

table tennis news

Official Magazine of the English Table Tennis Association

Ferdinand

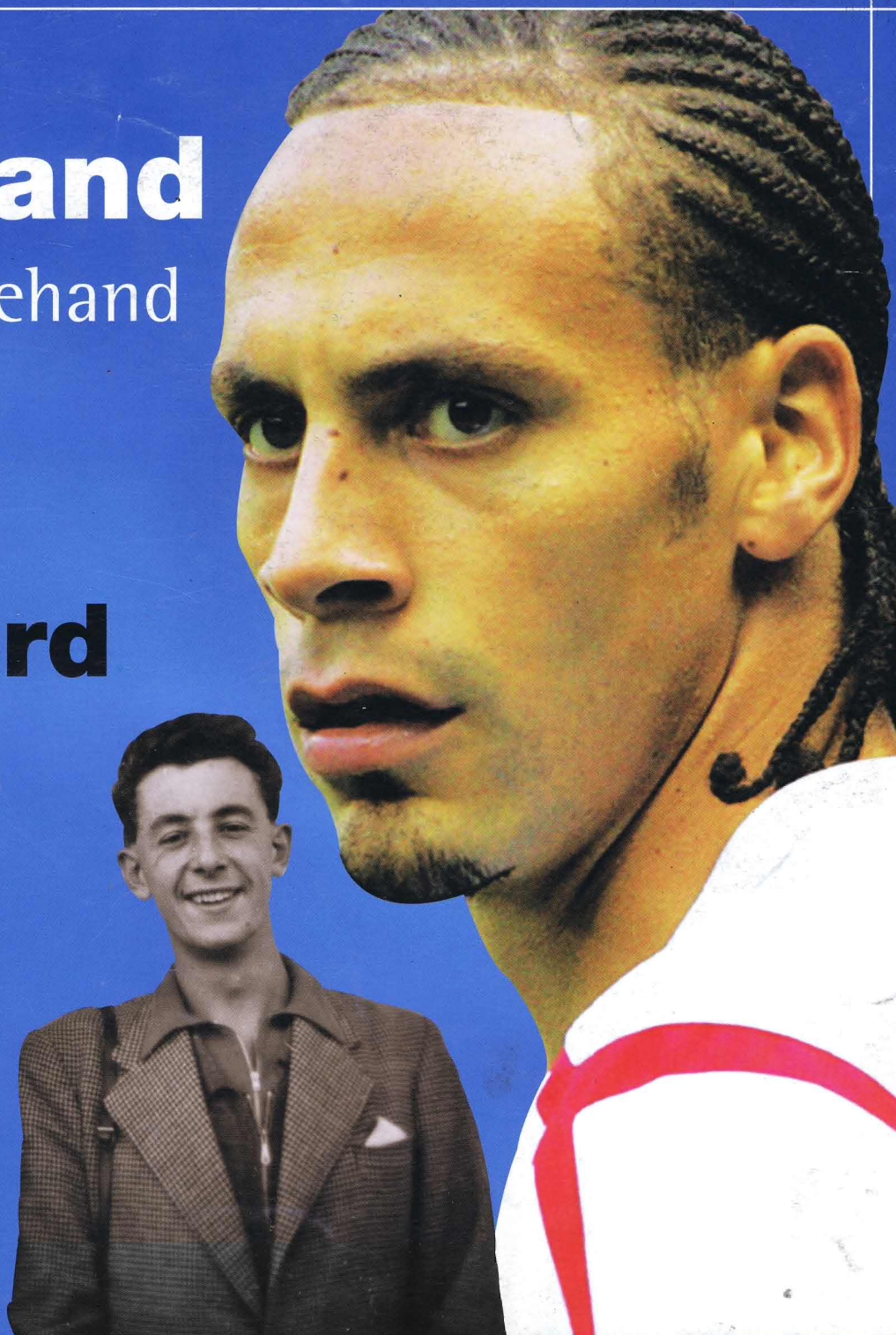
The best forehand
in football?

John Woodford

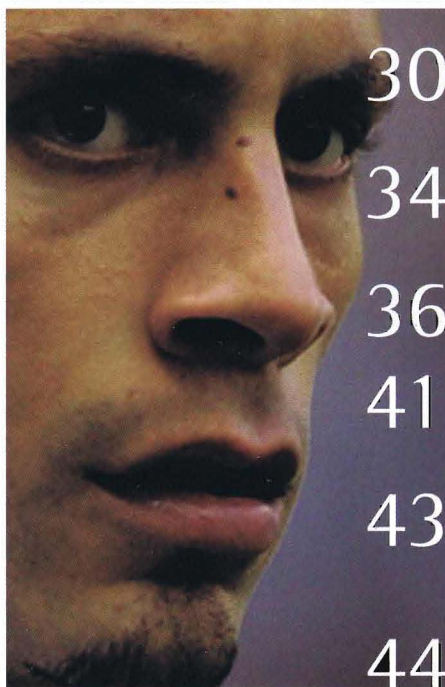
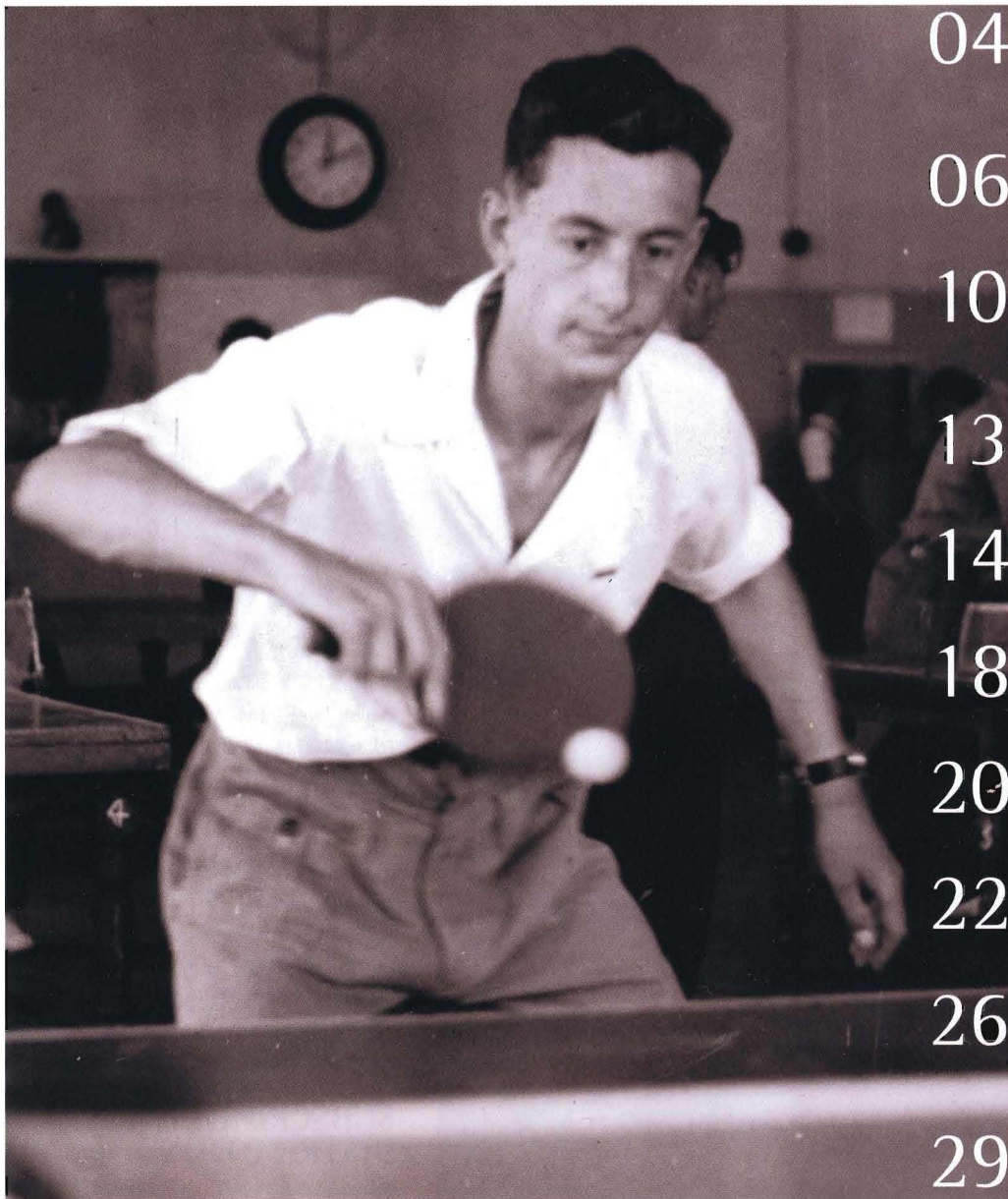
Memories of our
media man

Plus:

New No.1
Super Nan
Service Tips
and
the latest news
and results



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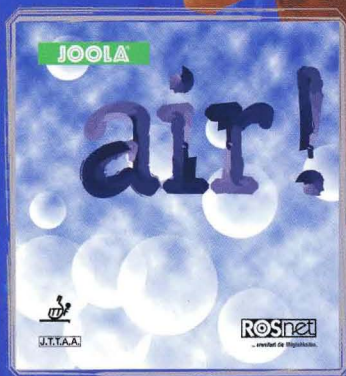
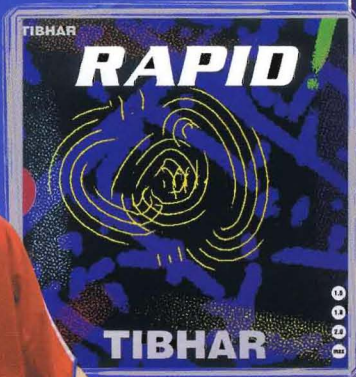
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from the editor



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.



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.



RICHARD EATON

Richard has written about racket sports for 30 years, working for newspapers, magazines, radio and websites all over the world. He has also co-authored books with Desmond Douglas, Jill Hammersley Parker and John Hilton.

Well what a treat: from Rio to Glasgow this issue is a real extravaganza of everything that is topical, tropical, and most definitely table tennis.

Serving up a banana is something you might expect as a tasty dessert, however in this issue we show you how to split your opponent with the devilish display of deception and catch them unaware as we illustrate the techniques required within the Banana Serve. A new issue, a new number one, Paul Drinkhall has reached the top at the tender age of 16 - he is one of the youngest ever to gain a pass into the select band of elite English masters. Matthew Syed provides an insight into just what lies ahead for the talented teenager.

We also have the second instalment of our three part special from the literary master Howard Jacobson, as he continues to delve deeper and deeper into the world of the nifty, shifty New Yorker, Marty Reisman.

Plus a game for the mind! Nan Agnew provides some food for thought as she describes how our miraculous sport has impacted on her life forever with a quite brilliant feature that is superbly and fondly written.

We also celebrate the incredible life of one of table tennis's most prolific and zealous reporters, John Woodford, with an excellent tribute from one of his many long term friends and colleagues Richard Eaton. I myself only knew John for a short period of time, however, in that time his enthusiasm and dedication was exceptional and incredibly infectious; he appeared in his element on courtside with his pencil always going ten to the dozen, and he will be sorely missed by all.

“USE THE PHRASE ‘BEST FOREHAND IN THE WORLD’ IN THEIR HEARING AND EACH WILL LOOK UP, ASSUMING YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT HIM.” HOWARD JACOBSON PAGE 10 “EVERY DAY THAT DRINKHALL TRAINS WITHOUT FIRE IN HIS BELLY GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS, AS IT WERE IS A DAY WASTED”. MATTHEW SYED PAGE 20 “IT CREATED A NICELY CONCISE AND BRILLIANTLY COURAGEOUS END TO A JOURNALISTIC CAREER IN WHICH HE COVERED SOMETHING LIKE 900 EVENTS AND REPORTED FOR THE DAILY TELEGRAPH FOR ALMOST 30 YEARS” RICHARD EATON PAGE 22

A time for reflection

The recent untimely death of John Woodford is a great loss to our sport, John's contributions to the media across all levels of our sport over many years will be missed and very difficult to replace.

I am sure in most cases your local league programme has started; I have played in my clubs first three matches and attended a number of events both as a player and administrator.

A battle took place at Wolverhampton with Peter Bradley (ETTA Deputy Chairman), Martin Clark (ETTA Treasurer) and myself drawn together in a group of over (!!!'s), I think this is the first time in 80 years of the ETTA that the three Directors of the Association have all been drawn against each other in a competition.

Our two top junior boys, Paul Drinkhall and Darius Knight have qualified to take part in the European Junior Top 12 in January 2007.

FUNDING PARTNERS

Negotiations are well under way with our funding partners to get support in a number of areas covering a Review of our Competitions Structure, continued assistance for the UKCC programme and Talent Identification. Presentations and Plans have been submitted which we hope will result in additional funding awards being provided to the ETTA which will complement and increase our support to the Table Tennis fraternity.

MEMBERSHIP DATA

To justify the large funding awards we are given and to get additional funding it is essential and part of the criteria required that we have clear and quantifiable data about our membership. The completion and returning of the Individual Registration Forms from all players and Officials at local league and club level will give us the data we require and in the interest of the sport you all love and enjoy. Please just take a few minutes and fill these forms in. It is, of course, a requisite within our rules. This data is for your ETTA to know how many members it has, how we can support you better and to show our funding partners the progress we are making to expand participation.

UKCC

I have said before that the introduction of the UKCC will change how we and all other sports recognise, train and certify coaches in the United Kingdom. All National Governing Bodies are involved and it is an opportunity to support, assist and develop the coaching structure for both the coaches and players, this is a Governmental Initiative. It is not the intention that this will change overnight but will be part of a long-term process involving us all and I believe a major benefit to our sport.

EUROPEAN JUNIOR TOP 12

You will be interested to learn that our two top junior boys, Paul Drinkhall and Darius Knight have qualified to take part in the European Junior Top 12 in January 2007 as well as our Junior Boys Team qualifying to take part in the World Junior Championships in December 2006. It is interesting to note that apart from Paul and Darius competing in the European Junior Top 12 last year our previous participant in the Boys was back in 1989 and apart from Joanna Parker in 2005 our previous Girl participant was in 1994. Reaching this level in juniors is an essential stepping-stone for players to become world-class seniors.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

I can now give you some further background on the next 6 years towards 2012 and the impact it will make on our sport. The growth of our sport in terms of facilities, talent identification and a legacy will not come easy and will require all of us across England looking for potential opportunities at Local, Regional and National Levels.

We shall be, like the other Olympic Sports, fighting for a share of the funding and opportunities which will give Table Tennis a real chance to increase participation, improve our facilities base and improve the standard of our players particularly in the International Arena.

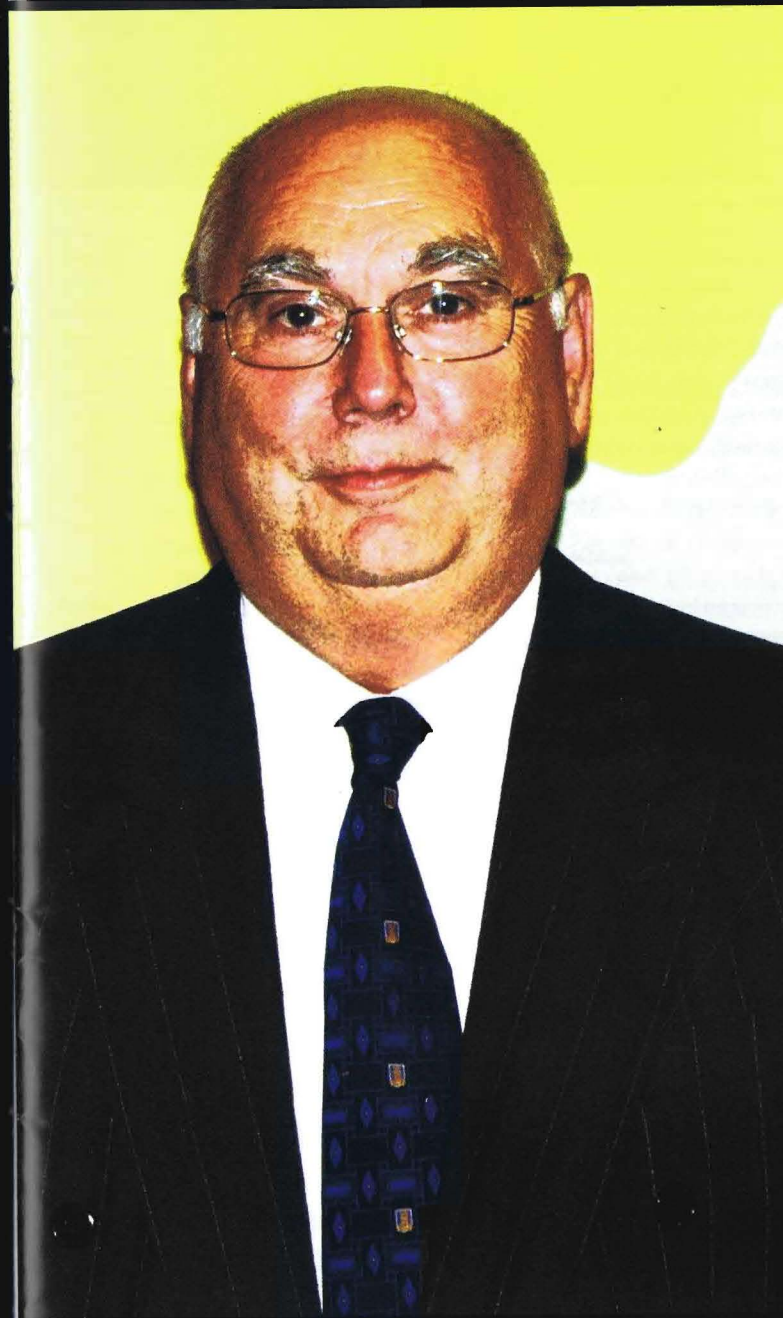
We shall be running a number of prestigious events leading up to 2012 and are working closely with UK Sport and other funding partners. We anticipate starting this programme of events in 2008.

The history of running major events has shown that it does not necessarily equate to a growth in our sport and the most important factor is generally about success at these events which gives a lift to all those involved and exposes our sport to the media hence generating the interest at the grass roots and increasing participation. This success must be at the highest level namely in European, World and the Olympics tournaments which are our aims over the coming years.

When successful you must ensure that the resources are ready to meet the needs of increased participation with improved and increased facilities, have a programme in place to provide the training and competition for the talented youngsters and have a resource base of volunteers who can provide the stability and backbone every sport needs.

Money is not the only answer, it does help of course, but just look at Tennis in GB. Massive income has been received at Wimbledon by the LTA for many years and despite all of this money our Team GB is in a lowly division in the Davis

The recent untimely death of John Woodford is a great loss to our sport, John's contributions to the media across all levels of our sport over many years will be missed and very difficult to replace.



