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Venue: Hertfordshire Sports Village, Hatfield

18-20th March 2016



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Sandra Deaton **Chairman, Table Tennis England**

I am delighted to welcome you to Hertfordshire Sports Village for the PG Mutual National Championships 2016. I hope everyone enjoys participating in and watching a great weekend of table tennis.

This Championship is 57 years old, yet we have many firsts and welcome changes this year. We have looked at the whole of our competition programme, not just what we deliver but how we deliver it. We cannot make progress by standing still.

This year we are providing a platform for our elite athletes to challenge each other in top-class competition surroundings. It is by getting this competition pathway right at home that we can help provide the best preparation for the big international challenges ahead.

We also welcome PG Mutual, the specialist income protection provider, as our title sponsors. We hope this is the beginning of a fruitful relationship for PG Mutual and Table Tennis England.

The latter stages of the event from March 18-20 will be televised live on ITV4, giving both the sport and PG Mutual national exposure. We are delighted that this will bring table tennis into the homes of our members, players and people who might be introduced to the game at this level for the first time.

We appreciate the work our commercial partners at Female Sports Group and production company Artifex Media have done to make this possible.

We are proud that these Championships have such a line-up of our top players and I am honoured to be able to pay tribute to their recent achievements and to wish them much success for the coming months.

For the first time, we are able to welcome our talented athletes who have just been selected for the GB squad to participate in the Paralympics in Rio. We have two athletes who are world No 1 in their class and three other players in the top five in the world. They will be competing this weekend.

Last year, in this programme I wrote about the pride I felt when I saw all six podium places occupied by England in



the 2014 Commonwealth Games mixed doubles. I doubted then that that feeling would be equalled easily. However, earlier this month I watched, as did so many of you here, our three English Leopards – Paul Drinkhall, Liam Pitchford and Sam Walker – take on the best at the Perfect World Team Table Tennis Championships in Malaysia and secure bronze medals.

Congratulations, we are so proud of your achievements and delighted that Paul, Liam and Sam are here this weekend to test themselves again – this time against each other.

Finally, my thanks to everyone who has helped make this event possible – our sponsors PG Mutual and our equipment providers, TeesSport; our official sports drink iPro Sport; our valued officials and volunteers, who give their time and expertise freely; our players, their coaches, families and supporters; visitors to this sell-out event and viewers at home; ITV4 for seizing the opportunity to promote table tennis to a television audience; Hertfordshire Sports Village for their assistance in staging this event; and to Table Tennis England staff, for their professional approach and for always being prepared to go that extra mile.

This is an exciting time. Our players are proving able to compete with the best in the world; television is recognising the potential of table tennis as a sport worthy of coverage; commercial sponsorship is now a reality; and we are seeing green shoots of development in table tennis across all ages and abilities.

I feel we have turned a corner and this is a new beginning for table tennis in England.



At PG Mutual we are dedicated to supporting the lifestyle of families and Table Tennis is a sport which can be played by all the family, so it's a very good fit for us.

Our support for the National Championships shows what you can achieve through sport. From a recreational sport which you might pick up on holiday, with hard work, dedication and the right support, you can achieve and compete at the top level.

As an average (very average!) club

Mike Perry **CEO, PG Mutual**

player I'm really looking forward to watching the most talented players in England competing over the three days and would like to thank Table Tennis England for organising such a great event.

I hope you enjoy your time at the PG Mutual National Championships and thank you for your support.



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HM The Queen

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Photos: Alan Man, Michael Loveder, ITTF

Tournament organisation

Referee: Steve Smith

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Umpire Manager: Karen Tonge MBE

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Technical Operations Manager: Chris Newton

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Event Director: Neil McGuigan

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Communications Manager: Paul Stimpson

Digital Manager: Jamie Gordon

Event Photographer: Alan Man

Photography and filming

By purchasing a ticket, all spectators have agreed that they may appear in event photographs and/or TV broadcasting. Should anyone feel uncomfortable about this, or wish to report any concerns, please speak to your nearest volunteer or staff member.

Please note, flash photography is prohibited.

Live streaming of this event via Periscope or similar platforms is strictly prohibited. Anyone found doing so may be asked to leave the venue.

Order of play

Friday March 18

1pm	Men's Team semi-finals; Under-21 Men's Singles round 1
2.45pm	Under-21 Women's Singles round 1
3pm	Under-21 Men's Singles round 1
3.15pm	Under-21 Women's Singles round 1
4pm	Under-21 Men's Singles round 2
4.35pm	Men's Team final
6.30pm	Men's Singles round 1
7.15pm	Men's Singles round 1
8pm	Men's Doubles round 1

Saturday March 19

10am	Mixed Doubles round 1
10.35am	Mixed Doubles round 2
11.10am	Women's Doubles round 1; Men's Doubles round 2
11.45am	Under-21 Men's Singles quarter-finals; Under-21 Women's Singles quarter-finals
12.30pm	Men's Singles round 2; Women's Singles round 1
1.15pm	Men's Singles round 2; Women's Singles round 1
2.15pm	Under-21 Men's Singles semi-finals; Under-21 Women's Singles semi-finals
3.15pm	Men's Doubles semi-finals; Women's Doubles semi-finals
4pm	Para Men's class 3-5 event starts; Para Women's class 3-5 event starts
4.15pm	Men's Singles quarter-finals (2)
5pm	Women's Singles quarter-finals (2)
5.45pm	Men's Singles quarter-finals (2)
	Para Men's class 6-8 and class 9-10 events start
6.30pm	Women's Singles quarter-finals (2)
7.30pm	Under-21 Men's Singles final; Under-21 Women's Singles final

Sunday March 20

9.15am	Mixed Doubles semi-final 1
9.45am	Mixed Doubles semi-final 2
10.30am	Men's Singles semi-final 1
11.15am	Women's Singles semi-final 1
12pm	Men's Singles semi-final 2
12.45pm	Women's Singles semi-final 2
1.45pm	Mixed Doubles final
2.15pm	Women's Doubles final
3.10pm	Men's Doubles final
4pm	Women's Singles final
5pm	Men's Singles final

Please note, exact times may vary. See draw pages in this programme for full details

The top seeds



Paul Drinkhall

Aged 26, from Loftus
Seeded: 1

A former European junior champion and part of Team GB for London 2012, Paul has won the national men's singles title four times. A World Team Championships bronze medallist this month, he was Commonwealth Games mixed doubles gold medallist in 2014



Liam Pitchford

22, Chesterfield
Seeded: 2

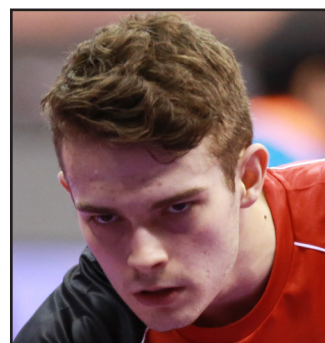
Liam has won the Men's Singles title in each of the last three years. A World Team Championships bronze medallist this month and a Team GB member from London 2012, Liam has five Commonwealth Games medals. He plays in the Bundesliga in Germany



Andrew Baggaley

33, Milton Keynes
Seeded: 3

London Olympian Andrew has won the national Men's Singles title on three occasions. He also has a total of six Commonwealth Games medals, including team gold from Manchester 2002. In the past two years, Andrew has won the World Championships of Ping Pong



Sam Walker

20, Worksop
Seeded: 4

Still only 20, Sam Walker has made great strides up the world rankings and was part of the bronze medal-winning team at the World Team Championships in Malaysia earlier this month alongside Paul and Liam. He is based in Germany, where he plays in the Bundesliga

The rest of the field



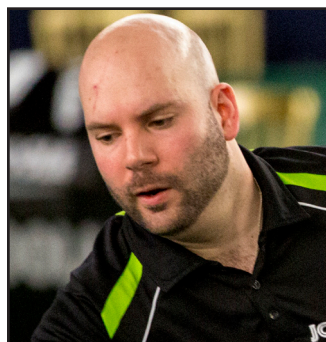
Helshan Weerasinghe

19, Tonbridge
Another member of the England team which won silver at last year's Commonwealth Championships, Helshan also represented England at the World Junior Championships



Michael O'Driscoll

44, Shepreth
England international Mike is a Commonwealth Championships gold medallist and has been national veteran men's singles champion in each of the past two seasons



Craig Bryant

30, Crawley
A former British Universities champion, Craig also helped England to team silver at the 2004 Commonwealth Championships in Kuala Lumpur



Adam Nutland

22, Kidderminster
A serial winner of tournaments on the domestic circuit. As well as the men's singles, Adam will also feature in the team event, for Harlow club BATTs



Mathew Ware

25, Poole



Lorestas Trumpauskas

46, Bermondsey



Danny Lawrence

18, Tonbridge



Sam Mabey

18, Willoughby Waterleys



Alex Ramsden

15, Northampton

Meet the players – Men's Singles



David McBeath
24, Southampton
Seeded: 5
David led England to team silver at the Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships in India last year, as well as reaching the last 16 of the singles, plus the mixed doubles quarter-finals. His sportsmanship also earned him the tournament's Fair Play Trophy



Danny Reed
26, Hutton Rudby
Seeded: 6
Twice a men's doubles national champion with Chris Doran, Danny was part of England's memorable mixed doubles podium clean sweep at the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, winning bronze alongside Kelly Sibley

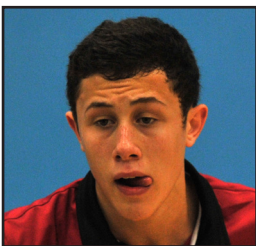


Chris Doran
24, Cogenhoe
Seeded: 7
Chris has one men's doubles national title under his belt and is the reigning Grand Prix series champion. He reached the quarter-finals of the World Championships of Ping Pong this year



Tom Jarvis
16, Skegness
Seeded: 8
Still a Junior, Tom helped the England Senior team to win silver at the Commonwealth Championships last year. He won the cadet singles at the Spanish Youth Open in 2014

