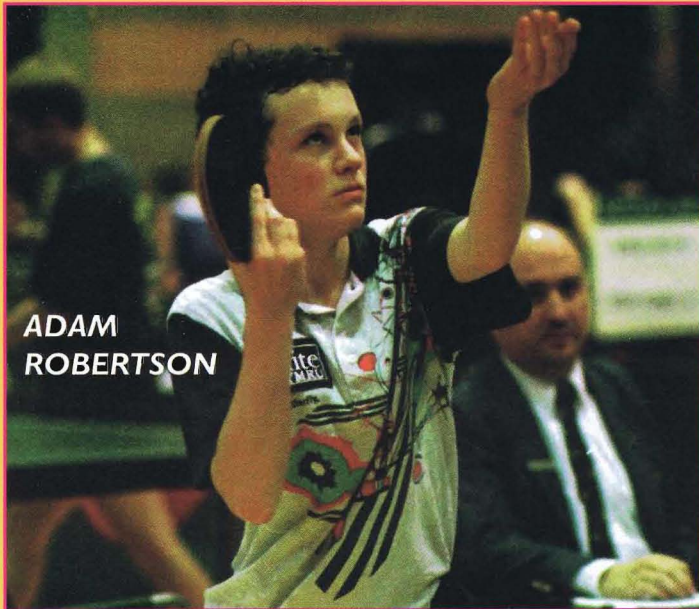
Rolikova topped this event having amassed 333 points to take the title following a very successful Grand Prix season.



Kubrat Owolabi

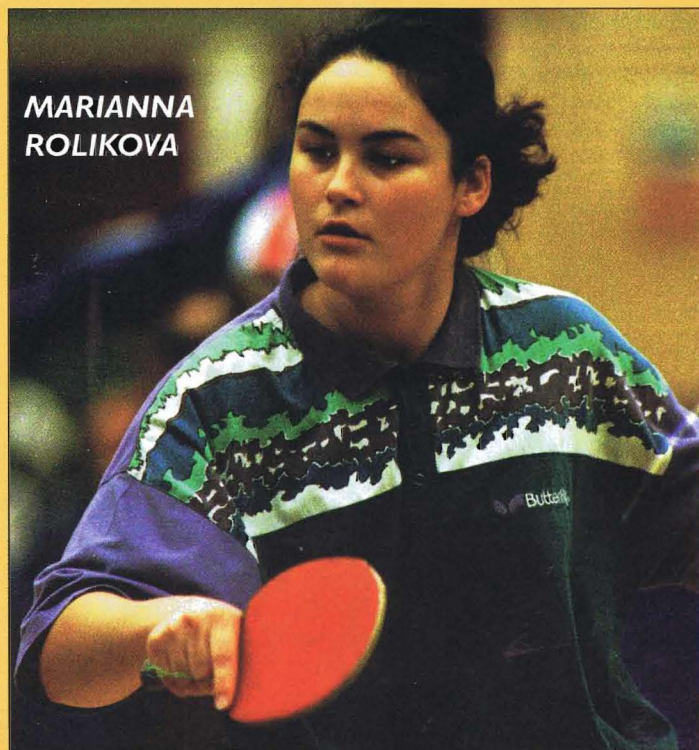


Surprise winners of the Womens Doubles, Sarah Horsnell (left) and Rebecca Fisher



ADAM ROBERTSON

..... WITH VICTORIOUS OWALABI WOMEN'S CHAMPION



MARIANNA ROLIKOVA

RESULTS

Mens Singles: Terry Young (Bk) b. Adam Robertson (Wal) -16, 8, 15.
Semi Finals: Adam Robertson (Wal) b. Gareth Herbert (Bk) 16, -18, 11. Terry Young (Bk) b. Mark Smith (Y) 18, 8.
Womens Singles: Kubrat Owolabi (Mi) b. Michele Cohen (Wi) 15, 8.
Semi Finals: Michele Cohen (Wi) b. Rose Rainton (Sx) 10, 7. Kubrat Owolabi (Mi) b. Siwan Davies (Wal) 18, 13
Band 1 Men: Abdul Wuraola (Sy) b. Neil Charles (Mi) 18, 16.
Band 2 Men: Phil Cox (K) b. Wesley Bush-Harris 15, -16, 18
Band 3 Men: Marc Burman (Sy) b. Michael Wilkins (Bd) 12, -18, 15.
Band 4 Men: Eli Baraty (Mi) b. Neil Page (Wal) 15, 16.
Band 5 Men: Neil Page (Wal) b. James Whiteman (Dv) 16, 16.
Band 1 Women: Marianna Rolikova (Sy) b. Hannah Yardy (E) 17, -18, 14.
Band 2 Women: Nikki Kennard (E) b. Rebecca Fisher (Mi) 19, -17, 20.
Band 3 Women: Gemma Chapman (Bu) b. Aimee Sparkes (Sk) -16, 14, 19.
Veteran Men: Nigel Eckersley (La) b. Brian Johns (Ch) -11, 10, 18.
Veteran Women: Jan Dunning (Wo) v Brenda Buoey (La) 20, 16.
Under 21 Men: Adam Robertson (Wal) b. Christian Thompson (K) 14, 3.
Under 21 Women: Marianna Rolikova (Sy) b. Siwan Davies (Wal) 24, 17.
Mens Doubles: Alex Perry (Dv)/Gareth Herbert (Bk) b. Michael Isherwood (Dy)/Steven Shaw (Dy) 18, 18
Womens Doubles: Rebecca Fisher (Mi)/Sarah Horsnell (Mi) b. Jan Dunning (Wo)/Michele Cohen (Wi) 17, 19.



WILL WALDNER DO IT ONCE AGAIN?

I CANNOT understand why more people from England do not go abroad to watch major international championships. International table tennis is so much better live - unbelievable! Perhaps after seeing the terrific play in Manchester in 1997, their appetites will have been wetted to cross the channel for the Dawei World Championships Individual Events, which were transferred to Eindhoven, 2-8 August after the overall Championships (with team events) scheduled for Belgrade (26 April to 9 May) had been cancelled, writes Ken Muhr.

Constantly faced by a seemingly uphill struggle to revive table tennis in this country, my flagging spirit and belief that ours is a truly wonderful sport never fails to be revived on seeing the best in the world demonstrating fantastic skills, in an atmosphere of often almost unbearable tension. It is a great tonic and morale booster. Not just the playing activity but the total experience of being there; rubbing shoulders with the stars and amongst excited, chanting, shouting, clapping, involved spectators: meeting and talking to table tennis people (eccentrics, many of them!) in the gangways, corridors, restaurants, bars, by the equipment stands (bargain hunting), debating with them the finer points of the game, the issues, the controversies, the rules and the rubbers. Belonging. And Eindhoven from my 1998 European Championships experience is a pleasant and accessible place to visit, clean, relaxed, easy going, inoffensive, friendly, reasonably inexpensive. Good food, nice people.

What to say about the table tennis in prospect? The most significant thing (to me) is that unless they are holding out for the 2,000 Sydney Olympics and you can make it there (or events leading up to there), this may be the last major occasion that you can view many of the big names of European men's table tennis at near their best. It may take 10-12 years to reach a peak, usually

THE DAWEI 45th WORLD INDIVIDUAL TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS, EINDHOVEN, NETHERLANDS 2 - 8 AUGUST 1999. A preview by Ken Muhr, ETTA Information Officer



JAN OVE WALDNER

1997 WORLD MENS SINGLES CHAMPION

achieved while players are in their twenties, but no-one can tell me that under normal circumstances they can maintain a peak until well into their thirties. Yet most of the top Europeans - Waldner, Primorac, Persson, Gatién, Saive, Roskopf, Karlsson - are the wrong side of thirty. That they are still near the top is a reflection no doubt on their class, but it is also a bad reflection on the new generation who should have been pushing them aside. Close rivalry between players from Europe and Asia is important to retain motivation, innovation and a competitive edge in the game. So the big question is, can a European become the new world Men's Singles Champion? Which Europeans are in the reckoning?

The current World Men's Singles Champion, Jan-Ove Waldner (Sweden), is the most gifted if not the greatest player ever. He can do everything! The losing finalist in Delhi 1987, he first became world champion in Dortmund 1989 and Olympic Champion in 1992. His destruction of Vladimir Samsonov in the Manchester 1997 final was awesome. A big occasion player, never to be written off (though somewhat erratic on other occasions), he is still world ranked no 6 and well within striking distance of the very top. But now at 33, age is against him: if he can win

in Eindhoven he will be the oldest world champion since 34 year old Stanislav Kolar (Czechoslovakia) in 1936. (The oldest ever was Zoltan Mechlovits of Hungary, aged 36, in 1928). An eventuality that might convince even Barna and Bergmann supporters of his 'greatest ever' status?

Zoran Primorac (Croatia), a well preserved 30, has had a late dawn, reaching number 2 in the world in 1998, but achieving relatively little in the way of the big titles (his best was the Perrier World Cup in 1997). He has a very smooth, precise, attacking game, being one of the very few modern players to employ, like Waldner, a delicate touch. On past form he could make it to the final rounds - but unlikely to win. Ranked 7 in the world.

Waldner's compatriot Jorgen Persson, also aged 33, has made a return to near his best form and the world top 10 (he is 9th) this season. Runner-up to Waldner in the 1989 final, two years later he beat him in Chiba, Japan for the title. The greatly respected gentleman of table tennis, Jorgen's slick, athletic game of forehand loop and power backhand, backed up by an excellent return of service, was in strong evidence at the English Open, Potters this year. He will be hard to beat - but realistically probably not the next world champion.

Frenchman Jean-Philippe Gatién, 30, the 1993 world champion at Gothenburg, also just scrapes in the world top 10. A speed merchant, with courageous left-handed forehand loops and excellent fight and temperament, he probably now lacks the versatility and consistency to go all the way. But his trumpet-playing father, Rene, will be supporting him to the end!

Although not quite 30, Jean-Michel Saive's (Belgium) time to win the world singles has probably been (in the mid 1990's, when he was world no 1) and gone. He will continue to graft with relentless two wing loops, fighting to the last, but his game has slowed down just enough not to pose the danger of old. His world ranking is down to no 13.

Jorg Roskopf (Germany) has been a world doubles champion (with Fetzner 1989) and has won big singles titles (European champion 1992, ITTF President's World Cup 1998). He hits with almost reckless power and abandon, particularly on his backhand, and can beat anyone, but he too is 30 and I do not see being able to sustain form throughout the tournament. He is now no 16 in the world. Likewise, 30 year old Peter Karlsson (Sweden) has been amongst the best in the world without ever really looking like the Singles Champion material.

Of Europeans - and leading a younger generation - that leaves 22 year old Vladimir Samsonov (Belarus) as the best hope. Until quite recently he was world no 1, but he is now no 3. He, like Persson, is another perfect sportsman and in play has no obvious weaknesses, being possessed of excellent serves, spin, control and deceptive power on both backhand and forehand. The only time Samsonov looks at all vulnerable is when an opponent plays 'out of his skin' (and perhaps with the crowd behind him), 'going for him' with touch, speed and rapid change of direction. To beat Vladimir someone will have to play fantastically, but at a world championships this happens!

A brief word about other

Europeans: the dynamic Kalinkos Kreanga (Greece), aged 27 and world ranked 11, has the big, booming, two wing loop game that can take out anyone, but equally, he can lose to anyone! Werner Schlager (Austria), 26, has been creeping up the world rankings (now no 15) with a competent, controlled, two wing attack played slightly away from the table - not enough to upset the big boys! That trio of Frenchmen, Christophe Legout (aged 25), Patrick Chila (29) and Damion Eloi (30) are all capable of scoring good wins in the early rounds. But where are the young European men? - Fredrik Hakansson (Sweden) ranked 36, Martin Monrad (Denmark), ranked 65 and Timo Boll (Germany), ranked 90, for example, seem too far down the list to cause serious bother. A big concern though shocks can occur.

The Asian challenge is formidable and most of their players are relative youngsters. The 1995 world champion at Tianjin, Kong Linghui (China), is still only 23 and world ranked no 1 again! Apparently influenced by Waldner, he plays an elegant, European style, shakehands attacking game, with a particularly fine forehand and excellent ball control. He must be a good bet - the favourite? - for the championships. Does he have the desire?

The 1996 Olympic Champion (i.e. the holder of that title), Liu Guoliang of China is also only 23. Displaced earlier this year by Kong at world no 1, he has an unusual fast penhold attacking style, adding a topspin backhand from the reverse side of the bat to the customary service and severe third ball forehand drive. Waldner has never beaten him! So good odds on him, although he has had surprising lapses.

World ranked no 4 Wang Liqin, aged 21, appears to be the coming man of China. He plays in a similar way to Jorgen Persson - an opponent he beat in a classic 5 setter at the Manchester World Championships - except possibly with a slightly more severe forehand but less powerful, more controlled backhand. Unusually for a Chinese, he plays at mid distance from the table, rather than close. I reckon he has a good chance of lifting the title.

Kim Taek Soo (Korea), aged 29 and just about the fittest player alive, plays a spectacular penhold attacking game, running miles to launch in his big forehand, lob returns and occasional backhand smash. Always dangerous and still 5 in the world, an issue must be whether he can keep up that athleticism for the whole championships, however hard he has trained.

Other Chinese in contention are 19 year old penholder Ma Lin, world ranked 8, and the man who lost to Waldner in the Manchester World Championships semi-finals, Yan Sen, 24, the left-handed penholder who is world no 12. It is uncertain whether the 'veteran' Chinese Ma Wenge (30), now playing in Germany and world no 18, will be at Eindhoven, despite demonstrating crisp and powerful shakehands hitting form to take the English Open title in February. Such is the Chinese strength that they can leave out world class players and come with 'unknowns' good enough to be world champions.

So while I would love to see a European win - and only Samsonov and Waldner are strongly in contention - I believe that it will be a Chinese this time. Kong Linghui and Liu Guoliang are the favourites, but I would risk money on Wang Liqin.

I can say with (almost) total confidence that a Chinese representing China will win the Women's Singles. They are incredibly strong in depth, youth and technical proficiency. Of those players who learnt their game in Europe, 21 year old Tamara Boros (Croatia), 11th ranked woman in the world, has the best chance. She has good serves and powerful two wing loops that can trouble the Asians and may be assisted by the reduction-in-length-of-pimples, regulation change. The question is whether she is fast or consistent enough - has she been able to play and train enough with the top Chinese?

Nicole Struse (Germany), 28, the 1996 European Champion and 19 in the world, also has a two wing 'glued up' attacking game but I am not sure that she has the speed or weight of shot to get through the leading Asians. Other talented younger Europeans who performed well at the English Open at Potters, Anne Boileau (France), almost 24 and Mihaela Steff (Romania), 20, are a long way down the world rankings and cannot be expected to be major threats. Longer established top Europeans like Hungarians Csilla Batorfi and Krisztina Toth have powerful spin serve and loop games that can trouble Asians, but are also wide of the mark in world terms.

