

TABLE TENNIS



£2.50

No.269 MAY 2000

NEWS

**PETER
KARLSSON
SURPRISE
WINNER
IN
BREMEN**



**Pages
13 to 15**



**MICHEL
GADAT
speaks out
Pages 17 to 19**



**SUPER-FIT ALAN COOKE
WINS HIS 3rd GRAND
PRIX Page 16**

JUNIOR BRITISH LEAGUE Page 20

STIGA®

You can now purchase "STIGA SPECIALIST PRODUCTS" from

The Bat Workshop Tel: 01304 369 996 Fax: 01304 369 636 e-mail: sales@bat-workshop.co.uk
Thornton's Sport and Leisure Tel/fax: 0161 761 6608

FOR STIGA TABLES

Telephone Sweden Table Tennis (UK) Ltd Tel: 01903 2

**Liu Guoliang wins the World
Title with Mendo MP rubber
and Clipper CR blade!**

TABLE TENNIS NEWS and TTN EXTRA

Unsolicited articles are welcome for possible publication but the English Table Tennis Association will accept no responsibility for the return of manuscripts and/or photographs.

Whilst every effort is taken to ensure that reports and facts are correct at the time of going to press no responsibility will be accepted by the ETTA should errors be published, either for errors or matters arising as a result.

The views expressed in Table Tennis News are those of the contributors and are not necessarily official ETTA policy. Similarly TTN accepts advertisements in good faith, but cannot accept responsibility for the goods or services described in advertisements. If you have any queries, these should be addressed directly to the advertiser.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical including photocopying, recording or any information storage or retrieval system without the prior written consent of the publisher.

Contents

CHATTERBOX Swathling Club Dinner in Bremen	04
FROM THE CHAIR Revolutionary New European System	05
POSTBAG Letters to the Editor	07
BRITISH LEAGUE Battle of Britain	10
EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS First Major for Sweden's Peter Karlsson	13
BLACKPOOL & NEWCASTLE GRAND PRIX TOURNAMENTS	16
THE BIG INTERVIEW Michel Gadad speaks out	17
COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS A Spark of Interest	22
ETTA RANKING LIST Top of the Table	26
TTN EXTRA A 16 page supplement including 'County Notes', 'Results' and much more.	

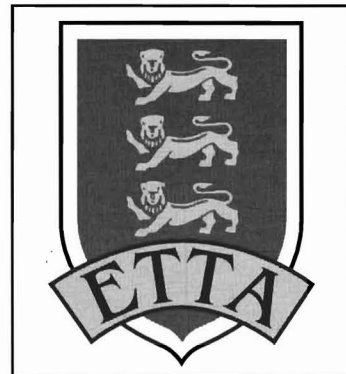


TABLE TENNIS NEWS

*The Official Magazine
of the English Table
Tennis Association*

**Issue No.269
May 2000**

Publisher
English Table Tennis Association
Queensbury House,
Havelock Road, Hastings,
East Sussex TN34 1HF
Telephone: 01424 722525
Fax: 01424 422103
email Events:
vanda.jones@talk21.com
email Administration:
admin@ettahq.freemove.co.uk
Web Site: www.etta.co.uk

Editor & Photographer
John F.A. Wood
Centenary Cottage,
Church Road, Charlestown,
St.Austell, Cornwall PL25 3NS
Telephone/Fax: 01726 70607
Mobile: 07887 945071
email: johnwood@macace.co.uk

Editor of TTN Extra
Ken Muhr
ETTA Headquarters, Hastings

Advertisements
Richard Yule
ETTA Headquarters, Hastings

Subscription & Distribution
Robert Sinclair
ETTA Headquarters, Hastings

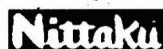
Subscription Rates
UK - £17, Europe - £27,
Rest of the World - £32

Printer
Printed in the UK by
Nima Print & Design Services,
91a Ashford Road, Eastbourne,
East Sussex BN21 3TE
Telephone: 01323 430036



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

The ETTA would like to thank the following companies for the support they give to English Table Tennis Association



BREMEN DINNER



SWATHLING CLUB DINNER: Having fun at the Swathling Club Dinner are (left to right) ETTA Chairman Alan Ransome, ETTA President Johnny Leach, Tony Martin from Ireland, Billy Gibbs of Scotland and Mr & Mrs Steve Gibbs from Wales

WOODY'S World

THIS issue of Table Tennis News is crammed full of reports and information, so full that we had far more than we could publish.

To be fair to all correspondents I have carried forward my report on the ETTA St.Austell Open Grand Prix to the June/July issue.

We include a full report on the European Championships in Bremen by John Woodford, pages 13 to 15.

With regard to new rules and regulations for Europe next season, see Alan Ransome's 'From the Chair' column, pages 5 & 6.

Michel Gadat speaks out on pages 17 to 19, whilst Henry Buist concludes his series on 'How to Play Long Pimples', page 27.

Plus see my test on an exciting new long pimple, page 24.

John Wood

CHINESE NATIONAL TEAM TRAINING CENTRE

A TRAINING CAMP OPPORTUNITY

24th July - 6th August 2000

CNTTC is the training base for the famous Chinese National Team. The 'Training Camp' has been specially organised for young players from the United Kingdom. Participants will benefit from the unique Chinese coaching method that has produced over 100 world champions.

The coaching will be run on an individual basis, with a responsible professional coach assigned to every player. Beware, the 8-hours-a-day and play-your-coach-only, can be very demanding! Your only leisure time will be a one day sightseeing trip to the Great Wall and the world's largest royal palace, the Red Forbidden City.

The cost per player is £1195 covering return air fare, insurance, coaching, accommodation and any organised sightseeing and social events. As entries are limited, please book early to avoid disappointment.

Visit www.callnetuk.com/home/tabletennis/tour1.htm to take a virtual tour of the centre.

For further details please contact the event organiser:
Linx Enterprises Ltd.,
71 Sutton Road, Watford, Herts. WD1 2QG, UK
Telephone: 01923 352846 Fax: 01923 242503
Email: info@chinalinks.co.uk

COACHING SUCCESS



EASTER COACHING

NICKY JARVIS, one of England's best coaches, ran a four day coaching course for 32 enthusiastic youngsters at the Tregorrick Park Table Tennis Centre in St.Austell Cornwall.

Some of the prize winners and participants are pictured above.

This course was run prior to the St.Austell Grand Prix, which took

place over the Easter weekend.

ESSEX IS MOVING

THE Essex 4 Star Junior Select is moving next season to 7th/8th October 2000, and will be played at Harlow.

'MISS PRINT'

IN the last issue of TTN the name of Samantha Johns was misspelled, as 'Samanatha'. Sorry!

REVOLUTIONARY NEW EUROPEAN SYSTEM



Alan Ransome OBE,
Chairman of the ETTA

THE European Table Tennis Union at its Annual congress in Bremen on 21st April adopted a revolutionary new system for the European League and the team events in the European Championships, effectively making the European League a form of qualifying competition for the Championships.

In both the Men's and Women's sections the teams in the top two divisions (24 men and 27 women) will play 7 matches (3 at home and 4 away and vice versa) over the two year period between European Championships and then, dependent on their results will be seeded in one of the categories for the Champion ships. This means that the teams who finish in the top four places in the First Division of the European League will qualify automatically for the quarter finals of the European Championships team event, whilst the teams finishing between 5 and 10 will qualify for the last 16 together with the winning teams in the second division.

The European Championship itself will be reduced in length with only 4 days being required to play the team event rather than six at present and to win the European Championship from the quarter final position, the leading teams would only need to play three matches. The effect of this will be to encourage all national teams to compete in the European League and to pick their strongest teams or risk a poor position/draw in the European Championships team event. The vote in favour of the new proposal was overwhelming as it provides good quality competition for the national teams during the two seasons without too many matches and provides a very interesting programme for the European Championships.

Following the results in Bremen England will be in the First Division

in both the men's and women's category (not Premier) and therefore will be fighting for one of the two remaining places in the top category event at the next European Championships in Zagreb.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE INCREASED TO TEN TEAMS

The European Champions League which has proved very popular with Eurosport viewers throughout Europe, this season is to be increased to ten teams for next season. The two finalists in the European Cup, winners Grenzau of Germany and runners up Frydek-Mistek of the Czech Republic, will join the league. Television arrangements for the league for next season are not yet finalised but it is hoped that again extensive coverage will be possible.

MAJOR CHANGES IN COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The ETTU Congress also approved major changes in the committee structure of the ETTU abolishing the 12 person Management Committee and giving the Executive Committee the authority to select the Committee Chairmen. In the elections for the Executive Committee there was only one new member. Pierre Albertini, President of the French Federation, retired from his Vice President position to concentrate on his new role as Deputy President of the ITTF, his place being taken by another French nominee, Claude Bergeret the former World Mixed Doubles Champion who is currently Chairman



**DONALD PARKER Deputy
Chairman of the ETTU Teaching
& Training Committee**

of the ITTF Athletes Commission.

From an ETTA perspective despite the many changes in the structure, all of our nominees were elected to the various committees as follows: Alan Ransome - Vice President and ITTF Council Member, Tony Chatwin - Deputy Chairman of the ETTU Umpires and Referees Committee,

Donald Parker - Deputy Chairman of the Teaching & Training Committee, Stuart Sherlock - Member of the Technical Committee, Mike Watts - Member of the Veterans Committee.

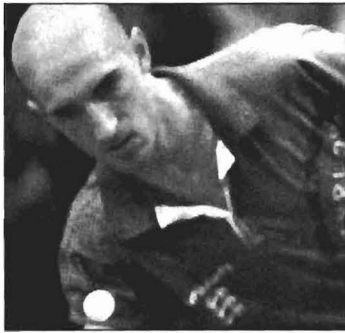
EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS YEAR CHANGE

Another important decision taken in Bremen was to change the year that the European Championships are held from even to odd years. The ITTF at its Congress in Kuala Lumpur in February had

decided on an experimental basis in 2003 to hold the World individual championships (odd years) and the World team championships in even years. Which would have meant that if the European Championships had continued in 2004 that in one six month period there would have been the World team championships, the full European Championships and the Olympic Games (like this year) which would have clearly proved too much. The ETTU decided to move their Championships to the odd years so that the European Championships would coincide only with the World individual event. All of this does not start until 2003 and therefore the major international programme over the next six years will be as below.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

2001	April	Full World Championships in Osaka, Japan
2002	April	Full European Championships in Zagreb
	July	Commonwealth Games in Manchester
2003	April	Full European championships in Italy
	May	World individual championships (venue to be decided)
2004	April	World Team Championships (venue to be decided)
	August/September	Olympic Games in Greece
2005	March	Full European Championships (probably in Czech Republic)
	May	World Individual Championships (venue to be decided)
2006	April	World Championships (venue to be decided)
	July	Commonwealth Games in Melbourne



*Flying the flag for England in Bremen were, **MATTHEW SYED** (left) and **KATY PARKER** (below)*



SUCCESSFUL CHAMPIONSHIPS IN BREMEN

The organisers of the European Championships in Bremen are to be congratulated on staging an excellent event. The Conference and Exhibition Centre in the town of Bremen proved to be a magnificent venue. The presentation of the whole event was first class and the spectator attendance particularly on the final Bank Holiday weekend was extremely good with nearly all tickets being sold out.

There were many excellent matches particularly in the later rounds, with the men's semi final in which Zoran Primorac beat Jan Ove Waldner 19 in the 5th being probably the best. The Women's singles final was also very good when the German/Chinese defender Qaingshong Gotsch defeated the fast improving Romanian Mihaela Steff.

From an England viewpoint overall results were not good, but there were some impressive individual performances for Matthew Syed and Terry Young in the Men's team event and from Helen Lower and Katy Parker in the Women's. A full report can be seen on page 14 by John Woodford.

SUNDERLAND CELEBRATE 90TH

On 5th May the Sunderland & District Table Tennis Association celebrated its 90th Anniversary. Sunderland is the oldest table tennis association in Britain and probably the world. The league was formed on 3 March 1910 as the Sunderland Ping Pong Union and ran under this name until 1927 when it changed its name to Sunderland & District Table Tennis Association.

The leading light in the early days was the Secretary/Treasurer, Andrew Donaldson, who won the first ever English Open in 1922 in London. Andrew Donaldson to his dismay found when he arrived at the Championships that the height of the net used in the Sunderland Union of

6" was lower than the 6.75" net used in London and for the Championships and quickly had to adapt his game to suit.

In the early days of the Sunderland League the three divisions were played on the basis of 7 a side teams with each playing one singles of 2 games 20 up.

Other stalwarts in the Sunderland history were Edgar and Jean Reay who were senior officers of the league from 1930 until 1981 and Ken Taylor who was coaching officer in 1960 and has served in one position or another to date where is he currently the very active President.

Sunderland has a magnificent history of which to be very proud. They also have a very active and hard working committee with the prospect of a very bright future. Jose and I were very honoured to be asked to attend and be part of their celebration evening.

TV COVERAGE

Following the recent agreement between Sky Sports, the ITTF and the ETTA, table tennis fans who have access to Sky Sports coverage will have 19 opportunities during July to see Pro Tour one hour programmes. The schedule is as below.

WORLD SCHOOLS TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS

BRONZE MEDAL FOR ENGLAND

SEVENTEEN countries and 369 players gathered in Beuvry, France, for the 5th World Schools Championships, for a week long festival of fun and friendships, writes Chris Jamieson.

The team event was played over the first 3 days and was fiercely contested. The England National Boys Team of Andrew Rushton, Louis Rosenthal, Justin Dodd and Craig Gascoyne, started well with a 7-0 victory over Slovakia, but then struggled against France, losing 1-6. However, they composed themselves to achieve the end result of a brilliant bronze medal, after winning the 3rd/4th play-off against Brazil.

England's National Girls Team of Natalie Bawden, Georgina Walker, Claire Gibbs and Lucy Pointer, was unable to emulate their silver medal of 1998, but achieved a creditable 5th place. The two 3-4 defeats saw the medals slip from their grasp.

The Girls School Team from Peniel Academy, Grace Brown, Gemma Heard, Sarah Brown, and Elizabeth Dewhurst, came 3rd in their group but then managed to pick-up a Portugese scalp and a great deal of useful experience at this level.

The Boys School Team also from Peniel Academy was Chris Jamieson, Peter Cleminson, Matthew Weil and Mark Cooper. They narrowly lost 3-4 to Germany to come second in their group and then went on to play the Turkish Team. Delight soon followed as England went 2-1 up, but then surprisingly, Chris and Peter suffered their first doubles defeat. A tense match then followed between Chris Jamieson and the Turkish No. 1, which Chris won narrowly in the 3rd. A now much quietened Turkish crowd failed to raise their team spirits as Mark Cooper finished off a famous victory with a commanding and well disciplined display to earn his team a 4th place medal.

The cultural evening was attended by all the countries where performance of the night came from the England boys, with their rendition of 'The Murder of Julius Caesar'. Mark Cooper, in particular, worked the crowd like a true pro and his acting ability left the audience in no doubt as to the magnificence of what they had witnessed.

The week long tournament was a great success for both the ISF and the ESTTA. Our thanks go to: the organisers, particularly John and Margaret Arnold, to the Head of Delegation John Blackband, the coaches, Paul Birch, Gail McCulloch, Nicky Jarvis and Esther Coleman, and to the umpires Wilf Rhodes and Margot Fraser.

Event	Date	Time	Channel
Croatian Open	9/7/00	19.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
Croatian Open	9/7/00	23.15	Sky Sports 1 Digital
Croatian Open	10/7/00	14.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
Croatian Open	10/7/00	18.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
China Open	14/7/00	21.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
China Open	14/7/00	02.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
China Open	15/7/00	15.30	Sky Sports 2 Digital
China Open	16/7/00	23.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
China Open	18/7/00	13.00	Sky Sports 1 Digital
China Open	18/7/00	16.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
Japan Open	21/7/00	21.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
Japan Open	22/7/00	15.30	Sky Sports 3 Digital
Japan Open	22/7/00	18.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
Japan Open	23/7/00	05.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
Japan Open	24/7/00	09.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
Japan Open	24/7/00	13.30	Sky Sports 3 Digital
US Open	30/7/00	19.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
US Open	31/7/00	01.30	Sky Sports 2 Digital
US Open	31/7/00	14.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital

POSTBAG

CROSSED SWORDS

THE principal purpose of my 'Courtside' column (I am requested) to use material that others may not wish to air and to increase the Editor's letters 'Postbag'.

That policy is bound to upset a few people and make others respond in the letters pages.

The policy of this magazine when I was editing was not to accept personal abuse. I believe that Tony Taylor's letter on the Jorgen Persson incident in Liege comes close to that category. If Mr. Taylor wishes to seriously to cross swords with me on a shocking incident that I witnessed and he did not, I shall be delighted to meet up with him when next in the Manchester area.

Meanwhile, I agree that we need personalities desperately, like Chester Barnes. Alex Higgins did no favours for snooker and John MacInroe, when at his most volatile on court, did little to enhance the good name of lawn tennis.

However, my main concern in Liege was that Persson's rear-end display was a disgrace, because of a large number of children and young people on my side of the arena.

We cannot afford this sort of behaviour in table tennis. Luckily for Persson there were no Swedish journalists present. The Swedish national association only heard about it some weeks later and they were not amused.

Jorgen thought it was a huge joke when he heard that the incident had been reported worldwide.

I see nothing 'stuffy' or 'sanctimonious' in my views on the happening and I would advise Mr Taylor to take more care with his choice of attacking words. One further thought, it is no good trying to shoot the messenger who brings the news.

*John Woodford
Eastbourne, Sussex.*

MEDALS GALORE?

ON the front cover of the March edition of Table Tennis News I read 'Medals Galore in Singapore'. Three medals, men's team gold, men's singles gold and men's doubles bronze, surely does not equate to 'galore'. In his report from the

Commonwealth Championships John Woodford writes "celebrated their 9 medal tally.....7 gold (one MS and 6 for MT) and 2 for MD". John Wood repeats the claim of nine medals in 'Woody's World'.

The convention in sport is that a win by a team or a pair counts as one one medal, eg Pinsent and Redgrave won a gold medal for Britain in Atlanta, Waldner, Persson, Karlsson, Hakansson and Carlsson won the gold medal for Sweden in the men's team championship at Kuala Lumpur - not five gold!

Please do not inflate the medal tally - celebrate success but not with exaggeration.

*Richard Scruton
Northallerton, Yorkshire*

Editor's Note: For Richard Scruton's information all publications at times exaggerate the news for impact, to draw the attention of the reader. Recently the Daily Telegraph published a report on a stalker who held Germaine Greer captive, who was quoted as saying "...I am not angry, I am not upset...", yet the headline was 'Germaine Greer tells of her anger....', which was the opposite of what she had said.

In TTN I do not use headlines that are the opposite of the facts, but only headlines that enhance or embellish the facts. In the case of 'Medals Galore in Singapore' I was flying the flag for England.

It is also a fact that we did collect a total of nine medals.

COURAGE

I have been a critic of the magazine in the recent past, but am pleased to record that I note a marked improvement in context and accuracy. This is largely as a result of the informed contributions from Ken Muir.

My main purpose is to applaud the references made to good umpiring. Yes John, COURAGE is a vital part of this function, and it usually concerns the judgement of services. However this need not be so difficult if the full provisions of the Laws and Regulations are used.

The Handbook for Match Officials 10.6 sets out clearly when service warnings may be used. Apart from the official warning 10.6.1. provision is made 10.6.3. for the umpire to give an INFORMAL WARNING between

continued on page 8

COURTSIDE IN BREMEN by John Woodford

• **AFTER** twelve days in the town of Bremen, I have learnt quite a lot on how nations like Germany succeed in terms of making money, attracting sponsors and getting crowds of 8,000 to major events like the European championships.

• **THE** Germans have 730,000 registered players, all of whom pay about £70 a year annually. This brings in £50 million, which makes our Lottery grants very small beer. Last year, some factions from the German regions mounted a major attack on the top brass, saying they are not getting enough for their money etc. This was put to a vote. The movement and its rebels were quashed.

• **WHEN** you see Bayern Munich FC come out onto the soccer fields wearing "Opel" as their main sponsor on their shirts, table tennis people in Germany can perhaps, thank their lucky stars that Opel are also the main sponsors of German table tennis. The Germans are clever enough not to put all their eggs in one basket, they have a consortium of about twenty sponsors including equipment people who clearly invest considerable sums of money in our sport.

• **CROWDS** numbering 8,000 do not arrive without some coaxing. Fifteen coachloads arrived daily on the best days from Dusseldorf and Dortmund.

• **WHICH** is a reminder how Potters Leisure Resort help to get their crowds totaling 26,000 over a week for their major world bowls events. They pay for some 23 coachloads of mainly retired people to come to Potters from all over the country. It is very difficult to imagine coachloads of table tennis supporters travelling distances these days. It did happen many years ago, but no more, I am sorry to report.

• **THE** movement of top-class players from club to club in Europe continues to fascinate me. Matthew Syed has now joined Caen to play with Jorgen Persson and Damien Eloi. Carl Prean returns to Germany in the regional divisions along with Terry Young and take a long look. at the strength of the latest Charleroi team - Samsonov, Primorac, Jean-Michelle Saive, Johnny Huang!

• **IT** was a pity that the Grand Prix at St. Austell clashed with Bremen, leaving a group of Hungarians to clean up headed by Barbara Kiss. Cornwall is such a long way to go, especially travelling by road on Bank Holiday week-ends, as John Wood has found, but what an incredible win he recorded in the mens singles groups over Chris Beckley. No-one should give up table tennis in despair after losing when they know that a player ranked over 800 can beat a player in the top hundred!

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
or you can save it in
a **"Richtext" file**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR continued

rallies, when a further deterioration would make the service illegal. I find that this option is not used as often as is desirable. The first occasion of a deterioration is likely to be before the vital points at the end of a game, and its use is to the benefit of the player and the umpire. The player will realise that the umpire will not accept bad services, and the umpire will thus be less likely to be obliged to penalise. Of course, flagrant faults must always be penalised.

In my work as I.U. assessor for the I.T.T.F.; I often discuss matches with umpires - afterwards at their request. I hear them say "Well, the services were just about O.K.". This surely means that there was a doubt, and that an informal warning would have been useful.

Surely the legislators must finally take the step to simplify the service law, and make it easier for the umpire and the receiver to see it clearly. I have been advocating this in table tennis publications for several years, but it fails to get a sufficient majority at the I.T.T.F. B.G.M. Those concerned should get together and fashion an agreed text that can be adopted. This would be of more benefit to table tennis than messing about with the scoring system. Several of the top players have endorsed this view.

Derek N. Tyler
I.U. 74801. Belgium.

OLD NEWS

SEVERAL people have commented to me recently regarding why is there a two month lapse between the copy date and issue date of the magazine? This obviously negates the impact of the content somewhat with such a long delay.

With more and more of the copy being sent by via email, and with the easy availability of Desktop Publishing facilities, it is hard to believe that it takes so long to get the copy into print. That's assuming that everything arrives the last and one would like to think that you are able to work on many aspects before this date.

I normally take this opportunity to tell people about the increasing usefulness of the ETТА web site, which more and more is becoming the source for up to date news. However for those enthusiasts not yet on-line, and for both contributors and readers alike, we really need to get the magazine out faster.

Hopefully this is planned, but your comments would be welcome.

Mike Prior
Eversham, Worcestershire

Editor's Note: Thank you for your

interest in Table Tennis News. We would like to have a month between the copy date and the publication date, but we had to extend that firstly to six weeks then two months due to correspondents requiring longer than a month to supply copy.

Normally I have only 25% of the copy sent in to me after 4 weeks.

Surprisingly very few of our correspondents have the use of desktop publishing or email.

Following are comments in response to Mike Prior's letter by ETТА Information Officer and Editor of TТN Extra, Ken Muhr:

On the face of it Mike Prior is right, and I know others share his opinion. (I was once one of the moaners!)

We should be able to get information out in Table Tennis News sooner. Of course we will try to improve things but I will outline just a few of the difficulties we face. I write from my own perspective, not for John Wood.

At any given time I am working on two or three editions of TТN Extra at once. There is always a backlog of county notes - other items are usually more current. One way of catching up a month would be to scrap the oldest contributions and print only the most recent, but this would be unfair on those who get their contributions in early.

Although some abide by the copy date, most contributors are late, and some (including establishment names) are very late! A very few send their copy by disc and e-mail (most is sent, in typed or handwritten form, by land mail or fax.), but even this, after editing, is retyped because 'Extra' is currently printed in 'Pagemaker', in which Susie is experienced and knows the set ups. (Yes, we will investigate conversion or typing it up in 'Word'). As most readers will know, TТN is still losing money, and there is therefore an added imperative to publish advertisements however late they are received. Other urgent items, corrections or statements also have to be included at the last moment, delaying things. The need for proof reading (and mistakes still get through) also holds up publication.

ТТN Extra is not my only or even major priority. Myself and ETТА secretary (to Chief Executive and General Secretary) Susie Foley try to work on the magazine on a continuous basis, as and when we have time, rather than blocking out time to it. The latter would seem logical but it is not practical. There are days, sometimes weeks, when I intend to work on TТN Extra but other more immediate or pressing matters, particularly regarding the

media, intervene. I also like to originate my own contributions as well as handling outside contributions, but am frequently forced to do this in my own time.

Regarding printing, cutting, stitching and mailing out, this could be done quicker if we were paying top rates. The opposite is true: if printer Nick Mason of Nima Print & Design was not effectively sponsoring the magazine, we would be losing money hand over fist. It should also be noted that most commercial monthly magazines require copy two months before publication, and they are prepared by a team of people. Remember that John Wood, editor, photographer and designer of the main journal is a one-man band.

I know that some might argue that we do not need a magazine and I will not rehearse the arguments in favour here. There is much to be said for the view, expressed by Iris Moss and others, that it should concentrate on views, discussion and debate (and on trends, technical matters and personalities) rather than on 'news'. However, I do think it is now a good buy, despite the imperfections, and worthy of support. We will continue to try to improve it and get it out faster and meanwhile beg your continued forbearance.

WELL DESERVED

I only recently learned of the death of George Yates. The well researched and moving tribute from Robert Sinclair and Ken Muhr (ТТN April) was well deserved. I did not know George well. A member of the Management Committee for most of my time as ETТА Chairman, George's main work at that time was in Europe where he was a distinguished General Secretary of the ETTU.

Rob and Ken mentioned my own warm praise for George when Editor of this magazine, which grew and improved throughout his time and often hit great heights not subsequently attained.

His own reports of tournaments have never been equalled. One knew exactly what each English player had done, one knew all the results at least from the stage of the last 32. Neither was there any pussyfooting in George's judgements. There was never any nonsense about a player having done well, when he had, in fact, lost 7 and 8. His style, seen as old fashioned by some, was always readable, there was a real sense of atmosphere and at the end of the article one felt one knew a lot more than before. I fear, as I survey current articles on the recent World

Championships, that these days have gone, that no one knows what really went on or will ever know. Where there was once George's meticulous prose, there are now only generalities and an absence of real facts, with old photos of favoured players where once there was real meat.

For years, although a regular contributor, I had never met George. I learned later that his own, often close colleagues had complained about my own at times 'controversial' contributions which some wanted to ban. George, although he often disagreed with me, was never in any doubt as to my right of free expression, so long as what was written was of sufficient quality to justify publication. In all his time as Editor, George resisted all pressures and every item I ever submitted was published in full. I wish I could say that subsequent Editors had been as liberal and fearless.

George was a marvellous Editor. We shall not see his like again. A long way to go, but there is now real hope that the blue part (in changing colours) edited by Ken Muhr will reach for the sky which George found long ago. At last readers have begun to think, to criticise, to put pen to paper for a better sport. That is how things once were, when George was Editor.

John Pream
Isle of Wight

40mm BALLS

I would just like to add my opinion about the 40mm balls. I think the ETТА should mandate that all local leagues use the larger balls as soon as they are introduced for tournaments and ranking events. If this is not done, many top players in local leagues (especially those who go to tournaments or play British League etc) will stop playing in these leagues as it is not feasible for them to play with both types of balls.

Any easing in period will, in my opinion lead to a drop in players at a time when local leagues need as many players as they can get. The ball manufacturers have known for some time about this possibility and seem to have been gambling on it not being introduced. League players shouldn't have to pay as a consequence of a commercial decision on the part of the ball manufacturers, and any pressure by them for an easing in period should be resisted.

Mark Purcell
Milton Keynes

BATTLE of BRITAIN

THE battle for the British League title has gone right to the wire with the holders, London Progress, still needing one point with one match to play to retain the championship. And that last match is against their nearest rivals Darlington who could snatch the title from the Londoners grasp if they win. Progress are in devastating form and should win the crucial encounter after 13-1 victories away to RMSC Wellow House and at home to OLOP. But Darlington are also in form with wins over Horsham (11-3) and RMSC (13-1). All will be revealed in the next issue, writes Aubrey Drapkin.

Derwent are relegated following defeats at the hands of OLOP and Harvey Barnet but the second

relegation spot is between Barnet and Wellow House with Barnet going into their final match with a one point advantage. Both teams are away on the last day of the season, Barnet visiting OLOP and RMSC playing at JAGS.

The position at the top of division One North is still not clear with the Norwich v Darlington seconds result not being known at the time of writing.

Darlington, however, must be favourites to win the division. If they have beaten Norwich then the title is theirs but if they have lost then they could still take it by beating the bottom club, Uxbridge, whilst Norwich have a difficult away match at Grantham. Norwich, however, will be promoted as Darlington already have a side in the Premier Division. Poor old Uxbridge go



'Progress' No.1 ANDREW EDEN, holds the key to the outcome of the 'Battle of Britain'.

down to the second division as do Hastings from division One South. Byng Hall Farningham

Print and DML Plymouth will fill the top two places in division One South but it is still not

Anyone over 18 can apply for the standard card, featuring a picture of English champion Lisa Lomas. But there's the prestigious Visa Gold Card for those earning £20,000 or more.



REASONABLE INTEREST RATE - JUST 17.9% APR (VARIABLE) FOR PURCHASES

INTRODUCTORY OFFER - PAY OFF YOUR EXISTING CREDIT CARDS AT JUST 13.9% APR, FIXED FOR SIX MONTHS

NO ANNUAL FEE FOR TWO YEARS - PLUS ONGOING "FEE REBATE OPTION" IF YOU USE YOUR CARD SUFFICIENTLY

FULL PACKAGE OF BENEFITS AT NO EXTRA COST

Champion!

Announcing a new Visa card for table tennis players.

A reasonable interest rate.

No annual fee for your first two years.

Plus the chance to raise funds for the English Table Tennis Association at no extra cost to you.

Now you can show your support for table tennis wherever you go - with the ETTA's exclusive low-interest Visa credit card, issued by MBNA International Bank Ltd.