Straight Talk

by Alex Murdoch
ETTA Chairman

Cup. The impact on table tennis in Denmark was unbelievable when they won the Bronze Doubles Medal in Athens, membership increased and their Club Structure was "bursting at the seams". How can Belgium with a population less than London have two of the top 10 Women Tennis Players in the World? It is all about long term plans and a vision for a sport, being prepared to accept that we cannot do all we would like to do and realising that we shall never compete with Football, they have more people watching Manchester United at home than we have as members.

What we do have is a fantastic sport, which is and can be played by all ages, disabilities and ethnicities. It is easy to start and relatively cheap, can be put into schools most of whom have some form of gym and it caters for all standards.

Table Tennis has a fantastic but aging Volunteer base. These next few years must be used to get more young people involved not only as players but as coaches, administrators and officials too.

Using the expertise, experience and knowledge gained by many of us over the years working with and supporting our future members to grow can help to make our sport the number 1 Racquet Sport in the UK.

It is up to us all to seek and find the opportunities that

What we do have is a fantastic sport, which is and can be played by all ages, disabilities and ethnicities.

London 2012 will bring to our sport and for the ETTA and the BTTF to work together with the Table Tennis fraternity by supporting you all.

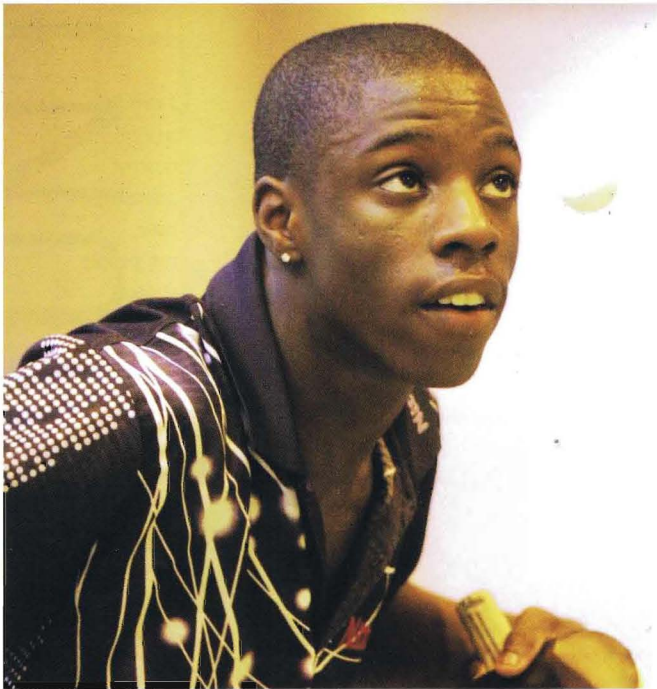
The Olympic Movement and its funding agency in GB has for many years been primarily Medal Orientated and resources have been geared to the sports that have brought home medals. This still remains a key focus but for the GB Team to get to number 4 in the medal table other sports such as Table Tennis are being supported.

It was a clear and definitive point that made our Bid for London 2012 successful, this was not just about winning medals but about making us a real sporting Nation again and providing a legacy for sports beyond 2012.

Table Tennis is the sport of the people and it is our hands to take up this "once in a lifetime opportunity" and make our great sport, great again.

Please keep the communications coming in and the request for visits, together we shall ensure our sport will prosper and grow.

NEWS



Academy of talent is launched

Tessa Sanderson celebrates launch

Sports stars past and present were out in force as the Newham Sports Academy with Tessa Sanderson celebrated its launch at Stratford Circus earlier this month.

The launch of the Newham Sports Academy saw table tennis gain valuable television coverage. With an initial intake of 25 young people, sports celebrities such as Sir Trevor Brooking, Sharron Davies, Amir Khan and John Regis, as well as Sanderson herself and ETTA

Chairman Alex Murdoch, were all on hand to welcome the first wave of inductees into the Academy which is the first of its type in the country.

A table tennis demonstration featuring Shu Huang, the 2006 over 40s World Veterans Table Tennis Championships Bronze medallist and two of the intake, local table tennis players Luca Mariano (13) and Anil Vekeria (15) featured on the

ITV London News, the only sport to receive such coverage. Sir Robin Wales, the Mayor of Newham, and 2004 Olympic Boxing Silver Medallist Amir Khan good naturedly joined in the demonstration.

Over 500 applicants from the host borough for the Olympics vied for a place on the illustrious scheme supported by Sport England and Richard Caborn, Minister for Sport, and after months of talent-spotting and assessments the first 30 athletes from a wide range of sporting denominations were given notice of their selection.

The Academy will provide its members with an elite coaching forum, as well as support from mentors and sports psychologists and access to cutting-edge sports advice on diet, training and techniques. Former leading international athletes Tony Jarrett, Clarence Calendar and Julian Golding are amongst the first batch of appointed elite coaching appointments.

Alex Murdoch, Chairman of the BTTF and ETTA, said "I recognise the importance of the Newham Academy initiative and the efforts made within the Borough of Newham to support table tennis

from the grass roots level. Table Tennis has clear pathways which will give young players the opportunity to progress and it would be fantastic if a person from Newham represented GB Table Tennis at the Olympics in 2012. My thanks go to the organisers of the programme during August and the efforts of Richard Webb (The Newham Unit for the 2012 Games), Shu Huang (Eastlea Wanderers Community Table Tennis Club) and the Newham Sports Department staff for their support. Table Tennis will liaise with Tessa Sanderson and her group to support the Academy project."

We are delighted to welcome the ETTA to this event and hope to work with all of the other national governing bodies of Olympic and Paralympic sports to nurture our talented individuals towards the 2012 Games," said an enthusiastic Sanderson. "Talent alone is just not enough, it needs massive commitment and dedication to make it to the top and hopefully the Academy will be the starting point for all the local talent. We need teachers, coaches and sponsors to get involved - we need people who care. Together we're going to make it happen."

Please keep your stories rolling in, this is an excellent area in which to showcase your club's and your personal achievements. We will consider all content, so don't delay get in contact via phone 01424 456217 or email richard.pettit@etta.co.uk

NEWS

Sports Awards 2006

Kelly Sibley awarded Young Sportswoman of the Year for Table Tennis



At the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sports Awards 2006 at the Ricoh Arena, Coventry, in front of an audience of more than 200 sportspeople, Kelly Sibley was awarded the Young Sportswoman of the Year for her achievements in Table Tennis over the past 12 months.

Kelly, accompanied by her mother, was the first of 16 awards to be made on the night at an event supported by the University with many sporting heroes in attendance including double Olympic swimmer Nick Gillingham MBE. Kelly wore a stunning new black evening gown for the occasion.

The awards ceremony was presented by Annie Othen 'live' on

Radio WM Coventry & Warwickshire. The award was made in recognition of Kelly's presence, still in her last year as a Junior, in the England Senior team at the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, the 2006 World Team Championships in Bremen, Germany, and the European Qualification rounds for the 2007 European Championships. In addition, as a Junior, Kelly's 2006 achievements were: member of the England team at the European Youth Championships in Sarajevo, she reached the last 16 in the Girls Singles event and in the Mixed Doubles (with Paul Drinkhall) and the quarter finals in the Girls' Doubles (with Sanja

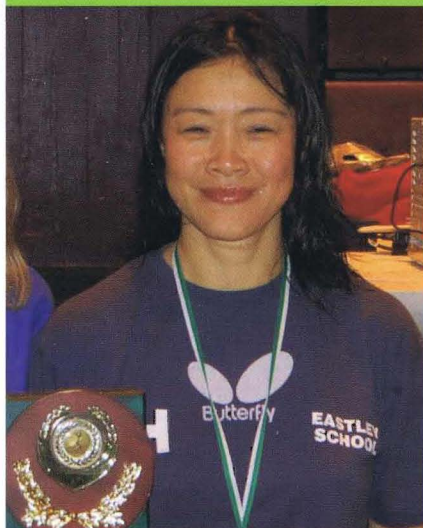
Paukovic of Croatia).

Bronze medallist at the Polish Junior Open and quarter finalist at the Spanish Junior Open in the Girls' Doubles (with Sanja Paukovic of Croatia).

At home Kelly is Triple National Champion having won the last Junior Championships in the Girls Singles, Mixed Doubles (with Paul Drinkhall) and Girls Doubles (with Lauren Spink) Kelly became UK Schools Games gold medallist in Glasgow.

Winner of the Women's Singles at the Clare Pengelly Grand Prix in her first outing on the Grand Prix circuit this season. All in all, a fantastic year of achievement by one of the English Table Tennis Association's rising stars.

Huang's key to success



Shu Huang, our no 1 veteran player, is back in business. The Ilford player has been given the go-ahead to play competitively again after successful keyhole surgery on her knee.

Within a few days of completing her surgery she was playing for England's VETTS team in the Six Nations in Belfast where she won the ladies singles title, the ladies doubles with ETTA's Sheila King and then picked up her third medal as part of the England winning team. More recently she won the ladies doubles title at the Midlands Masters with Sandra Rider and was runner-up to an inspired Jan Johns in the ladies singles.

Shu coaches at the Eastlea Community School in Newham and is also a key player at the new Newham Sports Academy where she was interviewed on TV and local radio at the launch of the Academy last month.

Fit&90

Fitness fan Gwen Whitehouse is fighting fit and 90 and she puts her fitness down to playing table tennis amongst other activities.

"We moved to be near our daughter but when my husband died I joined the local club here in Marford Hall and besides the keep fit classes. I find table tennis is a great way to keep me on my toes," she told her local newspaper the Herts Advertiser.

"Gwen is a shining example of the benefits of taking exercise, and playing table tennis is a great way to keep fit," said Judith Holpin who runs the classes.

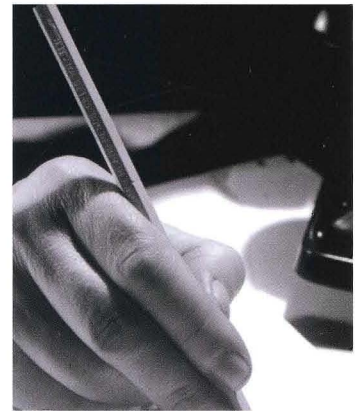
“It improves hand-eye coordination, uses upper and lower body and causes you to use different areas of the brain.”

Disabled table tennis star Leanne Stephan

from Sheffield picked up a [hat trick of medals](#) at the recent Norwich Union Junior Games and only one of them was for table tennis. The [17 year old all rounder](#) won gold in the table tennis event, a silver in the archery and bronze in the fencing event.

Now she has turned her ambitions to winning a medal at the Olympics in Beijing in 2008. “I’m in the [GB table tennis squad](#) so my [aim now is to win something in Beijing](#), but a gold medal at the [London Olympics](#) is a very real possibility.”

She added: “ This is a great event as it lets you try sports you may never have played before. But for now I think I’ll stick to table tennis.” Norwich Union is [working with Wheelpower](#) to prepare children with disabilities for future life challenges through sport.



John Vincent, the ETTA’s Press Officer of the Year, has put his good fortune down to his better half.

John, a former Plymouth League coach, has been writing his notes for the Evening Herald for almost 20 years, but without the backing of his wife Marie, he says he wouldn’t have got the award.

“Quite simply, without her, none of this would have been possible,” he says. “When we moved to Plymouth all those years ago, it was Marie who encouraged me to continue the sport,” said Vincent.

“She has supported me ever since and I really do owe a lot to her.” He added: “ We had a wonderful time and the evening was fantastic. But I must admit to being amazed that I won, as there were some strong contenders also up for the prize.”

Brainiest players...

Well, that proves it. Table tennis players are the brainiest sports people around. Who says so? None other than Dr Daniel Amen in his new book Making a Good Brain Great.

There are chapters about exercising your body, eating well, getting enough sleep, etc., but he finishes off by giving our sport the thumbs up.

According to the doctor table tennis is the best brain sport around... it improves hand-eye coordination, it’s aerobic, uses both upper and lower body and causes you to use different areas of the brain.

As we get older the old grey matter tends to desert us. The cells lose their branch like connections called synapses and the older we get the more cells we lose. Table tennis stalls that process.

So there you are. We can pound the street, pump iron and walk for miles but when it comes to brain power table tennis is king. Well, we all knew that anyway, didn’t we?



Goodbye to Nostalgic Era

Some of our readers may recall events we staged at the Wembley Conference Centre, home to many major table tennis tournaments in the mid 70s and 80s. Well, the centre is being demolished to make way for development around the new national stadium.

Wembley staged the ETTA Lambert and Butler Invitation Championships for several years and later the Charles Church Invitation. A nostalgic era for many of our older readers.

Both events brought many of the world’s best players to the Centre which was always packed to the rafters.

It also staged snooker events as well as international boxing. But the sad fact is that for years it struggled to stay in the black and eventually paid the price. The new development will include restaurants, cafes, bars and designer outlets.

“I, like many others who cannot decide whether to love him or just suffer him, forgive the omnivorousness, and sometimes even the callousness of his triumphalism...”

The comedian Jackie Mason, who grew up poor with Marty, makes no bones about the self-obsession. ‘Marty’s a tremendous egomaniac,’ he told me, ‘but a loveable egomaniac. He can’t get over the fact that he’s a sensational player. He’s still intrigued with himself after all these years. Like a kid with a new toy. But I never saw him do a bad thing to anybody in his life. If being obsessed with yourself because you’re good at ping-pong is the worst thing you ever do - is that so terrible?’

Besides which, the braggadoccio isn’t quite what it appears. In the end, the person who is meant to be persuaded by Marty is Marty. What Reisman is riding is the come-back trail to himself.

It’s a journey he has been on all his life. Back he has had to come, again and again, from one ping-pong fiasco or catastrophe after another - dust ups with the authorities, suspensions, inexplicable slumps in form, emotional collapses, to say nothing of that cold-hearted passage of time which has put to bed most other athletes his age. Now, it’s an operation on his playing arm he’s recovering from. In a little Japanese restaurant where he had taken me to meet his wife Yoshiko, he showed me the cicatrice - a single, silvery, horizontal stigma marking the place of the surgeon’s intervention. When was that, I wondered. He turned to his wife. ‘The date of my operation, Yoshiko?’ Not a fraction of a second’s hesitation. ‘November the 23rd, 1998.’ A good wife bears the dates of her husband’s operations like battle scars. Especially a Japanese wife whose lineage is undiluted Samurai. Though I have to say that as she painted word-pictures with her hands in the spaces between Marty’s ruminations on his form, it was the wives of novelists she most reminded me of, and the wives of quite a few poets I could think of as well. She had that grand, devotedly obliterated look that comes with living in the company of distinguished self-absorption.

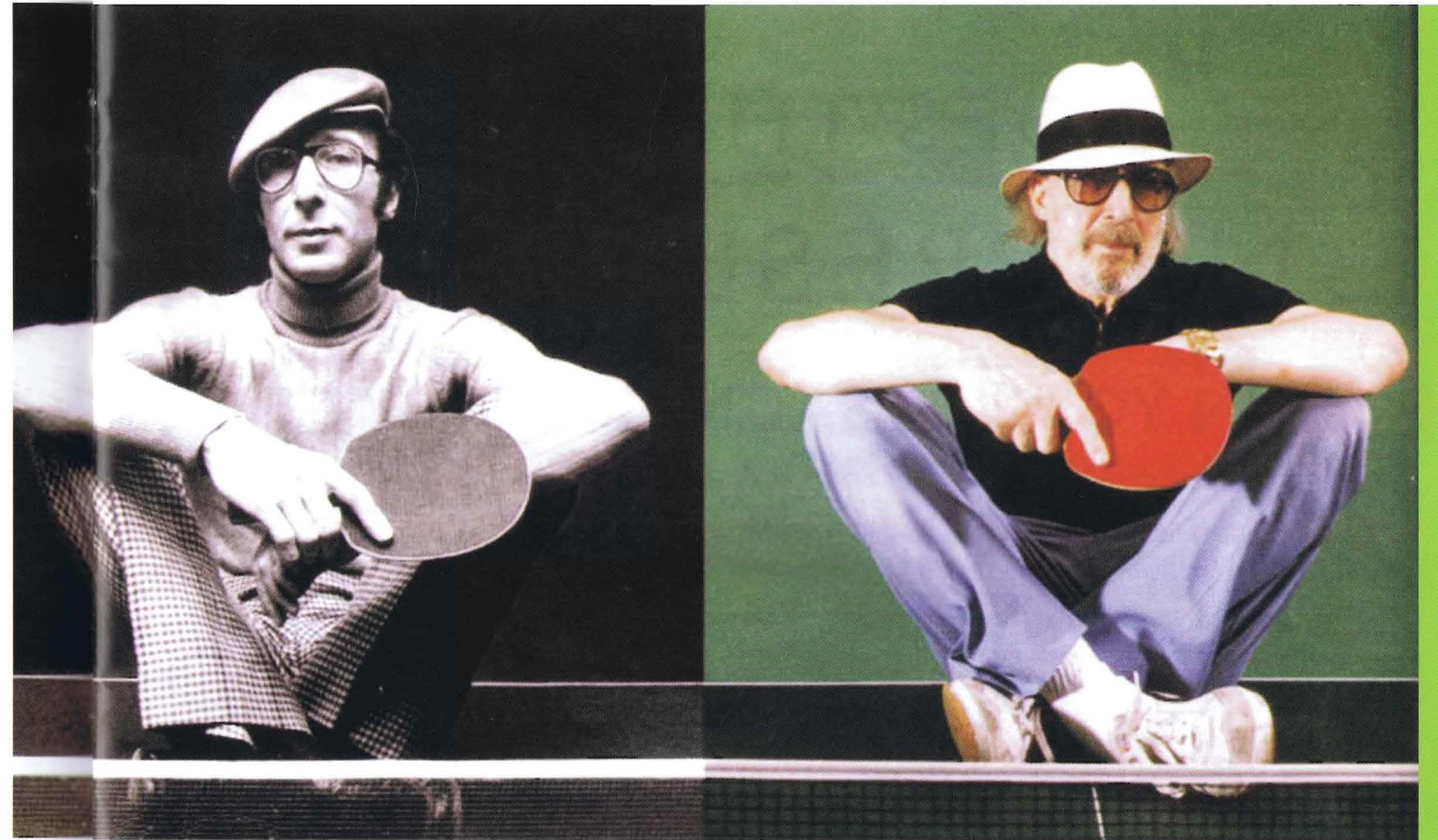
Marty’s operation was for a floating tendon. Now it’s back where it’s meant to be, attached with 2 titanium screws. And now Marty’s almost back where he’s meant to be as well. ‘When my game kicked in after my operation,’ he told me, ‘I realized what a rare skill I had. I woke up in the morning and I started to cry with pure joy.’ Another question for Yoshiko: ‘You remember when I came home and I told you “It’s back!”’ Oh yes, she remembered. I didn’t doubt she remembered the very hour of the very day.