Unfortunately for Europe, even Chinese expatriots representing European countries are highly unlikely to provide the world champion. The reason is that Jing Tian-Zorner, world ranked 4, Qianhong Gotsch, world 7, and Jie Schopp, world 15, all now of Germany, are all classy but ageing

defenders - and Chinese attackers are brilliant against defence, irrespective of whether long pimples are banned, even if the old girls can hold out physically! 36 year old pimpled bat penholder Ni Xin Lian (Luxembourg), is still equal 7th in the world, which is amazing for a Chinese blocker and (forehand) hitter! However her long pimples blocked backhand may now be less effective and make her vulnerable against the loopers.

The player on form is 20 year old left-hander Wang Nan (China) whose shakehands, reversed rubber, close-to-the-table attacking style has taken her to world no 1, following her lifting of the Vittel ITTF Pro Tour Grand Finals title in Paris in January and in the absence of reigning world champion Deng Yaping, who has effectively retired from international play (although still world ranked 2).

The talented Chinese champion Li Ju, also aged 20 and a right handed, reversed rubbered, shakehands topspin player, might reasonably have expected to take over the no 1 mantle from Deng Yaping, but she was leapfrogged by Wang Nan and is ranked 3. World no 5 Yang Ying, at 21 is a little older than her compatriots, and is a more traditional pimpled bat, penholder blocker and hitter. The world ranked 6, Sun Jin (China) is a 19 year old about whom I know virtually nothing (except that she is the Chinese mixed doubles champion with Ma Lin)!

There are countless other wonderful Chinese players (Ian Marshall is impressed with 21 year old world no 14, Lin Ling), but it will not, perhaps, be very meaningful to say anything about them! If a player outside of mainland China takes the world singles title then it could just possibly be world no 10 from Chinese Taipei, Chen Jing, the 1988 Seoul Olympics Singles Gold Medalist (and losing world singles finalist, 1993). A shakehands left-hander, she has an aggressive two wing attacking game, but aged 30 is past her best. Japanese teenager An Konishi is a shooting star but far off the big girls. So to sum up, Wang Nan and Li Ju are the favourites - or an unknown Chinese! But if any European has a chance it is Tamara Boros.

It is not unfair to say that there will be no England title winners at Eindhoven, indeed almost certainly no England medalists at all. Nevertheless, Carl Prean could have good wins, as he did at Manchester 1997 when he knocked out 1988 Seoul Olympics gold medalist Yoo Nam Kyu (Korea). Defender Matthew Syed can beat the best in Europe - in the Brazilian Open Pro Tour Event in Rio de Janeiro in June,

he had a great win over world no 10 Gatién, despite using shorter pimples - although he still struggles with Asian penholders. Both our top performers, Prean and Syed could be adversely affected by the reduction in aspect ratio of pimples (a regulation change that will probably reduce the effectiveness of crowd pleasing chop defensive players, one disappointing note of these world championships).

Despite being far off the top 100 women, Nicola Deaton is steadily improving and rising up the ranks, and could pick up further good scalps. Really, that is the best that other members of the England squad can do - pick up wins against higher ranked players and gain valuable confidence and experience in the process. We are not there yet, but the Institute and World Class Performance Team at Nottingham has given us the backup to make relative progress against other countries and players - an instant return to being amongst the best is not anticipated. Give our players your support and a lift in Eindhoven!

For those wanting to attend - and you should not miss out! - the Organising Committee of the Dawei 45th World Championships is contactable at: Indoor Sportcentrum Eindhoven, Iheo Köömenlaan 1, 5644 - HZ, Eindhoven, Netherlands. Tel. +31 40 2381414 Fax. +31 40 2381415. Tickets are available from the call centre of the Ticketbox and can be ordered by telephone or by www. The telephone number is +31 70 3062111 and the internet address is: www.TicketBox.nl

Ticket prices are as follows:
Monday, 2 August - DFL 15.
Tuesday, 3 Aug - DFL 15.
Wednesday, 4 Aug - DFL 25.
Thursday, 5 Aug - DFL 25. Friday, 6 Aug - DFL 35. Saturday, 7 Aug - DFL 35. Saturday, 8 Aug - DFL 35. The call centre charges DFL 3 extra per ticket with a maximum of DFL 12 per reservation.
Official Travel Agents to the ETTA are Dawson & Sanderson Ltd, 2 Market Street, Blyth, Northumberland. Tel. 01670 351435.

The ETTA also has a travel insurance partnership with IAU and AXA Insurance plc offering very competitive prices to cover all travelling requirements: contact ETTA headquarters on Tel. 01424 722525 for an application form. See you in Eindhoven!

COACHING by Ken Muhr

A Coaches course organised by former European Champion Jill Parker (ETTA National Coaching Manager) and led by Michel Gadal (ETTA Performance Director), Peter Hirst (ETTA Director of Coaching) and Matthew Weston (ETTA Sports Physiologist) ran at the English Open Championships, Potters Leisure Resort, Norfolk on 12th-14th March, with workshops on all 3 days and plenty of viewing and analysis of the actual play taking place. Grant aid towards the cost was offered to all regions and 27 coaches attended, representing a geographic spread of the country and all age groups. Among the participants were former England internationals Lisa Lomas and Andrew Eden. The aim of the course was to raise awareness and equip coaches with knowledge of high performance coaching.

In the session which the writer attended, Michel Gadal discussed short and long term planning and goals, stressing the need to be flexible, adaptive and creative in achieving individual targets within group sessions, structured according to the nearness of competitions. He again emphasised that there should be enough quality practice (to achieve the top level, a minimum of 12 hours per week) which should relate to the competitive game - players should try to win every point. Feedback from participants of the course was very positive, if not totally accepting of every message!

Coaches are being invited to a National Conference at Lilleshall National Sports Centre, Shropshire

on 3rd - 5th September 1999. The programme will include a keynote speech by Sue Campbell, Chief Executive of the Youth Sport Trust, a presentation on 'Coaching into the New Millennium' with reference to the World Class Performance Programme, discussion on the new syllabus for Coach Education (meanwhile tutors/assessors will be exercising 'good judgement' in assessment of coaches) plus workshops on disabilities, good practice and TOP Club.

Nominations to be submitted by 15th August are being invited for the newly launched Coach of the Year Awards 1999 scheme.

Nominees must be ETTA qualified coaches, the categories being:

- Male Coach of the Year
- Female Coach of the Year
- Tutor Coach of the Year
- Young Coach (Under 28) of the Year

- Contribution to Coaching

All nominees will receive a certificate and winners will be presented with their awards at the Coaching Conference Presentation Dinner at Lilleshall on Saturday 4th September.

A fully subscribed Level 3 Coach award course is running at Lilleshall on June 25th - 27th and 24th July, being led by Peter Hirst (Director of Coaching), Tim Holder (Sports Psychologist) and Matthew Weston (Physiologist).

To obtain further information on courses or nomination forms for Coach of the Year Awards, contact Jill Parker, ETTA Coaching Manager, Tel : 01772 461325.

OBITUARY

SID GODFREY (1927-1999)

Sid started playing table tennis for the Hollington Lions in the Hastings and District League in 1946. He spent several seasons with them and then in the early sixties he formed the Hollington club in premises at Alberta Road, St Leonards, later moving to the club's present venue at Hollington Community Centre.

The club first entered teams in the local league in 1961-62, and with Sid as a member of the top team, they progressed through the divisions, achieving first division status in 1965-66. The club now has an average of 12 teams competing each season throughout the Hastings League, with the majority of the players originating from the coaching schemes organised by Sid.

He ran the coaching and practice sessions twice weekly all year round for at least the last thirty years and these sessions have produced a considerable number of county and national standard players. Currently, the club is able to boast Sussex County Ladies Champion, Rosemary Rainton, and brothers Luke and Matthew Bridge, both of whom are in the English National Junior squads for their respective age groups.

Sid was no mean player himself, winning the Hastings Veterans Singles title for his age group on no less than nine separate occasions during the sixties, seventies, eighties and nineties. He won numerous league titles during the period of 53 years that he played, captaining his team to the 1997-98 local Division 2 title in his last full season of competition.

He also found time to be President of Hastings and District Table Tennis Association in 1981-82, as well as organising and assisting with a number of events for the local Association over the years, most notably the Patterson Trophy for teams of youngsters. His enthusiasm for table tennis always shone through and he was only too keen to help wherever he could.

Sid was organiser of the first Hollington Tournament in 1977. In 1982 it became the Hollington Open Tournament. This popular Tournament has continued under his guidance for 22 years attracting players from Sussex, Kent and beyond.

This season, Sid was playing in Division 3 of the local league, bringing on yet another two youngsters. Needless to say, they are currently top of their division. He was involved in running his coaching sessions right up until January, when sadly his illness got the better of him. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him and an incredibly hard act to follow for the large number of people it will need to fill the void left at Hollington Table Tennis Club.

Neil Stapley

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Table Tennis Development Officer (TTDO) Silver Award

TWELVE people who have successfully completed their TTDO Silver Award assessments were presented with their awards by Sport England East Regional Director, Jeff Neslen at a ceremony held during the English Open. These volunteers were part of 31 who had attended the first ever TTDO Silver Award Course at Braintree District Council on 24 January. Speakers for the course had been Peter Abbott (Chairman), Mike Behnke (Sport England East), Diccon Gray (ETTA Director of Development), Sandra Collins (ETTA East Regional Development Officer and Course Organiser) and James Carstairs (Sports Development Officer, Epping Forest DC). Feedback from course participants was very positive, with comments like, "Excellent and comprehensive range of resources available." "Excellent Programme. 19 "An interesting, informative and enjoyable day." "I shall push harder to get leagues and clubs more into gear." At the award presentations Alan Ransome, Chairman of the ETTA, acknowledged not only the important work of the development officers themselves, and particularly of RDO Sandra Collins for putting the programme together, but also the support of Sport England (previously called English Sports Council), Orchard Stationery and Sports Match.

STELLAN IN BRIGHTON



Former Mens Singles World Champion STELLAN BENGTSSON (centre) is pictured above with Brighton coaches, on a recent Stiga Coaching tour of England. It was a nostalgic visit for Stellan, because it was here in Brighton that he won the English Open Mens Singles crown, three times.

BRIBAR WIN TENDER

BRIBAR TABLE TENNIS, the Kent based table tennis mail order company, won its first ETTA equipment supply contract when it successfully tendered to supply Joola tables, surrounds, umpire tables and scoring machines, for the recently held National Under 10,11, and 12 Championships, staged in Widnes, Cheshire. (Report and pictures appear on page 10)

LONG PIMPLES

MOST of the new breed of long pimples are now on the market.

Butterfly have adapted their very popular Feint Long to Long Feint II, with which Matthew Syed was recently successful against Jean Philippe Gattien, in the Brazilian Open.

Piranja's faithful will be pleased to know that Donic have updated Piranja II to the new regulations, whilst Double Happiness have changed their PF4 C8 rubber to C8.

Joola, who were first on the market with their new long pimples rubber, Poker, which had better control but less wobble, will be bringing out a new one called 'Badman', which if it lives up to its name will be causing opponents much nail-biting and gnashing of

the teeth come August when it is scheduled to hit the market place.

Juic have entered the game with their upgraded version of Leggy, entitled 'Leggy R'.

Tibhar have dropped 'Grass Super' but have upgraded their wobbling rubber 'Grass Spezial' to 'Grass Spezial 2000', lets hope this new rubber wobbles as much as the previous one.

TSP have brought out two new versions of Curl, where 'Curl P-1 R' replaces Curl P-1, and 'Curl P-3a R' replaces Curl P-3a.

But possibly TSP's new 'Bamboo Curl P-1', due out in August 1999, will be the best of TSP's new long pimples rubbers, hopefully bamboozling opponents galore.

Users of Long pimples Friendship rubbers 755 and 837, will be pleased to know that their rubbers are still legal under the new regulations. Which is good news for the England No.1 Carl Prean, who uses Friendship 837.

TABLES

MAKING an impact on the table tennis table market is an English based company called 'Table Tennis Tables Direct', run by Geoff Rushton, in Bury, Lancashire.

SPONSORSHIP

THE Kent based company 'The KPC Group' are the sponsors of the 'ETTA Junior Umpire Award', which was launched at the English Open in March 1999.

The sponsorship is worth up to £10K, over the next three years.

EQUITY TEAM BUILDING

THE new Equity Committee of the ETTA has been meeting since November 1998. Our first task is to prepare a revised Equity Policy for the ETTA as part of the Development Programme, agreed with Sport England for 1998/99.

What is equity? Sports equity is about fairness in sport; equality of access to any part of the organisation; recognising inequalities; taking positive action to address inequalities.

As part of the process three vice-chairmen, 20 members of staff and Stuart Waller (Manchester City Council Table Tennis Officer), gathered at Lilleshall on the 25th February 1999 to participate in an Advanced Sports Equity Workshop. This is part of Sport England's Running Sport programme. The tutor for the course was Louise Evan-Wong.

The training day was a valuable team building exercise with Administration, Coaching,

Development, Information, and World Performance, all attending. It involved the identification of factors which prevent or deny access to disadvantaged groups; identifying discriminatory practices in our work and the ETTA; identifying key issues and priority groups for further action; and working towards a positive approach to behaving more fairly.

Definitions of equality and ideas for action as a result of the day are now being considered within the revised Equity policy. Further on-going training will follow for staff and volunteers. The policy should be ready for distribution following the July National Council Meeting. All National Councillors have received minutes of the Equity Committee and drafts of the Policy Statement. Any comments and suggestions will be welcomed and can be sent via Judy Rogers, Equity Committee Secretary, c/o ETTA at Hastings.

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Berkshire

by Michael Auchterlonie

BERKSHIRE JUNIOR TOP 12

HELD on the 16th May the Berks Junior Top 12 saw most of the top junior boys competing for a first prize of £25. First and second place was fought out between Robert Hudson and Sean Cox, two of Berkshire's fast improving junior boys. Robert Hudson won 21-13 in the third after Sean Cox had caught his way back to deuce in the second from 15-20 down. The Junior Girls was a contest between Kerry Matthews and Lisa Bosley for the £15 first prize. Lisa Bosley looked to be running towards a close fought victory in two. However, Kerry Matthews played some good points at the end of the second, keeping her nerve to win 21-19. The third was also close, but Matthews had the edge, continuing to go for positive shots at crucial points to become the junior girls winner. Spirited performances came from two youngsters, Alice Walker (9) in the girls and Daniel Rice (10) in the boys.