The card brings you significant financial advantages. But it also helps us raise money to promote the sport - at no extra cost to you! We receive a royalty from MBNA for every new cardholder, plus ongoing income every time you make purchases on your ETTA Visa card.



Certain restrictions apply to the above benefits. Insurances are provided by underwriters at Lloyds of London. Payment Protection Insurance is provided by member companies of Consolidated Insurance Group Ltd. The ETTA Visa card is issued by MBNA International Bank Ltd, Starshelb House, Chester Business Park, Chester, CH4 9JZ and is available only to ETTA members and certain connected parties. MBNA Visa card interest rates are 17.9% APR (variable) for purchases, 13.9% APR for balance transfers and cash advances, fixed for six months from the date your account is opened. The 13.9% APR is calculated by applying the monthly rate of 1.09% throughout the period of credit. After the six month period it reverts to the same variable interest rate which applies to purchases at that time (currently 1.38% per month, 17.9% APR). Both APRs are calculated on a fee exclusive basis, in view of the two year annual fee waiver and assume a credit limit of £1,000 for a standard card and £3,000 for a gold card. The minimum monthly payment is just 3% of the outstanding balance (minimum £5). The annual fee (£10 for a standard card, £35 for a gold card (both variable)) will be waived for your first two years. There will be no handling charge for cash advances until after your account has been open six months. After that date a handling charge of 1% (variable) from £1, max £25) will apply. Credit is available subject to status, only to persons aged 18 or over. Written quotations available on request.

APPLY TODAY

For more details and an application form, call **FREE on 0800 776262.**

QUOTING REF: BT06

The lines are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Alternatively, return the coupon below to:

ETTA Visa Card Applications, MBNA International Bank Ltd, PO Box 1048, FREEPOST, Chester CH4 9JZ.

Please send me full details about the new low-interest ETTA Visa Card

Name: (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel: (code) _____

(no) _____

BC06

BRITISH LEAGUE

PREMIER DIVISION	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
London Progress	13	12	-	1	147	33	24
Darlington	13	11	1	1	132	50	23
Horsham	13	7	1	5	87	95	15
OLOP	13	5	2	6	83	99	12
JAGS	13	5	1	7	78	104	11
Harvey Barnet	13	4	1	8	72	110	9
RMSC Wellow House	13	3	2	8	68	114	8
Derwent	13	-	2	11	59	123	2
DIVISION 1 NORTH							
Darlington II	10	8	1	1	68	32	17
Norwich	10	7	2	1	70	30	16
Kingshurst	12	6	2	4	62	58	14
Grantham	11	6	1	4	68	42	13
Derwent II	11	3	3	5	50	60	9
East Lancs	11	3	1	7	49	61	7
Uxbridge	11	-	-	11	13	97	-
DIVISION 1 SOUTH							
Byng Hall F.P.	13	9	2	2	78	52	20
DML Plymouth	13	8	3	2	77	53	19
Moonrakers	13	7	2	4	73	57	16
Horsham II	13	6	3	4	71	59	15
Harvey Barnet II	13	5	3	5	69	61	13
Poole	13	3	3	7	62	68	9
Ellenborough	13	4	-	9	55	75	8
Hastings	13	2	-	11	35	95	4
DIVISION 2 NORTH							
RMSC Wellow House II	13	12	1	-	99	31	25
Drumchapel Glasgow	12	10	1	1	91	29	21
Darlington III	13	7	3	3	75	55	17
Dewsbury	13	6	3	4	69	61	15
Derwent III	13	3	2	8	55	75	8
Ormesby	13	3	1	9	42	88	7
City of Manchester	13	1	4	8	45	85	6
East Lancs II	12	1	1	10	34	86	3
DIVISION 2 SOUTH							
Batts Peniel	13	13	-	-	113	17	26
Cippenham	13	9	1	3	83	47	19
Adeyfield	13	8	2	3	78	50	18
Harvey Barnet III	13	5	2	6	55	75	12
De Vere Sudbury	13	5	-	8	61	67	10
Aylesbury League	13	2	3	8	54	76	7
KCD Stiga	13	2	2	9	42	88	6
Fellows Cranleigh	13	3	-	10	32	98	6
DIVISION 3 SOUTH & WEST							
Brent Sports Progress II	13	12	1	-	110	20	25
Tregorrick Palace	13	10	1	2	85	45	21
Ashford	13	8	1	4	74	56	17
Guildford	13	5	1	7	55	75	11
Moonrakers II	13	5	-	8	57	73	10
DML Plymouth II	13	4	-	9	49	81	8
KCD Stiga II	13	3	1	9	48	82	7
OLOP II	13	2	1	10	42	88	5
DIVISION 3 NORTH							
Coventry	11	10	1	-	87	22	21
Halton	11	8	1	2	78	32	17
Potteries	11	8	-	3	77	33	16
Derwent IV	11	4	1	6	48	62	9
Glasgow II	11	3	1	7	41	69	7
Darlington IV	11	1	2	8	35	75	4
Ormesby II	12	1	2	9	23	97	4
DIVISION 3 SOUTH							
Byng Hall Farningham P. II	13	10	2	1	90	40	22
Horsham III	13	10	1	2	92	38	21
Britannia Ipswich	13	9	1	3	82	48	19
Crusaders	13	4	3	6	58	72	11
Middlesex Uni Progress	13	3	3	7	61	69	9
Harvey Barnet IV	13	4	1	8	43	87	9
Batts Peniel II	13	3	1	9	49	81	7
De Vere Sudbury II	13	-	6	7	45	85	6

known which one will finish on top to go into the Premier Division. Byng Hall temporarily lost top spot when Barnet held them to a draw but regained it when they beat Plymouth 6-4 to lead by one point. They must now visit Horsham seconds whilst Plymouth entertain Moonrakers.

RMSC Wellow House need only a draw away to City of Manchester to win division two North. Only Drumchapel Glasgow could catch them and that would only happen if they beat Darlington thirds and East Lancashire by large scores and RMSC lose in Manchester. At the bottom end East Lancs must beat both Glasgow and Derwent thirds if they are to have any chance of overhauling Manchester.

Batts Team Peniel are champions of division two South leaving Adeyfield and Cippenham to battle it out for the runners up spot. Cippenham have a slight advantage of one point as they go into their final game at home to KCD Stiga at the same time as Adeyfield visit the Aylesbury League. These games are also crucial to their opponents also are both still trying to avoid relegation along with Fellows Cranleigh who visit Barnet thirds in their final match.

Victory for Brent Sports Progress over Moonrakers seconds whilst Tregorrick Palace were losing 4-6 in their local derby with DML Plymouth seconds means that the position at the top of division 3 South and West is already settled with Progress as champions and Tregorrick Palace runners up.



Tregorrick Palace's
JEREMY WILLIAMS

OLOP seconds need to win at Plymouth and hope that KCD Stiga seconds lose away to Moonrakers seconds if they are to get off the bottom.

Coventry Phoenix defeated Potteries 9-1 to clinch the division three North title and with Halton beating Darlington fourths the match between Potteries and Halton will now decide runners up spot. Potteries must win but a draw will be enough for the Cheshire side. Ormesby seconds have finished bottom in this division.

Horsham thirds and Byng Hall Farningham Print seconds meet on the final day in a match which all decide the outcome of the division three South championship. Horsham must win but a draw will give the title to Byng Hall. Britannia Ipswich dropped out of the top two places when they were beaten by Horsham and then held to a draw by Middlesex Uni Progress.

De Vere Sudbury look like finishing last in this division but victory away to Batts Team Peniel seconds would put Peniel at the bottom of the pile.

The British League Official Ball

Schildkröt

3 Star - ITTF approved

available from

TEES SPORT
Specialists in Table Tennis Since 1976

Call Freephone:
0800 4584141

MUHR'S MEMO



INFORMATION OFFICER MESSAGES from Ken Muhr

ON Thursday 13th April, at the Arora International Hotel near Heathrow, I took ETTA Chief Executive Richard Yule's place at a Sports Sponsorship Advisory Service seminar, organised in association with British Airways - more on them later - on 'Improving Media Coverage'. It is impossible to mention more than a few key messages.

Derek Wyatt MP from the Select Committee for Culture Media & Sport, whose topic was 'A vision for sports broadcasting', said that some sports already have All Party Parliamentary Committees, a good example that other sports could follow. He also suggested that sports link together to apply for New Opportunities Programme funding to develop a shared Sports.com portal. He would be prepared to help sports develop this. With Greg Dyke the new Director General of the BBC, now is a good time to encourage BBC TV, who have been criticised for declining standards and coverage, to broadcast more sport. ITV is also now becoming more important for sport and is likely to become one company 'soonish'. He thought that cable TV - Flextech/Telewest and NTL - was the future and the best for interactive sport.

There are plenty of opportunities on radio e.g. Radio 5 Live and Talk Sport. There are massive opportunities on the Internet with dot.com services having space to fill. Sporting governing bodies, individual clubs even, should appoint 'Internet Directors' who are on top of the new technology.

Maurice Lindsay, Chairman of Wigan Rugby League Football Club, who had been enormously successful in negotiating satellite TV rights for Rugby League, said that terrestrial TV had woken up to the need to compete with satellite TV. He considered that governing body representatives should go to TV companies with a flexible brief to work in partnership with them, and consider new, exciting and innovative ways of broadcasting their sports. The broadcast sponsor may pay for production costs. The sport should share or own overseas rights. Digital radio and the internet, as well as BBC Radio and Talk Sport, are providing greater opportunity for sports. Some delegates felt that Mr Lindsay did not fully appreciate the difficulty that so called 'minor sports' have in getting broadcast media attention!

John Davis, Managing Director Of ISL Productions, said that low budget television could be used to 'lift the veil' on specific sports e.g. using cameras or camera angles to show scenes you don't normally see like players in the locker room. Ideally, get a sponsor to cover production costs, or get a TV company to find a sponsor or help with production. There will always be a production company locally and some will charge around £2,500 - £3,000 a day for 3 or 4 cameras. £3,000 could pay for a filler programme of your sport filmed by one camera. £6,000 could pay for a half hour sports programme. 6 or 7 half hour shows on a sport is attractive to broadcasters. Producing videos of your sport to sell as Christmas presents can be financially lucrative.

The Sponsorship & Promotions Manager for British Airways, Andrew Duffy, made an excellent point about finding out about

companies from their websites (or other sources), and therefore the sort of image or benefits they might be looking for, who else they sponsor etc. before contacting them for potential sponsorship. There must be a return for the sponsor, sponsorship being 'A financial investment aimed at achieving an association with or ownership of an activity, event, individual or group of individuals, delivering measurable benefits to the sponsor.' Listen to their needs and objectives.

Dee McIntosh, the Producer of BBC Radio 5 Live's 'Inside Edge' gave a whole lot of useful pointers to getting on air, such as understanding the media's constant need for stories (told simply but with an interesting or unusual angle), particularly when they have 'slow news days'. Golden rules were to be straight and co-operative with journalists without fearing them, and to know your end game - what you wanted to say. Unusual stories, top names, confrontation, human interest, and exciting competition all made good radio and TV. Getting to know particular programmes and journalists (and their preferences), and targeting them was the most effective way to operate. Late hours discussion programmes were often desperate for material to fill airtime. She also made a point of the value of promoting media friendly stars - as role models and pin-ups - and targeting the special interest media. Australian sports get their top performers in teenage and fashion magazines.

The founder of Cannon Communications, Martin Cannon, in his, 'Getting your sport into the press' presentation, made what I think is an astute observation. "Newspapers are not notice boards". They have no obligation to print your copy. We should not ignore the basic facts of newspaper life: "The single most important role of the press is to print stories that some people do not want to appear in public. Their second most important role is to do so in a fashion that makes them of interest to the general public and sells newspapers. An understanding of these two basic principles takes anyone with the responsibility for dealing with the press a long way along the route of successful media relations." Tongue in cheek perhaps but more than an element of truth!

To crudely paraphrase the presentation of Nigel Geach, Director of Sports Marketing Surveys, 'stickers on cars are important but what you do with them is more important'. Market research in sports sponsorship is a tool to obtain best value for money and maximum return on investment. Mr Geach's paper was quite detailed and scientific, but the point emphasised for me is that serious sponsors do not give money for love, casually or in hope. They have an informed expectation of a tangible return.

At the end of the conference there was a draw of delegate's business cards for a prize of British Airways tickets for two to any BA destination. Guess who won? Our Chief Executive is singing, "It should have been me!"

GOOD MEDIA COVERAGE FOR 40mm BALL

The ETTA decision, subject to AGM approval, to use the larger 40mm ball for all competition, got good national media attention, particularly from Richard Eaton in The Times as well as from John Woodford in The Telegraph. The editor was interviewed on the subject by BBC Radio 5 Live Digital but a promised interview on the main 5 Live did not materialise. Richard Yule was interviewed about the ball on BBC Greater London Radio.

Full page articles on Matthew Syed, Matthew Syed coaching and on Gareth Herbert have been published in The Sunday Express and The Express. Matthew has written more features for The Times. Sky magazine devoted a page to recreational table tennis; 'Ping it back: Trendy types making a bit of a pong!' Guardian feature writer Pete Nichols had published a long article on Katy Parker. I should apologise to Katy, who was also filmed, alongside Matthew Syed and Andrew Baggaley, for the BBC 'Blue Peter' programme mentioned in April's edition. Matthew and Gareth have also been filmed by Carlton Television, and Matthew is to be interviewed on Eurosport and Matthew and Terry Young are to appear on Carlton's 'London Tonight'.

Had English players been more successful, then I am certain that the national press would have followed the recent European Championships in Bremen more. As it was, John Woodford provided the only reasonable coverage in The Daily Telegraph, with the other quality papers printing little other than results - apart from The Times that is, who published a fairly large piece on the team event finals. Unfortunately we did little better for the National Senior Championships in Sheffield, the late Sunday finish drastically limiting any possible space - I know that The Telegraph cut John Woodford's words and The Times was prepared to provide far more column inches than the paragraph finally published. Ceefax and Teletext have continued to provide a limited results service.

FIRST MAJOR WIN FOR KARLSSON

THERE is hope for success in the future for all players when in the space of a few days Peter Karlsson, seeded No.11 wins his first ever major title and then at the other end of the pecking order down in Cornwall, John Wood, editor of TTN, ranked 843 on the England list defeats Chris Beckley (Surrey), recently No.84 on the same list, writes John Wood.ford.

After crushing Zoran Primorac 15, 18, 16 in the final at Bremen Karlsson said, "I am amazed to be here, never before having won an event of this size. There were shock results all the way, and perhaps I was a trifle lucky looking at the other results. Players that I may have lost to were taken out by others."

Looking at Karlsson's technique, his forehand attack, especially crosscourt is awesome. At times he seems to possess more power, being a fairly big man, than his more illustrious team-mates Waldner and Persson.

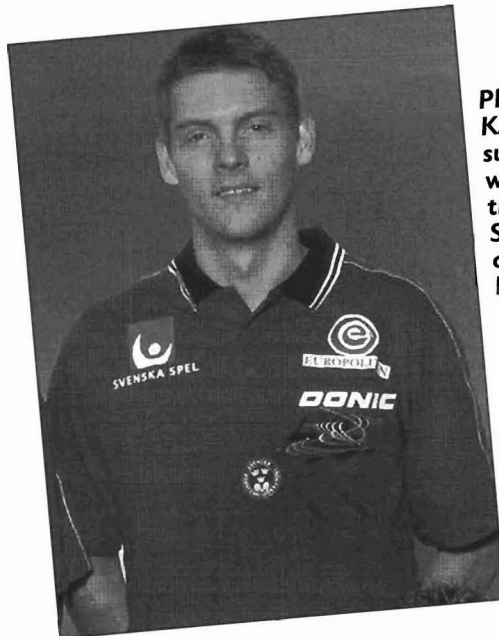
"Everything comes to those who wait" said Karlsson, 30, at the end of his media interview, "and I have waited a long time."

Mens singles finalist Zoran Primorac (Croatia) continues to be a bit of a mystery on court - at times he plays majestically and then the reverse. His major event score so far is two World Cups in which he defeated Chinese players, but very little else.

His battle in the semi-finals in Bremen lasted nearly an hour and a half - that was Waldner and Primorac at their best, but in the final the Croatian ace seemed unable to reach top gear.

The early sensation at the Stadhalle - a magnificent venue - was the early defeat of Vladimir Samsonov by Maksim Shmyryev now playing for Russia, whilst Samsonov appears for Belarus.

The story behind this defeat -15, 19, 20, 17, to the Russian is that they grew up together in the then Soviet Union. They know each other's game inside out and they shared until recently, an apartment together in Germany.



PETER KARLSSON surprise winner of the Men's Singles crown in Bremen

Vladimir Samsonov said, "I have lost a match today. That happens when you play table tennis and it was my turn today. I think we have a good chance to win the doubles gold medal. But there are also other tournaments. There's the Olympic Games for example. Though I was a little nervous before the start, I wasn't during the match. Perhaps I wasn't concentrated enough after I won the first set. Therefore, it was also a mistake to let him lead. You have to lead yourself against Maksim otherwise he finds his form and is difficult to beat. I've played him quite a few times in the past in Russia and I've lived with him for two years in the same apartment here in Germany. Therefore I know him even though it is ten years since I last lost against him. But life goes on."

Jean-Michelle Saive (Belgium) is not quite the world-beater he used to be. He was taken to five games by the Norwegian Erlandsen, beat Jiang (Croatia) in four and then went under -16, 11, 14, 23, to Patrick Chila, who I would imagine is now the French No.1. following some poor results from Gatién.

Jean-Philippe Gatién the former world champion (coached by Michel Gadál) cut his way through three

rounds before losing 18, 14, 21 to Petr Korbél (Czech Republic) who surprised us all by reaching the semi-finals - the best show of his career.

In the semis, the Korbél charge was stopped by Karlsson.

The most improved group of players in Europe over the past two or even three years, are from Poland. Lucien Blaszczyc, even if you cannot pronounce his name, is a force to be reckoned with at any level. Most of the Poles play in the nearby

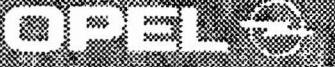
Bundesliga and that seems to be the best "school" in Europe.

Glancing at the bottom half of the mens singles draw, Matthew Syed started with a comfortable win against Thierry Miller (Switzerland) 15, 11, 10. This we thought could be the run we have been looking for from Matthew - a journey through to the third round after beating Marcin Kusinski from Poland.

The Syed-Kusinski game was a classic. Matthew returned shots out of this world. The Pole's power was amazing. The Richmond ace was driven back time and time again, but regrettably these circus performances as skilful as they are, often lose points against the best attackers - Kusinski won at 19 in the fourth game despite one of Matthew's most spectacular shows that attracts applause from fans watching other matches.

On one occasion in the 8,000 seater Stadhalle, the Syed retrieving shots almost stopped play on the other five tables as the fans cheered and applauded. Crowds love class defenders. I can recall in Germany a few years back Chen Xinhua receiving similar standing ovations for his performances including making good returns from the other side the barriers.

Tischtennis
EM
2000
Bremen
21. April – 1. Mai



MATTHEW SYED played a spectacular game against Poland's Marcin Kusinski

WOMENS SINGLES

QAINGHONG GOTSCH justified her world No.5 ranking by winning the womens singles trophy after a long battle -16, 20, 15, -13, 13 against Mihaela Steff (Romania).

Although mainly a chopper, Gotsch has an attack which most defenders would be proud of. She played mixed doubles with Matthew Syed, reaching the third round - and I could not help thinking that if Matthew's attack was in the same class as Gotsch, he would be even more successful. Tamara Boros (Croatia) was beaten by Steff 20, 15, 15, 23 in the semi-finals, whilst Gotsch defeated her German team-mate Jie Schopp 15, 16, 25.

England had three in Round 1 of the womens singles. Helen Lower (Wolverhampton) was almost in Round 2, winning the first two 14, 21 against the Italian Chinese Wang Yu, but the England No.2 faded to lose the next three -15, -13, -8.

Kubrat Owolabi had a tough draw, she went under 19, 11, 9 to Asa Svensson, whilst Linda Radford (Essex) did reach the second round 19, 18, 13 against Logatskaya from Belarus but then the Essex accountant lost to the seeded Jing Tian-Zorner (Germany) 8, 13, 14.

GREAT PROSPECT

After playing well in the team event, Katy Parker found herself in deep water in the qualifying event. She was up against a Lithuanian woman with another unpronounceable surname Daunoravicinte - and took the first game losing only six points. Katy, having trouble receiving service lost the second and she then surged ahead 10-2 in the final game. Nerves seem to take over and the Lithuanian took advantage of a youngster with still a great deal to learn coping with pressure, going on to win 18.

TEAM EVENT

BOTH the England teams finished in eleventh position and were relegated from Category 1 to Category 2, further proof if it were needed, that it could be some time before the England players are good enough to return to the top flights of European table tennis.

With Prean, Holt and Deaton, arguably, three of the top four players in England unwilling to play for their country, it was always on the cards that relegation would follow.

England men started off with a 4-1 defeat by now mighty Poland. This match included a great win by Terry Young (soon to be joined at his German regional club by Carl Prean) over the Polish No.3 Tomas Krzesiowski -18, 14, 11.

Young trained so hard for this tournament that he seemed to have lost a stone in weight. Soren Ahlen said, "Young has spent endless hours in the practice halls and now it has paid off.

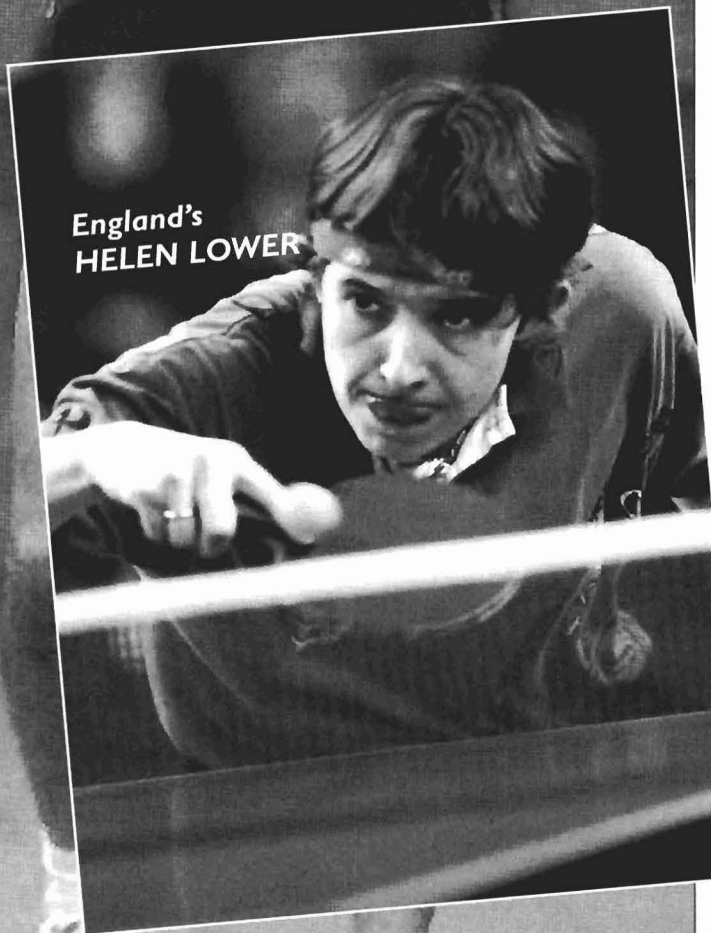
Syed lost two to Poland, but the 3000 first day crowd frequently applauded his incredible returns.

Once again, England women were drawn against the Czech Republic and once again they lost 4-2, Helen Lower raised her game to defeat both Dobesova and Valentova. Linda Radford and Katy Parker failed to score. Holland and England seemed to be the two weakest teams fighting against relegation in the womens event. We beat the Dutch 4-3 with two from Lower and one each from Parker and Radford - but not enough to avoid the drop.

There followed two 4-0 defeats for England against Germany for the men and Hungary for the women.

England men lost 4-2 to Belgium with Matthew Syed beating Philippe Saive and their new Bulgarian Martin Bratanov.

England came close to saving



PRESSROOM BOYS: The Daily Telegraph two-man team in Bremen John Woodford (left) and Geoff Taylor (right), are pictured with Press Centre Manager Manfred Schillings (centre)

themselves when Syed took two against Holland and Alex Perry chipped in with a win over Chen Sung 14, 12, but the Dutch won 4-3.

In the play-off matches England Women managed to beat Holland 4-3, but both teams were relegated to the second category, with two more wins from Helen Lower.

Commenting on the England team matches Soren Ahlen said "At least both teams won their last matches. We are only a short distance down the road of re-building both squads. The three young men Baggaley, Young and Herbert held their nerve today against Belgium when the chips were down."

SWEDEN STILL THE BEST TEAM

SWEDEN added the European men's title to the world team crown they lifted in February when they beat German 4-1 in the final. How long can Waldner, Persoon and Karlsson continue to deliver world-class performances? Some years yet.

I asked Waldner if he expected to be competing in the 2004 Olympics in Athens? "That is very difficult to say" said the millionaire. I will be looking to see how I am playing after the Sydney Olympics. I will make my retirement decision later, but how much later, I cannot say at this time." I would not be surprised to see Waldner making his last fling in Athens. He is fit enough and he does not have to play in foreign leagues to make money like most of his Swedish team-mates including Persson who is set to play for Caen next season with Matthew Syed and Damien Eloi. Sweden's success against Germany lifted their European record of mens team titles to 13 from the 22 championships staged since 1958. The host country before losing the mens final to Sweden also lost the womens final 4-

to Hungary, thanks to a superb display by Csilla Batorfi, whose high-thrown services are still winning huge batches of points.

DOPING

HAPPILY, we are almost a drugs-free sport. Last year a Czech player was caught and banned for a year for using a performance enhancing drug. In Bremen, it was revealed that the world and Olympic champion Liu Guoliang has been under the shadow of suspicion for the last year. Again, happily, the final result was that he has been cleared, but only after three tests, the final one with the most sophisticated equipment held in Cologne at the Olympic Committee laboratory. Here is the full story, as reported by the French agency AFP: China's Liu Guoliang, the reigning Olympic and world champion, has been cleared of any suspicion of doping when he won his world title in Eindhoven last August, the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) said Thursday.

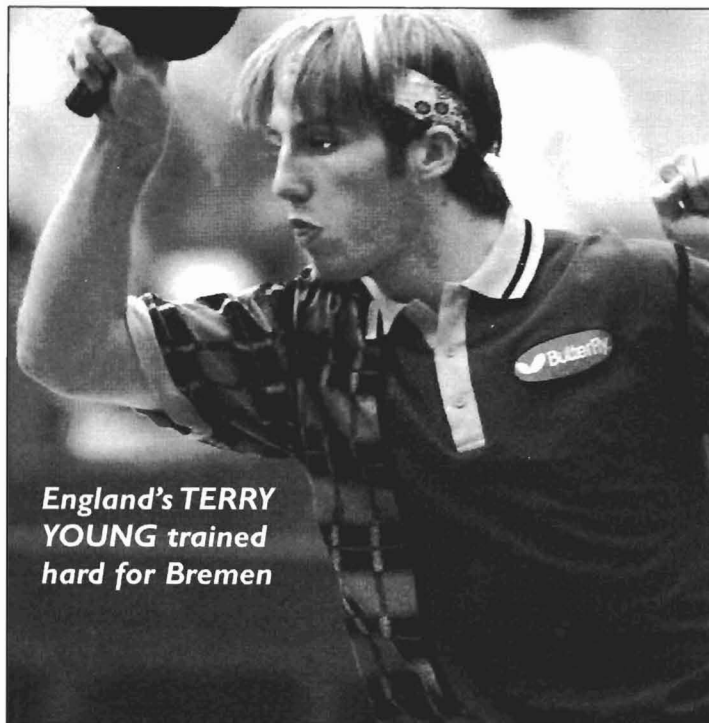
"There is no proof of doping concerning Liu Guoliang," professor Jean-Francois Kahn, the ITTF antidoping czar, told AFP on Thursday at the European Championships.

Liu, 24, underwent a test on August 8 1999, after his victory in the men's singles and recorded a higher than allowed level of epitestosterone - around 350 nanograms per millilitre. The legal threshold is 200 nanograms per millilitre.

But the laboratory in Los Angeles that analysed the sample only communicated the result to the ITTF in October.

Khan, professor of physiology at the Pitie-Salpetriere Hospital in Paris, pointed out that there is no relevant provision for suspension in the ITTF rules.

The ITTF then decided to carry out two random tests on Liu and these



England's TERRY YOUNG trained hard for Bremen

occurred on February 2 and 7 according to Chinese table tennis chiefs.

But one of those tests, analysed by a laboratory in Barcelona, also showed a higher than permitted level.

Finally the ITTF commissioned an International Olympic Committee (IOC) recognised lab in Cologne, Germany to carry out analyses based on Isotopic Ratio Measurements (IRMS) and these, according to the ITTF, showed no evidence for an external source of epitestosterone and therefore no proof of doping."

Liu said: "I feel so relieved. I didn't take anything illegal but I didn't know how to explain or convince others. I couldn't sleep well and was often jolted awake by nightmares.

"Now I can concentrate on the defence of my Olympic title in Sydney."

Chinese coach Cai Zhenhua said: "We never lost trust in Guoliang. We let him play in the final of the World Team Championships (in Malaysia) because we believed he was clean."

SUPPORTERS

ABOUT 30 supporters made the journey from Britain. Among those present were Alan and Jose Ransome, Barry Granger, Nicky Jarvis, Reg Thompson, Keith Wilson, Neil Hiams, Don and Jill Parker, Geoff Taylor and Martin Chinn (Bexhill) who slept in a mini-hike tent on a campsite for the first six nights, one hour's walk out of Bremen.

NEW RECORD

46 teams in the men's event and 41

in the women's competed at the European Championships in Bremen. It is a new record as it tops the figures set in the previous championships in Eindhoven. In 1998 there were 44 nations with teams in the men's competition and 40 in the women's. A total of 424 players from 46 countries participated in Bremen. They were backed up by 109 coaches and other staff.

RETIRING

Valentina Popova, The legendary European champion is planning to retire.

She isn't in the limelight any more. "But that doesn't worry me," said Valentina Popova smiling. The 39-year-old is still a remarkable person and just as reserved and warm hearted as she was at the height of her sporting career.

Born in Baku she collected a total of nine European championship titles between 1976 and 1988, all for the then USSR. A four time gold medal winner with the team, she also won two singles and three doubles titles. The highlight came at the 1984 European Championships in Moscow, where she won all four possible titles. Then after the break-up of the USSR came a radical new beginning. She moved with her husband and child to Bratislava but she remained true to table tennis. Valentina Popova has played for Slovakia since the 1997 World Championships in Manchester.