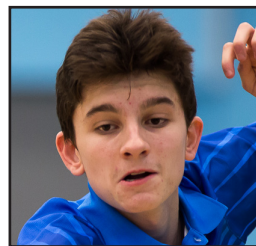
Please note: The seedings for this tournament are based on the Table Tennis England rankings list for February 2016



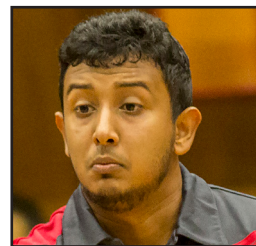
Adam Harrison
19, Grantham



Alim Hirji
26, Totteridge



Luke Savill
16, Maidstone



Emran Hussain
24, Poplar



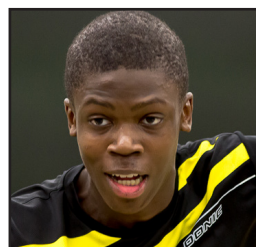
George Downing
20, Bournemouth



Kim Daybell
23, Sheffield



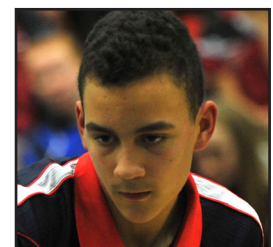
Steve Beerling
33, Hertford



Gabriel Achampong
18, Edgware



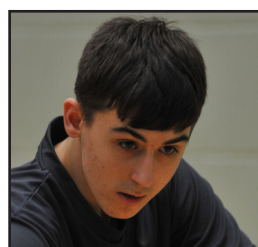
Liam McTiernan
20, Reading



Marcus Giles
17, Kingston-upon-Thames



Josh Bennett
16, Eastbourne



Mitchell Jones
18, Marston Moretaine



Matthew Leete
16, Grantham



Jack Bennett
18, Eastbourne



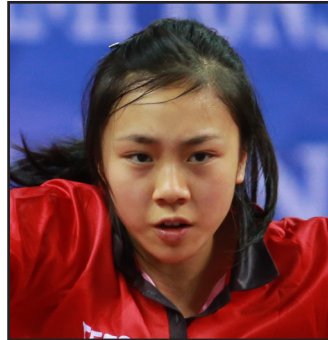
Alec Ward
16, Middlesbrough

The top seeds



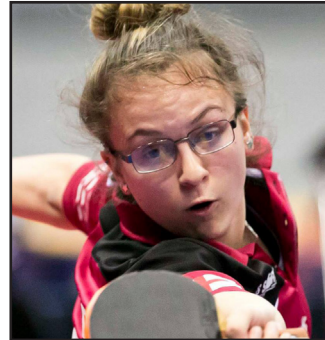
Kelly Sibley

Aged 27, from Leamington
Seeded: 1
The defending champion has five national singles titles to her name – only two women have more. An England mainstay, she represented Team GB at London 2012 and the European Games last year and won mixed doubles bronze at the 2014 Commonwealth Games



Tin-Tin Ho

Age 17, from Paddington
Seeded: 2
Tin-Tin has two mixed doubles and two under-21 singles titles in the bag and has represented England with distinction at world and European level. She won mixed doubles silver at the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, alongside Liam Pitchford



Maria Tsaptsinos

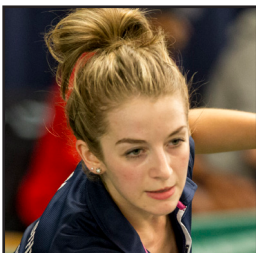
Age 18, from Reading
Seeded: 3
Formerly under-21 women’s singles national champion, Maria last year won her first senior title - the women’s doubles with Tin-Tin Ho. She represented England at last year’s World Junior Championships and is now also a senior England international



Hannah Hicks

Age 24, from Leckford
Seeded: 4
Another former under-21 women’s singles champion, Hannah is a seasoned England international, featuring at the last two Commonwealth Games in Delhi and Glasgow

The rest of the field



Karina Le Fevre
22, Stockton-on-Tees



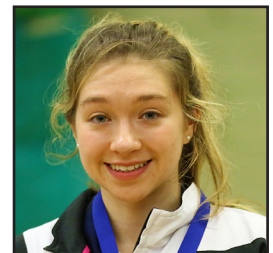
Emma Vickers
24, Derby



Lois Peake
19, Chichester



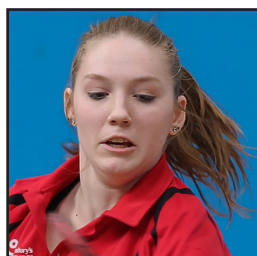
Emily Bolton
17, Askam-in-Furness



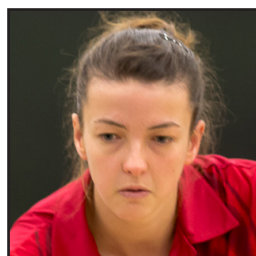
Emma Torkington
19, Lindfield



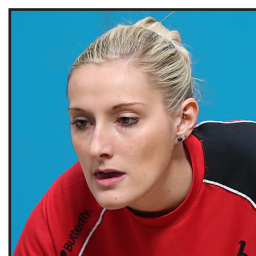
Kate Cheer
15, Crawley



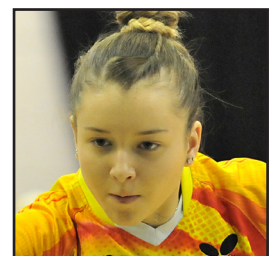
Evie Collier
21, Brentwood



Emma Tovey
21, Gravesend



Sophie Neil
22, Nottingham



Denise Payet
15, Enfield



Kate Hughes
33, Droitwich

Have you visited our engagement zone?

New to table tennis and fancy having a go?
Want to find out how table tennis can improve your health?
Come and visit our engagement zone!



Meet the players – Para competition

Men's Class 3-5



Kevin Plowman (class 3)
Aged 55, from Halifax



Nicko Anderson (class 5)
20, Northolt



Daniel Bullen (class 5)
18, St Neots

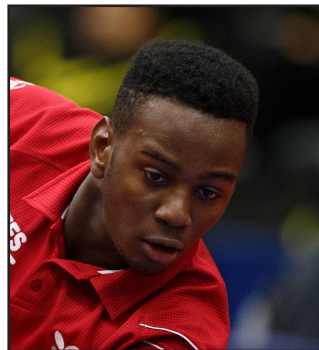


Jack Hunter-Spivey (class 5)
20, Liverpool

Men's Class 9-10



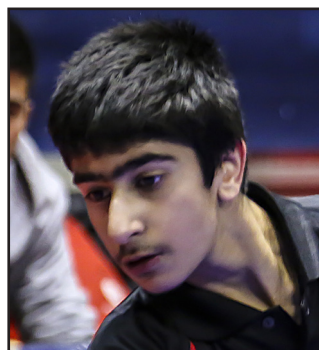
Craig Allen (class 9)
21, Bromsgrove



Ashley Facey Thompson (cl 9)
21, Stratford

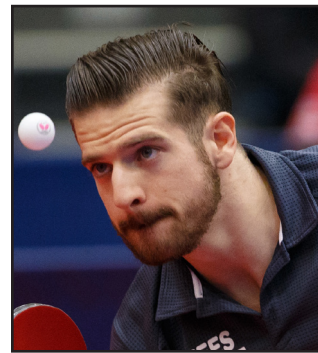


Kim Daybell (class 10)
23, Sheffield

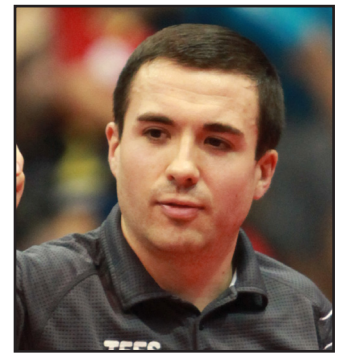


Shae Thakker (class 10)
12, Denham

Men's Class 6-8



David Wetherill (class 6)
26, Torpoint



Will Bayley (class 7)
28, Tunbridge Wells

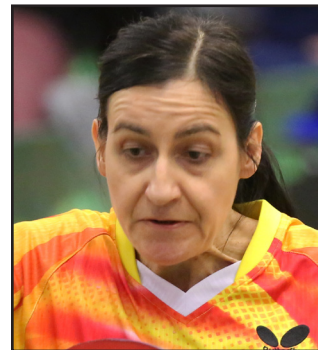


Aaron McKibbin (class 8)
24, London

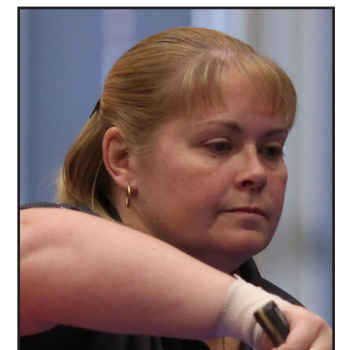


Ross Wilson (class 8)
20, Minster

Women's Class 3-5



Jane Campbell (class 3)
47, London



Sue Gilroy (class 4)
43, Barnsley



Megan Shackleton (class 4)
16, Todmorden

A note on classifications:
Classes 1-5 are for physical impairment (sitting), class 1 being the most severely affected and class 5 having the most physical functionality.
Classes 6-10 are for physical impairment (standing), class 6 being the most severe and class 10 the least. These are set by the International Paralympic Committee.

It's a friendly rivalry for Pitchford and Drinkhall



They've inspired England to success on the highest stage, travelled the globe together to compete in World Tour events, won doubles titles as a pair and they are great friends. But for a brief period every year, all that goes on hold as Paul Drinkhall and Liam Pitchford contest the Men's Singles title at the National Championships.

The pair have met each other in the last four singles finals and, with due respect to the rest of the field, the smart money would be on the top two seeds again facing off in the final match of these championships on Sunday.

