

TABLE TENNIS

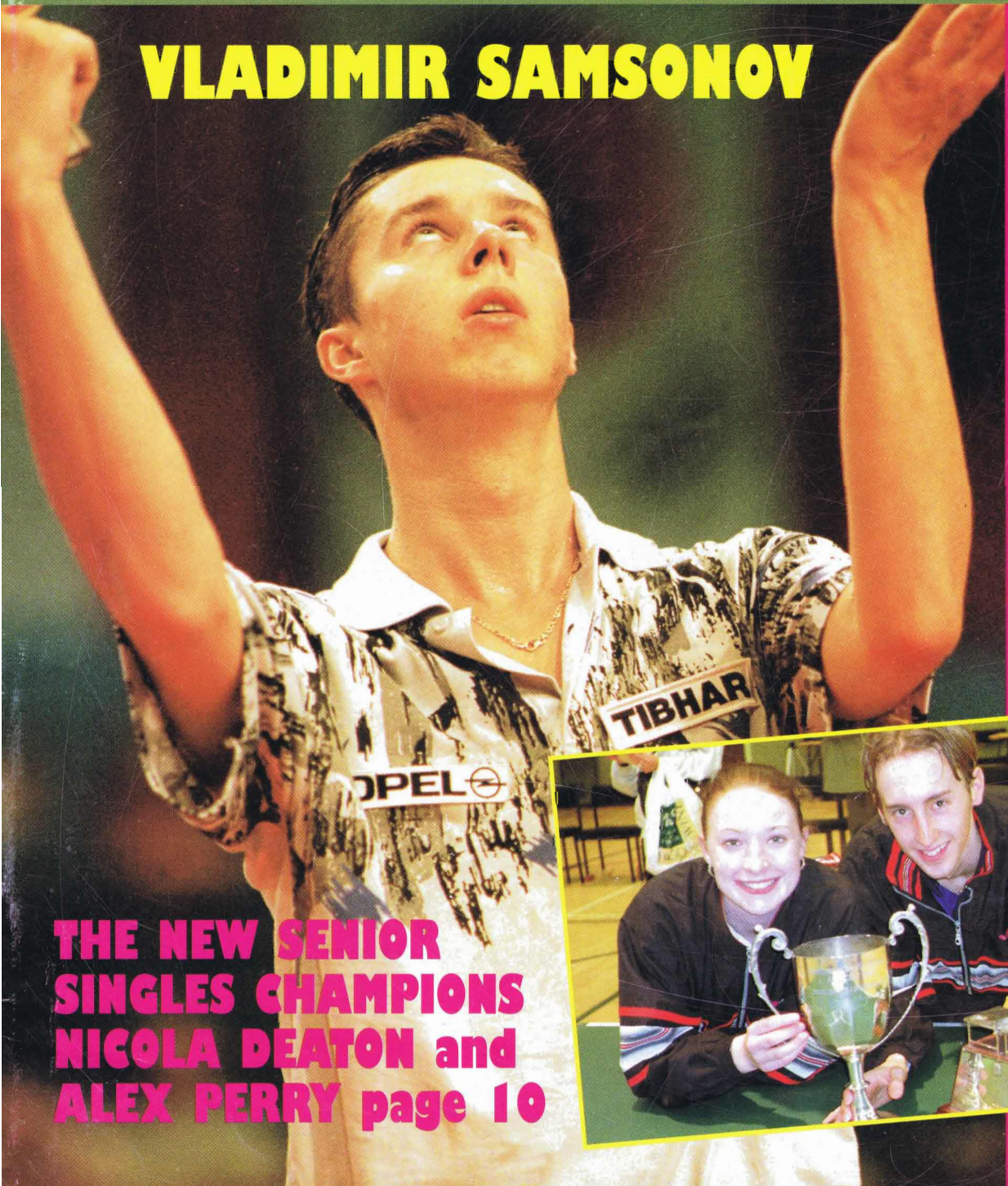
NEWS



ISSUE No. 259
MARCH 1999

£2.50

VLADIMIR SAMSONOV



**No. 1
Seed for
the Mens
Singles at
the
English
Open at
Potters
pages 16
to 21**

**THE NEW SENIOR
SINGLES CHAMPIONS
NICOLA DEATON and
ALEX PERRY page 10**



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Table Tennis News

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**NEXT ISSUE
APRIL 1999**

**MAY ISSUE
COPY DATE
1st APRIL 1999**

The ETТА would like to thank the following companies for the support they give to English TableTennisAssociation



THE SUSSEX ROADSHOW

MEMBERSHIP problems? Well lets think positive! That's what Dave Ward has done down in Sussex. For some years he has been experimenting with the idea of mobile T.T. Taking tables to venues where there is no equipment. As a result the T.T. MOBILE was born. Coaching in schools was ideally suited to this concept.

In Summer 1997 Dave was appointed Head Coach to the Dunlop Sussex Racket Sports Roadshows. His task was to introduce 120 children a day to Table Tennis (in groups of 30) 4 groups of differing ages from 8 to 16. Each session was one and a quarter hours duration. His initial thoughts were to have a session which would have impact, entertain, be colourful and leave them wanting more. From this initial programme the idea of the current roadshow was born. When the roadshow visited Worthing he was assisted by Ray Forder and they developed an understanding which resulted in an improvement and they were both thoroughly enjoying themselves and the presentations as well!



The Sussex County T.T.A. liked the idea and agreed to back its implementation. Since that time they have developed the production further and it is now a thoroughly

professional presentation and it has been received very successfully by youngsters all over the County. What is a Mobile Table Tennis Unit? A Transit van, 4 Blue rollerway tables, Orange Balls, Bats, Robot, Music + 2 E.T.T.A. Coaches. Add to this a ramp and it is easily set up in 20 mins. in any School Hall or Gym providing there is adequate access.

What does it do? We hold 3 x 1.5 hour sessions (24 per session) 72 total and in that space of time with maximum impact sell Table Tennis to them.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION RING OR FAX: DAVE WARD on 01323833824 (Mobile 0585328534) or write to DAVE WARD, 7 BUCKWELL RISE, HERSTMONCEUX, near HAILS HAM, EAST SUSSEX BN27 4LX.

BANGOR OPEN

The 15th Bangor Open Tournament takes place on the 26/27th March '99, at the North Downs & Arts Institute for Higher and Further Education, in Bangor, Co. Down.

For further information contact Vincent O'Regan, 80 Thornleigh Gardens, Bangor, Co Down BT20 4NP. Tel: 01247 459089.

SCIENCE OF SPORTS COACHING

The South Bank University, London is starting a new course - MSc/PG.Dip Science of Sports Coaching.

Anyone interested in this course, which is designed to meet the increasing demands of all levels of

sport and exercise giving practising coaches and physical education teachers the opportunity to develop their knowledge and expertise, should contact the Course Director, Jeanette Wardrop tel: 0171 815 7992 or email wardroj@sbu.co.uk

CHANGE OF DATE FOR ESSEX

The Essex 3 Star Youth Tournament (including Under 21 events), now has a new dates, Saturday/Sunday 1st/2nd May 1999. With the U12 and U14 competitions on Saturday and the U17 and U21 events on the Sunday.

Entry forms from Alan Shepherd Flat 6, 32 Green Road, Southgate, London N14 4AU. Tel: 0181 441 5775.

TABLE TENNIS NEWS

The Official Magazine of the English Table Tennis Association

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WOODY'S World

WELCOME to this special English Open edition, with a big six page player profile and prize competition feature, plus all the regular reports from home and abroad.

I trust that I shall see many of you Table Tennis News readers at Potters Leisure Resort.

John Wood

FABULOUS ENTRY FOR THE ENGLISH



Alan Ransome OBE,
Chairman of the English
Table Tennis Association

The 63rd English Open Championships to be played at the Potters Leisure Resort at Hopton-on-Sea in Norfolk promises to be the biggest and strongest Open in recent years. The Championships, part of the ITTF Pro Tour, will be played between 9th to 14th March, and have attracted virtually all Europe's top players as well as some leading Asian stars. There is a record entry of players from 46 countries totalling over 300 competitors.

The top seed in the Mens Singles will be the current European Champion and No. 1, the player who reached the final of the World championships in Manchester, Vladimir Samsonov of Belarus. After a shaky start to the year, Samsonov returned to his best form when he won the Europe Top 12 in Split last month. Other top players in the Mens Singles include Zoran Primorac of Croatia, and Jorgen Persson, the former World Champion from Sweden. Another World Champion, Jean-Philippe Gatin, leads a strong contingent from France which includes the on-form Christophe Legout, plus Patrick Chila and Damien Eloi. From Germany the former World Doubles Champion, Jorg Roskopf, and the European Youth Champion, Timo Boll will compete. From Asia the leading contenders are the famous Chinese player Ma Wenge and the Korean Kim Taek Soo. Of the English players, Matthew Syed is the highest in the world rankings at No. 25.

On the Womens side three European Champions, Nicole Struse of Germany, Csilla Batorfi, Hungary and Marie Svenson of Sweden, plus the current holder Ni Xia Liam of Luxembourg are competing. Tong Fei Ming of Chinese Taipei, who spent some

OPEN

years playing out of Grove in England, will defend her English Open title.

One of the reasons why the English Open has received such a fabulous entry is that it is part of the ITTF Pro Tour. Another is that several of the leading players are in contention for automatic entry into the Olympic Games in Sydney next year and the English Open is one of the most vital tournaments for international ranking points prior to the cut off date in the summer.

The Championships are being broadcast into many countries throughout the world including China where the main public broadcaster, CCTV, will be taking extensive coverage. The rest of Asia will receive pictures by Star TV from Hong Kong. The Pro Tour is being broadcast via the EBU Network in Europe. In Britain Sky Sports are giving the Championships extensive coverage. There will be 4 one hour programmes which will be broadcast three times each for a

total of 12 one hour slots. (For details of the coverage see the next page)

The best matches of the Championships are likely to be seen over the weekend of 12/14 March. On the Friday the Mens and Womens Singles last 32 and last 16 matches will be played. On Saturday the quarter finals of the Mens and Womens singles and semi finals of the doubles, whilst Sunday will be dedicated to just eight matches on one table, all four semi-finals of the singles plus all the finals of the singles and doubles.

The facilities at Potters Leisure Resort lend themselves perfectly to a four-court showcase arena, in a similar fashion to the layout at the World Championships in Manchester, and therefore most of the best matches will be staged with good spectator viewing. At the time of writing tickets are still available for the Championships and although the accommodation at Potters Leisure Resort itself is completely full as a result of the table tennis event, there are plenty of low cost local hotels in the nearby holiday resorts of Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft available.

BELGRADE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Of all the events in the international calendar this year, the only one that can expect a stronger international entry are the World Championships scheduled to be held in Belgrade from 26 April to 9 May. At the time of writing it is impossible to say with any certainty whether the Championships will go ahead. News of the political difficulties in Yugoslavia is being reported daily in the TV news and press and the ITTF are watching the developments very carefully. As it stands at the moment the Championships will proceed, but if the problems in Yugoslavia escalate it is difficult to see how the Championships can be played. From an England Team perspective, we are watching developments closely and will be consulting with the Foreign Office and taking all possible soundings before permitting an England team to travel to Belgrade. The safety and well being of our players, coaches and officials is paramount.

At the World Championships there will be a whole series of meetings of the ITTF, ETTU and other international bodies. One of the main meetings will be the Biennial General Meeting of the ITTF where the elections of the international officials take place. It is likely that the current President of the ITTF, Mr. Xu Yinsheng of China will retire and a strong contender for the position is the current Deputy President, Adham Sharara of

ENGLISH OPEN FINALS DAY PLAYING SCHEDULE

10.00hrs	Womens Singles	(1st semi-final)
10.45hrs	Womens Singles	(2nd semi-final)
11.30hrs	Mens Singles	(1st semi-final)
12.15hrs	Mens Singles	(2nd semi-final)
14.30hrs	Womens Doubles	Final
15.15hrs	Mens Doubles	Final
16.00hrs	Womens Singles	Final
17.00hrs	Mens Singles	Final



**ITTF Deputy Chairman
ADAM SHARARA**

Canada.

In January Michel Gadat attended a conference held by the ITTF which looked at ways of improving the sport. The 40mm ball was tried at the same time in the Ponders Cup competition in Copenhagen but the reports suggest that the results were inconclusive. The object of the introduction of the larger ball was to slow the ball down and give the sport some more visibility from a spectators perspective. There were several other discussions in Copenhagen, one of which identified that the sport internationally lacked personalities and that there was insufficient public recognition of the leading players. Another factor highlighted was that the television coverage of the sport needed to be more widespread and to create more drama and interest by focusing in on the personality of the players. The whole subject moves forward to Belgrade where it is understood that a major part of the Biennial General Meeting of the ITTF will be devoted to discussing improvements in the game itself.

The ETTA are currently in negotiation with the ITTF and Sky TV with the objective of ensuring that the Pro Tour will be covered on Sky Sports for the

whole of the coming year. I expect to be able to provide more details of this in the next issue of Table Tennis News. In the meantime, negotiations are at an advanced stage between the ITTF and the ETTU and Euro Sport to give live coverage of the European Champions Club League next season. If these negotiations prove successful, then all eight rounds will be broadcast live on Euro Sport. One complication for British Satellite viewers is that Euro Sport cannot be received on Sky Digital and, therefore, current Sky subscribers will need to either keep their analogue dish or subscribe to On Digital in order to be able to receive the Euro Sport pictures. One major benefit of Euro Sport is that it is available throughout the whole of the European

continent on satellite without subscription.

UKSI at SHEFFIELD

There have been two other very positive developments over the last month or so, the first one being that the Association has received a letter from the Minister of Sport, Tony Banks, indicating that the UK Sports Institute is likely to be given the go ahead very shortly and that table tennis will be provided with a dedicated National Training Centre. I quote "We are now pressing the UK and English Sports Councils, together with Phoenix Sports, to press ahead with the utmost vigour to ensure that this commitment does not wane because of a lack of substantial progress."

2002 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

There had been some speculation in January that table tennis might have been a casualty of the revision of the sports programme for the Commonwealth Games which are to be held in Manchester in 2002. Richard Yule, Michel Gadat and I met with the senior officials of the various partnerships involved in organising the Games recently and it now appears extremely likely that table tennis will retain its position in the Commonwealth Games in 2002. Whats more, following strong representation from Commonwealth Associations in Asia and Africa table tennis has been included in the bid from Melbourne for the staging of the 2006 Commonwealth Games. Melbourne are the strong favourites to be awarded the Games and if this is the case, table tennis will enjoy participation in two consecutive Games. This will undoubtedly provide a great boost for our sport throughout the Commonwealth.

"OPPORTUNITIES IN TABLE TENNIS" DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

DATE	REGION	VENUE
Sunday 28th March 1999	Yorkshire (Yorkshire, South Yorkshire)	To be confirmed

For further information contact Diccon Gray at Hastings 01424 722525

TABLE TENNIS on TV

ITTF PRO TOUR ENGLISH OPEN COVERAGE WITH SKY TV

Events	Transmission Date	Time	Channel
English Open Championships	15th March 1999	18.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
English Open Championships	15th March 1999	22.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
English Open Championships	16th March 1999	11.00	Sky Sports 1 Digital
English Open Championships	16th March 1999	18.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
English Open Championships	16th March 1999	22.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
English Open Championships	17th March 1999	11.00	Sky Sports 1 Digital
English Open Championships	17th March 1999	18.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
English Open Championships	17th March 1999	22.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
English Open Championships	18th March 1999	11.00	Sky Sports 1 Digital
English Open Championships	18th March 1999	15.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
English Open Championships	18th March 1999	18.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
English Open Championships	18th March 1999	23.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
English Open Championships	19th March 1999	11.00	Sky Sports 1 Digital

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA ON DSF.ASTRA SATELLITE

Match	Date of Match	Date of TV Coverage	Time (UK)
Gonnern-Ochsenhausen	19th March 1999	20th March 1999	16.00
Grenzau-Dusseldorf	26th March 1999	27th March 1999	16.00
Frickenhausen-Gonnern	1st April 1999	3rd April 1999	16.00
Grenzau-Ochsenhausen	9th April 1999	10th April 1999	16.00

POSTBAG

COACH REQUIRED

Having just retired I am planning a return to the game I left many years ago when the non-pimpled bats began to emerge! I then played in Essex and can well remember such as Bobby Stevens and Bobby Raybould, both of whom used to play in Walthamstow, East London.

I have subscribed to the magazine and just finished reading the 258 issue. As someone responsible for such publications in other walks of life I am well aware of the effort which goes in - and isn't always appreciated?

Anyway, to the point. Before presenting myself to a club for possible membership I would welcome the opportunity of a few 'lessons' or knock ups with a steady coach. Does such a being exist in my area? If so I would welcome contact details. I did note that Footscray is a centre but only for juniors?

I look forward to hearing from you when you get a moment.

Jack Perry

Old Bexley, Kent

EDITORS NOTE: Is there anyone out there in Kent who can help Jack with a spot of coaching. If there is please contact me and I will pass on your details to Jack.

POOH POOH RON

I felt that I had to respond to Mr.Etheridge's letter in the last issue. Whatever Mr.Etheridge felt regarding my article, I do take exception to what I consider to be a very personal comment.

It would appear that because Mr.Etheridge feels that he does not know me, that I have no knowledge of the sport whatsoever in any capacity. In deciding to respond, I was considering to list my achievements as such, as a player, administrator, coach and manager, that I have had. However, I see no point in doing this.

Sufficient to say to you, Mr. Etheridge, arguably my credence is on a par with ours and some might say better, not withstanding your wonderful achievement at the Manchester World Vets Championships.

Oh yes! I reluctantly must say that contrary to your snipe Mr.Etheridge,I have indeed heard of you!! In fact, I even believe my memory might be slightly better than yours, for I believe we have played against each other, in the Middlesex 3 Star Open Mens Singles around 1966 - I may be wrong of course - but who won?

Finally, just to kill off this silly view held by some players, that just because one player does not know of another (or cannot remember him) then that player must be rubbish, and/or his views!

A few years ago, when Len D'Arcey was Vets No.1, there was a Vets player in Essex, which those of us in East and North London, knew to be one of the best vets in England. However, because he never played any open tournaments, no-one outside of the leagues he played in, knew of him. Eventually he was persuaded by many of his friends to enter an open tournament. Duly he entered the Middlesex 3 Star Vets Open, where not only did he beat Len D'Arcey, he won the tournament. I am sure Len had not heard of Mike Lissen then, but I bet he now recalls him as a pretty good player.

This proves not just the point I have highlighted, but how useless the computer rankings are. However, that's another argument for another day.

I now respond to the technical points raised in Mr.Etheridge's letter. When I stated that I would like to see the same rubbers used on both sides of the bat, I stated no preference - all that I wanted to see was 'fair' equipment used of equal

manufactured standard, so that the best player may then win?

I fully appreciate all the 'tricks' Mr.Etheridge has highlighted that can be used to make rubber play differently - however, it is indeed for the administrators to 'tighten up' the regulations accordingly. Furthermore, the tricks highlighted, no way affect the play, as much as the manufactured rubbers that exist today in any case.

I agree with Mr.Etheridge as far as the game at top level and my article did pin point, doing away with glue as well as standardising the equipment.

Mr.Etheridge compared the Over 40s Final at the Manchester World Vets Championships to the Buist/Reisman hard bat battle, which he preferred (quite understandably!) Compare Buist and Reisman. Both use the same bats. Thank you Mr.Etheridge, you confirm by this the point of my article exactly!!

Mr. Etheridge argues in favour of long pimples as if he is a major share holder in the companies that manufacture the rubbers, but his views are so biased. Everyone that appreciates and understands table tennis, knows the unpredictability of long pimples!

I used the term 'trickery', yes to long pimples and also to combination bats - in my opinion it is a legal trickery and it is only players such as Mr.Etheridge that use such equipment, that would argue in favour of it.

I never put forward a strong argument that young players give up the game because of long pimples. I actually feel that as many young as old do - but my argument was the viewing of the main sport, both live and on TV, which the equipment to a large degree has helped kill.

I do agree with Mr.Etheridge that the youngsters today have drummed into them by their coaches '3rd ball attack' and that they are not taught any middle game which I agree is because of the glue and fast rubbers.

I do not agree at all with the final paragraph of Mr.Etheridge's letter - I

continued on page 33

JOHN WOODFORD writes his second 'Courtside', a popular resurrected column,

• **EVERY** now and again I have to remind people that they are not going to 'like' everything they read in the media, newspapers, magazines, whatever. Life is a series ups and downs and that is reflected in the media. One county team does well - another section like the juniors-suffers from the loss of star players to the senior ranks. This has happened in Sussex and I report that the team is being re-built and one team lost its first match 10-0. The new county junior supreme thought that was negative reporting. It is not an accurate reflection of the situation if only the good news is reported.

• **AFTER** many years covering the English Open, I am happily amazed at the strength and quality of the entry from 47 countries. It is almost like the European Championships with the addition of the third seed Kim Tack Soo from Korea. The world champion Jan-Ove Waldner will not be at Potters - he is busy preparing for the world championships in Belgrade - that also applies to the Chinese national team who are also being honed for Belgrade.

• **THE WAR** in Kosova is of course not that far from Belgrade. I spoke at length in Paris recently with Mischa Kapetanich the Yugoslav TTA president. He assured me that as they had spent the last ten years trying to get the the world's top table tennis event,into Belgrade they were not likely to be stopped by the battles in Kosova. But, should NATO decide to bomb Belgrade in the next few weeks, the tournament would be threatened with cancellation or postponement.

• **WINNING** space in the Daily Telegraph for table tennis in the past few months has become more difficult than ever, due mainly to huge national stories - the departure of Glen Hoddle, the drugs scares in several sports to name just two. I write a piece every Monday for a Tuesday column in the DT. Sometimes it appears, sometimes the next day. The reporting of major table tennis events will still happen after they have taken place, but the days of consistent pre-views of events are gone, due also to this nation (and the world in general) being more interested in soccer than anything else.

• **THE** question I have been asked most often recently is the dates and the venues for the Olympic Qualification events. The SINGLES will be staged in Patras, Greece, December 2-5 and the DOUBLES in Rotterdam, December 17-19 - two pleasant venues for pre-Christmas trips for intrepid supporter and journalists only!

DATE CHANGE

**ETTA NATIONAL UNDER 10/11/12
CHAMPIONSHIPS
KINGSWAY LEISURE CENTRE, WIDNES
SCHEDULED FOR THE
5/6th JUNE 1999
HAS CHANGED TO THE
29/30th MAY 1999**

Entry forms available from Vanda Jones at hastings 01424 722525

ETTA GRAND PRIX at MIDDLESEX & ST. AUSTELL



Mike
Johns,
ETTA
Events
Manager

MIDDLESEX OPEN ETTA GRAND PRIX

SATURDAY/SUNDAY 20TH/21ST MARCH 1999

Lea Valley Leisure Centre
Picketts Lock Lane
Edmonton, London N9 0AS



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



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DUPORTH HOLIDAY VILLAGE ST. AUSTELL, CORNWALL

The Middlesex Open proudly makes a comeback as an ETТА Grand Prix on the 20th/21st March, at the Lea Valley Leisure Centre, Picketts Lock, London, which had become its regular home since the late 1970's.

Over Easter we will be staging the 2nd South West Open in the lovely

town of St. Austell, at the Polkyth Leisure Centre.

Play commences on Good Friday and continues onto Easter Monday.

Accommodation is available at the Duporth Holiday Village, why not take advantage of the special offers available and turn it into a memorable holiday in Cornwall. As

the Wilkins family, pictured above, did last year when they stayed for the rest of the week, for only £21 per night. Mike not only enjoyed his table tennis, but his family also had a fabulous holiday in a most picturesque part of Britain.

Then its onto the Blackpool Grand Prix on 17/18th April 1999.

