

TABLE TENNIS NEWS

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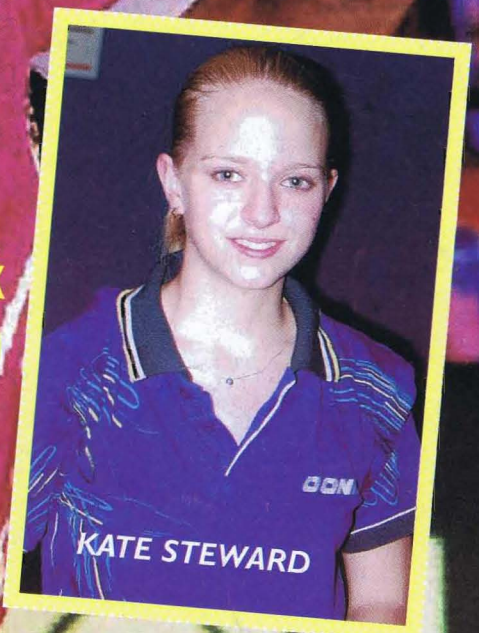
No.279 SEPT. 2001

**NEW
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LEACH
TROPHY
FOR
GARETH
HERBERT**

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WOMEN WIN 15th
ROSEBOWL** Page 13

**RUSHTON &
STEWART
JUNIOR
CHAMPIONS**
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TTN EXTRA
A 16 page supplement including 'County Notes', 'Results' and much more.



TABLE TENNIS NEWS & TTN EXTRA

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JOHNNY LEACH TROPHY FOR GARETH HERBERT

GARETH HERBERT has now consolidated his position as the England No.2, only 11 points behind Matthew Syed, but it will take a victory over the likes of Matthew for Gareth to gain enough points to be come No.1. His destiny is now in his own hands, but it will probably not be too many months before he achieves this feat.

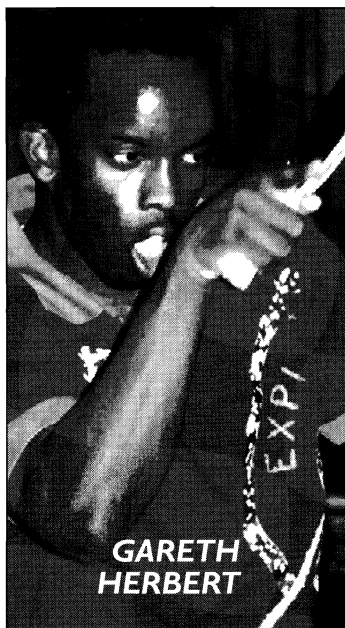
Herbert had a an excellent end of season boost to his rise up the world rankings, by doing very well at both the Brazilian Open and the USA Open.

In the USA Open he beat 89th world ranked Eric Varin of France, 14, 17, 19.

These good results plus excellent performances in the Commonwealth Championships and the Worlds, saw Herbert win the new Johnny Leach Trophy, for the most improved member of the England squad.

BRONZE MEDALS AT MACCABIAH GAMES

THE Great Britain mens team of Michael Levene (Hertfordshire), Eli Baraty (Middlesex) and Joel Roodyn (Middlesex) took the first Maccabiah medal for Britain for more than 3



decades when they gained bronze with their 4-3 defeat of Germany in the 16th Games, played in Israel. The key singles was when, with the team score standing at 3-3, the British player-manager Michael Levene beat former Russian Alexandra Shapiro 10-21, 22-20, 21-15 after saving a match point at 19-20 in the second game. Israel beat Russia 3-2 to win the mens team gold. Eli Baraty and Michael Levene also

reached the quarter-finals of the mens singles

SHEFFIELD LOTTERY AWARD

SPORT ENGLAND announced in July a maximum award of £23,540,000 for the English Institute of Sport Sheffield project. This multi sports facility adjacent to the Don Valley Stadium will provide a regional base for the delivery of services to athletes within the English Institute of Sport (EIS) network and a world class training facility.

The sports facility will contain a National Indoor Athletics Centre with a capacity for 1,500–2,000 seats for events, a national table tennis centre, a regional judo facility, national netball centre, a badminton performance centre, a large conditioning area and state of the art sports science and sports medicine facilities.

In October 1999 Sport England announced £120 million of Lottery investment for the English Institute of Sport. To date over £80 million of this has been allocated to specific projects. This is in addition to £135 million investment in facilities for the Commonwealth Games, some of which will become part of the Institute after the 2002 Games.

WOODY'S World

WELCOME to a new season and a new look Table Tennis News.

The front cover has been slightly redesigned, hope you like it? Plus we have some new exciting features planned for your added enjoyment.

What a fabulous end to last season for Gareth Herbert, leaping to the No.2 spot on the National Ranking list, see this page, 'From the Chair' page 11, and 'Top of the Table' on page 26.

Well, the new scoring system of 11 up is now with us, some dislike it, but I like it very much, because it's more exciting, no more long local league matches dragging on till the wee small hours, allowing us time to socialise with the opposing team, plus extra quality time with our families. So it was pleasing when I heard that the local leagues in Cornwall had voted in favour of the 11 up system. Local league matches in Cornwall, on occasion, can mean an hour's travelling each way, so the decision will greatly assist the away team.

Have successful and enjoyable season.

John Wood

The English Institute of Sport in Sheffield is expected to be completed and fully opened by Spring 2003.

WOMEN IN SPORT

TURNING plans to get more women playing sport into the reality of seeing more women in the gym, on the sports fields and at the athletics tracks is the theme of this year's Womens Sports Foundation National Conference.

'Women In Sport – From Policy to Practice' will be held on Thursday October 4th at South Leeds Stadium, Leeds. The Conference is aimed at sports development officers, teachers, coaches, sports administrators and leaders and all those with a desire to get more women and girls participating in sport.

It will focus on how sporting organisations can translate the aims and objectives of their gender equity policies - their policies to increase sporting opportunities and participation for women – into practice.

TABLE TENNIS on TV

Event	Date of Transmission	Time of Transmission	Channel
Korean Open	26.09.01	18.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
Korean Open	26.09.01	21.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
Korean Open	27.09.01	12.30	Sky Sports 2 Digital
Korean Open	27.09.01	16.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
Japan Open	10.10.01	21.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
Japan Open	10.10.01	02.30	Sky Sports 1 Digital
Japan Open	10.10.01	17.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
Japan Open	11.10.01	14.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
Japan Open	11.10.01	17.00	Sky Sports Extra
German Open	31.10.01	17.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
German Open	31.10.01	20.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
German Open	01.11.01	01.30	Sky Sports 1 Digital
German Open	01.11.01	11.30	Sky Sports 2 Digital
German Open	01.11.01	15.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
French Open	11.11.01	11.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
French Open	11.11.01	18.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
French Open	11.11.01	23.00	Sky Sports 3 Digital
French Open	12.11.01	11.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
French Open	12.11.01	14.00	Sky Sports 2 Digital
French Open	13.11.01	16.30	Sky Sports 3 Digital

COMMONWEALTH GAMES 2002



Alan Ransome OBE,
Chairman of the ETTA

THE most prestigious sporting event to be held in Britain over the next year is the XVII COMMONWEALTH GAMES in Manchester from 25 July until 4 August, in which table tennis makes its debut into the Games. The Manchester 2002 Games have attracted the largest ever entry with 72 nations and over 5,000 athletes and team officials participating across 17 different sports.

The table tennis competition runs for a total of 10 days starting on 26th July, the day after the Opening Ceremony, until the last day. The first 5 days will be the Men's and Women's Team Events, with the last five the Individual Men's and Women's Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles and a Woman's Elite Athlete with Disability singles.

Traditionally England has always done well in the single sport Commonwealth Championships and, in particular, the Men's Team have won a significant number of medals in recent Championships. Matthew Syed goes into the Games as the triple gold medal winner having won the Men's Singles in New Delhi 2001, Singapore 2000 and Glasgow 1997. In the last championships in New Delhi the much improved Gareth Herbert won a bronze medal in the Singles and Terry Young and Alex Perry won gold in the Men's Doubles. The women's events are more difficult to win medals due to the very strong Singapore ladies team and that several countries are strengthened by the inclusion of Chinese born players in their teams. Nevertheless, Alex Perry and Helen Lower won a bronze medal in the Mixed Doubles in New Delhi and hopes for at least some medals for our women's team players in Manchester do exist.

The host broadcaster for the Commonwealth Games is the BBC who have advised us that they are planning to take coverage from the table tennis event each day. It is likely that the BBC will be giving very extensive coverage to the Games and with our players having a good chance of medals table tennis could well receive worthwhile coverage. The table tennis event is being



THE TABLE TENNIS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE on an inspection visit to the site of the Tennis Centre in Sportcity, Manchester, where the table tennis competition will take place next July, (left to right) COLIN CLEMETT, DIANE UNSWORTH, JIM QUIGLEY, MIKE HOLT, KAREN TONGE, ALAN RANSOME, RICHARD SCRUTON, TONY CHATWIN and JIM BECKLEY.

played at the newly built Tennis Centre on the Sport City site, next to the Commonwealth Stadium and the Velodrome. The Tennis Centre will house two show courts with between 1,000 and 1,500 seats plus a further 10 outside courts and a practice hall. Temporary buildings will be used on the outdoor tennis courts to provide the additional facilities required.

There is every likelihood that tickets, particularly for the semi finals and finals sessions will be in strong demand as events such as the Commonwealth Games attract a far larger audience than do single sport events. This includes corporate packages which are taken up by people whose primary interest is in sport in general rather than just table tennis. Therefore, any ETTA members who wish to be certain of being able to obtain tickets are advised to buy their tickets early. The first batch of tickets will be on sale between 1st October and 15th November by mail order only. Application forms are available from large retail outlets still to be announced or from the Commonwealth Games website, www.commonwealthgames.com but any members who have difficulty in obtaining an application form can contact the ETTA office in Hastings to receive one. From the applications the first allocation will be issued in December. From 6th

January onwards telephone and internet sales are being operated by the official ticket agent, Ticket Master, and details of their arrangements will be published in a later issue of Table Tennis News. Box office sales for the remaining tickets will operate in the weeks running up to the Games itself. Sessions and ticket prices are listed overleaf on page 6.

ELEVEN UP

Following the decision made at the ITTF Annual General Meeting in Osaka in April to change the scoring system from the traditional 21 Up to the 11 Up system, the ETTA held a Special General Meeting on the same day as the AGM, 30th June, to give the membership the opportunity of deciding whether or not to allow local leagues and county associations to choose which system they wish to operate for their own competitions. The voting was 21,997 in favour of allowing the choice which was 84.7% of the votes cast, against 3,964 or 15.3% of the vote, which was more than the required majority, so giving the local leagues the option to play 21 Up for their own competitions. Those leagues and county associations that decide to continue with the 21 Up system will continue to follow all the previous rules and regulations regarding change of service, breaks in play, expedite, etc.

The take up on this option is mixed with some leagues feeling that they should help their members who play in open tournaments and other ETTA competitions by not putting them at the possible disadvantage of changing from one scoring system to another from one day to the next and then having to change back again, whilst other leagues are more concerned about the possibility of losing members who do not wish to continue with the 11 Up system or whose members prefer to stay with the traditional 21 Up system at least for the time being. In my view the SGM was right to allow local decisions to be made although I do expect that each year more leagues will vote to change over to the 11 Up system and comply with the new laws of the game.

EUROPEAN YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS

Young England players produced some encouraging results in the European Youth Championships that took place in Terni in Italy in July. The boys team of Dale Barham, Matthew Kenny, Michael Chan and Bryn Drinkhall reached the quarter final of their team event which is the highest position achieved for several years. The girls team finished 18th,

COMMONWEALTH GAMES TABLE TENNIS at the Tennis Centre-Sportcity

Date	Start Time	Session Description	Session Prices	Ticket Codes	Seating
26.07.02	10.00 am	Team Event Qualification Round 1/2	£5	TTO1A0726	General
27.07.02	10.00 am	Team Event Qualification Round 3/4	£5	TTO2A0727	General
28.07.02	10.00 am	Team Event Qualification Final Round Womens Team Event-Finals (x4) Mens Team Event Finals (x4)	£7	TTO3A0728	General
29.07.02	10.00 am	Womens Team Event Semi-Final (x2)	£10	TTO4A0729	Reserved
	4.00 pm	Mens Team Event Semi Final (x2)	£10	TT05A0729	Reserved
30.07.02	10.00 am	Mixed Doubles Rounds 1 + 2	£5	TT06A0730	General
	2.00 pm	WOMENS TEAM FINAL	£15 or £10	TT07A0730/ TT07B0730	Reserved Reserved
	6.00 pm	MENS TEAM FINAL	£15 or £10	TT08A0730/ TT08B0730	Reserved Reserved
31.07.02	10.00 am	Womens Singles EAD qualification groups Individual Events Early Rounds	£5	TT09A0731	General
01.08.02	10.00 am	Mens & Womens Doubles Round 2 Mixed Doubles Round 3 Womens Singles EAD qualification groups Mens & Womens Singles Round 2	£5	TT10A07801	General
02.08.02	10.00 am	Mens & Womens Doubles Round 3 Mens & Womens Doubles Finals Womens Singles EAD qualification groups Mens & Womens Singles Round 3 Mens & Womens Doubles Semi Finals Mixed Doubles Round 4 Womens Singles EAD Round 1	£7	TT11A0802	General
03.08.02	10.00 am	Mens & Womens Singles Finals Womens Singles EAD Finals Mixed Doubles Finals MENS DOUBLES FINAL WOMENS DOUBLES FINAL Womens Singles EAD Semi Finals Mens & Womens Singles Semi Finals	£20 or £10	TT12A0803/ TT12B0803	Reserved General
04.08.02	10.00 am	Mixed Doubles Semi Finals Womens Singles EAD FINAL Mixed DOUBLES FINAL WOMENS SINGLES FINAL MENS SINGLES FINAL	£20 or £10	TT13A0804 TT13B0804	Reserved Reserved

(Provisional schedule subject to change)

cadet boys 22nd and cadet girls 13th. Altogether 43 national associations participated. In the individual events the best performance was by Joanna Parker in the cadet girls singles. Joanna reached the quarter finals by beating Natalija Luzar of Slovenia 21-16, 21-23, 21-16 only to be beaten by Sara Ramirez of Spain 21-15, 21-23, 20-22. Overall the results were encouraging as most of England's best prospects were not in their final year and will be eligible to compete again next year in the same age category.

SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEERS

The election of Karen Tonge as Vice Chairman Teaching & Training at the last meeting of National Council signifies an initiative from the ETTA to increase the recruitment and training of more volunteers. There is no doubt that the sport needs more volunteers at all levels and recruitment and training will be on the agenda of the Teaching & Training Department at their forthcoming meetings with the intention to significantly expand the department's activities within the next few months. This department until two years ago only covered coaching. Following my proposal to

National Council in April 1999 it now covers, in conjunction with the appropriate departments or committees, umpires and referees, tournament organisers and development officers as well as coaches. All are needed and a strong recruitment campaign will be to the benefit of the sport.

ETTA LTD

The ETTA have followed the lead set by several other governing bodies of a similar size and the advice of Sport England to become an incorporated body with limited liability rather than a members' organisation. The main difference is that the ETTA National Council members and the County Associations were previously liable for debts that the ETTA were unable to satisfy. By incorporating the Council Members and the County Associations funds are protected subject to a nominal financial guarantee. This process has taken more than two years to complete and the incorporation came into effect on 9th August. However, a few more weeks will be needed to complete all the internal procedures and transfer the assets from the old ETTA over to ETTA Ltd and to establish new bank accounts etc. The effect on the actual running of the Association will be minimal.

by organisations for table tennis has now reached £848,751.00 with over 250 organisations receiving support. Organisations who have received a grant more than 12 months ago are eligible to submit a new applications for further support up to a maximum of £5,000. However, the new applications should be for a different programme to the one submitted previously. It is likely that the Awards for All programme will continue under a different title in 2002 to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's 50 years on the Throne.

GARETH HERBERT WINS JOHNNY LEACH MOST IMPROVED PLAYER AWARD

The ETTA President, Johnny Leach, has given a trophy to the Association for the Most Improved England Team Player of the Season. The Honours Committee unanimously decided that the first recipient of the trophy should be Gareth Herbert after his excellent performances in the Commonwealth Championships, World Championships and ITTF Pro Tour events which have seen him leap almost 100 places up the World list from 230 to 133. Gareth has also come very close to overtaking Matthew Syed as No 1 on the ETTA computer ranking list. Congratulations to Gareth on his good performances and significant improvement!

AWARDS FOR ALL TOP £800,000

More table tennis organisations have been successful with applications to the Lottery Sports Fund for Awards for All grants and the total received

BREAKDOWN BY REGIONS OF LOTTERY GRANTS FOR TABLE TENNIS, RECEIVED TO DATE

Region	Data	Total
East Midlands	Count of Region	27
	Sum of Total Award	80961
Eastern	Count of Region	16
	Sum of Total Award	49163
London	Count of Region	40
	Sum of Total Award	173035
North East	Count of Region	16
	Sum of Total Award	57899
North West	Count of Region	28
	Sum of Total Award	96003
South East	Count of Region	36
	Sum of Total Award	121257
South West	Count of Region	25
	Sum of Total Award	64564
West Midlands	Count of Region	36
	Sum of Total Award	109282
Yorkshire	Count of Region	28
	Sum of Total Award	96587
Total Count of Region		252
Total Sum of Total Award		848751

POSTBAG

NO MALICE

PAT GINNAW, I repeat, is one of the longest-serving coaches in Sussex with a great record over nearly half a century of producing young players. He is a man who never flies his own flag but there was absolutely no need for the insulting letter written by Andy Foster of the Arundel TTC in the last issue of TTN.

My piece in the March issue on Pat enjoying the comfort of the VIP seats at Chatham, was written because no-one at that stage could tell me how Pat got his top ticket. As to the suggestion of "sour grapes" I do not have the time to sit down for more than five minutes at major tournaments, let alone in the VIP seats, although I do have the qualifications.

After the March Courtside was written, I was able to find out the origin of the excellent sponsorship obtained for the English Open at Chatham. This was duly reported in my April column.

Summing-up: People do have a right to know the origin of sponsorship - this information was not apparently available from official sources prior to Chatham. I am sure journalists have the professional right to ask questions without malicious letters from supporters. There was no malice on my side whatever - Arundel TTC supporters please note.

John Woodford
Eastbourne, Sussex.

A STORM OF PROTEST

I received the May/June edition of Table Tennis News - I went through it slowly. It's obvious to me that since the ITTF announced that a game would be 11 up from 1st September 2001, it has produced a storm of protest from across the UK

All the members of the community club that I run are against the 11 up game, and are going to keep the 21 up game.

The Grand Prix circuit used the 11 up game last season - what do the players think of the new scoring system? More questions than answers, as far as the 11 up game is concerned. When Matthew Syed beat Chetan Baboor in New Delhi using the 21 up system - 21-7, 21-16, 11-21, 21-23, 28-26, total points 195.

When Alan Cooke beat Adam Robertson in the Blackpool Open over 5 games at 11 up, the total points scored was 86. John Woodford's report about the New Delhi final said, "The mother of all battles".

The ITTF initiative is nothing more than a time saving ploy. In forty years of watching some fantastic five game battles of up to 21, I think, along with most of the table tennis players in the UK that the ITTF have got it wrong.

Eddie Gordon
Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire.

GRAND PRIX

GRIPES

THIS is an open letter regarding the Butterfly Grand Prix Finals at Potters Leisure Resort, Nr. Great Yarmouth. For those of you who don't attend Grand Prix I will explain the format: 12 Grand Prix are played throughout the year around the country - there are 9 mens events and 7 womens events, plus doubles. These range from open singles, vets singles, under 21 s singles, plus 6 mens banded and 4 womens banded events. Points are awarded per Grand Prix, so at the end of 12 events a list of point scores is achieved. The Grand Prix Finals are staged after this, where the top 16 point scorers in each event are asked to play. For anyone who plays regularly in Grand Prix, the goal is to reach the Finals - obviously an achievement. The top 6 places in each event are awarded cash prizes. At this point, I would like to mention that in normal Grand Prix, apart from the top events, singles, doubles and band one, who all get cash prizes, every other winner and runner-up receives crystal glassware trophies. Therefore, the pinnacle of the Grand Prix Season, is The Grand Prix Finals.

Now, here are my gripes, which I hope will be received as constructive criticism:

Gripe 1 (on my behalf)

In all the 16 events at the Finals, not one was fully attended, which either shows apathy among the players towards this event, or lack of organisation by those running it. I personally played in the band 3 finals, where instead of 4 groups of 4 players (guarantee - minimum 3 games, even if you don't go through to quarter-finals), there were 3 groups of 3 and one of 4. Some bands were even worse Band 2 - only 3 groups (3, 3, 4). Band 4 - 4 groups (3, 3, 3, 3), Band 5 - 3 groups (3, 3, 4). I believe this situation devalues the Grand Prix Finals to such an extent that they are below the standard of normal Grand Prix.

Conclusions

If apathy is the problem, then why? Are they too late in the year? Are they at the wrong location (i.e. Gt. Yarmouth)? Is 16 players too many? Would it be better to invite the top 8 players only? Is it better not to have Finals at all - instead use the points from 12 Grand Prix only to decide winners?

Is it bad organisation is that there is not enough time between the last Grand Prix and the Finals to organise the 16 players to attend? Or is it the fact that no trophies are available to winners or runners-up if they reach the Final of the Grand Prix Finals? (See note regarding other Grand Prix). Anyway, whatever the reasons, I don't think it is satisfactory that the Grand Prix Finals are devalued

continued on page 8

COURTSIDE

by John Woodford

- **WITH** the new season already under way, let me emphasise the aims of this column - it is to stimulate readers, sometimes writing things that other people would not dare to put into writing. Like most journalists I feel free to comment fairly.

- **THE** Editorial Board have emphasised that attacking personalities and personal abuse will not be entertained. The letters that arrived from the Arundel club at this magazine's office in Cornwall were malicious and possibly libellous following my highlighting coach Pat Ginnaw's seating arrangements at the English Open last February.

- **MATTHEW SYED**, Brian Halliday (Vice-Chairman PR) and myself are agreed that there are not enough people contributing words to this magazine. It is too bland. Other sports boost the circulation of their magazines by including subscription cash in national registration for their players.

- **WE THREE**, Matthew, Brian, myself supported a move to accept some articles from John Prean. This would have been under fairly strict guidelines - no character assassination, only constructive criticism. The offer was accepted, but the move was vetoed by the Management Committee.

- **ETTA** Management Committee stick together frequently but not always; sometimes the chairman is occasionally outvoted. They stuck together like impact adhesive at Walsall at the National Council meeting on July 29 when the voting for the post of Vice-Chair Teaching and Training came under the spotlight.

- **KAREN TONGE** was the winner of the vote by 20 votes to 16 ousting Gail McCulloch from the post. One factor that helped to win the day was that Karen is very much a full-time table tennis volunteer, whilst Gail is still teaching.

- **BEAR** in mind that 16 counties voted against Mrs Tonge, whereas the Mancom votes were amongst the twenty that won the day. That suggests that there is a distinct and clear division of opinion on this issue; where might that lead to in the future?

- **AT WESTMINSTER** the government of the day usually desire a strong opposition, as long as they have a large majority when it comes to voting.

- **IT SEEMS** that the "Opposition" on the National Council of the ETTA has been strengthened by the votes for Gail McCulloch. Two more names have been added to the councillors - John Prean for the Isle of Wight and of course, Mike Johns for Cheshire.

- **ENGLISH VETERANS** have a chairman who has announced he has been making plans to oppose chairman Alan Ransome at the next opportunity. Alex Murdoch is a comparative newcomer to English table tennis politics. He will need to conjure up a great deal of support apart from his veterans - will he start with the 16 counties who voted against the status quo at Walsall?

- **SKYLET ANDREW** was the name we all knew him by when he played for England. He won the Commonwealth mens doubles title with Nicky Mason and the England mens doubles, also with our printer, six times.

- **NOW**, as 'Sky' Andrew it seems that the sky is the limit! Not long ago he appeared on TV as the front-man for Frank Bruno and his marital crisis. Sky's main client as a soccer agent is none other than England defender Sol Campbell as he controversially moved from Spurs to Arsenal.

- **THE** transfer fee was reported as being £18m and our old table tennis mate has earned a huge slice, possibly making him a millionaire. Well down Sky. Will Matthew Syed make as much money when he becomes Prime Minister?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR continued

by the lack of Players who attend them.

Gripe 2 (on behalf of Band 4 players)

Now this might sound a contradiction to the above, but in the Band 4 event, scratch entries were accepted on the day. In normal Grand Prix, scratch entries are accepted - a policy I dislike - due to the fact that it messes up the draw.

Everyone who attends the Grand Prix Finals is there on merit - some having only played 3 or 4 Grand Prix, others, like myself, having to play in most to qualify, and consequently, funding the whole structure of the event.

To take scratch entries in the Finals, devalues the importance of qualifying. Also, the draw was redone on the day, therefore, players who were geared up to play were told their groups had changed. One player I know, already in the money, deliberately lost his group games in protest. Surely, the idea is to encourage participation in future events, not the opposite.

Gripe 3 (on behalf of Paul Cicchelli)

Official umpires are used at knock-out stages of Finals. In the Band 2 Finals, the amiable defender Paul Cicchelli was disqualified from using his bat by an umpire and the referee because it was chipped and had damaged wood on its leading edge. Anyone who knows a defender (an endangered species) knows their bats are always battered at this point due to their hitting the floor and

table with their defensive chops. Because TeeSports were at lunch at the time, he couldn't get another blade made up, so used an attackers bat of Scriver and Mk. V, obviously losing his game.

Apart from the pettiness of this disqualification I find it disturbing that a player of Paul's style, who is surely the type who will eventually draw people back into watching our sport, unlike the foul-serving, hard-hitting clones that are encouraged to play today. Talking of foul-serving, how come the same umpires never seem to disqualify players on this point? You know the culprits - throwing the ball backwards, sideways, hitting the ball past the furthest point of their bodies - most of their very fast, side-spin, chop, top-spin serves would be difficult to achieve if the ball was thrown up and not hit illegally. Also, the bat throwing and swearing types who show no respect for the game or its officials. Surely, the poor bloke with the slightly damaged bat is the least of all these culprits, yet he is probably the easiest to deal with, due to his amiable nature.

I have been attending Grand Prix for the last 4 years and the Finals for the past 3, and these were easily the worst so far. Poor location, poor organisation, poor refereeing and umpiring, poor attendance - this was my last Grand Prix campaign - I hope the rest of you who carry on will find the Finals, if they bother having them, better in the future.

P.S.: There were other problems at these finals, but I can't be everyone's mouthpiece, so I hope those concerned let their feelings be felt through these letter pages, or even argue against my gripes.

Michael Wilkins

Leighton Buzzard

Response by Harvey Webb (National Events Manager): First of all I would like to thank Mike Wilkins for his constructive criticism. The Grand Prix Committee has always listened to the views of the players and made changes where appropriate, and has already decided that there will be no Finals next year, the points accumulated from the Grand Prix series determining the overall winners.

To answer Mike's specific points I would advise that the original invitations were sent out in good time, but were partially affected by the postal strike. It is also true to say that many of those originally invited were either late in replying, or did not reply at all, which caused further delays in inviting those in position 17 etc. From the many comments received there is little doubt that the major factor for the poor attendance was the location, and the Grand Prix Committee has noted this.

The decision to accept scratch entries, not normally possible for the Finals, was taken in an effort to provide some play for those that had accepted their

invitations and travelled to Great Yarmouth. The success of the Grand Prix series has been largely based on providing value for money, and the Committee felt that it should continue with that principal, rather than give players only one or two games.

On the issue of the Referee not allowing the use of an illegal bat, I have to say that I am continually amazed that many of our top players do not seem to know the rules governing bats and replacing them. At this event, like most others, there were several illegal bats not allowed. Umpires and Referees do not make the rules but they are there to implement them.

TIME-OUTS

RECENTLY when I have been attending tournaments (predominantly in the role of spectator due to my relatively lowly competence level vis-a-vis the other players) I have been regularly irritated by what appears to be a mandatory requirement of a modem coach. It seems that whenever a set is becoming interesting, as the players are warming up their skills nicely, and are become familiar enough with each other's play so that a really sporting contest starts building up, some spoilsport stops the action.

Now that 11-up seems to be in vogue, with the intention of creating more drama for the viewers, I suggest that coaching should only be allowed between sets. Goodness knows it's not long to remain patient, and may even encourage the idea that individual players can play the matches themselves, and are not to be treated like untrustworthy flunkeys.

This is aside from the often blatant abuse of the present time-out system when it is used to alter the momentum of a set if one player should engineer a well-earned advantage.

The simple answer seems to be to ban time-outs. To abandon them as a failed experiment which disadvantaged at least the spectators when it was 21-up, and is now ridiculously inappropriate to the 11-up set-up.

Regis King

St. Olaves, Norfolk

SUCCESSSES OF BELGIUM

YOUR May/June edition gave your readers a good insight into the happenings at the World Championships in Osaka, and naturally highlighted the improved performances by the England players.

May I point out that an exceptional performance merited greater recognition. I refer to the Swaythling Cup successes of the Belgian team. They represent a small Federation with limited resources and facilities, yet they reached the Swaythling Cup final. Their results en-route were as follows: vs Slovakia 3-1, vs Holland 3-0, vs Yugoslavia 3-0, vs Italy 3-1, vs Sweden 3-1 vs China 0-3.

A playing strength of only four players
continued on page 10

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR continued

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was used intelligently culminating in beating the holders in the semi-final. The steam had run out in the final, but even then the matches were far from being walk-overs. China has a great depth of talent, and players could be rested regularly.

It is surely worth noting and applauding what a small nation can do, and to gain inspiration from their efforts.

D.N. Tyler

Vice-President ETTA

Editors Note: I and probably all the readers of Table Tennis News applaud the fantastic efforts made by the Belgian Mens team in reaching the final of the Swaythling Cup in Osaka. As Editor of TTN I have to use the limited space available to me in publicity of the England team. If space had permitted I would have surely mentioned in more detail, the superb efforts of Belgium.

