

TABLE TENNIS



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NEWS

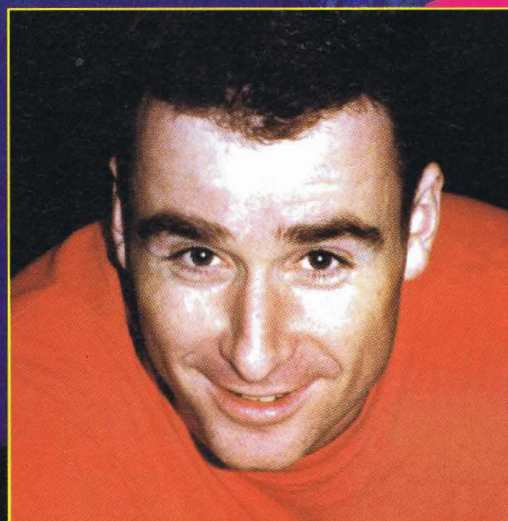
SUPER NEW YEAR EDITION

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AGAIN**

Pages 14, 15 & 18



**SUPER
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Page 14

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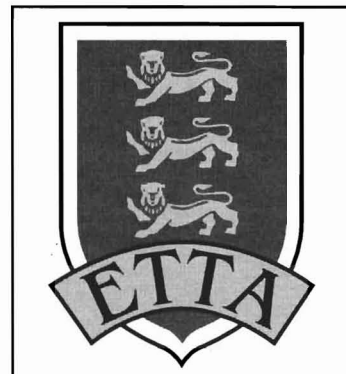


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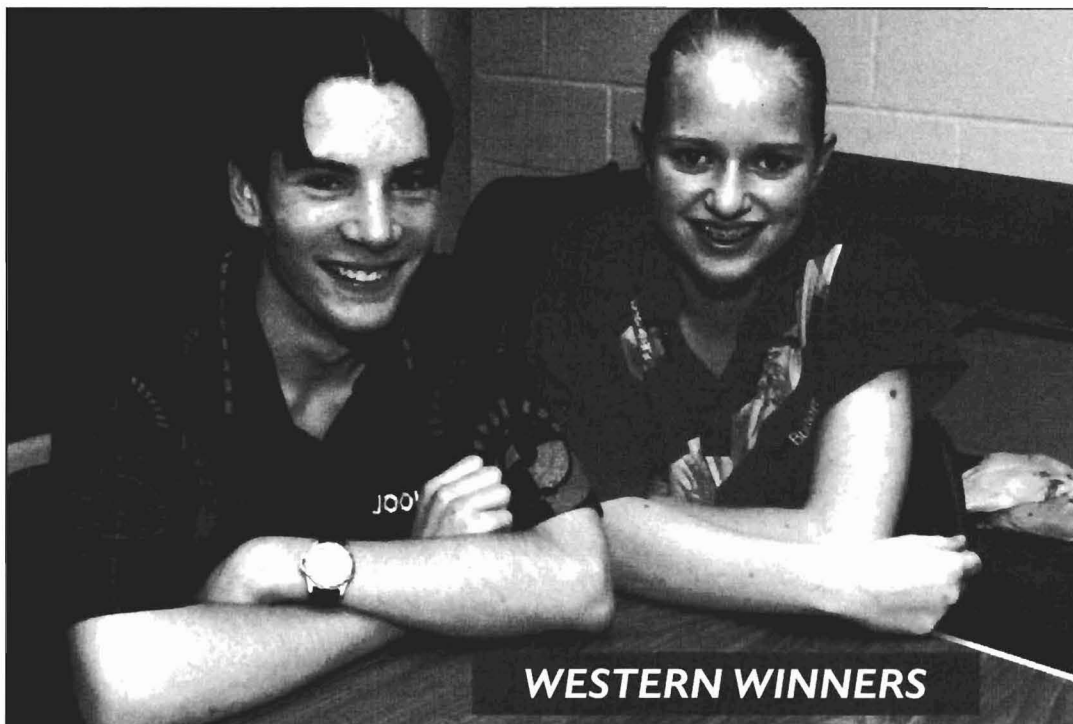
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WESTERN WINNERS

Pictured above are 13 year old GRAIG BRYANT (left) from Devon, and 14 year old KATE STEWARD from Somerset, who both won the South West Regional Finals in both the Cadet and Junior Singles. These two highly successful players were photographed at Tregorrick Park Table Tennis Centre in St.Austell, Cornwall, where the trials were held, before going on to the National Finals to be held in Cheltenham in January 2000.

**A CADET
BRONZE
MEDAL FOR
BARHAM IN
PORTUGUAL**

CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S DALE BARHAM, last December took a Bronze medal at the Portuguese Youth Open Championships in Povoa do Varzim.

The left-handed Peterborough youngster reached the Cadet Boys semi-final with a good 21-16, 21-17, win over Andre Gacima from Croatia, before losing 20-22, 15-21, to Loic Bobillier of France.

Although Dale, the England National Cadet Champion, played well, England Coach Soren Ahlen was a little disappointed with his squad as a whole.

"They showed some progress but our players lost all the tough games. They got too nervous when it was close. We shall need to do more mental toughness training sessions with our sports psychologist."

**GRANTHAM
EXPERIMENT**

As an experiment the second weekend of the Senior and Junior Premier Divisions of the County Championships come together under one roof for the first time, at South Kesteven Table Tennis Centre, Meres Leisure Centre, Grantham over the weekend of 15th/16th January 2000, where many of the top seniors and juniors in the land will be taking part.

Middlesex, who have won the Senior Premier Division as many times (26) as all the other counties put together since the County Championships were first organised on a national basis in 1947, lead the table after the first weekend with 3 wins and no losses, but are closely followed by last seasons champions Sussex, who have the same points but slightly poorer sets average. The other counties participating are, in current order in the table, Hertfordshire, Kent, Nottinghamshire, Berkshire, Yorkshire and Surrey.

Surrey lead the Junior Premier Division, equal on points with 3 wins with Cheshire but having a far

superior sets average. The other counties in the Junior Premier Division, in order in the table, are Glamorgan, Middlesex, Kent, Yorkshire, Devon and Lancashire.

See Stan Clarke's report in the next issue of Table Tennis News.

**CIPPENHAM
CANCELLED**

SADLY the Cippenham Cadet 3 star tournament due to be held on 11th March 2000 has had to be cancelled due to the clash with the Junior British League which has now been moved to that weekend.

LOST CONTACT

As the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the ETTA National Umpires and Referees Committee approaches we have a list of eight national umpires with whom we have lost contact:

- 56001 ETD OFFER (Dennis), London W9.
- 56006 AW PICKFORD (Arthur), Ilford.
- 57015 NKS BAKER (Norman), Harrow.
- 60034 WJ COMBER (Bill), Surbiton.
- 65046 AFW HORN (Arthur), Sidcup.
- 68060 SE FRANCIS (Stan), Dartford.
- 71089 AW KING (Alfred), Swindon.
- 78130 M VICKERS (Mike), Bishop Auckland.

Some may no longer be with us and if you know this, or if you know the current addresses of any who are still around but who are no longer active in table tennis, please inform Colin Clemett or Richard Scruton, contact via ETTA Head Office 01424 722525.

**WOODY'S
World**

THE NEW MILLENNIUM is now really with us and hopefully it will be the dawning of a new age for English Table Tennis.

The last century finished on a high with Dale Barham winning another European Medal, when he won the Cadet Bronze at the Portuguese Youth Open, see page 4 and 6.

Well, it looks like we will be playing with the increased size 40mm ball next season. See Alan Ransome's column page 5.

Having played with the new sized ball at the Manchester World Championships in 1997, following the Under 21 competition which used the 40mm ball as an experiment, I am very pleased because I actually prefer the new size because it is easier to see and therefore easier to hit.

Terry Young has come back in from the cold with a big win over Gareth Herbert at the Midlands Open Mens Singles final in Wolverhampton, page 18.

The London Open at the Lea Valley Leisure Centre, was my last tournament of 1999 that I attended, and I wasn't disappointed, for it was a real super display of top class table tennis, with Bradley Billington winning a breath-takingly close battle with Wales' Ryan Jenkins.

Tong Fei Ming, the former Grove player, has shown her world class status by comfortably taking both Wolverhampton and London Womens crowns.

This issue of Table Tennis News publishes the best and most interesting Mailbox of this season so far, see pages 7 and 8.

Ken Muhr's interview with Howard Jacobson (author of "The Mighty Walzer") has stirred a very interesting response from Tony Zhang. Tony puts the Chinese point of view to some of Howard's opinions.

Henry Buist continues with part 2 of his very interesting feature on 'How to play long pimples', see page 25.

Close to my heart is the ETTA South West Grand Prix in St.Austell, which takes place over the Easter weekend. See Mike Johns' preview on page 19.

I trust that you have a successful as well as an enjoyable new year.

John Wood

40mm BALL for NEXT SEASON?



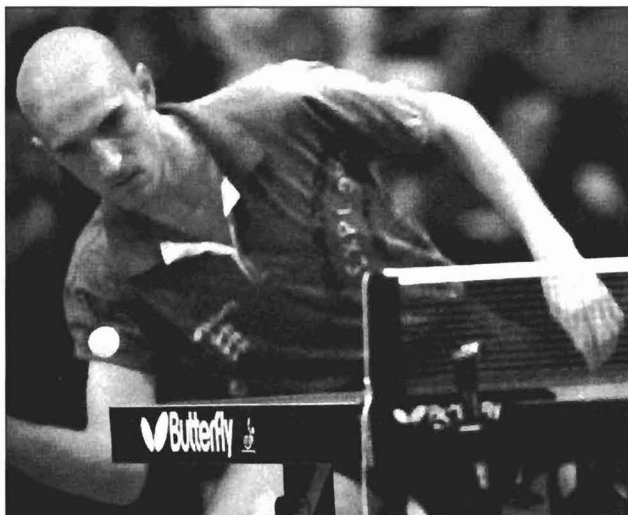
Alan Ransome OBE,
Chairman of the ETTA

THE INTERNATIONAL TABLE TENNIS FEDERATION Executive Committee are making a second attempt to have the larger size ball in use after the Olympic Games in Sydney, in ten months time, with rule change to be voted on at this month's special General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur. The ITTF believe that the larger size ball will make the game more visible for television and spectators and will slow the game down so making the rallies longer. The size of the current ball is 38mm and the 2mm increase has the effect of increasing the size in real terms by around 10%.

The ITTF Executive Committee attempted to have the 40mm ball accepted at the last BGM held at the time of the World Championships in Eindhoven in August last year and were very close to being successful with 74% of the delegates from the hundred plus countries voting in favour - 75% was required. The motion is to be put again at a proposed Special General Meeting, which is to be held at the World Team Championships in Kuala Lumpur on 23 February. This time the ITTF have modified their proposal and have the support of their own Equipment Committee. They have also proposed a three year introduction period which would remove some of the objections and therefore the chances of having it approved this time appear to be extremely high.

Just in case the motion fails, the Executive Committee have a second string to their bow with a proposal to the ITTF Council Meeting, which takes place after the SGM in Kuala Lumpur, when it will be proposed that the 40mm ball is included in the ITTF International Regulations, which would make it obligatory for all international events and if the current practice is followed would mean that it would be included for all events in England which are included in the ETTA Computer Ranking Scheme.

At the Council Meeting the majority required to adopt the 40mm ball into



MATTHEW SYED (top picture) and HELEN LOWER lead the England teams for the Commonwealth Championships and the World Team Championships

the International Regulations is only 51%. The additional proposal to include the three year phasing in period will mean that the county associations and local leagues in England are likely to have a choice of the timing of the introduction of the new ball for their own competitions.

The second major change to the laws which is currently under consideration is a change to the service law. In Eindhoven three proposals were tabled from different associations all with the common objective to change the rules with the effect of the ball being visible to the opponent at the point of contact with the bat during the service. There is some doubt as to

whether any formal proposals will be considered by the SGM in Kuala Lumpur, although a consensus may well be found to be considered on at the next BGM in Osaka in April 2001.

Another proposal which is likely to be tabled in Kuala Lumpur is a motion from the ITTF Executive Committee to change the official headquarters of the ITTF from St. Leonards-on-Sea in Sussex to Lausanne Switzerland, the attraction of Lausanne being the close proximity to the headquarters of the International Olympic Committee.

A week prior to the ITTF meetings in Kuala Lumpur the Commonwealth meetings will take place at the Commonwealth Championships in

Singapore. The main items on the agenda in Singapore are likely to be the reports concerning the inclusion of table tennis in the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester and 2006 Games in Melbourne, Australia. It is likely that an offer from India to stage the next Commonwealth Championships prior to the 2001 World Championships in Osaka, Japan, will be accepted. At the same time as the Commonwealth Championships in Singapore, the ITTF are holding a major two day conference 'Focus 21' to discuss the future development of the sport.

ENGLAND TEAM

Michel Gadal has announced the England teams to participate in Singapore, as follows:

Men: Matthew Syed, Alex Perry, Gareth Herbert, Andrew Baggaley and Terry Young. Captain - Jia Yi Liu.
Women: Helen Lower, Kubrat Owolabi, Louise Durrant, Natalie Bowden, Captain - Bradley Billington.

The selection for the World Team Championships are the players named above plus Linda Radford.

£188,000 GOES TO CLUBS FROM THE LOTTERY AWARDS FOR ALL PROGRAMME

Sixty table tennis clubs/local organisations have benefited to the tune of £188,000 from the Lottery Sports Fund Awards for All programme since it was launched last Summer. The schemes which have been submitted from the local clubs varied significantly, but the one thing they all have in common was that they must be designed to boost the sport in their local area. This programme is on going. Clubs can apply more than once and significant funds are available. Table tennis clubs, who are interested in applying should contact their Regional Development Officer for information, advice and support. To find out the contact details for your RDO,

FROM THE CHAIR - 2

telephone the ETTA Development Department in Hastings on 01424 722525.

ETTA WIN SPORT ENGLAND NATIONAL AWARD FOR THE BEST GOVERNING BODY VOLUNTEER INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Trevor Brooking, the Chairman of Sport England, presented ETTA Chief Executive, Richard Yule with a cheque for £5,000 and a plaque on Monday, 20 December, for the ETTA's work in encouraging volunteers. In the past two years the ETTA have won awards for the Table Tennis Development Officer Programme piloted within the Eastern Region and for the management of volunteers at the World Championships in Manchester by the Northwest Region. This time the award has been presented for the ETTA initiatives with the introduction of the Table Tennis Development Officer programme nationally and is an important feather in the cap of the Association's Development Department. Congratulations to all concerned!

PROGRESS WIN SECOND PLACE IN CCPR/ FOUNDATION FOR SPORT & THE ARTS CLUB OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Progress Club of North London won second place and a cheque for £4,000 in the CCPR/Foundation for Sport & The Arts Club of the Year Award, recently. Progress won the British League Premier Division and the Ormesby Cup, the national club knock-out competition and the Wilmott Cup, the national competition for local leagues, last season, and this clearly contributed

towards the award. However, also to their credit was their high profile as an inner city multi-racial club, which strongly encourages the sport in the local community. The winning club was from orienteering whilst third place was cricket.

SENIOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS POSTPONED UNTIL MAY

The English National Championships which were scheduled to be held in Bath in January 2000, were postponed following the withdrawal of sponsorship from Bath City Council. Bath are continuing with their support for table tennis in terms of the Western Open Grand Prix and the Grand Prix Finals. The National Championships will now be held on 13th/14th May and further details will be available in the next issue of this magazine.

MORE SUCCESS FOR BARHAM

Following Dale Barham's excellent performance in the Slovak Cadet Open in Bratislava in November, Dale played in Portugese Junior Open and won the bronze medal in the Cadet Boys Singles, losing in the semi-final to the French No.1 and European No.2 Bobiller.

DECISION ON NATIONAL CENTRE EXPECTED SOON

Discussions with Sport England and Phoenix Sport on behalf of Sheffield City Council, with regard to the inclusion of table tennis in the UK



BRADLEY BILLINGTON (left) the new full-time coach to join the ETTA World Class Performance programme at Nottingham

Liu. Bradley was employed on a part-time basis up to the end of the year and has been appointed to the vacancy created by the departure of Alan Cooke. Alan is continuing in the World Class Performance on a part-time basis.

TABLE TENNIS ON TV

With the screening of the ITTF Pro Tour finals from Sydney at the end of January, the Pro Tour coverage on Sky is completed, at least for the time being. The coverage of the Liebherr European Champions League live matches on Euro Sport comes to a climax with the two leg final at the end of March and beginning of April. The final will probably be between SVS Niederosterreich and Borussia Dusseldorf. Both teams lead their respective Groups and are favourites to overcome their opponents at the end of January. SVS Niederosterreich plays against Caen, whilst Borussia face Unirea Uzdin.

The latest stages of the Bundesliga can be picked up on the German Satellite sports channel DSF which is transmitted on the Astra Satellite which broadcasts the Sky Analogue programmes. The European Championships which are due to be played in Bremen in the last week of April, are being shown at least on the German ZDF channel, which is available on the Astra Satellite, as above. Further details of the coverage will be provided as soon as it is known.

Alan Ransome

Sport Institute are now moving ahead at a pace following the decision of the National Lottery to grant £22 million to Sheffield for the UK Sport Institute project. Included in the provisional plans for Sheffield are netball, athletics, judo, table tennis and possibly swimming. The facilities earmarked for table tennis include a purpose built hall with 15 tables for match play and 24 tables for practice, plus the use of a wide range of additional training facilities including state of the art sports science centre. Negotiations between the Association and Phoenix are expected to reach an advance stage shortly so that a final decision can be taken by mid-summer at the latest. The UK Sports Institute is scheduled to open in the summer of 2002.

BILLINGTON JOINS WORLD CLASS TEAM

Former England international, Bradley Billington of Derbyshire, has been appointed as a full-time coach for the ETTA World Class Performance programme, joining Michel Gadal, Soren Ahlen and Jai Yi

TABLE TENNIS on TV			
	Channel	Date	Time
GERMAN BUNDESLIGA ON DSF.ASTRA SATELLITE			
SV Pluderhausen - Borussia Dusseldorf		29.1.2000	19.00-20.00
TTC Zugbrücke Grenzau - SV Pluderhausen		12.2.00	19.00-20.00
Borussia Dusseldorf - TTC Metabo Frickenhausen		11.3.00	19.00-20.00
TTF Bad Honnef - TTV RE-BAU Gonnern		18.3.00	19.00-20.00
TTC Metabo Frickenhausen - SV Pluderhausen		1.4.00	19.00-20.00
TTF Liebherr Ochsenhausen - Borussia Dusseldorf		8.4.00	19.00-20.00
LIEBHERR EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL (LIVE)			
Final 1st Leg	Euro Sport	27.3.2000	TBA
Final 2nd Leg	Euro Sport	3.4.2000	TBA

MAILBOX

ENJOYMENT

I have read Table Tennis News for several years now. I enjoy it, but I think the best features in the magazine are those that may help to improve my game. Thus, I have enjoyed the article by Henry Buist.

I would also welcome information on how to improve practice sessions, serving, and playing against anti-spin etc.

I am 42, and have played in a local league for approximately six years.

Stephen Drew

Editors Note: I thank you for your constructive comments on the features within Table Tennis News. We are always trying to improve the amount of coaching copy, but it's not always easy to obtain it on a regular basis. Hopefully you will enjoy Henry Buist's second feature entitled 'Playing Against Long Pimples Part 2' on page 25.

DELIGHTED

As a recent, but aging, subscriber of table Tennis News I am delighted to have found a window on the present state of the game, largely denied to us without cable TV. Your lively accounts of matches worldwide, references to possible rule changes etc., are not buried among excessive advertising material and are well balanced with mention of former stars and obituaries, even, if some are no longer with us.

May I however express a note of disappointment? The magazine does appear slightly inward-looking, conveying an assumption that we readers are all not merely enthusiastic for the game, but fully club-involved already. Little is offered for the more casual player and virtually nothing for the spectator.

Your October issue illustrates this. Page 8 informs me exactly where and how to attend a Regional Sports Convention, if I were already involved in the administration of the sport, but page 16 (Forthcoming Events - TTN Extra) and page 30 (Calendar - TTN), are not nearly as informative. I need not enquire how to enter the 'London Open (GP)', presumably a Grand Prix, for I could not reach that standard, but if the finals were open to spectators, I might well have taken a couple of younger relations who both play.

Happily I do know the venue, but ticket available, prices, time of events

etc., might have been helpful.

No doubt the vast majority of your readers are actively committed to the sport and most of them at a high level. Nevertheless I would hazard a guess that there are others like me who played in the fifties - or perhaps earlier as evacuees - but who retain a playing interest, and might be enticed as spectators to the ultimate benefit of today's performers.

*D.K.McHardy,
Beckenham, Kent.*

Editors Note: Yes Mr. McHardy, it is true Table Tennis News caters for the club player, administrator, umpire, etc., but we also cater for the spectator and casual player too. You quoted the October 1999 issue of TTN, well in fact in this edition we published a spectator's view of the World Championships in Eindhoven, written by Paul Cichelli of Suffolk. With regard to your comments on the Calendar, we publish what information is supplied to us. And your enquiry on the possibility of attending the London Open as a spectator, to the best of my knowledge all table tennis events have always welcomed spectators to their tournaments. Grand Prix events have flexible time finishes, but members of the public are very welcome to watch play at anytime of the weekend, normally free of charge.

UNFAIR

Mr. Woodford (TTNews Nov.99) writes, "England selectors are clearly not amused by top players Nicola Deaton and Andrea Holt boycotting the world championships".

Later he writes: "The reason could be that juniors are young and committed, while the seniors are more interested in other sports, careers, etc.

Making full allowances for a reasonable wish to add a little 'controversy' to what is now a rather bland magazine, I have seldom read such unfair stuff. For Nicola and Andrea the sport has been their whole life from childhood and their commitment has been as full as anything in this life ever is. What has affected their commitment is the ever present worry about the future, the lack of prospects and rewards in our sport in England. Children may leave such thoughts to their parents.

continued on page 8

COURTSIDE
by John Woodford

- **JORGEN PERSSON**, at the very least, should have received a serious warning on his future behaviour for violating the code of conduct in Liege when he bared his backside at the European Masters when losing to Vladimir Samsonov. Weak officials will no doubt say he has always been well behaved up to now and it was not seen by the umpires. Seconds later most of the 1,500 fans knew what had happened as did the umpires and referees
- **THE** press box was situated, along with 500 seated spectators right in the line of fire to witness the baring of the Swedish bottom. What made him do it? It was probably a reaction to winning the first two games against the mighty Samsonov and then sliding towards defeat.
- **WITH 500** witnesses no further proof is needed to initiate some sort of disciplinary action by the Belgian referee on behalf of their association, by the ETTU and also by the Swedish Association.
- **I EXPECT** that nothing will happen. To use a John Prean expression - this is where this sport shoots itself in the foot. What a sickening example for the many young people who were watching play in Liege.
- **IF** there is any reader who can defend Persson's scandalous action in Liege, I shall be interested to hear their arguments, meanwhile, I fear for the future, that this sort of happening can only encourage the minority job elements who without doubt, will think it was a huge joke. My view: conduct that brings the sport into disrepute.
- **THE GERMAN** Association, the DTTB, did apparently, send a letter of apology to the ETTA over the shocking error that led to the disqualification of Andrew Baggaley at the German Open in November.
- **AGAIN**, it is a question of discipline. The ETTU has I am told, no disciplinary committee and no machinery for cracking down on world champions who drop their shorts or referees who make the most foolish errors like disqualifying Andrew Baggaley.
- **ENDING** on a more positive note, the ETTU has made the best decision for years with the new format for the European League. Countries can no longer raise two fingers to the League as it will be the qualifying event for Zagreb in 2002. This is also an opportunity to cut down the number of nations playing in the European team championships.
- **WHAT** is needed now, is to carry this principle forward and severely cut down the number of nations allowed to enter the Swaythling and Corbillon cups, too late I suspect, for the next world championships in Osaka, Japan. A cut to 32 nations from the present 70 or 80 is needed.
- **THE BATTLE** for media space continues unabated. The trio in the trenches for table tennis are of course, Ken Muhr, myself and Richard Eaton with some help from Matthew Syed, who has a somewhat curious relationship with The Times.
- **ANOTHER** alarming illustration of how increasingly difficult it is to obtain space for the smaller sports, especially the three smaller racquet sports - table tennis, badminton and squash. Our big brother lawn tennis is now occupying about 80 per cent of words out-put by Richard Eaton. He is only covering two major tournaments a year from badminton and squash and very little table tennis.
- **FOR** table tennis Ken Muhr is filing press releases three or four times a week, whilst I am filing national copy or results around five times a week, most of which appears in the Daily Telegraph.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR continued

Adults have to worry about such matters.

What on earth were the two girls to do when the little they were getting was taken from them? How can sportsmen and women be expected to live on money generally far below accepted poverty lines or indeed nothing? It is not lack of commitment to the present, if one worries about the future and sees this as destitute for English table tennis players. What were the players to do? Accept the poor treatment accorded to them? Or stand up and say "Enough is enough".

The lack of publicity accorded our sport has also obscured the very real achievement of both players. Andrea, together with Lisa Lomas and Alison Gordon formed part of an excellent team, which was always in the top eight, sometimes top four of European Ladies' table tennis. When Nicola replaced the retired Alison, the team remained in the front rank. When Lisa retired, Nicola and Andrea kept the England Team in the second division (called First). This year, in their absence, our ladies have lost 1-4 to Slovakia, 0-4 to Belgium and 0-4 to Luxembourg.

I don't know whether 'Selectors' are 'amused' by this or not. The obvious step is to get on their knees to ask these players to return and to find the money to keep, them in full-time play, recognising that they cannot live on thin air. At this time the system seems to be spending hundreds of thousands of lottery money to develop players and then, if and when they reach a decent standard, to pay them nothing and so force them out of the game.

I don't really care whether such 'policies' are down to the Sports Council/Sport England or our own ETTA. The end result is the same: Defeat by 4-0 against Luxembourg are unthinkable consequences in the forthcoming World Team Championships, perhaps laughing stock status, i.e. just below the third rate to which we have sunk so far.

John Prean
Isle of Wight

REPLY BY ETTA PERFORMANCE DIRECTOR MICHEL GADAL

In his article John Prean refers to a lack of rewards in table tennis and explains with the low level of income available the decisions of some senior players to stop playing at the International level.

Obviously it is impossible to compare table tennis to the major English sports, but I would like to report some facts to give a chance to the readers to have a better view of the reality.

1. In sport the reference is high

level (World not National results), the financial rewards are indexed to the level achieved. The major task of the National Governing bodies is to provide the best tools possible to their players to improve their skills and win at World or/and European stage.

2. England was the only major association paying players to represent their country, the others are paying bonuses when players are achieving results at World, European Championships and Olympic Games.

I believe players should not be paid to represent their country, obviously it is an open to debate and it will be interesting to know what is the opinion of the majority of the Association's members?

3. It is not true to say that the level of income of the players named was "far below accepted poverty lines", both of them:

- Are playing in French professional clubs and are paid.
 - Are playing tournaments with prize money (England and/or abroad).
 - Are sponsored.
4. As the other players selected in the World Class Programmes they had also access to:
- Free of charge training at the National Training Centre, including food, accommodation travel expenses, high level practice partners, high level coaching, physiotherapy and medical services.
 - Free of charge International training camps.

With the creation of the World Class Programmes table tennis has entered a new era where competing and winning at high level is the major goal.

ETTA is investing for the future working with a majority of young players while still providing very good services to senior players, committed to follow a real high level preparation regime.

Obviously the short-term results cannot be good when the best players are retiring and the transition was not prepared.

Even if we do not like it we have to accept the reality and work for the future.

AUSTRALIAN PROGRAMME

I have been sorting out a quantity of old files and papers - Table Tennis related, which I have gathered over the years. If there any collectors interested in expanding their

collection of 'Table Tennis News', I have the following No's available: 1, 2, 3, 5 & 7, 13, 19, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27 through to No 60 and 62 through to 71.

Perhaps of more interest to readers down under within the Australian Association, I have one copy of the match program of the First International between our Associations.

I shall store the magazines until the end of May 2000, should I receive more than one interest any others will receive photo-copies. Postage for any requests, together with a small donation to 'Cheshunt Table Tennis Club' would be appreciated.

George Butcher
C/o 47 St Laurence Drive
Broxbourne, Herts. EN10 6LH, UK

FRUSTRATED OF PINNER

Having played competitive table tennis for over twenty years in the Harrow and Wembley League, with the same bat. I am now desperate to replace my old broken Slazenger Challenger blade.

I was wondering if any person out there has an old Slazenger Challenger blade, with white painted up to the shoulders.

I am willing to pay any reasonable sum, plus postage to try and replace my bat.

Hope you can help me.
Nigel Steffens, 32 Eastcote Road,
Pinner, Middlesex HA5 1EH
Telephone: 0181 868 9052 (home)

DEVELOPMENT - BEGINS AT HOME

Under the heading "Who is it for?", the ETTA Premier Club Programme pamphlets lists eight courses of action. Should not the fourth listed "Enhance the quality of playing facilities" be at the top?

Most clubs provide a satisfactory table and net. How many provide good lighting and a dark toned backdrop, against which one can clearly focus on a ball swerving at speed?

How many venues do we know where a table is erected in an available space and play begins?

Most of us know of venues with reflective windows or light coloured walls behind the table, particularly difficult in a relatively small room. I've played in a room with a large white projection screen immediately behind the table. Multi-coloured clutter can cause a problem.

At local level, we cannot ban the

hidden service glue, extremes in rubbers, twiddling, etc., all of which are a turn-off for many club players and prospective players.

And whilst we, at club level, are prepared to put what currently is a flawed product into equally flawed and sometimes grotty packaging, is it surprising that 'development' is a struggle? The competition for our leisure time offers what are, clearly, more appealing pastimes.

I would like to propose two very simple initiatives, as Table Tennis News does not reach all clubs, I suggest that all league committees should be asked to consider asking all member clubs whether everything possible has been done to enhance their playing conditions.

Where lighting does not reach the desired standard for modern match play, can temporary lights specifically for table tennis, to be attached to the ceiling or hooked on a wire and raised before play, to be lowered at the end?

Even simpler, and costing less than the price of a new single sheet of rubber, a large dark toned tarpaulin (available from a variety of sources, including the 'Exchange and Mart') can be cut down the middle and hung behind the table at each end, thus creating the uniform dark toned background required.

There are two simple, inexpensive measures which would considerably improve the playing conditions in a very large number of venues. Just one of them would be better than doing nothing! Irrefutably, our enjoyment in playing would be enhanced, and isn't this what table tennis at club level is all about - enjoyable competition on the table and friendship off it!

John Parker
Willington, Derbyshire

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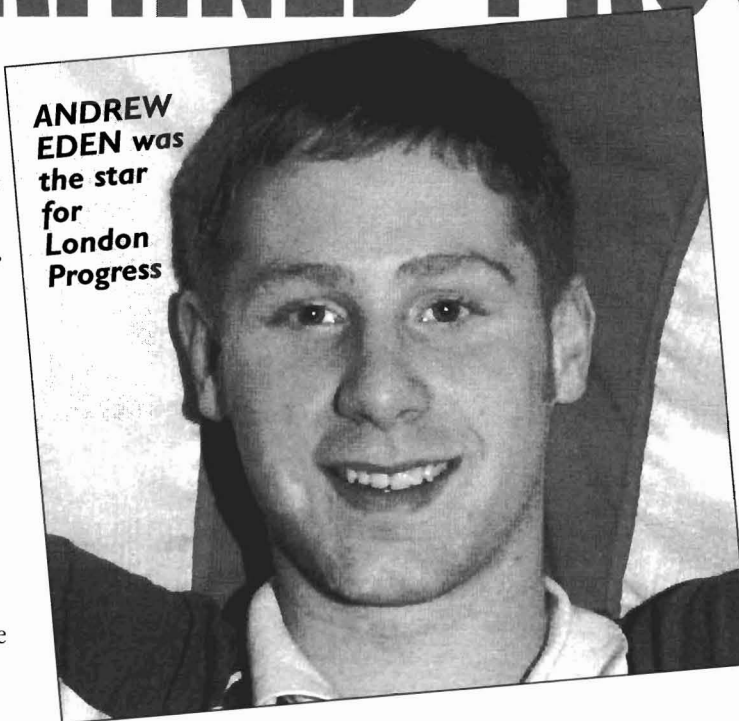
DETERMINED PROGRESS

LONDON PROGRESS are determined to retain their title in the Premier Division of the British League and moved to the top of the table by beating Darlington 9-5. Andrew Eden was their star with victories over Steve Slater, Eddie Smith and Fabio Mantegazza as well as combining with Marco Essomba to defeat Smith and Slater. Cris Sladden beat Smith and Mantegazza whilst Jason Sugrue got the better of John Hilton, writes Aubrey Drapkin.