If they do, then expect a no-holds-barred effort from both men – Pitchford to hold on to the trophy he has taken home in each of the last three years and Drinkhall to clinch a fifth national title and a first since 2012.

Afterwards, they will shake hands and resume their friendship, with shared goals of clinching a place at the Rio Olympics this summer and winning more medals with England after recent Commonwealth Games and World Team Championships success.

"We get on well and we see that when we're on the table, whether we're against each other or not," says Drinkhall, who at 26 is four years Pitchford's senior. "We're both winners and we both know how the other one is feeling if we win or lose.

"It's a good partnership. When we play at the Nationals it will be competitive but at the end of the day when it's finished, we'll all move on and try to qualify for the Olympics.

"We both want to win the Nationals but if we both qualify for Rio – and we might even get a team place there as well as singles – that's the target for this year. Whoever wins the Nationals, we'll quickly move on to the rest of the season."

Pitchford adds: "Off the court, we're really good friends. We don't see each other that often but when we get a chance to get together, we get on well.

"We both want to win when we play each other, but it's just a game of table tennis and we're friends afterwards."

Both players believe their friendship has also served

England well, Commonwealth Games team silver in Glasgow 2014 having been backed up by the sensational bronze at the World Team Championships in Malaysia, alongside Sam Walker, this month.

"That's probably one of the main reasons we played so well in Malaysia – the team spirit was probably the best of any team out there," said Pitchford.

Drinkhall added: "We just came together as a team. We all knew we were there or thereabouts with our form and everything just seemed to go in our favour – and we took our chance.

"Liam played some of his best table tennis and Sam played some of his. Against Poland, I played good table tennis but I was really the one who didn't get to a peak. Saying that, I managed to get the win against France (to put England into the semi-finals).

"Having three players, in a strange way, helped us. Normally you think it would be better with a five-man





Double act: Paul and Liam in action in last year's Men's Doubles final (left) and together at the Worlds in Malaysia this month (right). Below: the two of them have won the Guernsey Trophy for the Men's Singles seven times between them



squad and a bigger bench but we all grabbed our chance and it's a crazy achievement. Not many European teams have achieved that."

Neither man has had much time to rest after their exertions in Malaysia – Drinkhall was back in the UK for less than three hours before flying to Germany for a photoshoot with sponsor Tibhar and both have played for their clubs in the French League (Drinkhall) and the German Bundesliga (Pitchford). But, not surprisingly, they arrive at the PG Mutual National Championships in great heart.

As the man in possession of the Guernsey Trophy – awarded to the Men's Singles champion – Pitchford is the one to beat.

"It's not as important as winning the medal at the Worlds, but it's the biggest English tournament and I've won it three times in a row, so I want to make it four," he said.

"I can't really complain about how I'm playing and I'm always confident, but you never know who's going to play well.

"You've got to get yourself up from the first match and when it comes to the later stages hopefully I'll still be playing and get a chance to play on TV."

You might think that last year's victory was the most difficult as he came from 3-0 down to Drinkhall to triumph in the final.

But he said: "I would say the first one (in 2013) was probably the hardest, getting over the finish line to win it for the first time wasn't easy."

On last year's final, Drinkhall said: "Last year it was mine to win but Liam dug deep and managed to come through

and win again. It's another year and we've had a lot of table tennis since then.

"It's a competition I'm capable of winning, I really want to win and I'll be putting everything into it. It's something I definitely want to win again and be in the record books. Cookie (England's Performance Coach Alan Cooke) has got six and Des (Desmond Douglas) has got 11 and I'd like to be up there. But I go into every tournament trying to win.

"To say you're national champion, I'd like to be able to say that again.

"It's on the day. Me and Liam are big favourites but you've got four or five who on their day can go out and win the tournament. But if I go there and have my best day, there's a good chance I can win it."

As for the doubles, who would bet against the top seeds making it four in a row?

"Me and Paul go out there as favourites and we've proved in the tournaments we've played, especially the Swedish Open when we reached the semi-finals, that we're a really good doubles pair," said Pitchford. "We're quietly confident we can retain it."

If they do get to the finals, they will of course appear on live TV, and they both realise how important regular TV exposure is for the development of the sport.

"It's great for English table tennis and hopefully people will tune in and see some great matches and we'll get some new fans," said Pitchford.

If the final lives up to the quality Drinkhall and Pitchford have produced as team-mates, as a doubles pair and individually in recent times, those fans will only want more.

PAUL STIMPSON



Busy time: Kelly Sibley pictured at the Worlds and with the Nationals trophy last year (below left), will be running the London Marathon (below centre) next month. Below right: With RunTeamFlo in 2014

Elite sportspeople often talk about ‘doing the hard yards’ or ‘going the extra mile’ in their search for a winning edge – but in Kelly Sibley’s case that can be taken more literally than most.

Having recently helped England Leopards women’s team to 33rd place at the World Team Championships, winning nine of her 11 matches in the tournament, another sporting landmark is on the horizon for Sibley after the PG Mutual National Championships.

The England No 1 is tackling this year’s London Marathon, not as part of her normal training regime but for a special and personal cause. She will be raising money for Cancer Research UK, inspired by her five-year-old niece Flo, who was diagnosed with leukaemia when she was three and is now fighting back against the disease.

Sibley has tackled the Great Birmingham Run half-marathon in each of the past two years, raising an incredible £26,500 through JustGiving alongside a group of family and friends called RunTeamFlo.

Not that she is relishing doubling the distance when she pounds the streets of the capital on April 24.

“It’s coming up a bit too quickly for my liking,” admitted the 27-year-old from Leamington Spa. “Obviously my main goals have been the Worlds and the Nationals.

“I’m not doing the marathon for a time, I just want to get through it even if it takes me five or six hours. I’m doing it to raise money and awareness for cancer research, which is close to my heart.

“I’m going to try to enjoy it, if that’s possible, and count down the miles. And once I’ve done it, I’ll hopefully never have to do it again!”

First, Sibley has the defence of her national women’s singles title at the front of her mind, having defeated Tin-Tin Ho in last year’s final to seal the fifth singles title of her career. That moved her up to joint third on the all-time list, behind Mary Wright on six and Jill Parker (Hammersley) on seven – and both great champions will be at Hatfield to see whether Sibley can add to her haul.

“Everybody wants to be national champion in whatever sport they compete in,” said Sibley. “Even though I’ve won it before, I’m still hungrier than ever to retain my title and go on to win more.

“I didn’t realise until last year that having five titles put me joint third on the all-time list, so now I want to get the sixth and get into second place and keep going.

“I’m just going to focus on one match at a time and hopefully I can continue my positive form and confidence from the Worlds.”

Sibley was the undisputed leader of the team, which also featured Ho and Karina Le Fevre, as England won group matches against Turkey, Belgium, New Zealand and Canada, before losing to top seeds Serbia.

That put them into a match against Puerto Rico in the first round of positional play-offs, which unfortunately England lost despite Sibley’s two victories, including a standout win over world No 100 Adriana Diaz.

Sibley’s results moved her up from No 174 to No 168 in the world rankings and put right what she described as a below-par display at the Europeans earlier this season.

“From a personal point of view, I was quite happy with my performances and how I played at the Worlds,” said

London calling, but first Kelly's eyeing a sixth title



If you would like to donate to
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www.justgiving.com/RunTeamFlo/

Sibley. "I said before the event that I was a bit disappointed with the Europeans but I think I turned that around and I've done pretty well.

"I had a good couple of wins, especially beating the girl from Puerto Rico, who's top 100, but I'm disappointed we couldn't carry on through the tournament and challenge for that promotion place. We knew it was going to be tough but as a team we all fought really hard and gave it our best and couldn't do any more than we did."

Sibley was also thrilled by the bronze medal-winning performance of Liam Pitchford, Paul Drinkhall and Sam Walker [covered elsewhere in this programme].

She said: "It's been unbelievable. They deserve it because they've put in all the hard work but it's absolutely amazing.

"To be there and watch it and celebrate with them was great, especially after the France match. For Paul to take it 13-11 was fantastic. It was nerve-wracking but so exciting. I could see (Table Tennis England Chairman, Chief Executive and Head of Talent & Performance) Sandra, Sara, Simon and everyone else looking a little bit white at that stage!"

Now it's back to battling on the home front, and 2014 Commonwealth Games mixed doubles bronze medallist Sibley is thrilled that the latter stages of these championships will be televised live on ITV4.

"I think it's great we've got live TV," she said. "I think

we've had highlights before but we haven't been on live. It's fantastic and shows table tennis is going in the right direction."

She will have no nerves about performing in front of the cameras, having competed at the Commonwealth Games and at the Olympics – but she is worried about having tempted fate, after she teased Pitchford on social media about over-reaching for a shot and ending up on his backside in front of the cameras at the Worlds.

"I think I've jinxed it!" she joked, "but if it happens to me, it happens – and I'm sure Liam will be the first to have some banter with me. If I fall over but win the title, I'll take that."

There will be one very excited little lady if Sibley does reach the final – her niece Flo.

"Hopefully if I reach the final, she can watch Auntie Kelly on the TV, and she's very excited about that," said Sibley.

Flo will also be waiting in London to greet Auntie Kelly at the end of the marathon, and Sibley is amazed at how much money her efforts have raised.

She said: "People are ridiculously generous and I can't thank everybody enough. Our target was £2,500 and I think we're now on more than £26,000.

"Flo is great, she's in her first year at school now. She's still got hospital treatment every week. Hopefully at the moment, things are looking positive. We'll know more in the summer and fingers crossed things will be brighter.

"She'll be down there in her pink tutu waiting for me at the finish, which is quite nice – it's a reminder why I'm doing it and I'm sure there will be a few tears."

PAUL STIMPSON

THE WORLD is not enough

Will's got Paralympic glory in his sights too

Winner of bronze and silver medals at London 2012, Will Bayley readily admits a different colour dominates his horizon four years later.

The world No 1 and reigning Class 7 world champion is determined to complete the set by striking gold at the Rio Paralympics in September.

