

TABLE TENNIS NEWS



£2.75

No.282 DEC. 2001

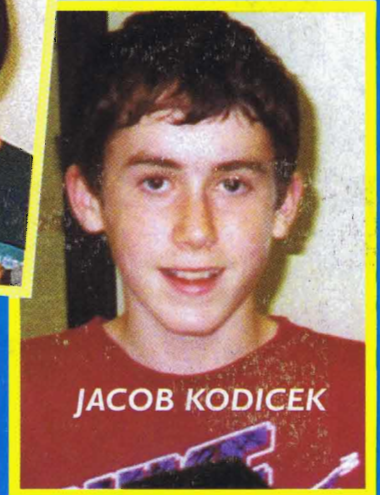


**ALAN COOKE
WINS CLASSIC
BATTLE WITH
BRADLEY
BILLINGTON**

Pages
14
& 15



SARRA WANG



JACOB KODICEK

**SCHILDKROT
JUNIOR BRITISH
LEAGUE 'PLAYERS
OF THE WEEKEND'**
Pages 17 & 18



**DARLINGTON TTC
WINS
SPORTSMATCH
SCHOOLS AWARD**
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**IRIS MOSS
WINS LIFETIME
AWARD** page 5



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TTN EXTRA
A 16 page supplement including 'County Notes', 'Results' and much more.



TABLE TENNIS NEWS & TTN EXTRA

The Official Magazine of the
English Table Tennis Association

Issue No.282
December 2001

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Subscription Rates
UK - £19, Europe - £30,
Rest of the World - £35

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

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HALTON TTC - NORTH WEST WINNERS OF VIP AWARD

HALTON TABLE TENNIS CLUB were announced on 22nd November 2001, as the North West region winners of Sport England's Volunteer Investment Programme (VIP) Recognition Awards.

The Cheshire based table tennis club have come first past the post in this UN International Year of the Volunteer for the quality training and support they give to the 26 volunteers attached to their club.

They were presented with their Award by Claire Huddart, a member of the Great Britain Swimming team 1989-2000. Claire has competed at two Olympic and two Commonwealth Games. The presentation took place at Robin Park Arena, Loire Drive, Newtown, Wigan. They also received a cheque for £1,000.

"Halton Table Tennis Club are deserved winners of the Sport England North West VIP Recognition Awards," said Trevor Brooking, Chair of Sport England.

"They have shown an outstanding commitment to recruiting and training their volunteers and making them an essential part of the club.

"There are over 1.5 million volunteers in the UK who play a vital role in helping sports clubs thrive and these VIP Recognition Awards are designed to recognise and encourage both the volunteers and the clubs they belong to."

Sport England were especially impressed by the way Halton Table Tennis Club:

- Use exhibition events/try it sessions

to engage the local community

- Extensive volunteer development including the production of volunteer plans and a mentoring scheme for young volunteers
- Identifying training skills and opportunities for volunteers

The VIP Recognition Awards are held annually and are part of Sport England's work to help sports clubs support their volunteers.

There are nine regional awards and the winners of these go through to the National VIP Awards which this year are being held at Queens Club, London on 11 December 2001.

Sports clubs can join the Volunteer Investment Programme for free and members receive a welcome pack and quarterly mailings, as well as being invited to training events and seminars. For more information contact the VIP Hotline on 0800 363 373.

HALL & ADONELYTE WIN SOUTH OF ENGLAND JUNIOR

Dominic Hall & Egley Adonelyte win South of England Junior Jarvis Sports Grand Prix.

Dominic Hall was very much the outstanding player at the South Of England Junior 3 Star Open Jarvis Sport Grand Prix played at Trinity School, Croydon over the weekend, easily beating his Kent colleague

Stephen Head 11-6, 11-2, 11-8 to take the junior boys singles. The new starlet of London Progress, Lithuanian hitter Egley Adonelyte won the junior girls singles but she did not have it easy in her 11-5, 11-7, 6-11, 8-11, 11-3 victory over Welsh combination bat player Laura Hall. Full report in TTN Extra.

CHESHIRE VETS OPEN

Brian Johns & Jan Dunning won Mid Cheshire Veterans Open.

Top seeded Brian Johns (Cheshire) and Jan Dunning (Worcestershire) won the mens and womens super groups respectively, in the first Mid Cheshire Veterans Open championships held at Egerton Youth Centre, Knutsford last month.

SYED'S FIRST GAME IN AN INTERNATIONAL

Matthew Syed, the 31 year old three times Commonwealth champion and four times England national champion played for the first time in an international competition since retaining his Commonwealth mens singles title in New Delhi on 20th April, when he competed in the Danish Open International Pro Tour event at Farum.

Matthew was pleased with his performance in reaching the men's singles last 32 at the Danish Open. Syed had a comfortable last 64, 11-4,

WOODY'S World

WHAT a fantastic tournament the Western Open Butterfly Grand Prix Major was, on the first weekend of December in Bath, see 'Stop Press' report on page 12.

Three hundred competitors competed, with another 30 wanting to play.

This is the biggest entry ever for a Grand Prix, proving the concept of the Grand Prix, is the format that the grass roots players want.

This point was proved with the banded events on the Saturday being standing room only.

Due to a massive contribution of copy for this issue of Table Tennis News, the next edition being February 2002, some articles had to be omitted.

I would like to take this opportunity of wishing all our readers at home and abroad, a very Happy Christmas and a successful and healthy New Year.

John Wood

11-4, 11-6, 11-8 victory over world No.49 ranked Russian Alexei Smirnov, before succumbing 13-15, 8-11, 8-11, 6-11 to the sharp hitter from Taiwan Chuan Chih-Yuan, who is world No.21.

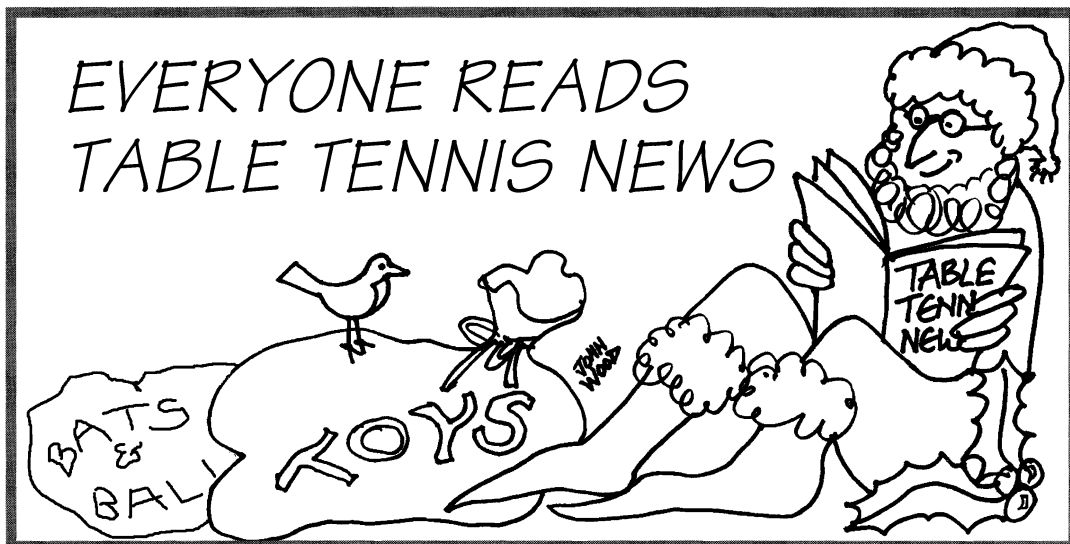
"I am pleased that I showed some form and it is a good boost for the next few months in the build up to the Commonwealth Games in Manchester next year. It shows that I can still play at a world class level."

This win in Farum automatically ensures Syed's return to his No.1 spot on the England list.

BRITISH UNIVERSITIES INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

16th/17th February 2002, Warwick University

Entry Forms for these championships were sent out at the end of November 2001. The closing date for entry is 31st January. The university contact point is either the Student Union sports manager or the secretary of the Athletic Union. Students can also go direct to BUSA through Jo Kirk at: Joanne@busa.org.uk or 02073 578555. Students who completed a university course in July 2001 are not eligible.



COMMONWEALTH GAMES ENTRY BOOST



**Alan Ransome OBE,
Chairman of the ETTA**

PRELIMINARY entries for the table tennis competitions in the Commonwealth Games are encouraging, with 18 men's and 17 women's teams for the team events, and with 117 men and 90 women for the individual competitions. This is larger than is normally received for the single sport Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships. The entry for the individual events also show several players from countries that have not entered the team events.

Most of the strong teams are amongst the list, including England, Canada, India, Singapore, Nigeria and Wales in the men's, and holders Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Wales, Malaysia and England in the women's event. The main omission currently from the team events is Scotland who have indicated that they are entering players in the singles events. In every national Commonwealth Games team there is strong competition by the sports for membership as the places in the official squads have been capped at the same level as the last Games in Kuala Lumpur and extra sports, including table tennis, have been added to the list.

Ticket sales for the table tennis are going well and early indications are that three of the final events are already over subscribed. Ticket information is available from: 0870 162 2002.

PROPOSAL TO ADD UNDER 12 SECTION TO THE NATIONAL TRIALS

Following discussions with Mike Prior, Coaching Chairman for the



JANE BLACKBURN (left) presents the 'Lifetime of Service Award' to wheelchair sport and table tennis, to IRIS MOSS

West Midlands Region and other members of the Coaching committee, proposals are being considered by the Competitions Department to increase the number of players in the cadet events in the National Trials and add an Under 12 section in the country, regional and national trials. It is becoming more important to recognise real talent in the under 12 age category and if the Competitions Department are able to add this category to the competition, this process will certainly be enhanced.

Also under consideration is a proposal to increase the number of cadet girls in the national trials and the possibility of expanding all sections to the same number of participants as the junior boys.

Soren Ahlen, ETTA Performance Director, is planning to re-introduce a national under 12 squad in the near future which is likely to be based on the under 12 ranking list incorporating the best under 11 and under 10 players, in addition to the under

12's. A squad of 15 boys and 15 girls, 5 from each age category is envisaged in the first instance. The likely venue for the training will be at the National Centre in Nottingham.

SPECIAL LIFETIME AWARD FOR IRIS MOSS

The enormous contribution given by Iris Moss of Middlesex to disabled sport was recognised by the British Wheelchair Sports Foundation when Iris was awarded a special Lifetime of Service Award to wheelchair sport and table tennis. Iris received her award and certificate at the Anniversary dinner of the Foundation, recognising the 44 years of service that she has given to disabled sport since she first became involved at Stoke Mandeville in 1957. In addition, Iris, now age 82, is the Life Vice

President of the Middlesex Table Tennis Association for whom she has been Secretary and Treasurer for 52 years. This has included the time when Middlesex organised one of the leading senior tournaments in the country, the Middlesex Open, which drew a prestigious entry from both England and abroad. Iris remains in post in Middlesex and still carries out an enormous amount of work for table tennis. Few people can have given so much to the sport over such a long period of time!

DARLINGTON WIN SPORTSMATCH BEST SCHOOLS AWARD

Another recent award for table tennis was won by the Darlington Table Tennis Club and Jarvis Sports in the schools category of the Sportsmatch Scheme that encourages businesses to become involved in grass roots sport. The Darlington Club, sponsored by Jarvis sports, provided coaching and competition opportunities to 30 primary schools in the County Durham area. The award was presented to Keith Wilson of Darlington and Reg Thompson of Jarvis Sports by the Sports Minister, Richard Caborn at the Sportsmatch dinner in Leeds.

HALTON TABLE TENNIS CLUB WINS VOLUNTEER AWARD

The Halton Table Tennis Club who won the CCPR Club of the Year Award last year, are the

FROM THE CHAIR - 2

North West Region winners of the Sport England Volunteer Investment programme (VIP) Recognition Awards for 2001. The Cheshire based club have come first past the post in the UN International Year of the Volunteer for the quality training and support that they give to the 26 volunteers who are attached to the club.

The presentation took place at the Robin Park Arena on 22 November when club chairman, Karen Tonge, received a cheque for £1,000 on behalf of the club. Sport England were especially impressed by the way that the Halton Table Tennis Club had used exhibition events and Come & Try It sessions to engage the local community, and had carried out extensive volunteer development including the production of volunteer plans and a monitoring scheme for young volunteers.

The VIP Recognition Awards are held annually as part of Sport England work to help sports clubs support their volunteers. Halton will now go through to the National VIP Awards which are to be held later in the year.

MORE SPORTS FACILITIES FROM THE NEW OPPORTUNITY FUND

The New Opportunities Fund that provides Lottery funding for education, health and environment projects which help create lasting improvements to the quality of life particularly in disadvantaged communities, have announced that they will commit a gross total of £581m to a PE and sports programme in England over the next three years. This funding will be used to support projects designed to bring a step change in the provision of sporting facilities for young people and for the community by modernising existing and building new indoor and outdoor facilities for community and school use.

Each local education authority throughout England will act as a lead organiser for grant aid

schemes in their area and each local education authority will receive funding based on the size of the school population and the level of deprivation within the local authority area.

This is an opportunity for table tennis clubs to link with local schools who are being provided with either improved or new facilities under this programme. The programme was launched in November and the local education authorities and their partners are developing applications between 23 November and 22 April 2002. It is, therefore, important that any table tennis club who are hoping to make use of additional school sports facilities that this scheme will provide, contact their ETTA Regional Development Officer in the very near future to discuss their plans. In case of difficulty the club should contact either the ETTA Director of Development, Diccon Gray, or the ETTA Facilities Officer, Paul Baker, via the Association headquarters in Hastings.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

As 2001 draws to a close, I would like to take this opportunity of wishing all members of the Association and readers of Table Tennis News a Very Happy Christmas and a Successful New Year. 2002 will be historic in table tennis terms as the year in which the sport entered the Commonwealth Games. See you in Manchester!

Alan Ransome, ETTA Chairman

SPORT ENGLAND NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE APPOINTED

THE new chief executive at Sport England will be David Moffett, one of the top sports administrators in the southern hemisphere.

David joins Sport England after holding several influential sporting positions in the past 10 years, most recently as chief executive of the National Rugby League of Australia. Before that, he was chief executive of the New Zealand Rugby Football Union (the All Blacks) and also SANZAR - South African, New Zealand and Australian Rugby.

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Tessa Jowell, today confirmed the appointment of David Moffett. Speaking in support of the appointment, Sports Minister Richard Caborn said: "The new regional structure that Sport England will have needs a dynamic leader and David will fill that role perfectly. He has an impressive track record of achievement in sport and the wider world and I look forward to working closely with him at such an exciting and challenging time for sport in England."

Trevor Brooking, chair of Sport England, congratulated David on his appointment. He said: "I look forward to working closely with David who has a proven track record in sport and business management."

"This is one of the most challenging yet rewarding jobs in British sport, with the potential to make a huge difference to many people's lives."

On accepting the post of chief executive at Sport England, David said his return to England would be a homecoming. He said: "I was born in Doncaster and have always retained a deep interest in English sport."

"Since moving to Australia, I have considered myself extremely privileged to have been involved with international sporting organisations and this has in turn, allowed me to work with English officials in different sports."

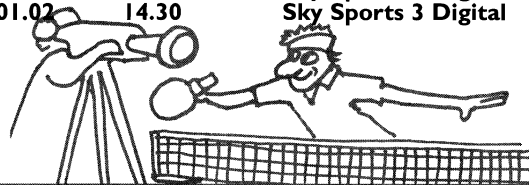
"I've had the chance to observe some of the issues they face and to compare these with issues faced in other countries. I am very much looking forward to returning to England and to contributing to what is a vital programme for English sport."

Some of the challenges facing David will be the management of a £300 million budget, continued progression of Sport England as a strategic influencer of sport development and as an enabler of sport both nationally and at a regional level.

It is hoped that David will take up his appointment in January 2002.

TABLE TENNIS on TV

Event	Date of Transmission	Time of Transmission	Channel
Danish Open	18.12.01	17.30	Sky Sports 3 Digital
Danish Open	18.12.01	21.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
Danish Open	23.12.01	12.30	Sky Sports 2 Digital
Danish Open	24.12.01	03.30	Sky Sports 2 Digital
ITTF Pro Tour Finals (China)	26.01.02	22.30	Sky Sports 3 Digital
ITTF Pro Tour Finals (China)	27.01.02	14.30	Sky Sports 3 Digital



POSTBAG

I AM A TINY PING PONG BALL

MY daughter recently had an in-house team building seminar at work and at the end of the day everyone had to choose a subject on which they would do a 5 minute presentation the following day.

My daughter chose 'A Day in the Life of a Table Tennis Ball'. So she came home that evening full of great expectations of father, who has been known to play the game (3-4 nights a week).

However it was her more poetic mother, who seldom has a kind word for our game, who composed the following in 10-15 minutes.

A Day in the Life of Me

I am a tiny ping pong ball
I'm very small and light
I come in several colours
But mostly I am white
I'm knocked across the table
By a silly little bat
One side of which is pimped, red
The other side is black
I ping across the table
I bounce over the net
And if you get the serve wrong
The umpire calls a 'let'
The points go up to twenty one
But sometimes it is more
The winner is the player
Who gets the highest score
My life is very painful
I get bashed about the head
And if I could choose a better life
I'd be a bat instead!
Alan Burgess

BACK NUMBERS OF TTN FOR SALE

I HAVE issues No.105 (October 1979) onwards of Table Tennis News, for sale to any interested party.

All are in mint condition and include the ETTA ranking list booklets where applicable in the older editions.

All offers will be considered, however the person must be able to collect, although I would consider delivering myself within reason.

Please contact John Wood, the Editor of Table Tennis News, for my full address and telephone number.

*Chris Spedding
Preston, Lancashire*

A REAL WINNER

I FELT that I must write to congratulate Peter Baldwin and all at Sussex County Table Tennis Association who were involved in the concept, planning and realisation of the South of England Cadets Championships, on 3rd November 2001 at Westergate.

When Dane and Clare from Broad Oak Table Tennis Club were invited to compete in this event I had no idea what to expect on the day and was simply overjoyed that protege of our club had been selected to take part. Well, I must say that the whole event was simply magnificent and made me proud to be associated with Sussex Table Tennis Association.

I overheard on the day, many similar comments from coaches and parents from all teams. Even the last minute unavailability of the Huntingdon team was very well overcome by the substitution of the very able and eventual winner's, Surrey.

Yes, it would have been wonderful for Sussex to have won the championships, but both of our teams played well and much experience was gained and I saw smiling faces and very competitive table tennis all day, so in my view, the event was the real winner.

*Paul Dunstall
Heathfield, East Sussex*

THE DIM AND DISTANT PAST

IN reading Ken Muhr's report on the ETTA National Teaching and Training Conference, I was amused by the comments of Julie Piffold about the difficulty of helping wheelchair players, and it brought back an incident of long ago.

In the dim and distant past (early 1960's) when I was closely associated with wheelchair table tennis, I arranged for coaching sessions to be held in the table tennis room at my office. The building (in Russell Square) was easy to get into and at that time there were a lot of wheelchair table tennis players in and around Central London. We had a very "elite" group of coaches, including Margaret (Fry) Hiorns, Laurie Landry and Di Rowe. On one

COURTSIDE

by John Woodford

• **CHESTER BARNES** - Even those who do not follow National Hunt racing, must occasionally have seen the pinnacles of success reached over the years by Chester. As a sort of Chief Executive to Martin Pipe, whose stables are by far the most successful in Britain. If only Chester's racing skills had been converted in table tennis, Chester might have been a world champion as he is in the racing game.

• **HELEN LOWER** - When I am reporting tournaments around the world, I usually keep to straight reporting; on how a situation seems to me. That was the case at Potters last June at the Grand Prix finals when Helen faced a huge wait and a strong group and then walked-out.

• **WHEN** this sort of thing happens, my usual procedure is to check with the officials, which I did, the player having gone home. No official could solve the mystery. Anyone is entitled to walk out of course, but it would avoid the mystery angle had she made it clear why she went home.

• **MORE** questions for Helen on the Isle of Man. Again, I am only reporting what I saw and all the spectators I spoke to were sure that Katy Parker's match point against Helen was six inches off, but an edge ball claimed by Helen fooled the umpire taking Helen into the final of the Home Countries womens singles championship. Again, no comment, just fact.

• **MANY**, many people in this sport do not understand why we in England are always struggling for money. At the recent German Open I learnt that Germany has 700,000 registered players all paying about £7 to the DTTB - total nearly £5 million - part of their annual income. We have just 40,000 registered players - the poor relation; we are not alone of course, other nations struggle financially, even Sweden.

• **THE** singles events are the most important on the Grand Prix circuit. I can see no reason whatever why the singles have to be left to last, some starting as late as 4 pm. When the singles finals are on almost all the crowd have gone home between 7 and 9 pm.

• **THERE** is no sense in the argument of keeping the best to last - the crowds are gone, the players are frequently exhausted, not to mention the officials with their two twelve-hour days in succession. Doubles could be last.

• **MATTHEW SYED** - Our man on the edge of a political career with the Labour Party and still writing feature articles for The Times, will soon need to win a lot more computer points if he is to stay on top of the England men's ranking list.

• **THE** second threat to the Syed top branch occupation comes because he has not played for points since last April in New Delhi. Four stars against his name confirm the position.

• **MATTHEW** was taken off the list, but he is expected to be back on top in January, following his entry in the ITTF Pro Tour Danish Open in Farum.

• **THE THUNDERER** ("The Times") get very worried when Matthew moves down ranking lists, so much so that they telephoned on one occasion in Japan when they spotted my story that Gareth was on top of the England list. He was there for a fortnight in early October but then lost the vital points on the Isle of Man against the Scottish top men Euan Walker and Gavin Rumgay.

continued on page 8

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR continued

occasion when Di was trying to make a wheelchair player do a shot which was not possible when sitting down, we took one of the girls out of her wheelchair and made Di sit in it, with the instruction that she must not put her feet on the foot-tray as it would give her the balance that the paraplegics did not have. I had a phone call from Di the next day to say that she had pains in muscles she did not know she had!

*Iris Moss
Hendon, London*

EXCELLENT NEW VENUE

VAL and I recently participated in the first Sportsbreak TTC Briar Mid Cheshire Veterans 2 Star Open Championship in Knutsford. I would like to thank, on behalf of the many players, the organisers Mike Johns and Gail McCulloch, Referee Ken Armson and the Egerton Youth Centre Manager Mike Walker for this well run event.

It was an excellent "new" venue with superb conditions, new lighting and refreshments.

I am convinced that more of these small Open Tournaments should be run covering Junior, Senior and Veterans. Many players who took part were not only playing in their first Open Event and hence had no rating but the Top Groups of both Ladies and Men were of a very high standard. Well done to all.

*Alex Murdoch
Letchworth, Hertfordshire*

OLDEST COMPETITIVE PLAYER IN BRITAIN

IN the above article in TTN Extra (October 2001 edition), Ken Muhr mentioned that I moved from Manchester in 1937. I trust that you do not mind if I correct this. Actually I commenced playing league table in 1937. I did not move from Manchester until 1966.

With regard to 'Famous people who played table tennis', published in the same issue, I remember chatting to Harold Evans (a club reporter at the

Manchester Evening News at the time), who played in one of the YMCA teams at that time. We did not have the luxury of changing rooms. We arrived in our 'civvies' and changed on the dais in the table tennis room, before going to our respective matches.

This occasion was probably in the 'Sixties'.

Harold Evans was very keen on the game and is now a member of VETTS.

*Dennis Clare
Steyning, West Sussex*

CONFUSION

IN the October Issue No 280 Judy Rogers the National Development Officer for People with Disabilities states: "There appears to be some confusion regarding the application of rules when disabled players are competing at local league level." She goes on to say there are two major differences in the rules that apply to wheelchair users only and that currently leagues/counties may or may not adopt the rules. I would be very interested to know what authority she believes supports that

statement. She ends by encouraging more leagues to make provision within their rules to accommodate disabled players. Again on what or whose authority does she make that plea. Far from clarifying confusion as she claims she has created confusion where none should have existed.

It is not really correct to say the ETTA normally follows the rules set by the ITTF. Under ETTA Rule 44.1 (2000/2001) all competitive table tennis under the jurisdiction of the ETTA must be played under ETTA Approved Laws and under Rule 44.4 the Approved Laws are those determined by the ITTF. Nowhere in the ITTF Rules or Regulations is any divergence of the Laws authorised for any particular type of player with the one exception in the Laws themselves that the requirements for a good service may be relaxed if compliance is prevented by physical disability.

It is irrelevant for the purpose of this particular question, but under Rules 44.6.3 and 44.7.1 a General Meeting of the ETTA or the National Council may resolve that there may be a specified divergence from the ITTF Laws in respect of either a particular event or a specified class of event. To allow some players in a Local League to play under different Laws from others in the same Local League would clearly be unconstitutional as the first object of the ETTA as set out in Rule 3.1 is To lay down and secure the adoption of uniform laws of the game of Table Tennis in England. There may be a strong case for arguing that the decision taken at the SGM last June to allow 21 up by some Leagues and Counties, and not others was unconstitutional but again it is irrelevant for the purposes of this question.

Judy Rogers states it is not the case that to be allowed to consecutive hit during doubles gives the wheel chair users a clear advantage. Really! I have to disagree strongly with her. I have played in many doubles matches in a Local League, over a great many years, where the opponents were in wheelchairs and I have always turned a blind eye to the fact that either player would strike the ball. There is no doubt at all that this in itself always gave them a considerable advantage. Judy Rogers makes no mention of the fact that a standing player may be partnering a wheel chair player. I have played against such a pair and the standing player, who was considerably better than the wheelchair player, took all returns that were wide of the table

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STOCKTON-ON-TEES JUNIOR SELECT CHAMPIONSHIPS

BLEAKLEY WALKS TIGHTROPE

Lancashire's **ADAM BLEAKLEY** walked a tightrope to be the surprise winner of the Stockton on Tees Junior Select Championship at Thornaby Pavilion on Sunday, 18th November. Bleakley's first unexpected win was over Craig Bryant of Devon at 11-8 in the 4th game in the quarter finals. Then the Lancashire star defeated the top seed, Cleveland's Bryn Drinkhall after being two games to one down in the semi-final. Bleakley won 11-8 in the decider, writes Alan Ransome.