SWEDISH SUPERSTAR TO VISIT ENGLAND

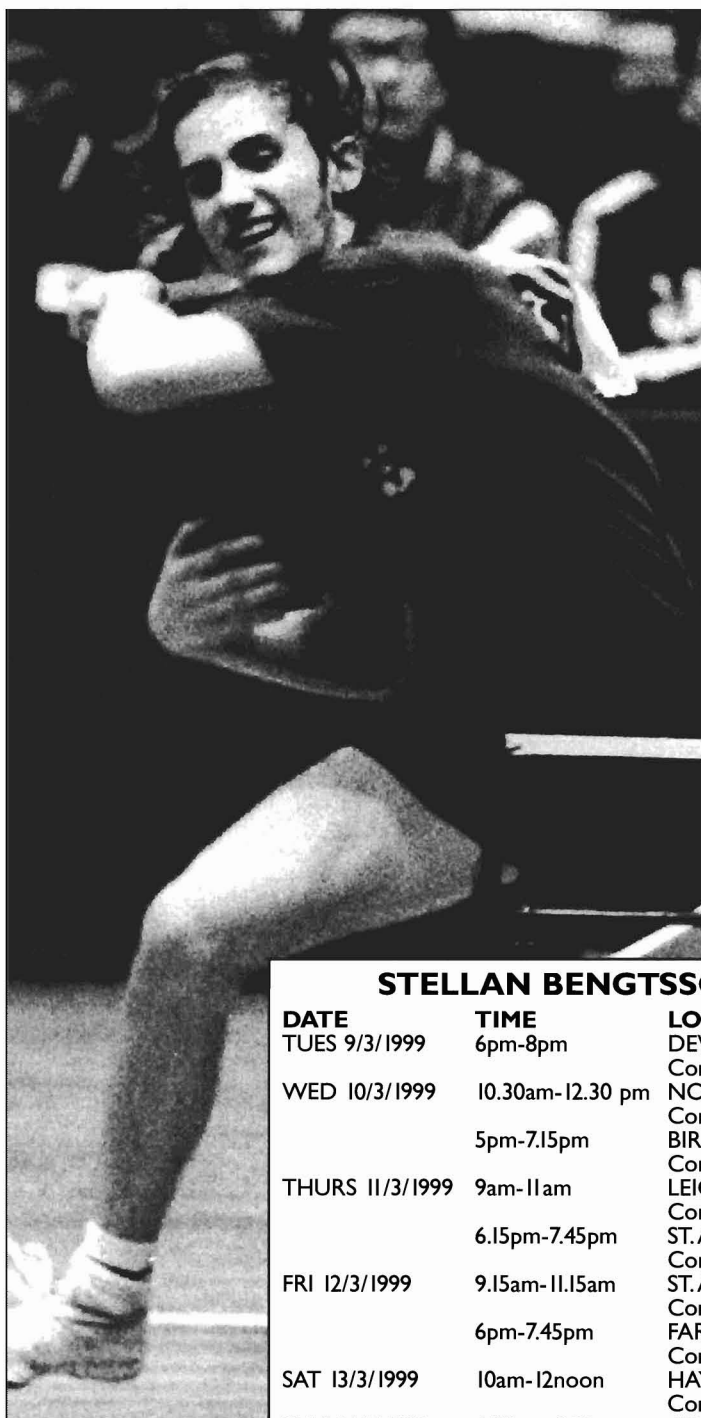
It was in the 1969 World Championships in Munich that the ace German defender Eberhard Scholer gave notice that Asian domination of the World Singles might be coming to an end. Ebby came within a whisker of taking the title. Two games up and 19-20 in the third was the nearest he came, as the clever Japanese star Shigeo Itoh roared back to clinch the set in the fifth and deciding game, writes Brian Halliday.

European table tennis again had played second fiddle to the stars from China and Japan. When would it end? Who had the talent to buck a fifteen year trend that was becoming monotonous.

The turnaround was surprising and dramatic. Sweden, with no real background of producing table tennis superstars, were about to burst onto the world scene with a trio of players which were destined to change the face of the sport for ever.

The story really starts on Teeside where the young Stellan Bengtsson was in sensational form to take the European Youth title in emphatic style. Here was a guy who displayed a fierce and frightening determination by winning 44 consecutive games without conceding one. The doubles were also annexed with Hungary's Tibor Klampar. The aggressive left hander took the championships by storm, and it was evident that a real star had arrived who might one day challenge Oriental might.

At the World Championships the following year dreams came true when Bengtsson, the 18 year old from Falkenberg, wrested the coveted St. Brides Vase from Itoh. What a night for Europe. The diminutive Swede had accounted for Aramaki of Japan 6,14, and 14,



Kim Yung-Sam of North Korea 9,13, and 12, followed by two exhausting five set victories over the Chinese player Li Ching-Kuang and Hasegawa of Japan.

In the quarters he saw off Kunz three straight, and in the semis he beat ex World Champion Hsi En-Ting. Bengtsson's final victory over Itoh was little short of sensational. The Swede had triumphed over all the speed and athleticism of a fine champion.

There is little doubt that Bengtsson and his fellow stars Hans Alser and Kjell Johansson had brought in a new era. This magnificent trio were to inspire a whole dynasty which eventually produced the incomparable Waldner and his all action team mates.

Table Tennis owes so much to Stellan Bengtsson so it is a great honour to welcome him back to the UK at this time for a promotional tour on behalf of the Swedish table tennis company - Stiga. Stellan will be making personal appearances at the following venues and the invitation is extended to everyone who wishes to meet again one of the truly greats of our sport.

STELLAN BENGTTSSON'S SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
TUES 9/3/1999	6pm-8pm	DEWESBURY, Yorkshire Contact: Bevan Walker 01274 672005
WED 10/3/1999	10.30am-12.30 pm 5pm-7.15pm	NOTTINGHAM Contact: Howard Knott 01636 893172 BIRMINGHAM Contact: Ron Anson 0121 423 1435
THURS 11/3/1999	9am-11am 6.15pm-7.45pm	LEICESTER Contact: Alan Jones 01509 814106 ST. AUSTELL Contact: Bill Steward 01726 824500
FRI 12/3/1999	9.15am-11.15am 6pm-7.45pm	ST. AUSTELL Contact: Bill Steward (as above) FAREHAM Contact: Keir Donaldson 01329 310884
SAT 13/3/1999	10am-12noon	HAYWARDS HEATH Contact: Phil Harvey 01444 242135
SUN 14/3/1999	6.30pm-8.30pm	BRIGHTON Contact: Peter Burdock 01273 591851

CHAMPAGNE PERRY & BUBBLY DEATON TOAST VICTORY IN BATH

ALEX PERRY, 23, holding onto the No.3 spot in the England European League team by his fingertips, gained a much firmer hold on his future prospects at the Bath Leisure Centre at the Senior National Championships, writes John Woodford.

The most recent championships have all produced shocks or surprises, who would have bet on Desmond Douglas reaching the mens singles final last year? Who would forecast Carl Prean reaching the semi-finals this year and then pulling out with the flu bug?

Perhaps Alex needed a break as supplied by Carl, whose best plan a bit earlier would have been to pull-out at match-point to let Darren Blake through to play Perry in the semi-finals.

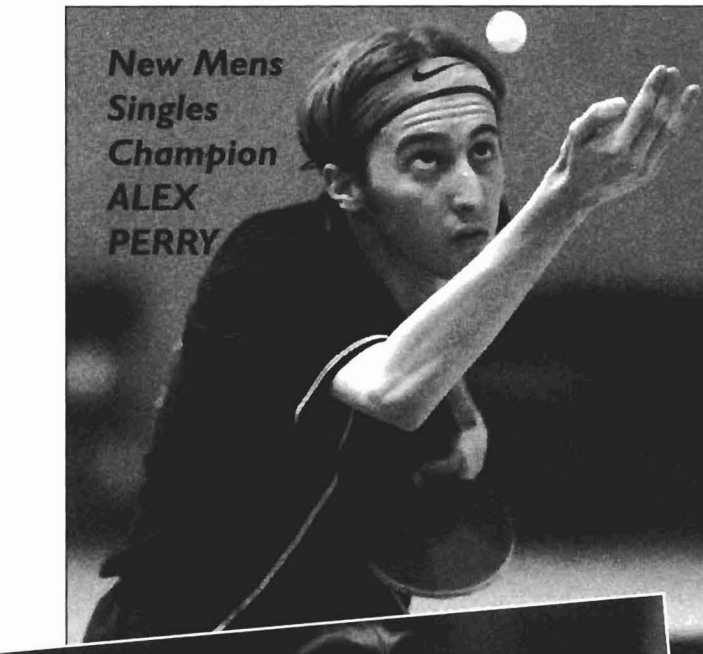
**Words by
JOHN WOODFORD
Words & Pictures
by JOHN WOOD**

However, Alex has been playing better table tennis in the past recent months, but who would have bet on him stopping his greatest rival Terry Young in the final 15, 14, 19?

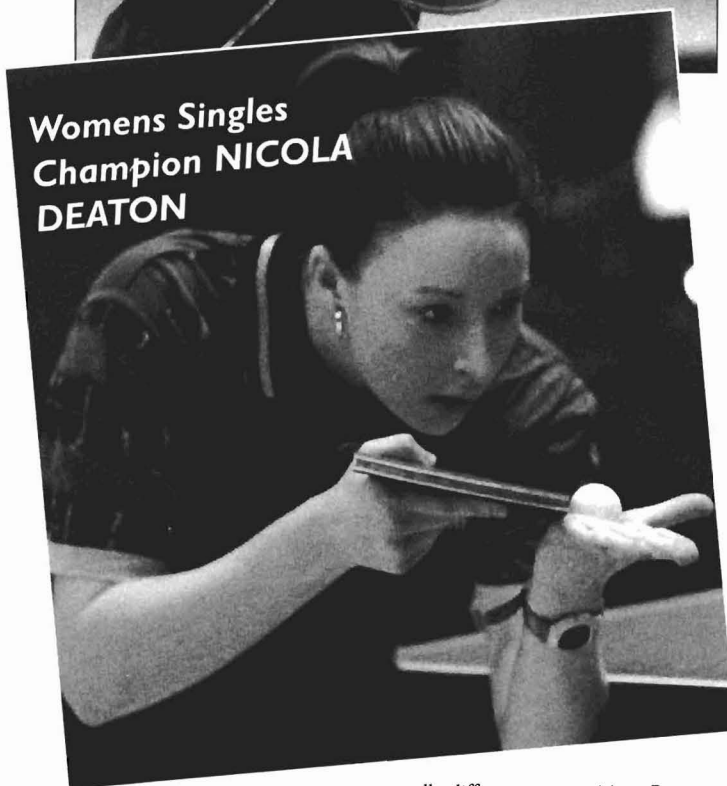
The Match of the Day and of the season was the defeat of Matthew Syed by Terry Young 17, -17, 15, -8, 15. Like many of Matthew's games it was a spectacle, the sort of spectacular that only a defender like Matthew can produce.

Even in the fifth game with the Maidenhead man looking as though he might tire and generally lose his concentration, get ragged and lose. But not this time. One of Young's strongest assets is that he can pile on the pressure whilst steadily increasing his power.

Tension mounted at Bath as the mens final got under way - could Young bring down Perry as he did Syed; looking at the world rankings



**New Mens
Singles
Champion
ALEX
PERRY**



**Womens Singles
Champion NICOLA
DEATON**

it seemed very likely that if the world No.25 can be tamed by Young it was quite possible that Perry's great run could be halted.

But, instead, Young found Perry a

totally different proposition; Perry was on the glory trail fully justifying his continued participation in the Swedish National League. Whilst on the subject of England squad men playing abroad, it seems that

Young's trips commuting to Germany, are also paying dividends.

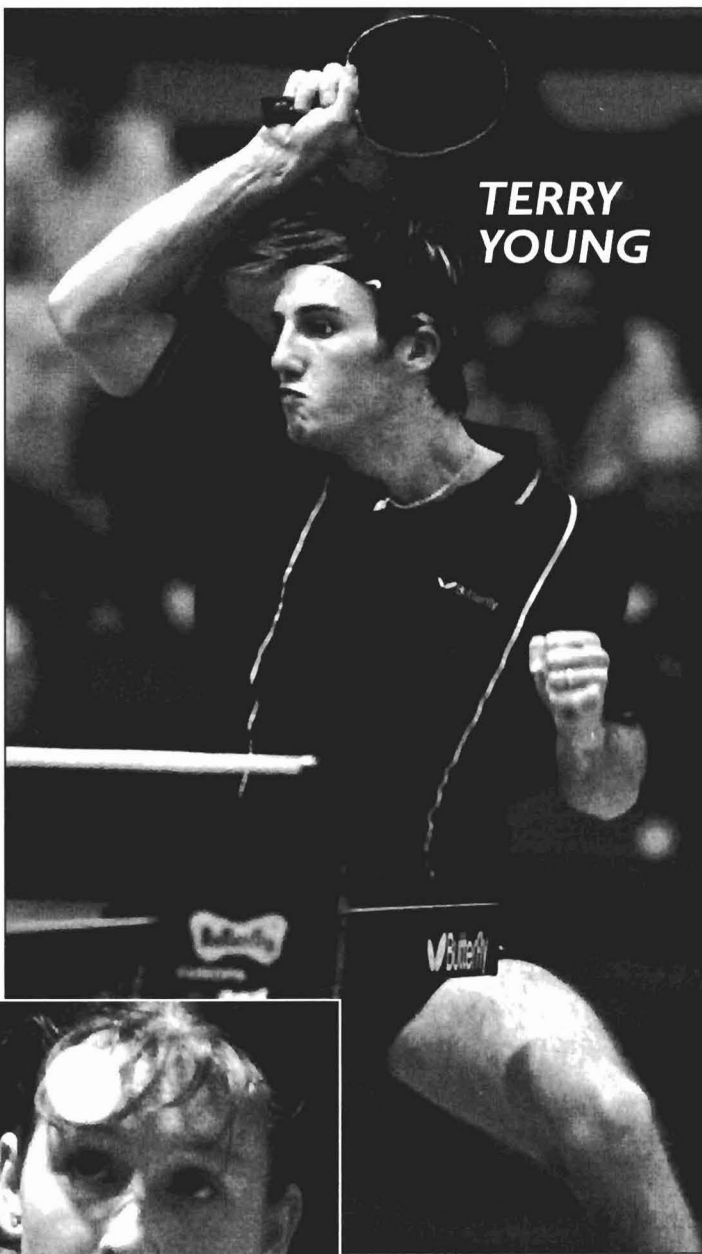
Nicola Deaton lifted the England womens crown for the second time. She won her first title in Brighton in 1997.

Having watched Nicola a couple of times in recent months, I am sure she has improved her all-round attack and could soon reach the No.1 spot on the England list. Wilton Holt is not at all impressed by the England National Training Centre at Nottingham. He thinks that playing there has not improved his daughter's game at all and he used the example of the womens final and the 17,10,19 Deaton triumph as an example.

The England women's elite squad is of course, at a crossroads after the retirement and almost complete disappearance at events of Lisa Lomas. Happily, Nicola is improving and Andrea still has a lot to offer England with her combination of attack and defence.

Following his shock defeat by Young, Matthew Syed had a number of things to say, among them, "The light floor makes it very difficult for we defenders. When the ball is coming at you like a rocket you need a dark background. I was not happy to see Carl pull out, I was looking forward to playing him for the first time in eight years."

Footnote: Play in the finals session at Bath was delayed by nearly an hour after an equipment fixing bolt was found to be sticking up half an inch from the floor and could not be dealt with at the time. Some of the women players refused to play on the table, if moved, because of the lighting change. The mens doubles finalists however, decided to play on it as the late finish was getting later. Lesson to be learnt - someone should be responsible for checking the floor areas of these multi-purpose arenas.



**TERRY
YOUNG**



SHELLEY RUOCCO

TERRY YOUNG and SHELLEY RUOCCO are this year's Under 21 Singles Champions, with Young defeating Gareth Herbert in the Final 18,-18, 11, whilst Ruocco brushed aside the challenge of Joanna Barraclough 19, 7, writes John Wood.

Young, following his very tough battle with Michael Isherwood in the Senior Mens Singles Quarter-finals

where the man from Maidenhead finally won 12, -22, 16,-18, 14, this time he won comfortably in the U21's semi-finals 8, 18. Herbert had a much tougher battle in the other semi, where Andrew Baggaley, the National Junior Champion, nearly caused an upset before going down -19, 17,-23.

Ruocco's route to the trophy was much less stressful, winning the semi-final 15, 21, against Hannah Yardy, and in the quarter-finals defeating Jade Kendall -18, 10, 15.

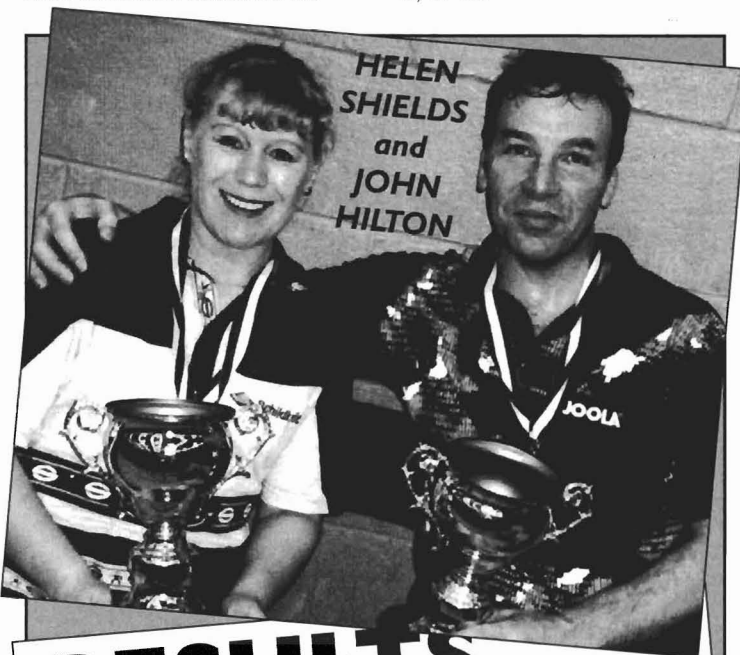
John Hilton has regained the Veteran Mens Singles trophy following his narrow victory over former Veteran Champion Brian Johns -16, 19, 19, whilst Helen Shields caused an upset by firstly knocking out the holder of the Veteran Womens trophy Jan Dunning 17,-10, 17, in the semi-finals, then she had a big win over

YOUNG & RUOCCO U21 CHAMPS

Brenda Buoy 10, 20, in the final.

Bubbly Perry and Deaton probably created a record when they both scooped all three trophies each, when they added to their Singles crowns by winning the Mixed Doubles together, beating Darren Blake and Kubrat Owolabi in the

final 17, 8, whilst Perry won his third in Mens Doubles alongside Gareth Herbert, beating Young and Blake 14, 20. Deaton crowned her triumphant weekend by winning the Womens Doubles with Helen Lower, defeating Holt and Owolabi 14,-16 19.



**HELEN
SHIELDS
and
JOHN
HILTON**

RESULTS

MENS SINGLES: Q/F: M.Syed b A.Baggaley 17, 16, 14; A.Perry b G.Herbert 10,-18, 16, 6; T.Young b M.Isherwood 12, -22, 16,-18, 14; C.Prean b D.Blake 16, 8, 16. S/F: Young b Syed 17,-17, 15,-8, 15; Perry b C.Prean w/o. FINAL: Perry b Young 15,14,19.

WOMENS SINGLES: Q/F: A.Holt b L.Durrant 6, 12, 11; L.Radford b J.Harris 19, 12, 21; H.Lower b T.Bloor 9, 19, 14; N.Deaton b K.Owolabi 10, 18, 17. S/F: Deaton b Lower -17, 15, 15, 15; Holt b Radford 23, 15, 12. FINAL: Deaton b Holt 17,10, 19.

MENS DOUBLES: Perry/Herbert b Young/Blake 14, 20.

WOMENS DOUBLES: Deaton/Lower b Holt/Owolabi 14,16,19.

MIXED DOUBLES: Perry/Deaton b Blake/Owolabi 17, 8.

U21 MENS SINGLES: Young b Herbert 18,-18, 11.

U21 WOMENS SINGLES: S.Ruocco b J.Barrowclough 19, 6.

VETERAN MENS SINGLES: J.Hilton b B.Johns -16, 19, 19.

VETERAN WOMENS SINGLES: H.Shields b B.Buoy 10, 20.

VETS MENS DOUBLES: Hilton/Davies b A & B.Johns 20,-11, 17.

VETS WOMENS DOUBLES: J.Dunning/Buoy b Shields/Simpson 12,-13, 13.

LIQIN THE STAR AS SAMSONOV CRASHES

WANG LIQIN, 20, need only play as well as he did here in Paris winning the ITTF Pro Tour Mens Singles title beating his compatriot Liu Guoliang, to win the world singles crown in Belgrade in April and May, writes John Woodford in Paris.

The standard of the final, like the rest of the tournament was extremely high. But on the day, it appeared that Wang Liqin has a stronger backhand attack, his counter-hitting was majestic and his reflexes very, very fast. That was the amalgam of talent that upset the World No.2 Liu, -18, 13, 13,15.

Wang Liqin is No.7 on the world list, but not for long I fancy, he must surely be in the front rank of the Chinese challenge for the retention of the Swaythling Cup.

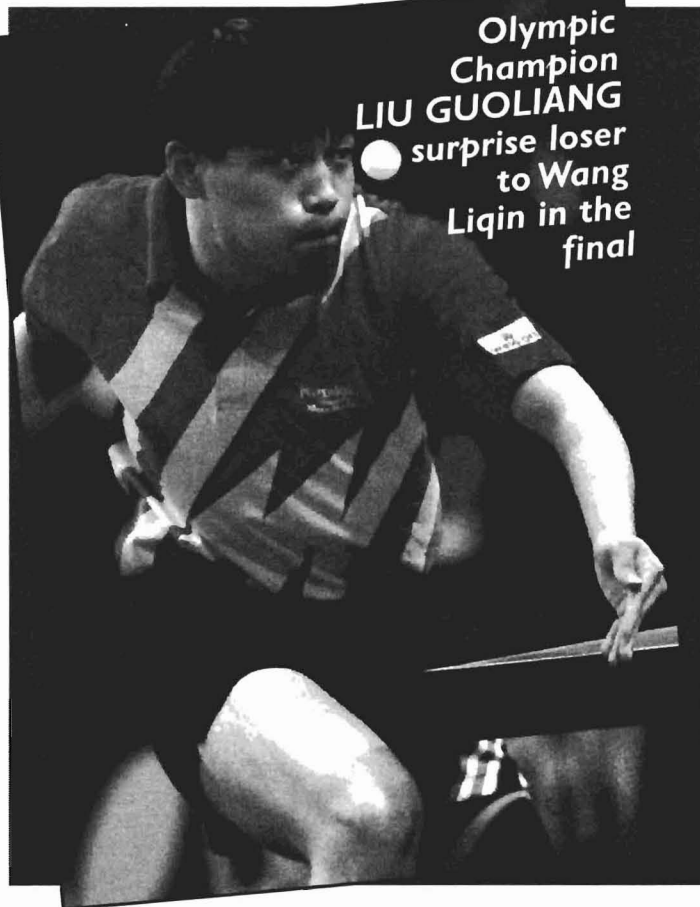
European players were a rare breed in Paris. There were a few around but they soon victims of the Chinese take-away with the exception of Jan-Ove Waldner and Jean-Michel Saive. These two clashed in the quarter-finals in a memorable battle. Waldner with all his skills seemed to have the upper hand early on.

Saive still has what seems to me the enormous disadvantage of standing round the side of the table most of the time. This causes him to have to rush over to the other corner time and time again, but Saive despite this weakness still took the second and fourth games from the world champion and still looked dangerous in the fifth, but the Swede managed to survive keeping Saive down to 17 points.

THE HUGE SHOCK

The first round crash of Vladimir Samsonov (world No.1) 17, 4, 8 by Wang Liqin was almost beyond belief. The Belarussian was tight-lipped at his press conference after the biggest defeat he has suffered in his career. "I was too passive" he explained. That was the understatement of the year.

Samsonov has this weakness of being content to get the ball back and let the opponent make the mistakes. Often it works. Against a player of Wang's calibre Samsonov



Olympic Champion LIU GUOLIANG surprise loser to Wang Liqin in the final

was never in the match, which was a big disappointment for the fans who wanted to see Europeans doing well against the Chinese.

Wang smashed and top-spun everything he could as Samsonov collapsed beneath the onslaught.

At Waldner's press conference he said "The Chinese play as a team" which is a broad hint that the results are often, still decided by coaches.

Waldner said after his defeat by Liu Guoliang "After two games I felt more confident receiving service-I learned a lot from the match".

My comment: He will need to learn a lot more if he (Waldner) is to lead the European challenge in Belgrade against the Asians.

The womens events were almost entirely dominated by the Chinese.

In fact many fans took the opportunity to take refreshment when the womens matches were on.

The Chinese women were so boring that many of the 4,000 crowd

clapped and cheered when a girl spectator returned a ball from the seating with a huge throw on target!

If any woman in Europe looks capable of making progress against the Asian challenge in Belgrade it is Tamara Boros from Croatia. She defeated the German-Chinese Tian Zorner 14 in the fifth in Round 1 and only lost 17 in the fifth to finalist Lin Ling. That is all that European women can offer at this point in time.