But I was in danger of giving into craven discipleship myself that evening. Earlier in the day Marty had worked me over for several hours at the Westside Billiards and Table Tennis Club, corner of 50th and 11th. As a boy I’d read about the new aggressive game that was exploding out of America. Dick Miles and Marty Reisman - they were the names to conjure with. Dick Miles the more defensive of the two, but both of them capable of taking the ball earlier than any other player in the history of the game, and generating extraordinary pace, not to say variations of pace, by infinitesimally subtle changes in racket-head velocity. Who was faster? Miles shows up occasionally at the Westside himself to renew the rivalry; use the phrase ‘best forehand in the world’ in their hearing and each will look up, assuming you’re talking about him. Marty reckons there was always too much preliminary flourish around Dick’s forehand for it to have been the equal of his; Dick, for his part, opens his chestnut brown eyes, and says nothing. Anyway, whether Marty’s was the best or the second best, there I was facing it. Partly, I think, because of the smallness of the playing area, partly because power is generated close to the body and is therefore suggestive of intimacy, there can be an imperious wit about great attacking shots in table tennis. And Marty’s forehand is over and above witty, not only by virtue of its classical follow-through - the bat cleaving the air like a sword that has unseamed you from the nape to the chops - but also because of the pleasure it takes in making space where there is none, in finding corners of the table that do not exist. Set yourself the task of retrieving Marty’s forehand and the table changes shape before your eyes. So this is no merely dry wit I’m describing: you actually catch yourself laughing appreciatively while you’re chasing.

‘Here’s something else you might find funny,’ Marty declared, mid-rally. ‘I’m desperate to get back into competitive table tennis. Do you know why? I felt I was in a life and death struggle with old age. It was horrible. Then I went to bed and said I wasn’t going to let him get me. And I haven’t heard a peep out of him for weeks.’

‘Don’t you think it’s terrific that Marty’s still going?’ I say to Jackie Mason later, knowing I’m talking to a man who exercises by reading papers in a chair.

‘I think it’s more than terrific. I think it’s remarkable. Most



people his age can’t even walk straight, and he’s doing somersaults round a table.’

Dick Miles wonders why he doesn’t call it a day. Go down to the country for weekends. Put his feet up. But then Miles was always a more reclusive figure, isn’t driven as Reisman is, and doesn’t appear ever to have felt what Reisman feels - that a World Title was once stolen from his grasp. Another piece of ping-pong news kept us excited at about the time Dick Miles and Marty Reisman were making a name for themselves: sponge. It was sponge that removed the two New Yorkers from the front page. And it was sponge that broke Marty Reisman’s heart.

He is dressed for the kill in Fort Lauderdale, like no other player in the history of table tennis. A black and white cap, suggestive of Las Vegas. A silky black shirt. Maroon pants and matching sneakers. It turns out that the sneakers are new and too tight for him, but it is important he looks colour-coded at the table. Even the laces have been thought about. You don’t catch Reisman in dirty Reeboks. Or in shorts. Nothing to do with age; Reisman has

always cut a queer sartorial dash. This is because he likes to give off the whiff of the pool-room and the late night poker school when he plays - but you can bet your life it is also because he has never much cared for his legs. He is thin as a string bean. A switchblade is how he thinks of himself, a murderously slim weapon concealed in a hustler’s fancy vest. His logo has his slippery silhouette, bent at the knee to retrieve a lowdown ball, forming the S of Reisman. He is no longer as sinuous now as he was, but in motion he still makes me think of Kokopelli, the mythic Indian Dionysus you find graffitoid on rocks all over New Mexico and Arizona. Call him Kokopelli, Coyote, Reynard the Fox: every culture throws up its own trickster. Ping-pong has Marty Reisman, sacred by virtue of his extravagant contortions, his vagabondism, and his bravado.

To this extent he has been a victim of his own magic: it hasn’t always been necessary that he actually win. In ping-pong, as in all sports, it is often the journeyman who triumphs, the calculator, the percentage player, the grubbing chiseller. There is a beauty

Marty’s forehand is over and above witty, not only by virtue of its classical follow-through, but also because of the pleasure it takes in making space where there is none, in finding corners of the table that do not exist.

and extravagance of stroke that befits only the loser, which only the loser has the leisurely grace to indulge. In Reisman's case there was an emotional pay-off, in spectator affection, as a consequence of the compact he made - however we are to understand it - with defeat. So that when his great disillusionment with competitive table tennis set in he was able to play the fool and get away with it. People who know nothing of his astounding promise, of the excitement he generated in other parts of the world, remember him vaguely as someone who hustled for a living, toured with the Harlem Globetrotters, could make the balls sing Mary Had a Little Lamb, could hit any ordinary mortal off the table with a bar stool, could spot you twenty points and still beat you with the heel of his shoe or the lens of his spectacles. Marty Reisman? Isn't he that guy who taught a chimpanzee how to play ping-pong?

In this way does America remember its heroes.

But in this way, too, did one of America's heroes choose to be remembered.

He was in trouble from the very beginning of his career. Look at photographs of him as a horse-faced teenager in chess-player's spectacles, and you'd think butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. But aged fifteen he was already being escorted out of a national tournament in Detroit - by uniformed cops, is how he likes to tell it - for trying to lay a bet of \$500 on himself. First lesson if you're going to be a sportsman and a gambler - don't mistake the head of the association for your bookmaker. And certainly don't count the notes out one by one into his palm. Graham Steenhoven became famous for leading the American 'ping-pong diplomacy' team to China. But maybe his most significant contribution to American table tennis was looking like a bookie and putting Marty Reisman on the wrong side of the law. Another veteran player, Freddie Borges, told me how he found Reisman in tears outside the tournament venue, escorted him back in and played merry hell to get him reinstated. 'Gambling? - ha!' Freddie told me. Everyone in ping-pong was betting then. There was no other way to turn a buck. The thing Reisman had against him, in a game that was administered from the Mid-West, was that he was a smart kid from New York. A smart Jewish kid from New York. Don't forget, Borges reminded me, this was the time someone in the US Table Tennis Association nearly got away with laying down a motion banning 'Negroes' from the game.

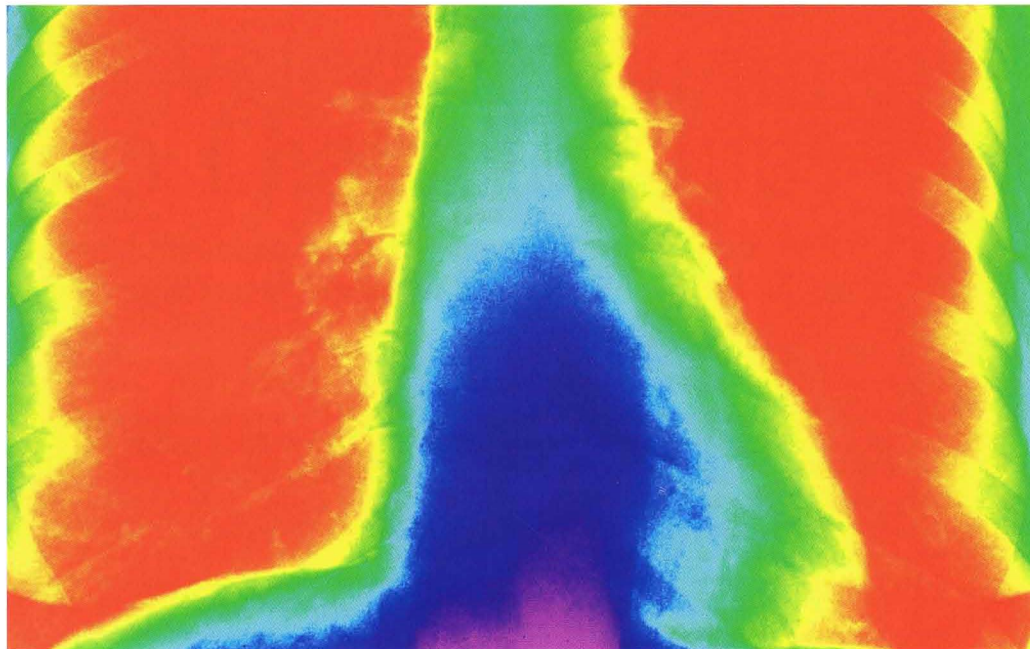
The \$500 is probably an exaggeration. And in *The Money Player*, his ghosted autobiography published in 1974, Reisman says nothing about the tears. It's more fun, on the page, to be the dude who roughed up the Establishment. In conversation, though, he doesn't pretend that the wounds caused by his fallings-out with authority have healed. He was suspended or simply 'not picked', as a consequence of disagreements over gambling, expenses, or just decorum, more frequently than was good for his

career. He was denied the opportunity to play in all the tournaments he should have played in. Officialdom stood in the way of his destiny, which was to be World Champion. Though it wasn't any official who stopped him dead in the 1952 World Championships in Bombay. It was Hiroji Satoh and his magic sponge.

Hard to tell from this distance in time precisely how fancied Reisman was to become World Champion that year. There were certainly others in the running, not least Dick Miles who had just won the US open. But that Reisman was among the three or four players considered likely to win, that he was tipped to win it sooner or later (and that he considered himself hot favourite to win it sooner), is unarguable. He had won the English Open in style. He was United States doubles champion. He had the form. He had the cheek. The only thing he didn't have was what Hiroji Satoh had.

Losing to Satoh in Bombay put Reisman in good company. Satoh swept the board. No one could handle the diabolic spins and dead floats which came off his revolutionary racket. Nor the insult of seeing this hitherto unknown player simply jabbing his bat in the direction of everything you threw at him and having the ball come back at you faster than you'd hit it. Satoh became World Champion. His sponge demoralized everyone and changed ping-pong forever. But most players made their peace with it. If you had to be spongeiform to win, then spongeiform you became. I remember cutting up a foam bedroll to make my first sponge bat. I doubt there was anything in the rules to have stopped me playing with the bedroll itself. An interregnum of modification and restriction followed - no sponge thicker than so thick, then no sponge which wasn't sandwiched between rubber. Whichever way we cut it, though, we were all now little Hiroji Satohs in the making. All except Marty. For him, the significance of Bombay was not only that he had been cheated of his title - 'There I was at the height of my career and they brought in a piece of equipment that had a skill of its own' - but that ping-pong had lost its aesthetic. No longer was it beautiful. No longer was it sensuous. No longer was it a contest ordered by hearing and touch. So what was it ordered by? Well, it wasn't ordered at all - there precisely lay Reisman's objection. Like an eighteenth century aristocrat beholding the beginnings of revolution, he stepped back aghast at the spectacle of unrule. To this day he can be comically precise about the horrible sensation of playing against sponge - 'It's like scrambled eggs out here,' he calls to me during some side-event in Fort Lauderdale, his opponent an especially unpretty and ham-fisted sponger. But his objection at the last is a societal one. It's harmony he's missing. Harmony and methodology and order. One word crops up again and again in Reisman's critique of post-Satoh ping-pong - chaos.

To be continued...



VO2MAX

By Christopher Pettit

Train to the MAX

Elite table tennis players have a high VO2Max, so what is it? What affects it? And how can you improve yours?

The body uses oxygen as a catalyst to drive chemical processes that enable your muscles to generate continuous muscular power. The greater the volume of oxygen your body can consume and process over a set amount of time the greater your ability to perform physical activities. VO2Max is a measure physiologists have devised to gauge the body's ability to process oxygen and thus perform vigorous continuous exercise.

What affects it?

Many factors influence your VO2Max; the most important of these are heredity, state of training, body size and composition, gender and age.

Heredity – As with everything no matter how hard you train there is a genetic ceiling to your capacity to improve your VO2Max. Don't let this put you off as only elite sports performers will reach this ceiling.

State of training – Your value will be higher after a period of regular aerobic training than before.

Body size and composition – Your ability to process oxygen is dictated by your cardiovascular and muscular system. VO2Max is a measure of your body's ability to process oxygen per kg of your body weight. As a result if all else is equal those who carry a few pounds of inactive (fat) tissue will have a lower VO2Max than those who don't.

Gender – Women's genetic make up as a rule has a higher percentage of fat than their male counterparts. As a result untrained women typically have a VO2Max 20-25% lower than untrained men.

However, when comparing elite athletes, the gap tends to close to around 10%.

Age – VO2Max decreases with age. The average rate of decline is generally accepted to be about 1% per year or 10% per decade after the age of 25.

How can you improve yours?

Many studies show that you can increase your VO2Max by working out at an intensity that raises your heart rate to between 65 - 85% of its maximum for at least 20 minutes. You can check your intensity levels by using a basic heart rate monitor (these cost around £30), and applying the following formula: research indicates that for the recreational player with a limited time to train, a weekly regimen of three high-quality workouts interspaced throughout the week is more than enough to stimulate improvements in VO2Max.

Table Tennis Tips?

Be creative when training at the table, add in activities that will increase/maintain the intensity needed to stimulate this area of fitness. Additional activities/exercises will make sessions more enjoyable and physically intense, aiding concentration and focus. Supplement table tennis training with additional continuous aerobic exercises, such as a fitness class in your local gym, i.e. spinning classes or by taking up jogging or cycling and adhering to the principles outlined above. Increasing your VO2Max is well worthwhile; it will help increase your output before fatigue and improve your recovery rates.

Definition VO2Max = the maximum amount of oxygen (mm) your body can use in one minute per kilogram of your body weight.

the perfect Banana serve

RESOURCES PRODUCED BY THE ITTF & ETTA

SERVICE - The basic service training is built on imagination and the ability to experiment. The forehand serve provides greater possibilities to use the wrist but whatever serve is used the bat should be kept loose and the wrist flexible.

To allow acceleration in the playing arm you need to create space between the arm and body and the bat and the ball. Short or long - A short serve should bounce on the server's half of the table, relatively close to the net. A long serve will need to bounce as close as possible to the server's baseline. Remember - Spend time mastering your serve. It is the only shot you have total control of, treat it well and it hopefully will serve up a victory or three....

CONSIDERATIONS - Table tennis is not only the fastest game but it is also the sport where spin can have the greatest influence on the result. Spin is generated from bat angles so here is a glossary of the terms used:-

Neutral - When bat is held so that the head is in a vertical position, the angle is described as neutral.

Closed - When the striking surface is angled downwards, the angle is described as closed.

Open - When the striking surface is angled upwards, the angle is described as open.

Variation of the angle will be created by rotating the hand and forearm.

SERVICE PHILOSOPHY - This is a popular serve using this principle whereby the action commences away from the body, moving into the waist area and out again. The line followed closely resembles a banana shape. Contact can be made at any point along the length of the banana, on the way in or out, resulting in vastly different spins with the same action.

REVERSE - sidespin/backspin: - The advantage of this serve is that you make 'reverse' spin. Place the serve mostly to your opponent's forehand but as a variation to the crossover point or into the backhand. If the technique is well developed it is relatively easy to disguise the placement. It is

difficult to learn and it demands a lot of training. The mistake is to use only the wrist which creates very little power. The whole arm has to be used. The upper arm should be high so that the lower arm can move forward and at the end of this movement the wrist will move forward as quickly as possible.

The contact point is close to the table and at chest height. To keep the contact point at this height, lower the body through the knees and by twisting the upper body you can place the ball anywhere on the table. The contact point is north of centre on the bat and the bounce should be early or close to the middle, depending on which direction you want the serve to go.

One problem with this serve is that the player can have difficulties coming back to the start position because many have all the weight on the back leg at the moment of contact - try to have the balance on both legs.

LONG SERVICES: - It is mostly used as a variation to the short serve. The big advantage you have with the long serve is the similarities of movement to a short serve; this provides the ability to catch your opponent off-guard. All service techniques can be adapted to provide a short or long service however, speed/length are key to a successful execution as inevitably a slow/long serve will be dispatched with no mercy from the opposite side of the table..

The bounce should be very early on your side of the table with your ball/bat contact point close to the table; if not it will result in a service which is too slow and too high. Remember that your opponent has to move an extra half a metre if the service is placed wide to the forehand.

NO SPIN SERVE: - The principles are the same as in the serve with backspin, the difference being that the contact point is the centre of the bat. It will be most important to simulate the action of a backspin serve. One way is to move the wrist back just after contact point or to make a forward movement with the wrist and close the bat immediately after the contact point.

ZHANG YINING IS EXECUTING A PERFECT BANANA SERVE

1 - Free arm - releases the ball straight up and moves immediately out of the way to prevent shielding of the ball.

2,3,4 - The playing arm is drawn back and away from the body creating space in preparation for the downwards acceleration prior to the contact point.

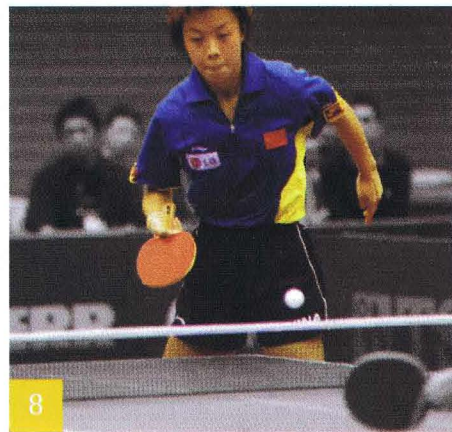
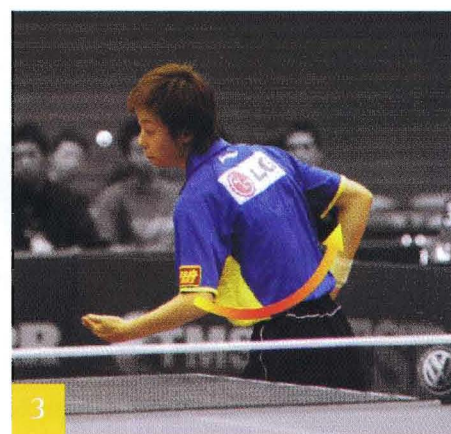
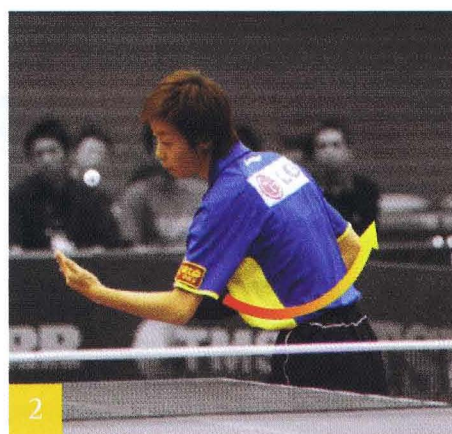
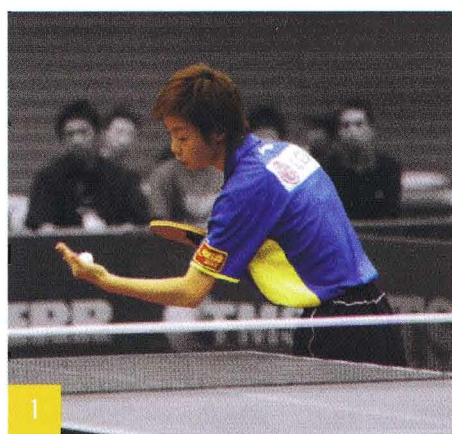
5 - The banana action commences as the playing arm sweeps forward, round and down in a banana shape. In addition Zhang Yining transfers her weight forward (back foot - front foot) to generate speed and power.