Progress then went on to beat Harvey Barnet 13-1, Eden, Sladden and Sugrue all being unbeaten and Christian Hundhausen, playing in place of Essomba, getting two.

Darlington kept the pressure on the London side, however, by winning 11-3 at home to JAGS. Mantegazza won all three of his singles in this match as did Keith Rodger who came into the side at number four.

Horsham moved up to third place



ANDREW EDEN was the star for London Progress

with victories over Derwent and OLOP. JAGS suffered a defeat at the hands of RMSC Wellowhouse who

also drew with Derwent whilst OLOP beat Barnet before losing out to Horsham. This leaves Derwent and

Barnet in the relegation zone.

Norwich Todd Foxwood, leaders of division 1 North, received a set back when they were held to a 5-5 draw by Grantham. Ian McLean, Philip Logsdon, Paul Cicchelli and Jon Cockburn could only manage one set each and Logsdon and Cicchelli won their doubles match.

Denis Neale was outstanding for Grantham with two singles wins and the doubles with Dale Barham whilst Barham and Mark Donaghue each took one singles.

Darlington seconds drew level on points with Norwich by easily beating Uxbridge (Burton) 9-1.

Norwich then defeated Derwent 9-1 and Darlington edged out Grantham 6-4. Michael Marsden was unbeaten for Darlington and once again Denis Neale got two for Grantham.

Byng Hall Farningham Print edged one point clear of DML Plymouth in division 1 South with 7-3 victories over Horsham seconds and Ellenborough, Mark Brown and Mark

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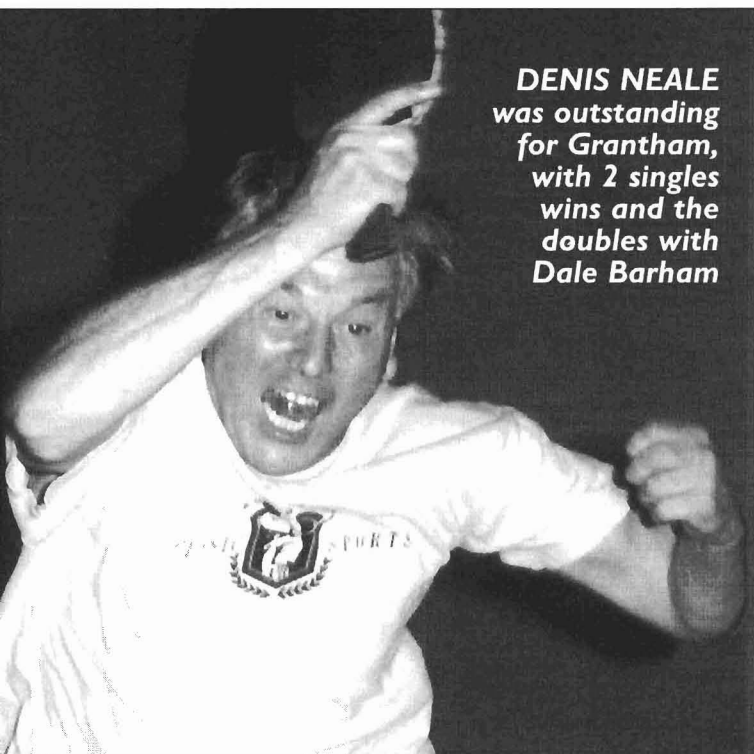


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DENIS NEALE was outstanding for Grantham, with 2 singles wins and the doubles with Dale Barham

Romano both being unbeaten in both matches. DML Plymouth beat Moonrakers 6-4 but were held to a draw by Harvey Barnet seconds. Barnet also beat Limberlost Pine Poole to move into the top half of the table.

RMSC Wellowhouse seconds retained their 100% record in division two North by beating City of Manchester 9-1 and Derwent thirds 7-3, Paul Wood won all of his singles in the two matches. Drumchapel Glasgow are now in second place having

defeated Darlington thirds 9-1 and Dewsbury 8-2. Stewart Crawford, Andrew Dunlop and Neil Cameron were all unbeaten on both occasions.

Darlington lost more ground when they were held to a draw by City of Manchester for whom Dave Griffiths was unbeaten. This was Manchester's fourth drawn match of the season but they have still not managed to get that elusive victory.

Batts Team Peniel continue to sweep the board in division two South, De Vere Sudbury and Harvey Barnet thirds being their latest victims. They were, however, given a fright by De Vere Sudbury when

Dave Cole beat Sean Gibson in the first set of the day and Steve Kerns defeated Chris Jamieson. Kerns and Richard Hutchinson beat Vince Avery and Jamieson in the doubles and at one stage the score was 3-3 but Peniel took the last four sets to win

7-3. Brent Sports Progress and Tregorrick Palace are level on points at the top of division 3 South and West, the former beating Ashford 8-2 and KCD Stiga seconds 9-1 whilst Palace won 7-3 against Guildford and 8-2 against Moonrakers seconds.

In division 3 North, Coventry Phoenix retained a two point lead over Halton with successive victories over Derwent fourths (8-2) and Ormesby seconds (10-0). Halton beat Potteries 7-3 and Derwent 8-2.

New leaders in division 3 South are Byng Hall Farningham Print seconds whose 6-4 successes over Horsham thirds and Britannia Ipswich left them also two points clear of Ipswich. Horsham, who were also held to a draw by De Vere Sudbury seconds slip to third place.

Middlesex Uni Progress gained their first victory of the season by beating Harvey Barnet fourths 10-0.



MICHAEL MARSDEN

BRITISH LEAGUE

PREMIER DIVISION	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
London Progress	8	7	-	1	87	25	14
Darlington	8	6	1	1	77	35	13
Horsham	8	5	-	3	56	56	10
OLOP	8	3	1	4	53	59	7
JAGS S.C.	8	3	1	4	49	63	7
RMSC Wellow House	8	3	1	4	48	64	7
Harvey Barnet	8	2	-	6	39	73	4
Derwent	8	-	2	6	39	73	2
DIVISION 1 NORTH							
Norwich Todd Foxwood	7	5	2	-	51	19	12
Darlington II	7	6	-	1	45	25	12
Kingshurst Bribar	7	3	2	2	35	35	8
Grantham I.D.S.	7	3	1	3	38	32	7
Derwent II	7	2	2	3	35	35	6
East Lancashire	7	1	1	5	29	41	3
Uxbridge (Burton)	6	-	-	6	7	53	-
DIVISION 1 SOUTH							
Byng Hall Farn'ham Print	8	6	1	1	50	30	13
DML Plymouth	8	5	2	1	44	36	12
Horsham II	8	4	1	3	41	39	9
Harvey Barnet II	8	3	2	3	43	37	8
Limberlost Pine Poole	8	2	2	4	40	40	6
Moonrakers	8	2	2	4	38	42	6
Ellenborough	8	3	-	5	36	44	6
Hastings	8	2	-	6	28	52	4
DIVISION 2 NORTH							
RMSC Wellow House II	8	8	-	-	61	19	16
Drumchapel Glaegow	7	6	-	1	51	19	12
Darlington III	8	4	2	2	46	34	10
Dewsbury T.T. Centre	8	4	1	3	42	38	9
Ormesby	8	2	1	5	24	56	5
City of Manchester	8	-	4	4	28	52	4
Derwent III	8	1	1	6	31	49	3
East Lancashire II	7	1	1	5	27	43	3
DIVISION 2 SOUTH							
Batts Team Peniel	8	8	-	-	70	10	16
Cippenham	8	5	1	2	51	29	11
Adeyfield	8	4	2	2	47	33	10
Harvey Barnet III	8	4	1	3	36	44	9
De Vere Sudbury	8	3	-	5	37	43	6
Fellows Cranleigh	8	3	-	5	25	55	6
Aylesbury League	8	1	1	6	28	52	3
KCD Stiga	8	1	1	6	26	54	3
DIVISION 3 SOUTH & WEST							
Brent Sports Progress	8	7	1	-	64	16	15
Tregorrick Palace	8	7	1	-	55	25	15
Ashford	8	6	-	2	51	29	12
Guildford	8	3	1	4	33	47	7
Moonrakers	8	3	-	5	36	44	6
OLOP II	8	2	1	5	32	48	5
DML Plymouth	8	1	-	7	26	54	2
KCD Stiga	8	1	-	7	23	57	2
DIVISION 3 NORTH							
Coventry Phoenix	7	6	1	-	56	14	13
Halton	7	5	1	1	48	22	11
Potteries	7	5	-	2	48	22	10
Drumchapel Glasgow	6	3	-	3	31	29	6
Derwent IV	7	2	1	4	28	42	5
Darlington IV	7	-	2	5	19	51	2
Ormesby II	7	-	1	6	10	60	1
DIVISION 3 SOUTH							
Byng Hall Farningham P. II	8	6	2	-	52	28	14
Britannia Ipswich	8	6	-	2	54	26	12
Horsham III	8	5	1	2	53	27	11
Harvey Barnet IV	8	4	-	4	33	47	8
Crusaders	8	3	1	4	32	48	7
Batts Team Peniel II	8	3	-	5	33	47	6
Middlesex Uni Progress	8	1	1	6	35	45	3
De Vere Sudbury II	8	-	3	5	28	52	3

MUHR'S MEMO



INFORMATION OFFICER MESSAGES from Ken Muhr

I AM not going to get into the argument over whether 31st December 1999 was the right date to celebrate the ending of a millennium and whether 1st January 2000 was the start of a new millennium. However, it certainly seemed the right time to reflect on the 1900's. I suspect that all the national papers ran features on the main sporting events and developments of the last century, and debated who was the greatest sportsman (and I am afraid that it was only about men) in a hundred years of sporting greats. Almost everyone I read plumped for Muhammad Ali, who was of course a major figure way beyond boxing. Footballers, athletes, basketball players, golfers, cricketers and tennis players also figured in the reckoning, but apart from Matthew Syed's advocacy in The Times for Jan-Ove Waldner to take a seat among the all time greats, albeit not quite at the top table, almost no mention was made of table tennis players. I understand that The Independent mentioned the Chinese world champion (1981 and 1983) Guo Yuehua, but about the best I saw from our sport's viewpoint was a passing reference to the fact that Fred Perry, considered of course for his tennis prowess, had also been a table tennis world champion. And Fred would come nowhere in a table tennis hall of fame (compared, for example to Barna, Bergmann, Leach, Ogimura, Chuang Tse-tung, Guo Yuehua and Waldner)!

This apart, I saw no mention of our wonderful sport in any of the hundred year histories of sport published in the national press, despite the table tennis/ping pong craze at the turn of the century, the huge audiences and Newsreel coverage in the 1930's and 1940's, and the massive expansion through the century into easily the world's biggest racket sport and possibly second biggest in participation only to football! Why for example, should cricket feature so strongly in sporting histories, and so many famous cricketers feature amongst assessments of sporting greats, when even in England fewer people play than play table tennis whilst in world terms cricket is tiny in comparison?! (The message for those gifted youngsters motivated by the possibility of future recognition as a sporting great is, pick the right sport as your platform for achieving fame!)

To be fair to cricket it has a long history, is part of our English culture, and it lends itself to descriptive writing. It has status, constant media exposure and is also part of the establishment, which table tennis has never been (except perhaps briefly in its parlour game origins). So which sporting facts are important, what do they mean and who decides? The answer is that what is important is in the eyes and mind of who is doing the writing. The choosing and the interpretation of facts is, as E.H. Carr famously said in his George Macaulay Trevelyan lectures later collated in a book, 'What is History?' (1962), subjective. Most historians and journalists strive to be objective - believe that there is some validity in what they are

writing - but absolute objectivity is impossible to achieve. So theoretically, table tennis could have been one of the sports written about in these histories - if they been written in the Barna/Bergmann hardbat era it more likely would have been - while other sports were forgotten. But unless the journalist thinks that table tennis is significant (perhaps because his editor or those in positions of power or customer response or consumer research or, highly unlikely, literature or tradition tells him it is) or he is sympathetic to it (because of previous involvement or a stimulating experience), he is not going to write about it.

What we must all therefore continue to try to do is ensure that the media, and particularly those in positions of power and influence, know about the strength, activities, merits and significant people and developments in table tennis and are sympathetic to it, by telling them about and showing them the sport in a good light. Better still, if at all possible we should try to get table tennis people into positions of power and influence, because if we can win the media 'war', we can change history! Always of course trying to maintain our objectivity: we should not be too propagandist and manipulative!

Seriously, we have much to do. Mainly through ignorance, too many journalists are indifferent or patronisingly disdainful to us. Occasionally they are vicious. Picking on what I thought was Matthew Syed's only possible hostage to misinterpretation in an otherwise excellent Times article on Waldner (previously mentioned) - his line that, 'Waldner has never had a girlfriend' - a Kim Fletcher commented in his Sunday Times column, "Looks like he (Waldner) picked the right sport then"! Matthew of course meant that Waldner, who shall we say lives a sort of 'wherever I lay my hat' international sports star lifestyle, had never had a serious relationship, but Fletcher was able to conjure up all sorts of wimpish, nurdish, socially inept (and other?) connotations!

However, much has improved, so much so that I cannot mention it all here. The England selections for the Commonwealth Championships and the World Team Championships were covered by most papers, including the Express, Mirror and Mail on Sunday, although much of the focus was on Nicola Deaton and Andrea Holt not being available for consideration for reduction in subsistence payment reasons. There was a full page article in the Sunday Times over disappointment with Lottery Sports Funding, which featured Michel Gadat and Nicola amongst disgruntled Performance Directors and athletes. Another large article in The Independent on Sunday by Alan Hubbard covered this and other issues facing table tennis, but in particular homed in on Dale Barham, 'Boy with a future in a sport fighting for one'. A further Times article on the alleged 'conflict of interest' (between Alan Ransome's position as ETTA Chairman and his trade interests) followed a question in parliament, but no breach of the code of practice or misuse of public funds has been found, or is anticipated to be found in the new inquiry ordered by Kate Hoey, Minister of Sport. Alan Ransome put up a robust defence of his position on this issue on BBC's Radio 5 Live 'Inside Edge' programme.

Meanwhile, Matthew Syed has continued to get quality features in The Times, and a four page, colour illustrated piece has appeared on him talking about the sport and demonstrating technique in Men's Fitness magazine (December 1999). And not to be taken for granted, John Woodford still provides much the widest and most regular coverage in The Daily Telegraph. I have had good feedback on the now regular table tennis briefs on Ceefax and Teletext, and our own website (www.etta.co.uk) is getting better and better. Not only on regional terrestrial television but also now by Sky satellite TV, the National Training Centre at Nottingham is getting growing attention from the media. Darren Blake hopes to develop a media role there, but we are particular fortunate having Matthew Syed create many new openings for us. The Liebherr European Club Champions League matches live on Euro Sport have been excellent, while the quality of the Sky coverage of the International Pro Tour Circuit has been mixed. A final footnote: Melvyn Bragg named Howard Jacobson's 'The Mighty Walzer' his 1999 novel of the year. It will shortly be coming out in paperback.

PERRY 'HUNGARY' FOR SUCCESS

MAGNIFICENT play by England Champion Perry and Matthew Syed in a superb new sports centre at Wigan, saw England ease away from any threat of relegation when they defeated a strong Hungarian side 4-3, writes John Woodford.

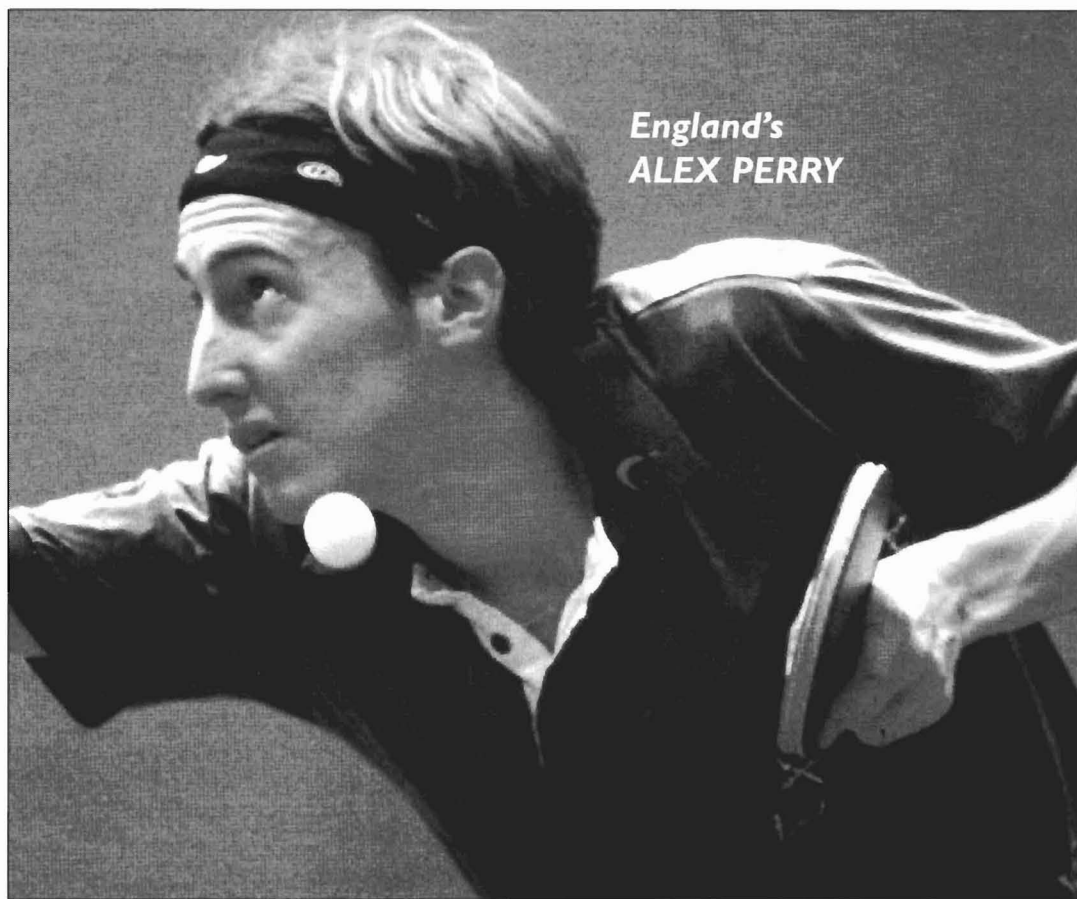
Swinging changes in the European League for the next two seasons means that the England men's team after dispatching Hungary should have a reasonable semi-seeded position when the new groups are formed for next campaign when all the nations entering the league will be qualifying for the 2002 European Championships in Zagreb!

That is in my view, probably the best idea the ETTU has come up with in its history.

Meanwhile, back to the match at the impressive Robin Park Sports Centre, which I would hope will be seeing a number of major events in the future - the huge circular foyer is large enough to stage a table tennis exhibition. It is new, only opened in January everything was excellent, the only slight snag it took Tony and Pat Chatwin and myself a good 45 minutes to find the place, as it is a little bit tucked away amongst the huge shopping complex. I am running out of suitable adjectives with which to praise Alex Perry. He has come a long way in the last two seasons, his game seems quicker, sharper and with deadly services. In the Daily Telegraph my report in one edition was shortened to one paragraph which said he won "ten aces" (services) in the last and decisive game against Ferenc Paszy.

I used aces in the widest sense - in the final game won 17, 15 by Alex, several of the Devon ace's serves Paszy did not make contact with and a batch of others he gave weak returns which Alex promptly killed. Revenge for Syed: Remember four years ago in Manchester, Zoltan Batorfi actually stopped Matthew going to the Atlanta Olympics when he beat him at the trials. I can recall Chen Zinhua being sent off coaching Matthew, but how the Hungarian No.2 managed to beat him I am not,

four years later, sure. However, in the sixth game with Hungary leading 3-2, Matthew got his revenge 9, 9, against Batorfi. In the opening match Syed capsized Karoly Nemeth 12, 9.



England's
ALEX PERRY

In between, Andrew Baggaley battled hard but found himself a little out of his depth and being pushed back and failing with his spectacular counter-hits. And we lost the doubles -19, -13, to Paszy and Nemeth against Baggaley and Gareth Herbert. The crowd numbered well over 550 - the best turnout of the season in the European League.

RESULTS:
England 4, Hungary 3.
M. Syed bt K. Nemeth 12, 9; A. Baggaley lt F. Paszy 14, -15, -11; A. Perry bt Batorfi 12, 17; Baggaley, Herbert lt Paszy, Nemeth -19, -13; Baggaley lt Nemeth -19, -11; Syed bt Batorfi 9, 9; Perry bt Paszy 17, 15.

EUROPEAN WOMENS LEAGUE

ROCK BOTTOM INSIGHT

IT is at the moment, unlikely that our two top-ranked ladies Nicola Deaton and Andrea Holt will ever play for England again, so the task of going to Poland on November 23 went to Helen Lower, Kubrat Owolabi and Georgina Walker.

Their chances of success were with respect negligible and they predictably lost 4-0. They now have to face two more matches to see who will finish at the bottom of Division 1.

Under the new system coming up, it would appear that England's women will appear in Zagreb in 2002 in one of the lower categories, unless of course a couple of our promising

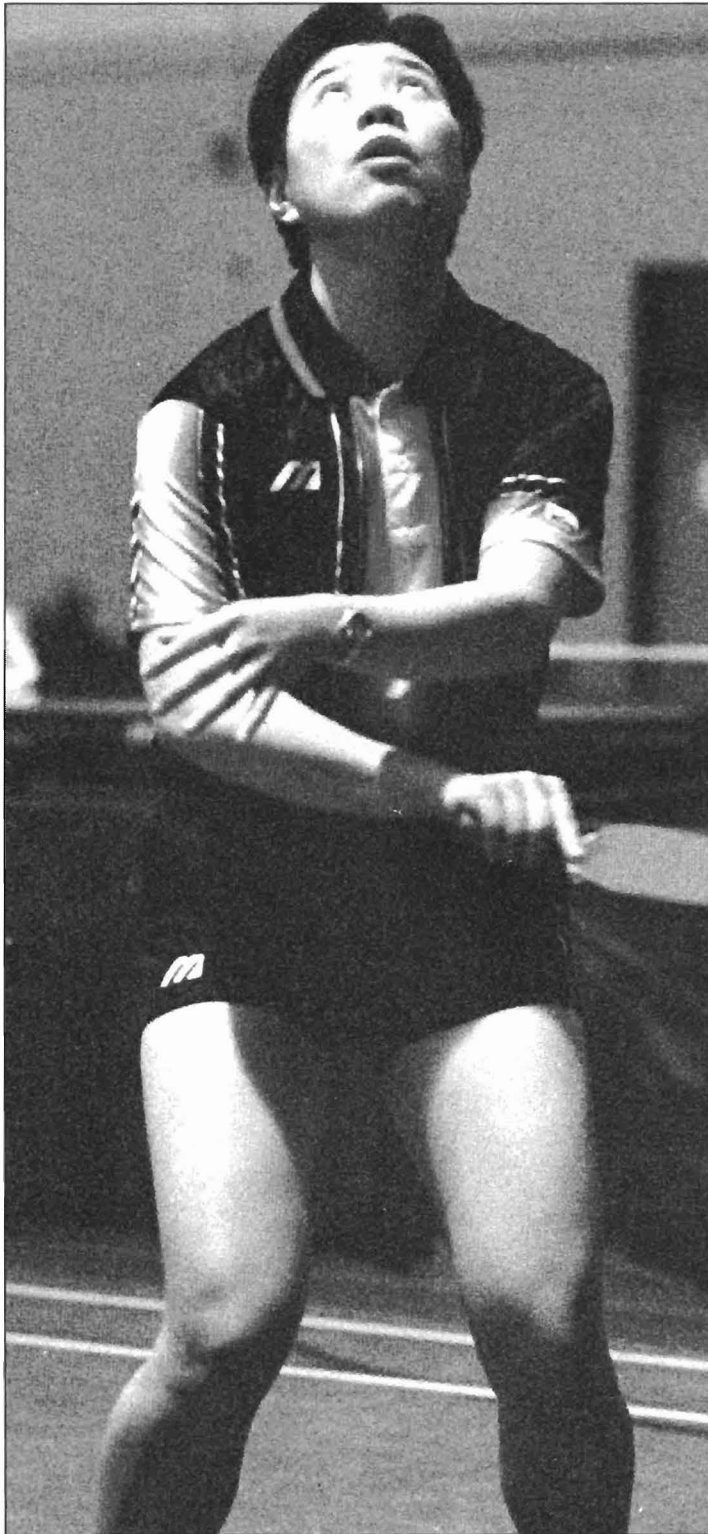
youngsters - Katy Parker, Georgina Walker, Louise Durrant etc. suddenly blossom into world-beaters.

RESULTS:
POLAND 4, ENGLAND 0. (at Wroclaw)
J. Narkiewicz bt G. Walker, 14, 6;
W. Litynska bt H. Lower, 22, 17;
K. Stanska bt K. Owolabi 12, 13;
Narkiewicz and I. Kuszaj bt Lower and Owolabi 17, 17.

Footnote: England will play the Czech Republic in two matches, home and away, in March 2000.

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TONG FEI MING WINS IN LONDON



SUPER COACH BRADLEY BILLINGTON and Super Star Tong Fei Ming, won the Mens and Womens Singles titles, respectively, at the London Open Grand Prix, held at the Lea Valley Leisure Centre, at the end of last year, writes John Wood.

Derbyshire's Billington won his second title of this season's campaign when he very narrowly defeated Ryan Jenkins of Wales, 25-23 in the third, in the final.

The opening game was just won 21-19 by Bradley, but the second saw Ryan bounce back to level the match at 22-20.

Ryan then stormed into a 5-1 lead in the third, but Bradley surged back level at 8-8 all, and from then onwards these two attack minded athletes thrilled the crowds with

scintillating topspin attack and counter attack all the way to the wire, with Billington just getting home with a last gasp winner.

Billington beat Michael Isherwood and Jenkins beat his brother Stephen in the semi-finals.

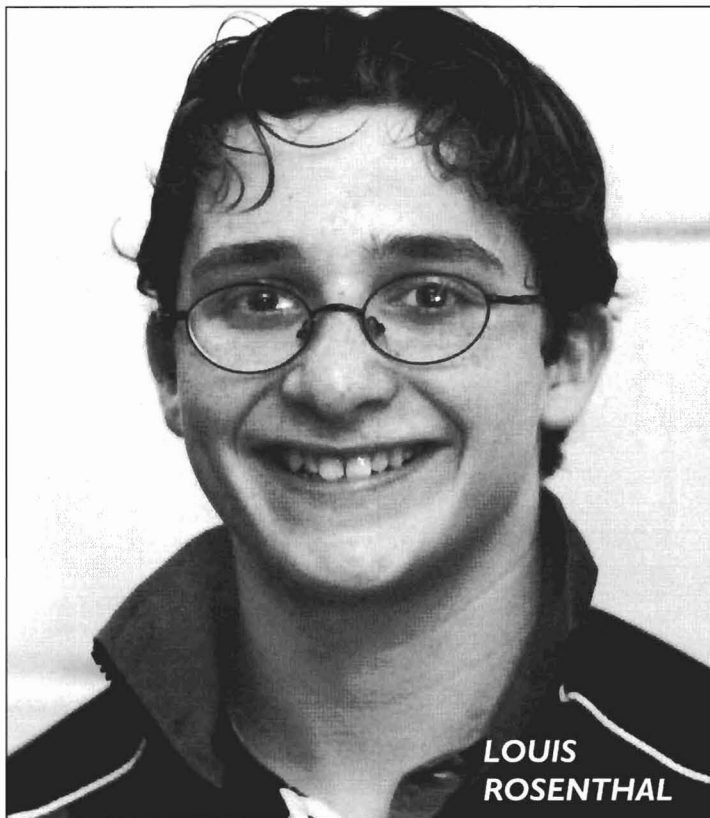
Following this epic battle, a jubilant Billington said, "It's definitely better to win than to lose a tremendous match like this one! I feel good, because I only play a couple of times a week now, as I still coach on a part-time basis at Nottingham. I miss playing competitive matches, and I was rusty on the big points today. I'm just happy to have won."

Tong Fei Ming, as expected, sailed through this tournament unscathed, overpowering Essex's Linda Radford in the final 11 and 14.

Linda lost this final in two, but

BILLINGTON'S 2ND CROWN





LOUIS ROSENTHAL

when the two last met in the final of the Bath Grand Prix, she did manage to take the middle leg off the girl from Taipei.

These two short pimpled players teamed-up to take the Womens Doubles, beating Trudie Bloor from Shropshire and Michele Cohen of Bristol 14 and 4.

The Mens Doubles saw Ryan Jenkins pair up with his brother

Stephen, to take the title beating Michael Isherwood and Steven Shaw -13, 20, 13.

Ryan won his second title of the day when he won the Mens Singles Under 21 final, overwhelming Surrey's Robert Pountney 13 and 13.

The Womens Under 21 Singles final saw Suffolk's Rebecca Sparkes continue her good run, since she returned to competitive table tennis



REBECCA SPARKES (left) & HANNAH YARDY

this season, winning a cracker against Essex's Hannah Yardy, 17,-13, 23.

Yardy reversed the result between these two ladies in the Womens Band 1 Final, where the girl from Essex won 10,-14, 14.

This tournament proved to be typical of the Grand Prix circuit in England, where the real stars were not the top players, but up and coming youngsters and grass roots players, like Louis Rosenthal from Manchester.

Fifteen year old Rosenthal, who only started playing table tennis at the age of 12 years old, has rapidly risen to No.8 spot in England since being coached by former European Champion John Hilton, won the Mens Band 2 Singles, beating Colin Carslake in the final, 8 and 14.

Last summer Rosenthal won 3 gold junior medals in the Maccabi Games at Sterling.

Young Chris Jamieson won the Mens Band 1, whilst Eli Baraty won the Mens Band 3 event.

This was also a good tournament for up and coming young Cornishman Adrian Noott, who had two maximum ranking victories, firstly he beat Clive Carthy 14 and 12, in the Mens Singles Groups, he then went on to beat Simon Rockall 18 and 9, in round two.

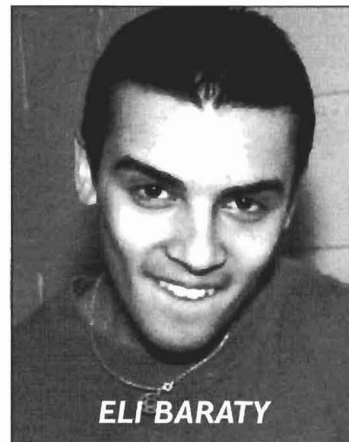
There was also another upset in round two when Norfolk's Adam Brewer beat Ryan Owen of Wales, 21 and 17.

Band 2 Group 4 was particularly interesting from the hard bat aggression of Kent's Henry Buist to the long pimpled combination of Suffolk's Ian Brown to the topspin, speed and exuberance of the youthful Chris Jamieson.

This Group had everything, it was a sheer joy to watch, exactly what a Grand Prix is all about.



SARAH HORSNELL



ELI BARATY

RESULTS

Mens Singles: S/F: Bradley Billington bt Michael Isherwood 17,-18,11; S/F: Ryan Jenkins bt Stephen Jenkins 17,11; Final: Billington bt R.Jenkins 19,-20, 23.

Womens Singles: S/F: Tong Fei Ming bt Trudie Bloor 4, 8; S/F: Linda Radford bt Alice Howard 23, 5; Final: Tong bt Radford 11,14.

Mens Doubles: Ryan/Stephen Jenkins bt Michael Isherwood/Steven Shaw -13, 20, 13.

Womens Doubles: Tong Fei Ming/Linda Radford bt Trudie Bloor/Michele Cohen 14, 4.

Veteran Mens Singles: David Harding bt Dave Harvey -18, 19, 21.

Veteran Womens Singles: Sue Burgess bt Gill Larking -19,14, 7.

Mens Band 1: Chris Jamieson bt Abdul Wuraola 18,-10, 16.

Mens Band 2: Louis Rosenthal bt Colin Carslake 8, 14.

Mens Band 3: Eli Baraty bt Henry Medelin -15, 8, 17.

Mens Band 4: Shariar Massodi bt Neil Cartwright 15, 10.

Mens Band 5: Shariar Massodi bt Stephen Gertson 12, 10.

Womens Band 1: Hannah Yardy bt Rebecca Sparkes 10,-14, 14.

Womens Band 2: Sarah Horsnell bt Val Murdoch 13, 14..