EVOLUTION

ALTHOUGH keen to see positive change introduced to bring new life to the sport, I agree with many readers that the ITTF are totally out of touch with reality. First we had the imposition of the new ball, to supposedly slow down the rallies for better TV viewing. Now we have the new scoring system combined with the bigger ball to quote 'make for a more attractive proposition for TV and benefit the sport as a whole'. This beggars belief

considering 11 up was not tested for the major televised events of last season and did anyone actually notice the difference on TV with the bigger ball? The greatest impact will be reduced playing time in major international championships and, apart from the rare live TV broadcast, most recorded TV highlights will no doubt still only show the last few points of each set.

For the sport to evolve successfully this should benefit the majority not the elite few. Such radical change should have been tested at all levels of the game, to evaluate feedback from existing players, the impact on attracting TV audiences, the media and new recruits to the sport in general. Still, at least the whole debacle has gained the sport rare and valuable press!

Being brutally honest, the 11 up scoring system just masks the real issues we face in the sport. This has been my 3rd season back after a 14 year 'sabbatical'. Everything I have seen, read and heard suggests that, arguably the biggest damage to the credibility of the sport (both as a spectacle and for participation) has been the crusade for faster rubbers culminating in the unnecessary, unhealthy, and socially unacceptable introduction of speed glue. This combined with the increasing array of funny rubbers to combat and the service loophole giving rise to the art of 'shielding' are surely the biggest offenders.

It is encouraging that the service rule is

being redefined and that the ITTF are also reviewing the future of speed glue, from a health perspective. However, the decision to delay the new service rule to September 2002 seems farcical. Exponents of this loophole will continue to shield and gain unfair advantage until the change comes into effect. This appears to be buying time to find the definitive wording? The major concern should be that the ITTF are shying away from the real issue, fundamental to the future success of our sport, controlling the 'speed crusade' to make for a more level playing field.

Grahame Brown (April letter) rightly states that for the 'man in the street' it is a mystery why innocuous looking shots appear to cause such problems. This is surely the biggest turn-off for the sport on TV and what should be addressed, rather than superficial changes to the ball or scoring system. Personally, a partial convert to the view that playing different rubbers and styles makes for a more interesting and demanding sport, this is definitely not the majority view. Table tennis is unique in how the racquet surface can impact on the game, often at the expense of technical ability or fitness levels. The demoralising effect, especially to up and coming youngsters, should not be underestimated. Unless this can be turned into a positive advantage, we will always be facing an uphill struggle to entice players from other sports, retain players past certain levels of competence and make for an attractive proposition on

TV.

As to the pros and cons of 11 up - Without doubt games are shorter, tenser with every point critical requiring maximum focus. This must make for more exciting matches and hopefully reduce the socially unacceptable finish times of many tournaments and matches played on the traditional 1 table. However, the thin margin for error will arguably inhibit players from experimenting with new shots which must be a concern for players and coaches alike. Most players seem to view that 11 up is now the only sensible route, otherwise why change for some events and not others? Yet, despite passions running high, the balloting process was very low key (if at all!). The result being confusion now reigns. The method of playing 11 up has quietly changed and leagues have a 'mish-mash' of approaches with some even adopting different scoring systems between divisions. And all before the new system has proven successful!

Reducing team match times is essential for the future of the sport. We will never encourage youngsters to compete in local leagues or win back the many 'seniors' who have hung up their bats due to the negative impact on work, home or social lives, unless we change with the times. There are many in favour of changing to teams of 2 instead of 3, as the alternative solution to the local

continued on page 12



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BRITISH LEAGUE

PENIEL & WELLOW HOUSE IN PREMIER

BATTS TEAM PENIEL and WELLOW HOUSE SCHOOL take their places in the British League Premiership when the new season gets under way at the beginning of September. Both were promoted from the first division last season and it will be a welcome return to the Premiership for Peniel after an absence of a few years. On the other hand Wellow House will be competing at the top level for the first time, writes Aubrey Drapkin.

Barnet have been reinstated after just failing to avoid relegation last time round. This is because of the withdrawal of Horsham. Which I understand is on financial grounds and it is sad to see them drop out of the Premiership. They will, however, continue to operate three teams in

the lower divisions.

There is an increase in the number of teams operating in the lower divisions which will once again be on the four weekend format. This has led to the creation of a further section of the fourth division.

The committee bade farewell to Peter Hancock who has served the league for many years. Pete has decided to give it up and the rest of the committee are sad to see him go.

Keith Ponting continues as chairman with Aubrey Drapkin as administrator. Carol Beames remains on the committee and a welcome is extended to Steve Kerns, who will in future be responsible for supplying information for the ETTA website and also for British League reports in this magazine.

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BRITISH LEAGUE

PREMIER DIVISION	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
London Progress	14	13	1	-	152	44	27
Darlington	14	11	-	3	135	61	22
Horsham	14	8	3	3	105	91	19
OLOP	14	8	-	6	95	101	16
JAGS	14	4	1	9	87	109	9
Byng Hall Farningham P.	14	4	-	10	79	117	8
Barnet	14	3	2	9	76	120	8
Norwich Todd Foxwood	14	-	3	11	55	141	3
DIVISION ONE NORTH							
Wellow House School	12	11	-	1	79	17	22
Seasiders (Blackpool)	12	10	1	1	65	31	21
Derwent I	12	6	-	6	50	46	12
Kingshurst I	12	4	1	7	44	52	9
Darlington II	12	2	4	6	32	64	8
Grantham I.D.S.	12	3	1	8	35	61	7
Uxbridge (Burton)	12	2	1	9	31	65	5
DIVISION ONE SOUTH							
Batts Team Peniel	14	14	-	-	86	26	28
DML Plymouth	14	10	2	2	71	41	22
Barnet II	14	7	2	5	65	47	16
Horsham II	14	6	3	5	58	54	15
Cippenham	14	4	4	6	49	63	12
PSP Moonrakers I	14	3	4	7	48	64	10
Ellenborough	14	2	2	10	39	73	6
Limberlost Pine Poole	14	1	1	12	32	80	3
DIVISION TWO NORTH							
Ormesby	14	11	1	2	77	35	23
Coventry Phoenix	14	9	3	2	71	40	21
Wellow House School II	14	7	2	5	50	60	16
Darlington III	14	7	1	6	61	50	15
Dewsbury I	14	6	2	6	55	55	14
Derwent II	14	4	2	8	51	61	10
City of Manchester	14	3	2	9	40	72	8
Halton Croda	14	2	1	11	40	72	5
DIVISION TWO SOUTH							
London Progress II	14	9	2	3	76	36	20
Aylesbury League	14	9	2	3	71	41	20
Byng Hall F. Print I	14	7	3	4	66	46	17
Horsham III	14	5	5	4	64	48	15
De Vere Sudbury Netts	14	6	1	7	48	64	13
Barnet III	14	4	4	6	44	68	12
Tregorrick Palace	14	3	2	9	36	76	8
Fellows Cranleigh	14	3	1	10	43	69	7
DIVISION THREE SOUTH & WEST							
Ashford	10	7	3	-	62	18	17
London Progress III	10	7	2	1	55	25	16
Birmingham Uni	10	5	-	5	42	38	10
OLOP II	10	5	-	5	39	41	10
PSP Moonrakers II	10	2	2	6	27	53	6
KCD Stiga II	10	-	1	9	15	65	1
DIVISION THREE NORTH							
Potteries	14	14	-	-	100	12	28
Wellow House School III	14	8	1	5	64	48	17
Derwent III	14	7	3	4	61	51	17
Darlington IV	14	6	1	7	52	60	13
Seasiders (Blackpool) II	14	5	2	7	54	58	12
Barrow	14	5	1	8	41	71	11
Kingshurst Briar II	14	2	3	9	39	73	7
Dewsbury	14	3	1	10	37	75	7
DIVISION THREE SOUTH							
KCD Stiga	12	12	-	-	78	18	24
Middlesex Uni Prog IV	12	6	3	3	57	39	15
Hastings	12	6	2	4	55	41	14
Britannia HSP Ipswich	12	4	2	4	44	50	11
Byng Hall F.P. II	12	5	1	6	42	54	11
Batts Team Peniel II	12	3	1	8	41	55	7
De Vere Sudbury Netts	12	1	-	11	17	77	2

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR continued

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league dilemma. Each player would then play 2 singles and a doubles using the same successful format as the Woolwich Junior leagues and some of the new 'super leagues', such as the Batts league at Harlow. Maybe the ETTA and County associations should be suggesting such initiatives, especially for leagues not wishing to embrace 11 up?

The counter argument is this will necessitate having more teams, match nights, cost etc. The simple fact is that unless there is the facility to play on more than 1 table, something must change if we are to move the game forward at 'grass roots' level and also bring back some much-needed social element, which is integral in most other sports.

There is a very positive solution to the issue of 'less play' in tournaments. Shorter matches must provide an opportunity to run larger groups, rather than the usual 3's in Grand Prix. More play and chances to progress would surely encourage entries and allay fears of valuable travelling time and cost not justifying the effort, especially with the usual annoying 'no shows'. It is disappointing to see that this has not

been adopted for the first few Grand Prix of the new season. This definitely should be tested. Organisers please take note!

I have canvassed views of players, 'ex' players, officials and parents of youngsters on ideas for improving our sport to successfully compete against the range of leisure pursuits now available. We have a dynamic sport yet one, which has a low level of 'social acceptance' and this perception, must be tackled. The age profile and demographics of the sport have changed dramatically. Veterans make up the largest percentage of league players and the whole Vets 'scene' is thriving. As a 'young Vet' this offers me many opportunities but is a big turn-off for the youngsters. The balance must be redressed for the sport to survive. This means more ties with schools, structured coaching at clubs, lots of opportunities for general play and motivational competition to measure improvement. The London Junior Ranking Scheme from novice to advanced is an excellent example. There is much great work going on with schools and other organisations from forward thinking clubs, such as Progress, to turn this around but much more is needed along with a commitment to professional coaches as has been the case in France.

At team competition level, it is time to change the tired and traditional points allocation, especially for County and many local and Inter leagues, to eradicate 'dead rubbers'. This is one of the greatest de-motivators in the sport, especially to the youngsters and change is essential to make for a more exciting sport and retain player's interest right through the season. The winner takes all approach is great for the top teams but hardly encourages a fight to the finish. One point for each rubber is simplicity itself and can often make a huge difference by the end of a season.

We desperately need to cultivate real National and European heroes as role models, as with other major sports. As much as one can only marvel at the awesome play of Wang Liqin, it is hard for aspiring youngsters (and adults) to relate to the Asian players in the same way and many find the Sky TV Pro -tour coverage uninteresting as a result. The emergence of new stars, such as the young German Tino Boll, and our own Gareth Herbert should be something for the PR guys to really get stuck into as they can inspire a new generation of players. However, one cannot ignore the basic requirement of the sport being easier to learn and see improvement, without the likes of 'crashing down to earth' after meeting 'Mr Pimps' or glued up speed merchants! 'Experiments' should be conducted globally to see the impact of more standardisation of rubbers and equipment to tackle these issues head on. Only when changes have proven successful with positive impact at all levels is the time to call for total change. Lessons must be learnt. Changes enforced by 'idealists', out of touch with the 'grass roots' of the sport, will inevitably provoke negative reaction and could end up damaging our beloved sport for the long term.

Steve Preston

away from home.

Unfortunately, in the confusion and need for so many last minute change of plans, it was overlooked that the licence of one of the players had expired and not been renewed. Consequently the team's excellent effort to win 3 of their 4 matches with a weakened side and after all the hassle they had faced, was amended to 4 heavy defeats. In view of the extenuating circumstance, our Club felt that it had a good case to go through the League's appeals procedure. We subsequently received written advice dated 20th November 2000 that our appeal had been upheld by the League's Committee due to the "extremely extenuating circumstances unheard of previously in the British league" and "that it would be grossly unfair to penalise the Club and that natural justice should prevail on this occasion." Our original match results were reinstated.

We were then astounded to learn that the same 7 Clubs that had threatened to withdraw from the League had now again got together to appeal against the appeal decision despite the fact that 3 of their teams had been beaten fair and square by our weakened team! On 30th April 2001, no less than 5 months after the original appeal decision, we were advised that the British League Referee to which the appeal by the 7 Clubs had been referred, had upheld their appeal and our match results were again being amended which resulted in our mid table position in Division 2 South being converted to a position 1 point from the bottom. I would add that in a subsequent conversation with an official of one of the other Clubs, he told me that he was "disgusted" with the way in which our Club had been treated and blamed his players rather than his Club. Needless to say, our team were demoralised and we were consequently only able to raise a much weakened team for the final weekend. We further understand that one of the British League committee members resigned as a result of their latest decision.

Surely this is not the image that our sport should be allowed to project when we are consistently endeavouring to achieve for it a higher profile and to extend the table tennis to all areas of the country.

David Lancaster
Tregorrick Park TTC, Cornwall.



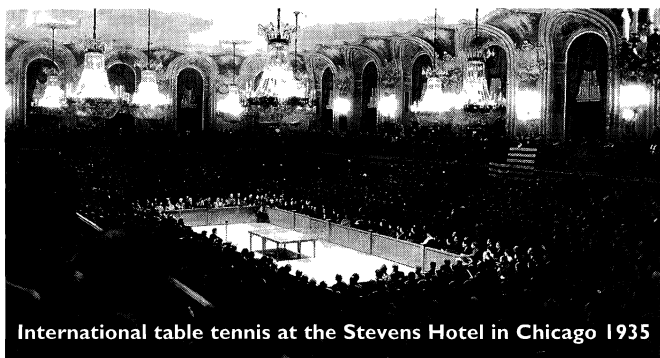
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PLAYER POWER

YOUR readers may well have read my previous letter in your columns regarding the refusal by 7 Clubs, under threat of their withdrawal from the League, to accept the agreed venues for the four Division 2 South weekends. Had they been allowed to stand, all teams in the Division would have faced very similar travelling/overnight commitments, with Tregorrick Palace having 2 long distance trips to Harlow. Essex and the other Clubs having 2 long distance trips to Cornwall.

As many know, merely a matter of days before the first weekend was due to be held in Cornwall and after all arrangements had been made (e.g. publicity, programmes, refreshments, referee, umpires etc.), the threats were allowed to prevail and the weekend was transferred to yet another venue in Essex.

The Tregorrick Palace players, notwithstanding their disgust with the attitude of the other Clubs, decided to honour their commitment and a team was, at such short notice, sent to Essex for the first weekend despite lacking their top-ranked player who found himself unable to travel due to late change of venue that involved 2 nights

COMMONWEALTH GAMES 2002

NEXT years Commonwealth Games in Manchester (26 July- 4 August) will be the biggest sports event ever to be held in this country and, for the first time, table tennis will be part of this sporting jamboree. For ten full days table tennis will hit the headlines and throughout the season Table Tennis News will bring you the latest news, views and pictures of what promises to be the most challenging event the ETTA has ever undertaken, writes Jim Beckley.

The Games will attract competitors from 72 countries chosen to take part in 17 events ranging from athletics to wrestling and, of course, table tennis which will be making its debut.

Manchester has become something of a second home to table tennis with the qualifying rounds of the Olympic Games in 1996 followed by the World Championships (1997) and in 1998 the World Veterans Championships.

For the past year or so a team from the ETTA has been meeting with Games officials to put into place all the necessary pieces in what will be our sports biggest ever challenge. It's a jigsaw puzzle on an immense scale.

Karen Tonge heads our team as competition manager working closely with the Games people. Also on the panel is ETTA chairman Alan Ransome, Colin Clement (international delegate), Tony Chatwin (deputy chairman), Richard Scruton (scheduling), Mike Holt (Announcing and MC), Richard Yule (TV) and myself (Media) each appointed because of their particular expertise.

We anticipate a minimum entry of 96 men and 64 women with teams consisting of 5 players. But if more entries arrive then adjustments can be made. The new system of 7 games up to 11 points in the singles matches and 5 games up to 11 pts in the team event will be the norm. It is expected that a 10 plus 2 combination of tables will suffice.

The Players Village in Fallowfield about four miles away from the main Stadium will be open 24 hours a day accommodating approximately 4850 athletes and officials.

Finally the Games could not go ahead if it wasn't for the volunteers. If you would like to become a volunteer (it will be hard work) contact Karen Tonge (01928 563640) as soon as possible who will then send you a form.

NATIONAL TRIALS AND JUNIOR/CADET MASTERS

POLICY FOR SEASON 2001-2002

The following policy document was approved by the National Council at their meeting on Sunday, 29th July, 2001. Whilst the majority of the policy remains as last season, I particularly wish to draw attention to the significant changes made for entry into the Masters and the allocation of points from the five Select Tournaments. It should be noted that this information was sent out with the entry forms for the Essex and Blackpool 4 Star Select Tournaments.

Junior Select 4 Star Tournaments

These are confirmed as follows:-

Essex, 29th/30th September, 2001 – Entries to Mr. Phil Gower, 63 Heybridge Road, Ingatestone, Essex CM4 9QA.

Telephone: 01277 353174.

Blackpool, 6th/7th October, 2001 – Entries to Mr. Martin Ireland, 18 St. Luke's Road, Blackpool, Lancs. FY4 2EJ.

Telephone: 01253 313156.

East Midlands, 27th/28th October, 2001 – Entries to Mrs. Margaret Welch, 48 Church Lane, Laceby, Grimsby DN37 7BW.

Telephone: 01472 870368.

Stockton-on-Tees, 17th/18th November, 2001 – Entries to Mrs. B. Stevenson, 10 Weaverthorpe, Nunthorpe,

Middlesbrough TS7 0PU. Telephone: 01642 310163. Derby, 2nd/3rd March, 2002 – Entries to Mr. Brian Webster, 141

Station Road, Mickleover, Derby DE3 5FL. Telephone: 01332 518007.

There will be NO automatic entry into the Junior and Cadet Masters. Players will qualify via the National Trials or via points accrued from the Select Tournaments. Players funded via the World Class Performance Programme will be directed by the Performance Director to play in at least 3 of the 5 Select Tournaments. (Exceptions to this will only be for players on International duty or playing in other such events as agreed by the Performance Director).

The top ten points winners from the Select Tournaments, providing they play in at least three, plus the six highest players from the National Trials, will be invited to the Masters.

The Select Tournaments will again be subject to a points system as follows:-

Winners 150 points, Runners-up 100 points, Losing Semi-Finalists 50 points

Losing Quarter-Finalists 25 points, Losing last Sixteen 15 points.

There is a significant change to the above, with the winners and runners-up points being considerably reduced. This is felt desirable in order to make it more equitable in respect of the five Select Tournaments.

In the event of a tie on points gained from the five 4 Star Select Tournaments, the positions for entry into the Masters will be decided by the placings on the latest ETTA Ranking List. This will be the one that comes out in March.

A running total record will be kept by Doreen Nightingale at Head Office and will also be available on the ETTA website.

Regional and National Trials

Exempt players

The following players, as ranked on the August, 2001 National Ranking List will be exempt from the Regional Trials and will receive an automatic invitation to the National Trials:

The top 10 Junior Boys,

The top 8 Junior Girls,

The top 8 Cadet Boys

The top 5 Cadet Girls

The position on the August National Ranking List will apply.

At the conclusion of the Final Regional Trials the following players will receive an invitation to the National Trials:-

Junior Boys – Top 5 players from each region plus the 4 highest nationally ranked reserves from any of the regional lists

Junior Girls – Top 4

Cadet Boys – Top 4

Cadet Girls – Top 2 players from each region plus the 7 highest nationally ranked reserves from any of the regional lists.

The ranking list to determine the reserves will be the one published in December, which should include all the results from the Regional Trials.

Confirmed dates:-

Junior/Cadet Preliminary Trials 22nd/23rd September, 2001

Junior/Cadet Regional Trials 24th/25th November, 2001

Junior/Cadet National Trials 5th/6th January, 2002.

Junior and Cadet Masters

It has been decided to retain invitations to 16 players and to continue with a two day event being played in two stages. The first stage will consist of two groups of 8 players (7 matches each) all on the first day. The two players who finish 7th and 8th will be eliminated. The top six players in each group will qualify for the second stage on day two. All results recorded by the players who qualify for the second stage will be carried forward from the first stage and will count in the final 12 player league table. All of the players in the final 12, who did not play each other in the first stage, will play in stage 2, so producing an all play all final league table. All the players who qualify for the second stage of the competition will, therefore, play six matches each on the second day.

In the event of any player gaining dual qualification, either through the Select Tournaments or the National Trials, therefore creating vacancies, the spare places will be taken up by the highest ranking reserves from the National Trials.

Confirmed dates:-

Junior Masters 6th/7th April, 2002

Cadet Masters 20th/21st April, 2002.

All this information will be published on the ETTA website.

KEITH PONTING, Vice-Chairman (Competitions).

PERRY & KISS WIN AS COOKE & DEATON FINISH ON TOP

NICOLA DEATON and Alan Cooke are the undisputed queen and king of the Butterfly Grand Prix, season 2000-2001 that ended at Potters Leisure Resort on June 9 and 10, writes John Woodford.

But at Hopton-on-Sea, there some odd twists in the tale like Alex Perry winning the mens singles final against Cooke -6, 10, 12, 5 and the womens final being won by Barbara Kiss 9, 6, 6 against Suffolk's Becky Sparkes.

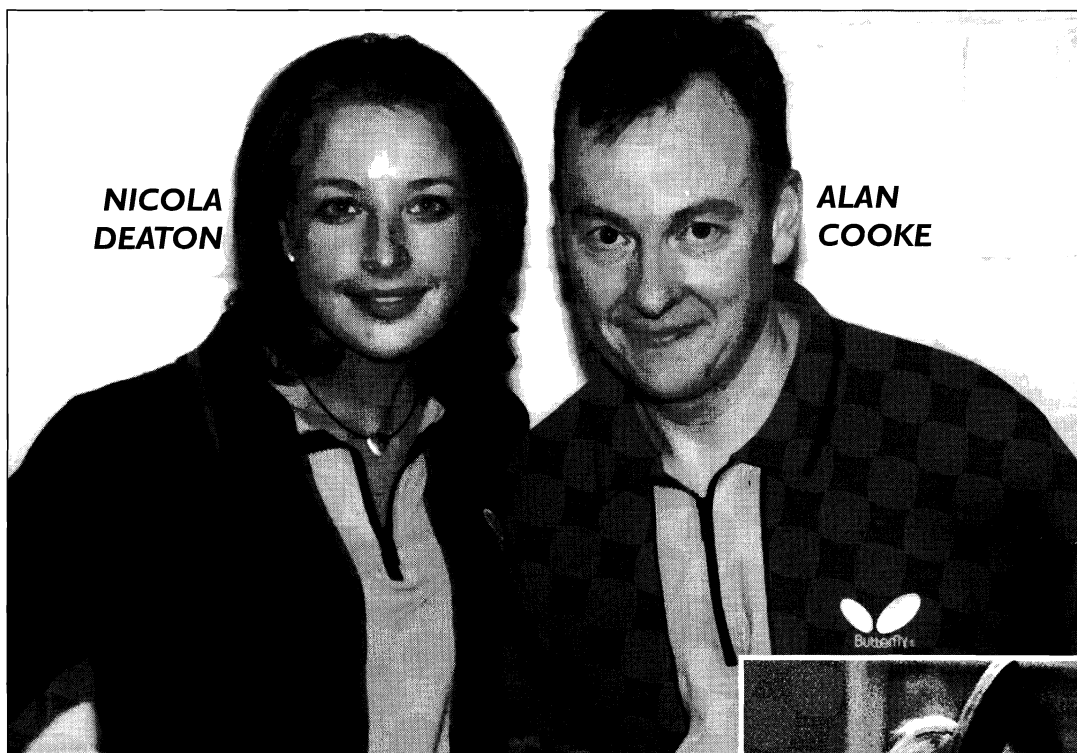
I am reliably informed that unless there is a complete change of mind by the Grand Prix committee, there will be no finals tournament in future.

There are several reasons for this. The main one is that a number of players fail to turn up for the finals unless they are in a favourable position in the prize fund points tables.

At the moment the new plan is that the twelve tournaments will be run, probably ending at Sheffield with a Major.

The end prize fund will then be distributed based on the performances of the players throughout the tournaments.

There are also plans (on the back burner) to bring in a venue each from Scotland, Wales and Ireland, thus making it a real British Grand



NICOLA DEATON

ALAN COOKE

Prix.

Players from the Scottish and Welsh squads have shown constant and valuable support for all the tournaments including the finals.

The mens quarter-final line-up was: Perry vs Neil Charles, Michael James vs Marco Essomba, Fabio Mantegazza vs Clive Carthy and Ryan Owen vs Cooke.

Both finalists Cooke and Perry cut their way through to the final without too much sweat being lost.

After losing 7, 7, 5, 5 Fabio said "Now I must concentrate more on my studies as I am approaching my third year on computer studies at Manchester.

Alex Perry goes to the top of the class for playing in most of the Grand Prix tournaments despite the fact the

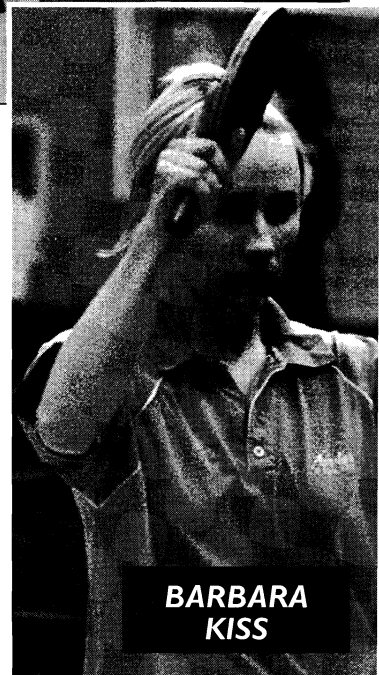
he is studying hard like Nicky Deaton.

EXAMINATION

Miss Deaton played one singles game at Potters after winning the doubles with Kubrat Owlabi. This ensured that she qualified for the main prize money. Then she had to leave to face a vital university examination the next morning.

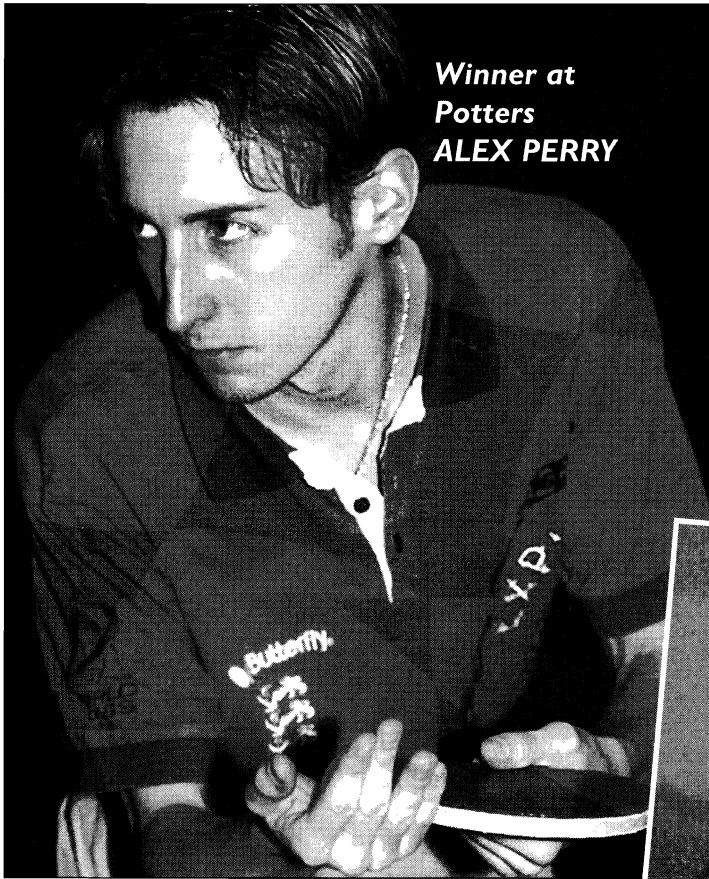
What happened to Helen Lower? She came to Potters, stayed the previous night, found she had been drawn in the same group as Barbara Kiss and then headed back home to Wolverhampton - no explanation available.

This left the womens singles semi-finals as Becky Sparkes vs Jane Durham and Kubrat Owlabi vs

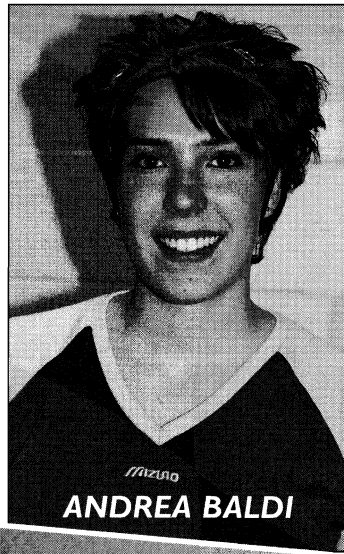


BARBARA KISS





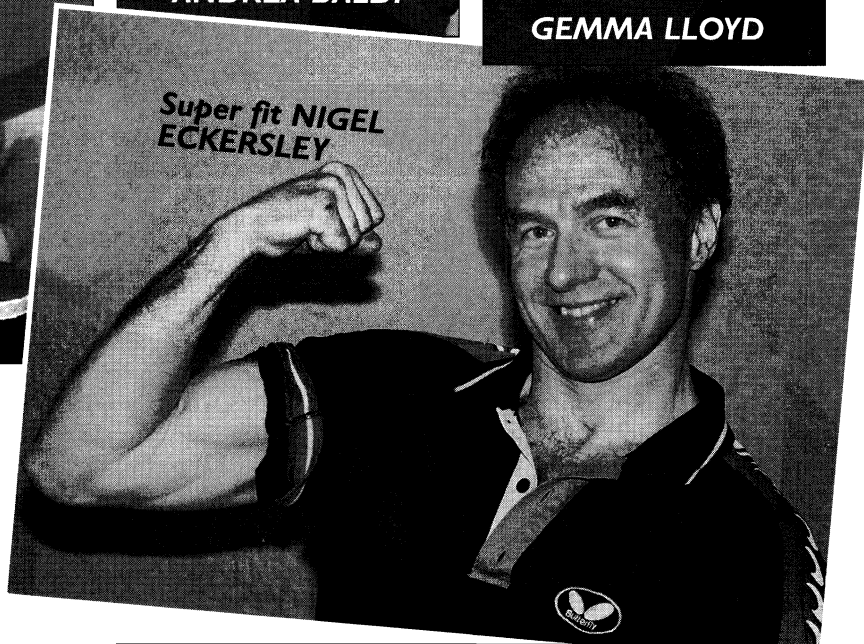
Winner at Potters ALEX PERRY



ANDREA BALDI



GEMMA LLOYD



Barbara Kiss. The former Hungarian junior squad player hit her best form to stop Kubrat 11, -9, 3, 9.