"I think I would be a bit cowardly to say it's not my dream to win the gold in Rio, because it is my goal," said the 28-year-old from Tunbridge Wells.

"It's definitely the focus of everything – I've got it on the calendar and I'm just ticking off the days.

"But I've got three or four tournaments before the big one and I also have to focus day to day. It's a long way off and I have to make sure I give my best at each session so that I'll be ready."

Having been named in the Paralympics GB team, Rio 2016 will be Bayley's third Games. And he believes his previous experience, allied to his ability, means he is now ready to win the big one.

"Beijing was fantastic," he said. "I was quite young and it was a great experience for me and amazing to play there.

"The noise was one thing that really hit me – it was extremely loud and totally different to every competition we'd played before. It was special.

"I learned a lot in terms of dealing with the pressure of the build-up, which again is like no other tournament – it's a long build-up and everyone knows you're there and that you're playing in the Paralympics, whereas Joe Public don't normally know about the other tournaments.

"To play London 2012 was a spectacular couple of weeks and a real pleasure to play in front of my home fans. To get to the final was special, though I was disappointed not to win it because on paper the semi-final was the hardest match. But I'd felt I'd done myself proud."

That semi-final saw Bayley beat Ukrainian Maxym Nikolenko, before he lost in the gold medal match to Jochen Wollmert of Germany, who won 3-1 (11-8, 4-11, 11-5, 11-4). Bayley later got a measure of revenge, beating Wollmert in the team event as he, Ross Wilson and Aaron McKibbin won the bronze for Britain.

Bayley expects Nikolenko and Wollmert to be among the major threats in Rio, along with another Ukrainian,

Mykhaylo Popov, and two Chinese, Shuo Yan and Keli Liao.

"There's a lot of players who also think they can win it but if you go by the last five majors, the two Ukrainians, Wollmert and the two Chinese players are the strongest. But there are a lot of dangerous players – you have to be in the top 14 to qualify, so any of us can beat each other, it's quite open.

"I go into every competition trying to win it and I've got the experience and all-round game to make myself very difficult to beat in Rio. I'm looking forward to the challenge."

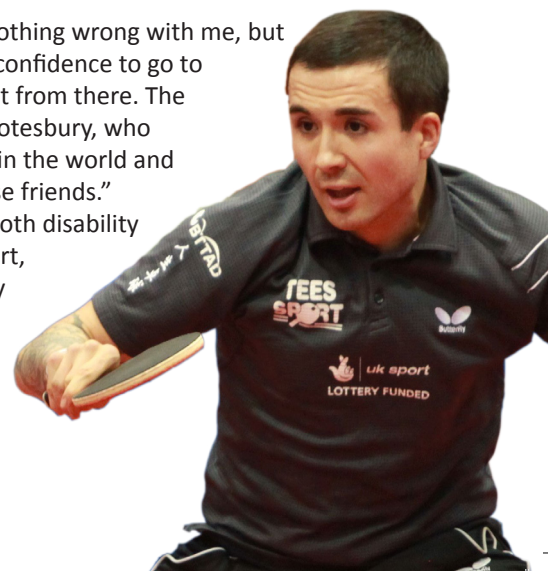
Bayley, who was born with a condition called arthrogryposis, which affects his muscle growth in all four limbs, had sporty upbringing and represented his school, Beacon Community College, in several sports. But it was while representing his county's able-bodied table tennis team that he started on the path to a Paralympic future.

"My dad was a football manager and my older brother was a good footballer, so I was always pushed in sport and always had a belief I would be good at it because of my family," he said.

"I was playing for the able-bodied county table tennis team and there was a player on the opposing side with cerebral palsy (CP). He said I could get to the Paralympics and that I should go to a talent camp and see what my standard was like.

"I told him I had nothing wrong with me, but eventually I got the confidence to go to the camp and it went from there. The CP player was Joe Stotesbury, who was a top-20 player in the world and is still one of my close friends."

Having played in both disability and able-bodied sport, Bayley is also acutely aware of the impact the Paralympics has in raising both the profile and perception



World Champion Will Bayley



of disability sport, particularly in cementing the fact that Paralympians are elite athletes in exactly the same sense as Olympians.

"I think it changes when it's in the public eye," he said. "When they see it, they can appreciate it. But when you speak to people and say you play Paralympic table tennis, people don't really understand.

"If you say you're a long-distance runner, they can appreciate what you have to do in training, but I don't think they see table tennis the same way, they maybe think it's a hobby and you play a couple of times a week, not six hours a day.

"It's still got a long way to go to get that respect but all I can do is try to lead by example."

He is also delighted to see the para-athletes competing at the Senior Nationals this weekend – and to see the final stages televised live on national, Freeview channel ITV4, something he feels can give the sport a big boost.

"It's great to compete here and to show how far we've come in the last few years," he said.

"I think if we could get an able-bodied player winning medals, that would really

help to push our sport forward, and more TV time as well. If a sport's in the public eye, people take a massive interest in it, but we go a bit under the radar at the moment."

Not that Bayley plans to spend 2016 under the radar, not with Paralympic gold to go for and add to the world title he won in China in 2014.

"Winning the Worlds was a special one because you never know if you're going to be one of the best in the world," he said. "When you're training, you tell yourself you can be and that you can beat anyone, but deep down you don't really know.

"And being in China also, it's special playing table tennis there.

"If I could have a perfect year, it would be to win every tournament between now and Rio and then to win Rio, but it's not as easy as that.

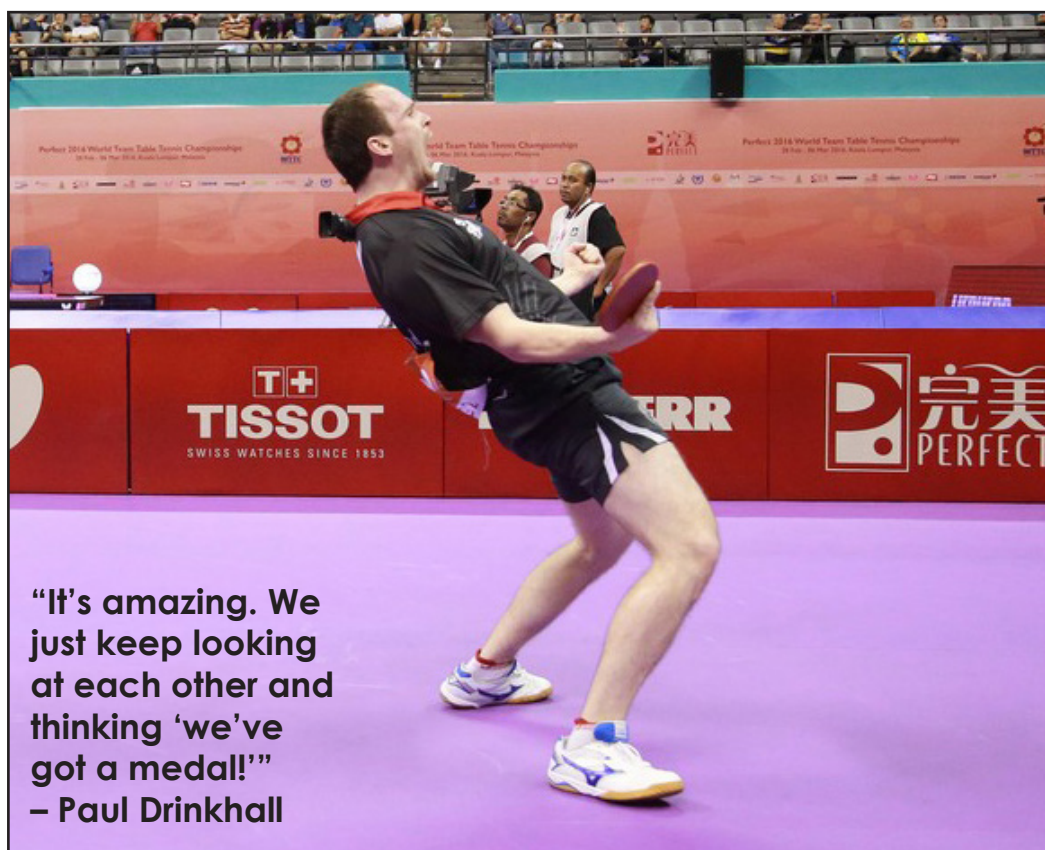
"If I lost every match between now and Rio but then won the gold, I'd snap your hand off – I'd take that, 100%, because the gold is something I've always wanted.

"But as long as I can sit here next year and say I gave 100% and didn't leave any stone unturned, then whatever the outcome I think I'd be able to live with myself."

PAUL STIMPSON



The day the Leo ROARE

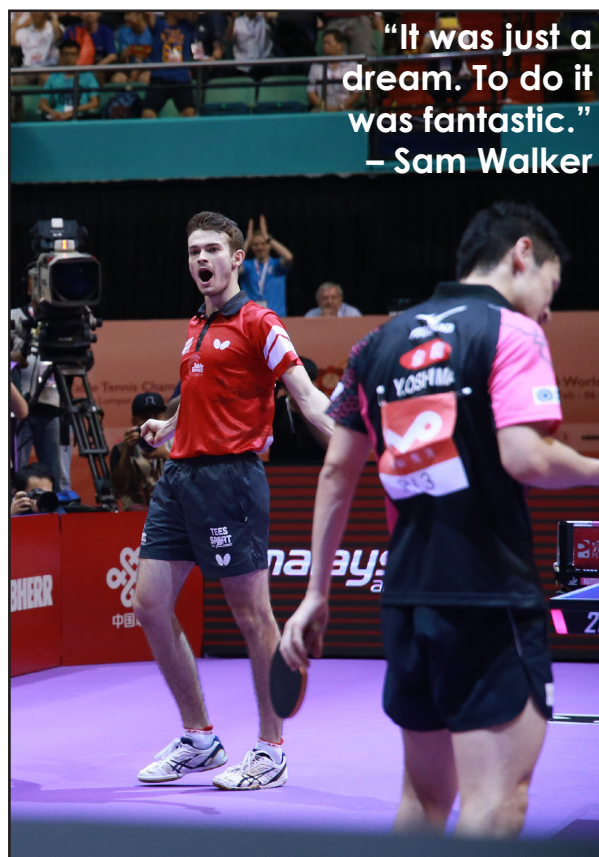


Leopards PROMOTED!