When the French pair Gatien and Chila were doing fairly well in the mens doubles - they almost took Wang Liqin and Yan Sen to five in the quarters - the 4,000 crowd did the Pierre de Courbertin stadium, - can you imagine such enthusiasm being shown by an audience of fans in England? The atmosphere in Manchester for the world's was very good. but not FIVE Mexican waves.

SMOOTH

The organisation of the event by the French Association and the ITTF ran smoothly. Parking cars in Paris is a nightmare at any time, but my party, that included ETTA treasurer Barry Granger and New Zealander Geoff Taylor managed to escape without any parking fines, but quite a few French francs lighter.

• Footnote: The Daily Telegraph cares for us smaller sports like no other newspaper in Britain. It tries to present a world-wide image for all sport, proved by the fact that despite there were no Brits in Paris for this event and few Europeans, they accepted both reports and results when all other newspapers would have said "No Brits? - We will take agency copy."

RESULTS

Mens singles

Round 1: Liu Guoliang b D. Eloi - 16, 10, 17, 13; P. Chila b J. Persson 17, 17, 18; J. Saive b W. Schlager 18, 19, -20, -18, 21; J. Waldner b P. Franz -17, 16, 13, 14; Kong Linghui b J. Gatién 19,17, 13; Yan Sen b C. Legout 18, 16, -17, 18; Wang Liqin b V. Samsonov 17. 4, 8; Ma Lin b K. Creanga -21, 7, 10, 13.

Quarter finals: Liu b Chila 10, 19, 13; Waldner b Saive 15, -15, 15, -14, 17; Kong b Yan 16, -19, 14, 9; Wang b Ma -17, 17, -16, 13, 12.

Semi-finals: Liu b Waldner 16, 12, -18, 19; Wang b Kong 6, 17, 14.

FINAL: Wang b Liu -18, 13, 13, 15.

Womens singles

Semi-finals: Lin Ling b Sun Jin 19, -20, -15, 12, 13; Wang Nan b Li Ju 14, 18, 13.

FINAL: Wang b Lin -21, 18, -19, 20,9.

Mens doubles

Semi-finals: Ma Lin/Qin Zhi Jan b Kong/Liu 18,-16, 9,-14, 16; Wang Liqin/Yan Sen b Chila/ Gatien 9,-22, 12, 19.

FINAL: Wang/YAN h Ma/Qin 23, 17, -17, 18.

Womens doubles

Semi-finals: Wang/Li b Herczig/Liu Jia 20, 11, 11; Cheng/Wang b Konishi/Fujinuma 10, 10,18.

FINAL: Li/Wang b Cheng/Wang 21, 20, 7.

POLES AXED AT HOLME PIERREPONT

HELEN LOWER was England's match-winner as England womens team, battling for survival in Division 1, forged a 4-2 victory over Poland at the National Training Centre where 50 spectators urged England to a victory that took nearly four hours and once again lost my Daily Telegraph dead-line, (apart from results only) in the later London editions, writes **John Woodford**.

Helen, as she always does goes for the kill, attack is the best form of defence is the way the Staffordshire girl plays her table tennis as if her life depends on it, not just her professional career.

Poland sent over one star player Joanna Narkiewicz who is an excellent player and two youngsters, both impressive.

Nicola Deaton opened for England with a sparkling win 9, -17, 13 against the youngster Iwona Kuszaj; Kubrat Owolabi appeared to be below her best as she was never in the hunt losing -13,-13 to Narkiewicz.

Then came Helen, missing a small pile of sitters but still fighting to win -11, 16,16 against Magdalena Gorowska who is No.7 in Poland, to put England 2-1 up at half-time. After the break England made the breakthrough in the doubles, a stunning win 20, 18 by Deaton and Lower against Narkiewicz and Kuszaj.

A 4-1 sweep by England seemed on the cards but Nicola just failed in a superb battle royal, losing to Narkiewicz 14,-11,19 to make the score 3-2 to England.

Lower then aimed higher, even losing a lobbing encounter but she managed to stop Kuszaj 12, -15, 12 to give England a hard-fought victory for them to take to Poland for the second leg.

They should have Andrea Holt, who was suffering from flu, back by then - if she can get two, Deaton



and Lower should score to secure an England aggregate win to save them from the trapdoor which is still yawning open.

Scores:

ENGLAND 4, POLAND 2
N.Deaton b I.Kuszaj 9,-17, 13;
K.Owolabi l. J.Narkiewicz -13, -13;
H.Lower b M.Gorowska -11, 16, 16;
Deaton/Lower b Narkiewicz/Kuszaj
20, 18; Deaton l Narkiewicz 14,-11,
-19; Lower b Kuszaj 12,-15, 12.

JOOLA®

MEN CRASH IN OSTRAVA

BIDDING for the final in Division 1, with a 4-2 first leg win at Maidenhead under their belts, everything seemed set for England to win the second leg and get into the final against Denmark, writes John Woodford.

First blow, was an injury to Carl Prean. He bashed his hand on a table in France and pulled out. Although Carl is not playing so much to world-class standard these days, he is still the man you want on your side; he is so professional,

his presence lifts the team. But this team - Syed, Young and the new English champion Alex Perry - were slightly demoralised without 'Preano' and lost 4-0 in front of 500 shouting fans in Ostrava to lose 6-4 on aggregate.

RESULTS:

P. Korbel b T. Young 12,-18, 15; T. Pavelka b M. Syed 18, 15; J. Bindach b A. Perry 17, 17; Korbel and Plachy b Young and Perry - 20,13,18.

ST. NEOTS' BOMBHELL

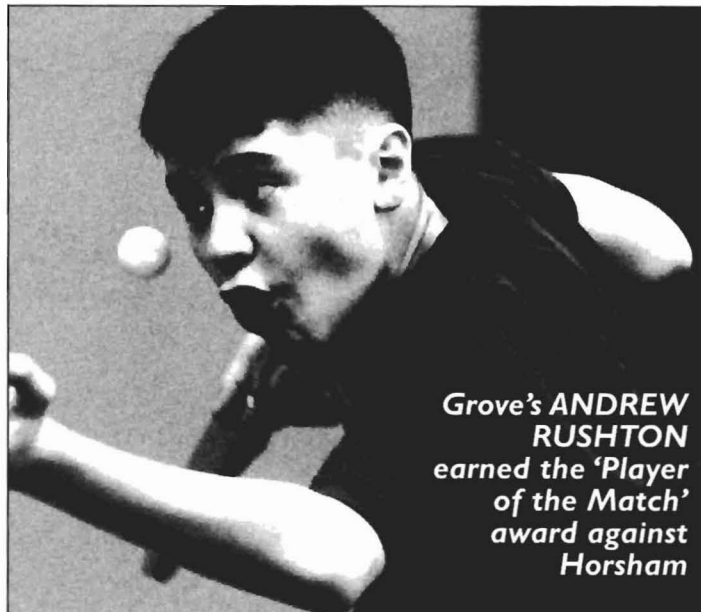
ST.NEOTS dropped a bombshell on the Premier Division of the British League shortly after Christmas when they pulled out of the league. The main reason appears to be that they were not going to be able to raise a team to fulfil most of their fixtures in the latter part of the season, writes Aubrey Drapkin.

Needless to say the remaining clubs in the Premier Division are rather disgruntled to say the least. Most of all, Brent Sports Progress, who had dropped only one point, whilst their main rivals Horsham had been beaten twice once by St Neots. They are now in effect only one point better off than the Sussex side.

British League rules, however are quite clear on the matter stating that if a club withdraws a team from the league before it has completed its fixtures the record of that team shall be completely expunged.

On the playing side Progress were given a fright by last season's champions Darlington, only managing to scrape home 8-6. Darlington's Eddie Smith was the man of the moment with victories over Gareth Herbert and Darren Blake and he only just failed to beat the unbeaten Marco Essomba going down 22-20, 17-21, 19-21 in what turned out to be the crucial game of the day.

Horsham, too had to be content



Grove's ANDREW RUSHTON earned the 'Player of the Match' award against Horsham

with an 8-6 scoreline when they were without Cris Sladden for their visit to Grove.

His replacement Christian Thompson did not let the side down, winning two of his singles as did Ritchie Venner and Adrian Moore but Nigel Eckersley could only manage one victory, going down to David Morris and Andrew Rushton. Young Rushton earned the player of the match award by also beating Moore.

JAGS appear to have ensured their future in the top flight with

successive victories over OLOP (AWCS) Ltd and DML White Hart Launceston.

Tom Cutler won all of his singles against OLOP who were beaten 11-3 and two against Launceston including the last one of the day 22-20 in the third against Mike Short. Abdul Wuraola gave a superb display against the Cornish side and his three single wins coupled with Cutlers crucial victory against Short gave his side the points.

Darlington seconds were unable to field a complete team against Bulldog Security and dropped a point in division 1 North but they still remain four points clear of Derwent who were held to a draw by Kingshurst Bribar for whom Robert Yong was outstanding.

In division 1 South the top of the table clash between Colley Hyundai and Harvey Barnet did not turn out to be the close affair that was expected with Colley's team of Wang Rui, Yan Han, David Barr and Mark Owen winning 8-0 to take over the leadership.

Grantham Kontak are still unbeaten in division 2 North and are now four points clear of Abbeydale Park who dropped a point to the draw specialists (seven out of ten matches played) Rushey Mead and were then

beaten at home by Derwent for whom Richard Shirt was unbeaten.

Division 2 South is now wide open after TAD-Ellenborough were beaten by the Aylesbury League 5-3, Stephen Cowley and Jeff Rigby both winning all of their sets. Horsham seconds with victories over KCD Stiga (7-1) and Cippenham (5-3) are only two points behind Ellenborough with a game in hand whilst Cippenham and Norwich Todd Foxwood are also still in the hunt.

CATSoft Puma's Adeyfield were held to a draw by the fast improving Guildford in division three South and West but then beat Moonrakers seconds 6-2 to go five points clear of Harvey Barnet thirds who lost 2-6 to Brent Sports Progress seconds.

Guildford's side of Phil Snelson, Graham Watts, Robin Pretty and Colin Webber followed up their draw against the leaders by defeating OLOP seconds 6-2 and, with Adam Laws replacing Webber, a 7-1 home success against Cippenham seconds. These were their first victories since joining the league and take them off the foot of the table.

Jack Spratt-Wellhouse are the first team to clinch a title this season being seven points clear in division 3 North with only three matches to play. They kept their 100% record intact with victories over City of Leeds, Syntegra Worcester City and Ormesby 2nds. In division 3 South, Harvey Barnet seconds only need one point from their final two matches to win that division. A 7-1 win over Ashford was followed by a victory over second placed De Vere Sudbury by the same score and then a 5-3 success against Horsham thirds, whilst Sudbury crashed 3-5 at home to Byng Hall Farningham Print seconds.

NB: Any team which would like to enter the British League, please contact Keith Ponting, 21 Southport Avenue, Redhills, Exeter, Devon. EX4 1RA. Telephone 01392 278642.

TOMMY CUTLER, who won JAGS last game of the day when he beat DML White Hart Launceston's Mike Short 22-20 in the third to secure the points for his side, following a closely fought battle, which JAGS won 8-6, pushing his team into relative safety in the Premier Division



TABLES

PREMIER DIVISION	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Horsham	9	8	-	1	89	37	16
Brent Sports Progress	8	7	1	-	75	37	15
Darlington	8	4	1	3	62	50	9
Grove	9	4	-	5	64	62	8
JAGS	9	3	2	4	52	74	8
DML White Hart Launceston	9	1	1	7	46	80	3
OLOP AWCS Ltd	8	-	1	7	32	80	1
St.Neots (Resigned)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

DIVISION 1 NORTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Darlington II	10	7	3	-	56	24	17
Derwent	10	6	1	3	47	33	13
Syntegra Worcester City	10	4	3	3	41	39	11
RMSC Lincoln	10	5	1	4	41	39	11
Uxbridge (Burton)	10	5	1	4	36	44	11
Seasiders (Blackpool)	9	3	3	3	38	34	9
Kinghurst Bribar	9	1	2	6	30	42	4
Bulldog Security	10	-	2	8	23	57	2

DIVISION 1 SOUTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Colley Hyundai	10	8	1	1	62	18	17
Harvey Barnet	10	8	-	2	50	30	16
Byng Hall Farningham Print	10	5	3	2	48	32	13
Hastings	10	5	2	3	42	38	12
C & M Insurance Brentwood	10	3	3	4	42	38	9
Limberlost Pine Poole	10	3	1	6	32	48	7
Moonrakers, Westbury	10	1	2	7	30	50	4
DML White H. Launceston II	10	1	-	9	14	66	2

DIVISION 2 NORTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Grantham Kontak	10	7	3	-	57	21	17
Abbedale Park	10	5	3	2	47	33	13
Derwent II	10	5	2	3	43	37	12
Rushey Mead Club	10	2	7	1	41	39	11
Darlington III	10	5	1	4	40	40	11
Ormesby	10	3	3	4	34	46	9
Drumchapel Glasgow	10	1	2	7	28	52	4
Grove II	10	-	3	7	30	50	3

DIVISION 2 SOUTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
TAD - Ellenborough	10	7	1	2	53	27	15
Horsham II	9	6	1	2	48	24	13
Cippenham	10	6	1	3	45	35	13
Norwich Todd Foxwood	9	6	-	3	53	19	12
Aylesbury League	10	5	-	5	39	41	10
Fellows Cranleigh	10	2	2	6	29	51	6
KCD Stiga	10	2	2	6	26	54	6
DML White H. Launceston III	10	1	1	8	19	61	3

DIVISION 3 SOUTH & WEST	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
CATSoft Puma's Adeyfield	8	7	1	-	52	12	15
Harvey Barnet III	8	5	-	3	38	26	10
Brent Sports Progress II	9	4	2	3	36	36	10
OLOP AWCS Ltd II	9	4	-	5	31	41	8
Guildford	9	2	3	4	33	39	7
Moonrakers, Westbury II	8	2	2	4	27	37	6
Cippenham II	9	1	2	6	23	49	4

DIVISION 3 NORTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Jack Spratt - Wellow House	9	9	-	-	58	14	18
Derwent III	9	4	3	2	38	34	11
Seasiders (Blackpool) II	8	3	2	3	34	30	8
City of Leeds	9	3	1	5	35	37	7
Darlington IV	8	3	1	4	27	37	7
Syntegra Worcester City II	9	3	1	5	31	41	7
Ormesby II	8	-	2	6	17	47	2

DIVISION 3 SOUTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Harvey Barnet II	8	7	1	-	50	14	15
De Vere Sudbury	7	4	1	2	32	24	9
Horsham III	8	4	-	4	30	34	8
Byng Hall F.P. II	6	3	-	3	24	24	6
Ashford	7	2	-	5	26	30	4
KCD Stiga II	6	-	-	6	6	42	-

LEAGUE PLACINGS, INCLUDING ALL MATCHES PLAYED UP TO THE 24th JANUARY 1999

NO LUCK FOR SYED

MATTHEW SYED and NICOLA DEATON travelled to Cardiff on February 7th, full of hope that they would retain their singles titles. Matthew was looking for a hat-trick, Nicola for her fourth Welsh crown. Both players reached home earlier than expected, Matthew having reached the semi-finals before losing and Nicola losing in the quarters to the third seed Russian Ekaterina Edel who should have won the final but blew four match points, writes John Woodford in Cardiff.

The Table Tennis Association of Wales were surprised to find themselves with such a strong entry from all over the globe and 160 players. But they coped admirably even if the finish was near 11 pm on the Sunday, when only the intrepid were still watching.

This was the day when the Syed good fortune evaporated. Just after breakfast Matthew was put on a narrow court (too narrow for his defenses) in his group against an unknown Japanese attacker called Takahiro Dmori, whose name I cannot find on the current world ranking list. The Japanese players are of course skilled against back-spin - the result-defeat for Syed -14, -17. That put Matthew in the bottom half. He battled his way through to the semis, via Gareth Herbert 17, 8 and so to a semi-final defeat 20, 20 by the second seed Liu Song (China).

The Syed-Song battle was one to remember - tremendous hitting by both players and some unbelievable returns from the English No.1.

But still Lady Luck was not on the English side. The Chinese player in the second game won four lucky points, nets and edges. One instance was typical - Song smashed to the finest of edges, Syed retreated, got it back, another two smashes from each player and the point was finally won on a "cruelist" net by the Chinese.

Matthew was almost speechless after his defeat, disbelieving his bad luck.

Earlier, Matthew had declared he was not impressed by the Japanese Umori, but when Matthew was driving over the Severn bridge, Omori won the final against Liu Song (Switzerland based holding a Argentine passport) 12, 20.

How is it that a player ranked No.25 in the world can be comfortably beaten by a player not listed? The Japanese do not take kindly to players, especially strong ones, who emigrate.

Gareth Herbert had a pleasant day - he defeated the fifth seed Jerome Raison before losing to Syed in the quarters. Adam Robertson (Wrexham) 'topman' in the Liverpool area who lives in Wrexham was unbeaten all day in the team events on the following day, he recorded his third successive win over Euan Walker, but then lost to his Welsh team-mate Ryan Jenkins.

Nicola Deaton, 22, the holder was seeded No.6 - a warning of the strength of the field. Nicola, playing better now than this time last year, scattered Asian players before beating the Belgian teenager Detrigne 18, 23.

NICOLA UNDER FIRE

The Derbyshire-based England champion then came under fire from Ekaterina Edel who went through 18,-19, 16. Had she won that match Nicola might have gone to the top of the England rankings.

The team event was won by a weird combination based in Switzerland - Liu Song and Herbert Neubauer, the pimples guru aged 52!

Their victims included England in the shape of Darren Blake and Gareth Herbert.

The Welsh Open, held annually, should be attended by more English players. It is a "good school" now with plenty of foreign opponents and a World Ranking Tournament. But the schedule needs to avoid the late finish - the first day needs the team event cut from groups to knock-out, to allow four hours on Saturday evening to get through some of the singles groups.

This should ensure a finish by 7 p.m. on the Sunday.

RESULTS: MS final: T. Dmori (Japan) b Lui Song (Argentina) 12, 20

WS final: Deng Yaping (China) b E. Edel (Russia) -18, 23, 11.

Mens doubles final: Dmori and and Y. Inoui (Japan) b C. Obert and J. Janssens 10,-14, 16.

Womens doubles final: Edel and Deng Yaping (China) b T. Shimuzu and M. Takahasi (Japan) 18, 9.

BIGGEST EVER ENGLISH OPEN

63rd ENGLISH OPEN TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS, POTTERS LEISURE RESORT, HOPTON-ON-SEA, NORFOLK, 9-14 MARCH, 1999
Preview by Ken Muhr, ETTA Information Officer

These championships are going to be the biggest ever English Open - and biggest ever ITTF Pro-Tour Event - with a record 47 countries and 300 plus players having already entered. It will also be the largest senior international table tennis event in Europe this season apart from the World Championships in Belgrade (26 April-9 May).



Holder of the English Open Mens Singles crown **JEAN MICHEL SAIVE**

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Not only is the entry large, but it includes many of the greatest players in the world and virtually all the top Europeans. In the men's event it is so strong that as things currently stand, our leading

player, Matthew Syed, ranked 25 in the world, will not be amongst the 16 seeds!

TOP 16 MEN

Number 1 seed will be current European Champion **Vladimir Samsonov** (Belarus), the world number 2 - until recently the world No.1 - who has entered the Open for the first time. The losing world singles finalist to Waldner at Manchester in 1997, 22 year old Samsonov is Europe's best hope for next world champion at Belgrade in May. A player who has excellent two wing control and deceptive power, he is coming on form at the right time, having retained his European Top 12 title at Split in February.

Zoran Primorac (Croatia) is seeded second. His smooth attacking game and touch have provided him with increased success in his late twenties (he is now 29) culminating in the Perrier World Cup title in Nimes, October 1997 (he had previously held the World Cup title in 1993). World No.2 for much of 1998, the 1994 Croatian Sportsman of the year and Zagreb Sports University graduate is currently ranked No.5.

Korea's **Kim Taek Soo**, 28, considers that his greatest success was winning two Bronze medals (for men's singles and doubles) at the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games and for twice pulling the World Doubles Cup with Yoo Nam Kyu (1990 and 1992). Employing a spectacular and athletic penhold style, with big forehands, hard backhands and one of the best lob defences, he has won 8 World All Star competitions and took the IOC President's Cup in 1991. He is world ranked no 8 and seeded 3 in the Open.

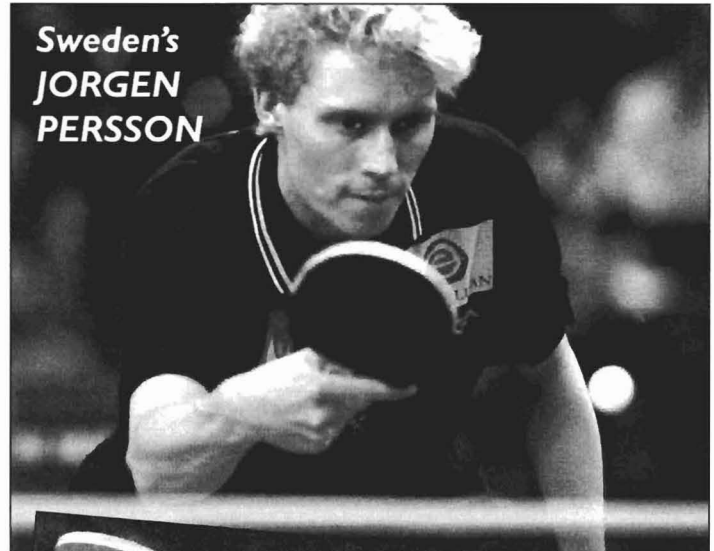
Now 32, the tall blond Swede **Jorgen Persson** has achieved it all! As a teenager he won the European Championships Men's Singles in 1986, but his greatest triumph was in lifting the World Men's title at Chiba in 1991 at the expense of his great team mate Jan-Ove Waldner who he had lost to in the 1989 Dortmund final. He was also a key member of 1989, 1991 and 1993 Swedish World Championship winning teams, and won the World Cup in 1991 and the European Top 12 in 1992. A real gentleman and possessed of excellent temperament, forehand loop, backhand control and smash, and return of service, Jorgen has made a recent return to the world top 10 following his victories over Waldner and Samsonov whilst winning the Yugoslav Open Pro-Tour Event in November. He is seeded 4th.

1997 English Open title holder **Jean-Michel Saive** (Belgium), achieved his 1994 European Men's Singles title in England (Birmingham) where he defeated Waldner. His spirited and physical two wing looping game has taken him to the World Singles final 1993 (when he was runner-up to Gatien) and to the top of the world rankings through much of the mid 1990s. Aged 29, he is currently ranked 11 in the world and 5th seed for the Open.

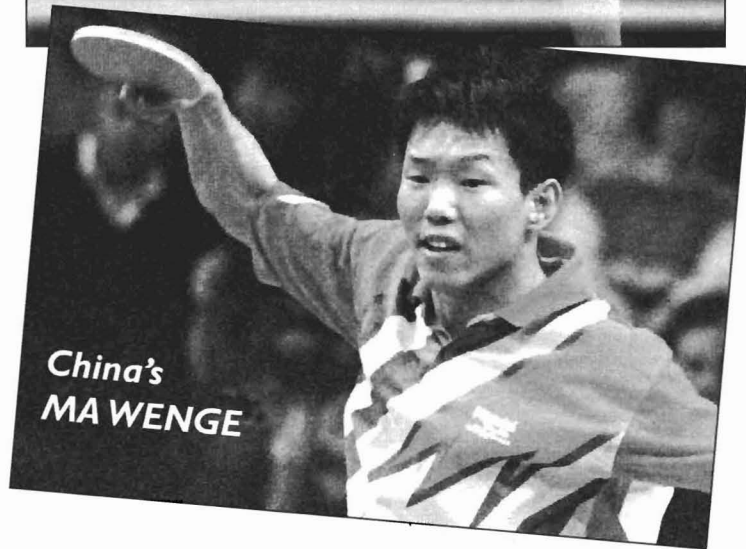
The career best of **Jean-Philippe Gatien**, also 29, was when he beat Jean-Michel Saive for the World Singles title in Gothenburg in 1993. The left handed Frenchman with the speedy forehand loop, footwork and early timing, was a silver medalist (to Waldner's gold) in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics and in 1997 won the European Top 12 with a final success over Samsonov. He quotes his trumpet player father, Rene, as being the biggest influence on his career but Michel Gadai, now ETTA Performance Director, was a significant help. Ranked 12th in the world, 29 year old **Jorg Roskopf** has been Germany's top player for more than 10 years. A left-hander who plays early with great power, particularly on the backhand, on-song he can beat anyone. With Steffen Fetzner, he won the World Men's Doubles in 1989 and was runner-up in the 1992 Olympics. In singles he was European champion in 1992, an Olympic silver medalist in 1996 and in October 1998 took the ITTF President's World Cup in China with wins over Saive, Kong Linghui, Liu Guoliang and Kim Taek Soo (final). World ranked 13.

