

table tennis news

Official Magazine of the **English Table Tennis Association**

ISSUE 318 £2.95
JULY 2006

Flintoff

Tries his hand at
our great sport!

Cooke makes history!

Alan becomes a
world champion!

Plus:

Featured:

Howard Jacobson

Jon Kaufman

and

How to conquer
dehydration

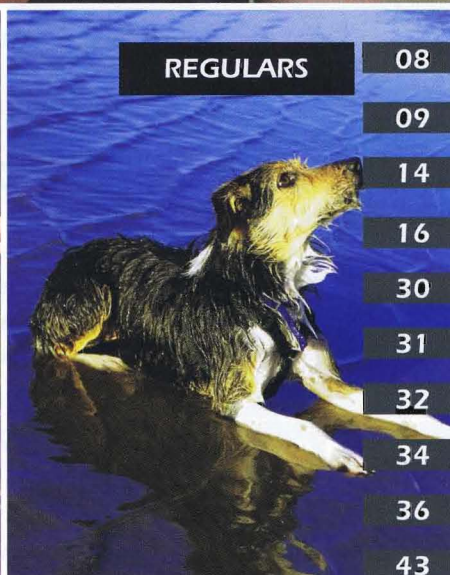
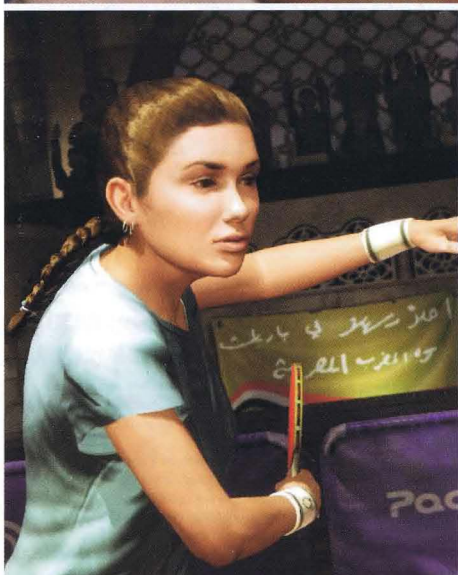
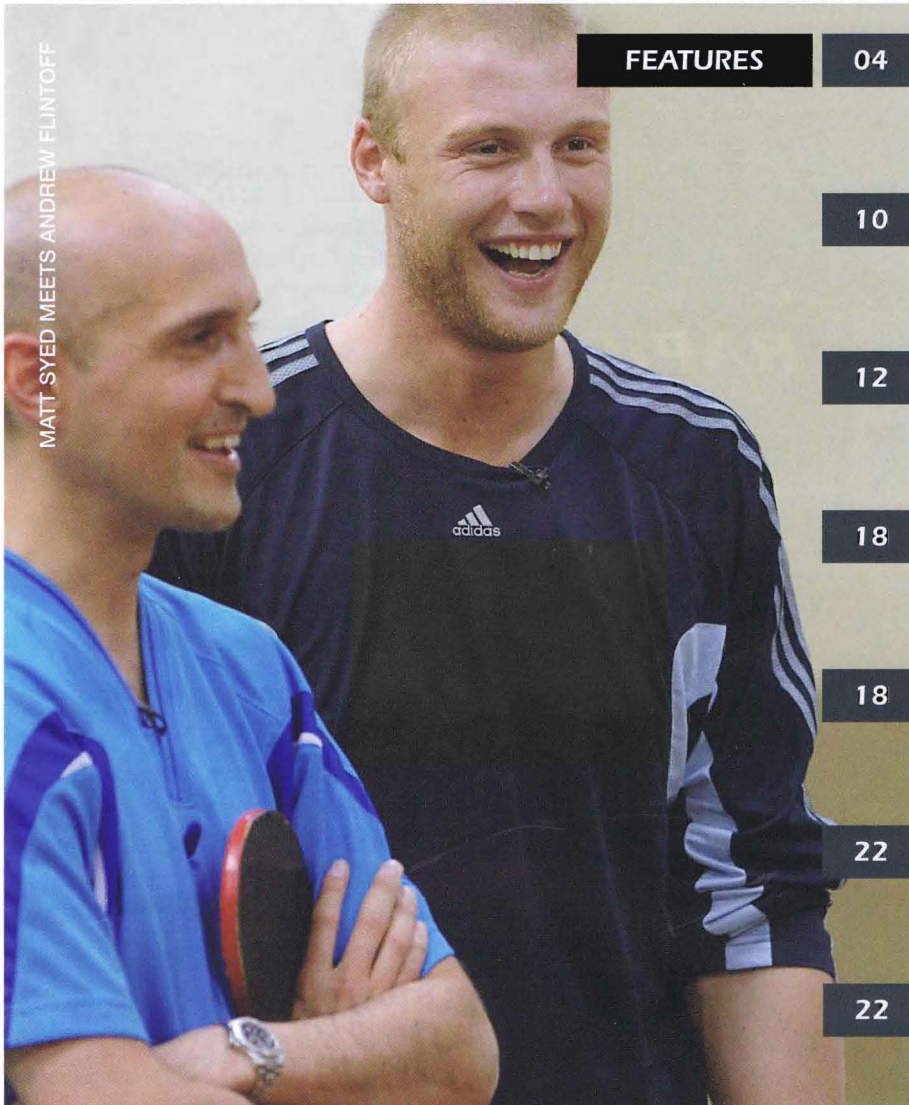


STIGA[®]
www.tabletennis.se

Optimum Sync Optimum Plus



WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE



FEATURES

04

COOKE MAKES HISTORY

Alan has recently become the first English player to win the World Over 40s title.

10

PLAY LIKE A CHAMPION

Christopher Pettit explains how your hydration level is the key element to success.

12

GRAND THEFT AUTO TO TT

Rockstar Games truly shock the gaming world with their new blockbusting title - Table Tennis

18

TOP PLAYERS OF THE FUTURE

Meet our top ten young guns, as we delve into their tournament history.

18

CRICKET OR TABLE TENNIS?

Flintoff tries his hand at Table Tennis, but what does Matt Syed make of his new skills?

22

HOWARD JACOBSON

Matt Syed evaluates Jacobson's philosophical novel - The Mighty Walzer.

22

KERN INTERVIEWS KAUFMAN

Steve Kern catches up with Jon Kaufman - the driving force behind London Progress.

REGULARS

08

STRAIGHT TALK

09

AT A GLANCE

14

COACHING TIPS

16

HOME AND AWAY

30

JUNIOR TOURNAMENTS

31

TOTALLY VETERAN

32

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

34

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

36

ROUND UP SUMMARY

43

ETTA RANKINGS

Bribar

Table Tennis

TIBHAR RAPID

Elastic offensive rubber for optimum spin / speed, similar in characteristics to Mambo or Sriver. The surface is grippy and suits the controlled attacker or offensive allrounder. Available in 2.0mm red or black. Opt for the Rapid Soft version for enhanced touch.

Spin	88	Speed	68	Control	90
Thickness: 1.8 / 2.0					
- DEF +	-	ALL +	-	OFF +	

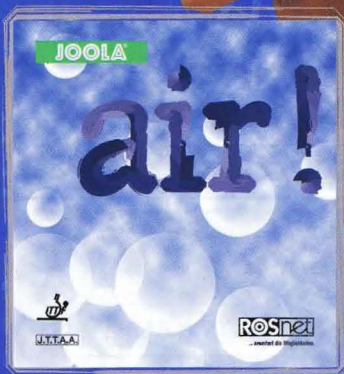
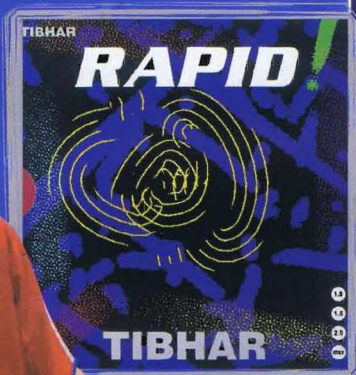
RRP £23.99
Sale Price £17.99
 or buy 2 sheets for £32.00

TIBHAR RAPID

Elastic offensive rubber for optimum spin / speed, similar in characteristics to Mambo or Sriver. The surface is grippy and suits the controlled attacker or offensive allrounder. Available in 2.0mm red or black. Opt for the Rapid Soft version for enhanced touch.

Spin	88	Speed	68	Control	90
Thickness: 1.8 / 2.0					
- DEF +	-	ALL +	-	OFF +	

RRP £23.99
Sale Price £17.99
 or buy 2 sheets for £32.00



JOOLA AIR

A favourite from Jooola designed for the attacking player requiring good catapult effect and top control. The reduced weight of the sponge permits players to increase the thickness of sponge and the corresponding attacking possibilities without losing balance. 1.5mm or 1.8mm for control and 2.0mm and 2.5mm for attack. Available in red / black.

Spin	95	Speed	96	Control	72
Thickness: 1.5 / 1.8 / 2.0 / 2.5					
- DEF +	-	ALL +	-	OFF +	

RRP £28.99
Sale Price £23.50
 or buy 2 sheets for £40.00

STIGA INNOVA

Air capsule sponge for improved spin and speed. The sponge design increases elasticity but maintains power - for attacking players only. Available in 2.0mm and 2.5mm sponge.

Spin	96	Speed	95	Control	72
Thickness: 2.0 / 2.5					
- DEF +	-	ALL +	-	OFF +	

RRP £27.50
Sale Price £23.50
 or buy 2 sheets for £40.00

WHEN ORDERING PLEASE QUOTE TABLE TENNIS NEWS.

• Tel: 01227 741471/01227 741644
 Fax: 01227 860569 • E-mail: sales@bribartt.co.uk

Bribar Table Tennis, Knaves Ash House,
 Church Road, Hoath, Canterbury CT3 4JT

PUBLISHER

ETTA, Queensbury House, Havelock Road,
 Hastings, East Sussex TN34 1HF
 Tel: 01424 722525
 Fax: 01424 422103
 Email: admin@englishtabletennis.org.uk
 Web: www.englishtabletennis.org.uk

EDITOR

Richard Pettit
 National Communications Officer
 English Table Tennis Association
 Tel. 01424 722525
 Mob. 07970 575280
 Email: editor@englishtabletennis.org.uk

ADVERTISEMENTS

Richard Pettit
 National Communications Officer
 English Table Tennis Association
 Tel. 01424 722525
 Mob. 07970 575280
 Email: editor@englishtabletennis.org.uk

SUBSCRIPTION & DISTRIBUTION

Robert Sinclair
 ETTA Headquarters, Hastings

GRAPHIC DESIGN

by Nikki Finn
 Naughty Beagle Graphic Design Service
 Tel: 01424 715915
 Email: nikki@naughtybeagle.co.uk

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

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

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

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

from the editor



RICHARD PETTIT, EDITOR



HOWARD JACOBSON

A superb novelist and broadcaster, Howard Jacobson is best known to table tennis fanatics across the world as the author of 'The Mighty Walzer' released back in 1999.



MATTHEW SYED

Matthew is former English number one. He has a defensive style with the bat yet quite the opposite with the pen. Currently a Times columnist, TV sports commentator and media pundit.



STEVE KERNS

After 15 years as Chelmsford League Press Officer, Steve is concentrating on his duties as British League Press Officer and Essex County Press Officer. Steve has also been a regular member of the Essex Veterans third team.



JEREMY WILSON

Jeremy is a sports journalist who writes regularly for both The Guardian and The Sunday Times. He has also played senior and junior county table tennis for Hampshire.

England's lacklustre performance in the footy, Henman's virtual no show at Wimbledon and this the last Table Tennis News of the season you might think what's there to cheer about. But stop, you still have 48 cracking pages of table tennis to enjoy and with the new season just around the corner, the glass is definitely half full not half empty. First up Jeremy Wilson provides an intriguing insight into our very own World Champion. Hydration or the lack of it has hit the news in a big way in recent weeks. Our expert provides you with some valuable tips to keep you brimming with confidence. We also showcase the future talents of our sport, the recently crowned National Champions in our "young guns" feature.

I delve into the new sensational Xbox title which is causing something of a stir whilst Matthew Syed delights in the literary genius of Howard Jacobson, complimented by a short piece by the master himself. This provides you with an appetiser to the main course due to be served up at the front end of next season's editions on the Hard Bat player from the USA, Marty Reisman

Following another triumphant season at London Progress top man Jon Kaufman's stance on table tennis is documented by our British League connoisseur Steve Kerns. Also Barry Granger opens up his county championships account providing the low-down on this, the 54th season.

Finally I can't leave you for months without a challenge as I know what competitive souls table tennis players are...back in 1993 Lisa Lomas and Jackie Bellinger set the world record for counter hitting. They reached an astonishing 173 in just 60 secondsbeat that! Have a great summer.

"COOKE IS LIKE AN ENTHUSIASTIC TEENAGER" JEREMY WILSON PAGE 4 "THE CORRECT HYDRATION LEVEL IS A KEY ELEMENT TO HELPING YOU GAIN THE EDGE AGAINST THE OPPOSITION" CHRISTOPHER PETTIT PAGE 11 "ANDREW FLINTOFF HOWEVER, IS AN ALL-ROUNDER IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE" MATTHEW SYED PAGE 22 "THE VERY FIRST TABLE TENNIS COMPETITION I ENTERED ENDED IN AN AMBULANCE" HOWARD JACKOBSON" PAGE 26 "SUNDAY WAS ANOTHER DAY AS FARQUHAR TURNED THE TABLES" GRAHAM TRIMMING PAGE 30 "ONE OF THE MORE EXCITABLE CHESHIRE YOUNGSTERS WAS YELLOW CARDED" BARRY SNOWDEN PAGE 3

ENGLAND'S WORLD CHAMPION

WORLD VETERANS TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP BY JEREMY WILSON

"DO you know something," says Alan Cooke, "it would be great to return in another life, try another sport and see how far you could get."

He might be something of an ageing monarch who has sat proudly at the top of English table tennis for a span of around two decades, yet when it comes to talking about sport, Cooke is like an enthusiastic young teenager.

A planned 20-minute conversation about his wonderful recent victory in the World Veterans' Championships soon extends to an hour and drifts from table tennis to the football World Cup and then to Colin Montgomerie's chances of winning one of golf's majors, before a discussion of whether he (Cooke) could complete the London Marathon. Given that he ran last year's Great North Run half-marathon in a mightily impressive 1hr 24 mins, it's surprising that he has any doubts. Still, despite an obvious passion for just about all sports, Cooke has no need to look beyond his chosen profession to feel a sense of real achievement.

He has recently become the first English player to win the world over 40s title. Cooke triumphed over a high quality field of around 1,000 players and his victories included a 3-0 semi-final demolition of old adversary and three-times European men's singles champion Mikael Appelgren, who was also the defending champion.

"I didn't actually take that much significance into the tournament," says Cooke, "I had practiced very little. I had quite a difficult draw – there was a good Estonian in the last 16 and then a former Chinese national player in the quarter-finals.

Appelgren had an easier draw which possibly didn't help him as I was that bit sharper. It was strange to play him again. It had been more than ten years, although in the 1980s and 1990s we played about 25 or 26 times.

But even when he was one of the top players in the world, I was 50/50 with him and the memories did come flooding back.

The reaction since I got back has been fantastic – I have been getting lots of calls and texts. I am proud to have won a world championship but I wouldn't compare it to winning an open category tournament and what Johnny Leach or John Hilton achieved in winning World and European championships. There was less pressure on me, you are playing for yourself, it was serious but still quite a relaxed tournament and I really enjoyed it."

It is a far cry from how Cooke felt about competitive table tennis a decade ago when he made the decision to retire during the 1996

"Cooke has recently become the first English player to win the world over-40s title and triumphed over a high quality field of around 1,000 players" JEREMY WILSON



“Des was my childhood hero, I had grown up watching him on the television in the final of the English Championships every year from about the age of ten.” ALAN COOKE

European Championships after England's relegation from the top division.

“That was pretty much when I made my mind up,” he says, “I had begun my career in the European Championships in Moscow in 1984 when we were relegated. It was a horrible experience and something I never wanted to happen again. But I decided to play for one more year after 1996 and then go out at the World Championships in 1997 at Manchester. I was physically and mentally burnt out. For a time up until my mid to late 20s, I was on an upwards curve but then I reached a stage where I didn't feel competitive against the very best players – the top ten.”

Cooke didn't play for two years, although he did continue to coach.

The catalyst for his comeback was the buzz of the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester. “I was coaching the men's team,” he says, “and some of the lads wanted to use me to warm up and practice against and I found that I was still competitive with most of them including Matt [Syed] and he was one of the favourites for the competition. It was such a great atmosphere and I just felt I should be playing.”

Cooke has spent the last four years proving his point in emphatic style. He has quickly climbed back to the summit of the national game, winning three more English singles titles to take his overall tally to six. Yet the priority was this year's Commonwealth Games in March. His preparation focussed largely on a gruelling physical training schedule but he eventually lost in the quarter-finals of the singles and then the semi-finals of the doubles. “I didn't play badly in Melbourne,” he says, “but I think I had over-trained for it. It was disappointing not to do better but there was some good competition and you have to be realistic and respectful of that.”

So how does the Cooke of 2006 compare to the player of the late 1980s and early 1990s who was good enough to reach the quarter-finals of the 1990 European Championships and help England to the silver medal in two team championships, as well as defeat all of the top stars in the game, including Jan Ove Waldner?

“I have slowed down and I am not as powerful as I was ten years ago,” he says, “but I don't feel the same amount of pressure. If I suffered a disappointing loss, the pain would take days and days to go away. I can pick myself up much quicker.”

Cooke's priority now is to help bring forward the next crop of English players.

“My ambitions are around the coaching side,” he says, “I would like to see the girls come through. The boys are looking reasonably healthy with the likes of Paul Drinkhall, Darius Knight and Gavin Evans. The important thing is that we have a way of getting into the schools and identifying

the best talent so that we don't lose them to other sports.”

Cooke is well aware that there was an element of fate in his decision to play table tennis from the age of ten.

“We played football, but one day a school match got rained off and they brought us indoors,” he says, “the team went into a table tennis exhibition at the school. We started a school team and continued at our secondary school. My parents gave me their 100% support, but never put me under any pressure, and my coach was only interested in developing me as a player who could go straight into senior table tennis.”

From when he first picked up a bat, Cooke's aim was to compete against the legendary Desmond Douglas who dominated English senior table tennis for more than decade.

“Des was my childhood hero,” he says, “I had grown up watching him on the television in the final of the English Championships every year from about the age of ten. I think he beat me the first three times that we played in the national final. All I can remember was thinking that I was playing my hero and it had been my dream to play against him.

I kept getting the image in my head from when I was about ten of watching him on television. He was someone that the harder you attacked him, the better he played. He had fantastic hands and could create incredible angles.” Eventually, though, Cooke's relentless heavy topspin style allowed him to succeed Douglas as the best player in the country – a position on the England ranking list which, amazingly, he continues to occupy.

“I am glad I chose what I did,” he says, “I have no regrets and I have been lucky to achieve some of my dreams.”



end of season analysis from our chairman

With the last issue of *Table Tennis News* for this season here I hope you have enjoyed the changes especially the new format and content. It is in my view much more modern and its image portrays the most exciting and competitive sport in the world.

The table tennis season has finished for many of you at league and club level albeit the increase in summer league programmes across the country continues. I hope you have had a great and successful table tennis season and your results were better than expected.

Our events programme has shown major increases in participation levels, particularly within the cadet and junior ranks, which augers well for the future.

It is exciting to note that this season we have won World Gold Medals at cadet level, over 40s and over 85s, which shows that our sport is for life and the results cover an age range of over 70 years.

It is essential though that our results in the senior ranks continue to improve. Our increasing group of young talented players are starting to illustrate that the future looks much brighter.