6 - Contact point - this is where the element of surprise is created. In this example Zhang Yining moves the wrist in and then out in one swift flick of the wrist imparting reverse

sidespin and backspin. However if Zhang Yining was to continue the action forwards and not alter the direction of her wrist during the serve she would place sidespin/backspin on the ball.

7,8,9 - Follow through and recovery in anticipation of the opponent's return. Interestingly Yining has placed the ball on her opponent's forehand.

The important element of this particular serve is disguise and flexibility within the wrist action. Developing this technique will inevitably provide excellent results and provide you with numerous variations to baffle and confuse your opponents.



The self-proclaimed table tennis king among footballers is Rio Ferdinand who apparently routinely demolishes his team-mates at club and international level.

According to the FA website, Ferdinand is "a master of spin and disguise...the Desmond Douglas of camp England". High praise indeed, and the Manchester United defender is also not shy of telling people about his skills.

Of the footballers who have tried to take him on, Ferdinand said: "I'm looking for someone to challenge me, but I haven't found anyone yet. I am the man at table tennis. I do believe I am the best footballer who plays table tennis, although there is a geezer called Tilson...he has actually challenged me to a game - he had the audacity to challenge me to a game. How dare he, but we'll see!"

Ferdinand's remarks may have been tough in cheek, but the 'geezer' to whom he refers would love the opportunity to prove his point. Steve Tilson is the manager of the Championship club Southend United and has represented Essex at table tennis and also played in the British League.

"I started when I was about 12 or 13 and I loved the game," says Tilson. "table tennis is a difficult game to pick up but I guess I found it fairly easy. I practiced extremely hard and used to play in all the tournaments.

"I was quite late into football and didn't turn professional

until I was 22. Obviously my football commitments meant that I have played less and less but I've tried to keep it going."

Tilson played for Southend United, Brentford and Carvey Island before returning to Southend as player, reserve team manager and the manager since November 2003.

At just 40, he is regarded as one of the top young managers in British football.

And, despite the pressures that go with leading a club which are now in the second tier of English football (Southend have won consecutive promotions in Tilson's two full seasons as manager), he continues to play for his local club Raweth in Division One of the Southend Table Tennis League. Last season, Tilson was unbeaten in league matches, although he admits he only played "five or six times".

"It's obviously difficult to find the time to play at the level I did," he says, "but I reckon that if I practiced for two or three months I could get back to roughly the standard I was."

Of a match against Ferdinand, he says: "Bring it on. It would be great fun. We should make it a bit more interesting with a wager for charity. It should be a week of Rio's salary against a week of mine - and the loser gives the money to charity. I reckon we would get a decent crowd."

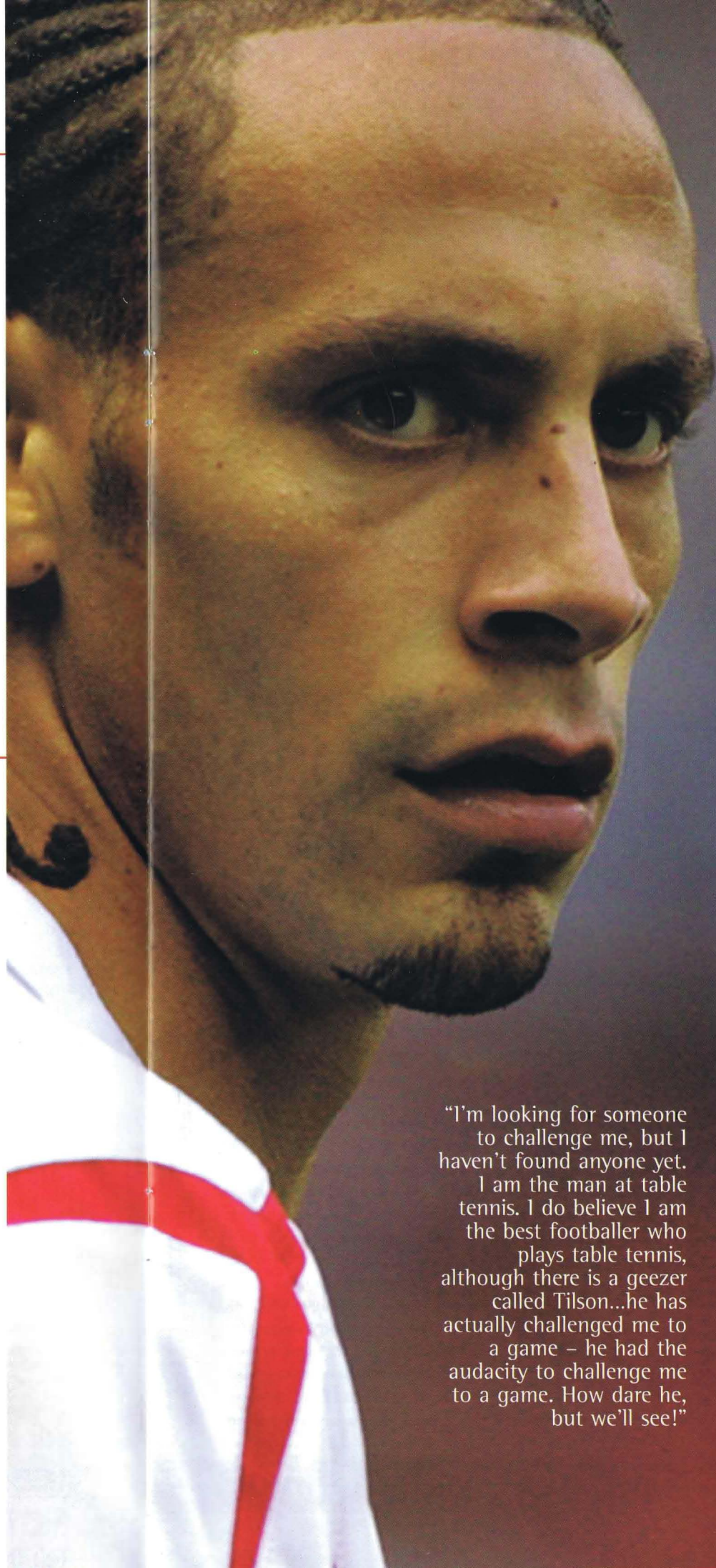
Ferdinand and Tilson are not the only footballers who enjoy playing table tennis.

Rio

the king of table tennis

By Jeremy Wilson

International table tennis players might trail behind professional footballers in terms of celebrity rating, but their skills are still envied within just about every Premiership dressing room. Indeed, at training grounds of football league clubs across the country, table tennis tables are an increasingly common sight.



"I'm looking for someone to challenge me, but I haven't found anyone yet. I am the man at table tennis. I do believe I am the best footballer who plays table tennis, although there is a geezer called Tilson...he has actually challenged me to a game - he had the audacity to challenge me to a game. How dare he, but we'll see!"

The Wales and Liverpool centre forward Craig Bellamy is another big fan of the sport.

Indeed, during Wales' preparations for the recent Euro 2008 qualifiers against Slovakia and Cyprus, a table had to be set up for the squad outside the physio's room at their Vale of Glamorgan base.

Bellamy took on all-comers and declared that he was best player in the Welsh squad.

Reporting on the matches, however, for the Daily Mirror was Martin Rogers. An Australian junior international from 1995 until 1997, Rogers still plays regularly enough to be ranked around the 100 mark in the England senior men's ranking list. He challenged Bellamy to a game, the Welshman promptly agreed and the two of them recently played a match.

"It was great fun and Craig is a very good player," said Rogers. "As you would expect he is extremely competitive and his footwork, speed and reactions are all superb.

"I thought that I might win fairly comfortably but we had a really good match. He was very competitive but also sporting - he was the first to say if you hit a good shot."

The use of club standard bats obviously favoured Bellamy in what was a best-of-five 21 up match. "He steamed away at the start," said Rogers. "I think he was 18-12 up in the first game. His strength was his backhand. He'd obviously had no coaching but he had the footwork to use it for most shots and could hit winners from most positions.

"His backhand was the standard of a top 30 player in England. If he had proper coaching and practiced, he could become a very good player."

Rogers, though, gradually exploited Bellamy's weaknesses to win the first game 21-19. Bellamy bounced back to take the second 21-19 before Rogers ran away with the third and fourth sets 21-18, 21-14.

Other footballers who are quite handy are the Newcastle and England striker Michael Owen, the former Arsenal defender Martin Keown, Watford's Jordan Stewart, the ex-Rangers, Fulham and Southampton midfielder Fabrice Fernandes as well as the Coventry City manager Micky Adams.

Table tennis is apparently also hugely popular among the Charlton Athletic squad. Mark Kinsella was reputedly the top Charlton player although he was challenged by Karim Bagheri who played for Iran at football but also table tennis as a junior. So what makes footballers play table tennis? "Above all it is good fun - they enjoy it," says Tilson, "although there is also a team-bonding element to it. Like all sportsmen, footballers are competitive as well. They have coordination and are decent at most sports.

"We have a table up at the Southend training ground and the lads play against each other after training every day, singles and doubles. I sometimes join in - although I tend to give them a few points start. I'm sure it's the same at a lot of other clubs as well."

Until Ferdinand proves otherwise, Tilson should rightfully be recognised as the table tennis king among the football playing fraternity - unless, of course, we were to include agents.

For the man who represents Sol Campbell is none other than the former England senior international Skyler Andrew! It's a small world.



It would be myopic not to recognise that the youngster's elevation to number one spot, whilst impressive, is a consequence of the impoverished state of senior table tennis in England.

Matthew Syed

No doubt of Quality... but Questions ahead?

Those of us who are hoping that Paul Drinkhall – a likeable and placid 16-year-old from Middlesbrough – will progress towards Olympic contention in 2012 will temper our praise at his having reached number one in England at such a tender age with the observation that he still languishes well outside the top 100 in the world-ranking list.

His successes in recent months have been impressive, his near-defeat of Ryu Seung Min – the Olympic Champion from Korea – a particularly stunning development. I heard the news after Steen Kyst Hansen, the performance director, left a rather excited message on my answer-phone but I did not believe what I had heard until Hansen had confirmed the remarkable details – Drinkhall dominated proceedings and had 3 match points in the 7th game.

But it would be myopic not to recognise that the youngster's elevation to number one spot, whilst impressive, is a consequence of the impoverished state of senior table tennis in England. Since the glory days of the late 80s and early 90s, when England regularly challenged for medals at major competitions, things have

been pretty gloomy. The truth is that ten years ago Drinkhall would have struggled to beat the fringe players, let alone make the senior team.

This is a problem in itself. One of the great incentives for players in late adolescence is the challenge of knocking older, more mature players out of the team. I well remember my early battles with the likes of John Souter and Nicky Mason and, later, Alan Cooke and Desmond Douglas. They were tough encounters but hugely significant in developing one's competitive and technical repertoire.

The key for Drinkhall is to raise his sights beyond England's shores. If he takes comfort in his England ranking it will be a recipe for mediocrity. He will become yet another England number one who failed to challenge abroad. If, on the other hand, he keeps his eyes fixed on his true competitors – young men in China who are already threatening major international honours – it will spur him on in a way that will enable him to realise his formidable talent.

With Liu Jai Yi in his corner, he has a coach with tremendous insight and knowledge. But that is never enough on its own. A

player's progression to the very top requires a level of hunger and desire that borders on the pathological. Every month that goes by where Drinkhall trains with low quality opposition is a wasted month. Every day that Drinkhall trains without fire in his belly – going through the motions, as it were – is a wasted day.

The ability to train with intensity is the hallmark of every top player. From Waldner to Primorac, Saive to Gatién, all have approached training with a passion that delivers maximum benefits from each session. It is no coincidence that, of the England players I have lined up alongside down the years, Alan Cooke, Carl Prean and Desmond Douglas – the three best – trained harder than anyone else, with the possible exception of Alex Perry.

Drinkhall must aim to eclipse the achievements of his predecessors. Douglas is far and away the greatest England table tennis player of the last 50 years, a joyously talented and instinctive player, and a person of rare decency. I always enjoyed training with Des, something I was reminded of at the ETTA Volunteers Conference where we got out our bats for old time's sake. But

Drinkhall aim to go beyond the sizeable achievements of Douglas.

The same goes for Darius Knight and Gavin Evans, the other players who make up England's golden triumvirate. They all need to practise with high quality opponents, in high quality venues with high quality coaches, day in, day out.

I hit a few balls with Evans at the Volunteers Conference and was interested to note that both Douglas and Paul Day – two good judges of such things – took the view that he was not quite as good as Michael O'Driscoll when he (O'Driscoll) was a cadet. I have no doubt at all that Evans will eclipse the achievements of O'Driscoll, but I state this merely to highlight that even someone of Evans's superlative ability has a long way still to go.

Success in sport is not written in the clouds nor is it delivered by the sometimes over-excited scribbles of journalists like myself. It is achieved via rigorous, systematic, high-intensity practise in unglamorous training halls. Drinkhall and his team-mates should always keep this rather prosaic truth in mind.

They all need to practise with high quality opponents, in high

quality venues with high quality coaches, day in, day out.

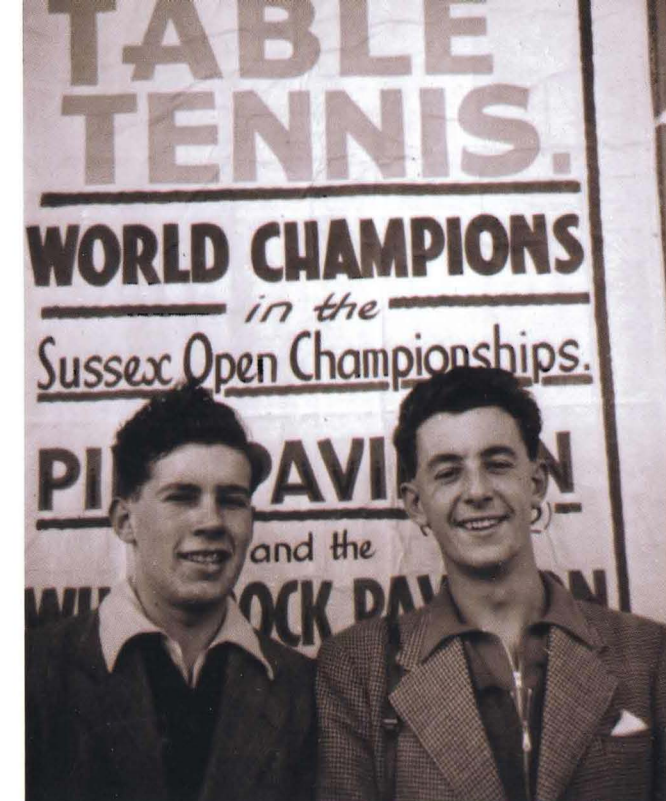
Woodford - a real Superstar

Speedy, steady, prolific, and ubiquitous, he filed from four continents, more than 20 countries, and every clime.

By Richard Eaton



John (right) waiting to go into the Sussex Open Championships at the White Rock Pavilion, Hastings



The best of John's stories was his last. Considering he wrote so many thousands of them during his 30 years of reporting table tennis from diverse areas of the globe, that is saying a great deal.

It was written when he had just been diagnosed with terminal cancer, and as a reaction to the dreadful news it revealed so much about him: the following day he was caught filing the words from his hospital bed.

John was good on focusing on those things he could do. He would ignore obstacles, and although this was not always entirely helpful, it made him positive, and helped bring about a blessedly pain-free departure from this world which was also, thankfully, quick.

It created a nicely concise and brilliantly courageous end to a journalistic career in which he covered something like 900 events and reported for the Daily Telegraph for almost 30 years. He loved it. Even in his sixties and seventies he would happily get up at four in the morning for a long haul flight, revel in every twist of a tournament's tale, and enjoy chin-wagging with his many contacts. No-one has chased snippets of gossip and news about table tennis so much or so far as he did. Probably no-one will.

He succeeded because he was disciplined and diligent and cheerfully made the best of things. This may have developed from a need to make up for an education cut short by World War Two, and from three years national service in the RAF. More likely, it was just John.

He presented an extrovert front and there was something of the salesman about him, a quality seen even more strongly in his daughter Moira. His son Stuart revealed a capacity for organization during the funeral arrangements, something his father would have greatly approved of.

John needed things to be orderly. His notebooks were unlike those of many other jourmos - neat, methodical, chronological, scored with a red line down the middle of the page when they had been used for filing, and then kept for records and reference.

There was never any question of missing deadlines because he always hated being late. Often he would get to airports three hours before flights. If, when travelling together, you arrived much later than that, you received a stare suggesting you had attempted a quayside plunge.

His writing was information-driven, unpretentious, and devoid of phrase-mongering. For him opinion was free and facts were precious because sometimes they could only be bought at a high price.

He was speedy, steady, prolific, and ubiquitous. He worked for nationals, provincials, agencies, magazines, programmes, brochures, supplements, pamphlets, advertising sheets, websites, and radio, and filed from four continents, more than 20 countries, and every clime.

He also believed that the truth was sacred, though trying to identify what it actually was could land him in trouble. When

John became editor of Table Tennis News, he tried to make it a magazine with a little more of an independent voice, which was a lively and laudable aim perhaps, but occasionally brought conflict with the chairman.

Risking this was, as he saw it, a duty, and one he was rarely afraid to pursue. "Both brickbats and bouquets", was his description of editorial policy, and although it undoubtedly led to mistakes, there was no doubting his sincerity. He was, after all, a Vice-President of the Association which sometimes sought to quieten him.

Journalism was not his first career. John began in the commercial offices of the Eastbourne Gazette and Herald at the age of 14, and stayed with the company for 44 years, during which time he became advertising manager.

He retired at 58 partly to continue full-time the table tennis journalism which had steadily grown. It enabled him to cover the entry of table tennis into the Olympics, and two more Olympic Games after that, as well as many World and Commonwealth Championships.

Although John's writing made him well-known in table tennis, his involvement in the sport had been longer than that, and possibly more self-defining. It had lasted most of his life. He began playing as a small child, competed in local and county leagues, sat on countless committees, and married a good player, Ann Davies, for some years the best in Sussex.