Kalinikos Kreanga (Greece), becomes 27 the day before the Open starts. World ranked 14 he is very dynamic to watch, playing away from the table with big booming backhand and forehand loops. **Patrick Chila**, 29 and world ranked 15, is a left-handed touch and control player, stronger on his backhand, who plays something like his French compatriot from the past, Jacques Secretin, with great variations at and particularly away from the table. A member of the French European Champion Teams of 1994 and 1998 as was **Damien Eloi**, a graduate of the University of Berthelet. His is a big shot, high risk game. The English Open Men's Singles winner at Thornaby, Cleveland in 1995, he is aged 29 with a world ranking of 16.

Peter Karlsson was a member of those Swedish, World Championship winning teams of



Sweden's
**JORGEN
PERSSON**



China's
MA WENGE

1989, 1991 and 1993 and with Thomas Von Scheele took the men's doubles at Chiba in 1991. 29 years old and ranked 18 in the world, he is an attacking player with a good backhand loop. Chinese born and a resident of Japan, 34 year old **Johnny Huang** represents Canada. He has a particularly strong forehand smash. Now ranked 19, his highest world ranking was No.10.

At 25 a little younger than his French Men's team mates, **Christophe Legout** is hitting top form, having recently lost in the Joola European Top 12 Men's final (to Samsonov) after beating Kreanga, Eloi, Persson, Saive and Roskopf. He is world ranked 20.

Werner Schlager (Austria) is a 26 year old attacker, strong on both wings and ranked 21 in the world.

A member of Chinese World Champion Teams in 1995 and 1997, 30 year old **Ma Wenge** is now in the twilight of his career, but he has a great and varied forehand loop and intends to carry on playing professionally in Germany so will remain a force. Still 22nd in the

world. Since moving from his native German Bundesliga to playing in the French National League, 21 year old left-hander **Peter Franz** has shot up the world rankings to no 24, just above England's **Matthew Syed**. He plays fast and positive, close to the table. Unless any of the above 16 players withdraws, Syed, the classic defensive player with a first class degree in PPE from Balliol College, University of Oxford, will be a dangerous floater in the draw rather than a seed!

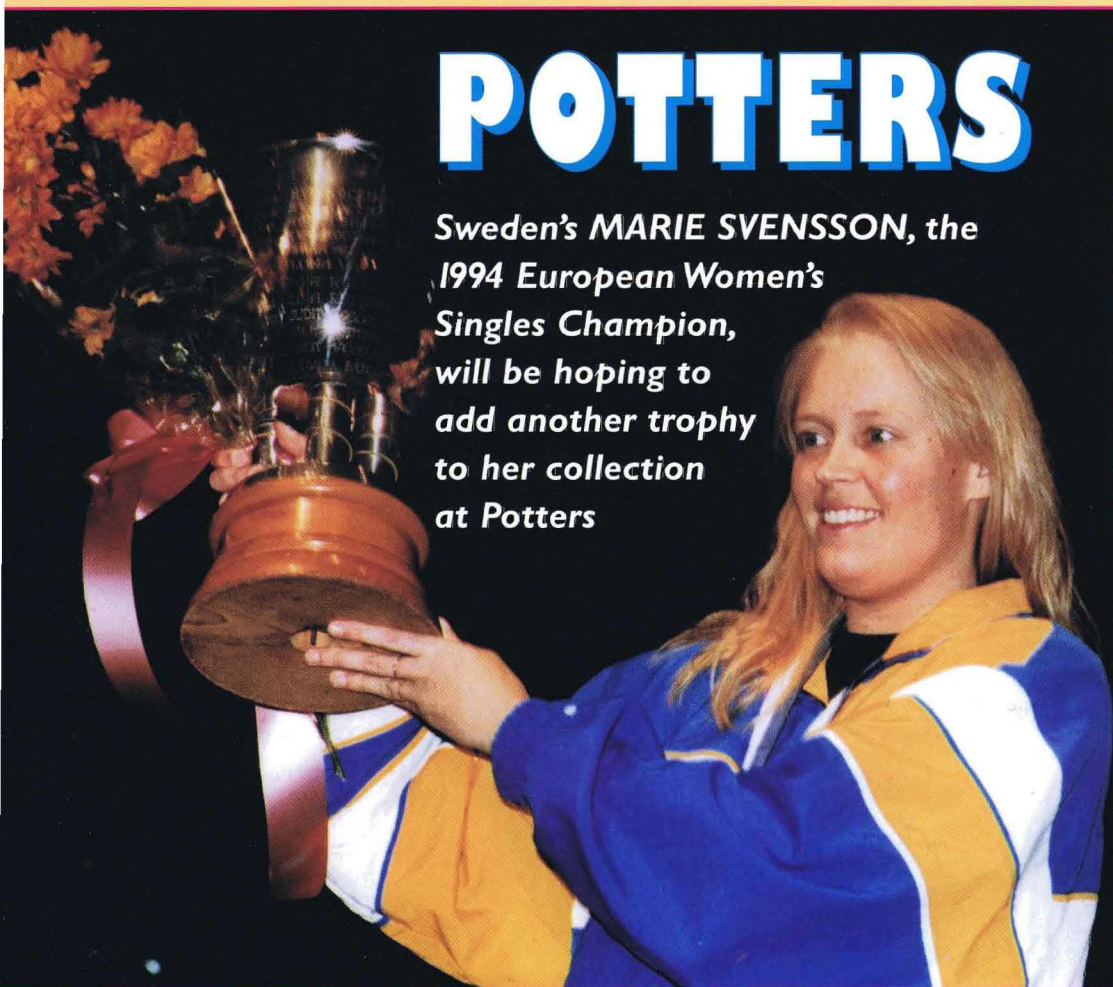
TOP 16 WOMEN

The women's singles event is not quite so strong as the men's, which reflects the dominance of China whose national squad will be away on a training camp. Nevertheless many top class performers have entered, including several Chinese expatriates now representing European countries.

Heading the list is the right handed Chinese defender **Jing Tian-Zorner**, now of Germany and ranked 6 in the world. Aged 36

POTTERS

Sweden's **MARIE SVENSSON**, the 1994 European Women's Singles Champion, will be hoping to add another trophy to her collection at Potters



she has won several national open titles and recently was runner-up (to Qianhong Gotsch) in the Joola Europe Top 12. She has a tremendous work-rate.

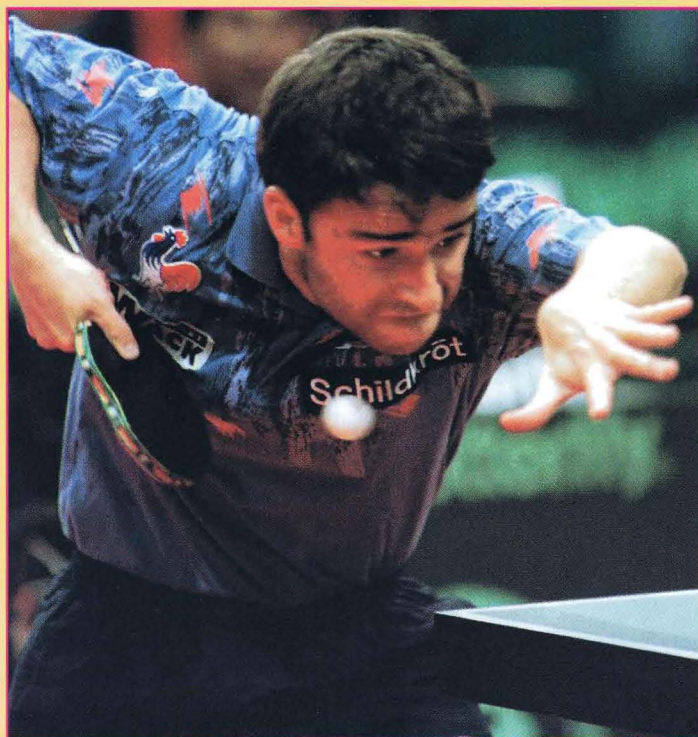
Second seed is current European Women's Champion **Ni Xia Lian** (Luxembourg). The 35 year old won gold medals for China in the women's team and mixed doubles events at the 1993 World Championships and more recently distinguished in winning the European Top 12 competition for 3 consecutive seasons (1996, 1997 and 1998). A penholder, world ranked 8, she plays a close to the table, blocking and attacking game, switching from short pimples to long pimples for the backhand.

Qianhong Gotsch (Germany) is a stylish, righted handed defensive player with considerable subtleties and changes of pace and spin. 30 years old and ranked 14 in the world, she totally dominated the European Top 12 tournament in February, beating Tian-Zorner 23-21, 21-17, 21-18 in the final. She was unbeaten for Germany in the recent European Ladies Team Cup. The third seed, she must be a good bet for the English Open.

The 1996 European Women's Singles Champion **Nicole Struse** (Germany), is a fast, athletic two wing topspin player with good serves, having a similar 'glued-up' style to the

European men. She is 27 years old, ranked 20 in the world and seeded fourth at Potters.

The fifth seed **Jie Schopp** (also Germany) is another defensive



player of Chinese origin, although she has never represented China. In 1994 she became the European Top 12 Women's Champion and as a member of the German team took gold in the European Championships in Bratislava, 1996. She is 31 and ranked 21st in the world.

Csilla Batorfi (Hungary) was about the first European women to perfect the high-toss service. As well as an excellent service she has a fierce forehand loop, and as a 17 year old in 1986 became European Women's Champion. She was a European Women's Champion in 1990. Now 30, she has a world ranking of no 24. Her compatriot **Krisztina Toth** is just behind Batorfi in the world rankings at 25. A talented left-handed topspin player with a fine forehand, she partnered Vladimir Samsonov to pull the mixed doubles title in the 1996 European Championships. She is 24 years old.

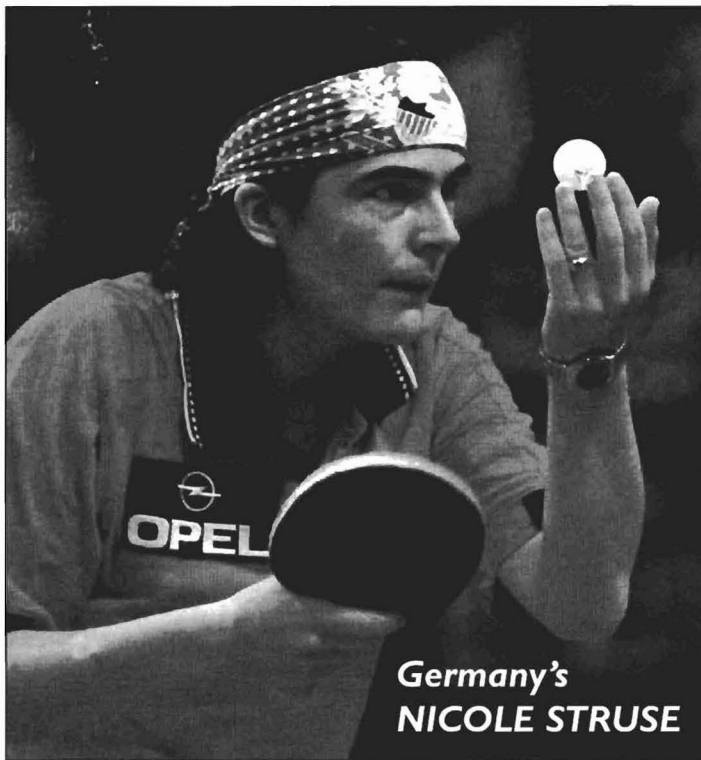
The surprise winner (and therefore title holder) of the English Open Women's Singles, **Tong Feiming** (Chinese Taipei), world ranked 28, is a right handed, shake-hands attacking player with a particularly powerful backhand. She played in England during season 1994-95, and came third in the Women's World Cup in 1998.

Gao Jun (USA) was similarly formerly of China for whom she lifted the World Women's Doubles in 1991 and the 1992 Olympic Women's Doubles Silver medal, on both occasions with Chen Zihé. She is a penhold, short pimples blocker with a stronger forehand and is ranked 31 in the world.

18 year old **Wong Ching** (Hong Kong), is a very promising righted handed shake hands player, two wing topspin attacker who has had her best results in Asia. Currently No.35 in the world. The 1993 European Youth Singles silver medalist **Anne Boileau** (France), is a right handed, forehand orientated topspinner, aged 23 and world ranked 44. Another expatriate now representing Germany is **Olga Nemes**, formerly of Romania. Now aged 30, she won the European Top 12 in 1983 and 1989, and for Germany the European Women's Team Event title in 1996. She is a fast counter-hitter ranked 45 in the world.

Otilia Badescu (Romania), aged 28, has been a leading player in Europe since her junior days when she was twice European Junior Top 12 Champion (in 1987 and 1988)

continued on page 20



Germany's
NICOLE STRUSE

and European Youth Champion in 1998. Using short pimples on her forehand, she is a close to the table, flat hitting attacker with a world ranking of No. 46. The 47 in the world, **Marie Svensson** (Sweden), 31, took her European Women's Singles title at Birmingham in 1994. She has more recently returned to the game from injury problems and plays an early, topspin forehand and short pimples counter-hit backhand.

The losing European Women's Singles finalist in 1994, **Gerdie Keen** (Holland), trained as a primary school teacher, and plays a fast, close to the table attacking game with pimples on her forehand and reversed pimples rubber on her backhand. She is 29 and ranked 55 in the world.

The 16th seed at the English Open is Sweden's **Pernilla Pettersson**, 27, who has a strong service and heavy forehand topspin style combined with a high work rate. Her world ranking is 57.

FUN WORLD

Such is the strength in depth of the world game today and the entry for the English Open at Potters, that there are many other top players in the draw, including all of the English Squad, capable of causing major shocks so there are going to be many tremendous matches. There is also going to be a lot of table tennis activity in Fun World, where 10 tables, table tennis robots and table tennis equipment and

display stands will be available for use or viewing by parties or members of the public.

Schools from districts of Norfolk and Suffolk have been invited to attend on Wednesday to Friday, 10-12 March, each child to receive a 'goody bag' (holding gifts from Joola and Dunlop and an autograph sheet) and the opportunity to enter a simple quiz: the first prize for the quiz is a Joola bat and shirt and a top Joola table to the winner's school, with a bat and a shirt to each of those pupils being drawn second and third. To celebrate Dunlop's involvement in the English Open they are also offering the chance to win a table tennis table, plus bats and balls.

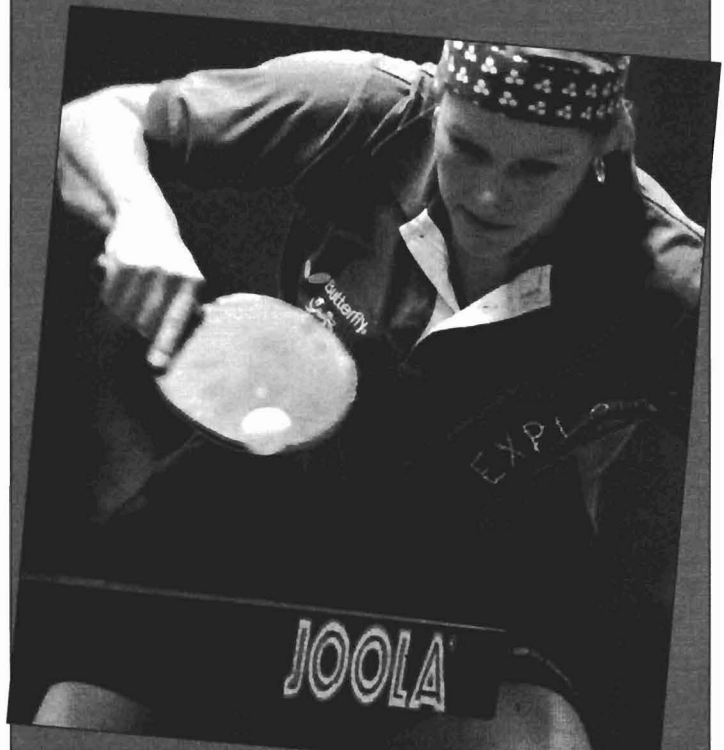
There will also be the chance to play, to receive quality coaching and to have a go against the robot, and on Saturday 13 March, Fun World will be open to all! The ETTA's Junior Umpire's Award is being launched on the Thursday (11 March) and the presentations for the first ever ETTA Table Tennis Development Officer (TTDO) Silver Award Course will be made on Saturday (13 March).

COACHES

The weekend of 12th/14th March sees ETTA Performance Director Michel Gadai and ETTA Coaching Director Peter Hurst, present a weekend course designed to equip coaches with inside knowledge of high performance level coaching and captaincy.

JOOLA PRIZE TABLE

JOOLA TABLE FOR LUCKY SCHOOL

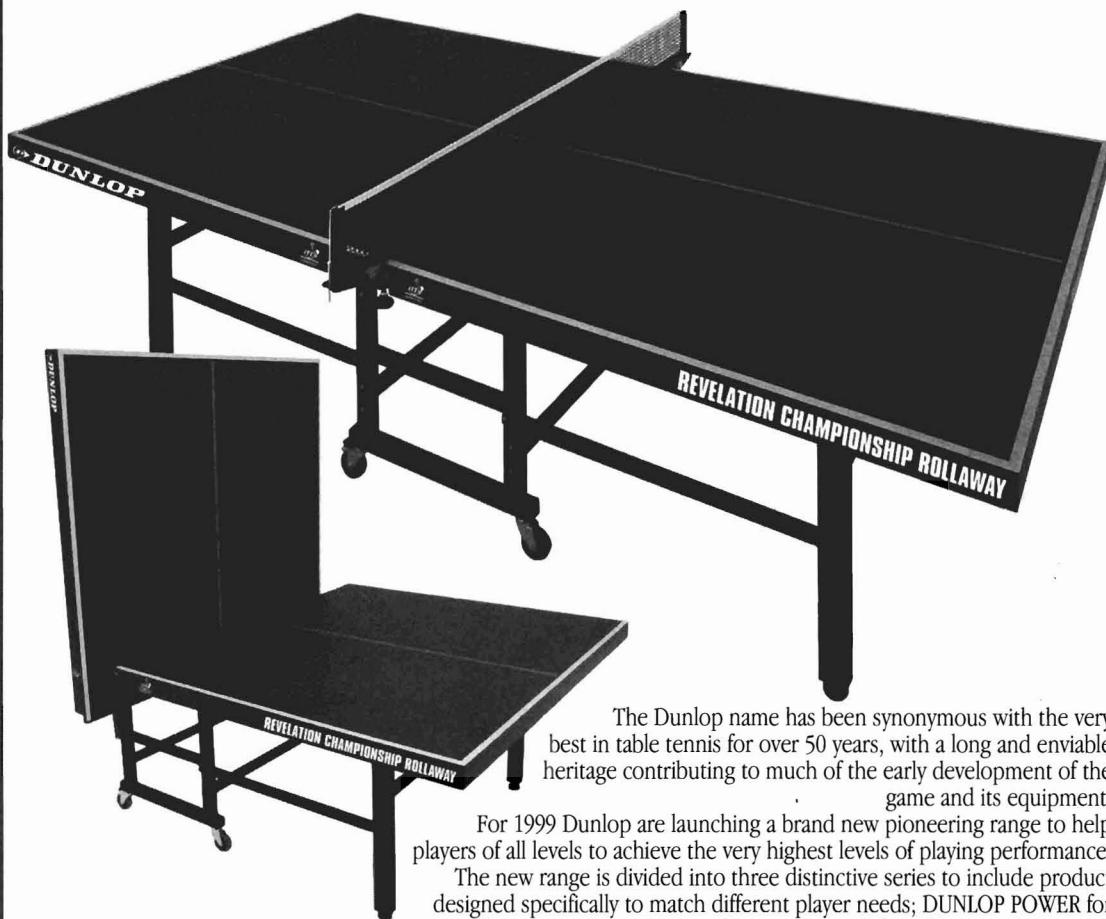


As part of the development programme running in conjunction with the 63rd English Open, one lucky school will become the owner of a Joola table as used in the Championships.

All children visiting the event, on a organised school visit, will receive a 'Goody Bag', which includes a quiz sheet. All correct answers will be entered into a draw and the first name out will receive the table for his or her school plus a Joola bat and shirt for themselves. The next 2 names out will receive a bat and shirt each.

All prizes have been donated by Joola the official equipment supplier to the 63rd English Open.

A NEW TABLE TENNIS REVELATION



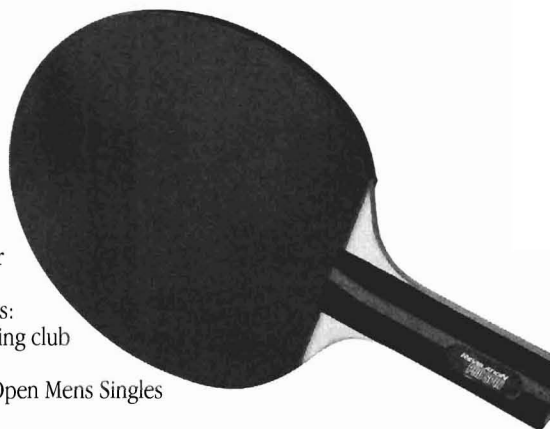
The Dunlop name has been synonymous with the very best in table tennis for over 50 years, with a long and enviable heritage contributing to much of the early development of the game and its equipment.

For 1999 Dunlop are launching a brand new pioneering range to help players of all levels to achieve the very highest levels of playing performance.

The new range is divided into three distinctive series to include product designed specifically to match different player needs; DUNLOP POWER for beginners, DUNLOP MAX for improving club and league players, and DUNLOP REVELATION for the most demanding requirements of advanced and professional players.

1999 will also see continued endorsement from the ITTF recognising

Dunlop products as some of the best there are. The ITTF approved Revelation Championship 3 Star ball has been adopted as the official ball of the 63rd English Open and will be exclusively used at this Pro Tour event by the world's top players.



To celebrate Dunlop's involvement in the English Open, and the launch of the new Dunlop range we are offering you the chance to win the top prize of an ITTF approved Revelation Championship Rollaway table, two Revelation Pro Spin bats and 10 tubes of Revelation Championship 3 Star balls. There will be five second prizes of a Revelation Pro Drive bat and 5 tubes of Revelation Championship 3 Star balls and 25 further runners-up prizes of a tube of 3 star balls.

For your chance to win, just answer the three simple questions:

1. What is the name of the Dunlop series designed for improving club and league players?
2. What is the name of the player who won the 1995 English Open Mens Singles title in Thornaby, Cleveland.
3. What is the name of the current holder of the English Open Womens Singles title.

The answers to the questions appear in this special English Open issue of Table Tennis News. All correct answers will be entered into a draw and the first names out of the hat will be the winners. Send your entries to: **John Wood, Table Tennis News, Centenary Cottage, Church Road, Charlestown, St.Austell, Cornwall. PL25 3NS.**

COMPETITIONS

NORTHUMBERLAND WIN DIVISION 2A

IT would appear from comments made to me recently that I am not the only one concerned at the lack of qualified umpires controlling county matches. I do not know if the problem is a result of lack of finance to pay umpires expenses, or a lack of qualified umpires, either way it seems to me that the problem needs to be addressed as a matter of some urgency. If the main cause of the problem is a lack of qualified umpires then it is time the Counties concerned took a long hard look at themselves, the initial qualification for umpires is the county umpire award and this is run by the counties themselves. They issue the test papers, mark them and are responsible for ensuring the candidate is assessed on their practical performance, however they need not be on their own in this matter, N.U.R.C. will provide speakers to address umpires seminars and help would-be umpires to get started. There is currently a mini crisis on the tournament circuit where it is becoming more difficult to provide sufficient qualified and experienced umpires to ensure the smooth running of these events. As one who has been on

the tournament circuit for many years I can't help but notice there are very few new faces appearing when at the same time the long serving umpires are beginning to thin out at an alarming rate, so come on you county umpire secretaries and ask yourself the question "What have I done to encourage an increase of umpires in my county?" If the answer is little or nothing then perhaps you should be looking at your performance with a more critical eye, writes Stan Clarke.

SENIOR DIVISION 2A

The first of the senior divisions to complete it's fixtures having played their second round of matches at Northwich on 30th January.

Winners of the division were Northumberland who dropped only one point finishing with six wins and one draw for a total of 13 points, with Eddie Smith, Andrew Wilkinson, Caron Guthrie and Karen Newby as the backbone of the team they were always likely to prove too strong for the rest of the division.