This left Miss Kiss an easy winner in the final 9, -6, 6, 6, against Becky Sparkes the girl from the neighbouring county of Suffolk.

In the banded events, Ryan Own (Wales) snatched Band 1, but only after a mighty struggle with Abdul Wuraola 14, -11, -9, 8, 6.

Scottish players dominated in Band 2 - won by Niall Cameron and in Band 3 won by Stuart Matthew.

Claire Bentley (Scotland) lifted the Band 1 womens trophy with a 3-1 victory over Catherine Davies the Welsh No.2.

Band 2 prize went to Aimee Wright Essex, who defeated the Sussex player Sara Coggan who travelled by road by herself all the way from East Kent.

With John Hilton notably absent without a reasonable excuse, Nigel Eckersley and Ian Girdler had the veterans singles to themselves. Mike Johns stepped in with crafty early win against Eckersley, but the man from Sussex suddenly hit a winning vein in the final, up-ending Girdler 5, 3, 11. "The best I have played all season" said the winner.

Andrea Baldi (Yorkshire) playing with 'Dr. Neubauer Super Spin' long pimped rubber, captured the Under-21 trophy, but the star youngster at Potters was Lauren Spink (Norfolk) the

losing finalist, losing 11, 10, 9. The overall winner was Gemma Lloyd.

The mens Under-21 final was dominated by Jason Sugrue who against the odds defeated his London Progress team-mate Marco Essomba 7, 3, 12.

SPECIAL

Now that the finals have almost certainly been axed, there are hopes that we can still run some big events at Potters which is a very special venue, not easily accessible but once you get there, everything is first class -the food, the accommodation, the playing conditions, the lot.

Last words from the ETTA Events Manager Harvey Webb who remains as cool as the proverbial cucumber when things go slightly off course, "The Grand Prix Committee is very grateful for the major sponsorship of the Grand Prix series it received this season from Butterfly, and is also grateful for the support of this event that we have received from Potters Leisure Resort.

I must also take this opportunity to thank all those Referees, Organisers, and Umpires who have helped ensure that this season's Grand Prix was once again a huge success, and my final thanks are to all those players that took part.



Pictured above are the Grand Prix Boys: (l. to r.) VIDAL GRAHAM, JOHN O'LEARY and PAUL JABLON. Pictured left is RYAN OWEN from Wales who won the Mens Band 1.



Rising star LAUREN SPINK

MATTHEW SYED reflects on table tennis, his career and other matters.

Interviewed by Ken Muhr.

We meet at his flat in Richmond, Surrey, during the Wimbledon men's singles final. I am here to interview 3 times Commonwealth champion and 4 times national champion Matthew Syed, not only for TTN but also for 'BlaqSport' (see feature in their September issue). Matthew agrees to turn off the sound but when Goran Ivanisevic and Pat Rafter reach the final set, he can resist his television set no longer: "We just have to watch this. This is fantastic. The atmosphere is incredible, the highest emotion. It brings tears to your eyes."

So either side of Ivanisevic's tearful triumph, I conduct my interview with the multi-faceted Syed, a most unusual elite athlete. I find him in an unusually reflective mood.

With probably his playing best behind him, what will be his table tennis involvement after hopefully doing well in the Commonwealth Games, his last major ambition? He is unsure. "I will have to think very carefully and decide whether to carry on playing. The issue will be more a motivational rather than a physical one." If he gave up table tennis, what other career might he pursue? He will take stock of his recent experience fighting for Labour in the General Election, before deciding whether to stand again. "I also enjoy writing and commentating on TV very much and possibly might go more into that. But I have no firm plans." So many options!

Only a postponement of the General Election from its expected date, owing to foot and mouth disease allowed Syed, Labour's candidate in the Wokingham constituency (John Redwood's seat) to successfully defend his Commonwealth men's singles title in New Delhi in April, achieved in an epic, cliffhanging final with India's top player Chetan Baboor, during which he held 7 match points, and saved 3 match points, before scrapping through 28-26 in the fifth game.

As it was he had only a week to prepare, with intensive practice and running, and he had to continue his physical conditioning through the team event in India, "so I was on the exercise bike or running machine in the evenings while everyone else was resting! I was behind for almost the entire last game (of the final) until I caught up at 18 all and then it was just point for point until the end and an extraordinary release of emotion when I finally won the last point."

Playing in the Commonwealth Championships, and then going straight into a General Election campaign was, "a fascinating diversity of experience – switching my brain from trying to win a very tight match to trying to debate with Redwood, the process of being involved in a local campaign, working with local activists, knocking on doors day-in, day-out, is such a contrast from table tennis. The set pieces we set up like a game of table tennis with Chris Smith in Woodley Shopping precinct I enjoyed very much"

Syed says he has had very encouraging feedback from the Labour Party (and volunteers from the constituency), whose share of the vote he marginally increased despite being squeezed by the Liberal Democrats (who came second) in a traditionally strong Conservative seat.

But to begin at the beginning, how had Matthew come into table tennis? It was at an after (Aldrynton Primary, Earley, Reading) school club led by teacher-coach Peter Charters. His brother Andrew (who reached England international standard before having to give up owing to ill health) first joined, before encouraging Matthew, and Charters who had the connections, "and also the passion and persuasiveness to ensure we stayed in table tennis".

If it hadn't been for Peter, would Matthew have gone to another sport? "Without doubt. We were very sporty. Andrew and myself played county badminton, county tennis. I captained the school football team and Andy was probably the outstanding player. We both did judo to a reasonable level. At that age the thing that really tells you which sport you are going into, generally is the person who is running that particular avenue. But certainly I enjoyed table tennis the most and I think it has a combination of qualities that makes it a compelling sport. It is athletic, but it is also very cognitive and the speed of interaction is something I enjoy very much."

Pete Charters also ran a club called Omega, which was 3 minutes drive from the Syeds' house. "It was an extraordinary club to be involved in, because there was a big contrast between the quality of the players and the quality of the location – it was a wooden hut with one table, with plants growing through the wooden walls, no toilet. It was bitterly cold during the winter. Sometimes there would be 8 or 9 of us waiting to play on the one table and you would be just sat in the freezing cold. In the summer it was just too hot! So it was the worst possible club, but somehow, essentially because of Pete, it produced very good players."

Having benefited from the support and encouragement of several enthusiasts in table tennis, Syed is very appreciative of volunteers. "English table tennis does not have the kind of revenue from the private sector that say tennis and football get, and therefore we can't fund all the people we need to make table tennis as effective as it could possibly be and therefore we rely on volunteers. I think that we are very fortunate that we have outstandingly gifted and dedicated volunteers, and of course I would have never got anywhere without helpful volunteers. For example Peter Charters, my first coach, gave hours and hours of his time, and when I train at the Cippenham Club, I see Ken Phillips and his staff who just devote hours of their time in a coaching capacity."

"We also have administrators who almost work full-time to help table tennis. Local district associations, chairmen and secretaries and so on, we are very, very lucky. Speaking on behalf of all those players who have made it to the top, we owe a tremendous vote of

thanks to those people who give them time for nothing and enable table tennis to survive, because without them table tennis would not survive and we would have no sport to engage our passion. So we are very lucky."

Syed chose to play defensively after Charters introduced him to that style (a more successful option in those days) and because it gave him more time playing away from the table against his faster brother.

In hindsight, knowing how difficult it is to be successful defending in the modern game, he thinks he should have chosen attack but admits, "I probably would not have enjoyed the game so much as an attacker and I would not have been a bigger favourite with the crowd. But if I'd had a choice between winning and being a crowd favourite and losing, I would have chosen winning! I have been a crowd favourite and lost so many times! Many people have come up to me and said, 'It was the match of tournament, we wish you had gone further, wasn't it wonderful?' and I think to myself, the skill level you displayed there was as much as anyone in this competition, but you just can't win against certain types of players."

He also wonders about tennis: "It might well be that innately, physiologically I could have been a better clay court tennis player, because of my speed around the court and my ability to defend, whereas table tennis is much more like grass court men's tennis. It is all about power, speed, and it might well have been that I would have been better off playing tennis on very slow surfaces. You never know."

However, although Syed considers that he has been unlucky with the technological advances in table tennis, he has no regrets. "I don't feel sad or bitter. Other than being more successful in terms of results and titles, I can't imagine that I could have enjoyed it more. In an odd kind of way I enjoy my table tennis career more than I can express. Playing against the odds, travelling around the world. When you are in the thick of it, winning is everything, losing is an absolute disaster, but when you look back on it, you see your career in a sense of perspective. I know Gattien and Persson have won great titles, but I don't think they look back on their careers with any more sense of pride and enjoyment than I do."

Syed also accepts the criticism that he never really did enough on the physical training side. "I have never given it a good enough shot. Maybe it is just a part of my nature, but I think I could have concentrated on both the table work and the physical work more. But it was very difficult given the other things I wanted to do." Although he seemed to cope very well with combining university and table tennis, he considers now that the only reason why he continued to be a good player – and he became the England no.1 just before his finals at Oxford – was because of his talent. Had he done extra training with that extra talent "it would have been far, far better for me".

After gaining his first class degree, he started training more and reaped the benefits, with his form reaching an

absolute peak at European Olympic qualification tournament in Manchester in January 1996, when he beat Swedish former world champion Jorgen Persson in a match of incredible quality – several people have said that it is the greatest match they have ever seen.

However, whilst he now asserts, "Doing a full time degree is absolute insanity if you want to be a top player. You can't do it", he also says, "If I look at my life as a totality, I certainly don't regret going to Oxford. Only in table tennis terms do I regret going to Oxford". His advice for aspiring top players, is to gain their academic qualifications slowly. He adds that he thinks that England have some very talented young players and that the National Training Centre, currently led by Swede Soren Ahlen at Nottingham, and the future, is good.

Syed has found his writing for The Times another fascinating experience, and appreciates the support and opportunity given by sports editor David Chappell. "It gives me another angle or dimension, and I enjoy writing very much. I wish I could do it a little bit more – I can only write feature articles infrequently. I have interviewed some interesting people and covered some great themes. It exercises the creative side of my personality. My writing style is very much me."

The 'sports writer' Matthew most admires may come as a surprise. "The best writer on sport by miles is Howard Jacobson. You know he wrote an article on table tennis – he is not a sports writer – and it was published in Table Tennis News, 'Like a Bat Out of Hell' I think was the headline, and it is divine writing. It is the kind of writing that makes you almost ashamed to describe yourself as a sports writer."

So what does he think table tennis people should be doing to promote their own sport? "I think that it is crucially important that people write to the sports editors, and even the editors of their newspapers, if a table tennis story goes in, and say 'fantastic, why can't we have more of this? We really miss that'. And whatever paper you read, if you see a table tennis story write in and say 'great, let's have more of it'. If you never see a table tennis story, write in and say 'where are they?' I think that is significant and I would really encourage people to write in and commend editors who include table tennis and express their disapproval if table tennis is not included. It makes a difference. I can safely say with my knowledge of the media from television and newspapers, that it makes a big difference."

So I leave Richmond Hill in a reflective mood myself, thinking how in the competitive arena Matthew Syed and Goran Ivanisevic are very different men, but off court, they are deeply sensitive and sentimental about their respective sports, proud of their place and achievements in them. Not too surprising really: they are from the same generation and at the same stage of their sporting careers – nearing the end of a grand adventure.

TABLE TENNIS NEWS EXTRA

Issue no. 279 September 2001

Editorial

Apart from the constraints of time, space and common sense, I have a fair leeway on what I can say in these columns, and am not prescribed to stick rigidly to a party line. **What I say is what I think.**

So welcome to the season 2001-2002, and to **games up to 11** for the majority of local leagues going along with this new rule, even if in many cases they did not want it. Probably many agree with Johnny Leach, who told me at the ETTA AGM that although he was unhappy with the change, he saw no point in not implementing it once it had become an international law of table tennis. I expect that there will be a small blip/increase of older players who will cite up to 11 as the final reason for calling it a day, but that otherwise, continuing players will quickly adapt. Some leagues sticking to up to 21 may find they actually lose members to those using the new system.

While an anticipated benefit of up to 11 was to make table tennis more attractive and exciting because of more crisis points, an immediate benefit (if sets are best of 5) might be to shorten the length of matches. However, a **more fundamental change in the match system** such as 2-a-side, 4 a side played on 2 tables, or 3-a-side but each playing only 2 singles, and more leagues played in single multi-table venues with good facilities, **may be necessary** to make local leagues an attractive proposition to potential recruits. Matches conducted in drab conditions, a sterile atmosphere and dragging on long into the night, are profoundly off-putting to many people who might otherwise be keen to participate.

The **new Sports Minister, Richard Caborn**, is **keen on social inclusion**, regionalisation, strategic thinking, and health and education issues related to sport, which should give some clues to table tennis organisations seeking future political support or funding.

Karen Tonge, who has become the **new ETTA Vice Chairman for Teaching & Training** on a close vote,

has shown good sense and humility in seeking the views of others on how the department should go, but coaching may not be able to afford to lose someone of the long-term experience, knowledge and calibre of **Gail McCulloch**.

Each time I visit the **National Training Centre at Nottingham, I am impressed with just how hard the players are now working**. Yes, there were teething problems, exceptional players have in the past come through outside of the existing system (though helped by it), and some people have argued that Lottery money should have gone into regional training. But, with the relative paucity of high-level talent on the ground, a centralised training system was probably right.

This is what we have, and it is working (although it is a long-term process). Therefore, I think **we should fully support Soren Ahlen and his team as never before**, and also collectively **give positive feedback to the Lottery Sports Fund**. For make no mistake, with the Lottery Sports Fund both being reduced and stretched more ways, there will be pressure to make cuts, and continuation of the ETTA's World Class Performance Programme after 2002 will come under threat if it is perceived not to be delivering – **a good England performance in the Commonwealth Games, Manchester 25 July-4 August 2002 is vital**.

Gareth Herbert has moved up to **122 in the world ranking list**. The England junior boys coming 8th in the team event and Joanna Parker only just failing to make the cadet girls' quarter-finals, were the English highlights of the **European Youth Championships in Terni, Italy**, on 20-29 July. Although big results were not anticipated this year with many players into new age group categories, there was some disappointment that squad members did not perform their best or got too nervous to win close matches.

As a former Gunnersbury Triangle Club, Acton League and Middlesex man myself, I was **sad to learn of the death of kindly umpire and official Jack Randall**, an easy going man of many talents and a member of MENSA. I was

particularly disappointed that I missed Jack's funeral, but I understand he was given a fulsome and well-attended send-off. There will be tributes in the October issue.

Could **county correspondents** please try to **limit your notes to around 300 words**. Once again, there are **so many items I am having to exclude** from this issue **for lack of space**. There are also book reviews I want to write, articles I want to originate. Ideas cluttering my head which, I fear I will lose unless I can commit them to print! Maybe in the October issue!

Ken Muhr

TIMEBANK

Timebank is a high profile UK wide media organisation specialising in volunteer recruitment campaigns. In partnership with Sport England, table tennis has been selected as one of only five sports to work up a campaign to recruit new volunteers into sport.

The way it will work is that Timebank will devise and obtain publicity (this will be nationally and may include trailers at cinemas, BBC, etc) and the ETTA will act as a point of contact for people interested in getting involved in helping table tennis. We will then endeavour to match up people with clubs (PremierClubs in particular). People volunteer for all sorts of reasons and of course have a vast range of skills to offer. The traditional route for recruiting (or is it arm-twisting!!) people to help in table tennis is usually through those already playing or parents of new players; this recruitment campaign is likely to be different in as far as volunteers are likely to be new (ore returning) to the sport and as such are more than likely to be able to offer 'professional' skills/expertise such as marketing, project management, plumbing, etc, rather than wanting to become a coach, tournament organiser or development officer. Therefore, we intend promoting a variety of roles for people to sign up. If your club has any particular thoughts or indeed requirements, please let your RDO or the ETTA Development Department know.

BERKSHIRE by John Cunningham

The increasingly popular Maidenhead Closed saw almost 300 competitive games played prior to the Sunday evening.

The final men's singles final saw some outstanding rallies but Danny Baxter's powerful hitting and amazing mobility saw him overcome the dogged resistance to his opponent, Graham Outrim.

Baxter was also successful in the men's doubles, with Chris Haines as his partner, and in the mixed doubles with Gemma Chapman. Gemma Chapman was the most successful player of the tournament, winning the ladies' singles, girl's singles, mixed doubles and partnering her mother Jan, in the ladies' doubles.

Finals Results

Men's Singles: D. Baxter bt G. Outrim 21-13, 21-13; Men's Doubles: D. Baxter/C. Haines bt G. Outrim/B. Morten 19-21, 21-15, 21-15; Women's Doubles: J. Chapman/G. Chapman bt D. Rolfe/S. Mitchell 21-10, 16-21, 21-15; Mixed Doubles: G. Chapman/D. Baxter bt E. Human/M. Banks 21-12, 21-17; Boys' Singles: D. Chaytor bt A. Currie; Girls' Singles: G. Chapman bt E. Human; Junior Doubles: M. Ludbrook/D. Chaytor bt S. Weller/N. Thakrar; Senior Men's Singles (under 40): H. Gehlot bt T. Griffiths 23-21, 22-20; Veterans' Men's Singles: J. Barclay bt T. Wooster 21-12, 21-14; Veteran Women's Singles: S. Mitchell bt D. Rolfe; Premier Division Championship: H. Gehlot bt G. Chapman 21-9, 21-13; Division 1 Championship: T. Wooster bt N. Maltby 21-14, 21-14; Division 2 Championship: C. Dawson bt S. Mitchell 21-9, 21-15; Division 3 Championship: B. Waters bt. A. Currie 21-14, 21-13; Divisional handicap: P. Davies (+6) bt M. Banks (-5) 21-15, 21-4; Drawn Doubles: G. Outrim/B. Adkins bt H. Gehlot/M. Salmon 8-21, 21-8, 21-17.

New look League will ensure more competitive games

The Bracknell & Wokingham Table Tennis League is all set for the new 11-up system. The League has been revamped with a total of six divisions with six teams. One team will be promoted and one relegated at the end of the first half of the season.

COUNTY NOTES

A look around the
country

Issue no. 279
September 2001

This brave new move was approved at the recent annual meeting and, together with the 11-up system, should ensure competitive table tennis throughout the term.

England's number one helps to put sport in the spotlight

The sport of table tennis took centre stage at the Sports Showcase held at Loddon Valley Leisure Centre last week.

Our Lady of Peace Table Tennis Club was just one of more than 30 clubs taking part, but this year, thanks to the efforts of John Cunningham, they were given a major spot in the main arena display.

Matthew Syed, the England number one table tennis player and Commonwealth Champion, opened the event and despite a recent shoulder injury, took part in the first display.

Matthew played the IMPACT coaching manager Alan Dines, beating him 11-7, 11-6 using the new scoring scheme, under the watchful eye of the international umpire Mick Reynolds.

Other players involved in the exhibition were Jennifer Deal, Alex Curran, Michael Auchterlonie and Melanie Farquhar.

25 youngsters mainly from Bracknell, Reading and Norfolk who are currently on a work experience course at the Army Technical Foundation College, Arborfield, fought out an exciting round-robin table tennis tournament recently.

Playing in group one James Campbell was the outright winner beating off brave efforts from Jordan Adcock, Chris Hillsdon, Danny Batten, Dominic Pevera, Sarah Hansen and Lorraine Roberts.



All the contestants at the Army Technical Foundation College Arborfield

CHESHIRE by Alan Blears

VETTS NATIONAL MASTERS

It was a highly successful weekend for Cheshire veterans in the VETTS National Masters, with three singles titles coming to the county.

In the Men's 0-40 section Brian Johns defeated John Hilton before securing a three game victory over Clive Carthy. Not to be outdone by his older brother, Mike Johns took the over 50s title when he beat Dave Welsman, who had in turn accounted for John Hilton in the semis.

In the 070's Terry O'Donlon was runner-up to Mike Willimot, having beaten European 070 champion Geoff Brook in the semis.

Doreen Schofield's good run continued with success in the women's over 60 section, where she defeated Connie Moran in the final. With partner Di Pearce, Doreen also took the over 50's doubles title from runners-up Louvain Smith and Janet Brown.

English Junior Championships

These will no doubt be reported elsewhere, suffice to say that the Cadets final between Stockport's Karen Shepherd and Surrey's Joanna Parker was a classic worthy of the occasion. Topspin attack versus spectacular defence, a great first game fight back by Joanna, and a tight third game which Jo won 21-17 made it a memorable match.

Playing together, the two were hardly threatened in the Cadet Doubles, winning the final 21-16, 21-12 against the Essex

duo of Abigail Embling and Sarah Brown.

Cheshire Closed Championships

Of many notable performances in this event, two in particular catch the eye. Teenager Daniel Horner scored a notable victory in the men's singles when he defeated Mike Johns -18, 16, 15 in the final, while Annabelle Sorrentino completed a hat trick of victories in the junior girls' singles when she beat a much improved Clare Langford -11, 15, 18. Full results as follows:

Men's Singles: Danny Horner bt Mike Johns -18, 16, 15; Ladies' Singles: Gemma Lloyd bt Teri-Ann Nolan -15, 17, 16; Veteran Singles (Men): Phil Biggs bt John Hope 14, 18; Men's Restricted Singles: John Hope bt Ken Connor 18, 18; Ladies Restricted Singles: Teri-Ann Nolan bt Elizabeth Dennett -23, 8, 8; Men's Doubles: Michael McEvoy/Ken Connor bt Neil Powell/Ian Campbell 15, 19; Ladies' Doubles: Gemma Lloyd/Teri-Ann Nolan bt Annabelle Sorrentino/Lynsey Powell 15, -33, 18; Mixed Doubles: Michael & Denise McEvoy bt Mike Johns/Eleanor Dennett -11, 17, 12; Junior Boys' Singles: Danny Horner bt Neil Powell 10, 12; Junior Girls Singles: Annabelle Sorrentino bt Clare Langford -11, 15, 18; Cadet Boys Singles: Tom Page bt Jonathan Taylor 14, 13; Cadet Girls' Singles: Clare Langford bt Ashley Layfield; U12 Boys (Round Robin): W - Matthew Langford, R-up - Paul Davies 12, 24; U12 Girls (Round Robin): W - Jordyn Layfield, R-up: Sophie Byron; Boys Doubles: Neil Powell/Gavin Lloyd bt Tom Page/Danny Russell 15, 14; Girls' Doubles: Annabelle Sorrentino/Clare Langford bt Fiona Dennett/Sophie Byron 12, 11.

CUMBRIA by Gordon Brown

Youth continues to have its fling in Cumbria. Barrow Table Tennis Club hosted the county schools championships and Dowdales School, from nearby Dalton, won every category they entered.

The only age group Dowdales did not feature in was the under 19s which included two former England representatives, Grant Woodhouse, of Parkview, and Zeke Dixon, of Queen

Katherine School, Kendal, who gave the crowd a tremendous final, Woodhouse taking the third.

He also reached the under 16 boys final, but was beaten by Dowdales' Jonathan Crawford. It was a great event for the Crawfords, as Helen, also of Dowdales, collected the under 11 girls title with a third game victory over Jane New, and the under 13s, while 9-year-old Scott Crawford reached the under 11 boys' semi-final. Joe Kavanagh, of Dowdales, won this championship and he and Helen and Jonathan Crawford will represent Cumbria in the national finals at Fenton Manor, Stoke-on-Trent, later this year.

Parkview School, Barrow, under 16 girls' team were in the national schools team tournament in Grantham. They had beaten Ashfield School, Nottingham, 9-8 in the northern regional finals in which Dowdales' under 13 boys, Parkview's under 13 girls and Askam's under 11 boys also participated.

In a local schools tournament at the centre, winners were Roose and Dane Ghyll boys and Askam and Sacred Heart girls.

DEVONSHIRE by John Vincent

The North Devon Closed Championships were played at Ilfracombe on 4th March 2001. The organiser was Steve Havers.

Results:

Men's Singles: Tom Williams bt Kevin Taylor -19, 18, 17 (Tom retained his singles title in a close and entertaining final); Men's Doubles: Tom Williams/Kevin Taylor bt Terry Wright/Dave Darch 12, 13 (the winners' topspin proved too much for the defence of Wright/Darch); Handicap Singles: Barry Brook bt Eric Beer 15-21, 31-29, 31-29 (Barry's defence just got him home against Eric's sound all-round game); Veterans' Singles: Terry Wright bt Barry Brook 19, 21 (Terry's will to win proved too strong for Barry in the last final of the night) Veterans' Handicap Singles: Terry Wright bt David Gray 13, 12; (Terry's game of defending and flat hitting was too steady for Dave).

Results were provided by Tom Williams.

Railway Club produces Goods

Intercity Table Tennis Club, a section of the main Great Western Railway (Sports

Association) Laura Club peaked this season by winning Divisions 1, 2 and 3 of the Beacon Electrical Plymouth & District Table Tennis League. Their 'C' team, in addition to winning Division 3, also won the Divisional Cup and had individual success with Etsuko Nakagawa getting the Top Lady award, Michelle Barrett received the Top Girl trophy and Jacob Kodicek got the Top Boy award. Dave Goldman, their fourth player, also did well, losing only four games to finish on 92%, second only to 14-year-old Jacob who lost two games and topped the averages on 96% to win our club's Dave Weymouth Cup for the best average. Congratulations to our Club, whose youth policy has paid handsome dividends.

In the South West Region Railways table tennis team event Laura defeated Redruth 5-2 in the final played in Truro.

National Team Event Competition for 10 Regions

This competition with teams of six boys and six girls in age groups under 10, under 12 and under 14 at Stoke-on-Trent the day after the National Schools Individual Championships was a tremendous success. The South West Region finished 4th out of 10 with four Devon players contributing to this success.

U14 Boys: Jacob Kodicek won 3 out of 5, U12 Boys: Simon Poyner won 5 out of 5, U14 Girls: Lisa Radford won 2 out of 5, U14 Girls: Lizzie Binks won 2 out of 5

ESSEX by Steve Kerns

CORTI WOODCOCK AWARD

Bob Sladden took the applause at the County Association's AGM when he was presented with the Corti Woodcock Award, the County's top award for service to the sport. A player for over 40 years, Bob has played in every single division of the Southend League. He has refereed the Southend Closed Tournament for the last ten years, been an active County Umpire, captained many Essex Junior sides, run the County Senior teams for a couple of seasons, sat on numerous County Sub-Committees and been the Southend League's County representative for the last 12 years.

However it is his enthusiasm for coaching for which he is best known and the list of players he has worked with include many of Essex's finest. They include son Cris (current County no. 1 senior) and daughter Lisa, Shelley Ruocco, ex-Southend footballer Steve Tilson, former junior internationals Ryan Savill and Reagan Nettleingham, current senior international Natalie Bawden, as well as scores of other leading Essex juniors including Nikki Kennard, Steve Joslin, Simon and Duncan Woods, Catherine and Paul Woodcock, Vicky Stubbington, Joe Benson, Tony Halling and Dawn Reed. Congratulations Bob.

BRENTWOOD CLOSED

The Men's Singles seedings went astray as second seed Mark England lost to Tony Halling in the group matches and as group runner-up had to face the favourite Reagan Nettleingham in the first round. Former Essex Men's champion Reagan made no mistake and duly made it through to the final where he beat Tony 12,18. Tony had further distinguished himself with a three game win over his father Andrew (seeded no. three) in the second round. There was more Halling glory in the Veterans Singles with Andrew getting the better of Nigel Lamb in the final and taking the Mens Doubles (with Tony) with a final win over the slightly more mature father/son pairing of Mark and Paul England. Ken James made it a hat trick by taking the O60s Singles with a Final 22-20, 21-18 success over John Darling whilst Tony Halling rounded off an excellent weekend with a narrow U21s victory over Charles Sweeney 21-19, 21-18. Karla Bryant claimed her first Brentwood Ladies title with a 13, 22 victory over Lindsay Phelps after Lindsay had upset the seedings by beating the redoubtable Sue Hickman.

BRAINTREE CLOSED

The favourite Neil Charles duly took the Mens Singles and Men's Doubles titles but the biggest shock on finals night came in the Mixed Doubles where former Essex first team-star Elaine Sayer and Jon Hill retained their Mixed Doubles title with a stunning 23-21 in the third success against Charles and fiancé Sarah Davison. Two other finals night games developed into classics with Essex first team regular Lucy Wang coming from behind to beat Sarah Davison 23-21 in

the third in the Ladies' Final and Matt Staines seeing off perennial rival Lee Daines 21-19 in the decider in an all-action Junior Boys' Singles. Selected results included: Men's Singles: Neil Charles beat Steve Dettmar 11, 20; Ladies' Singles: Lucy Wang beat Sarah Davison -15, 15, 21; Men's Doubles: Charles & Paul Davison beat Dettmar/Dave Ciniglio 17, 19; Mixed Doubles: Hill/Sayer beat Charles/Davison -11, 12, 21; Junior Boys' Singles: Matt Staines beat Lee Daines -20, 15, 19; Restricted Singles: Steve Mills beat Alistair Hill 12, -19, 17.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE by Alf Pepperd

The Executive Committee for 2001/2 is as follows:

Chairman: L J Smith; Vice-Chair: no nominations; Secretary: Mrs M A Dean; Treasurer: Mr K Bridle; Coaching Officer: position not filled; Development Officer: no nominations; Umpire Secretary: D J Dean; Press Officer: Mr A Pepperd; Match Secretary: Mr R Willsher President: Mr M J Reeves

Odds and Ends

In early July of this year, Dave Harvey and Darren Griffin organised an all-day table tennis marathon in Gloucester, which lasted from 10am to 6pm. This encompassed specific coaching for all the youngsters present. Great help came from Stroud's Suzy Robinson and juniors Harry Shahlaei, Tom Burdett and Michael Harvey. Intermediate Lawrence Shahlaei was also instrumental in assisting with the coaching. A considerable amount of cash was raised for Cancer Relief, and a great amount of effort went into the administrative side of the event.