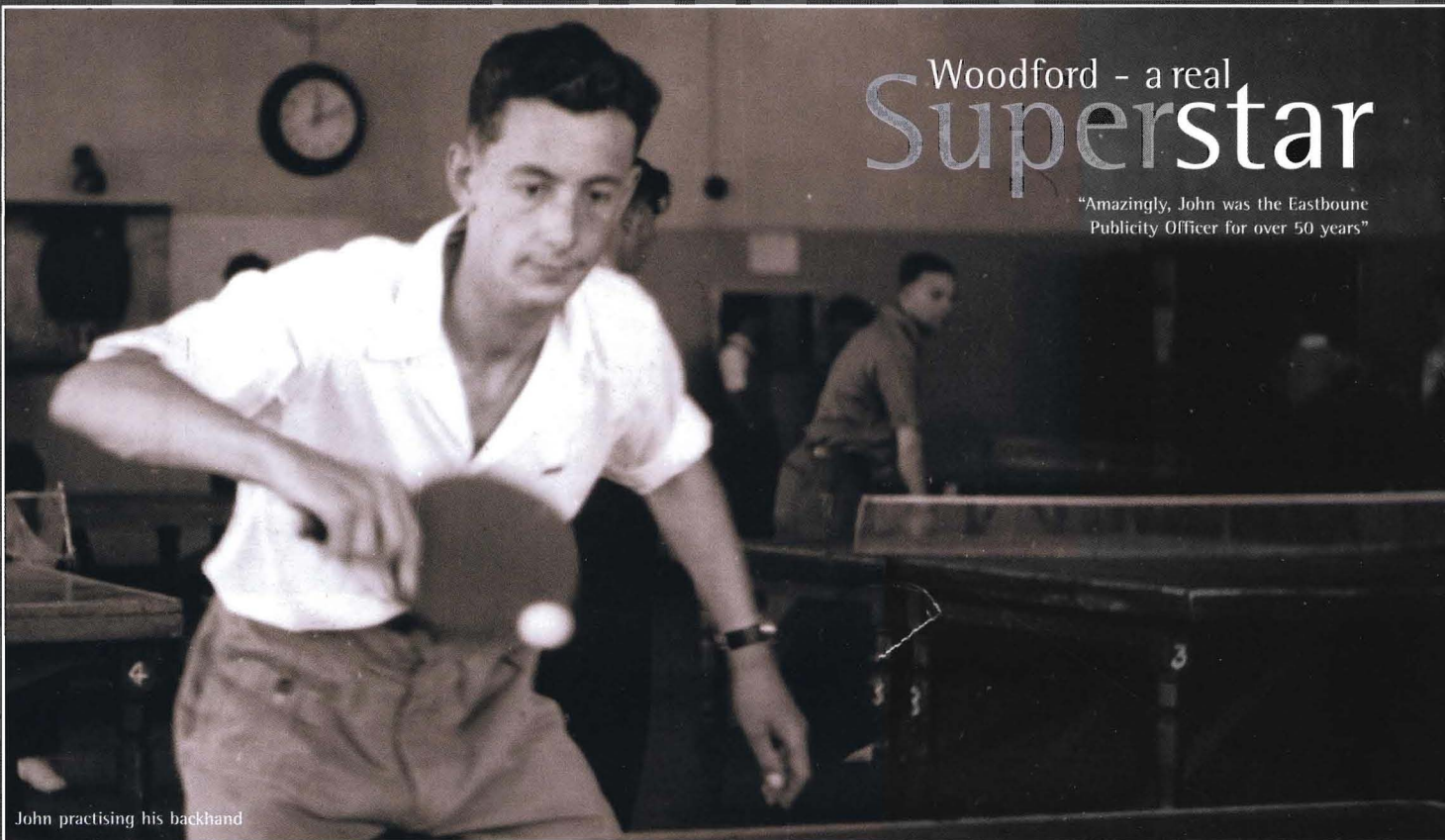
They had 21 years together, and later, throughout his thousands of miles of wanderings, John's great support was his partner Barbara Reynolds, who was with him for 31 years and right till the moment he died.

John was also a keen walker, a decent tennis player, and a very competent and enthusiastic golfer. His enduring fitness was partly the result of 35 years' membership of Eastbourne Downs Golf Club where his schedule of two or three rounds a week was maintained most weeks of the year.

There, 14 years ago, he achieved a hole in one, and one of the most remarkable. It happened at hole 12 - within half an hour of a friend doing the same thing, just two holes away. It seemed like a sign. Friendship he had always pursued. Eventually it pursued him.

Woodford – a real Superstar

“Amazingly, John was the Eastbourne Publicity Officer for over 50 years”



John practising his backhand

Tribute from Ken Muhr

I had known John Woodford a long time before, particularly from the tournament circuit and my contributions to Table Tennis News under his editorship, but when I became ETTA Information Officer in 1998 and we covered the media together at competitions, he sort of took me under his wing and acted as my mentor.

He advised about angles to take (in my copy), number of words (he considered me long-winded!), press deadlines to keep and which restaurant to go to when play and report writing was over. He was well organised and took tight notes: often I asked him for names of players, who beat who, the scores and the story of the match. John was also renowned for producing players' quotes, which approximated well to what they might have said, had they given a quote! To be fair, he was also assiduous at actually interviewing players.

He was proud of the position he had achieved in table tennis journalism, so initially I was very much his junior partner, being told by him to cover Grand Prix graded singles and doubles while he wrote on the prestige events for TT News. Eventually he relented, sometimes letting me share by-lines and produce joint reports.

John's unique, pithy writing style in Table Tennis News and The Telegraph and his tenacity over many years in chasing table tennis stories (Worldwide), often just snippets of information or gossip, frequently as the only table tennis journalist interested or in attendance, merits much respect. I didn't always agree with him, but his copy always demanded attention.

Hastings Sussex
Open October 1951.
John and friend
standing on the
pier dreaming of
future ambitions



Issue 161 – John's first editorial (1986)

Communication is vital to all sports. It has always been one of life's mysteries to me why the top decision-makers in table tennis have been shy of investing modest sums of money in the magazine. At the very least, we must try and complete with badminton who utilise the services of two persons in the production of their national magazine and attract material from national journalists to supplement the vast amounts of information that is used from amateur sources in both sports. Working on "shoe string" finances my associate director Fiona Brown and I will be trying over the next seven issues of this magazine to present a bright publication that will attract more readers and more advertisers.....

If this magazine is to flourish and be an attractive proposition to advertisers it is vital that we follow the lead of a number of rival sports and include the price in a national affiliation fee. It is a move that could take two years to happen, but steps should be taken now to persuade the National Council to move this way.

a miraculous Sport

Today, some six years over the notion of an allotted life span of 70, I manipulated my jalopy round and through a new complex roundabout with slips to the east and west motorways, numerous side roads to garage, supermarket, retail park, etc. etc, and with notices and lines of paint everywhere. I just embraced it all visually as I slowed down to a proper 30, chose my direction and "kept my eye on the ball". "Nae bother, Nae bother at all!"

By Nan Agnew

Four months ago I wouldn't even have attempted it so why the transformation and why was I so pleased? Let me bore you with an account of a miracle. I'm really into miracles, sort of mini-miracles anyway, especially when they apply to health like, for me, surviving breast cancer, arresting arthritis, lowering blood pressure which at 200 seemed to cause some nurses more than a little concern, and I suppose being able to dump the inhalers and chuck away the sticks after the last bout of arthritis have all been mini-miracles.

Last winter circumstances caused me to be alone most of it and miserably lonely. A bad fall in the early morning ice didn't help and the resulting strain and stress dragged into deep depression as I lived out the 'bonus' years in various states of consciousness abed, while intermittently imbibing gallons of tea from a large thermos and consuming tons of almond fingers. I was quite ready to 'pass on', grateful for the lack of pain after years of devastating migraine.

The pernicious onslaught of old age is seriously underestimated. As I continued to 'float' I occasionally reviewed my past including my athletic youth when I was half the weight I am now. Diets hadn't worked and I certainly couldn't play badminton now, no, not even to save my life. Not that I particularly wanted to save it. But what about Ping Pong. Why had I never thought of that? All that lifting of balls has to be good for the figure. But why bother! Couldn't I just float on, well, maybe get around to examining the environment a bit, or just arrange flowers and be a grumpy old woman. It was not to be. The ubiquitous T.T. notion kept me awake and aware - so - another almond finger, another great slug of tea - I was up!!! Just for a wee look mind you - nothing too close or energetic.

That "wee look" developed into a myriad of contacts and telephone calls - international if you count England, even Edinburgh!

Alas Easterhouse proved to be a table tennis black spot. There

"I didn't know what 'practice' was

appeared to be teaching in some schools but no clubs or facilities for other learners. There was a vague mention of Drumchapel, another deprived area, and quite out of the question being at the other side of Glasgow. An hour by car and three long legs by public transport. Forget that!

Proximity rather than planning propelled me into the next stage and the brave new world of table tennis. Two props, actually.

It so happened that Malcolm, my minister who created the local community centre in the church premises, was a former university table tennis champion so I petitioned him. "If you will give me a few lessons Malcolm, I'm prepared to buy a table for my physical fitness and (second prop.) to give a decent game to my London grandson who has just acquired a table." He agreed to the table in the church hall and for anybody to use it for fun.

Third propinquitous occurrence was the racket sports department of Glasgow Council being somewhat fed up with my

renowned internationally, even in England, I wandered round the Centre which was littered with photographs, cups, shields, certificates, prizes of all kinds, personal and club players' achievements. I began to get the message. This man had created, in this poor and deprived area, a fantastic club where no-one paid for membership, playing or coaching and had reared hundreds of table tennis stars. Already 'bitten by the bug' I was overawed and about to become what Terry calls "a table tennis freak".

Introduced as a 76 year old who hadn't held a bat for 40 years, he omitted to say I was standing very close to him, not because I fancied him but because I wore two hearing aids among other protheses, and praised my courage. He had a series of relevant jokes and inspiring comments as he introduced each would-be coach. Terry's thesis is that coaching, and indeed the whole game, has to be fun and this is exemplified in his total performance.



constant enquiries and comments on lack of information and facilities suggested I took an imminent coaches course. "You must be joking", I demurred, "I haven't held a table tennis bat for forty years and then it was only ping pong". Nevertheless they sent the application form and even though it would take place in the far flung Drumchapel I decided to go - at least I might get a game. Malcolm, a qualified coach but obviously a very busy man, was courteous enough to give me a few sessions and the names of strokes so that I wouldn't look and sound like a complete idiot on the course.

Reconnaissance was necessary to find Drumchapel Table Tennis Centre but this was discovered and I arrived early on the appropriate Saturday morning to be greeted by the fabulous Terry McLernon surveying his meticulously prepared domain. Of course I didn't know then he was famous throughout Europe,

Introduced as a 76 year old who hadn't held a bat for 40 years, he omitted to say I was standing very close to him...

I was delighted to meet seven other potential coaches, with some of whom I am still in contact. My social group has expanded and was about to explode as I developed my relationship with the Drumchapel table tennis scene.

During the next few weeks as I haunted the Drumchapel club I met another great coach - one Liam McKeating - a former champion Liam, like Terry McLernon and Terry Venables, believes

"practice makes permanent" and I had this proven as I was introduced to the wonder of the forehand drive. I didn't know what 'practice' was until Liam took me under his wing.

Three times a week I practiced nothing but the forehand drive - a controlled forehand drive - none of your battering hundred miles an hour jobs - although I occasional risked a good thump just for fun - usually returned with the admonition "If you hit it hard it is likely to come back hard". Liam analysed every stroke,

until Liam took me under his wing."

“I practiced nothing but the forehand drive”

right or wrong, all of mine, and sometimes those of others; his patience and humour inexhaustible.

As I fell further and further in love with “the beautiful game” I paused to wonder if my legs would hold up to this energetic activity, and thought I’d maybe better see an osteopath and check them out since two years ago I was hobbling about with two sticks. That reminded me that also two years ago due to considerable loss of various types of memory and a considerable lapse in general performance, I feared the onset of dementia so undertook an appraisal in the form of psychometric testing. A standard procedure is to apply a battery of tests assessing cognitive brain functions and to re-assess in a couple of years to measure deterioration. I had not realised that two years had passed and had stopped caring but now I decided to follow up the sequence and know the worst.

As the tests were administered over a period of four weeks, some five hours of testing which included general intellectual

ability various memory tests, language, executive functioning, verbal fluency and all that jazz. I enjoyed it all except for the two hour test which I found a bit tiring. I haven’t practiced a solid two hours on the forehand drive but I reckon that would be pretty tiring too as was 24 games in an afternoon at Tees Summer School! The psychologist commented that Mrs Agnew appeared to be well motivated to attempt the tests and so she was as she knew she was in fine fettle and was far more interested in the success of the forehand drive

Liam, my coach, without actually saying so seemed determined that I would achieve 100 controlled and perfect forehand drives before I learned another stroke. Of course I had no way of knowing whether this was ‘normal’ except for a comment by another coach who suggested he was a tough taskmaster and maybe a Marquis de Sade! Whatever, after four months I was a bit disappointed in my ‘game’ but pretty pleased with my forehand drive which attracted some praise, tho’ not from Liam, and a bit of good natured teasing.

A last minute decision to attend Tees Sports Summer School granted my dream of playing T.T. every day with no family or domestic hassles. My poor old body was just getting used to staying awake all day when I tentatively embraced this full-time programme. It should have killed me - but it didn’t! Thanks partly to the Ransomes and Steve Bailey facilitating my comfort throughout. The coaches were wonderfully instructive, witty, and full of fun while their demonstration and exhibition games were to die for. It would have been worth going just for these. I gave it my best while taking care to avoid dehydration and total fatigue - mini resting when possible. I joined in most of the ‘keep fit’ sessions but could not, yet, skip, run or jump but I did learn some

useful exercises and vowed to work harder on these when I got home.

Getting home, not sure what I’d learned, Liam and I went into the forehand drive routine and were both disappointed when I didn’t make 200 - only 179 - “Well done,” he praised (wonders will never cease) - “that took tremendous concentration”.

Needless to say, I was even more pleased by this than the results of the psychometric testing which, far from a deterioration, showed improved performance in all tests and in some so highly above average the clinical psychologist was prompted to say that in some areas I had the brain of a 25 year old - and everyone knows, including Alan Cooke and Matthew Syed who debated the possibility of a world champion over the age of 40, that the brain deteriorates after 25.

Who knows what the next few months will bring?

What the experts say

A couple of extracts from Japanese research that highlight why our sport is so brilliant for the brain and helps you live longer.

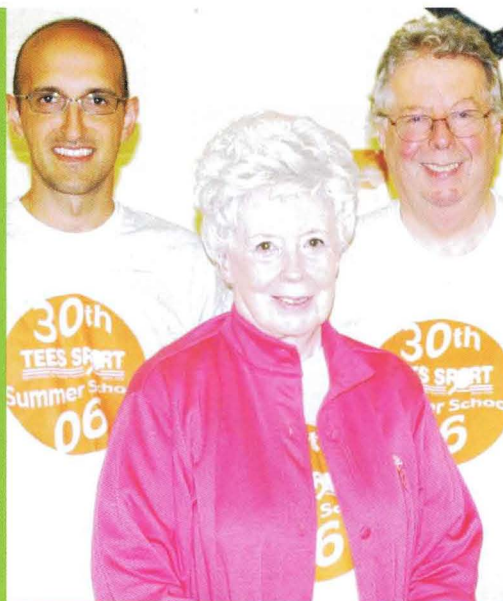
YOUNG LONGER

“The best way to keep an older person beautiful was keep using the body and the brain. If she/he does these, she/he can remain alert and younger longer.”

Often physical requirements limit participation of people from certain types of sport. This may be a big obstacle for older people. This is not the case in table tennis. Table tennis is one of the few sports that even an eighty year old can play.” Mr Tamasu

THE BRAIN GAME

The complexity and quickness of table tennis is unmatched by other sports; perhaps this is best described by Dr Win Wenger. In his book “How to increase your intelligence” he wrote as follows:- “Table tennis is an excellent way to extend hand-eye co-ordination. The game has many benefits: it demands very fast, complex reactions; you get instant feedback of your responses; the game has many subtleties, fitness, interlocked skills, rhythms, and stratagems which make demands on your entire brain and physical system; and at levels of high desire and stress, the game forces on extraordinary self-integration and self discipline. Become sharp at the table is one excellent way to “turn on” more of your midbrain!



The Filton College based Bristol Academy of Sport had a double cause for celebration when two table tennis coaches were asked to form a new National British Colleges Squad to represent the country in international competitions. Kevin Satchell is head coach of the Bristol Academy of Sport Table Tennis Academy and is assisted by Ryan Jenkins. Both coaches are Commonwealth medallists and with Kevin being English but a former Scottish National Team Manager and Ryan being Welsh, there couldn't be a better combination to represent the country's best 16-19 year olds in college education.



ESTTA & Ransome

ESTTA announce the signing of a new contract with Ransome Sporting Goods as sole equipment sponsor of the Association for the next 8 years, supplying equipment for all ESTTA major events – Team, Individual and International. The finals of the National School Team Championships 2007 are to be held at the Hinckley Leisure Centre when regional champions will meet in eight age groups to become Butterfly National School Teams Championships.

Ransome Sporting Goods will also be supplying Butterfly equipment for the Individual Championships in 2007 to be held at Fenton Manor Leisure Centre, Stoke on Trent. This is the largest one day table tennis event in England with play on 24 tables with representatives from all 50 counties. Table Tennis finds itself at the cutting edge of sports development in schools. It featured in the first UK School Games held in Glasgow in September 2006 and was a pilot sport in the development of competition frameworks to be used in schools as part of the PESSCL programme. Schools' Table Tennis, like other traditional school sports, needs a structure for competition within an educational setting. ESTTA believes that their Association provides this, but can only function with the help of sponsorship. The Association is therefore grateful for the support of Ransome Sporting Goods.



Drinkhall shortlisted

Paul Drinkhall is once again gaining accolades for his superb achievements within table tennis. Paul took the title of OCS Young Sports Person 2006 for the North East Region after astounding judges with his table tennis achievements and dedication to the sport.

Paul said "It is very encouraging to be given such a prestigious award and have people recognise the dedication that I and all the other nominees have put into our sports. Winning the North East award is extra special as there is a wealth of talented young athletes in the region. I would like to thank OCS for their support with this award and hopefully I will be able to use their support to enable me to improve, further helping me to reach my goal of a medal in 2012."

Over 400 entries from across the UK were received in the OCS sponsored competition, which is widely recognised as one of the most prestigious sports awards for young people. Paul and the other nine finalists will receive their cheques for £2,500 at a ceremony hosted by top television sports presenter Clare Balding on 23rd November in the OCS stand at the Brit Oval in London. At the ceremony the overall OCS Young Sports Person will also be announced – the winner will receive £7,500 additional sponsorship over two years (making a total of £10,000) plus a cheque for £2,500 for their school, college or club.

Cooke - Great North Run

50,000 runners lined up for the world's biggest half-marathon, the 26th BUPA Great North Run. This event, the brainchild of former Olympic 10,000m bronze medallist Brendan Foster, continues to go from strength to strength since making its debut in 1981. As does our very own Alan Cooke who took to the roads of Newcastle for the first time last year and recorded an amazing time of 124.45 mins, this year Cooke once again proved his running pedigree coming in just a



ALAN

fraction behind with another incredible time of 124.53 mins and a finishing position of 313. The 13.1 mile course, which started on the central motorway in Newcastle upon Tyne and finished by the coast of South Shields, was blessed with fine weather, which all contributed to an enjoyable day. Of course, supporters turned out in their droves to cheer the runners along the way, and to add to the atmosphere the Red Arrows provided a spectacular aerial salute to all runners as they passed over the over the famous Tyne Bridge. Congratulations Alan on another fine sporting achievement.