The commitment of your Management Team to table tennis and the willingness to listen, to be involved in your problems and help to support you with the many hours they put in has

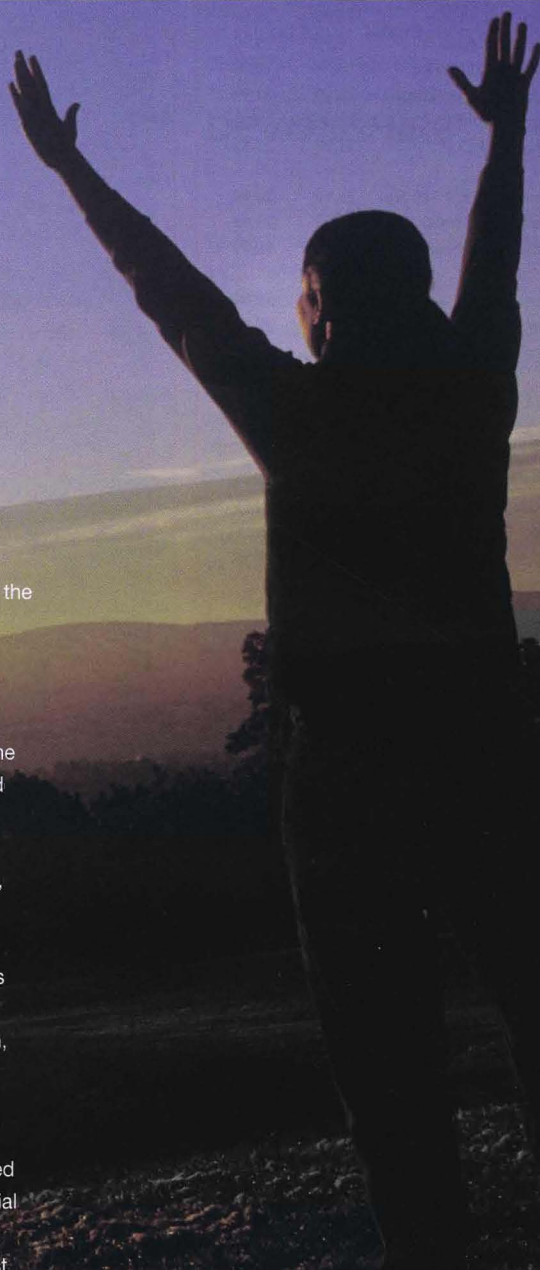
continued over the last 12 months.

It is quite clear that our sport is on the up again not just in our international performances but also in terms of overall participation. We still have a long way to go together making changes and improvements within the support, programmes, operation and management of our great sport.

Key issues such as Individual Registration, Corporate Governance, Rules and Regulations, Competition Structure and our Coaching/Development Programmes will take time to implement and feed through to the membership. You can, however, be assured that with your support these vital changes will be made and progress will continue.

The World Class Programme funded by UK Sport for Great Britain potential players will be finalised and in place during the summer to start in earnest from September. New programmes take time to put in place as they impact the whole of Great Britain, and have to be put together with the participation of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland in a way to ensure support for players across all home countries.

I hope you have a good break this summer and wish you well for next season.





three generations one table tennis team

For the final table tennis league match of the season Millom F.P. 'C' fielded a side comprising three members of the same family.

Normally this would not be considered unusual, except that in this case the team consisted of grandfather, son and

several titles, including the Yorkshire Junior Open, the West of Scotland U18, and is still the only Cumbrian to win a title of any sort in the Cumbria Open Championship. At twelve years old Nadia is just learning the game, but has managed to pick up two wins in the

At twelve years old Nadia is just learning the game, but has managed to pick up two wins in the Barrow League Division 2 so far.

granddaughter – John, Chris and Nadia Reed. Seventy three year old John has been a player in the Barrow League for over forty years and was, in addition, Chairman of the League for over twenty years, following this up with a stint as Chairman, and part founder of The Barrow and District Table Tennis Centre. Chris, now in his forties, represented the successful Millom School Club, helping them to win several national school Titles. On an individual level he won

Barrow League Division 2 so far. And the outcome? The match resulted in a win for FP 'C' against the spirited Travellers 'A' team, by 7-3. Chris, showing that he can still play a bit after a break of about twenty five years, won all three, granddad managed to win two, and Nadia chipped in with her third win of the season, coming back from two games down, and helped father Chris to take the doubles.

Table Tennis History UNCOVERED BY THE BBC

A documentary programme by the BBC which will uncover parts of table tennis history is currently under production. It is anticipated that such items as the history and origin of table tennis will be covered with an overview up to the present day, including a visit to a once famous club, St Brides in London.

ST BRIDES TABLE TENNIS CLUB IN FOCUS

St Brides Table Tennis Club is in Fleet Street, the part of London which is the home of the newspaper industry, and in the days when England's Ivor Montagu was the President of the International Table Tennis Federation, the club donated the St Brides Vase to be held by the winner of the Men's Singles event at the World Championships.

JILL HAMMERSLEY REFLECTS

The last Englishman to win the coveted trophy was Johnny Leach; he is featured in the programme as is former European Women's Singles champion, Jill Hammersley (now Jill Parker). Rolls back the years and visits where she started and reflects on her various triumphs.

BBC PRESENT IN BREMEN

In addition, the programme will cover the development of the sport worldwide and brings table tennis up-to-date with the Liebherr World Team Championships in Bremen. A BBC camera crew was present in Bremen and features the play and the general atmosphere of a World Championships; they visited the very impressive Liebherr ITTF Museum.

PROGRESS OF TECHNOLOGY EVIDENT

Furthermore, in Bremen, the progress of technology in the sport, the effects of the various racket covering was explained by Sebastian Rangs of the Tamasu Butterfly Company, whilst an interview with Jan-Ove Waldner was also arranged. Both should prove interesting viewing. Details as to the date and time of the programme are yet to be announced. It is believed it will be an hour long production. Keep your eye on our website www.etta.co.uk.



HYDRATION

In the dying moments of the game, eleven all in the fifth, you may be found wanting for a little extra energy to help you gain that crucial extra point. If you find yourself struggling to go the distance or lacking the power to make that winning combination of shots, it may be due to your hydration levels.

Agility, strength and stamina, achieved through regular training, are essential for competitive table tennis, but they won't give you the edge if you're suffering from dehydration. Hydration plays an important role in any professional's performance; just take the England football squad's lacklustre display against Paraguay in the recent World Cup match, but regardless of what level you play and indeed the intensity of your performance, the correct hydration level is a key element to helping you gain the edge against the opposition.

Water constitutes about 60% of a typical young man's and 50% of a young woman's total body weight. Despite this even minimal changes in your body's water content can impair performance. If the loss reaches 4-5% of body weight the capacity for prolonged effort can decline by as much as 20-30%!!!

Approximately 2.5 L (4-5 pints) of water is required each day for a fairly sedentary adult in a normal British environment. This water is supplied from liquids, foods, and produced by the body during metabolism. The average person consumes about 1.2 L per day (just over 2 pints) from various drinks and is able to maintain a good level of hydration. However, during exercise and in hot weather fluid intake can increase five or six times above the normal level. The main source of loss in these conditions is through sweat, the body's mechanism of maintaining its correct core temperature. In fact during an hour of intense effort a 70Kg male's sweat loss could exceed 1.5 L (2-3 pints); that's over half of a sedentary day's requirement.

It is natural to assume that the more water we lose through sweat the thirstier we would become. This assumption is true to an extent, however the mechanism is not sensitive enough to avoid losses in athletic performance. Your body doesn't sense thirst until well after dehydration begins. In fact the majority of our drinking is habitual, with meals or at natural breaks throughout

the day, it is rare for thirst to dictate our need for drink. Even when you are dehydrated you might only desire fluids but only at intermittent intervals. This has been highlighted by several scientific studies. One such study requested that its participants drink water as their thirst dictated. It showed that when reliant upon the thirst mechanism the body required 24-48 hours to completely replace water lost through heavy sweating. This is an interesting contrast to dogs, whose thirst mechanisms cause them to drink up to 10% of their total body weight within the first few minutes after exercise or heat exposure, thus replacing all their lost water. Because of our sluggish drive to replenish body water and in order to prevent chronic dehydration it is advisable to drink more water than our thirst dictates.

So exactly how much should we drink and is it better to drink before, after or during exercise?

The correct answer is that you should drink before, during and after exercise. It is recommended that you drink around about a pint of water or a sports drink two hours before a training session or match, followed by half a pint 10-20 minutes before the session or match, and then the same again every 15-20 minutes during (depending on intensity levels and environmental temperature). After the session or match you should consume approximately one to one and a half pints of water or a sports drink per pound of weight lost during the course session or match. Weighing yourself before and after every session is beyond the realms of most club level players; it is, however, an interesting experiment to

highlight just how much fluid needs to be taken on after a tough session.

Another and more practical way to check your hydration status is to monitor the colour of your urine first thing in the morning. If your urine colour is more like apple juice than water, you should drink more throughout the day.

Water or sports drinks?

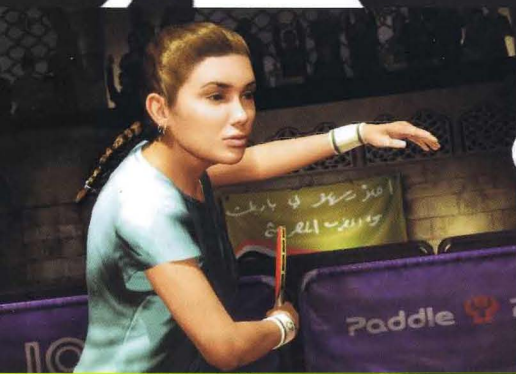
Water is a good thirst quencher, but not as good a re-hydrator as specially formulated sports drinks. This is because plain water turns off thirst prematurely and turns on the kidneys. As a result research shows that people drink less water than they need during exercise and lose more in the form of urine. Sports drinks are beneficial because they often contain other components lost in sweat and provide energy for active muscles. They may contain sodium (electrolytes), which stimulates fluid absorption, and helps maintain the desire to drink as well as suppressing the excretory mechanisms of the kidneys, therefore helping retain more water. A combination of water and sports drinks is what most people opt for.

What to look for in a sports drink?

Carbohydrate levels - below 8% is optimal for absorption and energy. Levels above this make the drink hard to digest especially during exercise. Avoid drinks containing only fructose, as too much slows fluid absorption and can initiate muscle cramps. No carbonation, which can cause stomach discomfort, and no caffeine, as it promotes dehydration.

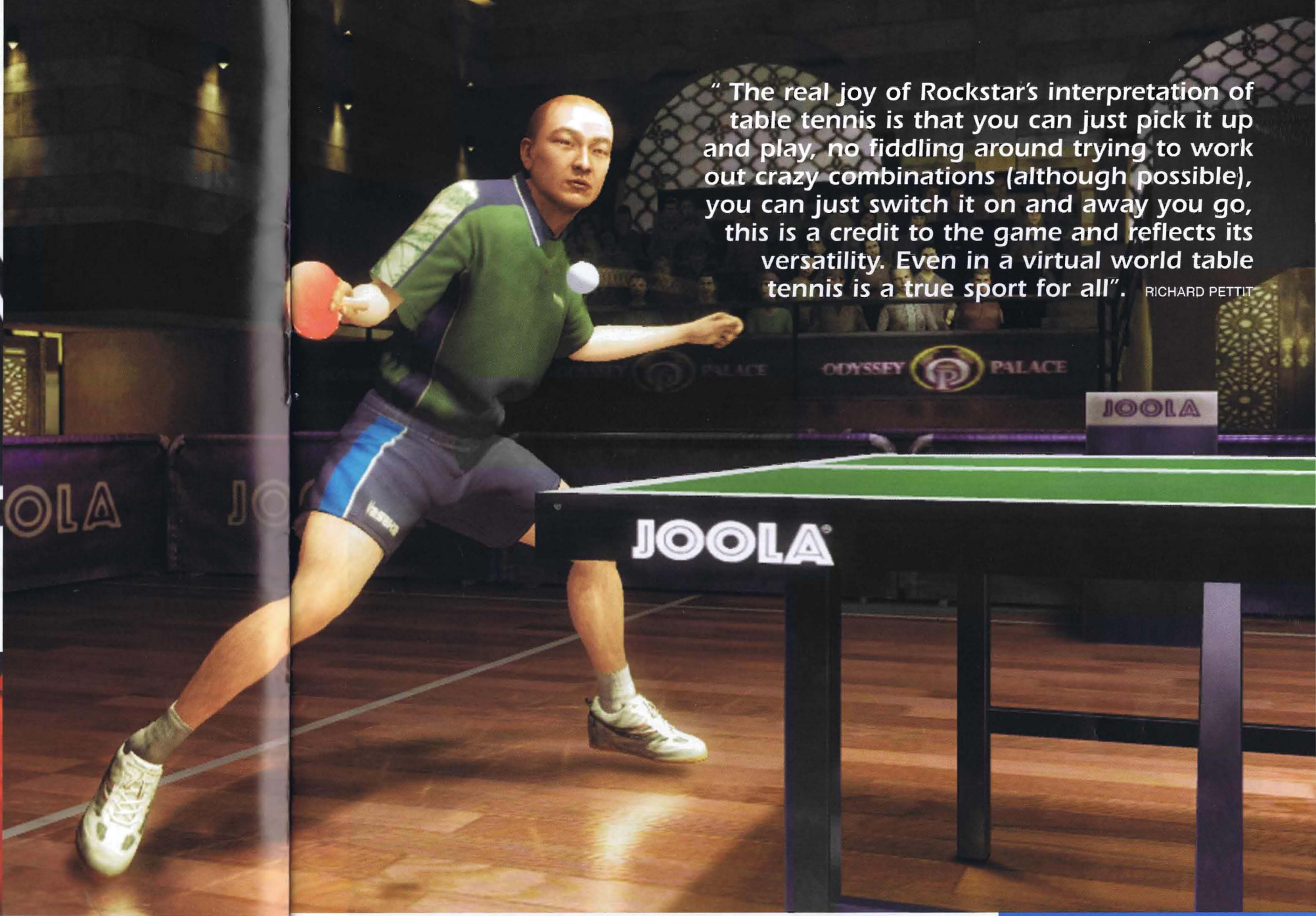
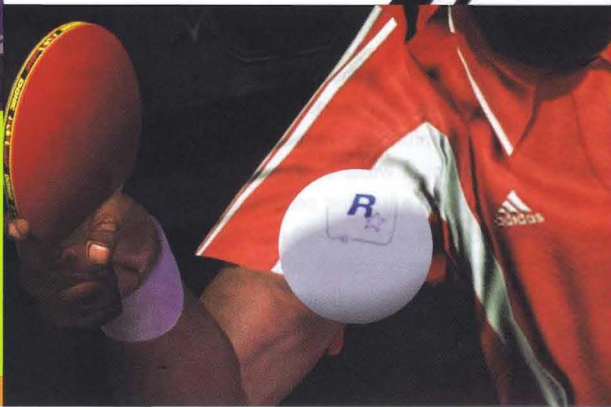
“ It showed that when reliant upon the thirst mechanism the body required 24-48 hours to completely replace water lost through heavy sweating. This is an interesting contrast to dogs, whose thirst mechanisms cause them to drink up to 10% of their total body weight within the first few minutes after exercise or heat exposure, thus replacing all their lost water”. CHRISTOPER PETTIT

ROCKSTAR GAMES PRESENTS TABLE TENNIS



"Here is a loving tribute to the sport that is unabashedly serious, and by golly it's wonderful"

THE OBSERVER



"The real joy of Rockstar's interpretation of table tennis is that you can just pick it up and play, no fiddling around trying to work out crazy combinations (although possible), you can just switch it on and away you go, this is a credit to the game and reflects its versatility. Even in a virtual world table tennis is a true sport for all". RICHARD PETTIT

Xbox, Playstation, Game Cube, all of these words either inspire or disillusion you, let's face it you're either a gamer or you're not. I have never been truly submerged into the world of gaming, yes, the temptation has always been there and I have dabbled in such titles as Sensible World of Soccer, Porsche Challenge and Grand Prix Racing. However, these would always be swiftly kicked into touch if the real game of TT or footy was in the offering.

Last year table tennis popped up on the playstation, great, about time our mighty sport gained coverage in the virtual world. However, the title Spin Drive Ping Pong was a low budget game with budget graphics, game play and above all a promotional company that simply didn't have the credentials to push the title to the forefront.

So imagine my scepticism when I received a phone call about another blockbusting,

revolutionary, mind-blowing title. Whilst the buzzwords rolled down the receiver there was one word that stood out: ROCKSTAR. Now you may not recognise the name, however, I could almost guarantee you have inadvertently heard of one of their controversial titles, Grand Theft Auto (GTA). With its objectionable content and anti social behaviour GTA is arguably the most talked about title of all time, this you may say is a bad thing, however, in a world where any publicity is good publicity, GTA definitely made its mark.

As pushing the boundaries with controversial content has become second nature to the guys at Rockstar, so time for a change of direction, their new focus fixed squarely on a sport close to their hearts, TABLE TENNIS, this once again truly shocked the games world.

Anyway, enough of the background and PR, what about the game.....I was invited to Rockstar headquarters and after a swift

introduction and demo(lition) by Hamish Brown, the Rockstar's PR Manager, it was clear that this was no ordinary game. The pace, sound, movements and even beads of sweat as match point approached were captured and fed down in intense vibrations to the vast array of buttons that is the Xbox 360 controller. Every conceivable type of shot is captured, first in real-time then in brilliant slow motion from camera angles galore.

The real joy of Rockstar's interpretation of table tennis is that you can just pick it up and play, no fiddling around trying to work out crazy combinations (although possible), you can just switch it on and away you go, this is a credit to the game and reflects its versatility. Even in a virtual world table tennis is a true sport for all. So just how has Rockstar achieved where all others have failed? Well the answer lay in pride of place in their studio and as Hamish informed me, in each and every Rockstar studio across

the world, there was a real full size table tennis table that was loved and played on at every possible opportunity. This passion for table tennis is truly reflected in every detail of Rockstar's virtual table tennis world.

The very fact that Rockstar is so interested in table tennis demonstrates what a product table tennis is, this video game is not simply entertainment for the ever swelling gaming population who will put it down once the next new title comes along. It is invaluable publicity for our sport; it is touching the untouchable youth in a manner which is simply impossible for other media, providing them with a rich, inspiring, engaging and, greatest of all, cool image of our sport.

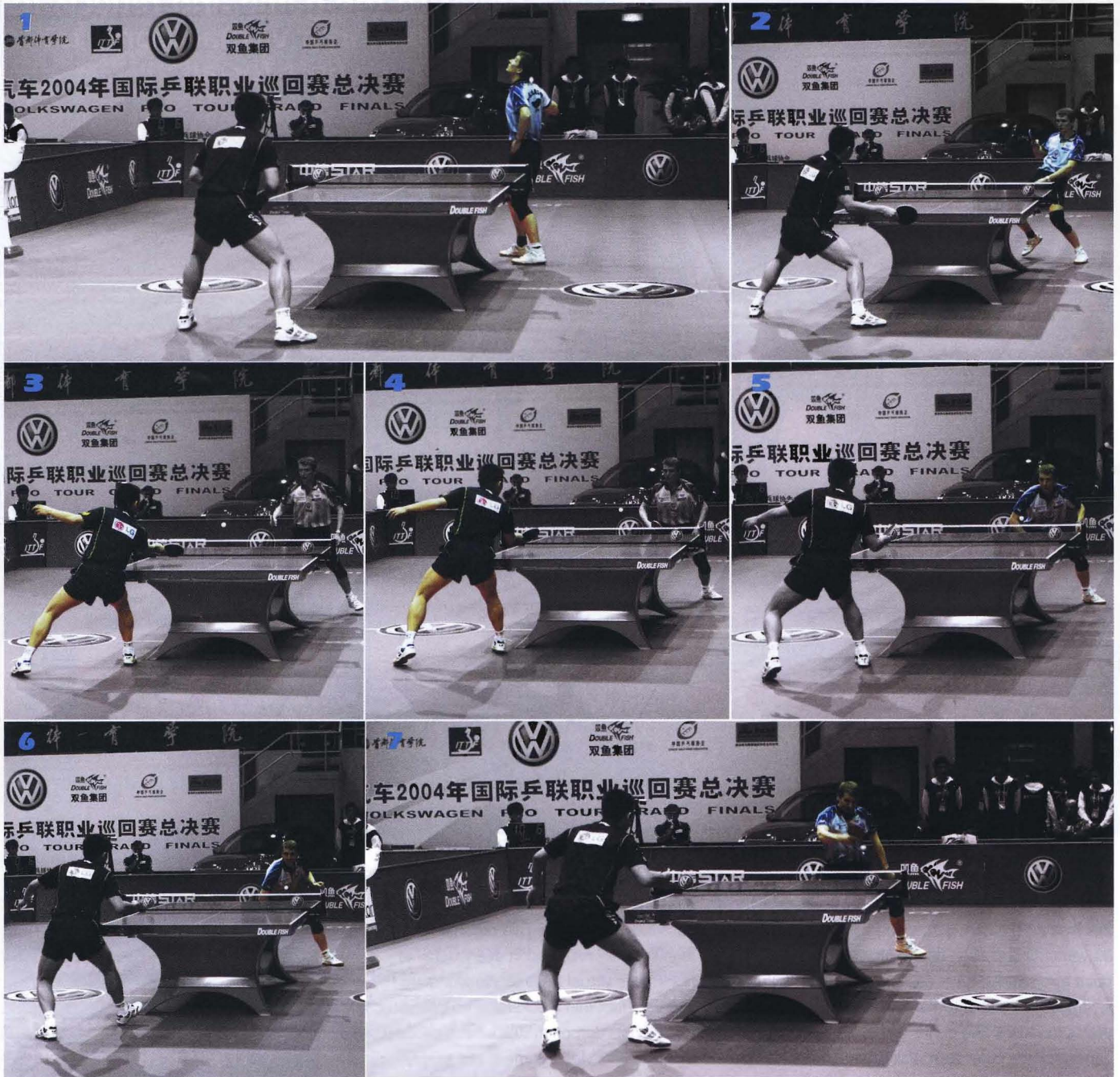
Who knows, perhaps introduction to our game via this modern medium might spark the interest of a future champion.