Womens Band 3: Clair Emmerson bt Lisa Calcutt 18, 17.

Under 21 Mens Singles: Ryan Jenkins bt Robert Pountney 13, 13.

Under 21 Womens Singles: Rebecca Sparkes bt Hannah Yardy 17,-13, 23.



SPOTLIGHT on MIDDX.UNI

THE SPORT and Leisure service at Middlesex University provides a wide and diverse range of sports clubs and leisure pursuits both for the competitive sports person and the novice.

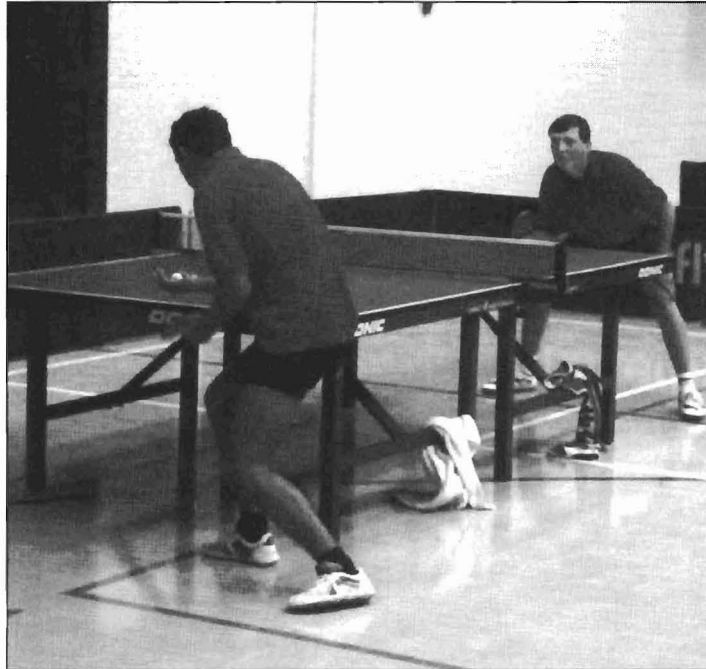
Over the last few years our service to staff, students and the local community has been expanding with new facilities and opportunities for everyone.

Our developments include a collaboration with Southgate Hockey Club, resulting in international standard pitches, as well as a state of the art indoor climbing facility at Bounds Green. The latest development is the construction of a Real Tennis court at the Burroughs Club on the Hendon site, thanks to a generous donation from the Luck-Hille foundation. This centre, 'The Millennium Court', will become one of the world's premier Real Tennis facilities.

TABLE TENNIS

The Middlesex University Table Tennis Club was founded in 1993 primarily to enter the British University Sports Association (BUSA) competition. The team played above all expectations to beat all the established universities and win the event. This was the first victory by one of the old polytechnics in any sport against the universities. This was just the beginning and for the next 3 years the team only lost one match in winning the title another three times.

The run of success came to an end in 1998 with a narrow defeat to Cambridge University in the final.



However success has continued this year with victories in the South England Student Sports Association singles and double events.

The Middlesex University Table Tennis Club has been active in the local leagues too, with teams competing in the North Middlesex Table Tennis League. Right from the start the first team have performed to the highest level, gaining promotion to the Premier Division of the North Middlesex Table Tennis League in only their second season. The teams' success has led to the expansion of the club and for the coming season, the club will have four teams in the league spread

throughout the divisions.

COACHING

Coaching sessions are currently undertaken by Simon Rockall. Simon, a top player in his own right has coached the England under-12 squad as well as an English junior age group champion. Simon is an alumni of the university and played in two successful BUSA winning teams.

NATIONAL JUNIOR LEAGUE

Middlesex University is also looking to develop table tennis amongst the local juniors. The National Junior

League (formerly 'The Woolwich'), structure offers young players the perfect introduction to table tennis. Play is for 10-17yr olds at a single multi-table venue in a league format. This encourages participation and gives an introduction into the game. Middlesex University has links with local schools in Hendon, Enfield, Oakwood and Tottenham to introduce the sport to the children in these areas.

COMPETITIVE PLAY

Middlesex University has a fine tradition of success in competitive table tennis. The teams compete in two university competitions as well as the North Middlesex league. For the first time this year the university will be entering the National League. In conjunction with London Progress Table Tennis Club, the university will be playing in Division 3 South.

This joint venture will hopefully build upon the university's reputation at a national level enabling us to further expand and develop table tennis provision.

CHAMPIONS AT MIDDLESEX

In addition to our own National League side the university will also be playing host to London Progress TTC who are the reigning Premier Division Champions. The team will be playing their home matches at the Trent Park Campus throughout the season.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Middlesex University run a sports scholarship scheme for which all students of the university are eligible. Awards are made at six monthly intervals for up to £1000 to assist high level competitors with their training and competition expenses. For full details please contact: Chris Walton, Sports Office Enfield, Telephone: 020 8362 5322. Email: C.Walton@mdx.ac.uk



I still believe that table tennis will be the sport for this new Millennium owing to its many inherent advantages: indoors (non-weather dependent), space efficient and versatile, healthy, safe, relatively inexpensive and can be played by (almost) anyone. In an increasingly polluted atmosphere and environment, these things will count in the long run. I can envisage, when in the next century people colonise the Moon and some of the planets, table tennis being the ideal sport for them to play in their air capsules - better a real sport than virtual reality games!

For the present, times are still tough, although as I repeatedly remind you, table tennis is still a much bigger sport in this country than you might believe. Worldwide it is huge. To keep going and expand in the medium term, we must ensure that the table tennis experience for those that play and might want to play is a great one! I get fed up hearing table tennis officials say that people do not want to play or find the sport boring, because if the table tennis experience is not at least as good and fulfilling as other activities, people quite simply should do something else. It would be morally indefensible to encourage them into the game!

There are plenty of other interesting things to do. Before Christmas I went to hear my brother and nephew play and sing at a folk concert at the Friends House in Hertford. On New Year's Eve I heard my mother recite poetry. On New Year's Day, in Ashwell, I saw lots of girl (and other) horse riders set out to follow the Cambridgeshire Hunt (this is not written in support of fox hunting!). An older nephew at Glasgow University plays Gaelic football. Another one, at Edinburgh University, plays shinty! Totally different worlds! But to do one thing, you must sacrifice doing something else. So to expect people to play table tennis, and possibly change their circle of friends and the course of their lives, you must offer something that is pretty damn good.

Of course, there are all kinds of people, and it would be a very boring world if everyone wanted to play only our sport, but the message I would like to get over is that if the table tennis experiences that you as a coach or an official offer are not attractive (i.e. people do not take them up) then you should, after due consideration and consultation, change them. Looking at the social and playing environment that the sport is pursued in would be a good start. My stand point is that the sport itself is fundamentally sound: vitally, it is the people involved who make it or break it.

TABLE TENNIS NEWS EXTRA

Issue No. 266
January/February 2000

A rare area where table tennis has expanded in recent years is Kendal, Cumbria, mainly as a result of the hard work, friendly welcoming atmosphere and excellent team spirit of the people who run the clubs and the league. Incidentally, it was Kendal and not the 'Kent League' (whatever the merits of the people of Kent) I intended to refer to when I said "or at least work co-operatively together, like small clubs in the K.....League do, to make the best use of facilities we do have", in my last editorial.

Offering a quality experience is of itself not quite enough. You have also got to tell people about it, and tell people about it in a way that grabs their attention, because the image of table tennis is generally not very good. Making a crude comparison, I would love to have a new (retro) Rover 75, because of its understated quality (no chance though that the ETTA would supply me with one!) But to sell more I think that BMW should have given it a racier, flashier image. Sport England have even come up with research that suggests that youngsters are as likely to be impressed by sports competitors who fail but look good, as by winners, which indicates the fickleness of image. However, to continue to sell a car or a sport to a wider market, I believe that both image and substance needs to be right. Promote table tennis as a trendy, exciting dynamic sport, but make sure that the reality matches the sales pitch.

This issue combines two months. Regrettably, I have had to cut some people's contributions, particularly when they have sent two lots of county notes, and also some tournament results and other items I have prepared. Sorry.

KENMUHR

STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS!

England play the Czech Republic at Parkside Centre, Autoquest Stadium, Widnes on 14th March in the European Women's League.

by Mike Johns

National Events & Marketing Manager

SENIOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Due to withdrawal of sponsorship the Senior National Championships, scheduled for the Bath Leisure Centre on 22/23 January 2000, has been postponed and will now be held on 13/14 May at the Ponds Forge International Sports Centre in Sheffield. Originally, on this date Sheffield were to host the South Yorkshire Open Grand Prix; this has now been cancelled.

ETTA GRAND PRIX

Since I last wrote we have held four Grand Prix events. The Western Open at Bath and the West Midlands at Stratford-on-Avon were the first two 'Majors' and were extremely successful. Both were over-subscribed resulting in a high demand for 'scratch' entries. There were major shocks in both tournaments, with the Men's singles top seeds (Carl Prean and Mat Syed) both losing. It seemed to me there were more spectators at these events than we normally attract, proving that when the top players are playing spectators will turn out to watch.

The other two tournaments, the London Open and the Midlands Open, also attracted large entries. The Midlands was played at the impressive Aldersley Leisure Village, Wolverhampton, a venue capable of taking up to 36 tables. The event was supported by the Wolverhampton Metropolitan Borough Council who have since agreed to stage 3 events at the centre next season.

Potters East Anglian Open is the next Grand Prix event on the calendar and will take place at the fabulous Potters Leisure Resort, Hopton-on-Sea, on 12/13 February.

Entry forms for the next 'Major', the Eastern Open at Lynnsport, King's Lynn, are now available from the Events Unit.

WOMEN'S BRITISH LEAGUE

The second weekend of this seasons Women's British League was due to be held at Kirkby Leisure Centre, near Liverpool, on 29/30 January and was supported by the Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council.

VETERANS BRITISH LEAGUE

For the second year running, the second weekend of this popular event will be held at Potters Leisure Resort on 5/6 March.

JUNIOR BRITISH LEAGUE

Originally scheduled for the 12/13 February at Liverpool, this event will now be played at Fenton Manor, Stoke-on-Trent, on 11/12 March.

SUPER SHARON

County table tennis player Sharon Mitchell finished the 20th Century in great style. The fast improving player who is coached by British League player Graham Outtrim finished the year unbeaten after taking on the country's top lady players. Sharon has beaten opponents from Hampshire, Devon, Oxfordshire and her own team mates from Berkshire since the start of the season, a remarkable record for the Caversham player.

Sharon, apart from county matches and regular tournament play, also plays in no fewer than three local clubs and leagues; Kingfisher in the Reading League, BBCTTC in Maidenhead and for OLOPAWCS 'A' team in Bracknell and Wokingham. The popular county player puts her recent success down to her coach, extensive training and practice and last but not least, regular Indian food at the Standard Tandoori in her home village of Caversham!

**Berkshire Inter-Town Competitions
1999/2000**

Reading (21 points) and Bracknell (18 points) are neck and neck for the Barbara Paisley Trophy, but with the juniors yet to play (match) watch out for Maidenhead. Meanwhile, following matches at Cippenham on 5th December 1999, Reading have three titles (Senior divisions 1 & 2 and Veterans 3), Bracknell have two titles (Veterans 1 & 2) and Maidenhead have one (Senior Division 3). Newbury, sadly, seem to be in decline.

Berkshire Junior Rankings - Nov/Dec 1999

Boys	Girls
1. Robert Hudson	1. Lisa Calcutt
2. Lee Calcutt	2. Hannah Stone
3. Sean Cox	3. Lisa Bosley
4. Ben Gates	4. Nisha Thakran
5. Vital Volovich	5. Laura Betteridge
6. Hugh Crosfield	6. Kerry Ludbrook
7. Simon Jarvis	7. Deborah Goddard
8. Joe Williams	8. Alice Walker
9. Ben Young	9. Melanie Farquhar
10. Gary Guidetta	10. Daisy Clark



Berkshire Cadet Ben Gates, rising star at local table tennis, moves up to 4 in the Berkshire Junior Rankings

COUNTY NOTES

- A LOOK AROUND THE
COUNTRY

READING YOUTH DIVISION

Ben Gates demonstrated again his excellent form this season winning 21-3, 21-5, and 21-5, 21-4 against the luckless Raiders 'A' to keep his 100% record in the League. His partner Ben Young also won both his games as Comet Thunderbolts continue to dominate the Youth League.

O.L.O.P. 'B' (currently second in the division) took maximum points against Raiders 'D' with the returning Tom Williams in masterful form not conceding a game. Chris Starke was taken to 3 games by the stylish Henry Kew but gave O.L.O.P. 'B' a 4-0 win. The Comet Starlet girls, Melanie Farquhar and Alice Walker, easily overcame Raiders 'B' 4-0, almost certainly guaranteeing themselves a place in Division One after the Christmas break.

BROADMOOREND CENTURY ON TOP

Broadmoor 'A' are the Premier Division leaders as the century ends for the Bracknell and Wokingham Table Tennis League. The Club and League top player Mark Hancock proudly remains undefeated with a remarkable 25 wins from 25 outstanding sets of table tennis.

The division one leaders are Our Lady of Peace Allied Worldwide Computer Services 2nd team.

CORNWALL by John Wood

Cornwall County Table Tennis Association is back on course, as is Tregorrick Park Table Tennis Centre, following extraordinary meetings held in November and December 1999, from which was formed a new County Executive Committee.

The new faces that volunteered their services to consolidate the future of Cornwall table tennis are: Chairman - John Wood from Charlestown, Vice-Chairman - Bob House from St. Columb Major, General Secretary - Roger Varden from Newquay and Treasurer - Kerry Lewis from Duporth Bay. Plus another two new faces, Shirley

Luckhurst, who will represent the women's point of view and Graham Worth, who is to be the 'Players' voice on the committee; both are from Launceston.

The seven new names will join the existing members elected at the last AGM, who are president - Roger Bunt, Match Secretary - Fred Ingram, Umpire's Secretary and National Councillor - Pat Archdale, Development Officer - Dennis Williams and John Wood who will continue as Coaching Secretary and Press Officer alongside his new role as County Chairman.

On accepting the Chairman's position, John Wood said "I see the past two years as developing and establishing the new centre in St. Austell as stage one. I see my responsibility, as Chairman of Cornwall County Table Tennis Association, is to guide the progress of our sport and introduce new ideas for the centre, which will include improving and developing coaching at the centre, thus establishing Tregorrick Park as the No. 1 coaching venue in the South West."

Cornwall has a big 'Coaching Week' coming up in April 2000, just prior to the St. Austell Grand Prix tournament, to be held jointly at Polkyth Leisure Centre and Tregorrick Park Centre, at which former England No. 1 player and England Team Coach Nicky Jarvis will run a coaching course. The course will be over four days; Monday 17th to Thursday 20th April 2000 at Tregorrick Park.

Publicity wise, Cornwall has made the airwaves of BBC Radio Cornwall, when Jane Firgins visited Tregorrick Park to interview members of Tregorrick Palace British League team, who are currently joint leaders of Division 3 South & West.

Fred Ingram was the first interviewed, then John Wood, followed by the team's youngest player Matthew Nicholls. The interviews were broadcast over the Christmas and New Year period.

Tregorrick Palace's next home British League match is against Brent Progress from London, who actually sit on top by virtue of a superior games difference, on Sunday 27th February 2000, starting at 2pm. As this is the big one of the season, possibly a title decider? So your support is needed.

CUMBRIA by Gordon Brown

Roger Harris, one of the Barrow-in-Furness' school teachers responsible for the growth of our sport in local schools, has won the first National Council for School Sports Teachers' Award.

A teacher at the successful Park View School, Barrow, for nearly 20 years, 53 year old Harris was nominated for the award by the ETTA, and he won it from nominations

from 12 other national sports associations. "It was a total surprise. I had no idea I had been nominated. I was obviously very delighted as well. But this is an award for everybody who has helped me over the years. Some people have been involved with me in this for 15 years and it really has been a team effort," said Roger.

In the letter informing him of the award, a crystal bowl, National Council for School Sports Chairman Bryan Latham told him: "You have achieved the award because you have given long and loyal service, particularly to Park View School. You have upgraded the sport of table tennis to national and international level and you have fostered strong links with primary feeder schools. All this shows that you have been involved across the broadest spectrum of your sport".

From humble beginnings when he used to play with pupils during wet lunch times on a table resting in chairs because it had no legs, Roger, who is head of special needs at the school, went on to lead the seven national schools' team titles. The school has been represented by at least one team at the finals for the past 14 years.

Eight of his players have represented England at different levels and in 1998 a girls' team represented England in the World Schools Team Championships in Portugal, finishing sixth. Roger was first to pay tribute to Yarlside Primary School in the town who provided many players for Park View, which is a comprehensive school.

Meanwhile, the Barrow youth conveyor belt continues to roll. Thirteen-year-old Grant Woodhouse won the northern regional cadet trials in Middlesbrough, going through the tournament undefeated. He lost only one match and finished joint first in the under-17 junior event.

As a result, Grant qualified to represent the north in both age groups at the national trials. Woodhouse also recently reached the cadet boys semi-finals at the Stockton Four Star tournament in the north east. He beat England number two Peter Cleminson in the quarter-finals, in a stirring match.

It is one of the oddities of the Cumbria Closed tournament that not all the best players in the county participate.

Now, efforts are being made by the Cumbria Association to attract them to the first closed of the Millennium, scheduled for Kendal Sports Centre on 30th January.

The county has unearthed a new star in Lancaster University student Simon Ledwick who plays for Blackpool in the National League and in the Kendal League with county team mate and association secretary Steve Dixon.

When Division 2a County Championship weekend was held at Northwich, Steve won

six sets and Simon three on his county debut. Julie Stitch, of Penrith, won eight. Paul Stebbins, of Kendal, another newcomer to the county scene, won one set.

RESULTS

Cheshire 6, Cumbria 4 (Julie Stitch 2, Steve Dixon 1, Simon Ledwick 1)

Cumbria 0, Yorkshire 10

Cumbria 6, Leics 4 (Dixon 2, Ledwick 1, Stitch 2, Stebbins 1)

Lancs 2nds 7, Cumbria 3 (Stitch 2, Dixon 1)

Warwicks 5, Cumbria 5 (Dixon 2, Stitch 2, Ledwick 1)

Cumbria 2

In the Junior Weekend at Grantham, Cumbria, newly promoted to Division 1a, were represented by Zeke Dixon (Kendal), Grant Woodhouse (Barrow), Joseph Mather (Kendal) and Barrow sisters Chloe and Fay Gasson.

Cumbria 3 Results

Cumbria 3, Essex 7 (Woodhouse 2, Dixon 1)

Cumbria 7, Lancs 2nds 3 (Woodhouse 2, Dixon 2, Mather 1, Chloe Gasson 1, Fay Gasson 1)

Warwicks 5, Cumbria 5 (Dixon 2, Woodhouse 1, Chloe Gasson 1, Fay Gasson 1)

New Regional Development Officer Mark Smith is attempting to organise a course to produce coaches and to increase the number of clubs. In an attempt to revive interest in West Cumbria, he is organising a whistle-stop roadshow of top players at a number of schools.

DEVON by John Vincent

Our County Association is now preparing a DEVELOPMENT PLAN in an effort to promote table tennis in Devon. There are coaches working in schools and I am anxious to know what you are doing and what competitions you have organised. Please write to me with details plus any articles that you would wish me to put in our ETTA magazine and any ideas or suggestions for our Development Plan.

At the moment the county runs an Inter-Town League with 3 divisions for Veterans, Seniors and Juniors. This League could be expanded by including a schools division provided there are enough schools leagues operating in the county.

This season Devon are running three junior teams. Our first team is in the Premier Division and apart from a 10-0 thrashing by a very strong Surrey side, lost 6-4 to both Glamorgan and Cheshire at Widnes. It was difficult to adjust to the pace of the Premiership but I was pleased to see that

our team was competitive.

Our other two junior teams are in the regional division 3C and with two wins each to date are getting good competition.

Tournaments

The county is hampered by not having a big table tennis centre from which junior ranking tournaments can be run. As Devon is the second largest county in England, with a population of 255,000 in Plymouth alone, we could do with a centre at a sports college or university where charges are not exorbitant. Hopefully, this will materialise in the not too distant future. Centres at St. Austell, with hardly any ranking tournaments and Cirencester, 150 miles away in Gloucestershire, who do have a number of tournaments catering for U10 to juniors, is 2 1/2 hours away. Once children are on the national ranking list parents are more prepared to travel.

Marjons

The College of St. Mark and St. John in Plymouth ran a 'Festival of Sport' on Thursday 21st October. This year table tennis was included and we were pleased to have the services of Peter Hirst (ETTA Director of Coaching) who led the coaching of 16 juniors from four sports colleges. In the evening Peter did a 2 1/2 hour workshop which was well received by our local coaches.

Devon Junior Ranking List

Boys

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Stuart Gibbs | 10. Edward Vanstone |
| 2. Craig Bryant | 11. Richard Brown |
| 3. Adam Shipway | 12. Joe Clifford |
| 4. Shaun Gibbs | 13. Tom Guntrip |
| 5. Max Kodicek | 14. Simon Gibbs |
| 6. Daniel Mayhew | 15. Paul Christie |
| 7. Simon Poyner | 16. Ben Warren |
| 8. Jacob Kodicek | 17. Christopher Smith |
| 9. Tom Sampford | 18. Brian Prestige |

Girls

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Michelle Barrett | 9. Natasha Harrison |
| 2. Shivani Shrestha | 10. Kelly Parkhouse |
| 3. Lisa Radford | 11. Vicky Loze |
| 4. Helen Parton | 12. Amelia Brooks |
| 5. Rebecca Wherrett | 13. Sally Smith |
| 6. Lucy O'Callaghan | 14. Nina Pelczyk |
| 7. Lizzie Binks | 15. Lindsey le Milliere |
| 8. Sara Lewis | |

DERBYSHIRE by Colin Deaton

Whilst Derbyshire continues to produce top ranked players it is most pleasing to record the loyalty and service of our top official Les Allwood. Les has been the Secretary of Derbyshire for a staggering 21 years, backed

up by 15 years as Treasurer.

He also plays in both the Derby and Eastwood Leagues, not forgetting his qualified role as a tournament umpire. One wonders where Derbyshire would be without his tireless efforts and dedication.

Chesterfield's Shaun Marples was the star of the East Midlands ranking trials and along with Burton's Simon Rudland has qualified for the National Ranking Trials.

Chesterfield have a wealth of young talent comprising of 10, 11 and 12 year olds. Most of these are based at the Peter Webster Centre and their jewels are eight year old Daniel Shaw, 11 year old Chloe McPherson and 14 year old Ryan Hutchinson. The eight year old is already playing in division five of the Chesterfield and District League, whilst young cadet player Chloe claims she is going to be better than Nicola Deaton.

Ryan Hutchinson is making a big impact on Chesterfield table tennis under the guidance of league player and coach, father Mark. He has a good modern game backed up by a variety of spin serves and is a strong physical player, which I believe is of paramount importance for a modern player. He also plays for Burton's Uxbridge Club in the British Junior League and has produced some impressive wins.

Staveley Middlecroft Leisure Centre is the venue for the annual Derbyshire Closed Championships which are to be featured on 18th March. This, in my opinion, is a much better venue than we have used previously. Play will be on ten tables with a cafeteria and PA system as part of the package. We hope a good entry will be received.

Burton's Uxbridge Club continues to be active and leader Terry Gadsby is to launch the a social league. This new venture is to be launched outside the current table tennis circle with no specification on age. We all wish Terry good luck in his new venture.

Meanwhile, the Burton junior team competing in the Carter Cup comprises Robin Pearce, Lewis Clifford and Eddie Moore. They hope to go one better than last year when they lost to Worksop in the final.

The Derby area is planning another course for coaches. This will be run over a weekend. In conjunction with this, the Derby League are appealing for helpers for an hour or so, to act as feeders to push the ball across the net at some of the coaching courses in schools and sports centres.

It is encouraging to note that the Derby and district schools interest and involvement is growing. Further schools tournaments are planned for both February and 9th April. Past schools' events this season have attracted over 60 youngsters playing on 14 tables.

Matlock supremo Tony Gregory has

received a grant from the Lotteries Panel for his Cromford Club. Tony plans to purchase some new equipment and to spend a lot of time and some of this money on trying to re-establish the cadet and junior game in the Matlock area.

One of his plans is to feature exhibitions at the local schools and follow this up with a series of coaching clinics. Finally, as a result of the efforts of the development team throughout the county, table tennis has been included in the Derbyshire Millennium Youth Games. These are to be held in the Moorways Sports Centre in Derby in July.

It is hoped that sports personality and Chairman of Sport England, Trevor Brooking O.B.E., will launch the games in spring 2000, by playing a featured exhibition game with Nicola Deaton.

Nicola is to perform a series of exhibitions around the British holiday camp scene during the summer months and this is to be followed by coaching and exhibitions on cruise liners, on European and Mediterranean cruises.

ESSEX by Steve Kerns

JUNIORS EXCEED ALL EXPECTATIONS

After missing out on promotion to the Junior Premier Division against Lancashire in the last game of last season, Alan Shepherd took a much less experienced junior first team to Grantham for the first round of county matches, and rather remarkably his team came away with six points out of six. With Natalie Bawden and Joe Benson both unfit Alan chose the three excellent Harlow players Nicole Todd, Amy Wright and Aaron Fennell together with the cheerful Niel Disley (Southend), fast-improving duo Matt Staines and Lee Daines (Braintree) and determined Romford girl Karla Bryant.

The team opened their campaign with a 7-3 win over Cumbria with the girls Nicole and Karla carrying all before them and Matthew making an immediate impact with a win over Joseph Mather. Aaron, whose game has come on leaps and bounds as part of the BATTs/Peniel British League squad, scored a great win over the No. 1 Zeke Dixon and Niel Disley completed the job with a win over Woodhouse. Better still followed with a very convincing 9-1 win over Clwyd. Lee made his first team debut and took his two singles in style whilst Niel Disley (2), Aaron Fennell (2) and Amy Wright (2) completed the rout. Amy appeared to be struggling against Fallon Thompson with the game poised at one-set all but in a complete transformation she stormed home 21-6 in the third with a super-aggressive display. Amy

was able to carry this adrenaline into the match with Lancashire II and she totally outplayed Joanne Cain and Hannah Roberts whilst Niel Disley also produced a level of consistency and intensity not seen from him before. Aaron proved that in Joe Benson's absence he is 'the man' whilst Matt Staines was again a revelation, beating David Rosenthal and losing in three to Nicky Ball. Alan's parting words sum up an outstanding weekend: "I was thrilled and delighted at the performance of all our players."

SHEILA GREEN

Southend League Chairman Ken field pays his respects to the much loved former Corti-Woodcock award winner Sheila Green, who passed away on 22nd November 1999 aged 74 after a long period of ill-health. Ken writes: "Sheila played in the Southend League for over 50 years and was part of our Committee for 25 years and for the last 20 years she has been our Records Secretary. Heaven forbid if you were late with a scorecard, a £1.00 fine was the punishment and a ticking off. Underneath that apparently tough exterior was a heart of gold and if you were in trouble or worried about anything Sheila would always try to help you. Despite hating computers, Sheila ensured that the League tables always went out on time and virtually all matches were played. Could a Pentium III have done any better? We'll miss you Sheila".

ETTA DATABASE

The news that filtered back from the Leagues at the recent County meeting regarding the ETTA database forms was "why should our players complete these forms?". Members are concerned that the form is intrusive, possibly illegal, downright rude with its references to ethnicity and disabled people, does not mention the Data Protection Act and could lead to an influx of junk-mail. Although the idea of collating a master list of players is vital to ensure continued Lottey funding it is clear that more work needs to be done to 'sell' the concept to 'rank'-and-file' players and that the form itself needs to be better worded. Leagues such as Braintree and Basildon both made concerted efforts to persuade players to complete the forms but returns of 28 out of 148 and 43 out of 240 tell their own story.

WEBSITES

Table tennis websites are springing up all over the country and some of the more interesting ones can be found at the following addresses:

Chelmsford League:
<http://www.zyworld.com/divsec/cdttl/>

Essex Inter-League:
www.btinternet.com/~topspin2/essex

Colchester League:
www.btinternet.com/~topspin2/cdttl

BATTS Club: www.batts.org.co.uk

All these websites can be accessed from the official ETTA website. Happy surfing.

NICE ONE CHRIS

Finally, congratulations to Chris Jamieson (Peniel) for taking the Mens Band One singles at the London Open with a thrilling all-action victory in the final over Abdul Wuraola (Surrey), one of the best displays seen by an Essex-based player for a long time. The England no. 205 beat the England no. 26 who was never in the third game. Keep it up Chris.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE by Alf Peppard

I mentioned in the November issue of TTN that Gloucester's Development Officer, Trevor Cox, is organising a Millennium Draw on the 22nd January 2000. Also to be incorporated on the same evening will be a team 4-a-side quiz. All this goes into focus in the hope that we MAY in the not too distant future have our own table tennis centre, either in the city or in the nearby suburbs. Cirencester has set a marvellous example - I personally do not think that we in Gloucester want to emulate them, all we require is our own playing premises, and hopefully over a five year or so period - we may attain something concrete.

Cotswold 4 Star Open

In 1997 the star ratings were revised and the Gloucestershire TTA applied for 4 star status for what had previously been a 2 star select event. After lengthy discussion a 3 star rating was accepted as being appropriate bearing in mind the criteria.

The tournaments were run as 3 star in 1997/1998 and 1999. Recently Les Smith, the tournaments' National Referee, verbally informed the Cotswold Committee that the ETTA have granted 4 star status for the event on 29th and 30th January 2000.

I can confirm that BBC Radio Gloucestershire will be present on the first day of the tournament and to have TV available as well, let us hope that it all comes to fruition.

Table Tennis facilities at Deer Park School, Cirencester

The above table tennis centre has been available since July 1995, when Alan Ransome, Chairman of the ETTA, officially opened it. In more ways than one it has proved to be an extremely useful source of table tennis play and enjoyment for players from near and far. Credit must also be given to the administrators who give up their valuable spare time to officiate at the many 1 and 2 star tournaments that take place annually at Deer Park School.

The playing hall itself sports nine tables quite comfortably. One cannot of course compare it in size to a modern day leisure centre, but then, in many instances these have priced themselves out of all recognition, at least to the rank and file table tennis player that perhaps they were originally intended for, and nowadays are only booked for the very big national table tennis events that make an appearance now and again.

All home county matches are now played at Cirencester, and indeed have been for the past four or five years. From a financial aspect this is far more advantageous than the rather plebeian, old fashioned way that we all used to run them, but of course in days gone by it was the only way that we could do it.

At the time of writing, the most recent Gloucestershire 2 Star Junior Open held at Cirencester was on October 31st when entries from as far afield as Cornwall in the west and Berks/Bucks in the south east battle it out for honours. The organiser was Cirencester's Ken Bridle, and the Hon. Referee was Mrs Gill Smith from Cheltenham.

Looking at the rest of the events at Deer Park School, Cirencester, for 1999, we have the Cirencester 1 Star U10/12 on December 5th, and the Gloucestershire Junior County Closed on 12th December.

The Senior County Closed which in previous years has mostly been run late in November or early December, this season will take place on April 9th 2000, providing that there are enough entries.

County Matches

In the most recent round of county matches (3rd round events) our seniors in Division 2D travelled to Guildford, where they beat Sussex 2nds 6-4, Kent 3rds 6-4 and Surrey 2nds 9-1.

On the same day our juniors travelled to Reading and came away with a highly successful 10-0 whitewash v Berkshire 2nds.

The veteran team in Division 2D lost 4-5 to Wilts 1sts in Wiltshire.

Gloucestershire seniors: match results to date - played 5, won 4, drawn 0, lost 1.

Senior individual players records:

	P	W	L
Darren Griffin	6	5	1
Dave Harvey	6	6	0
Brian McRandall	6	3	3
Ann Humble	6	4	2
Suzy Robinson	6	3	3

HEREFORDSHIRE by Harry Jutle

County Table Tennis Results - Saturday 6th November 1999

Veterans Division 3D

Hereford 1st played host to Somerset 2nd with a 5-4 victory. Harry Jutle was the man of the match, winning both his singles and the doubles partnered by Gordon Stables.

Norman Merchant won one singles, but was unlucky to lose the 2nd at deuce in the third game decider. The mixed doubles was also won by Norman partnering Carol Milnes. Our Bromyard venue at Queen Elizabeth High School had a very slippery floor resembling an ice rink and Gordon never looked comfortable.