Cippenham Senior 2 Star Open Championships Commence

The tournament season at Cippenham Table Tennis Centre got underway on 24 September with a bumper entry for the Club's annual Senior 2 Star Open

The tournament season at Cippenham Table Tennis Centre got underway on 24 September with a bumper entry for the Club's annual Senior 2 Star Open. As is often the case with these events, the competition was fierce with the seeded players not having it all their own way. The eventual winner of the Men's Singles title was Arturas Rybakas. The second seed got stronger as the day went on and won his final two matches, against Yasir Mauthoor in the semi-final and Adam Laws in the final, with relative ease. However, the Essex based Lithuanian lost to England cadet international Mathew Ware in his preliminary round group. Rybakas still qualified in second place but it was Ware who then filled the position at the bottom of the draw in the singles knockout while Rybakas was placed in the top half. The remainder of the top four seeds came through unscathed but only Laws made it to his allotted position in the semi-final in which

he defeated Ware to set up his final with Rybakas. Top seed Euan Liddle defeated Cippenham's Paul Elliott in the first round but then the Scot succumbed to dark horse Adam Brewer in the second round and he then became a victim of Rybakas in the quarter-final. Third seed and defending champion Rob Lemon fell to Mauthoor in the quarter-final but was still the host club's most successful player with Mark Jackson and Phil Clarkson having left the stage one round earlier. One player that really caught the eye was Suchira Gallage as the 15 year old beat the vastly more experienced Brewer in the preliminary round group but was unfortunate to fail to qualify for the main event after coming third in a three-way tie with Brewer and Ross Saxby. The Women's Singles was anything but straight forward. Top seed Sharon Mitchell even failed to make it out of her group, beaten by both Sue Adamson and Frances

Potjewyd. The latter's new-found form carried on throughout the day as she topped her group and then defeated Diane Melville and Val Murdoch to take the title. The event was organized by Paul Baker, refereed by Peter Hillier and attracted 80 entries.
By Graham Trimming

Results

SENIOR OPEN FINALS:

MS: Arturas Rybakas (E) bt Adam Laws (Sy) 9,1,10. WS: Frances Potjewyd (So) bt Val Murdoch (Bd) 8,6,7. MCons: Hoxley Baron (Mi) bt Roland McLellan (Mi) 8, -8, 7,-11,5. WCons: Stephanie Francis (Do) bt Sian Cook (Sk) 9,8,-9,5

Cippenham Veterans' Summer 2 Star Open Championships

Hardy table tennis players braved the 30 degrees temperature to participate in the Cippenham Veterans' Summer 2 Star Open Championships on 2nd July to watch Hall and Donovan win the titles

Hardy table tennis players from all over the south of England and some from the midlands and Wales braved the 30 degrees temperature to participate in the Cippenham Veterans' Summer 2 Star Open Championships on 2nd July. After eight hours of play it was the fittest of the players, all aged over forty and having played five matches just to get into the knockout stages, that lasted to compete in the finals. Although both the men's and women's championships were won by the top seeds there were some upsets to the rankings along the way including the appearance of Robin Pretty in the final. Pretty did not even win his preliminary round group, having been beaten by the very fit 60-something Colin Dyke. Dyke won that group but only after losing to bottom placed John Barnes. It was that sort of a day! Both Pretty and Dyke beat the top ranked player in the group Steve Giles. Fourth seed Andy Frain was the subject of an upset in the groups also. However, his conqueror, Derek Holman, is not ranked too much below, and is a previous winner at Cippenham. Frain went through in second place but that took him into the top half of

the draw where he met third seed Steve Davis in round 2. Davis, winner of the last two veterans' events at Cippenham, won their clash in four close games.

With second seed Mark Wicker failing to show, the bottom half of the draw became devoid of seeds. That might have left the door open for Holman to progress but, after beating Geoff Grange in round 2, he succumbed to the defensive skills of Tony Needham 3-0 in the quarter-finals. Meanwhile, Robin Pretty was making his progress by virtue of wins over Paul Beck and Roger Harris to meet Needham in the semi-final.

Steve Hall showed his class throughout. The man from Somerset with the unique style – his clever use of long-pimpled rubber on the backhand, a solid defence, and a mighty forehand attack makes him a formidable opponent. He regained the title he has won twice previously without dropping a single game.

Regina Donovan was the winner of the Women's Singles, a feat she has managed four times previously. After a long trip up from Wales, she progressed through the five

matches in her group and the semi-final against Cippenham's Sue Hayes without dropping a game. However, she could not quite emulate Steve Hall's performance as, in the final, Janet Brown took the first game and nearly the second before Donovan ran out a worthy winner 3-1. The other semi-finalist was Diane Melville.

The tournament was organized by Graham Trimming, refereed by Peter Hillier and attracted an entry of 50 players.

By Graham Trimming

Results

VETERAN OPEN FINALS:

MS: Steve Hall (So) bt Robin Pretty (Sy)

11,6,4. WS: Regina Donovan (WAL) bt

Janet Brown (Ox) -7,10,4,8. MCons: Paul Martindill (E) bt Keith Fung (E) 9,2,-7,9

WCons: Margaret Thornton (Sy) bt Flavia Wade (Mi) 7,9,5

County Championships

Number of counties opening their accounts

Although a small number of counties still wish to play on the Saturday format, the majority of counties have opted to play over two or three weekends. The logic behind this is that the event can be completed over a shorter space of time, thus freeing the ever congested calendar.

Providing there are sufficient volunteers to organise the divisions over two or three weekends the majority of these divisions get completed with minimum fuss.

Problems sometimes arise when the majority of counties in a division wish to play over two weekends but two may not. This can cause problems for the organiser

although with a little bit of creativity and co-operation from the counties not wishing to play over weekends the divisions can still run smoothly.

The first major county weekend this season was hosted by Cippenham TTC, the Junior Premier Division in which Buckinghamshire will be hoping to regain their title.

The following weekend saw Halifax TTC host the first round of the Veteran Premier Division as last season's shock winners, Yorkshire, sought to continue this success.

The following weekend Cippenham is once more the venue for the Senior Premier Division with Sussex looking to continue

their fine form of last season.

The Cadets Premier Division event finds a new venue at Draycott and Long Eaton TTC over the first weekend in February. As each cadet match is played on two tables, the event is completed in the one weekend as Lincolnshire start the defence of their title.

A recent survey requesting counties' thoughts about reducing the number of umpires at premier weekends has yet to be completed and the status quo regarding the number of umpires will be in force for the current season.

By Barry Snowden

Butterfly are the official ball supplier of the County Championships



Swedish Attack

K2 Crawley Open Butterfly Grand Prix was once again a hive of activity with another brimming entry of top TT players ready to do battle in state of the art 24 table venue

At one of the best centres in the country the K2 Crawley Open Butterfly Grand Prix was once again a hive of activity with another brimming entry of top TT players ready to do battle in the state of the art 24 table venue.

With a couple of Swedish superstars in the fray the men's singles was always going to be tough for the home grown talent.

However, from over the border the Scottish number 2, Gavin Runggay, gave it his best shot and looked commanding flying through to a semi-final demonstrating the same impressive form that allowed him to collect the Liverpool Open Butterfly Grand Prix title earlier this season.

However, in the semi-final Runggay came up against a consummate professional in the form of Sweden's Sebastian Andersson, this proved a top class clash, with some truly fabulous rallies laced with huge loops, drives and exhilarating speed. Runggay found himself 8/4 up in the fifth, after rallying to overcome Andersson in the fourth 13/11 to take it to a final set decider.

Andersson pulled off a memorable comeback to retrieve the four point deficit and take the final game 11/9, what a thriller. The other side of the draw had a slight air

of inevitability about it as Kalle Relfsson looked to be simply unstoppable. The calm and collected colleague of Andersson was unruffled as he slid straight through to the final and demonstrated his dominance by quickly dispatching Andersson, who perhaps was a little jaded from his five game thriller.

Final score 11-5 11-5 11-9 to Relfsson. The women's singles final proved to be a great display of grit and determination, with two resolute competitors both equally eager to get to the finishing post first. Abigail Embling a former England international, took the first two however, although the scorelines reflected dominance in the favor of Embling, Roberts took heart in a few frailties and frustration that crept into Embling's game and worked an opening in the third. This resulted in the final three games finishing 11-9, all edged by Roberts. Final score 6-11, 4-11, 11-9, 11-9, 11-9 to Roberts.

Tees Sport Player of the Weekend – Harry McCarney (Sx).

Harry fully deserved this title after two excellent performances in both the Band 5 and 6 events, for this superb display Harry received a framed certificate and a £50

voucher to spend at Tees Sport.

For a more in-depth report please log on to our website at www.etta.co.uk you can also pick up entry forms for the next Butterfly or Satellite Grand Prix event and much more.

Results

K2 CRAWLEY OPEN BUTTERFLY GP

Men's Singles Kalle Relfsson bt. Sebastian Andersson 11-5 11-5 11-9.

Women's Singles Joanna Roberts bt. Abigail Embling 6-11 4-11 11-9 11-9 11-9.

Men's Band 1 Singles Sebastian Andersson bt. Ritchie Venner 11-5 14-12 11-8.

Women's Band 1 Singles Elizabeth Insam bt. Michele Cohen 11-7 11-8 6-11 9-11 11-9.

Men's Band 2 Singles Mathew Ware bt. Yasir Mauthoor 11-5 5-11 11-7 11-7.

Women's Band 2 Singles Hannah Hicks bt. Joy Whitehorn 11-9 10-12 11-7 11-3.

Men's Band 3 Singles Yasir Mauthoor bt. David Fraser 11-7 3-11 10-12 12-10 11-6.

Women's Band 3 Singles Kelly Skeggs bt. Joy Whitehorn 11-9 8-11 9-11 11-5 11-8.

Men's Band 4 Singles Chris Smith bt. Paul Savins 11-6 11-8 11-2.

Men's Band 5 Singles Harry McCarney bt. Les Eadie 11-7 11-9 11-4.

Men's Band 6 Singles Harry McCarney bt. Zbyszek Kordula 11-2 11-9 11-9.

Restricted Men's Singles Paul Savins bt. Leo Veinsreider 11-8 12-10 10-12 11-7.

U21 Men's Singles Kalle Relfsson bt. John Murphy 12-10 11-8 11-2.

U21 Women's Singles Sally Smith bt. Sarra Wang 11-9 11-8 12-10.

Veteran Men's Singles Ritchie Venner bt. Clive Carthy 11-9 7-11 11-6 11-8.

Veteran Women's Singles Pauline Steel winner (Round Robin)

Clare Pengelly GP

Clare Pengelly Memorial Grand Prix Satellite

The Clare Pengelly Trust would like to thank all the sponsors, players and crew for helping contribute to the considerable success of this tournament. To date the tournaments have raised an amazing £15,000 for the South West Children's Hospice which includes the fantastic contribution of £2,000 from this year's event.

Results - Men's Singles Gavin Runggay bt. Ryan Jenkins 11-7, 11-8, 6-11. (Jenkins conceded in 4th set due to injury)

Women's Singles Kelly Sibley bt. Egle Adomelyte 13-11, 11-6, 11-9.

Men's Singles Band 1 Abdul Wuraola beat Vytas Rybakas 11-2, 11-6, 11-1.

Women's Singles Band 1 Sally Smith bt. Naomi Wilson 11-9, 11-7, 11-9.

Men's Singles Band 2 Mathew Ware bt. Robert Lemon 4-11, 11-8, 11-7, 6-11, 11-5.

Women's Singles Band 2 Sally Smith bt. Hannah Hicks 12-10, 16-14, 11-9, 13-11.

Men's Singles Band 3 Richard Marshall bt. Patrick Thomas 11-8, 11-5, 11-5.

Women's Singles Band 3 Joy Whitehorn bt. Dayna Pearce 11-5, 12-10, 11-9.

Men's Singles Band 4 Richard Marshall bt. Chris Smith 9-11, 11-7, 11-5, 9-11, 11-6.

Men's Singles Band 5 Lloyd Gregory bt. Alistair Smith 11-6, 9-11, 9-11, 11-5, 11-6.

Men's Singles Band 6 Ross Saxby bt. Freddie Cuttler 11-7, 11-13, 11-6, 11-3.

Veteran Men's Singles David Harvey bt. Abdul Wuraola (conceded)

Veteran Women's Singles Judy Morley bt. Penny Perry 11-13, 9-11, 11-9, 11-5, 14-12.

Boys' Singles Richard Marshall bt. Chris Smith 11-1, 11-4, 11-4.

OFCI Make Roaring Start

Promoted Oxford Fireplace Centre 1 wasted no time in showing their Premier Division rivals their championship credentials.

The first round of matches pitted them against eight times Champions DHS London Progress 1 on the Progress Club's home tables and they clearly faced the toughest of baptisms. They responded magnificently with Wu Yue Jiao (ranked amongst the 16 to 32 bracket amongst all-conquering China's ladies) sensationally winning twice. Jiao beat both Colum Slevin and Jason Sugrue whilst Oxford number one - Scottish international Gavin Rumgay, scored an equally fine win over Terry Young. Alex Echavarria had the dubious task of trying to save a point for the London side but despite a determined effort he missed out 9-11, 14-12, 10-12, 8-11 to Stewart Crawford. Match result: 5-3 to Oxford and a sensational start to the weekend by anyone's expectations.

Oxford capped what turned out to be a magnificent weekend with an 8-0 win over Harvey Barnets in round four 1 to give themselves a perfect record of eight points. They raced into a 4-0 lead without dropping an end although Barnets made life much harder for them in games number five and six. Gavin Rumgay found himself 2-1 down against the ever determined Costas Papantoniou before he came through strongly to win 11-5, 11-3, 11-13, 11-6, 11-3, and young William Maybanks produced a "hot spell" against Wu Yue Jiao which had everyone present shaking their heads in disbelief. The Chinese star was very relieved to finally triumph 11-7, 9-11, 6-11, 11-4, 11-6. With a games record of 28-4 Oxford sit proudly on top of the table, and the records of their four players make remarkably consistent reading. Gavin Rumgay, Wu Yue Jiao, Zhao Jing Wei and Stewart Crawford all won seven out of their eight singles. As always the games the leading team lost make interesting reading. Rumgay's sole loss was to Colum Slevin (1-3), Miss Wu's defeat came at the hands of Ellenborough's talented Lorestas Trumpauskas (0-3), her Chinese team mate Zhao Jing Wei came unstuck against Terry Young after leading 2-0, whilst Stewart Crawford only tasted defeat once, in his very first game against the ever-reliable Progress Captain Jason Sugrue (0-3).

The final round of British League matches produced one of the biggest upsets of the weekend. The young Ormesby side exceeded all expectations by jumping into third place by beating Ellenborough 6-2. Damien Nicholls, who had come so close to beating Ritchie Venner (BATTs Team Peniel) and Chris Brown (DML Woolwell), "hit the jackpot" when he scored a sensational opening game 8-11, 11-9, 11-9, 11-8 victory over Lorestas Trumpauskas. Nicholls returned to the table in his second singles and he added another fine win, this time getting the better of Jimmy Walsh 3-1. Trumpauskas showed just how well he was playing in his second game as he beat Craig Bryant 3-1. Martyn Clarke also impressed and he scored a 3-1 victory over Gary Tandler whilst Andrew Wilson capped a superb performance by the Middlesbrough side by defeating Gary Tandler 3-1. New Ormesby Player Coach Steve Bailey will have been delighted with his side's efforts.

Promoted Sycamore impressed many people. They might not be able to survive relegation, but they look determined to enjoy their first season in the Premier Division whatever happens. Shaun Marples scored two fine wins against BATTs Team Peniel beating both John Holland (3-2) and Clive Carthy (3-0) as there was never more than a single game separating the two sides. The canny Ritchie Venner was a convincing 3-0 winner over Kevin Dolder but the Sussex veteran met his match in the seventh game as Adam Frost came back from a first game mauling to win 3-11, 11-8, 13-11, 11-9, one of the most exciting matches of the day. Sycamore Captain Jason Ramage chipped in with a superb 3-2 victory over Clive Carthy. This left BATTs' number four Neil Charles with the responsibility of holding his side together and Neil showed great composure as he won twice. Neil beat both Adam Frost and Jason Ramage decisively 3-0 to ensure the match finished level.



Gavin Rumgay

**BUTTERFLY
THE BRITISH LEAGUE
OFFICIAL BALL**



British League Tables

PREMIER DIVISION							DIVISION 2 SOUTH AND MIDLANDS								
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Oxford FPC1	4	4	0	0	28	4	8	Guin Polska 1	4	4	0	0	27	5	8
London Prog 1	4	3	0	1	24	8	6	Ashford 1	4	4	0	0	24	8	8
Ormesby 1	4	2	1	1	18	14	5	London Sharks	4	3	0	1	22	10	6
Ellenborough 1	4	2	0	2	16	16	4	Guernsey	4	2	0	2	18	14	4
BATTs Peniel 1	4	1	1	2	16	16	3	Kingshurst Bribar	4	1	2	1	16	16	4
Sycamore	4	0	2	2	9	23	2	EBS-Orange W 2	4	0	1	3	10	22	1
DML Woolwell 1	4	1	0	3	9	23	2	Bed Modern 2	4	0	1	3	9	23	1
Harvey Barnets 1	4	1	0	3	8	24	2	De Vere Netts	4	0	0	4	2	30	0

DIVISION 1 NORTH							DIVISION 3 NORTH								
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
DC Glasgow 1	4	4	0	0	30	2	8	Barrow	4	4	0	0	29	3	8
Derwent 1	4	3	1	0	20	12	7	Derwent 2	4	4	0	0	27	5	8
McClymont Nat	4	1	3	0	19	13	5	Uxbridge Burton	4	3	0	1	24	8	6
Grantham	4	1	2	1	17	15	4	Halton Croda 2	4	2	0	2	13	19	4
Seasiders	4	1	1	2	12	20	3	Elgre Nottin'm 3	4	1	0	3	11	21	2
Ormesby 2	4	1	1	2	11	21	3	Formby	4	1	0	3	11	21	2
Elgre Nott'am 1	4	1	0	3	12	20	2	St Mary's Hull	4	1	0	3	10	22	2
R Scorpions 1	4	0	0	4	7	25	0	Murrayfield	4	0	0	4	3	29	0

DIVISION 1 SOUTH							DIVISION 3 SOUTH								
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
London Prog 2	4	4	0	0	22	10	8	TTK G'house 2	4	4	0	0	23	9	8
Cippenham 1	4	3	0	1	21	11	6	Ellenborough 2	4	3	0	1	22	10	6
Harvey Barnets 2	4	3	0	1	19	13	6	Eastbourne	4	3	0	1	20	12	6
Brighton 1	4	2	0	2	18	14	4	Cippenham 3	4	2	0	2	15	17	4
Byng Hall 1	4	1	2	1	16	16	4	Brighton 2	4	1	1	2	14	18	3
York Gardens 1	4	1	1	2	15	17	3	Horsham 3	4	1	0	3	12	20	2
Fusion 1	4	0	1	3	13	19	1	Hastings	4	0	2	2	11	21	2
Horsham 1	4	0	0	4	4	28	0	Sout'pton West	4	0	1	3	11	21	1