By Richard Pettit - Editor

"Table tennis may not be the most obvious step for the wilfully controversial developer behind the Grand Theft Auto series"

ARENA MAGAZINE

COACHING TIPS



TACTIC

A successful tactic used often by Werner Schlager against Kong Linghui was to attack very quickly with a backhand topspin.

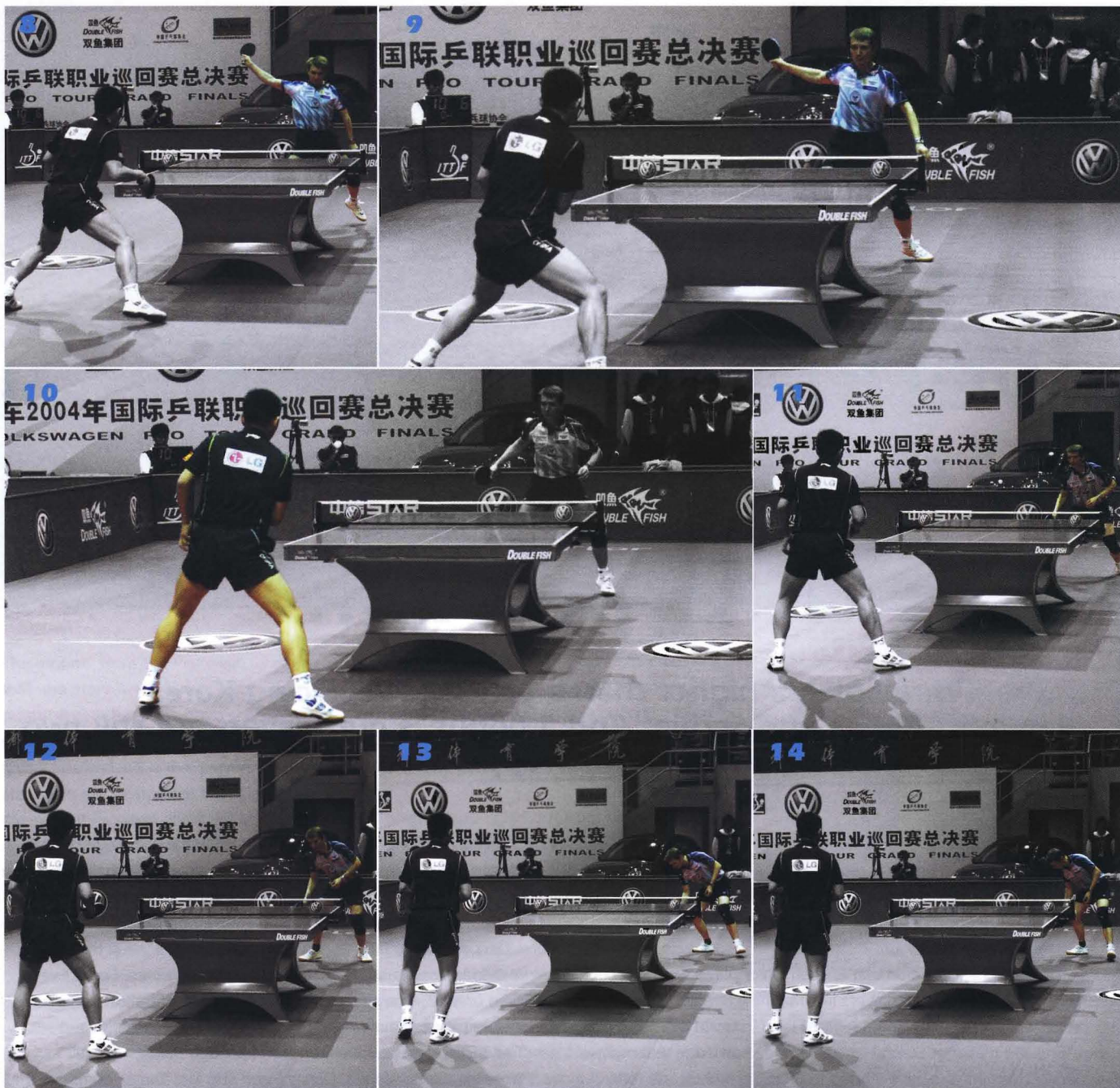
An Early Contact

COACHING TIPS WITH
IAN MARSHALL

ADVANTAGES

Werner Schlager gained three major advantages by topspinning the ball early with the backhand. Firstly, it enabled him to play a powerful stroke; secondly, his opponent was given little time to react and thirdly, he was able to create a wide angle.

Volkswagen Pro Tour Grand Finals 2004 Round One - Men's Singles Werner Schlager v Kong Linghui



TECHNIQUE

Werner Schlager adopts a low body position at the end of the back swing, the legs are bent and the body is leaning slightly forward. It is a good balanced position and a position from which he can generate a great deal of power. Furthermore, the elbow is virtually at the table height, bent and in front of the ball as he prepares to make contact. The legs straighten as the power is generated from the shoulder and he recovers quickly, ready to attack again if necessary.

KONG LINGHUI

The ball has flown fast and wide to Kong Linghui's backhand, Kong Linghui is a player with outstanding control but even he cannot control the return as his attempted block flies off the end of the table.

HOME: England's junior boys have moved up in the world, to fifth position in the latest ITTF world rankings...

...that's three places higher than a year ago replacing Korea Republic, Russia and Serbia. And a bonus is our players are still two years younger than many of their opponents.

These latest figures come after good individual performances in recent months including gold and silver medals at the World Cadet Challenge in the Dominican Republic and more medals at the European Youth Championships in Prague.

It's the highest position that English junior players have occupied for over 20 years when players like Matthew Syed and Carl Prean each went on to play at the highest level in world events.

England manager Steen Hansen, in the knowledge that many world class players have started to blossom in their late teens, recently moved the squad up to senior level by including them in the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne and more recently the World Championships in Bremen, Germany.

England are now chasing China, Japan, Germany and Chinese Taipei for a place in the top three of the world's best junior teams.

HANSEN NAMES SQUAD FOR EUROPEAN YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS

England manager Steen Hansen has named 15 players in his squad for the European Youth Championships in Sarajevo next month.

This is Europe's top event in which Paul Drinkhall and Darius Knight both came away with medals last year; Drinkhall with the cadets singles title, with Darius a gold in the team event and a silver with his Ukraine partner in the mixed doubles.

Darius was not far behind with a team gold, silver in the individual event and a bronze in the mixed doubles. Gavin Evans, then only 12, was also part of that team winning effort.

Both players have now moved into the junior rankings and will find the opposition much tougher, although medals are still possible. David Meads, Danny Reed and Tim Yarnall complete the junior line-up.

England no 1 junior Kelly Sibley leads the junior girl's squad along with Sarra Wang and Melanie Farquhar.

Gavin Evans will lead the cadet boys with Richard Marshall, Liam Pitchford and Matt Ware while Rachel Jamieson, Emma Vickers and Melissa Wright are Hansen's choice in the girl's event.

The European Youth Championships take place at the Skenderija Centre, Sarajevo, between 21-30 July 2006.

Turn to page 34 to find out the English results of the Polish Open.

By Jim Beckley

"Chinese Taipei's 'superman' Hung Chieh Chiang, the world no.3, impressively destroyed Turkey's Menge Gencay in the boys' final" WING YUNG CHAN

AWAY: News from the International Schools Federation World Schools Table Tennis Championships, held in Shanghai, China.



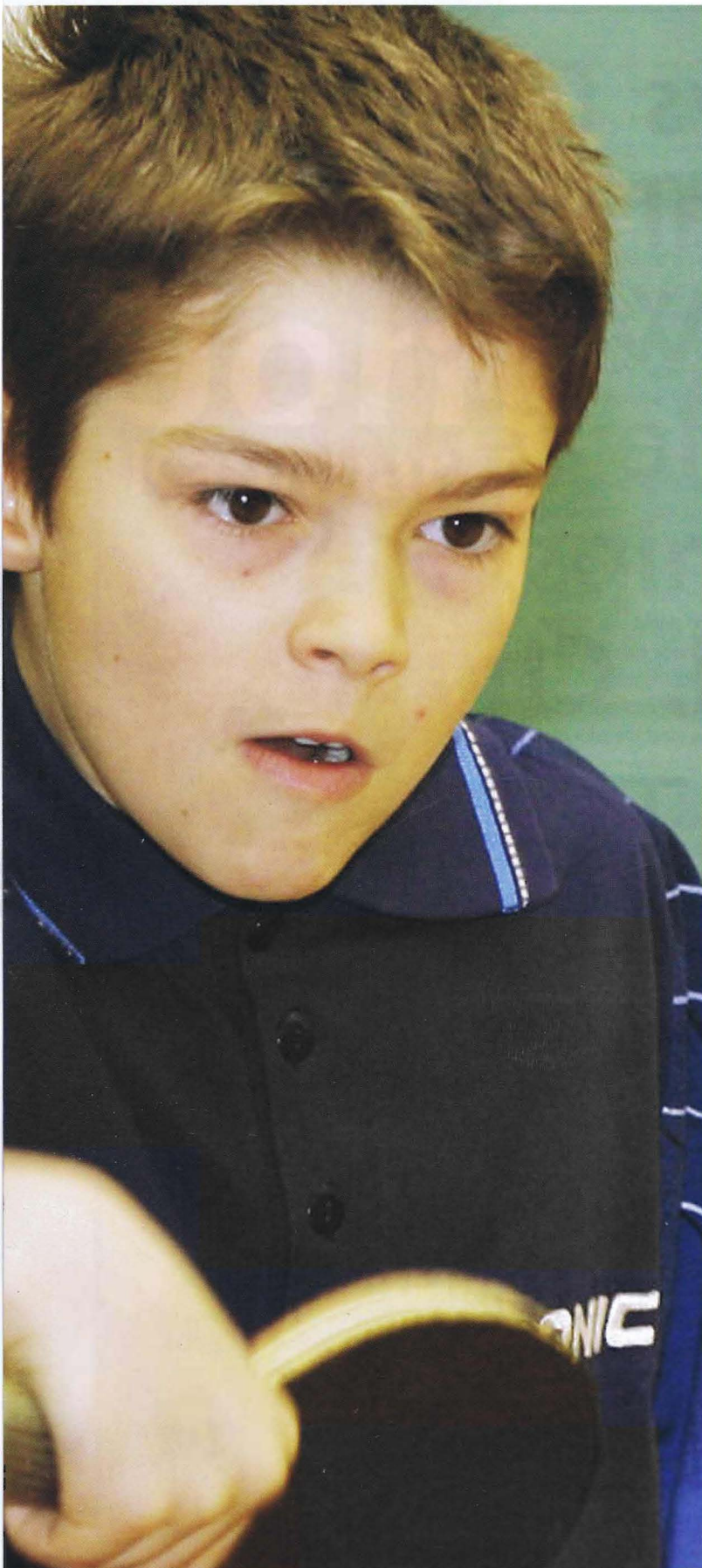
Ben Barlow, Bradley Evans, David Meads, Danny Reed, Paul Birch, Nicola Brown, Charlotte Callcut, Felicity Love, Rachel Jamieson, Nicky Jarvis, Wing Yung Chan, Patrick Hui, David Johnson, Adam Ryder, David Williams. (not in order of photo)

The team competition was split into four categories two national and two school teams. The National Girl's team (Melanie Farquhar, Caroline Hallows, Emily O'Sullivan, Emma Vickers, npc Gail McCulloch) finished 6th; the National Boys team (Ben Barlow, Bradley Evans, David Meads, Danny Reed, npc Paul Birch) just missed out on a medal to finish 4th; the Girls' School team (Peniel - Nicola Brown, Charlotte Callcut, Felicity Love, Rachel Jamieson, npc Nicky Jarvis) finished 8th and the Boys' School team (Whitgift - Wing Yung Chan, Patrick Hui, David Johnson, Adam Ryder, npc David Williams) finished 13th. Both David Meads and Rachel Jamieson had good wins over Chinese players.

The next two days saw the individual event which as expected was dominated by players from China and Chinese Taipei. Bradley Evans, David Meads, Danny Reed, Melanie Farquhar and Rachel Jamieson qualified from their groups with all other players going into the Consolation. Ben Barlow, Wing Yung Chan, Caroline Hallows and Emily O'Sullivan reached the last 8 of the Consolation. David Meads, Brad Evans, Danny Reed and Rachel Jamieson all fell to Oriental challenges. Chinese Taipei's 'superman' Hung Chieh Chiang, the world no.3, impressively destroyed Turkey's Menge Gencay in the boys final with Li Fuquan of China beating Nai-Yi Hsiung of Chinese Taipei in the girls' event.

With all matches complete, the presentations were made followed by the closing ceremony with several speeches and the lowering and passing on of the ISF flag to the Israeli delegation - in preparation for the event in two year's time.

TOP PLAYERS OF THE FUTURE



10 Young GUNS

SAM WALKER
Age: 11
Club: Worksop
Coach: Howard Knott

Unbelievably Sam had his first dose of table tennis at the age of two, his father Steven Walker, himself a table tennis nut, helped Sam stand on a piano stool so he could see over the table. Sam then progressed to Redlands School where table tennis and all sport have a very high profile, this allowed Sam to enjoy as much sport as he could possibly cram in.

Cricket is Sam's other major interest and he has been a regular in the school team for over five years, playing at Trent Bridge in a county final at the age of 6. He started playing competitive table tennis in the local Worksop League at the age of seven and has won numerous junior and senior titles.

Redlands always enters the E.S.T.T.A. tournaments and it was whilst winning the U11's team title in 2005 that Sam was asked to play for England in the Schools International in Wales last year. Sam played really well and from then on he has gone from strength to strength. He went on to win the schools individual title beating Lewis Gray in the final in his first ever tournament – he wasn't even seeded as he didn't have any ranking points or a player's licence!

This season he has entered tournaments winning the East Midlands and Derby 4 Stars at his age level. He again played for England in the Schools Championship in Scotland winning both team and individual gold, being undefeated over the weekend. He has been runner-up in the schools individual at Stoke, losing to Eddie Mitchell in the final. The culmination of this season has been selection for England in the Euro Mini Championships in Strasburg in August and the U11 Championship victory at Crystal Palace without dropping a set.

Sam's strengths are his excellent hand-eye co-ordination, determination and a very strong character, he plays the big points well. He is lucky enough to have a great coach in Howard Knott, who always is great fun to be with and who knows that there is far more to life than just table tennis! This always makes Sam eager to train and very level headed.

“it is far more important for Sam to be enjoying what he is doing, than to be constantly worried about the winning.” MRS WALKER (SAM’S MUM)

MELISSA WRIGHT

Age: 14

Club: Abbeydale

Sponsor: Tees Sport (Butterfly)

Proudest moment: Being selected for England for the first time

Other interests: Football, music and shopping

Tournament History

- 2006 National U14 Champion
- 2006 National U15 Runner-up
- 2005 National U13 Champion
- 2005 Cadet Six Nations Team Silver
- 2005 National Schools U13 Champion
- 2005 Schools Home International Team Silver
- 2003 National Schools U11 finalist



LEWIS GRAY

Age: 12

Club: The Weald

Coach: Ken Muhr

Sponsor: Bribar Table Tennis (Joola)

Proudest moment: Becoming a three times National Champion

Other interests: PS2, snowboarding, tennis and pet cat Sydney

Career Highlights

- 2006 National U12 singles champion
- 2006 National U12 doubles champion partner Edward Mitchell
- 2006 Angley Sports College Douglas Maloney Victor Ludorum trophy winner
- 2006 Represented England Youth Development squad at the International Youth Tournament of Catalunya, Spain
- 2006 Kent Schools U13 Boys singles champion
- 2005 Tunbridge Wells U12 Junior Sports Achiever Award
- 2004 National U10 boys singles champion



TOP PLAYERS OF THE FUTURE



EMILY BATES

Age: 10

Club: Grantham Tornadoes

Coach: Hong Hong Pebbles

Emily started playing just three years ago, her coach Hong Hong Pebbles asked her if she fancied a try after completing a coaching session with her older brother Michael. Just 20 minutes on the table was enough to convince Hong of her potential. Emily then moved swiftly on to her first tournament which resulted in victory at the Grantham 1 Star followed with a runners-up medal in the Blackpool 4 Star.

From Blackpool the next step was obvious, straight to China! Here Emily embarked on a six week training camp with her brother, this was a true shock, and the dedication and investment to training was certainly an eye opener, however, Emily being Emily she took it all on board.

Continuing on her rich vein of form Emily's jubilation lead to a creative handstand, resulting in a broken wrist just weeks before the National Championships. This would have ruled a lesser player out, however against advice Emily was determined to play and after getting the all clear from the referee she did just that, sporting a pink cast.

To everyone's utter amazement Emily reached both the U10 and U11 finals. In the U11 final she lost out in a super match 3-2 to the 'Pocket Rocket' - Lucy Davidson, and then went on to win 3-1 against Vicky Smith from Devon in the U10s, and gained her

first National title.

Subsequently Emily was invited to both the East Midlands high performance training at Nottingham and to the England youth development training at Lillshall culminating in an international match against Spain.

Emily was thrilled to gain automatic qualification to this year's Cadet Masters. Here she performed exceptionally well and eventually came ninth out of the 16 players taking part. Along with her fellow Grantham Tornadoes teammates, Dominique Jones and Mary Fuller, Emily went on to win the Jill Hammersley Cup, without dropping a single match in the finals. Emily regularly trains with the infamous 'Evans Brothers', Gavin, Miles and Bradley (also members of the Grantham Tornadoes Club), and all three are surprised by Emily's exuberance and attitude at the grand old age of 10.

Emily has had her best news so far by being selected to represent England in the European Mini Cadets Tournament held in Strasbourg, France, in August. Emily's ultimate ambition is to wear the England shirt and one day represent her country in the Olympics; with such a mature outlook for a 10 year old this may not be a dream but a possible reality.