Cheshire finished as runners-up only one point separating the top two teams, Cheshire, like so many other counties, suffer from not having their top players available, but with Ian Eaton, Bernie

Wentworth and Chris Dunne they have a very reliable back-up squad, on top of which they probably have the largest squad of lady players in the country.

South Yorkshire finished in third place and I'm afraid they look like spending some time in this division unless they can strengthen their squad just a little.

Lancashire 2nd finished a creditable fourth after a less than impressive first weekend, they even managed to tempt Paul Hutchings out of retirement to help their cause.

Lincolnshire and Warwickshire 2nd finished on five points with Cumbria and Leicestershire 2nd in the bottom two places, level on points but Cumbria having the better sets difference avoid bottom place.

Just to illustrate my remarks in the opening paragraph, I am told that of the eight counties contesting this divisional day, only one, Lancashire, bothered to provide an umpire, although Cheshire did have an umpire present, he was acting as referee and general dogs-body and was not able to umpire, what a disgrace.

JUNIOR DIVISION 1A

The first division to complete all of it's fixtures having completed all matches by 23rd January.

Congratulations to Lancashire on winning the division and promotion to the Premier division next season, N.P.C. Peter Aspin must be delighted with the performance of his team. Lancashire used four boys and three girls over their three matches, with Louis Rosenthal and Paul Whitehead ever present backed up by David Pilkington and Nick Ball, Joanne Cain, Rebecca Tong and Rachel McHugh being the three girls used.

Wins over Hertfordshire 7/3 and Warwickshire 7/3 paved the way for the crunch match against Essex in the last game of the day, Lancs. Could afford a draw but a defeat would make Essex champions. Essex proved tough opposition, with Micah Evans, Joe Benson, Keith Lesser, Nicole Todd and Amy

Wright, the match ended in a draw, Louis Rosenthal and Rebecca Tong winning two each with Paul Whitehead chipping in with a win over Micah Evans to secure the all important point for Lancashire. For Essex Keith Lesser won both of his sets with one each for Nicola Todd, Amy Wright and Joe Benson.

Yorkshire 2nd finished in third place on level points with Essex, having won one match more, but with one defeat they missed out on second place by just three sets, bad luck kids.

The vertically challenged teams are Lincolnshire and Herefordshire who finished in the relegation places and will be competing in the second division next season.

JUNIOR DIVISION 1B

An 8/2 victory over Sussex has seen Glamorgan 2nd climb to the top of the division, one point clear of Devonshire after five matches, Nicola Ritchie was the sole winner for Sussex winning both of her sets. Avon and Worcestershire shared the points in a drawn match, Berkshire lost 4/6 to Middlesex 2nd, Iva Gaberova and Haj Ahmed both winning two for Middlesex. Devonshire beat Glamorgan 3rd 7/3, two very close sets in this match, Samantha Johnson of Olamorgan beating Jessica Roras 25/23 in the third game and Stuart Gibbs of Devonshire beating James Haymer 22/20 also in the third game, they don't come much closer than that.

JUNIOR DIVISION 2B

Buckingham are currently two points ahead of nearest rivals Kent 2nd after five matches, the only undefeated team in the division. Glamorgan 4th (where do they get all their juniors?) are level on points with Kent 2nd separated by only one set difference. Surrey 3rd and Gloucestershire will be battling to avoid joining Kent 3rd in the third division next season, sorry if that sounds a bit harsh on Kent 3rd with the season only just over half completed, but with only five sets from a possible fifty I don't think I would risk a bet on their chance of survival.

SEASIDERS SUMMER SCHOOL

3RD GREAT YEAR

COACHES:

DESMOND DOUGLAS, DENIS NEALE
AND NICOLA DEATON

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8TH TO 13TH AUGUST 1999 and

15TH TO 20TH AUGUST 1999

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COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS TABLES compiled by Les Smith

Tables include results received up to
11th February 1999

SENIORS

PREMIER	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sussex	3	3	0	0	21	9	6
Surrey	3	1	2	0	17	13	4
Middlesex	3	2	0	1	16	14	4(39-33)
Hertfordshire	3	1	2	0	16	14	4(36-31)
Yorkshire	3	1	1	1	14	16	3
Derbyshire	3	0	1	2	13	17	1
Devonshire	3	0	1	2	12	18	1
Berkshire	3	0	1	2	11	9	1
DIVISION 1A							
Nottingham	4	4	0	0	29	11	8
Leicestershire	4	3	0	1	26	14	6
Suffolk	4	3	0	1	26	14	6
Lancashire	4	2	0	2	21	19	4
Cambridgeshire	4	2	0	2	18	21	4
Yorkshire 2nd	4	1	0	3	14	26	2
Worcestershire	4	1	0	3	14	26	2
Warwickshire	4	0	0	4	11	25	0
DIVISION 1B							
Kent 1st	3	3	0	0	27	3	6
Essex 2nd	3	3	0	0	24	6	6
Essex 1st	3	2	0	1	19	11	4
Kent 2nd	3	2	0	1	18	12	4
Middlesex 2nd	5	2	0	3	25	25	4
Buckingham	4	2	0	2	17	23	4
Wiltshire	5	1	0	4	7	43	2
Sussex 2nd	4	0	0	4	3	27	0
DIVISION 2A							
Northumberland	7	6	1	0	56	14	13
Cheshire	7	5	2	0	46	24	12
South Yorkshire	7	4	1	2	39	31	9
Lancashire 2nd	7	4	0	3	39	31	8
Lincolnshire	7	2	1	4	30	40	5
Warwick 2nd	7	1	3	3	29	41	5
Cumbria	7	0	2	5	25	45	2
Leicester 2nd	7	1	0	6	16	54	2
DIVISION 2B							
Glamorgan	6	5	0	1	38	22	10
Devonshire 2nd	5	4	1	0	34	16	9
Herefordshire	7	3	2	2	39	31	8
Cornwall 1st	5	3	1	1	32	18	7
Avon	6	2	2	2	32	28	6
Somerset	6	2	0	4	22	38	4
Worcester 2nd	5	1	1	3	23	27	3
Devonshire 3rd	5	1	0	4	16	34	2
Cornwall 2nd	5	0	1	4	14	36	1
DIVISION 2C							
Bedfordshire	5	5	0	0	38	12	10
Suffolk 2nd	5	3	0	2	27	23	6
Hertford 2nd	5	3	0	2	26	24	6
Cambridge 2nd	5	3	0	2	26	24	6
Norfolk 1st	5	2	1	2	27	23	5
Northampton	5	2	1	2	26	24	5
Norfolk 2nd	5	1	0	4	16	34	2
Huntingdon	5	0	0	5	14	36	0
DIVISION 2D							
Hampshire	5	5	0	0	39	11	1
Berkshire 2nd	5	3	1	1	29	21	7
Kent 3rd	4	3	0	1	27	13	6
Gloucestershire	4	2	1	1	21	19	5
Sussex 3rd	4	1	1	2	19	19	3
Surrey 2nd	4	1	0	3	13	27	2
Dorset	4	0	1	3	14	26	1
Wiltshire 2nd	4	0	0	4	6	32	0
JUNIORS							
PREMIER							
Cheshire	3	2	1	0	19	11	5
Surrey	3	2	1	0	18	12	5
Yorkshire	3	2	0	1	18	12	4
Kent	3	1	1	1	17	13	3
Glamorgan	3	1	1	1	17	13	3
Middlesex	3	1	1	1	14	16	3
Clwyd	3	0	1	2	10	20	1
Hampshire	3	0	0	3	7	23	0
DIVISION 1A							
Lancashire	7	5	2	0	43	27	12
Essex	7	4	3	0	47	23	11
Yorkshire 2nd	7	5	1	1	44	26	11
Suffolk	7	4	2	1	40	30	10
Warwickshire	7	3	0	4	33	37	6
Derbyshire	7	1	1	5	32	38	3
Lincolnshire	7	1	0	6	18	52	2
Hertfordshire	7	0	1	6	23	47	1

DIVISION 1B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Devonshire	5	3	2	0	37	13	8
Glamorgan 2nd	4	3	1	0	26	14	7
Worcestershire	5	1	4	0	26	24	6
Avon	5	2	1	2	27	23	5
Middlesex 2nd	5	2	1	2	22	28	5
Berkshire	5	2	0	3	22	28	4
Glamorgan 3rd	5	1	1	3	24	26	3
Sussex	4	0	0	4	6	34	0
DIVISION 2A							
Cumbria	4	3	1	0	23	17	7
Lancashire 2nd	4	3	0	1	25	15	6
Norfolk	4	3	0	1	25	15	6
Leicestershire	4	2	1	1	23	17	5
Essex 2nd	4	2	1	1	21	19	5
Warwick 2nd	4	1	1	2	18	22	3
Durham	4	0	0	4	15	25	0
Huntingdonshire	4	0	0	4	10	30	0
DIVISION 2B							
Buckingham	5	5	0	0	40	10	10
Kent 2nd	5	4	0	1	32	18	8
Glamorgan 4th	5	4	0	1	31	19	8
Surrey 2nd	5	3	0	2	33	17	6
Dorset	5	3	0	2	28	22	6
Gloucestershire	6	1	0	5	24	36	2
Surrey 3rd	6	1	0	5	17	43	2
Kent 3rd	5	0	0	5	5	45	0
DIVISION 3A							
Bedfordshire	4	3	1	0	24	16	7
Buckingham 2nd	3	3	0	0	28	2	6
Suffolk 2nd	4	3	0	1	23	17	6
Norfolk 2nd	3	2	1	0	18	12	5
Cambridgeshire	3	1	0	2	12	18	2
Hertford 2nd	4	0	1	3	14	26	1
Norfolk 3rd	3	0	1	2	9	21	1
Huntingdon 2nd	4	0	0	4	12	28	0
DIVISION 3B							
South Yorkshire	4	4	0	0	34	6	8
Nottingham 1st	4	4	0	0	33	7	8
Northampton	4	2	1	1	25	15	5
Cheshire 2nd	4	2	1	1	23	17	5
Cleveland	4	0	3	1	17	23	3
Nottingham 2nd	4	1	1	2	17	23	3
Lincolnshire 2nd	4	0	0	4	8	32	0
Northumberland	4	0	0	4	3	37	0
DIVISION 3C							
Somerset	5	5	0	0	36	14	10
Cornwall	5	4	0	1	35	15	8
Devonshire 2nd	5	3	1	1	25	25	7
Gloucester 2nd	4	1	2	1	22	18	4
Gwent	5	2	0	3	26	24	4
Powys	5	1	1	3	18	32	3
Herefordshire	4	1	0	3	14	26	2
Shropshire	5	0	0	5	14	36	0
DIVISION 3D							
Sussex 2nd	5	3	1	1	32	18	7
Sussex 3rd	4	3	1	0	24	16	7
Essex 3rd	5	2	3	0	29	21	7
Oxfordshire	4	2	1	1	20	20	5
Wiltshire	5	2	1	2	22	28	5
Dorset 2nd	5	1	1	3	22	28	3
Hampshire 2nd	5	1	1	3	20	30	3
Berkshire 2nd	5	0	1	4	21	29	1
VETERANS							
PREMIER							
Cheshire	3	3	0	0	22	5	6
Yorkshire	3	3	0	0	16	11	6
Surrey	3	2	1	0	18	9	4
Essex	3	2	1	0	17	10	4
Norfolk	3	2	1	0	11	16	4
Devonshire	3	0	3	0	10	17	0
Dorset	3	0	3	0	8	19	0
Lancashire	3	0	3	0	6	21	0
DIVISION 1A							
Leicestershire	7	6	1	0	40	23	12
Essex 2nd	7	5	2	0	40	23	10 (91-59)
Cheshire 2nd	7	5	2	0	40	23	10 (90-63)
Hertfordshire	7	4	3	0	33	30	8
Worcestershire	7	3	4	0	27	36	6
Yorkshire 2nd	7	2	5	0	28	35	4
Warwickshire	7	2	5	0	23	40	4
Bedfordshire	7	1	6	0	21	42	2
DIVISION 1B							
Kent 1st	3	3	0	0	24	3	6
Hampshire	3	2	1	0	16	11	4
Berkshire	3	2	1	0	13	14	4
Hertford 2nd	3	1	2	0	15	12	2
Sussex 1st	3	1	2	0	13	14	2
Kent 2nd	3	1	2	0	12	15	2

(DIV. 1B cont.)	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Avon	3	1	2	9	18	2
Sussex 2nd	3	1	2	6	21	2
DIVISION 2A						
Durham	5	5	0	33	12	10
Northumberland	5	5	0	32	13	10
Lancashire 2nd	5	3	2	32	13	6
Yorkshire 3rd	5	3	2	28	17	6
Northampton	5	3	2	27	18	6
Warwick 3rd	5	1	4	12	33	2
Worcester 2nd	5	0	5	12	33	0
Lincolnshire	5	0	5	4	41	0
DIVISION 2B						
Essex 4th	5	5	0	36	9	10
Norfolk 2nd	5	4	1	28	17	8
Middlesex 3rd	5	3	2	19	26	6
Cambridgeshire	5	2	3	24	21	4
Kent 5th	5	2	3	22	23	4
Suffolk	5	2	3	19	26	4
Buckingham 2nd	5	1	4	17	28	2
Norfolk 3rd	5	1	4	15	30	2
DIVISION 2C						
Middlesex 1st	5	5	0	36	9	10
Surrey 2nd	5	5	0	34	11	10
Buckingham 1st	5	4	1	31	14	8
Kent 3rd	5	2	3	25	20	4
Essex 3rd	5	2	3	20	25	4
Middlesex 2nd	5	2	3	18	27	4
Kent 4th	5	0	5	11	34	0
Berkshire 2nd	5	0	5	5	40	0
DIVISION 2D						
Oxfordshire	5	5	0	35	10	10
Warwick 2nd	5	4	1	31	14	8
Gloucestershire	5	4	1	26	19	8
Hampshire 2nd	5	3	2	29	16	6
Hampshire 3rd	6	3	3	27	27	6
Somerset	5	1	4	15	30	2
Dorset 2nd	5	0	5	13	32	0
Devonshire 2nd	4	0	4	4	32	0
DIVISION 3A						
Cheshire 3rd	7	6	1	42	21	12
Nottingham	7	6	1	40	23	12
Leicester 2nd	5	5	0	34	11	10
Staffordshire	7	4	3	40	23	8
South Yorks	6	4	2	32	22	8
Clwyd	6	3	3	22	32	6
Yorkshire 4th	7	2	5	30	33	4
Bedfordshire 2nd	7	2	5	23	40	4
Hertford 4th	6	0	6	14	40	0
Huntingdon	6	0	6	11	43	0
DIVISION 3B						
Norfolk 4th	4	4	0	25	11	8
Hertford 3rd	5	4	1	30	15	8
Bedford 3rd	6	3	3	29	25	6
Middlesex 4th	5	3	2	24	21	6
Hertford 5th	5	3	2	23	22	6
Suffolk 3rd	4	2	2	22	14	4
Cambridge 2nd	5	1	4	10	35	2

Cornwall

by John Wood

CHANGE OF VENUE

CORNWALL'S Lucy Wood and Matthew Nichols were sadly denied the chance of competing in the finals of the National Junior and Cadet Trials, in February due to a last minute change of venue.

Cadet Wood and Junior Nichols gallantly won their right to be in the Nationals, at the South West Regional Trials Finals held in Plymouth in January, but a mix-up over the booking in Cheltenham saw the venue switched to Liverpool. Sadly, the parents of both trialists had already made arrangements for Cheltenham, and couldn't afford the time to travel the long journey up north, plus the expense of an unexpected extra nights stay at a hotel.

Hopefully this type of mistake by the authorities won't happen again.

FIRST WIN

DML WHITE HART LAUNCESTON'S 3rd team recorded their first win of the season in Division 2 South of the British League, at Tregorrick Park Table Tennis Centre, in January.

To prove it was no fluke the lads, a mixture of Cornwall and Devon players, Adrian Noott, Daniel Adams, Stuart Gibbs and James Whiteman, travelled to top of the table TAD Ellenborough where they gained a fantastic result, by holding the champions elect to a 4-4 draw.

Unfortunately, success appeared to go to their heads, when they unexpectedly lost heavily 2-6 to KCD Stiga at home on the 24th January.

Launceston's two games were won by Adrian Noott and Rob Millard.

Sadly, the boys could have won 5-3 with a little bit of luck, with four of the games lost in the third leg, two of them decided at deuce. Better luck next time!

The 2nd team also had their first win of the season with a win over Hastings in Division 1 South, due the fact that the Sussex side were unable to field a team.

SCHOOLS SUCCESS

Last issue I reported on the remarkable success of the Truro's PENAIR SCHOOL. Under 16 team, well they've now gone better by winning the Schools Team Regional Finals in Plymouth, in January, where they beat a Somerset side 8-0, whose four boys towered above the diminutive four from Truro.

This team, Alaister and Jonathan Randall, David Croser, and Adam Tatlow, with an average age of 12, seem destined for better things in the coming years.

WORLD CHAMPION AT ST.AUSTELL

Former World Champion STELLAN BENGSSON from Sweden will be visiting the Tregorrick Park Table Tennis Centre, on Thursday 11th March 6.15pm to 7.45pm, and Friday 12th March 9.15am to 11.15pm.

Stellan is looking forward to coaching and promoting table tennis in Cornwall.

COUNTY CLOSED

The County Closed tournament will be at Tregorrick Park Table Tennis Centre, on Saturday/Sunday, 20th/21st March.

Cumbria

by Gordon Brown

The senior county team was the subject of some controversy in the early season

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.



Pictured above are CORNWALL'S DML WHITE HART LAUNCESTON 3rd Team, Adrian Noott, Stuart Gibbs, James Whiteman and Daniel Adams, who are celebrating their first win in Division 2 South of the British League.

Division 2a weekend at St.Nicholas RC School, Northwich when Cumbria fielded Mark Woollerton against his former county, Warwickshire. He won two sets to give Cumbria a 6-4 victory. Warwickshire have since pointed out that a player should be resident in a county for 6 months before playing for that county. He had not been living in Cumbria for that length of time and the Midlands county have subsequently lodged a complaint, the outcome of which was not known at the time of writing. To date, the result stands. Julie Stitch (Penrith) also winning two sets for Cumbria and Jade Kendall (Barrow) and Steve Dixon (Morecombe) gaining one each.

Cumbria also beat South Yorkshire with more triumphs for Mark and Julie Stitch and one each again for Kendall and Dixon. But Cumbria lost 3-7 to Lincolnshire, Julie taking her tally for the weekend to six with Jade winning the other set.

Because of the residency controversy, Woollerton was missing from the squad for the January weekend at the same venue when Cumbria introduced Zeke Dixon (Kendal) who won one set in a 4-6 defeat by Leicestershire 2nds in which Stitch gained another two and Steve Dixon won one.

Cumbria failed to win any matches on this occasion when they lost 4-6 to Cheshire, Julie and Steve grabbing two sets each. Northumberland won their other encounter 9-1, Julie winning the

one, taking her tally of sets for this season's county championship to 11 from six matches, making her our star for the series, which unfortunately ended, for all her efforts, in a lowly finish in the table for Cumbria.

Former umpires secretary Colin Taylor of Pennington, nr. Ulverston has produced a detailed results sheet for all Cumbria county senior and junior matches from October 1976 to February 1996. Colin was formerly county secretary and with brother John was a familiar sight at county championship matches. The variety of home venues makes interesting reading with Millom School, hosts to two senior internationals, a popular venue up to 1988 for both senior and junior matches. No fewer than 17 senior championship clashes and 37 junior ones were staged at the school where the sports connections were maintained by a team called Millom Former Pupils in the

Barrow League.

The Barrow League has constantly produced a flood of promising juniors over the years and currently eyes are focussed on 14 year old Michael Gomersall. He had left for Sweden to play for England in an international tournament following on from special coaching in China with their national junior squad. The England junior coach Liu Jia Yi has had Michael under his personal wing and rates him highly.

Derbyshire

by Colin Deaton

The Bath venue for the English Closed Championships turned out to be a happy hunting ground for Nicola Deaton. Her triple success was an outstanding achievement, bringing her tally of English Senior National titles to eight. Nicola is still only 22 years of age, and it is fair to predict that this total will be on the increase.

Another satisfying point for followers of Derbyshire table tennis, is the continual improvement of both Michael Isherwood from Chesterfield and Steven Shaw from Burton.

Isherwood never made the top in England as a junior, but his recent rapid strides have seen him shoot up the Senior National ranking list, giving him a place in the play-offs for the European qualifications.

He is a model of dedication and is totally and utterly focused on reaching the top. Steve Shaw too, continues to develop his speed and aggressive game and there can be no denying that he is a good bet for the top ten in England. So, the Derbyshire duo are riding on the crest of a wave. Their future and the Derbyshire Mens scene looks bright indeed.

The Burton area as always, continues to be a stronghold in Derbyshire's table tennis and they continue their development in schools. They are also featuring coaching sessions for the disabled and the Uxbridge Centre, under the guidance of Terry Gadsby, recently staged the Burton Boys Scouts Championships, both of which attracted record entries.

The talking point in Chesterfield's table tennis circles, is the popularity of the new friendly youth League which has been formed in Chesterfield. Under the guidance of Derrick Marples, 13 two player teams have been making their first introduction to competition table tennis. All matches have been played at the Springbank centre, with trophies for the winners and a bag of sweets for each competitor. These young hopefuls

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may well be Derbyshire's National champions of tomorrow.

Due to family commitments, Derby League secretary, Pat Chatwin has had to hand over the role to Ada Murphy. Pat hopes to be back in the future, meanwhile Ada continues the role with focused enthusiasm.

Meanwhile, the Derby League continue with a very encouraging youth policy. Mackworth College has the makings of a real Centre of Excellence, with over 40 youngsters attending regularly for the weekly sessions. This centre is equipped with six new championship tables and with a team of qualified coaches in support, this project looks destined for success.

Over in the Matlock League, their Division One leaders are Bradford Dalers, who are hot favourites to take the title following their emphatic 8-2 win over rivals Cromford C.C. In this clash, the Dalers with Paul Walker, Mark Swindell and Graham Morsom, brushed aside their opposition with the classy Paul Walker being undefeated, gaining victories over John Davies and Tony Gregory.

Finally to end on a disappointing note, the Annual Derbyshire Closed Championships were held at the Lee Green centre in Matlock in January. There was a disappointing entry with County Secretary and tournament organiser, Les Allwood having to cancel all the Ladies Junior and Senior events.

The dedicated Les only received 3 entries for all the Ladies events and had little or no alternative other than to cancel all female events. Derbyshire needs a bid purge on introducing young girls into our game.

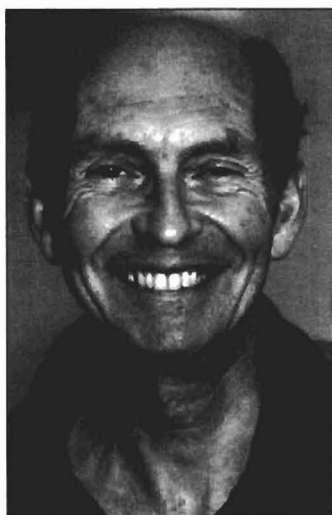
Let us all hope that the development programme throughout the County provides us with some enthusiasm, which in turn will result in some young hopefuls coming into our game.

Essex

by Steve Kerns

BAITTS TWO-A-SIDE LEAGUE

ONE of the most positive developments within the county this season has been the BAITTS two-a-side leagues which alternate between juniors one week and seniors the next. Organised by the Harlow club at their impressive new premises and with decent prize-money on offer (£300 for the winning team and £150 for the runners-up) many of the region's top players have appeared giving the event an even bigger pulling-power as it is not restricted to Essex. Leading team at the half-way stage are Southend with Cris Sladden and Ryan Savill both boasting unbeaten records. They are pursued by Cambridge (Keith Richardson and Andy Withers with Wen Shi in reserve, Beijing No.1 lady who beat Clive Carthy in her first match) and Peniel with a very talented squad (100% John Holland, Sean Gibson, Chris Jamieson, Dave Tan and Tim Cleminson). Barnet (John Taylor, Tom Carr and Barbara Kiss) have also impressed with four wins out of four which included a superb 3-2 win over Peniel II but their star player Barbara Kiss who scored a fine win over Tan has had to return to her native Hungary indefinitely. Best match of all was between Peniel I



Essex's experienced John Holland, Senior

and Fellows Cranleigh B which Peniel shaded 3-2. Tom Cutler gave John Holland his closest game yet losing at 15-in-the-third end and he had to pull out all the stops to beat outstanding prospect Chris Jamieson 19-in-the-third. Your Essex scribe is the first to admit he was wrong; he felt that such a league would be marred by teams seeking postponements; but it seems that the organisers have made it plain from the outset; postponements will not be tolerated.