In the final Bleakley was again two games to one down against Paul Drinkhall before clinching the title again at 11-8 in the fifth game. To reach the final, Paul Drinkhall also enjoyed a good run with wins over Peter Cleminson of Essex, Daniel Horner of Cheshire and Louis Rosenthal of Lancashire.

In the Girls Singles Georgina Walker of Nottingham played some very solid table tennis. To take the title she overcame the difficult style of Kate Steward of Somerset to win 11-5 in the 4th game in the final.

Georgina reached the final with a series of comfortable wins against Kelly Sibley of Warwickshire and Karin Eggar of Scotland.

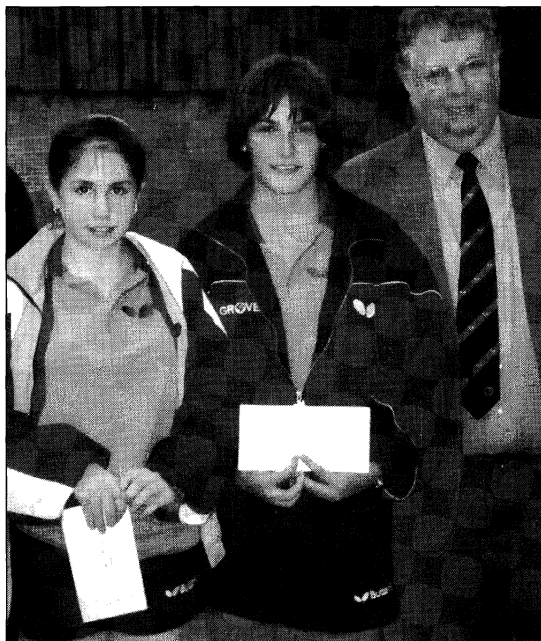
The Under 14 Boys singles was won by Middlesex's Israeli International, Niv Bogen who beat Adam Bleakley in five games in the semi-final and Darius Knight of Surrey in four games in the final. Knight overturned a defeat on the previous day in the Under 12 final beating Paul Drinkhall in three games in the semi final.

The Girls Cadet singles was won by the much improved Kelly Sibley of Warwickshire who defeated Abigail Embling of Essex and Lauren Spink of Norfolk both in straight games to clinch the title comfortably. Lauren Springthorpe of Lincolnshire was the comfortable winner of the Under 12 Girls Singles beating Scotland's Rebecca Russell in straight games in the final.

The team events on the Saturday ran much more to form as the Ormesby A team of Bryn Drinkhall and Craig Bryant beat the club's B team of Martyn Clarke and Daniel Horner 3 - 0 in the final. The Girls team event was won by the top two singles seeds, Kate Steward and Georgina Walker who represented



Stockton-on-Tees Deputy Mayor JEAN O'DONNELL and Assistant CLAIRE LAWS made the presentations with Cleveland County Chairman COLIN DAVIDSON to (top picture) Junior Boys winner ADAM BLEAKLEY and runner-up PAUL DRINKWELL, and (above) Junior Girls winner GEORGINA WALKER and runner-up KATE STEWARD



ETTA Chairman ALAN RANSOME presents the Cadet Girls Team prize to LAUREN SPINK and KELLY SIBLEY

Longshytan BTK. The team of Manchester Diamonds, Tim Yarnell and Adam Bleakley beat

Ormesby A 3 - 1 in the final of the Cadet Team event. Darius Knight did well to beat Tim Yarnell in three

straight games, but Yarnell recovered to beat Paul Drinkhall 13 - 11 in the deciding match to take the title. Wright Hassall, represented by Lauren Spink and Kelly Sibley scored a straight sets win over the Eclipse team of Lauren Springthorpe and Gemma Yarnley to win the Cadet Girls team final.

The Championships were organised by Cleveland County Table Tennis Association and supported at Thornaby Pavilion by Stockton Sports Development, a division of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Education, Leisure & Cultural Services Department. Presentations were made on Saturday by Cleveland County Chairman, Colin Davison, and ETTA Chairman, Alan Ransome, whilst the Stockton-on-Tees Deputy Mayor Jean O'Donnell and Assistant Claire Laws, made the presentations with Colin Davison, on the Sunday.

SINGLES RESULTS

Under 12 Boys Singles
FINAL: Paul Drinkhall (Cv) bt Darius Knight (Sy) 6, -9, -9, 6, 7.

Under 12 Girls Singles
FINAL: Lauren Springthorpe (Li) bt Rebecca Russell (SCO) 1, 6, 4.

Cadet Boys Singles
S/F: Darius Knight (Sy) bt Paul Drinkhall (Cv) 4, 6, 5; Niv Bogen (Mi) bt Adam Bleakley (La) 10, 5, -8, -7, 8.

Cadet Girls Singles
S/F: Kelly Sibley (Wa) bt Abigail Embling (E) 6, 9, 7; Lauren Spink (Nk) bt Laura Rungay (SCO) 4, 6, 9.

Grade 1 Boys Singles
FINAL: Andrew Leighton (Du) bt Daniel Rees (E) 3, 13, -8, 9.

Grade 1 Girls Singles
FINAL: Elizabeth Dennett (Ch) bt Lucy Weil (E) -9, 8, 7, 6.

Junior Boys Singles
S/F: Adam Bleakley (La) bt Bryn Drinkhall (Cv) 7, -11, -9, 9, 8; Paul Drinkhall (Cv) bt Louis Rosenthal (La) 8, 8, -6, -7, 7.

Junior Girls Singles
S/F: Kate Steward (So) bt Clare Langford (Ch) 3, -6, 6; Georgina Walker (Ng) bt Kelly Sibley (Wa) 5, 3, 4.

TEAM RESULTS

Cadet Boys Team – FINAL Manchester Diamonds bt Ormesby 'A' 3-1

Cadet Girls Team – FINAL Wright Hassall bt Eclipse 3-0

Junior Boys Team – FINAL Ormesby 'A' bt Ormesby 'B' 3-0

Junior Girls Team – FINAL Longshytan BTK bt Team Peniel 'A' 3-0

BRITISH LEAGUE

ESSOMBA UNBEATEN

WITH the British League Premier Division having reached round six of its fourteen week season there seems little doubt where the title is heading and London Progress I look odds-on favourites to become Champions for the fourth successive time, writes Steve Kerns.

Perhaps a more interesting question might be who will become the first player to get the better of the ever present Marco Essomba who remains undefeated so far. Progress's level of domination in recent weeks has been so absolute that the individual games they have lost have made more interesting reading than those they have won. In their 12-2 win over Barnet in week three both Cris Sladden and Marco Essomba beat Gergely Urban; dummy-ranked number nine in England yet it was Urban who took the Man-of-the-Match Award. This illustrates perfectly the standards Progress have set themselves. Against third-placed Wellow House (Progress again won 12-2) it was the turn of their reserve Eli Baraty to shine as he beat both Dave Gannon and Andy Wignall, great wins for a player ranked 116 in England at the time. Sladden and Essomba were both unbeaten again whilst Lee Neil will be delighted with his 11-9 in the fifth win over Jason Sugrue.

Darlington moved into second place after their impressive 9-5 win over BATTS Team Peniel. Darlington's no. 1 Fabio Mantegazza took his three singles but Darlington no. 2 Shi Guang will be disappointed to have missed out in the fifth end against Neil Charles, John Holland and Chris Jamieson. Darlington made certain of their victory by winning both doubles sets. Darlington had

previously put their sluggish start to the season firmly behind them with a 11-3 win over Barnet. Sussex import Ritchie Venner took the Man-of-the-Match Award winning his three singles and accounting for Gergely Urban on the way.

The battle between the four teams in the lower half of the table looks a fascinating one (certainly a lot more interesting than that at the top of the table!) and JAGS will take heart now they have signed Lorestas Trumpauskas from Horsham. JAGS had been on the receiving end of a stunning 13-1 defeat against a rampant OLOP side with Justin Goodall, Dave Barr and Robert Pountney all playing superbly. Goodall opened proceedings with a 11-9 in-the-fifth win over Clive Carthy in the first match and from that point on OLOP just couldn't do a thing wrong.

Barnet still only have four points to their name despite becoming the first club to beat BATTS Team Peniel in a match which stood level at 3-3 before Barnet surged clear to win 9-5. Gergely Urban's hard-fought four set win over John Holland and a 12-10 in the fifth success for Nicky McKoy over Joey Kennedy sealed Peniel's fate. Byng Hall are currently bottom and although they continue to compete well against everyone they will be wary that they have they haven't won a match since week three when they eclipsed JAGS 8-6. Adrian Moore took the Man-of-the Match award by being the only player to stay undefeated whilst Mark Romano excelled beating both Clive Carthy and Jerome Jonah.

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PREMIER DIVISION	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
London Progress	6	6	-	-	68	16	12
Darlington	6	4	-	2	49	35	8
Wellow House School	6	4	-	2	45	39	8
BATTS Peniel	6	3	-	3	38	46	6
OLOP Kingfisher	6	1	2	3	38	46	4
Barnet	6	1	2	3	31	53	4
JAGS	6	1	1	4	34	50	3
Byng Hall Farningham Print	6	1	1	4	33	51	3
DIVISION ONE NORTH							
Seasiders	4	3	1	-	26	6	7
Derwent	4	3	1	-	24	8	7
Ormesby	4	2	2	-	19	13	6
Darlington II	4	1	3	-	20	12	5
Norwich Todd Foxwood	4	2	-	2	13	19	4
Kingshurst	4	1	-	3	10	22	2
Grantham	4	-	1	3	10	22	1
Coventry	4	-	-	4	6	26	-
DIVISION ONE SOUTH							
Progress II	4	3	1	-	22	10	7
Horsham	4	2	2	-	21	11	6
Cippenham	4	2	2	-	20	12	6
Barnet II	4	1	3	-	18	14	5
DML Plymouth	4	-	3	1	15	17	3
Northampton	4	-	2	2	11	21	2
Ellenborough	4	1	-	3	11	21	2
PSP Westinsure	4	-	1	3	10	22	1
DIVISION TWO NORTH							
Halton Croda	4	4	-	-	23	9	8
Potteries	4	3	-	1	22	10	6
Uxbridge Burton	4	2	1	1	20	12	5
Dewsbury	4	2	1	1	19	13	5
Darlington III	4	2	-	2	13	19	4
Wellow House II	4	1	1	2	16	16	3
Derwent II	4	-	1	3	12	20	1
Manchester	4	-	-	4	3	29	-
DIVISION TWO SOUTH							
De Vere	4	4	-	-	23	9	8
Progress III	4	3	1	-	20	12	7
Fellows C.	4	3	1	-	19	13	7
Byng Hall F.P. II	4	2	-	2	18	14	4
KCD Stiga	4	1	1	2	15	17	3
Horsham II	4	-	1	3	13	19	1
Ashford	4	-	1	3	11	21	1
Hastings	4	-	1	3	9	23	1
DIVISION THREE NORTH							
Oakbank	4	4	-	-	29	3	8
Kendal	4	3	-	1	24	8	6
Clarks	4	3	-	1	24	8	6
Seasiders II	4	3	-	1	20	12	6
Barrow	4	1	-	3	11	21	2
Grove II	4	1	-	3	9	23	2
Dewsbury II	4	-	1	3	6	26	1
Darlington IV	4	-	1	3	5	27	1
DIVISION THREE MIDLANDS							
Grove	4	3	1	-	24	8	7
Bedford	4	3	1	-	22	10	7
Elgre	4	2	2	-	18	14	6
Birmingham Uni	4	2	-	2	15	17	4
Woodfield	4	1	1	2	16	16	3
Rotherham	4	-	2	2	12	20	2
Kingshurst	4	1	-	3	11	21	2
NT Cars	4	-	1	3	10	22	1
DIVISION THREE SOUTH							
Oxford F.C.	4	4	-	-	26	6	8
Cippenham II	4	3	-	1	22	10	6
Horsham III	4	3	-	1	19	13	6
Batts Team Peniel II	4	2	-	2	14	18	4
Progress IV	4	2	-	2	13	18	4
Ipswich	4	1	-	3	14	18	2
Byng Hall III	4	1	-	3	12	20	2
York Gardens	4	-	-	4	7	24	-
DIVISION THREE SOUTH & WEST							
Guildford	4	4	-	-	25	7	3
EBS-Orange II	4	3	-	1	22	10	6
Progress V	4	1	2	1	16	16	4
PSP II	4	1	2	1	14	18	4
JAGS II	4	1	1	2	15	17	3
OLOP II	4	1	1	2	14	18	3
Ashford II	4	1	-	3	12	20	2
KCD II	4	1	-	3	10	22	2

BRITISH LEAGUE TABLES

ANOTHER DERBYSHIRE DOUBLE

STOP PRESS

ALMOST at the half-way mark, the Butterfly 2001-2002 Grand Prix circuit now has five separate winners. No-one has won it twice, so far, bidding for the mens singles crown, writes John Woodford.

At Bath Leisure Centre on 1st/2nd December, a record 300 players competed on 28 tables - a massive control task for West Country stalwarts Tim Harris and Les Smith. Alan Cooke and Linda March were the two seeds who pulled out. This left the way clear for Bradley Billington after missing match points against Alan at Newcastle. This time the popular Derbyshire coach came through after stopping Christian Hundhausen 3-1 and Marco Essomba 3-2.

Brad often loses opening games but then recovers ground, the sign of a good coach. In the final he narrowly lost the first game in a display of superb counter-hitting to Ryan Jenkins, but then sealed a 3-1 victory, 8, 7, 7.

In the other half Jenkins took out Nigel Eckersley and Abdul Wuraola 4,6,4.

Jason Sugrue had his best grand prix this season reaching the semis via Ritchie Venner and the Hungarian Gergely Urban. But the London Progress coach then found Jenkins too strong in the semis going under 8,10, 13.

NICOLA No.1
Nicola Deaton proved her position as England No.1 when despite concentrating on her university studies, lifted the womens singles title with a final round victory 4, 4, 10 against Dorka Nagy the tiny Hungarian who had her best grand prix tournament so far

Nicola had earlier eliminated Barbara Kiss in the semi-finals, whilst



NICOLA DEATON and BRADLEY BILLINGTON winners at Bath



BRADLEY BILLINGTON's Mother JACKIE (right) was in his corner at Bath

**Words by JOHN WOODFORD
Pictures by JOHN WOOD
in Bath**

Nagy pulled off the shock of the day defeating the Czech chopper Marketa Myskova 7, 8, -8, 9 in the other semi-final.

Kate Steward (Somerset) knocking on the door of the England No.1 junior spot, had her first win over Michele Cohen 11-5 in the fifth before losing gallantly to Nagy at 11-8 in the fifth game. That was in the quarters.

Nicola Deaton also won the womens doubles with Kate Steward against Kiss and Lindsey Thornton.

The surprise winners of the mens doubles final were Clive Carthy and

table, scattering paper all over the control area. He was pursued by the referee who red-carded him and called for security staff to remove him from the the centre.

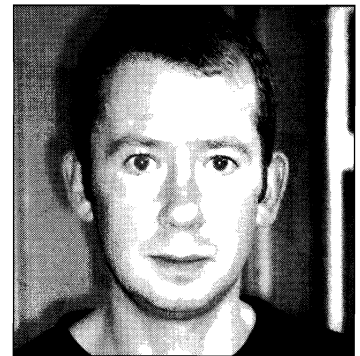
Governing bodies are sure to re-act to this gross behaviour violation as reports were sent in on the following day.

However, apart from this unsavoury episode by Ryan Owen it was a highly successful tournament. The finishes were near 10 pm on both days, not bad with that number of entries. One qualified umpire only most of the time, otherwise excellent organisation.

BRYANT & WALKER Under 21 CHAMPIONS

WEST country lad Craig Bryant followed up his success at the Clare Pengelly Grand Prix, by winning the Mens under 21 singles title beating Gavin Jones of Wales, 6, 3,-4, 8, writes John Wood.

Nottingham based Georgina Walker took the Womens under 21 crown defeating Cippenham super defender Gemma Chapman 7, 4, 2.



DOUBLE CHAMP.

Andrew Henry, pictured above, from Derbyshire, won both the Mens Band 5 and 6, before losing out in round 2 of the Mens singles to Kent's veteran hard bat 'Mr.Perpetual Motion' 67 year old Henry Buist.

NIGEL & JAN WIN VETERAN TITLES

Nigel Eckersley and Jan Dunning won the veteran titles, beating John Ranking and Jane Durham, respectively.

Neil Charles at 9 in the fifth against Billington and Matthew Kenny who is beginning to impress me.

RED CARD

Around lunch-time came a very nasty incident involving the Welsh squad player Ryan Owen. He arrived late and was disqualified. That brought a torrent of verbal abuse directed at referee Tim Harris including four-letter words and chairs being overturned. Owen moved away from control, then returned to appeal only to be turned away again. He re-acted by overturning the referee's control



POSTBAG continued

continued from page 8

and would never have been reached by either of two wheelchair users.

I would end by saying that in the ETTA we have specialists for dealing with the application of the Rules and specialists for dealing with the Laws of the Game. Official

announcements on such matters should be left to those specialists.

*John Freeman
Reading, Berkshire*

RULES ARE

RULES?

THE Grand Prix rules states "for grand prix major tournaments etta appointed umpires will be provide for the knock out rounds of the Sunday events". This certainly was not the case at the recent Grand Prix major tournament at Bath . In the past the organizing committee have cited the excuse that using umpires would prove too costly , however it is clearly stated that they would do so and thus they have gone back on their word . If as it has been stated that umpires were to be there then what happened is clearly unacceptable . However umpires should be used at all the grand prix tournaments to prevent incompetent players taking the place of qualified umpires . When it comes to the illogical conclusion from one player who attempted to umpire , that he was awarding the point to the other player despite the fact that he didn't see where the ball landed . It is not the players fault because disputes arise in any sport and it needs an independent umpire to make the final decision . The player umpires are already dejected at their earlier defeat and concentrate more on their long journey home than the actual game . If umpires were more frequent, then players would be allowed to concentrate more on playing table tennis and less on poor umpiring and the referees interfering in the game unnecessarily when in fact they have no authority to change the umpires ruling . It would be interesting to see factually the argument that umpires would prove too costly . Each event costs near to £10 now consider that there were at least 300 entries and on average each player paid for two events(in some cases more), this would mean that at least £6000 was raised . Surely this is far more than it costs to bring over 20 or 30 umpires solely for the Sunday afternoon . The money raised needs to be used to benefit the players enjoyment and not for these tournaments to be money raising ventures to pay the ETTA,

overheads .

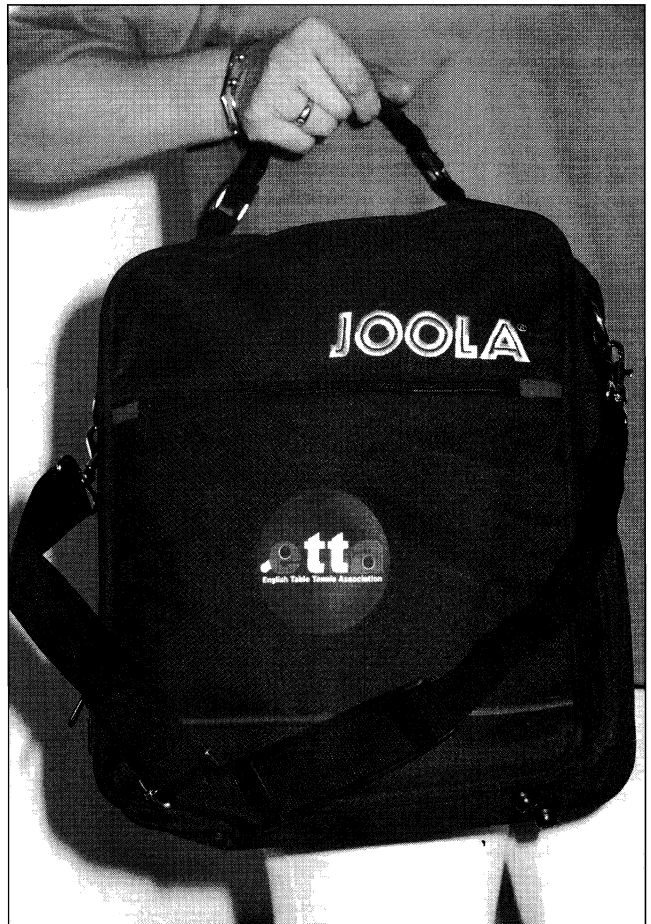
The event was made worse by the use of two halls , with the second smaller one being much worse than the first. The situation could have been made better if the players were informed that they would be playing in the second hall , as this would have enabled them to get used to the vastly different playing conditions. But sadly the organizing committee used, showed a distinct lack of initiative and players had to wait to be told which hall that they were in minutes before the main event commenced .

The organizers failed to stamp any authority on the tournament and at times it appeared that they were completely uncertain about the rules . An opponent of mine was treated totally unjustly when in the middle of our game he was told that because he had retired through injury in an earlier game , then he could not play in the knock out rounds . Surely those that had made this decision could have either waited for the match to have finished or told the players concerned in the ample time between the end of the groups and the start of the knockout stages . Instead an organizer thought it would be appropriate to walk on the court and call the game off . After making such a bold statement the committee took almost an hour to decide what they would do . Surely one of these well respected organizers had encountered a similar situation before, and even if they had not, the tournament or ITTF rule book must surely cover what happens in a situation like this . The decision was surely not up for debate and yet the organizers involved proceeded to tell both sides concerned what they wanted to hear with no mention of the actual rules. The players concerned filled an application form to compete in the tournament and not to make the rules of table tennis up . The organizers should face up to their inadequacies in this situation and feel ashamed for trying to make myself look bad . If the organization continues along these lines then how can we possibly expect table tennis to increase in stature when the solid organizational foundations are clearly lacking .

*Louis Rosenthal
Prestwich, Manchester*



BARGAIN BASEMENT



1. Those of you that were in Manchester for the World Veterans Championships will remember the shoulder bags that were given to all participants. They are in the style of a coaches bag, but they equally usable as a match bag.

After the event, the Championships logo was overprinted with the new ETTA Logo and there is still a stock for sale at a bargain price of £4.50 + p & p.

If you would like one, telephone Jackie Sands at the ETTA on 01424 722525. You can either have one posted to you, or to save the cost of p & p, Jackie can arrange for one to be taken to any ETTA Grand Prix or National Event where you can collect it.

2. The ETTA office in Hastings also has a limited quantity of Blue 1.8m surrounds for sale at an absolute bargain price of £5.00 each. Some of the surrounds have an ETTA logo whilst others have the Woolwich name on them.

Due to the bargain price, we cannot mail them and so they are available on a "buyer collects" basis, but if you are attending any ETTA Grand Prix or National event, it may be possible to have them delivered there. Also phone Jackie Sands, 01424 722525 to order.

CLASSIC FINAL BY COOKE & BILLINGTON

NEWCASTLE City Centre on a Saturday night when United have been at home is not the best place to be, as I found last year after dodging a street fight, half-naked teenagers queuing for the night clubs and then receiving dodgy phone calls at 3am, writes John Woodford.

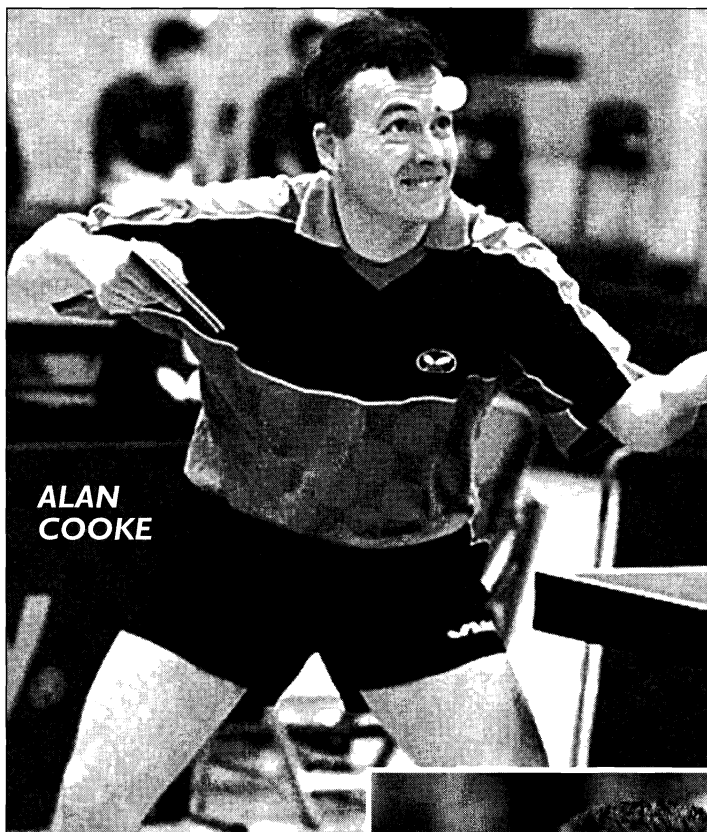
But this year things were different, United had no match so the city was behaving itself. At the Eldon Leisure Centre the 18-table venue on the third floor of the famous shopping centre, there was some quite superb table tennis culminating in a final, possibly, the best I have seen on the grand prix circuit between the Derbyshire coaches Alan Cooke and Bradley Billington.