Scores: Harry Jutle beat Mike Withyman 21-14, 21-15 and Alan Stone 23-21, 21-17. Norman Merchant beat Mike Tarr 21-13, 21-17 but lost to Mike Withyman 21-8, 4-21, 20-22. Gordon Stables lost to Alan Stone 17-21, 18-21 and Mike Tarr 21-18, 19-21, 19-21. Carol Milnes lost to Wendy Pryce 6-21, 12-21. Mixed doubles Norman and Carol beat Wendy and Mike Tarr 21-13, 21-13. Men's doubles Harry and Gordon beat Alan and Mike Withyman 21-19, 21-23, 21-18.

Hereford 3rd played host to Sussex 4th resulting in a 0-9 loss. They were beaten comfortably by the stronger opposition.

Scores: Mike Morgan 17-21, 10-21 and 4-21, 15-21. Mike Belfield 19-21, 11-21 and 15-21, 17-21. Trevor Davies 14-21, 16-21 and 11-21, 13-21. Sandra Gale 5-21, 10-21. Mixed doubles Belfield and Gale 15-21, 9-21. Mens doubles Morgan and Davies 17-21, 17-21.

Senior Division 2B

Hereford played host to Cornwall resulting in a 4-6 loss to the 1st team and a 6-4 win against the 2nd. Mark Owen won all his 4 games, Sally Davies won 3, Mike Keeley won 2 and Andy Castle won a single. Emily Birt failed to convert a couple of games on deuce.

Scores against 1st: Mark Owen 21-8, 21-14 and 21-16, 21-19. Sally Davies 21-18, 12-21, 21-19 and 6-21, 22-20, 21-15. Mike Keeley 13-21, 21-23 and 21-18, 19-21, 21-13. Andy Castle 19-21, 15-21 and 20-22, 15-21. Emily Birt 15-21, 20-22 and 20-22,

14-21.

Scores against 2nd: Mark Owen 21-11, 21-14 and 21-10, 21-20. Sally Davies 21-16, 21-13 and 21-19, 21-18. Mike Keeley 21-11, 21-19 and 21-14, 17-21, 14-21. Andy Castle 14-21, 16-21 and 12-21, 10-21. Emily Birt 15-21, 20-22 and 20-22, 14-21.

Veterans Division 3C

Hereford 2nd played host to Oxford 2nd resulting in a 2-7 loss. Single wins for Norman Merchant and Neville Meredith.

Scores: Norman Merchant 21-19, 22-20 and 11-21, 7-21. Neville Meredith 9-21, 11-21 and 21-10, 11-21, 21-10. John Hunt 9-21, 11-21 and 17-21, 16-21. Linda Ashman 20-22, 15-21. Mixed doubles Linda and Neville 13-21, 11-21. Men's doubles Norman and John 10-21, 12-21.

Junior Division 3C

Hereford played away against Devon 2nd and 3rd resulting in 1-9 and 0-10 defeats. A single win for Sam Lloyd and debut games for Lauren James. Alistair Dawson failed to convert 2 deuce games and Joe Davies failed to convert one.

Scores against 2nd: Sam Lloyd 9-21, 8-21 and 21-13, 16-21, 21-14. Joe Davies 11-21, 15-21 and 16-21, 11-21. Alistair Dawson 21-22, 22-24 and 13-21, 19-21. Jessica Davies 9-21, 9-21 and 8-21, 13-21. Lauren James 6-21, 10-21 and 5-21, 8-21. Scores against 3rd: Sam Lloyd 12-21, 14-21 and 21-19, 15-21, 12-21. Joe Davies 24-26, 18-21 and 7-21, 9-21. Alistair Dawson 13-21, 18-21 and 17-21, 13-21. Jessica Davies 17-21, 19-21 and 14-21, 15-21. Lauren James 11-21, 15-21 and 6-21, 9-21.

ISLE OF WIGHT by John Prean

Our county team continues to do us proud. After the opening sensation against Gloucester, we travelled to Guildford for a 7-3 victory against Surrey II, a major surprise, particularly to us.

We recalled the days when contingents from Surrey regularly raided our own open tournaments and invariably returned with the medals. I remember once, as a third division rookie, holding one of these giants to a third game, which brought me my first favourable notice in the local paper. Even with Carl Prean in the side few felt that an 'honourable' defeat would not be avoided, victory would prove impossible. That we won was largely due to Roger Hookey and Lucy Pointer, who defeated opponents above them on the ETTA ranking list - in

Roger's case some hundred places!

After all that, the home match against Berkshire II was expected to prove an even bigger hurdle, since Carl was absent at a European Cup match for his French Club which was played in Slovakia, arranged at short notice. However, the fortune, which has assisted us so far, again 'compensated' us for Carl's loss, since our opponents turned up one lady short. In terms of the match it was not an ideal situation and Lucy had to wait until the 9th contest before she could unpack her bat and for that she had to come all the way from Nottingham! She was, as always, worth waiting for, her dynamic hitting much in evidence although she sensationally lost the first game. These were anxious moments, as it was a match we just had to win. With Berkshire's Nos 1 and 2 (Martin Adams and Henry Gehlot) good for four wins and untroubled, the search was on for our four points which, added to the two defaults, would give us victory. With Jill Fothergill again in good form and Roger also in control against Guillaume Gien, the clincher was left to Alex Rorke, making his debut against Gien. It was to prove an exciting match which at times we could not see how he could win, but this is what he did by 21-18 in the third after leading 19-11. So the suspense continued all afternoon, until we won 6-4.

Promotion is now being seriously talked about by some, whilst others feel we have already done better than we had any right to expect.

Our home venue, the Carl Prean Centre (only 10 minutes from the hovercraft terminal), again looked great as a single-match venue and a decent crowd (by table tennis standards) had turned up and appaluse rewarded the good points. We await the next matches eagerly. It will be exciting to find out how far we can go.

We had an early top table clash when Newport Vics 'A' and Ryde 'A' met. The former have tended to win our title for some time, but this time Ryde reversed the score, winning 6-4 by virtue of a deuce-in-the-third doubles victory. This in itself reversed conventional wisdom, as Newport had Danny Burns (who had won three singles) and Chris Angus, a pair that had won the Island doubles title and Ryde had Alex Rorke. Defenders are not supposed to be effective doubles players, but the result proved otherwise.

I have already had a few phone calls and letters on my notes in the November issue of TT News concerning the 10 match playing system still used by most local leagues. My main points were that this is basically uninteresting, being too long, and that it discourages younger players whose parents feel quite reasonably that their

children have to be in school the next day and will be in better shape to profit from this, if they don't get to bed at midnight the previous night. Whilst a majority agreed with me, I had to point out to the rest that, although THEY obviously enjoyed the late nights, perhaps they should start thinking, in some cases for the first time in their lives, of the general good and future of the sport. In the main, however, whilst I enjoy hearing from old and new friends, I feel the issue deserves thorough debate in these columns. The local leagues remain the bedrock of the English game. That is what most of our members DO and often it is their only contact with the sport. Those of us who have appeared on the national stage tend to forget where the game is played most of the time and the health of the grass roots is essential to the national scene. I am not sure we have got things right at local level in terms of the changing times in which we live. If we have got it wrong, then action is needed and sooner rather than later.

LANCASHIRE by Tony Meredith

I must apologise for the absence of these notes in the previous few issues. To be really truthful, I have had little to get excited about and motivate me to put pen to paper. The local league scene is not generally ecstatic. The number of teams and players has dropped - again. To quote the Preston League - for example - it used to boast about ten divisions not so many years ago - it is now down to three and struggling at that. On the plus side, I think the County Championships is going through a slight revival. If anything there now seems to be more interest in County than British League. In the main, county matches are played over weekends with the prospect of lots of good table tennis for the travelling teams. On the other hand, the British League offers little table tennis in return for the devotion of a whole day by the players. It is the opinion of many that the competition is dying on its feet. The standard is dropping every season along with the teams.

JUNIOR TRIALS

The county held its seasonal junior trials with results as follows:- Junior Boys: 1. Andrew Rushton (exempt) 2. Louis Rosenthal (exempt) 3. Adam Bleakley 4. Iain Lindley 5. Paul Bramham 6. Nick Ball Junior Girls: 1. Katy Parker (exempt) 2. Rebecca Tong 3. Kim Barnard 4. Hannah Roberts Cadet Boys: 1. Adam Bleakley 2. Shweab Sadiq 3. David Rosenthal 4. Sheraz Butt Cadet Girls: 1. Cherith Graham 2. Sally Duncliffe.

County Rankings

On the senior list Preston ace Michael Malcolm has risen through the ranks and is now the no. 6 ranked senior player in Lancashire - a fantastic achievement. Lists as follows:- Men: 1. Andrew Eden 2. Andrew Rushton 3. Kevin Dolder 4. Steve Bevan 5. Chris Ford 6. Michael Malcolm

Women: 1. Andrea Holt 2. Katy Parker 3. Kim Roberts 4. Andrea Harrison

Veteran Men: 1. Phil Bowen 2. Keith Williams 3. Dave Newton 4. Brian Clements 5. Barry Crook 6. Ken Jackson

Veteran Women: 1. Brenda Bouey 2. Sylvia Graham 3. Mabel Neary 4. Alwyn Burrough.

County Results

The Vets first team made a sound start to the season with wins over Northumberland 8-1, Oxford 8-1 and Worcester 9-0. They were narrowly beaten by Hertfordshire 5-4. Keith Williams and Brenda Bouey were unbeaten throughout all four matches. The Vets second haven't fared too well, losing to Warwickshire 3-6, Yorkshire 3-6 and Durham 2-7.

COUNTY JUNIORS SELECTED FOR ENGLAND

Good news for the County - Lancashire's no. 1 junior boy Andrew Rushton and no. 1 junior girl Katy Parker were selected to represent England at senior level in European League matches, Andrew in Madrid and Katy in Bury St. Edmunds.

At the very young end, 12 year old Adam Bleakley certainly takes the eye. Adam is currently being coached by Alan Cooke and Denis Neale as part of the national training programme. He was very impressive at the recent Seasiders 3 Star, winning the top category against much older opposition. It is unwise to make predictions but on current progression he must have as much chance as anyone of becoming a top England player.

Seasiders Senior 3 Star

The first of the Seasiders Senior 3 Star graded events saw Eddie Smith of Northumberland pocket the £120 first prize by winning category one (groups of ten) with Lancashire's Kevin Dolder in second place. Smith beat Dolder 16 in the third and Dolder beat John Hilton two straight. Other results:- Category two men: Winner John Rankin, Runner-up, Louis Rosenthal. Category three men: Winner Matthew

Stanforth, Runner-up Ron Bennett. Category four men: Winner Keith Bird, Runner-up Paul Brandwood. Category five men: Winner Bernard Morris, Runner-up Alan Dunn. Category one women: Winner Karen Lockwood, Runner-up Alice Howard. Category two women: Winner Kim Barnard, Runner-up Katy Ingham.

Lancashire Junior 4 Star

The final of the junior boys band 1 was contested by the top two Lancashire boys, Andrew Rushton and Louis Rosenthal, with Andrew taking the title 11 in the third. Georgina Walker was the girls' winner with a straight games victory over Louise Durrant. Lancashire's Katy Parker went out at the quarter-final stage to Somerset girl Kate Steward.

Seasiders Junior 3 Star 24/10/99

Results as follows:- Category 1 boys: Winner Chris Gregory, Runner-up Paul O'Donnell. Category 2 boys: Winner Shweab Sadiq, Runner-up Paul O'Donnell. Category three boys: Winner Sheraz Butt, Runner-up Sam Shemmell. Category 1 girls: Winner Clara Howard, Runner-up Samantha Meredith. Category 2 girls: Winner Amy Burlison, Runner-up Elizabeth Dennett.

Seasiders Junior 3 Star 21/11/99

Results as follows:- Category 1 boys: Winner Adam Bleakley, Runner-up Neil Cartwright. Category 2 boys: Winner Aaron Beech, Runner-up Jonathan Crawford. Category 3 boys: Winner Simon Price, Runner-up Daniel Price.

Junior British League

East Lancashire Boys finished halfway in Division 3B after the first weekend with one win and one draw. Chris Hill was second in the division's averages with 8 wins from 10 played. The girls ended up in a similar position in Division 2 with one win and two drawn matches. Cherith Graham won 6 from 10 played.

Veterans' British League

East Lancashire first team found the going very tough in division one. They recorded just one victory over the weekend and will need some good results in the second weekend to avoid relegation. Brian Clements was the most successful player with 5 wins from 10 played. The second team also struggled in division five. They are propping up the rest after just one win. Charlie Ostapski was the top man with 4 wins

from 10.

Some good news to report from the Hilton Centre at Horwich. At the moment, the place is buzzing with lots happening every evening. The centre hosts the Junior National League, national training, local league matches and is a popular practice venue for top players in the area. Hyndburn TTC is still flourishing and like the Hilton they are also hosting the Junior National League along with county matches, British League, tournaments and local league play. With places like these there may be some light in the tunnel. Let's say goodbye to damp tennis huts.

LINCOLNSHIRE by Beryl Pickwell

CLWYD VETS v LINCS VETS

Lincs made the very long journey to Clwyd and suffered a 7-2 defeat. Played under extremely poor lighting conditions for a county match, Lincs struggled. Tight games went against Lincs, with Mick Corry losing 26-24 in the third to John Spence after leading 20-17 and Sue Allison and Mick Corry losing to Jill Whittaker and Bernard Carter 19 in the third in the mixed doubles. Pete Heath lost to Ian Woolley 19 & 20 and he and Steve Welch lost 15 & 21 against Woolley and Spencer in the men's doubles. Steve lost to John Spence 12 & 21. The only successes were Sue Allison's first victory of the season 7 & 12 against Jill Whittaker and Steve Welch's hard fought 20, -13, 14 win over Carter. As can be seen, if two of the three 'gamers' could have been reversed, the result would have been more respectable!

Last weekend saw the county senior team have a successful weekend when they completed 4 wins out of 4 against Suffolk 2; Norfolk 2; 8-2 against Hertfordshire and 10-0 against Northamptonshire.

Andy Wignall playing at number one for the men won his 8 rubbers without dropping a single game, a feat also performed by the number two lady, Nicola Massingham. They were ably supported by 6 wins each from Steve Brophy and Jane Strawson, 4 from Mark Donoghue, with the other two from Jim Brewster. This has placed Lincolnshire joint top of the table with Norfolk 1 and Warwickshire. All these counties have an identical rubber average with Norfolk clinching the top spot on games difference.

This has set up an exciting weekend's table tennis to be played at Hitchin in January when these counties will meet each other to contest the championship.

NORTHANTS by Dennis Millman

Congratulations are extended to Northants County Chairman and National Councillor, Ken Marchant, on being the deserved recipient of the ETTA's first ever Contribution to Coaching awards.

He collected the honour from former World Champion and ETTA President Johnny Leach as a reward for more than thirty years contribution to coaching on both the local and regional scene.

Ken remains the longest serving National Councillor and, in addition to being a National Coaching Committee member, he is Chairman of the Eastern Region Coaching Committee. He is also Vice-Chairman and Coaching Officer of the Wellingborough League and is still an active playing member.

Northants Juniors made a successful start to their County Championship campaign, with wins over both Notts 2nds and Durham and a battling draw against Cleveland.

Star of the show was Lucy Ellingham who won all six of her singles without dropping an end, while both Tim and Greg Yarnall took four from six, with Kenny Clarke losing just once in four encounters.

The result against Notts was never in doubt, but against Durham a winning margin wasn't achieved until Lucy took the ninth singles. Dickson Pang made his debut in this match and opened his account as did fellow newcomer Sophie Stewart.

Against Cleveland, Greg Yarnall, Clarke and then Ellingham put Northants three up before the opposition took four in a row only for Tim Yarnall and Ellingham to restore parity.

Unfortunately, the Veterans have been unable to recapture past glories and the side has been further depleted by the departure of Margaret Maltby who is set to join the Surrey ranks. Her initial replacement, Sue Moloney, excelled in a winning debut against Durham, but skipper Michael Edwards was the only other winner.

A similar story against Warwick 3rds with two wins from Edwards and one from Gordon Shaw, but it could have been so different if four close calls hadn't all gone Warwick's way.

In the local leagues the re-appearance of Graeme McKim at Northampton and former England cricketer and BBC Sports Personality of the Year, David Steele, at Kettering provided the main interest.

McKim included Andy Trott's conqueror Dave Welsman among his early victims, but it was the evergreen Steele who hit the headlines as he recaptured courage and determination reminiscent of his halcyon days in the greensward. His superb nat-trick against Thrapston's Ian Sclater, Geoff Atkinson and Phil Slade despatched last

year's runners-up to an early defeat.

Title-holders Higham Band lead in Kettering with Richard Elliott, Mark Nannery, Ryan Keates and Chris Handshaw all unbeaten, with Nannery recently becoming the tenth player to achieve 600 Premier Division singles successes.

In the Wellingborough Premier, the early absence of Andy Trott from the Higham Band outfit has enabled Old Grammarians A, fronted by Chris Gibbons and Michael Edwards, to make early running, with the Yarnall family's Westfield A in second place.

For once the Midlands Masters Veterans Championships, played at Kettering for what could prove the last time, was notable for some local successes with Margaret Maltby's triumph in the Over 50s main event the highlight. Gordon Shaw was also on the winner's rostrum in the Over 40s before falling to Herbert Neubauer in the final. Muriel Cox was another finalist, but in the Over 50s event she had to admit defeat against Lincolnshire's Sue Allison.

NORTHUMBERLAND by Pauline Long

The WENADE (UK) county veterans' team of 'Benny' Robertson, Geoff Salter, Rob Dodds, Jimmy Scope and Pauline Long had mixed fortunes in their first series of Division 1A matches at Walsall over the weekend of October 16th/17th.

They beat both Hertfordshire and Worcestershire 5-4 but lost to Lancashire 1-8 and Essex II 3-6. 'Benny' won four singles and also two mixed doubles with Pauline, but was unable to play either of his singles in the last match against Essex due to a pre-existing injury, which could have made this result a lot closer. Geoff also won four singles, and Rob two, with the two men's doubles victories coming from the combinations of Geoff/Rob and Rob/Jimmy.

At the end of the third round of matches, five teams including ourselves had won two and lost one, but unfortunately we were only fifth on sets won at that time. We were the first to leave after our last match was finished, so our current position will depend on how the other results went in the final round. We would probably need another win during the second weekend in February to ensure retaining Division 1A status.

The Junior Division 3B matches at Grantham on Saturday October 16th all resulted in defeats at the hands of Cleveland (3-7), Durham (4-6), Northamptonshire (4-6) and Lincolnshire II (1-9). However, there were some good performances by our young team of David Graham, Kevin Wilson, Steve Blacklock, Ellie de la Hunt and Ruth Swinburn (on debut). Had our No. 1 boy, Richard Chapman, been available, the

results could well have been even closer. Ellie was undoubtedly the outstanding player with seven wins out of a possible eight, and Kevin and Steve each won two, with Ruth getting one win in her first match at this level. David unfortunately had to play at No. 1 in Richard's absence and was unsuccessful on this occasion, but at 13 years old obviously has a bright future ahead of him.

Regular Friday night practice sessions for League standard players are now taking place at the new College Street Centre from 6pm to 9pm, with Saturday and Sunday afternoons also being made available by prior engagement with Jimmy Scope.

Both the WENADE (UK) Northumbria League Wilmott Cup and Rose Bowl representative teams qualified for the next stage of their respective competitions. The men's team of Andrew Wilkinson, Dave Godbold (both 2 in each match) and Ali Al-Kandari (1 in each match) finished top in their group matches at Sheffield by beating Hallam 5-1 and Nottingham 5-4. The women's team of Karen Newby (2), Lynne Herrington (2) and Pauline Long (1) finished as runners-up in their group matches at Grimsby with a 5-1 win over Grimsby but qualify for the next round even though they lost 0-5 to Nottingham.

The WENADE (UK) junior county team of David Graham, Kevin Wilson, Steve Blacklock, Ellie de la Hunt and Ruth Swinburn were due to travel to Grantham on December 11 for their second series of Division 3B fixtures against Cheshire II and Northamptonshire.

13 year old David, who plays for the Cramlington Colts team in Division 3 of the WENADE (UK) Northumbria League, was successful in the recent regional cadet U14 trials at Billingham. He finished fourth in this event and has therefore qualified for the national finals to be held later in the season. We shall be following the progress of this extremely promising junior with great interest.

The first half of the Northumbria League season has almost been completed at the time of writing, with the last week of December 13 being left free for the second round of the Team Handicap Knock-out Cup competition. In the Premier Division, the 'big three' of North Shields YMCA 'A', St. Gabriel's and Birtley 'A' are already well ahead of the chasing pack, while in the other divisions, the leaders are as follows: Division 1: Blaydon YC 'A'; Division 2: YMCA 'F'; Division 3: DSS 'B'; Division 4: YMCA 'K'.

Best wishes to all players, officials and friends for a healthy, happy and successful 2000.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE by Brian Jones

Successful clubs should be shouting about their achievements, it recognises the players, the organisers and encourages other clubs to work harder. Full marks, therefore, go to Huthwaite Table Tennis Club and to the Mansfield League for making sure that they get noticed. Stacey Beastall, Natasha Edwards and Frances Hallam are all playing tournaments and beginning to make an impression, and Kerry Radford is really pulling up trees, winning five trophies in the four tournaments she has entered. Congratulations also go to Neil Clifton for his work at Huthwaite. Wellow House School are also in the news, hanging on in 6th position in the British League Premier Division and also top of Division Two. Their twelve-year-olds have reached 4th in the National Junior League and they are joint top of the Worksop Cadet League. Recent events include a successful tournament (more later) and a coaching session by Alan Cooke, sponsored by the British League team.

The local leagues seem to be having mixed fortunes. Retford's league team entry is up for this season but the other leagues are slightly down. Worksop's experience is that older players are retiring faster than younger players are coming through into league teams and 'non-residents' are going back to their own local leagues. Change is inevitable of course but even I, working in a predominantly young club, reckon that retaining the enthusiasm of older players is at least important as recruiting youngsters so perhaps we all need to cast around the golf clubs or canteens and try to bring those older players back out of retirement. While I am spouting personal opinions, last season I had filled a whole computer disc with table tennis correspondence before the end of February. Two questions spring to mind - can those who manufacture the paperwork limit themselves to what is strictly necessary - can a lot more senior players come forward at club and league level and take on a small share of the work?

Some hard work on the telephone by John Wilde led to a much improved entry in the NSTTA Team Championships, held at Wellow. 13 teams (more than 50 children) entered and in some events, notably the Under 16 Boys, all the teams played to a good standard and would have been worthy representatives of the county in the next round. Congratulations go to Redlands Primary School (Worksop) both boys and girls, Valley Comprehensive (Worksop) U13 and U16 Boys, Ashfield School U16 Girls and Bircote and Harworth U19 Boys. Another tournament which went off well, nearly bursting at the seams in fact, was

first Wellow House 2 Star G.P. which had maximum entries in the U12 and cadet age groups, and Worksop players Lisa Ripley and Richard Wesley were among the medals. Enquiries for the remaining events are coming in from far and wide, including interest from a club in Stockholm!

Finally, some forthcoming events for your diary: 15 January - Wellow House School Cadet/U12/U10 Two Star Grand Prix II, 25 January - Notts. Schools' Individuals Championships, 12/13 February - Worksop Closed Championships.

OXFORDSHIRE by Avril Haynes

KARL AND JANET RETAIN TITLES

The annual tournament of the Oxford and District Table Tennis Association was held at the Oxford School on 27th November 1999. Despite a low turnout the standard of play was high.

In the men's singles Karl Bushell comfortably beat Marc Purcell 21-17, 21-13 in one semi-final and in the other one Tony Gorman beat Andy Packford 21-10, 21-18. The final was fiercely contested with Karl Bushell winning 22-20, 21-19.

Karl Bushell teamed up with Tony Gorman to win his second title of the day in the men's doubles, they defeated Ian and Andy Packford 21-13, 21-9, 21-8.

The women's singles was once again won by Janet Brown beating Sally Chambers 21-14, 21-14.

Other results

Division 2 Final:

Brian Hamilton bt Janet Brown 22-20, 22-24, 21-19

Division 3 Final:

Sally Chambers bt Greg Boone 21-13, 21-19

Division 4 Final:

Stewart Hamilton bt Paul Guest 19-21, 21-19, 21-10

VETERANS MIDLAND LEAGUE DIVISION 2

Shrewsbury 6

Oxford 4

Oxford travelled to Shrewsbury to play a newly promoted team. It was a hard fought match with Ian Arnold and Nigel Taylor both winning 2 singles each.

Walsall (A) 10 Oxford 0

Oxford lost a well fought match with 6 deuce games to another newly promoted team who proved too strong.

OXON YOUNGSTERS ON TOP FORM

At the Leamington Open Tournament the results were:

U14 Singles: Greg Boone bt Naomi Owen (Wales) 21-19, 21-19 in the final

U12 Singles: Sam Harrison bt Matthew Alderson (Wales) 21-15, 21-17 in the final

Beginners: Ben Shepherd bt David Morton (Birmingham) 12-21, 21-17, 21-14 in the final.

Improvers: Sam Harrison bt Luke Alderson (Wales) 21-12, 21-17 in the final

Gloucs 2 Star Cadet Tournament

Sam Harrison won the consolation event beating players from Essex, Glos, and Bucks before defeating Stephen Head from Kent 19-21, 21-15, 21-17 in the final. In the Band 2 competition Sam Harrison won the final against a much older opponent Jonathan Humphreys from Wiltshire 21-17, 20-22, 28-26 after being 13, -19 down in the final game.

JUNIOR COUNTY MATCH

Oxon drew with Kent III despite the top two girls being unavailable. John Camilleri and Kevin Cruickshank both won two singles each backed up by Ashley Cox who won the last rubber to clinch the draw. Young Sarah Howkins made a promising debut and will surely win in the future.

JUNIOR MIDLAND LEAGUE

In a very close encounter Oxford lost 4-6 to Gloucester. Greg Boone won two singles and both Sam Harrison and Stewart Hamilton picked up a singles each.

Veterans County

Oxons 1st veterans team who won Division 2 last year, travelled to Walsall for the first set of games in division 1A. They performed with honour and great spirit, winning two matches out of four.

Oxon(I) 5 Essex(2) 4

Two singles wins from Eddie Herrity and one each from Karl Bushell and Janet Brown together with a men's doubles from Karl Bushell and Nat Richardson secured the victory.

Oxon(1) 1 Lancashire(1) 8

A men's doubles win by Karl Bushell and Nat Richardson was the only success against a powerful Lancashire side.

Oxon(1) 3 Cheshire(2) 6

Karl Bushell won a singles and the mens doubles with Nat Richardson. Janet Brown

and Eddie Herrity won the mixed doubles. Oxon lost three mens singles 19-21 in the third set so were lucky not to get a victory.

Oxon(1) 5 Hertfordshire(1) 4
Nat Richardson was the star winning two singles and the doubles with Karl Bushell. Eddie Herrity and Karl Bushell both won one singles to help secure a victory.

SOMERSET by Martin Rumary

Two rounds of county matches have taken place since the last report with varying success for the home teams.

The Vets 1 remain unbeaten and therefore hopeful of honours at the end of the season while the seniors have won their first match and the juniors have now lost one.

At Worcester, the seniors found the home second team too strong for them. Andrew Rumary and Mark Morley picked up the wins while fourteen year old Naomi Wilson made a very creditable senior debut.

The match at home to Avon provided them with their first win. Mike Hurley did exceptionally well winning his two after a late call-up, and Naomi Wilson won her first senior games to go with Christine Cowell's two and Andrew Rumary's one.

The juniors had a very comfortable win over a young Herefordshire side but found Powys at home a much tougher proposition.

The Thomas brothers from Powys provided stiff opposition and Phil Tillotson did well to pick one of his wins against the younger brother.

With Naomi Wilson playing for the seniors the girls had a difficult day as well although Alison Holloway proved too good for one of the seniors.

A win at Gloucestershire where Brian Reeves had an unexpectedly barren day and a 7-2 win against Worcs 2nds leaves the Vets 1st team looking forward to what could be a 'crunch' game with Wiltshire, with high hopes.

The Vets 2nds entertained Hereford 3rds with great success by winning an 8-1 margin.

SENIORS:

Worcs 2nds 8 Somerset 2
(A. Rumary 1, M. Morley 1, R. Mullis 0, C. Cowell 0, N. Wilson 0)
Somerset 7 Avon 3
(A. Rumary 1, R. Mullis 0, M. Hurley 2, C. Cowell 2, N. Wilson 2)

JUNIORS:

Hereford 0 Somerset 10
(B. Lewis 2, D. Strutt 2, P. Tillotson 2, A. Holloway 1, C. Howe 0)
Somerset 4 Powys 6
(D. Strutt 0, B. Lewis 1, P. Tillotson 2, A.

Holloway 1, C. Howe 0)

VETS 1:

Glos 4 Somerset 5
(B. Reeves 0, J. Musselwhite 2, J. Crabtree 0, S. Dark 1, men's doubles 1, mixed doubles 1)
Worcs 2nds 2 Somerset 7
(B. Reeves 2, J. Musselwhite 1, J. Crabtree 1, S. Dark 1, men's doubles 1, mixed doubles 1)

VETS 2:

Somerset 8 Hereford 3rds 1
(M. Withyman 2, A. Stone 2, R. Deakin 1, W. Price 1, men's doubles 1, mixed doubles 1)

In the Slovak Open recently, Kate Steward teamed up with Georgina Walker to take the bronze medal in the cadet doubles, overcoming some useful pairings on the way.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE by Alan Dunn

Congratulations must go to the two new rudders steering the Yorkshire counties into the new Millennium. Alan Lowe (Regional Coaching Chairman) and Richard Hudson (Regional Coaching Administrator) will head the new Regional Coaching Committee, additional members will be nominated shortly. One of the group's main tasks will be to support our new RDO Wayne Marsh in all coaching matters.

South Yorkshire can welcome two newly qualified Level 2 coaches, Stuart Barnett and Robert Oldale. John Galloway from the Barnsley League is our first officer to hold the new Table Tennis Development Officer's Silver Award. Lee Walker (SCORPIONS) has passed his BT TOPS AWARD. His school Greasbrough Juniors receives a sports specific table tennis bag containing bats, balls, nets and literature invaluable to the up and coming table tennis coach. Bramley Sunnyside (Rotherham) coach, Mick Barlow, also holds the TOPS award. I recently helped Mick deliver a table to the Sunnyside School, the reaction the youngsters in the school yard answers the question "why do we coach?". Dozens of kids with that excited look in their eyes, everyone with a "Hi Mick !" or "Is that for us?", even the dinner ladies looked pleased to see us.

After the first two Junior National League days it's looking like Abbeydale will join Rotherham Scorpions in the British League, the carrot for winning the competition. Ben Wall, Liam Blakemore, Gareth Haywood, Stephen Roberts and Ben Fishburn finding the only serious threat coming from Ormesby.

Positions in the regional trials held in Hull were:

Cadet Boys

1st Simon Noutch
Stephen Denny
Andrew Woodhead
Nathan Hinks
Richard Moss
Stephen Roberts
Michael Bush
Ben Barlow

Cadet Girls

Rachel Baldi
Helen Stone
Amanda Bell
Nicola Shepherd
Jenny Smith
Charlotte Stamp

Junior Boys

Ian Parker
Matthew Heptinstall
James Houghton
Ben Wall
Stephen Denny
Andrew Woodhead
Liam Blakemore
Gareth Haywood

Junior Girls

Zoe Cheesman
Andrea Baldi
Amanda Bell
Helen Stone
Joanne Somers
Helen Reynolds

In the County Championships the juniors finished in second place in Division 2a. Results of the second weekend were: Nottinghamshire 6 S. Yorks 4, S. Yorks 8 Warwickshire 2, S. Yorks 8 Essex 2nd 2. The performances were James Houghton W5 L1, Andrea Baldi W5 L1, John Cade W4 L1, Ben Wall W4 L1, Hanna Jenkinson W2 L4, Clive Guest was the NPC.

Sheffield's Shaun Alvey competed in the Spanish Open Championships for the disabled in La Carina; Shaun would like to thank Sheffield City Council who backed him with a grant of £500. His international debut earned him a bronze medal and 120 World ranking points.

Our County Vets side suffered their first defeat of the season against Staffordshire going down 6-3, Bill Grant and Pat Thorley and a combination of the two taking the points.

South Yorkshire Senior County Table Tennis

The County team of Andrew Horsfield, Mark Short, Stephen Horsfield, Joanne Drew and Andrea Baldi are currently leading the table unbeaten after playing five matches over the weekend of 13th and 14th November, with Andrew and Stephen Horsfield remaining unbeaten.

The team is two points clear of nearest rivals Yorkshire with the remaining two matches being against weaker counties of

Cumbria and Warwickshire 2nd. The county is now in pole position and in only its third year of existence it's looking promising that we could gain promotion.