RESULTS & MEDALS

Mens Singles: S/F: P.KARLSSON (SWE) bt. P.KORBEL (CZE) 19, 16, 15; Z.PRIMORAC (CRO) bt. J.O.WALDNER (SWE) -19, 16, -23, 17, 16. FINAL: KARLSSON bt. PRIMORAC 15, 18, 16.

Womens Singles: S/F: Q.GOTSCH (GER) bt. J.SCHOPP (GER) 15, 16, 25; M.STEFF (ROM) bt. T.BOROS (CRO) 20, 15, -15, 23. FINAL: GOTSCH bt. STEFF -16, 20, 15, -13, 13.

Mens Doubles: Gold: P.CHILA/J.P.GATIEN (FRA), Silver: K.Kreanga (GRE)/I.Lupulescu, Bronze: L.Hielscher/T.Keinath (GER) & K.Jindrak/W.Schlager (AUS)

Womens Doubles: Gold: C.BATORFI/K.TOTH (HUN), Silver: N.X.Lian/P.Regenwetter (LUX), Bronze: E.Schall/N.Struse (GER) & A.Svensson/M.Svensson (SWE)

Mixed Doubles: Gold: A.KARAKASEVIC (YUG)/R.GARKAUSKAITE (LTU), Silver: I.Lupulescu (YUG)/M.Svensson (SWE), Bronze: R.Tosic/S.Paovic (CRO) & N.Tsiokas (GRE)/J.Schopp (GER)

Mens Team Event: Gold: SWEDEN, Silver: Germany, Bronze: Poland & Denmark, 11th England, 32nd Scotland & 33rd Wales.

Womens Team Event: Gold: HUNGARY, Silver: Germany, Bronze: Croatia & Russia, 11th England, 33rd Wales & 36th Scotland.

BLACKPOOL & NEWCASTLE GRAND PRIX

JENKINS & TONG win at BLACKPOOL

RYAN JENKINS, the 21 year old Welsh and Home Counties Champion, stopped the winning run of Alan Cooke from Derbyshire, 34, who had taken three consecutive Grand Prix titles, when he defeated three times England Champion and former Commonwealth Champion 21-19, 21-15, in the Mens Singles final of the Blackpool Open Grand Prix Major at Blackpool Sports Centre, over the weekend 8th/9th April, writes Ken Muhr.

The games were closely fought but Jenkins was consistent and relentless in attacking Cooke, who he had never previously beaten, with two wing topspins.

In the semi-finals Jenkins had been fortunate to scrape through Stephen Shaw of Derbyshire, 21-16, 17-21, 22-20, while Cooke had cruised through former England international Andrew Eden from Lancashire 21-16, 21-12, in the quarter-finals and Chesterfield colleague Michael Isherwood 21-13,

**RYAN
JENKINS
conqueror
of Alan
Cooke at
Blackpool**



21-9, in the semis.

An indication of the rising strength of the Welsh was when Ryan Owen defeated England's Darren Blake from Surrey, 21-18, 21-16, in the third round, before going down to his colleague Ryan Jenkins in the quarter-finals, 21-13, 21-9.

Tong Fei Ming, the world class Taiwanese player living in Fareham, Hampshire, once more was far too strong for the English opposition, being untroubled in seeing off former all African Champion Kubrat Owolabi now of Middlesex, 21-17, 21-17, in the Womens Singles final.

However, the biggest upset of the tournament was when 15 year old Katy Parker from Lancashire, defending like her famous former European Champion mother Jill Hammersley Parker used to, overcame the Hungarian 4th seed Barbara Kiss 11-21, 21-17, 23-21, to record probably her best ever win. But Tong was too strong for her in the semi-finals, winning 21-8, 21-14.

RESULTS

Mens Singles: S/F: R.Jenkins (Wales) bt S.Shaw (Dy) 16, -17, 20; A.Cooke (Dy) bt M.Isherwood (Dy) 13, 9.

Final: Jenkins bt Cooke 19, 15.
Womens Singles: S/F: Tong Fei Ming (Taiwan) bt K.Parker (La) 8, 14; K.Owolabi (Mi) bt H.Lower (St) 12, -16, 14. Final: Tong bt Owolabi 17,17.
Mens Under 21: A.Robertson (Wales) bt A.Rushton (La) 24, 12.
Womens Under 21: A.Howard (Ch) bt C.Davies (Wales) 14, 16.
Mens Band 1: S.Crawford (Scotland) bt A.Horsfield (Ys) -15, 19, 17.
Mens Band 2: J.Rankin (La) bt G.Rumgay (Scotland) 18, 22.
Mens Band 3: E.Liddle (Scotland) bt S.Ellis (Y) -16, 12, 12.
Mens Band 4: A.Rich (St) bt L.Davies (Wales) 11, 6.
Mens Band 5: G.Payne (La) bt M.Bruce (Scotland) 8, 19.
Womens Band 1: R.Sparkes (Sk) bt S.Davies (Wales) 10, 13.
Womens Band 2: J.Harrison (E) bt S.Johnson (Bk) -19, 21, 19.
Womens Band 3: K.Vickers (Du) bt H.McCreary (Ch) 14, -12, 19.
Veteran Men: J.Crawford (Du) bt A.Dickenson (Y) -14, 12, 15.
Veteran Women: RR. 1st P.Perry (Dv) 2nd B.Bouey (La).
Mens Doubles: A.Cooke (Dy)/ D.Blake (Sy) bt M.Isherwood (Dy)/ S.Shaw (St) 10, 27.
Womens Doubles: H.Lower (St)/ K.Owolabi (Mi) bt L.Thornton (La)/ B.Kiss (Hungary) -14, 19, 12.

ALAN COOKE, took his third open tournament Mens Singles title when he won the new Newcastle 3 Star Open Grand Prix, at the top class Eldon Square Leisure Centre, writes Aubrey Drapkin.

The 34 year old Derbyshire player demonstrated tremendous athleticism and counter hitting power in out playing 16 year old Welshman Adam Robertson 21-9, 21-18, after a semi-final success over Yorkshire's Michael James.

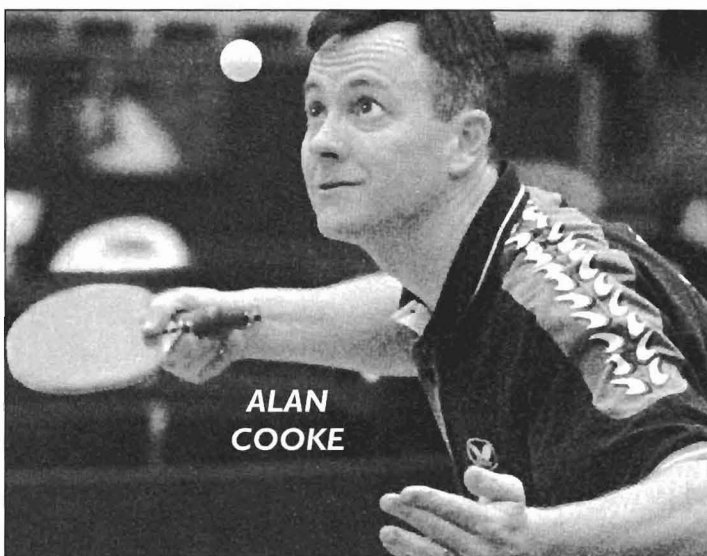
Robertson had earlier looked unbeatable when he crushed Germany's Erik Chraplak, currently a student at Manchester University, 21-14, 21-7, with a deluge of backhand and forehand topspins.

Two England internationals, Kubrat Owolabi of Middlesex and Sally Marling from Yorkshire, contested the Womens Singles final, which saw Owolabi, the former All African Champion, take the title 21-12, 21-12.

Marling was earlier very grateful to the Northumbria Police when her car broke down near the 'Angel of the North', on her way to the tournament, because they kindly gave her a lift direct to Eldon Square.

Northumberland's Eddie Smith was the most successful local male player,

COOKE & OWOLABI take NEWCASTLE



reaching the third round before going out 19-21, 19-21 to Cooke.

But the best performance from a local player in the women's event came from Kate Vickers of Bishop

Auckland, Durham, who lost to Owolabi in the semis.

Vickers also reached three singles finals, going down in both the Band 1 and Band 3 finals to Jane Durham

of Cleveland, and to Cherith Graham of Lancashire in the Under 21 final.

RESULTS

Mens Singles: S/F: A.Cooke (Dy) bt M.James (Y) 17, 12; A.Robertson (Wales) bt E.Chraplak (Germany) 14, 17. Final: Cooke bt Robertson 9, 18.
Womens Singles: S/F: K.Owolabi (Mi) bt K.Vickers (Du) 9, 3; S.Marling (Y) bt S.Graham (La) 6, 11.
Final: Owolabi bt Marling 12, 12.
Mens Under 21: Final: A.Robertson (Wales) bt P.Marshall (Y) 16, 13.
Womens Under 21: Final: C.Graham (La) bt K.Vickers (Du) 16, 12.
Mens Band 1: K.Rodger (Scotland) bt M.James (Y) 14, 12.
Mens Band 3: T.Bergman (Sweden) bt S.Bailey (Cle) -16, 6, 15.
Womens Band 1: J.Durham (Cle) bt K.Vickers (Du) 11, 8.
Womens Band 3: Durham bt Vickers 17, 14.
Veterans Singles: Final: D.Harding (Su) bt G.Salter (Nu) 10, 13.

TABLE TENNIS NEWS EXTRA

Issue no. 269 May 2000

Editorial

People are the greatest resource of any organisation and words about the characters of table tennis, their experiences and their views on current issues and events make good reading. This is a strength of the new Grove Club magazine, edited by Ian Marshall, mentioned inside, and we know that the media generally are interested in personalities. So **I would like to see more focus** on personalities in TTN and TTN Extra and if I had the time I would conduct more player/coach/official interviews myself for publication. Such emphasis on people and what they think, by contributors to this magazine, is greatly welcomed.

That we cannot get TTN out sooner is not only a justifiable irritation to our readership but it is also an enormous frustration to myself. However, **news, albeit late, can still be worth publishing**, and not only for readers who missed it at the time. When, as Information Officer, I have queries on stories and events from the past, old magazines are sometimes the only source to refer to. Information placed on the website (www.etta.co.uk) will not last, but when published in TTN it is a historical record. That is why I still like to receive open tournament reports and results (though the majority of tournaments don't send me them). Unless as a player your exploits are recorded for posterity, in a few years time when you no longer compete it will be like you never existed.

Table Tennis News has been flagging up for several months the likelihood of the ball size being increased. We cannot emphasise too strongly now that players, clubs, leagues and counties must prepare for the **40mm ball**, following its almost certain approval for all domestic play at the ETTA AGM on 1st July.

It seems to be an unfortunate characteristic of the English always to criticise rather than support. Since BMW have wanted to sell off Rover, several commentators have remarked that whereas French will buy Renault, Italians Fiat and Germans VW, the English (or British) have not shown the same kind of loyalty to Rover, despite the latter actually being quite good cars now and the Rover 75 being potentially a world beater. But, belatedly, helped by discounts, better publicity and understanding of the implications for jobs if Rover went out of business, sales of Rover cars have shot up. If I make again the rather crude comparison of English table tennis with Rover, I think that whereas some constructive criticism is justified, the organised sport has been deserving of more praise and support and less negative derision from some of its members for what it is trying to do.

For example, does anyone seriously think that there is a *realistic* alternative to the **National Training Centre** - despite having been beset from inception with financial cuts, changing goal posts and constant directives and scrutiny from the Lottery - if England is to have a chance of competing at the world level in the future? Our young players do seem to be coming on well, though they have a lot of catching up to do.

However, in the main magazine is an **interview with Performance Director, Michel Gadat**, who is beginning to sound like a man under siege. I know that I will be seen as speaking for the establishment now, but constant criticism wears people down whilst support through times of difficulty - and table tennis is facing problems - keeps morale and motivation high. We are all human, all fallible, and all of us need positive 'strokes'.

The average age of top European players keeps on rising. Of the Swedish men's team that won the team event at the European Championships in Bremen, Jan-Ove Waldner and Jorgen Persson are both 34 and Peter Karlsson was nearly (now is!) 31. For the Hungarian women's team event champions, Csilla Batarsi is 31. Three of the men's singles semi-finalists were over 30 (winner Karlsson, silver medallist Zoran Primorac of Croatia who was 31 on 10th May, and Waldner) and Petr Korbel of the Czech Republic is nearly 30. The women's singles winner was Qinghong Gotsch, 31, who in her semi-final beat fellow Chinese-German Jie Schoepp, aged 32. At least the other losing semi-finalist and the losing finalist, respectively Tamara Boros (Croatia) 23, and Mihaela Steff (Romania) 21, are relatively young. The oldies are great players but can't go on forever and the future still does not look too rosy for Europe.

In his April 'Courtside', John Woodford asks if there is a change in **policy under my editorship** with regards to County Notes and 'political' matters. I don't know about any change but as far as I am concerned, provided correspondents are not viciously personal or potentially libellous and provided too they can indicate how their views are connected or have relevance to the counties they represent, then they are entitled to offer opinions. If these opinions, though relevant to, do not represent the views or interest of the counties, then it is for the county associations to call their correspondents to account. If I consider that views expressed under County Notes are not county matters but are of wider interest to the table tennis community, then I may still publish them as stand-alone articles or letters. That is using editorial discretion.

Ken Muhr

CORNWALL
by John Wood

Cornwall's biggest entry for years in the HSBC Bank County Closed Championships saw Jerry Williams regain the Men's Singles crown, whilst Esme Stevenson consolidated her dominance of the Women's Singles event, at Tregorrnick Park Centre in March.

Williams at one stage looked like losing the Men's Singles final, being a game down and 15-18 down in the second leg to Adrian Noott, before going on to complete a remarkable comeback by winning in three, 16-21, 21-19, 21-13.

Titleholder Noott was so dominant and quick in the opening game that he had Williams rushing to his shots, and he carried on with his superiority in the second, coming out on top with his tricky arm spin serves and galloping with speed to a 18-15 lead. Then it all went wrong for the boy from Pentewan, as Williams, who never gave up, started to believe in himself and performed a great comeback to level the final 21-19.

Williams, from Falmouth, bristling with confidence, strode into a 5-0 lead in the 3rd before Noott could reply, and he pulled further away before a Noott mini-revival saw the match stand at 8-6 to Williams.

Noott, who was earlier moving smoothly to attack was now leaping at the ball, losing control and balance, as Williams majestically marched on to take the title.

Williams beat Graham Read in the semi-finals winning a close battle 21-16, 22-20, whilst Noott won an action packed topspin encounter with Graham Worth 14-21, 21-14, 21-10.

After the final a jubilant Jeremy Williams said, "I am pleased to be back after a couple of years out of it. It's nice to win the title again. It was a great game to play in, I was beginning to wonder if I would ever do it again. It's just great to be back."

The Women's Singles final was won by the Cornwall no. 1 lady Esme Stevenson, in a replica of the previous season's encounter, beating Shirley Luckhurst 21-14, 21-14.

Esme Stevenson paired up with Jeremy Williams to win the Mixed Doubles final, beating Shirley Luckhurst and Graham Worth 21-18, 19-21, 21-12.

Then Stevenson and Luckhurst formed a partnership to take the Women's Doubles title, beating the top two County Juniors Michelle Turner and Sarah Harris in the final, 21-14, 21-16.

Williams won his third trophy of the day when he teamed up with Malcolm Peters to win the Men's Doubles final, beating Steven Lobb and Graham Read 23-21, 14-21, 21-14.

The Intermediate Final was won by Launceston's Graham Worth who defeated Cornwall's top nationally ranked player Adrian Noott, 21-15, 11-21, 21-15. This was another classic topspin battle

COUNTY NOTES

A LOOK AROUND THE COUNTRY

Issue No. 269
May 2000

which saw Worth snap his blade in half. His replacement bat, a Persson Power blade, gave him more speed and better control, as he went on to complete a great victory.

This year's Veterans champion is combination bat expert Bob House, who defeated Roger Jacobs 21-16, 21-9 whilst the Over 55 Champion is Tim Wiltshire, who attacked long pimples exponent Tony Hales off the table, 21-14, 21-14.

The Consolation Singles winner was Kate Alken who defeated Trevor Gooch in the final 19-21, 21-15, 21-11.

We have a new name on the Junior Boys Trophy, that of Chris Brown who defeated Mark Poyner with controlled defence that toppled his opponent's aggression, 21-19, 21-12.

The first leg of this Under 17 Boys' final went point for point all the way to the wire, with Poyner hitting much harder than Brown, but Brown's tight control seeing him home. In the second game the pattern continued up to 5-5, but after that there was only one winner as young as Chris Brown streaked ahead to take the title.

The Under 17 Girls' winner was Michelle Turner who defeated Lucy Wood in an exciting final 21-15, 25-23.

Michelle won the first leg fairly comfortably, but the second game was a different story, with Turner's greater experience seeing her take an early 8-3 lead. It was then that this final really came alive with both girls playing their hearts out to win this coveted title. In the end it was Michelle's greater match fitness that saw her take the trophy at deuce.

However, Lucy Wood did experience the sweet taste of success when she won the Cadet Girls' title, beating Lisa Reed in the final 21-8, 21-18.

This year's Cadet Boys' champion is Chris Brown who won his second trophy of the day when he beat James Charlton 21-15, 21-15 in the final.

The Under 12 Boys Final was a close affair which saw Robert Fuller defeat David Brown 21-18, 14-21, 21-14 in the final,

whilst the Girls Under 12 title went to Emma Quayle, who defeated Georgina Credland 21-12, 21-11 in the final.

Mark Poyner and James Charlton won the Junior Doubles trophy beating Hugh Noott and Matthew Fox.

Matthew Nunes won the Consolation Singles final, beating Lee Farrant 21-15, 21-18.

The Junior Team Knockout competition was won by Mark Poyner and Chris Brown of Torridge A, who defeated Alastair Randall and Adam Tatlow of People's Palace A 3-0 in the final.



Cornwall's new Junior County Champions: Michelle Turner (left) and Chris Brown

CUMBRIA

by Gordon Brown

Cumbrian sportsmen had to pinch themselves to believe that Jimmy Cummings was dead. It seemed so unreal as more than 500 mourners in a packed St. James Church, Whitehaven, paid their last respects to the 44 year-old former Cumbrian County player who was one of the leading players in the former Whitehaven League. He was also an accomplished cricket batsman. His current table tennis club was Royal Oak, Welton, in the Carlisle League. He died from liver cancer, in West Cumberland Hospital, Whitehaven.

His wife, Christine, played badminton for England and he also leaves two children.

Table tennis may not be all that strong in Carlisle and Whitehaven these days but it is in Barrow and Kendal. Promising youngsters continue to dominate the scene in both towns.

In the Barrow League championships, the Men's Singles was won by 15 year-old Michael Gomersall, who also won the Junior Singles and the Handicap Singles.

Michael, who has returned to the League from the England Academy, was the youngest Men's Singles winner in the history of the tournament.

13 year-old Grant Woodhouse won the Under 14 Singles and Jonathan Crawford

the Under 12 Singles.

Roy Warriner, who lost to Gomersall in the Men's final, got some consolation by taking the Veteran's Singles and the Open Doubles with N. Smith.

Also in Barrow, 11 year-old Amy Burlison was called up for England Schools in the home nations tournament at Cardiff on April 29th. She is one of the many products of Northern Area Staff Coach Mike Yardley at the town's Parkview Centre of Excellence.

Grant Woodhouse has been a member this season of the successful Cumbrian junior team which finished a creditable joint third in Division 1a after the previous season's promotion as Division 2a Champions. His fellow townees Fay and Chloe Gasson, and up and coming Kendalites, Eke Dixon and Joe Mather, were the other members.

DERBYSHIRE

by Colin Deaton

There can be no denying that table tennis in Derby continues to be very active with youngsters of all ages introduced to our sport.

For instance, a beginners course for girls has started at the Lancaster Sports Centre. They have a team of qualified coaches to help these youngsters but in addition they are appealing for 'feeders' to assist in pushing the ball across the net.

A total of five school tournaments have been held with more to come. These events have attracted more than 50 youngsters playing on 14 tables.

There were 44 entries for the Derby Closed event. The winners were: Women: Jane Vickers, Men: Robin Pearce, Juniors: Simon Rudland, Veterans: Colin Ambrose.

Malcolm Allsop has indicated that he wants to relinquish his responsibility as the organiser for the city's next twinning trip with Osnabruck. A new organiser is currently being sought.

The Derby League Committee organising the popular annual Derby Junior four star event maintained another good entry of 255, and the standard of play from some of the top players in England did justice to the event. One big disappointment, however, to the organising committee was that there were very few Derby city juniors playing in this event.

One of the most talented young players coming through the ranks in Derby is ten year-old Emma Vickers. Emma is the daughter of Jane Vickers, the current Derbyshire ladies champion, and of course the proud dad is none other than active coach Phil Vickers. We will watch out for the talented Emma in the future.

All our hearty congratulations are extended to Mike and Lillian Payne who were presented with a crystal clock and a pen in recognition of the sterling work and organisation in conjunction with the Derby

Junior Open. Mike and Lillian have been involved with this popular event for a staggering 20 years. Both Mike and Lillian are qualified umpires and Mike is one of the leading lights on the Derbyshire County Committee.

Another very pleasing aspect is the promotion by the Derbyshire first team to the premier division of the National County Championships. We were able to field a team we have often dreamed about which was Nicola Deaton, Jane Vickers, Alan Cooke, Michael Isherwood and John Holland. Although Nicola and Cooke only played on one of the days during the weekend, their presence was enough for Derbyshire to be crowned champions.

Efforts are already being made for Derbyshire to get the squad available for next season's battles in the County Premier.

Chesterfield must be seen as a growth area in our game. A new academy has been opened in the village of Barlborough with help from a Lottery grant and Bolsover District Council under the guidance of Steve Chu, who is the Sport and Development Officer with Bolsover Council, and is also an ETTA coach and a former ETTA Development Officer. Nicola Deaton, who resides in Barlborough, is President of the club which boasts four new tables and a robot machine.

Matlock too has received a Lottery grant for their Cromford Club. Table tennis superno in Matlock, Tony Gregory, was quickly into the Matlock area schools with a view to promoting the game, featuring Nicola Deaton and Tom Gregory in a series of exhibitions. As a result, a tournament and weekly coaching sessions have been arranged.

Finally, the Derbyshire Millennium Youth Games will be launched on Friday 26th May by Chairman of Sport England, Trevor Brooking OBE, along with a table tennis exhibition featuring our international stars.

ESSEX

by Steve Kerns

Burnham Closed

Second seed George Reeves took the Men's Singles title for the first time with a 10,19 final victory over Paul Grant. In a tournament where there were plenty of upsets Grant ousted top seed Peter Ballard at 19-in-the-third in the semi-final. Grant had also beaten the dangerous Barry Mays a round earlier. It certainly was not all gloom for Ballard as he did manage to capture the O40's singles, O50's singles, Men's Doubles and Veterans Men's Doubles. In the best final of the night Nick Duce came from behind to beat the higher-rated Richard Smith -17,16,19 in the Mixed Open Singles (an event barring the top four seeds in the Men's Singles). Results included:

Men's Singles Semi-finals: Reeves beat Glenn Johnson 19, 18; Grant beat Ballard 23-, 14, 19; Final: Reeves beat Grant 10, 19
O40s Singles: Peter Ballard bt Glenn Johnson 16,-19,11
O50s Singles: Peter Ballard bt Tom Elder -15,17,15

Men's Doubles: Peter Ballard/Tom Elder bt Johnson/Reeves 14,19

Veterans Doubles: Ballard/Elder bt Johnson/Bill Smith -16,12-12

Mixed Doubles (round-robin) (1)Ray Sutton/Cathy Eakin, (2) George Reeves/Linda Murray.

CLACTON CLOSED

Martin Hogg took his second Men's Singles title but all the glory went to 14 year old Keiran Lally who ousted top seed John Andrews -19,24,19 in a thrilling semi-final. Hogg also impressed in his semi-final, gunning down the dangerous Dave Binns 15,14. Lally held four game points against Hogg in the first end in the final but finally his inexperience told as he lost 26-24. He was unable to hit the same heights in the second game. Dave Binns finally annexed the Veterans title after 15 years of near-misses, beating Andrews in a three-end final, and Jenny Higgins took her third Ladies' Singles title with a fine display against defending champion Sheila Howe.

Results included:

Mens Singles semi-final: Martin Hogg bt Dave Binns 15,14; Keiran Lally bt John Andrews -19,24,19; Final: Hogg bt Lally 24,12

Ladies' Singles: Jenny Higgins bt Sheila Howe 18,11

Mens Doubles: Hogg/John Rice bt Andrews/Paul Adams -13,15,16

Mixed Doubles: Dave Binns/Christine Edwards bt John Hobson/Sheila Howe -14,18,17

Veterans Singles: Binns bt Andrews -15,17-12

O60s Singles: John Long by Brian Thiel 13,17;

Junior Boys' Singles: Keiran Lally bt Lee Partridge 6,9

Junior Doubles: Lally/Partridge bt Matthew Watson/Andrew Deaves 11,17;

Division Two Singles: Graham Parkes bt Stewart Murray 17,16.

County Junior Third Team

Alan Shepherd reports on a great performance from the County Junior Third team who travelled to Kidlington in Oxfordshire knowing that only outright victory over Oxfordshire first team would give them the Division 3D title. That is exactly what they achieved with Kay Barham producing the pick of the performances with a fine win over the higher ranked Joanne O'Donovan with the score poised at 5-4 in Essex's favour. Previously, the very promising Umair Mauthoor had won both his singles and

Becky Jackson and Keiran Lally had both won once. Tony Halling drew a blank on this occasion but he too had made a significant contribution in all the other matches.

The excellent team spirit shown by this team can be further illustrated by the fact that Jack Leather (the other team member) travelled as non-playing reserve to cheer his team mates on. Such a young team should have a great future; and all four boys look contenders for a place in the first team.

GLoucestershire by Alf Pepper

At the time of writing we are rapidly approaching the end of the season, and now within the next few weeks the four leagues will be staging their respective finals nights, apart from AGMs another season will be well and truly over - but what has been happening during the past few months?

Les Smith and Tim Harris are to be congratulated for putting in two whole days of hard slogging work in refereeing both the National Junior/Cadet Ranking Trials - and the more recent Western Vets Open, the latter was played on 25 tables and both were held at the Cheltenham Recreation Centre at Cheltenham.

Both Cheltenham and Gloucester's Leagues are indeed well represented by excellent newsletters; Mike Brown edits 'Net & Edge' for Cheltenham, and Trevor Oliver does a fine job for Gloucester with 'Top Spin'. More information regards publicity regular weekly table tennis broadcasts have been forthcoming on BBC Radio Gloucestershire every Saturday since the end of September 1999 but will be terminating (for the summer) at the end of April 2000. Other hard working members in Gloucestershire are Ken Bridle of Cirencester who has been responsible for organising Junior and Cadet 1 & 2 Star Tournaments at Cirencester, and Cheltenham's Gill Smith for refereeing them.

A special word or two for Cheltenham's Junior and Cadet players, who hog most of the top 10 County Boys' rankings, much credit for this achievement not only rests with the players themselves - but their hard working coaches as well, and of course not forgetting the parents for getting many of them there.



photo omitted from the April edition - Harry Shahlaei & Stella Davis winning against Oxfordshire at Forest Green

And finally:

Gloucestershire Schools Table Tennis Closed Championships

The above Schools Table Tennis Championships took place at St. Benedicts School in Cheltenham on 11th March 2000. Here are the results:

Boys' Event

Under 11

Winner: Harry Shahlaei Glenfall
RU: Michael Harvey St. James

Under 13

Winner: Simon Frilling Deer Park
RU: Nick Wakeman Cleeve Chelt.

Under 16

Winner: James De Jong Pitville
RU: Stephen Gummer St. Peter's

Under 19

Winner: Andy Shaw Sir Thomas Rich's
RU: Laurence Shahlaei Bournside

Girls' Event

Under 11

Winner: Stella Davis Tuffley
RU: Emma Davenport Chesterton

Under 16

Winner: Nicola Burton Cleeve
RU: Joanne Pigott Ribston Hall

Under 19: To be played between Suzy Robinson (Glos-cat) and Gemma Pilsworth (Ribston Hall).

ISLE OF WIGHT by John Preat

One hears too often that the County Championships are not what they once were. Many programmes are condensed into a couple of weekends or even days in a "let's get it over with" attitude, top players no longer play for their county, the string of criticism is endless.

It is a pleasure to report that for us the event lived up to our expectations. No doubt our view is coloured by having gained promotion by winning Division 2 South and the whole season was made more exciting by this quest. We were not perhaps the best team in the division, we had our fair share of luck, winning four matches 6-4. Gloucester did not have their full team against us and they chased us to the end.

We won 7-3 against Oxford in the penultimate match, not as secure in the ladies' matches, which we lost 1-3, but our men came up trumps with a clean sweep. This left us requiring only a draw in the final match against Bucks. Both of our first string ladies were injured. Lucy Pointer has generally been a match winner and her absence might have cost us the match. This meant that six successive wins might have meant nothing if we lost the final match. The manner of her injury was also a disappointment, as it seems to have been aggravated by running or jogging on concrete and then did not yield to treatment and so might shatter not only

Lucy's season but ours.

We duly lost all four ladies matches against Bucks, although Nicky Porteous and Pauline Rorke performed gallantly and well, turning out at very short notice for a trip taking most of the day.

Fortunately our men again rose to the occasion with a clean sweep and so we won 6-4. Danny Burns kept up his excellent form in the closing stages of the season and Roger Hookey played above himself practically every time he went on the table. Carl Preat played every match bar one, when he was on England duty and it was in this match that our luck reached epic proportions, as our opponents turned up without their no. 1 lady. Team spirit was excellent throughout and it was this more than anything which carried us through. The matches were for us perhaps a bigger occasion than for most of our opponents.

We now look forward eagerly to the season in the higher division, where we hope to have Carl for most matches. Present indications are that he will go back to Germany. After two seasons in the top league in France, which he enjoyed, the better practice opportunities in Germany indicate a change in that direction. From our point of view, the French matches were played on Tuesdays, whilst the German ones tended to be played over weekends, which would clash with our county matches, at any rate for much of the season. It was hoped that there would be adequate practice in this country after the Lottery cash injections, but the new centre (Academy) in Nottingham in no way lived up to Carl's expectations. I don't doubt that I shall be told that everyone else thinks everything is wonderful, but I report the facts as I hear them. Recent England results, men and women, tell a different story.