11-up or 21-up?

It appears that Stroud and Cheltenham Leagues have voted for the 11-up system for the forthcoming season, while Cirencester and Gloucester have expressed a desire to remain and continue with the old 21-up method.

Umpires and Referees

Hearty congratulations go to Cheltenham's Mrs Gill Smith, who has

qualified as a National Umpire. We added no new umpires this season, but there are a few up-and-coming umpires hopefully in the pipeline for next season.

The Association would like to note the passing of Mr P Crocker, a long time member of the Association and subsequently a Life Member, whose valuable contribution to the GTTA deserves mention.

ISLE OF WIGHT by John Prean

The Island Games (for the world's smaller islands) seems to be getting bigger and better. Staged every two years, a mini Olympics, one noted in addition to the inevitable athletics and swimming with their enormous medal count, a very good soccer tournament, also women's football, golf, badminton, tennis, shooting, incl. clay pigeon, archery, triathlon, sailing and yachting.

Table tennis has been there from the start. In the first three years we fielded a team of volunteers who looked on this as a nice holiday, but won nothing. This time, for the fourth such occasion, we fielded our best team.

The Isle of Man organisers did an excellent job and did not overplay the competitors, as had been the case previously. The only major criticism concerned the timing of the team event final at 9am, not, one would have thought, ideal for attracting spectators.

Our team proved the star of the Isle of Wight contingent, winning five gold medals, whilst the remaining sports won 6. Only the ladies' doubles eluded us. That we do well and the rest badly I attribute in no small measure to our own travel arrangements at civilised hours, most of the rest travelling by bus, partly overnight, arriving tired and short of sleep. So we learned from the past ETTA travel arrangements, when national teams arrived washed out for their first match! Sadly 'organisers' at all levels see such occasions as only a matter of travelling from "A" to "B" at minimal cost or discomfort to their travel agents.

The John Woodford method of calculating medal counts would have given us 11 gold (two for each of the doubles won, one for each of the two singles and then five for the team event where we used all our five players)! The more conventional method produced "only" five.

Lucy Pointer won the Ladies' Singles where she beat Anika Ahlgren (Gotland) and she played very well. Carl Prean defeated Mikael Svenson (Gotland) who plays in the 2nd Division in Sweden. Carl and Lucy won the Mixed Doubles against Lucas Waring and Kay Chivers (Guernsey) and Carl and Danny Burns the Men's Doubles against Svenson and Ola Granlund. Danny was unfortunate to meet Svenson in the QFs, since the Swede was the only one who had beaten him in the team event. Roger Hookey had a tough draw in the groups, losing to both Lucas Waring and Peter Bronland (Greenland), which meant that he missed out on the final stages.

The team event was won 4-3 against Gotland, who pulled back a lead of 3-0 to level at 3-all, but with Carl to play our final game we felt fairly hopeful. He had, after all, face similar situations in World Championships. Congratulations to Danny Burns also on being named British League Player of the Year (Division 3 South). He certainly had an excellent season.

At last we saw the final league table of our section of the County Championships. It was as close as I thought. If we had won one more singles in our match against Hampshire, they, not we, would have been relegated. On the other hand, we did not take this and other chances and perhaps deserved our fate in the end.

No news yet as to how our members will vote in the 21up v 11up debate. It is, of course, a wonderful chance to change all sorts of things, notably the tired playing format of 9 singles and one doubles adopted by most leagues. Those who feel that playing up to 11 produces too short a contest could opt for playing "best of 7" up to 11 instead of "best of 5". Fewer matches could be played, perhaps 7 instead of the usual 10. I hear good reports of two-person-team events with the Davis Cup format of 4 singles and a doubles in the middle. Matches start at 8 and tend to be over no later than 10, which is probably more realistic in this day and age.

I do feel that we should try new things without crying "stinking fish" in advance of any and every change. We cannot pretend that we have the perfect product with mass TV so rare and members drifting away every year. The sport has to be marketed and sold to stay alive and minimal action must include some re-design and re-packaging of what is old,

and particularly some new ideas which liven up the basic staleness of our competitive play. I feel the ITTF must be supported when new ideas are introduced. I don't think there is a future in doing nothing or closing our minds to anything new.

LINCOLNSHIRE by Mick Corry

Report on Intertown and Vets County Matches

In the Lincolnshire League competition, Grimsby A veteran team had had a poor run with only one point gained from three matches. They were languishing at the bottom of the table and considering they had won the league the previous season were hoping for better results in their remaining matches to move them up the table for the away game against Boston.

Heath won his third singles of the match to give his team a 7-3 victory. Their next fixture was the eagerly awaited match against Grimsby B. Unfortunately, this match turned out to be something of a damp squib as the A team brushed their opponents aside in a 10-0 whitewash. The A team's final match of the season was away against Gainsborough, A which is usually a close match.

With the score 5-4 to Grimsby, Corry faced Slater knowing that he had lost to him in the corresponding fixture the previous season. Neither of the players had won a game in the match so something had to give and fortunately for Grimsby it was Slater as Corry overcame Slater's defence to win 21-13, 21-16.

By a strange coincidence, Grimsby B's final home match was also against Gainsborough A. Unlike the A team match the tenth and final game was to be contested by the two unbeaten players, Welch and Patrick. Welch has not got a good record against Patrick and Grimsby feared the worst. However, Welch was on top form and had a surprisingly easy 21-17, 21-9 win to gain his team a 6-4 victory.

The senior ladies competition, the Butlin Cup was retained by Grimsby after beating Boston Ladies 9-1 in the final match of the competition. Grimsby men won the Haigh Cup for the first time for a number of years when they built on their excellent results from the first weekend and defeated Boston 6-4 and drew with Lincoln on the second weekend.

Lincolnshire Veterans penultimate match was a home fixture against Clwyd. Although neither team could gain promotion Lincolnshire were hoping to win to finish in the top half of the table. The match resulted in a score of 5-4 to Lincolnshire.

Lincolnshire's final match of the season was away to Nottinghamshire 2nds and they lost 5-4. Although this was a disappointing end to the season for Lincolnshire they still managed to finish fourth in the league.

MIDDLESEX by Iris Moss

Why is that I seem to have to start practically every article I write with sad news of losses of stalwarts of table tennis? This time I have three to report. The first loss was when Margaret Cherry died as a result of a car accident. I knew Margaret for many years way back to the days when we both played in the London Civil Service League but she was even better known as a player, officer and patron of the North Middlesex League. Even when she gave up playing, she still took a keen interest in North Middlesex affairs and was made a Life Member of the League in recognition of her help.

Our second loss was Reg Boorer. Although he was probably not as well known in table tennis generally as Margaret Cherry, he had a long history of work in our sport. He served on the Middlesex Executive Committee from 1953/4 to 1956/7 as County Umpires Secretary (I took over from him in 1957/8!) and also at the same time worked for the Acton & District League as Secretary, Chairman and Treasurer, and eventually as President. On the amalgamation of the Acton and North Acton Leagues, he became Joint President of the West Middlesex League, a position he held until his death. I understand that although Reg moved away from the area, he still maintained a keen interest in the League, regularly sending donations.

Our third loss was Bill Brown, who was 'backbone' of the Willesden & District League, as I am sure all the remaining officers will agree. Bill was Deputy Chairman of Willesden in 1969, and was appointed as Chairman in 1970, a post he held until his untimely death. He even acted as Secretary for one year when the League was unable to find anyone to do the work. I can only hope

that the remaining officers of the Willesden League will be able to find someone who is willing to take on the mammoth task that Bill undertook.

Having practically all of the Middlesex Handbooks since it was first set up in 1947, I have a habit of trawling through them to see when names first appear. Sadly we have lost too many of our stalwarts and it seems to be becoming more difficult to interest the next generation (with exceptions I must say) into helping with the administration of our sport.

To come onto more recent 'history', the Middlesex Executive Committee remains unchanged – and still woefully understaffed – with Michael Close as Chairman, Doreen Stannard as Deputy Chairman and National Councillor, myself (Iris Moss) as Secretary/Treasurer and a Committee of David Howes, Nick McKoy, Jake Melnick, Jack Randall and George Walsh. Although I regularly appeal for more help, it is not forthcoming, so we just battle on. We have decided to enter a team in the 'Masters' Division of one of the County Championships but due to a combination of a shortage of girls and lack of a volunteer to run the team, we were unable to enter a Cadet team. Maybe we will do better next year. Apart from that, we have entered the same teams as last year, namely two senior, two junior and four veteran teams.

NORTHANTS by Dennis Millman

A July heatwave seems hardly the time to be writing the first contribution of the season for Table Tennis News, but with everything almost done and dusted, the next campaign is just two months away.

It is also a suitable time to look to some unreported end of season events and in particular to a most successful and well-supported Northampton Tournament in which the Men's Singles took pride of place.

Steve Silk maintained his recent form to reach the semi-finals but was then a shade unfortunate to go down 17, -20, 20 to David Gatiss, who in a repeat of last year's final then accounted for Ryan Keates. Best interim performance came from 14-year-old Keith Lucas, who first despatched Peter Wingrove and then took the first end off Chris Gibbons before the no. 4 seed eventually prevailed to reach his allotted place in the draw.

The corresponding doubles was also a repeat of last year's final with Silk and Keates getting the better of Gatiss and Michael Edwards in straight games.

The Ladies' final was between top seeds Clem Little and Janet Wright, with the former turning the tables to win -17, 14, 7, while the doubles saw Wright extract revenge when she and Sue Moloney overcame Little and Wendy Hancock in straight games. Wright also came out on top in the Mixed when she and Edwards repeated last year's victory over Hancock and Gatiss.

Gibbons won the over 40 Singles at the first time of asking, beating another new vet Gary Webb -17, 14, 15, and was then joined by Edwards to take the doubles, with Gerald Finney and Ray Kingston filling the minor places. Edwards went on to take a third successive over 50s event, overcoming Bill Fletcher in the final. Fletcher and Greg Dobrowolski took the Over 50 and the Over 60 Doubles but it was Dobrowolski who prevailed in the 60s singles when he beat Fletcher -19, 13, 16, an identical scoreline to the doubles defeat of Bryan Bond and Jim Brogan.

Chris Stone accounted for Phil Slade to take the Division One and Two Singles, while the Division Three & Four Singles went to 13-year-old Ben Starmer. The Hard Bat event went to Kingston who edged out Gibbons in the final, but Gibbons gained further reward when in the very first Mystery Doubles he partnered 11-year-old Katy Armstrong to victory.

So promising was the junior entry that a special finals night was held with eight events in contention. Chris Doran took the first of these, despite being hard pressed in the Under 10 Singles by newcomer Andrew Hayward, but at Under 12 level it was Ryan Fox who dominated, accounting for Ed Shepherd in the singles and taking the doubles in tandem with Katy Armstrong.

The introductory Girls' Singles was keenly contested with Melissa Price and Sarah Hollis eventually emerging as finalists with the former holding on to take the title in the decider.

The remaining four titles all ended in Dickson Pang's safe keeping, although only his under 14 win over Ben Starmer came in straight games. At the end of this final Pang received the new Bert Fawcett Memorial Trophy from Mrs. Ruth Fawcett in memory of her late husband, whose keen involvement in the

Northampton League had lasted for almost 40 years.

Pang also took the Under 14 Doubles in partnership with Starmer, the Under 17 Doubles with Martyn Hancox, and the corresponding singles against Keith Lucas, whose fine form lasted throughout the tournament but wasn't enough to prevent the trophy going Pang's way 11, -16, 14.

Regrettably, I have to report the sad death of Daventry's John Dabbs, who had been heavily involved in local table tennis for the past 17 years. For many of these John ran the Levi's Westfield British League side, while he was also the mainstay and sponsor for the first two player team event – the Westfield Invitation League.

He and his wife Rita were also instrumental in improving standards and facilities in the Daventry League, while his family commitment led to his son Keiron taking the Northants Men's Singles title on three occasions. Table tennis can ill afford to lose men of his calibre.

Our deepest condolences are extended to Rita, Keiron, Christian and family.

NORTHUMBERLAND by Pauline Long

I am writing these notes during the third week in July on the assumption that the deadline of 1st August for the September issue of TT News is the same as last season – although to date I have not seen any official notification to that effect.

As I correctly predicted, the young Division 3 team Cramlington Tigers (Kevin Wilson, David Graham and Richard Ingham) won the Team Handicap Knockout competition by 5-2 over Division 4 side Cramlington Rejects (Steve Ralph, Les Waters and Aubrey Drapkin). David and Richard both lost to Steve, who had the most success for the losers. There will obviously have to be some considerable adjustments to certain handicaps for this season's competition!

Former County junior Shaun Jackson represented Northern Region at the National Association of Youth Clubs finals at Widnes in early June, but again went down to Alan Morton (Kent) at the semi-final stage.

Belated congratulations go to County veteran Malcolm Lusk and County senior Karen Newby on their respective marriages during the summer (not to each

other – Karen got married to Gary Henry). Best wishes to both players for the future.

We are still looking for new sponsors for both the Northumbria League and County teams, as WENADE (UK) appear to have withdrawn their support. Meanwhile, the Summer League in which 29 teams are contesting four divisions, is continuing without a sponsor, and was due to end on 17th August. Current leaders are: Division 1, North Shields YMCA 'A'; Division 2, North Fire; Division 3, Cramlington Stingers; Division 4, DSS 'B'.

OXFORDSHIRE by Avril Haynes

Oxford League Forum Champions Again

In Division 1 of the Oxford League Forum A won the championship again with the team of Karl Bushell, Andrew Flint and Jeremy Flint.

Results: Division 1: Champions – Forum A, Runners-up – Crown House A; Division 2: Champions – Crown House B, Runners-up – Forum C; Division 3: Champions - Haddenham B, Runners-up – Bicester B; Division 4: Champions – Forum G, Runners-up – Bicester C

Leading Players: Division 1 – Karl Bushell (Forum A) 52-54; Division 2 – Mark Newns (Crown House B) 45-45; Division 3 – Paul Borrowdale (Vikings D) 42-42; Division 4 – Glen Stiffle (Forum G) 45-48

Divisional Knockout Competition

The League divisional knockout finals were held at St. James Hall at the end of April. Andrew Flint won Division 1 only 4 days after completing the London Marathon. Young Greg Boone won his third title running after winning Divisions 4 and 3 in previous years.

Results:
Division 1 – Andrew Flint (Forum A) bt Andy Packford (Crown House A) 21-10, 21-10; Division 2 – Greg Boone (Forum E) bt Kevin Giles (Gladiators) 21-16, 21-16; Division 3 - Mark Penn (Haddenham B) bt Simon Witney (Haddenham B) 21-18, 21-8; Division 4 – Barry Osborne (Morris Motors E) bt Glen Stiffle (Forum G) 21-18, 21-9

Oxford Development League

The inaugural development league was a great success, with one division of 9 teams consisting of two players per side. This gave over 20 people the opportunity to play competitive table tennis including those returning to the game and youngsters. The league was won by St. James D with 66 points and the runners-up were Forum 1 with 63 points. The leading players were Edward Halmarack (31-32) and Bob Ford (29-30).

Oxon County Averages

Six Oxfordshire players featured in the top county championship averages. Greg Boone and John Camilleri were joint first, winning 13 out of the 14 games in Junior Division 3D.

Alex Childs was second for the Junior Girls winning 12 out of 14 games and Joanne O'Donovan was 4th winning 11 out of 14 games.

In Veterans Division 4B Chris Lansley was second, winning 9 out of 10 games, whilst Anne Borrowdale was second in the ladies, winning four out of five games.

Midland League

Oxford won Division 2 after a tight finish with Nigel Taylor and Ian Arnold being the second and third players in the league on individual results.

SOMERSET by Martin Rumary

I'm not sure the last time, if ever, a Somerset player won a national title but at Wigan this year Kate Steward became the national junior champion in the junior girls' singles.

In the semis she beat Louise Durrant and then defeated the holder Natalie Bawden in the final. Not content with one title she also took the junior girls' doubles with Georgina Walker and reached the mixed doubles final where unfortunately her partner had to withdraw through injury leaving them runners-up.

At Lilleshall at the end of June, both she and Naomi Wilson from Somerset were selected for the England Schools team against opposition from Wales, Ireland, Iceland and Guernsey.

In the team event Kate's England 'A' side came out winners and Naomi's team England 'B' were runners-up, winning all

their games except that against the 'A' team.

Sunday saw the individual competition take place in which Naomi defeated Gemma Chapman, the second seed, to reach the final against Kate. Kate won fairly comfortably but it was pleasing to see two players from the home county contesting such a final.

Yeovil staged their individual tournament recently and not for the first time Lee Sadler and Shirley Dark won the respective men's and ladies singles.

Open Singles: Lee Sadler bt Mark Morley; Intermediate Singles: Roger Bowker bt Geoff Argent; Veteran Singles: Pete King bt Dave Beare; Vintage Singles: Roger Bowker bt Doug Smeeton; Ladies' Singles: Winner – Shirley Dark; Junior Singles: Chris Rudd bt Robbie Hawkins; Doubles: Lee Sadler/Mark Morley bt Dave Beare/Pete King; Junior Doubles: winners – Penny Appleyard/Robbie Hawkins, runners-up – William Hart/Chris Marks; Plate: winners – Dave Rudd, runner-up – Geoff Argent

The Mendip League's tournament was also staged with greatest success for Richard Jones and up and coming Purav Raja

Senior Singles: Richard Jones bt Colin Butterworth; Ladies' Singles: Winner – Sarah Laudler, runner-up – Keren Millard;

Junior Singles: Purav Raja bt Robbie Fortune; Senior Doubles: Richard Jones/Andrew Hewitt bt Andrew Rumary/Andy Harrington; Junior Doubles: Purav Raja/Tushar Bose bt Robbie Fortune/Steve Davis; Cadet Singles: Alex Kearney bt Ollie Gibbs.

Div 1 Singles: Paul Hewitt bt Julian Elsbury; Div 2 Singles: Purav Raja bt Robbie Fortune, Handicap Singles: Purav Raja bt A. Hewitt.

At the County Championships Rob Millard retained his men's title fairly comfortably as did Kate Steward in the ladies event.

Men's Singles: Rob Millard bt Rich Jones, Ladies' Singles: Kate Steward bt Naomi Wilson; Veterans Singles: John Crabtree bt Dave Yarde; Junior Singles: (boys): Phil Tillotson bt Gareth Duddridge; Men's Doubles: Rich Jones/Andrew Hewitt bt Andrew Rumary/Andy Harrington; Ladies Doubles: Kate Steward/Jean Watson bt Naomi Wilson/Christine Cowell; Mixed Doubles: Rob Millard/Kate Steward bt

Rich Jones/Christine Cowell; Junior Doubles: Phil Tillotson/Gareth Duddridge bt Naomi Wilson/John Hughes; Junior Singles (girls): Kate Steward bt Naomi Wilson.

SUFFOLK by Andrew Doshier

The County Championships held at Stowupland High School on 22nd April were a rousing success, and as predicted saw the re-emergence of past stars with Andrew Warner and Nigel Hodder making big impressions in both the men's and restricted singles.

Hutchinson easily beat Warner in the Men's singles semi, having lost to him in the league, while in one of the matches of the day Hodder just lost out at 19 in the third to Brown in the other semi. Hutchinson emphatically took the title for the second time in three years, while for Brown it was third time unlucky in a major men's singles final this season.

The women's final was won not surprisingly by Rebecca Sparkes who this season has reached her highest ever England ranking of 13. She beat her sister Aimee in the semis 8 & 11! Vicky Gray eliminated Clare Emmerson. In the final, Sparkes senior won by scores of 12 and 18. In the restricted final Warner gained revenge for his group loss, winning at 16 in the third over Hodder.

Aimee Sparkes has won the Suffolk player of the year award. In her first year in the Ipswich premier league she has beaten a number of leading players and has impressed on the tournament circuit. Well done!

In a setting that could have been something out of a Carry On film, Suffolk's highest-ranked male table tennis star, Paul Cicchelli, was controversially bundled out of the Grand Prix finals at Hopton on 9th June.

After initially qualifying for the main draw he was preparing for his first round match when on inspection of his bat the umpire ruled it illegal, due to around 1cm of wood missing around the edge.

Even worse was the fact that the stand selling table tennis equipment was shut for lunch, so short of conceding Cicchelli had to use someone else's bat. With no time to get used to the bat the match was all too easy for Cicchelli's opponent.

Such occurrences are familiar in table tennis and some are justified. This, however, falls into the category of 'the silly and the unnecessary.'

At a time when officials are desperate to attract players back to the game, incidents like this are hardly what the game wants. Umpires are encouraged to use discretion where possible and table tennis was at a loss for the umpire's decision on this occasion!

The Scoring Debate

At the Ipswich & District League's AGM the main topic was the question of whether to adopt the ITTF's new scoring system or to continue with the current one. Most players were against it, many older players not wanting to have to change, while others felt rather than adding to the excitement, the opposite would be the case as there is little time to settle and the pressure could even reduce the quality of play.

The main case in favour of local leagues taking on board the 11 up system is that youngsters or tournament players would have to accommodate both systems, which could affect performances!

After much debate, the league decided to delay the vote until after the ETTA's AGM where apparently they have the right to overrule the wishes of the individual leagues!

Other leagues in Suffolk and Essex have rejected the 11 up system – Colchester, Chelmsford, Braintree, Stowmarket and Bury St. Edmunds are amongst them!

Britannia Hanbury British League team

Ian Brown has very kindly offered to run the team, which will be made up of some of last year's squad plus a number of younger players.

Britannia Ipswich Top 12

The Britannia Ipswich top 12 was won by Richard Hutchinson. In the final Hutchinson at last ended his baron run over Doshier in three ends to claim a hat trick of domestic titles including the Ipswich and Suffolk men's titles. The event is based on the European Top 12 with two groups of six players. The top two in each group went through to the semi-finals.

SUSSEX by John Woodford

New season and a new chairman for the Sussex County Association. He is Trevor Wiramanaden, 59, from East Grinstead, taking over after a seven-year stint from Keith Jackson of Hurstpierpoint.

Trevor came to England from Sri Lanka in 1957. He plays for Sussex in their veterans competitions in the County Championships and was previously the Sussex veterans secretary.

Keith Jackson made an enormous contribution to the sport in Sussex and played 74 times for Sussex as a veteran. A ruptured Achilles tendon whilst playing at Haywards Heath put paid to his playing career – he is now chairman of his local bowls club. The only other major change of officers at the Sussex AGM was the appointment of a Development Officer – Chris Newberry, Chairman of the South West Sussex League. Amongst a batch of presentations at the county AGM were Junior Player of the Year Awards to Gina Rogers and Luke Bridge, both from Hastings.

Mr Peter Wales and Mrs Pat Wales received framed certificates recording 50 years' service to the sport in Sussex as players and administrators.

Coach of the Year was Paul Dunstall (Wealden), Press Officer of the Year – Brian Taite (Haywards Heath); the Award for Table Tennis Development – Miles Ross in recognition of his work in West Sussex in junior development and coaching.

Club of the Year was the Hollingbury Club for their efforts to achieve Premier Club Advanced status and assistance to the county with squad training sessions.

One more award – for administration to Sussex TTA Secretary Alan Beames – he is the recipient of the Maurice Goldstein Merit Award by the ETTA for services to the sport. He received his trophy at the ETTA AGM at Loughborough.

An important vote at the meeting was on 11 points – it was decided that all county events, including the All-Sussex Championships, will be 11 points.

My view on 11 points is in total agreement with former ETTA officer, Ian Marshall – playing to 11 points will soon seem to be the norm and those who resist the change will be increasingly in the minority. It is human nature to resist change – especially by older people – the youngsters adapt much quicker, so pack your bags, if you wish, you '21 pointers'.

The threat that large numbers of players will hang up their bats is nonsense – a few might, but not many.

The break-up of the Horsham club's first team – without argument the third strongest in the country – was caused by two factors – lack of sponsorship and no prize money. The lack of prize money in the British League is a disgrace and so is the shortage of sponsors.

Horsham will field three teams in the lower divisions with Andy Walker and Peter Bartram as the twin spearheads for the first team.

WARWICKSHIRE by Caroline Williams

Warwickshire has always produced talented players, particularly young ladies. Latest in the line is young Rachel Pilgrim from Bedworth. She showed her promising future when in June she was the winner of the Under 10 Girls' Singles National Championships. With the added advantages of an extremely lucky birthday - she was 11 on 3rd July and her pedigree – her father Adrian is a fine player in his own right, Rachel should go far. Just that bit older, Leamington's Kelly Sibley shows just what can be done. Despite being a lot younger than her compatriots (Kelly's birthday is in May), 13-year-old Kelly looks set to start her cadet year ranked number 2, after a season at 5. As well in June she was picked to compete for England in the Six Nations Cadet Tournament. Her performance there, added to her two seasons representing English Schools, immediately made her an established member of the England national cadet squad for the coming season and she will spend part of her summer holiday at England training camps.

However, it is not only the ladies who take the laurels this summer. Malcolm Macfarlane has been rewarded by the ETTA for all his work on IT by being voted a Vice-President at the AGM in June. Malcolm combines his work for ETTA Headquarters with being Chairman of Leamington District and has recently become Treasurer for Warwickshire. Added to that he somehow finds time to play table tennis and fits in a full-time job!! Three of his colleagues from Leamington District Association Executive Committee also received recognition for all their many years of hard work. Phil Paine, Derek

Harwood and Hazel Higgins were all given the Maurice Goldstein Merit Award.

NCF renamed Sports Coach UK by Colin Wilson

The National Coaching Foundation will now be known as Sports Coach UK following the launch of the new brand on 2nd April.

We feel that the name Sport Coach UK better reflects the work that we do in supporting and developing coaching and individual coaches within the UK.

If you would like to know more about Sports Coach UK why not look at our new website <http://www.sportscoachuk.org>

Lilleshall launches Rehabilitation insurance policy

Olympic hockey player Jane Sixsmith launched an insurance policy which covers this treatment at Lilleshall on 12th April. For the first time, a specific, low cost insurance policy that will enable recreational competitors to access rehabilitation at Lilleshall, along with treatment from a local chartered physiotherapist, has been developed. Many thousands of recreational sportsmen and women receive injuries that would benefit from the specialist facilities and expertise offered at Lilleshall Sports Injury and Human Performance Centre.

This unique scheme means that amateur sportsmen and women can compete in the knowledge that, should they get a serious injury, they can now receive rehabilitation services that have been available only to elite and professional sport in the past.

The policy, which has been produced in conjunction with John Henshall Insurance Brokers (Newport, Shropshire) and Crispin Spears Underwriters (Lloyds, London) can be used as either a stand-alone policy or alongside any other private medical insurance policy. This is a nationwide scheme, enabling anyone needing rehabilitation to stay at the UK's only residential sports rehabilitation centre whilst receiving treatment.

Rehabilitation Scheme

Rehabilitation – or the final phase of recovery from injury – is often neglected,

and many people return to active sport before complete recovery. For the last 15 years, the Lilleshall Sports Injury and Human Performance Centre has been successfully providing specialist sports rehabilitation services for elite sportsmen and women. The centre is the only residential sports rehabilitation facility in the UK, and is the Professional Footballer's Association recognised base for the rehabilitation of injured footballers, whilst also treating many sports men and women from a variety of sports.

For further information, please contact John Brewer at Lilleshall Sports Injury and Human Performance Centre on 01952 670185, or mobile 07976 634496, e-mail: johnbrewer@lilleshall.com

MEMORIES OF A 70 PLUS PLAYER by Ron Taylor

Somewhere around 1936/7, a young boy was given a ball and a bat, which, if I remember correctly, had a type of wood on one side and a form of rough gritty surface on the other, but having nowhere to play and few friends around, I started to practise by hitting the ball against the wall over a table on which a set of encyclopaedias rested against the wall instead of a net. Later, an extended dining table, a 'borrowed net' and a friend of the same age knocked about in the years before the war.

By the time I was 14 I had joined the local YMCA in Sheffield where, during the war and in spite of the blackout, a real table, free balls and a variety of opponents made for a welcome break from the blitzes and bombs. By 1944 I had graduated to the main YMCA in the centre of Sheffield and with my then doubles partner we spent hours at the table where luckily we were often the only players, and practice time was free!

By that time I had read and studied every book on table tennis from the Sheffield libraries, and the names of Bull, Perry, Barna, Bergmann and Vana, among others, filled my thoughts as I played four to five nights a week, to the detriment of my school work. As my partner was a hitter, I modelled my play on that of Charles Bull, my first hero, and at the end of the war, when tournaments and championships were resumed, I was just about good enough to enter and play in these events without disgracing myself too much. To the best of my memory,

my best performance was in the North of England Open, where once I reached the quarter-finals before losing to one of the Manchester internationals, Goodman or Casofsky, if I have the names right.

Soon after the war, Barna and Brook, the England international, began their series of exhibitions and I vividly recall a packed Victoria Hall in Sheffield where they gave us a display which I remember to this day; Barna, with his amazing backhand flick, and world-famous defence against Brook, who in play pushed Barna so far away from the table that he was virtually sitting in the front row of spectators – but the ball still went looping back! I was also privileged to play a few rallies against Brook, the experience of which sent me back to the practise table for the next few weeks before I dared show my face on the tournament scene again.