U12 National Championships

Congratulations to Lisa Calcutt and Lisa Bosley who both performed well in the U12 National Championships in Widnes. Lisa Calcutt reached the semi-final of the U12 Girls Singles, losing narrowly in three to Abigail Embling. Lisa also reached the semi-final of the U12 girls doubles with her partner Kelly Craven-Griffiths. Lisa Bosley also lost closely to Abigail Embling in the semi-final of the U11 girls singles, having led 16-13 in the first game. With her partner Heather Shutt, Lisa reached the quarter final of the U12 girls doubles, losing to the top seeds Karen Shepherd and Joanna Parker in two close games.

County Championships

The County First team performed well in the second half of the Premier Division, winning three out of their four remaining matches to finish a very promising fourth. This was a considerable achievement as the team had finished the first weekend at the bottom of the table with only one point to their credit. Dave Barr continued his good record in county by winning all of his second half matches. Susan Johnson won a large percentage of her matches and recorded a win against Joanna Roberts the no.14 in the county at the time. Ben Johnson's powerful spin attack and solid tactical play kept the pressure on the opposing sides, which eased the pressure on the rest of the team, Lisa Crick, Martin Adams and Michael Auchterlonie, who all won crucial matches to help get the wins for Berkshire.

Woolwich Junior National League

Two of Berkshire's top juniors Lee Calcutt and Robert Hudson were part of a winning team in the top division of the Woolwich Junior National League at Cippenham. Chesham 'A' won all their matches on the last day of play and have now earned themselves a place in the coveted Junior British League for next season.

World Championships 1999

Congratulations must go to all of the Berkshire players who have been selected to represent their country in the

COUNTY NOTES

County Notes is for the publicity of county activities. The accuracy of what is published is the responsibility of the county associations as the editor cannot possibly know the 'facts' may be incorrect. Copy containing libellous or personally abusive matter or 'political' comment will not be published.

forthcoming World Championships in Eindhoven. Matthew Syed, Terry Young and Gemma Schwartz have been chosen to represent England and Euan Walker (Farnborough) and Michael Auchterlonie are representing Scotland. All of these players are members of Kingfisher Table Tennis Club in Reading. Gemma is also a long standing member of OLOP TTC and Michael represents OLOP in the National League Premier Division.

Cornwall

by John Wood

CELEBRATING IN CARLYON BAY

HIGHLIGHT of the 1998/99 season was the County Annual Dinner, held at the Avallen Hotel in Carlyon Bay, on Saturday 7th May 1999, where sponsors of the County Closed Championships, HSBC/Midland Bank were represented Jill Hodcroft, the Branch Manager at Camborne.

The excellent three course dinner was followed by the presentation of trophies made by HSBC/Midland Bank's Jill Hodcroft.

Winners of the trophies were: Mens Singles: Adrian Noott of St. Austell who won the title for the first time at the tender age of 18, runner-up: Kevin Worth of Launceston.

Womens Singles: Esme Stevenson of Bude, who has now won the title a

record breaking nine times, runner-up Shirley Luckhurst from Callington.

In the Intermediate Final brothers Graham and Kevin Worth faced each other, with Graham taking the trophy following a close three setter.

Veterans: Austin Chapman, runner-up Bob House. Over 55: Tim Wiltshire, runner-up Brian Holloway. Mens Doubles: Malcolm Peters/Kevin Rowe, runners-up Jeremy Williams/Neville Reed. Womens Doubles: Esme Stevenson/Shirley Luckhurst, runner-up Anna Reed/Sarah Harris. Mixed Doubles: Esme Stevenson/Kevin Rowe, runners-up Shirley Luckhurst/Graham Worth. Consolation Singles: Steve Hunt, runner-up Mike Credland.

Junior Boys Singles: Matthew Nichols of St. Austell received this coveted trophy for the first time, runner-up Mark Poyner. Junior Girls Singles: Sarah Harris from Camborne who was also a first time winner, runner-up Michelle Turner.

Cadet Boys: Chris Brown, runner-up Ross Williamson. Cadet Girls: Michelle Turner, runner-up Lucy Wood. The Under 12 Boys final saw two lads from Truro meet each other with Jonathan Randall take the trophy against Adam Tatlow. Girls Under 12: Katie Latham beat Amy Burton in a see-saw final 20-22, 21-4, 21-15.

Junior Doubles: Mark Poyner/James Charlton beat the favourites for this title

Matthew Nichols/Andrew Gaved two straight. Junior Team K/O Mount Charles beat Falmouth 3-0.

This year's Annual General Meeting will be at Tregorrick Park on Thursday 29th July, where many issues will be debated, and the main situation to be resolved is a replacement for probably irreplaceable David Lancaster, who is moving back up country.

In my first season here in Cornwall I have got to know David very well, playing with him in the Knockout Handicapped Pairs tournament in the West Cornwall League, where we had a successful run reaching the final, as an umpire working with him at DML White Hart Launceston's British League matches at Tregorrick Park and at the South West Open Grand Prix tournament at the Polkyth Leisure Centre in St. Austell, as a friend, and as an administrator.

It is as an administrator that David will be mostly missed, it was his energy and vision that saw the dream of Tregorrick Park Table Tennis Centre, become a reality, plus due to his efforts Cornwall County Table Tennis Association has become a Registered Charity. I know nobody is indispensable, but David will definitely be a hard act to follow. It is essential that a replacement is found, ensuring that all of the achievements that have been made, are carried on and embellished. Thus making Tregorrick Park a great and continuing success, locally, regionally and nationally.

I would like to thank, on behalf of Cornish table tennis, David Lancaster for the huge impact he has made with table tennis in Cornwall, and wish him and his wife Rosemary every success and happiness for their new life.

Don't forget that Tregorrick Park Table Tennis Centre is open for Summer practice and coaching, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 2pm until 10pm.

See you all next season. 'Kernow onen hag oll.'

Derbyshire

by Colin Deaton

DESPITE a financial loss on the County Closed Championships, the Derbyshire Association are confident that the Association is in good standing.

Efforts are already being made to play this event next season at a new venue, and in the process the overall costs will be cut.

It will be remembered that all the Ladies events were cancelled because of a poor entry, but the county officials are quite adamant that this feature will not happen again.

Chesterfield in particular have a squad of 12 young girls all set to play in competitive table tennis.

Regular training sessions are held at the Staveley Middlecroft Leisure Centre for these youngsters and it is encouraging to note that all of them are to be invited to the County Junior trials.

Relegation to Division 1A for our seniors means that we have to get an all round balanced squad in the future



CORNISH LADIES pictured at the Cornwall County Table Tennis Association Annual Dinner and Presentation evening, held at the Porth Avallen Hotel, Carlyon Bay, are (left to right) Shirley Luckhurst, Jill Hodcroft of sponsors HSBC/Midland Bank, and Esme Stevenson.

with a big emphasis being put on our ladies.

The Matlock League have decided to do away with their annual presentation evening. Their presentation of awards will now take place at their Annual General Meeting. What a pity it was always a good social evening.

Meanwhile the Chesterfield League had their annual funds and presentation evening and despite an unfortunate clash with Manchester United in a Cup Final, it was still a good night.

Some thrilling table tennis was witnessed and star performance was England ranked cadet Shaun Marples, who won a host of titles.

Without doubt he will be a force to be reckoned with on the international scene in the not too distant future.

There was a good turn out for the AGM held at the Alfreton Hall.

The following officers were elected: Chairman - Tony Chatwin, Chairman - Derrick Marples, Secretary/Treasurer - Les Allwood, Vice-Chairman - Mike Payne, County Junior Captain - Neil Houghton, Press Officer - Colin Deaton.

The only addition to last year's officers was the nomination of Les Allwood as Honorary Life Member.

Allwood has been one of the driving forces of Derbyshire table tennis for several years, and it was a very fitting nomination for his services to our game.

On the international front Nicola Deaton played in the Brazilian and U.S.A. Opens, with Alan Cooke as the team Manager of the Ladies Team.

Finally the recent reduction in grants that our full time players are experiencing is beyond belief.

Nicola was no exception and came into this category.

This year has seen her as English Senior Triple National Champion, the England No.1 ranked lady player and she has moved significantly up the in the World Ranking list.

However, income from our National Association via the Sports Council Lottery Funding is reduced to the grand sum of £50 (fifty pound per week).

Over the past decade I have spent over £25 million pounds on sports coaches and personalities, and I am fully aware of the problems our administrators face, however, how can our Association expect our top players to give a full time commitment to our game.

Over the seasons I have not agreed with many of John Preat's comments, but his

final paragraph in the Isle of Wight Notes (TTN May/June issue) were to quote "English table tennis earnings remain below starvation level and somewhat below child labourers of the the third world."

Let us all hope that a mutually satisfactory conclusion can be reached.

Essex

by Steve Kerns

ESSEX YOUTH OPEN

THE Essex Youth Open at Colchester Leisure World held over May bank-holiday weekend attracted a reasonable entry despite a regrettable clash with the English Schools Individual finals and it was pleasing to see players travelling from as far afield as Dorset, Wales and Yorkshire to compete.

Gemma Chapman (Berkshire) was the tournament's most successful player taking the U14s title on the Saturday after a close-fought struggle with Amy Wright (Essex) and the U17s singles on the Sunday with excellent wins over Aimee Sparks (Suffolk) and Claire Gibbs (Somerset). In a very open event Miss Sparks had distinguished herself by beating top-seed Aparna Narendran (Middlesex) in the groups.

The U21 events went to form with top-seeded Paul Pountney and Marianna Rolikova coming out on top. However, the mens event provided plenty of shocks with the vastly under-rated Ben Warner (Essex) sensationally getting the better of third seeded Jon Nilsson (Sweden) 17,21. Little-known Ross Walker (Kent) topped the higher-rated Dominic Hall and beat Warner -21, 19,18 in a thrilling quarter-final before distinguishing himself -17,-26 in his defeat against Pountney. In the other half up-and-coming Eli Baraty (Middlesex) ousted Kent's Oliver Stevens before falling to Essex's Reagan Nettleingham in the semi-final. Pountney produced his very best form to beat Nettleingham 9,18 in the final.

Kent provided three of the four U17 boys semi-finalists with Steven Beerling looking mightily impressive as he beat Baraty 13,12 to book his place in the final. In the other half Oliver Stevens had to overcome a titanic quarter-final challenge from Ben Warner who only succumbed 14,-16, 23 saving seven match points in the third game and then serving off at 21-20!! Stevens booked his final place ousting Kent colleague Dominic Hall over three ends and came out on

top 20,18 in a well contested final.

Star of Saturday's play was the tenacious top-spinner Paul Moore from Surrey who took the U12 singles in style and looked a good bet for the U14 title after ousting top-seed Tim Holtam (Middlesex) in the semi-final. However, it was another excellent U12 Neil Cartwright (Dorset) who won utilising his excellent defence interspersed with a strong attack to stifle his all-action opponent. Kelly Craven-Griffiths (Leics) took the U12 girls title in style without dropping a game and she disposed of Gina Rogers (Sussex) 17, 6 in the final.

Full results were as follows:

U21 Mens Singles : Robert Pountney beat Reagan Nettleingham 9,18.

U21 Womens Singles: Marianna Rolikova beat Ahn Humble 15,19.

U17 Boys Singles : Oliver Stevens beat Steven Beerling 20,18.

U17 Girls Singles : Gemma Chapman beat Claire Gibbs 16,15.

U14 Boys Singles : Neil Cartwright beat Paul Moore -19,15,8.

U14 Girls Singles : Gemma Chapman beat Amy Wright 14,-20,15.

U12 Boys Singles : Paul Moore beat Liam Thomas 7,11.

U12 Girls Singles : Kelly Craven-Griffiths beat Gina Rogers 17,6.

Hertfordshire

by Doug Tomsett

SHAW TOURNAMENT

THE SHAW Tournament took place recently at the Barnet Table Tennis Centre, where the standard of table tennis was very high and keenly contested.

Glen Wilkes was again successful in the Mens Singles when he beat Gary Keers in the final 21-13, 21-14, whilst the Womens Singles was won by P. Schmelher who won a round-robin competition with maria Williams runner-up.

In the semi-finals Wilkes beat Alan Phipps 21-17, 21-17, whilst Keers won a close contest with Jeff Linskey 19-21, 22-20, 21-10.

The Veterans Singles was won by Mens Singles finalist Gary Keers who defeated Doug Willis 21-14, 24-22.

H. Sookraj won the handicap Singles title when he beat D. McCrave.

The Minor Singles title was won by D.McCrave who over came the challenge of S. Thomas 16-21, 21-15, 21-19.

C.Short won the Junior Singles crown when he beat J. Goodhead 21-13, 21-13.

The Mens Doubles final was won by Wilkes and Keers who defeated Jeff Linskey and Brian Gale 22-20, 21-18 in the final.

Victory was secured in the Womens Doubles final by Maria Williams and Rene Williamson when they beat A.Fereday and P. Schmelher in the final 12-21, 21-16, 21-15.

Maria Williams experienced the sweet taste of success again in the Mixed Doubles final when she paired up with long time friend Jeff Linskey, to beat A.Fereday and Keers, 21-13, 21-18.

We close this month's column on a sad note with the announcement that the funeral of Caron Harber took place at the West Herts Crematorium earlier this year.

It only seems a couple of years ago that

Caron was the County No.2 junior girl. She will be sadly missed by all players, coaches and officials, as she was one of the most friendly and jolliest persons that one could know.

Kent

by Adrian Hall

JUSTIN RETAINS NATIONAL SCHOOLS TITLE

THE DUNLOP English Schools Individual Table Tennis Championships were held at Aston Villa Sports Centre on Saturday 1st May. This is the largest one day tournament of the season with over 700 matches played in the day, and with every competitor the champion of their county at various age groups.

Gravesend Grammar's 16 year old Justin Dodd retained the U19 Boys singles title beating Nottinghamshire's Craig Gascoyne in the final. Dodd beat the champions of Cornwall, Surrey, Merseyside and Durham in the group matches and then beat the Essex defender Tim Yardy in the semifinal.

Disappointment though for Kent's other national squad player Dominic Hall (Maidstone Grammar) when the No.5 seed in the U16 boys Singles was beaten in the first round by Durham's Daniel Welsh.

Lee Broad (Fulston Manor) (Boys U13) had a good day winning his group with wins against players from Cheshire Hereford and Worcester and Avon. Broad then beat Shaun Marples (Derbyshire) 13-21, 21-18, 21-14 in the first round before falling to the 2nd seed Craig Bryant (Devon) 19-21, 17-21.

Lisa Hoghen (Highworth) (Girls U13), Michelle Hoghen (Tower) (Girls U16) and Hannah Frarey (Invicta Grammar) (Girls U19) all played well with out progressing past the group stages.