It is likely that our no. 1 player will not play for our county too often, another thing for which we may be 'grateful' to our beloved ETTA and its unrivalled management. A strong county team is, of course, vital to our own development, furthering progress towards stemming the relentless tide of membership losses, where we were able to report some success.

Our admirable Chairman, Gordon Burns, bows out next season after a superb record in the post. Three years service in such a difficult post is perhaps as much as any volunteer should be asked to undertake, but I view his understandable resignation with real sadness, because Gordon's time has been one of such solid as well as imaginative achievement.

He launched our flagship, the county team, almost single-handed, getting sponsorship which relieved us of most of the burden of finance, stepped in on many occasions "when there was no one else", a common complaint in these days of chronic volunteer shortages. I pay tribute to this excellent man of table tennis. I hope he will continue to be available to us in other

capacities and ways, as he is quite irreplaceable.

LANCASHIRE

Preston Closed Championships
Preston College Sports Centre
4th March 2000

Singles

Semi-finals: Katy Parker (Deerdale Club) bt Barry Crook (Deerdale Club) 15-21,21-11,21-18; Andrew Christopher (Deerdale Club) bt Dean Walmsley (Deerdale Club) 21-19,15-21,21-18; Final: Katy Parker bt Andrew Christopher 13-21,21-18,21-16; Singles (Handicap event): James Lee (Deerdale Club) bt Mike Sibley (Astra Club) 21-13,21-15

Division One event

Manoj Parekh (Springfields Club) bt Mike Eccles (Astra Club) 21-16,21-19

Division Two event

Stuart Norcross (Jacobarus Club) bt Clive Chishall (URCL Club) 21-13,21-12

Doubles Final:

Katy Parker/Donald Parker bt Dean Walmsley/Paul Robinson 21-15,21-10

Junior event

Singles: Daniel Martindale (Jacobarus Club) bt Ian Castle (Jacobarus Club) 21-14,21-16

Veterans event

Singles: Bill Ingram (Ashton Institute) bt Tony Rigby (Astra Club) 12-21,21-15,21-19

LEICESTERSHIRE

by Derek Butt

Rushey Meads first team are now looking likely to take the championship of the Leicester and District League Division One as they now lead the table by nine points over Knighton Park first in second place. Rushey have a strong squad with Maurice Newman, Alan Philpott, Graham Hall and Chris Brewer all playing well, whereas Knighton Park have to rely mainly on Karen Smith who has had a good season so far herself, losing just two of the 56 games so far. Great Glen in third place have also done well, but like the Park they do not have the strength in their squad. I would expect these teams to be in their present position at the end. At the bottom of the table Syston Casuals and Loughborough Kingfishers seconds look set for the drop. Syston's first season in the top flight has been hard, but I know that they have enjoyed the experience.

In Division Two the Goons will be promoted. They are having a really good season and have won all their eighteen matches so far, and I would think that they can keep in the top flight for some time. Their team enjoying this season are John Reay, Barry Robinson and Dave Tanner. The second promotion spot looks to be between Knighton Park thirds and

Great Glens seconds, not much between these two and just two points separate them, but Glen do have a game in hand. At the other end of the table it looks certain that Rushey Mead thirds are for the drop, but who will join then is not very clear any one of five teams as things are at the moment.

All the cup competitions have reached the finals, and all finals will be played during April.

The Hinckley (Calor Gas) Division One championship looks likely to go to Ridge Lane as they have a good lead and their nearest rivals have got (lack of) players problems. Ridge Lanes performance so far has been excellent having won all their fourteen matches, their squad of Ian Baxter, Alan Jenkins both playing well and have good support from Werner Behrschmidt and Geoff Stratford. At the bottom of the chart it's looking a bit sick for Market Bosworth E, but with the point system that they operate with in the Hinckley League it could well be anybody for the drop.

In the Terrivision Division Two, Blackhorse A look like getting promoted, and have John Iliffe and Stu Haines in good form, John unbeaten in his 32 games. They are well supported by Ernie McLeish (nice to see Ernie back and playing well). Transco are in second place. At the bottom it looks as though Caterpillar B will finish the season in their present position.

Leicester & District Table Tennis League

The Leicester Closed Table Tennis Championships were held at Beaumont Leisure Centre, the total of entries was a little down on previous years, but a good day was had by all. The Men's Singles had a large entry and Maurice Newman emerged the winner in an excellent match with Matthew Hobday 21-16 in the third. The highest entry was the handicap singles and the final was between Shaun Craven-Griffiths and his sister Kelly. Shaun was in good form throughout the day and deserved his win. Kelly herself won three titles, so she too had a good day. The most successful Veteran was Mike Meredith, winning two events.

Results:

Men's Singles

Semi-final: M. Newman bt K. Hall; M. Hobday bt A. Craven Griffiths ;Final: M. Newman bt M. Hobday 21-10,16-21,21-16.

Under 400

Semi-final: K. Hall bt M. Allsopp; M. Hobday bt M. Cant; Final: M. Hobday bt K. Hall 21-14,21-19

Under 300

Semi-final: D. Langley bt J. Rai; K. Hall bt M. Hobday; Final: D. Langley bt K. Hall 21-16,6-21,21-16.

Under 250

Semi-final: D. Langley bt P. Wilson, S.

Caratella bt H. Rainford ; Final: D. Langley bt S. Caratella 21-13, 21-17.

Under 200

Semi-final: P. Wilson bt M. Box; A. Craven-Griffiths bt A. Willson; Final: A. Craven-Griffiths bt P. Wilson 21-12, 21-13

Under 150

Semi-final: M. Cornforth bt L. Spary; S. Craven-Griffiths bt G. Marlow; Final: M. Cornforth bt S. Craven-Griffiths 21-7,13-21,21-19

Under 100

Semi-final: P. Turton bt. B. Jacobs; K. Craven-Griffiths bt S. Mason; Final: K. Craven-Griffiths bt P. Turton 21-14,21-8

Handicap Singles

Semi-final: K. Craven-Griffiths bt M. Box; S. Craven-Griffiths bt M. Woodfield; Final: S. Craven-Griffiths bt K. Craven-Griffiths 21-17,21-16

Doubles

Semi-final: A. Jenkins/S. Caratella bt H. McQueen/M. Newman; K. Hall/D. Langley bt P. Wilson/J. Lancaster; Final: D. Langley/K. Hall bt A. Jenkins/S. Caratella 21-18,21-16

Ladies Singles

Semi-final: K. Craven-Griffiths bt L. Spary; H. Rainford bt E. Craven-Griffiths Final: H. Rainford bt K. Craven-Griffiths 21-19,21-8

Girls Singles

K. Craven-Griffiths bt L. Spary 21-15,21-15

Boys Singles

M. Cant bt A. Craven-Griffiths 21-18,21-7

Cadet Singles

K. Craven-Griffiths bt S. Piranty 21-7,21-12

Intermediate Singles

J. Lancaster bt J. Rai 21-16, 19-21,21-14

Veteran Singles

Semi-final: M. Meredith bt G. Marlow; M. Newman bt S. Pratt; Final: M. Newman bt M. Meredith 21-12,21-16

Over 50's

Semi-final: M. Box w/o; M. Meredith bt D. Butt; Final: M. Meredith bt M. Box 22-20,21-7

Over 60's

Semi-final: M. Meredith bt N. Boyce; A. Willson bt P. Gerdes; Final: M. Meredith bt A. Willson 21-15,21-12

MIDDLESEX

by Iris Moss

Sadly, I have to report the death of Andy Barden. A full obituary will appear elsewhere in Table Tennis News, but I could not let the occasion pass without some mention of the many years when Andy represented the county both as a Junior and a Senior. Andy must have made his first appearance in a Middlesex team in the season 1971-72 (for which sadly I have no Handbook, although I have all the others) and played regularly in the 1970's, putting in a total of 65 appearances. Although I am sure that some of his closer friends kept in touch

with him, the Middlesex Committee lost contact with him. Out sympathy go to his family and friends at this time.

On a happier note, I am pleased to congratulate our Veteran 1st team, who have won Veteran Division 1B and earned promotion to the Veteran Premier Division. Well done, our team! The results will, no doubt, appear elsewhere in Table Tennis News, but the following report was received from Tony Taylor:

"Middlesex started the weekend in joint second place behind Hampshire to whom they had already lost. So we started more in hope rather than expectation, firstly concentrating on winning enough games to avoid relegation from the 1st Division. The first match of the weekend was against a strong Kent side and thanks to John Holland, Norman Swift and Anne Flowerday, who all came out undefeated in the singles, we won 6-3. Next match we played a full strength Sussex 1 and did even better, winning 7-2. As Hampshire had lost 2 matches that day, we ended the day in top position.

The crunch match came next with Avon who were equal on points, and in a 4 1/2 hour marathon with six games going to the third set, we again triumphed by a 6-3 score. The vital game was a close doubles win by John Holland and Tony Holmes. All that was left now was a win against Berkshire which we did in champion by style by an 8-1 result.

The star of the show was our lady Veteran Anne Flowerday, who won all her singles in straight games in very impressive style.

We now return to the Veterans Premier Division for the first time in 10 years.

Entry forms have been issued for the Middlesex Junior Closed which will have taken place before this article gets into print, but I will report the results as soon as possible after the event.

NORFOLK
by Debbie Willett

**Press notes from the NCTTA
championships held on 11th/12th
March 2000**

The Norfolk County Table Tennis Association Junior and Senior Closed Championships took place at the Robertson Barracks in Swanton Morley this weekend. The facilities at the base turned out to be some of the best that the tournament has ever been played in and provided an excellent back-drop for some fantastic table tennis.

The experience of competing in the National Junior Tournaments on a weekly basis has clearly paid off over the past 12 months for the likes of Lauren Spink and William Shutes. Lauren finished the Juniors' day winning four out of a possible five titles, including all three of the girls' trophies available.

In the Under 12 girls' final, Lauren faced Sarah Durraant for their second meeting of the day. Lauren dominated the match, not allowing Sarah to get a foothold and came out 21-9, 21-9 winner.

Lauren and Sara then met again for a third time in the final of the under 14 girls after beating Rebecca Loveday and Emily Sim respectively. In the final, Sarah dealt with Lauren's serves more consistently but still lost 21-10, 21-13.

The girls under 17 final proved to be the battle to end all battles between Lauren and Julie Horstead. In Julie's last season in the junior ranks, she was keen to leave on a high. The first game swung either way throughout but Lauren pipped Julie to the post by 21-18. In the second, Julie came out very strongly leading all the way through taking the game 21-10. In the third, Lauren started very well and managed to keep her head in front all the way to the end and came out 21-15 winner. Julie's ability and experience will most definitely stand her in good stead for the step up to the senior ranks. The boys competition was much more open, with a different winner in each of the three age groups. In the under 12 competition, the entrants, Sam Shaw, Chris Durrant and Andrew Peal, competed on a round robin basis. Sam showed some very good form to overcome both Chris (21-16, 21-17) and Andrew (21-14, 21-14) to win the title with Chris beating Andrew 22-20, 21-13 to take second place.

In the under 14 competition, the highly ranked William Shutes faced Jamie Leeder in the final. William's experience was too much for Jamie to contend with and he won comfortably 21-6, 21-15.

In the under 17 competition, the semi-finals threw up some tremendous matches between players who are guaranteed to win the titles and figure more prominently in the years to come. The first semi-final took place between Ben Metcalf and William Shutes. With Ben having gone against the form-book in the previous round by beating James Ruffles, the game was not a foregone conclusion. William turned on the form though, by beating Ben in two straight sets 21-10, 21-16. In the second semi-final, the top seed Wayne Mason faced Stephen Shaw who had unexpectedly beaten both Freddie Jenner and Sam Littlebou in previous rounds. Stephen was unable to continue his winning streak losing in straight sets 21-12, 21-7.

The final then brought together William, ranked at 76 in the England Junior list, and Wayne Mason ranked at 43. With this being Wayne's last season in the juniors he was keen to go out on a win and showed a little more experience than William by beating him in straight sets 21-18, 21-10. Again, William should not be disappointed by this loss as his progression up the ranking list is clearly demonstrative of his ability.

In the boys doubles competition,

William Shutes and James Ruffles faced Sam Littleboy and Ben Metcalf in the final where the former came out convincing winners and took the title 21-17, 21-13. In the girls competition, due to the low entry, the event was played on a round robin basis. Julie Horstead and Lauren Spink paired up to beat both Rebecca Loveday and Emily Sim and Emma Williams and Sarah Durrant. Rebecca and Emily went on to beat Sarah and Emma to take the runners-up spot.

In the mixed doubles final, Julie Horstead and Wayne Mason beat the highly rated pairing of Ben Metcalf and Lauren Spink. The game was exceptionally close, going to three legs but the experience of Julie and Wayne was enough to pull them through by winning 21-17 in the third.

On Sunday, the senior tournament took place and proved to be another excellent day of competition. In the three ladies' competitions, there was quite a sense of *deja vu* as the list of finalists was a carbon copy of last years' finals. In the Ladies singles, Kim Chambers faced Mary Sawyer in the final. Kim led all the way through the match and the result proved to be exactly the same as last year with Kim beating Mary in two straight sets 21-11, 21-12. In the ladies' veterans competition Mary played Sue Allen in the final. This was a much closer match with each player taking a set. In the third, Mary was always just in front of Sue and eventually won the title 21-17, 19-21, 21-12. Sue and Kim then paired up to play the ladies doubles final against Lauren Spink and Julie Horstead. The two youngsters had clearly improved over the past 12 months, but still lost out to the more experience pairing of Kim and Sue who have now won this title for the past four years. The match scores show that the game was incredibly close 24-22, 21-19 and should serve as a warning for next years' competitors in this element. In the men's competition, Ian McLean competing in the tournament for the first time since coming to Norwich proved to be the man to beat. He faced highly rated veteran Chris Brewer in the final of the mens singles. In the first game, Ian started well and kept his head in front throughout taking the game 21-15. The second game followed a similar format and resulted in them winning 21-13 to take the title for the first time. In the men's veterans, Russell King faced Dave Henderson. Like Ian, Russell took an early lead in both the games played and never allowed Dave to get level. Russell took the title 21-15, 21-19. Russell and Ian joined up to play the mens doubles final against the father and son partnership of Adam and Chris Brewer. In the first game, Ian and Russell established yet another early lead being 10-4 up. The Brewers pulled back a little but lost the game 12-21. In the second, it looked like being all over when Ian and Russell were 18-7 up. The Brewers made an amazing recovery by pulling back to 19-19.

Unfortunately for them this was enough to inspire Ian and Russell to victory and they took the game and the title by 21-19.

In the mixed doubles competition, the Swanton Morley pairings of Doug Bennett and Julie Horstead and the husband and wife duo, Paul and Wendy Durrant met in the final. After Lauren Spink and Ken Metcalf had beaten top seeds Kim Chambers and Jon Cockburn in the first round of the competition, the way was now clear for either pairing to make their mark. Doug and Julie made a good start in the first, winning some tremendous rallies and taking the game 21-12. The second was pretty much the same with a result of 21-13 to take the title.

For her outstanding performances over the weekend, including appearing in five finals and winning four titles, the Victor Ludorum shield was awarded to Lauren Spink of Taverham.

Thank you to everyone who helped to organise the championships, including Graham Rogerson, Dave Attridge, Lindsay Horstead, Dennis and Margaret Calver and Wendy Durrant. Also thank you to Barracks for allowing us to hold the event in their gym. We are currently looking for a new NCTTA General Secretary to take over the post in June when Debbie Willett stands down. If you are interested or want to know more, please phone Debbie on 01603 621757.

NORTHANTS by Dennis Millman

In Kettering's Millennium Closed tournament, Ryan Keates retained the men's singles title with a powerful performance reminiscent of the halcyon days of Graeme McKim.

In the final, Keates clarity of thought, fleetness of foot and speed of shot on both wings proved too much for Richard Elliott who was never able to mount a challenge as he lost an unbeaten record stretching back more than two years.

On his way to the final Elliott had to stave off strong challenges from both Gordon Shaw and Chris Gibbons, who took him the full distances before Elliott's determination carried him through.

For Keates it was all too easy and he ended the day unbeaten as he completed the traditional treble, partnered for the first time by Elliott in the doubles and the consistent Muriel Cox in the mixed event.

Earlier in the day Elliott had proved to be a master craftsman of the 'hard bat' as, without being extended he added the Kettering crown to the Wellingborough title he had taken just two weeks before. He also annexed the Over 30 to Under 40 singles at the first attempt.

Alan Ashberry was yet again in demand as the long day drew towards its close, but for once his efforts went unrewarded as he finished on the losing side in the

finals of all four veteran events.

He had the satisfaction of eliminating his close rival Gordon Shaw at the penultimate stage of the Over 40 singles, but then fell to Ian Sclater who succeeded in his first year of eligibility.

The remaining events at this level proved a triumph for Geoff Atkinson who had gone down heavily to Ashberry in the Over 40s age group. Atkinson extracted his revenge when he turned the tables to take the Over 50s for a third consecutive time, teamed up with Shaw to retain the title and at the same time relegate Ashberry and Gerald Finney to second place in the Over 40s doubles, and finally joined Finney to make it four in a row in the corresponding Over 50s category.

Greg Yarnall playing in this tournament for the first time dominated the Junior competition with impressive wins in the Under 17 and Under 15 singles plus the junior doubles in tandem with Kenny Clarke. He became the most prolific winner of the day when he came out on top in the Under 30 singles, with Simon Jarvia the losing finalist.

During the early part of the day, a galaxy of junior players played a prominent part in the proceedings but apart from Yarnall and Clarke, only Sam Piranty (under 13s) Matthew Regan (Under 11s) and the Kingswood Under 14 doubles pair of John Smith and Tom Panter ended on the winner's rostrum.

The handicap events were keenly contested with Chris Gibbons (+2) accounting for Ian Sclater (+4) at Premier level and Archie Robertson holding on to beat Stephen Woolston in Division One. In the remaining divisions, youth had its fling with Michael Clarke getting the better of Geoff Wilkins and Oundle's Simon Felton - conceding points all round, just too strong for Stuart Thompson.

A disappointing ladies entry brought about the abandonment of the doubles but didn't prevent Helen Watts from taking the title for a fourth time, with Muriel Cox causing more than a little concern on this occasion.

The Consolation Singles maintained its aversion to previous winners as Ian Donaldson got the better of Mark Cornforth to become the 25th winner in 26 years. Only Rob Filik in 1987 and 1988 has won the trophy twice.

Archie Robertson was back among the honours when he and Lee Bunker took the Mystery Doubles, but with 23 events creating 350 matches in more than 14 hours of non-stop action, the main honours go to the tournament organiser Phil Slade and his dedicated team who can look back with personal pride on one of the biggest and best tournaments for many years.

Cricket enthusiasts may have seen media reports on the premature death of Peter Edwards, Secretary of the Essex County Cricket Club.

From 1976 to 1978 the same Peter

Edwards was the enterprising and invigorating Chairman of Northants County Table Tennis Association, whose time in office coincided with one of the most successful periods in local table tennis.

He was the driving force behind the County League, which he initiated in 1975, and which provided high quality inter-league competition for Kettering, Northampton, Towcester, Wellingborough and Daventry, which both he and his wife Sue represented.

During his stay Peter made Daventry a force to be reckoned with but his genuine enthusiasm was best demonstrated by his twice weekly journeys from Hampshire to play in Northampton and Daventry League matches.

However, in 1979 he returned to the county of his birth and to those who knew him it wasn't surprising that in his first season Essex won a trophy for the first time in its cricketing history - the Benson and Hedges Cup. Later, that same summer, they secured a second by becoming county champions.

He is survived by his wife Sue, and a son and daughter, to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.

Kettering & District TTL Closed Tournament Brooke Weston College, Corby 19th February 2000

Men's Singles

Semi-finals: Ryan Keates bt Terry Luxton 4, 10; Richard Elliott bt Chris Gibbons 19, 10, 17; Final: Keates bt Elliott 14, 7

Women's Singles

Semi-finals: N/A (Round Robin)
Final: Helen Watts bt Muriel Cox -14, 17, 16

Men's Doubles

Final: Ryan Keates/Richard Elliott bt Chris Gibbons/Gerald Finney 15, 15

Womens Doubles

Final: No Event

Mixed Doubles

Final: Keates/Cox bt Martin Watts/Helen Watts 13, 17

Junior Events

U17 singles: Greg Yarnall bt Kenny Clarke 7, 4; U15 Singles: Yarnall bt Michael Clarke 11, 9; U16 Singles bt Sam Piranty bt Stephen Broughton -17, 8, 8; U11 Singles: Matthew Regan bt Scott Tyler 13, 18, 14

Veterans Events

O40s Singles: Ian Sclater bt Alan Ashberry 11, 10, 19; O50s Singles: Geoff Atkinson bt Alan Ashberry 14, 9; O40s Double: Atkinson/Shaw bt Ashberry/Finney 14, 11; O50s Doubles: Atkinson/Finney bt Ashberry/Tyler 7, 11

Other Events:

O30 to U40 Singles: Richard Elliott bt Chris Gibbons 16, 18; U30 Singles: Greg Yarnall bt Simon Jarvis 12, 14, 18; Hard Bat Singles: Richard Elliott bt Tom Stapleton 16, 14; Consolation Singles: Ian Donaldson bt Mark Cornforth 16, 19; U17

Doubles: Yarnall/K. Clarke bt M. Clarke/Paul Lynch 9,16; U14 Doubles: John Smith/Tom Panter bt Scott Tyler/Paul Tyler 11,22; Premier Division Handicap: C. Gibbons bt I. Sclater 11,17; First Division Handicap: A. Robertson bt S. Woolston 20,19,18

Second Division Handicap: M. Clarke bt G. Wilkins 16,19; Third Division Handicap: S. Felton bt S. Thompson 15,23.

Mystery Doubles: A. Robertson/L. Bunker bt Ivor Jones/Bill Lumley 16,11

NORTHUMBERLAND by Pauline Long

The WENADE (UK) County Veterans' team of 'Benny' Robertson, Geoff Salter, Robb Dodds, Malcolm Lusk (on debut) and Pauline Long lost to Oxfordshire 4-5, but beat Cheshire II 6-3 and Yorkshire II 5-4 to finish in a highly creditable third place following the final series of Division 1A play-offs.

The singles sets were won by Geoff(5), Malcolm(4) and 'Benny'(3). 'Benny' and Pauline also won a mixed doubles, and following a change in pairings, 'Benny' and Malcolm were also successful in two men's doubles. Our thanks go to all the team, together with Jimmy Scope, who were involved in helping to consolidate our Division 1A position. With less than three weeks to go before the end of the WENADE (UK) Northumbria League season it appears that Birtley 'A', North Shields YMCA 'F' and DSS 'B' have already won the championships of the Premier Division, Division Two and Division Three respectively, with only the runners-up positions having to be decided in each case. Eitherf Byker CC 'A' or Blaydon YC 'A' will be Division One winners, while the Division Four title will be decided between Whitehouse Lane 'B' and North Shields YMCA 'K'. The quarter-finals of the Team Handicap Knockout Competition were to be scheduled for week commencing 27th March.

We recently received the good news that both Northumbria Table Tennis and Cramlington Table Tennis Club have each received approximately £5,000 as Lottery grants from the Millennium Festival awards. Northumbria will use their allocation to put in heating at their College Street Centre, plus purchase of equipment, while Cramlington will be funding extra playing sessions as well as purchasing new tables and equipment.

OXFORDSHIRE by Avril Haynes

Oxford Win Town v Gown

Oxford dominated the annual town v gown fixture against Oxford University at the Forum Club. The Men's A Team of Karl Bushell, Fraser Harris, Andrew Flint and Jeremy Flint cruised to a 8-2 victory. The

Ladies' match was a one-sided effort with the students being overwhelmed 10-10 by Jackie Burgess, Sally Chambers, Maggie Beahan and Joanne O'Donovan.

The Men's B Team also won 8-2 with the experience team of Tony Wheeler, David Hearn, Bob Klobucki and Paul Casey.

Veterans' Midland League

Oxford 1 Cheltenham 9

Oxford had a hard fought match with Tony Wheeler saving his side from whitewash by defeating Graham Brown.

Oxford 0 Birmingham 10

Despite some close games, Oxford were beaten by a strong team.

Junior County

Gloucs 5 Oxon 5

Oxon travelled to Gloucester without 3 of their regular players and earned a meritable draw. Alex Childs and Kevin Cruickshank both had two good wins, well backed up by Joanne O'Donovan with a singles win. Greg Boone and Sam Harrison the replacements, both gained valuable experience.

County Vets

Oxon(3) 4 Norfolk (3) 5

Oxon were 4-2 up at one stage but lost the last three rubbers. Sue Gokgor had a good singles win and combined with Chris Lansley to win the mixed doubles, he also had a singles win. Tony Wheeler had a good win against Norfolk's top player.

Oxon(2) 3 Sussex(3) 6

Neil Hurford gained two victories and George Pullin won a singles in a match in Sussex.

SUFFOLK

by Paul Cicchelli

Like a tired racehorse approaching the final furlong at Ascot, this past weekend's County results should be just the jolt we need to whip ourselves into action for next year. It was once said of the charismatic golfer John Daley that he approached a crossroads in his life with one avenue leading to success, wealth, consistency and hard work, the other and more favourable option of room service burgers and too much television. Now, I am not suggesting for one minute that the Suffolk team look like a 'before' shot in a Weight Watchers campaign but I do find it alarming that out of the five people representing Suffolk, not one of the team members practices table tennis away from local and national league competition - and we wonder why we came so close to relegation.

There were, however, some great performances. Phil Logsden the man with a 28" waist and infectious enthusiasm took the captain's armband with 'aplomb',

dispatching off Cambridge's finer defender: David Atkinson. Phil baffled Atkinson with his merciless loop spin game and, whilst the Cambridge man has a backhand loop worthy of any VHS video, Logsden stamped his authority to take his first maximum win of the weekend. Other notable performances in this match were Andrew Doshier's 3-game thriller with martial arts expert Martin Gray. Paul Cicchelli lost 19 in the third to Atkinson with both players taking turns to loop, chop and hit clean shot winners. It has been said that Cicchelli made a meal of this match, 15-11 up when caught out of a position for a deft drop-shot, falling over in true comedy style, but I can tell you it is possible, and painful to get cramp in both legs at the same time!

Clean sheets for Vicky Gray, Phil Logsden and Sarah Davidson eased the match home - Suffolk 8 Cambridge 2

Northumberland v Suffolk

Whilst Dave Godbold was on his mobile to a friend to organise a quick fix of his car's camshaft so that he could quickly trade it in for a brand new model, business as usual went on for the first match in Sunday morning. Logsden claimed his second maximum win against the talented Northumberland no. 2 Andrew Wilkinson. Sarah Davidson picked up the other scalp of Karen Newby and Cicchelli gave another timely lesson in losing from a winning position to the talented Eddy Smith - Suffolk 2 Northumberland 8.

Worcester v Suffolk brought out the best in Sarah Davidson who points at her weekly yoga class for her excellent turn of results and whilst Janet Dunning pushed Davidson all the way Sarah's yoga helped her 'stretch' to a 21-11 third game victory. Andrew Doshier's expedite battle with Steve "that ball's not going past me" Horton. The match also saw the welcome reemergence of Max Crimmins who seems as young today as you're always read about - and as good! - Suffolk 4 Worcestershire 6

Derbyshire, who thankfully turned up for our match without Alan Cooke and Nicola Deaton, didn't seem any less forgiving by recruiting Mike Isherwood at 1, John Holland at 2, and whilst Stuart Macintyre the professional photographer could only manage one win against Suffolk's number 3 Andrew Doshier. The other mens games were predictably one sided affairs - and just to think the day before John Holland was playing at number 3. It doesn't bear thinking about. Vicky Gray managed to beat long term rival Helen Rainford, and Sarah Davidson silenced her knockers with 2 great wins - Derbyshire 6 Suffolk 4. Whilst Derbyshire's All-Stars are promoted to into the Premiership, Bedfordshire and Cambridge were relegated. And Suffolk? Well we're all off to search for Yoga lessons.

SUSSEX by John Woodford

Luke Bridge and Gina Rogers, both aged 13, are the two young people on whom Sussex are beginning to hope will be their stars of the future.

These two spread their wings to the west of the county on occasions although both live in Hastings. Luke played for North Mundham at the recent British Junior National League finals at Stoke-on-Trent and remained unbeaten in Division 4B. He is also undefeated in Division 2 of the Eastbourne League.

Gina played for Arundel in Division 3 at Stoke, winning four out of her last five games. Also prominent at Stoke for Sussex was Claire Hodger (Arundel) who won 15 out of 20 games over the two weekends; also Samantha Simpson (also Arundel) defeated ten opponents, but lost to ten.

Eastbourne became one of the first leagues in the country to try out the new 40mm ball in a local tournament on 11th March, on a day reserved for a handicap singles competition, five different events were added, including the Big Ball. Some 30 players competed and it was won by the Eastbourne champion John Davies, who commented "it takes a little time to get used to the new ball, but not as long as I expected."

Other players confirmed that view, which is a relief as many players may be fearing that they might find themselves unable to cope with the change. The general verdict - you will soon forget you are using the new ball. It is, of course, visibly slower to the spectator, ideal for TV.

Crawley men and Hastings women are through to the semi-finals of the Wilmott and Rose Bowl competitions respectively. Crawley again have a strong team - Ritchie Venner, Terry Haley and Mayur Majithia at no. 3. London Progress, however, must remain the favourites to win the trophy with their combination of Jason Sugrue and Marco Essomba.

Sussex players and others are still failing to reach the tournament organisers before the closing dates. Ritchie Venner was left out of at least one GP event earlier in the season. Three well-known players on the circuit failed to get their entries to Doreen Nightingale in time for the Sussex Newman 2 Star on 2nd April, leaving Venner as top seed.

The all-Sussex Junior and Senior championships will be staged at Hove on 8th/9th April. For the senior event Venner and Rose Rainton will be the defending champions.

WARWICKSHIRE by Caroline Williams

Myton are Top for Girls

Myton School, Warwick, have made it for

the third year running to the Dunlop National Schools Team Competition National Finals. Kay Nason, Gilly Matthews and Joanna Buick were part of the successful Under 16 Girls team in 1988 and Under 19 Girls team in 1999 and have been joined by 11 year-old Mytonian Stephanie Hawkins to compete in the Under 19 Girls contest. The squad went in February to Deerpark School, Cirencester for Midland and West Regional Finals. There they had to play Devonport High School (Devon) and Ribston High School (Gloucestershire). Such was the caliber of the Myton girls that they annihilated the opposition 8-0 in both matches.