KIM DAYBELL

Age: 13

Club: Crookes TTC

Career Highlights

- 2006 National U14 doubles champion with David McBeath
- 2006 Finalist at Grantham cadet banded 4 star
- 2006 Semi-finalist at Blackpool cadet 4 star
- 2005 U13 England schoolboy champion
- 2005 Represented England schoolboys in a home international
- 2005 Represented England against Wales and Belgium (friendly)
- 2004 Winner of Blackpool 4 star U13
- 2003 Player of the season 'Chandlers' Tournament, Grantham



10 YOUNG GUNS

“Emily had an amazing tournament in the U11s, she once again beat her now doubles partner, Vicki Smith, 3-0”

VICKY SMITH

Age: 10
Club: DML Woolwell
Coach: Paul Whiting
Sponsor: Bribar Table Tennis
Proudest moment: Winning the Plymouth League Handicap Pairs with Paul Whiting two years running

Career Highlights

- 2006 Derby 4 star U11 champion
- 2006 National Trials U11 champion
- 2006 English Schools U11 semi-finalist
- 2006 Represented England at the British Schools Championships
- 2006 National U11 finalist
- 2006 National U12 doubles champion
- 2005 National U10 finalist
- 2005 Grantham 4 star U11 finalist
- 2004 National U10 semi-finalist
- 2004 Undefeated in Regional Squad Championships U11s
- 2004 Youngest ever Exeter 1star U11 champion
- 2004 Youngest ever player in the country's oldest adult league
- 2003 Devon Schools U11 champion

DAVID G J MCBEATH

Age: 12
Club: Waterside TTC
Coach: Ken McLeod
Sponsor: Bribar Table Tennis
Proudest moment: Receiving the Michael Austin Harlick Outstanding Sportsperson Award for 2005

Career Highlights

- 2006 Band 3 finalist at the Mid-Sussex Butterfly Grand Prix
- 2005 Junior British League Division 1 champion with Waterside TTC
- 2005 Finished 8th at the Cadet Masters, Cippenham
- 2004 Finalist U13 4 star Blackpool
- 2004 Winner of East Midlands U18 Consol.
- 2004 Represented England in Cardiff
- 2004 Liverpool U13 4 star champion
- 2004 Cheltenham U13 4 star champion
- 2004 Essex U13 4 star champion
- 2004 Band 4 winner at the Norwich BGP
- 2003 Winner of Cippenham 2 Star
- 2003 Winner of Derby 4 Star U12
- 2003 National U12 finalist



GAVIN EVANS

Age: 13
Club: Darlington TTC
Coach: Jia Yi Liu
Proudest moment: Becoming the U13 National Champion

Career Highlights

- 2006 U13 singles National Champion
- 2006 U14 singles National Champion
- 2005 World Cadet Challenge -Team Gold
- 2005 European Youth Championships - Cadet Team gold, 12 National titles (9 singles, 3 doubles) British Primary Schools Champion
- 2004 European Youth Championships - Cadet Team silver medallist
- 2004 Denmark Youth Open U11 and 13 winner, U15 runner-up, U18 doubles winner
- 2004 Swedish Youth Open U13 winner
- 2004 Cadet Six Nations in England's winning team
- 2003 Luxemburg Youth Championships U13 winner
- 2003 Hungarian Youth Open Cadet doubles winner
- 2003 Portuguese Youth Open Cadet team winner

KARINA LEFEVRE

Age: 12
Club: Ormesby
Coach: Alan Ransome OBE
Proudest moment: Representing England in the Cadet 6 Nations Championship in Holland

Career Highlights

- 2006 National U13 Schools Champion
- 2006 Finalist in the National U14 Championships
- 2006 National Cadet Doubles Champion



KATHERINE LEFEVRE

Age: 14
Club: Ormesby
Coach: Alan Ransome OBE
Proudest moment: Winning the National Cadet Doubles title at Crystal Palace

Ambition: To play for England

Career Highlights

- 2006 National Cadet Doubles Champion

10
Young
GUINLS

MATTHEW SYED MEETS:

Flintoff

It is not always the case that having the co-ordination to play one sport entails that one will have the co-ordination to play all sports - as anyone who has witnessed Carl Prean trying to skip will testify. Andrew Flintoff, however, is an all-rounder in more ways than one.

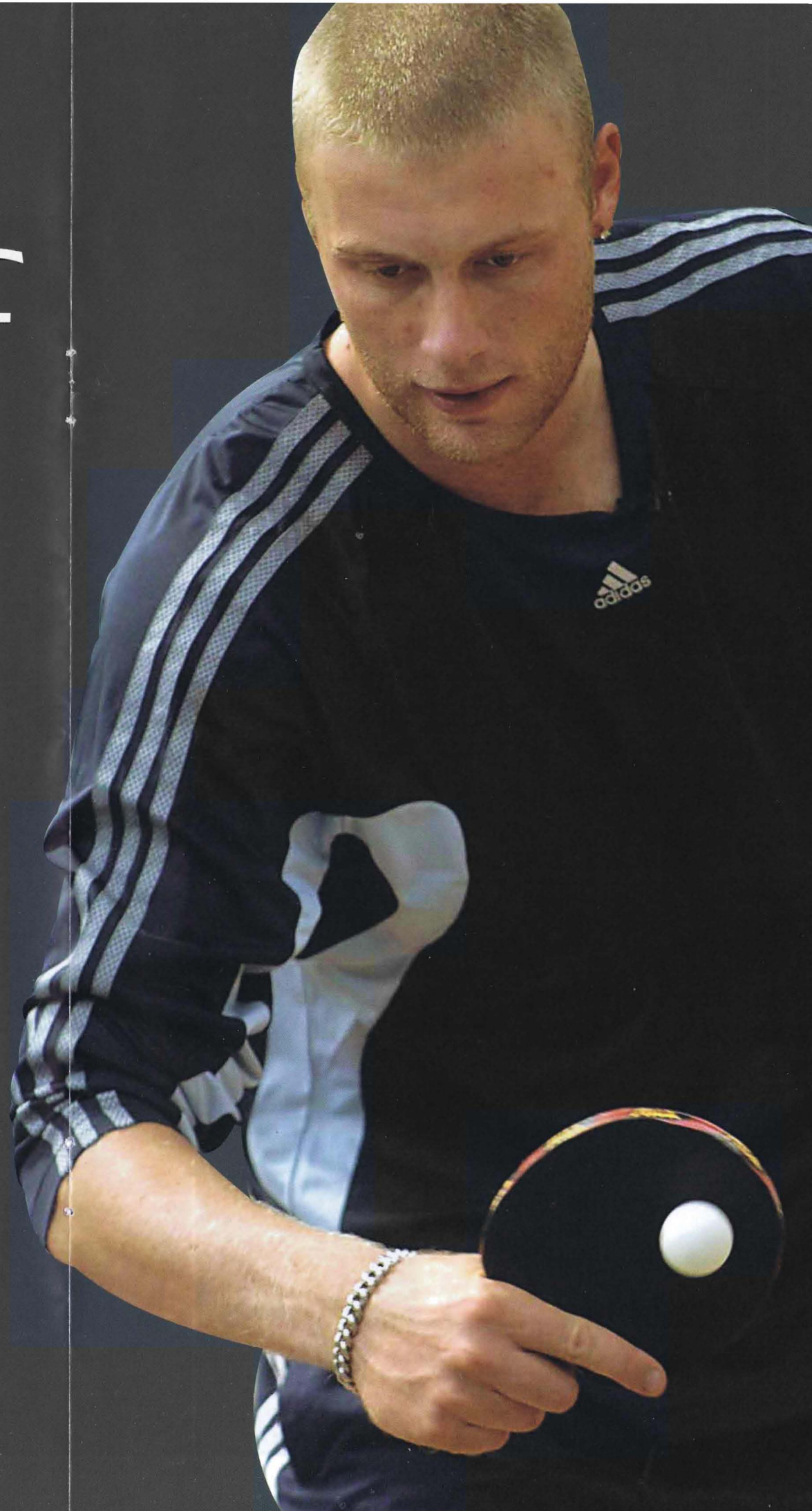
When I first met the England cricketer, during an interview for The Times last year, he had told me about his interest in table tennis and how he had lost to one Katy Parker when playing in the Preston league. It was no surprise, then, when the Cricket AM programme on Sky Sports - which features Flintoff trying out a different sport each week - phoned to say that Flintoff wanted to have a crack at table tennis.

I readily agreed to take part - knowing that it would provide

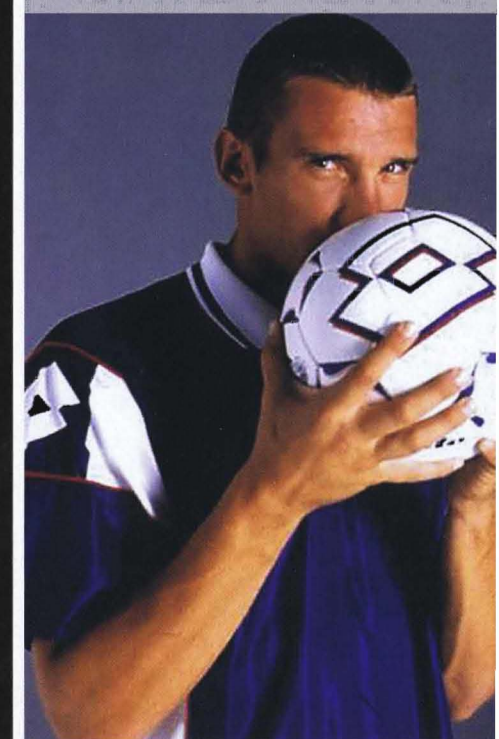
some great publicity for table tennis - and based on the understanding that we would be able to use the pictures for Table Tennis News and elsewhere.

Suffice it to say, Flintoff was excellent. It was not so much the fact that he looked the part that impressed (as would be expected from someone who has played before) so much as the speed with which he incorporated my coaching tips into his repertoire. Within a few minutes he was counter-hitting and flourishing backhands like a county player.

Afterwards, Flintoff - who was terrific company throughout the shoot - asked me to make an assessment of his game. I told him that it was my guess that, had he played table tennis rather than cricket, he would have challenged for a place in the England team.



" In the Ukraine training camp, new Chelsea FC striker Andrei Shevchenko had been facing a race against time to gain fitness for Ukraine's vital clash on 14 June, against Spain and according to Shevchenko the best remedy to slowly regain fitness in time for the match was a game of table tennis. The Ukrainian super striker apparently displayed a keen eye for the game, so having not lived up to his impressive reputation on the football pitches in Germany at least a game of table tennis should go some way to restoring his confidence!

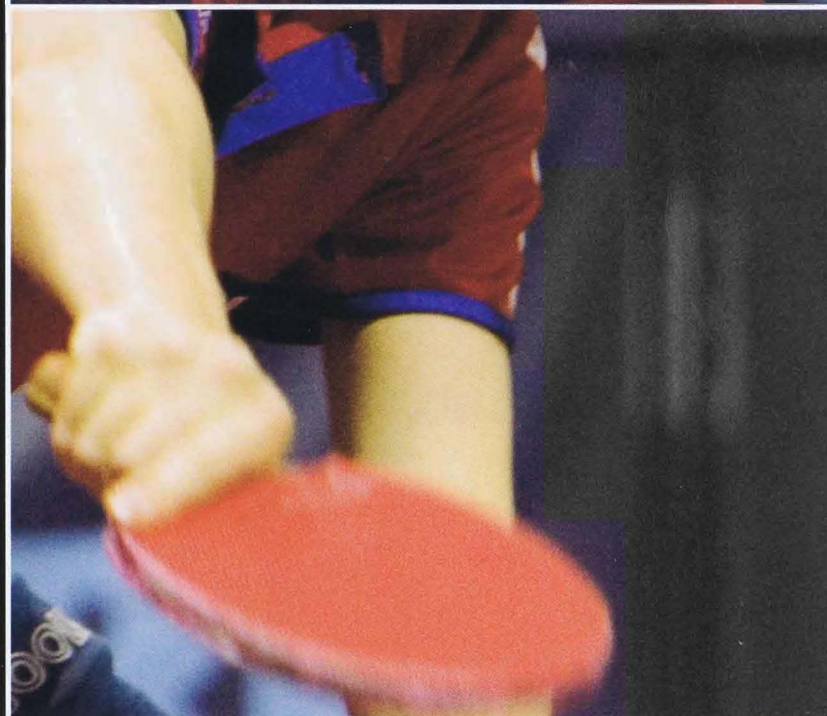
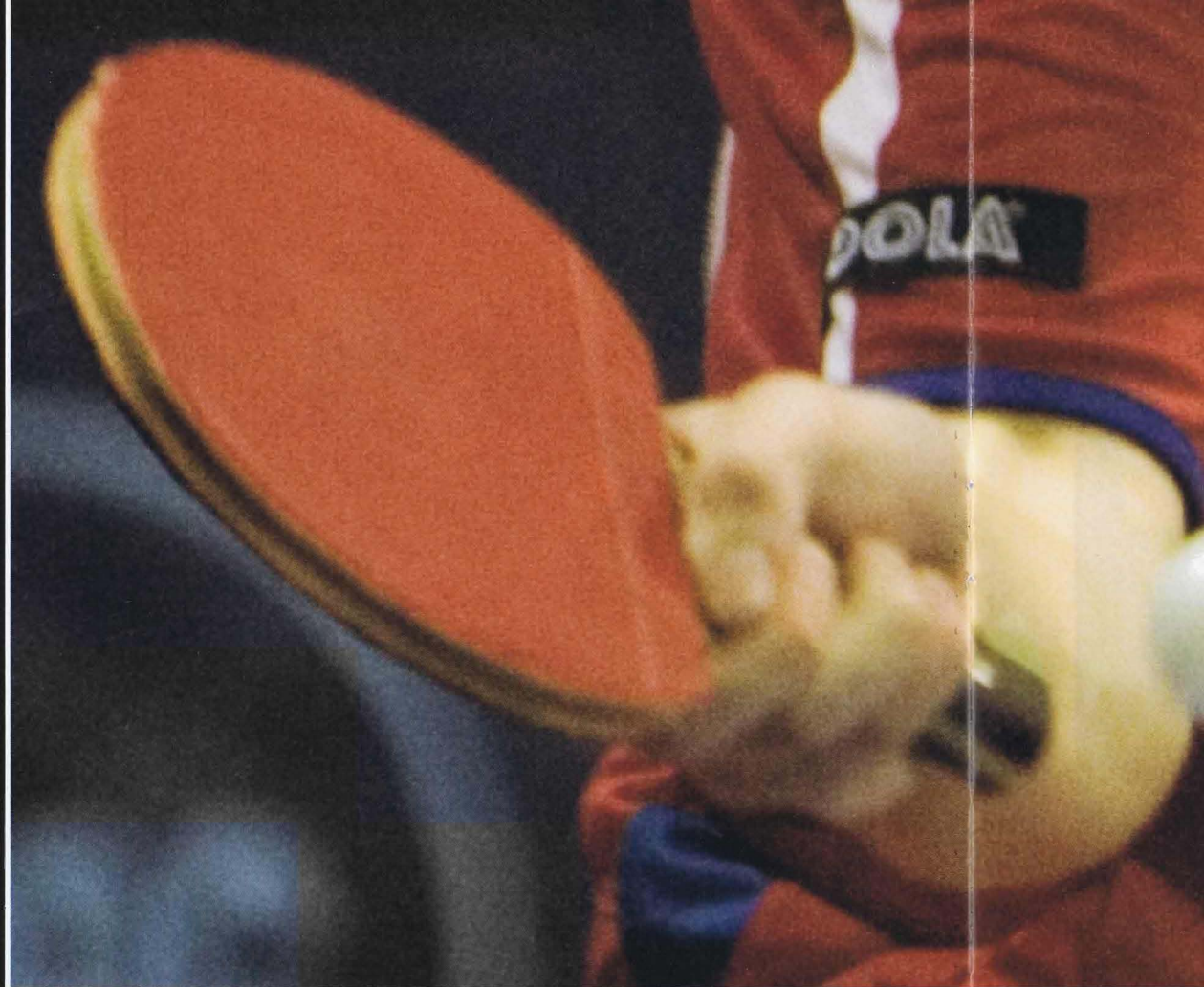


Shevchenko
CHELSEA FC STRIKER

**MATTHEW SYED
FOCUSES ON:**

Howard Jacobson

It is often said that, of all sports, boxing has inspired the best literature. I would dispute that. In *The Mighty Walzer*, his autobiographical novel based around the Manchester league of the 1950s (published in 1999), Howard Jacobson has given us a work demanding favourable comparison with *Liebling* and *Mailer* at their best. Rarely a week goes by when I do not dip into the book for the sheer pleasure of its prose.



The strength of the novel lies in Jacobson's uncanny ability to imbue the most ordinary of situations with a combination of comic irony and philosophical substance. Whether it is clambering under a chair to retrieve a ball, the mortification of being faulted by an over-zealous umpire or revelling in the camaraderie of one's teammates, Jacobson manages to expand one's knowledge and appreciation for the things with which one is most familiar.

Take Jacobson's description of the feelings of Oliver Walzer (the eponymous protagonist) the first time he went to a tournament. I was intoxicated by the tumult. It made me tremble. Made my stomach lurch with apprehension. So many wills, so many separate ambitions, so many arms going, enough piston power to light the whole of Manchester on a winter's afternoon. I shook my head when I read that paragraph, so powerfully did it speak to my own experience.

Then there is this description of the forehand chop, so beautiful that I quote it in full:

Of all table tennis strokes the forehand chop is the loveliest – speaking classically now, speaking of grace and elegance, speaking of music and poetry – and the most deadly. To execute a forehand chop you must leave the sanctuary of your body, go out on a limb, risk your reach and your balance, expose yourself. Get a forehand chop wrong and everyone can see it. Ditto get a forehand chop right. Not just see it either; execute the forehand chop to perfection, take the ball into custody on your forehand, cradle it, coddle it, suspend its trajectory for a millionth of a second, caress it, make it yours, put your name on it, and your opponent will shudder like a patient on an anaesthetist's table, feeling fingers pulling at his heart. You shudder yourself at that moment of suspension and possession, as though futurity, with its adoring millions, has paused to lay flowers on your grave. Yes, it is the loveliest and the most arrogant of all ping-pong strokes because it infinitesimally arrests the game and controverts its logic. In this way it is crucially different from a counter hit, however unexpected, for a counter hit merely answers like with like, whereas the forehand chop refuses your opponent's entire vocabulary. It is insouciant. Egotistical. Imperious. Soul destroying.

On at least one occasion, Jacobson has also written on table tennis in a journalistic capacity. His article for the *Independent* newspaper – *Like a Bat out of Hell* – is, by some margin, the most brilliant sporting article that I have read.

It is for this reason that such excitement has been generated by the news that Jacobson has written an eight thousand word essay on Marty Reisman, the great American hard bat player whose ambition to become world champion in Bombay in 1952 was foiled by Hiroji Satoh, a Japanese watchmaker who pioneered the use of sponge. Originally written for the *New Yorker* magazine, *Table Tennis News* will publish the article over three

editions from September. It will be the first time that it has ever been printed.

Jacobson's passion for the hard bat era personified by Reisman will be familiar to anyone who has read *Walzer*. The devious unpredictability of what Jacobson describes as "a bat with a mattress stuck on it" has, he believes, hindered the spectacle of our sport. There is much that he says that is difficult to disagree with, although I would argue that Jacobson is rather too condemning of the modern game, which, after all, produced the greatest artist of all in Jan-Ove Waldner.

Talking of Waldner, it is one of my regrets that the greatest writer on table tennis has yet to write expansively on its greatest ever player. Although Jacobson has seen Waldner play, he never watched him at his best. It is a pity, because there is no one who would be better able to capture the enigma and unfathomable talents of the great Swede.

Although Jacobson stands tall over others who have written about table tennis, it would be wrong to say that there is nothing else out there of literary merit. *The Money Player*, by Marty Reisman, comes highly recommended as does *Twenty One Up* by Richard Bergmann. A personal favourite, however, is Jerome Charyn's *Sizzling Chops and Devilish Spins*, a quite brilliant memoir that sparkles and fizzes with wit and insight. Here is my review of the book, reproduced by kind permission of *The Times*.

Sizzling Chops and Devilish Spins, Jerome Charyn's meandering and enigmatic memoir, is the latest in a growing list of literary gems based upon table tennis. It follows hard on the heels of Howard Jacobson's celebrated *Mighty Walzer*, a dazzling novel set amidst the Manchester ping-pong league of the 1950s.

Charyn's is an intimate history of his life-long love affair with the sport, chronicling its esoteric evolution from the battle between sandpaper bats to the plethora of rubbers and glues that has turned modern professionals into alchemists. The early game was a methodical duel of geometry and stamina; contemporary table tennis is a frenzy of spin and speed.

The great schism occurred with the arrival of sponge. And fifty years on the sport continues to agonise over whether that development should be nullified by rule changes designed to recreate the bygone age. Veteran campaigners, including Jacobson, remain unequivocal in their condemnation of the modern game; they argue, with some justification, that it is precisely because of the ascendancy of technology that rallies have been shortened to the point of futility.

Charyn, however, is unusually balanced in his passion for table tennis in each of its incarnations. He captures the charm of the hard bat era such that even the most die-hard techno-freaks will feel pangs of nostalgia. And yet, now in his sixties, he derives sadistic pleasure in bamboozling young adversaries with his "picot" (long pimples set upon soft sponge).

Not that his opponents are up to much. Charyn was never more than a local league player, and having moved from his native America to Paris, is, he says, ranked 11013th in France; which makes it even more remarkable that he has so exquisitely characterised the unfathomable dimensions of the modern game.

The most compelling chapters tell of how Lawrence's table tennis club on Manhattan's Broadway, once a speakeasy owned by Legs Diamond and with bullet holes in the wall to prove it, became a mecca for US ping-pong in the 1940s.