DOMINIC WINS THREE GOLD MEDALS FOR ENGLAND

Fourteen year old Dominic Hall who attends Maidstone Grammar School and is a member of the Larkfield Table Tennis Club won three gold medals for England in the Home Countries Quadrangular Tournament at the Welsh Institute of Sport, Cardiff on the 7th/8th April 1999.

In the team event Dominic with team mates Lee Barham (Cams), Matthew Kenny (Yorks) and Peter Cleminson (Essex) beat Ireland 4-1, Scotland 3-2 and Wales 5-0 to win the gold medal although Hall lost the only singles match to the Scottish No.1 Gavin Rungay.

In the doubles Hall and Kenny met the Scottish No.1 pair of Gavin Rungay/David Atkins in the semi-final and in the final the Irish pair of Sean Brady/Dane Smythe, who had beaten the English pair in the team event. In the final, however, the English pair made no mistake after a close first game went on to win 22-20, 21-14.

In the singles Hall played his best table tennis to make it a clean sweep of gold medals for England. In the final he met his doubles partner Matthew Kenny, who Hall had never previously beaten. On this occasion Hall made no mistake and took the first leg easily 21-

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10, the second leg was a much closer encounter and with Hall getting a lucky edge at 20-21, went on to win 24-22. **CHRISTIAN BACK WITH A BANG** Christian Thompson came back from injury to record his best victory at the Blackpool Grand Prix. Having narrowly lost 18-21, 17-21 to England No.5 Gareth Herbert (Berkshire) in the Mens Singles quarter finals, Thompson defeated the England International 21-13, 26-24 to win the U21 singles title.

KENT PLAYERS EXCEL IN ESSEX Kent supplied three of the four semifinalists in the Junior Boys (U 17) Singles at the Essex 3 Star Youth Open at Colchester on Sunday 2nd May. Top seed Oliver Stevens (Rotherhithe) beat Maidstones 4th seed Dominic Hall in the top half of the draw, while 3rd seed Stephen Beerling (Thanet) beat Middlesex's Eli Baraty in the bottom half of the draw. With two Kent players in the final it was the higher ranked Stevens who came out on top to take the Championship.

Medways Ross Walker caused a major upset in the U21 singles when he beat 7th seed Dominic Hall (Maidstone) in the second round for a maximum ranking points win and then accounted for Essex's Ben Warner in the quarter finals. Walker then met the No.1 seed Robert Poutney (Surrey) in the semifinal and put in an excellent performance before losing to Poutney who was the eventual winner of the tournament.

KENT JUNIORS SELECTED FOR ENGLAND

Kents topjuniors who were all medal winners at the recent National Championships have been again rewarded with selection for England. Oliver Stevens (Rotherhithe) and Dominic Hall (Maidstone) will be in Spain for a weeks training camp prior to participating in the Spanish Open in Barcelona, while Gravesends Justin Dodd will be taking part in the French Junior Open at the end of May.

Lancashire

by Tony Meredith

CONGRATULATIONS

I should like to congratulate the Lancashire junior first team on winning division 1a with an unbeaten record and gaining promotion to the Junior Premier. Louis Rosenthal led the way with eleven wins out of fourteen. If he can combine with England no.2 Andrew Rushton next season along with Katy Parker, they should be strong contenders for the title. Other records: Paul Whitehead 8 from 14, Paul Bramham 3 from 4, Iain Lindley 3 from 4, David Pilkington 1 from 4, Nick Ball 1 from 2, Rebecca Tong 7 from 10, Joanne Cain 5 from 10, Rachael McHugh 4 from 8.

The first team won 5 and drew 2. The seconds won 4, drew 2, lost 1 and finished runners-up in division 2a. Well done everyone.

Lancashire & Cheshire League

Liverpool have retained both the men's and ladies division titles. Wirral were runners-up in the men's division and Oldham a close second in the ladies. Division two north was won by Bury who pipped Preston on sets difference (47-13

to 45-15). Oldham took two south over Warrington. There was also a sets countback in division three where Manchester "A" got the nod over Trafford. Southport were surprise junior premier winners over Wirral who (on paper) should have walked the division. In division one Halton were worthy winners with Chester runners-up. Stockport were vets champions for the eleventh successive season. They have been the sole winners since the vets divisions were formed. Schoey has gone but the team marches on. other divisions:- Division one : Winners, Halton runners-up Oldham. Division two : Winners, Oldham "A" runners-up Salford & Farnworth. Division three : Winners, Wirral, runners - up Southport. Division four : Winners, Rochdale "A", runners - up Hyndburn. Division five north: Winners, Lancaster & Morecambe "A", runners - up Wigan Division five south: Winners, Warrington, runners-up Rochdale "B"

Norman Cook Memorial Trophy

Liverpool won the trophy for a record sixth time when they beat neighbours Liverpool Business Houses 5-1. With the score at 2-1 to Liverpool, LBH had a chance to level the match when Paula French led Brenda Buoey a game and 17-12 but lost the next nine points and the deciding game. This was really the turning point in the match. Keith Williams beat Ian McElwee to conclude affairs. Williams has played in all six of Liverpool's final successes.

Dennis Smith Memorial Trophy

Liverpool vets were 5 - 3 victors over Salford & Farnworth in this final after a shock defeat against LBH in last season's event. The turning point came when Ken Jackson saved two match points to defeat Bob Jackson and give Liverpool a 4-2 lead. John Bleakley pulled one back when he beat Peter Lee deuce in the third, but Ken Jackson made no mistake against Brian Doxey to give his side the result.

Jack Livingstone Trophy

The event was played at Hyndburn Table Tennis Centre on Sunday 9th May. Five teams competed on a round robin basis. The deciding match came in the final round when Barrow beat Wirral 5 - 1. Had the match ended in a draw there would have been four teams in a countback (Chester, Barrow, Wirral and Salford & Farnworth). All the sets were close (several went to three) but Barrow had the edge. Results as follows:- Barrow: Won 3, lost 1. Salford & Farnworth: Won 2, drew 1, lost 1. Chester: Won 2, drew 1, Lost 1. Wirral: Won 1, drew 2, lost 1. Hyndburn: Lost 4.

Seasiders Junior Grand Prix

A Welsh contingent made a considerable impact on this tournament. Owen Griffiths defeated fellow countryman Lee Davies in the junior boys band 1. Clara Howard of Cheshire took the junior girls title over Cherith Graham (Lancashire). Shropshire's Edward Moran edged out James Fletcher of Lancashire in the cadet band 1 and Cherith Graham was a comfortable winner over Claire Langford (Cheshire) in the cadet girls. Stephen Denny from Yorkshire got the better of the improving Chris Gregory (

Shropshire) in the under 12 boys and Ashlie Edwards (Nottingham) accounted for Claire Langford in the under 12 girls. other results :- Junior boys band 2 : Owen Griffiths bt Lee Davies. Junior girls band 2 : Ashlie Edwards bt Clara Howard. Cadet boys band 2 : Lee Davies bt James Fletcher. Cadet girls band 2 : Ashlie Edwards bt Cherith Graham. Grand Prix winners :- Junior boys : James Lister (Yorkshire) Junior girls: Clara Howard. Cadet boys : Grant Woodhouse (Cumbria). Cadet girls : Clara Howard. Under 12 boys: George Yardley (Derbyshire). Under 12 girls: Clara Howard.

Seasiders Grand Prix (Top Ten)

The Tournament took on a new format, groups often played on two tables - no knockouts, no hold-ups, no waiting and nine quality matches for every entrant. The winner and runner-up in each category pocketed handsome cash prizes - paid on the day. Each category was played in strict National ranking order. The top category produced some super t.t. from J.Hilton and co. Sadly for Mr. Hilton he lost three matches to messrs. Dolder, Gannon and Williams. Gannon lost to Dolder, Donoghue and Allison but beat Hilton. Kevin Dolder was unbeaten winner of the group with Dave Gannon a not so close second. Nottingham's Georgina Walker was the unbeaten winner of the women's category. She dropped only one single game in nine matches (to runner - up T.A.Nolan). This girl has the disposition to go a long way in the game. At present she appears to lack the big shots but she is only thirteen and has time on her side.

Other category results :- Category 2 - Men : Winner, Simon Pugh (Yorkshire), Runner - up, Malcolm Francis (Sussex). Category 3 - Men: Winner, Peter Taylor (Lancashire), Runner - up, Jonathan Ash (Lancashire). Category 4-Men: Winner, Dean Walmsley (Lancashire), Runner - up, Chris Hill (Cheshire). Category 5 - Men : Winner, Clive Strettle (Lancashire), Runner - up, Mick Dudman (Lincolnshire). Category 6 - Men : Winner, John Brewer (Cheshire), Runner - up, Tom Murray (Cheshire).

Seasiders Junior 4 Star

The event attracted anything but a four star entry. Parents were asking "where are the players?". The players are at the ETTA Grand Prix tournaments - that's where. It has become the norm now for juniors with 300 ranking points (and less) to ignore junior events and just play in the Grand Prix. The chance to catch one or two veterans cold early in the morning can be very lucrative pointswise. Why bother with junior events when a much easier road can be taken at the Grand Prix' 5. The points attained by this method are certainly not relative to the junior list. The junior list states players' positions in relation to each other, but how many of the top ten juniors have played each other this season. It needs some communication skills between the tournaments committee, ranking committee and the Performance Director to save our major junior events.

Getting back to the event itself- cadet Louis Rosenthal from Lancashire was the

worthy winner of the junior boys band I beating Welsh prospect Owen Griffiths in the final. What a pity he didn't enter the cadet events. The junior girls final was contested by Terri - Anne Nolan of Cheshire and Rachael Codd from Yorkshire with Nolan the winner and justifying her no.1 seeding.

other results :- Junior boys band 2 : Owen Griffiths bt Grant Woodhouse (Cumbria). Junior girls band 2 : Rebecca Tong (Lancashire) bt Rachael Codd. Cadet boys band 1; Colin Byrne (Ireland) bt Peter Daniels (Wiltshire). Cadet girls band 1: Amy Wright (Essex) bt Karen Shepherd (Cheshire). Cadet boys band 2 : Colin Byrne bt Peter Daniels. Cadet girls band 2 : Ashlie Edwards (Nottingham) bt Clara Howard (Cheshire). Under 12 boys singles: Stephen Denny (Yorkshire) bt James Fletcher (Lancashire). Under 12 girls : Karen Shepherd bt Nicola White (Yorkshire). Junior boys doubles : Nathan Thomas/Owen Griffiths (Wales) bt James Whiteman (Devon)/James Fletcher. Junior girls doubles: Terri - Anne Nolan/ Annabelle Sorrentino (Cheshire) bt Karen Shepherd/Rebecca Tong. Cadet boys doubles : Chris Gregory (Shropshire)/Adam Bleakley (Lancashire) bt Neil Powell/Danny Horner (Cheshire). Cadet girls doubles: Karen Shepherd/Rebecca Tong bt Cherith Graham (Lancashire/Helen Stone (Yorkshire).

Lincolnshire

by Betty Brown

LINCOLNSHIRE CLOSED

THIS year saw a good entry for the Lincolnshire Closed Championships. The event was held at Cleefields Table Tennis Centre in Grimsby.

The Men's Singles ran to form with the top seeds in the semi finals. The first saw British League team mates Mark Donoghue (1) play Andy Wignall (3). Both players produced some good table tennis but Donoghue always had the edge and won 21-11 and 21-16. The second semi saw Brian Hill (2) take on another Veteran Brian Allison. This encounter proved a little one-sided with Hill winning 21-12 and 21-7. The final turned out to be a classic attacker/defender battle with Hill on top in the first game winning 21-15. The second rubber saw Donoghue's timing improve to win 13-21. Donoghue's form remained in the third for him to take it 21-18, making him the Lincolnshire Men's champion.

The Ladies entry was good this year and the standard high. The No. 1 seed Jane Strawson had a semi-final clash with Kath Fisher. Fisher stretched her to the limit in a tough three setter, the No.1 seed eventually winning 21 - 18, 17-21 and 21-19. The second semi involved two County Vets, Connie Moran and Sue Allison. Moran got the better in this encounter, winning 21-1 3, 19-21 and 21-14. The final saw Strawson's offensive game prove too strong for Moran, winning 21-18 and 21 - 14 to become Ladies' champion.

The Ladies Veteran event was run as a round robin with five entries, the winner being Connie Moran with Kath

COUNTY NOTES – A look around the country

Fisher runner-up.

The Men's Veterans saw Brian Hill's name appear again. This time his opponent in this final was Jimmy Brewster. Brewster played well but could not maintain his attack against Hill's stalwart defence, the scores being 21-16, 11-21 and 21-11.

The Under-17 Boys' Singles champion for the County is now Mark Shannan who beat Alex Green in the final 21-13, 19-21 and 21-14.

The Under-17 Girls' event only had four entrants so it was run on a round robin basis. The winner was Katie Barwood with Hayley Hooton runner-up.

The Ladies' Doubles champions are Sue Allison and Jane Strawson. In the final they beat Connie Moran and Kath Fisher 21-19, 21-14.

The Men's Doubles event saw the Veterans finalists pair up to defeat John Hancock and Steve Forbes 21-11 and 21-11.

In the Mixed Doubles, Brian Hill's name appears again. He knows how to pick his partners! This time he and Katie Barwood played as if they were a regular pair and easily swept aside all opposition to become the Mixed Doubles champions. Their opponents in the final were Connie Moran and Matt Sheader whom they beat 21-10 and 21-12.

RESULTS

Men's Singles: M. Donoghue beat B. Hill 15-13, 18. Ladies' Singles: J. Strawson beat C. Moran 18, 14. Men's Veterans: B. Hill beat Brewster 16, 11, 11. Ladies' Veterans Winner C. Moran, Runner-up K. Fisher. Boys Singles: M. Sharman beat A. Green 13, 19, 14. Girls Singles: K. Barwood Winner, H. Hooton Runner-up. Men's Doubles: B. Hill/J. Brewster beat J. Hancock/S. Forbes 11, 11. Ladies' Doubles: S. Allison/J. Strawson beat C. Moran/K. Fisher 19, 14. Mixed Doubles: B. Hill/K. Barwood beat C. Moran/M. Sheader 10, 12. Under-30 Men's: T. Wright beat D. Rimmer 19, 11. Men's Under-40: M. Donoghue beat A. Wignall 15, 8.

Norfolk

by Graham Rogerson

FEW CHANGES

THE Norfolk County AGM as expected saw few changes in personnel. The most important change saw John Shutes take over responsibility for the County Junior sides.

For many years the county juniors have proved to be a problem as the rural nature of Norfolk has meant that it has been difficult for the County Junior Selectors to know exactly what has been going on all over the county.