Spa - A Night To Remember

It was probably the best Leamington Closed Championships Finals night that anyone in the 54 years history of the Association could remember. 16 year old Samantha Meredith reflected her 21 junior ranking by winning five out of six finals to equal Lynn Sibley's record. In the Leamington Spa Courier Ladies Singles Samantha Meredith faced Liz Haynes on Liz's 21st birthday. Liz, as a junior, had taken this title in 1996. It was a thrilling three-setter with two girls evenly matched before Samantha took the crucial last few points to seize the title 21-16,17-21,21-19.

Varsity Five

Three County Umpires, Geoff Taylor, Bob Montgomery and Frank Stevens, all from Coventry travelled to officiate at the annual Varsity Match held in Oxford in February as part of the 28th Varsity Games sponsored by Norton Rose. Two Leamington players, Jenny Williams and Jon Shaw, were part of the Cambridge squad.



Jenny Williams, last years' Ladies Captain, was playing in the Women's first team for her third and last time. Under Frank Stevens' watchful eye the quartet defeated Oxford 8-2 for their third successive victory with Jenny taking both her singles. Jon Shaw in his first year was picked to play for the Cambridge Seconds and Bob Montgomery took the umpire's chair. Last year's 6-4 Oxford win was reversed by Cambridge with Jon Shaw notching a single and the doubles.

Geoff Taylor was in control of the Men's first match where Oxford gained 6-4 victory.

For Jenny Williams with Varsity matches will always be remembered! In July she marries Paul Robertson who captained Cambridge men to Varsity success in 1997, 1998 and 1999.

Birmingham Closed, 2nd April 2000

(Winners in bold)
Men's Singles: **Tony Isaac (Cudworth)**, Ian Ferguson (Cudworth)
Women's Singles: **Joan Humphrey-Middlemore (Colebridge)**, Eileen Shaler (Colebridge)
Women's Doubles: **E Shaler/J Humphrey-Middlemore, A Lloyd/H Turner (Colebridge/Sutton Coldfield)**
Veterans Singles: **Tony Isaac, Mike Browne (Kingshurst)**
Mixed Doubles: **E Shaler/R Dixon (Colebridge)**, S Riach/M Browne (Kingshurst)
Junior Boys: **Simon Gleeson (Baverstock)**, Gareth Hayward (Streetly)
Junior Girls: **Sarah Riach (Kingshurst Bribar)**, Catherine Smith (Smithereens)
Cadet Boys: **Tom Madeley (Otton West Warks)**, Mark Thompson (Colebridge);
Cadet Girls: **Jenny Gordon (Baverstock)**, Lucy Dixon (Baverstock)
Boys Doubles: **S Gleeson/P Singh (Baverstock)**, S Pickett/J Essex (Kingshurst Bribar)
Girls Doubles: **S Riach/C Smith (Kingshurst/Smithereens)** J Gordon/L Dixon (Baverstock)
Under 12 Singles: **T Madeley, James Cockerill (Otton & West Warwicks)**
Junior Restricted: **Jason Essex (Kingshurst Bribar)**, Purdiph Singh (Baverstock)
Restricted A: **John Ludlow (Holdens Tile Cross)**, Andy Binks (Streetly)
Restricted B: **Colin Platt (Smithereens)**, Steve Pinder (Lodge Road)
Restricted C: **Sarah Riach, Luke Hemming (Kingshurst Bribar)**.

WORCESTERSHIRE by Martin Clark

CLOSED COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Crimmins Sweeps the Board

This year's event, held again at Droitwich Leisure Centre, heralded the anticipated return of Max Crimmins, after many years absence, and brought added spice to the proceedings.

Max did not disappoint, showing much of the style and ability from his heydays on the National and International scene, he cruised his way through to the Men's final without dropping a set. In the other half of the draw, Jean-Michel Rouanet, playing out of Worcester, took the scalps of

previous champions Jason Thompson and Steve Horton on his way to the final, however, he was no match for Max who took the title despite a spirited showing from Jean-Michel.

Sarah Stone took full advantage of the absence of a number of quality players in the Ladies singles by taking the title for the first time, without dropping a set. She beat Dot MacFarlane in the final, who had done well to overcome the challenge of Helen Pogmore in the semi-final.

Not content with the Men's Singles crown, Max Crimmins also took home the Veteran's Men's trophy after a tussle with finalist Ray Dixon. Ray recently won the Over 60s event in the Veteran's Western Masters at Cheltenham.

The Veteran Ladies singles was contested by only four players and it was last years champion Lynda Reid who again took three games to get the better of Kate Hughes.

Number one ranking in the Men's Doubles, Steve Horton and Julian Wooton battles their way through to the final, but then came across Max Crimmins, partnered by Dave White, which put an end to their title aspirations.

The pairing of Wendy Baggott and Sarah Stone proved to be a winning combination as they powered their way to the title in the Women's Doubles. They beat Kate Hughes and A Berry 19, 20 in the final. Completing Max Crimmins' haul of trophies, he and Willie Aherne overcame champions of many years, Mervyn Wood and Roy Norton 12, 20.

The Mixed Doubles was arguably the most competitive of all the events of the day, with many of the sets going to three games. In a titanic final with Jason Thompson and Sarah Stone playing Steve Horton and Joanne Hill, each game went to deuce. The last game gave match points to both pairings on many occasions, enthralling the audience before Thompson and Stone eventually won -20, 22, 32.

County Championships

Sadly, our Veterans 1st team finished bottom of division 1A, despite a great effort in the last round of matches at Wood Green. A win against Essex 2 6-3 was not enough to save us from relegation.

Veterans 2nds scraped home 5-1 against Dorset to keep alive our hopes of avoiding the drop into division 3, thanks largely to sterling displays from Chris Madden and Dot MacFarlane.

YORKSHIRE
by Rea Balmford

Where better to open this month's 'notes' than at the most lively of outposts - Scarborough, where, by the time they appear in print, a new 'state of the art' table tennis centre will have been opened to further lift the standards up on the North East coast - an opening that I would

have hoped to attend had not the 'flu bug' dictated otherwise.

Everybody will wish Scarborough well, not least those 'elder brethren' who used regularly to attend their excellent 'North East of England Open' over the Easter weekends a number of years ago. On the subject of tournaments - what has happened to these once popular events? County and League tournament now seem to attract just a handful of entries, more often than not insufficient to provide a worthwhile competition, and many have already fallen, or are in imminent danger of falling, by the wayside.

An ever-bigger gap is developing between top, where the major grand prix events, with big prize money and high ranking points, are flourishing, but the smaller 'opens' and league 'closed's' are continuing to fall by the wayside.

Yes, we have gained at top level, where the sport has become much more professional in all senses of the word, but this must be balanced against a worrying drop at lower levels, where a part of the ladder which used to help players move from bottom to top seems to have been lost. Do not ask me to provide an answer, but somehow, I am sure that the lower stage of the ladder which leads from novice to top 'star' must be strengthened or our sport will lose out to the many counter-attractions.

On the playing front the prospects look good as the county's young junior II side complete their programme in Division IA of the County Championships with seven points from their four outings. With a side already in the Junior Premier Division, they will, of course, not be able to move up, but the young tykes - Steven Denny, Ian Parker (Bradford), Lea Turner (Halifax), Sarah Donnelly (Leeds) and Zoe Cheesman (Wakefield) can look back on a task well done.

MUHR'S MEMO EXTRA!

Regarding regional media coverage, BBC TV East Midlands who filmed Nicola Deaton and Alan Cooke in a preview and BBC Radio Sheffield, as well as local papers, reported on the Senior National Champions and I am grateful for the work of Colin Deaton and John Hatfield in facilitating this.

There is of course much other good regional TV, radio and press table tennis coverage going on. Taking the North East for example, Keith Wilson achieved excellent attention from all three media for the vital Darlington v London Progress British League Premier Division clash, and there was an interesting 'faces of fame: making a champion' feature on Denis Neale

in the Middlesbrough Evening Gazette.

I hope that dossiers of nominees for the ETTA Press Officer of the Year Award, supported by Howard Jacobson's publishers, Random House (see inside) will provide me with more information on media coverage around the country. Incidentally, the national press have been printing book reviews of the Vintage paperback edition of Howard Jacobson's 'The Mighty Walzer', which has been shortlisted for three literary awards: Jewish Quarterly Literary Prize (Fiction), which he won, WH Smith Award for Fiction and P.G. Wodehouse Everyman Bollinger Award for Comic Writing.

Ken Muhr

INTERNATIONAL HARD BAT CLASH BETWEEN ENGLISH AND AMERICAN PLAYERS AT MANCHESTER

The legendary American hard bat player known as 'The Money Man' (for his challenge matches), Marty Reisman, who won the 1949 English Open Championships with the great Victor Barna being one of his victims, is to lead a team of Americans in a special 'friendly' match against top English hard bat players such as Denis Neale, Jeff Ingber and Henry Buist (who played Marty in a classic encounter at the 1998 World Vets Championships, Manchester) at Manchester Sports Development Centre on Friday 9th June, starting at 7.30pm.

It is hoped the players will recreate the kind of table tennis which used to fill the Albert Hall with spectators, this match being supported by the Manchester Millennium Veterans Games Committee.

For further information contact Tony Meredith, Organiser at 1 Elm Avenue, Blackpool FY3 9BQ. Tel: (01253) 397589. Players considering playing in the Manchester Veterans Championships, which includes a hard bat tournament, on 10th/11th June, should note that this clashes with the ETTA Grand Prix Finals at Bath.

www.sports.com

Sports.com is a new comprehensive sports website covering football, cricket, golf, tennis, rugby union, formula one, rallying, sailing and betting tips. The site is mainly focused on European sport. It is working towards covering other sports, including table tennis. There are daily news stories one each of the above sports plus live football scores from all the major European Leagues, ball-by-ball Test and one day international cricket scores for all of England's games.

For all the latest action, news and scores, visit the site. An excellent starting point for Euro 2000 coverage

DOES OUR SPORT HAVE A DEATH WISH?

At long last a real debate seems to be taking place as to how we can improve the game rather than boast about real or imaginary imagery triumphs. Certainly our scoring system is a disaster in terms of undermining interest and excitement. It cannot compare with that of tennis. Moreover, the latter has worked, ours has not. This is clearly shown by the interest in tennis, which still remains enormous in terms of TV, gates and money attracted. Such things table tennis can only dream about. Yet our sport should play better on the small screen for obvious reasons and we should ask ourselves why it does not.

We have identified the ridiculously short rallies and the relatively drawn out scoring system, which is in such stark contrast to the otherwise frantic nature in which the game is generally played with rallies lasting 3.4 exchanges, at any rate at international level.

I have my doubts about the larger ball myet approve of its introduction on the basis of "what have we got to lose?", i.e. in terms of public interest things cannot get much worse.

There is, however, one item in the top player's repertoire which destroys the game as surely as the short, frantic rally and that is the service. When I sat behind the players in my capacity as a team manager in the Seoul Olympics (1988) I could not believe what I saw seeing or should I say NOT seeing? Even then it was obvious to me that my players could not see the other man's contact with the ball, as this was hidden - and quite deliberately so - by the opponent's body. Players are already skilled at disguising what they put on the ball when serving, in some cases they are almost magicians. This one can live with, as they exercise basic skills and so the opponent may struggle to tell whether the ball is chopped or floated as either spin or non-spin is produced with apparently similar actions or indeed the opposite spin is produced to what the hand or bat indicates. Unfortunately, such skills are enhanced, if that is the right word, by putting the body firmly in front of the ball, or the opponent's vision, at the time of contact. I have seen the ball clearly thrown backwards to enhance the spin and that, too, is invisible behind the body.

There is a rather verbose rule which is designed to prevent that sort of thing, but it has not worked. The result is that returns against certain players are incredibly difficult and at the top level if you do not return well, your return is slaughtered. This shortens the rallies more than anything. Of course, the umpire, sitting where he or she does, sees even less than the player. There appears some belated recognition, in so far as there are ideas around which will stop

players shielding their service action with their arm. I fear officials are far behind the times. Some shielding of the action with the arm there may be, but this is a minor problem compared with what goes on in the real world. Since modern service deliveries make the game look bad, since they ruin it as a spectacle, what is to be done? These are surely serious charges which ought to be addressed.

I cannot really see an alternative to serving in front of the body, so that the opponent clearly sees the contact with the ball. Serves will be easier to return and such a move alone will help the cause of longer rallies and more interesting matches. Of course, one regrets that players who have worked hard on their often unplayable service should be deprived of the fruit of their labour, but in the interest of the larger sport, the sacrifice needs to be made.

One cannot doubt that some top players will be the most conservative elements. One recalls the 'boycotts' of events in England played up to 11 rather than 21, the poor publicity that resulted in the upset sponsors. More recently, one notes that two top players have threatened to boycott certain ITTF events, if these are played with the new, not much larger ball. One notes how they apply their glues, with all accompanying smells and heaven knows what else, in order to make their bats faster and a little more effective. One sees the death wish everywhere, not least among players whose future would be so much brighter, if the sport got its act together and set about winning a new public for what can be, indeed should be a wonderful sport.

The sport seems like a drug addict, the occasional wonderful trance overshadowed by the long term damage to the health of the sport. Very urgent reforms are needed on many fronts, because little has been done for so long. We have not faced the real problem, which is that we are losing members, TV and public support, because our basic product is not right and too few are prepared to buy it.

Table Tennis Pensioners

Readers will no doubt be interested to know that table tennis players, because of the short-lived nature of their occupation, are amongst categories the Inland Revenue allows to draw early tax-free cash lump sums and taxable pension income (reference: The Daily Telegraph 29/04/00).

When they have made their mint from the game they can retire at 35, a great source of comfort for those not qualifying for Lottery subsistence grants!!

JOE BEADLE'S TOP TABLE TENNIS VARIETY SHOW

Joe Beadle from Tameside has organised a number of table tennis promotional events over the last two years, mainly in the Tameside, Stockport and Derbyshire/Cheshire border areas, but also as far away as Hinckley, Leicestershire.

According to newspaper cuttings and information from Joe and Stockport coach Alan Blears, these roadshows include exploding balls, frying pan bats and tiny tables and the opportunity to play a robot, and feature demonstrations by French star Glem Gullium, Noel Beadle (Joe's brother) and top juniors such as Lee Williams, James Fletcher, Karen Shepherd, Kirsty Caldwell, Sophie Smith, George Yardley, Amanda Pollard and Cleo Fisher from Tameside and Stockport (Sorry if I have left names out! - Ed). They have also received good and positive coverage by the media. The Editor has long believed that exhibitions well done are an excellent and effective way of promoting table tennis, providing there is an outlet or exit route for those enthused to play. He is aware that there are other roadshows around the country and invites information or articles on them.

HISTORY OF THE DIDCOT & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE:

THE YEARS 1949 - 1999

Dedicated to the memory of the late Brian Bidmead (who compiled an earlier history), Derek Manners and 'Chick' Fowler (who was inspirational in founding the league), and to the Rev. 'Pat' Keating, this book, written by Alan Mead and Keith Walton with photographic work by Michael Norris, celebrates 50 years of the Didcot & District Table Tennis League.

The history and records of the association, of the clubs and of the competitions is interesting enough reading, but what I found most fascinating were the pen pictures in Chapter 5 on 'Players and Personalities' - and I don't know most of them! I remember Stan Hahn though - he had a rare backhand loop. Browsing through the pages, one realizes that all leagues have their histories, their stalwarts and characters, yet very few will be fondly recorded for posterity - live on - in this way.

I hope that the immense amount of work, even if it was for the authors sometimes pleasurable, that must have been put into producing this book, is appreciated by local people. 250 attended a reunion/book launch at the Civic Hall, which indicates the solidity of the Didcot League and its members - a tough example for other leagues to follow.

**DARLINGTON 7
LONDON PROGRESS 7**
(at The Dolphin Centre, Darlington)
by Kevin Heatley

The drums were beating for London Progress as they and Darlington prepared for the crunch match to decide the Premier Division title. The home supporters included a larger than life inflatable green alien, clad in home colours, and a large banner hung from the gallery proclaiming "Your Progress Stops Here". So the scene was set for a truly amazing match.

With loud applause and cheers accompanying virtually every point, the drama began in the opening two singles. Andrew Eden opened for Progress with a smooth straight sets win over Darlington's Greek no. 2 Pittas but the scores were level after Italian no. 1 Fabio Mantegazza clinched a tight first set before running away with the second against Marco Essomba.

Darlington Team Manager Keith Wilson had predicted before the match that whichever side took a two game lead would win the match, and in the next two singles that is exactly what happened. Darlington's Eddie Smith and Steve Slater both won the opening sets but turned to dismay as Slater squandered a 17-13 third set lead to lose out to Chris Sladden, and Smith tired badly under a barrage of power hitting from Jason Sugure. The lead continued as singles sets were shared.

Eden defeated Mantegazza in a tense two set affair with both players displaying moments of sheer brilliance, Pittas powered past Essomba, Slater's superb control providing too much for Sugrue, and Sladden brushed aside Smith 5-3 to Progress and next the doubles where Darlington left out Smith and brought in Scottish international Keith Rodger, tuned up by playing in a first division match two hours earlier. He and Mantegazza took care of Eden and Essomba in straight sets but it was the second doubles that brought Darlington back into the match. Three sets, all won at 21-19, eventually went to Slater and Pittas to bring the scores level at 5-5.

Eden then totally destroyed Smith but Mantegazza levelled for Darlington again in a tempestuous match with Sladden, both players trading insults at the end of the first set which prompted the intervention of match referee John Lawton. The second set also went to the Italian player.

At 6-6 the final two singles began, London Manager Jon Kaufman and Darlington counterpart Keith Wilson both slipping off to the bar to steady the nerves! Pittas quickly defeated Sugrue with some awesome backhand winners to Slater and Essomba to decide the match. At 19 all in the first it could have gone either way, but Essomba played two points that can only be described as pure bravery.

Two magnificent forehand winners from difficult service returns gave Progress the edge. The second gradually ran away from Slater and the drums, which had gone strangely silent after the doubles sets, began pounding louder than ever. The gallery banner was thrown to the floor, and the green alien disappeared from view. The Chairman of Durham County TTA, Sam Raistrick, praised both sides before presenting the League County trophy to London Progress.

Both clubs agreed that it was a special occasion but both believed that this is what a British League match should be like. On every other occasion through the whole season a lack of atmosphere. However, on this occasion, the usual "One man and his dog" occupying the spectators seats had been replaced with two sets of passionate supporters. The result: a match that will live long in the memory of all who witnessed the constant skill and drama. On a knife edge throughout, a tribute of both sets of players.

SUNDERLAND LEAGUE CELEBRATES THEIR FIRST 90 YEARS

On Friday 5th May the Sunderland League, chaired by Mike Wilson, had a celebratory dinner to mark 90 years of operation. Sunderland is England's oldest League, having an unbroken run (World War 2 years apart) since 1910, and actually starting earlier - schoolteacher Andrew Donaldson, the first English Open Champion in 1922, had played several times for in it for Sunderland YMCA in 1902-03. Edgar Reay was a top pre-war player and a top post war official, and in more recent years Ken Taylor, now their President, was their guru. Other well known Sunderland players were T.F Ewbank, Wilf Barker, Eddie Taylor and Peter McQueen.

The Editor will welcome any articles on long-standing, rapidly expanding or otherwise successful clubs or leagues.

SUMMER COACHING/TRAINING COURSES

From time to time the Editor gets to hear of open application coaching courses, such as run by Grove TTC, Teesport or Grant Solder. If he sent them, he would be happy to publish brief details of such courses, although publication should not be taken as endorsement.

THE GROVE Specialist Table Tennis Magazine

The Grove TT Club (website: www.gttc.co.uk), now based at Whitchurch Sports & Leisure Centre, Shropshire and supported by Butterfly/Teesport, have

produced an attractive 16-page magazine edited by Ian Marshall, with a nominal cover charge of £1.

I liked the top player profiles, interviews, quoted, experiences and opinions, eg. on rule/regulation changes, long pimples etc and also the photographic playing sequences demonstrating and describing advanced technique. There is other information on competitions and courses, and articles by officials.

For further information, contact Ian Marshall, Grove TT Club, Melton House, Sydnal Lane, Woodseaves, Market Drayton, Shropshire TF9 2AR. Tel. 01630 657980, fax: 01630 657406, email: info@gttc.co.uk

COACH INTERVIEW - GIDEON ASHISON by Ken Muhr

Surrey Coach Gideon Ashison, from Druid Street, London SE1, is part of a table tennis family, his daughters Glenda and Glenys and son Gerry having all reached a high level.

How did you come into coaching?

"I came into coaching by playing at club level at Fulham and my kids wanting to play. At the time - 1987 - there was hardly any coaching in the area so I was compelled to take up coaching."

So your kids were the motivation?

"My kids were the motivation. At the time everyone relied on adults and my kids were ignored."

Who have been your influences in coaching?

"Alan Lindsay, who was an England international some time back. What was good about him was that he was very patient and he was the only one who took interest in the kids - but then he was retiring at the time."

Where are you coaching at the moment?

"At the moment I am coaching in two places: one in York Gardens in Battersea and the other one in Kings College, Wimbledon, a private school rising from 7 to sixth form level."

What would you like to pass on that is valuable about coaching? What fires you about coaching?

"The pleasure of seeing somebody that you have passed on information to, taking it into their stride to do it - working at it. There is so much joy and pleasure in seeing somebody perform. That is my main motivation - to pass on information and seeing that it is carried through and they get success with it."

What successes have you had in coaching?

"My first success was with my own daughter, Glenda Ashison, who became no. 1 junior girl. My next one was with James Kirk who I took from nothing - he was told he had got no rhythm, he could not play table tennis at all. He came from 200 straight into the top 20 (of England ranking list) and then he packed it up, unfortunately. He was well known in Surrey as coming from the ranks, but because he packed up before he could be noticed it was short lived. The next one was Paul Young, he is only 11 and he came from nowhere in the rankings and at the moment he is number 6."

So how do you cope with disappointments if you have a player who is good who suddenly gives up?

"I wouldn't call it a disappointment as such if there is very good reason for anybody to pack it up. All I can say to them is, "good luck, keep table tennis in mind in the future, Think of it as an enjoyment sport." And carry on."

FAMOUS PEOPLE WHO PLAYED TABLE TENNIS

Karen Tonge noticed an article in the Daily Telegraph, 'Big Hitter', with the opening paragraph, "Baroness Jay of Paddington, the formidable leader of the House of Lords, is little known for her equally ferocious performances on the ping pong table". Apparently, she was taught to play by Liberal Democrat Lord Rogers of Quarry Bank, then a Labour member, and she used to impress onlookers at the Fabian Society Summer Camp with her table tennis skills.

A former Labour MP who used to play in the Bletchley (now Milton Keynes) League was publishing and media mogul Robert Maxwell, who Dave Gilbert tells me was fiercely competitive! On the Tory side, former Transport Minister Ernest Marples was another Keen Player, practising at the Fulham Club I believe.

SOUTH WEST REGION REPORT by Alf Pepperd

At the meeting at Weston-Super-mare on 13th February, Chairman John Burtenshaw asked for a minute silence in remembrance of the late Mel Jones, Chairman of Bridgwater and Brian Holloway, Cornwall's Secretary and very well known national umpire. Joy Merton RDO Sport England discussed the Awards For All application pack (Lottery helpline: 0345 649649) and it was noted that there had been seven awards for table tennis in the South West area amounting to over £20,000 which reflected well on the work of former ETTA RDO Tim Temple. Mike

Lewis said that the post had been extensively advertised.

Regarding the regional trials, Les Smith (Glo'shire) reported full co-operation from four counties but had not heard from Avon, Dorset or Wiltshire. Ken Satchell (Wiltshire) prompted a wide ranging discussion on development following a discussion at National Council on the same subject. Date of next meeting: 13th August, Venue: Weston-Super-Mare Cricket Club, 2.30pm

ETTU DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

The ETTU is looking to appoint a full-time Development Manager, to work on a self-employed basis, to produce and implement development plans and projects.

The postholder should be dynamic, knowledgeable, experienced, committed, well educated, have presentational and computer skills and ideally speak another European language as well as English. The fee is 2,500 Euros a month. Applications, including CV, should be sent to the ETTU General Secretary, 25 rue des Capucins, L-1313 Luxembourg (Tel: 352 223030, fax: 352 223060) to whom enquiries for further information should be directed.

TRAINING FOR TABLE TENNIS?

Did I hear right? When Howard Jacobson, while promoting the paperback version of 'The Mighty Walzer' on BBC Radio 4's 'Loose Ends' programme, said that he used to 'train' for table tennis, Ned Sherrin exclaimed incredulously something like, "Surely not? Don't you just stand there and wave your arm at the ball?!" Unfortunately, this is the kind of misinformed perception of the sport we have come to expect.

WINNERS IN SCOTLAND! HANNAH YARDY & PETER CLEMINSON

JUNIOR HOME INTERNATIONAL,
Largs, Scotland, 26th/27th April
by Peter Hirst & Gail McCulloch

England again had a swag of good results including the Boys Cadet Team title by beating Wales in the final with some brilliant open flowing table tennis. The Junior Boys went down to Scotland.

Both Junior and Cadet Girls team titles were won with wins over Wales. In the individual event at Junior level, Hannah Yardy proved too strong for the opposition with only Jean O'Sullivan, Ireland, with her combination bat making any real impression. Gemma Chapman made a great debut, with wins in the team event again Hayley Thomas, Wales, and Gillian Edwards, Scotland. In the individuals she won through only to lose in the semi-final to Jean O'Sullivan of Ireland.

The cadet girls saw Joanna Parker

having several battles with Naomi Owen of Wales. Joanna came out on top three times with all matches going the full distance.

Karen Shepherd provided a sound support having to adapt her game to reach the semi-final only to lose 19 in the third to Naomi Owen, Wales.

The Junior Boys saw Peter Cleminson coming back from a very difficult position with some brilliant attacking play to beat Gavin Rungay of Scotland by the narrowest margins of 23-21 in the third. Gavin had been flown back especially to play the event from a successful time in Germany at the European Championships. The only other player in the individuals to take a game from Peter was Gavin Jones of Wales in the semi-final.

Greg Baker without, doubt the most improved player in the country, showed tremendous promise throughout the whole event, giving Gavin Rungay of Scotland the fright of his life in the team event. Just watch this space, this kid has potential.

In the Cadet Boys, Tim Yarnall showed great twiddling skills to upset all until the semi-final when he lost in three to McArthur of Ireland.

Adam Bleakley in the end went down after a great tussle with Stephen Gertsen of Wales. Adam showed great attacking skills with good topspin on the forehand.

England can be proud of this new batch of good juniors coming through the ranks.

PARALYMPIAN WINS MAURICE GOLDSTEIN MERIT AWARD

by Judy Rogers,
National Development Officer for
people with Disabilities

John Jenkins, British Table Tennis Association for people with Disabilities Vice-Chairman, was presented with the Maurice Goldstein Merit Award by the ETTA Deputy Chairman at Stoke Mandeville on 7th May.

The presentation of the award, given for services to table tennis, was aptly made in front of John's colleagues after a BTTAD Executive Committee Meeting. John's distinguished career, including paralympic, international and national successes, spans a number of years. Not only renowned for his sporting prowess, John has worked with great dedication to promote and improve opportunities for disabled people to participate in sport. In addition to his development role with BTTAD, he devotes many hours to support WAMDSAD, a sports club for both able-bodied and disabled, in Maidenhead.

To celebrate the award, the Committee, with Tony and Pat Chatwin, retired to a local hostelry, The Bell, an expedition which brought back many memories for everyone. Well done John, an award richly deserved.

NBC OLYMPIC WEBSITE

The NBC Olympic website <http://www.NBCOlympics.com> is quite impressive, having items such as reports from the European Championships, ITTF rule changes, Liu Guoliang being cleared of taking drugs after testing positive for higher than allowed levels of epitestosterone, Olympics trials (particularly from an American point of view), the Olympic table tennis schedule and a short table tennis glossary. You can give your e-mail address to be updated with table tennis news. If you register (no doubt at a cost) you can receive magazines. Worth a visit.

40mm BALL

Because so many enquiries have been made to the ETTA office, the following information is repeated here:

The advice of the ITTF received when they agreed the 40mm ball (weight 2.7g) at their BGM was that sufficient stocks would be available for next season. They will be issuing a data sheet on it soon.

So far they have approved two balls - Double Happiness and Nittaku - with several others (most of the well known brands) in the pipeline. For the latest information on this, contact Ms Lilamanu de Soysa, ITTF Technical Office, Lausanne (fax: +41 21 3407099, email: itff@worldcom.ch) or Dr. Joachim Kuhn, ITTF Technical Committee (fax: +49 931 884166), or check on the ITTF website (www.ittf.com).

Whilst not definite, the strong indications are that the ETTA AGM on 1st July will support the motion that the ETTA Approved Laws of Table Tennis require the ball to be 40mm in diameter (as opposed to 38mm ball previously) with immediate effect for all ETTA competitions except summer competitions, then in operation which will be allowed to complete their programmes with the old ball. Assuming this happens, the message is: prepare for the 40mm ball!

Incidentally, under comparison in dimensions of the 40mm and the 38mm ball, there was a typing error in the April TTN Extra. The 40mm ball is 5.3% bigger in diameter, 10.8% (not 40.8%) in surface area and 16.6% bigger in volume.

It is perhaps worth pointing out the other ITTF rule changes to take place for all competitive play from 1st September 2000.

"A player obstructs the ball if he, or anything he wears or carries, intercepts it when it is moving towards the playing surface and has not passed beyond his end line, not having touched his court since last being struck by his opponent" (the new wording is in bold) (Colin Clemett, Chairman, ITTF Rules Committee).

ETTA Junior/Cadet Masters Cippenham Club, Slough, 25th/26th March

Top placings, final groups:

Junior Girls: 1. Katy Parker (La) (W11, L0); 2. Georgina Walker (Ng) (W10, L1); 3. Natalie Bawden (E) (W9, L2); 4. Louise Durrant (Ng) (W8, L3)

Junior Boys: 1. Andrew Rushton (La) (W11, L0); 2. Chris Jamieson (E) (W9, L2); 3. Dale Barham (Ca) (W9, L2); 4. Michael Chan (Sy) (W8, L3)

Cadet Girls: 1. Georgina Walker (Ng) (W11, L0); 2. Kate Steward (So) (W10, L1); 3. Karen Shepherd (Cl) (W9, L2); 4. Joanna Parker (Sy) (W8, L3)

Cadet Boys: 1. Greg Baker (Wa) (W10, L1); 2. Peter Cleminson (E) (W9, L2); 3. Daniel Horner (Ch) (W9, L2); 4. Bryn Drinkhall (Cv) (W8, L3);

ITTF Membership

The membership of the International Table Tennis Federation is currently 186 national associations.