Last season, Alan dominated the circuit with four victories. This time he racked up his first win but only at 13 in the fifth game of the nerve-tangling final against an inspired show by Bradley Billington who failed to clinch four match points. They both stood two or three paces back from the table swapping top-spin drives, exhibition style but laced with a great determination to win.

The double quote after the match was "the best game ever between us". Cooke added "I was lucky to survive four match points."

It was the sort of match to inspire young players, but the number of spectators to watch the final was the appallingly low number of less than a dozen!

Once again, I put this to the Grand Prix organising committee: The other racquet sports - lawn tennis (Wimbledon), squash and badminton do NOT leave the main event, the



ALAN COOKE

Words by JOHN WOODFORD in Newcastle

mens singles to last.

Players are "knackered" at the end of the day - so are some of the officials - after playing all through the other events, doubles, under 21s, etc., how can they perform as they would wish, exhausted and with almost no spectators? The singles final rounds should be played in the 4-5 pm area, not 10 o'clock at night when the fans and all the other players are on their homeward journeys.

NA LIU WINS WOMENS

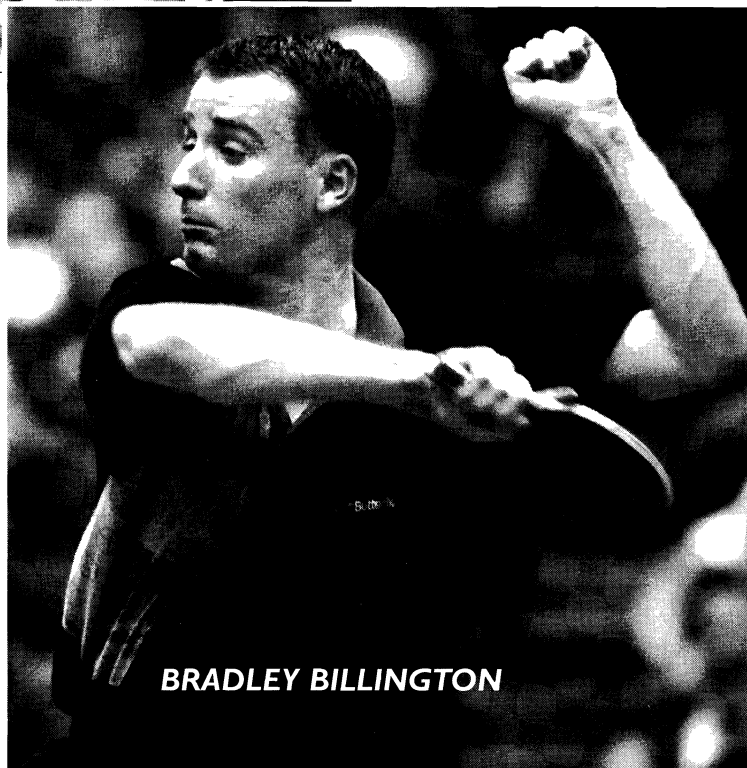
The womens events were poorly supported. The winner was the Chinese student Na Liu who is a

student at Queens University in Belfast and has been snapped by up Ireland.

She came through 6,6,3 against Louise Durrant in the quarters, but had a mighty struggle to defeat Helen Lower in the semis 9, -9, -7, 6, 10. This time it was Helen who was unlucky - she suffered an edge ball on the penultimate point of the match. The Chinese girl plays an orthodox attacking game plenty of top-spin with some powerful hitting - this became obvious in the final when she almost pulverised Barbara Kiss 3, 6, 7.

Not many thrash the Hungarian from North London, so I think we shall see a lot more of the Belfast student.

From an entry of about 170, there were some bright spots for the local players. Two of the prominent players in the north-east defeated Abdul Wuraola - Eddie Smith and Tony Gelder. Two of the Darlington players were in good form - David Meads aged only 12 and the 20-year-



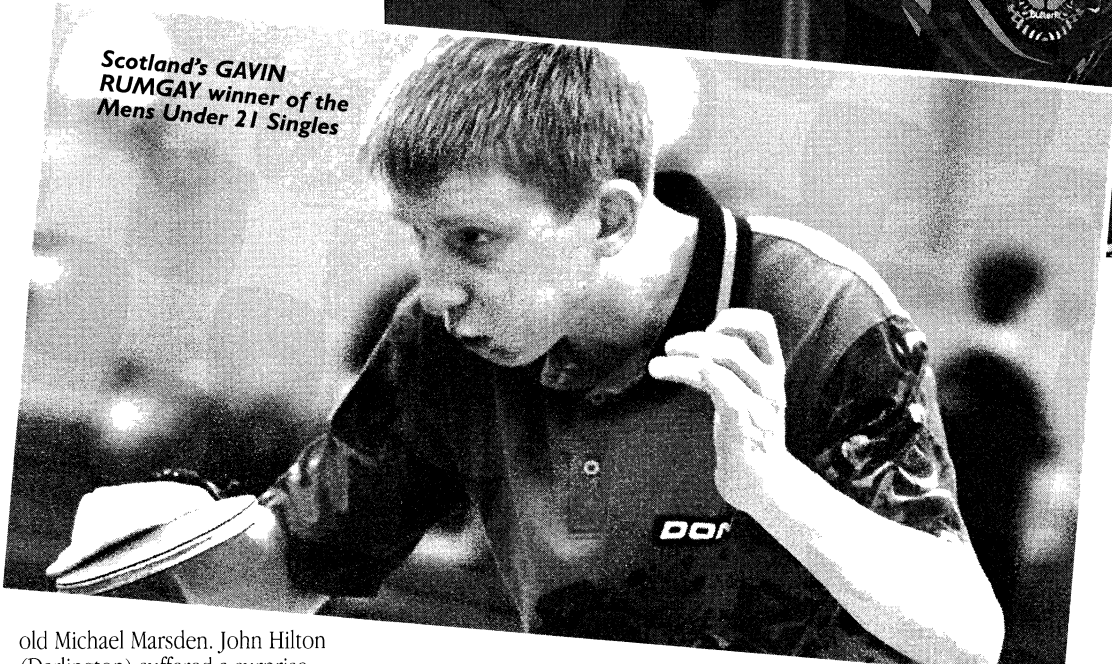
BRADLEY BILLINGTON



NIGEL ECKERSLEY (right) who won the **Mens Veteran Singles** title, beating his old rival **John Hilton**, in an epic final



Scotland's **GAVIN RUMGAY** winner of the **Mens Under 21 Singles**



RESULTS

Mens singles (from semi-finals): Alan Cooke (Derbys) bt Gergely Urban (Hungary) 11-4, 11-8, 11-3. Bradley Billington (Derbys) bt Marco Essomba (Surrey) 10-12, 11-3, 11-4, 11-4. **Final:** Alan Cooke (Derbys) bt Bradley Billington (Derbys) 6-11, 11-4, 9-11, 16-14, 15-13.

Womens singles (from semi-finals): Na Liu (Ireland) bt Helen Lower (Staffs) 11-7, 9-11, 7-11, 11-6, 12-10. Barbara Kiss (Herts) bt Dorka Nagy (Hungary) 11-9, 11-9, 12-10. **Final:** Na Liu (Ireland) bt Barbara Kiss (Herts) 11-3, 11-6, 11-7.

Mens doubles: Bradley Billington/Alan Cooke (Derbys) bt Marco Essomba (Surrey)/Jason Sugrue (Middlesex) 11-8, 11-6, 11-5.

Womens doubles: Helen Lower (Staffs)/Dorka Nagy (Hungary) bt Alice Howard (Cheshire)/Barbara Kiss (Herts) 6-11, 11-4, 11-7, 11-6.

Mens under 21 singles: Gavin Rungay (Scotland) bt Michael Marsden (Durham) 11-8, 11-7, 11-5.

Womens under 21 singles: Alice Howard (Cheshire) bt Siwan Davies (Wales) 11-13, 11-3, 11-5, 9-11, 11-5.

Veteran mens singles: Nigel Eckersley (Sussex) bt John Hilton (Lancs) 11-8, 11-3, 8-11, 6-11, 11-9.

Veteran womens singles: Jane Durham (Cleveland) bt Judy Morley (Gloucs) 11-4, 11-1, 11-3.

Mens band 1 singles: Eddie Smith (Northumberland) bt Christian Hundhausen (Middlesex) 11-9, 5-11, 11-8, 8-11, 11-9.

Mens band 2 singles: Euan Liddle (Scotland) bt Stephen Denny (Yorks) 11-2, 8-11, 11-3, 11-4.

Mens band 3 singles: James Russell (Scotland) bt Shaun Marples (Derbys) 11-8, 11-9, 11-8.

Mens band 4 singles: Shaun Bibby (Yorks) bt Ross Martin (Scotland) 11-8, 16-14, 6-11, 3-11, 11-6.

Mens band 5 singles: Andy Henry (Derbys) bt Roger Moss (Yorks) 11-3, 9-11, 11-3, 7-11, 11-9.

Mens band 6 singles: Andy Henry (Derbys) bt Deepak Arora (Lancs) 11-2, 11-6, 11-8.

Womens band 1 singles: Na Liu (Ireland) bt Alice Howard (Cheshire) 11-5, 11-4, 11-7.

Womens band 2 singles: Laura Rungay (Scotland) bt Zoe Cheeseman (Yorks) 7-11, 11-3, 12-10, 11-9.

Womens band 3 singles: Amanda Bell (Yorks) bt Carol Homewood (Kent) 11-6, 6-11, 13-11, 11-5.



ALICE HOWARD winner of the **Womens Under 21 Singles** crown, beating Wales' **Siwan Davies** in the final

old Michael Marsden. John Hilton (Darlington) suffered a surprise defeat in the men's veterans final. He was beaten 9 in the fifth after leading 9-6 by Nigel Eckersley who earlier had stopped Surrey's Ian Girdler.

Scotland entered twenty players, but second seed Euan Walker pulled out with a recurring knee injury. Gavin Rungay lifted the Under-21 title winning 8,7,5, against Marsden and Rungay reached the quarters in the mens singles losing to the Hungarian Gergely Urban 8,1,5. Marco Essomba, the man who cannot get on the England ranking list, once again reached the semi-finals but lost to Bradley Billington -10, 3,4,4. Cooke's mens singles semi-final victim was Urban 4, 8, 3.

COMMENT: The local officials responded well to 13 hours play on each day - 10pm finishes on both days - "Not good enough", was the verdict of the players missing trains on the main line south. On control Trevor Openshaw and Eileen Allison survived two gruelling days, often chasing umpires.

FOOTNOTE: Only two bluecoats - John Lawton and Gary Wyman who did 25 games on the first day. Then cars were locked in the 6 pm closing car park - the biggest snag with the city centre venue.

DARLINGTON WIN SPORTSMATCH BEST SCHOOLS AWARD

REPRESENTATIVES from over 300 sporting clubs and sponsors met in Leeds for the governments annual awards. Darlington TTC and sponsors Jarvis Sports were shortlisted for the best schools project, and Reg Thompson of Jarvis Sports and I attended the lavish function, hosted by The Rugby Football League and held at Headingley International Cricket and Rugby Stadium, writes Keith Wilson.

Just being considered for such an award was an honour, but we both were shocked and delighted when, announcing the result in the traditional reverse order, Sportsmatch Director Mike Reynolds proclaimed ours as the best in the schools category. The glass trophy was presented to us by the Sports Minister Richard Caborn and to complete a perfect evening, Reg won the raffle for a prized autographed England 1966 World Cup football shirt!

The project began when we were awarded a Sportsmatch grant of £5389, matching our new sponsorship by Donic and Jarvis Sports. A series of small tournaments were held but the main project centred on a countywide Primary schools event. Having devised a fun based competition for under 11's for last year's Millenium Youth Games, we took it a stage further and went into school classrooms where youngsters took part and learned the basic skills needed to compete. Eight "Primary School Festivals" were staged with the winning team going on to a county final. This was held in June and proved to be a huge success.

Such was the success that local authorities and education officials are to organise the project with Darlington TTC as advisors. What



Pictured right is the Sports Minister RICHARD CABORN (centre) presenting the trophy to REG THOMPSON (left) of Jarvis Sports and KEITH WILSON (right) of Darlington Table Tennis Club

impressed Sportsmatch was the simplicity of the idea, and the way it cut through many of the barriers that sometimes prevent children from taking part. The fact that teams consisted of three boys and three girls meant that the "girls in sport" issue was immediately addressed. In the Durham City festival event, one of the skill test games was won by a school for special needs. In Weardale we had a team competing from an infant school where the vision of a 5 year old standing on tiptoes bat raised and only the fringe of hair visible at the other end of the table, will always be remembered. We improvised by standing each child on a chair.

In a village school we had an imbalance of boys and girls. One boy had to join a girls team and asking for a volunteer was answered by fingers pointing to the unsporty looking overweight boy who began

to cry. Tears turned to laughter as his team won.

Perhaps the best, and most lasting memory came in the County final. The headmaster from the winning team pointed to a boy happily clutching his winners trophy and told us that he came from a family of eleven children and was the least successful, sporting or academic. For once he would be the centre of attention.

What began as a fun event has turned into probably our best development aid. This season it will be expanding with an extra two festivals being organised. The project which earned Darlington and Jarvis Sports this national award involved 89 schools and took table tennis to over 2000 children. All were linked to secondary schools where table tennis was played and now more have taken up the sport. Back in January, Rachel Greener picked up a bat for the first

time in a lesson in St Teresa's primary school in Darlington. 9 months later the 11 year old made her county junior debut for Durham winning four out of her six matches, even more proof of the success of the project.

As with every sponsorship, there has to be a return for the sponsor. Such is the growth of school based table tennis in Durham that the Donic brand and Jarvis Sports have benefited greatly. "To have the government say that the partnership between Jarvis Sports and Darlington is the best in their schools development category is a tremendous accolade. Jarvis Sports and Donic are involved with what we think is the most progressive club in the country and to push a £50k Athletics project backed by Nike into second place shows just how good ours was" said Reg Thompson for Jarvis Sports.

TABLE TENNIS NEWS EXTRA

ISSUE NO. 282 - December 2001

Editorial

Season's greetings to all readers, and may your table tennis futures be ever brighter and more fulfilling! You may be interested to consider that 100 years ago, on **12th December 1901**, the first constituted organisation of the sport was formed, '**The Table Tennis Association**'.

We need some positive breaks in table tennis. The news in November that **England Performance Director Soren Ahlen is to return to Sweden next year after the Commonwealth Games** filled me with gloom, because I felt that he was so much the right person for the job, with his straight talking, quiet hands-on authority, genuineness and obvious knowledge and expertise. He also has the ability to get on with and gain the respect of (almost) everyone here, which is a difficult enough task in England! He is not a bureaucrat or a politician but lets his integrity speak for him, and with the support of Jill Parker and the ETTA office now has the necessary administrative back-up.

So why is Soren going? Well, we were not going to hold a man of his calibre for ever, and the opportunity for him to take the helm of the new Swedish high performance Academy (and his wife to resume her career in psychiatric nursing) was a great one and his initial contract would have been coming to an end, but people have got to be assured of continuity of employment if they are to commit themselves to carrying on longer, and this simply could not be guaranteed. To put it starkly, **we simply do not know whether the Lottery Sports Fund will continue to fund our World Class Performance Programme.** As the Guardian says (3rd December) in an interview with the chairman of Sport England, Trevor Brooking, '**Declining lottery sales have meant less and less for sport:** in Brooking's first year in charge he presided over a giveaway of £325m; next year he is budgeting for £202m; by 2003 it is down to £180m. It means, he suggests, that the days of thinking it can fund a grand sporting project are gone.'

As well as a cut in total funding, it also means a **likely shift away from supporting elite sport to supporting**

grassroots sport. Brooking says, "**If you've got to make a choice, and we have to, it's got to be the grassroots.** What everybody forgets is, when the lottery was set up, it was additional money. But there's no doubt it's been a good excuse for local authorities to stop funding sport. The grassroots are in a terrible state. Well, the elite performers programme has definitely been a huge success, but no, to be honest, we're not that much better off. It's replaced other people's spending. And, as I look at it now, **we've got more demands for less money than ever.**"

With the policy of the government and the Chairman of Sport England going that way, there is pressure on the National Training Centre. But whilst as a coach I recognise the weakness in our structure in being unable to produce enough youngsters good enough to challenge for High Performance places – we badly needed funds, for example, to support PremierClubs and regional squads – I think that the Centre is working well now and the new national coach Steen Hansen has fitted in well. More and more countries are operating similar high performance programmes, and unless we can 'hot house' our best young talents together, I suspect we will find it even harder to compete internationally. **But whatever the system, we must make the best of it and give it our support.**

One grassroots scheme that has been a resounding success, has been Keith Wilson's Darlington Club led, fun skills-based competition in Durham County primary schools, sponsored by Donic and Jarvis Sports with matched grant from Sportsmatch. Therefore we give **hearty congratulations** to all concerned for lifting the **national Sportsmatch Award 2001, Schools category,** presented by Minister for Sport Richard Caborn at Headingley on 14th November. **Congratulations also to Halton TT Club for becoming the North West region Sport England Volunteer Investment Programme (VIP) Recognition Award winners.**

I must confess some **surprise** that according to the ETTA questionnaire results, **only 44% of those local**

leagues which responded had adopted up-to-11 games for some or all of their competitions, **compared to 84% of counties.** Although the more vocal older players (aged 40+) who have experienced it are still mostly against up-to-11, the overall picture is by no means clear, with even some 'oldies' in favour, because, for example, it makes matches more exciting or quicker. But whether or not the next ETTA AGM allows local leagues and counties to diverge from the international law (i.e. continue to have discretion to operate games up-to-11, games up-to-21 or a mixture of both, for their competitions), **the future must be with 11 up.** Even older players can adapt but in any case, sooner or later they will retire. Therefore any league concerned to look after the interest of better players (who may participate in competitions where up-to-11 is compulsory) or younger players would be advised to implement the new scoring system now. You could still run 21up competitions as fun events.

At the **international level** the consensus seems to be that table tennis is now better, more intense and exciting to watch, but an article in the November ITTF Table Tennis Illustrated suggests **quite a few leading players have had difficulty adjusting mentally and tactically to 11up, although the majority thought that it was best for the sport.**

Although my emphasis has been on content, **I have sympathy with those complaining about the presentation in TTN Extra** or asking for their contributions to go in the glossy. Although I want my (and others') hard work read and recognised, it has been difficult to make it more attractive within the constraints of budget, time, space and expertise. **Please persevere with reading Extra** though, and I am sure that you will come across some rewarding items.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the **excellent photographs of Arthur C Clarke** printed alongside the Essex Junior 4 Star Open Jarvis Sport Grand Prix in the last issue. More of his pictures will appear with the South of England Junior Open report, which we have had to hold over until the next issue.

Ken Muhr

CHESHIRE by Alan Blears

Having myself nominated him for the award last year, I was especially pleased to learn that Les Jones had been declared National Male Coach of the Year. I am sure that this much deserved recognition for years of dedicated service to the game will have been greeted with delight by players of all ages in the Wirral.

Countless Cheshire youngsters, including many girls, have benefited from his skill, enthusiasm and commitment, and have also learnt to win and lose with grace and dignity. As Les himself says, it is not a war.

It is also good to know that Les has recovered from his recent illness and is back coaching again. You can't keep a good man down!

One of the Wirral's latest successes is Daniel Horner, and I see in the 31st October copy of The Daily Telegraph that he has won the junior boys title in the East Midlands Junior 4 star in Grantham. He beat Lancashire's Louis Rosenthal 11-8, 5-11, 11-4, 11-4 in the final. Well played, Danny.

At the other end of the age scale Doreen and Derek Schofield of Stockport have been to Turkey for the popular Turkish Veterans' Open. Doreen was unable to quite repeat last year's success, losing in the semis of the O60s ladies singles to her doubles partner, Carol Gibson, with whom she was runner-up in the doubles.

Husband Derek has now reached the O70 age group – tempus fugit – and despite being short of practice following injury, emerged the winner.

CORNWALL by John Wood

CORNWALL'S senior table tennis teams were in action last month in the English National County Championships, at Tregorrick Park Table Tennis Centre, St.Austell, whilst the Veterans played in Somerset.

The newly promoted Senior 1st team played all day on Saturday against Berkshire, Hampshire and Wiltshire, in Division 1B where they found the standard of play extremely high, only Cornwall's Adrian Noott could stand the pace winning five of his six

COUNTY NOTES

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singles.

Against Hampshire the Duchy team fared best drawing 5-5, with Noott winning 2, Graham Worth, Esme Denslow and Shirley Luckhurst one each.

In the match with Wiltshire, once again Noott was in fine form winning two including the scalp of top defender Phillip Payne. Luckhurst won the other game in a 3-7 defeat.

Berkshire also proved too strong for the Cornish side, in a match where all action Noott succumbed to Berkshire's super defender Dave Barr, losing 11-8, 11-7, 4-11, 2-11, 6-11, before bouncing back to beat former England junior star Ben Johnson 11-8, 11-9, 6-11, 11-5. Cornwall's ladies Denslow and Luckhurst won one each as the Duchy went down 3-7.

Top team of the day were Berkshire who won all their three matches, including a 7-3 victory over main rivals Wiltshire. This match saw the clash of the super defenders, with Berkshire's Dave Barr out-chopping Phil Payne 7-11, 9-11, 11-9, 11-8, 11-5.

The Cornish 2nd senior side lost to Worcestershire in Division 2B, 3-7, with Graham Reed, Michelle Turner and Kate Alken winning one each. This was a debut match for Veteran John Wood, who had turned up for the match as the umpire, but had to switch to player mode due to the team being one short. However, he didn't let the side down, competing well and almost winning one, finally losing the last battle of the day 11-9, 12-10, 8-11, 4-11, 6-11, to Worcester's Zia Khan.

Cornwall Veterans travelled to Somerset for their match which they lost 3-6, where Bob House really flew the flag for the Duchy side winning both of his games, whilst debut man Gary Hall won one.

CUMBRIA by Gordon Brown

Despite the County Association being unable to enlist a tournament secretary to replace the retired Richard Johnstone, this season's tournament will definitely go ahead.

The event will be staged at Kendal Leisure Centre on Sunday 27th January. Association Secretary Peter Rushton says the organizing will be carried out by a combined team of county officials.

The County Junior team made a reasonable start to their Division 1A programme in the county championships at Grantham when they beat Worcestershire 6-4 and drew with Nottinghamshire 5-5. Josef Mather of Kendal, was Cumbria's leading player at no. 1, while Harry Carter, of Kendal, at no. 3, and Jonathan Crawford, from Barrow, at no. 2, were the next leading scorers.

Barrow girls Fay Gasson and Amy Burlison also put up creditable performances. The next division matches are again at Grantham on 9th March.

Barrow's already excellent table tennis centre at Parkview School on the outskirts of town is being further improved at a cost of £50,000.

The Committee has been awarded a £30,000 grant from the Sports and Arts Foundation with a condition that disabled access and modernized toilet facilities are provided and subject to Cumbria Education Authority granting a 12-year-lease on the toilets to run alongside the lease already granted on the hall of the centre.

Other help has come in the form of £1,000 from Barrow Sports Council and £250 from the local Roosecote and Newbarns. The Centre has produced many top rated junior players since it opened in the 1990s from a converted school gym.

Long-standing coach Mike Yardley said: "We are a centre of excellence and second to none in the North West. But we do have to improve the facilities for the boys and girls and also develop the social aspect of the centre. The committee realizes we are lacking on the social side and we are looking to do something about that."

Mike added that the toilet, changing and showering facilities are long overdue for an overhaul. He wants to see more people, including wheelchair

users, taking up the sport and using the centre.

The successful Yarlside School, Barrow, has ceased playing table tennis because of a new policy introduced by a new head. Yarlside was an important feeder school to the more senior Parkview.

But as one door closes another opens. Dowdales Schools, at Dalton-in-Furness, has emerged as a new leader of Cumbrian Schools table tennis work as a successful feeder school.

Duncan Crawford is the coach at Dowdales, and both he and Steve Cairns are coaching at Askam. Mike is hoping the centre improvements would be in place by the time you read this.

Steve Dixon was unbeaten for Cumbria on their county championship weekend in Senior Division 2A. Cumbria lost to Durham and Warwickshire 8-2, and Leicestershire 2nds and Cleveland 7-3, but managed to take one match when they defeated Warwickshire 2nds 9-1.

Barrow area dominated the Cumbria section of the Jarvis Sports National Schools Championships with six of the eight titles going to the town and district. Five finals were played on the day at Barrow & District Table Tennis Centre, but three other finals were not played because Barrow was the only entrant and automatically went through. The successful teams qualified for the North West Area finals in Blackburn.

Winners – Under 11 boys – Barrow St. Columba; Under 11 girls – Askam, Under 19 boys: Queen Katherine School, Kendal; Under 19 girls: Barrow Sixth Form College, Under 13 boys: Dalton Dowdales; Under 13 girls: Dalton Dowdales, Under 16 boys: Queen Katherine, Kendal, Under 16 girls: Parkview, Barrow.

DEVONSHIRE by John Vincent

Junior Premier Weekend

We approached this weekend with a larger squad than usual and it paid handsome dividends with a three-point return.

Our first match saw us suffer a defeat 3-7 at the hands of a strong Yorkshire side. Craig Bryant won two and the experienced Shaun Gibbs 1.

Next with the addition of our two reserves Daniel Mayhew and Lisa

Radford, we secured an 8-2 victory over Warwickshire with both our newcomers and Craig Bryant getting maximums. Shaun Gibbs and Michelle Barrett took one each.