Hopefully this year the problem will be addressed, as we are hoping to get all the coaches from all over the county involved in the selection procedure. The final details have yet to be decided, but I anticipate that the result will be a more broad base for selection plus more players being recommended for regional squads.

The championships drew a disappointing entry for various reasons, but 10 address this we are hoping to move the venue to the Dereham area next year, as a more central venue.

This year's final 100 club winners were David Henderson £58, Man Pickard, £29 Wendy Durrant £14.50, and Ray & Ruth Hogg £5.80. Anyone from the county will immediately notice that the majority of these winners are County Committee members. This is because the Committee are committed to ensuring the County's prosperity and so participate in all fund raising schemes.

Unfortunately they receive little support from across the county, where players are quick to criticise but slow to support. The county is having to cut teams and support to teams due to falling revenues and desperately need help from all county players to raise money.

One major bright spot was the King's Lynn Dinner dance organised by Marie Brewer, which saw 270 people attend, and this from a league of only 42 teams. The majority came from within a 40 mile radius of Kings Lynn, but we also had a party from Germany. Everyone enjoyed the evening from the beginners in the Woolwich League to the Supervets in the IBA League, and also the parents of our juniors and the children of our veterans.

Finally, unfortunately I have to report that one of the longest servants of Table Tennis in this area Ruth Hogg, is severely ill with little prospects of a full recovery and our thoughts go out to her and her husband Ray.

Northants

by Dennis Millman

ANDY TROTT reigned supreme at the Queensberry Scimitar County Closed tournament, retaining his Mens Singles crown with an impeccable display of exhilarating table tennis.

This was Trott's fifth title, one less than Graeme McKim, and two fewer than Colin Hogg's record of seven, and on this occasion, his awesome power on both wings proved too much for well-travelled Malcolm Francis. This latter's varied defensive technique had earlier confused a variety of opponents, while also bringing him back from the brink of semi-final defeat against newcomer David Gatiss.

The final was an absorbing battle of spectacular rallies, but there was only going to be one winner - the talented Trott - and he ran out the victor for the loss of just 24 points.

It was almost a different story in the doubles, where Trott partnered by Steve Brown, encountered twice losing finalists Richard Elliott and Mark Nannery. Trott and Brown started well but their early control gradually disappeared, and though they took the opener, Elliott and Nannery levelled in the second, and playing superbly led 16-9, 18-12 and finally 20-16 in the decider. At this stage Trott and Brown could do little more than keep the ball in play, but their opponents spurned every opportunity, losing six consecutive to gift the title to their Higham colleagues. It was a bitter pill to swallow.

In the mixed Doubles, a defending Trott and Muriel Cox had Ryan Keates and Clem Little in opposition and this also went the distance. However, by the third end Trott's fluency had returned, and Cox providing steady support, the

honours were taken with points to spare.

Bill Fletcher had an outstanding tournament, with victories in the Over 50 and Over 60 Doubles, partnered by Greg Dobrowolski, and narrow defeats at the semi-final stage of the Over 40 and the Over 50 Singles. He also played with flair and determination to reach the principal veterans final, but at this obstacle his progress came to an abrupt end at the hands of last season's champion Gordon Shaw, who also combined with Over 50's singles winner Michael Edwards to retain the Over 40 Doubles.

Ironically, with Shaw taking veteran honours at Kettering, Wellingborough and county level, it was Edwards at Northampton, who deprived him of a clean sweep.

Clem Little, the only player to have competed at every finals night, made this year's journey worthwhile, when she retained her Womens Singles title against Helen Watts by varying returns to good effect. However, when the players returned to contest the doubles the roles reversed, and it was Watts who cleverly kept the ball away from Viv Smiley's potentially match-winning forehand, who guided Sue Moloney to a 25-23 third end success in a reversal of last year's result.

Little also produced a reversal of her own, when she got much the better of Moloney in the Over 40 event.

Marathon performances came from brothers Tim and Greg Yarnell. Tim feature in thirty matches and Greg just three fewer, as between them they ended up with eight winning trophies and eleven year old Tim, also ending as runner-up in the Under 14 Singles.

However, when the brothers met in the semi-final of the Under 17 Boys, where it was Tim who emerged triumphant - a win he was to repeat at the same stage of the Gwil Evans Memorial Trophy Class 1 Singles. He then went on to success in both these competitions with superb final verdicts over Paul Chatfield, Paul Gatiss.

There was a major surprise in the major Girls' Singles, when Gabrielle Evans, who had graced ever final since 1994, made her departure from the Junior ranks on a losing note, by going down narrowly to the much improved Lucy Ellingham.

Wellingborough's Rachel Love took the two remaining girls titles, but the most junior event of all, provided reward for the Yardley Gobian contingent, when Thomas Wood got the decision over Shane Atkins.

The Yarnell brothers missed out on the Boys Doubles going down at the penultimate stage to Michael Clark and Robert Williams, who in turn lost to Carlton Ellwood and Daniel Pang. County Secretary Denise Barnett made it three in a row in the Singles for the Disabled, former No.1 Junior Andy Thomas took the Rod Marchant Memorial Trophy, while Kettering players Viv Smiley, Lee O'Boyle and Damian Carr proved successful in the Class 2, 3, and 4 Singles, respectively.

However, undoubtedly the greatest achievement was that of Tournament Referee Arthur Palmer, and Assistant Phil Slade, who masterminded the biggest closed tournament ever staged inside the county boundaries, and ensured that

more than four hundred and fifty matches were brought to a successful conclusion.

Oxfordshire

by Avril Haynes

GREG WINS THREE TITLES

THE Junior County Closed Tournament was held in April at the AERE BALL with success for Greg Boone.

RESULTS

JUNIOR GIRLS SINGLES Joanne O'Donovan beat Laurel Christer 21-2, 21-5.

JUNIOR BOYS SINGLES Kevin Cruickshank bt William Chan 21-15, 21-13.

JUNIOR DOUBLES Kevin Cruickshank and Greg Boone bt James S Cunane and Richard Lyons 21-12, 21-1.

CADET GIRLS SINGLES Joanne O'Donovan won in a round robin competition with Sarah Howkins as runner-up.

CADET BOYS SINGLES Greg Boone bt James S Cunane 21-9, 21-16.

UNDER 12 BOYS SINGLES GREG Boone bt Sam Harrison 21-6, 21-6.

UNDER 12 GIRLS SINGLES Sarah Howkins bt Laurel Christer 21-14, 10-21, 21-17.

UNDER 12 DOUBLES Sam Harrison and Greg Boone bt Ben Shephard and Eddie Halmarack 21-11, 15-21, 21-14.

The standard of play was very encouraging particularly in the under 12 events. This bodes well for the future and is a basis on which to build. The competition was well organised by Alan Mead.

DIDCOT TOURNAMENT

The Didcot Tournament was also held in April at the AERE BALL

WINNERS were:

Mens Singles: Karl Bushell bt Eddie Herrity.

VETERANS MENS SINGLES: Karl Bushell again bt Eddie Herrity.

MENS DOUBLES: Karl Bushell and Ian Packford bt Andy Packford and Clive Mitchell. This was the third win for Karl Bushell.

RESTRICTED SINGLES: Mike Haddrell bt John Wheeler.

The award for best performance by a player not in the first division went to Pam Bell.

MIDLAND LEAGUE JUNIOR

Oxford had an excellent win at Coventry beating them 9-1. Kevin Cruickshank and Greg Boone both won 3 singles each and the doubles. Sam Harrison won 2 singles.

COUNTY JUNIOR

Oxfordshire drew with Berkshire 2nd team despite having a depleted team Kevin Cruickshank and John Camilleri both won 2 singles backed up by young Greg Boone who won 1 singles.

South Yorkshire

by Alan Dunn

EXCELLENT SHOP WINDOW

THE second South Yorkshire Open held at Ponds Forge over the 8th & 9th May was an unresounding success. The

continued on page 30

THE MIGHTY WALZER



HOWARD JACOBSON's *Mighty Walzer* is definitely not a book to give to your mum for her birthday. Especially if your mother happens to be Jewish. Or for that matter if she's Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or atheist. Best also to keep it out of the hands of your grandmothers, aunts, sisters nieces and close female cousins. So what am I suggesting? Has Jacobson produced some monstrosity of a misogynist novel? I think not, but you'll have to make your own mind up on that one. What he has produced is one of the funniest, poignant 'coming-of-age' semi autobiographical roller coasters I've read for many a year. A classic to match the very best of Woody Allen's masterpieces but with the added bonus; the *Mighty Walzer* offers a kosher account of table tennis in the 1950's, specifically in the Manchester area but with a familiar resonance for towns and cities throughout Britain, writes Jon Kaufman.

Given the wholesome, 'apple pie and motherhood' audience that *Table Tennis News* aspires to, I'll constrain my comments to the table tennis angle. But in the interests of the nation's morality I should warn TTN's readers that if *The Mighty Walzer* ever becomes a film it's likely to get an X-rating if indeed it passed the censor's desk at all. Not that I consider Jacobson's sexual meanderings in any way gratuitous - simply honest. Brutally honest.

Now to the 'ping pong', (the nomenclature favoured by Jacobson rather than our preferred 'table tennis', the latter name admittedly not having much of a literary feel about it). Sometimes I feel, if not ashamed, then at the very least a little defensive, to admit to myself that a huge proportion of my adult life has been spent knocking a little white ping pong ball backwards and forwards. As obsessions go it's relatively harmless but shouldn't I be doing something better with my time. *The Mighty Walzer* removes any such feelings. Never again will I feel ashamed to proclaim to the world my love of ping pong. Jacobson has

'THE MIGHTY WALZER - A story of sex, death and ping-pong' by Howard Jacobson Reviewed by Jon Kaufman

Published by Jonathan Cape to be launched on the 26th August 1999, cost £15.99 in hardback. Howard Jacobson, the well known author (examples of his work are: fiction, 'Peeping Tom', 'Redback' and 'No More Mr. Nice Guy', and non-fiction, 'In the Land of Oz', 'Roots Schmoots' and 'Seriously Funny: An Argument for Comedy') was a leading Lancashire junior player in the late 1950's, coming second nationally in the junior county championships averages. He knew top Manchester players of the time such as Jeff Ingber, Benny Casofsky and Jack Clayton. Earlier this year he was filmed watching the English Open Championships at Potters Leisure Resort in conversation with Matthew Syed, to help promote his new book on the South Bank Show, being broadcast in the second or third week of September. It is hoped he will attend the Merseyside Open Grand Prix event on 28/29th August 1999.

made it OK to be a table tennis anorak. Not only that. By the end, table tennis is elevated by Jacobson beyond a youthful obsession - a substitute for unfulfilled sexual urges. In Jacobson's mature world, table tennis reaches the realm of 'the beautiful game', a battle of individual wills locked together in fraternal goodwill and comradeship.

Am I going over the top? Did Jacobson go over the top? Perhaps so, but if one considers the international comradeship engendered by the recent World Veterans Table Tennis Championships and similar such gatherings, I think we are witnessing something special. This is Jacobson's point and I fully concur.

Whatever his purpose, Jacobson has done our beloved game a mighty service (both puns intended). By conjuring up a literary link between ping pong past and ping pong present, he offers us a vision of a ping pong future. And in these days of rapidly declining leagues the vision thing is all important. No vision, no future. *The Mighty Walzer* is definitely a smash hit and will be available in August this year from all good table tennis clubs.

Jon Kaufman 7/6/99



HOWARD JACOBSON pictured practicing with MATTHEW SYED at the English Open

event is an excellent shop window within our region for our sport. The lack of local juniors and seniors, both as competitors and spectators is worrying. The Band 5 event is for local league standard players of any age, the five S.Yorks entries was disappointing to say the least. "If I cant win it, I wont be in it". Seems to be the feeling in our county. Our most successful players were Stephen Horsfield in the mens singles, losing to Michael Isherwood in the 2nd round. Mark Short missed out on a quarter final place in Band 1, losing to Christian Thompson -16,19,20. Matthew Kenny also narrowly missed the quarters, losing to Tom Hughes -15,18, 14 in Band 3. Rotherham duo James Houghton and John Cade both show promise, reaching the last eight of Band 5. The Baldi sisters were the only female entries from our region, Andrea and Rachael both use long pimple combination bats, the work done by coach Roy Maskery paid dividends as Andrea reached the last four in Womens Band 2.

The English Schools T.T National Championships were held in Aston Villa at the beginning of May. Five out of the seven youngsters representing South Yorkshire, were from the Rotherham Scorpions Club: Ben Barlow U11, Emily Robinson U11, Charlotte Stamp U13, James Houghton U16, James Brittle U19, others were Stephen Roberts U13, and Andrea Baldi U16. All did their County Proud, but need more experience to reach the later rounds of such a prestigious national tournament.

Results of the three local T.T league campaigns for the 98/99 season were as follows:

Barnsley was won by Stocksbridge, Brian Barrat, Gary Firth, Stephen Horsfield, and Mick Travis R.U.P Stocksbridge 'A', Alan Ball, Andrew Horsfield, Peter Horsfield, and Richard Shirt. Hallam (sheffield) winners were Stocksbridge 'A'. R.U.P Abbeydale Park, David Charlton, Mark Short, and Tim Simpson.

Rother Valley & District went to the wire, Rotherham Mainline winning by one point. Shaun Bibby, Tever Lees, Pete Morgan and Phil Wakefield. Swinden House R.U.P Stuart Element

**JULY/AUGUST
ISSUE OF
TABLE TENNIS
NEWS
WILL
INCLUDE
REPORTS ON THE
NATIONAL TEAM
FINALS AND THE
WORLD SINGLES
CHAMPIONSHIPS
IN EINDHOVEN**

Mick Jarvis, Phil Newton and John Warby.

Rotherham Scorpions finished in the top spot in the Yorkshire Region of the Woolwich Junior National League, pushing Ormesby into 2nd place. Well done James Houghton, John Cade and Christopher Robinson.

In the County Championships the summing up from S.Yorks seniors captain Andrew Horsfield, the team played as well as expected but are finding it hard to get out of the division, would cover the juniors and vets equally well.

S.Yorks. Juniors finished 2nd from eight teams in Div. 3B James Houghton won 11 from 14, Andrea Baldi 12 from 14, Matthew Kenny 12 from 14, Ben Wall 9 from 14.

S. Yorks Seniors finished 3rd from eight in Div. 2a David Charlton won 10 from 12, Joanne Drew 3 from 14, Andrew Horsfield 8 from 10, Stephen Horsfield 3 from 4, Jean Newton 6 from 14, Mark Short 10 from 12.

S. Yorks Vets. finished 5th from 10 teams in Div. 3a Brian Barret won 9 from 14, Roy Bowes 6 from 10, Bill Grant 10 from 12, Jean Newton 2 from 4, Mick Travis 6 from 10. Gloria Stocks 1 from 2, Trevor Williams 1 from 2.