“It’s absolutely amazing. We never thought it was possible but we’ve done it.”
– Liam Pitchford



“It was just a dream. To do it was fantastic.”
– Sam Walker



It was the tournament that put England back on the table tennis world map as the Leopards squad of Liam Pitchford, Paul Drinkhall and Sam Walker bagged a brilliant bronze medal at the World Team Championships in Kuala Lumpur.

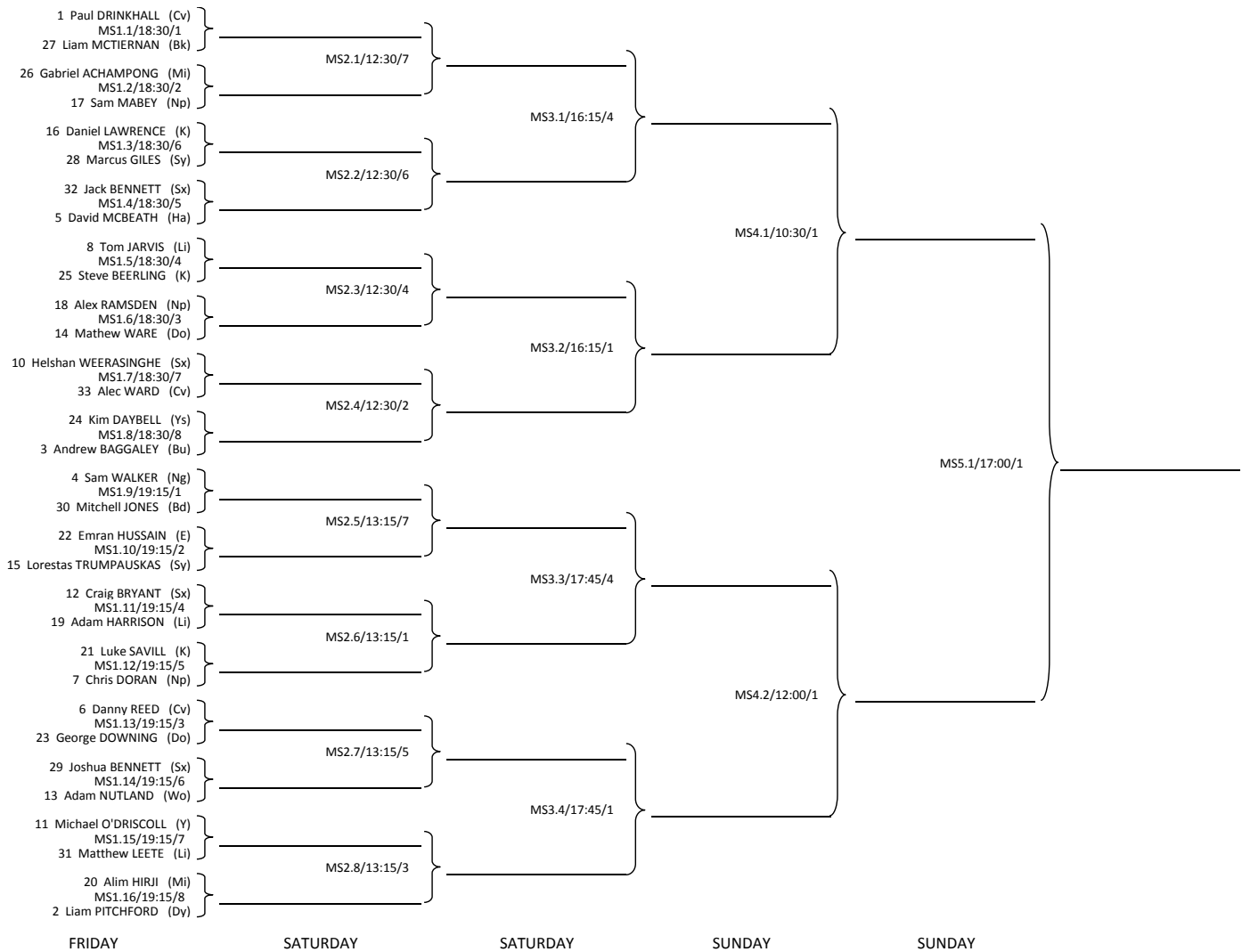
Newly promoted to the top division of the world game for the first time since 1997, and seeded 18th, the team seized the moment and defeated second seeds Germany, Poland and France to advance to the semi-finals, where they lost to third seeds Japan.

But it was enough to seal England’s first podium place since 1983 – and become the first promoted side in history to win a medal as well as the last surviving European side in the competition.

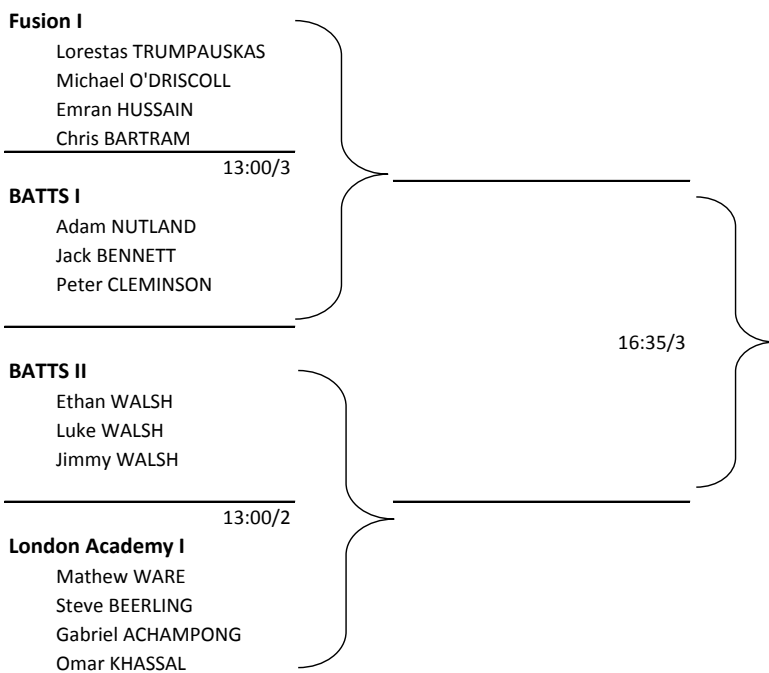
With thanks to Remy Gros (ITTF Photographer)



Men's Singles



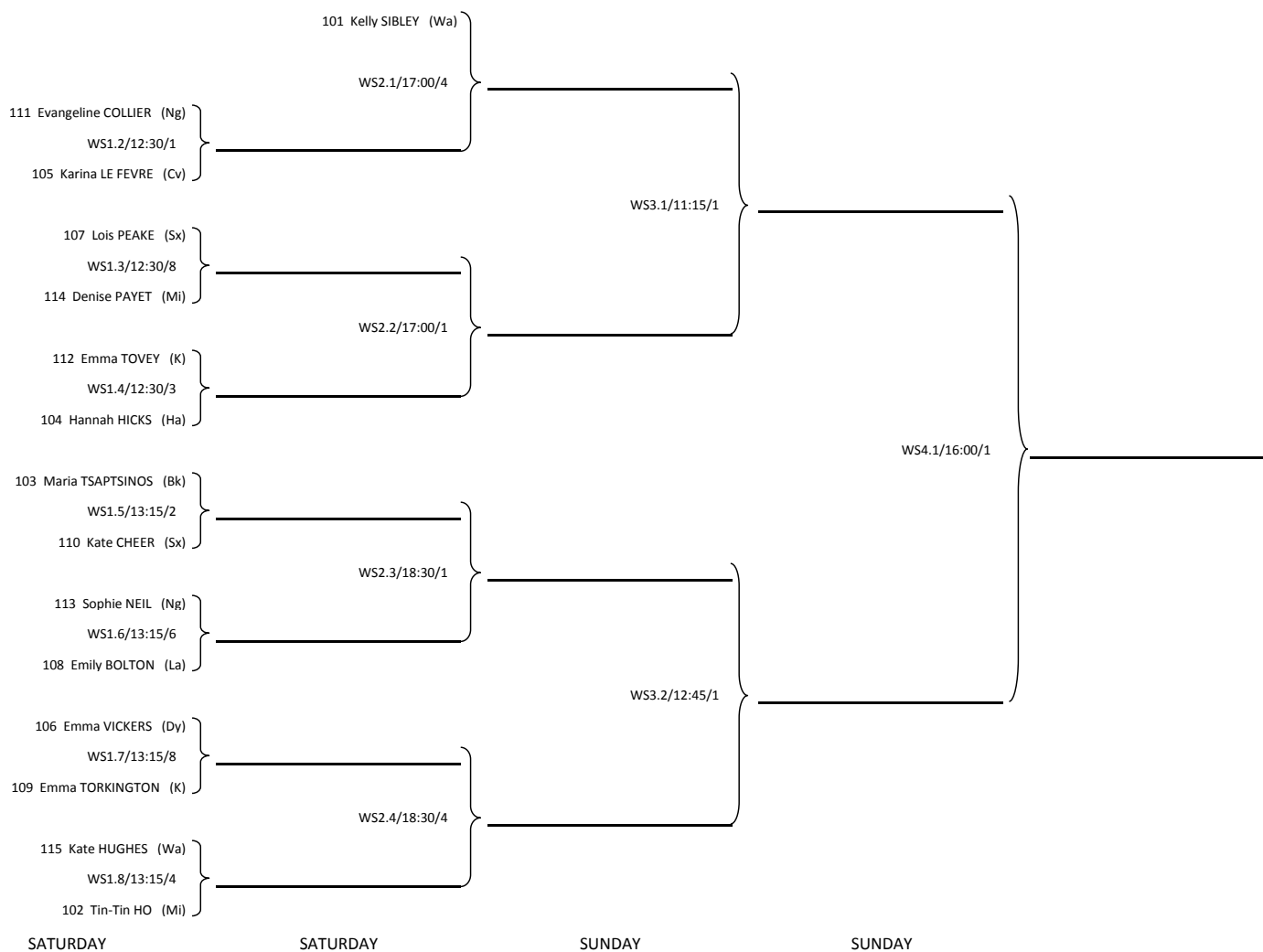
Men's Team (Friday)