I played regularly in the Sheffield leagues, against the best of the South Yorkshire players, who included some pre-war England trialists, county players and also some penholder players, whose style by comparison with today's exponents was so old-fashioned as to be almost not worth remembering, but in their day they posed problems for many of us.

My best years were probably the late forties, but by 1951, when a young J. Leach won his second world title, I had teamed up with my wife-to-be, at both badminton and tennis, playing for Sheffield at tennis and Sheffield and District Teachers at badminton, so by this time my table tennis sessions were few and far between. So, from the early 50s until 1994, for over 40 years, I never went near a table! In the 70s, I bought bats for my two sons, but on leaving school for more interesting pastures, they handed the bats back to dad.

The next 40 years I never failed to read all I could in the papers, as first the Japanese and then the Chinese assumed the leading nation role, leaving the occasional titles for the Swedes and French. The switch to sponge led me to watch with increasing credulity the speed of the rallies, the change in the game's pattern, from what I had learnt decades ago, of attack versus defence to an all-out hitting game on many occasions, the infinite variety of serves, and the increasing need for more mobility and athleticism in the top players.

The "player's" story starts again in late 1993. After an accident at work in 1991,

I spent seven months in hospital, had three heart operations, one on the lungs, and came out in the August, unable to walk. I learnt to walk again slowly over the next 18 months and as a result of being persuaded to try to play sport again, to get me back to full fitness, by my son, when I visited him in the USA, I took up badminton and table tennis again. My first regular opponent for table tennis had been playing regularly for the last 30 years, and I played him weekly for over 9 months before I won my first game! I have since then played both badminton and table tennis for my local borough in the annual 'Inter-London Boroughs' competition for the over 50s, even though by this time I was giving my opponents over 20 years in age. I have also gained a coach's certificate and have had the pleasure of giving many of my friends in various over 50 groups, to which I belong, the ability to play and enjoy their table tennis more and more (in the summer I help to coach some of the keener tennis players).

I have recently been to a number of coaching sessions run by the ETTA in London, which have helped me to both improve my own game and also to give more help to those who I am coaching myself at a different level. The recent Sportingbet.co.uk English Open Championships at Chatham were both an inspiration and a lesson to me, and I can honestly say that I learned both how the world's best players play and how much they could teach me.

I am still working, although well into my 70s, and enjoy my table tennis three to four times a week, keeping fit with aerobics and sessions in the gym. I think it is fair to say that I am now firmly convinced that because of the coaching I have received from the ETTA coaches, and my experience in watching the top class play at Chatham, that I can still improve and I would hope to be able, in the near future, to play more regularly at a higher level, albeit in a veterans environment.

There is only one thing I would add. I regret the missing 40 years when I did not play, because I have had so much enjoyment from the game in the last few years and I hope to go on playing for many more years to come.

The Big Ball – Girls, thinking points By Rowden Fullen, the Yorkshireman coaching in Sweden

The 'big ball' has now been with us for some months – however, just how many girls have taken the time to consider how this will affect them personally? Whether it will be of benefit to their own particular style of play or if it will in fact cause them problems? How many have introduced changes into their training regime to focus more directly on the tactics required to win points with the big ball? And the \$64,000 question? How many coaches have actively considered the implications of the big ball in the women's game and how their approach to the style development of the young girl player should be restructured?

Science has given us certain undisputed facts about the ball – it's bigger and heavier and compared to the small ball slower through the air and takes less spin (in a proportion of about 10-20%). However, it doesn't explain many other aspects – why so many net balls (top of net and out), why world-class players miss so many simple shots, especially when they try to play very early or very late. It appears that the big ball has a slightly different trajectory through the air, behaves differently after the bounce and drops more quickly as it comes off the table. Some problems at the moment are due to poorer quality, but this is not an aspect which will persist. Others are due to the fact that the player is in the wrong place.

The player is in fact in the place where experience has led her to expect that the ball will be – but in fact experience is no longer a tool to be relied upon, circumstances have now changed. This, however, is also a situation which will not persist, new experience will be formed. Our game of table tennis is changing; if we are to progress we must meet the challenge and change with it. Otherwise, we may be left behind. To give us a little more basis for discussion let us listen to what some of the world's best players say about the big ball.

- slower tempo, less spin, harder for blockers and speed players to win points
- we need to hit harder and develop more power
- must play the ball rather than let it hit the racket – better technique and better footwork is required and

slightly longer strokes to get the same effect

- it's going to call for changes in playing style nearer to the table for example
- a little higher bounce, harder to serve and to play short
- the quality of the ball is bad, because of this and the way the ball plays the level of play is suffering – you need to be much more active and positive now
- It is harder to win points from back, mainly because you have less spin. The difference in speed is not so much.
- Harder to take the ball very early especially with a short stroke. Slightly different bat angle on blocking.
- Reaction re. serve and receive is very mixed, especially with women. Some find it harder to take serve, others easier. Most find it harder to win on their own serve. Men who generally serve with much more spin don't stress any big differences.
- Players who hit hard and have power in reserve will benefit.

It is obvious in the future that there must be a different direction and emphasis in the coaching of young girls.

Less speed and less spin will affect all players who prefer to be at a distance from the table – it is harder to win points from back. Is there any way to dramatically increase the power? Unlikely. Women are already at a big disadvantage compared to men in the power department. We could look at faster blades and weight training to strengthen the body, but we must also be realistic. To achieve a power increase of at least 20%, which is what we need, is not easily or quickly achievable. Equally, it is hard to envisage any new rubber or technique that would increase spin or deception in the same ratio. It would therefore appear that girls who prefer to play at a distance from the table will really win points through disguise of spin or with topspin – rather they will win only by getting the ball back so often that the opponent eventually misses – hardly a recipe for long term success!

Conversely, the blockers and counter-hitters who stay close and use their reactions (and there are many of these in girls' table tennis), will benefit from facing less speed and spin. They will have more control in the rallies and more

time to select the ball to hit hard. The end result could well be that we shall see rather more control or negative play, especially among younger girls and at the lower levels in women's table tennis! If it's harder to actually win points with the big ball, then there's less incentive to be positive.

What exactly does this mean to the coach/trainer at the top of young girl player, who is expected to make an impact at European or even world level? Certainly, some training areas must now be accorded a much higher priority.

One of the prime development areas must be to increase the player's capability to break up the control game and to accelerate from a control situation into full attack and to look at different ways of doing this. In the majority of cases this is going to involve more emphasis on closer to table options.

- variations in all aspects must assume more importance
- girls have always had more problems than boys in producing good serves, especially with spin, and in receiving in a positive manner. If they wish to play at top level it is now rather more urgent that they achieve mastery of these areas and the second, third and fourth balls.
- The first hard attack or counter will often win the point – more than ever it is vital that girls have a positive attitude and look to attack early in the rally
- The need to play the stroke more and have a little longer action to get good effect (and the necessity to try and generate more power), implies directly that better technique and better footwork is significantly more important.

In view of the differences in both power and spin between men's and women's table tennis, perhaps it would have been a rather wiser decision to have brought in the bigger ball just for the men's game. However, the powers that be rarely consider the ramifications or how in fact players will be affected, when they make such decisions.

What it means for the young girl who wishes to aim at the highest level, is that she is going to need rather more individual and specialised guidance and more often. From a young age, technique, tactics, footwork patterns and

appropriate style development will need close monitoring. She will require specialist help on serve and receive and following up on the second, third and fourth balls, as well as guidance on the strategy of variation. Above all, she must be able to take that step from mere control of the play to actually winning the point, always bearing in mind the vital importance of the first good hit or counter.

Such a level of individual emphasis coupled with the appropriate insight into the requirements to succeed at the top in the girls' game, is rarely available outside Asia. Asia dominates women's table tennis at world level – the last time a non-Asian team won the worlds was in 1969 in Munich (USSR), the last time a European won the women's individual title was the legendary Angelica Rozeanu in Utrecht 1955. By adopting the big ball it is highly probable that the ITTF has in fact increased the gap in Asia's favour and ensured their dominance for a further 50 years.

Essex County TTA Press Release

Junior Premier Division Here we come

Alan Shepherd reports from Grantham where the Essex Junior first team scored four superb victories over Yorkshire III 9-1, Nottinghamshire 6-4, Lancashire 6-4 and Cumbria 8-2, to ensure a return to the Premier Division. (I regret that the meat of Alan's report has had to be cut – Ed.)

I would like to say that it has been an absolute pleasure this season to work with our top boys and girls; their spirit has been tremendous, they have worked very hard and they thoroughly deserve their success. Sadly, we have to say farewell to Aaron and Nicole who are too old next year but we wish them every success as senior players.

Dunlop Invitation Schools International Championships

Herewith the results from the above championships held at Lilleshall between 29th June and 1st July.

Team Event (top three places)

Senior Boys: 1. Wales 'A' 2. England 'A' 3. England 'B'. Intermediate Boys: 1. England 'A'. 2. Wales 'A' 3. Scotland 'A'; Cadet Boys: 1. England 'A' 2. England 'B' 3. Ireland 'A' Senior Girls: 1. England 'A' 2. Wales 'A' 3. England

'B'; Intermediate Girls: 1. England 'A' 2. England 'B' 3. Wales. Cadet Girls: 1. England 'A' 2. Wales 'A' 3. England 'B'.

Individual Event

Senior Boys: Owen Griffiths (W) bt Justin Dodd (E) 21-19, 21-9; Intermediate Boys: Gavin Rumgay (S) bt Craig Bryant (E) 21-19, 21-19; Cadet Boys: Tim Yarnall (E) bt Steven Denny (E) 21-19, 21-13; Senior Girls: Jenny Weiss (W) bt Hannah Yardy (E); Intermediate Girls: Kate Steward (E) bt Naomi Wilson (E) 21-15, 21-10; Cadet Girls: Abigail Embling (E) bt Naomi Owen (W) 21-14, 21-17.

In the season in addition to the regular domestic competitions it is expected that ESTTA will be participating in the prestigious ISF Table Tennis Championships to be staged in Bratislava in April 2002.

English Success at European Veterans Championships, Aarhus, Denmark, 25th June – 1st July, as reported at the VETTS AGM

The Secretary reported on the fine efforts of VETTS members in Aarhus where 6 gold, 6 silver and 24 bronze medals were collected. They were:

Over 40 Men's Doubles: J. Hilton, P. Bowen (Bronze), Over 40 Womens Singles: J. Dunning (Bronze), Over 40 Women's Doubles: J. Dunning, H. Shields (Bronze), Over 50 Womens Singles: J. Williams (Bronze), Over 60 Women's Singles: M. Dignum (Gold), P. Steel (Silver), Over 60 Women's Doubles: S. Bax, C. Judson, M. Dignum, S. Tyler (Bronze), Over 65 Men's Doubles: F. Lockwood (Silver), Over 65 Womens Singles: C. Moran (Bronze), Over 65 Women's Doubles: B. Bird (Bronze), Over 70 Men's Doubles: T. Donlon, D. Schofield, G. Brook, G. Chapman (Bronze), Over 70 Women's Singles: P. Butcher (Gold), Over 70 Women's Doubles: P. Butcher (Gold), Over 75 Mens Singles: H. Levinge (Silver), Over 75 Women's Singles: E. Fletcher (Gold), N. Penny (Bronze), Over 75 Women's Doubles: S. Flynn (Gold), E. Fletcher, N. Penny, G. Veneer (Bronze), Over 80 Men's Singles: L. D'Arcy (Gold), R. Etheridge (Silver), J. Husbands (Bronze), Over 80 Mens Doubles: D. Clare, L. D'Arcy, R. Etheridge (Bronze), Over 80

Women's Doubles: M. Hawkins, B. Gray (Bronze).

The following were successful in the consolation events:

Over 50 Womens Doubles: S. Mitchell, S. Rider (Gold), J. Curtis, M. Hooker (Silver), Over 60 Men's Doubles: R. Dixon, T. Adams (Gold), Over 65 Men's Singles: B. Bickell (Silver), Over 65 Women's Singles: J. White (Gold), A. Robinson (Silver), Over 70 Men's Singles: W. Moran (Silver), Over 75 Men's Doubles: S. Taylor, H. Levinge (Gold), G. Chevalin (Silver), Over 75 Women's Singles: G. Veneer (Silver), Over 80 Women's Singles: M. Hawkins (Gold).

Six Nations Cadet Tournament, Mondeville, France 8-10 June, Girls Team Event by Tony Pacitto

Final order: 1 France, 2 Germany, 3 Netherlands, 4 England & Sweden (Boys: 1 Sweden, 2 Germany, 3 France)

French and German girls team wise too strong for England. England unlucky to lose 6-4 to Netherlands. England with a 4th girl would have beaten Sweden, even with only three girls they were too strong for Denmark. No praise can be too high for the way the three girls handled playing with one player short. Only Joanne won her group but lost to Germany's Fulja Ozler in straight games. Why did we not complain about the way the draw was conducted against the tournament rules? Once again Joanna showed her promise but needs to chop harder and have more versatility against the top Europeans.

Results:

Match 1 – France v England

1. Natalie Cahoreau v Karen Shepherd 10, 14; Laurie Phai Pang v Joanna Parker 19, -8, -10; 3. Doubles: 11, 9; 4. Natalie Cahoreau v Joanna Parker 17, 12; 5. Laurie Phai Pang v Karen Shepherd – 19, -18
- England lost 2-3
1. Carole Grundisch v Kelly Sibley 15, -14, 10; 2. Dieniou Coulibaly v Abigail Embling 18, 14; 3. Doubles: 7, 18; 4. Carole Grundisch v Kelly Sibley 17, 12; 5. Dieniou Coulibaly v Abigail Embling –16, 11

England lost 0-5: Overall loss 2-8

Match 2 - Netherlands v England

1. Sigrid Van Ulsen v Abigail Embling 16, 18 2. Carla Nouwen v Joanna Parker – 19, -15, 3. Doubles: 19, 19; 4. Sigrid Van Ulsen v Joanna Parker 17, 18; 5. Carla Nouwen v Abigail Embling -12, -20
England lost 2-3

1. Kelly Willems v Karen Sheperd 20, 19
2. Sandra Leyten v Kelly Sibley –15, 19, 21; 3. Doubles: 16, 23; 4. Kelly Willems v Kelly Sibley -16, 18, -17. 5. Sandra Leyten v Karen Shepherd –17, -15
England lost 2-3

Overall lost 4-6

Match 3 - Sweden v England

1. M. Stenquist v A. Embling –19, -18;
2. E. Ingres v J. Parker –18, -17; 3. Doubles –12, -9; 4. M. Stenquist v J. Parker –17, 17. 5. E. Ingres v A. Embling 17, -19, 17
England won 4-1

1. M. Melcher v K. Sibley –18, -14;
2. C. Lundstrom v K. Sibley –18, 22, 14
Doubles & 2 Singles
Overall result – drew 5-5

Match 4 – England v Germany

1. J. Parker v D. Czajkowski –14, -20; 2. J. Parker v F. Ozler –16, -14; 3. Parker/Embling –21, 18, 16
2 singles conceded by K. Shepherd
England lost 1-4

1. K. Sibley v J. Wirdemann 9, 10; 2. A. Embling v K. Ollmer 20, -21, -19; 3. Doubles – conceded; A. Embling v J. 4. Wirdemann 14, 19; 5. K. Sibley v K. Ollmer –17, -14
England lost 1-4
Overall lost 2-8

Match 5 – England v Denmark

1. J. Parker v M. Roejkjaer 18, 18; 2. A. Embling v L. Korsgaard 14, 12; 3. Doubles: 11, 10; 4. J. Parker v L. Korsgaard 12, 11; 5. A. Embling v M. Roejkjaer 9, 20
England won 5-0
1. K. Sibley v C. Reftstrup 9, 14;
2. K. Sibley v Grauholm 5, 9; 3. Doubles and 2 singles conceded
England lost 2-3

Overall won 7-3

National Cadet League

Following a successful initial season, the National Cadet League has expanded to compete in 16 geographically spread venues in 2001/2.

The four selected dates assigned are all Sundays: 21st October 2001, 16th December 2001, 10th March 2002 and 21st April 2002, and the National Grand Final, 12th May 2002 (central venue), although a certain amount of lenience is permissible. Ranking points to the value of 1.0 for all divisional matches and 1.5 (National Finals) have been allocated to this competition.

Each division normally consists of six teams (8 are permissible) and each match will comprise six singles. Scoring of matches (by competitors) will be 11-up, best of five games, with service as per ETTA regulation.

Winners of each division will be invited to compete for the title National Cadet League Champions. Match sheets, playing schedule, approved 3 star balls, and a match day organiser will be provided at each venue.

Get your entry in quickly – there will be a demand for places. For further information contact Mike Lewis, 31 Comb Paddock, Westbury on Trym, Bristol BS9 4UG, tel/fax: 0117 9620877.

CSSC Table Tennis

Although the CSSC (Civil Service Sports Council) can boast a long history of providing table tennis, participation has declined in recent years, though there are still strong pockets of interest. For example, a number of government departments such as Inland Revenue, Employment and Social Security still have their own championships, whilst certain CSSC sports grounds continue to fund or promote table tennis in local competitions.

The CSSC also runs a Civil Service Open Championships. For further information contact the CSSC's Sports Development Team on 01494 888439/440, fax: 01494 888452, e-mail: headoffice@cssc.co.uk

FSA/ETTA Community Table Tennis Facility Scheme

Following discussions between the ETTA and the Foundation for Sport and the Arts (FSA) on the provision of capital grants

to smallscale projects to create new venues for table tennis, the FSA has agreed in principle to support schemes by PremierClub registered clubs to refurbish/upgrade existing buildings to create new table tennis venues. The amount of funding available, up to £50,000 p.a. for two years, is significant, but it is anticipated that applications will exceed demand. For the criteria or to register your potential application, contact your Regional Development Officer or the ETTA Facilities Officer Paul Baker (mobile: 0778 518799 email: paul@glynswood.freeserve.co.uk)

Dunlop Barna Hard Rubber Bats

Dr. Thomas J. Huff, PO Box 533, Gerrardstown, WV 25420, USA, tel: 304 229 5165, email: gym852@cs.com wishes to buy Dunlop Barna hard bats or sheets of original Barna rubber, as the best substitute for black and red Leyland rubber, which he also cannot obtain. The renewed interest in the classic hard bat game in the USA has rekindled his interest after many years out, and he plays in hard bat events. If you can help, please contact him

Table Tennis Museum Website

To all interested table tennis collectors and historians!!

I detail below a link to a fantastic web site. If you do nothing else today, have a look at this. Chuck Hoey, who will be known to most of you as the American collector who has probably acquired the foremost collection in the world, has photographed it all and put it on the web. There are hundreds of photos of all manner of items, mostly relating to the period around 1902.

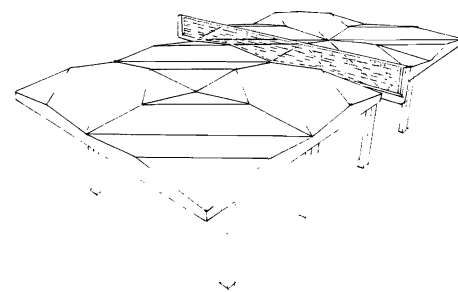
In my opinion, Chuck has put together the most fascinating and rich resource of historical knowledge yet assembled. www.tabletennismuseum.com

Art in the right place

Midland artist Ed Hartley has sent us the picture below of a novel table tennis table, with an uneven geometrical contoured surface, which he made for the Art Works Out Exhibition, Jan-Feb 2000 at the Gallery, Stratford Leisure Centre. He says that it was very popular, especially with children, and was

surprisingly easy to play on. He would love to see what a good player could do with it. The top is made of 4mm plywood, in four sections and sits on two collapsable bases for easy transportation.

Ed develops and designs many other bizarre ideas and structures. Anyone interested in trying out his table or looking at his other work should contact Ed Hartley, Art in the Right Place, 18A Northfield Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham B30 1JH, tel: 0121 459 6555.



Saudi Arabia Training Camp, 30th July – 9th August 2001 by Tony Chatwin

In the 11th year of the “Sports Co-operation Programme” between the British government and the Government of the Kingdom of the Saudi Arabia a squad of English players under the eye of Head of Delegation, Tony Chatwin and coach, Derrick Marples, assembled at Gatwick to start their journey to Dammam.

The party comprising Andrew Rushton, Jason Sugrue, Justin Goodall, Michael James, Christopher Jamieson, Dominic Hall, Craig Bryant and Peter Cleminson were unaware of events of the previous day. Passports and tickets had been handed to Tony Chatwin, as arranged, at the National Council meeting in Walsall. Upon arriving home at 1730 hours and checking passports and tickets, it was discovered that there was a passport missing. Had it been handed over? Had it been dropped? What can be done about it?

With a vision of a member of the party missing the trip a series of telephone calls were made, finally after ½ hour the answer was revealed – the passport had been required for a holiday prior to the visit to Saudi Arabia. Oh what a relief

but also annoyance that lack of communication had led to an avoidable situation.

Upon arrival at King Faud Airport in Dammam we were ushered through customs, not without a search of our luggage, and met by two officials of the Saudi Arabia Federation. The temperature was a warm 32 degrees centigrade at 2300 hours, the humidity was in the high 80s and those of us wearing spectacles were immediately looking through frosted glass. After stopping for a meal we were taken to the complex at Quatif which was to be our base for the 10 days. Rooms were quickly allocated and 10 weary travellers were soon asleep.

The first opportunity to inspect the facilities was after breakfast. The complex is only three years old and whilst the accommodation is basic there is a hall with 3,500 fixed seats and bleacher seats on all four sides for extra seating, good lighting and with a wooden spring floor. There is a swimming pool, fitness suite and games room with pool, table tennis and TV.

The complex also has a stadium catering for football, athletics and field sports with seating for approx. 20,000. There are also facilities for basketball, hockey and five-a-side football. A very impressive complex, which according to our hosts is hardly used.

The first training session commenced at 0930 on the 31st when we were disappointed to learn that the Saudi players would not be arriving until 2nd August. However, it did allow our players time to get acclimatised.

Two hard training sessions on Thursday were followed by a day of sun, sea and sand as the party of English and Saudi players were taken to a private beach on the Arabian Gulf. The party swam, played football, relaxed and had a barbeque of prawns, chicken and fish, with fruit and soft drinks. A truly memorable day summed up by Andrew Rushton in one word: "wicked".

On Sunday, Peter Waddell, Programme Director of BAE, drove from Riyadh, some 460km away, to take us to lunch, a gesture which we were most appreciative of.

Our stay was a mixture of training and matches, with the seniors playing four matches, and the juniors playing three matches, the seniors losing one and the juniors winning all theirs. A good performance by our players as they were

up against the Saudi national teams who were to compete in the Gulf Championships in Bahrain, commencing 11th August.

On Tuesday evening all the players were invited to a reception at the Sheraton Hotel, hosted by the Saudi Arabian Federation. From lunchtime Wednesday we were free to go into Quatif and Dammam for last minute shopping. We left the complex at 2130 hours, arriving at the airport at 2200 hours for our 0025 hours flight to Gatwick. We parted company at Gatwick with all members of the party agreeing that it had been an enjoyable and memorable trip.

Our grateful thanks go to the Saudi Federation and to Peter Waddell and Keith Hutton of BAE.

Coach's Report by Derrick Marples

All the players worked very hard, showing good team spirit helping and supporting each other.

The first two days were spent as an English training camp, in which the players were able to assess the conditions for playing.

The Saudis commenced training on Thursday 2nd August in two sections, i.e. senior players, junior players, into which we assisted as requested. All our players were very co-operative in carrying out the instructions from the Saudi coaches. Fitting into the training were friendly matches for each section. These gave the Saudis the type of training and competition they required. Fortunately we were able to win six of the seven matches played as a result of determination by our players.

Looking at the players individually...

Andrew Rushton: showed tremendous determination throughout the week and especially when playing the matches. This enabled him to win six of his seven matches although some were very close and required strength of character to achieve success.

Jason Sugrue: trained very hard and was very co-operative with the Saudi's coach. He managed to win two of his matches and showed excellent attitude even when losing.

Michael James: played in three matches and won his last one. Michael is always

an example to others in how to train and together with his application he has tremendous determination. This strong approach enabled him to win his last set.

Justin Goodall: during his first two days he worked very hard, showing his overall capabilities. When the senior Saudis commenced training he did not appear to be favoured by the coach. He played in only one match, which turned out to be against the number two. Whenever he was called upon to assist he was very co-operative and carried out all requests.

Christopher Jamieson: playing at no. 1 he won one of his first two sets, but in the second match lost both. Tried very hard and worked well.

Peter Cleminson: played and won, showed a very strong attitude and determination to hit the ball...very good mover.

Craig Bryant: thinks out how to win, very interesting serves which initially confused the Saudis. Has a strong personality under pressure. Won three from four sets played.

Dominic Hall: very hard worker, learns well. Played six sets, winning four. Thinks his way through the game, good at implementing his tactics and style on the game.

BlaqSport magazine: A Celebration of Black Sporting Achievement.
Reviewed by Ken Muhr

BlaqSport describes itself as an exciting new magazine packed with powerful pictures and incisive writing, dedicated to sports lovers in all major sports worldwide. It states that it will give readers the stories behind the performances, results, training methods and techniques, triumphs...and disasters.

In fact I was very impressed with the March/April issue I was sent to review. Produced on expensive glossy paper, with excellent photographs and illustrations, ***BlaqSport*** was also a stimulating read. The quality and range of articles was very high, and sensitive issues such as gayness in sport, women in sport, disability, and black pioneers trying to make headway in conservative 'white' sports were covered, as well as

the many success stories of wonderful black athletes.

Readers may be interested to know that an article by myself on Matthew Syed will be appearing in the September edition, and BlaqSport intends to feature other 'black' table tennis players such as Gareth Herbert in future months. Note that the magazine has 'The broadest possible definition of Black: Asians (e.g. Pakistanis, Indians, Bangladeshis, Arabs, Chinese) and mixed ethnic minority races, are very much part of it'.

BlaqSport costs £2-95 an issue. For further information contact: BlaqSport, 43 Linslade House, Whiston Road, London E2 8SB (tel. 0207 739 1622).

NATIONAL U10, 11 & 12 CHAMPIONSHIPS by Ken Armson MBE

The National U10s, 11s & 12 event again took place at Kingsway Leisure Centre, Widnes on 10/11th June. The continued support of Halton Borough council for table tennis events could make this a permanent venue for the event.

The entry figure of 97 Boys was 20 up on last season but the Girls entry remained a disappointing 42 with the U10 event dropping from 16 to 12. This event continues to be one of the best at which to officiate at any level as the enthusiasm of the competitors and their pleasant manner both on and off the table makes for an enjoyable weekend.

Although the U10 Girls had only 12 players, the matches were keenly contested with the No.1. seed, Rachel Jamieson going out in the semis to Laura Yarnley 14 in the 3rd after having comfortably taken the first game 7. The no.2. seed, Rachel Pilgrim progressed comfortably into the final with a 2 straight win over Emma Vickers. The final was a real battle, Laura taking the first game 20 only to see Rachel storm back to take the title 17 in the 3rd.

There was a strong possibility the Evans brothers, Gavin and Myles, could make the U10 Boys an all family affair, but Dorian Robinson won a close semi final against Myles 19 in the 3rd with Gavin coasting into the final 8 & 5 after having lost the first -18 against Darren Reed. Once again these youngsters showed their skill and tenacity in a tight 3 gamer, with Gavin emerging the U10 Boys champion.

The U11 Girls had a much larger entry, with No.1. seed Lauren Springthorpe coasting into the final with a 8 & 6 semi final win against No.2 seed Rachel Jamieson. Rebecca Tweedy the No.3. seed defeated No.2. seed Melanie Farquhar in a titanic semi-final battle 20,-18, 20. In the final, Lauren, with her confidence high, raced to a two straight win 12 & 14 to become the U11 Girls champion.

An entry of 58 for the U11 boys had Paul Drinkhall at No.1. and Darius Knight at No.2. and the new U10 champion at No.4, with Harry Shahlai completing the strong line up at No.3. seed. All four seeds progressed through to the semi-final stage with only a much-relieved Gavin having battled through his QF to win 21 in the 3rd having lost the first game 20 and narrowly take the second at 17. Paul duly demonstrated his seeding with a 2 straight 15 & 6 over Gavin to claim his place in the final with No.2. seed Darius Knight falling at the semi-final stage to a determined Harry Shahlai 16, -18, 17. Paul Drinkhall became the new under 11 champion in grand style by defeating Harry 9 & 17.

No surprises in the U12 girls, No1. seed Gemma Yarnley never looking troubled on her way to the final to meet Lauren Springthorpe the U11 champion who also had an untroubled passage. Gemma took the title in a 2 straight 19 & 19 win over a very game Lauren.

The final of the U12 Boys was a real battle between the top two seeds with Bradley Evans emerging a very relieved winner against U11 champion Paul Drinkhall.

If composure and temperament determined winners then Paul Drinkhall would have been a double champion for he took the first in whirlwind style game 15 and Bradley Evans had no answer to Paul's all out attacking style. Paul continued in the same manner in the second. Somehow, assisted by the excellent input of his coach, Bradley pulled himself back into the match and snatched a narrow game 19 win. He trailed again 2-8 in the 3rd, Paul clearly sensing victory and continuing his brilliant and consistent attacking play. Once again Bradley pulled himself back into the game, using timeout to good effect. Paul's corner called a timeout when he was leading 18/17 but in doing so gave Bradley's coach another opportunity to get his player into the right mood and he came back to win the coveted U12 championship. They say

no-one remembers losers but I believe everyone present at Widnes that night will remember the brilliance of Paul's input and Bradley's amazing comeback. Bradley and Paul teamed up to take the U12 Boys doubles defeating Daniel Rees and Harry Shahlai 16 & 12 with Gemma Yarnley and Sarah Perks taking the U12 Girls doubles also in two straight against Anusha Seneviratne and Hether Shutt.



Boys U10 ; Gavin Evans – W; Dorian Robinson, RU



Girls U11: Lauren Springthorpe – W; Rebecca Tweedy, RU

MUHR'S MEMO: Information Officer Messages from Ken Muhr

There was no Muhr's Memo in the May/June issue, so I am certain to miss some significant items in this summary of **table tennis in the media**. I feel **we are making ground** and that table tennis **mentions are coming up in the most surprising places**.