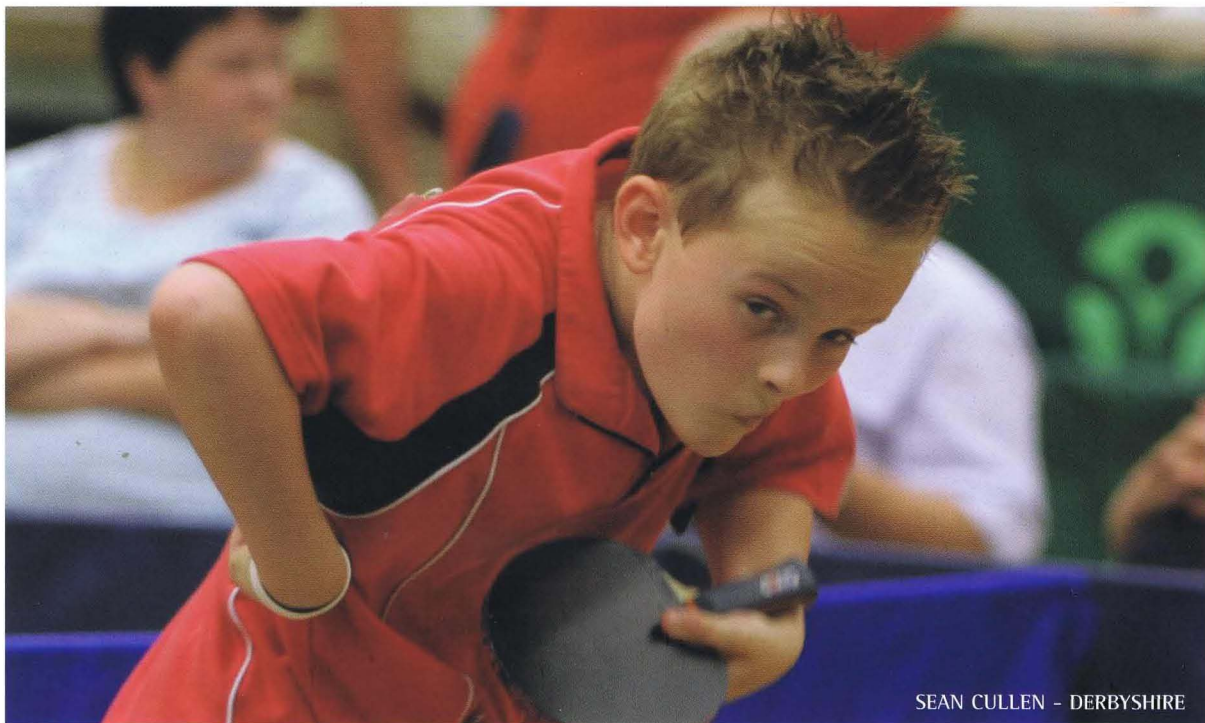
DIVISION 1 SOUTH AND MIDLANDS							DIVISION 3 SOUTH AND WEST								
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
TTK G'house 1	4	3	1	0	25	7	7	Ashford 2	4	4	0	0	24	8	8
London Prog 3	4	3	0	1	21	11	6	Fusion 3	4	3	0	1	21	11	6
Bed Modern 1	4	3	0	1	19	13	6	Kingfisher Read	4	3	0	1	20	12	6
Oxford FPC 2	4	3	0	1	18	14	6	NWF	4	2	0	2	18	14	4
OLOP Impact 1	4	2	1	1	21	11	5	Oxford FPC 3	4	2	0	2	16	16	4
EBS-Orange W 1	4	0	2	2	14	18	2	V.I.P. Entertain	4	2	0	2	15	17	4
Cippenham 2	4	0	0	4	6	26	0	DML Woolwell 2	4	0	0	4	8	24	0
Elgre Nott'am 2	4	0	0	4	4	28	0	Waterside	4	0	0	4	6	26	0

DIVISION 2 NORTH							DIVISION 4 NORTH								
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Chesterfield 1	4	2	2	0	21	11	6	DC Glasgow 2	4	4	0	0	28	4	8
Halton Croda 1	4	2	2	0	20	12	6	Har'pool Brierton	4	3	1	0	21	11	7
Northfield	4	2	2	0	18	14	6	Pudsey	4	3	0	1	23	9	6
Ormesby 3	4	2	0	2	19	13	4	Elgre Nott'ham 4	4	2	1	1	17	15	5
Grimsby	4	1	2	1	16	16	4	Barnt Green	4	1	1	2	14	18	3
Sheffield	4	2	0	2	16	16	4	R Scorpions 2	4	1	0	3	14	18	2
Woodfield	4	1	0	3	9	23	2	Chesterfield 2	4	0	1	3	7	25	1
Fastbats	4	0	0	4	9	23	0	Isle of Man	4	0	0	4	4	28	0

DIVISION 2 SOUTH							DIVISION 4 SOUTH								
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Generation 2	4	4	0	0	24	8	8	York Gardens 2	4	3	1	0	21	11	7
London Prog 4	4	3	0	1	20	12	6	Brighton 3	4	3	0	1	20	12	6
Mossford	4	2	1	1	16	16	5	SEH-Brit Ipswich	4	2	1	1	21	11	5
Fusion 2	4	1	2	1	16	16	4	Stepney Green	4	2	1	1	19	13	5
Club Cornwall	4	1	1	2	15	17	3	TTK G'house 3	4	2	0	2	16	16	4
Horsham 2	4	1	1	2	13	19	3	Guin Polska 2	4	2	0	2	15	17	4
OLOP Impact 2	4	1	0	3	12	20	2	London Prog 5	4	0	1	3	12	20	1
BATTs Peniel 2	4	0	1	3	12	20	1	Byng Hall 2	4	0	0	4	4	28	0

ROUNDUP

COUNTY



SEAN CULLEN - DERBYSHIRE

Cheshire by Alan Blears

Halton players have enjoyed an early season run of form. In the World Corporate Games in Budapest, Alice Howard of Halton Ladies took the winner's trophy, while in the Okehampton Satellite Grand Prix Mark Roscaleer was three times runner-up: in the U21s, Men's Band 2, and most impressively the Men's Singles. Congratulations to both players.

County Trials - There was a good boys' entry in the junior and cadet trials, with the Hillcourt Club in Stockport scoring a notable double success. Matthew Weatherby took the junior top spot, despite losing to Neil Baker. Less predictably Jordan Potts won the cadets, helped by a win over the much higher ranked and vastly more experienced Josh Boulton. Jordan's one loss was to the youngest competitor, Matthew McCormick, in the groups, but he gained his revenge in the play-off for first and second spots.

Entries for the younger girls' age groups were almost non-existent, with the county desperately short of U13 girls at the moment.

The junior girls' entry was hit by school calls, with Caroline Hallows, Fiona Dennett and Jordyn Layfield all being in Glasgow for the U.K. School Games where they took a team gold.

The cadet girls' event must surely have been unique, with Sarah Weatherby playing two girls

with a history of heart problems. Rachel Baker's are hopefully now behind her, but Jade Carr has had a transplant. Jade recently won a silver medal at the British Transplant Games, and has been selected for the World Transplant Games. A very courageous young lady.

U11 boys: 1 - Daniel Weardon, 2 - James McEvoy, 3 - Glyn Wheeler, 4 - Matthew Buxton.

U13 boys: 1 - Joshua Boulton, 2 - Matthew McCormick, 3 - Stephen Jackson, 4 - Chris Hatton, 5 - Daniel Weardon, 6 - Ben Usher, 7 - Daniel McEvoy, 8 - George Gebbie. Cadet boys: 1 - Jordan Potts, 2 - Matthew McCormick, 3 - Joshua Boulton, 4 - Liam Tyldsley, 5 - Daniel Brown, 6 - Steven Nicholls, 7 - Chris Hatton, 8 - Marcus McNyfty, 9 - Nick Karabelas, 10 - David Bruce. Junior boys: 1 - Matthew Weatherby, 2 - Chris Weir, 3 - Jacob Shaw, 4 - Neil Baker, 5 - Andrew Huddart, 6 - Chris Pattison, 7 - Liam Tyldsley, 8 - Scott Bradley, 9 - Sam Lutas.

U11/U13 girls: 1 - Natalie Dodd, 2 - Corrina Bebbington, 3 - Nicofe Dodd, 4 - Chloe Mains. Cadet girls: 1 - Rachel Baker, 2 - Sarah Weatherby, 3 - Jade Carr. Junior girls: 1 - Rachel Baker, 2 - Maitreyi Shivkumar, 3 - Annie Hudson, 4 - Melanie Parkinson, 5 - Stephanie Bear.

Farewell - Cheshire, and the Hillcourt Club in particular, have said goodbye to the very popular Lorna Harper, who has gained a job promotion in

her native North East. Lorna's tournament career was brief, just two years, during which time she rose from nil points to roughly 2,000, before injury and a mysterious focusing problem brought it to a close. Still a very skilful player, her help will be much missed by the Hillcourt youngsters, but no doubt some club in the North East will be the beneficiary.

School links - In Crewe Dave Stubbs is establishing a table tennis centre at Victoria Community School, while the Hillcourt Club now has links with Manchester Grammar School. John Potts - Jordan's dad - is head of P.E., several pupils attend the club for training, and the club coach (your correspondent) is also an old Mancunian - meaning he is a former pupil, not a geriatric resident of Manchester!

Derbyshire by Neil Houghton

I must mention a highlight of the ETTA Conference for Derbyshire and in particular a certain club. Just west of the M1 on the Nottingham edge of Derbyshire is a town used in filming a British Asian comedy (actually set in West Midlands) 'Anita and Me', one precursor to 'Bend it like Beckham'. Likely reason for using Draycott is it is just as you would expect a small Midlands town to be - with shops, a church and t'mill. And a chippy next to what is known

Kerry Mansell was the only person to take a game off Lindsey Thornton Reynolds in her progress to the final!

as "The Old Boxing Club"; not old any longer as long time users Draycott and Long Eaton Table Tennis Club have recently given it a big facelift and new building programme. A former Derbyshire champion (good left hander) and a coach at the club has turned his hand to different work. Phil Vickers has been presented with the award of Table Tennis Development Officer of the Year due to his fine effort towards the new buildings project. Well done Phil! The Newcastle Grand Prix also happened back on 'Conference weekend' and some young Derbyshire players had a very good tournament. When I gave Kerry Mansell the chance of playing for the county juniors last season at Cippenham I was impressed with her felicitous enthusiasm and gutsy approach at the table. The increasingly experienced Kerry put in a good Newcastle performance including being runner up in the Under 21s and reaching two semi-finals. No table in her women's semi-final is that Kerry was the only person to take a game off Lindsey Thornton Reynolds in her progress to the final! Daniel Lowe won Men's Band 6 and was Band 5 runner-up in his first senior outing. Another young player Sean Cullen had a good tournament, as did seasoned Shaun Marples who was runner-up in the Under 21s. First outings in senior tournaments bring to mind differing opinions on how much, if any, senior play cadets and younger juniors should undertake. Some would say quite soon as it can toughen and tighten their game while others may say the junior game is different and early senior play may not help development. It does seem senior tournament play does not automatically lead to junior success, interesting. It is possible I have missed word of other good performances or interesting events - if you don't tell me I can't find out everything so please get in touch!

Cleveland by Alan Ransome

The great news from a Cleveland perspective was the selection of Danny Reed to join Paul Drinkhall and Darius Knight in the England men's team for the Challenge Division Qualification for the European Championships which took place in Ljubljana on 14 and 15 October. Danny won 2 of his 5 matches as England beat Luxembourg and Switzerland 3-0. England finished fourth in the division after losses to the

Netherlands, Portugal and Slovenia. Paul Drinkhall won 3 of his 6 matches.

This selection confirms a big step forward for Danny who made his mark at the Junior Masters last season which earned him the third place in the England Junior team for the European Youth Championships in July and then selection for the Japan and China Senior Opens last month.

Under the captaincy of Steven Bailey, the Ormesby 1st team, consisting of Craig Bryant, Nigel Eckersley, Martyn Clarke, Andy Wilson and Damien Nicholls, did well to finish in third position in the league table after the first round of four matches on 23 and 24 September.

On 9 and 10 September Ormesby's 2nd team in Division 1 North finished in sixth place with 3 points from 4 matches, whilst Ormesby third finished fourth in Division 2 North with 4 points from 4 matches. Northfield, in the same division, finished one place ahead with 6 points.

Newcomers to the British League, Hartlepool Brierton, started well with 7 points from 4 matches played and are currently in second position.

In the Women's British League, the Ormesby team finished equal top of Division 2 on 8 points with Guernsey and Irish Ladies II, having won 3 and drawn 2 of the 5 matches played at Hereford on 30 September and 1 October.

Karen Shepherd was Ormesby's best player with 8 wins from 10 matches whilst Karina Lefevre with 5 wins from 8 matches, Stephanie Donnelly with 4 wins from 6 matches and Rachel Greener with 2 wins from 6 matches all made a significant contribution.

In the Junior British League, the Ormesby girls team did well to finish top of Division 1 at the end of the half season's fixtures at Stoke on 14 and 15 October. The mainstays of the team were Rachel Greener with 8 wins from 9 matches and Karina Lefevre with 7 wins from 9 matches. Katherine Lefevre made an important contribution with 3 wins from her 6 matches whilst Chloe Whyte did well to win a key match against the Ballina team.

Ormesby Junior A, who were without Danny Reed, finished fifth in the Boys Premier Division with Damien Nicholls winning 8 from his 10 matches.

Ormesby B finished fifth in Division 2B.

Hertfordshire by Ann Fereday

The Hertfordshire County Junior Ranking Trials were held on September 9th. Three of the top

boys were absent, so the results do not reflect our true strength. There were more entries this year though; just the top 10 are listed here.

Junior Boys (U18): 1 - Darius Atashroo, 2 - Jordan Harvey, 3 - James Selby, 4 - Ben Ong, 5 - Daniel Shine, 6- Luke Walsh, 7- Andrew Mcardle, 8- Ross Macniven, 9- Adam Parker, 10- Chris Selby. Cadet Boys (U15): 1 - Jordan Harvey, 2 - Ben Ong, 3 - Luke Walsh, 4 - Andrew Mcardle, 5 - Ross, 6 - Adam Parker Macniven, 7 - Chris Selby, 8 - Bowen Wang, 9 - David Fillary, 10 - Brent Hinshelwood. Junior Girls (U18): 1- Haylee Potts, 2- Tamsind Holland, 3- Jennifer Sims, 4 - Ameer Potts, 5 - Abigail Moore, 6 - Natasha Walsh, 8 - Katie Brill, 9 - Wenting Wang. Cadet Girls (U15): 1 - Haylee Potts, 2 - Tamsind Holland, 3 - Jennifer Sims, 4 - Natasha Walsh, 5 - Wenting Wang, 6 - Harriet Howat.

Only the best juniors get to play in the County team. Some of the others take part in friendly matches with neighbouring counties. Last season a junior team in one of these 'friendlies' beat Essex and Norfolk while a Cadet team beat Norfolk but lost to Essex. The Herts. player of the day was Andrew McArdle.

The Herts. junior coach is Nelson D'Lima. By profession he is a systems consultant engineer who has lived in Hertfordshire for 25 years. He qualified as a coach in April 2000, mostly playing and coaching in Dacorum. Now he is expanding his experience at STAGs and at county level. He says he finds it harder working with juniors but far more fulfilling. He feels a coach needs patience and a sense of humour. When time allows Nelson likes to attend coaching updates or go swimming.

Again this year, Haylee Potts is top of the lists for Cadet and Junior Girls. When she was 9 years old her dad, Garth, introduced her to table tennis. She has already had many successes including playing for England in the Under 13 Four Nations tournament held in Wales. Not only did she win her individual matches at this event but also the team competition with Mary Fuller. Haylee has played for the English Schools side in the 5 Nations tournament in Jersey. She trains regularly, then her dad takes her and sister Ameer to events on most weekends. Her ambition is to play for England at senior level. Good luck and best wishes to you Haylee. We will follow your progress and hope that one day you will achieve your goal.

ROUNDUP

COUNTY



PAUL DRINKHALL - SURREY

Northants by Dennis Millman

Chris Doran was the star performer in a Unison Masters that had superb play, fighting comebacks and tense finishes in abundance. But it was Doran who produced the only finish that really mattered - the one that took him onto the winner's rostrum.

Eight of the 15 matches went the full distance with all five of Dave Welsman's settled at the final stage. Only two encounters, both won by Andy Trott, ended in straight games. Greg Yarnall proved the victor in the two longest matches, while it was no surprise that Trott won the three shortest.

Perhaps the die was cast in the first series of games when Trott took the first two ends 11-5, 11-3, only for Doran to display his emerging talents to take the remaining three 11-7, 11-5, 11-5. On the adjacent table Welsman had a titanic struggle with Mark Nannery who, having taken the first end 15-13 and the third 12-10, led 5-4 in the fifth only for the former national title-holder to reel off seven points in a row. Trailing Richard Elliott by two games and 4-0 in the fourth end, Yarnall, last year's winner, used the time-out rule to advantage and eased home in the fifth, while Welsman beat Trott 11-9 in the decider, to make Trott's position desperate. Doran got the better of two deuce games to see

off Yarnall in four ends, while Elliott needed all five to edge out his Higham Band team-mate Nannery.

Next Doran took the first two games against Welsman and then led 4-0 in the third only to falter. Welsman squared the contest but Doran led all the way in the fifth, 5-2 at the changeover, 8-5 and 10-7. However saving four match points Welsman gained a third successive win and at this juncture Trott began his renaissance against Elliott.

Yarnall accounted for Nannery and Doran beat Elliott to stay in contention, but Trott, now in full flow, was merciless against Nannery while Yarnall inflicted a first defeat on Welsman 11-8 in the fifth.

With just three matches left, Welsman, Yarnall and Doran had all won three times, but Doran soon made his tally four, despite a third end lapse against Nannery. Now only Welsman could catch Doran but first he had to beat Elliott.

The Unity player led by two games to one but Elliott stood firm and squeezed through 11-8, 11-9. As a result Doran, England's no.4 cadet at the end of last season, had taken the title at his first attempt.

Simultaneously Yarnall and Trott met in a battle for second place and it was Trott who triumphed with a swift 11-7, 11-7, 11-1 verdict elevating

him to the runners-up position, while Yarnall had to settle for fourth.

A tremendous event with twists and turns at every stage produced a brand new champion in Doran, who duly received the Unison trophy from County Chairman Ken Marchant.

Northumberland by Pauline Long

Several of our local veterans had an early season taste of competitive play at the North Eastern Masters tournament held in Sunderland over the weekend of 2nd-3rd September. Unfortunately there were no local successes - Dave Godbold was on holiday and unable to defend his singles and doubles titles - but the tournament was greatly enjoyed by all that entered. Thankfully the entry was up on last year, but it still does not have the support that the other tournaments enjoy, presumably because of the travelling distances involved for many players.