All these leagues are being played on brand new Donic equipment supplied by Jarvis Sports, and paid for by sponsors, which are the Active Security Group and Orchard Paper, and their contributions were matched by Sportsmatch.

DANBURY CHASE FIRST CHELMSFORD TITLE

The battle for the first division title in the Chelmsford league looks like being a thriller with Danbury A chasing their first title, closely followed by last year's champions Writtle A and ECC A. Danbury team-captain Colin Marco has kept faith with up-and-coming junior Ben Warner and his rapid improvement coupled with Ryan Savill's revitalisation for the game - just two defeats out of 27) has given this team an excellent platform. With other squad players such as Terry Guymer, Neil Brierley and Mike Hayes to call upon their challenge could well be successful. Writtle A have bolstered their chances with the signing of former Lithuanian Lawrence Trumpauskas (recent winner of the mens singles at the Midlands Open) and his class paired with the talented Paul Lucas (who has done his best to make his team's Monday fixtures by commuting back to Birmingham University on Tuesday mornings) and the experience of John Holland Snr give this team a formidable outlook if they turn out their best three players. ECC A who are currently in third place have depth to their squad with Steve Dettmar, Colin Carslake, Steve Kerns and Dave Birkett at their disposal. Possibly out of contention but capable of turning anyone over on their day are ECC B (Dave Cole, Dave Window, Richard Veale, Simon Woods and Martin Hogg) and Elmtree Graphics (Rik James, Terry Dowsett, Chris Jacob, Andy Wadling and

Steve Edmonds). The team who takes the title this year will really have worked for it!

Gloucestershire

by Alf Pepperd

SENIOR CLOSED CHAMPIONSHIPS

Organised and refereed by Mrs Gill Smith (TR) from Cheltenham and played at Deer Park School, Cirencester the above event was a great success and resulted in just one or two surprises, overall, there were nine events played, and here are all the results.

Gloucester's Darren Griffin re-affirmed his No.1 County ranking by winning the closed singles championship for the ninth time, beating Cheltenham's Dave Harvey -22,17,14, Griffin at 6-7 in the third and final game hit his right knee badly in a collision with the table, but soon regained his composure to carry on and win.

In the Women's Singles Final - Top seeded County Junior Suzy Robinson beat the No.2 seed Veteran Judy Morley in straight but close games 16,17, to take the title for the first time at Senior level.

Veterans Singles Event: In the S/F's Alan Giles beat Bill Dawe 17,15, and in the other half Dave Harvey beat John Fannin 9,13, the Final resulted in 49 year old Harvey beating Stroud's Alan Giles 8, 6, to retain the title for the ninth time.

Intermediate Singles: The final of this event featured the No.3 seed Strouds Suzy Robinson who beat the Top Seed, Chris Roberts from Cheltenham 12,12. In the Consolation Plate Singles, the RAF's Tony Stead beat the Forest of Dean Veteran Bob Trimble 15,18, in the Final.

The Minor Singles Final was won by Matthew Hartwell who beat Luke Davis 18,15, in a fast moving "Hit or Miss type of game.

Men's Doubles Final: The 2nd seed pairing of John Fannin and Dave Harvey proved to be just a wee bit too strong for Top Seeds Bill Dawe and Sylvester Callum, the former ran out narrow winners by a scoreline of 18,-17,19.

In the Women's Doubles Final - Suzy Robinson and Marianne Willscher combined well to beat Elaine Bassett and Katie Broad, 17,-17, 18.

Mixed Doubles Final, The all Gloucester pairing of Darren Griffin and Judy Morley beat Top Seeds Suzy Robinson and Brian McRandall, 17,19.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE JUNIOR (CLOSED)

Cheltenham's 14 year old Dominic Wynn-Sands confirmed his No.1 Junior County ranking by beating Matthew Brooke-Smith 10,20, in the Boys U17 Singles Final.

In the Girls U17 Singles, unseeded Katie Broad beat the Top Seed Tiffany Hopton 20,-17, 20, in the final, both girls hail from Cheltenham, this indeed was a great victory for Broad.

In the Boys U12 Singles Final, 9 year old Harry Shahlaei beat Michael Harvey 11,3, both players are from Cheltenham, and it's mentioned in local table tennis circles, that young Harry is so keen that he sleeps with his T.T.Bat under his pillow every night, this youngster has great potential for the future.

The Girls U12 Singles, entries were on

the low side but Gloucester's Celina Bell was the group winner, with Jenny Roberts taking the R.U. place.

In his last year as a Cadet - Dominic Wynn-Sands beat young Harry Shahlaei 15,12, in the final of the Boys U14 Singles.

The Girls U14 Singles went to Celina Bell as group winner, Joanne Pigot was the R.U.

The U14 Doubles was won by Top Seeds Dominic Wynn-Sands and Sam Ewens who beat C.Dring and B.Hobbs 6,8, in the Final.

And finally, in the U17 Doubles Top Seeds Rob Lane and L.Shahlaei beat Chris Roberts and Katie Broad 23,17.

BRITISH TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION DISABLED

In the most recent B.T.T.A.D, ranking list, Gloucester's Elaine Marshall is now ranked at No.2 in the Women's Standing Classes 6-11, she has acquired 1778 points, J. Smith from Grimsby heads the rankings with 2093 points.

Isle of Wight

by John Prean

ROUSING STUFF

Our "Top 16" was reduced to 14 by the flu epidemic, but produced some rousing stuff nevertheless with youth very much to the fore. Two 16 year olds caused the main sensations in the quarter-finals. Dean Whittington defeated Steve Barsdell who had been unbeaten in the league until then. Only a few days earlier he proved the hero for Newport Vics in the top table clash against Ryde, when he won all three and shared in a victorious doubles. This meant little to Whittington who pulverised him by 16 and 11.

James Ovnik defeated Alex Rorke, again a major surprise, as Ovnik is mainly a once a week player, albeit it a very talented one. If only he practiced more... how often has one heard this before?

In the semi-finals the two young heroes were beaten at last, Ovnik by Danny Burns in straight games and Whittington, after winning the first game, by Roger Hookey. So the final of recent years was repeated and also the more recent results when Burns won again and very convincingly at that. He still does not often repeat his Island form on the 'mainland' and so readers of these notes are sometimes surprised by his fluctuations in form here and 'over there'.

Dean Whittington also won a place in the National Junior Trials. That is the good news, the bad that he faces a long trip to Blackburn to take his place. Lucy Pointer (now at the ETTA Academy in Nottingham) will be there as of right by virtue of her rankings. It will be an important event for her, as she did not quite break through in the National Junior Championships, runner-up in the cadet doubles being perhaps her best performance. I hear she played well in the Portuguese Junior Open in December with three wins from seven matches.

The 'County Press' tournament, a team event for two person teams, played on a handicap system, was won

by Danny Burns and Chris Angus and, for the first time, there was prize money thanks to the sponsor, The County Press, our largest local newspaper which has a remarkable circulation in relation to our population of 120,000 or so. Few households are without it and each weekly issue is huge with around 56 large pages. There are 4 sports pages with table tennis well represented. Our leading players are household names locally.

Carl Prean won the Windsor 'Grand Prix' the first one he managed to play in this season and a warm welcome awaited him in terms of the best field so far.

Although he won through in straight games, Michael Isherwood, Terry Young and in the final Alex Perry each gave him one hard game. A lead of 21-14 and 14-5 seemed to indicate an easier final, but far from it. Carl was glad to win that one 21-19. He had a good December with a couple of singles wins against the Czech Republic to whom we have tended to lose to recently. A 4-2 win established a useful, but not unassailable lead for the return. If successful only one more match against an excellent young Danish team stands between England and promotion to the Superleague. So near and yet so far.

I am a strong supporter of our 'Grand Prix' concept however, some helpful suggestions may be useful. The finish time of the main event was again dreadfully late. This is the one most competitors want to see and I really don't know why it can't be played earlier and is left till all but a few have begun the journey home, often a long one. John Woodford, the table tennis correspondent of The Daily Telegraph was there, but had to leave early to catch his train and by then it was too late to catch the Monday editions. There is absolutely no reason why the main event cannot be played earlier and some others, less media worthy, can be played later.

We arrived home after midnight after a three hour trip (which we regard as short by our standards) and at 7 in the morning Carl was on the hovercraft for a league match in France. Add weak prize money here, less than was general ten years ago, moderate playing conditions, lighting and background and a lot of room for improvement remains. I know entries are good for the many events these 'Grand Prix' tournaments stage, at any rate for the men's events, but rather more money and effort will need to be directed at the above problems.

I am disappointed that these tournaments have to stand on their own financially, whilst thousands are spent on sending teams to overseas tournaments where most of our players benefit no more than they would from a well attended domestic 'Grand Prix' event. These should be part of a structured international programme for our players, an important first step. I fear once again, despite all the lottery money, we are getting things wrong.

Kent

by Adrian Hall

YOUNGSTERS SPRING SURPRISES AT GILLINGHAM

The KENT RELIANCE Senior and Junior

Closed Championships were held at the Black Lion Sports Centre, Gillingham on 30th/31st January 1999 and attracted a strong entry, particularly in the Mens Singles where the top 20 Kent Men were in attendance. The Men's Singles title went for the first time to Medway's 19 year old Christian Thompson when he beat surprise finalist Mark Romano (T.Wells) 21-17, 21-19 in the final. The older Kent players and top seeds were for the first time were put under severe pressure from the counties youngsters with 7 year old Scott Friday (Medway) 15 year old Stephen Beerling (Thanet), 20 year old Alastair McTavish (Gravesend) home from University all winning against the seeds. The star though was 16 year old England Junior International Justin Dodd (Gravesend) who exceeded all expectations by reaching the semi-final, but there his run came to an end at the hands of 9th seed Romano 21-16, 19-21, 19-21. In the top half of the draw top seed and reigning champion Justin Goodall (Thanet) progressed as expected to meet 4th seed Thompson where he lost 18-21, 18-21.

Second seed Kristina Brocklebank (Canterbury) won the Ladies Singles beating last years finalist Heidi Steers (T. Wells) 21-12, 16-21, 21-13 in the final. Brocklebank went on to capture all the major Ladies titles adding to her Ladies Singles by winning the Ladies Doubles with Heidi Steers and the Mixed Doubles with Joe Kennedy.

The following day, Gravesend's Dodd won the Junior Boys Singles beating Maidstone's Dominic Hall in the final, while in the Junior Girls Singles, to everyone's surprise, Ashford supplied both finalists, Michelle Hogben beating Charlotte Harris. Dodd beat Sittingbourne's Lee Broad in one of the boys semi-finals, while the clash of the national squad players Hall and Beerling (Thanet) in the other semi-final went Hall's way 26-24, 21-19. Hall went on to collect the U14 Boys Singles, U14 Boys Doubles with Medway's Paul Newborough and the U17 Boys Doubles with partner Beerling.

KENT RELIANCE KENT SENIOR CLOSED

MENS SINGLES: Christian Thompson (Medway) beat Mark Romano (TWells) 21-17, 21-19.

LADIES SINGLES: Kristina Brocklebank (Canterbury) beat Heidi Steers (TWells) 21-12, 16-21, 21-13.

U21 MENS SINGLES: Christian Thompson (Medway) beat Justin Dodd (Gravesend) 21-16, 23-21.

VETERAN MENS SINGLES: John Burleton (TWells) beat Dave Emery (NWK) 22-21, 21-11.

VETERAN LADIES SINGLES: Tina Stewart (Canterbury) beat Sue Lang (NWK)

MENS DOUBLES: Mark Brown (T. Wells)/Paul Rainford (Bromley) beat Christian Thompson (Medway)/Joe Kennedy (Bromley) 21-15, 21-13.

LADIES DOUBLES: Heidi Steers (T.Wells)/Kristina Brocklebank (Canterbury) beat Kim Mudge (Bromley) /Sue Lang (NWK) 11-21, 21-16, 21-16.

MIXED DOUBLES: Joe Kennedy (Bromley)/Kristina Brocklebank (Canterbury) beat Mark Brown (T.



Pictured above at the KENT RELIANCE SENIOR & JUNIOR CLOSED CHAMPIONSHIPS are Ian Robinson of Mid Kent Reliance, and the Senior Singles Champions, Kristina Brocklebank (left) and Christian Thompson.

Wells)/Carolyn Brown (TWells) 21-9, 21-11.

KENT JUNIOR CLOSED

U17 BOYS SINGLES: Justin Dodd (Gravesend) beat Dominic Hall (Maidstone) 17-21, 21-14, 21-14.

U17 GIRLS SINGLES: Michele Hogben (Ashford) beat Charlotte Harris (Ashford) 13-21, 21-11, 21-12.

U14 BOYS SINGLES: Dominic Hall (Maidstone) beat Lee Broad (Sittingbourne) 20-22, 21-13, 21-17.

U14 GIRLS SINGLES: Hazel Clucas (TWells) beat Michelle Hogben (Ashford) 21-6, 21-19.

U12 BOYS SINGLES: Matthew Neve (TWells) beat William Scanlan (Folkestone) 21-19, 13-21, 21-14.

U12 GIRLS SINGLES: Anusha Seneviratne (Ashford) beat Gemma Yarnley (Folkestone) 21-16, 21-14.

U10 BOYS SINGLES: Nick Chatfield (T. Wells) beat Mark Jones (Folkestone) 15-21, 21-19, 21-17.

U10 GIRLS SINGLES: Gemma Yarnley (Folkestone) beat Anusha Seneviratne (Ashford) 21-13, 21-15.

U17 BOYS DOUBLES: Dominic Hall (Maidstone)/Stephen Beerling (Thanet) beat Justin Dodd (Gravesend)/Wesley Cheeseman (TWells) 21-17, 23-21.

U17 GIRLS DOUBLES: Hazel Clucas (T.Wells)/Ellen Grant (Thanet) beat Jodie Stringer (Medway)/Gemma Yarnley (Folkestone) 21-12, 21-18.

U14 BOYS DOUBLES: Dominic Hall (Maidstone)/Paul Newborough (Medway) beat John Everest (TWells)/Andrew Ewer (TWells) 21-16, 21-19.

U14 GIRLS DOUBLES: Hazel Clucas (T.Wells)/Anusha Seneviratne (Ashford) beat Michele Hogben (Ashford)/Lisa Hogben (Ashford) 21-17, 19-21, 21-7.

BUCKS JUNIOR 1sts 9 - KENT JUNIOR 2nds 1

Kent Junior 2nds lost their unbeaten record in a big way losing 9 - 1 to Buckinghamshire 1st. Paul Dunmall's win over Daniel Jacobs was Kents only

consolation. Warren Brooks, Robert Hansell, Gemina Chapman and Jane Dickens were all unbeaten for Bucks.

Kent III - Ross Walker (Medway) (0), Paul Dunmall (TWells) (1), Lee Broad (Sittingbourne) (0), Joanne Hubbard (TWells) (0), Hazel Clucas (T. Wells) (0) KENT JUNIOR 3rds 1 - SURREY JUNIOR 2nds 9

Ashfords Michelle Hogben making her debut for Kent was the counties only winner against an experienced Surrey team. Andrew McN'Tillan Dhivant Patel, Edward Qualtrough and Skylay Beenhaw were all unbeaten for Surrey.

Kent III - John Everest (TWells) (0), Andrew Ewer (TWells) (0), James Martin (Dartford) (0), Michelle Hogben (Ashford) (1), Gemma Yamley (Folkestone) (0).

BROAD WINS REGIONAL TRIALS

Medways Ross Walker finished 7th in the Regional Trials at New Malden on Saturday 2nd January 1999 to qualify for the Junior Boys National Trials at the end of February at Liverpool. Also representing Kent will be T.Wells Joanne Hubbard who finished 4th in the Cadet Girls event. Kent achieved two additional finalists from the cadet boys regional trials at Harlow on Sunday 3rd January. Sittingbourne's Lee Broad who won the event and Andrew Ewer (T. Wells) who finished in 3rd place will be pitched against England best in search of a place at the Masters (top 12) at the end of the season.

Lancashire

by Tony Meredith

SITTING ON TOP

The County junior first team are showing the other teams the way on the County scene. They sit at the top of junior 1A, being unbeaten after the first round of matches. The junior seconds have also done very well - losing just one match and in second place in 2A.

The senior first team under strength

due to the usual reasons - have managed two wins from four played and remain in fourth place in IA. The seconds have won one from four and will need some good results to avoid relegation.

Both Nigel Eckersley and Phil Bowen were unavailable for the first vets premier weekend. Consequently, the team lost all their matches and are propping up the rest at the foot of the table.

REGIONAL TRIALS

The North West Regional Trials took place at Hyndburn in early January. Players qualifying for the National Trials are as follows:- Junior Boys: Louis Rosenthal, Junior Girls: Joanne Cain and Rebecca Tong. Cadet Boys: Louis Rosenthal, Alex Cairns and Adam Bleakley. Cadet Girls: Hannah Roberts and Rebecca Tong. Andrew Rushton and Katy Parker are exempt till the Masters event.

LANCASHIRE & CHESHIRE LEAGUE

Burnley trounced bottom of the table Ellesmere Port 9-1 and edged out Stockport 6-4 with Howard Whewell and Dave Newton unbeaten on both occasions. Darren Howarth engineered a 6-4 victory for Bolton over neighbours Manchester. Leaders Wirral overturned Salford and Farnworth 7-3 with Chris Dunne in great form. Liverpool stay in contention with a 9-1 hammering of Stockport where Kevin Dolder and Adam Robertson kept clean sheets.

Top two in the north competed with each other - a draw was the outcome and Preston's Bill Ingram took all three Bury scalps. Macclesfield went down to Oldham 2-8 and Warrington 3-7 in two south. Darrel Meredith got three for Oldham and Peter Flint was the Warrington star. In division three Trafford whitewashed Blackburn and Rochdale 'A' beat Lytham 'A' 7-3. The latter also went down 2-8 at Glossop.

Only one result in the ladies division where Liverpool comfortably beat Blackpool 7-3.

Salford and Farnworth recorded two wins in the junior premier 7-3 at Blackburn and 10 nil at home to Manchester. Southport beat Oldham 7-3 and Wirral steamrollered Blackburn 9-1. The Wirral - Preston match was a cracker. Wirral took the honours 6-4 but it was Preston's Katy Parker who stole the show with wins over John Coysh, Danny Homer and T.A. Nolan. Barrow 'A' defeated Macclesfield 7-3 in junior one.

In the vets premier Burnley won the opening three sets at Blackburn and proceeded to lose the next seven - a very strange result.

They also went down 4-6 at home to champions Stockport. Dave Newton won three of the four including the scalp of classy Roger Hampson. A very close match between Liverpool and Preston ended in Liverpool's favour 6-4 with Peter Lee in splendid form. Preston made amends at Manchester, winning 7-3 where Barry Crook stood out. Oldham beat Macclesfield 6-4 in vets one and LBH edged out Trafford by a similar score thanks to some good chopping from Peter Taylor (only 310 chopping

days to Christmas).

Just one result in vets two - a 6-4 win for Oldham 'A' over their 'B' team. The same in vets three - a 7-3 victory for Oldham 'C' over Wirral 'A'. Wigan hammered Oldham 'E' 9-1 in vets four where the famous Alex Almond hit form. Barrow 'A' disposed of both Lytham and Lytham 'A' (9-2 and 9-1). Lytham took revenge on Barrow 'B' 9-1 where Gary Benson lobbed a few off. Barrow 'A' and 'B' then did battle with the result a 7-3 to the 'A'. A sound 9-2 win for Southport at Wirral 'A' saw Sylvia Graham in great form.

Rochdale 'B' and Warrington drew in five north and Wigan 'A' beat Lancaster & Morecambe 'B' 9-2. Nothing for five south.

PRESTON CLOSED

Preston Closed championships took place at BAe Warton on 31st January. There was a new men's singles champion. Veteran Barry Crook beat holder Steve Crook (no relation) in straight games. George Barry Crook held out in three to Adam Linton in one semi and Steve Crook demolished Pankash Parek in the other. Dee Evans retained her ladies title with a straight victory over Julie Williams (nee Clegg). Daniel Dean is the new Junior champion, defeating Ian Flintoff (cousin of Andrew) in a close contest. Tony Rigby teamed up with very funny batter Chris Spedding to take the men's doubles against the scratch pairing of Barry Mason and Andy Michnoviac. Steve Crook took some consolation when he retained his vets title over Ray Ashley in a very one sided match.

Other results 3- Handicap Singles 3 Daniel Dean bt George Walmsley 19, -11, 19. Division 1 Singles: I. Flintoff bt D. Dean 12, 17. Division 2: Mark Shirley (nephew of Jill Shirley) bt G. Walmsley 24, 11. Division 3: Michael Knowles bt Robert Parker (nephew of Don Parker) 14, -17, 16.

BLACKPOOL CLOSED

In the absence of Steve Bevan (holder) Jon Ash was the expected winner of the men's singles. He overhauled Martin Ireland in fine style. Glen Riches was a surprise semi-finalist going down to Ash and Tony Rigby lost out to Ireland. Kim Roberts retained her ladies title over veteran lady President Alwyn Burrough and Chris Redfern beat twin brother Andrew in the Junior final. Tony Rigby was pushed by Brian Oldfield in the vets final but came through in the third.

Other results : Men's Doubles: M.Ireland/Stuart Walker bt J.Ash/C.Spedding. Ladies Doubles: Liz Ransome/K.Roberts bt A.Burrough/Viv Robertson. Mixes Doubles: M.Ireland/K.Roberts bt C.Spedding/V.Robertson. Handicap Singles: Gary Keenan bt Dave Woolley. Handicap Doubles: C & A Redfern bt John Lynch/G.Riches (easily).

ENGLAND CALL-UP FOR LOUIS

Thirteen year old Louis Rosenthal from Manchester got the England call recently. He flew out to Sweden to represent England Cadets in an International tournament. By all accounts he fared pretty well. As I write these notes he is attending an England Training Camp at Potters. A rapid climb in a very short time.

Leicestershire

by Derek Butt

Rushey Mead third team continue to dominate the Leicester and District Table Tennis League and after thirteen matches have yet to be beaten. They have a good all round team in Chris Brewer, Graham Hall, Maurice Newman, and Alan Philpott. Knighton Park are their nearest rivals, but have to rely a lot on the good form of Karen Smith who so far this season remains unbeaten. Rushey Meads first and second teams are also playing well, but it look firm favourites at the time of writing.

In the second Division the lead changes pretty regular, and at the present Syston Casuals are the leaders, the others in contention Blaby and Whetstone, Leicester Electricity first will all have to strengthen their teams if they are promoted and are to survive in the top flight.

All of the Cup competitions have reached the final stages but have yet to be played in the Rose Johnson Cup Knighton Park will play Rushey Mead first, and in the Corral Cup Blaby and Whetstone meet Knighton Park. The Frith Trophy will be between Leicester Electricity and Belgrave W.M.C., And finally the Lillian Williamson Memorial Trophy will between Leicester Electricity and Knighton Park.

All these matches will be played in March.

In the Hinckley (Calor Gas) Division One Nalگو B continue to lead and after twelve matches remain unbeaten, they have Mick Allsopp, Peter Morris and Martin Hobday all playing well, and look to be well in control to take the title. Last seasons winners Ridge Lane are in second place, but ten points adrift of the leaders. Ian Baxter is their top player and at present leads the individual averages. Level on points with Ridge Lane are Nalگو A, they have lost just one match.

Hinckley had their Championships a few weeks ago, but I am unable to report on this as I have received no information.

LEICESTER CLOSED

The Leicester Closed Championships were held recently and although the entries were slightly down on last season, it was still a good turnout with some excellent table tennis played by the up and coming youngsters and from the experienced players. It was one of the most experienced players Keith Fellows that had the hardest day reaching five finals, the maximum entry being five per player.

He played almost all day as he progressed to the finals. He won four of the five finals, the first the under 400 title as he beat Abraham Conteh in an exciting three games 2-19 in the third. The next was in the under 300 event in which he won with a little more ease beating Kevin Hall in two straight. He then won the Veterans title beating Steve White in another three setter game 16 in the third. The next was the doubles in which he and his partner Mike Meredith narrowly lost 2-18 in the third, to Abraham Conteh and Steve White By this time Keith was beginning to feel tiredness creeping in, but he still had to play the most crucial one of all, the mens singles in which he had to beat the very impressive Conteh. Keith still remained very calm as he took

his fourth title winning 21-18, 21-14., in which produced some excellent table tennis, with plenty of counter hitting.

The Ladies title went to Helen Rainford who beat Lucy Spary 21-13, 21-17.

There was some good play from many of the youngsters, they were Harris McQueen, Matthew Cant, Andy and Shaun Craven-Griffiths, Lucy Spary, Simon Mason, and Emma Craven-Griffiths to mention just a few.