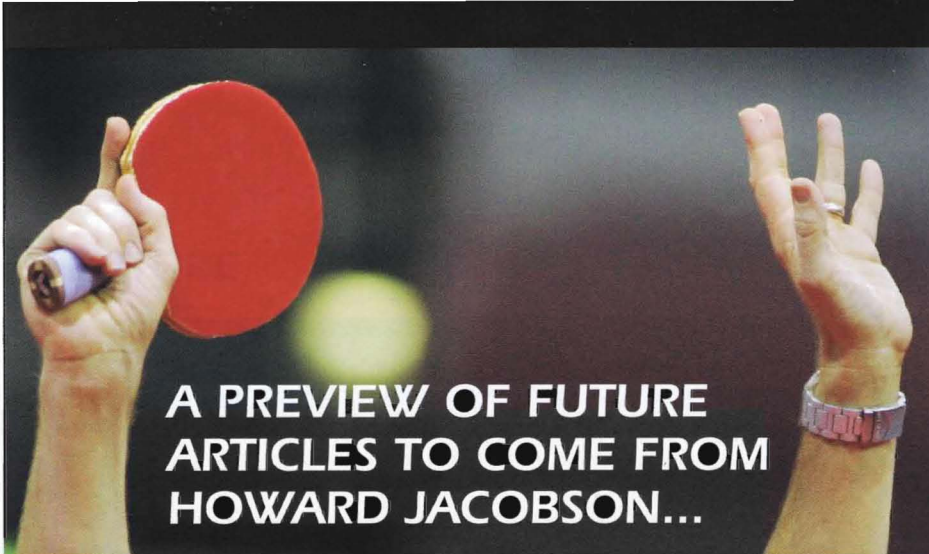
Its protagonists were more diverse than those of the Lord of the Rings; creatures of the night that gambled till the small hours, and, almost by accident, discovered that they had become world-class exponents. No manuals or textbooks entered Lawrence's – you came with only your bat, your wits and your money, and invariably departed bereft of the latter.

The player cleaning up was Marty Reisman, a bony teenager with a voluptuous style. Nicknamed the Needle, you can still see him competing each year in the Seniorppps event at the US Open. He continues to joust with his hard-nippled bat, an anachronism wielded as a memento of the fateful Bombay World Championships of 1952.

It was there that sponge made its first appearance in the hands of the unknown Japanese player, Hiroji Satoh. The Needle arrived as tournament favourite but was destroyed by Satoh's epoch-making weapon. He vowed never to betray the sport by joining the mass exodus to sponge, and in so doing he has become a living symbol of ping-pong's great debate.

The ongoing controversy is not particularly helpful, perhaps, if you are concerned about the vitality of the sport. But lovers of the written word will find it a price worth paying should it continue to inspire works of the class of Sizzling Chops. And even more so should we ever be blessed by another like Jacobson's.

By Matt Syed



It would be inaccurate to say I was mollycoddled. I was brought up cautiously, that was all, with an eye to preserving my physical beauty. No one at home said don't play cricket or football, but when I complained of the hardness of the ball or the roughness of the other boys, I received a sympathetic hearing. So my new passion for table tennis was greeted with enthusiasm. Thank God I wanted to take part in 'some' sport, and thank God it was a sport at which nobody got hurt.

But it's a funny thing. The very first table tennis competition I entered ended in an ambulance. Not for me, for my opponent. It was the finals of a junior championship in Leeds. The year is not important, but it was a long time ago. Before sponge. I was going through an attacking phase; my opponent - X, I'll call him - was an out and out defender. Richard Bergmann, he modelled himself on. I was Johnny Leach, with a touch of Victor Barna.

Defensive players can be infuriating. There's something about the ball coming back time and time again no matter where you place it, and no matter with what variation of topspin. And X was infuriating personally because of the over-athletic way he ran about, not just to retrieve the ball but even when he was just going over to get his towel, or changing ends, and also because of the way he punched the air whenever he won a point, and said 'OYes!' to someone in the audience. I had to beat him. Not just because I wanted to win the title at my first go, but because I had to beat 'him'. My way of being a human being had to prevail over his way of being a human being. And I did beat him, or at least I was ahead before the ambulance came to take him away. It was a drop shot that did it - what looked as though it was going to be another of the forehand drives he was returning effortlessly from so far away I could barely see him, suddenly became the most exquisitely executed drop-shot, just landing over the net and then dribbling back into it. He couldn't accept that it had fooled him. Even after the ball had bounced for a third time he was charging forward, telling himself to 'OCome on!' And then crash! His knee into the corner of the table.

I received my cup while they were still trying to load him, howling, into the ambulance. It shouldn't have been satisfying but it was. I felt doubly his conqueror.

The sad part was that I couldn't tell my family what had happened. 'OYeah, I won. Yeah, easy,' I said, and had to leave it at that. Had I told them what had happened they'd have realised what a rough game table tennis was, and would never have allowed me to go on playing.

INTERVIEW WITH

Jon Kaufman

Jon Kaufman, the driving force behind eight time British League Premier Division Champions London Progress and a Table Tennis author, is well known for his hard work, boundless enthusiasm and hard-hitting comments. British League Press Officer Steve Kerns caught up with him:-

How did you get started in Table Tennis?

My first game was on a ship. I was emigrating from the UK to Australia in 1967 with my family. There was a table on the deck and I played endlessly with my 'old man'. Every kid on the ship was queuing up to do the same. Like so many youngsters, I soon developed an addiction for the game. The point I am trying to make is that table tennis has a remarkable ability to hook you. The media endlessly talk of football being the people's game but I'm not convinced. I would describe football as the 'corporate game', where the world's leading companies trip over each other in a bid to make a financial killing. Corporate billionaires buy community clubs as their play things. Increasingly, local people can neither afford to watch the games live and local talented kids are very unlikely to break into the top flight. Table tennis on the other hand is the real "people's sport". Mums and dads can play, the dinner ladies and the school caretakers can join in. Teachers can play with their students and disability and lack of athleticism are no barriers. When I got to Australia, aged 13, I nagged my parents relentlessly for our own table. They finally relented and along with the table came a gang of 'friends'. I was suddenly a popular guy. Of course I had to start organising them. My managerial career was in full swing.

Eight British League Premier Division titles on the trot. Which of these holds the most special memories?

To be honest..... they all just merge into one gigantic blur. I'm usually too tense to enjoy the spectacle. And when it's all over, my attention is rapidly forced into planning for the forthcoming season. I like that bit. It gives me a real buzz. Today we have five teams in the British League and we are applying to enter two more. The process of welding all the club's resources together is like a military campaign, the real pleasure. The early wins were of course magical, especially with Darren Blake, Gareth Herbert and Jason Sugrue's families always lending their support along with various girlfriends, parents and other members of the Progress "Barmy Army". The first two wins both went to the wire with Horsham being destroyed on

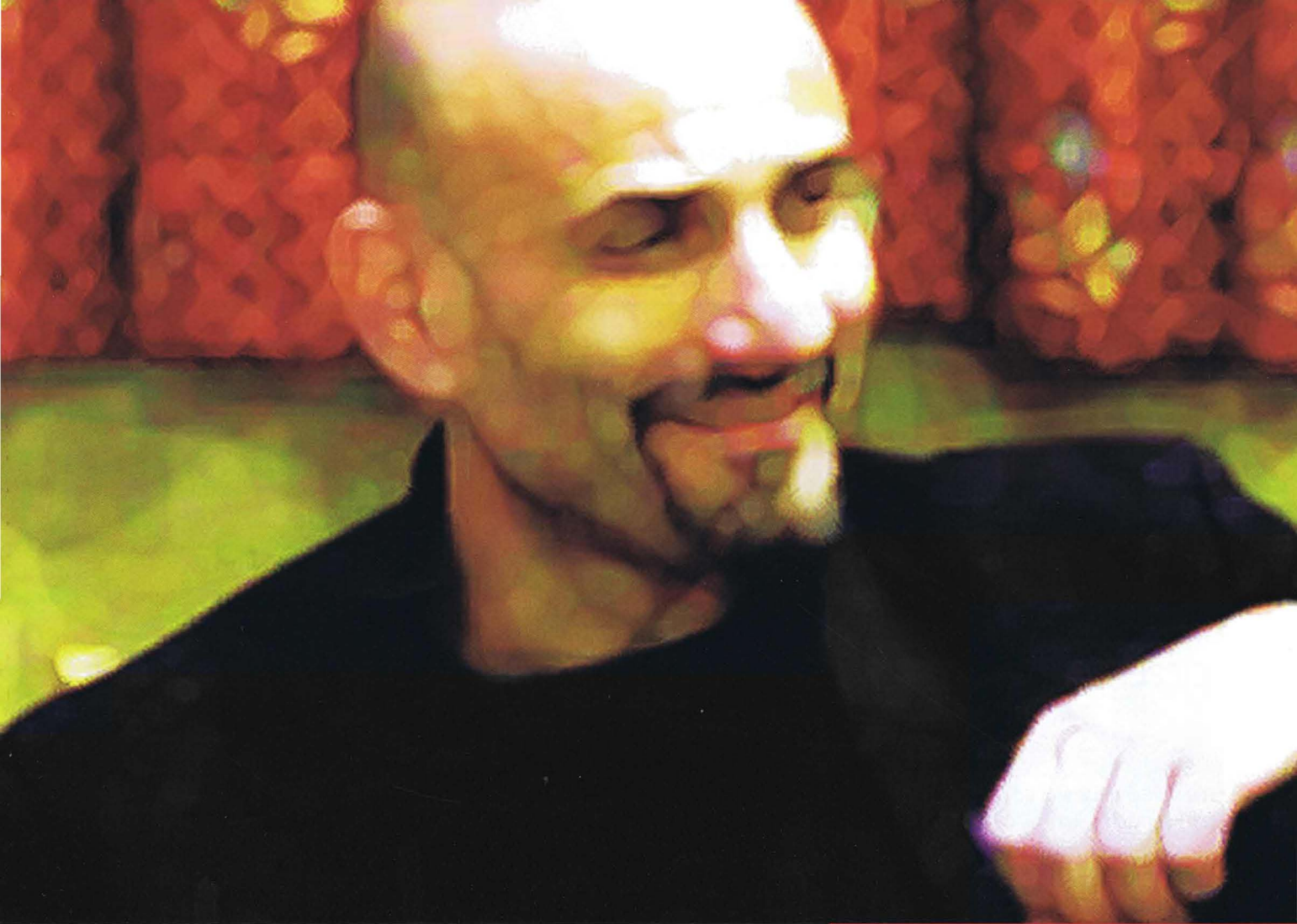
their home turf and, a year later, Darlington finally being crushed in the very last match of the day in front of their home crowd. Marco Essomba was the hero on that occasion and I can still remember the post match celebrations. Darlington had a banner which read: 'Your Progress Stops Here'. They were very nearly right but in the end, the sporting gods were on our side.

What would you like to say about the contributions of Jason and Marco?

Jason and Marco have been magnificent. They have performed in every Premier Division campaign and their professionalism is only matched by their good humour. Along with Darren, they have shown an unflinching ability to deal with every situation that has arisen and to come out on top. We have had so many wonderful characters in the team over the past eight years, including Andrew Eden, Cris Sladden, Gareth Herbert, Christian Hundhausen, Tomak Gtretscell and the brilliant Tajudeen Agunbiade. There have been at least a dozen more who have made considerable contributions. More recently there has been the great performances of Terry Young and Darius Knight. But it is Jason and Marco who have the real "Progress Soul" .

That takes me on to my next question. I'm a little embarrassed asking it The one criticism of Progress is that you do seem to sign on new top-class players all the time - Darius Knight and Colum Slevin being two examples last season. Isn't there a danger that players who have really worked hard to establish themselves will remain on the fringes when the new stars are brought in?

A good point Steve. And yes, every team that brings in top players does act to keep out home-grown talent. Over the years I think Danny Fesehatsion, Eli Baraty and Vidal Graham have suffered. We are aware of the problem. Without giving too much away we are planning a radical restructuring of our club's teams over the next two years. This has already begun under the direction of Jason Sugrue and Charlie Alvarez.



The stories from the Progress Club are that the stars are always prepared to practice with the lesser players. Is that really true?

It was true and still is that players of all standards mix freely. That has always been the spirit at Progress and it will be a sad day if we ever lose it. The huge mix of standards, nationalities and cultures is what makes us tick and I think it has a lot to do with our success. I don't care for any form of elitism particularly in sport. London Progress should be considered as a "huge jigsaw" and every player a piece of equal value. That's what we aspire to and by and large I think we get it right.

Your book "The Meaning of Success" was well received by the British League playing fraternity. What has been the reaction you have received to it?

'The Meaning of Success' has had its enthusiasts and its critics, as you would expect of a book about a club like Progress. I did not attempt to produce a coffee table publication. It was deliberately confrontational because I felt that was what the sport required. Of course it was a personal view and I'm sure there are people

within Progress that might have squirmed at some of the more controversial passages. I'm currently planning to do a second edition and it will be even more controversial than the first one.

I have to apologise but from time to time your British League Premier Division side are so dominant that it is only the games they lose that make good copy. How do your players react to this?

Another sore point with me. After eight years at the top of club table tennis in this country you can count on one hand the number of articles about London Progress that have appeared in Table Tennis News. You do your best Steve, but that's about it. Many times whole issues of the magazine appear without a single mention of Progress or for that matter any of the other top clubs. The problem is a deep-seated structural one in Britain. Our table tennis structures are not yet convinced of the value of big European style clubs. It's still leagues and counties that rule the roost.

Where would like to see the club in five years' time?

In five years' time? A huge community

I did not attempt to produce a coffee table publication. It was deliberately confrontational because I felt that was what the sport required.

based club working alongside local boroughs and schools and other sports clubs including the big football clubs in the area. We want to be big enough to be able to fund regular European competition at all levels. In five years' time I would expect our coaching team to be considerably larger than it is now. Our aim is simple. To be the best table tennis club in Europe. By best we don't just mean winning European trophies. Our idea is to have the largest base of any club on the continent. A professional club offering a professional service to all the residents of West London - 24 hours a day, 365 days a year!

Jon - thanks for talking to me and for being so honest. We will certainly do our best to try and improve the coverage we give to your club.

JUNIOR TOURNAMENTS

STARS

CIPPENHAM YOUNG PLAYERS' SUMMER FESTIVAL BY GRAHAM TRIMMING

Rachel Farquhar and Eddie Mitchell were the host club's stars as Cippenham Table Tennis Club staged its eighth annual Young Players' Summer Festival over the weekend 10-11 June. More than 300 entries were received for this two-day extravaganza, played on seventeen tables at the Club's purpose-built headquarters in the grounds of the Westgate School. Despite being rated only as a 1 star event, this tournament always attracts a quality and near capacity entry with players from long distances including a strong contingent from Wales. However, it was Essex players that dominated the older age groups with Billy Deville, Jessica Macken and Oscar Selfridge leading the charge. The most successful individual player was Chloe Thomas from Wales. She reached three finals and was successful in two of them. In the U12 and U13 finals on Saturday, Thomas beat Tin-Tin Ho and Cippenham's own Rachel Farquhar respectively in the finals. However, Sunday was another

day as Farquhar turned the tables on the Welsh girl to win the U14 event. A 3-1 win for Thomas on Saturday became 3-0 in Farquhar's favour on Sunday in a reversal of the seeding.

The other player to reach three finals was Eddie Mitchell, the latest in a long line of talented juniors produced by Ken Phillips and his coaching staff at Cippenham. The first of these was a repeat of the English National U12 final of the previous weekend. Mitchell and Lewis Gray are the leading lights nationally in the U12 age group at the moment and on Saturday Lewis repeated his win gained in the national championships. However, Mitchell stepped up one age group and won the Cippenham U13 title by beating the aptly named Ping Ho in the final, while on Sunday Mitchell also reached the final of the U14 event but was beaten 3-1 by Oscar Selfridge. This result was in line with the seedings, just as was Billy Deville's win over Selfridge in the final of the U16s.

The girls' U16 event produced the closest finish of all the finals. Jessica Macken made it a bumper day for the Peniel Academy club from Essex with an 11-8, 10-12, 11-6, 9-11, 11-9 over Sussex girl Sally Hughes, again a result in line with the rankings.

Tin-Tin Ho also featured in two finals. She won the opening event for the U11s on Saturday morning, beating Hannah Hoskin in the final, and then reached the final also of the U12s where she lost to Chloe Thomas. The U11 boys' event was won by Connor Neenan over Azarel Adebajo. Eddie Mitchell's good form continued until the end as he reached the semi-final of the U16s before losing to the eventual champion Deville. Other Cippenham players to impress included Angela Oetiker who reached the quarters in the girls' U16 and Jonathan Evans in the quarters of the boys' U14 and semi-final of the U12. Turn to page 35 to find out the final results.



TOTALLY VETERAN

BY JIM BECKLEY

IF ANYONE CAN, STAN CAN!

A story brought to my attention concerns golden oldie Stan Baines, the veteran coach from Norwich who never stops for a rest despite being 86 years young!

Players in the Norwich area will know Stan well. He was secretary for Sprowston Youth Table Tennis Club members of the Norwich League for many years. But being secretary of a club isn't everyone's cup of tea; yet from what I gather Stan, who retired after many years as a chef, loved every minute.

And that's how he likes to live his life. He's a man on the go that also likes to give coaching lessons to local youngsters. A keen entertainer, he also visits old people's homes to bring a smile to the faces of the residents, many younger than him.

Not surprisingly he loves to karaoke and last year made it to the final of the Brickmakers' Elvis Presley soundalike competition (I kid you not). I also believe he does a pretty good impression of Norman Wisdom, George Formby and Andy Williams.

He still attends meetings galore and is a standard bearer for the Normandy Veterans.

"I've no intention of stopping." He said. "I'm doing more every day. I still play table tennis and love coaching the kids." He also plays bowls and is a wow in the ballroom.

Not surprisingly he has been nominated for his local paper's Community Champion of the Year award. The result of which will be announced towards the end of July.

BRONZE IN BREMEN

Congratulations to Shu Huang, winner of a bronze medal at the recent World Veterans Championship in Bremen, Germany.

Nothing special about that you may say,



with English players having won dozens of medals in the past. But I'm reliably informed that Shu is the only veteran over 40 female player to win a medal at this level.

A coach at the Eastlea Community School, Canning Town, our no.1 raced through to reach the semi finals before finally going down.

On her way to the semi she had a couple of excellent wins beating Kimie Iwata, Japan's no. 1, and then accounting for top German player Anke Murke. Unfortunately Shu had to withdraw from the doubles when she aggravated an old knee injury.

This latest triumph follows a bronze medal won in the European Veterans Championships in Bratislava.

A professional coach, Shu is bringing a wealth of experience to school kids in Canning Town passing on much of the experience she picked up at the Chinese National Training Centre in her native Beijing.

SENSATIONAL DEBUT

The newest Brit on the veteran circuit could not have made a more sensational debut.

England international and former national champion, Alan Cooke made his long awaited appearance on the growing veterans scene, finishing in a blaze of glory when he won the World Veterans singles title in Bremen.

He was able to celebrate his debut by beating former world champion Michael Applegren and then Hungary's Peter Aranyosi in the final.

But gracious as always, Alan put his triumph down to the help he received from the hoards of English supporters.

"They were magnificent. Especially in the final, all I could hear was their roar of encouragement and when I won the final point the place seemed to erupt."

He also paid tribute to his coach Derrick Marples, winner of the Male Coach of the Year award at last year's conference at Lilleshall. "Derrick is one of the really top coaches and I couldn't have got this far without him

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON SUMMARY



The curtain came down on a memorable 58th season of the county championships and the best was left until last, or nearly last, as the second weekend of the junior and senior premier divisions took place on the penultimate weekend of the season.

SENIORS

The senior event proved to be the most competitive for many years as there were a number of teams in contention for honours as all counties played their final round of matches.

In the event a three way tie at the top of the table saw Sussex take the title by virtue of a one set advantage over runners-up Devon who themselves were one set ahead of Middlesex as all three counties had completed the season on 10 points.

Essex finished fourth, one point behind, and even fifth place Yorkshire could perhaps consider themselves unlucky as although they finished two points behind Sussex they had the same sets total as Middlesex, and had Mike James not dropped out the night

before the second weekend and Nicola White gone sick also during this weekend, who knows?

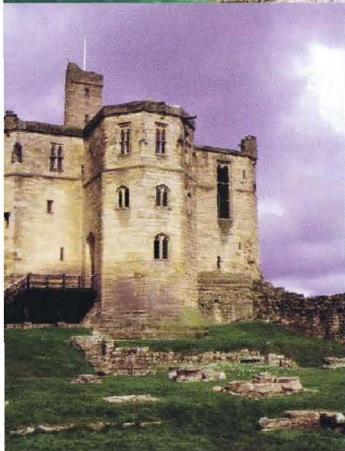
Lancashire finished one place below their White Rose rivals and retain their premier status but unfortunately Durham and Gloucestershire were relegated and will be replaced by Derbyshire and Berkshire.