LOTTERY GRANT COMES TO THE RESCUE OF "SPINNERS" TABLE TENNIS CLUB

by Dave Rennison, Hon. Sec.
"Spinners" TTC

The Wirral Table Tennis League headquarters at Arrow Park has been transformed from an adequate venue into an excellent playing centre. Spinners TT Club, who play at Arrow park, applied for a grant from the 'Millennium Awards For All' within the Lottery commission to have 'Taraflex' specialist flooring fitted.

Mike Ashton, a player with the League club 'Phoenix', through his contacts, was able to get around 156 square metres of Taraflex flooring which had been used for an international tt tournament in Manchester, but unfortunately, neither 'Phonenix' nor 'Spinners' club could raise enough money to have professional fitters lay the material.

'Spinners', who run five teams in the Wirral League, are financed with nominal match fees instead of a lump sum annual subscription working on a £1.50 match fee, no play, no play regime and they couldn't raise enough funds to meet the estimates for the job, the best of which was £910.

Club Secretary Dave Rennison applied for a grant application pack and outlined the club's 'open to anyone' policy with table tennis in a friendly but competitive atmosphere, access to coaching and encouraging youngsters. Dave's application, "thankfully" he says, was ultimately successful to the delight of all

the people who play at Arrow Park.

The flooring, which took four days to fit, looks magnificent and is a wonderful playing surface.

If we hadn't got the 'Taraflex' flooring grants, it would have cost approximately £4,500 to buy and but for the Lottery grant of £910, we'd have been sitting on flooring worth five times the fitting cost.



County Veterans Premier Division

A KENT PERSPECTIVE

Ron Langheim's second weekend report including all the results appeared in the April TTN. However, Mark Romano of the winning side, Kent, also wrote an article. We publish here some of his thoughts on participating.

Having won all their matches in the first weekend, Kent felt well satisfied with themselves. However:

"John's (Burleton) announcement in the car that Anne, his wife, was pregnant and due the week before the next weekend put a bit of a dampener on any potential ambitions we may have had. Anne duly gave birth on 14th February, to a boy, and was still in hospital on the 18th so John reluctantly pulled out".

Despite this, Kent (Romano, Henry Buist, Ian Girdler (for Burleton) and Di Pearce) ended the second weekend on top, although losing to Leicestershire. Mark is full of praise for Henry Buist.

"At 65, the guy is a marvel. I consider that I have spent two weekends this season playing with a legend in his own lifetime. It was on honour to play with Henry and we were all especially pleased for him that we were able to win this championship. I would have put "in his twilight years" but old twinkle toes looks like he will be around for a while yet."

His thoughts taken from the weekend?

1. Don't be taken in by the bandages, or 'I'm a pensioner and I'm here for the social!'

2. They can all drink so be careful who you mix with!

3. Need to be fitter - they play rallies all the time - most unusual!"

4. Need to be fitter - they play rallies all the time - most unusual!"

JUNIOR UMPIRE AWARDS

Since inception the following young people aged between 9 and 16, have successfully completed the Junior Umpire test:

North West

Craig Bennett
Mark Bevan
John Billinge
Patrick Cooke
Sean Cookson
Matthew Cullenn
Stephen Dean
Aaron De-Pablo
James Durbin
Matthew Fairhurst
Wayne Fellows
Karl Fenney
Neil Fisher
Stuart Gaffney
David Godwin
Mark Griffiths
Daniel Griffiths
Chris Hartley
Andrew Hodgson
Alexander Holdon
Robert Hughes
Karl Ince
Chris Jackson
John Kilgannon
Kevin Langton
Sean Loftus
Graham Lyons
Jonathan Mark
Michael McCann
Liam McGovern
James Mellor
Kevin Morton
Sean Naylor
Simon Noone
Paul O'Grady
Andrew O'Neill
Tony Philnill
David Randall
Craig Rogers
Keiron Smith
Michael Smith
Annabell
Sorrentino
Robert Stevens
Michael Tague
Gerard Taylor

Sean Yates

Greater London

Marc Armstrong
Matt Connell
Nick Donoghue
David Fitzgerald
Guney Gok
Ali Hemmari
Robert Pennock
Michael Persaud
Devin Shah
Rishi Shah
James Smith
Soheil Tavahlew
Sagar Thakrar
Matthew Thomas

West Midlands

Daniel Bracknall
Matthew Cerfontyne
Steven Corabella
Williams Cull
Jennifer Easley
Jane Easley
Joe Gregory
Matthew Hepwood
Jasvir Johal
Imtiaz Khalfe
Oliver Mauldridge
Sandeep Patel
Kate Pritchard
Kelly Stokes
Jonathan Vickers

East Midlands

Joe Allen-Cripps
Daniel Brown
David Cogan
Keith Lucas
Sam Popplestone
Tobias HJ Rooney
Lauren EM Turner
Thomas GJA Ulyyott
William JSH Ulyyott
Andrew Young

Southern

Sylvana Bielec
Jenny Hansell
Catherine Hayes
Caroline Linz
Jhaapjeet Panesar
Prabdeep Panesar

South West

Gavin Brown
Oliver Gibbs

South East

Brett Avery
Victoria Barrett
Daniel Bristow
Chris Brown
Matthew Buckwell
Christopher Burke
Rachel Burrows
Adam Burrows
James Burrows
Leon Collins
Joe Costin
Adam Daley
Emma Dawe
David Frow
Kevin Haklar
Tom Herman
Ruth Herman
Daniel King
Aaron Osment
Kirsty Peters
David Rayment
Shaun Robertson
Jessica Trimwell
Sarah Wickenden
Robert Worrall

TOURNAMENT RESULTS FROM CIPPENHAM

**Cippenham Junior 3 Star Open
Championships (02.01.00)**

U17BS: Warren Brooks (Bu) bt Tim Holtham (Mi) 20,15; U17GS: Gemma Chapman (Bu) bt Lisa Calcutt (Bk) 18, 14, 19; U17BSCon: Ben Cooper (Do) bt Bradley Evans (Bu) 14, 18, 15; U17GSCon: Samantha Simpson (Sx) bt Emma Etheridge (K) 18, 15.

**Cippenham Veterans 2 Star Open
Championships 16.01.00**

VMS: Ian Girdler (K) bt Tom Carr (He) 8, 13; VWS: Shirley Carroll (E) bt Jackie Thomas (Bk) 18, 11; VMSCon: Malcolm Stennett (Ca) bt Geoff Grange (Mi) 11, 21; VWSCon: Flavia Wade (Mi) bt Georgia Veneer (Bk) 6, 21.

**Cippenham 2 Star Open Championships
(Grand Prix) (23.01.00)**

MS: JeromeJonah (Sy) bt Chris Beckley (Sy) 15, 12; WS: Gemma Chapman (Bu) bt Amanda Alabaster (K) 9, 10' MSCon: Davdi Wakefield (K) bt Winston Wong (Mi) 12, 18; WSCon: Sarah Hudson (Bd) bt Carol Clarke (Sk) 14, 15.

**Slough Closed Championships
(19/20.02.00)**

MS: Mike Rhodes (Cippenham) bt Derek Wood (Police) 21, -11, 12; LS: Gemma Chapman (Cippenham) bt S. Hayes (Cippenham) 14, 14; MD: Andrew Misseldine/Kevin Rowe (Cippenham) bt Barry Weatherall/Derek Wood (Police) 14, 13; LD: Gemma Chapman/Sue Hayes (Cippenham) bt Julie Barlow (WAMDSAD) /Judy Barlow (Cippenham) 17, 14; XD: John Barclay (Chalfont)/Gemma Chapman bt Chris Dickens (Burnham)/Wendy Barlow (Cippenham) 11, 20; VS: Derek Wood bt Mike Rhodes (Cippenham) 19, 21; U17BS: Thomas Mitchell (Cippenham) bt Bradley Evans (Cippenham) 18, -13, 19; U17GS: Gemma Chapman bt Helen Smith (Cippenham) 15, 17; U14S: Gemm Chapman bt Bradley Evans -23, 14, 17; U12S: Bradley Evans bt David Hayes (Cippenham) 14, 18; U17JD: Gemma Chapman/Thomas Mitchell (Cippenham) bt Bradley Evans/David Hayes (Cippenham) 20, 19.

Forthcoming events at Cippenham:

May 14th:

Cippenham Under 12 2 Star Open (Ken Phillips - 01628 636664)

June 10/11th:

Cippenham Young Players' Summer Festival (a 1 Star Open including events for U13, U11, U10, U9 and U8) (Ken Phillips - 01628 636664)

July 8th:

Cippenham Veterans' Summer 2 Star Open (Graham Trimming - 01628 636978)

**ETTA
PRESS OFFICER OF THE YEAR
AWARD**

Supported by RANDOM HOUSE

Further to the notice in the April Table Tennis News, I am delighted to advise you that Random House, whose imprints Jonathan Cape and Vintage publish the hardback and paperback versions of Howard Jacobson's 'The Mighty Walzer', will be providing books up to the value of £500 plus a valuable special prize to the winner of the ETTA's new Press Officer of the Year Award.

Clubs, Leagues and Counties or the Press Officers themselves are invited to send nominations, together with a portfolio of four or five pieces of their best work (cassettes for radio work) for the season 1999-2000, to Ken Muhr, ETTA Information Officer, 3rd Floor, Queensbury House, Havelock Road, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 1HF, by Wednesday 31st May 2000. Please give the names and contact details of nominees, stating who they act as Press Officers for and which media (details please) they supply copy/reports for.

A panel, consisting of Brian Halliday (ETTA Vice-Chairman (Public Relations)), Kathleen Smith (Random House Marketing Manager), Howard Jacobson (novelist), John Woodford (Daily Telegraph journalist) and myself, will judge the submissions.

The overall purpose of the award is to give recognition to our volunteers who work with the media, acknowledging the importance of what they do in publicising our sport. Please advise the appropriate people in your organisation of the award.

Could I please remind contributors to limit their copy, including League and County Closed reports, to 500 words, to be submitted BY THE 15TH of the month but one prior to the month prior to month of publication. Note that form PR.1.C was intended for open tournaments only. All correspondence to Ken Muhr at the addresses below.

**English Table Tennis Association
3rd Floor, Queensbury House
Havelock Road, Hastings,
East Sussex, TN34 1HF
Tel: 01424 722525
Fax: 01424 422103
email: etta:talk21.com/
admin@ettahq.freemove.co.uk
website: www.etta.c.uk**

BOOK REVIEW

Table Tennis from A to Z
by Dimosthenis E. Messinis

Reviewed by Ken Muhr with a
contribution from Robert Worrall

There are so few coaching/technical books on table tennis that any new ones are welcome. I also want to fair. This is a well-produced, reasonably priced, fairly comprehensive and wide-ranging book, and despite the author being Greek, is written in good English. Dimosthenis Messinis, now a PE teacher, would appear to be academically well qualified, with a first degree in Physical Education & Sports Science (with a major in table tennis), a Ph.D in the Biology of Exercise and further qualifications. His table tennis credentials are as a former player just short of national team standard and as the current Scientific Director of the Greek TTA and Physical Trainer for the national teams.

His background might explain some of the strengths and weaknesses of the book. Is table tennis coaching an art or a science? In that I believe that coaching should express some of the feeling, passion and excitement for the game, I (subjectively) would tend more towards the former. From his writing, Dimosthenis is definitely of the latter school. The book is logically set out in 13 chapters (covering equipment, technique, footwork, doubles, tactics etc), more like a college textbook than an alphabetically arranged encyclopedia, and includes quite detailed chapters on sports science subjects such as Training Planning, Physical Preparation,

Ergometric & Technical Evaluation, Psychological Preparation and Nutrition, backed up by appropriate references.

His descriptions of technique are objective and clinical - rarely disturbed by an obviously subjective opinion - and although I would not disagree with most of what he says, I do have a problem with the rigidity of quoting precisely measured angles (for bat, leg or arm etc.) or distances (from table or bat from body, etc) even if the author prefaces this with 'about'. Players come in all sorts of shapes, sizes and styles and may play strokes differently according to the tactic. I also remember taking from Gallwey's 'Inner Game of Tennis' (1974) the danger of overloading players with too much information and analysis, and the need to concentrate on one sharply focused point of activity at a time. Some technical description and analysis in a book is of course necessary but it should be kept simple and allow flexibility. As a coach I am often guilty of saying too much!

More critically, I don't think that Dimosthenis says enough on 'why' and 'when' and outcome - the point or purpose or tactic - of playing particular strokes as opposed to the 'what' and 'how'. There should be more on 'reading' the game and 'reading' the opponent. The photographic sequences from Butterfly are really quite good, but may be too technical for non-experts. Fewer but larger pictures might have been better, depending on the target audience. Profiles on top players/personalities could have been an interesting extra.

The overall question is, "just who is this book aimed at?" For the already informed student or coach of the game, or as an

educational text in schools, colleges and libraries, it could be quite valuable to go alongside other books, and the table tennis specific sports science topics are frequently neglected at this level. Unfortunately, the novice could find it too dry and heavy going, while I fear it will do little to fire the passion or imagination of the fanatic.

I add below the comments of Robert Worrall, a table tennis playing school student who did two weeks work experience at the ETTA:

"The book is set out with 13 chapters ranging from 'History' to 'Nutrition'. The layout of each chapter consists of side headings and brief definition and description (mainly factual, little if any opinion). The few pictures shown are in black and white, have little excitement and are quite unappealing to possible fans or players thinking of taking up the game. The reading soon becomes tedious, hard-going; a lot like reading a dictionary.

The author has compiled this book from a lot of inside knowledge and interesting information; it is a shame therefore that he could not have shared some of his experiences and opinions, instead of making a mere factual book. Another problem the author gave himself was trying to please everybody. I think he should have targeted a particular type of enthusiast, e.g. a higher level table tennis player."

You would not lose too much - it is not a bad book - judging 'Table Tennis From A to Z' for yourself. It is available for purchase directly from Dimosthenis Messinis's website (<http://www.tabletennis.gr>) by credit card (pay in \$US) or by money order, postal order or personal cheque (£13 inc. postage).

'THE WAY FORWARD'

ETTA TEACHING AND TRAINING CONFERENCE
1/2/3 SEPTEMBER 2000
LILLESBALL NATIONAL SPORTS CENTRE

Keynote Opening Address with workshops
Adham Sharara - President of the International Table Tennis Federation

Presentation Dinner with volunteer of the year awards:
Coach of the Year Awards
Table Tennis Development Officer Award
Press Award (including launch of Premier Club of the Year Award)

Workshops for:

Coaches - A practical day with Soren Ahlen and some of the team from the World Class Performance Programme
Equity & Disability - 2 one-day workshops with practical and fun elements - boost your confidence as a coach - play with one of our paralympians
Premier Club Development - making your club tick (case studies from successful clubs to include planning your programme, income generation, forming links with schools, recruiting and managing volunteers, promotion and communication)

Price £120 Full Board all sessions
£50 Day Rate (includes morning coffee-lunch-afternoon tea)
10% discount for advance booking before 30th June from:

Mrs Jill Parker,
The Spinney, 50 Egerton Road, Ashton, Preston, Lancs PR2 1AL (Tel: 01772 461325, fax: 01772 461326)
Email: jparkeretta@cablenet.co.uk

THE BIG INTERVIEW WITH MICHEL GADAL

KEN MUHR: *Now that you have been here for some time, what are your feelings about English table tennis? You will be aware that another Frenchman, Patrice Hagelauer, the new LTA Director of Coaching, has criticised English tennis clubs for being 20 years behind Europe, for not encouraging juniors enough, and for coaches criticising each other. Do you think it is the same in table tennis?*

MICHEL GADAL: England has a very strong table tennis history. Table tennis is still part of the tradition, part of the life of England, so all the conditions are there to be successful in the future. There is also a lot of conservatism, a lot of difficulty accepting change to adapt to the new competition. That is something we have to address to make sure we can use our strengths to become a better nation in table tennis. I think that a lot of people think what it was like in the past and avoid trying to see the reality of the sport today: that the level of English table tennis is not as good as it was for whatever reason - we can investigate the reasons, we need to know, but this is not to say that is your fault, anybody's fault, just a fact. You have to start from this picture, this fact, to build something new, not try to say who was good, who was bad because there is no point. The point is that our players are not as good as the world level and we can make changes for our players to become better.

If I compare things to what Patrice Hagelauer said, I have mainly to agree with him. I don't know if we are 20 years behind France, Sweden and other countries, but for sure we are behind. He is quite right. Maybe it is not the same situation in table tennis as in tennis, but he told me that in tennis he was amazed because in the clubs instead of trying to attract players they try to reject the young players, which is amazing! But if you look at the table tennis situation we do not have too many full time clubs where people can practice and train. I think the ETTA is trying to expand the number of facilities and change the structure of the sport. One of the weaknesses of clubs is the lack of coaches and the lack of numbers to practice together to improve: we don't have too many players and young players competing, and maybe the most important table tennis activity in England is not in young players: (people in England consider that) the most important activity is not in teaching, but in playing. A lot of

people are very motivated to play, but very few people are motivated to teach table tennis. They also mix up what is teaching: in England people sometimes think that teaching is playing with somebody. This is not the case. You need to have a group to play with, a coach to coach each individual within the group. That is something we have to change in England. People believe that a good coach is a good player. Having a good coaching session is not playing with somebody. The coach is there to teach, is there to use the strength of the players, the strength and variety of styles and attitude and so on to make each individual better. One to one is just one part of coaching and maybe in England people are thinking too much that it is the key in sport.

There are not enough players practising for the high level, and not enough young players so there is not enough competition. So people are becoming 'very good' in England very soon but when you compare them with the rest of Europe they are not good at all. And we don't match with the standards of other countries. When you read the report of Mark Bawden (ETTA psychologist) in China you will see that over there,

MICHEL GADAL, ETTA Director of Performance



INTERVIEW WITH MICHEL GADAL, DIRECTOR OF PERFORMANCE AT NATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE, HOLME PIERREPONT, NOTTINGHAM

The following interview, with questions by ETTA Information Officer Ken Muhr and ETTA Vice Chairman for Public Relations Brian Halliday, and with open and frank responses from Michel Gadal, took place at the Centre in March.

players are practising over 30 hours a week and they are 12 years old. All we can do is try something around the same number of hours - it is impossible! There are talented players in England for sure, but they need to practice hard at least two hours a day to have a chance.

KM: *Can you tell me a little about the National Training Centre and how you think it is going?*

MG: The Centre is a key element for the ETTA. If we really want to be successful and have a top player at the world level, the Centre today is indispensable. We cannot afford not to have such a centre. I know a lot of people are saying it is not good. In France people first criticised INSET, then after 2-3 years when they saw it was starting to be successful, they wanted to come. It is not possible to do without centralised training. It could be with clubs, it could be with regional centres but at the moment we need to give our attention to one national centre. We started last year with the Centre and when we started

I gave myself 3 years to build a very good system and I think we are right on track. If you compare March 2000 to March 1999, there is a big improvement in the quality of practice, in the organisation, and in the quality in relation with school and education - the players should be able to achieve the same or better academic results than if they had stayed at home - so I think the Centre is a good example of what can be done. I think it could be a good example with regards to future club orientation. I have to say I am pleased with how the Centre is working. I know there is a lot of frustration but there are a lot of people quite happy also, supportive of what we are doing. I accept there is criticism but what I say to people is, 'Remember the Centre is a tool for the high level. Nobody is forced to come here. Nobody is bribed to come here. I think you come because you want to become a good player. If you don't want to become a good player, do whatever you want'. We are there to help people who want to make it. That is maybe not pleasing everybody but I think there is no other way. Maybe in 15 years, 20 years time it will be different but as of today we must use the Centre as the main tool for the higher level.

So the table tennis part of the Centre is going quite well. I don't have any frustrations. It is no secret that there have been difficulties with the working co-operation with the Sport England organisation. With so much money involved they, naturally enough, feel they must exercise a rigid control. I can understand this but they should, in their turn, appreciate that I am the guy who is paid for his expertise in producing top quality players. I understand that these problems are not particular to table tennis, and in fact other performance directors have met with similar problems. We are very much willing to work, we are very much motivated to work but we need to have a chance to work and the time to do it.

I think this is a very difficult time for the English Table Tennis Association because most of the money from Sport England has been switched from exchequer funding to Lottery money and this Lottery money is just focussed on a very few number of players. I don't decide how many players we have in our programme. They decide and those monies are ring fenced. A lot of money for a very few players: I understand that it is very difficult for the governing body to deal with this with the members, because the members don't understand how it is

THE BIG INTERVIEW WITH MICHEL GADAL

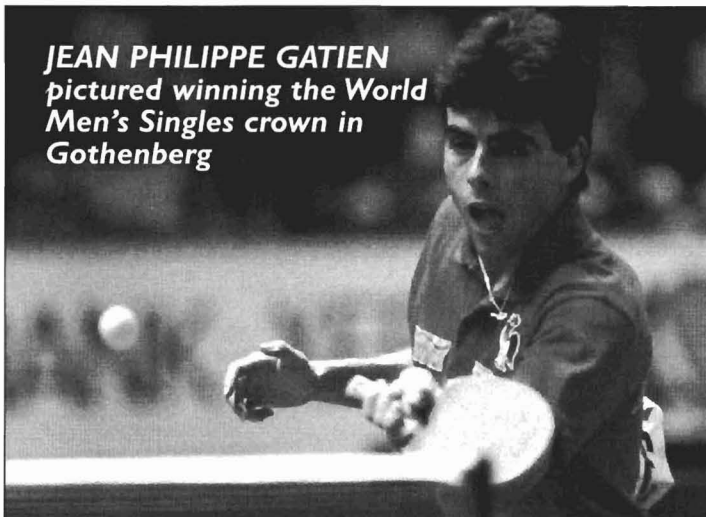
possible for all this money to go to the Nottingham Centre with nothing much left for the rest. The way the Lottery was set up was maybe not the best thing for the association and the last 2 years have been quite negative for public relations between Sport England and the governing bodies and between the governing bodies and their clientele, but I hope that now we are going to have a better picture of the future and a better future.

KM: I accept that you are not to blame, but there has been some criticism over some top players not getting their subsistence grants. Do you want to make any comments on this?

MG: I think there has been a lot of misunderstanding, and misinformation given to the players. I do understand the players' point of view - if two years ago they were told that they were to receive £1,000 and sometimes say £10,000 subsistence grants and then after 6 months they are told this is to be reduced by 50%, and then after a further 6 more months this will reduce to nothing, they get frustrated. That I can understand, but once again I have to explain that it is not the Performance Director's decision, and that it is the criteria is for all sports. Sport England have said that the 'A' category is for players in the top 20 in the world, and I agree that money should be given to top athletes according to results. But the top representatives of our Association and myself argued our case very strongly that we think that the criteria of being in the top 20 in the world is unfair on our sport. Table tennis has a different order of achievement than for some other sports. But I don't make the rules. The people making the decisions are the people giving the money. I am charged to use the money following their direction.

So I understand very well the situation of players. I try to help them. But what I am telling them is that if they want to make money, then they have to be very good, and to be very good, first they have to work very hard. There is no point in saying, 'I am the best in England. I have to be paid,' when the criteria is to be the best in the world. If the criteria was to be the best in England, there would be no complaint, but it is not the case. I think the main part of the money should come for being at a very high level as it is now. If you are world champion you should get more money than if you are No.50 or No.100. But I agree with them when they say, 'if you are the best in your country you should receive

JEAN PHILIPPE GATIEN
pictured winning the World
Men's Singles crown in
Gothenberg



something, whatever your ranking is at world level'. I think it is unfair to say to somebody, 'you are number 1 in your country but you are not good enough so we will give you nothing'. I cannot decide how much money but you should have something, but I still think that the money should always be related to results.

I was very surprised when I came here to see that English players were paid to play for England. This is the first time that I have seen this. No other country is doing that. And here it looks like players think it is normal! I think that players should be paid when they win and they should be proud to play for England. And I will always fight for that. I am always pleased to see the player making money, but I think it is like any job. If you want to consider playing like a job, you are paid if you are good. If you are Bill Gates you make much more money in computers than if you are a student. I find it very normal that Waldner is making much more money than the other players because he is - was - the no.1. So I think the philosophy of the players here should change. Here at the national training centre, everything is free, food, accommodation, coaches, travel expenses, so they receive a lot of money - though it is not in their wallet - to learn something to become good. If they become good they will receive a lot of money in their wallet. Sometimes in England they would like the money before achieving. That is not the way it is working anywhere in the world.

KM: What are your hopes and plans for the future?

MG: If you want to be realistic you have to plan long term. Our hopes are long term but you have to have targets in the short term. Our long term plan is 8 to 10 years and the 2008 Olympic Games should be a main target, but to reach this target we need to see an improvement at

the European level, and in the youth category as soon as possible. So in the very short term, let's say July 2000 - not very long - I hope to see at least one medal for the English team in the European Youth Championships, the most important result today. It would be very symbolic. Symbolic, but a very good boost for the programme and I think it is possible. But I would like to see in 4 years, the year 2004, England able to compete in European Youth Championships and able to win medals in each category. That is a target. One (youth) medal this year is possible, next year will be very difficult with the change of category, but after that, 2002, 2003, we should see a medal every year, arriving at 2004 when we should have a chance to win a medal in every category.

With the seniors, to be objective and realistic, we should forecast first for the Commonwealth Games 2002, because I think it is very important for us. The Commonwealth Games are part of the English culture and it is also the first time that table tennis is included and the Games are in Manchester, so everything is there to make good results. I think we have a chance to do well so we should focus on this and I would like to see not only one medal, but a reasonable number of medals. That should be our main target and I hope that the young players should be able to compete at this level and achieve something too.

So that is the situation today. For sure we are going to struggle for a few years with the senior team, more with the women than with the men but we have to accept it. We get what we deserve maybe, because if the investment has not been done, for whatever reason, we have to pay the price for that non-investment. I think that in England there were a lot of good players, but at one point something has been missed. And I think the reasons are absolutely

acceptable - I am not blaming anybody that something is missing. We have to be patient, we have to be able to work together to make it better for the future. I would like people to understand that it is not a contest between World Class Performance and the staff working with me, and the other people in the English Table Tennis Association. We want to work together and for sure we have the tools here, we have the knowledge of very high level coaches, but we want to work together. I will not stay forever in England. I don't see Soren Ahlen (head coach) staying forever in England. We are here for a short period of time, even if it is 5 or 6 years. What we would like is to help the association and then leave it to English people to do it by themselves.

We are struggling and people think sometimes that it is good to compete against me. There is no point (in some coaches) always fighting against the decisions we are making. They should work with us to give the best chance for the players. When I arrived here they thought that they knew table tennis better than me. But there is no competition against me. I don't say this because I know better than anyone else but because there is no point in it. Sometimes there is a little misunderstanding and for sure I am not God. But I don't compete against anybody here. I just work with people and will have to work with more people, but I just want to do my job. If people want to be performance director just apply for the job. But if I am the person in charge, I am the person in charge. The 'game' is not for the coaches to show that they are better than Soren and Michel Gadai. It is not a case of 'my player will win tomorrow' or 'Soren's player will win tomorrow', we are trying to build something together that will win tomorrow. We should work together for the good of the player, not for the good of the coach. Soren has already coached a world champion, I have already coached a world champion, so it would be good to be successful (in England) but it won't change our lives. As I said to Management Committee and National Council, I want to do this with people but if English table tennis doesn't want to do it, it is no problem because that is your table tennis. That is very important to understand. I am not there to try to fight people. I am there to help people to succeed.

Brian Halliday: What was your time scale in France to produce the types of players that were produced? Was it a similar time scale?

MG: Yes. I took the young team, including Gatien, Mamurek, Mommessin, Chila when they were 12-13 and they achieved their first very good results when they were 18-19 so it takes 5-6 years from cadets. At this stage (in England) we are at almost the same level. The only difference is that in France I had more players at the beginning. The group we started with was a bit bigger which makes it easier. But here I think we surely have the possibility, and I think we have some players who have the talent to become as good as the French but it is more difficult to put all the conditions together. I don't want to say any names - people will recognise who I mean - but we have one or two players who have a very good chance. But they need to put all the conditions together to become very good.

Brian Halliday: *What qualities do you think that Gatien had to become world champion? What qualities perhaps do our people lack compared to him, bearing in mind that when he was younger, he was defeated by some quite run-of-the-mill English players?*

MG: I think the main qualities: hard worker and learning from mistakes. That is a key issue for the sport. You can improve. If you don't work very, very hard, if you are not courageous, you have no chance. You never can become a champion if you don't have the heart. You ask me what is the difference, what is lacking from some English players. I think that people here - table tennis players - are very good at trying to find excuses. They explain to you before the match, why they are going to lose. They are good at finding the excuse very early, when they are tired. They say, 'I am tired, I am injured, I have to stop.' But sport is very difficult. You have to go further than your pain to become very good. And I think that is lacking in English table tennis players. They lack this courage to go a little bit further, this accepting losing but learning from the loss so as next time not to lose again. And the example you gave of Gatien losing to an English player, maybe he lost just once, not twice. If he lost twice then not 3 times because he always improved from his mistakes, which is very important for any sport person. These are key qualities. Maybe the last one is that he was very open to new techniques, changes, accepting that if you have a long term goal what you are doing is not always right and you have to change to improve. Sometimes you win, but if you want to win at the

next level you have to add something and accept that you might have to go down a bit before going up a level later.

KEN MUHR: *One final question from me. One of the criticisms has been the remoteness of the centre from the rest, and that the staff and the players at Nottingham don't mix or get outside enough. How would you respond to that?*

MG: I think it is a fair criticism but I think it is also fair to say that the situation in the organisation today makes it quite difficult. I will answer step by step. One, normally you need to have press/public relations people but if you don't have a lot of staff it is almost impossible to do the public relations. I would love to supply daily information on the training centre. I was planning to have a newsletter every month or every two months, I was planning to have more meetings of parents and players. But my staff is reduced to the minimum of people, so today I am doing everything but coaching, which is very strange! I am doing administration support, finance, booking tickets, driving cars - I am sometimes a one-man show so it is very difficult to have a public relations service in this way. If I had more staff I would do it without any doubt.

But I would like to say to people, communication is a two way game so you don't always have to wait for me to come to see you. You can come to see me, write to me, you can 'phone me, and I usually answer the 'phone and answer the letters. You can come here. And when you meet me - I will be at the masters the next weekend and the cadet national championships the following weekend - you can ask me a question. What I find very strange sometimes is that people ask questions to people who are not in charge. If you have a question regarding the centre, why don't you ask me?! Why do you ask somebody else who is going to give you 50% accurate information, and you give this information to the next one and it is going to be only 35% accurate? At the end of the day nothing will be right! So just ask the question. We can go through the newsletter, we can go through the website, whatever, I am willing to do it, but we must establish this two-way communication. It is very important.