The Rotherham Closed T.T Champion is Shaun Bibby, Vets winner Pete Morgan and Ladies winner Andrea Baldi, all three are from the Rotherham Mainline Club. Junior Champion for the third year running is James Houghton (Scorpions).

These are my first County notes, please remember most of the information must come from you, players, Captains and coaches etc. Contact me on (01709) 324548.

Sussex

by John Woodford

SECOND FIDDLE

IT is not surprising that the county championships finds itself playing second fiddle to the British League. Attending the championships AGM at Birmingham for the first time, I had been forewarned that the attendance would be about fifteen persons, in fact it was sixteen.

I cannot see how either competition can make progress if only 15 turned up at Birmingham and there were 21 clubs absent at the British League AGM.

However, although it does not sound like good news, Sussex have reduced their senior teams from three to two, a streamlining that was overdue by a couple of years. The third team was struggling to find willing and able players - many young people work on Saturdays, the academics go on to further education leaving a vacuum. I needed assurance that Sussex could still field four vets teams without any arm-twisting. I am told that there are plenty of vets to fill the four Sussex teams, so fair enough, the vets travelling expenses are not so high and they do not have the huge problem facing the junior teams - finding willing helpers to drive the teams around.

Peter Baldwin of Bognor Regis continues to strive hard in charge of the junior teams, but he is appealing for helpers for next season in the transport department.

The Sussex TTA AGM took place at Hurstpierpoint on July 11. The only vacancy amongst the officers is coaching

officer. Plenty of coaches in Sussex, nearly 150, but again no-one prepared to take on what I consider to be a vital post.

Worcestershire

by Martin Clark

SENIOR FIRSTS

HAVING had a poor first weekend back in November the team was struggling near the foot of the table with a mere two points from four matches. Survival seemed to be the priority at St. Neots, and the first match of the second weekend produced some fine sets against high flying Suffolk. Jan Dunning and Sandra Roden played with the skill and determination that left them undefeated but still we were 4-5 down when Steve Horton played out of his skin to defeat Paul Chicchalli in the third to secure a draw.

Spurred on by this result the team including Dave Rogers and German based Julian Wooton went on to chalk up wins against Warwickshire and Lancashire, both 7-3 to round off a fine performance and secure our division one place for next season.

SENIOR SECONDS

Defeat by Devon Seconds and victory over Devon thirds left us mid-table in a season that had its highs and lows. Mark Brookes again showed the form that has kept him high in the county rankings for so long and it is sad that his departure to live in Devon seems as though we might lose his services next year. Lets hope Brookesy will change his mind and make himself available.

VETERANS SECONDS

After a torrid first half of the season the 2nds finally came good following the victory against Lincolnshire with another win to round off the season against neighbours Warwickshire 3rds. Eric Hardman gained two wins and was ably supported by Chris Maiden and Martin Clark to set up a 5-4 result that kept us well clear of the relegation spot.

JUNIORS

In the match against Middlesex our girls again proved too strong for the opposition with Kate Hughes and Jenny Burchill. winning both of their games, so it was left to the boys to show their metal. All three did not disappoint, Lewis Cook, Leigh Ripkins and James Perks all won one each to leave the match result 7-3 in our favour.

AROUND THE COUNTY

Wyre Piddle Elite won the first division in the Evesham League, whilst Wyre Piddle Outcasts won the second and littleton Groovers the third. In the championships the mens singles new holder is Grahame Brown who also won the veterans singles. Lynda Reid won the ladies singles and Dot Macfarlane the Veteran Ladies. Junior boys title goes to Rick Hanwell and the girls holder becomes Sara Roper.

Lickey Monarchs retained the league championship and cup in the Bromsgrove league, whilst the second division had joint winners for the first time in the leagues history with Hillcrest and Himbleton sharing the honours. A new name on the mens singles cup was Roy Norton and similarly the veterans new holder is Eric

Hardman.

In Kidderminster the first division was won by Hartlebury British Legion, division two winners were Hospital and division three Sea Scouts. Lewis Sicker secured the open singles final, Ken Worton the veterans title and Alison Westward the ladies crown. The Cadet single's trophy went to Tom McDermott, whilst Leigh Hipkins took the Junior event.

In the Midland League Dudley have won promotion to division 1 in the senior Section, having Steve Horton and Jason Thompson unbeaten with fine support from evergreens Ken Worton, Mervin Wood and Glen Warwick. In the veterans Section Bromsgrove were beaten only once and finished third in the first division whilst Kidderminster came mid-table in the third.

The county are sad to report that Clive Stott died recently at the young age of 52. Clive ran the Junior teams in Kidderminster for many years and will be missed greatly by those who knew him well.

Yorkshire

by Rea Balmford

NEW MAN IN POST

NEW MAN in Yorkshire filling the boots of former Development Officer Ray Burch is Wayne Marsh from Hull, moving into his first post after completing a College course. Wayne will be based in Sheffield but, like Ray, will have a responsibility for the sport from the Derbyshire border to Teeside.

A personable young man, Wayne has represented his County on the green table, as well as holding down a spot in Hull's British League side, is an experienced and fully qualified coach, and has both the ability and background to make a success of his new role. Give him a warm welcome when he comes along to see you.

PLAYING FRONT

A brief look at the playing front, where our Junior Premier side, without No.1 Scott Taylor, unable to play because of work commitments in his new - and first - job, struggled in the second series of matches in the Junior County Championships, but credit to the side who pulled out all the stops to get home 9-1 against Clwyd in their final outing and thus preserve their Premier Division status, with the girls, Emily Dearing and Sarah Nutch, contributing a major share to the survival battle.

'GIRL POWER'

The Junior Division 1A side - the only second string in the division, finished in a creditable third place, level on points with Essex in second, and once again it was 'girl power' that was to the fore with Wakefield's Zoe Cheesman, on debut, coming through her six outings undefeated.

A STORM OF FURY

FUNNY how it is the little things that cause the biggest rumbles. A bearded German Jew beavers away at his writings in the British Library and half the world's population ends up under a communist regime; a butterfly flutters its wings in Hyde Park and causes a hurricane in Timbuktu; long pimples are shortened by a mere 0.3 of a millimetre and the wonderful if idiosyncratic world of table tennis is plunged into a storm of fury bordering on the apocalyptic. It is enough to leave a chaos theorist reeling, writes Matthew Syed.

Fury might sound a bit over the top for the sake of 0.3 of a millimetre, but in elite sport, of course, precision is everything. As Adrian Moorhouse, the swimmer, is so fond of pointing out, a weakening in performance by 0.05 per cent can make the difference between first and last in the Olympic final of his discipline. As, indeed, was the intention, the cut in pimple length has marginally reduced the quantity of spin attainable with long-pimpled rubbers. Marginally, but crucially. Oh boy - does size matter!

Defensive players such as myself are virtually the sole practitioners in the art of long pimples and many have spent years (16 in my case) perfecting techniques based on the wonderfully mottled surface. However, the pimples, formerly gleaming pine trees, are now being reduced to stunted oaks.

The regulation which came into effect on July 1 in the run-up to the 2000 Olympic Games. Frenzied lobbying would have at least forced a postponement until after Sydney, had the full council of the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) met at the world championships due to have taken place in Belgrade last month. But, with the bombing and consequent rescheduling for August in Eindhoven, the regulation will have now sneaked in by default. Collateral damage or what?

It will mean an instantaneous change of technique from the Brazilian Open in Rio de Janeiro on June 30 and the US Open starting on the fateful July 1.

All this has left the defensive player feeling rather like a young man who has spent precious years cultivating fragile friendships at his constituency



MATTHEW SYED

party only to find, at the key moment, the imposition of an all-woman shortlist. Spin is absolute cornerstone of the defensive player's technique and tactics. Where the attacking player relies on brute power and speed, the defender relies on guile, spin being a key component.

The tremors are reverberating far beyond the defensive elites. The surprisingly numerous and vibrant veteran community is also outraged.

Many began playing in the golden defensive era of the 1940s and 1950s and have seen virtually every mutation in the evolution of their beloved sport operating in the interests of the attacker. The most recent development has been the innovation of speed gluing, which has reduced defenders to an endangered species (there are now only six defenders in the world's

top 100 and none in the top 20). Some wonder if any will survive the latest measures.

The administrators justify the ban on the pretext that long pimples are damaging the sport by putting off young people. While this argument is being widely condemned as naive, it does highlight a crucial issue cutting across all sports.

How do you maintain marketability when sportsmen, often in conjunction with manufacturers can reduce the appeal of the sport in their single minded pursuit of victory? Administrators, aware of the fierce marketplace in which their products now compete, have had to change their regulations to rein back innovations in tactics, techniques and equipment simply not envisaged when the rules were formulated.

The regulation changes spur new innovations in turn. Tennis typifies

this dilemma. Few, would disagree that the male grass court game has lost aesthetic appeal with the likes of the roistering Rusedski producing services approaching 145mph, which engenders in turn an exasperating scarcity in rallies.

Some favour removing the second service others that a foot be kept on the ground throughout the service action. Many players would quite naturally, resist. No one likes being sacrificed, even if it is at the altar of the perceived wider sporting interest.

Therein lies the great fallacy in the pimples rules change. The administration is hitting the very style that enthuses spectators, who are increasingly frustrated by rallies that, between two attackers, last an average of just 3.2 strokes.

The ITTF does point out that some balance will soon be restored with either a larger ball or a higher net designed to slow the game down, but this will mean taking on the huge lobby of offensive players: the last time that this was attempted was with the banning of speed glues and officials were forced into a farcical climbdown.

Still, I remain optimistic. The cloud may yet have a silver lining for defenders. Manufacturers are desperately trying to negate the disadvantages of the shorter length by altering pimple consistency. Herbert Neubauer, the German-born world over-50s champion, is busy experimenting with new samples, like some latterday alchemist. However, when asked how things were shaping up, his sigh of resignation took so long I thought he had hung up.

• Matthew Syed is the Commonwealth champion and highest world ranked British table tennis player. He will be competing in the 2000 Olympic Games and will be writing regularly in *The Times* during build-up to Sydney.

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ETTA National Ranking

TOP OF THE TABLE

Period 68 7th June 1999
1998/99 SEASON



Doreen Nightingale
Ranking Co-ordinator

ANY QUERIES OR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE RING DOREEN NIGHTINGALE - 01424 722525