Finally we drew 5-5 with Buckinghamshire whose strong girls took maximum points from Michelle Barrett and Helen Parton. Craig Bryant completed his maximum weekend with two, Shaun Gibbs was consistent taking one and rising star Jacob Kodicek won two which helped us save the match.

Senior Premier Weekend

Our seniors did well to gain three points despite being weakened by the unavailability of Craig Bryant and Gregory Bridget. The team of Paul Whiting, James Whiteman, Kevin Buddell, Marketa Myskova and Penny Perry competed well together to notch a win and a draw.

Against a strong Yorkshire team we drew 5-5 with Whiteman and Myskova winning two each and Whiting getting one.

Next we defeated Leicestershire 6-4 with wins from Whiting 2, Myskova 2, Whiteman 1 and Perry 1.

The final match saw us lose 3-7 to Essex. Myskova completed an outstanding weekend winning 2 and Whiting, our reliable captain, won 1.

Clare Pengelly Memorial Trophy

This was won deservedly by Helen Parton for her county results, 13 wins out of 14 games, and her attitude whilst playing for Junior 2

Pat Archdale Trophy

This was considered by the South West Region Coaches Panel and was awarded to Craig Bryant for his progress over the past 12 months and his high national ranking on the May 2001 list.

Other Junior Results

Devon Junior 2

Two matches were played over the Junior Premier weekend with a weakened team. We defeated Warwickshire II 6-4, Darren Reed 2, Paul Christie 2, Sam Bruty 1, Sally Smith 1 lost to Hereford 3-7, Reed 1, Christie 1, Sally Smith 1.

Devon Junior 3

We were defeated 2-8 by Hereford. Chris Smith and Lizzie Binks winning 1 each. We also lost to Warwickshire II 2-8. 11-year-old Chris Smith and new boy Stuart Wherrett won 1 each.

South West Region Final Trials – Cirencester

Congratulations to the following players who have qualified for the National Trials in February 2002.

Junior Boys – Jacob Kodicek, Shaun Gibbs; Junior Girls – Lisa Radford; Cadet Boys – Darren Reed, Paul Christie; Cadet Girls – Lizzie Binks

National Junior League – Plymouth

A new league with eight teams has been formed in Plymouth with two teams from Redruth in Cornwall, one from Ilfracombe in North Devon and 5 from Plymouth.

South of England Junior 3 Star Tournament

Darren Reed attended this tournament and did very well to reach the final of the U12 boys when he took the second set 11-7 off Darius Knight.

DURHAM by Keith Wilson

With school-based activity mushrooming, and Durham's county teams all succeeding, the season looks like being the best for many years.

More and more schools are taking up table tennis as both an in and out of school activity. A new development at Belmont Comprehensive in Durham is one such example where 13 new tables are in operation every lunchtime with a new club operating on Monday evenings. Haughton School in Darlington is a newcomer to the Durham Schools League and there are 12 new tables in constant use. Greencroft School in Annfield Plain continues to thrive, but having ended the dominance of Tudhoe Grange last season, they could see their county schools title under threat from Hummersknott School (Darlington).

Durham's decision to re-enter the county senior team, after many years 'absence, was taken to give young players more experience. Few expected

the success that followed when the whole of the division was played at the Auto Quest Stadium in Widnes. Former County men's champion Dave Robson led a young side, including former county junior champions Michael Marsden and Kate Vickers, in addition to current juniors Kevin Wilson, Joanne Meads and Claire Wilson. An opening 7-3 win over Cleveland was the first of six victories followed by Cheshire 6-4, Warwick 7-3, Warwick 2nds 10-0, Leicestershire 2nds 8-2 and Cumbria 8-2, giving Durham the title and promotion.

The juniors followed up with the county 1st team rattling off four 10-0 wins in their opening matches at Greencroft School. Durham 2nds were the first victims followed by whitewashes over Conwy, Northumberland and Conwy 2nds. Durham 2nds recovered from the defeat by their first team with wins over Northumberland 8-2, Conwy 6-4 and Conwy 2nds 8-2.

A visit to Grantham in February will complete the division with matches against Northants and Notts 2nds and 3rds, the unbeaten Durham 1st squad being Kevin Wilson, David Meads, Andrew Leighton, Mark Simpson, Joanne Meads and Claire Wilson.

Philip Robinson was unbeaten for Durham 2nds where Simon Donnelly, Chris Dixon, Jonathan de Wind, Rachel Greener, Samantha McCormick and Jessica Panting all made their county debuts.

Durham Veterans lie in second place after their opening matches, however, their 3-6 defeat by Northumberland could prove costly. A shock defeat for Tony Gelder by Northumberland's Geoff Salter and a mixed doubles defeat proved their downfall. Gelder's 5 wins from 6 matches were matched by Vets team "new boy" Ian James.

In the British League, Darlington has begun to recover from two surprise defeats with three comfortable wins. 18-year-old Chinese student Shi Guang has strengthened the squad and played his part in their latest 11-3 win at Barnet. Shi Guang and Fabio Mantegazza both lost to Barnet's new Hungarian no. 1 Gergely Urban, but Ritchie Venner celebrated his first wins in a Darlington shirt by winning three, including an 11-4 fifth set win over Urban.

With table tennis in the developing stages in many schools, one such successful project is the subject of national acclaim. Darlington's Durham Primary Schools Festival series has been shortlisted for the award for Best Schools project in the government's annual Sportmatch awards.

These notes will no doubt be printed well after the awards dinner, held at Headingley in Leeds on 14th November, where hopefully Darlington will be successful and receive the award from new Sports Minister Richard Caborn.

HAMPSHIRE by Brian Lamerton

Victor Imiseev, Hampshire's answer to Vladimir Samsonov, is the new county mens singles title-holder. The man from Belarus with the deceptive laid-back style took the title at his first attempt defeating the unseeded Tony Reynolds in the final. Reynolds led for much of the first game (played on the old-fashioned 21-up system!) but once he had allowed Imiseev to catch him there was only ever going to be one winner as the new champion ran out 22-20, 21-7. Defeated semi-finalists were Ramesh Bhalla and the holder Jeremy Wilson, the no's 1 and 2 seeds.

Barbara Savage successfully defended her women's singles title (defeating Anne Longland in the final) and went on to take three more titles, the women's doubles with Longland, the mixed doubles with Rod McMullen and the Women's veteran title.

The men's doubles went to Chris Wilshere and Wilson, the men's veterans to Mickey Sinanan and the intermediate (under 23) to Stuart Williams who defeated Hampshire's no. 1 junior Nic Anderson in the final.

Hampshire juniors have made the most promising start to the season for several years; travelling to Graham Spicer on 13th October, three matches produced two wins and one draw. Starting with the draw, against Oxford, to which almost everything was owed to the Dobson sisters, Emma and Jenny, from Southampton who between them won their four sets, they progressed as the boys settled their early season nerves to defeat Surrey 3rds 6-4 and Middlesex 2nds by no less than 10-love. Glenn Wilshere and Chris Willshere both from Southampton and Portsmouth's David Woodacre

completed the team. On the down side for the second season in succession Hampshire juniors have NO home matches. This is disappointing as with the considerable increase in junior table tennis being played in the county it is denying newcomers the opportunity to view and support their team. So much for the 'block' system – 'nuff said!

The Veteran 1sts got their season underway with a 6-3 "home" win against Kent 2nds with two wins for super-vet Ramesh Bhalla together with vital contributions from Chris Willshere, "Charlie" Childs and Barbara Savage; the 2nds have recorded two wins (5-4 against Kent 4ths and 7-2 versus Berks 2nds) and the 3rd and 4ths (or social teams as I prefer to call them) have also made promising starts.

The inter-town leagues, particularly juniors and cadets, remain strong and first half league leaders are Cadets; Div 1, Bournemouth "A"; Div 2, Basingstoke; Juniors; Div 1 Bournemouth "A"; Div 2 Bournemouth "B".

Leading County Rankings

Seniors:

Men: 1. Clive Payne, 2. Mark Butler, 3. Ramesh Bhalla, 4. Lee Dredge, 5. Jeremy Wilson, 6. Victor Imiseev; Women: 1. Maria Taylor-Woodward, 2. Barbara Savage, 3. Gill Larking, 4. Donna Granville, 5. Sandra Simpson, 6. Sarah Whithorn.

Juniors:

Boys: 1. Nic Anderson, 2. Glenn Wilshere, 3. Chris Willsher, 4. David Woodacre, 5. Alex Garlick, 6. Chris Marshall; Girls: 1. Jenny Dobson, 2. Emma Dobson, 3. Joanna Hurt, 3. Sue Tompsett, 5. Sophie Willsher, 6. Annabelle Morle.

Veterans

Men: 1. Clive Payne, 2. Ramesh Bhalla, 3. Chris Wilshere, 4. Keith Childs, 5. Peter Matthews, 6. Graham Outrim; Women: 1. Barbara Savage, 2. Gill Larking, 3. Sandra Simpson, 4. Jackie Rice, 5. Anne Longland, 6. Sue Hibberd.

ISLE OF WIGHT by John Prean

Despite being relegated last season, we enjoyed a fair gate for our first county

match, which ended in an 8-2 win against Berkshire II. The statistics are flattering, as five matches went to 5 games and we won four of these. Our cause was assisted by a clean sweep for Jill Fothergill and Lucy Pointer in the ladies' matches in addition to Carl Prean's usual two plus an excellent win by Alex Rorke who stood in for the injured Danny Burns.

A week later our team fell to Kent II in Sidcup by a 6-4 margin. This time the ladies produced a 1-3 score line, with Jill absent and Lucy the only winner, but not in her best form, pressing the self-destruct button rather too often. Again Alex produced an excellent win, this time against the former England junior Justin Dodd, who must be ranked 300 or so places above him on the ETTA computer. Carl added his two to leave us one victory short of a draw, our promotion hopes severely dented.

Our season has kicked off, the ambition of some at last realized, with an 8-team Premier section. This may be progress, but it owes much to lower numbers of players and the standard is no higher than a few years ago, when there were 12 teams in the division.

We embraced the 11-up system, apparently in a minority across the country, where most leagues seem to continue with the old 21-up system. I had hoped that one of the benefits would be shorter matches and fewer late nights with their obvious implications for work and school the next day. I am not sure how this will happen, as many players seem to play more carefully as they near the 11 mark. Those with a 'modern' game who concentrate on 3rd and 4th ball attacks have recorded some very quick finishes, but the average player, who sees him or herself as an all-rounder, one who can push (and often does) as well as hit (which is seen as riskier) seems to play with greater care, which means keeping the ball on the table in the hope that the winning mistake will come from the other side. In terms of watching, where it is pointed out that this is irrelevant, as we have no spectators (!), I regarded the system as an undoubted success. The matches are more interesting, there are more crisis points, more suspense, more quality, fewer dead periods. I am sad that there is so much opposition in the country to something so overwhelmingly accepted by a democratic international vote, so

much wasted effort on a relatively small matter, when there is so much more in our sport in need of urgent reform and thought.

I joked at the time that the 11-up system was sure to be unpopular, as in all matches 50% of players were losers and these would be sure to blame their defeats on the new system. Since everybody loses some of the time, we had a large inbuilt majority against the new idea. It was meant to be a joke, but, sadly, this does not seem to be the case, as players are beginning to blame their failings on the new scoring system. I suppose, if we go back to 21-up, substantial numbers will tell us they would have won if we had still played to 11.

It is depressing that what seems a worthwhile attempt to catch up on other sports, which have overtaken us, should produce such a violent response, even retirements. We now have a mish-mash of scoring systems, playing to 11 one day and to 21 the next.

One recalls the heady days when Anne Hayden played with a hard bat one day and sponge the next, because for some years legislators could not get together. I wish our members would not be so vehemently opposed to almost anything new. The sport will not progress or regain its former standing unless we try new things. Some may not work, but all deserve to be given a chance.

KENT by Adrian Hall

KENT UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

After more than 10 years as Chairman of KCTTA, Reg Thompson resigned the post at the 2001 AGM. The Kent committee under the guidance of Reg took the county from a point of bankruptcy to the most progressive and active county in the country. Reg's ability to obtain sponsorship and both local and government grants enabled the county's top players to train and compete abroad as well as bringing international coaches and players to coach players in Kent. The most exciting venture was in taking 14 players to China for a month and the following year bringing 12 Chinese players and coaches to Kent. The county owes Reg a debt of gratitude and has

left the new committee with a hard act to follow.

Your new Kent committee:-

President – Bill Lavis, Chairman – Micky Kilden 0208 851 1083,
Secretary – Crystal Hall 01732 844756,
Treasurer – M Seneviratne,
Development – Tina Stewart, Veterans – Ted Tydeman, Seniors – Joe Riggs, Juniors – Neil Highams, Kent League – David Cue,
Committee – Len Pilfold, S Wilson

COUNTY TEAMS OFF TO A WINNING START

Kent Junior 1sts made an excellent start to their division 1B county programme in an effort to regain a place back in the premier division which was lost last season.

Berkshire 1 – Kent 9

John Harley 2, Sean Owen 1, William Harrington 2,
Anusha Seneviratne 2, Hazel Clucas 2

Glamorgan II 4 – Kent 6

John Harley 1, Sean Owen 1, William Harrington 2,
Anusha Seneviratne 1, Hazel Clucas 1

Kent 7 – Middlesex 3

John Harley 1, Sean Owen 0, William Harrington 2,
Anusha Seneviratne 2, Hazel Clucas 2

Kent Senior 2nds have also started off well with wins over the I.O.W., Berkshire II and Surrey II.

Kent II 6 – I.O.W. 4

Dominic Hall 1, Justin Dodd 0, Chris Knight 2, Kim Mudge 2, Jackie Mersh 1
For the I.O.W. Carl Prean was in a class of his own, but how nice it was to see a world-class player supporting his county and also giving so much support to his teammates.

Kent II 9 – Berkshire II 1

Dominic Hall 2, Paul Cronin 1, Scott Dawtry 2, Kim Mudge 2, Jackie Mersh 2

Kent II 9 – Surrey II 1

Dominic Hall 2, Paul Cronin 1, Scott Dawtry 2, Kim Mudge 2, Jackie Mersh 2

South of England Grand Prix

We understand that the above Grand Prix event will take place at the Black Lion Sports Centre, Gillingham, on Good Friday and Easter Saturday, the weekend originally put aside for the

Kent Senior and Junior Closed Championships. Your new Kent Committee have agreed to the ETTA holding the event in the County on that weekend although it is a major problem finding a new date for the Kent Championships. The Kent committee are hoping that Kent players will give the Grand Prix massive support as it is the first to be staged in the county, and has the benefit of being on a holiday weekend.

We have no doubt that other counties have fallen foul of a clash of dates and wonder if consideration should not be given to putting aside two weekends in the calendar for counties and even leagues to organize their closed events.

LANCASHIRE by Tony Meredith

At last I have been given some copy re our county. Chairman Stan Clarke, who has been acting NPC in the absence of volunteers, has phoned me the good news concerning our senior team.

Lancashire played four matches in division 1A over the weekend 27/28 November and returned four resounding victories. The squad was strengthened by the inclusion of former England player Jonathan Taylor who, I am told, is getting quite keen again. The team disposed of Worcester 9-1 where Alice Howard defeated the experienced Jill Harris. Southport's Cherith Graham made her first team debut in this match. She took the first game from Jill Harris but eventually succumbed to experience. In the next match they overcame Yorkshire II 8-2. The first match on Sunday morning saw a 9-1 victory over Essex II with Gary Tendler gaining a consolation win over Paul Hutchings. Lancashire ran out 8-2 winners in the final match against Northumberland. Paul Hutchings went down to Eddie Smith and Kevin Dolder lost out to the evergreen Dave Godbold.

The league table shows Lancashire and Yorkshire South on level points with the Lancastrians ahead on sets. Weekend two will be a tough one with Yorkshire South and Derbyshire amongst the opponents. Players averages as follows:- Jonathan Taylor 8-0, Paul Hutchings 6-2, Kevin Dolder 7-1, Alice Howard 8-0 and Cherith Graham 5-3.

NATIONAL JUNIOR LEAGUE

Lancashire teams Formby "A" and "B" dominated the northern section on the opening day of the North West competition. The "A" team was unbeaten and the "B" team lost only to their "A" team. Sally Duncliffe was the only unbeaten player in one north with twelve wins out of twelve. Lancaster & Morecambe "A" lost just one match – to Formby "A", and Ben Aldren finished on 83%. Lancaster & Morecambe "B" are joint top in two north and unbeaten although they drew with Fylde "B". Andrew Parkinson won eleven out of twelve and finished on 92%. Manchester "B" are in contention in two south after winning four of their five matches. They drew with Macclesfield but are just four sets behind leaders Stockport "A". Siful Khan finished on 88% with seven wins out of eight. Leading players averages as follows:-

LANCASHIRE & CHESHIRE LEAGUE JUNIOR DIVISIONS

The first ever weekend format took place on 11th November at Halton Table Tennis Centre. The number of teams has increased from 12 to 21 - the scoring system has changed from 21 to 11 up. Barrow have emerged as premier division leaders with wins over Southport "A" 5-1, Wirral 4-2 and Southport 4-2. Jonathan Crawford was unbeaten in all three matches. Southport are just one point behind but have played four matches. Salford & Farnworth are unbeaten but drew with both Halton and Southport. They are still very much in the reckoning as they have Barrow to play in the second half.

JUNIOR BRITISH LEAGUE

Seasiders Girls stole the show from the boys at Wolverhampton in October. They lost just one match – to Cippenham "B" – but topped the division one table with a games advantage over Cippenham who drew two of their matches. Kerry Radford finished on 100%, Clara Howard 70% and Amanda Bell 30%. The boys, who were the second rated team in the division, were below par and ended up in the next to bottom slot with just one win. Harry Carter and Jonathan Crawford both finished on 50% and Josef Mather 10%.

STIGA GP JUNIOR 3 STAR 4/11/01

The tournament again attracted a "full house". Several of the better players were away on county duty but the play was still very competitive. Barrow's Jonathan Crawford lived up to his seeding and won the boys category one when he defeated Cheshire's Aaron Beech in straight games. Craig Feargrieve from Nottingham got the better of Jack Taylor (Lancaster) in the category two event. It is the first time that I can recall any player from Lancaster reaching a final. In the girls category one round robin it was Nottingham's Kerry Radford who again took the honours over her friend and neighbour Stacey Beastall. Points Table Leaders:-

Boys Overall: Jonathan Crawford 32; Aaron Beech 24; Adam Bleakley 24

Girls Overall: Kerry Radford 48; Stacey Beastall 24

Cadet Boys: Jonathan Crawford 32; Adam Bleakley 24

Cadet Girls: Helen Crawford 6

Under 12 Boys: Matthew Knott 6

Under 12 Girls: Helen Crawford 6

MIDDLESEX by Iris Moss

In these days of a woefully small Executive Committee, it is difficult for the few members to decide which task to undertake first. It was very gratifying therefore that Doreen Stannard (already thoroughly overworked with commitments to table tennis at all levels) volunteered to try and do something to bridge the gap caused by the loss of Jack Randall. She is going to hold a seminar for Level 1 umpires at her club (Eastcote Community Centre) on 15th December and although the closing date of 1st December will be well and truly past before these notes appear in print, anyone who is interested could contact Doreen to see whether by some chance she has a vacancy. A Level 1 umpire has to have knowledge of the essential Laws and basic scoring procedure and to take an unsupervised test consisting of about 50 simple multiple-choice questions. This entitles them to umpire any match under the jurisdiction of a County Association and we are hoping that it will also inspire those attending to try for the County Umpire (Level 2) and eventually qualify as a National or International Umpire!

From my own experience (and I only qualified as a County Umpire) it is very worthwhile and can lead to very interesting events.

Arrangements have now been made for our Inter-League Championships. The Victor Barna Competition (for 3 men) and the Norman Pegg Competition (for 2 women) will both be played at Ellenborough Table Tennis Club on Sunday 10th February 2002, and will be run jointly by Anne Flowerday and Alan Shepherd. The Russell Grant Middlesex Competition (for juniors) will be run at Ashford Table Tennis Club on Sunday 24th February when the Organiser will be Margie Stamford. The Ted Connell Competition (for Veterans) will as usual be run throughout the season – with Rene Templeman in charge. We are also hoping to run Junior Closed Championships to which I will invite entries from all the Premier Clubs in Middlesex in the hope that we will find some new “blood” and encourage them to take part in competitive play.

I will continue to attempt to get notes into Table Tennis News, but once again, with the amount of work I am undertaking, dates often slip by without my noticing. I can only do my best! But if anyone has any interesting news that can be included in my notes in Table Tennis News or in the Middlesex Association Bulletin, I will be happy to write it up. So please keep in touch with me.

NORTHANTS by Dennis Millman

Thursday 5th July 2001 was a memorable day for one of Northants' longest serving officials, for at the Northampton League's AGM Reg Allen was elected the new President in succession to the late Bert Fawcett.

Simultaneously his 36-year term as League Secretary came to an end, and Reg, whose name has become synonymous with Northampton table tennis, vacated a post he has occupied with such dedication and expertise since June 1965.

He first played at Northampton in the 1960/1 season for the newly formed Doddridge club and two years later he became a Divisional Secretary, almost immediately followed by a spell as Match Secretary.

During his time as League Secretary, he orchestrated the growth of the league from 49 teams of four players to 129 3-a side outfits in 1973. However, even his Herculean efforts couldn't buck the national trend and when he left office there were just 42 sides in contention.

One of his major success stories was his organisation of the Annual Presentation Dinner at a host of venues, with none more special than the well-known Midlands Ballroom – the Salon, where in the early seventies the attendance peaked at 450.

Another speciality was his handling of the fixture list and irrespective of the total number of entries and the size of the different divisions, Reg would always ensure that club requirements were adhered to.

As far back as anyone can remember and whenever a knotty problem needed resolving it wasn't long before “Give Reg a ring” was heard. Even now he hasn't fully relinquished the reins for although the new League Secretary is Janet Wright, the Handicap Team Knock-Out Tournament Secretary is none other than R.W. Allen of 12 Weston Way.

The last series of County Championships matches produced five wins from six starts with the Junior Firsts taking all four available to them, with Conwy Firsts and Seconds and Notts Seconds and Thirds all well beaten. Greg Yarnall and Robert Williams led the way with eight wins each while brothers Dannel and Dickson Pang took seven between them.

Last season the girls had difficulty at this level but 12 months on it was a different story as Katy Armstrong, Katie Mansfield and Melissa Price all made a positive contribution.

At veteran level the Firsts were well beaten by Leicestershire despite sound displays from Chris Gibbons and Gordon Shaw, but a fifth win came when the Veteran Seconds got much the better of their Notts counterparts with the main honours going to Mike Hawes, in his second county match, with two singles and a winning doubles in tandem with Pete Wingrove. An unbeaten Janet Wright and Michael Edwards added the remaining points.

Although Tim Yarnall missed the county matches he continues to make the headlines on the national scene. His position as no. 1 Under 14 Cadet was confirmed when he took the Under 14

Singles at the Blackpool Junior Four Star Open, and followed up by joining his final victim Adam Bleakley to take the corresponding doubles.

NORTHUMBERLAND by Pauline Long

The County Veterans' team of “Benny” Robertson, Geoff Salter, Malcolm Lusk, Rob Dodds and Pauline Long – unchanged from last season – were due to play their first series of Division 1A matches in Halifax during the weekend of 20th/21st October, and hopefully will have made a good start to this season's campaign.

The top senior men – Eddie Smith, Andrew Wilkinson and Dave Godbold – were all expected to be available for their Division 1A matches the following weekend, but unfortunately both Caron Guthrie and Karen Henry have now confirmed their retirement from county play, although both will still figure in League matches for North Shields YMCA. Both women are thanked for their services to the county over the years. They were to be replaced for the first weekend by Christine Robinson, making her first appearance at this level, and recalled veteran Pauline Long! It seems that the shortage of girls at junior level and women at veteran level has finally extended to the seniors – a very sad state of affairs.

Rankings are as follows:

Senior Men

1. Eddie Smith, 2. Andrew Wilkinson, 3. Dave Godbold, 4. Ian “Benny” Robertson, 5. Gary Sangster, 6. Geoff Salter, 7. Malcolm Lusk, 8. Steve Penman, 9. Keith Patterson, 10. Alan Matthewson, 11. Bill Stokoe, 12. Rob Dodds.

Senior Women

1. Caron Guthrie, 2. Karen Henry (prev. Newby), 3. Christine Robinson, 4. Pauline Long, 5. Ellie de la Hunt, 6. Alison Bell.

Veteran Men

1. Robertson, 2. Salter, 3. Lusk, 4. Dodds, 5. Jimmy Scope, 6. Maurice Cheek, 7. Bob Atwell, 8. Bob Appleby, 9. Fred Short, 10. Peter Wilkinson, 11. John Donnelly, 12. Mark Kimberley, 13. Charlie Robertson, 14. Ronnie Scott.

Veteran Women

1. Long, 2. Lily Aust, 3. Margaret Neale, 4. Linda Pinkham.

Last season's Northumbria League champions Birtley "A" are already leading the Premier Division after the first three matches and look odds-on favourites to retain their title. Other early leaders are Division 1: Byker CC "A"; Division 2: North Shields YMCA "D"; Division 3: Byker CC "B"; Division 4: Cramlington Trojans.

The first round of the Team Handicap Knockout Cup Competition was to take place during week commencing 29th October, a week free of league matches. The Newcastle Grand Prix Tournament was scheduled for 10th/11th November at Eldon Square Recreation Centre, Newcastle, but at this time there was concern that there had been very little publicity regarding the event. The County Closed Tournament will be held on either Saturday 23rd March or Sunday 24th March, either at the new West Gate Community Centre or last year's venue at Cramlington High School.