Going back to April, the **decision of the ITTF AGM to change to games up to 11** (and to a lesser extent next year's **change of the service law**) got coverage in all the quality broadsheets and tabloids – including quite long **Richard Eaton articles** in The Times and The Guardian - and also stimulated radio interest. Table tennis has been quoted in articles on

other sports that might want to change their scoring systems, such as badminton (and there was to be more media coverage on up to 11, surrounding the ETTA AGM vote to allow leagues discretion whether to carry on with up to 21). **John Woodford** did a piece in The Telegraph about there being **no change** for the time being regarding **speed glue** although there is an intention to ban it. A media generated story which made some of our national papers and Radio 5 Live (Peter Jensen of the ITTF interviewed) picked up was the apparent efforts of the ITTF to make the **sport sexy by the wearing** (by women) of more **fashionable clothing**. The **Commonwealth Championships**, particularly **Matthew Syed's** late availability to play and then his subsequent **triumph** and the other **England successes**, followed by the **World Championships** where **Gareth Herbert's** wins were the talking point, got reasonable coverage in the national press. **John Woodford** was responsible for much of this through his usual **Telegraph** and **Press Association** copy plus four bits for the **Daily Mail**. However, I was gratified that see that some of the nationals picked items from my press releases.

A major interest to the media was **Matthew Syed's election campaign**, including **two very large articles** about him (with a heavy focus on table tennis) in **The Daily Telegraph**, and other articles in the broadsheets including by **Alan Hubbard in The Independent on Sunday**. Profiles of Matthew were in newspaper and The Labour Party's websites. **TransworldWorldSport** filmed Matthew campaigning (and playing TT) in Wokingham and the piece was broadcast after polling day on **Channel 4 and Sky**. He also did a number of radio interviews.

Matthew was also very active in getting table tennis in the media in other ways. He wrote **two major features for The Times** focussing on our sport. The first published on 27th June was about 10 year old **Hung Kei Li**, while the second (published 13th July), which argued that **sporting stars (including Richard Bergmann) of the past would not live with those of today**, succeeded in its aim in achieving a **large letter response** from table tennis readers (impressing The Times), two of which they **published** –

from John Hatfield and myself. I will just break from Matthew for a moment to say that I had **my reply to a letter in The Daily Mail** asking 'Who invented table tennis?' **published** in the Mail (alongside a picture showing Fred Perry and Desmond Douglas together), and this resulted in several Daily Mail readers contacting the ETTA.

To my knowledge, **Matthew** was twice interviewed on national radio – **on Radio 5 Live and on Talk Sport** (30 minutes) – and also did several regional interviews, including with BBC Radio Berkshire to raise the profile of table tennis in the Commonwealth Games, and of Gareth Herbert and Terry Young. **BBC television breakfast news** featured him, and the film also used for BBC News 24 and BBC World Service. He **arranged for BBC East Midlands to film Hung Kei Li, Carlton TV to feature Dale Barham and Hung Kei Li, Sky News and Sport to feature Hung Kei Li, and Hung Kei Li and himself to be filmed for Blue Peter Unleashed**. He has also set up BBC Newsround featuring Hung Kei Li. He organised the Sun doing a fashion (photographic) shoot of Gareth Herbert and Terry Young. A positive development is the intention expressed by the BBC Ceefax service to increase their table tennis coverage. Our website www.etta.co.uk is currently getting over 700 hits per day and sometimes tops 1,000 hits.

There have been all sorts of other table tennis features published. For example, in May the **Observer Sports Magazine** printed **two colour pages on how a table tennis ball can be hit at 100mph**. The **Voice** (black newspaper) has published an interview with **Des Douglas**, 'Modernise or Sink', in which he now argues in favour of the 11-up scoring system! **I have interviewed Matthew Syed for BlaqSport**, and both The Voice and BlaqSport have indicated they would like to publish future features on leading black players. **Jon Kaufman of the London Progress Club** had a **two-page article in FHS** (Faster, Higher, Stronger) magazine where he argued for three club philosophies: open door policy, total integration, and audacious ambition.

There has also been a lot on the **table tennis and health and fitness theme**, spearheaded by an **excellent two page article in the Sunday Times 'Style'**

magazine showing a Hollywood beauty in TT action, which resulted in at least 50 enquiries to the ETTA office! An article in The Times by Danny Baker promoted table tennis as the universal game in which both sexes mix. Snippets extolling the fashionable/celebrity, entertainment/fun and healthy virtues of TT have appeared in theMail on Sunday magazine, The Sunday Times Style magazine and in Rosemary Conley's Diet & Fitness. An article is shortly to appear on TT & health in Slimming magazine (October) and the journalist said she had read a similar article in another woman's health magazine, Shape.

By virtue of Tim Henman's hopes to win Wimbledon, the **table tennis exploits of the last Englishman to take the title, Fred Perry**, were mentioned in most the dailies, on television and again in a Radio 4 Archives Hour programme on Fred. At the time of Sol Campbell's transfer, Nicky Mason and myself were both interviewed by a People journalist about the **table tennis career of Skylet Andrew**, now a football (Sol's) agent. Unfortunately, for The People, the **Sunday Mirror** beat them to publication with a similar article, which I am told – I did not see it – also quoted Nick. Rather bizarrely, **table tennis has also featured** fairly recently in the plots of two **BBC Radio 4 comedy programmes**, 'Old Harry's Game' and 'The Shuttleworths'. A Guardian article on the Internet and sport by Martin Kelner, 'Whether it pings or pongs, the net is catching all sorts in its web', used the ITTF website as an example.

Finally two messages: as Matthew says in the interview with him in the glossy, **you must congratulate the media when they cover table tennis and tell them off when they don't**. It really does make a difference in encouraging them to cover table tennis. Secondly, **I am trying to create an E-mail list of all club, league and county press officers and would be grateful if you could send me relevant addresses**.

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SCHILDKROT NATIONAL CADET LEAGUE 2000/2001



The BEDFORD MODERN team are presented with their trophies for winning the Schildkrot National Cadet League, by England womens star Kubrat Owolabi.

IN its inaugural season, especially formed and designed for younger players in their developing years this competition attracted entries from Sunderland to Sussex, writes Mike Lewis.

Seven divisions geographically spread around the country competed a value for money schedule of play on four separate days culminating in a grand final for divisional winners and runners up at the ETTA National Academy Sports Hall Holme Pierrepont on Saturday 12th May.

Competition on finals day was fierce but fair with the 11 up scoring system easily accepted by players although in the early rounds some umpires expressed surprise when the score reached 11.

It was pleasing to see the 'Midlands' divisional winners team Stafford were mainly all girls who gave good account of themselves and really enjoyed every match despite not gaining ranking points for their endeavours.

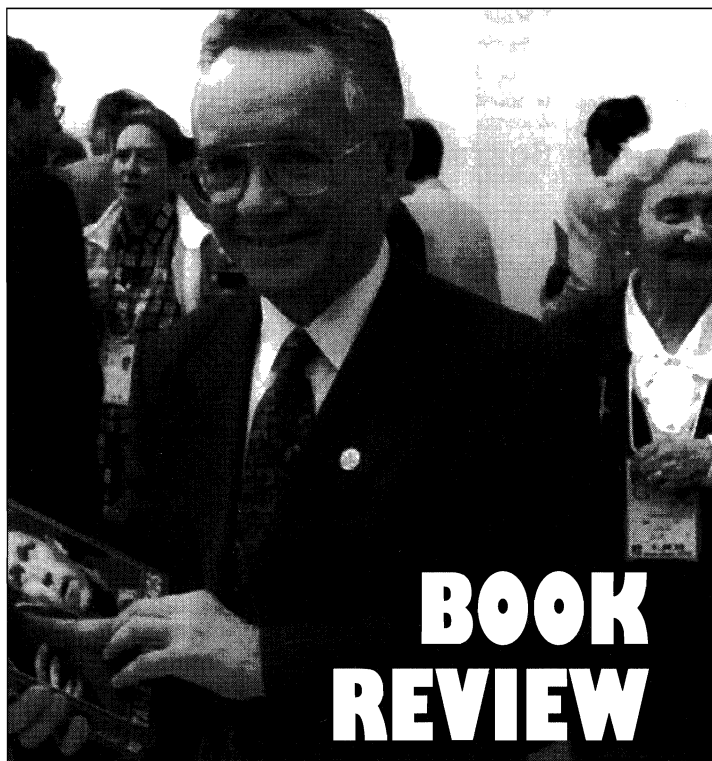
The schedule set by referee Richard Scruton IR,

one of drawn groups with winners and runners into the quarter finals ensured all teams a great days play and well worth the travel.

The semi's were a delight to watch with two London teams Progress and Ellenborough losing out to stronger opponents although Ellenborough unlucky not to have won more of the 3 sets which went to the 5th game especially with Marc Armstrong's record of winning all his games until going down in 5 to Oliver Young.

In the final Banbury vs Bedford, Bedford's Oliver Young squared the match in the 4th set and the duo of Brightman and O'Mahony proved too strong for Banbury's Cox and Clark leaving Bedford Modern worthy National Cadet League Champions by 4 sets to 2.

A great start to this new venture which bodes well for the future in no small part due to, Schildkrot the ball sponsors, first class match day organisers, the ever willing umpires, administrator Chris Lewis, and referee Richard Scruton.



BOOK REVIEW

Author ZDENKO UZORINAC is pictured above with his new book. In the background (left) is Di Scholer (nee Rowe), whilst to his right is 6 times Women's World Singles Champion, Angelica Rozeanu.

TABLE TENNIS LEGENDS by ZDENKO UZORINAC Reviewed by BRIAN HALLIDAY

DECENT books on table tennis are very rare. Every year or so a book may come on the market and one hopes that it will shy away from the usual mish-mash of half baked theories and regurgitated nonsense. Usually it is in the name of coaching, or clever-clever tactical "know how", which one can discard immediately. There are exceptions. I particularly liked the U.S.A player, Larry Hodges, coaching book - a deal of thought went into that one, but by and large, our coaching manuals over the years have been pretty boring.

What of our literature? Well have we any? The mildly (mildly?) eccentric Marty Reisman wrote "The Money Player" many years ago, and this is certainly an amusing and an interesting read. My all time favourite though was Richard Bergmann's extremely entertaining "21 Up". Full of interesting anecdotes it set a wonderful standard which unfortunately none of his successors have been able to copy - until now that is.

I have waited a lifetime for a truly great book to come along about our sport, its players, its history, and yes, its humour. Well now at last we have a book which is quite superb in every respect.

The author is a Croatian journalist Zdenko Uzorinac and the compilation of this marvelous book has taken many years and was obviously a labour of love. First published in Serbo Croat, it has now

been translated into English to coincide with the 75th anniversary of the ITTF.

Uzorinac has shied away from a straight forward history of the game, and instead has told the story through the triumphs (and disasters) of over 100 players. The author's overall selection might not be to everyones taste, but it is difficult to quibble on this score.

The book includes the details of the careers of the very best, together with a wealth of statistics. The hundreds of photographs, in colour and black and white, are sensational, and there are numerous anecdotes which add much to the flavour of the whole book.

I cannot recommend this book too highly. Everyone who has thrilled to star players, past or present, will have many hours of enjoyable reading. It really is a book to treasure.

The book is not cheap, but if you want a very special Christmas present - save up and order it now. ("Table Tennis Legends", 496 pages, \$50 postage included, from The International Table Tennis Federation, The Head Office, Avenue Mon-Repos 30, 19b5 Lausanne, Switzerland. Bank details: UBS Pl. Saint Francois 1, 1002 Lausanne, Switzerland. a/c no 243-467622.40W).

You may also email: LDESOSYA@ITTF.CH or FAX: 0041 21 3407099 or Telephone: 0041 21 3407090. Payment may be made by credit card or bank transfer (no cheques).

KENNY & STEWARD JUNIOR CHAMPIONS

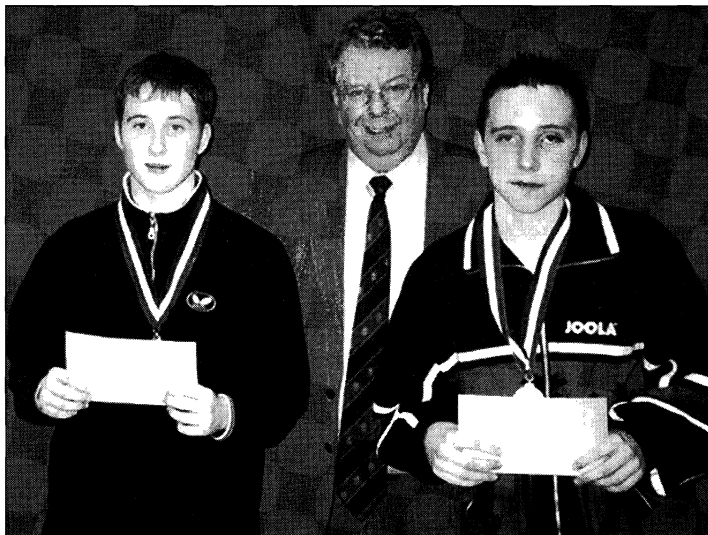
English Junior National Championships, Robin Park Arena & Sports Centre, Wigan, 19th/20th May: More Reasons to Be Cautiously Optimistic writes Ken Muhr.

"Unfortunately they haven't played this well when they have competed abroad", commented the Performance Director heir-apparent Soren Ahlen, whilst observing his charges in action at Wigan. They certainly looked good to me, fit and strong, and able to rally as well as turn on the advanced shots. But if the last 8 or 16 players in each singles events seemed impressive, the wide gap between them and the rest remains a worry.

16 year old Matthew Kenny from Sheffield, Yorkshire, the favourite and Kate Steward, 15 from Taunton, Somerset, the dangerous 'floater', took the boy's and girl's singles titles at the Junior National Championships (which were supported by Wigan Council).

Kenny, who has been likened to a young Alan Cooke, showed no hint of any suspect temperament. Seeded no.1 (Dale Barham was training in China), he was relatively untroubled in the boys' singles, dropping only one game en-route to the final - to Daniel Horner, 15, from the Wirral, Merseyside, who he beat 21-12, 19-21, 21-12 in the semi-finals. The skillful Horner had put out the higher seeded Dominic Hall 21-17, 22-20, the Kentish player looking utterly crushed after serving off on pressure points at the end of the crucial second game.

Matthew was ultimately too strong for Gregory Baker, who he defeated 21-10, 21-13. However, the relentless Baker, a 14 year old from Tamworth, Staffordshire (but with Warwickshire loyalties), had caused a shock when he had vanquished 2nd seed Michael Chan (Surrey) 16-21, 22-20, 21-11, although Chan had developed a leg injury two thirds through the second game. Baker had also stopped the progress of the surprise packet of the event, Paul Drinkhall (Redcar, Cleveland and a



ETTA Chairman ALAN RANSOME presented the prizes to Junior Boys Singles winner MATTHEW KENNY and runner-up GREGORY BAKER, and (below) to the Junior Girls Singles winner KATE STEWARD and runner-up NATALIE BAWDEN.



member of the famous Ormesby Club), just 11 in January, who with punchy backhands and steaming forehands had put paid to his third seeded, older (15) brother, Bryn, in the first round, and the England cadet (under 14) no.2 Tim Yarnall (Northants) in the second round before going down 15-21, 14-21 to Baker.

Kenny also picked up two doubles titles, the boys' doubles with Bryn Drinkhall, and the mixed doubles

with Natalie Bawden, giving him a hat-trick/clean-sweep of junior trophies.

Kate Steward, the England no.5 girl from the Malcolm Francis school of coaching and who has also trained in Hungary, had 3 consecutive victories over higher ranked players to take the girls' singles title - the most fiercely fought event. In the quarter-finals she had her toughest struggle whilst defeating 2nd seed Georgina Walker (Notts) 12-21, 21-10, 21-19.

Steward then had an easy 21-16, 21-9 win over 3rd seed Louise Durrant (Notts), who seemed to have no answer to her chop and sharp hit, combination bat (pimples both sides) game.

In the final, Steward in superb forehand hitting form was always ahead, (if assisted by a few nets and edges), of a spirited Natalie Bawden (Wickford, Essex), the fourth seed, and won 21-17, 21-17. Bawden had played with courage and aggression to vanquish the defending champion Katy Parker (Preston, Lancashire) 21-18, 24-22 in the semi-finals.

Unfortunately for Bawden, she (and Katy Parker) again lost to Steward, playing with Georgina Walker, 17-21, 14-21 in the girls' doubles final, but Steward was denied the chance of contesting for a third title when her partner Michael Chan withdrew from the mixed doubles final, owing to his leg injury.

Junior Results:

Junior boy's singles (from semi-finals): Matthew Kenny (Yorks) bt Daniel Horner (Cheshire) 21-12, 19-21, 21-12. Gregory Baker (Warwicks) bt Michael Chan (Surrey) 16-21, 22-20, 21-11. Final: Matthew Kenny (Yorks) bt Gregory Baker (Warwicks) 21-10, 21-13.

Junior girl's singles (from semi-finals): Natalie Bawden (Essex) bt Katy Parker (Lancs) 21-18, 24-22. Kate Steward (Somerset) bt Louise Durrant (Notts) 21-16, 21-9. Final: Kate Steward (Somerset) bt Natalie Bawden (Essex) 21-17, 21-17.

Junior boy's doubles: Matthew Kenny (Yorks)/Bryn Drinkhall (Cleveland) bt Michael Chan (Surrey)/Dominic Hall (Kent) 21-13, 22-20.

Junior girl's doubles: Georgina Walker (Notts)/Kate Steward (Somerset) bt Katy Parker (Lancs)/Natalie Bawden (Essex) 21-17, 21-14.

Mixed doubles: Matthew Kenny (Yorks)/Natalie Bawden (Essex) w/o injured Michael Chan (Surrey)/Kate Steward (Somerset).



JUNIOR GIRLS DOUBLES CHAMPIONS

KATE STEWARD & GEORGINA WALKER (pictured far left) proudly hold the trophy presented to them by ETTA Deputy Chairman **TONY CHATWIN**. Pictured right are the runners-up **KATY PARKER & NATALIE BAWDEN**.

CADET TOP SEEDS BAKER & PARKER TAKE THE TROPHIES

THE top Cadet seeds Gregory Baker and Joanna Parker (Surrey) put in quality performances to take the cadet (under 14) boys and girls' singles. Baker, who had already done so well in reaching the junior boy's final on Saturday, was in a class of his own in the cadet singles, until he met 2nd seed Tim Yarnall, another Malcolm Francis pupil, in the final. Although leading 19-13 in the first game, Baker was then forced to display sustained, athletic topspin attack in the face of a fighting comeback from Yarnall, who fully stretched him in two close games before the favourite won 22-20, 21-17. The rallies were both fierce and long.

The giant killer of the event was 10th seed Stephen Denny (Yorkshire), who had knocked out the 4th seed Shaun Marples (Derbyshire), and 6th seed Umair Mauthoor (Essex), the latter from 19-14 down in the third game, before falling to Baker in the semi-finals. Yarnall had put out the gutsy Manchester player Adam Bleakley in his semi-final. An interesting second round match was the clash of under 12 titans Bradley Evans (Buckinghamshire) and Paul Drinkhall, won 21-14, 16-21, 21-19 by Bradley, who then fell over three games to Yarnall.

The defensive Joanna Parker also had a comfortable run to the cadet girl's singles final, but looked in deep trouble when her closest rival, Karen Shepherd from Stockport, Cheshire smashed her way through Parker's chop to take a 18-9 lead in the first game. However, Parker tenaciously fought her way back to 19 all, only ultimately to lose the first game 23-25. She then seemed to backspin harder and with more authority to easily take the second game. There were some superb attack-versus-defence rallies in the deciding game, plus a few well chosen hits from Parker, and it was Shepherd who cracked at the end with some missed smashes, giving Parker a 23-25, 21-12, 21-17 victory. A smiling Shepherd apparently took defeat very well, but then a few seconds later let herself down with a tantrum. The less said the better, but a pity because it had been a great match.

In her semi-final, Karen Shepherd had saved game points from 20-18 down to beat Abigail Embling (Essex) 21-15, 24-22. Joanna Parker had comfortably beaten Nicola White (Yorkshire) 21-15, 21-11. It amazes me how, over the years, Tony Pacitto has continued to discover and nurture such talents as Parker! We always argue about technique but he must have been doing a lot right!



Baker and Parker both combined with their singles finals opponents to win second titles in the cadet boys and girl's doubles respectively.

Cadet Results:

Cadet boy's singles (from semi-finals): Gregory Baker (Warwicks) bt Stephen Denny (Yorks) 21-12, 21-16. Tim Yarnall (Northants) bt Adam Bleakley (Lancs) 22-20, 21-13. Final: Gregory Baker (Warwicks) bt Tim Yarnall (Northants) 22-20, 21-17.

Cadet girl's singles (from semi-finals): Joanna Parker (Surrey) bt

Nicola White (Yorks) 21-15, 21-11. Karen Shepherd (Cheshire) bt Abigail Embling (Essex) 21-15, 24-22.

Final: Joanna Parker (Surrey) bt Karen Shepherd (Cheshire) 23-25, 21-12, 21-17.

Cadet boy's doubles: Greg Baker (Warwicks)/Tim Yarnall (Northants) bt Adam Bleakley (Lancs)/Christopher Gregory (Shrops) 21-19, 21-17.

Cadet girl's doubles: Joanna Parker (Surrey)/Karen Shepherd (Cheshire) bt Abigail Embling (Essex)/Sarah Brown (Essex) 21-16, 21-12.

SCHILDKROT NATIONAL CADET LEAGUE NATIONAL ORGANISER

The ETTA Development Department seek the voluntary services of a National Organiser to head and run the newly introduced National Cadet League.

Opportunities for this particular competition to expand are immense and will be rewarding to all those who participate whether as player or organiser.

The National Organiser will need to work closely with, Vice/Chairman for Development, Match Day Organisers, Venue Administrators, and Referee.

Expenses will be reimbursed and the post supported by the Development Department.

Should you have interest in the post, please contact:
M.W.J.Lewis V/C Development 31 Comb Paddock BRISTOL BS9 4UG Tel/Fax 0117 9620877

JUNIOR BOYS
TEAM EVENT

THE Junior Boys started poorly in their team event, but with the system in place at a European Youths, this does not necessarily mean elimination from winning, and the boys went on to prove that, with a little bit of luck that went their way in the draw, as they advanced to play for positions 1 to 16, writes Barry Granger.

The first matches in their group, against Poland (0-4), Yugoslavia (1-4) and Czech Republic (0-4) did not seem to augur well. But with the 4th placed team able to play-off against another team finishing 1st in their group to take their top 16 position, the draw smiled favourably on the boys as they drew Wales. With Adam Robertson 9 in Europe in their team, it would not be easy; but each of the boys did their bit and a 4-2 result was the outcome, meaning a top 16 place was guaranteed. Scores: Kenny vs Robertson -16, -9; Barham vs Jones 11, 8; Chan v Griffiths 15, 11; Barham/Kenny vs Robertson/Griffiths 21, -16, 19; Barham vs Robertson -17, -11; Kenny vs Griffiths 13, 12.

The next match saw them face Portugal, a good all round team, for a top 8 place. This was a see-saw match where we lost the 1st game, then went 2-1 up and 2-3 down, before Matt Kenny played really well to beat Jose Enio Mendes 14, 17 and Dale Barham went on to seal the win with a 20, 20 victory over Francisco Santos. Michael Chan had previously beaten the Portuguese number 3 (Santos) -6, 18, 20!!

A top 4 place was in the offing if we could beat France. But as expected, they were too strong and a 0-4 defeat meant that we played Croatia in the 5-8 position play-offs.

A 1-4 defeat meant a play-off for position 7-8 against Poland. Although Matt Kenny managed to win the first match, a 1-4 defeat meant overall 8th position.

France, with a 4-3 win over Sweden in the semi and a 4-3 over Slovakia in the final were champions.

CADET BOYS
TEAM EVENT

THE Cadet Boys started with a bang. Spearheaded by Greg Baker they thrashed both Wales and Cyprus 3-0 and had a walk-over against Israel who failed to appear. Tim Yarnall also played singles matches with Greg and Chris Gregory playing doubles.

Having won their group, to get into the top 16 they still needed to beat

ENGLAND TEAM PERFORM WELL

Denmark. With Greg losing the first match to David Hinderson by the closest of margins (13, -18, -19), it was to be an uphill struggle. Tim won his singles against Jacob Assmussen 13, -16, 14, but the doubles was lost 15 in the third to go 1-2 down, Greg won his second match 7, 13, but Tim Yarnall was unable to clinch the win in the final rubber and a 2-3 defeat meant playing for positions 17-28.

A 3-1 win in the next match against Slovenia meant a possible 17th place. Greg beat K. Rebek 18, 17 and J. Tomse 13, 17. Tim lost -16, -14 to Tomse, but we won the doubles. However, a 0-3 defeat followed against Slovakia and position 21-24 was now the best possible. There followed a 3-0 win over Greece, before a final 2-3 reverse against Estonia and 22nd place.

Scores against Estonia: Adam Bleakley vs S. Kljutshenkov -17, 13, -23; Tim Yarnall vs I. Polozov 11, 19; Baker/Yarnall vs Kljutshenkov/Polozov 19, 8; Yarnall vs S. Kljutshenkov -9, -12; Bleakley vs I. Polozov -14, 17, -16.

There is no question that all our players are now competing well with the top players in Europe, but there still seems a long way to go before we can produce teams that can win a medal at this type of event.

The presentation ceremony was different - all players and officials were bussed after finals to an amphitheatre in the town and, in front of a large stage in the open air, the presentations were made with almost everybody present. It was quite an experience as we were sitting in an open air auditorium, in blazing sunshine, at 7 O'clock at night.

BOYS SINGLES

AFTER a free day, singles started. Two rounds for all but the seeded players. In the Junior Boys, Bryn Drinkhall was in the qualifying event and he just failed to beat G. Roposa (Slovenia). He lost 12-21 in the first and then stormed back 21-11. Finding himself 13-19 down in the third, a mammoth effort brought him to 20-20, but he then lost 21-23.

Matt Kenny won comfortably against D. Djudakovic 21-13, 21-19. In his second round against R. Leshchenkov (Belarus), however, after winning 21-11, he fell

awkwardly injuring his shoulder. After a 10 minute break, he returned with the score 10-11 and managed to win 21-14. Unfortunately, he could not play his third round match against the French boy Bobillier due to his shoulder. Michael Chan lost 13-21, 19-21 to A. Arbuzov (Belarus) and Dale Barham defeated K. Hasek (Slovakia) 2118, 14-21, 21-19. Dale then had to play defender and no. 10 seed Daniel Weitz (Ger). He stormed to a 6-0 lead in the first, but Weitz clawed back to take it 21-16. A strong display from Dale got him to 20-20 in the second, but the next two points went to the German, and Dale was out.

In the cadet boys, only Tim Yarnall won a round against R. Petrosius (Lithuania) 21-16, 16-21, 21-16. His second round opponent was just too strong and he lost 15-21, 13-21 to A. Gregorev (Rus). Greg Baker fought hard against the Greek A. Malinakis, but could not find the enough consistency to attack all the time and was unlucky to lose 22-20, 15-21, 19-21. Defeats also for Chris Gregory against E. Sgouromallis (Gre) 14-21, 21-17, 10-21 and Adam Bleakley against R.Gavette (Swe) 13-21, 13-21, meant singles participation was short-lived for the boys.

GIRLS EVENTS

I WISH this was a glowing report of how well our girls played, sadly I think that even the young ladies will say they were dissatisfied with the results, writes Tony Pacitto.

Yet no praise can be too high for the effort that the players put into every match.

JUNIOR GIRLS
TEAM EVENT

UNTIL the final match Katy Parker looked and played like a real contender, until losing to Kapo. Then her form and confidence went. The other three girls often failed to take their chances.

CADET GIRLS
TEAM EVENT

THE first match against Poland was a disaster, both girls failed to play, it all went downhill until the easier Greeks, and we went on to win three

matches, including a convincing victory against Poland.

GIRLS SINGLES

KATY'S defeat in the first round was a shock, and our interest ended in the second round.

The Consolation Singles saw Katy Parker play well to reach the 4th round.

Our cadets fared no better losing in the first and second round. One exception was Joanna Parker, and I cannot hide my pride and joy on the way she played, at the same time she must improve her concentration when she is in the lead. She should have been in the last eight.

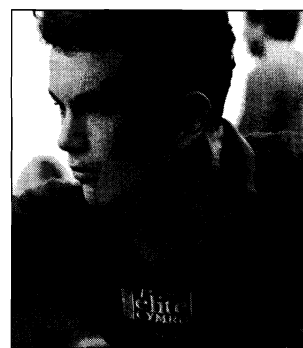
Her defeat of the No.12 seed was superb play, but again a bad second leg.

In the consolation event Abigail Embling had two good wins before losing in the 3rd round.

Finally well done to all the boys and girls who did their best, and the coaches who are on a hiding to nothing.

This report would not be complete without congratulating the Italian TTA, on a well run tournament, and the Referee Richard Scruton, even if he did turn me away!

BIG SHOCK



The biggest shock of the tournament was the first round exit of last years silver medallist ADAM ROBERTSON (Wales), 16-21, 15-21 to Tomislav Jape (Croatia), in the Junior Boys Singles. However Robertson was the only British competitor to win a medal, when he partnered Joao Monteiro (Portugal), to win Bronze in the Junior Boys Doubles.

NEW FACES on MANCOM

THERE are two new faces on the ETTA Management Committee, who have been duly elected, Karen Tonge the new Vice Chairman of Teaching and Training, and Carol Beames, Vice Chairman without portfolio.

KAREN TONGE

Karen is very experienced in the area of Teaching and Training. Professionally Karen worked for Cheshire County Council as a Teacher and Youth Leader, until she took early retirement in 1997.