South Yorkshire 6 Yorkshire 4

Match of the weekend, all hinged on the men's matches as the Yorkshire women were both in the top 50 in England. The men played to their full potential with both Andrew Horsfield and Mark Short inflicting the first defeats of the weekend on Richard Smith, the Yorkshire No. 1. Stephen Horsfield was involved in both the key matches, firstly coming from game down and 18-12 in the second game to beat Simon Pugh (Yorkshire No. 3). In his final match with the score at 5-4, he played against David Smith (Yorkshire No. 2) saving a match point by playing a trademark backhand winner. The pressure then finally got to David Smith when he faulted on his service to give Stephen Horsfield his first match point which he took. The wins came from Andrew Horsfield, Mark Short and Stephen Horsfield all winning two each.

Other matches:

SouthYorks bt Cleveland 9-1, bt Lancs2nds 7-3, bt Cheshire 6-4, bt Leics 2nds 8-2.

SUFFOLK by Andrew Doshier

Excellent news from Stowmarket Table Tennis Club is that they have won a grant of £4,252 under the Millennium Festival Awards for All. The grant is to be used to purchase special table tennis tables which can be adjusted to the size of the player, this will help especially young players who are barely able to see above the table top. The tables are to be used in primary schools, Stowmarket Middle School and the club itself.

The club is already working in three primary schools and they will add another next season. Suffolk county coach Peter Avenell and two other ETTA qualified coaches, Derek Ames and Geoff Brook, are those involved.

As Development Officer, I have written to a number of schools asking them if they would be interested in seeing a demonstration of top table tennis players, with the hope of recruiting interested youngsters to coach and hopefully set up a Woolwich League, the aim is for this to be a stepping stone to local leagues and so on. I have written to nine in all and will be following up shortly, the exhibition and league set up will hopefully take place early in the new year.

The County Championships were held earlier than normal on 20th November at Stowupland High School. At the last

moment county men's no. 1 Phil Logsdon was unable to play and in the women's Claire Lowe and Sarah Davidson were absent.

For the men's, women's and restricted singles there was a group format, with the two top players going through to the main draw.

Mens Singles:

Quarter-finals: Paul Cicchelli beat Charles Fulcher 12 & 10, Ian Brown beat Andrew Holmes 17, -15, 21, Tim Avis beat Kieran Hills 15 & 14, Andrew Doshier beat Richard Hutchinson 18 & 15

Semi-finals: Paul Cicchelli beat Ian Brown 10 & 17, Andrew Doshier beat Tim Avis 19 & 18

Final: Paul Cicchelli beat Andrew Doshier 22 & 14

Women's Singles:

Semi-finals: Rebecca Sparkes beat Aimee Sparkes 10 & 9, Vicky Gray beat Claire Emmerson 10 & 14

Final: Rebecca Sparkes beat Vicky Gray (score unknown).

Restricted final: Andrew Doshier beat Charles Fulcher 21 & 8

Men's Doubles: final: Richard Hutchinson & Gary Bloomfield beat Paul Cicchelli & Andrew Doshier 16 & 18

Mixed Doubles: Tim Avis & Rebecca Sparkes beat Richard Hutchinson & Aimee Sparkes 2-0 (score unknown)

Under 21 Singles: Rebecca Sparkes beat Chris Brook 12-19, 21-11

Consolation Singles: Gary Bloomfield beat Colin Baxter 2-0 (score unknown)

Around the local leagues, in the Sudbury Premier two man invitation tournament round 5 was played on 11th November. The Sudbury Lardy boys ended the Ipswich Marauders 100% record by winning 3-2, they couldn't stop Ian Brown though maintaining his personal unbeaten run as he beat both Bob Heleby and Paul Fuller. The Godolphin Red Bulls aided by a maximum from Richard Hutchinson and a deuce in the third win for Richard Ingle over Tim Avis, beat Sudbury Cream 3-2. Bury Bullets beat Suffolk Stowaways 4-1 where Lee Balaam registered a win over Steve Annison, Paul Cicchelli unbeaten. In the other match Lee Daines beat Rob Cushen for their rubber in a 4-1 loss to Sudbury Vibe.

In the Ipswich League, Britannia A with Ian Brown, Andrew Doshier, Charles Fulcher and Andrew Holmes have soared in front and their 8-2 win over St. Margarets A which include Richard Hutchinson, Gary Bloomfield, Norman Atkins and Keith Baskett emphasised their championships credentials. Elsewhere, Britannia Eagles will

now be struggling as 'it' girl Claire Lowe and Gavin Bloomfield are both injured for a while. However, Electric Asteroids are making steady progress and have moved up to 2nd place though they have played more games than other teams. Ipswich Hospitals are into third position and have two of the hardest players to beat in the league, pimpled players Rex Manning and John Tallent plus Simon Ball, all in the top half of the players' leading averages, Rex Manning scoring an early season win over Andrew Doshier.

Good news is that the Premier Top 16 invitation tournament which was held with success last year will be held again early in 2000. Britannia treasurer Maurice Lowe has pledged £250 prize money, with the winner getting £150 !! Last year the event was shown on Anglia TV Sport and featured a whole page in the regional newspaper, criteria being that players are of National League quality. Invitations will be extended to winners of local leagues' closed championships in the Anglia region and some from the surrounding areas, plus the possibility of qualification or invitation alone.

In the National League, Britannia Ipswich have finished the first half of the season as leaders of Division Three South. By beating Crusaders 10-0 in their last match they leapfrogged Byng Hall on games for and against. With both teams on 12 points they play each other in the first match of the second half. No doubt both sides will play their strongest teams possible. Horsham III are third with 10 points and can still play a vital part. The title appears to be between these three teams.

Elsewhere in Suffolk, De Vere Sudbury, who have been struggling all year to field teams, lost in both Division 2 & 3 South. A notable highlight was Dave Cole's 18 & 12 victory over Sean Gibson, of Division Two's Team Peniel. John Holland was also taken to three by the same player!

Word is that the Yellow Dot Sports Club home of Sudbury table tennis, is facing closure. It would be a shame in light of the hard work it took to get the club established if it all came to an end. Hopefully, a resolve can be found. The club seems to be thriving, what with the coaching of youngsters plus the Thursday fortnightly invitation league, which has brought a lot of the region's best players together.

The county second team of Tim Avis, Ian Brown, Paul Davison, Aimee Sparkes and Janet Fairs played four games in Nottinghamshire in its first county weekend recently.

They lost to Lincolnshire 9-1, 8-2 to Warwickshire, beat Norfolk 11 8-2 and drew with Hertfordshire 5-5. The most encouraging result for Suffolk was Ian

Brown's excellent deuce in the third win over Michael Boardman of Herts. After this series of games, Suffolk II are mid-table.

I can now be contacted on mobile 07818 418 291.

SUSSEX by John Woodford

An unbeaten performance of three victories for Sussex at Cippenham in the Premier Division of the County Championships has raised hopes that we can retain the title.

Ritchie Venner has had a worrying start to the campaign, losing some matches in the British League to players well below him on the national list. But he has now recovered well and was undefeated at Slough, although Sussex had to fight hard to beat Hertfordshire and Kent, both by 6-4.

Adrian Moore scored four wins and found himself playing for Sussex with this wife Claire playing for Kent! The battle between Rose Rainton and Claire Moore was a classic, the verdict going -18, 20, 20 to Rose.

Sussex are now tying for first place with Middlesex at the top of the Premier table. The second stage takes place in January at Grantham - a number of exciting clashes are certain.

Gareth Mann (Hastings) and Samantha Simpson (Arundel) have been named as the two top juniors in Sussex. Dynamic junior organiser Peter Baldwin has now listed 30 boys and 25 girls - the largest lists ever produced.

Here are the top 15 in each list:

Boys:

1. Gareth Mann (Hastings) 2. John Wilson (Guestling) 3. Michael Simpson (Arundel) 4. Ian Hussey (Crawley) 5. Neil Brown (Chichester) 6. Luke Bridge (Hastings) 7. Garth McGovern (Bognor Regis) 8. Lloyd Crathern (Worthing) 9. Gary Wilson (Worthing) 10. Nathan Derby (Hastings) 11. Elliott Crathern (Worthing) 12. Luke Tearall (Arundel) 13. Michael Welling (Ditchling) 14. John Kirkwood (Rye) 15. Stuart Ayling (Chichester).

Girls:

1. Samantha Simpson (Arundel) 2. Claire Hodger (Hastings) 3. Gina Rogers (Hastings) 4. Sharon Roberts (Burgess Hill) 5. Polly Duncan (Brighton) 6. Sarah Clarke (Hastings) 7. Tracey Zimmatore (Forest Row) 8. Samantha Monk (Haywards Heath) 9. Joanna Clarke (Hastings) 10. Sonia Gough (Hastings) 11. Linda King (Worthing) 12. Shayma Osman (Hastings) 13. Hannah Osman (Hastings) 14. Rachel Wilmot (Horsham) 15. Julia McFarlane (Wisborough Green).

WARWICKSHIRE by Caroline Williams

NICOLA COMES TO SPA

England number one Nicola Deaton from Derbyshire gave a stunning exhibition to a jam-packed audience of over 120 in Leamington Spa in November, her father Colin Deaton acting as compere.

First step up was leading Free Church player Mark Woolerton, whose team currently leads Division 1 but he was despatched 21/11. Earl Sweeney (St. Georges) was the next challenger but he only just made double figures falling 21/10. Kay Nason (Free Church), last season's Junior Girls' champion and just making her way in senior competitions, had a try but fell to Nicola's might 21/9.

At this point, Bert Banks from St. Georges stood up from the audience to pick up the gauntlet. Discarding his jumper and tie to play in an ordinary trousers and shoes he and Nicola produced an amazing and amusing match. The umpire had a hard task to keep pace as Nicola first changed Bert's borrowed bat to one of frying-pan size and then, to progressively smaller bats, the final one hardly bigger than the ball. Bert's legendary good humour continued with lots of asides from players, umpire and compere before Nicola finished 21/11 up.

Back in the more serious play, Jon Williams (The Carpenters) was sent off 21/11. Most taxing of Nicola's matches was when her opposition was Coventry League champion Adrian Pilgrim (Phoenix). Even so Nicola was able to display her formidable play to run out winner 21/14.

Finally, Nicola played Kelly Sibley (Free Church) who Nicola now coaches. Leamington and Warwickshire Cadet champion, sponsored by Wright Hassall Solicitors, looks a most exciting prospect for the future. Currently ranked 4 under 12, she recently reached the semi-final of the Cleveland 4-star where she was watched by the England selectors. For fun some of Nicola and Kelly's game was played on a table less than two feet in size. The final score was 21/16 to Nicola, though the jokes made the score irrelevant.

Many thanks must go to Lynn and John Bolitho for organising the evening and to the Lillington Club for allowing the event to be staged in such a relaxed and social surroundings. It was an evening thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

And on to the Nationals...

Warwickshire players did well at the West Midlands Regional Trials held in November at Warwick. Star of the show was Leamington's own Kelly Silbey. Aged only 11, she was nominated for the Cadet Girls and the Junior Girls. She lived up to her

promise and outplayed not only her own peer group but also girls much older. In the Cadets from a field of 11 she finished in top spot. In the Junior Girls she finished in equal second place with two other Warwickshire girls, Samantha Meredith (Leamington) and Claire Baker (Birmingham). None could touch Worcestershire's Kate Hughes but all four go on to the Nationals in January in Cheltenham.

For the boys, it was Birmingham's chance to shine with Greg Baker showing his worth at Cadet and Junior level. He is joined by Leigh Bradford, Simon Gleeson and Gareth Hayward (juniors) and Tom Madeley (cadet).

YORKSHIRE by Rea Balmford

Many participants in other sports, among them professionals who are at or near the top of the tree, also play table tennis in addition to their chosen sport, and it has recently been brought to my notice that two leading lights in other fields - Yorkshire C.C.C skipper David Byas and boxer Nasseem Hamed - both played in the Scarborough League before becoming top professionals in their respective sports.

And yet another young man looking to make his way in the 'square ring' - Paul Ingle - has recently been playing in the same league - it must be something in the air up on the north east coast.

The feet-hand-eye co-ordination obviously transfers to different fields, for looking back two men immediately come to mind from the broad acres - Len Browning, a soccer 'pro' with both Sheffield United and Leeds United and a regular player in the Leeds and Harrogate Leagues, and Mike Fletcher, the ever consistent former Hull K.R. full back, now with Hunslet, who, as a junior, had the ability to go to the top had the time been available for practice.

Few reputations were enhanced when the junior side opened their programme at Widnes and, following three defeats, the county's youngsters have a mountain to climb when the second series of matches comes round in the new year. Best for the White Rose side were Emily Dearing (Hull) and Simon Nutch (Leeds), both of whom broke even with three wins from six outings.

Dewsbury are making full use of their new centre with all the teams in the two divisions of the Dewsbury League using it as a base, while it is also home for both the town's Yorkshire League sides, a busy coaching centre, a 'half-way house' for some British League clashes and, surprisingly, occasionally hosts fixtures for 'big brother' league sides.

Finally, I hear on the grapevine that Wakefield is beginning to 'buzz' - hopefully

more on this in the new year.

Unfortunately, we had no space to include Mick Strode's response to readers comments on the ETTA website in the December issue, but we do so now.

DEVELOPING THE ETTA WEBSITE by Mick Strode

It's good to see that the website is being looked at, and with appreciation. It's also good to get constructive criticism.

Currently about 250 people a day are hitting the website with the British League pages being the most looked at. Once I can persuade the Americans in charge of the host computer to activate the Grand Prix data I'm sure that will register many hits as well.

Going through some of Mike Prior's comments, several of his requested pages are already there - the events calendar has been reported as being the most comprehensive one around, featuring not only British but European and ITTF events. This, however, is a large file and takes a while to load. It will shortly be broken down into calendar months which will load far more quickly and allow more information to be included (e.g. what events are to be played in tournaments - assuming of course that the information is given to me!).

All British League events have their results rapidly displayed on the web - those featuring weekends (e.g. Women's BL) have the details and a report downloaded almost as soon as play finishes each day. Obviously, this can't take place for the normal British League where play takes place around the country, but even so, results and latest tables are usually available Monday evening.

Major international competitions generally set up their own dedicated website generally with pages in English. Provided I am told about it, a link is immediately set up to the relevant site to enable people to see how such a competition is progressing. This was recently done for the European Junior and World Individual Championships. Personally, I consider it to be a waste of resources to duplicate this readily available information on our site. Similarly, there are very few international links on our Links Page - as it says in the note at the top if you want hundreds of links use the link to Terry Canup's site where an almost complete set of links for the world's table tennis sites can be found.

Setting up a 'Chat Centre' where people can air their views on various topics is an item to be looked at shortly - a few people have suggested it.

All press releases distributed by the ETTA are placed on the 'News' page and other reports are put on the relevant pages - admittedly this doesn't occur very often - if the items don't reach me I can't do anything with them. This latter statement I'm afraid applies particularly to the County Championships results which are driving me mad - it is almost impossible to get the details from the Administrator although I do get the results which are telephoned to the office (which ought to be ALL of them). The current County Championships pages are certainly short of several results.

Very shortly it should be possible to download entry forms, especially those for the ETTA events such as the Grand Prix Open Tournaments. These will probably be available by the time this is printed. I also hope to be able to give a contact for all tournaments so that people can send off for their entry forms.

For the future I hope to start adding a bit of colour to the proceedings by adding photos - personally I think the reports on the 3rd European Veteran Championships and the British League weekends are greatly enhanced by the addition of photos. I also hope to switch from the traditional ETTA logo to the new one and also get some animation on the main page. Unfortunately it all takes time and I'm not full time on the website! My wife already starts complaining that "...it's 1am - how much longer are you going to be?".

Another page shortly to be launched will be an e-mail directory. Anyone connected with table tennis will be able to have their e-mail address added to this page together with their function i.e. player, coach, league official, etc.

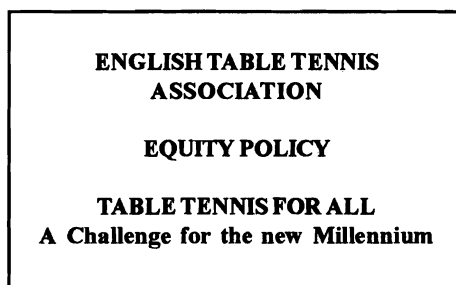


Table tennis is one of the world's great sports - as an Olympic and Paralympic sport it embraces the Olympic ideal - and is played and enjoyed by millions of people in every continent, irrespective of race, gender, disability or age.

In England, the birthplace of the sport, a philosophy and practice of inclusion and opportunity for all was established which remains enshrined in the Constitution of the English Table Tennis Association (ETTA, the national governing body) to this day.

The ETTA, however, recognises that these principles need continual reinforcement in an increasingly diverse society; it is fully committed, therefore, to implementing an Equity Action Plan and programme of awareness which will ensure that our sport remains open and welcoming to all who wish to play, spectate, coach, officiate or work in table tennis.

The challenge facing clubs, leagues, county, regional and national structures is to reflect the rich diversity of our communities and embrace the principles of equity and inclusion being advocated by Sport England and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

The ETTA is entirely in accord with Sport England's equity objectives and will actively promote participation within key groups such as young people, women, disabled people, and black ethnic minorities.

The ETTA is proud to present its Equity Policy but recognises that action will always speak louder than words.

Every club, therefore, is strongly encouraged to proudly display the ETTA Equity Policy and

to implement the principles of equity and fair play as normal club practice.

THE POLICY:

The ETTA will ensure:

- Ongoing commitment at all levels to work towards equity through the annually reviewed action plan.

- Table tennis in England is open and welcoming to everyone.

- Ongoing training for staff, officials and volunteers which addresses equity issues is provided.

- The development and distribution of equity guidance notes for use at club, league, county, national level and for other organisations as appropriate.

- All people are treated fairly.

- Any known or perceived inequalities receive urgent and immediate attention.

BRITISH LEAGUE PRIZE FUND FOR SEASON 1999-2000

PREMIER DIVISION

First place	-	£2000
Second place	-	£1000

FIRST DIVISIONS

First place	-	£900
Second place	-	£450

SECOND DIVISIONS

First place	-	£500
Second place	-	£250

THIRD DIVISIONS

First place	-	£400
Second place	-	£200

EUROPEAN TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS, BREMEN, GERMANY, 21 APRIL - 1 MAY 2000

Apparently, the venue and presentation will be fantastic!

For tickets contact:

Ticket Service, Centre Bremen,
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Germany
(Tel. 0049 421353637, Fax. 0049 42135363839)
e-mail: ticketorder@tsc.de Internet: http://
www.tsc.de)

For hotels contact:

BTZ Bremer Touristik,
Zentrale GMBH,
Findorffstr. 105,
28215 Bremen, Germany
(Tel. 0049 18051011030, Fax: 0049 4213080089,
e-mail: btz@bremen-tourism.de Internet: http://
/www.bremen-tourism.de)

CIPPENHAM UNDER 9/10/11 1 STAR OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS (24.10.99)

In the three years that have passed since the opening of the Cippenham Table Tennis Centre, the club based there has pushed forward the boundaries in the development of tournaments aimed at the youngest age groups. From the success of the junior and cadet opens which ran successfully in its first season was born an Under 10/12 Open. This was then the only event of its kind in the country apart from the National Championships although it is pleasing to note that others have now copied the idea. From this came an idea of an U9/10/11 Open which attracted a fantastic entry of 144 from 81 players last season and spawned a Young Players' Festival in the summer which included events for the U-8s. Cippenham Table Tennis Club is determined to lead at the cutting edge of the development of competitive (and social) activities for the very young. The second U9/10/11 was played on 24th October on twelve tables and once again attracted a first class entry from all over the south and midlands.

Cippenham's own James Milton won the Under-11 Boys' Singles, the blue ribbon event. The home player was never troubled during the day in a repeat of his victory in the same event at the Cippenham Young Players' Summer Festival in June. Milton, however, was only one of several successful players from the home club which again demonstrated its prowess in the younger age groups.

Milton's opponent in the final of the U11 event was Kent's Nick Chatfield, the only visiting player to make the semi-final stage at which point Milton beat Joe Misseldine while Chatfield defeated Gavin Evans. The presence of Myles Evans and Nicholas Mellish in the quarter-finals meant that Cippenham provided five of the last eight players.

These same players dominated also the younger events with Chatfield taking away the U10 Boys' Singles after defeating Gavin Evans in the final while Misseldine beat Myles Evans in the U9 final. Once again, Chatfield was the only visitor to reach the semis of the U10 where Myles Evans and Misseldine were the beaten players, and George Bone and Edward Flower completed a Cippenham quintet in the quarter-finals.

The U9 Boys' Singles also had three Cippenham players in the semi-finals but in this event it was Myles Evans who beat his younger brother Gavin, and Misseldine who progressed before the latter won the final in fine style.

Kent was the most successful county in the girls' event with Anusha Severeratne saving five match points in the second game of the U11 final to defeat her county colleague, Gemma Yarnley, while the latter's sister Laura won the U9 round robin. In the U10 Girls' Singles, Cippenham's Rebecca Tweedy reached the final before losing out to Sarra Wong.

The most outstanding display of young talent was demonstrated by Gavin Evans. Incredibly, Evans reached the semi-finals of all three events, progressing to the final of the U10 - and all that at just six years of age! He will surely follow in his brother Bradley's footsteps and become an England champion in due course.

Results:

U11BS:
James Milton (Bu) bt Nick Chatfield (K)
16, 11
U11GS:
Anusha Severeratne (K) bt Gemma Yarnley (K)
-11, 22, 14
U10BS:
Nick Chatfield (K) bt Gavin Evans (Bu) 16, 15
U10GS:
Sarra Wong (E) bt Rebecca Tweedy (Bu)
15, 11
U9BS:
Joe Misseldine (Ox) bt Myles Evans (Bu)
11, 15
U9GS:
1st Laura Yarnley (K); 2nd Rachel Jamieson (E)
U11BCon:
Edward Brown (E) bt Joseph Hurdley (Sp)
13, 20
U11GCon:
Caroline Linz (Sy) bt Laura Yarnley (K)
16, 19
U10BCon:
Matthew Tucker (Bu) bt Dorian Robertson (So)
17, 12
U10GCon:
Felicy Love (E) bt Rachel Jamieson (E)
8, 14
U9BCon:
Billy Deville (E) bt George Bone (Ox)
19, -9, 17
UpGCon:
1st Nicola Brown (E); 2nd Nicola Misseldine (Ox)

Forthcoming Events at Cippenham..

March 11 - Cippenham Cadet 3 Star Open (Ken Phillips - 01628 636664) - please note the change of date to avoid a clash with the ETTA National Cadet Masters which is at Cippenham

May 14th - Cippenham Under 12 2 Star Open (Ken Phillips - 01628 636664) - please note change of date.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE UNDER 14 2 STAR OPEN TOURNAMENT

IMPACT starlets Alice Walker (Under 11) and Melanie Farquhar (Under 10) playing against much older girls made big impressions at the Gloucestershire Under 14 2 Star Tournament where there was an open singles and a Band 1 event for the top players.

In the Open Singles groups Melanie Farquhar qualified by beating Natasha Lee (Essex) 21-8, 21-11, Emma Davenport (Glos) 21-6, 21-8 and Sara Smith (Essex) 21-13, 21-15. Her only loss was to the no. 2 seed Helen Parton (Devon) 16-21, 13-21. She progressed to the quarter-finals losing out to the eventual winner Lucy Weil (Essex) 31-21, 14-21. A splendid performance for Melanie who has five years to go in this age group.

Alice Walker had a tough group which included Lucy Weil and although she had one spectacular win, did not go through. She then played in the consolation singles where with devastating

attacking play beat Suzi Liniker (Essex) 24-22, 21-12 in the quarter-final and Joanna Hunt (Essex) 19-21, 21-18, 30-28 in the semi-final. In the final Alice played Claire Groome (Essex) and convincingly won the title 21-14, 21-12. A fine result for Alice Walker who has four years to go in this age group.

The Band 1 event was next and Alice Walker produced incredible performances. Firstly she played a semi-finalist and no. 2 seed from the open singles Helen Parton (Essex) and won 15-21, 21-18, 21-18. She then played another semi-finalist Celina Bell (Glos) who had eliminated in that event Kerry Mathews who had been no. 1 seed. Alice, after a shaky start, demolished this girl 5-21, 21-19, 21-12. She followed this up by beating Ellen Turner (Dorset) 15-21, 21-14, 21-12. Alice's wonderland ended in the semi-final where she just lost to Alpa Jobanputra (Wilts). However, the series of wins against much older and higher ranked players gave notice to all that Alice Walker has 'arrived' and she gained a significant number of ranking points to improve her position at no. 13 in the England Under 12 rankings.

Melanie Farquhar did well in her Band 1 group going close against Lucy Weil, the open winner. She had a spectacular match against Stella Davis (Glos) and won 21-17, 22-24, 21-17. Melanie and Stella are the same age and this result puts Melanie Farquhar firmly in top place as the No. 1 Under 10 girls in the country. The days results consolidates Melanie's no. 11 position in the England Under 12 rankings.

Alan Dines stated that he was delighted at the incredible rate of progress of the girls with IMPACT. The new starlets Alice Walker and Melanie Farquhar are following closely behind superstar Lisa Calcutt who is now in the Under 13 age group. IMPACT believe the time will come when all three will play in a National Team together.

TORCH TROPHY FOR KEN MARCHANT

by Gail McCulloch

On December 6th, along with Peter Hirst and representatives of many other governing bodies, I gathered at Queens Club in London, in the presence of HRH Prince Philip, for the presentation of the Torch Trophy Trust Awards.

The Torch Trophy Trust recognises and rewards volunteers from all sports for their outstanding contribution to sport in the United Kingdom. It was, therefore, tremendous that Ken Marchant was being presented with a Torch Trophy for his work in table tennis.

The original torch that was used in 1948 to light the Olympic flame when the Olympics were last held in Britain, was displayed and Ken received an engraved replica of it - although somewhat smaller!

The sports represented were varied, with recipients travelling from Scotland and Ireland as well as England. All citations showed great contributions to sport in a voluntary capacity. Ken's work as a coach and administrator at both local, regional and national level was recognised and even his former footballing skills were mentioned!

HRH Prince Philip applauded the magnificent contribution of thousands of years of sporting expertise that was being honoured before he was photographed with all recipients. He then spoke informally to each of them and their guests. Our conversation was a debate as to who was the oldest - Ken or Prince Philip! Other sporting stars such as Jimmy Hill, John Motson and Christine Janes were also present to honour the recipients.

Everyone present was party to a splendid buffet and was given a Christmas present of a cashmere scarf.

It was a wonderful evening and a great honour for Ken which he richly deserves. I am sure that Ken will remember the occasion with great fondness, especially as his son and daughter-in-law were able to be present.

Well done Ken!



[Worldsport.com website](http://www.worldsport.com)

Worldsport is the official internet partner of GAISF, the General Association of Internet Sports Federations.

The site has been going for more than two years now and covers 90 international federations taking part in a total of 230 sports right around the world.

With the latest news, a full calendar telling sports fans which events are happening in the world of sport in the coming months and a host of special features, the site provides a unique service on the internet.

Our table tennis coverage so far this year has featured full coverage of the ITTF Pro-Tour Grand Finals in Australia, with round-the-clock reports plus profiles, schedules, photos and results.

You can find our site at www.worldsport.com and contact the Editor, Andy Morris at amorris@worldsport.com Tel: 0207 386 2855.

Planet on Sunday

Launched on 5th December 1999 the **Planet on Sunday** is a brand new Sunday paper which is hoping to give readers a real alternative to traditional Sunday papers.

Our coverage of sports will focus on those which do not get the coverage that maybe they should. Mainstream sports such as football, cricket and tennis will not be covered. Disabled, amateur and minority sports will be given priority.

We would therefore welcome any news worthy events/stories that you may hear about.

If you would like to see the paper then buy a copy this Sunday. It costs 50p and is available from newsagents in England and Wales.

Contact: tom@planet-on-sunday.co.uk

Basic Coaching Manual Update

TT News Extra (December 1999) states that the coaching manual update costs £30.00. It should be £3.00! The cost is merely to cover photocopying and postage. Send your cheque to ETTA Headquarters.

FAMOUS PEOPLE WHO PLAY TABLE TENNIS cont'd...

Elsewhere, in his Yorkshire notes, Rea Balmford advises us that Yorkshire County Cricket Captain David Byas and boxer Naseem Hamed both played table tennis in the Scarborough League before going professional in their respective vehicles. Apparently, another boxer, Paul Ingle, has been playing in the same league. Soccer professional with Sheffield United and Leeds United, Len Browning, is a regular in the Leeds and Harrogate TT League, and Rugby full back with Hull and then Hounslet, Mike Fletcher, had great potential as a table tennis junior. Judy Rogers from the ETTA office advises us that Wolf of Gladiators disclosed on TV's Star Secrets that he became interested in sport through playing table tennis. She also heard Neil 'Razor' Ruddock, Premier footballer with Spurs, Liverpool and West Ham, admitting on A Question of Sport to doing the same. Alan Blears from Stockport has sent me a cutting from the Daily Telegraph on Crown Prince of golf, Jean Van de Velde, who is apparently very competitive in best of 3 of 5 table tennis sets.

An article in the TTN of December 1998 mentioned several other prominent people who played, such as Tim Healey, former star of 'Auf Wiedersehen Pet', documentary maker Alma Taft, Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Southend footballer Steve Tilson, actor Paul Shane, art dealer Angela Flowers, poet Roger McGough and surrealist painter Patrick Hughes. In the same article Barry Meisel wrote about all the show business legends who played: Mickey Rooney, Harold Lloyd, Fay Wray (of 'King Kong' fame), Lew Ayes, Robert Cummings, Bob Hope, Anthony Quinn, Tyrone Power, Jimmy Stewart, Henry Fonda, Joel McRea, Peter Lorre, Judy Garland, Edward G Robinson, Freddie Bartholomew, Dick Powell, Jane Withers, Marsha Hunt, Jimmy Durante, Ginger Rogers and Betty Grable. Apparently in the 1930's the Gershwins held open house table tennis sessions at their 103rd Street, New York home to film and showbusiness people, and the USA's only world singles champion (1934) Ruth Aarons took part. The source for this information

was Tim Boggan, writing in a 1993 edition of Table Tennis Today USA.

THE 40MM BALL - A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER?

There is a very strong possibility that the ITTF Council Meeting during the Dawei World Team Championships at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 19-26 February 2000, will approve by the necessary 75% majority, the proposal to increase the size of the ball from 38mm in diameter to 40mm. Whereas I was cautiously in favour, mainly owing to the evidence from television companies that the larger ball shows up better on the screen, but also in the hope that the slower speed and lesser spin will make the game generally more visible and attractive for spectators to watch (with longer rallies), my position is moving to cautiously sceptical - at least until more research is done. Should not more experiments (e.g. a major tournament) with players trying out the new ball, have been conducted, and while experimentation was going on, why not try out other sizes such as 42mm and 44mm? (I suspect, though, that 40m is the best alternative, if a change is to be made.)

Although it is natural to resist change, players usually quickly adapt, yet my concern has increased as more feedback on the 40mm ball has filtered through. It seems that the quality has been less consistent, they have cracked quicker and they tend to sound as if they always are cracked! (Tischtennis Aktuell, September 1999. Table Tennis Illustrated, Nov/Dec 1999.) Writing in Butterfly World Report (Jan/Feb 2000) Pole Andrzej Grubba, whilst accepting that serves will be easier to return and the ball will be slower, ominously suggests that defensive players like Greek Ntaniel Tsiokas or players like himself who play away from the table find it harder to control the ball. It was this type of 'attractive' player which the ball was supposed to assist! Grubba also suggests that there will be less 'Kamikaze' type players who go for the early winner, and that physically strongly built players like Dragutin Surbek who are able to generate power with the slower ball will make a comeback - which might not be a bad thing. Sweden's Jorgen Persson says in Table Tennis Illustrated (Nov/Dec 1999) that fitter players will have an advantage. However, I would agree with Kimihko Tamasu (Butterfly World Report, Jul/Aug 1999) that the rallies required to make table tennis more attractive are those that are dramatic rather than necessarily longer, and that the 40mm may not produce these. Also, one of the enjoyable things about the sport to many players is its speed, which would be reduced with the larger ball. There are other implications, e.g. what to do with old stocks of balls and whether robots can be adjusted.