By the time these notes appear in print, the festive season should be rapidly approaching, so on this assumption all good wishes are extended to players, officials and friends for the Christmas period, and best wishes to all for 2002.

OXFORDSHIRE by Avril Haynes

Ian Stars for Oxford Midland League Veterans

Oxford 5 Kidderminster 5
Oxford had a close match with Kidderminster in their first match in Division 2. They played the team who finished runners-up to them in Division 3 last season.

Ian Arnold starred for Oxford winning two of his singles and the doubles with Chris Lansley, who also won a singles.

At one point Oxford were 3-5 down and after Ian Arnold won his second singles it was left to Nigel Taylor to win his last singles to draw the match. Mike Meredith won all his three singles for Kidderminster.

County Matches Veteran Oxon (3) 2 Berkshire (5) 7

Oxfordshire lost their first match of the season at home to Berkshire when their

only wins came from Ian Arnold who played well to win both of his singles.

Herts (7) 3 Oxon (3) 2
Oxfordshire travelled to Barnet and faced a strong Hertfordshire team. Chris Lansley starred for Oxfordshire winning both his singles.

SHROPSHIRE by Terry Ridgway

Shropshire's very first veterans side started Division 4C with a winning run only to be brought back to earth by the strong Hereford 1st team, on Saturday. After two successive 5-4 victories over Wiltshire 2nds and Somerset 3rds the County Veteran squad of Mike Dudley, Rob Mansfield, Terry Ridgway, Malcolm Langford and Jane Bevan crashed to a 6-3 defeat against an inspired Hereford side.

On the domestic front the new scoring system in the Telford League appears to be receiving a good reception as the point per set will make it quite close in each division, the top section has Albrighton's A and B sides leading after four matches closely followed by Industrial Bearings and Bridgnorth 'A'; with only a few points separating the above sides it could be a close battle this year. Division 2 sees Matheson 'A'; Shifnal and Idsall 'A' as potential challengers for promotion. Division 3 favourites must be the young Idsall 'B' side coached by Chris Tarr and featuring some of the county's promising juniors.

With only three weeks gone in the Shrewsbury League last season's championships have started well (Cricket Club 'A') but with Pontesbury 'A' persuading former county no. 1 Darrell Corfield to play this season it could be a battle royal for the honours. Last season's third and fourth placed sides did play recently with a 7-3 result in favour of Cricket Club B over their C side but the following week Cricket Club A were inspired by Nigel Holding and backed by Matt Croft and Rod France to beat the B side 9-1 and prove their reluctance to let go of the Premier crown.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE by Alan Dunn

As these are the first county notes since the back end of last season, a special

mention must go to the juniors Ben Barlow and Joe Dunn who both finished in the last 8 at the National Championship, Ben U12 and Joe U10. Both are from the Rotherham Coaching Academy and it's hoped these success's will be followed up by other youngsters from the town.

South Yorkshire has three clubs in the National Cadet League, Abbeydale, Scorpions A & B and new boys from Barnsley, Priory Predators. All enjoyed the first Sunday of four, held at Halifax T.T. Centre. The top two in the league go into a national play off.

In the National Junior League (under 17) held at Hillsborough for the first Saturday, our County has teams from Castle and Scorpions A & B.

The Senior County South Yorkshire team comprising of Mark Short, Andrea Baldi and Sarah Smith and Andrew and Stephen Horsfield won all their matches during the first county weekend.

v. Essex	2	won	7-3
v. Northumberland		won	7-3
v. Nottinghamshire		won	8-2
v. Worcestershire		won	7-3
Mark Short	won	5	lost 3
Andrew Horsfield	won	7	lost 1
Stephen Horsfield	won	5	lost 3
Andrea Baldi	won	5	lost 3
Sarah Smith	won	6	lost 2.

Rotherham Scorpions are the only representatives in Junior Boys and Girls British League with brave efforts in the first weekend. Stephen Roberts, Ben Barlow and Christopher Robinson finished 5th and Emily Robinson and Helen Reynolds (two girl team due to injury) finishing a well-respected 4th of 6, believe me this is a tough competition.

Shaun Bibby has been the most consistent for Scorpions Senior British League side, which made a promising start to this season's campaign, with two very hard fought draws. All the team played their part, Stephen Crosby, Reza, Alan Dunn, and 12-year-old Ben Barlow showed maturity beyond his years. The draws came against Bedford Modern and Halton Croda, with defeats against Grove 1 and Elgre. The next weekend is at Lytham St. Annes on the weekend of 15/16 December.

New coaching initiatives are underway in Barnsley, thanks to the Barnsley T.T. Development Group. Anyone who wishes to assist in any way, please contact Brian Heathcote,

the new Barnsley T.T. Development Officer, on (01226) 383916

New coaches who have joined the county coaching team are Helen Reynolds, Matthew Price and Rajabi Reza Muhammid working in Rotherham and Mark Brunt from the Sheffield Camp.

In the Liverpool Grand Prix Shaun Bibby reached the finals of Band 4 and 5. Andrew Horsfield lost in the final of Band 2. Mat Kenny came into good form in the middle of June during the French Youth Open, where he was the only non-European ranked player to reach the last 16.

In the European Junior Champs he was present in all the team matches. England finished in eighth place.

In the singles he reached the last 32, higher than any other British player but unfortunately had to withdraw with a dislocated shoulder that he sustained when he fell in the previous match. He won that match against a Belarunian player 21 - 13, 21 - 14, but he injured his shoulder at 10 all.

Don't forget to visit the Sheffield Hallam and Rotherham Scorpions websites, for up to date information, my email address is on the latter. <http://www.hallamtabletennis.co.uk>
www.scorpions.itgo.com

SUFFOLK by Andrew Doshier

At the Suffolk senior championships in October it was another men's singles title for Paul Cicchelli, while Sandra Ballam took out the women's. In the open singles Richard Hutchinson proved too strong for all.

It was John Tallant's turn to shine, winning the restricted singles & getting to the men's singles semi-finals. It took Cicchelli to beat him by the tightest of scores 18 & 22. Robert Warner reached his first ever men's final was seldom in the rallies against the stern attack & defence of Cicchelli. In a round robin group to decide the women's title it was newly adopted to Suffolk Sandra Balaam who won all her games including a 17 & 18 victory in the all important game over Vicky Gray.

In the newly created open singles to accommodate the new up to 11 scoring system. The final as so often with these

two went the distance with Richard Hutchinson an 11-8 fifth set winner over Andrew Doshier.

In the final of the restricted Tallant won at 12 in the decider against Michael Wright. The women's doubles were won by Gray & Sonja Talbot over Balaam & Carol Clarke, while in the mixed Hutchinson & Gray accounted for Hodder & Talbot. After another round robin event Gary Bloomfield emerged as the under 21 winner.

News about the Stowmarket Premier Club & County matters: a report from Geoff Brook - County Secretary. The Stow Academy was set up in June for those players with the desire and motivation to reach their full potential. Under the guidance of Peter Avenell, Suffolk County Coach, this willingness to learn was more important than the level of achievement at this early stage. The Academy has 14 committed players from Bury St. Edmunds and Stowmarket areas who are progressing very well. Age range is from 9 to 14 years old and the only disappointing feature so far is the group only consists of 1 girl - hopefully more will come through our pathways shortly via clubs and schools.

Our target for the next 6 months is to try and recruit more girls into the squad, so if you would like to join us, whatever your playing ability, please contact Peter on 01359-269527. To learn more about us why not take a look at our website

<http://members.tripod.co.uk/tmooney/stowtblclub.html> Within Stowmarket Club 7 sports leaders are now actively promoting a new Woolwich League and it is hoped to get this off the ground during December. Within the club our juniors are now trialing a new pyramid competition assisted by the ETTA in the production of the material - the early signs are promising with players eager to challenge and play.

County matters

The county decided that only one senior and one junior team would be entered in this season's county championships. The reason for this was if a clash of dates occurred we could have a problem in fielding a full complement of ladies.

The junior team had their first taste of competition in division 2A of the County Championships when they played Norfolk, Cheshire and Lincolnshire and found the going very tough. We lost 6-4, 8-2 and 10-0 respectively.

At a recent junior trial a number of Suffolk's top juniors did not take part when invited. County Junior coach Peter Avenell has informed me the players in question were taken off the list because on failing to reply to a letter & also a follow up phone call, they had not informed the committee of their actions.

SUSSEX by John Woodford

Promoted to the premier division of the veterans' county championships, Sussex found themselves at Ashford without their top player Nigel Eckersley, for whom work commitments intervened. It was also a debut for Peter Bartram whose topspin accounted for three victims, but Sussex could only beat Dorset 6-3, losing 7-2 to Surrey and Yorkshire.

Ironically, the Chief Executive of the ETTA, one Richard Yule, now aged 51, belied his years by playing for Surrey and winning five games from six, leaving Surrey top of the table so far. Richard's only defeat was by the Crawley chopper Barrie Gilbert! Talking of Headquarters staff, Sheila King once again defeated Helen Shields 9, -6, 10, -7, 4, and who are the favourites for this title? Without doubt former ETTA Events Manager Mike Johns, brother Brian and former European Champion John Hilton. And the final round is at Knutsford, the John's home ground in Cheshire.

The number of foreign students with some table tennis talent seem to be on the increase. Sussex selectors have snapped up a Berlin-based top-spinner Birgit Seiffert, aged 18. She is down to play for Sussex second team on the Isle of Wight soon. Her victims so far include the England no. 2 cadet Lauren Spink and the former Hastings champion David Pickard.

The untimely death of Mike Watts caused despair around the county including Sussex where he resided for some years, playing for the country, into a couple of leagues, organising a British League team, and then his commitments

in four after making a shaky start losing the first -9.

The semi-finals saw Niv Bogen beat Darius Knight in four and Adam Bleakley narrowly beat Cleveland's Paul Drinkall in five.

It looked as if there would be an upset in the final as Niv took a 2 set lead against Adam but Adam, fought hard to win the remaining three games to take the title.

The plate final was contested between Tom Bray from Lancashire & Adam Leow from Surrey. Tom managed to win in three sets but was taken all the way in the first, winning 17-15, and in the third winning 14-12.

Results

Cadet Boys

S/F - Niv Bogen (MI) bt Darius Knight (SY) 7,-10,7,8

Adam Bleakley (LA) bt Paul Drinkall (CV) 2,-11,-10,5,7

Final - Adam Bleakley (LA) bt Niv Bogen (MI) -9,-7,9,5,8

Cadet Boys' Plate

Final - Tom Bray bt Adam Leow 15,5,12

Cadet Girls

Top seeds in the Cadet Girls were Essex's Abigail Embling & Norfolk's Lauren Spink. Both girls had easy rides until the semi finals when both were taken to five sets.

Abigail overcame the local girl Lauren Springthorpe -4,9,-8,5,3. and Lauren beat Kelly Sibley -6,9, -5,10,10. The final was an equally hard fought game with the result going with the seeding, Abigail winning in five -2,9,-3,2,9.

Results

Cadet Girls

S/F - Abigail Embling (E) bt Lauren Springthorpe (LI) -4,9,-8,5,3; Lauren Spink bt Kelly Sibley -6,9, -5,10,10; Final - Abigail Embling (E) bt Lauren Spink (LI) -2,9,-3,2,9

Cadet Girls Plate

Final - Sylvana Bielec bt Kelly Skeggs 6, -7,10,7

Under 12 Boys

Thirty five players contested the Under 12 Boys' Singles, the number one and two seeds Paul Drinkall and Darius Knight as expected did not have any

trouble reaching the final with neither player losing a game in any of their matches. The final also went with the seeding but not before Darius gave Paul a fright by winning the first game 11-5. However Paul settled his nerves and won the next three games 3,7,6 to take the title.

S/F - Paul Drinkall (CV) bt David Meads (DU) 9,5,3; Darius Knight (SY) bt Gavin Evans (BU) 4,6,6

Final - Paul Drinkall (CV) bt Darius Knight (SY) -5,3,7,6

Under 12 Girls

Local Grantham girl Lauren Springthorpe lived up to her no. 1 spot in the Under 12 Girls' Singles and cruised through to take the title without dropping a game, beating Berkshires Melanie Farquhar 5,4,4 in the final.

S/F - Lauren Springthorpe (LI) bt Sarra Wang (E) 8,9,10; Melanie Farquhar (BK) bt Rachel Pilgrim (WA) 5,-9,2,8
Final - Lauren Springthorpe bt Melanie Farquhar 5,4,4

Under 10 Boys

There were 3 groups of under 10 boys with the winner of each group going through to a 3 group final. Unfortunately Myles Evans had to withdraw injured, leaving his brother Gavin to play Billy Deville from Essex.

Winners:

Group 1 - Gavin Evans (BU)
Group 2 - Myles Evans (BU)
Group 3 - Billy Deville (E)
Final - Gavin Evans (BU) bt Billy Deville (E) 12,9,4

Under 10 Girls

This was a group of 5 girls playing each other, with Jessica Macken (Essex) coming out the winner and Joanne Hiley (Lincolnshire) being the runner up..

Winner - Jessica Macken (E); Runner up - Joanne Hiley (LI); 3rd Charlotte Airey (LI); 4th Hannah Brewin (LI) 5th Alison Nix (LI)

Sunday 28th

Junior Boys

As expected the biggest event over the weekend was the Junior Boys' Singles with one hundred entries. Greg Baker was seeded no.1 and Daniel Horner no.2.

Daniel had several hard matches but managed to reach the final. In the second round he beat Surrey's Robert

Lemmon in five 6,5,-5,-7,4. In Round 3 he beat Stephen Denney of Yorkshire in four. This set him up for a quarter-final match against no. 5 seed Dominic Hall from Kent. In one of the best matches in the tournament Daniel fought through to the semi-finals beating Dominic in four 8,-9,8,9. To reach the final he had another hard match against Yorkshires Simon Noutch winning in four again 9,-7,8,9.

In the other half Greg Baker had a fairly easy win over Kent's John Harley in the second round, but he had to pull out injured in the 3rd round giving Cleveland's Paul Drinkall a walk over into a quarter-final match against Devon's Craig Bryant, the no. 3 seed. Craig proved to be too powerful and overcame Paul in three 9,4,1. In the semi final Craig met Louis Rosenthal from Lancashire, Louis was in excellent form and won comfortably 4,8,3.

The final went as seeded with Daniel coming out on top 8,-5,4,4.

The Plate Final was between Shaun Robertson of Surrey and Oliver Young from Bedfordshire. The first game was close but Shaun won comfortably in three 10,5,6.

Results

Junior Boys

S/F - Daniel Horner (CH) bt Simon Noutch (Y) 9,-7,8,9; Louis Rosenthal (LA) bt Craig Bryant (DV) 4,8,3

Final - Daniel Horner (CH) bt Louis Rosenthal (LA) 8,-5,4,4

Junior Boys Plate

Final - Shaun Robertson bt Oliver Young 10,5,6

Junior Girls

The standard of the Junior Girls was very high with eight of the players ranked in the top twelve in the country. Number one seed was Natalie Bawden from Essex and the number two seed was Joanne Parker of Surrey.

Joanne had a scare in the quarter finals when she was taken to five games by Naomi Wilson from Somerset. Joanne beat the fourth seed Abigail Embling in four to reach the final.

Natalie had an easy three set win over Berkshire's Gemma Chapman before facing Georgina Walker, the no. 3 seed in the semi-final. In what was probably the best game in the girls' singles, Georgina caused an upset by beating Natalie in a very competitive five set

match coming back from 2-1 down to win 2-3.

The final proved to be an anti-climax when Georgina who was very much on the top of her form cruised to an easy 3 set win. In the Plate Final Joanne Hubbard from Kent beat Essex's Emma Weil 10, -11,7,9.

Results

Junior Girls

S/F - Georgina Walker (NG) bt Natalie Bawden (E) 6,-9,-9,4,7; Joanna Parker (SY) bt Abigail Embling (E) -6,11,10,7
Final - Georgina Walker bt Joanna Parker 6,1,10

Junior Girls Plate

Final: Joanne Hubbard bt Emma Weil 10,-11,7,9

SOUTHERN COUNTY CADET COMPETITION RESULTS

Surrey cadet team was a latecomer to this event on 20th October 2001. They only have one day to select a team that made of the following five young players.



from left to right: Adam Leow, Adam Burrows, Wing Yung Chan, Benjamin Chan (Captain), Emma Lucas, Sash Gordon

Due to a late withdrawal of Huntingdon, Surrey cadet team was given a chance to prove their ability amongst 4 other strong county teams who were much more prepared for this event.

The team captain gave a simple instruction to the three boys, try to win all your matches and for the girls they only need to win one out of four in every match.

The first match was against the strongest team, Sussex 1. The result was 5:5. This was a cruel result because after this match, the team continued to do well.

We beat Somerset 7-3; we beat Berkshire 6-4; We beat Sussex 2 7-3.

Both Adam Leow and Wing Yung Chan gave an impressive performance by winning 7 out of 8 matches.

Surrey beat Sussex 1 by one point to clinch the first place of this first County Cadet Competition in this country. The Surrey team will face the winner of the Northern County team in a final match next year.

New Opportunities Fund: New Opportunities for PE & Sport Programme

I wrote the article below on 'Table Tennis, Physical Activity and Intelligence' for the November issue of TTN Extra, but unfortunately there was no room to fit it in. Subsequently, I think it has gained greater relevance with the publication of the New Opportunities Fund document, 'Building for tomorrow: OUR VISION FOR THE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR PE AND SPORT PROGRAMME' published in November, the NOF PE and Sport programme being backed by a £581.25 million budget to be allocated through local education authorities (LEAs). Potentially this could create great opportunities for table tennis.

The document explains that, 'The New Opportunities Fund provides Lottery funding for education, health and environment projects which will help create lasting improvements to the quality of life, particularly in disadvantaged communities'. More specifically, the PE and Sport programme aims to support projects designed to improve the provision of sporting facilities for young people (aged 5 to 16) and the community by modernising existing, and building new, sports facilities, and providing revenue funding to support the development and promotion of these facilities for wider community use. Overall aims are to improve PE and school sport, integrate sport, education and health outcomes, encourage innovative design and management of facilities, increase levels of physical activity, and develop the relationship (promote collaboration and cohesion) between families and schools and between schools and communities in supporting the development of citizenship and lifelong learning, and to promote social inclusion.

Directly supporting the basis of my article is the acceptance of the positive links between levels of physical activity

and educational attainment and exam results, as well as improving young people in a range of related areas such as health, fitness and well-being, self-esteem and motivation, personal and social development and citizenship, positive attitudes, attendance and behaviour. Confirming the thrust of the earlier paper I wrote on 'Table Tennis & Health' (TTN Jan/Feb 2000), the health benefits of physical activity stated in the document include reducing the risk of coronary heart disease, high blood pressure and strokes, and some cancers, improving weight control and diabetes, reducing the risk of accidents and depression and helping to prevent non-specific lower back pain. Table tennis, I had previously argued, is a particularly beneficial form of physical activity because it is good for all-round fitness, can be played by all whatever their age (sport for life) or physique, and is relatively safe/risk free and inexpensive. Because it is especially good for stimulating the brain, table tennis helps improve intellectual/academic performance (see below).

All of these factors will be good arguments for possible table tennis projects, linked with young people and the community (particularly a disadvantaged community), being based in schools facilities. Clubs, particularly PremierClubs, having aspirations to get their projects included in LEA priorities for NOF funding, should urgently contact their RDOs or Paul Baker, ETTA Facilities Officer on e-mail: paul@glynswood.freeserve.co.uk

Table Tennis, Physical Activity and Intelligence: Musings by Ken Muhr

When in the 1960s and 1970s Kent coach Allen Fisher measured the intelligence of some of his table tennis pupils and found an increase in their quotient while they continued to play over a period of time, he was on to something quite important.

As I mentioned in my Table Tennis News January/February 2000 article on 'Table Tennis and Health', the American scholar Dr Win Wenger had recommended table tennis as good for the brain in his book, 'How to Increase Your Intelligence' (1983) and the Japanese Chairman of Tamasu Co. Ltd, has probably done more than anyone else in promoting table tennis as the best

sport for the brain and long life. Tamasu gave the following rationale in a World Table Tennis article (1986):

“All human behaviour is controlled by the brain. Movement of muscles has its origins in the brain. Signals to move muscles are delivered from the cortex to the muscles through the midbrain. The harder your body moves, the more the brain is stimulated. Indeed, playing a sport is a pleasant way of using the brain. There is an additional advantage. This means that more nutrition is brought to the brain. Sports not only stimulate the brain but also make the brain healthier. The amount of stimulation is determined by the sport.”

(Tamasu then mentioned a Japanese professor who suggested that because judging the nature of a pitched ball and hitting it with a bat requires more brainwork than hitting a ball at rest, baseball was better for the brain than golf.)

“By pursuing this through further, I reached the conclusion that table tennis is the best sport for the brain. The complexity and quickness of our sport is unmatched by other sports.”

However to return to the raising of intelligence: in April of this year our national press reported on the rise in IQ in many Western countries. The Observer (22nd April) said:

“Analyses of IQ tests show that people are getting rapidly more intelligent, or at least getting higher scores. Average scores have risen by 27 points in the UK since 1942 and 24 points in the USA since 1918, with comparable gains across the world.”

A study by William Dickens of The Brookings Institution in Washington DC and James Flynn and The University of Otago, New Zealand, published in the Psychological Review of the American Psychological Association, argued that a more stimulating environment coupled with genetic inheritance interacted in a virtuous circle to make people smarter, and that the environment is overwhelmingly powerful. Education and the increasingly cognitive demands of jobs might have caused some of the changes. However (Observer, 22.4.01): “Increased leisure time could also mean that people are honing their intelligence more by reading or playing games or solving puzzles, and television and the Internet bombard people with a wealth

of information denied to previous generations.”

An intellectually stimulated person might also choose more demanding leisure activities. What is the physiological effect of stimulation of the brain? We know that even people who are brain damaged through stroke and accident can regain brain function, through the creation of new neural pathways as a result of stimulation and exercise. Dr John Harvey, professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and the author of ‘A User’s Guide to the Brain’, says in the Sunday Times Style magazine (‘Brian Train’, 8th July 2001), “It is possible to change your internal wiring, but you must engage in some sort of activity that is novel to you”. (This might suggest that those new to table tennis or learning new technique or tactics might get the most benefit!) “For decades, scientists maintained that once its physical connections were completed during childhood, the brain was hard-wired. The reality is that with every passing second we are changing.”

In the same article Dr Lawrence Katz, professor of neurobiology at Duke University Medical Centre in America and author of ‘Keep your Brain Alive’, says, “The more active the brain cells are, the more growth-stimulating molecules they produce and the better they respond.”

A Guardian Education article (Wendy Berliner, ‘Mind Games’, 14th August 2001) focussed on the specific benefits of physical activity in building a better brain. “Research is still in its infancy but the argument goes basically like this: increased physical activity increases blood flow to the brain and, when coupled with learning tasks (physical or mental), causes the formation of dendrites – the slender filaments that branch out of the neurons and increase the neural pathways and neural mapping of the brain. This is believed to increase intelligence in mammals and foster greater learning through improved intelligence”. Susan Greenfield, professor of pharmacology at Oxford University, is also quoted on similar lines to Dr Katz above: “The brain is very sensitive to what is happening to the body, and the more you are interacting and stimulating the circuits of the brain, the more agile are your brain cells.”

Wendy Berliner’s Guardian article mentions several quite startling

examples in schools where increased physical activity increased academic performance (although an improvement in IQ as measured is not necessarily claimed – the benefits also come from greater attentiveness, higher motivation and engagement in education, better health and fitness and higher self esteem, lower truancy and bad behaviour, etc.) Ben Tan, director of the British Heart Foundation’s national centre at Loughborough University, who has reviewed much of the research, says:

“There does seem to be a strong correlation between high levels of physical activity and high academic achievement in schools. It increases the concentration of children and their ability to learn. In schools that invest in PE and after-school sport you can see a major improvement in academic achievement.”

Returning to table tennis, Japanese neurosurgeons Professor Teruaki Mori and Dr Tomohiko Sato have said (1999) how it helps brain disease patients in their rehabilitation treatment. I think we have enough (other) evidence to safely conclude that playing table tennis does assist blood flow to the brain, improve reaction time and help raise intellectual performance. However, it is as yet an unproven hypothesis that owing to its speed and complexity, spin, touch, power, range of shots and tactics etc. it is the best sport/one of the best sports for the brain - as opposed to a good sport for the brain - or that it definitely raises intelligence as measured. I believe it actually is and does but we need more proof. Once we have this evidence it will be a fantastic promotion tool for encouraging people to play table tennis.

I appreciate that this article could come across as pseudo-medical/pseudo-scientific and would welcome the suggestions and opinions of readers more knowledgeable than myself in these areas.

LEN PILFOLD –The Ageing Revolutionary, by Jon Kaufman

Len Pilfold is 71 years old and a dangerous man. At such an age one would not expect to find a volunteer bristling full of exciting and challenging ideas about the future of table tennis, but that is exactly what you do find when in conversation with Len. The fact

that Len has taken over the administrative burden of the highly successful, almost revolutionary London Junior Table Tennis Scheme gives a pretty clear indication of where Len's sympathies lie. The scheme, originally developed by a team of table tennis visionaries including Dave Miller, Alan Harwood, John Llewellyn, Malcolm Springthorpe and Reg Rockall, has found a most dedicated advocate in Len and wife, Julie Pilfold. Such has been their success that the ETTA recently awarded them the honorary title of National Volunteers of the Year. So what is it that makes Len Pilfold a dangerous influence in the normally staid world of English table tennis?