Derbyshire won Division 1A by virtue of a one point advantage over local rivals Nottinghamshire, while in Division 1B Berkshire had a closer finish when they tied on 12 points with Surrey but took the league by virtue of a superior sets advantage.

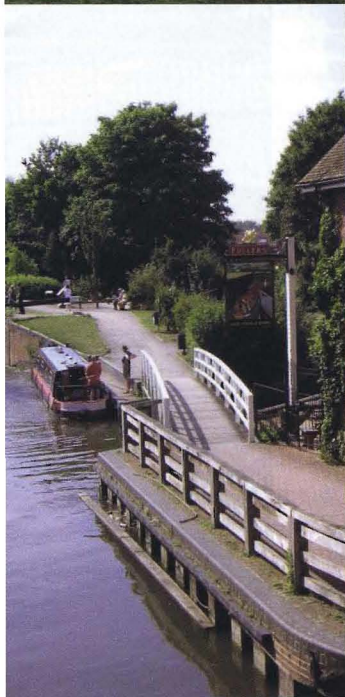
VETERANS

As usual the veterans were the largest event with 100 teams competing in 13 divisions, and at the top of the pile this season were Yorkshire who took the Premier Division after two exciting weekends at Halifax and Ashford.

The first weekend at Halifax saw Yorkshire and Devon emerge



County landmarks from around the country. From top to bottom: Beachy Head, Eastbourne, Sussex - Warkworth Castle, Northumberland - Bridge at Amersham, Buckinghamshire - York Minster, Yorkshire.



COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP CONFERENCE 06

The highlight of the annual county championship conference, which was held in Birmingham on the first Saturday in June, was the presentation of a piece of engraved crystal to administrator Les Smith who has just completed 25 seasons in the hot seat.

The difficult position of county championships administrator is not envied by many and Les's work is greatly appreciated by all involved in the county championships.

Also at the conference the divisions for season 2006/07 were produced with 245 teams entered for the competition. This is a reduction of one team overall from last season as the seniors, veterans and over 60s all remain the same with the juniors down two and cadets up one.

with three wins apiece and Essex two points adrift with two wins, but no one could have expected the fireworks that were to happen at Ashford when all counties met up again for the second weekend.

Yorkshire got off to the worst possible start as they lost their first match to Lancashire but retained their initiative as they won the remaining three matches with 6-4 victories against Devonshire and Essex.

Going into the second weekend as favourites, Devon were unable to register one victory from four matches and were overtaken by Essex who took the runners-up spot.

The Yorkshire win was all the more remarkable as it was their first season back in the top flight and they did not even win Division 1A the season before as they finished runners-up to Cheshire seconds, but as Cheshire had a team in the top division they were unable to be promoted and it was Yorkshire who went up.

Northumberland and Dorset were relegated and will be replaced by Leicestershire and Surrey who won Division 1A and 1B respectively.

One other Division worth a mention was Division 3C which had an extremely close finish with Sussex thirds just getting the nod over Oxfordshire seconds after both teams had finished on 13 points.

The teams could not be split on sets as they too were identical but with Sussex having a slightly superior games difference it was they who took the division.

JUNIORS AND CADETS

The Junior Premier division was comfortably won by Buckinghamshire who had a perfect season with seven straight wins to take the title by four points from runners-up Essex.

Cheshire and Kent were the two relegated counties this season and will be replaced by South Yorkshire and Hampshire next term.

The cadets premier title was taken by Lincolnshire who took the title from Gwent by a single point in this most competitive of divisions which had six drawn matches over the one weekend event.

Warwickshire took Division 1A as once more a three way tie saw them take the title from Lancashire on games as they were tied on sets. One interesting fact to come out of this division was that Cheshire also finished on the same number of points but were a set adrift of their rivals. It becomes interesting when one of the more excitable Cheshire youngsters was yellow carded in a set and then conceded this set to his opponent.

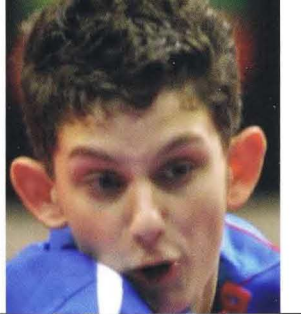
At least the administrator did not have to do a games check on Cheshire because who knows what the outcome may have been.

OVER 60s

Worcestershire retained the over 60s title, as after winning Division 1A they won a three team play off with Essex finishing second and Division 1B winners Middlesex finishing third.

Visit our website www.etta.co.uk for full county championship tables.

In the semi final England overcame France, in a hard fought contest with Paul Drinkhall the backbone of the victorious team and Danny Reed the player to rise to the occasion.



Double Celebrations

National champion Alex Perry was the centre of double celebrations at the final Butterfly Grand Prix tournament of the season at the plush new venue of the K2 sports centre at Crawley. It was almost champagne all round as Alex announced the arrival of his son Matthew Joseph (born on June 9th weighing 7lb 3oz), and then he went on to lift the Crawley men's singles title winning the final 11-8, 11-8, 11-8 against the surprise second seed, the former Lithuanian champion Lorestas Trumpauskas.

Perry's path to the final saw him defeat Abdul Wuraola in the quarter-final and then Dale Barham 11-4, 11-6, 11-5 in the semi-final. The Lithuanian had to struggle at times before he beat Craig Bryant 11-4, 7-11, 11-9, 11-7 in the bottom half semi-final. After the final Perry said "I managed to stay calm through the final - Lorestas reached eight points twice, so I had to pile on the pressure at those points and happily succeeded".

The women's singles winner was the England no.1 Joanna Parker with a final victory 11-7 in the fourth against Claire Wilson from Durham who at times looked as though she might cause a major upset.

In the men's veterans event Nigel Eckersley (Sussex) was the final winner with a four-game surprise victory over Abdul Wuraola from Surrey, who despite losing retains his no.1 spot, but Eckersley's points total continues to rise and he is mounting a challenge for no.1 next season.

Val Murdoch landed the women's veterans title with a hard-fought final tussle of five games against Sussex player Pauline Steel. In the banded events Abdul Wuraola won the men's band 1 title and Naomi Wilson (Somerset) triumphed in the women's band 1 event.

This new venue was opened last November and cost £36 million. The facilities are excellent, the best I have seen in the South of England for many years.

It will appear on the Butterfly Grand Prix circuit next October - at last Sussex has a superb venue!

By John Woodford

Men's Singles	
Band 1: Abdul Wuraola bt. Clive Carthy	11-8, 11-7, 11-9
Band 2: Jonathan May bt. Ayode Ademakinwa	11-9, 8-11, 11-7, 11-9
Band 3: Yasir Mauthoor bt. Simon Donnelly	11-2, 8-11, 11-9, 11-9
Band 4: Daniel Ives bt. David Fraser	11-7, 15-13, 9-11, 11-8
Band 5: Zbyszek Kordula bt. Paul Martindill	11-8, 11-9, 5-11, 11-5
Band 6: Zbyszek Kordula bt. Milan Dragojlovic	11-7, 7-11, 11-9, 11-9

Women's Singles	
Band 1: Naomi Wilson bt. Liz May	11-8, 9-11, 10-12, 11-8, 11-8
Band 2: Kelly Skeggs bt. Jurate Brazaityte	11-9, 11-8, 11-8
Band 3: Hannah Hicks bt. Sally Hughes	12-11, 11-5, 13-11

Doncaster Butterfly Grand Prix Results

Men's Open	
Andrew Rushton bt. Colum Slevin	7-11, 11-8, 11-2, 10-12, 11-5

Women's Open Singles	
Lindsey Thornton-Reynolds bt. Andrea Baldi	11-4, 11-9, 11-8

Junior Boys Singles	
Craig Howieson bt. Will Maybanks	6-11, 11-8, 11-9, 12-10

Women's U21 Singles	
Karen Shephard bt. Caroline Hallows	11-3, 10-12, 11-4, 11-6

Men's U21 Singles	
David Meads bt. Stephen Denny	11-8, 8-11, 11-8, 8-11, 11-6

Veteran Women's Singles		
1st - Kim Mudge	2nd - Eileen Allison	3rd - Ruth Purseglove

Veteran Men's Singles	
Abdul Wuraola bt. Chris Beckley	11-8, 11-9, 11-6

Men's Singles	
Band 1: Abdul Wuraola bt. Chris Doran	11-8, 11-9, 11-13, 9-11, 11-8
Band 2: Chris Doran bt. David McBeath	11-5, 5-11, 11-7, 11-6
Band 3: Simon Donnelly bt. Wahab Adam	11-6, 10-12, 11-8, 11-9
Band 4: Craig Hardie bt. Tony Smith	11-5, 11-5, 12-10
Band 5: Darren Howarth bt. Jake Collins	14-12, 11-0, 11-7
Band 6: Darren Howarth bt. Daniel Lowe	12-10, 13-11, 13-11

Women's Singles	
Band 1: Andrea Baldi bt. Corinna Whitaker	11-2, 8-11, 3-11, 11-9, 16-14
Band 2: Corinna Walker bt. Rachel Greener	11-7, 11-6, 12-10
Band 3: Laura Yarnley bt. Alison Yarnley	11-6, 11-2, 11-9

Butterfly Grand Prix 2005/6 Series Champions	
Men's Singles	Ryan Jenkins
Women's Singles	Lindsey Thornton-Reynolds
Men's Band 1	Abdul Wuraola
Men's Band 2	Martin Rogers
Men's Band 3	Simon Donnelly
Men's Band 4	Jonathan Durham
Men's Band 5	Paul Savins

Men's Band 6	
Wayne Matthews	

Women's Band 1	
Naomi Wilson	

Women's Band 2	
Rachel Greener	

Women's Band 3	
Laura Yarnley	

Veteran Men	
Abdul Wuraola	

Veteran Women	
Kim Mudge	

Under 21 Men	
David Meads	

Under 21 Women	
Claire Wilson	

Boys' Singles	
David Hayes	

Girls' singles	
Sarra Wang	

England - Polish Youth Open

Junior Boys team	
First Round Group - England 3 Belarus 1	

DRINKHALL Paul	beat VOITSEKHAU Tsimir	11 - 7, 12 - 10, 11 - 0
KNIGHT Darius	beat SOPELEU Anton	11 - 8, 11 - 6, 11 - 4
REED Daniel	lost to BALTRUSHKA Dzmityr	7 - 11, 11 - 5, 7 - 11, 11 - 13
DRINKHALL Paul	beat SOPELEU Anton	11 - 3, 11 - 4, 7 - 11, 11 - 5

First Round Group - Latvia 1 England 3		
BURGIS Matiss	beat KNIGHT Darius	11 - 5, 11 - 6, 11 - 5
AGURJANOVS Vladislavs	lost to DRINKHALL Paul	3 - 11, 7 - 11, 4 - 11
SIROKJIS Viktors	lost to REED Daniel	1 - 11, 11 - 9, 13 - 11, 7 - 11, 9 - 11
BURGIS Matiss	lost to DRINKHALL Paul	1 - 11, 8 - 11, 11 - 9, 11 - 6, 2 - 11

Quarter-Final - England 3 Japan 0		
DRINKHALL Paul	beat MATSUDAIRA Kenta	13 - 11, 12 - 10, 8 - 11, 11 - 9
KNIGHT Darius	beat IKEDA Kazumasa	11 - 7, 7 - 11, 11 - 9, 11 - 9
REED Daniel	beat MIUCHI Kentaro	11 - 7, 11 - 5, 11 - 9

Semi-Final - England 3 France 1		
SALIFOU Abdel-Kader	beat KNIGHT Darius	8 - 11, 21 - 19, 11 - 9, 6 - 11, 11 - 6
LEBESSON Emmanuel	lost to DRINKHALL Paul	5 - 11, 10 - 12, 11 - 5, 10 - 12
BAUBET Vincent	lost to REED Daniel	10 - 12, 11 - 5, 12 - 10, 1 - 11, 6 - 11

Final - England 3 Germany 1		
DRINKHALL Paul	beat FILUS Ruwen	11 - 5, 3 - 11, 11 - 3, 11 - 6
KNIGHT Darius	beat MENGEL Steffen	11 - 8, 11 - 6, 11 - 8
REED Daniel	lost to SCHLICHTER Markus	6 - 11, 5 - 11, 11 - 9, 6 - 11
DRINKHALL Paul	beat MENGEL Steffen	11 - 6, 11 - 7, 11 - 6

Girls Team: First Round - England 2 Slovakia 3		
SIBLEY Kelly	beat HUDECOVA Sona	11 - 8, 11 - 9, 6 - 11, 11 - 2
FARQUHAR Melanie	lost to BALAZOVA Barbora	7 - 11, 7 - 11, 3 - 11
HALLOWES Caroline	lost to DAUBNEROVA Simona	7 - 11, 11 - 8, 11 - 13, 8 - 11
SIBLEY Kelly	beat BALAZOVA Barbora	13 - 11, 11 - 8, 11 - 5
FARQUHAR Melanie	lost to HUDECOVA Sona	6 - 11, 3 - 11, 4 - 11

Girls Team: First Round - Poland 3 England 2		
PARTYKA Natalia	beat FARQUHAR Melanie	11 - 8, 11 - 9, 11 - 3
BAK Natalia	lost to SIBLEY Kelly	12 - 10, 7 - 11, 12 - 10, 9 - 11, 3 - 11
GOLOTA Marta	beat HALLOWES Caroline	11 - 9, 11 - 9, 9 - 11, 11 - 8
PARTYKA Natalia	lost to SIBLEY Kelly	14 - 12, 9 - 11, 11 - 7, 6 - 11, 19 - 21
BAK Natalia	beat FARQUHAR Melanie	11 - 2, 11 - 3, 11 - 5

The National Bribar under 11/12/13/14 Championship

U11 Girls' Singles	
Emily Bates bt. Vicky Smith	11-5, 11-7, 11-8

U11 Boys' Singles	
Sam Walker bt. Zak Zilesnick	11-8, 11-9, 11-4

U12 Girls' Singles	
Emily Bates bt. Lucy Davidson	11-2, 11-7, 11-8

U12 Boys' Singles	
Lewis Gray bt. Edward Mitchell	12-11, 12-10, 11-5

U12 Girls' Doubles		
Emily Bates/Vicky Smith	bt. Chloe Whyte/Jessica Dawson	11-7, 11-9, 11-5

U12 Boys' Doubles		
Edward Mitchell/Lewis Gray	bt. Sam Walker/Joseph Thursby	7-11, 12-10, 11-9, 11-5

U13 Boys' Singles	
Gavin Evans bt. Liam Pitchford	11-8, 11-6, 12-10

U13 Girls' Singles		
Ayonija Sundararajan	bt. Lucy Davidson	11-8, 11-8, 11-8

U14 Boys' Singles		
Gavin Evans	bt. David McBeath	11-6, 12-10, 11-4

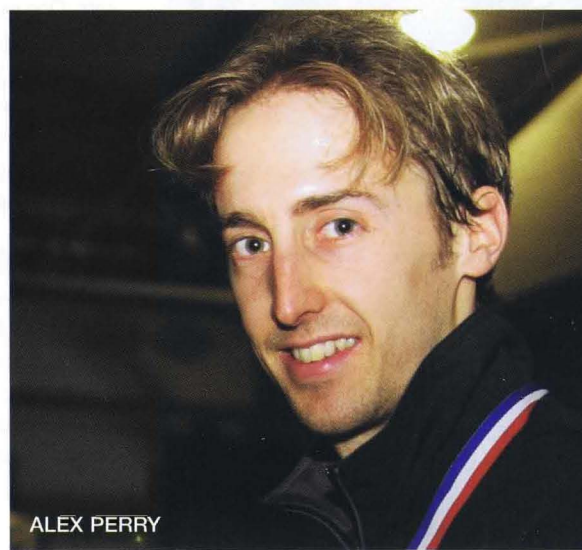
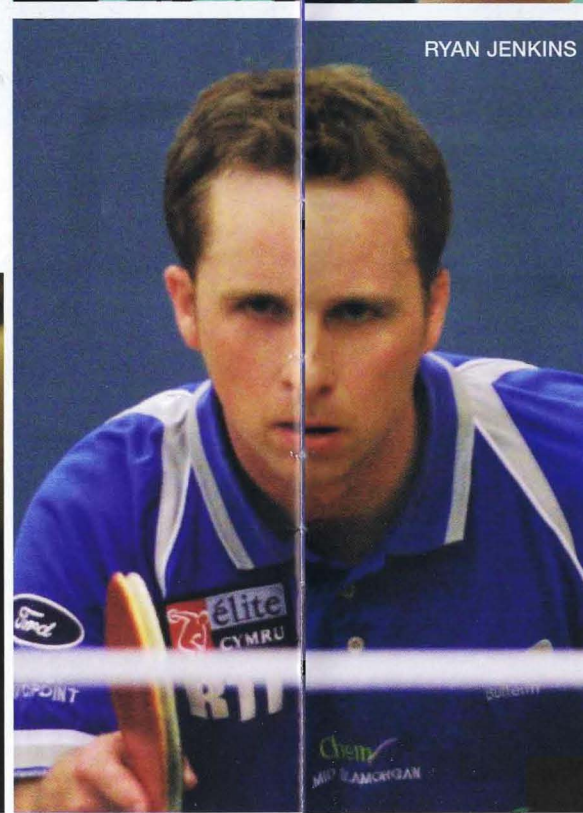
U14 Boys' Doubles		
Kim Daybell/David McBeath	bt. Liam Pitchford/Greame Barella	11-9, 11-7, 11-9

U14 Girls' Singles		
Melissa Wright	bt. Karina Le Fevre	8-11, 11-5, 14-12, 5-11, 11-7

U14 Girls' Doubles		
Karina Lefevre/Katherine Lefevre	bt. Mary Fuller/Martha Travis	8-11, 11-6, 11-8, 7-11, 11-13

Cippenham Young Players Summer Festival

U16BS: Billy Deville (E)	bt Oscar Selfridge (E)	11-6, 7-11, 11-2, 11-7
U16GS: Jessica Macken (E)	bt Sally Hughes (Sx)	11-8, 10-12, 11-6, 9-11, 11-9
U14BS: Oscar Selfridge (E)	bt Edward Mitchell (Bu)	11-7, 8-11, 11-9, 11-7
U14GS: Rachel Farquhar (Bk)	bt Chloe Thomas (WAL)	12-10, 11-5, 12-10
U13BS: Edward Mitchell (Bu)	bt Ping Ho (Mi)	11-5, 11-4, 11-8
U13GS: Chloe Thomas (WAL)	bt Rachel Farquhar (Bk)	6-11, 11-4, 11-2, 13-11
U12BS: Lewis Gray (K)	bt Edward Mitchell (Bu)	11-5, 11-6, 11-4
U12GS: Chloe Thomas (WAL)	bt Tin-Tin Ho (Mi)	11-4, 11-8, 11-5
U11BS: Connon Neenan (Mi)	bt Azarel Adebajo (E)	11-2, 11-7, 11-4
U11GS: Tin-Tin Ho (Mi)	bt Hannah Hoskin (E)	11-5, 6-11, 11-7, 11-9
U16BCons: Thomas Dantzig (Mi)	bt Simon Thome (Bk)	11-5, 13-15, 11-4, 11-6, 12-10
U16GCons: Grace Collier (E)	bt Colette Neenan (Mi)	11-7, 8-11, 7-11, 11-9, 11-1
U14BCons: Richard Varley (Mi)	bt Joshua Tumbidge (E)	11-8, 11-9, 11-11, 8
U14GCons: Charlotte Love (E)	bt Emma Elliston (Bu)	11-8, 7-11, 7-11, 9-11, 14-12
U13BCons: Lewis Williams (WAL)	bt Matthew Parkinson (Bu)	8-11, 9-11, 14-12, 11-7, 11-9
U13GCons: Taylor Williams (WAL)	bt Lucy Collier (E)	14-12, 11-6, 11-8
U12BCons: Alex Parkinson (Bu)	bt Alexander O'Connell (WAL)	9-11, 11-8, 11-3, 7-11, 11-9
U12GCons: Georgina Barnes (E)	bt Jessica Whealy (E)	11-5, 11-6, 11-5
U11BCons: Alex Parkinson (Bu)	bt Marvin Obi (E)	11-7, 11-1, 11-9
U11GCons: Annabelle Gibson (E)	bt Georgina Barnes (E)	10-12, 11-8, 11-11, 8-11, 7



ALEX PERRY

RYAN JENKINS

LINDSEY THORNTON-REYNOLDS

COUNTY NEWS

AVON

By Dave Banks

The Bristol League tournament took place at the new Filton venue, with some thrilling encounters taking place in the senior and junior events. In the open singles, Daniel Ives managed to get the upper hand in the final against Shaun Hall; however this result was reversed in the junior boys singles final! The ladies singles was a tightly fought event, with Gill Beer winning through against Michelle Leonard to take the title. In the junior girls' singles final, Rebecca Seal had a close win against Hayley Ruderham.