A very well organised tournament, especially the work done by match administrator Seve Zanker.

FINAL RESULTS

Mens Singles: Keith Fellows beat Abraham Conteh 21-18, 21-14. Ladies Singles: Helen Rainford beat Lucy Spary 21-13, 21-17. Doubles: A. Conteh, S. White beat K. Fellows, M. Meredith 15-21, 21-7, 21-18. Intermediates: Abraham Conteh beat Daniell Marriott 21-19, 18-21, 23-21. Over 60s: Mike Meredith beat Alan Wilson 21-12, 21-15. Over 50s: Steve White beat Mike Meredith 21-15, 21-15. Veterans: Keith Fellows beat Steve White 21-11, 16-21, 21-16. Under 400: Keith Fellows beat Abraham Conteh 21-12, 10-21, 21-19. Under 300: Keith Fellows beat Kevin Hall 21-12, 21-7. Under 250: Dean Langley beat Daniell Marriott 21-18, 21-15. Under 200: Matthew Cant beat Mick Box 21-9, 21-6. Under 150: Andy Craven-Griffiths beat Mark Cornforth 21-17, 21-16. Under 100: Shaun Craven-Griffiths beat Robert Geary 21-17, 24-22. Boys Singles: Harris McQueen beat Matthew Cant 21-19, 21-12. Girls Singles: Emma Craven-Griffiths beat Lucy Spary 17-21, 21-18, 21-13. Cadets: Shaun Craven-Griffiths beat Simon Mason 21-15, 21-13.

Middlesex

by Tony Taylor

Our Senior County 1st team battled well in the first Senior Weekend winning two matches against Berkshire and Devon both by the score of 6-4 and only lost the third to Yorkshire 6-4 after leading 3-0. Neil Charles, Richard Hyacinth and Tom Cutler played excellently, each winning 4 of their 6 matches over the weekend. Yuki Gresswell and Apandra Narendran gained valuable experience each succeeding with 2 of their 6 games.

Our Senior 2nd Team battled well against other county 1st teams of Essex and Kent losing by 2-8 and 3-7 respectively, but when faced with their equivalent second team of Sussex, won 7-3. Daniel Fesehatsion performed well winning 4 of his 6 matches and Sara Horsnell made an excellent introduction to the Senior County side winning 3 out of 6 matches.

In the Ladies Rose bowl competition Caroline O'Leary, Caroline Seaholme and Hazel Williamson tried hard but lost to West Middx. 5-3 and North Middx. 5-2 in the round robin and so made an early exit.

The Junior County 1st team had a mixed weekend in the Junior Premier with 1 win, 1 loss and 1 draw and was notable for Apandra Narendran winning all 6 of her matches. Eva Gaberova also won her two matches. Eli Baraty, Louis

Dominguez, Mark Gilston and Tim Holtam made useful appearances.

The Junior 2nd team managed by Bob Sydney won 7-3 against Sussex 1st team. Tim Holton, Hagi Ahmeed and Mark Gilston winning maximums, but lost against Avon 2-8.

The Veteran 1st team continued their undefeated run against a strong Bucks' team winning 6-3. Tony Holmes and Anne Flowerday retained their 100% singles records.

Norfolk

by *Grabam Rogerson*

January sees the two biggest local championships in the county, at Norwich and Kings Lynn. In Norwich, Philip Logsdon equalled Doug Bennett's record of seven mens singles titles, beating Jon Cockburn in the final.

In Kings Lynn seven was also the key number with Gary Hewitt winning his seventh open singles title in eight years and his fourth in a row, beating his Bulldogs team mate Martyn Allen in the final.

In the ladies singles Kim Chambers made it three Norwich titles in a row, although she was pushed all the way by Mary Sawyer. Wendy Nicholls successfully defended her Lynn title, just getting the better of Anthea Rudd 21-19 third end.

Kim Chambers and Philip Logsdon went on to wrap up all the major titles in Norwich. Logsdon partnering Scottish international Ian McLean in the mens doubles. Chambers and Logsdon then teamed up to take the mixed doubles for a clean sweep.

In Kings Lynn the open singles finalists Martyn Allen and Gary Hewitt teamed up to take the mens doubles title, the ladies doubles went to Ruth Hoddle and Anthea Rudd and the mixed to Anthea Rudd and Keith Burlingham.

Norfolk has a large contingent of veteran players and in both leagues this competition is as keenly contested as the mens singles. Steve Howlett took the title in Norwich beating team mate Dave Henderson in the final, while in Kings Lynn, Alan Nicholls claimed his third title in four years beating team mate Steve Barrett.

Both competitions include handicap events which were won by Norwich's Sean Molloy and Kings Lynn's Steve Barrett.

Entry forms are now available for the County Championships on the 6/7th March, which due to financial considerations this year is being in Drayton. The first of the Norfolk County News sheets should be available by then, where I am hoping to feature the Coaching which is currently going on in the county. Anyone running coaching sessions who would like to be included in the newsheet should contact me ASAP.

Northants

by *Dennis Millman*

In the Wellingborough Closed Tournament, county champion Andy Trott, whose unpredictability extends only to his wide choice of shot, regained the men's singles title when his scintillating attack proved too much for former Sussex player Malcolm Francis. In

a repeat of last year's county final Trott won 21-14, 21-14.

However with Trott also committed to indoor knock-out cricket at the County Ground on the same day, Francis found his way clear to team up with Gordon Shaw to account for Northampton's Adrian Roper and David Gallo in the doubles.

Classified events excepted, these were only two of three titles to change hands, the third being ten year old Tim Yarnall's success over older brother Greg in the Under 14 event.

In a repeat of last season's finals Sue Moloney took the women's singles at the expense of Gabrielle Evans, and the doubles in tandem with Christine Howell, with Maxine Shears and Clare Coles providing the opposition.

In the veterans events Gordon Shaw, who had another rewarding day, again proved too strong for Michael Edwards, and then paired together, the singles finalists got the better of Geoff Atkinson and Steve Brown, the latter having been a Shaw expedite victim in the semi-final of the singles. Atkinson however was dominant in the Over 50's, beating Edwards on a pair of deuces in the singles, and joining Dennis Millman to add the doubles with Edwards again on the losing side.

It was another Yarnall bonanza at junior level, with Greg turning the tables on Tim in the Rod Marchant Memorial Trophy Under 17 Singles, the brothers combining to take both the Under 17 and Under 14 Doubles, and then for good measure, Greg again ousting Tim in the class one singles 15, -11, 19.

For the first time a Hard Bat singles was on the agenda, and to prove that equipment is only secondary to talent, the final was between Trott and Richard Elliott, with the former winning in straight games.

Other winners were Gabrielle Evans in the Under 17 Girls, Sue Moloney in the Women's Over 40's, Tim Yarnall at Class 2 level, Lee Hughes in Class 3, Rachel Love in a special Junior League singles and Paul Gatiss and Paul Goodman in the Mystery Doubles.

With leading county juniors Greg and Tim Yarnall not competing, and last season's winner James Fitton no longer involved, the Northants Junior Top 12 looked a very open event, with the initial three groups of four doing little to throw any light on the proceedings.

At this stage the lowly ranked Michael Clarke excelled, beating Paul Chatfield to take top place in Group One. The older Clarke brother Kenny, not to be outdone, got the better of Gabrielle Evans to head Group Two, while Dannel Pang finished in pole position in Group Three, closely followed by Carlton Ellwood.

After the opening groups came two round robin sections based on earlier finishing positions and in the lower section, Robert Williams turned out to be the star performer, with five straight wins to finish seventh overall.

In the top section Paul Chatfield made all the running, gaining revenge over Michael Clarke 21-17 in the decider, before surviving a close call against Ellwood. Nevertheless he remained

unbeaten throughout a testing series of games to take the Top 12 title, with Dannel Pang edging out Kenny Clarke to ensure second place. Final Placings:

1.Paul Chatfield, 2.Dannel Pang, 3.Kenny Clarke, 4.Michael Clarke, 5.Gabrielle Evans, 6.Carlton Ellwood, 7.Robert Williams, 8.Lee O'Boyle, 9.Dickson Pang, 10.Damian Carr, 11.Simon Anderson, 12.Keith Lucas.

Northumberland

by *Pauline Long*

With the Christmas and New Year break taking up most of the time between the revised copy dates of mid-December and mid-January for County Notes, there has obviously been little activity during this period.

The unbeaten veterans' team were due to entertain Worcs II on January 23, while the seniors - also unbeaten, but with one draw - followed a week later on January 30/31 with their second weekend of matches. The juniors play their next series of matches on February 20.

The week commencing December 14 was devoted to the second round of the Team Handicap Knockout Cup Competition, which gives players of all abilities the chance to meet and progress against teams of a higher standard by virtue of a superior individual handicap. Even so, there are still four Premier Division sides - North Shields YMCA 'B' and 'C' teams, Washington 'A' and last year's runners-up, DSS 'A', left in the competition, but the greatest threat could come from teams such as YMCA 'J' from Division 4, a young side of potential whose overall standard has considerably improved since the handicaps were calculated on last season's League performances. YMCA have five teams into the third round (the last 16), and are assured of further representation, as the 'B' and 'J' teams are due to play each other. The two Cramlington teams, Colts and Stingers, have also been drawn

against each other. The next round of matches is due to be played during week commencing February 15, again a week free of League matches.

January was a good month for both the WENADE (UK) County senior and veterans' teams. The seniors, with Steve Penman replacing 'flu victim' Dave Godbold, clinched the Division 2A title in their second series of matches at Northwich by beating Warwickshire II 8-2, South Yorkshire 7-3, and Cumbria 9-1. Eddie Smith and Andrew Wilkinson were both unbeaten, and Steve did well to win three singles out of six played.

The women's matches also went well, with Caron Guthrie losing only one set and Karen Newby two. This was just reward after missing out by just one point last season, and congratulations to all on a fine performance.

The veterans' team are still unbeaten, but had to fight hard for their fifth win in a row, just edging out Worcestershire II in a 5-4 thriller at North Shields YMCA. "Benny" Robertson was unbeaten, winning both singles and the mixed doubles in partnership with Pauline Long, and Geoff Salter was also successful in winning two singles. At the time of writing, they have two matches left to play, versus Warwickshire III (home) and Durham (away), on 20th February and 27th March respectively.

The WENADE (UK) LTD Northumbria League representative side of Caron Guthrie, Karen Newby and Lynne Herrington have reached the last 16 of the women's Rose Bowl team competition. They defeated Leicester 5-4, West Middlesex 5-3 and Bromley 5-1 in their group matches at Leicester.

NO TRANSPORT

Unfortunately the junior boys' Carter Cup team had to concede their matches at Worksoop as no-one was

continued on page 30

**PLEASE NOTE
MY NEW ADDRESS
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"Word 5.1 for Macintosh"**

available at the last moment to transport them to the venue. This is a problem which must be addressed if we continue to enter this competition - unfortunately, juniors cannot drive themselves to matches in the way that seniors and veterans can!

The JOYNSON OFFICE EQUIPMENT Northumberland and Closed Championships will be held at Wallsend Sports Centre on Sunday, 28th March, commencing at 9.00 a.m., and we hope for a better entry than last year, especially in the women's events.

Nottinghamshire

by Brian Jones

Nottinghamshire teams seem to be riding high in every field of endeavour. The Vets have won 4 out of 5 matches with Pat Muir setting high standards and the Seniors are unbeaten. The senior results show an outstanding team effort with every player pulling his weight and scoring points. Well done Mesdames Smith and Russ and Messrs Neil, Stoddart and Green, carry on the good work. Of course, the time delay in getting copy into this magazine and the shortage of space means that I can not do full credit to all those who deserve it. For that, please forgive me. As you read on, you will see that I have the most pleasant of problems, lots of success to report and limited space to do it. On the County Juniors scene, both the first and seconds are riding high. The firsts are unbeaten and clear favourites to win the division with the boys in particular, Craig Gascoyne, Thomas Hughes and Edward Croyden-Fowler driving all before them. The seconds were able to give our first team a fright and take the points off other county first teams with Alan Ford, Andrew Gascoyne and Kerry Radford consistently among the points. Congratulations are also due to Jim Hughes, balancing two teams is never an easy job but Jim seems to be in complete control. On the county schools scene, the march continues. Nottinghamshire Schools won five of the seven categories they contested in the Notts-Derbys-Lincs area round of the National School Team Championships and by the time you read this, they will have played the Northern Regional round in Blackburn. This means that in their respective age groups, we have five schools numbering among the top twelve in England. Well done the pupils of Redlands Primary School, Valley Comprehensive, Ashfield School and Wellow House.

On the domestic front, the Worksop League staged a very successful Closed Championships weekend which saw Thomas Hughes win a tense Junior Final -20, 9, 13 against Andrew Gascoyne and Ashlie Edwards winning both the Under 12 Girls and the Cadets titles. Shaun Lee played 18 sets to reach one final, Sarah Smith played 16 to reach four, veteran Alan Wilson played 16 sets to reach two and under 12 George Yardley played 14 sets to reach three finals. They breed 'em tough in Worksop! Congratulations are also due to Wellow House A for winning Division Three and to Daincourt A for winning Division One of the Cadet League.

Finally, I understand that Nottingham have taken exception to some of my remarks in this column. I never said that they do not DO anything. I am sure Nottingham is doing wonderful work. I know that Barrie Russ and Gordon Fearn have a lively 'B' squad training at the Sycamore Centre and that sterling efforts are being made to improve the facilities there. My problem is that Nottingham never TELL me anything. So Nottingham, dust off that old typewriter and let's be hearing from you.

Oxfordshire

by Avril Haynes

KARL WINS THE DOUBLE

At the Oxford Closed Tournament held at the end of November at Oxford School and finished in early December at St James Hall, Karl Bushell (Forum Club) was the star. He regained the mens single crown by beating a determined challenge from Forum team mate Andrew Flint in straight sets, avenging a league defeat a day earlier. Karl also retained his Veterans singles trophy with a comfortable win over Eddie Herrity (Morris Motors).

The mens doubles went to Ian and Andy Packford (Crown House) who beat Ellis Bicknell and Karl Bushell (Forum) in the final.

New star Tyoshi Hitomi (Forum) put out Tony Gorman the mens singles holder in the group but then was easily beaten in the semi-final by Karl Bushell. Hitomi however won the Restricted singles final by beating Nick Ballet (Forum) in the final.

Fraser Harris (Forum) beat Ellis Bicknell (Forum) to take the under 21 title.

Janet Brown (Hailey Road) was too good on the night for Maggie Beahan (forum) and took her Ladies singles title with a comfortable victory.

The Ladies doubles title was won by Eleanor Hughes and Maggie Beahan (Forum) who proved too experienced for Janet Brown (Hailey Road) and Linda Morris (Forum).

MIDLAND LEAGUE JUNIOR

Oxford 3 Birmingham (B) 7 Birmingham proved too strong for Oxford. Kevin Cruickshank played well for his 2 singles wins ably supported by Greg Boone who picked up 1 singles win.

VETS COUNTY MATCHES

Oxon(1) 7 Warwickshire (2) 3 Oxfordshire continued their winning ways over Warwickshire with Nat Richardson Eddie Herrity and Karl Bushell all winning 2 singles matches each. Karl Bushell won the mens doubles with Nat Richardson. Oxon(2) 3 Wiltshire (2) 6 Oxfordshire lost to Wiltshire with a depleted team, David Harse and George Pullin both won a singles each and the mens doubles. Oxon(3) 3 Norfolk(4) 6 Chris Lansley was the star for Oxon winning 2 singles matches and the mixed doubles with Anne Borrowdale.

Sussex

by John Woodford

RITCHIE VENNOR lifted his sixth Sussex mens singles title at Hove, whilst Rose Rainton lifted the womens crown for the third year in succession.

Two players should have been seeded - but the organisers were short of information on the most improved players of the campaign in Sussex, Andy Walker and Jerry Haley should also have been seeded - both got through to the later stages, Walker to the final and Haley into the semis.

Once again the bomb-hitting Paul Elphick (Brighton) stormed into the quarter-finals but yet again his nerves failed after he led 12-8 in the third game against Haley.

In the final, Walker again impressed - he took the second 18 against Venner but the 'King of the County' closed the door tightly to win the last game 11.

Peter Bartram also impressed. He snatched the second game 19 against Venner in the semi-finals, but again Venner came back to win 21-15.

Rose smashed her way out of trouble in the womens final. She found herself 16-20 down in the first game of the final with Teresa Bennett, but with a barrage of top-spin and flat-hits she burst through to win 20,13.

Mixed fortunes for Rose in the Hastings and Eastbourne championships. At Hastings in the biggest shock of the year Tina Beaney knocked out Rose 5,18, just as Rose has done herself on several occasions this season - going for broke - win or bust!

At Eastbourne she had no problems, easily overcoming the England No.6 veteran Sheila King 13, 12 in the final. The mens singles winners were Paul Barry at Hastings and Sussex ex-lawn tennis stalwart Stuart Hobden at Eastbourne, 20, 12 against John Davies in the final.

Horsham are riding high at the top of the premier division of the British League, but the fears are that they will finish in second place behind Brent Progress who call on Gareth Herbert and Darren Blake. Horsham's strength also lies apart from Venner and Cris Sladden, with Adrian Moore and Nigel Eckersley as the tail -end Charlies - what a couple of battlers!

Hastings are falling back as contenders for the Division 1 (South) title. The ETTA staff is worked so hard at Hastings that they could not raise a team to go to Launceston and forfeited the points.

John Wilson from Hastings is the new Sussex junior boys champion. In the final he came through a huge struggle to beat Ian Hussey (Crawley) 24-22, 22-20.

Nicola Ritchie (Lancing) is the new Sussex girls title-holder, after winning 11, 17 against Sandy Gubbins (Crawley) in the final round.

For the future, the two Hastings youngsters Luke Bridge and Gina Rogers are attending the England Under-12 squad sessions, but for the present Sussex in county championship terms, are re-building all three teams under the gallant Peter Baldwin, the junior supremo.

Warwickshire

by Caroline Williams

KATE TRIUMPHS 3rd YEAR RUNNING

The Warwickshire Closed Championships were held for the third time at Warwick on the first Sunday of 1999. The results were as follows with league in brackets:

Mens Singles: Mike Browne (B) bt Ian Ferguson (B) 16,-17, 13.
Semi-finals: Mike Browne (B) bt Chris Leach (B) 17,17, Ian Ferguson (B) bt Mark Read (B) 17,12.
Mens Doubles: Ian Ferguson I Mark Read (B) bt Chris Leach I Mike Browne (B) 14,17.

Ladies Singles: Kate Ryan (L) bt Joan Humphrey-Middlemore (B) 17,-19,19.

Ladies Doubles: Kate Ryan (L)/ Joan Humphrey-Middlemore (B) bt Helen Turner (B)/Sandra Duncan (B) 19, 22.

Mixed Doubles: Kate Ryan (L)/ Trevor Bradley (L) bt Joan Humphrey-Middlemore (B)/Phil Paine (L) 12, 21.

Junior Boys Singles: Gurdeep Singh (C) bt Gareth Hayward (B) -18,13,16.

Junior Girls Singles: Samantha Meredith (L) bt Gilly Matthews (L) 6,14.

Cadet Boys Singles: Gareth Hayward (B) bt Adam Madeley (B) 9,16.

Cadet Girls Singles: Kelly Sibley (L) bt Stephanie Hawkins (L).

Junior Boys Doubles: Anthony Kelly/Leigh Bradford (B) bt Jonathan Madeley/Simon Gleeson (B) 12, 14.

Junior Girls Doubles: Claire Baker (B)/Samantha Meredith (L) bt Gilly Matthews (L)/Kay Nason (L) -15,16,12.

Veteran Singles: Mike Bishop (L) bt John Chandler (B) 11,19.

Veteran Doubles: Mike Bishop (L)/Phil Paine (L) bt Ron Vose (L)/Andy Hare (B) 19,19.

Veteran Over 50's: Ray Dixon (B) bt Bill Fletcher (B) 15,16.

Junior Plate: Simon Gleeson (B) bt Anthony Kelly (B).

JUNIORS DOING WELL

The West Midlands Regional Trials were held in January at Warwick and once again Warwickshire dominate the results to decide who attends the National Trials in February. In the Junior Boys for 4 places Gareth Hayward (B), still a cadet, came first, Gurdeep Singh (C) third, Anthony Kelly (B) fourth and Jonathan Madeley (B) fifth. In the Junior Girls Samantha Meredith (L) aged 15 was top, Kay Nason (L) third whilst Gilly Matthews (L) lost out on countback to come fourth and will hope for a reserve spot and Claire Baker (B) ended up fifth.

Gareth Hayward and Greg Baker (B) both qualified automatically for Cadet National trials on their high England rankings and Leigh Bradford (B) reached sixth on the day. With only 2 places available in the Cadet Girls the competition was fierce but our two did well with Kelly-Jayne Walden (N) aged 11 reaching third and Kelly Sibley (L) only 10 finishing fourth.

21st YEAR

This is the 21st year of the East Midland Cadet League which is going strong with 11 teams in action. Grantham is in the lead at present with Leicester

second though there are still 2 sessions to go Three of its four founder members Nuneaton, Coventry and Leicester are still competing along with other teams from throughout the East Midlands. The fourth founder member was Leamington Spa who spawned the Heart of England Cadet League which plays on a similar basis in Kenilworth.

ROUND THE COUNTY

The preliminary round of the sealed handicap Mackie Cup County competition proved fatal for Land Rover who are past winners of this trophy. No less than three Land Rover teams were squeezed out and in two matches the margins were very tight -two and a half points and three and a half points.

In Nuneaton latest league tables show Ret Ajax A with 7 wins and a draw in Division 1 and having the edge on nearest rivals Alderman Smith OB. In Division 2 Ret Ajax D look well on course with only one defeat in eight but a comfortable 13 points above second placed Boys Club A. Division 3's leaders Fire Brigade A have a clean sheet of 6 wins and a fantastic 60 points and are also two matches in hand to next placed Boys Club B.

Leamington's top teams are building up to a fine showdown in Division 1. Last season's champions Phoenix A are leading the field with 8 wins from 8 and a massive average. Second placed St. Georges A are likely to be eclipsed by also unbeaten Wellesbourne A who are lurking behind Saints with matches in hand. It remains to be seen if Wellesbourne however will catch Phoenix.

Worcestershire

by Martin Clark

VETERANS 1STS

A satisfactory trip to St. Neots placed the county in a handy position when the second round of matches are played later in the season.

Following a tight finish to the opening match against Essex 2, in which Ray Dixon made it 5-4, we beat Bedfordshire 7-2 where Mervyn Wood and Roy Norton were in the ascendancy.

The only reversal came against Hertfordshire 2-7 when four of the five sets going to three went against us. However, a final 6-3 victory over Warwickshire, in which Jan Dunning and Ray Dixon performed well, helped restore confidence going into the next series.

VETERANS 2NDS

Facing a strong Yorkshire side it was never going to be easy for us at Jim's Gym, and so it proved to be. Having fallen 0-2 behind, Eric Hardman gave us hope with a convincing win. But it was not to be, and by the time Martin Clark got a second set the match was already lost. This, a third consecutive defeat and a long trip to Northumberland and Durham in prospect, a battle for survival is on.

JUNIORS

With Jenny Burchill injured and other girls unavailable young Emily Dexter was thrown in the deep end against an unbeaten Berkshire team and despite some fine play, her lack of experience was a big factor.

Nonetheless our regulars of Leigh Hipkins, James Perks and particularly Lewis Cook and Kate Hughes saw us

through 6-4 to record our first win and maintain our unbeaten run.

AROUND THE COUNTY

Bromley again set the early pace in the Dudley league, whilst Lickey Monarchs and Newton Works fight it out in Bromsgrove/Redditch league. The Kidderminster league may have a new name on the first division trophy as Hartlebury British Legion take a grip at the top.

Yorkshire

by Ray Balmford

Once again, I am opening with a tribute to two of our young players who, thanks to the dedicated work of coaches and all those others whom, in their different ways, have helped, have come bubbling through to the top.

Firstly to 11 year old Leeds boy Simon Nouch - yes, brother of County Junior Sarah and son of coach David, who flew out to Spain in early December as a member of the national Under 12 squad to take part in an intensive training with Europe's top 'teenies'.

Simon earned his place the hard way - dedicated coaching at the Leeds Centre of Excellence and regular match play for the Bramley Ebenezer club against senior players in the Leeds League.

And, returning to this country, Simon could well have passed Hull's Emily Dearing, two more years to go in the Junior ranks and already playing - and winning - in the city's highly competitive Premier Division.