Senior Men				Senior Women				Veteran Women				Junior Girls				Junior Boys					
Pos	Name	Rtg	Fig	Pos	Name	Rtg	Fig	Pos	Name	Rtg	Fig	Pos	Name	Rtg	Fig	Pos	Name	Rtg	Fig		
(1)	1	PREAN, Carl (IW.)	4555	**	(1)	1	DEATON, Nicola (DY.)	3876	*	(1)	1	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3219	(1)	1	LOCKWOOD, Karen (CH)	2945	(1)	1	BAGGALEY, And (BU.)	4007
(2)	2	SYED, Matthew (SY.)	4519	*	(2)	2	HOLT, Andrea (LA.)	3796	**	(2)	2	DUNNING, Janet (ST.)	3022	(2)	2	BAWDEN, Natalie (E.)	2920	(2)	2	RUSHTON, And (LA.)	3321
(3)	3	PERRY, Alex (DV.)	4289		(3)	3	LOWER, Helen (ST.)	3592	**	(3)	3	RADFORD, Lesley (E.)	2987	(3)	3	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(3)	3	JOHNS, Brian (CH.)	3325
(4)	4	YOUNG, Terry (BK.)	4265		(4)	4	OWOLABI, Kubrat (MI.)	3524	*	(4)	4	SIELDS, Helen (Y.)	2862	(4)	4	HANDY, Philip (DO.)	1658	(4)	4	RUSHTON, And (LA.)	3321
(5)	5	HERBERT, Gareth (BK.)	4194		(5)	5	RADFORD, Linda (E.)	3503	*	(5)	5	BUOYE, Brenda (LA.)	2816	(5)	5	ILES, Leigh (AV.)	1638	(5)	5	CUTLER, Tom (MI.)	3316
(6)	6	BLAKE, Darren (SY.)	4059		(6)	6	SCHWARTZ, Gem (BK.)	3417	*	(6)	6	KING, Sheila (SX.)	2785	(6)	6	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1600	(6)	6	CAMPBELL, Se (SY.)	3298
(7)	7	BAGGALEY, An (BU.)	4007		(7)	7	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3219	*	(7)	7	SCHOFIELD, Dor (CH.)	2781	(7)	7	SPEED, Douglas (SY.)	1593	(7)	7	SAMUELS, Keith (BD.)	3265
(8)	8	EDEN, Andrew (LA.)	3912	*	(8)	8	MARLING, Sally (Y.)	3215	**	(8)	8	RIDER, Sandra (Y.)	2748	(8)	8	HOLTAM, Timothy (MI.)	1587	(8)	8	CARTHY, Clive (E.)	3247
(9)	9	ISHERWOOD, Mic (DY.)	3786		(9)	9	RUOCCO, Shelley (E.)	3159	*	(9)	9	PEARCE, Diane (K.)	2730	(9)	9	YARNALL, Tim (NP.)	1569	(9)	9	AUCHTERLONIE, Mic (BK.)	3227
(10)	10	SHAW, Steven (ST.)	3768		(10)	10	BARRACLOUGH, Jo (CO)	3117	*	(10)	10	SIMPSON, Linda (Y.)	2725	(10)	10	HANSELL, Robert (BU.)	1531	(10)	10	GODDALL, Justin (K.)	3223
(11)	11	TAYLOR, Jon (LA.)	3739	****	(11)	11	HARRIS, Jill (ST.)	3085	*	(11)	11	KNIGHTLEY, Gil (BK.)	2689	(11)	11	KIRK, James (SY.)	1531	(11)	11	WILKINSON, And (ND.)	3217
(12)	12	MASON, Nicky (SX.)	3712	*	(12)	12	COLLIER, Susan (BK.)	3063	*	(12)	12	JUDSON, Carol (Y.)	2689	(12)	12	LESSER, Keith (E.)	1531	(12)	12	RICHARDSON, Keith (CA)	3215
(13)	13	SMITH, Eddie (ND.)	3631	*	(13)	13	DUNNING, Janet (ST.)	3022	*	(13)	13	BAWDEN, Marilyn (E.)	2687	(13)	13	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(13)	13	TAYLOR, John (HE.)	3190
(14)	14	SATCHELL, Kevin (WI.)	3554	****	(14)	14	ROBERTS, Joanna (Y.)	2990	*	(14)	14	MALTY, Marg (NP.)	2661	(14)	14	HORSFIELD, And (Y.)	3186	(14)	14	HORSFIELD, And (Y.)	3186
(15)	15	SLATER, Stephen (ST.)	3551	*	(15)	15	ADAMS, Martin (BK.)	2861	*	(15)	15	DIGNUN, Marg (WO.)	2645	(15)	15	DOLDER, Kevin (LA.)	3177	(15)	15	DOLDER, Kevin (LA.)	3177
(16)	16	SLADDEN, Chris (E.)	3544	*	(16)	16	COX, Philip (K.)	2846	*	(16)	16	HALES, Linda (E.)	2628	(16)	16	MORRIS, David (SP.)	3176	(16)	16	MORRIS, David (SP.)	3176
(17)	17	VENNER, Ritchie (SX.)	3489	*	(17)	17	HILL, Brian (LI.)	2842	*	(17)	17	HEWETT, Carol (SX.)	2626	(17)	17	CLAYTON, Tony (DO.)	3149	(17)	17	CLAYTON, Tony (DO.)	3149
(18)	18	ECKERSLEY, Nig (CH.)	3459	*	(18)	18	BECKLEY, Chris (SY.)	2833	*	(18)	18	STEELE, Pauline (SX.)	2622	(18)	18	THOMAS, Peter (DV.)	3148	(18)	18	THOMAS, Peter (DV.)	3148
(19)	19	ROGERS, Chris (LE.)	3445	*	(19)	19	BREWER, Chris (NK.)	2831	*	(19)	19	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(19)	19	CHAN, Michael (SY.)	3123	(19)	19	CHAN, Michael (SY.)	3123
(20)	20	THOMPSON, Christ (K.)	3407	*	(20)	20	KASAHARA, Tet (BK.)	2830	**	(20)	20	SHALER, Eileen (LE.)	2575	(20)	20	GANNON, Dave (LE.)	3095	(20)	20	GANNON, Dave (LE.)	3095
(21)	21	BARR, David (BK.)	3393	*	(21)	21	HARPER, Mick (BD.)	2830	*	(21)	21	POGORE, Hel (WO.)	2565	(21)	21	HOWARTH, Dar (LA.)	3083	(21)	21	HOWARTH, Dar (LA.)	3083
(22)	22	SUGRU, Jason (MI.)	3390	*	(22)	22	ISAAC, Anthony (ST.)	2691	*	(22)	22	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(22)	22	NEALE, Denis (Y.)	3072	(22)	22	NEALE, Denis (Y.)	3072
(23)	23	MOORE, Adrian (K.)	3384	*	(23)	23	ADAMS, Martin (BK.)	2861	*	(23)	23	DUNNING, Janet (ST.)	3022	(23)	23	BROWN, Mark (K.)	3050	(23)	23	BROWN, Mark (K.)	3050
(24)	24	PALMER, Stuart (SX.)	3371	*	(24)	24	DONOGHUE, Mark (Y.)	2852	*	(24)	24	SMITH, Sarah (NG.)	2782	(24)	24	NEIL, Lee (NG.)	3048	(24)	24	NEIL, Lee (NG.)	3048
(25)	25	MARSHALL, Peter (Y.)	3369	*	(25)	25	SHEPPARD, Tim (NG.)	2852	*	(25)	25	SCHOFIELD, Dor (CH.)	2781	(25)	25	FESCHATH, Dan (MI.)	3037	(25)	25	FESCHATH, Dan (MI.)	3037
(26)	26	WURAO, Abdul (SY.)	3367	*	(26)	26	FRIDAY, Scott (K.)	2848	*	(26)	26	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(26)	26	PAPANTONIOU, Co (MI.)	3032	(26)	26	PAPANTONIOU, Co (MI.)	3032
(27)	27	WHITING, Paul (DV.)	3365	*	(27)	27	COX, Philip (K.)	2846	*	(27)	27	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(27)	27	OWEN, Mark (HR.)	3023	(27)	27	OWEN, Mark (HR.)	3023
(28)	28	CHARLES, Neil (MI.)	3361	*	(28)	28	COX, Philip (K.)	2846	*	(28)	28	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(28)	28	PAYNE, Phil (SO.)	3023	(28)	28	PAYNE, Phil (SO.)	3023
(29)	29	SMITH, Mark Ric (Y.)	3358	*	(29)	29	HILL, Brian (LI.)	2842	*	(29)	29	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(29)	29	DYSON, Tim (Y.)	3009	(29)	29	DYSON, Tim (Y.)	3009
(30)	30	JAMES, Michael (Y.)	3354	*	(30)	30	BECKLEY, Chris (SY.)	2833	*	(30)	30	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(30)	30	GREEN, Mark (NG.)	3006	(30)	30	GREEN, Mark (NG.)	3006
(31)	31	JOHNSON, Ben (BK.)	3341	*	(31)	31	BREWER, Chris (NK.)	2831	*	(31)	31	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(31)	31	READ, Mark (WA.)	3004	(31)	31	READ, Mark (WA.)	3004
(32)	32	HILTON, John (CH.)	3334	*	(32)	32	KASAHARA, Tet (BK.)	2830	**	(32)	32	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(32)	32	GRIFIN, Darren (GS.)	2940	(32)	32	GRIFIN, Darren (GS.)	2940
(33)	33	JOHNS, Brian (CH.)	3325	*	(33)	33	ADAMS, Martin (BK.)	2861	*	(33)	33	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(33)	33	RAND, Steven (E.)	2936	(33)	33	RAND, Steven (E.)	2936
(34)	34	RUSHTON, And (LA.)	3321	*	(34)	34	DONOGHUE, Mark (Y.)	2852	*	(34)	34	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(34)	34	SHORT, Mark (YS.)	2936	(34)	34	SHORT, Mark (YS.)	2936
(35)	35	CUTLER, Tom (MI.)	3316	*	(35)	35	SHEPPARD, Tim (NG.)	2852	*	(35)	35	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(35)	35	ROOFE, Eddie (WI.)	2930	(35)	35	ROOFE, Eddie (WI.)	2930
(36)	36	CAMPBELL, Se (SY.)	3298	*	(36)	36	FRIDAY, Scott (K.)	2848	*	(36)	36	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(36)	36	HARVEY, Dave (GS.)	2926	(36)	36	HARVEY, Dave (GS.)	2926
(37)	37	SAMUELS, Keith (BD.)	3265	*	(37)	37	COX, Philip (K.)	2846	*	(37)	37	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(37)	37	WELSMAN, David (NP.)	2924	(37)	37	WELSMAN, David (NP.)	2924
(38)	38	CARTHY, Clive (E.)	3247	*	(38)	38	HILL, Brian (LI.)	2842	*	(38)	38	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(38)	38	JOHNS, Mike (Ch.)	2874	(38)	38	JOHNS, Mike (Ch.)	2874
(39)	39	AUCHTERLONIE, Mic (BK.)	3227	*	(39)	39	BECKLEY, Chris (SY.)	2833	*	(39)	39	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(39)	39	HILL, Brian (LI.)	2842	(39)	39	HILL, Brian (LI.)	2842
(40)	40	GODDALL, Justin (K.)	3223	*	(40)	40	BREWER, Chris (NK.)	2831	*	(40)	40	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(40)	40	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(40)	40	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(41)	41	WILKINSON, And (ND.)	3217	*	(41)	41	KASAHARA, Tet (BK.)	2830	**	(41)	41	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(41)	41	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(41)	41	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(42)	42	RICHARDSON, Keith (CA)	3215	*	(42)	42	HARPER, Mick (BD.)	2830	*	(42)	42	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(42)	42	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(42)	42	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(43)	43	TAYLOR, John (HE.)	3190	*	(43)	43	ADAMS, Martin (BK.)	2861	*	(43)	43	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(43)	43	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(43)	43	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(44)	44	HORSFIELD, And (Y.)	3186	*	(44)	44	DONOGHUE, Mark (Y.)	2852	*	(44)	44	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(44)	44	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(44)	44	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(45)	45	DOLDER, Kevin (LA.)	3177	*	(45)	45	FRIDAY, Scott (K.)	2848	*	(45)	45	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(45)	45	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(45)	45	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(46)	46	MORRIS, David (SP.)	3176	*	(46)	46	COX, Philip (K.)	2846	*	(46)	46	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(46)	46	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(46)	46	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(47)	47	CLAYTON, Tony (DO.)	3149	*	(47)	47	HILL, Brian (LI.)	2842	*	(47)	47	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(47)	47	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(47)	47	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(48)	48	THOMAS, Peter (DV.)	3148	*	(48)	48	BECKLEY, Chris (SY.)	2833	*	(48)	48	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(48)	48	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(48)	48	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(49)	49	CHAN, Michael (SY.)	3123	*	(49)	49	BREWER, Chris (NK.)	2831	*	(49)	49	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(49)	49	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(49)	49	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(50)	50	GANNON, Dave (LE.)	3095	*	(50)	50	KASAHARA, Tet (BK.)	2830	**	(50)	50	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(50)	50	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(50)	50	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(51)	51	HOWARTH, Dar (LA.)	3083	***	(51)	51	HARPER, Mick (BD.)	2830	*	(51)	51	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(51)	51	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(51)	51	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(52)	52	NEALE, Denis (Y.)	3072	*	(52)	52	ADAMS, Martin (BK.)	2861	*	(52)	52	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(52)	52	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(52)	52	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(53)	53	BROWN, Mark (K.)	3050	*	(53)	53	DONOGHUE, Mark (Y.)	2852	*	(53)	53	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(53)	53	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(53)	53	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(54)	54	NEIL, Lee (NG.)	3048	*	(54)	54	FRIDAY, Scott (K.)	2848	*	(54)	54	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(54)	54	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(54)	54	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(55)	55	FESCHATH, Dan (MI.)	3037	*	(55)	55	COX, Philip (K.)	2846	*	(55)	55	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(55)	55	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(55)	55	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(56)	56	PAPANTONIOU, Co (MI.)	3032	*	(56)	56	HILL, Brian (LI.)	2842	*	(56)	56	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(56)	56	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(56)	56	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(57)	57	OWEN, Mark (HR.)	3023	*	(57)	57	BECKLEY, Chris (SY.)	2833	*	(57)	57	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(57)	57	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(57)	57	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(58)	58	PAYNE, Phil (SO.)	3023	*	(58)	58	BREWER, Chris (NK.)	2831	*	(58)	58	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(58)	58	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(58)	58	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(59)	59	DYSON, Tim (Y.)	3009	****	(59)	59	KASAHARA, Tet (BK.)	2830	**	(59)	59	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(59)	59	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(59)	59	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841
(60)	60	GREEN, Mark (NG.)	3006	*	(60)	60	HARPER, Mick (BD.)	2830	*	(60)	60	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(60)	60	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841	(60)	60	WALKER, George (NG.)	2841

UPS & DOWNS



Men's No.1 Carl Preat

also made a big improvement on her previous position of 61 to 48.

Surprisingly, Louise Durrant of the Nottingham Academy has dropped from 17 down to 22.

There are no dramatic changes in the Veterans lists, where Nigel Eckersley from Cheshire and Karen Smith of Leicestershire have enjoyed a lengthy spell at the top of their respective lists.

The Junior boys' list remains the same at the very top, where Buckinghamshire's Andrew Baggeley has spent a long period at



Women's No.1 Nicola Deaton

the pinnacle. But a bit lower down all sorts of changes are taking place.

Firstly, Cumbria's Michael Gommersal has jumped up from 13 to 7, Yorkshire's Matthew Kenny has jumped from 21 to 15, Yorkshire's Matthew Heptinstall has gone from 79 to 38, Robert Owen of Yorkshire has jumped from 63 to 40, but the most remarkable leap-frog of all was by Tim Yarnell who sprang from 107 up to 47.

Karen Lockwood takes over the No.1 spot in the Junior Girls list moving up from 2nd position, Natalie Bawden jumps up from 6 to 2, whilst Georgina Walker went from 10 to 5. But it was in the middle order of the Top 50 where all the most dramatic changes took place.

Aimee Sparkes lit up the hearts of Suffolk by leaping from 44 to 18, Lancashire's Rebecca Tonge jumped from 45 to 25, whilst Lynsey Powell goes from 78 to 32.

CARL PREAN and NICOLA DEATON have enjoyed the status of being the top ranked players in England for the second list running, following their efforts to gain the No.1 spots in the Mens and Womens, respectively, writes John Wood.

Not much dramatic movement at the top of the mens list, but plenty of change at the lower end of the top 100.

Yorkshire's Mark Short has obviously benefitted from playing regularly on the Grand Prix circuit has jumped from 94 up to 76, Cambridgeshire's Dale Barham has leapt from 110 up to 85, Norfolk's Ian McLean has risen from 124 to 86, Berkshire's Martin Adams has improved on No.108 spot rising to 91, Kent's Phillip Cox has jumped to 95 from 102, whilst Norfolk veteran Chris Brewer has gone from 104 to 98.

Bedfordshire's Mick Harper has the privilege of propping up the top 100, as a result of dropping from the 96th position.

In the womens top 50 most of the movement is in the middle of the list, where the girls from the Academy in Nottingham have done particularly well.

Firstly Essex's Natalie Bawden has leapt from 45 up to 21, Jade Kendall of Cumbria has jumped up from 38 to 26, Georgina Walker from Nottingham has made a mighty leap from 64 up to 31, Katy Parker of Lancashire has gone from 43 to 34, whilst Essex's Hannah Yardy has

COMPETITION WINNERS

SPECIAL ENGLISH OPEN
 **DUNLOP**
 PRIZE COMPETITION

1st PRIZE: an ITTF approved Revelation Championship Rollaway table, two Revelation Pro Spin bats and ten tubes of Revelation 3 star balls.
WINNER: Mrs. Ann Robinson of Somerset.

2nd PRIZE: a Revelation Pro Drive bat and five tubes of Revelation Championship 3 Star balls.
WINNERS: (5) Mrs. Val Eaves of Dawlish, D.M. Beesley of Devon, Mr. D. Robinson of Dorset, Javad Ameri of Streatham, London, and Naomi Wilson of Bridgewater.

25 RUNNERS-UP PRIZES: of a tube of 3 Star balls.
WINNERS: A. Johnson of Lancashire, N.E.F. Wright of Tregaron, Mr.D. Seaholme of Watford, Hannah Luckhurst of Cornwall, Nathan Luckhurst of Cornwall, Paul Bovett of Devon, Eddie Gordon of Pembrokeshire, John Trenbirth of the Wirrel, Geoff Taylor of Surrey, Sylvia Smith of new Milton, Denise Sclanders of Bournemouth, Mr. A.P. Wheeler of Oxford, E.F. Holstead of West Yorkshire, Mrs. Shirley Luckhurst of Callington, Paul Tarrant of Hemel Hempstead, Dave Edwards of Watford, Richard Stone of Luton, Michael Boardman of Hertfordshire, Andrew Woodhead of Bradford, Harry Spraggs of Hampshire, Doug Tomsett of Bushey, John Holland of Essex, Paul Cicchelli of Suffolk, Matthew Nichols of St.Austell, and G.Hayes of Essex,

1st and 2nd Prizes were drawn from the hat by Johnny Leach at the ETTA 100 Club Dinner in Sheffield. The 25 runners-up prizes were drawn by Table Tennis News Editor John Wood.