Karen was the Cheshire County Coaching and Secretary from 1977 through to 1990 and was Regional Coaching Chairman from 1987 to 1991, then Regional Chairman from 1991 to date.

From a qualifications point of view, Karen is a Level 4 Senior Coach, International Referee, International Umpire, Table Tennis Development Officer at Silver Level, the highest to date and a Level 2 Tournament Organiser.

She has recently carried out several roles in the development and motivation of Volunteers. Karen was the Director of Volunteers for the 1997 World Championships. She was the Chair of the North West Development Committee, when in 1999 the Region won the National Volunteer Investment Programme Award, a competition established by Sport England.

Karen has a great deal of involvement with Sport England and their Volunteer programme. She is a Running Sport Tutor and involved in Sports Network North West

Millennium Volunteers Programme aimed at 16-25 year olds.

For the ETTA in addition to being Director of Volunteers for the 1997 World Championships, Karen was Director of Hospitality for the World Veterans Championships in 1998, and in her capacity as Vice-Chairman Without Portfolio, was a founder Chairman of the ETTA Equity Committee which produced ETTA policy, action plan plus the monitoring of the evaluation process.

Within her own local area in Cheshire, Karen has been responsible for the establishment of the Halton Table Tennis Club, that won the ETTA Club of the Year Award for 2000 and went on to be the CCPR Club of the Year Award for All Sports in that year, which is a unique achievement bringing the prize of £10,000 to her Club.

Karen has developed a new club facility with the Halton League and a new centre within Auto Quest Stadium in Halton, which operates with 16 tables with table tennis being played at the centre for an average of 30 hours a week.

Karen is the Competition Manager for the Commonwealth Games in Manchester 2002.

CAROL BEAMES

Carol has been the National Councillor for Sussex since 1994 and was Chair of the ETTA South East Region from 1994 -1999, until the Sport England re-organisation.

She has also been Secretary of the British League Committee from 1992 to date and was awarded the ETTA Ivor Montague Award in the year 2000 for the work that she carried out within the Development Department producing Club Rules and Constitution for the Premier Club programme.

Carol is the Development Officer for the Brighton League and one of the mainstays behind the Hellingbury Club which was founded in 1992/3 and has been awarded ETTA Premier Club advanced status.

In addition to the above, Carol is the organiser of the Sussex Open Championships which is Britain's longest running Open Tournament.

NATIONAL TEAM FINALS



ORMESBY CUP winners PROGRESS (above) won the Treble for the third year running



Winners of the J.M.Rose Bowl for a mighty 15th consecutive time, WOLVERHAMPTON women, pictured (l to r) KEITH PONTING Vice Chairman of Competitions, JILL HARRIS, JAN DUNNING and JOSE BONGERS.

THE Senior King National Team Championships finals were successfully completed on Saturday and Sunday, 26th/27th May, 2001 at the Kirkby Sports Centre, Valley Road, Kirkby, Knowsley, writes Keith Ponting.

The remarkable record of the Wolverhampton League continued when they retained the J. M. Rose Bowl for the 15th consecutive season. West Middlesex won the Wilmott Cup for the fourth successive season, whilst the London Progress Club, representing the Wembley and Harrow League, won the Ormesby Cup for the fourth time in a row.

The Wolverhampton womens team after comfortable earlier victories came up against sterner opposition in the final, where they narrowly defeat Leicester 5-4, after trailing 2-4.

London Progress had much more comfortable finals, in the Ormesby Cup beating Ilfield 5-1, and Liverpool 5-2 in the Wilmott Cup. I am most grateful to Harvey Webb, National Events Manager for making all the arrangements and to Mick Strode and Doris Moors, Committee Chairman and Secretary respectively, for organising the competitions throughout the season and

officiating during the week-end. I would also like to pay a special tribute to our hardworking team of umpires, who did a tremendous job on both days.

- WILMOTT CUP
Winners: WEST MIDDLESEX
Runners-up: Liverpool
- J. M. ROSE BOWL
Winners: WOLVERHAMPTON
Runners-up: North Middlesex
- CARTER CUP
Winners: SLOUGH
Runners-up: Chesterfield
- L. BROMFIELD TROPHY
Winners: HARLOW
Runners-up: Leeds
- ORMESBY CUP
Winners: LONDON PROGRESS
Runners-up: Ilfield
- GAINSFORD CUP
Winners: BRAMLEY EBENEZER
Runners-up: Crippenham
- LEACH CUP
Winners: LONDON PROGRESS
Runners-up: Slough
- HAMMERSLEY CUP
Winners: BRADFORD
Runners-up: Slough
- PAT ARCHDALE CUP
Winners: BRADFORD
Runners-up: Liverpool
- ALEC BROOK TROPHY
Winners: GUILDFORD
Runners-up: Thames Valley

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COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS LEAGUE TABLES by Leslie Smith

Final Tables for Season 2000/2001

SENIORS

PREMIER	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yorkshire	7	6	1	0	54	16	13
Sussex	7	6	0	1	53	17	12
Middlesex	7	4	1	2	46	24	9
Kent	7	4	1	2	39	31	9
Devonshire	7	3	0	4	29	41	6
Surrey	7	2	1	4	32	38	5
Derbyshire	7	1	0	6	12	58	2
Hertfordshire	7	0	0	7	15	55	0

DIVISION IA

Leicestershire	7	6	1	0	55	15	13
Lancashire	7	6	1	0	51	19	13
Northumberland	7	3	2	2	37	33	8
South Yorkshire	7	4	0	3	31	39	8
Nottinghamshire	7	2	1	4	37	33	5
Worcestershire	7	1	3	3	32	38	5
Suffolk	7	1	2	4	26	44	4
Norfolk	7	0	0	7	11	59	0

DIVISION IB

Essex	7	6	0	1	48	22	12
Glamorgan	7	4	1	2	40	30	9
Middlesex 2nd	7	4	0	3	35	35	8
Wiltshire	7	3	2	2	38	32	8
Berkshire	7	3	1	3	33	37	7
Hampshire	7	2	1	4	26	44	5
Isle of Wight	7	0	3	4	24	46	3
Kent 2nd	7	1	0	6	26	44	2

DIVISION 2A

Yorkshire 2nd	7	6	1	0	59	11	13
Cleveland	7	5	2	0	45	25	12
Cheshire	7	4	0	3	38	32	8
Warwickshire 1st	7	3	2	2	34	36	8
Leicestershire 2nd	7	3	1	3	33	37	7
Lancashire 2nd	7	2	1	4	27	43	5
Warwickshire 2nd	7	1	0	6	23	47	2
Cumbria	7	0	1	6	21	49	1

DIVISION 2B

Cornwall 1st	7	7	0	0	58	12	14
Worcestershire 2nds	7	5	1	1	47	23	11
Avon	7	4	0	3	31	39	8
Devonshire 2nd	7	4	0	3	30	40	8
Glamorgan 2nd	7	3	1	3	35	35	7
Somerset	7	1	1	5	28	42	3
Herefordshire	7	1	1	5	20	50	3
Cornwall 2nd	7	1	0	6	31	39	2

DIVISION 2C

Essex 2nd	7	7	0	0	48	22	14
Bedfordshire	7	3	3	1	39	31	9
Hertfordshire 2nd	7	3	2	2	34	36	8
Lincolnshire	7	3	1	3	37	33	7
Cambridgeshire	7	2	2	3	35	35	7
Northamptonshire	7	2	1	2	35	35	6
Suffolk 2nd	7	2	1	4	34	36	5
Norfolk 2nd	7	0	0	7	18	52	0

DIVISION 2D

Gloucestershire	6	6	0	0	45	15	12
Sussex 2nd	6	3	2	1	34	26	8
Buckinghamshire	6	3	1	2	37	23	7
Kent 3rd	6	3	0	3	33	27	6
Oxfordshire	6	2	1	3	26	34	5
Surrey 2nd	6	1	2	3	25	35	4
Berkshire 2nd	6	0	0	6	10	50	0

JUNIORS

PREMIER DIVISION

Surrey	7	6	1	0	45	25	13
Buckinghamshire	7	4	3	0	45	25	11
Glamorgan	7	4	1	2	40	30	9
Cheshire	7	4	1	2	39	31	9
Yorkshire	7	2	2	3	38	32	6
Warwickshire	7	2	2	3	33	37	6
Kent	7	1	0	6	17	53	2
Middlesex	7	0	0	7	23	47	0

DIVISION IA

Essex	7	7	0	0	53	17	14
Lancashire	7	6	0	1	48	22	12
Yorkshire 2nd	7	4	1	2	35	35	9
Nottinghamshire	7	4	0	3	37	33	8
Cumbria	7	2	1	4	34	36	5
South Yorkshire	7	1	2	4	28	42	4
Derbyshire	7	1	1	5	23	47	3
Suffolk	7	0	1	6	22	48	1

DIVISION IB

Devonshire	7	7	0	0	59	11	14
Dorset	7	5	1	1	39	31	11
Glamorgan 2nd	7	5	0	2	44	26	10
Buckingham 2nd	7	4	1	2	42	28	9
Berkshire	7	2	1	4	26	44	5
Worcestershire	7	1	2	4	24	46	4

Avon	7	1	1	5	30	40	3
Hampshire	7	0	0	7	16	54	0
DIVISION 2A							
Lincolnshire	7	7	0	0	53	17	14
Cleveland	7	5	0	2	41	29	10
Cheshire 2nd	7	4	0	3	36	34	8
Norfolk	7	4	0	3	35	35	8
Lancashire 2nd	7	3	1	3	30	40	7
Essex 2nd	7	2	0	5	31	39	4
Warwickshire 2nd	7	2	0	5	30	40	4
Huntingdonshire	7	0	1	6	24	46	1

DIVISION 2B

Gwent	7	6	1	0	56	14	14
Sussex	7	6	0	1	54	16	12
Surrey 2nd	7	4	1	2	32	38	9
Kent 2nd	7	4	0	3	40	30	8
Middlesex 2nd	7	2	3	2	30	40	7
Surrey 3rd	7	2	0	5	29	41	4
Gloucestershire	7	0	2	5	18	52	2
Essex 3rd	7	0	1	6	21	49	1

DIVISION 3A

Hertfordshire	7	7	0	0	54	16	14
Bedfordshire	7	5	0	2	42	28	10(94-69)
Suffolk 2	7	5	0	2	42	28	10(91-67)
Leicestershire	7	4	0	3	39	31	8
Hunt'g'd'nshire 2nd	7	4	0	3	32	38	8
Norfolk 2nd	7	2	0	5	29	41	4
Cambridgeshire	7	1	0	6	27	43	2
Bedfordshire 2nd	7	0	0	7	15	55	0

DIVISION 3B

Lincolnshire 2nd	6	5	1	0	45	15	11
Northamptonshire	6	5	1	0	39	21	11
Nottingham 2nd	6	4	0	2	44	16	8
Durham	6	3	0	3	38	22	6
Nottingham 3rd	6	2	0	4	28	32	4
Conway 1st	6	1	0	5	13	47	2
Conway 2nd	6	0	0	6	3	57	0

DIVISION 3C

Shropshire 1st	7	7	0	0	52	18	14
Devonshire 2nd	7	6	0	1	53	17	12
Cornwall 1st	7	4	0	3	46	24	8
Somerset	7	4	0	3	39	31	8
Herefordshire	7	2	1	4	24	46	5
Devonshire 3rd	7	2	0	5	23	47	4
Cornwall 2nd	7	1	1	5	21	49	3
Shropshire 2nd	7	1	0	6	22	48	2

DIVISION 3D

Oxfordshire	7	7	0	0	58	12	14
Buckingham 3rd	7	6	0	1	54	16	12
Sussex 2nd	7	5	0	2	43	27	10
Wiltshire	7	2	2	3	31	39	6
Gwent 2nd	7	2	1	4	27	43	5
Kent 3rd	7	2	0	5	19	51	4
Northampton 2nd	7	1	1	5	27	43	3
Sussex 3rd	7	1	0	6	21	49	2

VETERANS

PREMIER	P	W	L	F	A	Pts	
Kent	7	7	0	0	48	15	14
Essex	7	6	1	0	42	21	12
Surrey	7	5	2	0	39	24	10
Dorset	7	4	3	0	35	28	8
Cheshire	7	3	4	0	37	26	6
Lancashire	7	2	5	0	26	37	4
Middlesex	7	1	6	0	12	51	2
Leicestershire	7	0	7	0	13	50	0

DIVISION IA

Yorkshire 1st	7	6	1	0	44	19	12
Durham	7	5	2	0	36	27	10
Hertfordshire	7	5	2	0	32	31	10
Yorkshire 2nd	7	4	3	0	34	29	8
Northumberland	7	3	4	0	33	30	6
Oxfordshire	7	2	5	0	27	36	4
Norfolk	7	2	5	0	25	38	4
Cheshire 2nd	7	1	6	0	21	42	2

DIVISION IB

Sussex	7	6	1	0	38	25	12
Surrey 2nd	7	5	2	0	37	26	10
Kent 2nd	7	5	2	0	35	28	10
Avon	7	4	3	0	37	26	8
Hampshire	7	3	4	0	32	31	6
Hertfordshire 2nd	7	3	4	0	30	33	6
Berkshire	7	1	6	0	27	36	2
Wiltshire	7	1	6	0	16	47	2

DIVISION 2A

Cambridgeshire	7	6	1	0	37	26	12
Warwickshire 1st	7	5	2	0	44	19	10
Lancashire 2nd	7	5	2	0	43	20	10
Bedfordshire	7	5	2	0	38	25	10
Essex 2nd	7	3	4	0	29	34	6
Yorkshire 3rd	7	3	4	0	27	36	6
Essex 3rd	7	1	6	0	18	45	2

Norfolk 2nd	7	0	7	0	16	47	0
DIVISION 2B							
Buckinghamshire	7	7	0	0	47	16	14
Somerset	7	5	2	0	42	21	10
Dorset 2nd	7	4	3	0	36	27	8 (81-62)
Worcestershire 1st	7	4	3	0	36	27	8 (83-68)
Kent 4th	7	3	4	0	28	35	6
Kent 3rd	7	3	4	0	24	39	6
Devonshire	7	2	5	0	27	36	4
Worcestershire 2nd	7	0	7	0	12	51	0

DIVISION 3A

Nottinghamshire	7	7	0	0	43	20	14
Cheshire 3rd	7	5	2	0	41	22	10
South Yorkshire	7	5	2	0	38	25	10
Staffordshire	7	4	3	0	33	30	8
Leicestershire 2nd	7	4	3	0	31	32	8
Yorkshire 4th	7	2	5	0	29	34	4
Northamptonshire	7	1	6	0	25	38	2
Warwickshire 3rd	7	0	7	0	12	51	

ALAN COOKE'S MASTER CLASS

A GREAT SUCCESS

"Fantastic week", "The best course I have been on", "Would I come again, Yes, Yes, Yes."

Just a few of the comments made by participants on the first "Alan Cooke Master Class" organised by SportBreak and held at Potters Leisure Resort from 11th to 15th June 2001.

Alan Cooke organised the coaching programme, but was dealt a blow a few days before the course when Nick Mason, who was to be Alan's assistant, had to pull out following the death of his father. The remaining staff, coaches Alan Cooke and Mike Johns assisted by Dominic Johns had to work extra hard to make up for Nick's absence. Alan and Mike concentrated on the coaching whilst Dominic took the warm up and cool down sessions, most of the multi ball training and still found time to act as a practice partner.

Being held during term time the course comprised entirely of adults, many of who were veterans and Alan designed the programme to help improve the individual games of each player. Using many training techniques Alan had learnt firstly as a world ranked player and then through his time spent coaching at the National Training Centre in Nottingham. Alan proved to be an outstanding coach and by the end of the week everyone felt that the course had been beneficial.

Play was from 10am to 5pm daily (with a break for Potters superb lunches). On Tuesday evening Alan explained the new rule changes on the scoring system and service rule and the rationale behind them. On Wednesday evening Mike led an Open Forum, which proved so popular it ran over time, and on Thursday evening a sports Quiz was comfortably won by Dave Hillbeck.

During the Wednesday afternoon a tournament was held using the new scoring system (a first for a number of the players). Great Yarmouth player Sean Molloy won a great final against Dave Adamson (Gloucestershire) 3-2.

Players were given the opportunity to try out different rubbers and blades courtesy of Bribar Table Tennis who also supplied the Joola tables and balls for the course.

At the conclusion of the course Gary Baker (Potters Operations



Manager) presented trophies to the tournament winner and runner up, and to Tom Taylor-Woodward from Guildford who the coaches selected as the most improved player of the week.

Outside the playing hall, as befits a venue like Potters, the social life was tremendous. Each evening most of the participants and staff got together to watch the shows and dance the night away. The highlight was undoubtedly Thursday night when Potters Sports Manager and Norfolk county player Russell King challenged former England and Commonwealth Champion Alan Cooke to a match. Alan must have known he was in for a hard night when the umpire (Mark Brewer, head of Potters entertainment) explained to him that the match was to be played under "Potters rules" which apparently have resulted in Russell being unbeaten. As the game progressed a crowd of over 300 roared their approval, with the majority supporting Alan, but to no avail, the unbeatable combination of Russell King and a "bent" umpire resulted in a 21-19 defeat for the former England star.

The fun did not end there. All through the following show Mark took every opportunity to soak Alan, and those sat next to him, with a water gun. A great night was had by all with the possible exception of "Cookie".

The course proved so popular, with the vast majority of participants indicating they will come on future courses, that SportBreak have decided to offer two courses next season. Course 1 – from Monday 25th February to Friday 1st March, Course 2 – from Monday 27th May to Friday 31st May.

Places are strictly limited. For further information contact Mike Johns at SportBreak, on 01606 45766.

ESTTA signs JARVIS



NICK JARVIS (centre) is pictured signing the contract with ESTTA officials JOHN ARNOLD (left) and JOHN BLACKBAND

ESTTA is pleased to announce the signing of a new contract with JARVIS SPORTS as sole sponsor of the Association for the next 5 years.

Jarvis Sport will supply equipment for all ESTTA major events - Team, Individual and International.

The finals of the National School Team Championships 2002 are to be held at the new Grantham Leisure Complex. This event enhanced for the season 2001/2002 will involve greater participation of school teams at regional and national finals.

Jarvis Sports will also be supplying DONIC equipment for the Individual Championships in 2002 to be held at Fenton Manor Leisure Centre, Stoke on Trent. This is the largest one day table tennis event in England with play on 24 tables with representatives from all 50 Counties.

In order to continue to develop our activities there are two essential ingredients. A strong and dedicated band of voluntary workers who promote schools' table tennis together with cash and security in

the form of sponsorship. The cost of competitions is ever increasing and even though affiliation and competition fees are regularly raised, there is still a wide gulf between income and expenditure.

As a means to bridge this gap Jarvis Sports has offered substantial sponsorship in cash and kind for 2001-2006. Not only does this include support for major grass roots events but also support for International teams representing ESTTA in the International School Sport Federation World School Meeting in Table Tennis.

Schools' Table Tennis, like other traditional school sports, needs a structure for competition within an educational framework. ESTTA believes that the Association provides this, but can only function with the help of sponsorship. The Association is therefore grateful for the support of Jarvis Sport.

BAT TESTS

Due lack of space, blade and rubber tests will appear in the next issue.



NETA NATIONAL RANKING LIST

TOP OF THE TABLE

START OF SEASON 2001/02 - List 91

Further details please ring Doreen Nightingale 01424 722525

Senior Men

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(1)	1 SYED, Matthew (SY.)	4815**	
(2)	2 HERBERT, Gareth (BK.)	4804	
(3)	3 PERRY, Alex (DY.)	4637*	
(4)	4 COOKE, Alan (DY.)	4597*	
(5)	5 YOUNG, Terry (BK.)	4581	
(6)	6 BAGGALEY, Andrew (BU.)	4558**	
(7)	7 PREAM, Carl (IW.)	4540****	
(8)	8 DOUGLAS, Desmond (WA.)	4408****	
(9)	9 BILLINGTON, Bradley (DY.)	4298**	
(10)	10 RUSHTON, Andrew (LA.)	4188**	
(11)	11 EDEN, Andrew (LA.)	4044****	
(12)	12 BARMAN, Dale (CA.)	4021	
(14)	13 ISHERWOOD, Michael (DY.)	3950****	
(15)	14 BLAKE, Darren (SY.)	3924****	
(17)	15 SUGRUE, Jason (MI.)	3822*	
(19)	16 SLADEN, Kris (E.)	3771****	
(27)	17 KENNY, Mathew (Y.)	3722	
(20)	18 SHAW, Steven (ST.)	3698**	
(22)	19 VENNOR, Ritchie (SX.)	3651**	
(23)	20 PYE, Leeroy (NK.)	3629**	
(24)	21 GOODALL, Justin (K.)	3610**	
(25)	22 JAMES, Michael (Y.)	3599*	
(26)	23 CHARLES, Neil (MI.)	3597*	
(36)	24 CHAN, Michael (SY.)	3578	
(28)	25 TAYLOR, Jonathan (LA.)	3564****	
(29)	26 WURAOA, Abdul (SY.)	3550*	
(30)	27 HILTON, John (CH.)	3537*	
(31)	28 MARSHALL, Peter (Y.)	3535****	
(32)	29 BROWN, Mark (K.)	3512***	
(33)	30 BARR, David (BK.)	3500***	
(34)	31 MOORE, Adrian (K.)	3480***	
(35)	32 SMITH, Eddie (ND.)	3456**	
(37)	33 SLATER, Stephen (ST.)	3440***	
(47)	34 BAKER, Gregory (ST.)	3440	
(38)	35 ROGERS, Chris (LE.)	3423**	
(39)	36 ECKERSLEY, Nigel (SX.)	3412*	
(40)	37 CUTLER, Tom (MI.)	3409**	
(41)	38 JOHNS, Brian (CH.)	3404*	
(71)	39 DRINKHALL, Bryn (CY.)	3388	
(43)	40 CARTH, Clive (E.)	3380*	
(44)	41 HUTCHINGS, Paul (LA.)	3349**	
(45)	42 KENNEDY, Joe (K.) (E.)	3348**	
(46)	43 WHITING, Paul (DV.)	3344**	
(48)	44 CUNNINGHAM, Andy (K.)	3342**	
(49)	45 DOLDER, Kevin (LA.)	3331**	
(50)	46 SMITH, Mark Richard (Y.)	3330**	
(51)	47 TAYLOR, John (HE.)	3329***	
(52)	48 POUNTNEY, Robert (SY.)	3304**	
(53)	49 WILKINSON, Andrew (ND.)	3298*	
(55)	50 NEIL, Lee (NG.)	3251**	
(56)	51 GRIFFIN, Darren (GS.)	3247*	
(57)	52 GANNON, David (LE.)	3244**	
(58)	53 BRIDGETT, Gregory (DV.)	3240****	
(59)	54 BEERLING, Stephen (K.)	3237**	
(60)	55 PAPANTONIOU, Costas (MI.)	3227**	
(62)	56 CLAYTON, Tony (DO.)	3221**	
(63)	57 DRINKHALL, Keith (CA.)	3219***	
(64)	58 MCKOY, Nick (MI.)	3206**	
(65)	59 SHORT, Mark (YS.)	3202**	
(66)	60 RANKIN, John (LA.)	3189**	
(67)	61 PAYNE, Phil (SO.)	3179***	
(68)	62 GIRDLER, Ian (E.)	3178*	
(69)	63 GIBSON, Sean (E.)	3170***	
(70)	64 LOGSDON, Philip (NK.)	3169***	
(72)	65 WIGNALL, Andy (LI.)	3157**	
(75)	66 HARVEY, Dave (GS.)	3156	
(73)	67 HORNER, Daniel (CH.)	3155*	
(74)	68 ADAMS, Martin (BK.)	3153***	
(76)	69 TENDLER, Gary (E.)	3148*	
(78)	70 JONAH, Jerome (K.)	3130***	
(79)	71 WELSMAN, Dave (NP.)	3128*	
(80)	72 COX, Philip (K.)	3126****	
(81)	73 HARDING, David (SY.)	3120*	
(82)	74 WILLIAMS, Keith (LA.)	3117*	
(83)	75 GELDER, Tony (DU.)	3112*	
(84)	76 WALSH, Jimmy (HE.)	3111*	
(85)	77 CAMPBELL, Selwyn (SY.)	3104***	
(86)	78 JAMESON, Christopher (E.)	3103**	
(87)	79 HALL, Dominic (K.)	3101**	
(88)	80 SMITH, Richard A. (Y.)	3091**	
(89)	81 ROOFE, Eddie (WI.)	3090**	
(91)	82 GOBDDOL, David (DU.)	3060**	
(92)	83 ROMANO, Mark (K.)	3057***	
(93)	84 DENNISON, John (E.)	3056***	
(94)	85 SHORT, Mike (DV.)	3055**	
(95)	86 ROSENTHAL, Louis (LA.)	3050**	
(128)	87 YARNALL, Tim (NP.)	3045	

(96)	88 MAJITHIA, Mayur (SX.)	3043**
(97)	89 HORSFIELD, Andrew (YS.) (Y.)	3038**
(98)	90 LIGHTOWLER, Richard (Y.)	3026**
(99)	91 WALKER, Andy (SX.)	3026**
(100)	92 GASCOYNE, Craig (NG.)	3024****
(101)	93 OWEN, Mark (HR.)	3016**
(102)	94 BARTRAM, Peter (SX.)	3015**
(103)	95 RICH, Andy (ST.)	3015****
(104)	96 READ, Mark (WA.)	3009**
(105)	97 BRYANT, Craig (DV.)	2986**
(106)	98 PAYNE, Clive (HA.)	2977***
(107)	99 JOHNS, Mike (CH.)	2969**
(108)	100 CICCHELLI, Paul (SX.)	2966*

Senior Women

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(1)	1 DEATON, Nicola (DY.)	4031*	
(2)	2 LOWER, Helen (ST.)	3925**	
(3)	3 MARCH, Linda (E.)	3715**	
(4)	4 OWOLABI, Kubrat (MI.)	3664**	
(7)	5 PARKER, Katy (LA.)	3621	
(6)	6 KISS, Barbara (HE.)	3606*	
(5)	7 BAWDEN, Natalie (E.)	3575	
(8)	8 STEWARD, Kate (SO.)	3523	
(11)	9 PARKER, Joanna (SY.)	3470	
(9)	10 DURRANT, Louise (NG.)	3434	
(10)	11 WALKER, Georgina (NG.)	3420	
(12)	12 SMITH, Karen (LE.)	3302**	
(13)	13 HARRIS, Jill (ST.)	3227**	
(14)	14 SPARKES, Rebecca (SK.)	3205*	
(15)	15 THORNTON, Lindsey (LA.)	3178**	
(16)	16 ROBERTS, Joanna (Y.)	3140**	
(17)	17 BLOOR, Trudie (SP.)	3111**	
(18)	18 YARDY, Hannah (E.)	3107***	
(20)	19 DUNNING, Jan (WO.)	3089*	
(21)	20 LOCKWOOD, Karen (CH.)	3084**	
(23)	21 BONGERS, Jose (ST.)	3075**	
(37)	22 EMBLING, Abigail (E.)	3073	
(24)	23 WESTON, Sally (SX.)	3068**	
(25)	24 RAINTON, Rosemary (SX.)	3063**	
(27)	25 HURLING, Emma (HE.)	3032**	
(28)	26 KENDALL, Jade (CU.)	3028****	
(29)	27 COHEN, Michele (AV.)	3025**	
(30)	28 BUOYEY, Brenda (LA.)	3018***	
(31)	29 HARPER, Sandra (BD.)	2991**	
(32)	30 SHIELDS, Helen (Y.)	2986*	
(33)	31 SMITH, Angela (MI.)	2982**	
(34)	32 HOWARD, Alice (CH.)	2969***	
(35)	33 PEARCE, Diane (K.)	2953*	
(38)	34 SHEPHERD, Karen (CH.)	2939*	
(39)	35 WHITE, Nicola (Y.)	2937	
(40)	36 WRIGHT, Amy (E.)	2912*	
(41)	37 BALDI, Andrea (YS.) (Y.)	2890*	
(42)	38 DAVISON, Sarah (SK.) (E.)	2879*	
(43)	39 SHORT, Elaine (DV.)	2876**	
(44)	40 LLOYD, Gemma (CH.)	2871*	
(45)	41 PERRY, Penny (DV.)	2857**	
(46)	42 PRINCE, Julie (LA.)	2856***	
(47)	43 SIMPSON, Linda (Y.)	2852*	
(48)	44 MARLING, Samantha (MI.)	2851***	
(49)	45 WANG, Lucy (E.)	2847**	
(50)	46 SMITH, Sarah (NG.)	2833**	
(51)	47 DURHAM, Jane (CV.)	2832*	
(52)	48 CHAPMAN, Gemma (BK.)	2829**	
(53)	49 KNIGHTLEY, Gillian (BK.)	2827*	
(54)	50 MALTBY, Margaret (NP.)	2823*	
(55)	51 FISHER, Rebecca (MI.)	2821*	
(56)	52 SPINK, Lauren (NK.)	2815*	
(57)	53 BAWDEN, Marilyn (E.)	2810**	
(58)	54 BRISTOW, Angie (K.)	2806**	
(59)	55 MORLEY, Judy (GS.)	2803*	
(60)	56 KING, Sheila (SX.)	2796*	
(61)	57 PESTKA, Debbie (NG.)	2792**	
(62)	58 GELDER, Shirley (DU.)	2784*	
(63)	59 ROBISON, Suzanne (GS.)	2772**	
(64)	60 SCHOFIELD, Doreen (CH.)	2769***	
(65)	61 BURGESS, Suzanne (CH.)	2765*	
(66)	62 RIDER, Sandra (Y.)	2753**	
(67)	63 GARLICK, Helen (K.)	2740***	
(68)	64 DIGNUM, Margaret (WO.)	2738*	
(69)	65 JUDSON, Carol (Y.)	2735**	
(70)	66 MAY, Elizabeth (DV.)	2727*	
(71)	67 COGOGAN, Sara (SX.)	2725*	
(72)	68 DAWSON, Marjorie (E.)	2722**	
(74)	69 MUDGE, Kim (E.)	2720***	
(73)	70 PERRY, Lucy (DV.)	2720**	
(75)	71 BAX, Sally (HE.)	2718**	
(76)	72 VAJDI, Carmen (SY.)	2713****	
(78)	73 HORSNELL, Sarah (MI.)	2703*	