Then we are remote because we are in one place in England, but not very remote actually because it is in the middle of England. For sure, the players are practising a lot: each day they leave the centre for school at 8am and come back at 3pm through

to 7.30pm. We try to help the players to build their own schedules and we don't push them to play too many competitions. I know the ETTA is very much aware of that and I will have a meeting soon with the Calendar Working Group and with the Competition Group to try to set up a schedule of competition in England plus also a way of organising competition to fit better. There are many things done but not always in a proper way or always at the right time. I think nothing is really wrong, but is just a question of everyone meeting together to discuss it, to flag it up and start again. Competition has grown a lot in the last 5 years and you always add one competition, but at the end of the day nobody remembers the logic or rationale behind the competition, so I think it has to be discussed and put to a new start. I would say there is no rush, if we don't do it in September 2000 then do it in 2001, but make sure first we understand what we want. And when we understand that each competition has to serve different

clientele - I think we could have the competitions on the same day for the veterans and the under 12s - we have to organise this properly so that everybody can find his own way to have competition and can prepare for this competition.

So this link between World Class Performance and the rest of the ETTA is more than important, it is vital for the association, and it is not World Class Performance against the others but World Class Performance with the others. I would like to see more people from World Class Performance involved with the committees of the ETTA, involved in the very heart of the ETTA because we have got to put a little bit of 'World Class' everywhere and then I think every department will understand better what we are doing, we will understand better what the ETTA is doing and we will stand a better chance of being world class in the long term. But we have to do it together, which is very important.



ENGLISH TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION
Employment Opportunity

Regional Development Officer - Eastern



This ETTA appointment, supported by Sport England, offers an exciting challenge for people interested in table tennis with the necessary experience, commitment and enthusiasm to drive the development of the sport in the region.

- Fixed term contract until March 2002.
- Office based initially at Braintree.
- Salary - £16,000 p.a. (incremental increase after satisfactory performance and length of service plus travel expenses and car allowance).
- 48 hours (average) per week.

Job Summary

To initiate and co-ordinate table tennis development in the region in accordance with ETTA national policy and priorities.

Ideal candidates will:

- have a recognised involvement and knowledge of table tennis
- have a BTEC higher level or NVQ equivalent in a subject area relevant to requirements of a sports related position
- have practical experience of sports development issues
- have effective communication skills
- be willing to work long and some unsociable hours
- hold a current full British driving licence and have full use of a suitable vehicle
- the ambition to help table tennis progress
- live in the region or within a maximum 50 mile radius of the office base.

For job background, person specification, job description and an application form, contact:

Diccon Gray (Director of Development)
The English Table Tennis Association, Queensbury House,
Havelock Road, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 1HF.
Tel: 01424 722525 Fax: 01424 422103

Closing date: 30th June 2000

The English Table Tennis Association is working towards equal opportunities

FRYDEK MISTEK WIN PREMIER...

THE Barham brothers, Dale and Lee, together with Craig Bryant playing under the name of Frydek Mistek emerged as Boys Premier division winners when this season's Junior British League was completed at Stoke on Trent's Fenton Manor Sports Arena, writes Brian Lamerton.

Although winning only two of their five matches at Fenton the first half lead built up when Louis Rosenthal was the third player together with all the other teams taking points from each other was sufficient to see Frydek through. The champions were defeated 4-2 by Edmonton (Daniel Homer 2.) and also dropped points in draws with Team Peniel and Challoner Guildford. (Michael Chan 2.). In holding Frydek to a draw twice Challoner thought that they had done enough to take second spot but missed out by the overall



TOP PICTURE: Winners of the Boys Premier Division, Frydek Mistek, being presented with their trophies by the Mayor and Mayoress of Stoke, Councillor and Mrs. Reg Booth. Picture left to right are Craig Bryant, the Mayor, Dale Barham, the Mayoress and Lee Barham. BOTTOM PICTURE: Winners of the Girls Premier Division, Cippenham. Picture left to right with the Mayor and Mayoress are Emily Deering, Joanna Parker and Gemma Chapman.

result of their two matches with Peniel. Dale Barham retained top individual position although twice beaten, 26-24, 21-19 by Chan and 21-16, 21-15 by Matthew Kenny (Edmonton). Chan and Peniel's Peter Cleminson with nine wins from ten starts each recorded the best second

...WHILST CIPPENHAM TAKE GIRLS PREMIER

half records whilst Cleminson, team mate Chris Jameson and consequently Team Peniel with 9 points from their five matches showed the most improvement. With four draws and six 4-2 results from a total of fifteen matches this was a very closely contested division.

CIPPENHAM RACE INTO LEAD

Cippenham "A" and Glamorgan Girls started level and it was still anybody's championship as the two went into the last match in the Girls Premier division but surprisingly Cippenham raced into a 5 love lead and had the title well won before girls player of the week end Hayley Thomas saved the Welsh from a whitewash. The winners were represented by Joanna

Parker, Emily Dearing and Gemma Chapman with Parker and Dearing winning 9 from 10 as did Blairgowrie's Karen Shepherd .

It was a topsy turvey world in Boys Division 1; had only the second week end counted, Ormesby would have been winners, Scotland second and Glamorgan and Streetley equal third. The two matches lost at Fenton by the ultimate winners, Scotland were the only matches won by opponents Glamorgan and Cippenham! The Scotland squad of Gavin Rumgay, Michael Bruce, Nick Baxter and Mark Lundberg did however complete the double over runners-up Ormesby with Rumgay and Bruce both unbeaten and that was the difference.

Spicer Girls who had beaten B.A.T.T.S. first time round needing only a draw from the return which was the final match to win Girls division 1. started well with Deborah Flint and Rebecca Tong quickly putting them two up but Nichole Todd and Amy Wright pulled the score back to two-all and it was left to Flint to win her second set before Spicer's could breathe easily. Aparna Narendran (Progress London), beaten only by Amy Wright and Deborah Flint who lost to Narendran lead the individual averages in this division.

Boys Team of the week end, Colley Hyundai, dropped only four sets in winning all five matches to take the Boys division 2 title; runners up, Darlington, well beaten, 5-1, in the process. Owen Griffiths and Nathan Thomas were unbeaten and well supported by Mark Daniels and Lee Davies. Zeke Dixon's 9 from 10 helped keep Darlington in second place.

Our Lady of Peace (O.L.O.P.) the only girls team to win all ten matches romped away with Girls division 2. and included a 4-2 win against runners up and team of the week end Team Peniel "B" for Lisa Calcutt, Kelly Craven-Giffiths and Emma

Craven-Giffiths. Calcutt returned a 100% average for both week ends whilst Kelly C-G lost but once to Cippenham's Hannah Stone.

Cippenham "B" and Scotland "B", the only boys team to score a perfect 10 comfortably won Boys divisions 3A and 3B respectively. For Cippenham David Hayes was unbeaten with Bradley Evans and Thomas Mitchell winning seven apiece whilst for Scotland Stewart Matthew and David Atkins were both unbeaten with Glyn Eggar winning six.

Andrew Woodhead of division 3B's Oakbank Bradford was nominated boys player of the week end.

Joanne Hubbard (8 wins), Hazel Clucas (6) and Emma Etheridge (5) kept Byng Hall on the top of Girls division 3 although they were held to draws by Oakbank Bradford, Humberside (who came back from 3 love down) and Arundel (Claire Hodger 2.)

The two Boys divisions 4 which consisted of eight teams each completed their roundrobin by the second session on Day 1 and then split into four mini leagues with Olton West Warwick and North Mundham winning the two promotion places.; West Warwick represented by Purdip Singh, Simon Gleeson and Leigh Bradford and North Mundham by Luke Bridge (unbeaten), Michael Simpson and Neil Brown.

Another new venue, still in its first year of operation, where we were well looked after by a very helpful staff who made us most welcome as did Mr Peter Vigurs, Stoke's Director of Leisure and Cultural services at Saturday's opening ceremony and by The Lord Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor and Mrs. Reg. Booth who presided at Sunday's presentations. Finally a thank you to ALL present for the perfect one minutes silence held as a tribute to the late George Yates who had died a few days previously.



CLOONCORICK is a luxury bungalow offering first class accommodation with en-suite bedroom, in the heart of Leitrim lakeland district. There are a minimum of 20 lakes within 10 km, 5 minutes walk from Village and Bait shop.

Contact: Elizabeth McGlynn, Clooncorick, Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim. Telephone: 00 353 49 - 39783

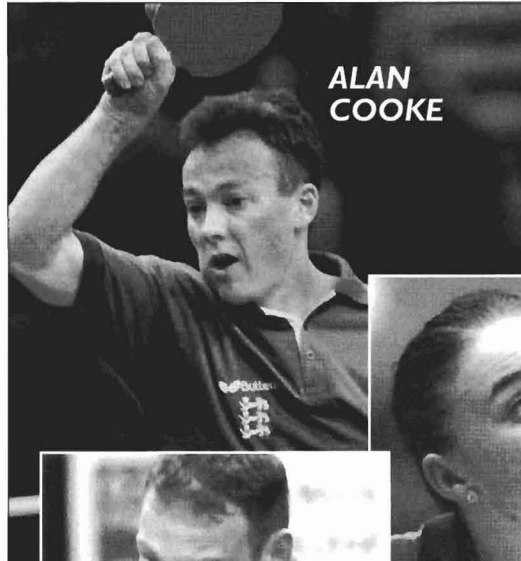
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Boys Premier							
Frydek Mistek	10	6	3	1	43	17	15
Team Peniel A	10	5	3	2	35	25	13
Challoner Guildford A	10	4	5	1	34	26	13
Edmonton A	10	3	4	3	31	29	10
Uxbridge A	10	3	1	6	23	37	7
Irish Boys	10	1	0	9	14	46	2
Boys Division 1							
Scotland A	10	6	2	2	37	23	14
Ormesby	10	6	1	3	34	26	13
Cippenham A	10	4	2	4	30	30	10
Glamorgan Boys	10	3	4	3	29	31	10
York Gardens Progress	10	3	2	5	29	31	8
Streetly T.T.C	10	2	1	7	21	39	5
Boys Division 2							
Colley Hyundai	10	9	1	0	49	11	19
Darlington A	10	7	2	1	46	14	16
Halton	10	2	3	5	26	34	7
The Broadstone Club	10	3	1	6	19	41	7
Bristol	10	2	2	6	22	38	6
Uxbridge B	10	1	3	6	18	42	5
Boys Division 3A							
Cippenham B	10	8	1	1	42	18	17
Mid Cheshire	10	5	2	3	32	28	12
Dunstable Pioneers	10	4	4	2	31	29	12
Edmonton B	10	2	5	3	28	32	9
Byng Hall	10	2	2	6	24	36	6
Team Peniel B	10	1	2	7	23	37	4
Boys Division 3B							
Scotland B	10	10	0	0	48	12	20
Oakbank Bradford	10	6	1	3	33	27	13
B.A.T.T.S.	10	5	1	4	30	30	11
Spicer Boys	10	4	2	4	28	32	10
East Lancashire	10	2	1	7	26	34	5
De Vere Sudbury	10	0	1	9	15	45	1
Boys Division 4A (Top Half)							
Olton West Warwick	6	5	0	1	23	13	10
Team Peniel C	6	3	1	2	16	20	7
Rotherham Scorpions	6	2	1	3	18	18	5
East Point	6	0	2	4	11	25	2
Boys Division 4A (Bottom Half)							
Rejects	6	2	4	0	20	16	8
Challoner Guildford B	6	2	3	1	19	17	7
King's Lynn Super Blades	6	1	3	2	18	18	5
Ashford	6	2	0	4	15	21	4
Boys Division 4B (Top Half)							
North Mundham	6	3	3	0	22	14	9
Darlington B	6	1	4	1	18	18	6
Humberside	6	1	3	2	18	18	5
Chester YMCA	6	0	4	2	14	22	4
Boys Division 4B (Bottom Half)							
Greenleys	4	3	1	0	16	8	7
Lucan Boys	4	2	1	1	15	9	5
Stoke Woodfield	4	0	0	4	5	19	0
Girls Premier							
Cippenham A	10	9	1	0	46	14	19
Glamorgan Girls	10	7	2	1	39	21	16
Grove	10	4	1	5	30	30	9
Addleshaw Booth Blairg.	10	3	2	5	29	31	8
Darlington	10	3	0	7	19	41	6
Irish Girls	10	1	0	9	17	43	2
Girls Division 1							
Spicer Girls	10	6	2	2	38	22	14
B.A.T.T.S.	10	5	4	1	38	22	14
Gautby Girls	10	4	1	5	30	30	9
Club Mid-Cheshire	10	3	3	4	25	35	9
Team Peniel A	10	2	4	4	25	35	8
Progress London	10	2	2	6	24	36	6
Girls Division 2							
O.L.O.P	10	10	0	0	46	14	20
Team Peniel B	10	6	2	2	36	24	14
East Lancashire	10	2	5	3	29	31	9
Scotland	10	3	3	4	30	30	9
Cippenham B	10	2	3	5	27	33	7
Essex Girls	10	0	1	9	12	48	1
Girls Division 3							
Byng Hall	10	6	4	0	40	20	16
Oakbank Bradford	10	5	3	2	36	24	13
Humberside A.T.C.	10	4	4	2	33	27	12
Arundel	10	4	3	3	33	27	11
Spicer Girls B	10	3	2	5	27	33	8
St Ives	10	0	0	10	11	49	0

DAUNTING DERBYSHIRE

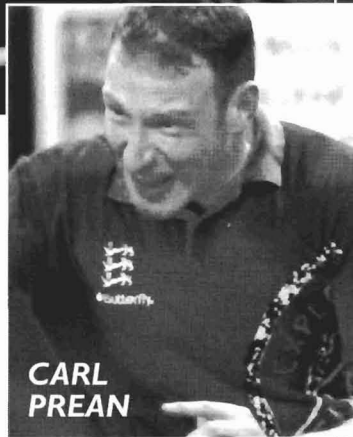
WITH the season drawing to a conclusion the only division where promotion and relegation is still in doubt is Senior division 1B where there is a dispute between Essex and Devonshire concerning matches not played on the scheduled date, writes Stan Clarke.

As the matter is currently in the appeals procedure I must refrain from making any comment at this time, except to say that both promotion and relegation hinge on the decision of the Appeals Board and that what ever the outcome I would much rather see such matters resolved on a match table rather than around a table in a committee meeting, a view that I am sure most people would agree with. The outstanding matches in Division 2B between Worcestershire 2nd and Cornwall 1st and Cornwall 2nd have now been, played, the results being a 9/1 victory for Worcestershire over Cornwall 2 and a 5/5 draw with the Cornwall 1st team, the results having no effect on the final places in the division and Cornwall 2nd finishing in bottom place. Of course by the time these notes appear in print all of the outstanding issues will have been decided and you will be left wondering what on earth I am prattling on about, but that is inevitable when the notes, by necessity, are usually over a month behind the actual event.

SENIOR DIVISIONS Division 1A The second weekend of matches for this division required each team to play five matches, two on the Saturday and three on the Sunday, with the final round of matches starting at 5pm on the Sunday several teams experienced a very long and tiring weekend, some not arriving home until well after midnight. It can't have helped the morale of their opponents to see Derbyshire arrive on the Saturday with Alan Cooke, Michael Isherwood, John Holland, Nicola Deaton and Jane Vickers, a team more than capable of challenging the best of the Premier division, let alone division 1A. They promptly proved the point



ALAN COOKE



CARL PREAN



NICOLA DEATON

Former England Internationals represent their county's. Alan Cooke and Nicola Deaton for Derbyshire and Carl Preat the Isle of Wight.

by winning their first two matches over Bedfordshire and Leicestershire by 9 sets to 1, only Sandra Harper of Bedfordshire and Karen Smith of Leicestershire helping their respective teams avoid the whitewash. On the Sunday Alan Cooke and Nicola Deaton were unavailable and their places were taken by Stuart McIntyre and Helen Rainford and though the results were not as spectacular as the previous day, victories over Lancashire 8/2, Suffolk 6/4, and Cambridge 8/2 saw the team undefeated over the season and promoted as worthy champions. If they can turn out their strongest team next season then you have to believe they will be more than strong enough to win the Premiership. Runners up were Leicestershire with

just a single defeat at the hands of the champions to mar their season, Chris Rogers Dave Gannon, Abraham Conteh, Karen Smith and Bettina Lehmann are well acquainted with the seesaw between Premier and first divisions but they will have to wait at least until next season before they can make it back to the top flight. Lancashire, bottom of the division after the first round of matches, were able to call on the services of Kevin Dolder to strengthen their squad and wins over Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire were enough to ensure their place in the division next season, but they will need to strengthen their squad if they are to avoid the relegation dog fight next season.

The relegation places are filled by Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire,

quite a blow for Cambridgeshire who have held their place in this division for a very long time, however they along with Suffolk appear to be in a period of change having apparently lost the services of players who have been the mainstay of their teams over the years.

Teams promoted to the divisions 1A/B next season are South Yorkshire, Norfolk, Glamorgan and The Isle of Wight, there won't be many first division players looking forward to taking on Carl Preat next season, if in fact he is available to play. I must say that I have the greatest respect for Carl turning out to play for his County in Division 2D, not too many of our top players would be prepared to do so.

JUNIOR DIVISIONS

Devonshire and Lancashire drop from the Premier division their places being taken by Buckinghamshire and Dorset. Yorkshire 2nd who finished as winners of division 1A cannot be promoted as regulations do not allow two teams from the same County to compete in the Premier division, Dorset will be promoted from division 1B as they have a superior record to Warwickshire, runners up in division 1A. I'm glad I'm not the administrator, it could be a tricky task balancing the divisions geographically next season.

Interesting to see the situation in division 3A where Huntingdon 2nd finished in top spot with Huntingdon 1st in second place, seems to be something odd in the selection process there.

VETERANS DIVISIONS.

Lancashire and Middlesex will take the places of Yorkshire and Norfolk in the Premier division next season, whilst Durham, Hertfordshire 2nd, Surrey 2nd and Wiltshire will gain promotion to the first divisions replacing Essex 2nd, Worcestershire, Essex 3rd and Devonshire.

Cheshire 3rd, Middlesex 4th, Surrey 3rd and Devonshire 2nd all gain promotion to the second division as champions of their various divisions.

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS LEAGUE TABLES by Leslie Smith

Tables include results of all matches received by 1st April 2000

SENIORS

PREMIER	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Middlesex	7	6	1	0	53	17	13
Sussex	7	6	1	0	52	18	13
Kent	7	5	0	2	43	27	10
Hertfordshire	7	2	2	3	29	41	6
Yorkshire	7	2	1	4	33	37	5
Surrey	7	1	2	4	28	42	4
Nottinghamshire	7	1	1	5	24	46	3
Berkshire	7	1	0	6	18	52	2

DIVISION 1A

Derbyshire	7	7	0	0	57	13	14
Leicestershire	7	6	0	1	44	26	12
Northumberland	7	5	0	2	44	26	10
Worcestershire	7	4	0	3	34	36	8
Suffolk	7	2	1	4	33	37	5
Lancashire	7	2	0	5	29	41	4
Cambridgeshire	7	1	0	6	19	51	2
Bedfordshire	7	0	1	6	20	50	1

DIVISION 1B

Wiltshire	7	6	0	1	47	23	12
Essex 1st	5	5	0	0	46	4	10
Devonshire 1st	5	4	0	1	32	18	8
Hampshire	7	3	1	3	30	40	7
Middlesex 2nd	7	2	2	3	34	36	6
Kent 2nd	7	2	1	4	25	44	5
Essex 2nd	5	0	0	5	15	34	0
Devonshire 2nd	5	0	0	5	10	40	0

DIVISION 2A

South Yorkshire	7	7	0	0	53	17	14
Yorkshire 2nd	7	6	0	1	49	21	12
Cheshire	7	4	1	2	42	28	9
Cleveland	7	3	1	3	33	37	7
Lancashire 2nd	7	3	0	4	30	40	6
Warwickshire 2nd	7	1	1	5	26	44	3
Leicestershire 2nd	7	1	1	5	24	46	3
Cumbria	7	0	2	5	23	47	2

DIVISION 2B

Glamorgan 1	8	8	0	0	75	5	16
Glamorgan 2nd	8	6	0	2	44	36	12
Cornwall 1	8	5	1	2	52	28	11
Worcestershire 2nd	8	5	1	2	49	31	11
Somerset	8	3	0	5	30	50	6
Avon	8	3	0	5	29	51	6
Herefordshire	8	2	0	6	30	50	4
Devonshire 3rd	8	2	0	6	28	52	4
Cornwall 2nd	8	1	0	7	23	57	2

DIVISION 2C

Norfolk 1st	7	7	0	0	56	14	14
Warwickshire	7	6	0	1	51	19	12
Lincolnshire	7	5	0	2	48	22	10
Suffolk 2nd	7	3	1	3	33	37	7
Hertfordshire 2nd	7	2	1	4	28	42	5
Norfolk 2nd	7	2	0	5	25	45	4
Northamptonshire	7	2	0	5	23	47	4
Huntingdonshire	7	0	0	7	16	54	0

DIVISION 2D

Isle of Wight	7	7	0	0	45	25	14
Gloucestershire	7	6	0	1	53	17	12
Sussex 2	7	4	0	3	45	25	8
Kent 3rd	7	4	0	3	39	31	8
Surrey 2nd	7	3	0	4	30	40	6
Buckinghamshire	7	2	0	5	25	45	4
Oxfordshire	7	1	0	6	27	43	2
Berkshire 2nd	7	1	0	6	16	54	2

JUNIORS

PREMIER DIVISION

Glamorgan	7	6	1	0	51	19	13
Surrey	7	6	0	1	49	21	12
Kent	7	3	3	1	38	32	9
Cheshire	7	4	1	2	37	33	9
Middlesex	7	3	1	3	33	37	7
Yorkshire	7	1	1	5	26	44	3
Devonshire	7	1	1	5	26	44	3
Lancashire	7	0	0	7	20	50	0

DIVISION 1A

Yorkshire 2nd	7	5	2	0	48	22	12
Warwickshire	7	4	2	1	41	29	10
Essex	7	4	1	2	44	26	9
Cumbria	7	3	3	1	39	31	9
Derbyshire	7	3	2	2	37	33	8
Suffolk	7	2	1	4	34	36	5
Lancashire 2nd	7	1	0	6	22	48	2
Clwyd	7	0	1	6	15	55	1

DIVISION 1B

Buckinghamshire	7	7	0	0	63	7	14
Dorset	7	6	0	1	46	24	12
Avon	7	4	1	2	37	33	9
Hampshire	7	2	2	3	33	37	6

Worcestershire	7	2	2	3	32	38	6
Glamorgan 2nd	7	2	0	5	26	44	4
Glamorgan 3rd	7	1	1	5	24	46	3
Middlesex 2nd	7	1	0	6	19	51	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
Warwicks 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

Berkshire	7	6	1	0	54	16	13
Buckingham 2nd	7	4	3	0	43	27	11
Surrey 2nd	7	4	2	1	44	26	10
Kent 2nd	7	4	2	1	41	29	10
Sussex 1st	7	3	0	4	39	31	6
Surrey 3rd	7	2	0	5	23	47	4
Cornwall	7	1	0	6	20	50	2
Sussex 2nd	7	0	0	7	16	54	0

DIVISION 3A

Huntingdon 2nd	7	6	0	1	47	23	12
Huntingdon 1st	7	5	1	1	54	16	11
Bedfordshire 1st	7	5	1	1	47	23	11
Suffolk 2nd	7	3	1	3	39	31	7
Norfolk 2nd	7	3	1	3	32	38	7
Hertford 2nd	7	3	0	4	30	40	6
Cambridgeshire	7	0	1	6	18	52	1
Bedfordshire 2nd	7	0	1	6	13	57	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	7	6	1	0	56	14	13
Powys	7	5	1	1	44	26	11
Shropshire 1st	7	4	2	1	44	26	10
Devonshire 2nd	7	4	1	2	43	27	9
Somerset	7	3	1	3	42	28	7
Devonshire 3rd	7	2	0	5	27	43	4
Herefordshire	7	1	0	6	11	59	2
Shropshire 2nd	7	0	0	7	13	57	0

DIVISION 3D

Essex 3rd	6	5	1	0	42	18	11
Gloucestershire	6	4	2	0	44	16	10
Oxfordshire	6	3	2	1	40	20	8
Kent 3rd	6	1	3	2	31	29	5
Sussex 3rd	6	2	1	3	25	35	5
Wiltshire	6	1	1	4	19	41	3
Berkshire 2nd	6	0	0	6	9	51	0

VETERANS

PREMIER	P	W	L	F	A	Pts	
Kent	7	6	1	0	40	23	12
Surrey	7	5	2	0	46	17	10
Leicestershire	7	4	3	0	26	37	8
Cheshire	7	3	4	0	31	32	6 (74-76)
Dorset	7	3	4	0	31	32	6 (73-77)
Essex	7	3	4	0	30	33	6
Yorkshire	7	3	4	0	26	37	6
Norfolk	7	1	6	0	22	41	2

DIVISION 1A

Lancashire	7	6	1	0	49	14	12
Oxfordshire	7	5	2	0	32	31	10
Northumberland	7	4	3	0	29	34	8
Hertfordshire	7	3	4	0	32	31	6
Cheshire 2nd	7	3	4	0	30	33	6 (74-75)
Yorkshire 2nd	7	3	4	0	30	33	6 (72-75)
Essex 2nd	7	2	5	0	25	38	4 (65-83)
Worcestershire	7	2	5	0	25	38	4 (63-85)

DIVISION 1B

Middlesex	7	6	1	0	43	20	12
Hampshire	7	5	2	0	40	23	10
Avon	7	5	2	0	35	28	10
Kent 2nd	7	4	3	0	34	29	8
Sussex	7	3	4	0	30	33	6
Berkshire	7	3	4	0	26	37	6
Essex 3rd	7	2	5	0	27	36	4
Devonshire	7	0	7	0	17	46	0

THE HALLMARK OF SUCCESS

LONG PIMPLES are roaring back with a vengeance, writes John Wood.

This coming 1st July 2000 sees the introduction of several new long pimples, with most of the rubber manufacturers offering new and exciting products. But next season there are two new rubber makers names on the ITTF List, that of Hallmark Table Tennis Ltd., who manufacture 'Dr Neubauer Super Special', and Toni Hold who make 'Virus 2000.

This issue of Table Tennis News features the introduction of a British made product, Dr Neubauer Super

Special.

This exciting new long pimple is the first ITTF Approved British rubber on the market since the world leader 'Swing' hit the headlines for Lentec.

WHO ARE THEY?

HALLMARK TABLE TENNIS is a Welsh company based in Penarth, which is near Cardiff. They have just launched their first product which is a long pimped rubber called Dr Neubauer Super Special.

The company has been aware for quite a number of years that there has been a lack of innovation in the production of new rubber surfaces

for use as racket coverings. About three years ago a number of research projects were undertaken to look at producing new long pimple, short pimple and reverse rubber surfaces. For the project on long pimples Dr Herbert Neubauer, the worlds leading authority on long pimples, agreed to assist with the evaluation of products made. The result of this research is the new long pimped rubber Dr Neubauer Super Special. During research into this rubber it was found that the red rubber was slightly more effective than the black so Hallmark Table Tennis have decided to sell only the red version.

They also found that the use of sponge severely reduces the effect of the long pimples so they will be marketing only the no sponge version.

The company hopes that by its continued investment in research and development it will be able to offer further new products in the coming years.

Further information about the company can be obtained by contacting the Distribution Manager, Mrs Anne Hall. Tel: +44(0)29 20705336 Fax: +44(0)29 20708164

RUBBER TEST

Since the demise of the former long pimples, last season, I have been desperate to find a suitable replacement, but I failed to re-discover my former standard of awkwardness. Most rubbers were okay, but lacked the ability to confuse my opponents, thus making my 1999/2000 season very frustrating.

This new rubber 'Dr Neubauer Super Special' seems to be just what I've been looking for, it's slower than the current long pimples and it gives me back some of my mystery element. So I'm definitely looking forward to next season.

As the rubber is slower I needed to stay closer to the table, but that suits my game perfectly. It enabled me to produce more backspin thus producing a greater variation in chop and float returns against topspin.

Lifting the ball with an open bat vertical, reverses the spin. This shot is most effective but needs lots and lots of practice.

This rubber from Hallmark also enabled me to play the occasional backhand punch shot. It was also excellent against floated and slow looped shots. Heavily spinned serves were also no problem to return.

Hallmark have definitely produced a winner with 'Dr Neubauer Super Special' rubber.

40mm BALL

AS required by the ITTF to produce the new larger table tennis ball STIGA stocks are now being manufactured for the new season.

Stiga's reigning Olympic and World Mens Singles Champion, Liu Guoliang, has worked closely with Stiga's technical department to achieve the new superb Stiga ball that is ITTF approved.

Liu Guoliang said, "The new Stiga ball slows play down and gives excellent control."

Most of the leading brands of the new 40 mm balls will be available in both white and orange at the end of June, or during the beginning of July.

The actual cost is not known yet.

GRANT SOLDER TABLE TENNIS SUMMER SCHOOL 2000

To be held at Barking Abbey School Leisure Centre,
Woodbridge Road, Barking, Essex EGI 1 9ET
THURSDAY 3rd AUGUST until SUNDAY 6th AUGUST 2000

COURSE ORGANISOR: GRANT SOLDER

Age 27, Professional Table Tennis Coach working fulltime at Peniel Academy. Last season was Coach of England for Cadet and Under 12 players. Former Essex No.1, London No.1, and England No.12 Mens. Made England Senior debut in 1995. Former England No.1 Junior, England Under 18 Champion and Spanish Open Champion. Grant has organised eight previous Coaching Courses. Grant played most of his professional table tennis in Belgium and Norway for four seasons. An ETTA Qualified Coach.

COACH: DESMOND DOUGLAS

Former England No.1 (for 11 years), World No.7 and European No.4. England International for 20 years. One of England's greatest all time players. Des has beaten most of the World's top players, such as Waldner, Gatien, Saive, Appelgren, Persson, Grubba and Bengtson. Titles include 11 times English Champion, European Top 12 Champion, European Team Silver Medallist, English Open Champion and Commonwealth Champion.

COACH: ALAN COOKE

Former England Mens No.1, three times English Champion, former Commonwealth Champion. Alan was a great England player with an excellent hard working attitude. Alan has beaten some of the World's greatest players, such as Waldner, Gatien, Appelgren, and Persson. Alan is a Professional table tennis coach and is currently working with the National Team.

COACH: ANDREW EDEN

Aged 27, Andrew is a former England No.5 and was a regular member of the England team. Andrew's titles include Commonwealth Gold Medallist, former England Junior No.1 and English Junior Champion. Played professionally for Peniel Academy and in the German Bundesliga. Andrew is a very enthusiastic coach and a great personality.