Para competitions (Saturday)

Men's Para Singles Class 3-5	16:00/2
Jack HUNTER-SPIVEY	
Kevin PLOWMAN	
Daniel BULLEN	
Nicko ANDERSON	
Men's Para Singles Class 6-8	17:45/3
Will BAYLEY	
Aaron MCKIBBIN	
Ross WILSON	
David WETHERILL	
Men's Para Singles Class 9-10	17:45/2
Kim DAYBELL	
Ashley FACEY-THOMPSON	
Craig ALLEN	
Shae THAKKER	
Women's Para Singles Class 3-5	16:00/3
Sue GILROY	
Megan SHACKLETON	
Jane CAMPBELL	

Women's Singles

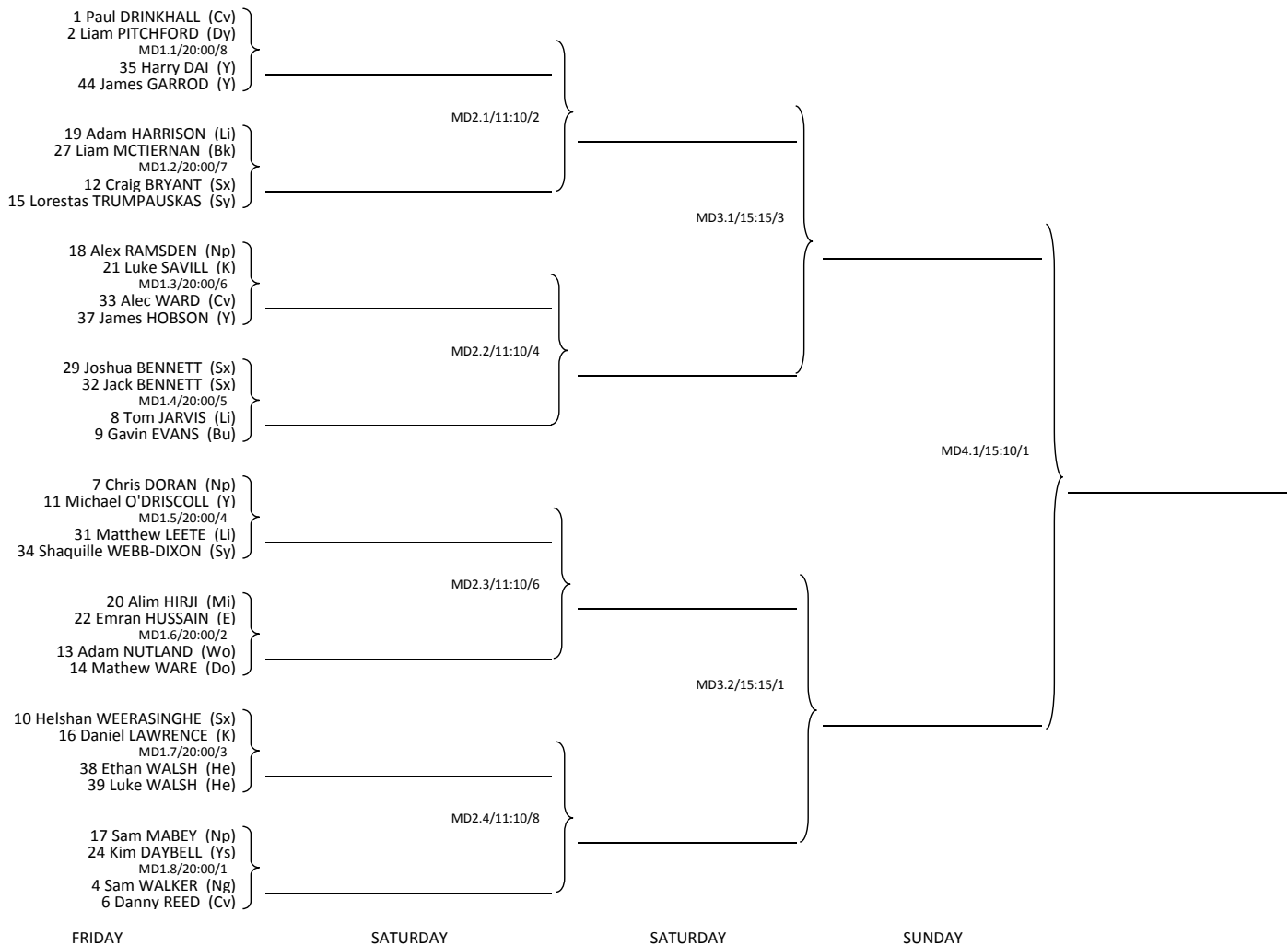



Official event shop

Don't forget to visit our event shop and pick up England Leopards and Table Tennis England merchandise as a souvenir of the PG Mutual National Championships. The shop is located in the viewing balcony on Friday and Saturday and in the engagement zone on Sunday.



Men's Doubles



Advertising feature: About PG Mutual

We are a not-for-profit membership organisation specialising in providing income protection insurance for professional people since 1928. As a friendly society, we don't have outside shareholders, and therefore return any profit to our Members.

What do we offer?

We offer an Income Protection Plus Plan which will pay you a regular income if you are unable to work due to illness or injury. Our plan also includes an investment element which pays out at maturity of your policy.

Features:

- Protection that can start from first day of illness or injury
- Cover lasts until you can return to your professional career or reach age 65
- No penalty for making a claim and

no limits to the number of claims that can be made

What is Income Protection Plus?

We offer a tailored plan that pays you a regular income for an affordable cost for as long as you need it, should you find yourself unable to work due to illness or injury.

And the Plus?

As a not-for-profit, friendly society, we do not have any outside shareholders and therefore return any profits to our members. So how does that work? When you take out a plan with us it includes a unique investment element that pays out at the maturity of your policy, mirroring that of a savings plan.

Protection can start from your first day of illness or injury and lasts until you return to your professional career

or reach age 65. There are no penalties for making a claim and no limits on the number of claims you make. You can claim at any time right up until age 65.

As an extra PLUS all of our members have free access to our fantastic member benefits scheme which provides access to a whole range of discounts/cashbacks and offers on popular brands and services.

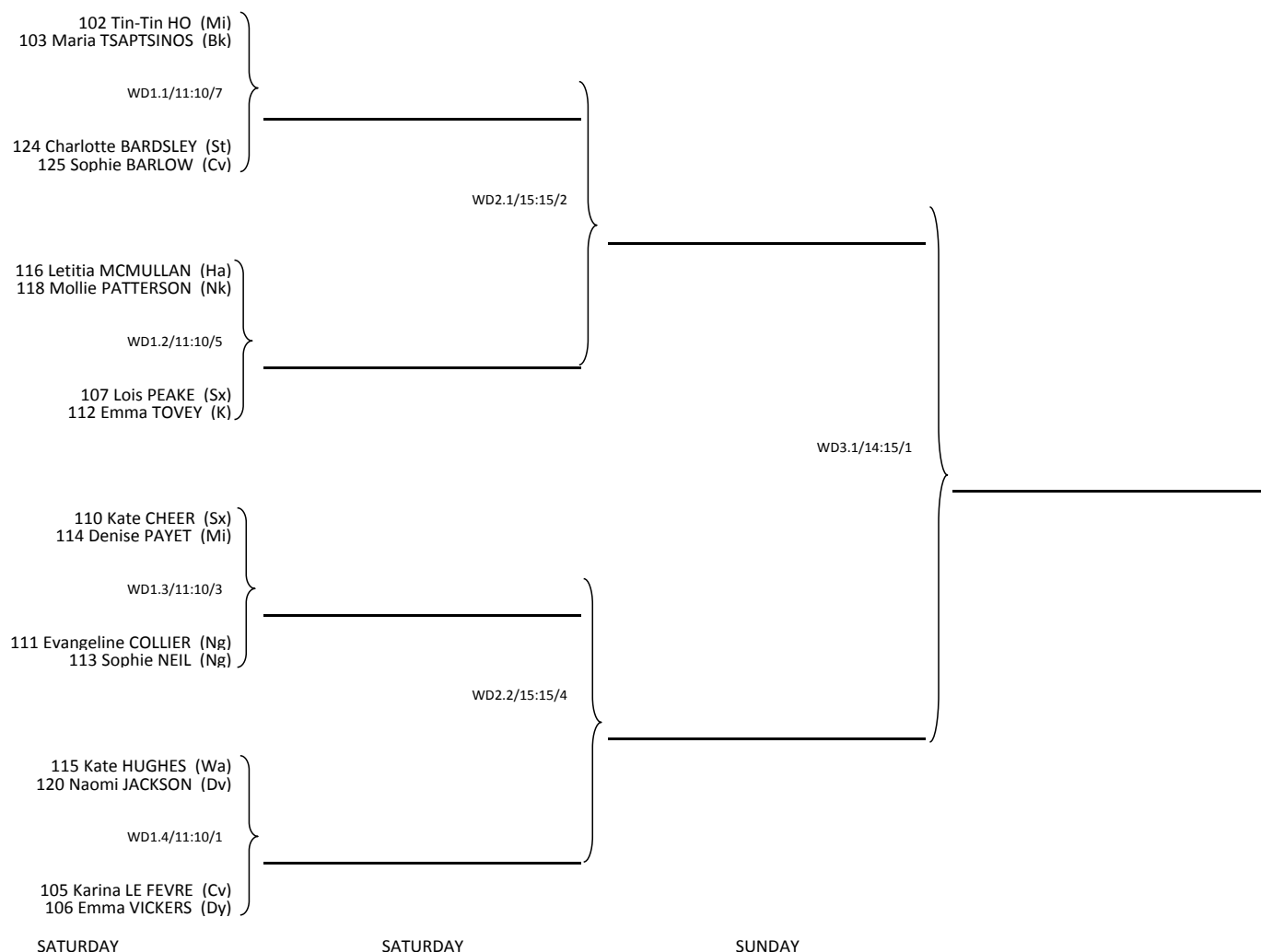
For more information, call 0800 146 307 or email enquiries@pgmtual.co.uk or visit www.pgmtual.co.uk

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Incorporated in the United Kingdom under the Friendly Societies Act 1992, Registered Number 462F.

Authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, Firm Reference Number 110023.

Women's Doubles



We have teamed up with our title sponsors PG Mutual and equipment supplier Tees Sport to offer spectators the chance to win some amazing prizes on all three days of these championships!

Friday

Have a go at the target competition in the Engagement Zone – the best score will win a bespoke bat for yourself, up to the value of £100 from the Tees Sport stall.

Saturday

1) Tweet us a photo of you or your family or friends enjoying the action – the best will win an England Leopards shirt signed by the squad. Use the hashtag #PGMutualNationals when you tweet to @TableTennisEng

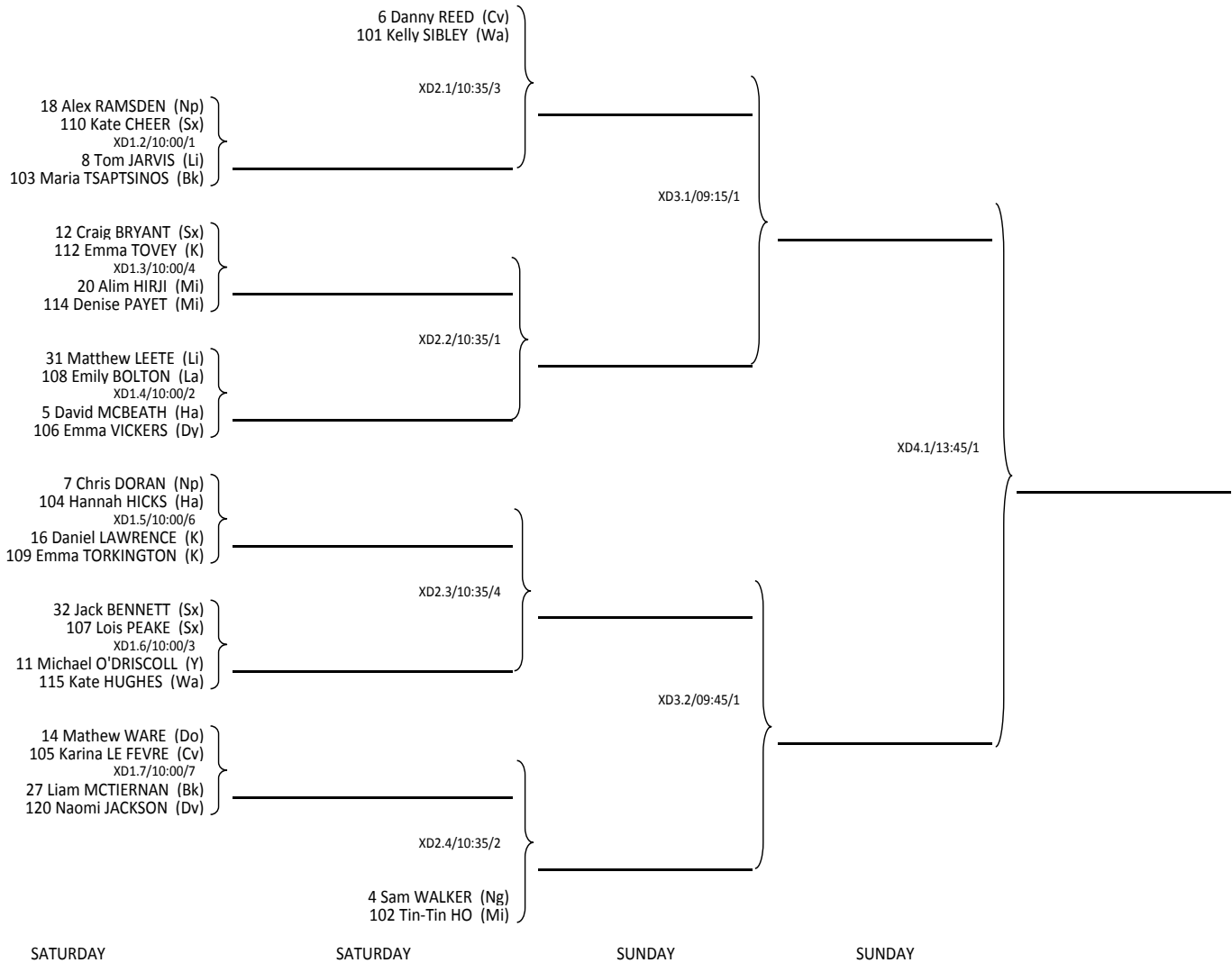
Competition time – win a new bat or signed England Leopards shirt!

2) Find the golden table tennis ball hidden around the venue and a bat up to the value of £100.

Sunday

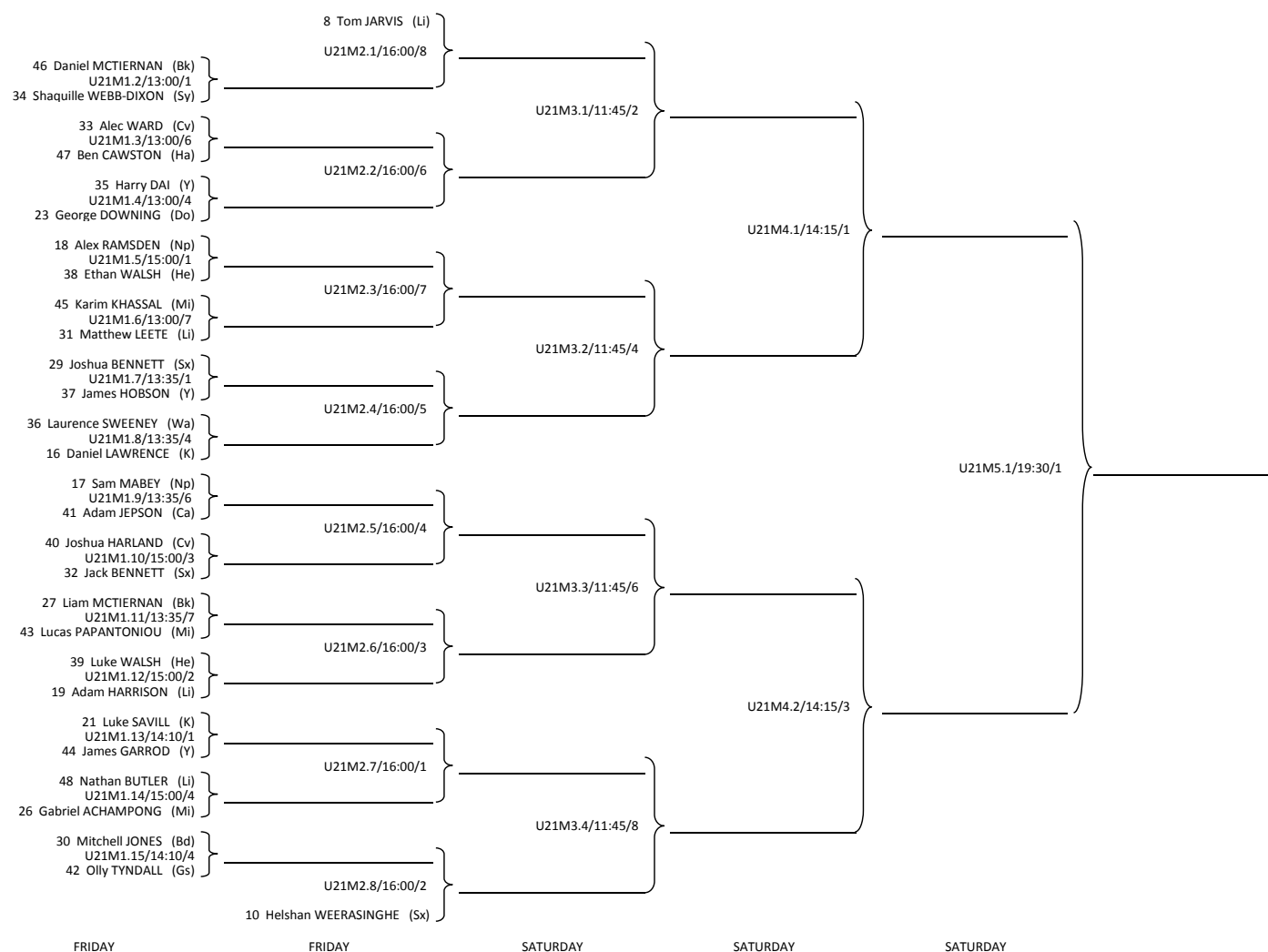
1) Take on the robot challenge in the Engagement Zone – best score wins a bat up to the value of £100.
2) Tweet a photo of you or your family or friends enjoying the action to @TableTennisEng using the #PGMutualNationals hashtag – the best will win an England Leopards shirt signed by the squad.

Mixed Doubles



Winning line-up: Last year's winners from the Volunteer Awards at the VIP reception at the Nationals

Under-21 Men's Singles



Thanks to our brilliant volunteers!

As well as the best players in the country, Hatfield also hosts the cream of the crop of our volunteers as we honour the annual award winners based on nominations from our members around the country.