Len Pilfold loves the London Junior Table Tennis Scheme for three simple but revolutionary reasons. Firstly, the scheme is exceedingly cheap for youngsters to get involved with. Just £2.00 to enter your local area tournament, and if you qualify, a whopping £2.50 gets you into the All-London Finals. There's no doubt about it, the LJTTTS has always been fantastically cheap but what do you get for your money? The answer is a guaranteed number of games. It doesn't sound too revolutionary, but when you think of the mainstream ETTA tournaments with their miserly groups of three or four and the traditional knockout for the lucky few, and then in comparison the LJTTTS and its advocates are offering something quite revolutionary - value for money. In the LJTTTS, every participant is guaranteed at least five games, but the average is much closer to six or seven. Every child plays throughout the day, with no demoralising early knockout.

It's cheap, it gives value for money and thirdly, it gives recognition to every participant. Every player goes home with a certificate telling them where they finished in their particular group and category. In addition to their certificates, each player earns rating points, and again this has the effect of giving value to every player of every ability. The LJTTTS, according to Len, offers a winning formula not just for novice tournaments, but for all tournaments, whatever the standard, whatever the age.

Len has done more than to simply keep the scheme going. He has been the leading light in fighting for the scheme's expansion, and we now have a

situation where there are 10 qualifying area tournaments, which then feed into the All-London Final. This has taken the scheme right back to its grass roots where a youngster can come straight out of his/her house without any previous experience, and hey presto they're involved in a London-wide table tennis tournament. An important positive by product of this expansion has been the involvement of 10 area organisers who now take a healthy interest in the scheme's survival and success. Many of the area tournaments are held in London's big clubs, thus helping to consolidate the growth of the ETTA's Premier Club Scheme. Len Pilfold has a lot to be proud of.



What are some of the other thoughts of Len Pilfold? Len has long argued that the whole competition structure needs a good shake-up with the central aim of getting the tournament circuit regionalised. Len argues that kids should not have to be criss-crossing the country in search of ranking points at huge expense to their parents and often for relatively few games. Too many tournaments, too many clashes and too many miles for too little table tennis. Len is busy putting his revolutionary ideas into practise in the Capital. I wonder how long it will be before others follow his lead. Long live Len!

ETTA's South West Regional Report By Alf Peppard

(Editor's note: We publish key points from a long report by Alf, which sadly he says is his last, owing to ill health.)

The second meeting of the year took place at the Weston-super-Mare Cricket Club on Sunday 19th August 2001, chaired by John Burtenshaw. Mr Burtenshaw mentioned that former English international Byran Merrett

would be sadly missed by the table tennis world.

It was agreed that a proposed website should be set up and Philip Irwin-Brown, Regional Development Officer, was instructed to pursue this matter.

After many years of faithful service Doug Parsons has retired from the post of Treasurer and the paperwork is now back in the Chairman's hands.

Press/Publicity

In his absence it was highlighted that Alf Peppard (Press/Publicity) works tirelessly and achieves good press media for the sport. The Chairman produced a full page newspaper report and photograph with regards to Alf's work.

Commonwealth Games Update By Jim Beckley

Tickets for the table tennis tournament at the Commonwealth Games have gone through the roof. And that was after just one month. The organisers say they have been 'overwhelmed' with the early requests for tickets.

Demand for tickets has already outstripped supply with three of the four finals oversubscribed and there is still eight months to go. "The most expensive seats seem to have attracted the most interest", said Press Officer Ross Hughes.

It's a major task filling seats, no one knows better than the ETTA who is constantly trying to do just that at big events. The Games organisers have a much bigger task but it already seems to be looking good.

A great deal of publicity has already helped the cause and with the vast majority of spectators coming from within an hour and a half's drive of Manchester, that's where the bulk of publicity has been aimed.

The athletics events are also selling like hot cakes with a third of all tickets for the stadium already sold, more by the time you read this. Besides the athletics, swimming and gymnastics are also selling above average with the opening and closing ceremonies already sold out.

The price of tickets probably had a lot to do with the early surge. As mentioned in Chatterbox, half the tickets for the Manchester 2002 Games are priced at £10 a day or less. Tickets as little as £5 are available for the early days of the table tennis competition

rising to £20 for the finals of the singles. The opening and closing ceremonies are priced at £21 each. These will be the biggest Commonwealth Games ever held, and it will be one of the biggest sporting events this country has ever held." Niels de Vos, the Games Commercial Director told TTN.

"What we wanted to do was reassure ourselves that the public demand was there for the Games and we have certainly achieved that with this unbelievable response for the table tennis."

Application forms are available from the Games Hotline on 09870 162 2002 or from any Asda store. Whilst tickets are selling well, the Games organisers are also pleased with the response they are having with merchandise.

Mancunians will be well aware of the efforts going into this side of the Games through regular reports in all the local newspapers. There's a shop in the Arndale Centre packed to the ceiling with items such as official t-shirts, polo shirts, key rings, towels, beanies and fridge magnets including one aimed at table tennis, which, along with a small Kitkat (that's the Games mascot) you can buy for £2.99.



International School Sport Federation International

This prestigious event will be held in Senec, Slovakia, from 5th to 12th April 2002. Only four boys and four girls will be chosen by ESTTA for the national selected team.

Schools Dates for your Diary

1st Mar 2002 – Last date to nominate events in individual champs; 21st Mar 2002 – Last date to nominate players in individual champs; 6th-8th April 2002 – British Primary Championships, Dublin; 27th April 2002 – National Individual Champs, Fenton Manor; 10th May 2002 – Annual General Meeting; 28th-30th June – Schools International, Cardiff

Vets British League, Stoke, 17th/18th November, by Jim Beckley

Colebridge ladies team have been close but never quite managed to win the

premier division of the Veterans' British League. But, after the first weekend at the impressive Fenton Manor Sports Centre, they have given themselves a real chance of putting the record straight. The Midlands side finished unbeaten topping the Premier Division, just one point ahead of rivals Millennium Belles.

They dropped a point against Ryelands but made up for that slip by beating Millennium 4-2. It is a win that could prove an important factor when the sides meet again for the final session in Widnes in January.

Big-hitting Jan Dunning was unbeaten with colleagues Linda Simpson, Carol Eckersley and Eileen Shaler helping push their team into pole position.

But it is proving tough at the top for Worcester Ladies. Their return to the Premier Division proved something of a nightmare when the side failed to win a point.

They had a couple of 4-2 defeats to Colebridge and Colleens but with Janet Hunt and Lynda Reid struggling and Margaret Dignum missing out on the second day, it was left to Ann Lloyd to collect the best figures with three wins from her ten matches.

Richard Yule, Mike Short, Mike Johns and Dave Welsman put Ryelands into a strong position for the second week by finishing two points clear of title leaders PAA.

Richard Yule proved to be their match winner winning nine of his ten matches, his only defeat coming against Bournemouth superstar Tony Clayton. Mike Short was his usual self, finishing with a creditable 83% and his only defeat to Bournemouth's Dave Sharples.

There were not many whitewashes around with only Cippenham men (Division 3) and HEL Ladies (Division 1) finishing this first session with 100% records. First Division side Tameside (formerly Stockport) were voted Team of the Weekend with another first division side The 4Js the ladies winners. Marilyn Bawden and Neil Brierley picked up the Player of the Weekend awards.

Famous People Who Played Table Tennis

The Guardian report (19th November) of Lennox Lewis's demolition of Hasim Rahman to become only the third man

in boxing history (after Mohammad Ali and Evander Holyfield) to be a 'three-time heavyweight champion of the world', included the following paragraph indicating he played table tennis on the evening before the feat:

'Steward (Lewis's trainer) described visiting Lewis's penthouse suite on the eve of the fight. "Lennox put on a tape of the first fight, and after watching it he turned to me and said, 'Emanuel, this man does not have the class. This is going to be an easy fight for me. I'm going to have some fun out there.' Then he went off and played a game of ping pong, and I knew then that everything would be all right.'"

Of course we don't know how well Lewis plays table tennis, but fellow pugilists Frank Bruno and Naseem Hamed are quite proficient.

An Observer (14th October) full-page interview headed, 'The Freud who hates therapy' had a subheading which included, 'Sir Clement Freud...talks about...his passion for ping-pong'. Apparently he is proud of the fact that he has never been beaten by any of his children, though 'he stopped playing Matthew just at the point at which defeat was looming'!

Another Jewish name famous in English table tennis circles is Goldstein, for until his death in 1988, Maurice Goldstein OBE, an England trialist in the thirties, had been an incredible servant of table tennis: for example, secretary of the Birmingham League since 1931, secretary of Warwickshire TTA since 1937, worked at the national level since 1933, organised countless open tournaments (e.g. the Midland Open), as well as World Championships (the 1977 Championships in Birmingham were perhaps his finest achievement), international matches and other events, and since 1973 been President of the ETTA! Well, Tony Shapps tells me that Maurice's son Andrew, a rabbi, still plays – a defender in the Wembley and Harrow League.

JOHN GARDNER 1948-2001 by Steve Kerns

Former Chelmsford League Chairman and County Vice-Chairman) who died on Monday 15 October 2001.

John Gardner's enthusiasm for sport and life in general can be best summed up by the simple expression "he never

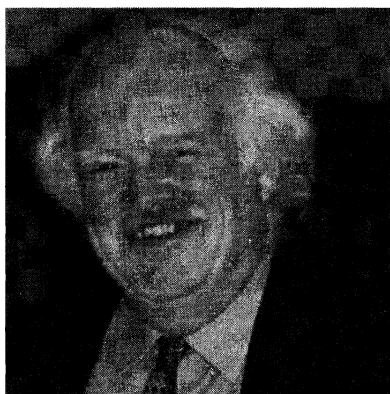
did anything by halves". John had been playing up in the fourth division of the Chelmsford & District Table Tennis League for the Old Chelmsfordians Club and joking in his jolly familiar style and in what proved to be his final match he pulled off a superb win belying his usual sixth division status. He then sat down quietly, collapsed and died.

John, aged 53, was raised in Ashbourne, Derbyshire and as the son of a Headmaster, it is therefore unsurprising that he entered the teaching profession. His first school appointment led him to King Edward VI Grammar School in Chelmsford where he was to stay for the next 30 years going on to become Head of Economics and Careers Master. During this time he also completed his Masters degree in Economics at Birkbeck College in London. For John one might say love blossomed backstage as one of his extra-curricular activities in those early years was assisting with the drama productions. It was at a production of "Senate Sounds" that he met his wife Tricia. Boswells School were called upon to help and a young English teacher brought along some of her pupils. Whilst the pupils set about their tasks with relish John clearly had other ideas in mind! Married in 1972 Tricia and John had two children both whom have achieved first class academic careers - Sarah (now aged 26) and Paul (who is 22).

John had a wide range of interests including blues and classical Music as well as a recently acquired love of coins. He was a mean cricketer again playing for the Old Chelmsfordians Club, a sport he pursued up to last year. His deadly spin bowling had foxed many a bat and also brought many "Man of the Match trophies" which were proudly displayed in the family trophy cabinet. John used to joke that he "played cricket even slower than he played his table tennis!" John went on to become President of the Old Chelmsfordians Club, its most prestigious appointment. His love for table tennis grew when daughter Sarah, at the age of 10, started to show real interest in the sport. Learning to play at the very successful Chelmer Valley Coaching School under the likes of Coaches Phil Gower, Richard Clark and Joe Wigley Sarah went onto achieve top

20 rankings in England in both the Cadet and Junior Girls categories playing for Essex Junior first team regularly in the process. Sarah won the Junior Girls Singles titles in the Chelmsford, Colchester and Burnham Leagues as well as at the Hollington * Open in Sussex. Son Paul didn't achieve the same success as Sarah on the Table Tennis table but he does share his father's love of Coins and history. It is also delightful to hear that he recently organised a highly successful Table Tennis Tournament at his University in Oxford.

John was Chairman of the Chelmsford League from 1994-8 after having served his apprenticeship as Vice-Chairman. He was also hugely respected in County circles having been the Chelmsford League's representative for 11 years at County Meetings and he was the County Vice-Chairman from 1995 until 1998. John also worked on the County Junior Affairs Sub-Committee as well as on the Senior Affairs Sub-Committee. In both instances he showed typical magnanimity by not bolstering his daughter's claim for team-places above that of other players. Arguably John's proudest moment came at last year's Chelmsford Closed Tournament where he took the 6-Down Singles Title - his first individual Singles title in 35 years in the sport. There were fewer prouder or more popular winners when players picked up their trophies at Final Night back in February.



MUHR'S MEMO: Information Officer Messages from Ken Muhr

Space is short so I will be brief.

First a notice: the management of the **Table Tennis Collectors' Society, run for 9 years by Gerald Gurney whose brainchild it was, is being handed over to Graham**

Trimming (graham.trimming@virgin.net), to whom you should send your £10 annual subscription. More details next issue.

As usual **John Woodford, Daily Telegraph**, was the only journalist to have regular copy published, but **Richard Eaton** joined him in covering Ryan Owen's antics at the Western Open Butterfly Grand Prix in Bath, having 6 paragraphs on the affair published in **The Times**. Other items that got small national publicity were **Gareth Herbert's** gaining the national **no.1 men's ranking** with **Matthew Syed** dropping out, and Syed **successfully returning to international table at the Danish Open Pro Tour as part of his build up to the Commonwealth Games, Manchester 2002**, which will probably ensure that he retakes the top position in the next ranking list. Matthew did get a feature on David Beckham published in **The Times**, but table tennis is barely mentioned. The former table tennis prowess of Skylet Andrew, now the agent for 11 professional football players has been given passing reference a few times in the national dailies.

Through the efforts of Matthew Syed, **SKY TV** have been filming at the **National Training Centre, Nottingham**, and young **Darius Knight** has been interviewed and filmed in action by **BBC London Live, Newsroom South East** - quite a coup! More on that in the next issue. It is very tough getting table tennis players in the national media - the media are very discriminating on what/who they will cover - and I hope that other players who don't get the same exposure will have the generosity of spirit to understand that it is all good for the game.

One item I forgot to mention was a Stephen Moss article in the **Guardian** of 17th July on sporting genes, 'Born to win?' in which he refers to **Katy Parker**, "the daughter of former European champion Jill Hammersley and England international Don Parker". Strangely, the biggest headline given to 'ping pong', was **The Observer** interview of **Sir Clement Freud!**

There has been a lot in the media regarding the massive demand for **Commonwealth Games** tickets (www.commonwealthgames.com. Information line: 0870 609 2002). The last time I heard from Karen Tonge on this, at least **3 of the table tennis days had been sold out, with finals tickets possibly having to go on a lottery**. Time has just about run out table tennis sports specific **volunteers**. They need to fill in an application form, to be returned to Karen Tonge, 1 Malpas Rd, Runcorn WA7 4AD (not to the M2002 office). If you have already sent a volunteer form to M2002 and wish to be involved with the table tennis, please contact Karen (etta.Karen@virgin.net Tel. 01928 563640) and also tell M2002 when they call you for interview.

ORMESBY & GROVE LEAD THE PREMIER DIVISIONS

THERE can be no finer sight in British Table Tennis this season than that at Aldersley Leisure Arena, Wolverhampton over the week end of 13/14h. October - 37 tables in one hall with close on 300 junior players representing 74 teams from the four corners of England, plus Ireland, Scotland and Wales. With the Sussex Grand Prix and National Council the same week end it was also a mammoth task to recruit 37 umpires so a word of praise early in these notes to that loyal band who worked unchanged throughout 5 sessions, writes Brian Lamerton.

In the boys premier division Ormesby with the benefit of the whole of last seasons squad, Craig Bryant, Bryn and Paul Drinkhall and Martyn Clarke would appear to be having it all their own way with only the Irish taking two sets from them (John Murphy and Conor Nolan) but a cautionary word, they have yet to play either Idsall or Colley Hyundai (Wales) who occupy second and third spots Bryant, playing at No. 2. was the division's most successful player winning all ten sets, 7 times 3-straight but on the other three occasions being taken to a close fifth game by Stephen Denny (Oakbank), Glynn Eggar (Scotland) and Colin Byrne (Irish). Idsall's Adam Bleakley (also playing at 2) took a 100% record into his last match but was then beaten, in 4 games, by Liam Thomas (Colley Hyundai).

It was good to welcome Grove back into the fold and they quickly made their presence felt with their team of Natalie Bawden, Kelly Sibley, Georgina Walker and Naomi Owen taking command in the girls premier division ending the week with a 4-2 victory against last seasons winners Cippenham. With no disrespect to Cippenham their team of Gemma Chapman, Joanna Parker and Karen Shepherd who lost a total of 4 sets throughout both week ends last season have already lost 10; an indication of the increased strength of the competition. Natalie Bawden remained unbeaten which included a



GIRLS TEAM OF THE WEEKEND: Cippenham 'B' being presented with their trophies by the Chairman of the Wolverhampton Sports Development Unit PETER HOLMES, to (left to right) EMILY TUCKER, GEMMA HOLLETT and FRANCESCA PARNELL.



BOYS TEAM OF THE WEEKEND: Gautby Boys (left to right) NEILL POWELL, TOM PAGE, GAVIN LLOYD and DANIEL RUSSELL.

Pictures by: Patricia Mosney

straight games victory over Peniel's Abigail Embling who was also otherwise unbeaten.

Grove are also well to the fore in boys division 1 with Harry Shahlaei, Dominic Wynn-Sands and Ashley Nicholls recording four 5-1 victories, 4-2 against York Gardens being their closest call and in this match York's Darius Knight won both of his games including coming from behind to provide Shahlaei with his only reverse. Knight's own unbeaten record was wrecked - in 5 games by - Peniel's Daniel Rees.

Seasiders from Blackpool lead girls division 1 despite losing (4-2) to joint

Seasiders team included Clara Howard and Amanda Bell and the Cippenham team was completed by Gemma Hollett and Francesca Parnell.

In the top of table clash in boys division 2A North Mundham recovered from 3-1 down to draw with Grove "B"; James Whitehorn, Luke Bridge and Michael Simpson won a set apiece for the Sussex team whilst Jaz Allen -Sutton won twice for Grove; Alistair Dawson, Robert Morris and Duncan Pattison completing their squad. So tight is boys division 2B - only two points covering all 6 teams - that bottom team Challoner drew with leaders Retford! - Challoner's Chris Sabourin winning twice.

In girls division 2 Darlington "A" came from behind to defeat the previous leaders, Grove "B" by 4 sets to 2 in the final match, a match which saw Grove's Heather Shutt unbeaten record fall to Tanya Waller. Waller and Claire Wilson each won their two sets in this match to both finish the weekend on played 8, won 7.

continued on page 18

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JUNIOR BRITISH LEAGUE

PLAYERS OF THE WEEKEND



PETER HOLMES, The Chairman of Wolverhampton Sports Development Unit, presents the 'Players of the Weekend' awards to **JACOB KODICEK** (above) and **SARRA WANG** of Chelmsford.



Pictures by: Arthur C. Clarke

Boy "player of the weekend" Jacob Kodicek (Truro Tigers) shares top individual billing with Hamish Yeung (Bedford Modern) - boys division 3A - each with 9 wins from 10 appearances; Yeung defeating Kodicek but being beaten himself by Peterborough's Adam Frost. Will Harrington of Byng Hall returned a maximum in boys division 3B, a feat matched in boys division 4B by Christopher Brown of Torridge Aces. In girls division 3 Stacey Beastall received one walk-over, winning the other nine whilst her Draycott/Longeaton team mates Sarah Bayliss and Natasha Edwards each lost once only.

There were many close matches

and many close and exciting individual encounters; Emily Tucker's defeat of Linda O'Sullivan in girls division 2 by 9-11, 11-9; 10-12; 14-12; 14-12 and that of James Fletcher in his boys division 3B win against John Everest 1 16; 12-14; 12-10, 10-12; 13-11. doing much to justify the new scoring system

Sarra Wang from Chelmsford was girls 'player of the week end' and "teams of the week end" were Cippenham "B" (girls) and Gautby Boys. Presentations, including one to long serving umpire Wilf Rhodes, were made by Peter Holmes, Chairman of the Wolverhampton Sports Development Unit.

BOYS PREMIER	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ormesby	5	5	0	0	25	5	10
Idsall	5	3	2	0	21	9	8
Colley Hyundai	5	3	1	1	17	13	7
Irish Boys	5	2	2	1	18	12	6
Cippenham A	5	2	1	2	17	13	5
Oakbank A	5	2	0	3	13	17	4
London Progress A	5	0	0	5	6	24	0
Scotland A	5	0	0	5	3	27	0
BOYS DIVISION 1							
Grove A	5	5	0	0	24	6	10
Gautby Boys	5	3	1	1	16	14	7
Cippenham B	5	2	2	1	18	12	6
Team Peniel A	5	2	0	3	13	17	4
York Gardens	5	0	2	3	11	19	2
Streety TTC	5	0	1	4	8	22	1
BOYS DIVISION 2A							
North Mundham	5	3	2	0	22	8	8
Grove B	5	3	2	0	18	12	8
Scotland B	5	3	1	1	19	11	7
Spicer Boys	5	1	2	2	11	19	4
Seasiders	5	1	1	3	11	19	3
East Point	5	0	0	5	9	21	0
BOYS DIVISION 2B							
Retford	5	2	2	1	18	12	6
Darlington A	5	2	2	1	17	13	6
De Vere N.E.T.T.S.	5	1	3	1	15	15	5
High Wycombe	5	1	3	1	13	17	5
Uxbridge Bribar	5	2	0	3	14	16	4
Challoner TTC	5	1	2	2	13	17	4
BOYS DIVISION 3A							
Truro Tigers	5	3	2	0	20	10	8
Bedford Modern	5	3	2	0	20	10	8
Ellenborough	5	2	1	2	16	14	5
Peterborough	5	1	3	1	16	14	5
London Progress B	5	0	3	2	12	18	3
Oakbank B	5	0	1	4	6	24	1
BOYS DIVISION 3B							
Corby Power	5	3	2	0	19	11	8
Byng Hall	5	2	3	0	17	13	7
Grove C	5	3	0	2	16	14	6
Colley Hunai B	5	1	2	2	13	17	4
Rotherham Scorpions	5	0	3	2	13	17	3
Hilton	5	0	2	3	12	18	2
BOYS DIVISION 4A							
Team Peniel B	5	4	0	1	18	12	8
Reigate/Redhill	5	3	1	1	17	13	7
Darlington B	5	2	2	1	19	11	6
Lucan Boys	5	2	1	2	16	14	5
Crusaders	5	1	1	3	13	17	3
Super Blades	5	0	1	4	7	23	1
BOYS DIVISION 4B							
Torridge Aces	5	3	2	0	20	10	8
St.Andrews	5	3	2	0	19	11	8
Cheltenham	5	2	2	1	19	11	6
J.A.G.S.	5	1	3	1	15	15	5
B.A.T.T.S.	5	1	1	3	11	19	3
St.Marys	5	0	0	5	6	24	0
GIRLS PREMIER							
Grove A	5	5	0	0	23	7	10
Cippenham A	5	4	0	1	20	10	8
Team Peniel A	5	2	1	2	18	12	5
Club-Mid Cheshire	5	2	1	2	14	16	5
Scotland A	5	1	0	4	9	21	2
Gautby Girls	5	0	0	5	6	24	0
GIRLS DIVISION 1							
Seasiders	5	4	0	1	20	10	8
Cippenham B	5	3	2	0	20	10	8
Byng Hall	5	2	2	1	17	13	6
Team Peniel B	5	1	2	2	14	16	4
Irish Girls	5	2	0	3	13	17	4
Spicer Girls	5	0	0	5	6	24	0
GIRLS DIVISION 2							
Darlington A	5	5	0	0	24	6	10
Grove B	5	4	0	1	23	7	8
Rushymead	5	3	0	2	19	11	6
Chelmsford	5	2	0	3	12	18	4
Grove C	5	1	0	4	8	22	2
Nuneaton	5	0	0	5	4	26	0
GIRLS DIVISION 3							
Draycott/Longeaton	5	5	0	0	28	2	10
Woodfield	5	4	0	1	19	11	8
De Vere N.E.T.T.S.	5	3	0	2	16	14	6
Rotherham Scorpions	5	2	0	3	12	18	4
Arundel	5	1	0	4	11	19	2
Darlington	5	0	0	5	4	26	0

SHILDKROT JUNIOR BRITISH LEAGUE TABLES

STARTING TIMES

THE previous two articles in this series have been concerned with the negative: not playing (postponements), not turning up (walkovers) and not having a full team. This one is about playing, and more specifically starting. When should matches start and what happens when they don't?

On starting times, there was remarkable unanimity in the random sample of league handbooks I surveyed. With only two exceptions, starting time was 7.30. Southampton had a time of 7.15 and Sunderland 7.00. These were the biggest towns in the survey, suggesting that the majority of players probably work locally, in comparison with those

in commuterland where more time is needed to travel from work.

The differences arise over what to do about matches that don't start at 7.30. Most leagues give a time by which matches can be claimed if no one has turned up, most commonly 8.00, and others give times when teams can start claiming sets. In Reading, for instance, one set is forfeited after 15 minutes, two after 30 minutes and the whole lot after 45 minutes.

Eastbourne require two players to be in attendance by 8.15, Stamford by 8.00 and Maidstone by 7.45.

There is also usually a cut-off time when the third player is expected to arrive or forfeit all his

or her sets: Fakenham and Maidstone 8.15, Lowestoft 8.30, Stamford and West Essex 9.00, Northampton 9.15.

As with a number of apparently inflexible rules, the dilemma is when and how to enforce them. Do you turn a blind eye to bad timekeeping or do you sour the evening by telling your opponents that you have just claimed the first set?

Those who favour a hard line may wish to take heed of a cautionary tale from my own experience.

The league had come to an exciting climax where not only was the outcome of the season resting on the final match, but three different teams could win the title. If **A** beat **B**, then **A** won

the title. **B** needed to beat **A** 10-2 (we played three doubles in those days) to win. If the match was drawn or **B** won by less than 10-2, then the title went to **C**.