ENGLAND TABLE TENNIS PSYCHOLOGIST: MARK BAWDEN

Mark is a fully qualified Sports Psychologist and has worked for the last four years for the ETTA, working with the top Senior and junior players on the mental side of the game. Mark is a former England No.5 cadet and so obviously has a very good background of the game. So here's your chance to have some 1-2-1 and group sessions with Mark and improve the mental side of your game.

COST £215 PER PERSON NON-RESIDENTIAL (INCLUDES LUNCH)

£299 PER PERSON RESIDENTIAL - FULL PRICE INCLUDES:

Accommodation-Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights accommodation, at the Palms 3 Star Hotel, which has en-suite rooms and Satellite TV.

Meals - Breakfast, lunch, and evening meals will be provided.

Playing conditions - Play will take place in the brand new £2.5 million Sports Centre funded by the Lottery Unit Sports Fund (opened September 1999) on new Donic tables, with excellent lighting.

I am pleased to be able to invite you to the Grant Solder Summer Camp School 2000. Players will be under expert guidance of Grant Solder, Desmond Douglas, Alan Cooke, Andrew Eden and Mark Bawden. There are excellent shower facilities and there is separate accommodation for male and female. Seniors, veterans and Juniors are all welcome. There will be a female chaperon at the course to look after any young girls. You will be training for 5 hours per day as well as improving your 'mental skills' with Mark Bawden. All standards are catered for. Book now to avoid disappointment and improve every aspect of your game! Any players having difficulty in getting to Barking, then contact Grant Solder and I will do my utmost to arrange transport for you.

For an application form or any further information, please contact:

Grant Solder, 6 Bennions Close, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 6TR
Telephone: 01708 551778 or Mobile: 07930 275940



ETTA NATIONAL RANKING LIST

TOP OF THE TABLE

May 2000 - LIST 77

Further details please ring Doreen Nightingale 01424 722525

Senior Men

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(1)	1 SYED, Matthew (SY.)	4669	
(2)	2 PREAN, Carl (IW.)	4520	
(4)	3 BAGGALEY, Andrew (BU.)	4444	
(5)	4 YOUNG, Terry (BK.)	4432	
(6)	5 COOKE, Alan (DY.)	4427	
(3)	6 PERRY, Alex (DV.)	4419	
(7)	7 HERBERT, Gareth (BK.)	4298	
(8)	8 BILLINGTON, Bradley (DY.)	4164**	
(9)	9 ISHERWOOD, Michael (DV.)	4007	
(11)	10 EDEN, Andrew (LA.)	3971	
(12)	11 RUSHTON, Andrew (LA.)	3935	
(10)	12 BLAKE, Darren (SY.)	3923	
(13)	13 SHAW, Steven (ST.)	3787	
	14 TRUMPASKAS, Lorestas (E.)	3742	
(14)	15 MASON, Nick (SX.)	3718**	
(15)	16 VENNER, Ritchie (SX.)	3674	
(35)	17 JAMES, Michael (Y.)	3654	
(16)	18 SLADDEN, Kris (E.)	3654	
(17)	19 SMITH, Eddie (ND.)	3559	
(20)	20 GOODALL, Justin (K.)	3557	
(18)	21 SATCHELL, Kevin (WI.)	3529**	
(21)	22 CUTLER, Tom (MI.)	3485	
(22)	23 SUGRUE, Jason (MI.)	3484	
(23)	24 MOORE, Adrian (K.)	3480	
(25)	25 SLATER, Stephen (ST.)	3476	
(19)	26 BARHAM, Dale (CA.)	3471	
(24)	27 BARR, David (BK.)	3466	
(28)	28 ECKERSLEY, Nigel (SX.)	3459	
(26)	29 ROGERS, Chris (LE.)	3447	
(29)	30 JOHNS, Brian (CH.)	3443	
(31)	31 MARSHALL, Peter (Y.)	3406	
(33)	32 HILTON, John (CH.)	3361**	
(34)	33 THOMPSON, Christian (K.)	3360****	
(32)	34 TAYLOR, John (HE.)	3358	
(30)	35 SMITH, Mark Richard (Y.)	3329	
(28)	36 CHARLES, Neil (MI.)	3308	
(36)	37 NEIL, Lee (NG.)	3304	
(37)	38 JOHNSON, Ben (BK.)	3298*	
(38)	39 SAMUELS, Keith (BD.)	3291*	
(39)	40 WHITING, Paul (DV.)	3279	
(51)	41 DOLDER, Kevin (LA.)	3263	
(40)	42 GANNON, David (LE.)	3260	
(45)	43 WURAOJA, Abdul (SY.)	3247	
(42)	44 BROWN, Mark (K.)	3245	
(43)	45 GILES, Paul (CO.)	3244	
(44)	46 CLAYTON, Tony (DO.)	3239	
(54)	47 HORSFIELD, Andrew (YS.)	3233	
(46)	48 CARTHY, Clive (E.)	3223	
(41)	49 CAMPBELL, Selwyn (SY.)	3218	
(55)	50 CHAN, Michael (SY.)	3202	
(48)	51 ATKINSON, David (CA.)	3185	
(50)	52 PAPANTONIOU, Costas (MI.)	3180	
(47)	53 WILKINSON, Andrew (ND.)	3177	
(57)	54 SHORT, Mark (YS.)	3170	
(49)	55 SMITH, Richard A (Y.)	3166	
(53)	56 NEALE, Denis (Y.)	3165*	
	57 CRIMMINS, Max (WO.)	3144N	
(126)	58 JAMIESON, Christopher (E.)	3142*	
(56)	59 CORBIN, Anthony (HE.)	3129*	
(59)	60 CHAUSSÉ, Christophe (YS)	3117	
(61)	61 WIGNALL, Andy (LI.)	3096	
(60)	62 WELSMAN, Dave (NP.)	3076	
(103)	63 KENNY, Mathew (Y.)	3073	
(62)	64 HARVEY, Dave (GS.)	3071	
(64)	65 MCKOY, Nick (MI.)	3070	
(63)	66 FESEHATSON, Daniel (MI.)	3069*	
(58)	67 POUNTNEY, Robert (SY.)	3069	
(86)	68 DENNISON, John (E.)	3060	
(95)	69 BEERLING, Stephen (K.)	3051	
(52)	70 ROSENTHAL, Louis (LA.)	3037	
(78)	71 MAJITHIA, Mayur (SX.)	3034	
(65)	72 PAYNE, Phil (SO.)	3023	
(67)	73 ROCKALL, Simon (BU.)	3016**	
(70)	74 MCLEAN, Ian (NK.)	3014	
(68)	75 ROGERS, Martin (E.)	3013*	
(71)	76 KENNEDY, Joe (E.)	3010*	
(72)	77 OWEN, Mark (HR.)	3006*	
(73)	78 ROOFE, Eddie (WI.)	3005*	
(77)	79 WALKER, Andy (SX.)	3004	
(69)	80 TENDER, Gary (E.)	3002	
(66)	81 ADAMS, Martin (BK.)	2998	
(75)	82 MUSK, Ian (BU.)	2997**	
(76)	83 RAINFORD, Paul (K.)	2993*	
(81)	84 BARTRAM, Peter (SX.)	2990	
(74)	85 HARDING, David (SY.)	2973	
(79)	86 GREEN, Mark (NG.)	2970	
(80)	87 GRIFFIN, Darren (GS.)	2968	

(89)	88 LOGSDON, Philip (NK.)	2963
(83)	89 TURNER, Steven (LA.)	2957***
(113)	90 GODBOLD, David (DU.)	2955
(107)	91 RANKIN, John (LA.)	2951
(87)	92 BRIDGETT, Gregory (DV.)	2946
(85)	93 WALSH, Jimmy (HE.)	2945
(109)	94 DODD, Justin (K.)	2935
(88)	95 DYSON, Tim (Y.)	2933**
(96)	96 HALEY, Terry (SY.)	2932
(90)	97 SHORT, Mike (DV.)	2920**
(84)	98 BECKLEY, Chris (SY.)	2920
(91)	99 BARRY, Paul (SX.)	2909
(94)	100 SANDLEY, Graham (MI.)	2907*

Senior Women

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(1)	1 DEATON, Nicola (DY.)	3852	
(2)	2 LOWER, Helen (ST.)	3642	
(4)	3 OWOLABI, Kubrat (MI.)	3567	
(3)	4 RADFORD, Linda (E.)	3545	
(5)	5 SCHWARTZ, Gemma (BK.)	3386****	
(8)	6 SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3284	
(7)	7 MARLING, Sally (Y.)	3274	
(13)	8 PARKER, Katy (LA.)	3267	
(6)	9 DURRANT, Louise (NG.)	3248	
(10)	10 THORNTON, Lindsey (LA.)	3237	
(11)	11 RUOCCO, Shelley (E.)	3159**	
(12)	12 LOCKWOOD, Karen (CH.)	3155****	
(33)	13 WALKER, Georgina (NG.)	3144	
(14)	14 HARRIS, Jill (ST.)	3120**	
(10)	15 YARDY, Hannah (E.)	3111	
(16)	16 SPARKES, Rebecca (SK.)	3110	
(17)	17 WESTON, Sally (SX.)	3091	
(17)	18 COLLIER, Susan (BK.)	3074*	
(18)	19 KENDALL, Jade (CU.)	3064**	
(19)	20 DUNNING, Jan (ST.)	3050	
(20)	21 BONGERS, Jose (ST.)	3015**	
(25)	22 BAWDEN, Natalie (E.)	3009	
(23)	23 COHEN, Michele (AV.)	3003*	
(22)	24 HURLING, Emma (HE.)	3003****	
(21)	25 BLOOR, Trudie (SP.)	3001	
(24)	26 RADFORD, Lesley (E.)	2999**	
(27)	27 RAINTON, Rosemary (SX.)	2998	
(26)	28 ROBERTS, Joanna (Y.)	2986	
(37)	29 HOWARD, Alice (CH.)	2966	
(28)	30 NEWNS, Clare (CH.)	2965**	
(30)	31 BUOYE, Brenda (LA.)	2961	
(29)	32 SMITH, Angela (MI.)	2956	
(31)	33 RODEN, Sandra (WO.)	2954	
(36)	34 PERRY, Penny (DV.)	2907	
(34)	35 SHIELDS, Helen (Y.)	2897	
(32)	36 SMITH, Sarah (NG.)	2878	
(35)	37 FISHER, Rebecca (MI.)	2876	
(43)	38 RIDER, Sandra (Y.)	2840	
(39)	39 WANG, Lucy (E.)	2831N	
(40)	40 MOORE, Claire (K.)	2822**	
(42)	41 MALTBY, Margaret (NP.)	2797	
(38)	42 JUDSON, Carol (Y.)	2792	
(44)	43 SEAHOLME, Sarah (HE.)	2789	
(45)	44 KEAST, Lesley (MI.)	2785**	
(46)	45 SILBURN, Nicola (Y.)	2785****	
(47)	46 AMOS, Helen (K.)	2781**	
(52)	47 PEARCE, Diane (K.)	2779	
(40)	48 SIMPSON, Linda (Y.)	2766	
(48)	49 KING, Sheila (SX.)	2764	
(51)	50 STEWARD, Kate (SO.)	2758	
(49)	51 MARLING, Samantha (MI.)	2746*	
(50)	52 SCHOFIELD, Doreen (CH.)	2744	
(53)	53 BAWDEN, Marilyn (E.)	2727	
(54)	54 ROLIKOVA, Marianna (SY.)	2726**	
(55)	55 SMITH, Nicola (Y.)	2714*	
(52)	56 BRISTOW, Angie (K.)	2709****	
(57)	57 KNIGHTLEY, Gillian (BK.)	2691	
(56)	58 H-MIDDLEMORE, Joan (WA.)	2687	
(59)	59 DAWSON, Marjorie (E.)	2687	
(59)	60 DEARING, Emily (Y.)	2684	
(60)	61 ROBISON, Suzanne (GS.)	2682	
(63)	62 HARPER, Sandra (BD.)	2673	
(64)	63 DIGNUM, Margaret (WO.)	2663	
(65)	64 BURGESS, Suzanne (CH.)	2656*	
(97)	65 HORSNELL, Sarah (MI.)	2652	
(66)	66 MAY, Elizabeth (DV.)	2650**	
(68)	67 RUSS, Tina (NG.)	2645**	
(68)	68 HUMBLE, Ann (GS.)	2640****	
(63)	69 DAVIDSON, Sarah (Sk) (E.)	2638	
(70)	70 HALES, Linda (E.)	2630	
(73)	71 PERRY, Lucy (DV.)	2630	
(67)	72 MORLEY, Judy (GS.)	2630	
(72)	73 VICKERS, Jane (DY.)	2623	

(88)	74 FLOWERDAY, Anne (E.)	2622
(61)	75 SHALER, Eileen (LE.)	2620
(74)	76 BAX, Sally (HE.)	2617
(73)	77 SEAHOLME, Caroline (HE.)	2615**
(75)	78 STEEL, Pauline (SX.)	2608
(86)	79 JOHNSON, Susan (BK.)	2598
(92)	80 HARRISON, Jennifer (E.)	2595
(71)	81 LLOYD, Gemma (CH.)	2594
(76)	82 KENNARD, Nikki (E.)	2593**
(78)	83 BROWN, Janet (OX.)	2591
(77)	84 VAJDI, Carmen (SY.)	2590
(79)	85 REID, Lynda (WO.)	2580
(81)	86 POGHORE, Helen (WO.)	2578****
(84)	87 WHITE, Jean (LI.)	2574
(101)	88 BENTLEY, Ruth (NG.)	2572
(80)	89 GELDER, Shirley (DU.)	2569
(90)	90 PARKER, Joanna (SY.)	2568
(135)	91 CONNOLLY, Tamar (OX.)	2548
(91)	92 COGGON, Sara (SX.)	2547
(116)	93 HUGHES, Kate (WO.)	2544
(89)	94 HICKMAN, Susan (E.)	2539
(95)	95 ECKERSLEY, Carol (SX.)	2529
(105)	96 BUTCHER, Pamela (K.)	2527
(139)	97 SHEPHERD, Karen (CH.)	2526
(85)	98 NARENDRA, Aparna (MI.)	2524
(102)	99 GUTHRIE, Caron (ND.)	2522
(94)	100 STITCH, Julie (CU.)	2521****

Junior Boys

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(1)	1 BAGGALEY, Andrew (BU.)	4444	
(2)	2 RUSHTON, Andrew (LA.)	3935	
(3)	3 BARHAM, Dale (CA.)	3471	
(5)	4 CHAN, Michael (SY.)	3202	
(5)	5 JAMIESON, Christopher (E.)	3142	
(8)	6 KENNY, Mathew (Y.)	3073	
(7)	7 BEERLING, Stephen (K.)	3051	
(4)	8 ROSENTHAL, Louis (LA.)	3037	
(9)	9 DODD, Justin (K.)	2935	
(6)	10 GASCOINE, Craig (NG.)	2846	
(12)	11 HALL, Dominic (K.)	2827	
(11)	12 YARDY, Timothy (E.)	2795	
(15)	13 BARHAM, Lee (CA.)	2777	
(14)	14 HUGHES, Tom (NG.)	2607	
(13)	15 PEARCE, Robin (DV.)	2602	
(16)	16 CLEMINSON, Peter (E.)	2602	
(17)	17 BAILEY, Steven (CV.)	2508	
(17)	18 BAKER, Gregory (ST.)	2490	
(19)	19 BRYANT, Craig (DV.)	2415	
(18)	20 RULE, Martin (BU.)	2338**	
(23)	21 HORNER, Daniel (CH.)	2326	
(20)	22 GIBBS, Stuart (DV.)	2290*	
(25)	23 DAVIES, Stephen (LI.)	2279	
(32)	24 DRINKHALL, Bryn (CV.)	2257	
(26)	25 HANDY, Philip (DU.)	2196	
(21)	26 WELSH, Daniel (DU.)	2175	
(22)	27 YARNALL, Tim (NP.)	2168	
(24)	28 DOMINGUEZ, Luis (MI.)	2161	
(31)	29 RUDLAND, Simon (ST.)	2151	
(29)	30 HANSELL, Robert (BU.)	2050	
(34)	31 BLOOMFIELD, Gary (SK.)	1943	
(28)	32 POUNTNEY, Paul (SY.)	1931	
(30)	33 WALKER, Ross (K.)	1922	
(33)	34 WHITAKER, Jonathan (E.)	1915	
(35)	35 HOLTMAN, Tim (MI.)	1869	
(37)	36 COSTELLO, Paul (CV.)	1787	
(107)	37 COOPER, Mark (E.)	1709	
	38 WILSON, Nicholas (BU.)	1707	
(36)	39 TAYLOR, Blake (BU.)	1670	
(39)	40 BROOKS, Warren (BU.)	1657	
(38)	41 WOODHOUSE, Grant (CU.)	1651*	
(47)	42 NOUTCH, Simon (Y.)	1634	
(40)	43 SPEED, Douglas (ST.)	1634	
(45)	44 DIXON, Zeke (CU.)	1618	
(45)	45 CARTWRIGHT, Neil (DO.)	1615	
(53)	46 HOUGHTON, James (Y.)	1603	
(42)	47 MASON, Wayne (NK.)	1597	
(43)	48 FENNEL, Aaron (E.)	1586	
(44)	49 HEPTSTALL, Matthew (Y.)	1553*	
(51)	50 LINDLEY, Iain (LA.)	1539	

Junior Girls

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(3)	1 PARKER, Katy (LA.)	3267	
(1)	2 DURRANT, Louise (NG.)	3248	
(5)	3 WALKER, Georgina (NG.)	3144	
(2)	4 YARDY, Hannah (E.)	3111	
(4)	5 BAWDEN, Natalie (E.)	3009	
(6)	6 STEWARD, Kate (SO.)	2758	

(7)	7 DEARING, Emily (Y.)	2684
(10)	8 PARKER, Joanna (ST.)	2568
(12)	9 HUGHES, Kate (WO.)	2544
(16)	10 SHEPHERD, Karen (CH.)	2526
(9)	11 NARENDRA, Aparna (MI.)	2524
(8)	12 POINTER, Lucy (IW.)	2515
(11)	13 CHAPMAN, Gemma (BK.)	2512
(20)	14 DONNELLY, Janine (Y.)	2450
(13)	15 SORRENTINO, Annabelle (CH.)	2407
(15)	16 FLINT, Deborah (SY.)	2355
(14)	17 GIBBS, Claire (SO.)	2337
(21)	18 WRIGHT, Amy (E.)	2335
(18)	19 BROWN, Grace (E.)	2334
(19)	20 EMBLING, Abigail (E.)	2331
(26)	21 TONG, Rebecca (LA.)	2328
(25)	22 CHEESMAN, Zoe (Y.)	2304
(27)	23 TODD, Nicole (E.)	2298
(23)	24 SPARKES, Aimee (SK.)	2230
(17)	25 CALCUTT, Lisa (BK.)	2230
(24)	26 SPINK, Paisley (ST.)	2215
(27)	27 MEREDITH, Samantha (WA.)	2181
(30)	28 VICKERS, Kate (DU.)	2154
(29)	29 DONNELLY, Sarah (Y.)	2117
(32)	30 BARNARD, Kimberley (LA.)	2078
(28)	31 BALDI, Andrea (YS) (Y.)	1975*
(31)	32 INGHAM, Katy (CH.)	1964
(40)	33 GRAHAM, Cherith (LA.)	1949
(34)	34 POWELL, Lynsey (CH.)	1922
(33)	35 WILSON, Naomi (SO.)	1882
(37)	36 GOLDSTRAW, Claire (SP.)	1826
(36)	37 CRAVEN-GRIFFITHS, Kelly (LE.)	1776
(35)	38 HORSTADT, Julie (NK.)	1764
(41)	39 LANGFORD, Clare (CH.)	1729
(53)	40 BROWN, Sarah (E.)	1700
(38)	41 WILLIS, Rachel (WI.)	1692
(39)	42 ROBERTS, Hannah (LA.)	1610
(43)	43 HOWARD, Clara (CH.)	1607
(51)	44 WHITE, Nicola (Y.)	1572
(42)	45 DAUNCEY, Stephanie (AV.)	1566
(46)	46 STONE, Hannah (BK.)	1559
(47)</		

PLAYING AGAINST LONG PIMPLES Part 4

by Henry Buist

Pimpled Hits

When a pimpled player does a hit you expect topspin because of the upward movement of the bat but, as we have seen, the spin on the ball will depend on what you did with your last shot. The effect will not be so great as when the pimpled player chops because the fast upward movement of the bat will tend to put a little spin on the ball, but there will be much less than you expect.

The ball will tend to come through the air fairly fast but when it hits the table the lack of topspin will mean that the ball will come off the table more slowly than a similar shot made with a spinny rubber. Players tend to say that the ball does not come through. This means you must wait for it a split second longer before playing it.

So when a long pimpled player hits the ball you must wait for it and lift it.

The danger here is that you may give them an easy ball to kill, so this is one time when spinning it against the pimples may be necessary especially against hitters. You will have to judge each case on its merits. The important thing to realise is the lack of topspin on the ball and the slow bounce off the table.

This is true to some extent of any player playing with pimples out - there will not be as much spin on the ball as your experience tells you, so again you must wait for it and lift it.

Pimpled Hitters

Up to the present there have not been many hitters using long pimples but now a number of them are using it on their weaker wing which is usually the backhand. They also tend to use pimples that are slightly shorter than those used by defensive players. This makes the long pimples effect a little less severe but enables them to do a greater variety of shots and hit the ball harder.

There is no easy way to play these players because of the wide variation between the two surfaces, and because their style of play will not give you much time to think. Further you will not have the luxury of having the time to do an exploration phase as you do when playing defensive players. Areas of vulnerability may be inconsistency and the inability to be aggressive with the pimples, they may not be able to hit pushes or chops too well - they tend to lift them.

Here are a few things to try:

- **Play down their stronger side. If you can master their strength you are well on the way.**
- **Play steadily down the pimples, this could tie them down.** They are likely to try a few hits which may go on at first but they may not be able to keep it up. They may then run round to hit it with their strong side. This is something they will have done before playing with pimples so they are likely to be good at it. Then you must either hit it straight back at them or put it wide down the other wing. Also keep them guessing by putting the occasional ball down strong side anticipating their running round.
- **Get just the amount of spin you want back by using the appropriate serve to the pimples.**

A mild chop will get you back a float

A long topspin will get you back a chop

- **A hard flat hit to the pimples can be effective**

Finally - Mastering Funny Bats

Forget it, you won't. There will always be one that comes along which will fool you, so treat each one with respect. A few years after long pimples were introduced, some 20 odd years ago, I mastered them. When I played a combination bat player I used to play down the pimples; if they twiddled I just followed the pimples around. In those days players just used to let the pimples do the work, but over the years they have learned to do more with them, and added to the fact that there is now such a wide variety of pimples about means that learning is a continuous process. Now I struggle against them.

Once the move away from plain wooden bats was made in the twenties and thirties table tennis has been continually changing, and probably always will. With each change a number of players fell by the wayside. If you want to stay in the game you must adapt to these changes, the game you learn today is unlikely to last you forever. Remember today's funny bat is tomorrow's standard implement. To me a sponge bat is a funny bat.

ANDREW BARDEN

ANDREW BARDEN 1957 - 2000

IT is very sad to have to record the death of one of the finest players ever to have played in our league. He must have been about 11 or 12 years old when he first became known to me, being a promising youngster from the old East Finchley club. He was immediately pressed into Junior Inter-League duty, where he backed up Robert Aldrich, David Jemmett and Ann Painter (Flowerday) in a very strong team. Subsequently, Andy graduated to the senior team, for which he played many times. By the age of 15 he had become one of the top juniors in England and had won many national tournaments. Between 1972 and 1976 he won the England Junior Boys Doubles Championships four times with his partner Paul Day and he won the Boys Singles title in 1975. He played for England as both a Junior and a Senior, and in his prime won two consecutive National Open tournaments, namely the Spanish and the Swiss.

Andy's career in our League was meteoric, as I see that he topped the Premier Division averages in 1975 with 69.7% but does not appear to have played after that, and I believe that he gave up the game in his late twenties.

It is very distressing to learn of the passing of such a likeable and friendly person. I shall always remember him as a young boy. His memory will long remain in our hearts.

Alan Shepherd

I have known Andy for many years and my contact in the past was more as fellow player rather than part of his close circle of friends.

Andy was an excellent table tennis player who played in the 1977 World Table Tennis Championships in Birmingham. Andy also won a Gold Medal in the European Youth Championships, with Paul Day.

Andy and I met around 1968. We played for Middlesex and England as both Juniors and Seniors and many a time we shared country-wide journey's together with our respective friends.

Andy had an attacking style of game which was very good against defenders. He was assertive and played close to the table and had a very strong forehand topspin/smash and a good backhand. He was also quick around the table due to good anticipation and reading of the game.

Andy had a natural gift for table



Pictured above are ANDREW BARDEN (right) with Paul Day (left) and Mike Maclaren (centre) at one of the English National Championships presentations. Andrew and Paul won the Mens Senior Doubles title twice, in 1975 and 1978, and Junior Doubles titles four times.

tennis. I would like to make a personal comment on the way the bat sat or was held in Andy's hand; the grip was so good the bat seemed part of him.

I recently met with Andy. Sadly, our first contact after a very long gap was at his father's funeral. The second meeting was at a table tennis reunion only this Christmas past. I was so pleased to see how fit and successful he appeared, both personally and professionally.

I attended Andy's funeral, and by the turnout of friends and relations, he must have touched many peoples lives. I send my deepest sympathies to his wife and two young children.

Mark Mitchell

ANDY BARDEN joined East Finchley TTC at the age of 12 and started his long climb from the lower divisions of the North Middlesex League to the World Championships in Birmingham.

Luckily, shortly after Andy joined the club, former England International Ian Harrison arrived as our coach and from then on Andy's progress was rapid. Firstly, as a North Middlesex and then Middlesex and England Junior. He quickly became a force on the Junior tournament circuit and joined with Paul Day to make a formidable doubles combination, winning, while still playing as Juniors, the English Men's Closed Doubles at Crystal Palace in 1975.

Len Pilditch ETTA Vice-President

ERIC JOHNSON 1930-2000

IT is with great sadness that I report the death of Eric Johnson, who passed away after a heart attack on the 20th March 2000, at the ripe old age of 70.

I first met Eric in 1947 when I played a Stockport Table Tennis League match against his club, St. Andrews Institute. Whereupon, having duly beat me, he suggested that I join them, thus forming a firm friendship that was to last a lifetime.

Eric was a genuine sportsman in every way, cheating was never an option and he was just as gracious in defeat as he was in victory. Champion of Stockport many times, he was most certainly ranked in the top fifty players in England.

He was, however, essentially a team man. His was the inspiration that took Cheshire County side into the Premiership of the County Championships, we could play against World Champions, the likes of Victor Barna and Johnny Leach.

But it was perhaps in the mens doubles play that Eric had his finest moments.

Partnered by various players like Vince Hankey, George Temperton and myself, he won practically every open championship from the Midlands to Cumbria, including the high profile North of England, Merseyside, Lancashire and Cheshire tournaments.

During the 1956 English Open Championships at Belle Vue, Manchester, Eric and I were introduced to two young ladies, Diane Wright and Doreen Ridgway. We didn't realise at the time that these two young ladies would eventually end our bachelor status.

Eric took it on himself to coach these young ladies, and under his tuition laid the foundation for both Diana and Doreen to attain the high National Ranking of 6 and 10 respectively. A wonderful compliment to Eric's dedication and expertise.

Although Eric retired from playing in the mid-seventies, his table tennis career was far from over. Because, at this juncture he was elected Chairman of Stockport Table Tennis Association. An office he carried out with dignity and distinction for twelve halcyon years.

The thoughts and sympathy of all table tennis players who ever met Eric throughout the country, go out at this time to Diana, Sally and David in their tragic loss.

For Doreen and myself, we have lost a very dear friend indeed. But, it has been a privilege and a pleasure to have known Eric Johnson, a sportsman and a gentleman.

Derek Schofield

CALENDAR

JUNE

8th-11th	World Club Championships (Men)	
10th-11th	ETTA Grand Prix Finals	Bath
15th-18th	Japan Open (Pro-Tour Major)	
24th	Schools International	Isle of Man

JULY

1st	ETTA Annual General Meeting	
6th-9th	US Open (Pro-Tour Major)	Fort Lauderdale, USA
7th-16th	European Youth Championships	Bratislava
13th-16th	Brazilian Open (Pro-Tour Major)	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

AUGUST

17th-20th	2nd World Youth Festival	Budapest, Hungary
26th	Hollington Junior 1 Star	
26th-27th	ETTA Grand Prix	
27th	Hollington Senior 1 Star	

SEPTEMBER

2nd	Selby 2 Star	
3rd	British League (1) Premier Division	
8th-13th	World University Championships	Shanghai
9th-10th	Womens British League	Kirby
16th-25th	Olympic Games	Sydney, Australia
16th	County Championships (1)	
17th	British League (2) Premier Division	
22nd-24	Home Senior International	Cardiff
23rd-24th	Junior/Cadet Preliminary Trials	
30th	Chesham High School Junior 2 Star	
30th/1st Oct	ETTA Grand Prix	

OCTOBER

7th-8th	Essex 4 Junior Star Select	Harlow
7th-8th	VETTS Masters	
8th	British League (3) Premier Division	
14th	National Junior League (1)	
14th-15th	Sussex 3 Star	Hastings
14th-15th	Junior British League (1)	
14th-24th	Summer Paralympic Games	Sydney, Australia
21st	County Championships (2)	
21st	Derwent Cadet 2 Star	
22nd	British League (4) Premier Division	
22nd	Chesham High School Junior/Cadet	
26th-29th	ITTF Italian Pro Tour	
28th-29th	East Midlands 4 Star	
28th-29th	Veterans Premier (1)	
28th-29th	Junior Premier (1)	
29th	Cirencester Under 12/14 1 Star	
29th	Derwent Senior 2 Star	

NOVEMBER

2nd-5th	French Open	
4th	County Championships (3)	
5th	British League (5) Premier Division	
11th-12th	ETTA Grand Prix Major	
11th-12th	South of England Junior 3 Star	
12th	North Yorkshire Junior 2 Star	
16th-19th	ITTF Polish Pro Tour	
18th-19th	Senior Premier (1)	
18th-19th	Veterans British League (1)	
18th-19th	Stockton-on-Tees Junior 4 Star	
23rd-26th	ITTF Swedish Pro Tour	
25th-26th	Junior/Cadet Regional Trials	

AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS THE 4 WEEKEND DATES FOR THE BRITISH LEAGUE DIVISIONS 1 TO 3 HAD NOT BEEN SELECTED