To be fair, some of the early feedback on the 40mm has been quite favourable (and it probably will help old players, those with poor eyesight or co-ordination and young children) while other people think that players will soon get used to it and or that it won't make much difference - but if it will make little difference, why change (apart from improving table tennis on TV, the strongest argument?) However, the more important possible rule change, supported by a growing

consensus of players, coaches and umpires, would be to ban the shielded serve so that the ball can clearly be seen by the opponent. I am also coming round to supporting the raising of the net (by half an inch), a position long advocated by John Prean, and now I see by former European women's champion Csilla Batorfi (Hungary). Fundamentally, I still feel that the game is great as it is: the change I personally would most like to see is (more) better presented top class table tennis on TV - something on the recent Eurosport lines but ideally on terrestrial TV! For a live audience, Belgium's Jean-Michel Saive (TT Illustrated, Feb/March 1997) is right that the "creation of a theatre effect where spectators" are in "comparative darkness" would add to the whole presentation. Meanwhile, if the 40mm ball really does come, I hope and pray that it is good for the sport.

**10th World Veterans Championships,
Vancouver, Canada
May 21-27 2000**

For information on this event contact the VETTS International Co-ordinator, Mrs Doreen Schofield, 21 Corbar Street, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6EP, Tel: 0161 483 4744.

**SWEDISH MEN WANTING TO PLAY IN
ENGLAND NEXT SEASON**

Jesper Bostrum (Rosett vagen 27, 90441 Roback, Sweden Tel: 469046858, email: jeppeb@hem.passagen.se) aged 20, and Daniel Astrom (Tel: 469030410, email: dastrom78@hotmail.com) 21, are both interested in playing in England next season to develop themselves as players. Representing Sandakern, they are currently in 4th position of the Swedish National League but hope to finish second. They have trained hard since they were 10, currently training 6-7 times a week, and are in the top 6 players in their age group for the north of Sweden. They would hope for some money if they played for a British League club next season, or if that is not possible, for some sort of job to be organised for them to cover their living costs. The standard of play is higher in Sweden so they would probably be Premier Division players here. Please contact them direct.

COACHING COURSES 2000

Readers are reminded that the National Coaches' Conference is to be held at Lilleshall National Sports Centre, Shropshire on 8-10 September 2000 so book early! It is possible that it will become the National Teaching & Training Conference, with umpires, tournament organisers and development officers also invited.

NORTH WEST REGION

5/6 February Sport Leader/Teacher/Level 2
Venue: Manchester Contact: John Dwan
Tel. 0161 2264736
18/19 February Sport Leader/Teacher
Venue: Manchester Contact: John Dwan
Tel: as before
27/28 May Sport Leader/Teacher/Level 2
Venue: Manchester Contact: John Dwan

Tel: as before

SOUTH EAST REGION

5/6 February Sport Leader/Teacher
Venue: Horsham Contact: Dave Berriman
Tel. 01732 872566
18 & 20 February Sport Leader/Teacher
Venue: Chatham Contact: Dave Berriman
Tel. as before
18/19 February Level 2
Venue: Guildford Contact: Dave Berriman
Tel. as before
20/21 May Level 2
Venue: Canterbury Contact: Dave Berriman
Tel. as before

EASTERN REGION

18/19 March Level 2
Venue: Stowupland Contact: Sandra Collins
Tel. 01376 552525 ext. 2342
15 April Introduction to Coaching
Venue: Benfleet Contact: Sandra Collins
Tel. as before
20/21 May Level 2
Venue: Benfleet Contact: Sandra Collins
Tel. as before

LONDON

February Sport Leader
Venue: Barnet Contact: John Standing
Tel. 01689 829882
11/12 March Sport Leader
Venue: Brent Contact: John Standing
Tel. as before
March Sport Leader
Venue: Southwark Contact: John Standing
Tel. as before
March Sport Leader
Venue: Lewisham Contact: John Standing
March Sport Leader
Venue: Brent Contact: John Standing
Tel. as before
October Sport Leader
Venue: Brent Contact: John Standing
Tel. as before

**Results - Gloucestershire Open 2 Star Junior
Deer Park TT Centre, Cirencester, 31.10.99**

Boys Open semi-finals: Sean Cox (Bu) bt Daniel Mayhew (Dv) 16,19, Mark Daniels (Gw) bt Chris Brown (Dv) 17,9
FINAL: Mark Daniels bt Sean Cox 15,17
Boys Band 1 Semi-finals: Mark Daniels bt Dominic Wynn-Sands (Go) 12,12, Daniel Mayhew bt Philip Tillotson (So) 16,14
FINAL: Daniel Mayhew bt Mark Daniels 17, -11,16
Boys Band 2 semi-finals: Andrew Hodges (Wi) bt Harry Shahlaei (Go) 14,-9,15, Ross Williamson (Co) bt David Hodges (Wi) 9, -15, 15
FINAL: Andrew Hodges bt Ross Williamson 16, 12
Girls Open semi-finals: Stephanie Dauncey (Av) bt Katherine Silto (Wi) 6, 12, Sinead McMillan (Gw) bt Georgina Niciecka (Co) 18, 8
FINAL: Band 1: Stephanie Dauncey bt Sinead McMillan
FINAL: Band 2: Lisa Reed (Co) bt Mo Wills

(Co)

**Results - Cirencester 1 Star Open Under 12
& Under 14, Deer Park Table Tennis Centre,
Cirencester, 07.11.99**

Boys U12 semi-finals: Bradley Evans (Bu) bt Tony Halling (E) 21-19, 21-13, Simon Poyner (Dv) bt David Hayes (Bu) 20-22, 21-16, 21-16
FINAL: Simon Poyner bt Bradley Evans 21-19, 11-21, 21-17
Boys U14 semi-finals: Bradley Evans bt David Hayes 21-19, 21-17, Tony Halling bt Sam Ewens (Go) 21-11, 21-19
FINAL: Bradley Evans bt Tony Halling 21-11, 22-20
Girls U12 semi-finals: Lisa Bosley (Bk) bt Jenny Dobson (Ha) 21-17, 21-15, Gemma Yarnley (K) bt Stella Davis (Go) 21-7, 21-11
FINAL: Gemma Yarnley bt Lisa Bosley 21-12, 21-14
Girls U14 semi-finals: Gemma Yarnley bt Helen Parton (Dv) 18-21, 21-14, 21-11, Francesca Parnell (Bu) bt Lisa Bosley 19-21, 21-19, 21-19
FINAL: Gemma Yarnley bt Francesca Parnell 21-10, 21-14

'PING PONGING'

Have you noticed how often the terms 'ping pong match' or 'ping ponging between' or 'ping ponging to and from' are being used in the national media regarding current issues such as the beef crisis between Britain and France, the Northern Ireland Peace Process and legislation being passed between the Commons and the Lords, and even in football match reports ?!!

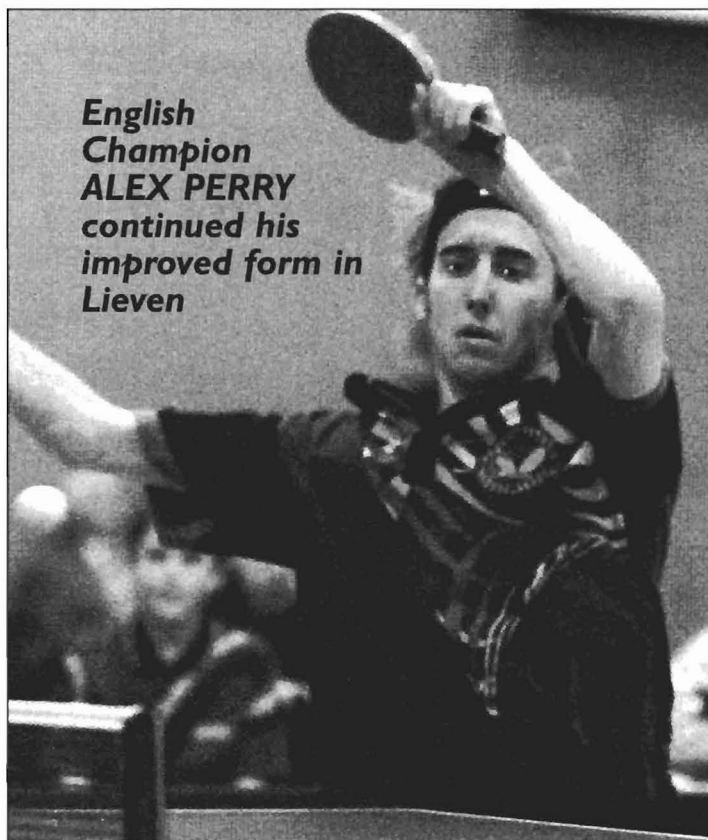
**Stolnoteniske Legende
by Zdenko Uzorinac
reviewed by Ian Marshall**

The end of the second Millennium is undoubtedly a most apt time for a publication on the history of table tennis.

Legends of Table Tennis, written in Serbo-Croat, is a superbly illustrated book of 626 pages with 690 photographs, many extremely rare, detailing the careers of 130 of the world's greatest players. The publication is the result of years of dedicated work by Zdenko Uzorinac, the author of several books on table tennis. A renowned writer and historian on the sport, Zdenko Uzorinac was also a fine player winning a bronze medal in the Swaythling Cup in 1951 and being a member of GTSK Zagreb, winners of the Europe Club Cup in 1962. A regular contributor to Table Tennis Illustrated he is nowadays a member of the ITTF Media Committee, the ITTF Research Centre Advisory Board and the ETTU Development and Publicity Committee. In 1995 he deservedly received the ITTF Merit Award at World Championships in Tianjin.

The book includes contributions from Adam Sharara, Xu Yinsheng, Hikosuke Tamasu, Radivoj Hudetz and Zarko Dolinar. It is available at a cost of US\$40 (plus postage US\$10 Europe) from Zdenko Uzorinac Prilaz Gj. Dezelica 20, Zagreb, Croatia (Tel: 385 1 4846282 Fax: 385 1 2404820 e-mail: ZdenkoUzorinac@public.hr).

PERRY'S VICTIMS ON INCREASE



English Champion ALEX PERRY continued his improved form in Lieven

NINE English players made the short journey to Lieven, some through the Channel Tunnel, others airborne. None of English contingent pulled up any trees, but the tournament provided more valuable experience, writes John Woodford.

The maximum crowd was around 2,000 at peak times ; in Paris or Lyons probably 3,000 would have turned out - envious figures for the ETTA when organising the English Open.

Matthew Syed and Carl Prean were the twin English spearheads. They were exempt until the third stage. Appearing late in the tournament, cold and not having the advantage that most of the others had of getting accustomed to the conditions and getting warmed -up, is not a good system.

Both the England front men were defeated 3-1, Prean by Thierry Miller (Switzerland) and for Syed, yet another defeat at the hands of an Asian player Chang Yuan Su from Taipei. These men from the Orient seem to have no trouble at all coping with Syed's world-class backspin. We see very few Chinese defenders, so there must be plenty of them (in China) to test the attackers when they are practising.

In contrast, world-class players like Gatién and Peter Karlsson have been made to look like novices against our Matthew, in the past.

Carl and Matthew continue to slip down the world ranking list. We can only hope the sliding will be halted soon with the Olympics looming.

One of the best English results was a defeat for Gareth Herbert but only by 15, -18, 20, by Lee Chul Seung who has a world ranking of 51! Gareth is on 336, but Andrew Baggaley has shot up from 381 to 283, following his string of victims at Bremen.

Terry Young is searching for a way up the world list from his present spot of 336 - he defeated Neillson (Sweden) before losing -17, -15, to Feng Zhe of China.

Alex Perry continued his improved form. Before he dashed off to Sweden he overpowered Bykov (Belgium) and Casares (Spain) -16, 22, 18 to win his group. In the second stage match he went down to Jens Lundquist (Sweden) 22, 17, 13.

Helen Lower was the only English female to be chosen for this trip. She

had an encouraging run in the doubles playing with the Welsh champion Bethan Dauntón - they reached the third qualifying round before going under 17, 15 to the French pair Palut and Plaisant.

After his defeat Matthew Syed said,

Words by JOHN WOODFORD in Lieven

"That was one of my worst performances of this season, I never got into the game ; one of these days I shall get a better draw and make real progress."

So that was the French Open - stunning venue, one of the best 5,000-seater venues I have seen. Despite the beef war between Britain and France our hosts were very friendly.

There were a number of star players absent, probably because most of them were off to the following Swedish Open. Samsonov, Waldner and Liu Guoliang were absent so it was left to Zoran Primorac to fly the European flag right through to the later stages.

Primorac put up a strong

performance only losing 14, 16, -21, 24 to young Wang Ligin in the semi-finals.

The mens singles final was a "real" battle, unlike some we have seen in the past between Chinese teammates. Kong, the 1998 world champion lost the first 18 to Wang, but quickly recovered piling on the top-spin and sharpening his counter-hitting to win -18, 18, -17, 13, 19.

Tamara Boros now seems to be the only European women capable of beating the Asians. She reached the

womens singles final after convincingly bringing down Sun Jin (China) 17, 15, 10, but in the final the world No.5 Chen Jing (Taipei) proved too strong, winning the final battle 14, 16, 13. The two up-and-coming players from the Derek Marples stable Michael Isherwood and Steve Shaw paid their own way to Lieven, but they soon disappeared after gaining more experience in the qualifying groups.

To add a finishing touch to the tournament, eight hostesses, dressed airline hostess style in smart blue uniforms and hats were on duty selling programmes and looking after VIPS and the public. They came from the French tourism bureau for the area and are in action at many major events, both in sport and at business conferences. How could the ETTA afford such a luxury at the English Open in 2001? Last question - how do the French clubs find the sponsors to be able to employ nine of our best players, whilst Sport England demote us to World Class Potential? Our role as the poor relation continues.

RESULTS

MS.SF: Kong Linghui (China) b Ma Lin (China) -11, 9, 15, 13

Wang Ligin (China) b Z. Primorac (Croatia) 14, 16 -21, 24.

FINAL: Kong b Wang -18, 18, -17, 13, 19.

WS SF: Chen Jing (Taipei) b Li Jia Wei (Singapore) 16 -20, 16, 19.

FINAL: T. Boros (Croatia) b Sun Jin (China) 17, 15, 10.

TABLE TENNIS NEWS & TTN EXTRA

COPY DATES for 1999/2000

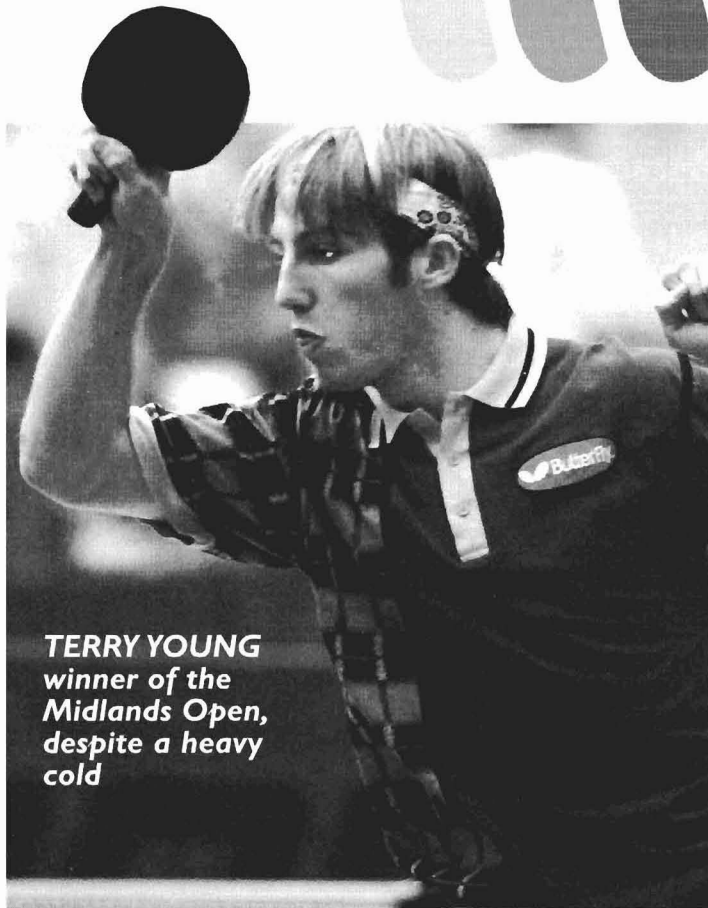
ISSUE No./DATE

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- 15 JANUARY
- 15 FEBRUARY
- 15 MARCH
- 15 MAY

YOUNG IN FROM COLD



TERRY YOUNG
winner of the
Midlands Open,
despite a heavy
cold

TERRY YOUNG, still out in the cold in the eyes of the selectors for most of the season, came back to win the Midlands Open, despite suffering from a heavy cold, writes John Woodford.

Following frequent visits to the glue area that seemed to irritate the organisers, he dropped the odd game in the early stages, but eventually came through to the quarters to stop Nigel Eckersley 14, 14, and then Michael Isherwood 17, 12. Young, moving ever so slowly from court to glue-room, moved up a gear to stop Stephen Shaw 6, 12, and in the final Gareth Herbert's talent was stifled 14, 15. On the way to the final, "Herby" managed to stop the Swedish challenge from Anders Johansson 14, -19, 13.

Johansson aged 25, is a fine young attacking player, ranked around the

20 mark in Sweden who has played second division Bundesliga where he lost on one occasion to Terry Young. However, Gareth did well to beat him thus saving me losing a wager.

The biggest surprise win of the tournament was by Stephen Shaw over Darren Blake who is three places ahead of Shaw at No.8.

John Hilton chalked up his third win in a row over Nigel Eckersley, 19, 19, in the Veterans mens final. Clashes between these two arch-rivals are not so dramatic as they were two years ago.

FLU BUG

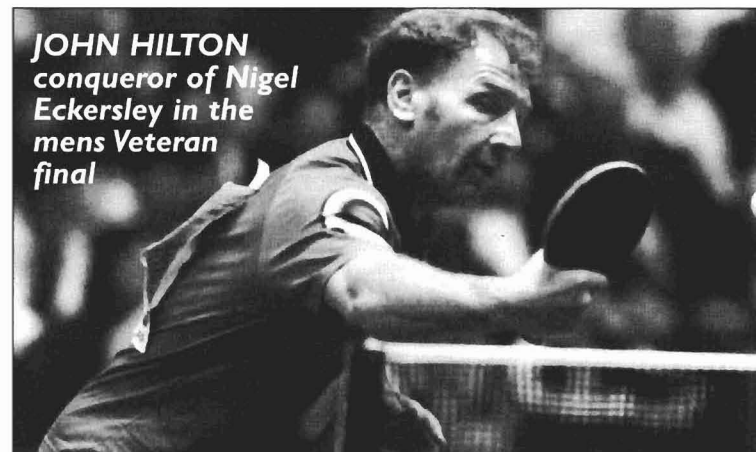
A number of players entered did not turn up as they were suffering from the 'flu bug' - Matthew Syed and Helen Lower being the two most prominent absentees; Linda Howard was also unfit and did not appear. That left an even clearer path for the

world No.38 Tong Feiming who has gone to the top of the Grand Prix women's table and will be about 500 to 1 on to be there at the end of the Grand Prix Finals next May.

Trudy Bloor had a splendid tournament reaching the womens singles final at the expense of Scotland's Nicola Bentley 19, -15, 9, but in the final the lady from Taipei was an easy winner 5, 14.

The Aldersley Stadium is a superb venue with its 34 tables. There were heating problems on both days and overcoats were essential, except on the first floor where in the bar and restaurant it was possible to watch excellent soccer matches on the pitch below. There are few umpires in the Birmingham area, so the tournament lacked the bluecoats. Anders Johansson actually umpired the mens singles final. Most of the other Grand Prix tournaments manage to find a handful of bluecoats for the last day and for the finals, otherwise the tournament ran smoothly with sensible finishing times soon after 8 p.m. on both days.

**Words by
JOHN WOODFORD
of the Daily
Telegraph**



JOHN HILTON
conqueror of Nigel
Eckersley in the
mens Veteran
final

RESULTS:

MS: Quarter-finals: A. Johansson (Sweden) b S. Crawford (Scotland) 12, 16 G. Herbert (Berks) b S. Slater (Staffs) 19, 16 S. Shaw (Staffs) b D. Blake (Surrey) 18, 13, T. Young (Berks) b M. Isherwood (Derby) 17, 12.

SFs: Herbert b Johansson 14, -19, 13, Young b Shaw -6, 12.

FINAL: YOUNG b Herbert 14, 15.

WS: Semi-finals: Tong Feiming (Taipei) b A. Narendran (Middlesex) 6, 12

FINAL: Tong b Bloor 5, 14.

MD: Final: Young and Blake b Herbert and C. Carthy (Essex) -12, 13, 10.

WD: Final: N. T. Nolan and G. Lloyd (Cheshire) b S. Johnson (Berks) and J. Donnelly (Yorks) 23, 18.

Men Under-21: Final: R. Pountney (Surrey) b O. Griffiths (Wales) -13, 17, 16.

Women Under-21: R. Sparkes (Suffolk) b A. Howard (Cheshire) 16, 16.

Veteran Men, Final: J. Hilton (Cheshire) b N. Eckersley (Sussex), 19, 19.

Veterans women, Final: P. Perry (Devon) b J. Morley (Glos) 12, 3.

Banded Finals:

Men Band 1: A. Dunlop (Scotland) b C. Carthy (Essex) 18, 17.

Men Band 2: R. Rosenthal (Lancs) b C. Carslake (Essex) 15, 11.

Men Band 3: L. Dredge (Dorset) b R. Cronin (Kent) -17, 17, 17

Men Band 4: G. Bryant (Devon) b A. Walker (Kent) 20, 24.

Men Band 5: I. Girdler (Essex) b R. Walker (Kent) 21, 18.

Women Band 1: N. Bentley (Scotland) b S. Roden (Worcs) 18, -12, 16.

Women Band 2: T. Nolan (Cheshire) b S. Johnson (Berks) 19, -19, 11.

Women Band 3: C. Emmerson (Surrey) b A. Sorrentino (Cheshire) -16, 20, 17.



Sport England Chairman **TREVOR BROOKING CBE**, presents the national governing body category VIP Recognition Award for Volunteer Management (TTDO Programme) to ETTA Chief Executive **RICHARD YULE** and Director of Development **DICCON GRAY**

National Award for Table Tennis Development Officer Programme

IN December 1999 the successful ETTA TTDO programme was awarded the Sport England Volunteer Investment Programme (VIP) recognition award for good practice in volunteer management in the national governing body category, writes Diccon Gray (ETTA Director of Development).

The VIP awards recognise governing bodies and clubs that invest in the recruitment and development of volunteers. Organisations send in an application form to Sport England and a panel of judges assess it. The awards are given to governing bodies and clubs felt to be the best in terms of quality.

Awards were presented by Sport England Chairman, Trevor Brooking CBE, who said: "Volunteers are the real heroes of sport - without them, fixtures wouldn't happen, teams would not be coached, juniors would not develop. England has a massive network of unpaid helpers and our Volunteer Investment Programme Recognition Awards are designed to reward them."

The Volunteer Investment Programme provides information, training, practical tools and membership of a volunteer network to all sectors of the sporting community. It supports clubs, local authorities and national governing bodies, as well as giving the annual recognition awards.

Developed by our Eastern Region Development Officer, Sandra Collins, from an original concept devised by Harold Taylor (former East Midlands Regional Development Officer), the TTDO programme has welcomed 173 local volunteers on ten regional courses. It aims to provide training (silver award course) and information (in the form of a big blue resource pack) for people interested in developing table tennis at local level.

Ten further courses are being arranged this year and those interested should register with their RDO. The programme is linked to the ETTA national programme for club development (Premier Club) and feedback from the table tennis community has been outstanding.

EASTER AT ST.AUSTELL

One of the most popular tournaments on the Grand Prix circuit, the South West Open, will again be staged at St Austell over the Easter weekend. This will be the third year the tournament has been held and the growing popularity is testament to the hard work put in by the local organisers led by David Lancaster, writes Mike Johns.

Following several requests from players this years event will be shortened to two days (Saturday and Sunday) and work to the schedule used in all other Grand Prix events. To cater for this two venues will be used, the Polkyth Leisure centre will continue to be the main venue but some of the banded events and early rounds of the open events will be held at the St Austell table tennis centre.

Accommodation for the weekend will be available at the Duporth Holiday Village, details of which will be on the entry forms which are due to be dispatched from Hastings mid February. If you are not on the entry form mailing list but would like one please contact the Events Unit at Hastings.

As in previous years a number of the top players have indicated that they intend to enter and it is hoped that Matt Syed will again defend his Men's singles title. The tournament is supported by the Restormel Borough Council.

FOUR DAY EASTER COACHING COURSE BY NICKY JARVIS

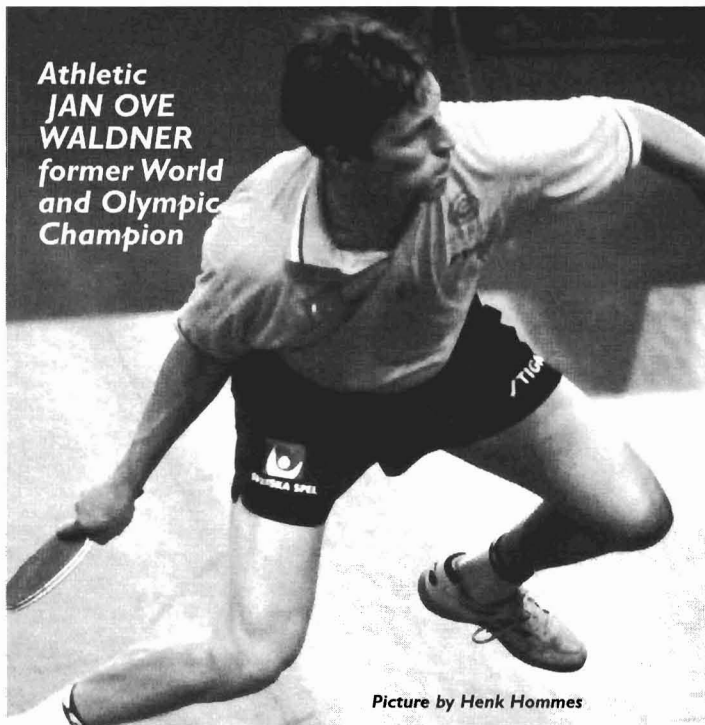
Former England No.1 player and England Team Coach, Nicky Jarvis will be running a 'Coaching Course', at Tregorrick Park Table tennis Centre, from Monday 17th April to Thursday 20th April. Everyone will be welcome. Each day coaching will commence at 11 am. For further information please contact John Wood, telephone 01726 70607.

HEALTHY Exercise

DERRICK MARPLES (1999) has suggested that the ETТА could sell the concept of playing table tennis to 20-34 year olds as a method of safely keeping fit (i.e. with minimal risk of injury). The writer, through his health education/promotion background, has long believed that there are considerable and broad health benefits in playing and there is also a growing health and fitness market that we as a sport could take advantage of. Certainly more people ought to be exercising more. The Allied Dunbar National Fitness Survey (1992) demonstrated that most English people were not physically active enough (to improve personal health and well-being), yet many thought they were fitter and more active than they really were. This article will give a brief overview, firstly on the benefits of exercise generally, and then of playing table tennis specifically. It will be by no means complete - new bits of information can constantly be added to it, writes Ken Muhr.

There has been an increasing body of ever stronger evidence of the health benefits of sustained, regular exercise to people of all ages and both sexes, probably best summed up in 'The New Case for Exercise' (Fentem et al, 1988). The focus has mostly been on the physical benefits enhancing normal health: exercise maintains and improves muscle strength and tone (and bone density), suppleness and mobility (range of joint movement); after training, an individual can work longer, harder with less effort (i.e. stamina is improved); exercise strengthens the heart, improves circulation and may protect against heart disease; it can protect against injury; it can reduce blood pressure; it assists weight control and digestion.

However, the writer would broadly agree with the more holistic World Health Organisation definition (1948) of good health as being not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, but the positive physical, mental and social well-being of the individual. Psychological/mental benefits of exercise include: reducing stress; giving enjoyment and satisfaction; giving/raising self-confidence, self-esteem and well-being; improving sleep and relaxation; improving intellectual performance and memory. Social benefits can include: meeting and mixing with people and making friends; developing and improving social skills; structuring time. Further or enhanced physical, mental and social benefits arising from participation in sport can be added to the above (e.g. improving co-ordination; developing a sense of fair play and co-operation with others; developing self-identity; improving tactical and decision making skills; developing coping skills



**Athletic
JAN OVE
WALDNER**
former World
and Olympic
Champion

Picture by Henk Hommes

and mental toughness). Added to this are health benefits accrued from participating in specific sports - such as table tennis.

At the basic level, playing table tennis will improve and maintain flexibility/suppleness, concentration, hand-eye co-ordination, and reaction time, as well as cardio-vascular fitness (stamina) to some extent. In addition, because it is indoors (non-weather dependent), space efficient and versatile, relatively inexpensive, relatively safe (injury free) and easy to play and enjoyable - it can be played by almost anyone, of whatever age, gender, and ability.

At a higher level, table tennis develops to a much greater extent the above health factors (cardio-vascular fitness becomes much more important) plus muscle speed, strength (particularly explosive strength), and thinking/perceptual/tactical (cognitive) skills. These are some of the factors that Marples (1999) suggests might attract and hold young adults in the sport. Cox (1999) has reported on how model Iris Palmer uses it as a physical workout "a brilliant way to keep in shape". Speed work, quick response exercises and stamina and strength building routines are all part of the training - 'it is a great exercise for the brain'. However, it is interesting to note that table tennis never seems to figure in the charts of calories burned for various activities (both gentle and strenuous) over an hour, that have been printed in health education, physical education and fitness material. As it is such a widely played sport and calories burned is a selling point,

someone should collect and supply this information!

Children as young as 5 or 6 up to those in their 90's play. One example of someone who demonstrated that table tennis is truly a 'sport for life' was the late Percy Hyde (1897-1992), who played for nearly 80 years, taking up the game in 1908 when he was aged 11, and carrying on competitively (in the Milton Keynes League) until he was 90, when loss of balance ended his career! Percy, who was created a Life Member of the ETТА, was quoted in the Milton Keynes Express in 1978 as saying: "It is the best indoor sport I know for keeping fit. It is more strenuous than people imagine. It has given me a lot of fun and I would like to see more people take it up and do themselves some good. I look forward to many more years of ping pong."

Some of the advantages were immediately apparent to the first Chairman of the revived (1922) Table Tennis Association and the founder (1926) Chairman of the International Table Tennis Federation, the Hon. Ivor Montagu, who (Montagu, 1970) "saw in table tennis a sport particularly suited to the lower paid, above all - since it was played indoors - in crowded towns. Its equipment was relatively cheap, it did not require extensive or expensive premises its low cost meant that it could give pleasure and exercise indoors to youth of a class that enjoyed little enough outdoors of either." That international table tennis almost from the outset was a grown-up, healthy sport for all was indicated in the ITTF decision in 1933 that member associations must

conduct "the sport in their territory in such a way as to enable participation in it of all their inhabitants without distinction of colour, race or creed" (Montagu, 1976).

That table tennis can be good for physical and mental health has long been recognised. Writing in Table Tennis World November 18, 1931, a Harley Street physician praised the competitiveness factor in table tennis over other indoor exercises. Table tennis "demands rapid movement. It exercises all the muscles of the body. It stimulates the heart. It makes the lungs extend freely. It makes you alert, watchful, wary. It is, therefore, a good tonic for the nervous system."

He goes on to say that 'physical fatigue' from playing table tennis, 'will promote sleep' and mentions the particular benefits of exercising the forearm and wrist muscles, making them supple and sinewy.

"Lastly, table tennis has a unique function in training the little eye-muscles that rotate the eyes.

It teaches you to focus rapidly and accurately, for you have to follow all the time the movements of a rapidly moving ball. This sort of vision is invaluable not only for all games with a moving ball, but also for flying and driving a motor car."

Over 60 years later a retired general practitioner in Milton Keynes, Dr A L Fawdry (1993), then aged 80, argued that through table tennis reaction-delay due to ageing could be postponed, helping elderly car drivers avoid accidents. While playing a rally "I am practising eye-limb co-ordination about twenty times a minute, so my inevitable prolongation of reaction-time is not as bad as it might be and I am safer on the motorway, thanks to table tennis."

The American scholar Dr Win Wenger has recommended table tennis as good for the brain in his book, 'How to Increase Your Intelligence' (1983), in which he says:

"Table tennis is an excellent way to extend this hand-eye co-ordination. That game has many benefits: it demands very fast, complex reactions; you get instant feedback on your responses; the game has many subtleties, fitnesses, interlinked skills, rhythms, and stratagems which make demands on your entire brain and physical system; and at levels of high desire and stress, the game forces on you extraordinary self-integration and self-discipline. Becoming sharp at table tennis is one excellent way to 'turn on' more of your midbrain."