In the Bath League championships, Terry Parkins was in superb form, beating Alan Champneys in four in the open singles and Bob Murray in the veteran singles, 12-10 in the fifth, after being two games down.

The junior county teams had their last round of matches at Okehampton and although the first team managed to win all of their games, disappointingly they could only finish second in the table, just one point behind Cornwall 1st. The 2nd team managed to finish in sixth place.

An exciting day of top table tennis took place at the National Regional Junior Finals, held at Filton. In the U15 category, David McBeath and Hannah Hicks won the boys and girls' finals respectively, with the Avon players Alex Kearney and Alex Banks playing well to finish in second place in their groups.

The final senior county match of the season took place on 1st April in Worcester, beginning with a 7-3 win against Cornwall 2nds. This was followed by heavy defeats against Cornwall 1sts and Worcester, with Alex Banks playing exceptionally well, taking the only rubber against a much higher ranked Zia Khan.

The annual Avon Closed junior tournament was staged with some promising youngsters taking part. In the U12 events, Niall Mordecai and Alice Gregory won the boys and girls' singles. In the cadets, Alex Banks and Jessica Coggins were the winners. In the juniors, Lloyd Gregory and Hayley Ruderham both played well

to win in closely fought finals.

On the league front, in Bristol, Failand A won the Premier Division, with Knowle A as runners up. Steve Hall and Eddie Roofe topped the averages. In the Bath League, Oldfield B scraped the winners spot over Mayfield A, Michelle Cohen and Clive Ellison having the highest averages.

BERKSHIRE

By Colin Dyke

A maximum entry of 32 players battled for the main prize when the Bracknell Wokingham Association held their Grouping Tournament at the Kingfisher Club. This is proving a popular tournament with all entrants guaranteed a minimum of 6 matches. In the end two Wokingham Club players battled out an excellent final with Keith Winter eventually edging out Phil Prady 5-11, 11-5, 9-11, 11-3, 11-6. Clubmate Richard Ambrose made it a clean sweep for Wokingham by edging out Kingfisher's Colin Dyke for third place 10-12, 11-8, 6-11, 12-10, 11-6 whilst Roger

Woolven Allen secured fifth spot with a -6, 7, 5, -3, 10 win over Peter Bennett.

Congratulations to Melanie Farquhar on her selection for the England Junior team at the recent Polish Open. She may yet prove a key figure in Berkshire's progress in next season's County Premier Division.

CHESHIRE

By Alan Blears

A busy weekend for Cheshire youngsters and others with the Schools Individual Finals on the Saturday and the Regional Squad competition the following day, both in Stoke-on-Trent.

It was not, however, one of the county's best weekends. The only one to progress beyond the quarters in the schools' event was Fiona Dennett, who was semi-finalist in the U16 girls.

Some of the younger players were not at their best, possibly due to tiredness. One must ask whether travelling the width of the county on a Friday for a "Development squad" session, returning late then being up in time for an 8:30 am start in Stoke, is the best preparation for 11

and 12 year-olds prior to a major competition.

The North West squad, with players from Cheshire, Lancashire and Cumbria, finished a disappointing fifth in the squad competition.

Junior/Cadet County Championships:- The junior first team were narrowly relegated from the Premier Division. Disappointing though this may be, (in part) the result of the illness of one of the most experienced players on day one, they may well bounce straight back next year as the inexperienced Mark Roscaleer and Matthew Weatherby, still a cadet are improving at a good rate of knots.

Matthew Hillcourt's club mate, Jordan Potts, received a surprise call up for the Cheshire cadet team after only 15 months coaching, and contributed a 50% success rate, as the team may well have gained promotion from Division 1A.

Also promotion candidates after day one were the junior second team in Division 2A, but they had to settle for fourth place after a tough round of matches on the second day.

Junior Grand Prix:- Matthew Weatherby's good season continued with his first win this series, taking the penultimate event's first prize. The Wirral's Maitreyi Shivkumar continued her unbeaten run, but was taken to five games by Stockport's Natalie Dodd.

These three were also the overall winners, with Matthew taking the cadet boys' title, Natalie Dodd the U13 and Maitreyi Shivkumar the junior girls titles. You do know, folks, that one third of any prize money goes to the coach? In our dreams, that is, but it's a nice idea!

CLEVELAND

By Alan Ransome

Paul and Danny help England to Polish Open victory: - With Ormesby's Paul Drinkhall and Danny Reed included in the team, England juniors won their most important tournament for more than 20 years - the Junior Boys' team event in the Polish Open Championships in Cetniewo last weekend.

Paul Drinkhall was the star of the England team, being unbeaten throughout the team event with 9 wins from 9 matches played. Danny Reed excelled to win 3 of his 5 matches, as did London's Darius Knight who also won 3 from 5.

England opened with a victory against Belarus 3-1 in which Paul Drinkhall won 2 and Darius Knight 1. England's second victory was again 3-1 against Latvia with 2 from Drinkhall and 1 from Reed.

England's first major victory was in the quarter-finals against Japan where the England trio all won their singles to reel off a 3-0 victory. In the semi-final England beat the strong French

COUNTY NEWS

team 3-1 after Darius Knight had lost to Abdel-Kader Salifou in the first set. Paul Drinkhall beat Emmanuel Lebesson 3-1, Danny Reed defeated Vincent Baubet and then to clinch the victory, Drinkhall beat Abdel-Kader Salifou 3-1.

In the final the England win was over Germany by 3 sets to 1 with Drinkhall beating Ruwen Filus 3-1 and Steffen Mengel 3-0, and Knight also beating Megel 3-0.

Paul and Danny are both currently in China for training in advance of the European Youth Championships which take place in Sarajevo this month.

Ormesby sisters in doubles win: - Ormesby sisters Katherine and Karina Lefevre brought more honours back to Cleveland when they won the English National U14 Doubles Championships at Crystal Palace.

In the final, the Ormesby pair beat the current champions, Mary Fuller from Yorkshire and Martha Travis from Cornwall, in a very tight 5 set match at 13-11 in the 5th game.

In the Under 14 Singles Karina Lefevre did well to reach the final, only to lose to the top seed, Melissa Wright from Yorkshire in 5 close games. Karina also reached the semi-final of the U13 Girls' Singles before losing to Derbyshire's Lucy Davidson in straight games.

In the U12 Girls' Doubles, Ormesby's Chloe Whyte and Jessica Dawson did well to reach the final before losing to the top seeds Emily Bates and Vicky Smith from Lincolnshire in straight games.

Karina achieves further honours: - Following her success in winning the National Schools U13 title and finishing 5th in the Cadet Masters, Karina Lefevre was selected to represent England in the Cadet 6 Nations Championship in Drachten, Netherlands.

Karina produced another good performance throughout the weekend. She won both of her matches in England's 8-2 victory over Denmark and one against Ann Sophie Jean in England's 7-3 defeat with France. She won two against the Netherlands in England's 8-2 win, 1 against Anna Kriehof in England's 7-2 defeat against Germany and 1 against Marjan Safai in England's 6-4 defeat with Sweden.

Overall, Karina won 7 of her 10 team matches.

In the individual groups, Karina also did well to win 3 of her 6 matches. At the age of 12, Karina was competing against players 2 years her senior in this competition.

Karina has also been selected, together with Jonathan Durham, to represent England Schools in the International Schools Home Countries Championship at Douglas in the Isle of Man.

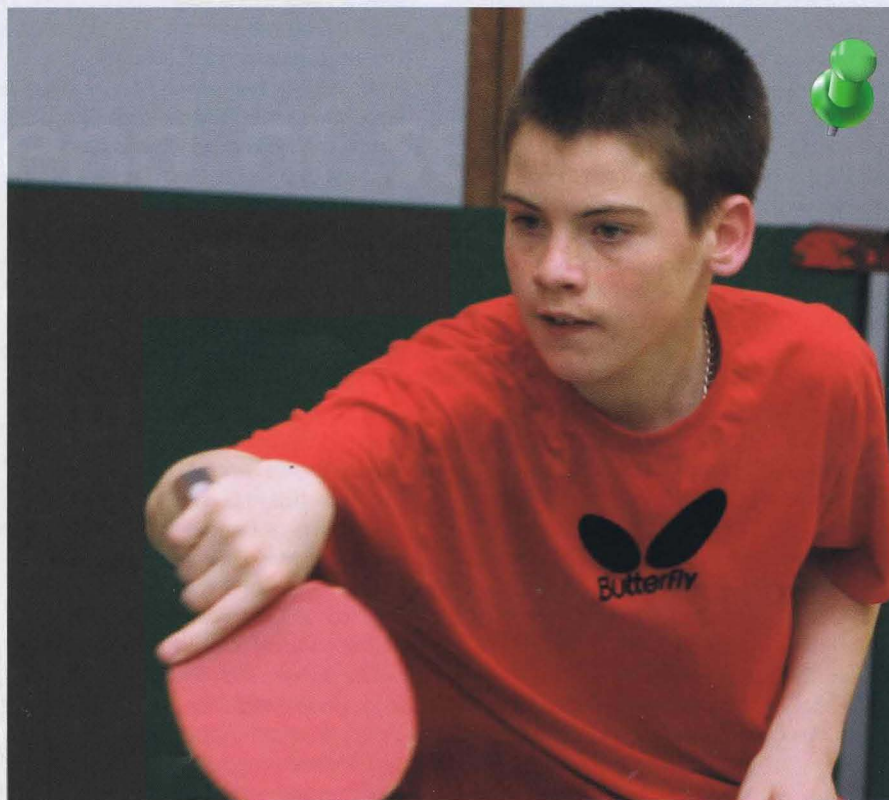
Jonathan Durham, who represents Ormesby 3rd team in the British League and attends



Cheshire's Matthew Weatherby flying high

Round Up summary

COUNTY NEWS



David McBeath, Under 15s Winner National Regional Junior Finals. Avon

Macmillan College, is part of the England U16 Boys' team, whilst Karina Lefevre, who is currently the England no.1 U13 player, represents Ormesby in the Women's British League and attends Thornaby Community School, will be part of the England Under 14 Girls' team.

DERBYSHIRE

By Neil Houghton

Obviously the first thing to say is about the previous writer of this column, Colin Deaton; he will be sorely missed. Would I be in Table Tennis if it were not for Colin? Probably not. Did his extreme enthusiasm and unique sales pitch for the sport introduce and involve hundreds or maybe thousands of people? Certainly.

Unfortunately Derbyshire is mourning the death of a further two upstanding characters, Gordon Bird and John Whittaker. Gordon lived in Burton and played in the Burton and Derby League for many years. A thoroughly 'good bloke' shortly due to retire from his job which (to those not understanding the professionalism/skill involved) was the envy of many – a Beer Taster! As well as some good TT Gordon also played local league football and was a keen cyclist including a trip from Lands

End to John O' Groats with son Keith.

John Whittaker, who lived at Alveston, was also a keen cyclist and table tennis player in the Long Eaton and Derby League. He cycled to county championships at Lea Green and Staveley. A good distance anywhere but heading up into Derbyshire Dales takes fitness. Unfortunately being a decent person, good at table tennis, fit and healthy doesn't offer protection from everything, John recently succumbed to a serious illness.

All the above were remembered at the recent DTTA meeting and our kind regards, from the DTTA and Derbyshire TT community, go to their families and friends.

Welcome good news is that Derbyshire's own Alan Cooke clinched the World Veteran Over 40s title! Having had some publicity, including a television mention of his 40th birthday celebrations in Australia, always keen to play Cookie signed up for the Vets' Worlds and succeeded at his first attempt!

Emma Coles won three events in Matlock finals, including the women's title. She also won the U13 event at Sheffield 1 Star, hopefully another decent player for Derbyshire juniors on the way. Emma's team also clinched Matlock League Division Two, involving three generations, 11 year old Emma, her father and

grandfather! A fitting note to end on - life goes on in table tennis, a family sport and an inspiration to young people.

DEVONSHIRE

By John Vincent

Plymouth City Council has lodged a bid with the National Lottery to help fund the building of a £50 million life centre in Central Park. The centre would be a multi-use complex incorporating a 50-metre Olympic size swimming pool, world class diving facilities, as well as provision for badminton, netball, basketball, hockey, cricket, five-a-side, aerobics, martial arts and ice skating. But the Life Centre will be much more than just a leisure centre. It will also incorporate health clinic facilities for music, arts, dance, a library, some commercial development and a youth centre. Table tennis could well benefit from this venture with so many schools nearby it provides an opportunity to get involved!

This year has seen Plymouth junior Richard Marshall selected for the England Cadet team to play in the 6 Nations Tournament in the Netherlands, Vicky Smith did well playing for England in the British Primary Schools Championships in Scotland and her older sister Sally has been selected for England Schools home internationals in the Isle of Man.

DML Woolwell Table Tennis Club is growing fast with over 100 members. It is John Smith's intention to enter 16 teams in the Plymouth and District TTL for the 2006/7 season. Each year John has run a 24 hour table tennis marathon to raise funds for his club; this year has again been a success with many willing members obtaining sponsorship.

For the past five years John Smith has successfully run the Plymouth Primary Schools Championships with both individual and team events, attracting an average 33 players in each event. Due to pressure of work, etc. this year's championships have been delayed but are expected to be run in October.

Junior British League – DML Woolwell boys' team of Richard Marshall, Chris Smith and Chris Warn finished in third place in Division 2A. Marshall with 17 victories from 20 games finished second in the individual averages.

Sally Smith registered with Redland Bats in order to play in the Girls' Premier Division. This move proved fruitful with Sally winning 13 of her 18 matches to finish second in the averages behind Emma Vickers with an average of 72.2%. Smith had three victories over opponents higher than her in the National Ranking List. Redland Bats were placed third in the Premier Division.

ESSEX

By Steve Kerns

Corti Woodcock award:- Neil Brierley, one of the driving forces behind the thriving BATTs Club, the current county veterans match secretary, successful veterans county player, counter-hitter (with that "so annoying" backhand high-tossed serve!) and a four times Harlow League Men's Singles Champion, was the deserved recipient of the county's premier award for service to the sport this year. One of the hardest working people in the county, his enthusiasm for table tennis is visible for all to see. As a result the BATTs Club has hosted numerous British League, county and regional events at all levels in the last few years.

Needless to say Neil has been involved (and present) at the vast majority of these ventures.

Shu Huang, the ETTA Community Coach at the Eastlea School in Canning Town exceeded all expectations by sensationally reaching the semi-finals of the Over 40s Ladies Singles at the Veterans World Championships in Bremen. After a thrilling victory in the last 16 against Japan's Kimie Iwata (11-5, 10-12, 12-10, 11-7, 12-10) Shu again came up trumps by getting the better of Anke Mutke (Germany) 12-10, 9-11, 11-6, 11-9 in the quarter-final. Shu finally met her match against 1998 World Over 40s Singles Champion Larisa Farina (Russia) in the semi final.

National police champion Keiran Lally, former Chelmsford and Clacton Men's Singles Champion, made a dramatic return to form by annexing the National Police Championships at Potters Leisure Resort, Norfolk. From an unseeded position Keiran won his group matches with four wins out of four which included a superb 3-2 success over the seeded Tim O'Mahoney (Wiltshire) as well as a 3-0 victory over the potentially dangerous Winston Wong (Metropolitan Police). Keiran had few problems in making it to the semi-final but here he needed all his experience to get the better of highly ranked county veteran player Jeff Craighill (Cheshire) 3-2. His opponent in the final was Ian Ferguson (West Midlands) who had scored a superb win over the top seeded John Rankin (Lancashire) in his semi-final. The final produced the most free flowing and action-packed match of the weekend and after four evenly fought games it was Lally who broke free in the fifth end to win 11-6.

Brentwood Closed: - George Reeves capped a fine season where he was an integral part of the title winning Essex Veterans IV team by capturing a hat-trick of titles at the Brentwood Closed Championships. The fast-improving Charles Sweeney was his victim in the Men's Singles final whilst John Gagg was his opponent in the Veterans' Singles final.

Results:- Men's Singles - George Reeves bt. Charles Sweeney 3-1, Ladies Singles - Sue Hickman bt. Caroline Cole 3-0, Veterans' Singles - George Reeves bt. John Gagg 3-1, Men's Doubles - Reeves/Sweeney bt. Alan Arnold/Nigel Lamb 3-2, Veterans Over 60s Singles - George Pavitt bt. Keith Ashton 3-0, Handicap Singles - Trevor Carter bt. Keith Spicer 2-1 Team Handicap Event - Mark Alloway/John Hickey bt. Dave Finlayson/Caroline Cole 2-1

HERTFORDSHIRE

By Ann Fereday

Hertfordshire teams win 3 County Trophies: - Congratulations to Veterans Team 4 who won Division 4A. The same players turned out for every match: captain Geof Bax, plus Stuart Mylrea, Larry Gregory and June Nelson. Veteran Team 5 received the runners-up shields for Division 4B with captain Barry Phillips, Andrew Nash, Brian Gale and Mary Nicholls. The juniors were runners-up in Division 1A.

Controversy at Hertfordshire senior closed tournament: - This was held at the Barnet Centre. Again this year there was a low entry of just 35 people, barely enough for a lively atmosphere, which deteriorated following problems with the Ladies Veteran Singles.

Four ladies entered and all played each other on the Saturday. At the end of this three of them were tied on the same number of points. It seemed logical to add up their sets for and against which indicated Mary Nicholls was first. Next day David Edwards arrived to assist the organiser John Barnes. He said that the fourth lady, not involved in the tie, should be deemed to be non-existent! Her results were removed and Sue Felstead was declared the winner. If you have entered and played in a tournament and then been told your results counted for nothing it does not encourage you to enter again. There must be a better way of solving this sort of situation.

Results:- Men's singles: Ilin Pylypiw r/u Andrew Nash Ladies Singles: Sanya Clements r/u Sharon South Men's Veteran Singles: Mark McCarthy r/u Jeff Linskey Senior Veteran Singles: Jim Craggs r/u Dennis Robinson Men's Doubles: Andrew Nash/Gabor Patonai r/u Trafford Coker/Dennis Robinson Ladies Doubles: Sue Felstead/Sandy Nash r/u Jackie Channel/Sharon South Mixed Doubles: Ilin Pylypiw/Sanya Clements r/u Mark McCarthy/Sharon South Veterans Doubles: Jeff Linskey/Mark McCarthy r/u Jim Craggs/Paul Nelson. Last year the feedback on this column was that you liked reading the results of your local leagues closed tournaments. Here are the results then that I have received from three of them.

Shaw League:- Open Singles: Sanya Clements Men's Doubles: C.Armstrong/R.Powell bt. R.Murrell/M.Livesey Ladies Singles: Ann Fereday bt. Elaine Tuit Mixed Doubles: R.Murrell/A.Fereday bt. H.Collins/E.Tuit Minor Singles: Aaron Mortimer bt. Howard Collins

Junior Singles: Daniel Shine bt. Phillip Evans Veteran Singles: Derek Willis bt. Richard Hudson Handicap Singles: David White bt. Adam Cohen-Rose. The organiser was Frank Sharpe.

Barnet League:- Open Singles:Paul Nelson bt. Jeff Linskey Ladies Singles: Jennifer Sims bt. Rena Williamson Open Doubles: T.Bateman/D.Robinson bt. Sanya Clements/M.McCarthy Ladies Doubles: R.Williamson/J.Simms bt. J.Dean/S.Szanto Mixed Doubles: P.Nelson/S.Clements bt. J.Sims/K.Mistri Veteran Doubles: J.Linskey/P.Nelson bt. J.Carpenter/B.Gale Veteran Singles: Dennis Robinson bt. J.Linskey Senior Veteran: Dennis Robinson bt. T.Bateman Junior U18: Max Thomas bt. Max Murrain U15 Zac Zileskni bt. Collette Neenan (first time a girl has got to the final) U13 Max Thomas bt. Zac Zileskni

Watford League: - Men's Singles: C.Ogle bt. A.Budden Ladies Singles: Sally Bax bt. Jeanette Maybanks Men's Doubles: M.Bonyadi/W.Maybanks bt. C.Ogle/H.Davies Mixed Doubles: M.Bonyadi/J.Maybanks bt. S. & G.Bax Veteran Singles: C.Ogle bt. M.Bonyadi Junior Singles: W.Maybanks bt. M.Meraki.