B travelled to **A** seeking their 10-2 win but after winning the opening doubles, their third player had not turned up. **A** promptly claimed the next set, leaving **B** needing nine of the remaining ten sets to take the title. The decision to claim the set left them in such a fired-up mood that they did just that.

And, yes, since you ask, it was my team that won...

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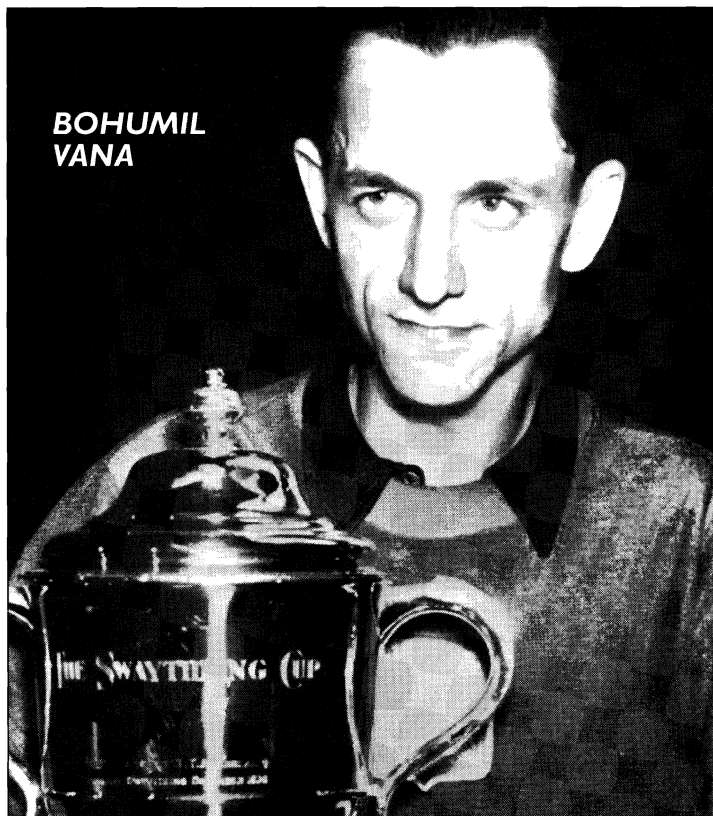
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CZECH VETERANS



BOHUMIL VANA

CMKV - CZECH AND MORAVIAN CLUB OF VETERANS Written by Lumir Ruzha, president CMKV and Ladislav Sejпка

THIS article is about veterans table tennis in the Czech Republic where such stars as Bohumil Vana, Ivan Andreadis, Stanislav Kolar, Marie Kettnerova, Vlasta Depetrisova, Milan Orlovski and other excellent players played.

The CMKV was founded on 24.4.1982 by Jiri Grossl under the name GPV (Grand Prix of Veterans) and he became the club's first president. The present name was

SOME OF THE INFORMATION FOR THESE PAGES WAS OBTAINED FROM ETTA & ITTF OFFICES AND ITTF MAGAZINE 'TABLE TENNIS ILLUSTRATED'

established in 1990. The first tournament was held on that day in Litvinov with 27 players. In that year only three regions out of eight participated but from 1985 the whole of the Czech Republic became involved. From 1985 women were included in the events.

Currently the club is managed by a committee of thirteen members, as an independent organisation but is associated with the Czech Association of Table Tennis. Since its foundation the presidents have been Jiri Grossl (1982 - 1989), Miroslav Rezab (1990) and Lumir Ruzha (1990 - 2001).

As already mentioned the first name of the club was Grand Prix of Veterans and since 1982, Grand Prix Veterans Tournaments have been organised eight per year. Up to 31.12.2000 166 tournaments have been arranged. Points are awarded at each tournament. The points for seven tournaments for each player in the year are added together and points for their worst tournament excluded. The eight best players in each category play in a Masters Tournament the winner being Champion of CMKV and the Grand

Prix. The remaining players play another competition in groups of eight.

The tournaments are organised in eleven categories, men 40+ to 75+ in five year steps and women in three categories 40+ to 60+ in ten year steps. From 2002 there will be an 80+ category for men. Only singles are played at tournaments, in groups of four then K.O., as in the World and European Championships. Seeding is applied according to the latest Vets Ratings points. There is a fixture list compiled each year. The average number of players for each tournament is 195 and the maximum 264. Most tournaments are played in one day. Winners obtain 240 points, runner up 220, semi-finalist 200 and quarter-finalist 180. To these are added 10 points for each match win, 20 points for win in the group and 10 for participation in the tournament. The Tournament winner usually accumulates 320 to 350 points.

CMKV presents 17 Challenge Cups and these are presented each year following the Grand Prix and Masters Tournaments to the winners of each category. Two further cups are presented to the best players in the mens and ladies categories. A cup is presented for fair play and two cups for the oldest man and lady player. Finally there is a cup for the oldest member of the club, currently Miroslav Rezek (1914). The first eight players receive prizes and diplomas and first four players medals.

Permanent records are kept of all tournaments and for each member details of their club membership, tournament wins and points obtained. Those that have participated in World or European Vets Championships and reach the last eight or win Consolation events are recorded in the "Honour Book" of the club.

Of the 35 founder members that formed the club in 1982, three still remain. Currently the membership is 467. For loyalty to the club at 10 years a bronze medal is presented, for 15 years silver and 20 years and next five years gold medals. Players from Austria, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Germany and Slovakia are registered with the club.

At the tournament Grand Prix in Hradec Kralove and Havirov last year highly ranked players Roy Norton and Fred Lockwood from England took part.

The club has a bulletin called "ZPRAVODAJ" distributed by post, showing results from the latest tournaments, World and European Championships, news from the club, committee and topical events. The postage is sponsored by CAST and is a great help to the club.

STOP PRESS

MA LIN WINS DANISH OPEN

Farum, Denmark, 2 December 2001.

The Chinese No. 6 in the World Ma Lin has had his worries about the new counting system playing to 11, he hasn't won anything with the shorter games and he obviously hasn't been feeling well with the new system.

On Sunday he proved that he can learn as he took the title in mens singles at the Farum Danish Open beating Jan-Ove Waldner of Sweden 4-1.

Waldner had fought his way into the final beating Austria's Werner Schlager and Lee Chul Seung of Korea, but against Ma Lin he couldn't keep up.

Both Ma Lin and Waldner needed at least a place in the semi-finals to qualify for the Grand Finals in Tianjin, China, in January 2002, and they both succeeded. That cost Vladimir Samsonov the trip to China. He chose to stay at home and lost his place among the best 16.

LI JIA TOOK WOMENS CROWN

LI JIA went to Farum Danish Open to earn the necessary points to qualify for the Grand Finals. She did that by reaching the semi-finals, then went on to the final where she took the Danish title by ousting Aya Umemura of Japan in four straight sets.

SWEDISH OPEN RESULTS

MENS SINGLES

Quarter-finals: Wang Liqin (China) b Liu Guoliang 4-1 Sang Eun Oh (Korea) b Sen Yan (China) 4-2; F. Hakansson (Sweden) b T.Krzyszewski (Poland) 4-3; Seung Min Ryu (Korea) bt J. Roskopf (Germany) 4-3. S/Fs: Wang b Sang 4-2 Seung b Hakansson 4-2. FINAL: Wang b Seung 8-11, 7-11, 11-7, 11-4 16-14 11-6.

WOMENS SINGLES

S/F: Yan Guo (China) b Yang Bait (China) 4-2; T. Boros (Croatia) b M.Takahashi (Japan) 4-0. FINAL: Yan b Boros 12-10, 7-11, 6-11, 9-11, 11-6, 11-9, 11-5.

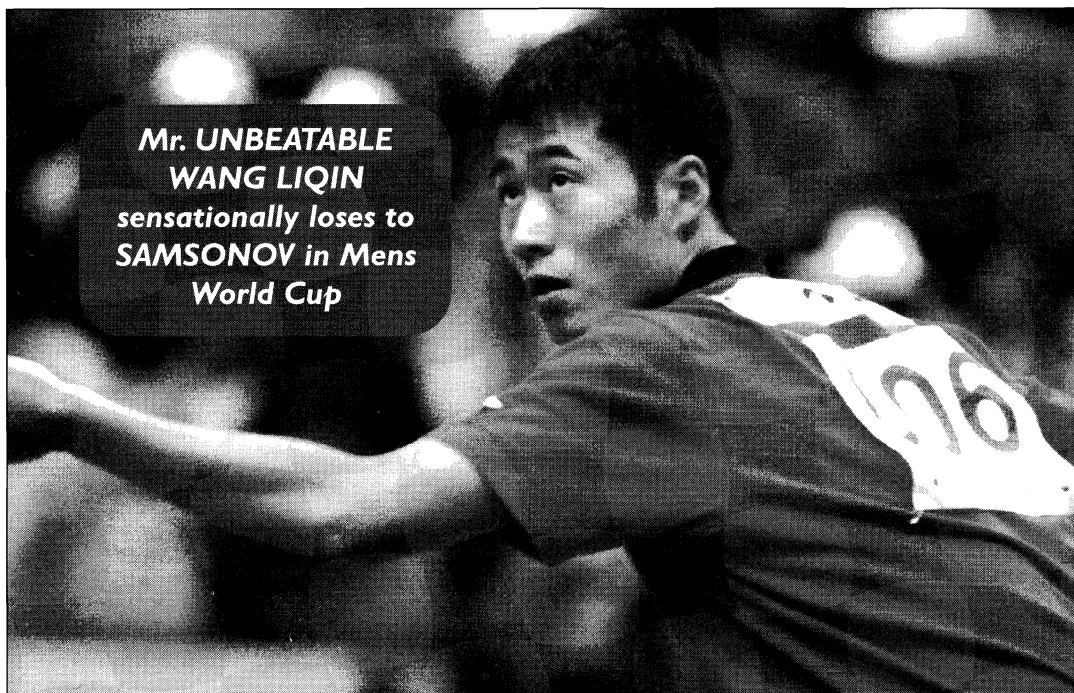
MENS DOUBLES

FINAL: Wang and Yan (China) b Cheung and Leung (Hong kong) 4-2.

WOMENS DOUBLES

FINAL: Yang and Bai (China) b Jiang and Guo (China) 4-1.

SAMSONOV BEATS Mister UNBEATABLE WANG LIQIN



**Mr. UNBEATABLE
WANG LIQIN**
sensationally loses to
SAMSONOV in Mens
World Cup

Mens World Cup, Courmayeur, Italy, 11 November 2001.

FOR more than a year the World Champion Wang Liqin (China) had not lost even one single match in an individual event on the international scene. At the Mens World Cup it happened, and the defeat was a tough one.

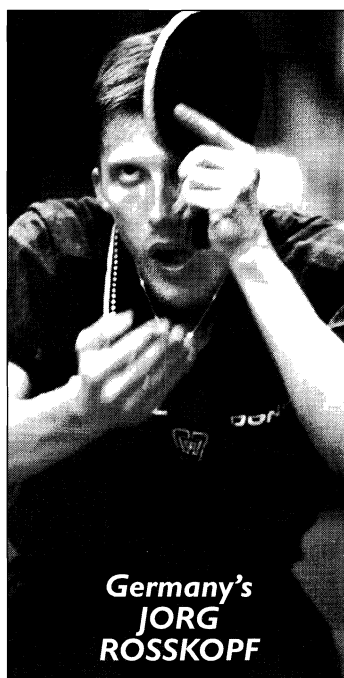
In the World Cup final he was simply outclassed by Vladimir Samsonov (Belarus) who beat him 4-0, leaving no doubt who was top man on the day.

The first 3 games came easy to Samsonov. In the 4th Wang took the lead 9-5 but not even that disturbed the man from Belarus. He took 7 points in a row to win the game and the match.

"I cannot remember when I have ever played that well. Everything was fitting together for me in this tournament. Before the final I decided to be very aggressive, and I succeeded because I received his services very well", says the World Cup winner adding with a smile that with 44.000 US Dollars in prize money his new born son Victor can

expect a nice present.

The World Champion Wang Liqin, as everybody else was saluting Samsonov, said "Samsonov played



**Germany's
JORG
ROSSKOPF**

extremely well, and I congratulate him. I was not happy with my game here in Courmayeur. I used to be a slow starter, and playing to 11 is disturbing me. I'll have to adjust to this new system".

GOOD WEEK FOR ROSSKOPF

Jorg ROSSKOPF (GER) crowned an excellent performance at the Men's World Cup in Courmayeur, Italy, by

winning the match for the 3rd place against No. 4 in the World Chiang Peng-Lung of (TPE).

"This has been an excellent week for me beating two Asian players from the top 10 in the World," he said.

EARLY SCARE FOR SAMSONOV

Samsonov twisted his ankle in one of his group matches on the Friday and he was anxious that he would not be able to play on Saturday, instead the injury seemed to 'inspire' him to play some of the best table tennis he has played for the last year.

First he ousted Kalinikos Kreanga (GRE) in the quarter finals, then he out classed the World's No. 4 Chiang Peng-Lung (TPE) in the semi.

Samsonov beat Chiang 7, 3, 5 and 9, and said, "I didn't feel sure about the injury but in there I did not feel any pain, instead I was really moving my feet fast today. I felt very focused from the very first point and I managed to be aggressive on his services. That kept his forehand out of the match".

WANG TOO STRONG FOR ROSSKOPF

Wang Liqin overcame Jorg Roskopf in the other semi final.

Roskopf, playing brilliantly, surprised everybody - including himself - beating the defending title holder Ma Lin (CHN) in the quarter final, but against Wang there was never any doubt though Roskopf won the first game.

"Even when I was up 1-0, I felt that Wang was too strong for me. I only got the 1st game because he made two service mistakes and totally missed my service", said Roskopf.

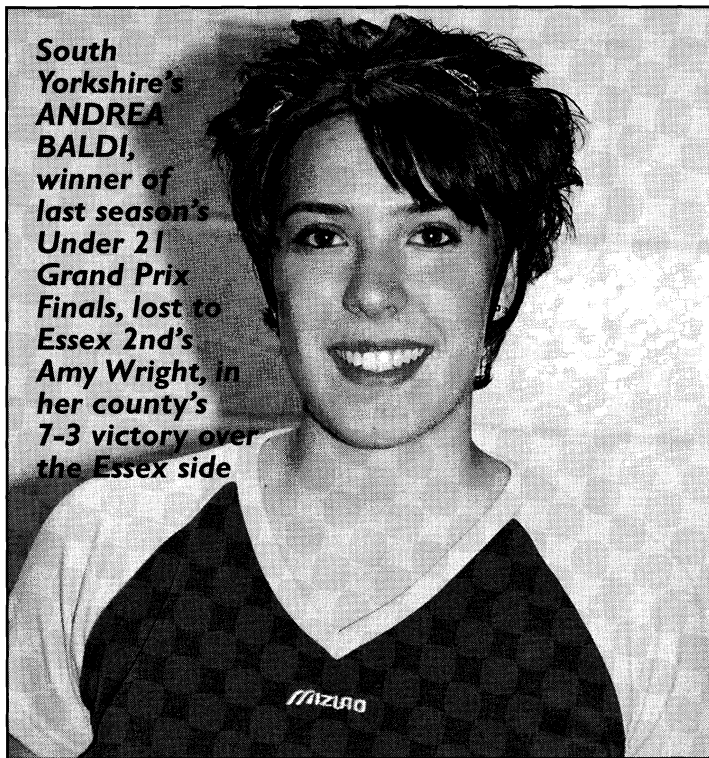
who on Sunday will play for the 3rd Wang Liqin beat Austrian Werner Schlager, 11-5, 8-11, 10-12, 7-11, 11-6 14-12, 12-10 (4-3), in the other semi-final.

WORLD TOP TEN NOVEMBER 2001

MEN				WOMEN					
1	(1)	2264	WANG Liqin	CHN	1	(1)	2330	WANG Nan	CHN
2	(2)	2120	LIU Guozheng	CHN	2	(2)	2160	ZHANG Yining	CHN
3	(7)	2052	SAMSONOV Vladimir	BLR	3	(7)	2068	RYU Ji Hye	KOR
4	(4)	2049	CHIANG Peng-Lung	TPE	4	(5)	2057	BOROS Tamara	CRO
5	(5)	2048	KONG Linghui	CHN	5	(4)	2006	LI Ju	CHN
6	(3)	2039	MA Lin	CHN	6	(3)	1997	STEFF Mihaela	ROM
7	(6)	2000	KIM Taek Soo	KOR	7	(6)	1952	SUN Jin	CHN
8	(10)	1988	SCHLAGER Werner	AUT	8	(11)	1910	NIU Jianfeng	CHN
9	(9)	1963	LIU Guoliang	CHN	9	(8)	1906	CHEN Jing	TPE
10	(8)	1955	PRIMORAC Zoran	CRO	10	(9)	1898	YANG Ying	CHN
67	(63)	1441	SYED Matthew	ENG	178	(163)	1080	LOWER Helen	ENG
131	(126)	1159	HERBERT Gareth	ENG	185	(173)	1059	DEATON Nicola	ENG

LANCS. IN THE DRIVING SEAT

South Yorkshire's **ANDREA BALDI**, winner of last season's Under 21 Grand Prix Finals, lost to Essex 2nd's Amy Wright, in her county's 7-3 victory over the Essex side



AFTER nearly four weeks without a score sheet to comment on I suddenly find my desk covered in them and it is difficult to know where to start, so I decided it would be better to start with matches I was present at so here goes, writes Stan Clarke.

SENIOR DIVISION 1A.

Each team played four matches over the weekend of 27/28th October at Woodgreen TTC, Walsall, and there were some unexpected results, mainly because teams were in several cases very much lacking their first choice players, most notably Derbyshire who were missing their whole first team and then some, but if players are unavailable or unwilling to play, then you must make the best of things and hope for better results next time. Of course fielding a much stronger side in the second half of the championships produces problems in that it can upset the promotion and/or relegation prospects within the division and can result in some very unhappy teams who may feel that they have been hard done by through no fault of their own, but that is all speculation and may not happen (But I bet it will), so down to the actual play.

Lancashire are very much in the driving seat after this first weekend with a 100% record of four wins from four matches and a sets difference of 34/6, last year's runners up are making a determined bid for promotion this year. Their squad of Jonathon Taylor, Paul Hutchings, Kevin Dolder, Alice Howard and

Cherith Graham were just too strong for their opponents on this first weekend. They started their campaign against Worcestershire, who had an immediate problem when Jan Dunning was taken ill on the way to the venue leaving them one player short and with Jill Harris suffering from an injury to her arm, their once very strong Ladies section was not up to the task on this occasion, Lancashire duly disposed of the challenge with a 9/1 victory, only Jill Harris, with a win over a very nervous Cherith, who was making her debut in the senior team, preventing a whitewash. Second match was a replay of the War of the Roses against Yorkshire 2nd and although the score of 8/2 may seem as though the Red Rose County had an easy trip it was not that easy at all, Richard Lightowler taking both Jonathon and Kevin the full course only to lose both sets, Nicola Silburn and Emily Dearing both beating Cherith.

The Sunday morning saw Lancashire paired with Essex 2nd and what a match it turned out to be, although the score of 9/1 would seem to make it an easy task for the Lancastrians it was in fact their hardest match of the weekend, seven sets needing five games to provide a winner two going to four games and only one being won in three, most pleasing from the Lancashire point of view was that Cherith finally produced the wins that her play deserved, with two very good victories over Amy Wright and Nicole Dodd, the only success for Essex came when Gary Tandler proved too

strong for Paul Hutchings. Their final match was against Northumberland who were missing the services of Andrew Wilkinson, but for the first time over the weekend the Lancastrians found themselves behind in a match when Eddie Smith beat Paul Hutchings in the first set, but they soon set about rectifying that and it was 8-1, before the Northumberland team registered their next set when Dave Godbold beat Kevin Dolder, incidentally the first set Kevin has lost in the last ten matches.

In second place are South Yorkshire, also on eight points from four wins, but with an inferior sets difference. They started with a 7/3 victory over Essex 2nd, Gary Tandler again proving the stumbling block with wins over Mark Short and Andrew Horsfield, Amy Wright providing the other set by defeating Andrea Baldi. Next up were Northumberland and an immediate upset with Andrew Horsfield upsetting the form book with a great win over Eddie Smith, it was the fourth set before Northumberland opened their account when Dave Godbold beat Mark Short before completing a double by beating Steven Horsfield but by then the match was well won by the South Yorkshire outfit. On the Sunday morning they faced the potentially very dangerous Nottingham team who were strengthened by the inclusion of Louise Durrant who proved her worth by beating Sarah Smith and Andrea Baldi, but with the rest of the Nottingham team unable to produce the goods, except for a fine win by Craig Gascoine over Steve Horsfield her efforts were to no avail. The final match of the weekend brought Worcestershire to face the South Yorkies and they promptly found themselves 6/0 behind before Jan Dunning stopped the rot by defeating Sarah Smith but Mark Short beat Steve Horton to make the score 7/1, step up Jill Harris to face Andrea Baldi who promptly took the first two games 11/8, 11/9 before Jill took the next two 11/6, 11/4, in the final game Jill trailed 11/5 and all looked lost, but no, she dug in and won the game 12/10, just to add to the revival Julian Wootton won the last set against Steven Horsfield to make the match score 7/3 in favour of South Yorkshire. In third spot are Nottinghamshire, tied on six points

with Yorkshire 2nd but with a three sets advantage and both teams are set to take over the top places if things go their way in the second weekend when Nottingham play Lancashire and Yorkshire 2nd face South Yorkshire and as both of the leaders have to play Derbyshire who may or may not strengthen their team, the division is still wide open. Essex and Northumberland are probably safe from the relegation places with both Worcestershire and Derbyshire languishing below them, neither team having gained a point to date, I can see Derbyshire escaping the drop if they strengthen their team but I'm afraid I can't see any hope for Worcestershire. In general terms the same old problems applied, only Worcestershire, Lancashire, and Derbyshire provided Umpires for their matches and some teams apparently could not agree on which colour their shirts should be, come on folks, these are basic requirements for the competition so how about making an effort?

SENIOR DIVISION 2A

Want to save on County match expenses? Well it seems that the teams in this division have found the solution, they have played all of their matches over one weekend, yes six matches per team. It's not a solution I would personally recommend but if the players are prepared to play that many games in two days so be it. It does mean that they have completed a seasons fixtures and no longer need to worry about calendar clashes. The matches were played at the Autoquest Stadium in Widnes and the divisional champions are Durham who won all of their matches, so congratulations to Dave Robson, Michael Marsden, Kevin Wilson, Kate Vickers and Claire Wilson and good luck in the first division next season. In second place were near neighbours Cleveland, defeated only by the champions, they were followed but never pushed by, Warwickshire, Cheshire and Leicestershire 2nd. Cheshire hold the record for using the most players over the weekend, I count no less than ten different players used in their six games must be some sort of record. Cumbria and Warwickshire occupy the two bottom places but as there is no third division they will be back in this division next season.