However, probably more than anyone else, it is the Japanese Hikosuke Tamasu, Chairman of Tamasu Co. Ltd., who has promoted and advocated table tennis, in many talks and articles, as the best sport for the brain and for long life - "the intelligent sport for the 21 st century!". He (1998b) has summarised Dr Wenger

as saying that table tennis is effective in preventing senility and the best sport for keeping you going because it is a sport that uses the eyes the most, eyesight stimulates the middle brain, and the midbrain is the source to activate overall function of the body and body cells. In the context of people worldwide participating more in sport and paying more attention to their health, he gave the following rationale for table tennis (1986):

"All human behaviour is controlled by the brain. Movement of muscles has its origin in the brain. Signals to move muscles are delivered from the cortex to the muscles through the midbrain. The harder your body moves, the more the brain is stimulated. Indeed, playing a sport is a pleasant way of using the brain. There is an additional advantage. Physical activities increase circulation. This means that more nutrition is brought to the brain. Sports not only stimulate the brain but also make the brain healthy. The amount of stimulation is determined by the sport." (Tamasu then mentioned a Japanese professor who suggested that because judging the nature of a pitched ball and hitting it with a bat requires more brain work than hitting a ball at rest, baseball was better for the brain than golf.) "By pursuing this through further, I reached a conclusion that table tennis is the best sport for the brain. The complexity and quickness of our sport is unmatched by other sports."

On attending a medical symposium on 'Life in the 21st century' in March 1983, Tamasu became convinced of the particular benefits of table tennis to the elderly.

"A scholar lectured that the best way to be an older person beautifully was to keep using the body and the brain. If he does these, he can remain alert and young longer. As a method he recommended to play a sport immediately I thought of table tennis. Often physical requirements limit participation of people from certain types of sport. Table tennis is one of very few sports that even eighty year olds can play."

Tamasu (1987) quoted Dr. Dennosuke Jinnai, President of the Japanese Medical Doctors Table Tennis Association, as giving six reasons why table tennis is best for medical doctors: 1. Can be played regardless of physical strength. 2. Can be played in all weathers. 3. Economical. 4. Fighting spirit is fostered. 5. Endurance necessary for the profession is developed. 6. Spirits of sportsmanship are acquired. In the same paper Tamasu mentioned that the JMDTTA was investigating the effect of table tennis on the brain and academic vitality, and that table tennis is the most popular sport for women and housewives in Japan!

He outlined some of the medical findings in later papers (1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 1999). A research team of brain neuro surgeons, headed by Professor Teruaki Mori of the Department of Neurosurgery at Oita Medical University, Japan, has shown table tennis to be an effective means of rehabilitation for patients who were paralysed on one side of their body as a result of road accidents or alcohol abuse. Dr Tomohiko Sato,

head of the Department of Neurosurgery and Rehabilitation, and colleagues of Armeida Hospital found that central brain blood flow was increased by playing table tennis. Table tennis had a positive effect on the rehabilitation of patients with a central nervous disease (sample including people suffering from cerebrovascular disease, brain tumour, head injury, dementia), with for example, walking improving and dementia reducing. A higher brain test devised by M.H. Kawano MD and K.Mimura MD showed that table tennis practice can prevent or reduce dementia.

Sato and Mori (1999) highlighted some of the above findings, making the point that because table tennis is a sport where the risk of injury is relatively low, little space is required, a game lasts a fairly short period of time, anyone can take part (from novice to expert, the movements ranging from the simple to the complex), and hours of enjoyment can be obtained, it can help rehabilitate patients with disturbed central nervous systems. After two and half months of TT therapy wheelchair use significantly reduced. Not surprisingly, patients undertaking TT therapy also improved psychologically!

In Britain table tennis is used in rehabilitation regimes for mental illness (there always appear to be table tennis tables in psychiatric wards!), heart/lung cardiovascular diseases and severe injury. One of the greatest uses of table tennis as rehabilitation is in the 12 spinal injury units in the UK. Kirston Hart, physiotherapist in the spinal gym at Stoke Mandeville Hospital says that of sports, in particular table tennis is used in the early stages to practise balance, and improve upper limb strength and mobility, hand-eye co-ordination and cardio-vascular endurance. Later on, people may progress into the club or competitive sport. The Inter-Spinal Unit Games have events for both tetraplegics (three or four limbs affected) and paraplegics (two limbs, usually legs, affected). Table tennis is a sport suitable for people with disabilities (or disabling conditions) of all kinds, with Polybat having been developed for disabled beginners or people with the most severe disabilities.

Physicist and science fiction writer Arthur C Clarke has said how table tennis helped his rehabilitation when he became totally paralysed with polio in 1962, and he has been playing it ever since, although he has to keep one hand on the table owing to post polio syndrome. His quote in the Observer on 14th December 1997 that "I only feel I am fully living when I am playing table tennis", could not be a fuller spiritual endorsement of the sport!

Tamasu (1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 1999) has given a number of other examples where table tennis has given health benefits. For example, several years ago Empress Michiko, wife of the Emperor of Japan, totally lost her voice owing to a shock she experienced, but while enjoying playing table tennis, the favourite sport of the Imperial Family, she started recovering it! Another example is at a factory in Japan, where all the manual workers improved their efficiency when

the company president adopted a recommendation of world famous Japanese violinist and teacher, Sin-ichi Suzuki, that they practise table tennis! On a wider front, Tamasu (1992) has undertaken a crusading role in promoting table tennis as a means of contributing to international friendship, trust and understanding.

Table tennis is also used as a warm up for other physical activities. For example Bill Wyman played table tennis to limber up before Rolling Stones' concerts and boxer Nazeem Hamed has played to relax before fights. There are many examples of famous mathematicians, physicists and chess players who use table tennis to stimulate the brain.

There are a huge number of anecdotal examples of coaches, officials and older players who have observed positive social, intellectual and emotional changes in youngsters as a result of playing the sport. Both as a primary school teacher and a club organiser/coach in Bedfordshire, Dolly Harmer, who still plays and is in the VETTS over 70 rankings, has seen youngsters across the range of physical and mental disability grow in self confidence through "the fellowship of table tennis". It has made a big difference, helping them to feel normal, more able to do what they are in reality able to do - we and they too often assume they cannot do it. They did not necessarily carry on playing, but what the sport gave them helped them get on in life. In this context it is interesting to note that Howard Jacobson's semi-autobiographical novel 'The Mighty Walzer' (1999), is about a boy overcoming painful shyness and finding fulfilment through table tennis. Harmer also makes the point that table tennis is a rare inclusive sport, where people across generations (and gender, socio-economic class, race/ethnicity, religion for that matter) can and do mix.

In the 1960's and 1970's Kent coach Allen Fisher used the basic Eysenck Intelligence test 2 or 3 times over 2 or 3 years (start, middle and end of that period) with schoolchildren aged 12-15 and Ministry of Technology apprentices aged 16-18 (mainly boys, from a wide cross-section of society), who he was coaching at table tennis. What these tests indicated was an increase in the measure of IQ while they played, which was particularly marked on the youngsters who started with low measures. (How they finally did in the tests was also an accurate predictor of how they would do in their leaving exams). Fisher puts this down to their power of concentration having increased remarkably, which meant that they were then able to make use of the skills they naturally had and also to organise themselves better and gain self-confidence. Because table tennis is an individual game, the child had to share the game - co-operate - with someone else (an opponent) to be able to play, thus also learning social skills. He and colleague Brian Etherington have numerous examples of children who initially almost totally lacked concentration and were disruptive: headmasters subsequently remarked on their complete transformation through playing table tennis into polite, intelligent

'gentlemen'. (One boy at Mallory School, south east London, changed from being unable to concentrate for 5 seconds to be able to maintain full concentration for the whole 2 hour session.) More than one would have become a thug but for the sport!

With such a positive message about the health benefits of playing table tennis, we should all be participating and telling everyone else the good news, so that they can benefit by playing too! Strategies should be planned on how best to get the message over and how to make playing opportunities available to those who would like to derive health benefits from the sport. Letters, contributions and comments are invited on this article (to the editor of TTN or TTN Extra) which is still a working document.

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MIDDX & SUSSEX ON TOP

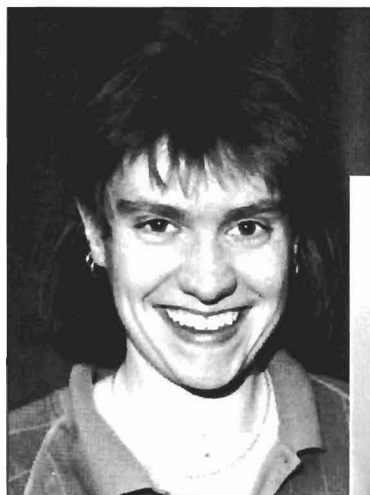
SENIOR PREMIER DIVISION

THE first Senior Premier Division weekend, in which each team played three matches, was held at Cippenham TTC over the weekend of 13th/14th November 1999 resulting in only two teams emerging undefeated, Middlesex and Sussex, both achieving three wins and separated by just one set in favour of Middlesex, writes Stan Clarke.

It would appear that of the remainder only Hertfordshire are in a position to challenge the leaders should either one falter. Kent, Nottinghamshire and Berkshire are all tied on two points with only three sets separating them, Yorkshire and Surrey are currently in the relegation places and must be concerned about retaining Premiership status next season, but with four matches still to play it's far from over.

After the first round of matches only five players remain undefeated, Barbara Kiss and Emma Hurling of Hertfordshire, Neil Charles of Middlesex and Ritchie Venner of Sussex all with six wins from their matches and Ewan Walker of Surrey with four wins from two matches. In my experience that is a rather low figure after only three matches, but it is perhaps an indication of how fierce the competition is in this division.

Middlesex started the weekend with a 7/3 win over Kent, going 3/0 up before Justin Goodall registered a good win over Jason Sugrue to put Kent on the scorecard, Claire Moore and Angie Bristow being the other set winners for Kent but doubles for Tommy Cutler, Neil Charles and Leslie Keast were enough to see Middlesex home. On the Sunday morning Middlesex were confronted



UNDEFEATED:
Hertfordshire's EMMA HURLING (above) and RITCHIE VENNOR of Sussex (right)



by a Surrey team strengthened by the inclusion of Ewan Walker who had not played the previous day, no matter, despite Ewan producing wins over Tommy Cutler and Jason Sugrue the youngsters of Surrey were overwhelmed going down to a 8/0 defeat, although Michael Chan can consider himself unlucky loosing both of his sets very narrowly in the third game. The final match of the weekend for the leaders was against Nottinghamshire which once again resulted in a 8/2 win only Tina Russ beating Rebecca Fisher and Sarah Smith beating Angela Smith

upsetting the apple cart.

Sussex started the weekend in great style with a 10/0 thrashing of Berkshire, my old mate the much travelled Nigel Eckersley, turned the clock back when in his first match for his new County he faced David Barr, Nigel's top spin proving too much for David's defensive skills, just like old times. The two Sunday matches against Hertfordshire and Kent proved to be a much tougher nut and although Sussex were never in a losing position in either match I suspect that in the end they were happy to achieve two 6/4 wins.

Of the remaining teams in the division I suspect that Yorkshire and Surrey, although concerned at their present positions, will take some satisfaction from the fact that they both fielded teams of very young players, indeed Surrey had two of their Junior Premier boys playing in Michael Chan and Robert Pountney, whilst Yorkshire can point to a team which I am sure has an average age of less than twenty. The question is will they pay the penalty for playing such young teams in such a highly

competitive division?

SENIOR DIVISION 1A

There has, at the time of writing, been no play in this division due I believe to problems in arranging a suitable venue, it needs to be sorted p.d.q.

SENIOR DIVISION IB

The first set of matches having been played Essex and Wiltshire are contesting the top two places both sides being undefeated in three matches, struggling are Essex 2nd and Devonshire 2~d who are yet to collect a point and have only amassed 7 sets each from a possible 30.

DIVISION 2A

South Yorkshire must be delighted to look down and see Yorkshire 2nd languishing two points beneath them after five matches, there seems little love lost between the two Counties since the decision to split was taken but perhaps with such a large County as Yorkshire it was inevitable that parts would eventually drop off. The question in this division is will Cumbria avoid finishing in one of the bottom two places? I have my doubts.

SENIOR DIVISION 2B.

If you take the two Glamorgan teams away this would be a very tight division, as it is they stand proudly in first and second places, both teams having collected 8 points from their matches to date but with the second team having played one match more, looks like there will be Welsh representation in Division I next season.

SENIOR DIVISION 2C.

Talk about a tight Division, three teams having played four matches each with four wins each and all with a sets average of 34 for 6 against, Norfolk, Lincolnshire and Warwickshire are apparently separated only by alphabetical order although it isn't shown that way on the list I have in front of me, perhaps Les knows something I don't.

SENIOR DIVISION 2D

The newly emerged Isle of Wight are in a very strong position in their first season in the Championships, lying in second place in the division with two matches in hand, (How does that happen), mind you if you can persuade Carl Preat to turn out for you what do you expect?

PLEASE NOTE

Correspondents can send their copy by email to:
johnwood@macace.co.uk
for "Attachments" save them as a
"Word 5.1 for Machintosh" file

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS LEAGUE TABLES

Tables include results of all matches receive Compiled by Leslie Smith

SENIORS

PREMIER	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Middlesex	3	3	0	0	23	7	6
Sussex	3	3	0	0	22	8	6
Hertfordshire	3	2	0	1	16	4	4
Kent	3	1	0	2	14	6	2
Nottinghamshire	3	1	0	2	12	8	2
Berkshire	3	1	0	2	11	19	2
Yorkshire	3	0	1	2	12	18	1
Surrey	3	0	1	2	10	20	1

DIVISION 1A

Derbyshire	2	2	0	0	17	3	4
Leicestershire	2	2	0	0	15	5	4
Suffolk	2	1	0	1	10	10	2
Northumberland	2	1	0	1	10	10	2
Cambridgeshire	2	1	0	1	9	11	2
Worcestershire	2	1	0	1	7	13	2
Lancashire	2	0	0	2	7	13	0
Bedfordshire	2	0	0	2	5	15	0

DIVISION 1B

Essex 1st	3	3	0	0	27	3	6
Wiltshire	3	3	0	0	23	7	6
Devonshire 1st	3	2	0	1	17	13	4
Middlesex 2nd	3	1	1	1	14	16	3
Kent 2nd	3	1	1	1	11	18	3
Hampshire	3	1	0	2	13	17	2
Essex 2nd	3	0	0	3	7	22	0
Devonshire 2nd	3	0	0	3	7	23	0

DIVISION 2A

South Yorkshire	5	5	0	0	36	14	10
Yorkshire 2nd	5	4	0	1	32	18	8
Lancashire 2nd	5	3	0	2	26	24	6
Cheshire	5	2	1	2	28	22	5
Cleveland	5	2	1	2	23	27	5
Warwickshire 2nd	5	1	1	3	22	28	3
Cumbria	5	0	2	3	17	33	2
Leicestershire 2nd	5	0	1	4	16	34	1

DIVISION 2B

Glamorgan 1	5	5	0	0	47	3	10
Glamorgan 2nd	6	5	0	1	35	25	10
Cornwall 1	5	4	0	1	38	12	8
Worcestershire 2nd	4	3	0	1	26	14	6
Cornwall 2nd	5	1	0	4	18	32	2
Devonshire 3rd	5	1	0	4	17	33	2
Somerset	4	1	0	3	13	27	2
Herefordshire	5	1	0	4	16	34	2
Avon	5	1	0	4	10	40	2

DIVISION 2C

Norfolk 1st	4	4	0	0	34	6	8
Lincolnshire	4	4	0	0	34	6	8
Warwickshire	4	4	0	0	34	6	8
Suffolk 2nd	4	1	1	2	16	24	3
Hertfordshire 2nd	4	1	1	2	15	25	3
Northamptonshire	4	1	0	3	10	30	2
Huntingdonshire	4	0	0	4	9	31	0
Norfolk 2nd	4	0	0	4	8	32	0

DIVISION 2D

Gloucestershire	5	4	0	1	35	15	8
Isle of Wight	3	3	0	0	19	11	6
Sussex 2	4	2	0	2	25	15	4
Kent 3rd	4	2	0	2	21	19	4
Surrey 2nd	6	2	0	4	23	37	4
Oxfordshire	3	1	0	2	15	15	2
Berkshire 2nd	4	1	0	3	13	27	2
Buckinghamshire	3	1	0	2	9	21	2

JUNIORS

PREMIER DIVISION

Surrey	3	3	0	0	25	5	6
Cheshire	3	3	0	0	19	11	6
Glamorgan	3	2	1	0	21	9	5
Middlesex	3	2	0	1	17	13	4
Kent	3	1	1	1	14	16	3
Yorkshire	3	0	0	3	9	21	0
Devonshire	3	0	0	3	8	22	0
Lancashire	3	0	0	3	7	23	0

DIVISION 1A

Essex	3	3	0	0	24	6	6
Yorkshire 2nd	3	2	1	0	21	9	5
Derbyshire	3	1	2	0	17	13	4
Cumbria	3	1	1	1	15	15	3
Warwickshire	3	1	1	1	15	15	3
Suffolk	3	1	0	2	14	16	2
Clwyd	3	0	1	2	6	24	1
Lancashire 2nd	3	0	0	3	8	22	0

DIVISION 1B

Buckinghamshire	4	4	0	0	36	4	8
Dorset	4	4	0	0	31	9	8
Hampshire	4	2	2	0	25	15	6
Worcestershire	4	1	2	1	17	23	4

Avon	4	1	1	2	16	24	3
Glamorgan 3rd	5	1	1	3	19	31	3
Glamorgan 2nd	6	1	0	5	20	40	2
Middlesex 2nd	5	1	0	4	16	34	2

DIVISION 2A

Nottingham	7	7	0	0	53	17	14
South Yorkshire	7	6	0	1	50	20	12
Norfolk	7	3	2	2	40	30	8
Essex 2nd	7	2	3	2	31	39	7
Lincolnshire	7	2	2	3	33	37	6
Warwickshire 2nd	7	0	3	4	26	44	3
Leicestershire	7	0	3	4	25	45	3
Hertfordshire	7	0	3	4	22	48	3

DIVISION 2B

Surrey 2nd	6	4	2	0	43	17	10
Kent 2nd	5	3	2	0	30	20	8
Berkshire	4	3	1	0	28	12	7
Bucks 2nd	5	2	3	0	30	20	7
Sussex 1st	6	3	0	3	35	25	6
Surrey 3rd	5	2	0	3	20	30	4
Cornwall	7	1	0	6	20	50	2
Sussex 2nd	6	0	0	6	14	46	0

DIVISION 3A

Huntingdon 1st	4	3	1	0	32	8	7
Huntingdon 2nd	4	3	0	1	24	16	6
Bedfordshire 1st	3	2	1	0	21	9	5
Norfolk 2nd	3	2	1	0	17	13	5
Hertford 2nd	3	1	0	2	11	19	2
Suffolk 2nd	4	0	1	3	16	24	1
Cambridgeshire	4	0	1	3	14	26	1
Bedfordshire 2nd	3	0	1	2	5	25	1

DIVISION 3B

Cheshire 2nd	6	5	0	1	44	16	10
Cleveland	6	4	2	0	36	24	10
Northamptonshire	6	3	1	2	31	29	7
Lincolnshire 2nd	6	2	2	2	31	29	6
Durham	6	3	0	3	29	31	6
Nottingham 2nd	6	1	1	4	22	38	3
Northumberland	6	0	0	6	17	43	0

DIVISION 3C

Gwent	5	4	1	0	37	13	9
Shropshire 1st	5	3	2	0	35	15	8
Powys	5	3	1	1	28	22	7
Devonshire 2nd	6	3	1	2	37	23	7
Devonshire 3rd	6	2	0	4	25	35	4
Somerset	4	1	1	2	21	19	3
Herefordshire	5	1	0	4	9	41	2
Shropshire 2nd	4	0	0	4	8	32	0

DIVISION 3D

Gloucestershire	4	3	1	0	31	9	7
Essex 3rd	4	3	1	0	29	11	7
Oxfordshire	3	2	1	0	22	8	5
Kent 3rd	3	0	2	1	14	16	2
Wiltshire	2	0	1	1	8	12	1
Berkshire 2nd	3	0	0	3	5	25	0
Sussex 3rd	3	0	0	3	1	29	0

VETERANS

PREMIER	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Kent	3	3	0	20	7	6
Surrey	3	2	1	19	8	4
Cheshire	3	2	1	18	9	4
Dorset	3	2	1	15	12	4
Yorkshire	3	1	2	12	15	2
Norfolk	3	1	2	9	18	2
Leicestershire	3	1	2	7	20	2
Essex	3	0	3	8	19	0

DIVISION 1A

Lancashire	4	3	1	29	7	6
Yorkshire 2nd	4	3	1	21	15	6
Hertfordshire	4	2	2	19	17	4
Cheshire 2nd	4	2	2	18	18	4
Northumberland	4	2	2	14	22	4
Oxfordshire	4	2	2	14	22	4
Essex 2nd	4	1	3	16	20	2
Worcestershire	4	1	3	13	23	2

DIVISION 1B

Hampshire	3	3	0	18	9	6
Middlesex	3	2	1	16	11	4
Berkshire	3	2	1	15	12	4
Sussex	3	2	1	15	12	4
Avon	3	2	1	14	13	4
Kent 2nd	3	1	2	13	14	2
Essex 3rd	3	0	3	9	18	0
Devonshire	3	0	3	8	19	0

DIVISION 2A

Durham	4	4	0	29	7	8
Leicestershire 2nd	4	3	1	22	14	6
Wanwickshire 1st	4	3	1	20	16	6
Yorkshire 3rd	4	2	2	20	16	4
Nottinghamshire	4	2	2	16	20	4
Warwickshire 3rd	4	1	3	14	22	2

Lancashire 2nd	4	1	3	13	23	2
Northamptonshire	4	0	4	10	26	0

DIVISION 2B

Bedfordshire	4	4	0	27	9	8
Hertfordshire 2nd	4	4	0	25	11	8
Norfolk 2nd	4	3	1	23	13	6
Hertfordshire 3rd	4	2	2	17	19	4
Kent 5th	4	2	2	15	21	4
Cambridgeshire	4	1	3	16	20	2
Buckingham 2nd	4	0	4	11	25	0
Middlesex 3rd	4	0	4	10	26	0

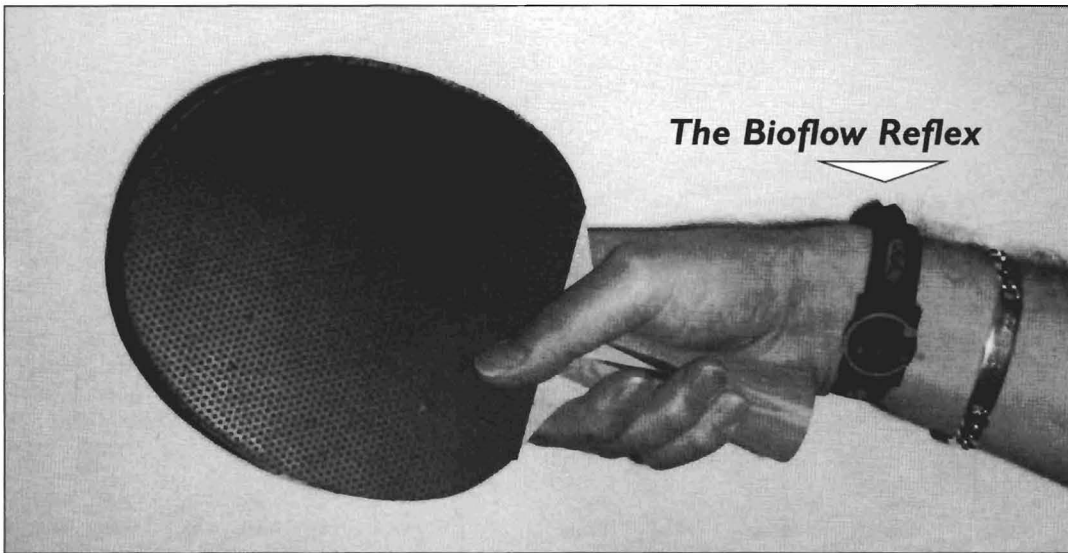
DIVISION 2C

Surrey 2nd	5	5	0	39	6	10
Buckinghamshire	4	2	2	19	17	4
Middlesex 2nd	4	2	2	18	18	4
Kent 4th	3	2	1	12	15	4
Essex 4th	4	2	2	14	22	4
Kent 3rd	2	1	1	11	7	2
Surrey 3rd	4	1	3	13	23	2
Sussex 2	4	0	4	9	27	0

DIVISION 2D

Wiltshire	4	4	0	20	16	8
Somerset	4	3	1	23	13	6
Dorset 2nd	4	2	2	24	12	

MAGNOTHERAPY



THE benefits of magnotherapy have been well documented in recent years by the many people who have undeniably benefited from its use - both to aid healing and to alleviate pain. But, how exactly does magnotherapy work?

The pain relieving and healing benefits of magnotherapy are the result of a change in the body's pH levels caused by magnetic energy.

Stress and inflammation (together with the resulting pain experienced by many sports people and health & fitness enthusiasts) usually causes an excess of lactic acid to be produced by the body.

The importance of maintaining the correct pH balance is vital to the life of cells in the body - but the pH level of a cell can only be neutralised by the movement of electrons in and out of the cell. Therefore an acid cell (low pH) can be neutralised by accepting electrons, and an alkali cell (high pH) can be neutralised by donating electrons.

The movement of electrons in the body is the fundamental action of magnotherapy. In other words, without the movement of electrons, pH levels cannot change and the benefits are not felt.

Magnotherapy can play an important role in maintaining the correct pH levels which are important to optimum health and performance.

Magnotherapy has been successfully used to help promote connective tissue healing and repair, musculoskeletal pain relief, bone repair and the acceleration of the healing of fractures - problems commonly

experienced by sports people.

Thermography (heat) trials have shown an increase in blood flow when magnets are used.

Scintigraphy scanning (which measures the metabolic uptake of an injected substance) has shown a 30% increase in the rate of substance uptake in the soft tissue, and in the bone of a leg, treated with magnets.

Magnotherapy can help to reduce pain which has not been effectively controlled by medication.

In a double-blind, placebo controlled study, patients were treated with magnets applied to the skin. A statistically significant reduction in lower back pain was observed. The pain relief was significantly greater than the placebo group where unmagnetised pads were used.

Central Reverse Polarity (CRP) magnets are superior to any other static magnet because they are specifically designed to move electrons. As the moving of electrons is the fundamental action of magnotherapy, which enables the body's pH levels to change, it is clear why it is important to choose a high quality CRP magnet. Bioflow magnotherapy products, made by Ecoflow are the only ones which use Central Reverse Polarity Magnets.

Many sporting injuries/conditions are the result of excess lactic acid production. This has a detrimental affect on the body's pH balance and triggers the brain to respond to pain.

Magnotherapy can help to increase the cellular oxygen levels, increase fluid and gas circulation by dilating blood vessels, improve cell permeability, reduce inflammation

and normalise pH levels in the body thus relieving pain.

It is thought that the magnetic field influences ionic exchange across cell membranes thus influencing the metabolism of waste products left behind by injury.

By increasing the circulation to and around an injury site, pain can be alleviated and the healing process

accelerated.

Magnotherapy can help to improve recovery rates after exercising, competing or illness and can also help to boost energy levels.

A magnetic wrist band (e.g. The Bioflow Reflex - specially designed for sports people as it provides a greater depth of magnetic field than standard Bioflow wrist bands) should be worn on the wrist where the field will have maximum effect.

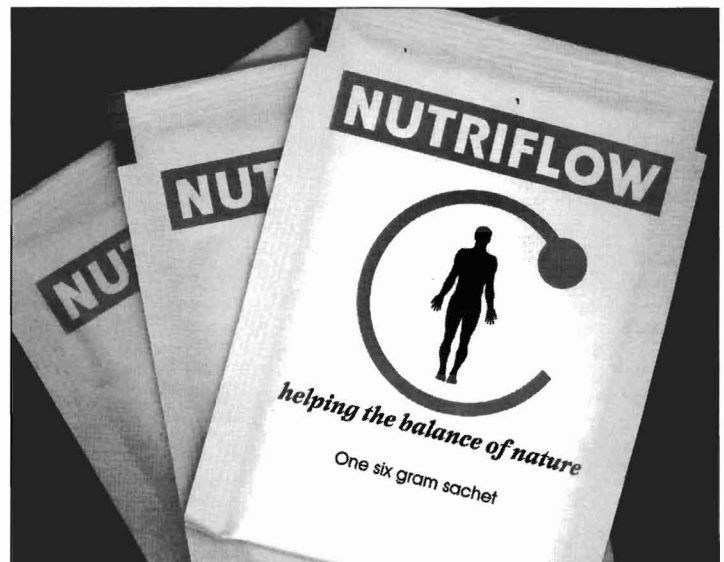
The magnetic wrist band should be worn continually, or for at least 12 hourly periods.

A magnetic field can change the body's pH by changing the cells' molecular structure through reduction and acceptance of electrons. However, to fully optimise the benefits, the body also needs a balance of cations and anions in electrolyte mineral form to maximise the benefits of magnotherapy.

To increase the benefits of magnotherapy, Nutriflow has been developed. Nutriflow is a powdered electrolyte | mineral supplement taken in water every day to maintain the body's natural balance of minerals and electrolytes which are essential to good health.

• *Reproduced from a leaflet by Ron McAndrew, Athletics Coach and England Team Manager*

• *Further information and leaflets available. please telephone Lesley Hall-Wood on 01726 70607.*



CHRISTMAS ADIDAS COMPETITION

The correct winning answers are: The current Mens World Singles Champion is Liu Guoliang, and the current Womens World Singles Champion is Wang Nan, both from China.

PLAYING AGAINST LONG PIMPLES Part 2

by Henry Buist

Long Pimpled Defenders - the Core of the Problem

We now come to what is probably the core of the difficulties encountered by attacking players when playing against long pimples. I am illustrating these difficulties by analyzing a number of rallies between you, a modern attacking player, and a long pimpled defender - Mr Pimps. The rallies are typical of the sort of thing I have seen many times in encounters between these types of players.

First two comments:

When you play a defensive player you will often get points early on in the game with hard hits, but as the game goes on the defensive player will get the measure of your hits and get them back. I have assumed this has happened when the score is 6-6.

It is unlikely that when you play a game you will analyse each shot as I have indicated in the table. Most of the time you will judge each shot automatically using your experience. But when playing against pimples you have got to think more and put your experience aside.

The score is 5 all with Mr Pimps to serve

Score	Mr Pimps	You	Result	Reason
5-5	1. Serves - a long slow serve with a chopping action	2. Try to hit it hard	It goes off the end	<i>The chopping action makes you think there is chop on the ball so you lift it; but, in fact, there is no spin on it.</i>
6-5	1. Serves 3. Chops it back	2. You are more cautious and do a soft hit - it will contain a small amount of topspin 4. Hit it hard	You hit it past him <i>(You think you have cracked it)</i>	<i>The small amount of topspin you put on the ball with the return of serve, shot 2, comes back to you as a gentle chop. In fact just the amount of chop you would expect from a normal bat with the same action; so, luckily, you judged it correctly.</i>
6-6	1. Serves 3. Chops it back 5. This time he just scrambles it back, but is out of position.	2. Another soft hit 4. Hit it hard 6. Try to hit it hard again	It goes into the bottom of the net	<i>Your first hard hit, shot 4, contains a great deal of topspin which is returned to you as a very heavy chop.</i>
7-6	Shots 1-5 same again			
	7. Pushes it back with a chopping action	6. This time you push, lifting it to allow for the chop 8. Try to hit it hard again	It goes off the end of the table	<i>Your push, shot 6, will contain a small amount of backspin which will be returned to you as topspin. But because of the chopping action of his bat, and the heavy backspin on the previous shot, you still think there is chop on the ball, so you lift it off the end of the table.</i>
	Shots 1-7 same again			
9-6	9. Smashes it	8. Push, it goes back high	Leaves you standing	<i>You are more cautious and push his return. But you still think there is chop on the ball, so you lift it; it goes back high giving him an easy smash.</i>
9-6	You are losing confidence but it's your serve now. You do your best, most spinny serves, but you get your own spin back and make all sorts of mistakes. You become more and more bamboozled and he runs out an easy winner.			

During the game you are confused you just don't know what he is doing, You watch his bat closely. If only you knew what he was doing you could combat it. But that's just it **he isn't doing anything, you are doing it all for him.** The more severe and diabolical things you throw at him the more severe and diabolical things you will get back.