(80)	74 SEAHOLME, Sarah (HE.)	2701***
(81)	75 REID, Lynda (WO.)	2698**
(82)	76 GRAHAM, Sylvia (LA.)	2686**
(83)	77 VICKERS, Jane (DY.)	2669***
(84)	78 SMITH, Nicola (Y.)	2667****
(85)	79 DEARING, Emily (Y.)	2666**
(86)	80 NARENDHAN, Aparna (MI.)	2664****
(87)	81 H-MIDDLEMORE, Joan (WA.)	2657****
(88)	82 SEYMOUR, Tamar (OX.)	2650****
(89)	83 SHALER, Eileen (LE.)	2644**
(91)	84 FLOWERDAY, Anne (E.)	2643**
(90)	85 HARRISON, Jennifer (E.)	2643*
(93)	86 WILSON, Naomi (SO.)	2630**
(98)	87 BROWN, Janet (OX.)	2629
(94)	88 POINTER, Lucy (IW.)	2625***
(95)	89 BARELLA, Jane (ST.)	2622****
(96)	90 WHITE, Jean (LI.)	2616***
(97)	91 SEAHOLME, Caroline (HE.)	2614***
(99)	92 HALE, Linda (DO.)	2601***
(100)	93 STEEL, Pauline (SX.)	2599**
(101)	94 GUTHRIE, Caron (ND.)	2581****
(102)	95 CRICK, Lisa (BK.)	2578***
(103)	96 HOOKER, Muriel (BU.)	2572**
(104)	97 HICKMAN, Susan (E.)	2560**
(105)	98 BUTCHER, Pamela (K.)	2557**
(106)	99 DONNELLY, Janine (Y.)	2554**
(107)	100 ECKERSLEY, Carol (SX.)	2544*

Junior Boys

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(1)	1 BARMAN, Dale (CA.)	4021	
(2)	2 KENNY, Mathew (Y.)	3722	
(4)	3 BAKER, Gregory (ST.)	3440	
(5)	4 DRINKHALL, Bryn (CY.)	3388	
(6)	5 HORNER, Daniel (CH.)	3155*	
(8)	6 HALL, Dominic (K.)	3101**	
(9)	7 ROSENTHAL, Louis (LA.)	3050**	
(11)	8 YARNALL, Tim (NP.)	3045	
(9)	9 BRYANT, Craig (DV.)	2986**	
(12)	10 CLEMINSON, Peter (E.)	2833**	
(15)	11 BARMAN, Lee (CA.)	2646**	
(17)	12 GREGORY, Christopher (SP.)	2636	
(16)	13 NOUTH, Simon (Y.)	2571**	
(19)	14 DENNY, Stephen (Y.)	2405**	
(20)	15 MARPLES, Shaun (DY.)	2367**	
(21)	16 BLEAKLEY, Adam (LA.)	2342	
(23)	17 MAUTHOOR, Umair (E.)	2280**	
(26)	18 EVANS, Bradley (BU.) (BK.)	2224	
(25)	19 YARNALL, Greg (NP.)	2224**	
(27)	20 DRINKHALL, Paul (CY.)	2189	
(28)	21 CLARKE, Marryn (CV.)	2189**	
(29)	22 HOLT, Tim (MI.)	2147**	
(30)	23 PEEBLES, Robin (LA.)	2137*	
(33)	24 JACOBS, David (E.)	1941****	
(34)	25 MOSS, Richard (Y.)	1939**	
(35)	26 BROOKS, Warren (BU.)	1925***	
(38)	27 CARTWRIGHT, Neil (DO.)	1884*	
(40)	28 WYNN-SANDS, Dominic (GS.)	1828	
(42)	29 HARLEY, John (K.)	1759*	
(43)	30 SHUTES, William (NK.)	1750*	
(44)	31 BRADFORD, Leigh (WA.)	1743**	
(45)	32 LALLY, Keiran (E.)	1732**	
(46)	33 HAYWARD, Gareth (WA.)	1730***	
(47)	34 MORAN, Edward (SP.)	1675**	
(48)	35 MITCHELL, Thomas (BU.)	1651***	
(50)	36 LEMON, Robert (SY.)	1630**	
(51)	37 POWELL, Neil (CH.)	1597*	
(53)	38 CAMILLERI, John (OX.)	1552****	
(54)	39 GREEN, Alex (LI.)	1535***	
(55)	40 KNIGHT, Darius (SY.)	1529*	
(51)	41 ROGERSON, Shaun (LI.)	1491**	
(59)	42 HAYES, David (BU.)	1488*	
(60)	43 SHAHLAEI, Harry (GS.)	1463*	
(62)	44 GIBBS, Shaun (DV.)	1457***	
(63)	46 O'DONNELL, Paul (LA.)	1456***	
(47)	47 WOODHEAD, Andrew (Y.)	1375**	
(64)	48 DORRINGTON, Philip (CA.)	1368***	
(67)	49 LEIGHTON, Andrew (DU.)	1357*	
(68)	50 FLETCHER, James (LA.)	1344**	

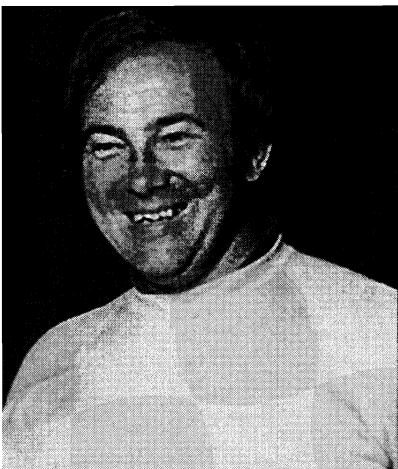
Junior Girls

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(2)	1 PARKER, Katy (LA.)	3621	
(1)	2 BAWDEN, Natalie (E.)	3575	
(3)	3 STEWARD, Kate (SO.)	3523	
(6)	4 PARKER, Joanna (SY.)	3470	
(5)	5 WALKER, Georgina (NG.)	3420	
(7)	6 EMBLING, Abigail (E.)	3073	

(8)	7 SHEPHERD, Karen (CH.)	2939*
(9)	8 WHITE, Nicola (Y.)	2937
(10)	9 WRIGHT, Amy (E.)	2912*
(11)	10 CHAPMAN, Gemma (BK.)	2829**
(12)	11 SPINK, Lauren (NK.)	2815*
(14)	12 WILSON, Naomi (SO.)	2630**
(15)	13 POINTER, Lucy (IW.)	2625***
(16)	14 SIBLEY, Kelly (WA.)	2532
(17)	15 INGHAM, Katy (CH.)	2529**
(18)	16 GRAHAM, Cherith (LA.)	2528*
(20)	17 SPARKES, Aimee (SX.)	2495**
(23)	18 CALCUTT, Lisa (BK.)	2378***
(25)	19 BROWN, Grace (E.)	2320**
(26)	20 BROWN, Sarah (E.)	2266**
(27)	21 LONG, Rebecca (LA.)	2249***
(29)	22 TANGFORD, Clare (CH.)	2229**
(30)	23 BELL, Amanda (Y.)	2134*
(31)	24 ROBERTS, Hannah (LA.)	2122**
(32)	25 HOWARD, Clara (CH.)	2102**
(33)	26 RADFORD, Kerry (NG.)	2100*
(35)	27 SPRINGTHORPE, Lauren (LI.)	2062*
(36)	28 YARNLEY, Gemma (K.)	2012*
(39)	29 DENNETT, Elizabeth (CH.)	1909*
(40)	30 HUBBARD, Joanne (K.)	1776**
(41)	31 VAJDI, Christina (SY.)	1759****
(42)	32 WEIL, Emma (E.)	1740**
(43)	33 BARRETT, Michelle (DV.)	1724***
(45)	34 WALLER, Tanya (Y.)	1637***
(46)	35 BALDI, Rachel (Y.) (Y.)	1635**
(47)	36 HOLLETT, Gemma (SY.)	1623**
(48)	37 HEARD, Gemma (E.)	1622**
(49)	38 CLEMINSON, Jessica (E.)	1555****
(50)	39 TUCKER, Emily (BU.)	1539**
(52)	40 SENEVIRATNE, Anusha (K.)	1498*
(54)	41 DEWHURST, Elizabeth (E.)	1481****
(55)	42 CHEESMAN, Leah (E.)	1385****
(56)	43 GASSON, Faye (CU.)	1376***
(57)	44 WEIL, Lucy (E.)	1324**
(58)	45 CLUCAS, Hazel (K.)	1273**
(59)	46 PARTON, Helen (DV.)	1268**
(61)	47 GASSON, Chloe (CU.)	1248***
(63)	48 REES, Bethany (E.)	1199**
(66)	49 SHUTT, Heather (Y.)	1165*
(65)	50 ROGERS, Gina (SX.)	1165**

Cadet Boys

Pos	Name	Rtg	Flg
(2)	1 YARNALL, Tim (NP.)	3045	
(2)	2 BLEAKLEY, Adam (LA.)	2342	
(9)	3 EVANS, Bradley (BU.) (BK.)	2224	
(10)	4 DRINKHALL,		



BRYAN MERRETT

Former England No.1, Captain, Selector and National Coach.

ENTHUSIASTS countrywide will be saddened to learn of the death of Bryan Merrett (pictured above) on August 1st 2001 at the age of 66, after a short period in Standish Hospital. Very few thought his illness was life threatening, but on reflection, Bryan was such a modest, unassuming person, he may have wanted it that way.

At the age of 13, and basically self taught, he emerged as a player 'a bit special' at the Gordon League Club in Gloucester. Local events were won with consummate ease, and he came to prominence on the 5th January 1952, when he bent stars of that time (Messrs. Crayden, Spychalski and Bubley) to reach the final of the Metro Open, only to lose narrowly to former World Champion Richard Bergman.

International recognition came swiftly - as a Junior against Wales on the 11th January 1952, and as a Senior, again versus Wales at Liverpool on the 19th January 1952. (Although successful, it was too late for him to be selected for the World Championships in Bombay 1952. Perhaps just as well, as this was the time when a little known Japanese "penholder" beat everyone in sight, using a new style bat covering, now popularly called 'sponge'.)

Bryan's career blossomed; he became joint number one with his counterpart Ian Harrison of Cheltenham. His remarkable record shows he played in 100 Internationals, and was Captain of Junior/Senior Men and Women's teams on an astonishing 467 occasions. He also officiated as a National Selector, and subsequently became National Coach.

Although severing his connections with the ETTA in 1987, he continued for several years thereafter, to maintain, with the considerable help of his late wife Shirley, at his home, the computer database of all the country's top players.

During his long association at national level, many incidents come to mind, here are a couple where I thought he might have put pen to paper (alas he never got around to it).

(1) In April 1957, England played an international match at Budapest. It was shortly after Soviet troops had put down a counter revolution, and the venue was ringed by armed guards. For the record, in a strained atmosphere, Bryan beat the Hungarian champion Szepesi - but lost to

Ferencz Sido an up-and coming star.
(2) The other occasion was in May 1973, when Bryan captained an England contingent on a Far Eastern tour, taking in Singapore, Hong Kong and China. It was the first sporting organisation to be admitted to China, after the cultural revolution, and the team were met by tremendous crowds everywhere. Indeed, it was said there was an audience of 18,000 at the match in Peking (Beijing). Asking Bryan of his impression - his succinct reply was, "They say there are 1200 million people living in China, and I reckon half of them want to play Table Tennis." Tongue in cheek perhaps - but how prophetic.

It is probably as a coach that he was best known - travelling all over the country, his skill, experience and self effacing manner endeared him to so many, and his demeanour on and off the table - never in question. In fact, not so long ago, I found him in the 'chair' at a fifth division match, in a clubroom near his home - giving counsel to his protegees. That was the very nature of the man. Along with his close contact

with his daughter Gail (of which he was intensely proud), he had an inherent love for TABLE TENNIS and many will treasure his memory.

Jack Reeves, President Gloucestershire Table Tennis Association.

• A tribute to Bryan by Ron Crayden will appear in the next issue.

JACK RANDALL

JACK RANDALL, (pictured right) one of the best-known and most respected English umpires, died in hospital on 10 August 2001, a few weeks after undergoing heart surgery. He qualified as a County Umpire in 1953, as a National Umpire in 1958 and as an International Umpire in 1974. He, Tony Chatwin, Fred Groom and the late Syd Morton were the first English umpires to represent the ETTA at a foreign tournament, when they went as a team to the 1969 World Championships in Munich. He subsequently officiated at many major competitions, in England and in countries all round Europe, retiring from the "tournament circuit" only a couple of years ago. He also found time to take on



administrative work, first as Chairman of the Portsmouth League for several years and then, when his work took him to London, as the long-serving Umpires Secretary for Middlesex. Nationally, he was the Secretary of the NURC in 1970-71 and more recently he served on some of the NURC's specialist panels. At the time of his death he was a member of the group developing a new County Umpire test paper. Jack who was unmarried, was 76. He will be greatly missed by his many friends and colleagues.

Colin Clemett, Secretary National Umpires & Referees Committee

KEN MUHR interviews LOUISE DURRANT

The National Under 21 Womens Champion Louise Durrant was interviewed by Ken Muhr at Ponds Forge International Sports Centre, Sheffield on 11th March.

Louise Durrant, 17 from Worksop, Nottinghamshire, is the current England junior no.3 and senior no.8 who also is a member of the National Training Centre, Nottingham.

Ken Muhr: Congratulations on winning the under 21s. Is this your best victory to date?

Louise Durrant: Definitely.

KM: What other results are you proud of?

LD: The last national title I won was when I was in my last year as a cadet - national cadet champion. It was about 3 years ago. Last week I won the Derby 4 star.

KM: It was a very close final with Georgina Walker.

Would you like to describe how the match went from your point of view?

LD: I did not get off to a very good start. In the first game I was 16-6 down, then I started a run of points to come back to get to deuce and finished winning the game 26-24. In the second game it did not go too well either and I lost game 13. And in the third I seemed to play much better, I sorted my shots out. I was 20-17 up in the third and she came back to deuce so I thought 'don't throw it away now!' But I got the national title anyway.

KM: You are both from Nottinghamshire. Are you very competitive with each other, are you friends with each other?

LD: Yes! We are best friends really, we are best friends but you have to separate the friendship when you are on the table. It is quite difficult sometimes, but if you want to win that is how it has got to be, hasn't it?

KM: In the women's singles, you played Nicola Deaton last year as well as this time. Last year you took a game off her. Nicola has been training a lot since then, but this year, although you seemed to play quite well, score-wise you lost by a bigger margin. What do you feel about the match?

LD: I thought I played okay though I know I can play

better than that. I thought Nicola seemed much more nervous when she played me last year, this year she seemed much more confident. Maybe we practise with each other more often at the National Centre nowadays, so she is more used to my game.

KM: What ambitions do you have in table tennis?

LD: One of my main ambitions is to be English champion in the next couple of years hopefully, if everything goes to plan. I want to make a career out of it for sure. No-one really knows.

KM: Technically are there things you want to do to your game to improve it?

LD: Well, I have been playing with short pimples since I was 9 up to this summer, but I thought that if I wanted my game to go anywhere I needed to play with reversed rubber really. So it was a big change for me this summer, and it was not going too well until about January and then the results started coming together. So hopefully I can progress from there. It all seems to be going quite well.

KM: You used to flat hit with the pimples before. How have you had to change your game?

LD: I have had to change my whole technique. Body movement, footwork, the way you hit the ball, the height you hit the ball, I had to change it all during the summer. It was quite hard.

KM: You are at the National Training Centre. Who is helping you at the centre?

LD: Brad. Bradley Billington is in charge of the women. And Soren. I get help from Soren Ahlen as well. Outside of the centre my coach is Alan Cooke. I see him usually most weekends if I can.

KM: How are you finding the centre?

LD: The centre is going well at the moment. The practise partners and everything has improved this year and the training facilities are great. Everything is going all right, everyone is training hard. Everyone seems to be really improving.

KM: You mentioned Brad, Soren and Alan. Are there any other people you would say helped you on your way?

LD: When I started I was coached by Neil Houghton, and after that by Denis Neale, and now the main one is Cookie.

PREMIER

THE very first Premier Club National Conference, held at the National Training Centre, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham on Saturday 23rd June, and attended by 83 delegates (20% women) from 31 clubs was a success, judged not only subjectively by myself but also by the generally very favourable response indicated by the evaluation forms (more of the latter at the end of this report). The signage, the display and screen back drop to where presentations were given, and the orange corporate shirt (actually from the 1998 World Veterans Championships!) worn by Development staff all gave a professional air to proceedings, writes Ken Muhr.

AFTER a brief welcome from Vice Chairman for Development Mike Lewis, the conference kicked off with a presentation by ETTA Chairman Alan Ransome on the vision and background to the Premier Club Programme and how it would help meet the needs and requirements of table tennis to build a stronger and healthier sport. One of issues Alan stressed was social inclusion, which became something of a theme for the conference and of course is very much on the Government's agenda.

When Alan gets going it is difficult to curtail his enthusiasm, so Diccon Gray, Director of Development had to race through, no less enthusiastically, his two presentations: the first on Premier Club Features & Benefits and Funding Opportunities (among others, National Lottery 'Awards for All' small grants and Lottery community projects capital fund, New Opportunities Fund, 'Out of school hours learning programme' (revenue) and 'Spaces for Sport & the Arts' (capital), ETTA/FSA 'community TT facilities' scheme, Specialist Sports Colleges, and Sportsmatch), and advising the audience to use the 'buzz words', 'talk up table tennis', demonstrate 'self help', and seek RDO/SDO advice and endorsement when working up projects/applications; the second on 'People', the value of our volunteers and the awards being given to recognise, support and encourage them.

In his last official public function as ETTA Performance Director before returning to his native France as

Technical Director, a sparkling Michel Gadal wowed the conference with his exposition on 'Learning from French Success', which I shall write up separately because of its wider interest value.

As part of the National Training Centre open day (the same day), Michel later showed delegates round the table tennis facilities and in his second presentation, Michel spoke about background philosophy for the Centre, how it was set up and how it is operating. When he arrived in England 3 years ago most of the top players did not practise enough, whereas it is known that you need (broadly) 10 years/10,000 hours of training to become a champion. Initially, a centre was necessary to try to fast track our best players to reach the high level as soon as possible and to catch up on other nations, bringing them together for centralised training with high level coaches to increase the amount/level of practice, the quality (and intensity) of practice and the range of styles (and standard) of practice partners. A target was also to develop the Premier Club programme to produce the top players of the future and maybe in 15 or 20 years time make the Centre unnecessary.

Michel thought that although still not perfect the Centre is now operating on the right track. Although the Centre players are practising on average 16-20 hours a week, there had been problems with how hard they practised, but Michel is now proud to enter the training hall because the players are practising very well. There is also now much better co-operation between senior and junior players. All the conditions and tools (including sports science back-up) are there, but it is now down to the 'heart' of the players and there is a price (for them) to pay. Other countries also have similar programmes so we have to try to run faster than them. Players should also practise in their holidays and also take small breaks (for rest), because for every week you take off you need a month to get back to where you were.

Michel did not think parents should interfere with the training at the centre or tell the coaches what to do, which had been a problem. It is the only professional work where you

receive advice from your customers – if he went to the dentist he did not usually tell the dentist what to do! He trusted him.

Alan Ransome thanked Michel for all his work in setting up the Training Centre, now working as a very effective unit, liaising/negotiating with the Lottery to ensure that table tennis stays in World Class Programme, and also the significant input into the policy of the association regarding the high level and the competitive programme.

Michel thanked Alan and the ETTA. He said that although it had been a hard time for him - he was not expecting so much difficulty - you learn a lot when there are problems and he would take away with him what is positive. He had enjoyed his time in England and understands better English culture – "one of the best cultures in the world" - had learned a lot about the relationship between sport and politics (!), and was pleased to see the World Class Programme was working and there was a future for English table tennis. He would be pleased to see the English players improving, though not quicker than the French players! He would be back many times to England and would be pleased to meet delegates all over the world.

National Development Officer Judy Rogers extolled the virtue of that great modern day sporting issue – Inclusion and Targeting. Equity is about making table tennis open to all, raising its profile amongst ethnic minority populations, disabled people, women and girls. We should have a readiness to discuss table tennis with ethnic minorities, working with particular communities to find out their needs. Architect Paul Baker, ETTA Facilities Officer spoke in more detail on the new Foundation for Sport and the Arts/ETTA community TT Facilities Scheme to assist Premier Clubs in upgrading and/or refurbishing existing buildings with grants ranging from £5,000 to £15,000, and also on the Premier Club Location mapping Plan.

London Regional Development Officer and Progress Club supremo Jon Kaufman roused himself from his sickbed to challenge the delegates with his "Is your club exciting?" "How does it measure up alongside football?" questionnaire, which he

asked them to complete. Duly chastened if not totally convinced, they got his essential message – that they must sharpen up what they offer to compete for the attention and loyalties of potential recruits, particularly youngsters. He outlined a 'pyramid' of several key programmes and competitions, and suggested that clubs should run a full programme of activities concurrently, to make the club 'sizzle': they should plan to run 3 more activities next season.

In live interviews, Diccon Gray first asked Adrian Pitt from Baddow Village TTC, Essex how Premier Club had helped them. He then interviewed England's rising star Gareth Herbert, now closely challenging Matthew Syed for the no.1 ranking, who attributed a lot of his recent success to the World Class Programme at Nottingham. Gareth outlined his weekly training programme, praised the Cippenham Club for the opportunities it offered, and said that the new service law to be implemented in September 2001 (Gareth is one of the world's best servers) is a "bit of a bugger!" although games up to 11 should work in his favour. Gareth then accepted a few challenges from delegates to attempt returning his serves.

Alan Ransome and a panel of the afternoon's speakers then responded to Open Forum questions, before Alan rounded up the conference with his closing remarks and delegates adjourned for Market Stall before going home.

The Market Stalls concept where twice during the day (at the middle and end of the conference) delegates had the opportunity by appointment to meet RDOs or people with development expertise to discuss projects or problems, was an interesting innovation, but whereas some gained a lot from it, there was a feeling that the space in which the stalls took place was too cramped and the time allocated too restricted. On a glorious day weatherwise, the lack of adequate ventilation in the main hall also caused some discomfort. The delegates' evaluations of the speakers, the sessions and the day were overall very positive, even if some felt that there was too much on the agenda, time keeping could have been better and there should have been more time for questions and discussion. They looked forward to the next conference.

Ken Muhr continues his report at the Conference on the next page

LEARNING FROM FRENCH SUCCESS - A presentation to the ETTA Premier Club National Conference, 23rd June, by the then ETTA Performance Director, Michel Gadat, now French Technical Director. Reported by Ken Muhr

To be successful at the highest level you need to have an integrated plan which takes account of all the following components: clubs, coaches, players, high level system and competition system. France also has strength of numbers – 200,000 registered members paying a fee to the association so it has financial independence, freedom (only 20% of its income comes from the government) and power.

20 years ago France started working towards 'nice' clubs that had permanent facilities (i.e. they owned them) where people enjoyed coming and staying, which provided different products for different customers, from hobby, competitive to the high level.

In France it is the same integrated system for all sports. If you want to make money coaching any sport you need to gain a national degree to become a professional coach and recognised by the government as a sports teacher. You have to pass exams in areas such as your knowledge of the law, safety regulations, physiology and anatomy plus one part specifically for table tennis. To teach in a club you need to have a minimum of level 1, which will require around 1 year study (not full-time). To teach as a professional coach in a region you need level 2, which requires 1 plus 2 or 3 years study, and to be a national coach and paid by the government to teach you need 5 years study. Standards are becoming very high. The French Federation of TT coach education is increasingly based on needs analysis (i.e. how to cope with the situation in which you find yourself or finding solutions to problems), not just technique, tactics, fitness etc.

The government gives incentives to create full-time coaching jobs, started with a large percentage of the salary in the first year, tapering down to nothing in the last year. The French Federation also had a target of 1,000 full-time coaches in 2001, and although they have not achieved this yet, they do have around 600 full-time coaches and 200-300 coaches working part-time.

In France a lot of effort has gone into creating links with schools, putting table tennis in after school but also during school time and training teachers (particularly PE teachers) to deliver it as part of

education, and creating schools competitions from a local to a national level. The French have also created a lot of training and competition related to the level of the player. Michel thought a problem in England was players playing in too much competition but not doing enough training (or targeted competition). The French association has also been able to retain all the top players in the sport after their playing careers and plan to do this (and the government encourages them to do so) because they carry on the culture of the sport.

In France there is almost no choice, if you want to reach the high level, but to attend the centralised training. Centralised training is a national philosophy. There is one national training centre INSEP, which is a multi-sport centre. There are 6 table tennis inter-region training centres, and 12 regional centres (which mainly the top cadets and under 12s attend). The centres are linked to clubs and some clubs are organised as well as centres e.g. in Paris there are 3 clubs with memberships of 500, links with schools and 3 or 4 full-time coaches. One of Michel's tasks will be to see that everyone is working together (particularly clubs and centres) for the good of the player and not against each other. For players to have the best chance to reach the high level, it is very important that the first coach they have is good and that there are good links with the high level.

The competitive system is club based from department (county) to national. You must be a club member to play in any competition. Michel is '200%' convinced that clubs are the future of English table tennis. In France there is also an individual competitive system from local to national level – for each category entries to the (final stage of the) National Championships, come through a sifting process of 4 or 5 tournaments (i.e. 20,000 players entering Senior Nationals).

The culture within the sport is the key to success. In England, some of the culture of the high level has been lost.

In response to questions, Michel said that in France, a player may have to pay in the region of say £40 to £50 a year to join a bottom club, for the top clubs around £200 a year. The French government finds sponsorship, employment and education by companies for top players (present and past) to continue their involvement in sport.

MEMORIES OF OSAKA

FACE TO FACE Brian Halliday meets Jorgen Persson at the English Open



JORGEN PERSSON'S KINDNESS

BRIAN HALLIDAY, ETTA Vice Chairman of Public Relations, was just one of the relatively anonymous many at the Osaka World Championships-oficionados all-who, like the World Champions they so admire, have a memorable story to tell, writes Tim Boggan of the USA.

I met Halliday by chance at the French TTA April 24th (On to Paris in 2003) Righa Hotel cocktail/aperitif Reception, and from early pleasantries found that he'd been to the Commonwealth Championships and would be representing Guernsey at the ITTF's April 26th Annual General Meeting.

After retiring from the insurance business, Brian who was about to turn 68 and walks with a cane, was able to indulge his passion for all things table tennis.

An English County player, he was thrilled to win the the Mens Over 60 Doubles at the 1998 World Masters Games in Portland, Oregon. And, in retrospect, he was even more thrilled at the 1999 English Open for being able to interview for Table Tennis News one of the great Swedish World Champions, Jorgen Persson.

But then suddenly Brian's table tennis fun was stopped. He was given a hard punch to stomach, as it were-a cancerous tumor there had to be removed, and in the process damaged his sciatic nerves so much that, despite his having spent eight fearful, painful weeks in a Reading hospital, they never did heal properly.

"Bad luck", said the attending surgeon-"Only one chance in 20,000 of it happening."

A cold calculation that did nothing to alter Brian's depression at losing his mobility and his unhappiness at not being able to resume his normal table tennis life.

However, one day in the hospital there was a beginning brightness. Halliday received a 'Get Well' card. "How nice," he thought, "Someone remembered that English Open interview and sent me a get well card with Jorgen Persson's photo on it."

The card, however, was a special one, for it came from Jorgen Persson himself. He'd somehow found out that Halliday was suffering.

"That card gave me an enormous lift," said Brian. "It will always have pride of place in my home collection."

Here in Osaka on April 23 Brian got the chance to thank Jorgen in person. "I could hardly talk to him," he said, "I was so overcome with emotion."

Amazing, isn't it how when one is desperately ill and depressed some kind gesture can make all the difference.

Especially when its not only a champion's play one looks up to, but his humanity.

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

1st-2nd	British League Weekend (1)	
2nd	British League (1) Premier Division	
7th-9th	ETTA National Conference	Lilleshall
8th-9th	Womens British League	
9th	Stiga Junior Grand Prix	Hyndburn
9th	Grove Senior Grand Prix Satellite	
11th	European League	
	Slovakia vs England Men	
15th	County Championships (1) Cadet, Junior, Senior & Veterans	
15th-18th	ITTF Pro Tour Korea Open	Seoul
16th	British League (2) Premier Division	
21st-23rd	Home Countries International	Isle of Man
21st-24th	ITTF Pro Tour Japan Open	Kobe
22nd-23rd	Cadet/Junior Preliminary Trials	
22nd-23rd	Womens British League	
25th	European League	
	Netherlands vs England Women	
29th	Chandlers Cadet/Junior 1 Star	
29th-30th	Clare Pengelly Memorial Butterfly Grand Prix	Paignton, Devon
29th-30th	Essex Select 4 Star Cadet/Junior	
30th	Grove Senior Graded 2 Star	
OCTOBER		
6th	Chesham High School Junior Graded 2 Star	Chesham, Bucks.
6th-7th	Stiga Blackpool Cadet/Junior 4 Star	
6th-7th	VETTS Midland Masters	Wolverhampton
7th	British League (3) Premier Division	
9th	European League	
	England Men vs Spain	Halifax
13th	National Council	
13th	National Junior League (1)	
13th-14th	Sussex Open Butterfly Grand Prix	Hastings
13th-14th	Junior British League (1)	
14th	Grove Veterans 4 Star	
18th-21st	ITTF Pro Tour German Open	Bayreuth
20th	County Championships (2) Cadet, Junior, Senior & Veterans	
21st	British League (4) Premier Division	
21st	National Cadet League (1)	
21st	Chesham High School Junior Graded 2 Star	

THE ETTA WEBSITE

www.etta.co.uk