The Butterfly Newcastle Grand Prix Tournament, held at Eldon Leisure Centre a fortnight later, produced no such problems, with England's number 2 Alex Perry (Devon) and Marcia Ma (Surrey) taking the main men's and women's singles titles respectively. Full results will, presumably, have been published elsewhere, but it is worth recording some of our local successes. Andrew Wilkinson won the men's restricted singles, and was also a losing semi-finalist in the main event, while Dave Godbold retained his veterans' title with a stunning victory over top veteran Abdul Wuraola (Surrey), Eddie Smith was runner-up in the Band 1 singles, while Dale Aitkenhead and Pauline Long were losing semi-finalists in the Men's Band 5 singles and the Women's Band 3 singles respectively.

The Board of Directors in charge of league and county affairs remains the same as last season, apart from the resignation of Jimmy Scope. The Northumberland League season commenced on 11th September with 58 teams in 5 divisions. Washington A, who won the Summer League Division 1 for the first time, will be hoping to retain their Winter League title. But much will depend on how often their top players are available. The week of 16th October was set aside for the first round of the Handicap Knockout Cup competition.

The senior and veteran county teams have again been entered in their respective divisions but, regrettably, there will be no junior team competing this season. Instead, they will be

Chris Doran was the star performer in a Unison Masters that had superb play, fighting comebacks and tense finishes.

entered in the Regional League and funded for selected tournaments from development funds. Best wishes to all players for a successful season.

Surrey by Chris Andrews

At the ITTF World Junior Circuit in Madeira, Darius Knight won the doubles with Paul Drinkhall in the U18 event. Following on from this Darius and Paul won the team event at the Madeira International Open in Funchal.

The Veterans' Six Nations event in Belfast saw Surrey's David Harding triumph in the over 50s doubles with Keith Fellows in an all England final against Brian Johns and Wayne Percival.

At the Liverpool Butterfly Grand Prix Wahab Adam was runner-up in Band 4. The Newcastle Grand Prix saw better results for Surrey with Marcia Ma and Abdul Wuraola winning the Women's Singles and Men's Band 1 respectively. Also Wahab was again runner-up in Band 4 and Abdul Wuraola was the Veterans' Singles runner-up. Due to junior international tournament commitments Darius Knight is now playing for York Gardens 1 in Division One (South).

Wing Yung Chan won the tournament at the Grant Solder Summer School 2006.

The results of the Surrey Grand Prix event held at Graham Spicer's on 22nd April were as follows:

Under 11 boys: Winner - Adam Hitchcock,

Runner-up - Scott Robinson Under 11 girls:

Winner - Chloe Salt, Runner-up - Sophie

Sothcott Under 13 boys: Winner - Ayman Al-

Sibassi, Runner-up - Michael Hitchcock Under 13

girls: Winner - Ashika Khera, Runner-up - Lydia

Regan Under 15 boys: Winner - Michael

Hitchcock, Runner-up - Aaron McKibbin

Junior dates for your diary

3/12/06: Regional Trials at London Progress (to be selected from Surrey Trials)

4/12/06: Regional Trials at London Progress (to be selected from Surrey Trials)

10/1/07: Sutton Junior Open tournament u13/u15 mixed at Sutton YC

21/1/07: London junior ranking zone event at Graham Spicer

9/2/07: Surrey Schools Pairs competition at Whitgift

3/3/07: LJTTTS final at Eastlea School

25/3/07: Sutton Junior Open tournament u13/u15 mixed at Sutton YC

1/4/07: Surrey Grand Prix at Graham Spicer

21/4/07: London junior ranking zone event at Graham Spicer

12/5/07: LJTTTS final at London Progress, Southall

26/5/07: Surrey Grand Prix Final

Contacts: Surrey trials:

Jane Barella 0208 240 6086

LJTTS finals: Len Pilford 0208 850 3910

Sutton junior tournaments: Martin Rogers 0208 647 4053

I am sure all of Surrey is saddened by the passing away of Daily Telegraph correspondent John Woodford, who was a previous editor of "Table Tennis News" and still wrote columns in this magazine up until his death.

Warwickshire by Caroline Williams

The Warwickshire Junior and Cadet Trials were held in Leamington Spa early in September. This was to identify those to represent Warwickshire at both cadet and junior levels in the County Championships, and also to select up to five to represent the county in three age groups, Under 11, Under 13 and Under 15, at the Regional Trials to be held shortly. This year there are no regional trials for the Under 18s.

For the second year running, Xiaoyang Ma won both the cadet and junior competitions. Still only 12, this youngster from Coventry will again be able to play for both the County Championships teams. However he is still not eligible to play nationally and so cannot progress to the Regional Trials. Birmingham's Jack Williamson, again second in the cadet trial, will again go to the Under 15 Regional Trials. Rugby players took third and fourth places with Matthew Outhwaite gaining an Under 13 nomination and Jack Randle an Under 15 one. Rajinder Davsi (Birmingham) and Leamington's Alistair Nicholson also will go to the Under 15 regionals. Seventh to ninth needed countback to split them, with Ian Anson (Birmingham) succeeding at Under 13 and Leamington's Philip Blowey and Lawrence Sweeney at Under 15 and Under 13 respectively. Nuneaton's Salman Khan came 10th and Ryan Oldham (Leamington) 11th but are outside the regional trials places for their age groups. Under 11 places went, however, to Jesse Kendrick Hill (Rugby), Luke Spencer (Leamington) and Akbal Rhazak (Nuneaton). The last two Under 13 places were won by Ryan Lines (Rugby) and Scott Delday (Leamington).

Three Under 13 girls took the top three places in the cadet girls competition, Sanika Karandikar (Birmingham), Jessica Burbeck (Nuneaton) and Holly Thompson (Leamington), followed by three

Under 15 girls, Charlotte Spencer (Leamington), Adele Fisher and Hannah Chetwynd (Nuneaton).

Two other Leamington girls also gained nomination, Hannah Saville for Under 15 and Elizabeth Hancock for Under 11.

The junior boys trial for places in the county team was won by Xiaoyang Ma, followed by three Birmingham boys, Alan Caffery, Jack Williamson and Ferhan Pektar. Edward Freeman from Leamington and Matthew Outhwaite from Rugby came fifth and sixth. The junior girls will be ranked with Nuneaton's Rachel Pilgrim as number 1 followed by the cadet girls in the order they finished in the cadet trials.

Yorkshire by Barry Snowden

Pudsey Table Tennis Club

One of the leading clubs in Yorkshire recently is Pudsey Table Tennis Club who have only been in existence as Pudsey for just over two years.

Granville Thornton founded the club as Bramley Ebenezer Table Tennis Club in 1970, and was elected first President at the A.G.M. in July 2002.

The club was formed to provide alternative recreational facilities for children, both from the church and the local community, and entered two teams into the local youth league in 1970 and officially entered the Leeds League in 1973 and the Bradford League in 1984. With the closure of the church in 2004 the club found a new home at the Yorkshire Bowling Club in Pudsey. As a result of the success of this move the club was renamed Pudsey Table Tennis Club at the A.G.M. in July 2005.

The clubhouse has a two table facility in the basement of the Bowling Club premises and after hard fought matches teams are often found sharing a relaxing drink in the bar area which also houses a snooker table.

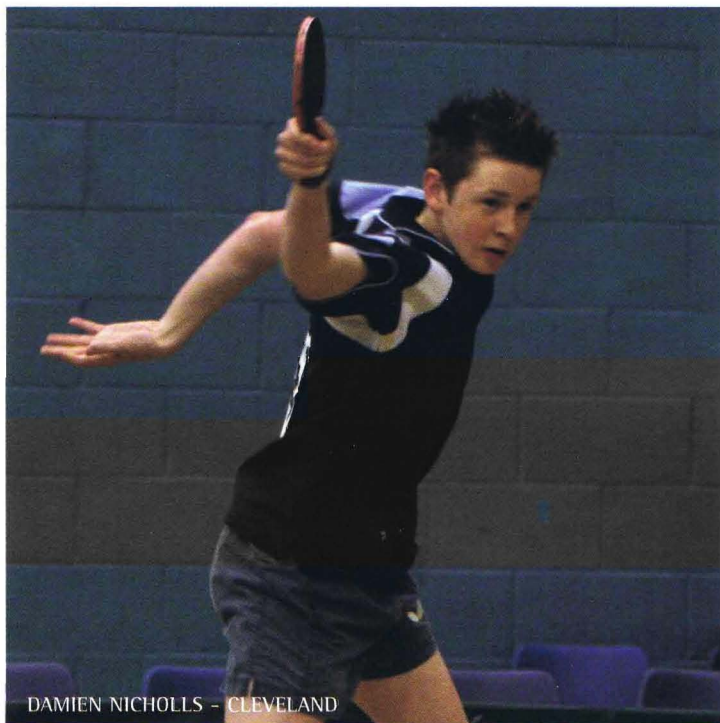
With an executive committee of Peter Thompson, Ray and Sandra Rider along with Thornton, Pudsey TTC has the potential to go from strength to strength.

Pudsey Table Tennis Club is now an Advanced Premier Club and has attained set standards in areas of club development, competition, management duty, facilities and other club activities.

They pride themselves in having a strong coaching structure with ETTA qualified coaches from level 1 upwards and their coaches are responsible for many of the coaching sessions run in Leeds schools, and the development of

ROUNDUP

COUNTY



DAMIEN NICHOLLS - CLEVELAND

players can be seen in the number of players who have gone on to achieve county honours and England representative honours.

The club has recently been awarded Clubmark status - a Sport England cross-sport scheme that recognises safe, effective child friendly sports clubs.

The club has an open membership policy and has a range of members whose ages run from 10-70, male and female from all sections of the community. We are a club who like to socialise with many tales of past functions and playing at a club with a bar is an added advantage!

The club is affiliated to the Leeds League and also competes in events run by the Yorkshire TTA and ETTA.

For this season 2006/7 they have 11 teams in the Leeds League with two mainly comprising of juniors, they also have a team of cadets competing in the National Cadet League at Wath on Dearne, and a team of juniors competing in the National Junior League at Sheffield. History is also made this year as Pudsey enters for the first time a team in the British League which is the premier club competition in the country.

The finals of all three Yorkshire club competitions took place recently at Dewsbury TTC with the senior, junior and veterans competitions all reaching their conclusion, and it was the home team Dewsbury Tog 24 who stole the honours as

they took two of the titles while Pudsey TTC, in their first season, had to be content with two runners-up awards.

The most competitive of finals was the junior event which was won by Helmsley TTC who recorded a fine 5-3 victory over Pudsey TTC. Although Pudsey had the star of the match in county second team player Chris Parker who scored a maximum, it was the all round team effort of Joe Wright, Edward Fambley and Chris Allott who achieved success as the two remaining Pudsey players, Andrew Holding and Danny Beech, were unable to get off the mark.

The senior event proved just as one sided as Stead joined Richard Lightowler and Darren Lindley to record a comprehensive 5-1 victory over Pudsey TTC. Pudsey never recovered from a first set reversal when county first team player Richard Smith surrendered a two game advantage to Lightowler, and despite a single win for Smith over Lindley neither of his team-mates, Simon Pugh or Phil Cawser, were able to get off the mark as the Dewsbury club took their second title of the night.

South Yorkshire by Robert Locksley

At the recently held South Yorkshire county cadet trials, Rotherham Scorpions' James Grayson emerged triumphant, with Louis Havenhand (Sheffield TTC) and Jamie Hudd - also of Scorpions - achieving team selection. Ten-year-

old Scott Hollowood (Scorpions) completes the line up as reserve.

In the junior section Richard Element (Wadsley Bridge/Scorpions) joins the pre-selected Matthew Dodds (Vulcan TTC) and Crookes TTC's Kim Daybell with Louis Havenhand as reserve.

In the Sheffield League the campaign has commenced with five divisions of 14 teams and a sixth division containing 16 teams. In Division 1, all eyes will be on the Stocksbridge Rugby Club as once again Andrew and Stephen Horsfield, together with defensive ace Trevor Williams and Bamsley's all-rounder Richard Shirt, attempt to win the championship for a sixth consecutive time.

In Division 2, Sheffield Wheelchairs Sports Club led by James Rawson, Arnie Chan and Stefan Trofan - the European Wheelchair gold medal winners in Jesolo, Italy in 2005, will be making efforts to join the top flight.

Sadly, Harold Judson (74), the long time serving secretary of the Public Works TTC, recently passed away. Harold, who taught his brother Cleve to play, competed at all levels in the Sheffield TTL and the Sheffield "Works" League for 50 years. His most successful season was in 1976 when the Public Works 'A' team triumphed in the division 4A championship, the knockout cup and Harold partnered by Pete Muscroft won the Wembley pairs competition. He was a Table Tennis stalwart and a gentleman of the old school who will be greatly missed by his family, friends and table tennis colleagues.



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DANIEL LOWE

Currently ranked: Number two Cadet Boys **Date of birth:** 16th May 93 **Style of play:** Right hand attacking player **Bat/rubber type:** Bryce and Bryce FX/ Michael Maze blade **Greatest TT achievement:** Winning Derby 4 Star **Favourite English player:** Andrew Rushton **Favourite international player:** Michael Maze **Favourite hobbies:** Cricket **Favourite actor/actress:** Jim Carey **Favourite television programme:** Desperate Housewives **Favourite music:** R&B **Table tennis ambitions:** Play Olympics 2012 **Weekly training schedule:** Every day **Favourite lesson at school:** P.E. **Favourite food:** Jacket potato **Favourite website:** Haven't got one **Favourite place to shop:** Rebel **What you want to do when older:** Psychologist **Favourite film:** Forest Gump **Best piece of advice given to you by Peter Charters:** Always try your hardest, you never know who is watching

PLAYER RANKINGS 2006/2007

TOP 25 SENIOR MEN

Ranking	Player
01	DRINKHALL, Paul (CV.)
02	PERRY, Alex (DV.)
03	RUSHTON, Andrew (LA.)
04	BAGGALEY, Andrew (BU.)
05	KNIGHT, Darius (SY.)
06	HERBERT, Gareth (BK.)
07	YOUNG, Terry (BK.)
08	YARNALL, Tim (NP.)
09	MEADS, David (DU.)
10	TRUMPAUSKAS Lawrence(E.)
11	HOLLAND, John J (DY) (E.)
12	BRYANT, Craig (DV.)
13	REED, Daniel (CV.)
14	BARHAM, Dale (CA.)
15	EVANS, Gavin (NG.)
16	SMITH, Mark Richard (Y.)
17	WURAOLA, Abdul (SY.)
18	MARSDEN, Michael (DU.)
19	DOLDER, Kevin (LA.)
20	VENNER, Ritchie (SX.)
21	ECKERSLEY, Nigel (SX.)
22	MARPLES, Shaun (DY.)
23	ROGERS, Chris (L.E.)
24	PAPANTONIOU, Costas (MI.)
25	ECKERSLEY, Nigel (SX.)

TOP 5 JUNIOR BOYS

Ranking	Player
01	DRINKHALL, Paul (CV.)
02	KNIGHT, Darius (SY.)
03	REED, Daniel (CV.)
04	MEADS, David (DU.)
05	EVANS, Gavin (BU.)

TOP 5 CADET BOYS

Ranking	Player
01	EVANS, Gavin (BU.)
02	PITCHFORD, Liam (DY.)
03	MCBEATH, David (HA.)
04	DAYBELL, Kim (YS.)
05	LOWE, Daniel (DY.)

TOP 5 UNDER 13 BOYS

Ranking	Player
01	GRAY, Lewis (K.)
02	MITCHELL, Edward (BU.)
03	WALKER, Sam (NG.)
04	BOULT, Joshua (CH.)
05	HO, Ping (MI.)

TOP 5 VETERAN MEN

Ranking	Player
01	WURAOLA, Abdul (SY.)
02	ECKERSLEY, Nigel (SX.)
03	VENNER, Ritchie (SX.)
04	KENNEDY, Joe (K) (E.)
05	GILES, Paul (DV.)

TOP 25 SENIOR WOMEN

Ranking	Player
01	PARKER, Joanna (SY.)
02	SIBLEY, Kelly (WA.)
03	LOWER, Helen (ST.)
04	BAWDEN, Natalie (E.)
05	WALKER, Georgina (DY.)
06	EMBLING, Abigail (E.)
07	REYNOLDS, Lindsey (LA.)
08	SPINK, Lauren (NK.)
09	MA, Marcia (SY.)
10	ROBERTS, Joanna (Y.)
11	KEAST, Lesley (LI.)
12	WILSON, Naomi (SO.)
13	SMITH, Karen (L.E.)
14	RADFORD, Lisa (DV.)
15	CHAPMAN, Gemma (BK.)
16	WHITE, Nicola (Y.)
17	RAINTON, Rosemary (SX.)
18	BALDI, Andrea (YS.)
19	COHEN, Michele (SG.)
20	HOWARD, Alice (CH.)
21	BRISTOW, Angie (K.)
22	WANG, Lucy (E.)
23	YARNLEY, Gemma (K.)
24	NARENDRAN, Aparna (MI.)
25	HARPER, Sandra (BD.)

TOP 5 JUNIOR GIRLS

Ranking	Player
01	WRIGHT, Melissa (YS.)
02	FULLER, Mary (Y.)
03	TRAVIS, Martha (CO.)
04	LEFEVRE, Karina (CV.)
05	BAKER, Rachel (LA.)

TOP 5 CADET GIRLS

Ranking	Player
01	SPRINGTHORPE, Lauren (LI.)
02	WANG, Sarra (E.)
03	VICKERS, Emma (DY.)
04	HALLOWES, Caroline (CH.)
05	FARQUHAR, Melanie (BK.)

TOP 5 UNDER 13 GIRLS

Ranking	Player
01	BATES, Emily (LI.)
02	DAVIDSON, Lucy (DY.)
03	KING, Yolanda (SX.)
04	FURNIVAL, Chelsea (SX.)
05	WHYTE, Chloe (CV.)

TOP 5 VETERAN WOMEN

Ranking	Player
01	HUANG, Shu (K.)
02	MA, Marcia (SY.)
03	SMITH, Karen (L.E.)
04	HARPER, Sandra (BD.)
05	JOHNS, Jan (CH.)



For the full list of player rankings go to our website

www.etta.co.uk



DATES

for your diary

Table Tennis events
for November 2006



Saturday 4th: **Senior:** Nottingham Butterfly Grand Prix • **Veteran:** Veterans' County Premier 1st Weekend

Sunday 5th: **Senior:** Nottingham Butterfly Grand Prix • **Veteran:** Veterans' County Premier 1st Weekend

Saturday 11th: **Senior:** County Premier 1st Weekend • **Veteran:** Veterans' British League 1st Weekend and Veterans' National League 1st Weekend

Sunday 12th: **Senior:** County Premier 1st Weekend • **Veteran:** Veterans' British League 1st Weekend and Veterans' National League 1st Weekend



Saturday 18th: **Senior:** British League Premier 2nd Weekend • **Other:** Youth Development Squad Regional Training

Sunday 19th: **Senior:** British League Premier 2nd Weekend • **Other:** Youth Development Squad Regional Training

Saturday 25th: **Cadet:** County Championships • **Junior:** County Championships **Senior:** County Championships • **Veteran:** County Championships

Sunday 26th: **Other:** Cirencester U13 and U15 Championships and Stiga 3 Star Grand Prix Accrington



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