Correct answers were: 1. Dunlop Max, 2. Damien Eloi and 3.Tong Fei Ming. (Solutions to the three questions appeared in March 1999 issue of Table Tennis News.

CHRISTMAS MYSTERY EYES COMPETITION

Names of eyes:

1. CARL PREAN, 2. KATE HUGHES, 3. ALAN RANSOME, 4. ROSE RAINTON.

WINNERS: who will receive an ETTA Pen are: Chris Hood of New Zealand, Rob Lowe of Seaford, T. Richardson of Kent, Hannah Luckhurst of Cornwall, E.F. Holstead of Pontefract, Tim Cook of Lincolnshire, Nancy Scrutin and Geoff Scrutin of Yorkshire.

CHARLES WYLES OBE *A Table Tennis Star*

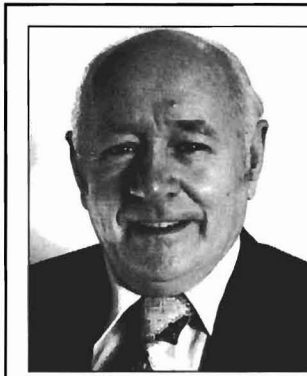
CHARLES WYLES was a Kentish man, born in Sturry near Canterbury. After leaving school, he trained and became a master baker and later opened a bakers shop with his brother John in Hythe, Kent. It was during that time that their interest in table tennis began and they started a club. The Second World War brought Charles to Romney Marsh where he was stationed in Appledore on a mission to feed the troops. When he was not preparing food, he was a member of the Civil Defence with the Fire Brigade. As a player, he was known for having a difficult defence and in the tournaments his trade mark was knocking down the barriers as he went so far back on the court!

In 1942, he married Ethel who later had a boy and girl, Ken and Evelyn. Evelyn would become well known to table tennis persons when she was older, travelling with Charles to events. After the war, Charles opened a grocer's shop in Broadstairs which he ran until he retired in 1957. After this time he became involved with Kent and Sussex County TTA and eventually got involved at national level in 1967.

Shortly after becoming Chairman of the ETTA in 1970, he led the England team to the People's Republic of China, following the 31st World Championships in Nagoya, Japan, 1971. The tour of China was a true epic, which became known as 'Ping Pong Diplomacy' and he was awarded the OBE in 1973, which was a very proud time for him and for English table tennis. During the tour, six international matches were played against China which each attracted capacity crowds of 23,000.

The team also visited a table tennis ball factory and Charles was often amused to recall that the team had travelled over 20,000 miles to see a tennis ball made for the first time! Another wry memory was that banquets during the tour were twice a day, a gastronomic endurance test which were always 10-12 courses, including sea slugs and fried frogs legs! Although he met several premiers of different countries during his time as ETTA Chairman, including Chou En-Lai of China, Charles was also amused to relate the first (future) Prime Minister he had contact with was Edward Heath, both having attended the same school.

Another milestone came along for Charles in 1977, he was Chairman of the ETTA Management Committee responsible for staging the Birmingham World Championships, his large major contribution to table tennis.



CHARLES MURTON WYLES OBE
Born 02.11.1912 Died 24.02.1999

ENGLISH TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION
Chairman 1970 -1978
Deputy Chairman 1969 - 1970
Life Member 1971-1999

KENT COUNTY TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION
Chairman 1969 -70
General Secretary 1965 - 69
National Councillor 1967 - 68

He suffered a stroke in 1979 and was left paralysed down his right side. His determination was such that a normal quality of life was attained. Ill health came again and he fought two cancers and survived the

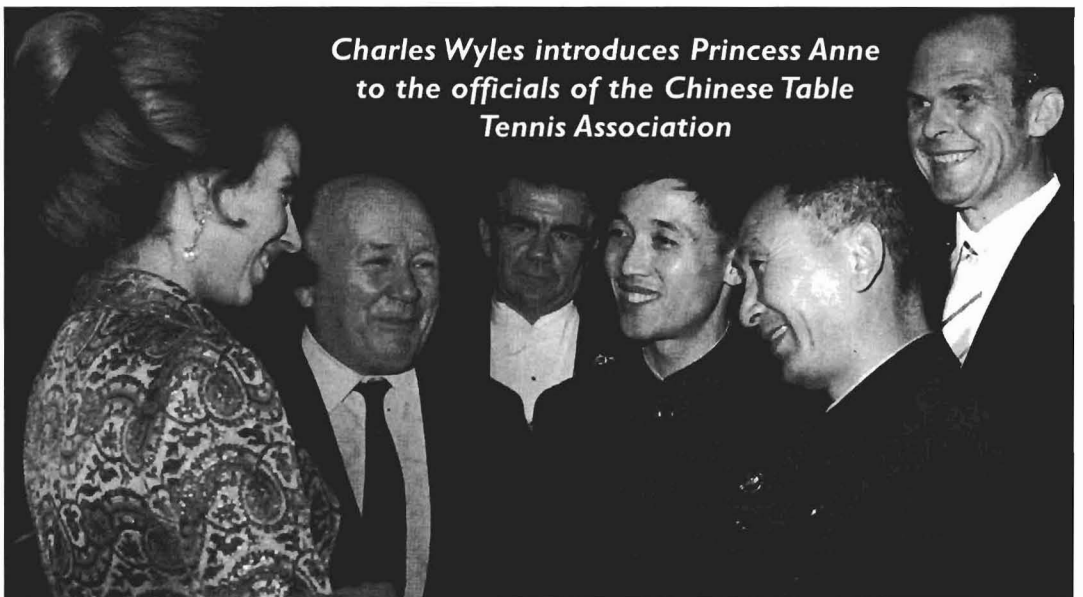
treatment. During April 1998, he had another stroke which left him immobile. On 24th February 1999 Charles died in his sleep.

I found Charles to be a kind and thoughtful person who always had

time for anyone, no matter how busy he was. A cheerful face was assured when he visited the Headquarters Office at Claremont - a 'hello' was always enough to cheer you up! Charles loved table tennis, it was his life and it took him to distant places in the world. I feel certain he is looking down on you all to make sure you are looking after his beloved sport - table tennis.

A star and a star that shone so brightly for English table tennis.
Robert H.Sinclair
ETTA General Secretary

Pictured below at a Press Conference after the 1971 Tour of China. (left to right) are: Top: Trevor Taylor, Jill Hammersley and Tony Clayton. Bottom: Pauline Piddock, Charles Wyles and Alan Hydes



Charles Wyles introduces Princess Anne to the officials of the Chinese Table Tennis Association

VARSITY ALL SQUARE FOR THE MILLENNIUM

CAMBRIDGE University defeated Oxford in the Varsity match for the third year running to take the running total of known matches to 26 wins each for Oxford and Cambridge and only 4 draws, to make it all square for the new Millennium, writes Caroline Williams.

The Varsity match has been held annually since it was inaugurated by Ivor Montague and Frank Kipping at Cambridge in 1922. Montague went on to become the first President of the ITTF whilst Kipping remained at Cambridge and was the first Senior Officer of the Cambridge Table Tennis Club for many years. This year was the 56th recorded match as results are missing from 1923 to 1946 (unless readers have any information) though it is known that the novelist CP Snow and his brother Martin both played for Cambridge during this time. The match was held at Queens' College Cambridge on Saturday February 13th 1999 as part of the 27th Varsity Games sponsored by Norton Rose. The match was played in the Fitzpatrick Hall, a wood lined theatre sports hall in front of a large audience. Warwickshire County Umpires Frank Stevens and Bob Montgomery kindly travelled from Coventry to act as Umpires for the 4 matches.

Paul Robertson, former Welsh Junior International, playing in his fourth Varsity made the fantastic achievement of captaining his team for the third time to success. Robertson playing at two with Andy Sugarman (Yorkshire) in his third appearance playing at one produced an impeccable performance in their singles against Oxford's Lukas Kratochvil and David Smith and in the doubles against David Smith and Stephen Speed. Cambridge's number four Thomas Hansen-Siedler gained two more singles successes to take the final score to 7-3. For Oxford's reply players three and four Paul Butcher and Stephen Speed notched wins against the Cambridge third player Frank Wetley and Butcher and Kratochvil gained the second doubles.

Cambridge Women had a field day, destroying Oxford 10-0 in straight sets for the second time in succession. Prior to 1998 Oxford were the only women's team to make a 10-0 score-line in 40 years though the actual results prior to 1994 are missing! This year's captain Jenny



CAMBRIDGE WOMEN 1st team (left to right) Teng Ming Ying, Jenny Williams, Sarah Lane, Helen Arnold and Yi Wen Chua.

Williams (Warwickshire), who played in the doubles, and numbers one and two Teng Ming Ying of Singapore and Sarah Lane from Surrey were the nucleus of last season's team who powered their way not only to Varsity but also BUSA team Championship success in 1998. The trio strengthened by the new arrival of Helen Arnold and Yi Wen Chua easily overcame Oxford's quartet of Clare Shobbrook, Leonie Foong, Mie Taleb and Qinjie-Yang. The outcome could have been different if Oxford had not been deprived at almost the last moment of their number one player Glenda Ashison.

In 1995 Kipping Trophies were awarded to the Men and Ladies Varsity winners. This fifth year shows Cambridge just in the lead by 3 to 2 on both shields with Mens victories in 97, 98 and 99 and Ladies in 96, 98 and 99. Presentations were made by Dr. Simon Maddrell, President and only the second Senior Officer of Cambridge University TTC who himself captained Cambridge in 1960. Half Blues have been awarded to players in the First teams at Cambridge since 1955 and Oxford followed suit shortly after.

At Jenny Williams' suggestion and reflecting the growth of women's table tennis at Cambridge a Women's Second team match was held at the same time as the Mens Second team match before the First team matches (on the model of the

Isis I Goldie Boat Race). The foursome from Cambridge of Elizabeth Biott, Kikue Tachibana, Joanne Lee and Deborah Saville produced an excellent 9-1 result over Oxford's Jacky Yap, Amy Watson, Yuko Takigawa and Li-Choo Tay though the match was not as one-sided as the score suggests. Yuko Takigawa gained Oxford's sole point overcoming Cambridge's number 4 Deborah Saville

and was only squeezed out of a second win 22/20 in the third by Cambridge second captain Joanne Lee.

Oxford however had the upper hand in the Mens Second match against a nervous Cambridge and gained a close 6-4 victory to revenge the 9-1 defeat of the previous year. Oxford took an initial

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CAMBRIDGE vs OXFORD 2

3-0 lead in tightly contested three-setters before Cambridge rallied to avoid a whitewash. Mifzal Ahmed and Steve Se as one and two gained their singles at Mark Tsang and Sean Tan's expense and also the doubles and Anders Markvardsen added the crucial sixth point for Oxford. Christoph Wunderer, a '98 blues player, returned to form on the day to give Cambridge both his singles and the doubles with Sean Tan while Sacha Wilson chipped in with a single.

This year's Varsity Games, comprising 17 sports and some 700 sportsmen and women was in fact won by Cambridge by only a narrow margin, and thus the 5 points for to 1 point against collected from Table Tennis was extremely crucial.

As well as Varsity success Cambridge are also in the forefront of all student competition. Eight members of the squad attended the British Universities Sports Association Individual Competition held at Warwick University on February 20/21 and five of them



CAMBRIDGE MENS 1st team (left to right) Andy Sugarman, Dr. Simon Maddrell (President), Paul Robertson and Thomas Hansen-Siedler. (Frank Wettley was not available for photograph)

returned with medals! Paul Robertson gained no less than one gold and two bronzes from his three events.

He achieved the gold by partnering Teng Ming Ying to Mixed Doubles victory and received bronzes from reaching the

semi-finals of the Mens Singles and the Mens Doubles with Andy Sugarman. Helen Arnold and Yi Wen Chua were losing semi-finalists in the Ladies Doubles for two more bronzes.

In the BUSA Team Competition the

Cambridge Men, 1998 champions as well as runners-up in 1997, have been disappointingly knocked out 9-7 by last year's semi-finalists Aberdeen. The Cambridge Women however, who only entered BUSA for the first time in 1998 and promptly reached the pole position, are intending to successfully defend their title. So far they are through to the semi-finals to be held at Birmingham University in March after wins over East Anglia 10-0, Essex 7-3, Loughborough 8-2 and Birmingham 7-3.

All this reflects the importance of the sport of table tennis at this University where not only do the top players compete in the local Cambridge and St. Ives League but also an inter-college league gives competitive play in various Divisions to cater for all standards from beginners to Blues players.

TABLE TENNIS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



Earlier this year the North West Open Disabled Tournament was held at Hyndoun where, for the first time the competition received world ranking, with players travelling from as far afield as China to compete.

BRITISH WHEELCHAIR GAMES

The British Wheelchair Games were held at Stoke Mandeville at the beginning of June where all our top wheelchair table tennis players competed against the best from Europe. There were large squads particularly from France, Italy and Denmark and competition was strong. However all our players, both ladies and men, had a good weekend with some excellent results against foreign opposition.

COMPETITIONS FORUM

On 1st May a 'Competitions Forum' was held in London where many people and groups involved with the organisation of disabled table tennis competitions met to look at the events calendar for the next 2 seasons. Agreement was reached to:

- Organise Regional Tournaments which are to be pan disability and open to all.
- Set up a national league for disabled

players of all ages played over 3A weekends during the season with venues as close geographically as possible to where the disabled players live. This competition will not be open for national squad members.

- To establish 2 major tournaments to mirror the mainstream game's English Open and Senior Nationals and to look for world ranking.

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Most of these changes will happen for the season 2000/2001.

The group will be meeting again in September when more information will be available.

The European Championships for disabled table tennis took place at the beginning of July in Piestony, a report will appear the next issue.

CALENDAR

AUGUST 1999

2nd - 8th

World Championships (Singles & Doubles)

Eindhoven

28th - 29th

ETTA Merseyside Grand Prix

Liverpool

SEPTEMBER 1999

5th

British League (10)

10th - 12th

European Masters Cup

11th - 12th

Veterans Home Countries International

11th - 12th

Womens British League (1)

12th

Seasiders GP 2 Star

18th

County Championships

18th

Selby 2 Star

18th

BWSF Training

**Stoke Manderville
Hull**

18th - 19th

DSE National Championships

19th

British League (2)