Look at the point at 7-6 and his shots 3, 5, 7. This is where your problems really start. You get back a mild chop, a heavy chop and a mild topspin, and all from what looks like the same shot from him - a fairly gentle chop. No wonder you are confused. But remember, each time you are getting your own spin back so you are digging your own grave.

In the next part I will give some hints on playing against a long pimpled defender.



ETTA NATIONAL RANKING LIST

TOP OF THE TABLE

January 2000 - LIST 74

Further details please ring Doreen Nightingale 01424 72525

Senior Men

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(1)	1 SYED, Matthew (SY.)	4606*	
(2)	2 PERRY, Alex (DY.)	4542	
(3)	3 PREAM, Carl (IW.)	4514	
(4)	4 YOUNG, Terry (BK.)	4395	
(5)	5 BAGGALEY, Andrew (BU.)	4349*	
(6)	6 HERBERT, Gareth (BK.)	4342	
(7)	7 BILLINGTON, Bradley (DY.)	4103	
(8)	8 BLAKE, Darren (SY.)	4014	
(9)	9 EDEM, Andrew (LA.)	3954	
(10)	10 ISHERWOOD, Michael (DY.)	3924	
(11)	11 SHAW, Steven (ST.)	3786	
(12)	12 RUSHTON, Andrew (LA.)	3719	
(13)	13 MASON, Nicky (SX.)	3716	
(14)	14 SLADDEN, Christopher (E.)	3646	
(15)	15 SMITH, Eddie (ND.)	3616	
(16)	16 VENNOR, Ritchie (SX.)	3569	
(17)	17 SATCHEL, Kevin (WI.)	3529***	
(18)	18 GOODALL, Justin (K.)	3502	
(19)	19 HILTON, John (CH.)	3459	
(20)	20 SLATER, Stephen (ST.)	3454	
(21)	21 SUGRIE, Jason (ML.)	3446	
(22)	22 MOORE, Adrian (K.)	3445	
(23)	23 ROGERS, Christopher (LE.)	3445	
(24)	24 BARR, David (BK.)	3439	
(25)	25 ECKERSLEY, Nigel (SX.)	3439	
(26)	26 CHARLES, Neil (ML.)	3428	
(27)	27 CUTLER, Tom (ML.)	3388	
(28)	28 MARSHALL, Peter (Y.)	3367*	
(29)	29 THOMPSON, Christian (K.)	3360*	
(30)	30 SMITH, Mark Richard (Y.)	3359	
(31)	31 JOHNS, Brian (CH.)	3357*	
(32)	32 BARHAM, Dale (CA.)	3353	
(33)	33 NEIL, Lee (NG.)	3340	
(34)	34 SAMUELS, Keith (BD.)	3315	
(35)	35 JOHNSON, Ben (BK.)	3308*	
(36)	36 WHITING, Paul (DV.)	3293	
(37)	37 TAYLOR, John (HE.)	3269	
(38)	38 WURAOLA, Abdul (SY.)	3258	
(39)	39 JAMES, Michael (Y.)	3257	
(40)	40 GANNON, Dave (LE.)	3245	
(41)	41 HORSFIELD, Andrew (YS) (Y.)	3244	
(42)	42 WILKINSON, Andrew (ND.)	3237	
(43)	43 CAMPBELL, Selwyn (ST.)	3235	
(44)	44 BROWN, Mark (K.)	3198	
(45)	45 CLAYTON, Tony (DO.)	3197	
(46)	46 CHAN, Michael (SY.)	3185	
(47)	47 DOLDER, Kevin (LA.)	3176*	
(48)	48 CATHY, Clive (E.)	3158	
(49)	49 CHAUSSE, Christophe (YS)	3149	
(50)	50 NEALE, Denis (Y.)	3138	
(51)	51 POUNTNEY, Robert (SY.)	3130	
(52)	52 ATKINSON, David (CA.)	3119	
(53)	53 PAPANICOLAOU, Costas (ML.)	3118	
(54)	54 SMITH, Richard A (Y.)	3099	
(55)	55 ROSENTHAL, Louis (LA.)	3094	
(56)	56 FESEHATSION, Daniel (ML.)	3062	
(57)	57 GREEN, Mark (NG.)	3058	
(58)	58 HARVEY, Dave (GS.)	3045	
(59)	59 CORBIN, Anthony (HE.)	3023	
(60)	60 MCKOY, Nicholas (ML.)	3018	
(61)	61 ROCKALL, Simon (BU.)	30161	
(62)	62 SHORT, Mark (YS.)	3002	
(63)	63 OWEN, Mark (HR.)	3002	
(64)	64 RAINFORD, Paul (K.)	2998	
(65)	65 WIGNALL, Andy (L.)	2998	
(66)	66 MUSK, Ian (BU.)	2997	
(67)	67 HARDING, David (SY.)	2995	
(68)	68 ROOFE, Eddie (WI.)	2994	
(69)	69 BARTRAM, Peter (SX.)	2990	
(70)	70 MCEAN, Ian (NK.)	2989	
(71)	71 BEERLING, Stephen (K.)	2979	
(72)	72 TENDLER, Gary (E.)	2974	
(73)	73 PAYNE, Phil (SO.)	2974	
(74)	74 WELSMAN, David (NP.)	2967*	
(75)	75 GRIFFIN, Darren (GS.)	2966*	
(76)	76 MAJITHIA, Mayur (SX.)	2963	
(77)	77 WALSH, Jimmy (HE.)	2961	
(78)	78 DYSON, Tim (Y.)	2961	
(79)	79 TURNER, Steven (LA.)	2957	
(80)	80 DENNISON, John (E.)	2956	
(81)	81 WALKER, Andy (SX.)	2938	
(82)	82 BRIDGETT, Gregory (DV.)	2932	
(83)	83 ADAMS, Martin (BK.)	2928	
(84)	84 WILLIAMS, Keith (LA.)	2924*	
(85)	85 LIGHTOWLER, Richard (Y.)	2923	
(86)	86 SHORT, Mike (DV.)	2921	
(87)	87 BARRY, Paul (SX.)	2917	

(62)	88 DODD, Justin (K.)	2914	
(199)	89 NOOTT, Adrian (CO.)	2913	
(76)	90 SANDLEY, Graham (MI.)	29101	
(85)	91 LOGSDON, Philip (NK.)	2906	
(63)	92 READ, Mark (WA.)	2895	
(88)	93 JOHNS, Mike (Ch) (SX.)	2889*	
(89)	94 DAVIES, Nicky (Y.)	2885*	
(58)	95 BECKLEY, Christopher (SY.)	2883	
(90)	96 STEAD, Michael (Y.)	2882	
(91)	97 JAMES, Simon (Y.)	2881	
(87)	98 GASCOYNE, Craig (NG.)	2878	
(109)	99 RANKIN, John (LA.)	2876	
(92)	100 GOMERSALL, Michael (CU.)	2874****	

Senior Women

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(1)	1 DEATON, Nicola (DY.)	3835*	
(2)	2 HOLT, Andrea (LA.)	3783***	
(3)	3 LOWER, Helen (ST.)	3654**	
(4)	4 RADFORD, Linda (E.)	3517	
(5)	5 OWOLABI, Kubrat (ML.)	3499*	
(6)	6 SCHWARTZ, Gemma (BK.)	3386*	
(7)	7 SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3267	
(9)	8 MARLING, Sally (Y.)	3231***	
(8)	9 DURRANT, Louise (NG.)	3229	
(10)	10 RUOCCO, Shelley (E.)	3156	
(11)	11 LOCKWOOD, Karen (CH.)	3155*	
(12)	12 HARRIS, Jill (ST.)	3109	
(13)	13 KENDALL, Jade (CU.)	3066***	
(14)	14 PARKER, Katy (LA.)	3020	
(15)	15 HURLING, Emma (HE.)	3003*	
(16)	16 DUNNING, Janet (ST.)	3000*	
(17)	17 COHEN, Michele (AV.)	2994	
(18)	18 RADFORD, Lesley (E.)	2963*	
(20)	19 BONGERS, Jose (ST.)	2961*	
(24)	20 BAWDEN, Natalie (E.)	2960	
(39)	21 YARDY, Hannah (E.)	2958	
(30)	22 BLOOR, Trudie (SP.)	2956	
(23)	23 RODEN, Sandra (WO.)	2955	
(21)	24 BUOEU, Brenda (LA.)	2951*	
(29)	25 RAINTON, Rosemary (SX.)	2927	
(25)	26 SMITH, Angela (ML.)	2919	
(26)	27 SHIELDS, Helen (Y.)	2906*	
(27)	28 WESTON, Sally (SX.)	2904	
(28)	29 NEWNS, Clare (CH.)	2899**	
(31)	30 SMITH, Sarah (NG.)	2883	
(22)	31 SPARKES, Rebecca (SK.)	2882	
(32)	32 PERRY, Penelope (DV.)	2874	
(33)	33 WALKER, Georgina (NG.)	2876*	
(36)	34 FISHER, Rebecca (ML.)	2851	
(48)	35 HOWARD, Alice (CH.)	2835	
(35)	36 MARLING, Samantha (ML.)	2834****	
(37)	37 SMITH, Emma (Y.)	2826***	
(38)	38 JUDSON, Carol (Y.)	2816*	
(40)	39 SIMPSON, Linda (Y.)	2809*	
(43)	40 LOWE, Claire (SK.)	2799**	
(44)	41 SILBURN, Nicola (Y.)	2785*	
(45)	42 MOORE, Claire (K.)	2781**	
(47)	43 HODGKIN, Sandra (Y.)	2774*	
(42)	44 KING, Sheila (SX.)	2748*	
(49)	45 MALTBY, Margaret (NP.)	2746*	
(50)	46 SCHOFIELD, Doreen (CH.)	2742*	
(51)	47 SMITH, Nicola (Y.)	2733*	
(52)	48 PEARCE, Diane (K.)	2726*	
(53)	49 KNIGHTLEY, Gillian (BK.)	2724*	
(46)	50 KEAST, Lesley (ML.)	27171	

Junior Boys

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(1)	1 BAGGALEY, Andrew (BU.)	4349*	
(2)	2 RUSHTON, Andrew (LA.)	3719	
(3)	3 BARHAM, Dale (CA.)	3353	
(4)	4 CHAN, Michael (SY.)	3185	
(9)	5 ROSENTHAL, Louis (LA.)	3094	
(10)	6 BEERLING, Stephen (K.)	2979	
(5)	7 DODD, Justin (K.)	2914	
(6)	8 GASCOYNE, Craig (NG.)	2878	
(7)	9 GOMERSALL, Michael (CU.)	2874****	
(12)	10 JAMESON, Christopher (E.)	2817	
(11)	11 KENNY, Matthew (Y.)	2758	
(8)	12 HALL, Dominic (K.)	2720	
(14)	13 PEARCE, Robin (DY.)	2637	
(13)	14 BARHAM, Lee (CA.)	2526	
(25)	15 BRYANT, Craig (DV.)	2433	
(15)	16 RULE, Martin (BU.)	2370***	
(16)	17 HUGHES, Stuart (NG.)	2359	
(17)	18 GIBBS, Thomas (D.)	2305	
(19)	19 YARDY, Tim (E.)	2195	
(18)	20 WELSH, Daniel T (DU.)	2154	

(20)	21 HORNER, Daniel (CH.)	2134	
(23)	22 CLEMINSON, Peter (E.)	2123	
(21)	23 POUNTNEY, Paul (SY.)	2091	
(31)	24 HANDY, Philip (DO.)	2025	
(24)	25 BAKER, Gregory (ST.)	1994	
(22)	26 DAVIES, Stephen (LI.)	1988	
(34)	27 WALKER, Ross (K.)	1912	
(26)	28 RUDLAND, Simon (ST.)	1902	
(27)	29 DOMINGUEZ, Luis (ML.)	1864*	
(30)	30 BAILEY, Steven (CV.)	1857	
(29)	31 HANSELL, Robert (BU.)	1856	
(28)	32 BLOOMFIELD, Gary (SK.)	1800	
(82)	33 TAYLOR, Blake (BU.)	1697	
(35)	34 YARNALL, Tim (NP.)	1692	
(33)	35 HOLTAM, Timothy (ML.)	1686	
(32)	36 HEPTINSTALL, Matthew (Y.)	1681	
(38)	37 DRINKHALL, Bryn (CV.)	1668	
(36)	38 WOODHOUSE, Grant (CU.)	1664	
(37)	39 SPEED, Douglas (ST.)	1623	
(40)	40 COSTELLO, Paul (CV.)	1613	
(49)	41 CARTWRIGHT, Neil (DO.)	1580	
(42)	42 BROOKS, Warren (BU.)	1567	
(41)	43 MASON, Wayne (NK.)	1560	
(43)	44 WHITAKER, Jonathan (E.)	1530*	
(39)	45 HEATLEY, Ian (CH.)	1530	
(44)	46 MOORE, Paul (SY.)	1523*	
(51)	47 YARNALL, Gregory (NP.)	1505	
(45)	48 NOUTCH, Simon (Y.)	1500	
(46)	49 MANN, Alex (SK.)	1495	
(52)	50 CAMILLERI, John (OX.)	1484	

Junior Girls

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(1)	1 DURRANT, Louise (NG.)	3229	
(2)	2 PARKER, Katy (LA.)	3020	
(3)	3 BAWDEN, Natalie (E.)	2960	
(5)	4 YARDY, Hannah (E.)	2958	
(4)	5 WALKER, Georgina (NG.)	2860	
(7)	6 POINTER, Lucy (IW.)	2582	
(11)	7 NARENDRAAN, Aparna (ML.)	2579	
(6)	8 DEARING, Emily (Y.)	2572	
(9)	9 STEWARD, Kathryn (SO.)	2540	
(8)	10 GIBBS, Claire (WO.)	2485	
(10)	11 HUGHES, Kate (SO.)	2435	
(12)	12 CHAPMAN, Gemma (BK.)	2386	
(13)	13 SHEPHERD, Karen (CH.)	2380	
(34)	14 CALCUTT, Lisa (BK.)	2345	
(15)	15 PARKER, Aimee (SY.)	2341	
(16)	16 SPARKES, Joanna (SK.)	2278	
(14)	17 DONNELLY, Janine (Y.)	2259	
(23)	18 TONG, Rebecca (LA.)	2247	
(19)	19 CHEESMAN, Zoe (Y.)	2211	
(17)	20 SORRENTINO, Annabelle(CH.)	2202	
(18)	21 FLINT, Deborah (SY.)	2117*	
(20)	22 SPINK, Paisley (CH.)	2038**	
(21)	23 MEREDITH, Samantha (WA.)	2011	
(24)	24 DONNELLY, Sarah (Y.)	2005	
(22)	25 BALDI, Andrea(YS) (Y.)	2003	
(28)	26 VICKERS, Kate (DU.)	1977	
(26)	27 WRIGHT, Amy (E.)	1975	
(25)	28 BARNARD, Kim (LA.)	1954	
(27)	29 INGHAM, Katy (CH.)	1893*	
(29)	30 POWELL, Lynsey (CH.)	1819	
(30)	31 TODD, Nicole (E.)	1781	
(31)	32 BROWN, Grace (E.)	1770	
(33)	33 GOLDSTRAW, Claire (SP.)	1748**	
(32)	34 WILLIS, Rachel (WL.)	1747	
(35)	35 CRAVEN-GRIFFITHS, Kelly (LE.)	1690	
(36)	36 EMBLING, Abigail (E.)	1684*	
(44)	37 WILSON, Naomi (SO.)	1631	
(43)	38 GRAHAM, Cherith (LA.)	1615	
(37)	39 CAIN, Joanne (LA.)	1584	
(38)	40 ROBERTS, Hannah (LA.)	1571	
(47)	41 HEARD, Gemma (E.)	1528	
(39)	42 HUMAN, Emma (BK.)	1523	
(48)	43 DAUNCEY, Stephanie (AV.)	1480	
(40)	44 HOWARD, Clara (CH.)	1437	
(41)	45 BROWN, Sarah (E.)	1405*	
(42)	46 HORSTEAD, Ivie (NK.)	1396	
(45)	47 GABEROVA, Julia (ML.)	1385*	
(46)	48 ASHISON, Glenys (SY.)	1380*	
(52)	49 DEWHURST, Elizabeth (E.)	1366	
(49)	50 BELL, Amanda (Y.)	1359	

Cadet Boys

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(1)	1 BARHAM, Dale (CA.)	3353	
(5)	2 BRYANT, Craig (DV.)	2433	
(2)	3 HORNER, Daniel (CH.)	2134	

(3)	4 CLEMINSON, Peter (E.)	2123	
(4)	5 BAKER, Gregory (ST.)	1994	
(6)	6 YARNALL, Tim (NP.)	1692	
(7)	7 DRINKHALL, Bryn (CV.)	1668	
(8)	8 WOODHOUSE, Grant (CU.)	1664	
(13)	9 CARTWRIGHT, Neil (DO.)	1580	
(10)	10 BROOKS, Warren (BU.)	1567	
(11)	11 MOORE, Paul (SY.)	1523*	
(12)	12 NOUTCH, Simon (Y.)	1500	
(16)	13 MITCHELL, Thomas (BU.)	1449	
(12)	14 BRZEZNIAK, Kacper (Y.)	1440	
(15)	15 DENNY, Stephen (Y.)	1285	
(14)	16 MARPLES, Shaun (DY.)	1270	
(25)	17 EVANS, Bradley (BU.)	1251	
(17)	18 BLEAKLEY, Adam (LA.)	1194	
(19)	19 GREGORY, Chris (SP.)	1188	
(20)	20 SHUTES, William (NK.)	1149	
(18)	21 ROGERSON, Shaun (LI.)	1129	
(21)	22 FLETCHER, James (LA.)	1103	
(23)	23 WOODHEAD, Andrew (Y.)	1073	
(24)	24 BROAD, Lee (K.)	1054*	
(26)	25 BARNARD, Chris (LI.)	966	

Cadet Girls

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(1)	1 WALKER, Georgina (NG.)	2860	
(2)	2 STEWARD, Kathryn (SO.)	2540	
(3)	3 CHAPMAN, Gemma (BK.)	2386	
(4)	4 SHEPHERD, Karen (CH.)	2380	
(6)	5 CALCUTT, Lisa (BK.)	2345	
(5)	6 PARKER, Joanna (SY.)	2341	
(7)	7 CRAVEN-GRIFFITHS, Kelly (LE.)	1690	
(8)	8 EMBLING, Abigail (E.)	1684*	
(12)	9 WILSON, Naomi (SO.)		

CORRECT TRAINING

THIS ARTICLE IS IN RESPONSE TO KEN MUHR'S INTERVIEW WITH HOWARD JACOBSON - TONY ZHANG PUTS THE CHINESE POINT OF VIEW.

“ I used to play professional football and did not get myself involved in table tennis until a few years ago when my son started the sport. I've enjoyed every issue of the ETTA Table Tennis News which are a wealthy source of information about the sport in England and around the world, writes Tony Zhang.

As a table tennis super nation, China is mentioned in dazzling frequency not only in the ETTA TT News, but also in many other media forms. Unfortunately, the interpretation of Chinese table tennis, more often than not, has been biased and misleading for some reason. I am trying to be as objective as I can, though some may still think I am opinionated because I am Chinese.

Many people outside China have been saying that table tennis is their national sport, if not the only sport, in China. One article goes as far as saying “The political autocracy simply dictated the sport that people should aim for and then scoured the country in a single-minded quest for potential table tennis champions. Hundreds of millions began to dream of conquering the world of table tennis.” I don't know how he arrived at that conclusion. Ask any Chinese you come across what the most popular sport is in China, chances are table tennis is one of the least to be mentioned these days. You name it, be it football, basketball, badminton, swimming, almost every major sport is more or getting to be more popular than table tennis. Exactly the same as in England, football is the one that attracts everyone old or young. Football is where all the commercial money is washed around. Certainly not table tennis. In the December issue, someone says “The Asians would not know what we are talking about if we said that table tennis has a problem”. Again assumption based on imagination, with due respect to the guy named Howard Jacobson, whom I have no knowledge of.

The “In China if you are good at table tennis, you earn a good salary and live a good life”, has been repeatedly quoted to indicate how serious the Chinese are about the sport. Hang on a second and use your brain, you live a good life if you are good at ANY sport, not just table tennis.

The problem with the Chinese table tennis is a much similar one to anywhere else, the spectators. When the First World Club Championships, with all top players entered, were played in China in June 1999, there was not any live coverage on any of the eight national channels. What did that tell us?

There is one difference though, the general public take every world table tennis title for granted as if they were there solely for China. They are not excited if won, but certainly furious if lost. The attitude has put enormous pressure on both players and coaches. Yet sadly, the money is not there for them. Any second class footballer makes more than Liu or Kong!

Believe it or not, it is the Chinese ‘One Family One Child’ policy that has supplied the Chinese table tennis with new blood never-ending. Parents, afraid of things like football that involves a lot body contact and inevitable injury to their only child, often settle down for table tennis for their children.

China is not only good at table tennis, but also to almost the same extent good at badminton, diving and shooting sports.

You may ask why the Chinese table tennis is singled out. Well, table tennis was the sport that won China in 1959 the first ever world title in its sports history, which immediately inspired the nation in the sense of national pride. People today may take penhold as the synonym of Chinese table tennis. But before Rong Guoguan who won the Worlds in 1959, almost everyone there played shakehand. His victory gave table tennis a special status in China. If the Chinese have committed more than others into table tennis, Rong is the one that gets the credit for providing the drive.

Motivated at all levels, the country has since produced over a hundred world table tennis champions to date. Under the stark political

bureaucracy in the old days, table tennis was unavoidably employed for purposes other than pure sports. The scenario reached its peak in the early 1970s when the ‘table tennis diplomacy’ was staged to break the political ice with the United States. Now a much liberalised country thanks to the Open-Door policy adopted 20 years ago, China has since drifted away from its once most loved sport to a much wider spectrum with table tennis left alone facing its own fate.

However, table tennis is of course much more popular there than in England. The names of Waldner and Samsonov represent sport excellence and attract admiration all over China. They certainly are much bigger stars than in their own countries. Waldner is far more than just a European breed that saved the face of European table tennis, but as well to a great extent inspired millions of Chinese players with his style and talent. Did people here know that the name of Desmond Douglas is well remembered in China? That is the beauty of sport that speaks for itself beyond national boundary.

Again the Mr. Howard Jacobson says, I quote, “Funnily enough Kong who does play a bit like a European, greatly admires Waldner. The Chinese don't heroise Samsonov and Waldner”. When I read that language, I had things more than mere disdain. Kong is two generations (in table tennis terms) younger than Waldner. When the latter was on form grabbing the title as king of the sport, Kong was still in kindergarten. What's his admiration for the like of Waldner funny about? How did he know Waldner and Samsonov are not heroised in China? He boldly hawked his imagination in the English Table Tennis News only because he took the chance it would not reach a Chinese reader! Can anyone tell me what good his remark can possibly do for English table tennis? I was only happy Mr. Jacobson is not in the governing hierarchy of the English table tennis.

The Chinese play a style of speed and precision game which is sometimes mentioned by some with cynicism. Well, long rally is certainly good for the eyes but puts more uncertainty to either players chances. Both Waldner and Persson in their

early years spent lengthy time in China, why? They were there for the first-three-ball and close-to-table techniques. We are talking about a competitive sport, not something for exhibition. Ah, you say the spectator problem again. Yes we are facing that problem which is as some put it caused partially by the lack of rallies. But if you are a player and want to be good, bear in mind you are there to win not just to please others. If we don't get this attitude right, we will never get anywhere. You don't get a medal because you played longer rallies. I am sure the Lottery ‘World Class Programme’ only wants to see the gold. The essence of first-three-ball is all about how to overwhelm your opponent as early as possible. I was so pleased that the newly appointed national team coach Soren Ahlen clearly emphasises this and is bringing it to the team.

The Chinese technical superiority comes from hard training and correct method. The multi-ball training which was devised by the Chinese coaches in the 1960's has not really been adopted in England. Think about it, how it will be like if you can precisely deliver the ball to the exact spot where you want it? You can only achieve that by committing yourself to many hours of multi-ball training through your entire table tennis career. If you cannot bear the hardship, you are simply out. Don't excuse yourself by saying you don't like the precision style. Again we've heard Soren Ahlen say he would introduce multi-ball to Nottingham which I'm sure will benefit our players a great deal.

When people talk about the sheer number of table tennis players in China, there is simply a hint of frustration in catching up! Is that really so? The number of football players in China is at least 5-6 times more than in England, but where is China in the world of football? English Premier League is seen there as the best football in the world and all matches, yes all matches, are covered live by the Chinese TV and attract hundreds of millions of people. Don't tell me table tennis is the sport there again.

It is all a matter of correct training and mechanism that make a country better than others.

PROGRESS AWARD



(Pictured left to right) **DAVID OXLEY OBE** Chairman of **CCPR**, **JON KAUFMAN** and **JASON SUGRUE** of **Progress TTC**, and **GRATTON ENDICOTT** from the **Foundation for Sports and the Arts**.

LONDON PROGRESS 2nd IN CCPR/FSA 'SPORTS CLUB OF THE YEAR' AWARD

LONDON PROGRESS, who last year achieved the national table tennis treble when they won the British League

Premier Division, the Ormesby Cup (men's club knockout) and Willmott Cup (men's league team knockout), have received £4,000 for coming second in the Central Council for Physical Recreation/Foundation for Sport and the Arts 'Sports Club of the Year' Awards.

The awards are given to clubs which encourage greater participation, set standards in excellence, have a proven track record in working with schools, local authorities and other community groups, and have already attracted grants and sponsorship - clubs that are fine

examples of good practice.

At the gala dinner presentation at Kenilworth, Warwickshire on 24th November, Gratton Endicott, Secretary to the Trustees of the FSA, particularly commended London Progress, which has a strong grass roots coaching and development programme and multi-ethnic (particularly Afro-Caribbean) flavour, for its socially inclusive nature. Said club leader Jon Kaufman, who collected the award with leading player and a founder member Jason Sugrue, "We are over the moon, proud to be selected among the top three clubs. We will put the money towards our ever expanding, coaching and development programme the heartlands of London".

OBITUARY

JOHN MCKIM

IT is with profound regret that I have to report the sudden and totally unexpected passing away of John McKim on 2nd October 1999, bringing to an end an involvement in the sport of table tennis covering a period of 60 years.

Having previously served for a couple of years as a co-opted member of the Liverpool and District Table Tennis League Executive Committee in the capacity of Deputy Referee, followed by a full year as an elected member, John's administrative expertise was put to its greatest test at the commencement of the 1957 season. This arose when due to the sudden death of Bill Stamp, who for so many years had guided the fortunes of the League as its General Secretary, it became necessary to find someone who was both willing and able to devote the time and enthusiasm to ensure that the League's affairs continued to be efficiently administered. Undaunted by the knowledge that his predecessor had set such a high standard, John undertook the task, and with the pleasant and obliging manner which over the years became so characteristic of him, the affairs of the League continued to be conducted with the diligence and competence which earned him the respect of both players and officials. He performed his many tasks assiduously and his selfless endeavour during periods of indifferent health was appreciated by

all who had the pleasure to be associated with him. During his playing career with the League which dated back to 1938, John played for several Clubs and he will be remembered as a sporting competitor, friendly to his opponent either win or lose. The League felt privileged to acknowledge John's dedicated commitment in 1960 when he was awarded the Stamp Award of Merit, and further recognition of his sterling service was accorded to him in 1991 when the League's highest accolade of Life Member was bestowed upon him. Although John took the decision to resign as General Secretary at the 1995 Annual General Meeting, he has continued to make a valued contribution as a member of the League's Board of Appeal.

In addition to his longevity of service to the Liverpool & District Table Tennis League, John's administrative abilities extended far and beyond its boundary. He joined the Executive Committee of the Lancashire County Table Tennis Association in 1959, and in 1968 was elected to the Office of Hon. General Secretary, a post which he continued to fulfil with distinction up to the time of his death. In those early years the Lancashire and Cheshire County Associations and the Lancashire & Cheshire Table Tennis League met as a combined body, and for approximately four years from 1968, in addition to Secretarial duties for the Lancashire

County Association he also fulfilled the role of Secretary to the other two Organisations. He also represented Cheshire for two years on the National Council of the English Table Tennis Association. He remained an elected member of the Lancashire & Cheshire Table Tennis League Executive Committee.

John had given service as a member of the E.T.T.A. Tournaments and Rules Committees, and continued to be a member of that Association's Board of Appeal. His contribution to the sport at all levels was recognised in 1983 when he was elected a Vice-President of the English Table Tennis Association. He will be remembered by the wide circle of friends which he deservedly earned for himself, in particular for his wise counsel, his quiet efficiency, and for the courtesy which was one of his natural attributes.

This has been a most sad occasion for his widow Maureen, who has herself been experiencing poor health for some time, his daughter Janice and her family. They have lost a loving husband, father, and grandad, and we extend our deepest sympathy to them in the sad loss which they have sustained.

I personally was privileged to have known John as a result of our mutual interest in the sport of table tennis spanning a period of half a century, and to have had a close and happy working relationship as administrators covering four decades. I shall miss his caring disposition and his valued friendship, and like the countless others who were enriched by the privilege of knowing him, will feel the poorer by his passing.
Arthur E. Upton
Chairman, Lancashire TT Association.

ENGLISH SENIOR NATIONALS

You may be aware that due to the withdrawal of sponsorship the senior National Championships, scheduled to be played at the Bath Sports and Leisure Centre on the weekend of 22/23 January have been postponed, writes Mike Johns.

We believe that it is essential that these Championships are held this season, although with the Commonwealth Championships in Singapore, the World Team Championships in Malaysia, the European Championships in Germany plus various Pro Tour Championships and our own events programme, finding a suitable free date has been virtually impossible.

Finally, a compromise has been reached. The Senior National Championships will be held at Ponds Forge International Sports Centre, Sheffield on 13/14th May 2000 replacing the scheduled South Yorkshire Open Grand Prix event. The South West Open at St. Austell on the 22nd/23rd April will now become the last Grand Prix before the finals, with the Eastern Open and the Blackpool Open being the two remaining 'Majors'.

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2000

4th-6th	European Top 12	
5th-6th	Veterans British League	Potters Leisure Resort
5th-6th	Welsh Open	
5th	Junior County Championships (6)	
5th	Leach & Hammersley Cups Rnd.2	
6th	Carter Cup & Bromfield Trophy	
6th	Junior Training Day	
6th	East Midland Graded & Disabled Grand Prix	
12th-13th	ETTA East Anglian Grand Prix	Potters Leisure Resort
12th-13th	ETTA Junior British League (2)	
12th-13th	B.U.S.A.	Warwick
13th	Seasiders Graded Grand Prix	
19th	Exeter 1 Star	
19th	Idsall 2 Star	
19th	Wellow School U10/11/12 2 Star	
19th-26th	World Team Championships	Kuala Lumpur
19th-20th	Veterans Premier County Championships (2)	
19th-20th	North Herts Banded GP 2 Star	
20th	Derwent 2 Star	
20th	ESTTA Regional Team Finals	
26th	National Junior League (3)	
26th-27th	VETTS Western Masters	Cheltenham
27th	Cirencester U14/17 1 Star	
27th	British League (10)	

MARCH

4th	County Championships Senior and Veterans (6)	
4th	Senior Top 12 (3 & 4)	
4th-5th	Derby Junior 4 Star	
5th	British League (11)	
11th	Humberide Cleefields Junior 2 Star	
11th	Willmot & Gainsford Cup R2, and Rose Bowl R2	
12th	Seasiders Graded Grand Prix 3 Star	
12th	Alex Brook Trophy Round 2	
18th	ESTTA National Team Finals	
18th	County Champions (7)	
19th	Junior Training day	
19th	British League (12)	
25th-26th	ETTA Grand Prix Major	Kings Lynn
25th-26th	VETTS Northern	
25th-26th	Junior Masters	
26th	Cippenham Cadet 3 Star	

APRIL

1st	Brighton Newman Junior 2 Star	
1st	Wilmott Cup R3	
1st	Pat Archdale Cup R1	
2nd	Carter Cup R3	
2nd	Bromfield Trophy R3	
2nd	Gloucestershire Banded U12 2 Star	
2nd	Brighton Newman Senior 2 Star	
8th	Chesham School U12/U14 2 Star	
8th	Abbey Junior 2 Star	
8th-9th	Blackpool 4 Star Major Grand Prix	Blackpool
8th-9th	Cadet Masters	
9th	Leach & Hammersley Cup R3	
16th	British League (13)	
22nd-23rd	ETTA South West Grand Prix	St.Austell