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS LEAGUE TABLES

Tables up to 8th November 2001 - Compiled by Leslie Smith

SENIORS

PREMIER	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Devonshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Essex	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leicestershire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Middlesex	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Surrey	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sussex	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yorkshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

DIVISION IA

Lancashire	4	4	0	0	34	6	8
South Yorkshire	4	4	0	0	28	12	8
Nottinghamshire	4	3	0	1	25	15	6
Yorkshire 2nd	4	3	0	1	22	18	6
Northumberland	4	1	0	3	15	25	2
Essex 2nd	4	1	0	3	14	16	2
Worcestershire	4	0	0	4	12	28	0
Derbyshire	4	0	0	4	10	30	0

DIVISION IB

Berkshire	3	3	0	0	22	8	6
Glamorgan	2	2	0	0	16	4	4
Middlesex 2nd	3	2	0	1	20	10	4
Wiltshire	3	2	0	1	19	11	4
Hertfordshire	2	1	0	1	9	11	2
Hampshire	3	0	1	2	8	22	1
Cornwall	6	0	1	5	16	44	1
Gloucestershire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

DIVISION 2A

Durham	6	6	0	0	46	14	11
Cleveland	6	5	0	1	40	10	10
Warwickshire 1st	6	4	0	2	37	13	6
Cheshire	6	3	0	3	37	13	6
Leicestershire 2d	6	2	0	4	21	39	4
Cumbria	6	1	0	5	19	41	2
Wawickshire 2nd	6	0	0	6	10	50	0

DIVISION 2B

Devonshire 1nd	3	2	1	0	24	6	5
Glamorgan 2nd	3	2	1	0	21	9	5
Cornwall 2nd	2	1	0	1	10	10	2
Somerset	2	1	0	1	10	10	2
Worcester 2nd	2	1	0	1	6	14	2
Herefordshire	2	0	0	2	6	14	0
Avon	2	0	0	2	3	17	0

DIVISION 2C

Bedfordshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cambridgeshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lincolnshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Norfolk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northamptonshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suffolk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Herefordshire 2nd have withdrawn

DIVISION 2D

Kent 2nd	3	3	0	0	24	6	6
Buckinghamshire	2	2	0	0	16	4	4
Sussex 2nd	2	2	0	0	14	6	4
Isle of Wight	2	1	0	1	12	8	12
Surrey 2nd	2	0	0	2	5	15	0
Oxfordshire	2	0	0	2	5	15	0
Berkshire 2nd	3	0	0	3	4	26	0

JUNIORS

PREMIER DIVISION

Glamorgan	3	3	0	0	25	5	6
Yorkshire	3	3	0	0	20	10	6
Cheshire	3	2	0	1	18	12	4
Devonshire	3	1	1	1	16	14	3
Essex	3	1	0	2	12	18	2
Surrey	3	1	0	2	12	18	2
Buckinghamshire	3	0	1	2	12	18	1
Warwickshire	3	0	0	3	5	25	0

DIVISION IA

Cumbria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cleveland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lancashire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lincolnshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nottinghamshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Yorkshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Worcestershire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yorkshire 2nd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

DIVISION IB

Kent	3	3	0	0	22	8	6
Sussex	3	2	1	0	21	9	5
Buckingham 2nd	3	2	1	0	18	12	5
Glamorgan 2nd	3	2	0	1	18	12	4
Middlesex	3	2	0	1	15	15	4
Dorset	3	0	0	3	12	18	0
Gwent	3	0	0	3	9	21	0
Berkshire	3	0	0	3	5	25	0

DIVISION 2A

Derbyshire	3	3	0	0	19	11	6
Lincolnshire 2nd	3	2	0	1	23	7	4

Shropshire	3	2	0	1	18	12	4
Cheshire 2nd	3	2	0	1	17	13	4
Norfolk	3	2	0	1	16	14	4
Lancashire 2nd	3	1	0	2	14	16	2
Suffolk	3	0	0	3	8	22	0
Hertfordshire	3	0	0	3	5	25	0

DIVISION 2B

Essex 2nd	3	2	1	0	22	8	5
Hampshire	3	2	1	0	21	9	5
Surrey 2nd	3	2	1	0	19	11	5
Kent 2nd	3	2	0	1	19	11	4
Oxfordshire	3	0	2	1	13	17	2
Middlesex 2nd	3	0	2	1	10	20	2
Avon	3	0	1	2	8	22	1
Surrey 3rd	3	0	0	3	8	22	0

DIVISION 3A

Bedfordshire 1st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bedfordshire 2nd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cambridgeshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Huntingdonshire 1st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Huntingdonshire 2nd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leicestershire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Norfolk 2nd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northampton 2nd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

DIVISION 3B

Durham 1st	4	4	0	0	40	0	8
Northamptonshire	4	4	0	0	31	9	8
Durham 2nd	4	3	0	1	22	18	6
Nottingham 4th	4	3	0	1	30	10	6
Nottingham 3rd	4	2	0	2	22	18	4
Conwy 1st	7	2	0	5	25	45	4
Conwy 2nd	7	1	0	6	13	57	2
Northumberland	4	0	0	4	7	33	0

DIVISION 3C

Somerset	3	2	1	0	21	9	5
Cornwall 1st	2	1	1	0	12	8	3
Devonshire 2nd	1	1	0	0	6	4	2
Herefordshire	2	1	0	1	11	9	2
Shropshire 2nd	2	1	0	1	11	9	2
Warwickshire 2nd	3	1	0	2	12	18	2
Devonshire 3rd	1	0	0	1	3	7	0
Cornwall 2nd	2	0	0	2	4	16	0

DIVISION 3D

Buckingham 3rd	4	4	0	0	33	7	8
Gloucestershire	3	2	1	0	18	12	5
Wiltshire	3	1	2	0	17	13	4
Essex 3rd	4	2	0	2	20	20	4
Buckingham 4th	3	1	1	1	15	15	3
Gwent 2nd	3	1	0	2	11	19	2
Sussex 2nd	3	0	0	3	9	21	0
Sussex 3rd	3	0	0	3	7	23	0

CADETS

NORTHERN DIVISION

Cheshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cleveland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Durham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lancashire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yorkshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

SOUTHERN DIVISION

Surrey	4	3	1	0	25	15	7
Sussex 1st	4	2	2	0	24	16	6
Somerset	4	1	2	1	19	21	4
Sussex 2nd	4	0	2	2	15	25	2
Berkshire	4	0	1	3	17	23	1

VETERANS

PREMIER

P	W	L	F	A	Pts	
Cheshire	3	3	0	19	8	6 (64-40)
Surrey	3	3	0	19	8	6 (68-45)
Kent	3	2	1	15	12	4
Yorkshire	3	1	2	14	13	2
Lancashire	3	1	2	13	14	2
Essex	3	1	2	12	15	2
Sussex	3	1	2	10	17	2
Dorset	3	0	3	6	11	0

DIVISION IA

Northumberland	3	3	0	17	10	6
Hertfordshire	2	2	0	11	7	4
Durham	3	2	1	14	13	4
Leicestershire	3	1	2	12	15	2
Warwickshire	2	0	2	7	11	0
Yorkshire 2nd	3	0	3	11	16	0
Oxfordshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Worcester 2nd	2	0	2	5	13	0

Cambridgeshire have withdrawn

DIVISION IB

Surrey 2nd	2	2	0	14	4	4
Middlesex	2	2	0	13	5	4
Hampshire	3	2	1	16	11	4
Kent 2nd	3	2	1	16	11	4
Hertfordshire 2nd	2	1	1	8	10	2
Avon	2	0	2	6	12	0

Buckinghamshire	2	0	2	4	14	0
Somerset	2	0	2	4	14	0

DIVISION 2A

Essex 2nd	4	4	0	27	9	8
Cheshire 2nd	3	3	0	18	9	6
Norfolk	4	3	1	21	15	6
Worcestershire	3	1	2	12	15	2
Yorkshire 3rd	3	1	2	13	14	2
Lancashire 2nd	3	1	2	10	17	2
Bedfordshire	4	1	3	12	24	2
Nottinghamshire	4	0	4	13	23	0

DIVISION 2B

Berkshire 1st	2	2	0	10	8	4
Hampshire 2nd	2	2	0	10	8	4
Wiltshire	3	2	1	15	12	4
Dorset 2nd	2	1	1	10	8	2
Middlesex 2nd	3	1	2	14	13	2
Kent 3rd	2	1	1	9	9	2
Berkshire 2nd	2	0	2	7	11	0
Kent 4th	2	0	2	6	12	0

DIVISION 3A

Yorkshire 4th	3	3	0	16	11	6
Leicestershire 2nd	3					

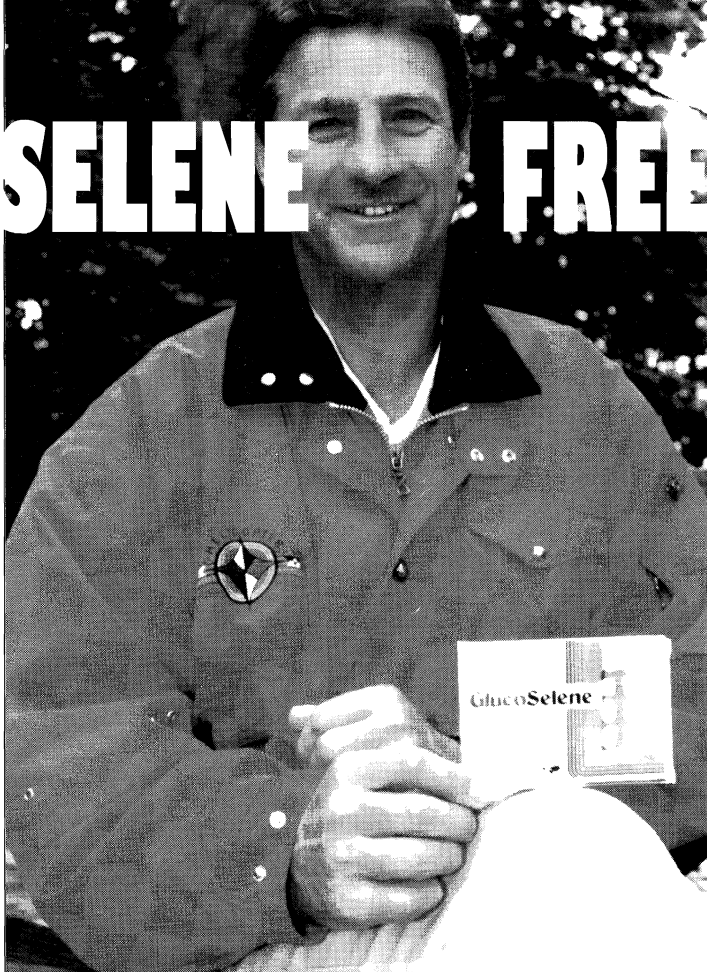
GLUCOSELENE FREE OFFER

JOINTS CAN BENEFIT FROM NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTATION

AS winter rolls in and aches kick in it could be a good time to remember findings published in the medical journal *The Lancet*. These indicated that a nutritional boost with glucosamine sulphate can help to guard against fallout from damaged joints. Whilst the physical exercise of playing table tennis can act as a tonic to the cardiovascular system, the downside can be wear and tear on the joints and damp cold weather brings this message home.

The research showed that people with osteoarthritis of the knee joints who took glucosamine sulphate daily in a three year trial, had better joint structure and could feel the benefits.

Nutritional manufacturer Wassen - recognising the potential synergy



between glucosamine and another nutrient, the antioxidant selenium, also helpful in maintaining joint mobility - have developed GlucoSelene to combine both. Supplementing the diet with this joint action formula helps stimulate the production of tissue components which hold onto water within the cartilage where it acts as a sponge when joint pressure is applied.

The company's nutritional adviser can be reached by consumers on vitamins@Wassen.com to answer questions and the Wassen website at www.Wassen.com gives further detailed information.

Table Tennis readers have the opportunity to go into the New Year with a spring and sample Wassen GlucoSelene by writing to: Table Tennis GlucoSelene Reader Offer, Wassen International, P O Box 71, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 7DP. The first 30 cards drawn on 15th January 2002, will receive a one months supply (RRP £8.95)

■ ■ ■
■ ■ ■ Grantham College

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Are you aged 16 or above and playing table tennis to at least county standard? Do you want to improve your national ranking and study for a national qualification?



Alex Cook and Nicola Denton use Grantham College as a venue for their popular summer school. Nicole says: "The College is an excellent venue, its centrally located and very well equipped."

Then why not enrol at Grantham College's Table Tennis Academy in September 2002. Located in the heart of England, Grantham College is one of the U.K's top Further Education Colleges. At the new academy you will be able to take advantage of our excellent facilities, including self-catering accommodation, you'll benefit from 15 hours hours of professional coaching every week and be able to compete in local, regional and national tournaments.



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www.grantham.ac.uk



A NEW RISING STAR

2001 YEARS AGO there was a sensation when a new star appeared in the Eastern sky, apparently heralding the birth of Jesus Christ. There is a new young star on the horizon for England - Kate Steward from Taunton, currently the England No.2 junior, personally coached by Malcolm Francis, writes John Woodford in Skopje, Sweden.

Travelling to Sweden for my first Swedish Open, I was hoping for at least three of the Brits (three from Wales) to provide some success stories.

Kate Steward was the only player from the English and the Welsh squads to qualify after she overpowered the Swedish No.5 Jenny Lindstrom and the Chilean No.2 Patricia Alvarez. The Taunton teenager was playing in her first senior tournament. On the following day when all the English and Welsh were out (apart from the ranking tournament) Kate was defeated by the world No.87 and Japanese No.4 Ai Fujinuma.

Both Soren Ahlen and Malcolm Francis were surprised and of course delighted, with Kate's performance.

Interesting to note that she was the most active player around, practising whenever the opportunity arose with foreign players.

Once again, I make the point that success in this sport comes from playing against foreign players (Asian if possible) as often as possible. Playing at Nottingham is not enough even if Des Douglas is amongst the playing partners.

The English players pulling out of tournaments is increasing. Gareth Herbert was due to play in Sweden but for a wrist injury that might need surgery; we have Alex Perry and Nicola Deaton giving priority to their studies; we have Matthew Syed giving priority to the Kenshoen circuit in Japan and of course, to his political career.

In Sweden, that just left Terry Young who lost all his games and will admit himself that he loses confidence when under pressure; Andrew Baggaley, whose elbow problem is improving but he pulled out of two games here because of trouble with a wisdom tooth. He has now transferred clubs from Germany to Sweden.

I have seen Katy Parker play some excellent games, but in Sweden at this tournament she seemed to lack commitment and then resting at her hotel, whilst her rival from Taunton was crashing home drives in the practice hall hour after hour.

Praise is due for Tamara Boros (Croatia). Before Skopje she was in third place in the Pro-Tour standings. In Sweden she clawed her way to the final, only losing at 5 in the 7th to Yan Guo. Boros, with the possible exception of Steff, seems to be the only European woman capable of upsetting the Chinese appercart.

The best Welsh performance was by Adam Robertson in reaching the third round of the ranking tournament, whilst



KATE STEWARD England's new rising star

Bethan Daunton and Ryan Jenkins had odd wins but then faded at the next hurdle.

The tournament attracted a powerful entry from Asia including the World and English Open champion Wang Liqin the eventual mens singles winner over the young Korean Seung Min Ryu. He is the latest star out of Korea - his present world rank at 31 is a joke - he beat Jan-Ove Waldner, Jorg Roszkopf and the local favourite Fredrik Hakansson at 10 in the sixth.

Wang Liqin plays his best table tennis coming from behind. In the mens final he lost the first two games -8, -7 but then recovered like a true world champion to win 7, 4, 14, 6.

Zlatko Cordas the ITTF Events Director told me "Attendances at the European Pro-Tour are really too high for comfort and in Asia only half the number of players attend".

At Skopje, we saw most of the top Chinese which made the journey worthwhile, the second or third Chinese womens team and a powerful challenge of the new breed of Koreans who it seems will be challenging the Chinese at the next world championships in Paris in 2003.

Soren Ahlen, departing for Sweden in July said "Apart from Kate Steward who did well, the rest of the England players here can do better. In fact, they will have to improve because I am charged with the job of building a squad that will win medals both in Moscow (European Youth) and of course at the Commonwealth Games in Manchester."

Results are on page 20.

PREMIER CLUB

ELLENBOROUGH TTC A JEWEL IN THE LONDON CROWN

ELLENBOROUGH Table Tennis Club is a wonderful blend of the traditional table tennis club and the all-singing club, as envisaged by the ETTA's Premier Club Scheme. It has its own 6 table centre, complete with mini bar and comfortable social area. It has won the Men's British League on two occasions; it is the driving force behind the successful North Middlesex League; and it has a long history of producing Middlesex County players. But all this is not what makes Ellenborough the beacon club of North London. The thing that makes Ellenborough special is its drive and determination not to stand still, writes Jon Kaufman.

The club could easily rest on its backside and enjoy its successes, past and present. But you certainly don't get that impression when you visit the club. The first thing that hits you when you step through the door is the vibrancy of its noticeboard. How many times do you go into a club and see the same tired old notices on the board complete with a local League table three months out of date. Not so at Ellenborough. Their notice board is more of a club organiser, with all the latest from many junior and senior leagues and tournaments. Entry forms are usually on display for the next event. League tables are up to date and the club's excellent newsletter is proudly there for all to see. You get immediate feeling this club is going places.

The club's playing programme is prodigious. Ellenborough were the first club to sign up to the ETTA'S Premier Club Ability Programme, and sessions for disabled players are now a regular weekly feature. Its over 50's session is booming and serves the whole borough of Enfield. Its women's evening is attracting many of the parents into the sport and from there comes a rich vein of potential volunteers, and the club is hosting the North Middlesex two-a-side, single venue league for lower division players. All this and I haven't even mentioned the junior playing programme.

In terms of the junior pyramid the club cannot be faulted. Starting with the North London section of the London Junior Table Tennis Scheme and finishing with the Junior British League, the club offers juniors opportunities at every level. The club hosts National Cadet and Junior Leagues and creates the perfect atmosphere for youngsters just starting their competitive careers. So busy is the club's playing schedule that they have their own bookings officer!

The club has teams in the British Junior League, the Womens British League, the British Veterans League and the Mens British League. In their spare time they send teams to the prestigious BATT'S Super League. This is a club that takes its table tennis seriously.

The club committee is strong and stable. The coaching programme is structured and purposeful. The playing programme is full to overflowing and the community links are growing all the time. Surely that is enough for the club to be getting on with. Not so. Ellenborough Table Tennis Club are in the middle of submitting a major Lottery bid in order to expand their premises. Now that is what I call an ambitious club.

THE current 4/5 table hall that is the centre for coaching at the moment will be replaced by a facility that will house all our current activities under one purpose made roof, writes Gary Howes.

At present the club utilises 3 separate venues, the Byng Hall, for coaching and practice 3 nights a week it is also used for Kent County junior home matches. The local YMCA is used for the Premier British League matches and local league premier division. Finally St Matthews school hall for social and beginners on Saturdays.

The new centre has come to fruition through a liaison with the head of the St Johns School Andy Blundell who has been supportive of the table tennis activities that the club has been involved in over many years, the root of which was supported by the previous head Leslie Bowman. The club has been using the old Hall (St Johns parish rooms Byng Hall) since the club was formed by Gary Howes in 1990, Gary has developed the once a week one hour session into what it is today, along with the many volunteers who give up their time willingly to a club that caters for all aspects of the game, in Particular attention is played to good club spirit and a sense of belonging.

The club currently supports six British League teams, three mens,

NEW FACILITY FOR BYNG HALL TTC



one womens and two juniors. We run one of the SE regional National junior league divisions at the YMCA with 3 teams from the club one currently leading the division, we won it last season!

The club also has two cadet league teams playing in Milton Keynes and two local league teams both in the premier division.

The new double aspect hall is just up the road from the existing venue in the grounds of the junior site. The hall has a divider running across the width, so one hall could be used for matches while the other can be separated for coaching and practice or to run coaching courses and the like. Alternatively it can be opened up into one large space for 8/10 tables.

The floor is table tennis specific. Junkers fully sprung wood block and the lighting has been up graded from the standard specification of 300+ lux to over 500+ lux of high frequency fluorescent with the

addition of metal halide to raise it still further to premier British league standard of over 1000 lux. All this with the aid of a FSA grant supported by the ETTA.

The Halide lighting was supplied as full sponsorship from the Tunbridge Wells Branch of Newey and Eyre electrical wholesale.

Another great plus for the hall are the large storage facilities often forgotten in hall design. There is a lift for disabled and for transporting equipment to other levels.

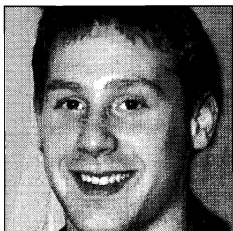
There is a small kitchenette, shower facilities, ample parking and dedicated access.

The hall will be ready for occupation in late February next year if all goes to schedule.

All the extra tables and equipment has been provided by grants from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Bribar table tennis.

EDEN PREDICTS

Former England Star ANDREW EDEN who now coaches Lynne Riding



approach in her quest to strike Gold next summer, even though she is already installed among the frontrunners.

Despite winning a bronze medal in the team event in the world-ranking Spanish event, she refuses to look further ahead than the next competition and then on to the day the England team is announced early next summer.

"It's far too early to start talking about a Gold Medal or a place on the podium," insists Lynne, 44. "The team has not even been chosen yet and my first priority has to make sure I'm selected.

"But of course it would be a dream come true to compete in the Commonwealth Games in Manchester. I'm from the North West so really the Games are taking place in my back yard. It's a very exciting prospect.

"And it will be a tremendous opportunity for both the able-bodied side of the sport and EADs. Table Tennis in general doesn't receive a lot of publicity but being part of an event of this size is a chance to show everyone what our game is all about.

"And for EADs to be included in the main event for the first time is another big step forward. It proves that people are starting to recognise that we can perform to a high standard."

Lynne, a full-time, all-round athlete who has also tried her hand at discus and rugby and turned to table tennis 14 years ago, added: "It wasn't until I competed at the Atlanta Olympics that I realised how far I could go if I really put my mind to it.

Atlanta was a tremendous experience but so far nothing can match the Sydney Paralympics in 2000. I've never known such incredible enthusiasm from everyone involved. I'm sure Manchester can be just as special.

Lynne's regime between now and the Games will be tough. As well as competing in several major championships, she will be training up to six days a week, combining three table tennis sessions with cycling and swimming work-outs. And her coach can be hard taskmaster, too. "Competing at this level is tough," says Andrew. "But it will all be worth it if she wins that medal."

ANDREW EDEN first savoured the magic of Commonwealth Gold when England won the team event at Hyderabad in '95, writes Andrew Collomosse.

Two years later, he combined with Carl Preato to lift the men's doubles crown when the championships were staged in Singapore, going on to claim Silver with Andrea Holt in the mixed doubles and also in the team competition.

And now, with Table Tennis lined up for its debut as a Commonwealth Games event in Manchester next year, Andrew reckons he is going to enjoy the sweet smell of success once again. This time as a coach.

For he is convinced that Lynne Riding has the potential to become the first women's singles champion in the competition for Elite Athletes with a Disability.

Lynne, currently ranked fourth in the world, won the Bronze Medal at the European championships in 1997 and 1999 and took fourth place in the 1998 World Championships.

And after appearing at the last two Paralympic Games in Atlanta and Sydney, she is developing the big-occasion know-how to handle the pressure when the going gets tough at the XVII Commonwealth Games.

"At her best, she can compete with anyone, anywhere," said Andrew after putting Lynne through a strenuous work-out at the Southport General Hospital Spinal Injuries Unit before setting off for the recent Spanish Open at Guernica.

"But sport at this level is played in the mind and preparing her mentally is going to be just as important as the technical side.

"Obviously for EADs, the sport is less about speed than tactical awareness and she has to know when to play the angles, when to slow the pace and when to go for it and attack. But I'm convinced she has the talent to go on and do really well."

For her part, though, Preston-based Lynne is adopting the softly, softly

SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR BRENDA STEPHENSON

BRENDA STEPHENSON, the Treasurer of Ormesby Table Tennis Club and Secretary of the Middlesbrough & District Table Tennis League, was honoured at the Middlesbrough 2001 SPORTS PERSONALITY AWARDS on Sunday, 25th November with the Service to Sport Award, writes Alan Ransome.

The citation for Brenda read as follows:

Brenda Stephenson has made a major contribution to the increasing popularity and progress that is being made in the sport of table tennis in the Middlesbrough area. It is not that Brenda has achieved one outstanding result, but rather that she has been a dynamo in the on going, day to day activity of the sport.

Brenda is the Treasurer of Ormesby Table Tennis Club, the Secretary of the Middlesbrough & District Table Tennis League, the Treasurer of the Cleveland & District Summer League and the Tournament Secretary for the Cleveland Association.

Brenda Stephenson plays a major role in the running of the Ormesby Junior Squads and runs the Ormesby Junior League on Saturday morning, both of which take place at the Teesside Tertiary College on Marton Road in Middlesbrough. Brenda runs the Ormesby website and produces the club's newsletter. In addition she

plays a major role in the club's fund raising activities and, as Treasurer, manages all the club's finances.

For the Middlesbrough & District League Brenda is the General Secretary. Brenda produces the league's Table Talk newspaper which is published several times each season as well as the majority of the work in producing the league handbook. It is not just a question of the enormous quantity of the work that Brenda undertakes, but the quality of her contribution which is enabling the sport to move forward strongly in the Middlesbrough area.

In addition, Brenda plays a major role in the running of approximately 12 tournaments per season including the Cleveland Championships and Junior Championships, the Middlesbrough League Championships, the Summer League Championships, the Ormesby Junior Championships and the Ormesby Club Championships as well as helping with the County and Regional Trials.

Brenda also assists in the running of the Disabled Sports Day which is organised by the Middlesbrough Rotary Club and is the stalwart of Rainbow Ladies table tennis group which started in 1983, operated out of the Rainbow Leisure Centre for many years and continues to thrive.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES 2002 MANCHESTER

CALENDAR

DECEMBER

14th-16th	Portuguese Youth Championships	Vila Nova de Gala
15th	National Junior League (2)	
15th-16th	British League Weekend (2)	
16th	National Cadet League (2)	
16th	Cippenham Junior 3 Star	
18th	Women's European League England vs Netherlands	
20th	Mens European League England vs Slovakia	
22nd	Wilmott Cup/Rose Bowl R2	
22nd	Chesham High School U13/14/15	
23rd	Bribar Knutsford U12/Cadet 2 Star Open	
29th	Carter/Gainsford/Ormesby Cups R1 Bromfield Trophy	
29th	Bribar Mid-Cheshire Junior 2 Star Open - Knutsford	
30th	Bribar Mid-Cheshire Senior 2 Star Open - Knutsford	

JANUARY 2002

2nd	Chesham High School Junior Graded 2 Star	
4th	Chesham High School Under 12/13/15	
5th-6th	Cadet/Junior National Trials	
5th-6th	Bangor Open Butterfly Grand Prix	Bangor
10th-13th	ITTF Pro Tour Finals	Tianjin, China
12th	County Championships (5) Cadet, Junior and Senior	
12th-13th	VETTS Western Masters	Hereford
13th	British League (8) Premier Division	
13th	Cippenham Under 13/15 1 Star	Slough
13th	Stiga (Hyndburn) Junior Grand Prix	
19th	National Council	
19th-20th	ESTTA Team Area Finals	
19th-20th	Schildkrot Veterans British League (2)	
23rd-27th	ITTF Pro Tour Austrian Open	Wels, Austria
26th	County Championships (5) Veterans	
26th	Training Day (North)	
26th-27th	Schildkrot Womens British League (2)	
26th-27th	Cotswold Cadet/Junior 4 Star	
27th	British League (9) Premier Division	
27th	Alex Brook Trophy (R1)	

FEBRUARY

2nd	County Championships (6) Cadet, Junior, Senior & Veteran	
3rd	British League (10) Premier Division	

TABLE TENNIS NEWS COPY DATES

ISSUE

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JAN./FEB.2002
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APRIL 2002
MAY/JUNE 2002

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1st SEPTEMBER 2001
1st OCTOBER 2001
1st NOVEMBER 2001
1st JANUARY 2002
1st FEBRUARY 2002
1st MARCH 2002
1st MAY 2002

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