Emily, who has made a meteoric rise up the Junior rankings and represented the Tykes at both Junior and Senior level, was named as a member of the England Junior squad to compete in the Portuguese Open over the pre-Christmas weekend.

Well done, both of you - but 'watch your backs' - the Regional Junior Trials were held in Hull over the first weekend of the New Year, and it was soon obvious that there are plenty more young hopefuls where Simon and Emily came from - and they will not be happy to remain on the outside, looking in.

Some are being 'blooded' at County level, with Yorkshire's Junior Division 1 North Side for the opening series of matches containing only Janine Donnelly (Leeds) with experience at this level. Congratulations to Rob Owen, David Innes (both Hull), David White (Bradford) and Cheryl Dainty, daughter of former County star, Mick, from Doncaster, who were all on debut.

The Yorkshire League programme is well under way with Bradford dominating the Mens Premier Division as they occupy the top two places, while, in Division 1, Halifax are setting the pace.

Northallerton are prominent on the Veteran scene with their teams heading both Divisions 1 and 2, while Scarborough top Division 3. Leaders in the Junior sections are Halifax II (Boys Premier), Doncaster (Boys, Division 1), Hull (Girls), while Bradford head both Boys and Girls Cadet Divisions.

In the Yorkshire Clubs

Championships, the semi-final draw has been made as follows:-

MEN: Hull Y.P.I. vs Harrogate Wanderers; Sessions (York) vs Brook Motors (Huddersfield).

VETERAN: Hull Y.P.I. vs Harrogate

Wanderers; Clayton Heights (Bradford) vs Brook Motors or Sessions.

Finals will be on March 26th at the Dewsbury T.T. Centre.

ENGLISH OPEN

See **JORG ROSSKOPF** and all the other stars in action at **Potters Leisure Resort**





ETTA National Ranking

TOP OF THE TABLE

Period 64 Date of run: 2nd February 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				Cadet Boys				Cadet Girls											
Pos	Name	Rtg	Fig	Pos	Name	Rtg	Fig	Pos	Name	Rtg	Fig	Pos	Name	Rtg	Fig	Pos	Name	Rtg	Fig	Pos	Name	Rtg	Fig	Pos	Name	Rtg	Fig				
(1)	1	SYED, Matthew (SY.)	4548	(1)	1	HOLT, Andrea (LA.)	3807	(1)	1	DUNNING, Janet (ST.)	2978	(1)	1	PARKER, Katy (LA.)	2743	(1)	1	PARKER, Joanna (SY.)	1454	(1)	1	BARHAM, Dale (CA.)	2772	(1)	1	PARKER, Katy (LA.)	2743	(1)	1	NOUTCH, Simon (Y.)	1102
(2)	2	PREAN, Carl (IW.)	4477	(2)	2	DEATON, Nicola (DY.)	3756	(2)	2	RADFORD, Lesley (E.)	2929	(2)	2	YARNALL, Tim (NP.)	1032	(2)	2	GOMERSALL, Mich (CU.)	2347	(2)	2	YARNALL, Tim (NP.)	1032	(2)	2	BAWDEN, Natalie (E.)	2683	(2)	2	YARNALL, Tim (NP.)	1032
(3)	3	YOUNG, Terry (BK.)	4350	(3)	3	LOWER, Helen (ST.)	3638	(3)	3	SHALERS, Eileen (LE.)	2532	(3)	3	BLOOR, Louise (SP.)	2916	(3)	3	BARHAM, Lee (CA.)	2337	(3)	3	BAKER, Gregory (ST.)	1029	(3)	3	WALKER, Georg (NG.)	2352	(3)	3	BAKER, Gregory (ST.)	1029
(4)	4	PERRY, Alex (DV.)	4295	(4)	4	RADFORD, Linda (E.)	3503	(4)	4	BUOY, Brenda (LA.)	2835	(4)	4	CARTWRIGHT, Neil (DO.)	922	(4)	4	POINTER, Lucy (IW.)	2206	(4)	4	WALKER, Georg (NG.)	2352	(4)	4	CARTWRIGHT, Neil (DO.)	922				
(5)	5	BILLINGTON, Brad (DY.)	4127	(5)	5	OWOLABI, Kubrat (MI.)	3497	(5)	5	SCHOFIELD, Dor (CH.)	2822	(5)	5	DEARING, Emily (Y.)	2796	(5)	5	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(5)	5	POINTER, Lucy (IW.)	2206	(5)	5	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190				
(6)	6	BLAKE, Darren (SY.)	4083	(6)	6	SCHWARTZ, Gem (BK.)	3378	(6)	6	KING, Sheila (SX.)	2743	(6)	6	MURRELL, Richard (HE.)	1456	(6)	6	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(6)	6	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(7)	7	HERBERT, Gareth (BK.)	4061	(7)	7	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(7)	7	RIDER, Sandra (Y.)	2760	(7)	7	MARSHALL, James (Y.)	1438	(7)	7	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(7)	7	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(8)	8	BAGGALEY, And (BU.)	3947	(8)	8	RUOCCO, Shelley (E.)	3185	(8)	8	PEARCE, Diane (K.)	2730	(8)	8	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(8)	8	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(8)	8	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(9)	9	TAYLOR, Jon (LA.)	3739	(9)	9	HURLING, Sally (Y.)	3168	(9)	9	PERRY, Penelope (DV.)	2706	(9)	9	BROOKS, Warren (BU.)	1402	(9)	9	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(9)	9	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(10)	10	MASON, Nicky (SX.)	3708	(10)	10	DAVIES, Tracy (E.)	3130	(10)	10	JUDSON, Carol (Y.)	2659	(10)	10	HORNER, Daniel (CH.)	1384	(10)	10	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(10)	10	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(11)	11	ISHERWOOD, Mich (DY.)	3624	(11)	11	BARRACLOUGH, Jo (CO.)	3113	(11)	11	HEWETT, Carl (SX.)	2638	(11)	11	PEARCE, Diane (K.)	2730	(11)	11	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(11)	11	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(12)	12	SHAW, Steven (ST.)	3557	(12)	12	HARRIS, Jill (ST.)	3078	(12)	12	KNIGHTLEY, Gill (BK.)	2636	(12)	12	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(12)	12	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(12)	12	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(13)	13	SATCHEL, Kevin (WI.)	3554	(13)	13	COLLIER, Susan (BK.)	3078	(13)	13	MALTBY, Marg (NP.)	2608	(13)	13	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(13)	13	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(13)	13	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(14)	14	SLADDEEN, Kris (E.)	3539	(14)	14	ROBERTS, Joanna (Y.)	3042	(14)	14	DAWSON, Marjorie (E.)	2608	(14)	14	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(14)	14	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(14)	14	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(15)	15	VENNER, Ritchie (SX.)	3526	(15)	15	DUNNING, Janet (ST.)	2978	(15)	15	HICKMAN, Susan (E.)	2491	(15)	15	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(15)	15	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(15)	15	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(16)	16	SLATER, Stephen (SY.)	3512	(16)	16	HURLING, Sally (Y.)	3168	(16)	16	WHITE, Jean (LI.)	2490	(16)	16	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(16)	16	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(16)	16	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(17)	17	SMITH, Eddie (ND.)	3500	(17)	17	SMITH, Emma (Y.)	2870	(17)	17	HARPER, Sandra (BD.)	2482	(17)	17	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(17)	17	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(17)	17	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(18)	18	ROGERS, Chris (LE.)	3447	(18)	18	LOCKWOOD, Kar (CH.)	2869	(18)	18	VAJDI, Carmen (SY.)	2476	(18)	18	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(18)	18	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(18)	18	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(19)	19	WHITING, Paul (DV.)	3429	(19)	19	BONGERS, Jose (ST.)	2863	(19)	19	BURGESS, Sue (CH.)	2463	(19)	19	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(19)	19	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(19)	19	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(20)	20	ECKERSLEY, Nigel (CH.)	3408	(20)	20	DURRANT, Lou (NG.)	2858	(20)	20	PEARCE, Diane (K.)	2730	(20)	20	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(20)	20	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(20)	20	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(21)	21	HILTON, John (CH.)	3382	(21)	21	SHIELDS, Helen (Y.)	2837	(21)	21	RUOCCO, Shelley (E.)	3185	(21)	21	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(21)	21	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(21)	21	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(22)	22	JOHNSON, Ben (BK.)	3370	(22)	22	BUOY, Brenda (LA.)	2835	(22)	22	HURLING, Sally (Y.)	3168	(22)	22	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(22)	22	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(22)	22	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(23)	23	MARSHALL, Peter (Y.)	3362	(23)	23	BENNETT, Teresa (SA.)	2822	(23)	23	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(23)	23	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(23)	23	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(23)	23	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(24)	24	PALMER, Stuart (SK.)	3340	(24)	24	SCHOFIELD, Dor (CH.)	2822	(24)	24	HURLING, Sally (Y.)	3168	(24)	24	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(24)	24	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(24)	24	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(25)	25	MOORE, Adrian (K.)	3334	(25)	25	MARLING, Sam (MI.)	2821	(25)	25	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(25)	25	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(25)	25	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(25)	25	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(26)	26	BARR, David (BK.)	3320	(26)	26	BLOOD, Trudie (SP.)	2816	(26)	26	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(26)	26	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(26)	26	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(26)	26	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(27)	27	SMITH, Mark Rich (Y.)	3314	(27)	27	MORRIS, Claire (SP.)	2808	(27)	27	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(27)	27	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(27)	27	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(27)	27	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(28)	28	THOMPSON, Chris (K.)	3305	(28)	28	DEARING, Emily (Y.)	2796	(28)	28	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(28)	28	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(28)	28	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(28)	28	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(29)	29	SUGRUE, Jason (MI.)	3303	(29)	29	WESTON, Sally (SX.)	2779	(29)	29	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(29)	29	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(29)	29	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(29)	29	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(30)	30	WURADLA, Abdul (SY.)	3278	(30)	30	MOORE, Claire (K.)	2773	(30)	30	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(30)	30	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(30)	30	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(30)	30	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(31)	31	CHARLES, Neil (MI.)	3274	(31)	31	MOORE, Claire (K.)	2773	(31)	31	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(31)	31	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(31)	31	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(31)	31	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(32)	32	RICHARDSON, Ke (CA.)	3266	(32)	32	RIDER, Sandra (Y.)	2760	(32)	32	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(32)	32	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(32)	32	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(32)	32	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(33)	33	JOHNS, Brian (CH.)	3259	(33)	33	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(33)	33	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(33)	33	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(33)	33	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(33)	33	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(34)	34	CARTHY, Clive (E.)	3250	(34)	34	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(34)	34	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(34)	34	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(34)	34	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(34)	34	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(35)	35	CUTLER, Tom (MI.)	3242	(35)	35	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(35)	35	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(35)	35	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(35)	35	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(35)	35	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(36)	36	JAMES, Michael (Y.)	3210	(36)	36	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(36)	36	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(36)	36	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(36)	36	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(36)	36	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(37)	37	CHAN, Michael (SY.)	3189	(37)	37	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(37)	37	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(37)	37	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(37)	37	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(37)	37	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(38)	38	HORSFIELD, A (Ys) (Y.)	3186	(38)	38	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(38)	38	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(38)	38	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(38)	38	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(38)	38	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(39)	39	AUCHTERLONIE, BK.)	3182	(39)	39	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(39)	39	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(39)	39	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(39)	39	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(39)	39	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(40)	40	THOMAS, Peter (DV.)	3175	(40)	40	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(40)	40	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(40)	40	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(40)	40	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(40)	40	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(41)	41	CAMPBELL, Sel(SY.)	3167	(41)	41	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(41)	41	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(41)	41	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(41)	41	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(41)	41	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(42)	42	GODDALL, Justin (K.)	3163	(42)	42	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(42)	42	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(42)	42	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(42)	42	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(42)	42	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(43)	43	RUSHTON, And (LA.)	3159	(43)	43	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(43)	43	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(43)	43	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(43)	43	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(43)	43	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(44)	44	WILKINSON, And (ND.)	3157	(44)	44	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(44)	44	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(44)	44	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(44)	44	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(44)	44	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(45)	45	MORRIS, David (SP.)	3151	(45)	45	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(45)	45	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(45)	45	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(45)	45	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(45)	45	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(46)	46	TAYLOR, John (HE.)	3116	(46)	46	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(46)	46	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(46)	46	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(46)	46	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(46)	46	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(47)	47	MUSK, Ian (BU.)	3110	(47)	47	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(47)	47	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(47)	47	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(47)	47	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(47)	47	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(48)	48	FESEHATSON, Dan (MI.)	3102	(48)	48	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(48)	48	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(48)	48	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(48)	48	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(48)	48	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(49)	49	HOWARTH, Dar (LA.)	3101	(49)	49	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(49)	49	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(49)	49	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(49)	49	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(49)	49	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(50)	50	DOLDER, Kevin (LA.)	3078	(50)	50	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(50)	50	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(50)	50	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(50)	50	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(50)	50	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190								
(51)	51	GANNON, Dave (LE.)	3070	(51)	51	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(51)	51	SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3187	(51)	51	WALKER, Ross (K.)	1420	(51)	51	CHAPMAN, Gem (BK.)	2190	(51											

stand totally by what I stated in my article - no other sport relies on both the manufactured technical 'trickery' of the equipment as well as the artificial 'trickery' of the combination of such materials as does our sport. The other sports Mr. Etheridge mentions, do not all employ the technical manufactured deviations that occur in table tennis.

I do not have long pimples or combination bats - although personally I do not mind playing against them - what I detest is the trickery that they stand for. Indeed everytime I beat someone using such equipment I get a small buzz knowing that I have beaten someone who in my eyes plays with the aid of trickery!
*Stuart Greenberg
Barnet, Herts.*

FLAGSHIP?

It is the opinion of Brent Sports Progress, Darlington and Jags that there are insufficient grounds for the British League committee to accept the request from St. Neots to withdraw from the British League. With participation in the Premier Division, we all agree, comes certain responsibilities. The premier Division is after all, the flagship of British club table tennis. All teams have the responsibility before taking on the commitment of the Premiership, to ensure they have sufficient resources, both financial and human, to complete the season. While we accept that certain unforeseen circumstances could force a team to withdraw i.e. personal tragedy, we do not feel that such a decision should be taken lightly. We do not feel that St. Neots have presented any such case.

We believe that St. Neots attempt to withdraw mid-season brings the entire league into disrepute and makes a mockery of the competition. Furthermore the remaining teams in the division should not be in a position to either profit nor be penalised due to the irresponsibility of another club. We firmly believe that in the era of 'Top Club', St. Neot's attempted withdrawal should not and cannot be countenanced.

Being aware of the existing rules we would like to propose that St. Neots request for withdrawal not be accepted until the end of the season, but instead they be allowed to forfeit their second half matches. All first round matches should stand.

We believe that to casually allow teams to withdraw from the British League will set a dangerous precedent. Any club/team doing poorly might take it upon themselves to withdraw, thus saving themselves the 'trouble' of completing the season. Such a half-hearted approach would be unimaginable in any other Premier Division of any other sport. If we do not take our sport seriously then we cannot expect others to do so.

*Errol Skeete
Assistant Secretary Progress TTC*

CUSTODIANS

Local leagues (and their member clubs) have long been the custodians of the table tennis cause in their areas. Through their core function of organising, promoting and regulating league fixtures and related

competitions, they have provided the main purpose and social hub for keeping grass roots players in the game - and this role continues to be important. Many existing players (and returners to table tennis) enjoy participating in them, and they offer regular organised competitive opportunities for newcomers to learn their craft.

Most local leagues also assumed the wider responsibility for promoting and developing the sport, with links downward with local schools and the community, crossways with other leagues and clubs and upwards for higher level competitive and coaching opportunities.

Unfortunately, because of increased competition from other sports/recreational pursuits, lack of proper facilities and volunteers, and ageing players, it has become tougher to thrive and many local leagues are struggling to stay in business.

But why particularly do local leagues fail? Too many doggedly soldier on with tired formats that are unattractive to some existing players, let alone potential new recruits. Thus I agree with John Prean (Isle of Wight Notes, November 1998) that the traditional playing system - 9 singles and a double (on one table) is often unsatisfactory to all but diehards. Our concern should be as much about those who are not playing (as those who are): talented youngsters who have got bored with the travelling and late nights in grotty venues, with ancient and unsociable (in their eyes) company and gone on to more fulfilling sports; many more youngsters whose horrified parents won't let them join the adult league in the

first place; potential adult recruits whose work and family commitments do not give them the time for long evenings out; mature players, in their twenties or thirties, who may prefer to meet their former table tennis peers for an hour or two of tennis or squash instead.

So how can leagues attract and hold new members? As well as better publicity and promotion, what about improving the essential product? Make matches shorter and more sociable.

How about the Woolwich 2-a-side (or 4-a-side on two tables) format, ideally held at a single, multi table venue, followed by socialising? There are other systems that may suit local circumstances such as 3-a-side teams playing 6 singles (and a doubles), or the match stopping when the first side reaches 5 or 6 sets etc. And as well as running Woolwich Junior leagues, could not leagues consider offering similar feeder divisions for different age groups or adult beginners, to bridge the standard gap barrier (between recreational play and the lowest division of the league)? That these ideas are nothing new does not make them less worthy of serious consideration.

However, where some local leagues have failed most is in not meeting their wider promotional and developmental role such as providing coaching and practice (as well as competitive) opportunities supporting schools and clubs, publicising activities etc. (leagues composed of 'clubs' which only exist/function as teams in the league). For when they (or their member clubs) have not assumed this responsibility in an area, usually no-one else has done, and the

game dies through want of replenishment. Hopefully at some time in the future, more large TOP Clubs on the continental model will take on this role but until (and even) then, dynamic local leagues will remain vital for the health of English table tennis.

*Ken Muhr
Ferryhill, Co Durham*

PS: Not quite yet the official voice of the ETTA, I use my remaining moments of intellectual 'freedom' to entreat all enthusiasts to help see English table tennis vigorously through the next few 'make or break years', and beyond. Particularly my generation of players - those now in their late 30's and 40's - who started when the game was much more popular. So there are still plenty of you playing; but by not putting enough back, my (our) generation has let the sport down. Make amends now! There is plenty to do and great opportunities for the sport if we can take them. Help create the kind of co-operative structures and environment, with progressive opportunities to play, to compete, to improve, to socialise, which breeds (future) players, coaches, organisers and missionaries for table tennis - benefiting not only the club, league or locality, but the sport everywhere.

Not content with the present situation, we must dream of better times for table tennis. Like that famous Sam Cooke song (of black emancipation), we must believe that 'A change is gonna come. Yes it will'. And we must be the engineers of that change.



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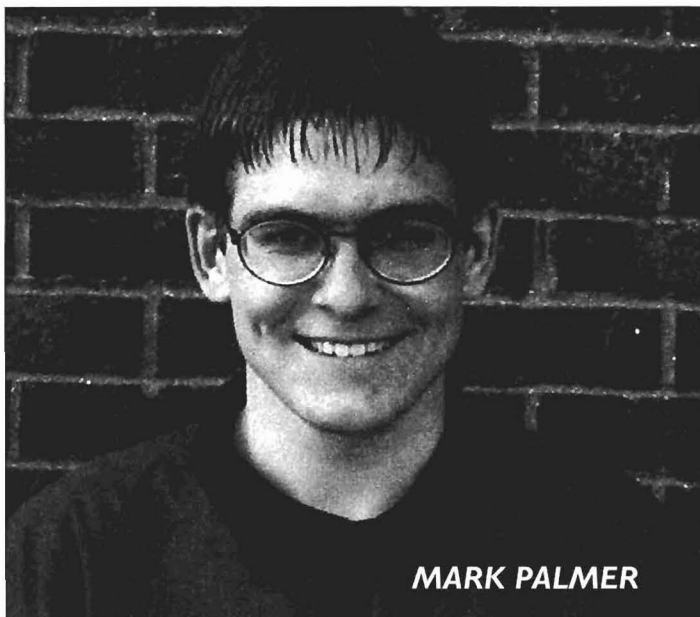
25/26/27th June 1999

Further details available from:

Jill Parker

**The Spinney, 50 Egerton Road,
Ashton, Preston PR2 1AC**

BTTAD CLOSED



MARK PALMER

BTTAD Closed

The BTTAD Annual Closed Tournament will be held at Stoke Mandeville on 20th and 21st March 1999. This is a prestigious tournament for all disabled players to enter. Forms can be obtained from Judy Rogers at ETTA Headquarters telephone 01424 722525.

Spectators are always welcome so please come along and support our disabled table tennis players.

TABLE TENNIS NEWS

I would like to thank the ETTA and John Wood for making room each month for disabled table tennis news. If anyone has any views, news or items of interest connected with disabled table tennis I would be pleased to hear from them. This page is for everyone's contributions so please don't be afraid, air those views, let us all know of any competitions, successes or gossip.

PLAYER PROFILE

MARK PALMER

Mark is currently the youngest member of the British National Disabled Squad at only 17 years of age.

Living in Essex Mark started playing table tennis at the Dovedale Flyers Disabled club in Chelmsford when he was 7 years old. Like any young child

Mark joined the club to have a go at as many sports as possible, but decided that table tennis was for him.

Currently Mark plays for the Black Notley Table Tennis Club in Essex and is a member of the Eastern Regional Squad, one of very few wheelchair users to be playing in elite mainstream squads.

1998 saw the highlight of his table tennis career to date when he represented Britain at the World Disabled Championships held during October in Paris.

Mark is now looking forward and training hard for the 2000 Paralympics in Sydney combining competitions, training sessions and homework as he studies hard for his A levels.

Eventually Mark hopes to gain a University place where he wants to study Sports Management.

If you would like to see Mark play he will be at Stoke Mandeville on March 20th and 21st at the BTTAD Closed Championships, and at the English Open on Saturday March 13th where he will be playing exhibition matches and issuing challenges to allcomers.

Will Tong Feiming retain her Womens Singles title at Potters Leisure Village?



TOURNAMENT PHOTOGRAPHS

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**Centenary Cottage, Church Road, Charlestown,
 St.Austell, Cornwall. PL25 3NS**

DIARY DATES

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
20-21 March 1999	BTTAD Closed	Stoke Manderville

EVENTS CALENDAR

MARCH 1999

9th - 14th	English Open Championships	Potters
13th	Humberside Cleefield Junior 2 Star	
13th	ESTTA National Team Finals	
20th	Leach Cup R2	
20th	Hammersley Cup R2	
20th	Selby 2 Star	
20th - 21st	Middlesex Open	Picketts Lock
20th - 21st	VETTS Northern Masters	Halifax
20th - 21st	BTAD Closed	
20th - 21st	BWSF Training Weekend	Stoke Mandeville
21st	Junior Training	
27th	Brighton Newman School Junior 2 Star	
27th	County Championships	
27th	Woolwich National League	
27th - 28th	Veterans Premier	
27th - 28th	Senior Premier	
28th	Carter Cup R2	
28th	Bromfield Trophy R2	
28th	Gloucester Graded 2 Star	
28th	Brighton Newman School 2 Star	

APRIL 1999

2nd-5th	South Western Open (Grand Prix)	St.Austell
10th	Carter Cup R3	
10th	Bromfield Trophy R3	
10th	Alec Brook Trophy R3	
10th	Pat Archdale Cup R2	
10th	Cippenham 2 Star	
10th	British Primary Championships	
11th	Leach Cup R3	
11th	Hammersley Cup R3	
11th	Seasiders Junior GP 2 Star	
11th	British League	
1 6th-23rd	Commonwealth Championships	
17th	Abbey Junior Graded 2 Star	
17th	Chesham School U~11/U.13 Graded	
17th	National Council	
17th-i 8th	Blackpool GP 3 Star	
24th	Wilmott Cup R3	
24th	Rose Bowl R3	
25th	Whitchurch 2 Star	
25th	British League	
26th-9th May	World Championships	
MAY 1999		
1st	ESTTA Individual Finals	
1st	Ormesby Cup R3	
1st	Gainsford Cup R3	
1st	Hollington Junior 1 Star	
1st - 2nd	Essex Junior 3 Star	
1st - 2nd	Glos Graded Junior 2 Star	
1st - 2nd	VETTS Western Masters	Thornbury
2nd	Hollington 1 Star	
8th	Cippenham U12 2 Star	
8th - 9th	South Yorkshire Open (Grand Prix)	Sheffield
8th - 9th	BWSF Training Weekend	Stoke Mandeville
15th - 16th	Seasiders Junior 4 Star	
15th - 16th	BALASA Federation Games	Cirencester/Swindon
22nd	Mid Yorkshire Junior 2 Star	
22nd - 23rd	Junior & Cadet Masters	
22nd - 23rd	VETTS National Championships	Thornbury
29th - 30th	Grand Prix Finals	Bath
29th - 30th	National U10/11/12 Championships	Widnes