Sally Bax (captain of Hertford Veteran 1 team) has been selected to play for England in the 6 Nations Home Countries Tournament in Belfast in September. Good luck Sally!

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

By Dennis Millman

In the final series of the EBS Mobile Phones Ltd. Super League all four teams were poised to take a share of the £1000 prize money, while DCA Pumas, with fixtures completed, waited in keen anticipation.

Only two sides could win the inaugural title with Westfield and Harborough in direct opposition. A depleted Harborough's earlier defeat at the hands of Corby put them at a disadvantage, with the Kettering League club requiring a 7-2 win to create a dilemma for the organisers, or an 8-1 success to become champions.

Andy LeButt and David Grundy both beat John Fuller in scintillating attack versus defence encounters as Harborough took the lead three times. Greg Yarnall levelled twice, while Tomas Jacko on his first appearance beat Barry Thompson to ensure that Westfield would take

COUNTY NEWS

home the trophy.

Two things remained, the match result and the individual award. Yarnall made sure of the latter with a fourth end decision over Grundy but an earlier match in which he edged out LeButt 14-12 in the fifth could have proved his downfall, especially with Richard Elliott unbeaten on the adjacent table.

LeButt levelled at 4-4 but in a tense finish, Fuller just held on to beat Thompson 12-10 in the decider to give the Wellingborough side a 5-4 victory.

The second match featured Farthingstone and Higham Band with both in the running for third place, the former requiring a 7-2 verdict while the Band needed to win 5-4.

In the event neither side achieved its target. Two wins each from Gary Webb and Dave Murphy plus a single success from Tony Woodward gave Farthingstone a win, but like Elliott's hat-trick it was all to no avail, as third place went to the Pumas.

The splendid trophy, together with cheques for the top three sides, was presented by Kieron Hallam, Operations Manager of EBS Mobile Phones Ltd.

In a close finish to the Top 12 tournament for boys, three players finished level with ten wins each, with the final outcome decided on countback.

Matt Carter, Dan Smalley and Jordan Dainty all won their first six rubbers with Carter's results the most clear-cut. However with Smalley and Dainty in direct opposition in round 7, something had to give and it was Dainty's unbeaten record as Smalley gained a straight game decision.

The major surprise came in round 8 when Carter, ranked no.59 on the Thornton's Sport County Ranking List, was well beaten by Dainty, ranked 193 places lower.

When the final round arrived, a win for Smalley against Carter would give the Westfield player the title, a win in a decider would leave Dainty in pole position, while a straight game success for Carter would be enough to earn him the coveted trophy. Carter made no mistake.

Placings: 1. Matt Carter. 2. Jordan Dainty. 3. Dan Smalley. 4. Carl Leeson. 5. Ryan Harrison. 6. Marcus Dimmock. 7. Jack Coleman. 8. Angus Oliver. 9. Matt Horrocks. 10. Sam Wildman. 11. Sean Oliver. 12. Tom Low.

Early results in the Top 8 tournament for girls went as expected with the first shock coming in Round 5 when a steadily improving Charlotte Binley, ranked no.462, toppled hot favourite Katy Armstrong, 167 places higher. Binley followed up with a win against the previously unbeaten Anna Hobson and when the final round arrived all three players could take the

honours.

Armstrong beat Hobson to remain in the reckoning, but Binley was having problems against Jordan Wood who had beaten her in the County Closed U15 final. This game went all the way but Binley held her nerve to take the decider 11-7 and so take the title for the first time. Final Placings: 1. Charlotte Binley. 2. Katy Armstrong. 3. Anna Hobson. 4. Jordan Wood. 5. Amy Chapman. 6. Gracie Shuttleworth. 7. Victoria Amos. 8. Becky Armstrong.

Higham Band completed a successful season by taking Premier Division titles in both the Wellingborough and the Kettering Leagues. Richard Elliott, Mark Nannery, Steve Brown and Chas Allen were good enough to relegate holders Westfield A into second place at Wellingborough, but it took frequent appearances from Andy Trott and Ryan Keates to hold off the challenge of last season's Kettering champions Burton Baptist A.

Higham needed just three points from their final match against third place Kettering Town, a task made easier by the absence of Chris Doran at an England training camp. Town, the only side to beat Higham, were unable to repeat the performance as Elliott, Nannery and Keates took eight games between them to win a fourteenth title.

Town also had a good season, becoming the first side to reach the final of all three cups, with the varied abilities of Ken Philipson, John Palmer and Dennis Millman were also on call when required. However 12 matches in three weeks proved too great a handicap as fine displays from Thrapston Harriers and Harborough Rovers restricted Town to a single trophy.

Finally, congratulations to the husband and wife team of Dave and Margaret Welsman, Dave for ending as runner-up in the National Masters Over 50 Singles and Margaret for retaining the corresponding ladies crown.

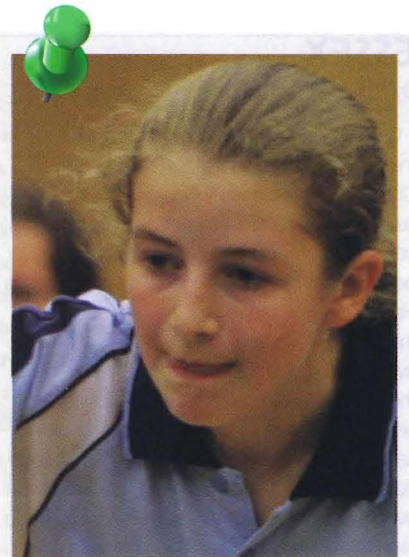
NORTHUMBERLAND

By Pauline Long

Washington A's team of Eddie Smith, Andrew Wilkinson and Dave Blackburne as expected took the Northumbria Winter League Premier Division title from last season's champions Birtley A (Dave Godbold, Dale Aitkenhead, Mark Jackson and Gary Sangster).

Other winners and runners-up were: Division 1 College Street r/u NESLC B Division 2 Oxhill YC "A" r/u Mortimer Division 3 Byker CC B r/u Cramlington Casuals Division 4* Cramlington Lions r/u North Shields YMCA E.

*The Lions were the only team in the five divisions to remain unbeaten throughout the season, although held to a draw on two



Karina Lefevre on top form for Cleveland

occasions.

The Summer League commenced on 15th May with 32 teams contesting four divisions, and will continue until week commencing 14th August – can Washington "A" achieve the double for the first time in their history?

The Lions team of Andy Roberts, Ben Dawson and Graeme Boxwell achieved a notable double when winning the Team Handicap Knockout Cup competition, beating last season's winners Old England FATTS from Division 3 (Nick Wool, Barry Matthews and Steve Martin) in the final, by 7 sets to 2.

Sadly after 30 years it may be the last time our County Notes appear in TT News unless I can find a volunteer with the requested e-mail facilities and some spare time on their hands. Any takers?

SOMERSET

By John Wood

Ark Lift League & Cup: - Ark Raiders have added the handicap cup to their Premier Division title in the Taunton Table Tennis League. In the cup they comfortably defeated YMCA Reds in the final, which was sponsored by Ark Removals, whilst in the Premier Division they took the title pushing Trinity Kings into second place by 14 points. Division 1 was won by Galmington by 26 points from second spot Castle Valliants.

Baker Tilly Yeovil & District League :- The first division title had the closest finish for many a year with the top three positions undecided until the very last games of the season, which saw Mosterton Merlins leapfrog from third place to top spot to take the title, pushing Westland's White and Grey teams into second and third

COUNTY NEWS

spots respectively.

This year's second division title was won by Ilminster A by a massive 83 points, with Westland Hopedefuls just hanging onto second spot by a mere three points from third placed Westland Flyers.

Division 3 was won by Sandford Orcas B who pushed Netherbury Untouchables into the runners-up position by 12 points.

Paul Green won this year's American Handicap Cup when he beat Lee Sadler, in an all Westland final. The Scratch Cup Final was contested by two Westland teams, the Blacks and Greys, which saw the Whites take the title. Ilminster A Team completed a league and cup double when they won the Intermediate Cup final, overpowering Westland Hopedefuls 8-1.

At the presentation evening of the Baker Tilley Yeovil & District Table Tennis League, held at the Westland Sports & Social Club's Wessex Room, it was announced by League Chairman Roy Harrison that the sponsor Baker Tilley were moving to Bristol, he thanked them for their past support and informed the gathering that the League had found a new sponsor, VES Precision Limited of Crewkerne, starting with the coming 2006/7 season. Tom Newberry of aerospace engineers VES Precision said, "We plan to sponsor the League for the next two or three seasons". Prior to the presentations a pot luck doubles competition took place in the table tennis room at Westlands, where a good entry on a hot and sultry evening battled their way through to the final, which saw Takuya Takaishi and Gillian Thorne beat Chris Brice and Janet Swain.

SURREY

By Chris Andrews

At the World Team Championships in Bremen both Joanna Parker and Darius Knight did well. Joanna beat world no.192 Beh Li Wei in England's 3-2 win over Malaysia, while Darius beat both world no.130 Achanta Sharath Kamel and world no. 215 Soumyadeep in England's 3-2 win over India. In the Championship Joanna won 8 out of 13 matches, putting her as England's leading female player, whereas Darius played 10 matches and won 4.

In the Ormesby Cup (National Men's Club Team event) Merrow were runners-up with their team of Terry Haley, John Robinson and Steve Davis. John had an excellent win over Gary Tendler.

The Surrey senior first team had an interesting time in Division 1B. In the opening match we won with Rob Lemon beating Alistair McTavish 11-2 in the fifth. The two women, Ida Jandova and Jane Barella, both had superb wins over Angie Bristow and Kim Mudge respectively, and

we secured the points as early as game 6, going 6-0 up. Kent rallied, however, to take three of the remaining four games for Surrey to win 7-3.

In the second match Berkshire were expected to be tough opposition. Adam Laws had a very good game against Martin Adams, defeating him 3-0. This inspired his teammates to equally great victories. Pete Barrow defeated Hari Gehlot 3-0 and Rob scored a great win over David Barr at 11-6 in the fourth. With Ida and Jane winning their two matches, Surrey established a 5-0 lead against the divisional favourites. Martin Adams beat Pete, but we were not to be denied our victory, as Ida clinched it against Susan Johnson at 11-4 in the fourth. Adam beat Dave Barr to make it 7-1, but Berkshire won the last two matches. We produced the team performance of the season to overcome them 7-3.

Bolstered by the inclusion of England international Darius Knight and Marcia Ma, the current no.2 veteran woman in England, a strong Middlesex side were swept aside with doubles for Marcia, Darius, Chris Lewis and Ida. Dov Katz had an excellent match though, for the losers. Surrey were victorious 9-1. Without Darius and Marcia it was always going to be tough.

The match against Glamorgan was truly disastrous for us, as no Surrey player apart from Rob Lemon was able to find any type of form. He defeated Neil Wright for our sole win. Ida was below her best, but in her first full season for Surrey, did extremely well overall. We lost 9-1. This meant we had to rely on Berkshire messing up against three player Middlesex, but we weren't holding our breath. We were right not to, as they duly won 10-0 to get promoted to the Premier Division at our expense. There will be plenty of hope for us to go one better next season.

In the National Schools U13 competition, the U13 girls team from Coombe Girls School consisting of Kim Beard, Anna Driscoll, Helena Foylan and Lydia Regan played fantastically well. They beat the first team they played Oak Hill 5-3 and so went on to their second match which ended in a 4-4 draw. Their final match was against Peniel Academy who were ranked the highest. All the girls played very well and we were thrilled when Lydia took a game off them. A massive congratulations to the girls who managed an excellent second place.

In the Byfleet League Season, Old Woking A won Division 1, with M. Batt-Rawden of Byfleet LTC A being top of the averages. This is the first title for Old Woking after many years of trying. They edged out the holders Byfleet LTC in the final two matches of the season.

Monk Hill A won the Croydon League Division

1 title, with Forresters A and Wickham Park A in joint second place. As last year Tony Bostic topped the averages. Wickham Park D and Monk Hill D won Divisions 2 and 3 respectively. Monk Hill A beat Wickham B 5-1 in the Open Cup and the Handicap Cup was won by Wickham D who beat Monks Hill 5-3. Croydon presented Lon Moir with a plaque in recognition of his long service to sport in Croydon. The ceremony took place in the Mayor's parlour in the Town Hall, Croydon.

In the Haslemere & District League Brook A won the Division 1 title, Brook C won Division 2 and Liphook A won the Division 3 title. In the Handicap Cup Haslemere E emerged victorious. The Reigate, Redhill & District League's Premier Division was won by Holy Trinity. Godstone II won the Division 1 title while Divisions 2 and 3 were won by Temple Bar 2 and Godstone VI respectively. Pete Barrow was top of the averages in the Thames Valley League. Pete is stepping down as Surrey Secretary we wish to thank him for all the hard work he has done for the county and send him good luck in his new job. Graham Spicer 3 won the Division 1 title (the captain of which is club treasurer Tony Needham), Malden 1 won the Division 2 title, Chessington 3 won the Division 3 title and Hersham Village won the Division 4 title.

In the Wandsworth & District League York Gardens A won Division 1, Vale A won Division 2, St Paul's A won Division 3, York Gardens D won Division 4 and Devas B won Division 5.

SUSSEX

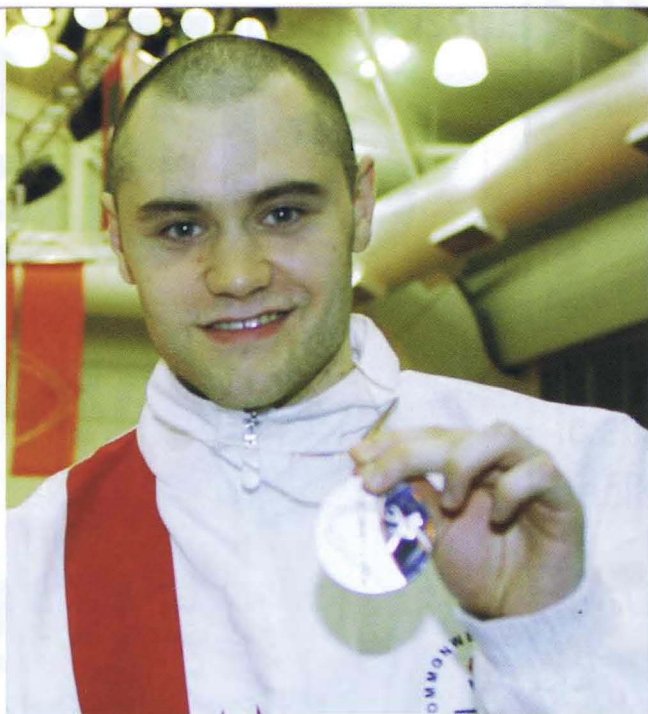
By John Woodford

Apart from the final Grand Prix tournament at Crawley, Sussex table tennis ended the season at Fontwell with the prestigious invitation event, the Seaman and Nicholls Cups. Top seed Ritchie Venner won the Seaman Cup for the thirteenth time following a final round 4-0 victory against Jack Boulton.

Ritchie, however, had to struggle through six games in his semi-final to stop the holder Peter Bartram. Rose Rainton clinched her ninth win in the Nicholls Cup, beating the former Sussex champion Teresa Bennett in the final 3-0.

The junior boys event winner was James Rivers of Horsham with a surprise win over Liam Vine from Arundel and the junior girl to watch at this time is Stacey Furnival. She has been picked to play for England for the second time in the English Schools U16 team in the home internationals on the Isle of Man. At Fontwell, she won the Rymill Cup, beating Sally Hughes 3-0 in the final.

THE BEST PLAYERS



02 SENIOR MAN ALEX PERRY

FORM Alex has hit great form this season, not only is he the current National Champion in both the Men's Singles and Mixed Doubles, Alex has also won every Butterfly Grand Prix he has entered.

CAREER HIGHLIGHT Winning his 13th National title in 2006

04 SENIOR MAN ANDREW RUSHTON

FORM With an exceptional performance defeating Alan Cooke in the semi-finals of the National Championship, Andrew's season has gone from strength to strength.

CAREER HIGHLIGHT Winning Silver Medal in Melbourne with doubles partner Andrew Baggailey

05 SENIOR WOMAN NATALIE BAWDEN

FORM Natalie is again one of the top performers in this country; her exploits at the World Champs in Bremen this year were impressive with five wins out of six.

CAREER HIGHLIGHT Being selected for the World and Commonwealth Championships whilst still a Junior.

07 SENIOR WOMAN L THORNTON-REYNOLDS:

FORM Top form again this season winning the Butterfly Grand Prix Women's Open Series and established a 92.85% average with her league team - DML Woolwell.

CAREER HIGHLIGHT 2005/6 Butterfly Grand Prix Singles Champion

PLAYER RANKINGS 2005/2006

TOP 25 SENIOR MEN

Ranking	Player
01	COOKE, Alan
02	PERRY, Alex
03	DRINKHALL, Paul
04	RUSHTON, Andrew
05	BAGGALEY, Andrew
06	KNIGHT, Darius
07	HERBERT, Gareth
08	YOUNG, Terry
09	YARNALL, Tim
10	BLEAKLEY, Adam
11	TRUMPAUSKAS, Lawrence
12	MEADS, David
13	HOLLAND, John J
14	BRYANT, Craig
15	BARHAM, Dale
16	REED, Daniel
17	SMITH, Mark Richard
18	EVANS, Gavin
19	WURAOLA, Abdul
20	MARSDEN, Michael
21	BLAKE, Darren
22	DOLDER, Kevin
23	EVANS, Bradley
24	VENNER, Ritchie
25	MARPLES, Shaun

TOP 25 SENIOR WOMEN

Ranking	Player
01	PARKER, Joanna
02	LOWER, Helen
03	MARCH, Linda
04	SIBLEY, Kelly
05	BAWDEN, Natalie
06	WALKER, Georgina
07	REYNOLDS, Lindsey
08	SPINK, Lauren
09	ROBERTS, Joanna
10	PEERS, Clare
11	SHEPHERD, Karen
12	KEAST, Lesley
13	WILSON, Naomi
14	SMITH, Karen
15	RADFORD, Lisa
16	CHAPMAN, Gemma
17	WHITE, Nicola
18	RAINTON, Rosemary
19	BONGERS, Jose
20	COHEN, Michele
21	BRISTOW, Angie
22	HOWARD, Alice
23	WANG, Lucy
24	YARNLEY, Gemma
25	NARENDRAN, Aparna

TOP 5 JUNIOR BOYS

Ranking	Player
01	DRINKHALL, Paul
02	KNIGHT, Darius
03	REED, Daniel
04	EVANS, Gavin
05	YARNALL, Tim

TOP 5 CADET BOYS

Ranking	Player
01	EVANS, Gavin
02	CHAN, Wing-Yung
03	WARE, Mathew
04	DORAN, Christopher
05	MARSHALL, Richard

TOP 5 UNDER 13 BOYS

Ranking	Player
01	EVANS, Gavin
02	PITCHFORD, Liam
03	LOWE, Daniel
04	CULLEN, Sean
05	BARELLA, Graeme

TOP 5 VETERAN MEN

Ranking	Player
01	WURAOLA, Abdul
02	ECKERSLEY, Nigel
03	KENNEDY, Joe
04	CARTHY, Clive
05	GILES, Paul

TOP 5 JUNIOR GIRLS

Ranking	Player
01	SIBLEY, Kelly
02	SPRINGTHORPE, Lauren
03	SPINK, Lauren
04	VICKERS, Emma
05	WANG, Sarra

TOP 5 CADET GIRLS

Ranking	Player
01	VICKERS, Emma
02	JAMIESON, Rachel
03	HICKS, Hannah
04	WRIGHT, Melissa
05	ARDESHANA, Reena

TOP 5 UNDER 13 GIRLS

Ranking	Player
01	SUNDARARAJAN, Ayonija
02	TRAVIS, Martha
03	LEFEVRE, Karina
04	BATES, Emily
05	DAVIDSON, Lucy

TOP 5 VETERAN WOMEN

Ranking	Player
01	HUANG, Shu
02	SMITH, Karen
03	JOHNS, Jan
04	HARPER, Sandra
05	MUDGE, Kim