The trophies will be presented during a VIP reception on Saturday and the winners for this year are:

Club of the Year

Winner – TCC Bishop Auckland; Runner-up – Joola Plymouth

Volunteer of the Year

Winner – Keith Warrington; Runner-up – Debbie Whiting

Coach of the Year

Winner – James Lewis; Runner-up – Harvey Stevens

Unsung Hero

Winner – Bryan Edwards; Runner-up – Roger Bowkett

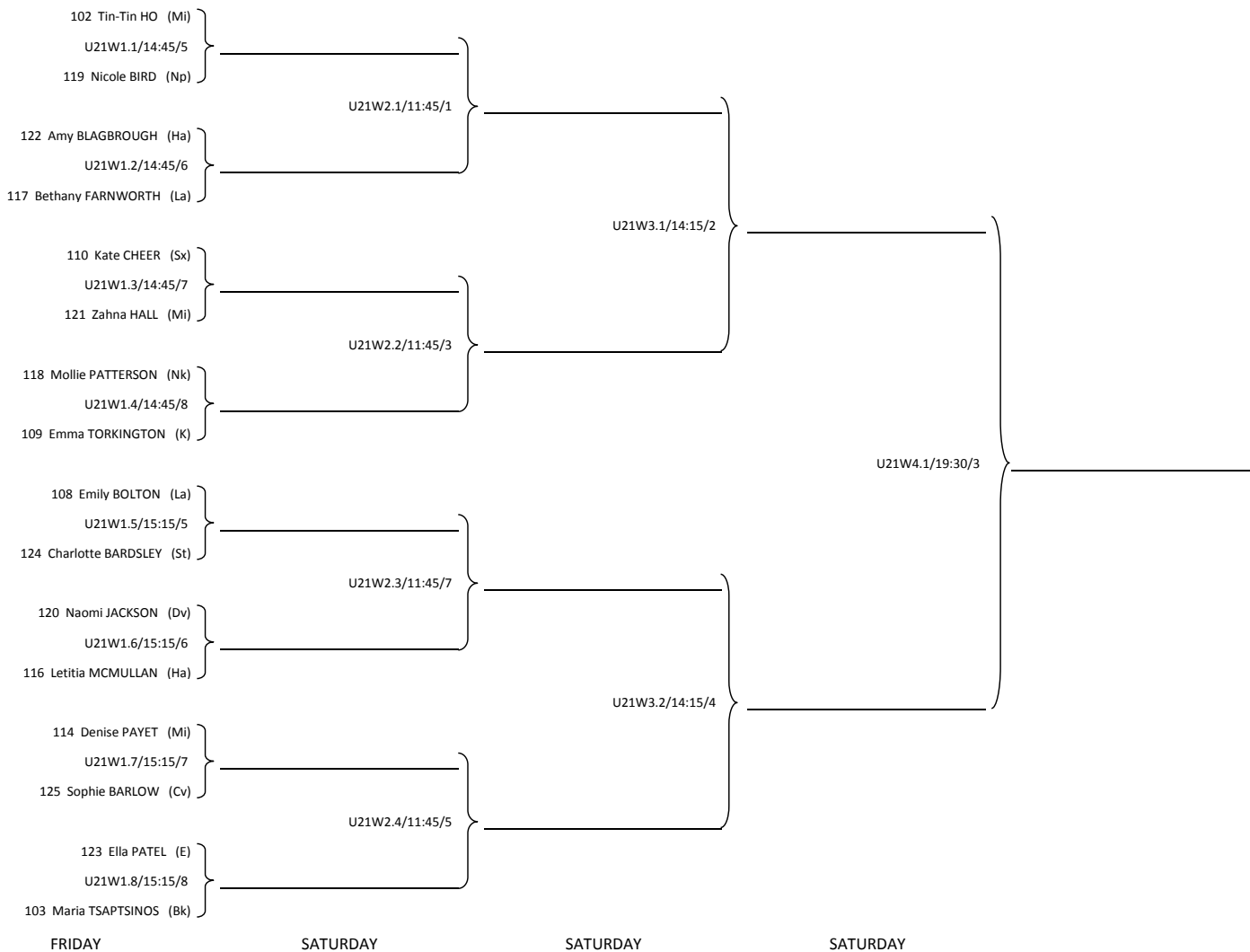
Equality Award

Tim Holtam

Congratulations and thanks to all!



Under-21 Women's Singles



Charity feature: Bounce Alzheimer's Therapy

The BAT Foundation DRUG FREE Alzheimer's Therapy

Bounce Alzheimer's Therapy (BAT) is the new health and wellbeing charitable arm of Bounce Ping Pong Limited, aimed at delivering a national ping pong therapy program and table tennis equipment to settings specialising in dementia and Alzheimer's care across the UK.

BAT is committed to a campaign of generating clinical research into the benefits of regular ping pong play on those living with onset dementia.

The aim of the project is to deliver a carefully designed therapy programme, providing resources and specialised training to care staff, whilst markedly improving the atmosphere in the care giving environment with enhanced social engagement between carers, family members and the sufferers of these devastating diseases.

In addition to the research and therapy programmes, BAT acknowledges there is a growing inclination within society to look toward preventative measures and alternatives over



drug prescription. With this in mind, in collaboration with Butterfly (the world's leading table tennis manufacturer) BAT has developed a prototype table (MK1 – pictured above) to roll out within the field of Alzheimer's care.

This initial prototype has been produced by Butterfly and, as proposed, fitted with a pair of side panels to create an 'In the Space' experience – the next step is to introduce additional treatment enhancing elements, namely the addition of light, colour, contrast and perspective to maximise playability for those suffering with Alzheimer's.

DeveloPING our sport



Table Tennis England's Development Department is responsible for supporting our clubs, encouraging participation and implementing initiatives to deliver a diverse and dynamic sport which transforms lives, connects communities and achieves excellence.

Clubs & Disability

We are currently reviewing our table tennis club programmes to make them more beneficial for clubs across the country. We want to help clubs develop, bring in new and sustain existing players/members. One area we are keen to develop and work with clubs on, is helping them be more inclusive and accessible to a range of different people.

We currently have a few programmes in place to support this and from the start of the 2016/2017 season there will be some more information available for clubs:

Club Table Grant Scheme

This fund is to purchase new tables for affiliated clubs wishing to expand. It is specifically to help those wishing to increase participation to do so by introducing new tables in club venue/s where there is sufficient space. It will fund between one and four tables per successful project, four in exceptional circumstances. But, please note it is not to replace old tables.



Ability Club Support Scheme

We want to create suitable opportunities for people with disabilities to get involved in table tennis and we are therefore helping and inspiring our clubs to offer these opportunities in their local communities.

The Ability Club support scheme is a free Table Tennis England initiative to help our clubs attract new disabled people to play table tennis. The scheme is aimed exclusively at our PremierClub Ability Clubs (PremierClubs who have completed the free disability awareness training as part of their membership) and is designed to allow clubs to work with us on a one-to-one basis to develop and fund new disability or inclusive projects.

If you want any more information about how your club can get involved in some of these schemes then please contact us at development@tabletennisengland.co.uk and we'll be happy to provide some more information.

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Complete Table Tennis Packages, up to 55% off RRP!
Designed specifically for workplaces and sport clubhouses, Loop provides everything you need to get people active; playing and enjoying ping pong.

keepintheLOOP.co.uk

PING!
PINGENGLAND.CO.UK

The free street ping pong festival returns this summer!



The live possibilities are endless



Domestic table tennis was a regular on the airwaves in the 70s and 80s but since then, aside from Olympics and Commonwealth Games, it has seldom found its way into the nation's living rooms.

That changes this year when ITV4 televises the final three hours of the National Championships here at the Hertfordshire Sports Village.

The Men's Doubles, Women's Singles and Men's Singles finals will all be covered live, with earlier finals filmed so that highlights can be slotted into the schedule if time allows.

It is an exciting prospect for players, spectators and for Table Tennis England as a governing body – and also for ITV as they get involved in our sport for the first time since the heyday of World of Sport and its iconic presenter Dickie Davies.

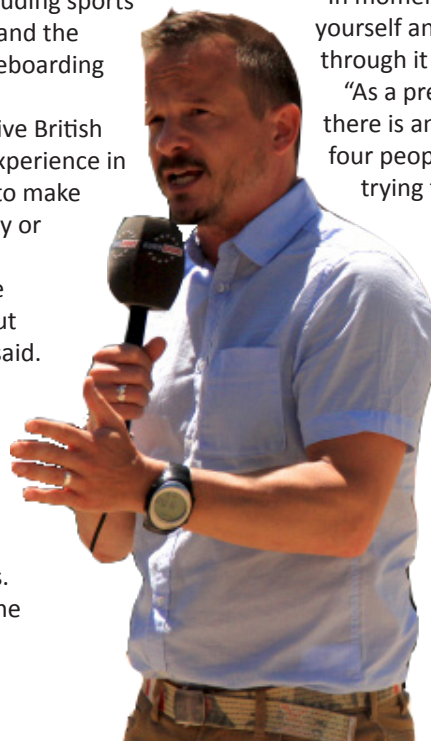
In front of the cameras now will be Neil Cole and Louise Beckett, who bring with them a blend of experience of live TV presenting, sports coverage and an enthusiasm for table tennis.

Neil, an MTV presenter from 2000-2004, has fronted sports coverage for more than 10 years, including sports as diverse as motorsport (including rallying and the Le Mans 24-Hour race), skateboarding, wakeboarding and extreme sports.

He was also the first person to present a live British women's handball match and believes his experience in smaller sports will stand him in good stead to make the coverage accessible for viewers who may or may not be familiar with table tennis.

"I think people seem to like me being able to explain sports to complete newcomers but without patronising the hardcore fans," he said. "It's not a balance that's easy but it feels good when you get it right."

Louise's understanding of table tennis comes from being part of the live presentation team for the sport at Excel during London 2012 and, like Neil, she has done plenty of homework about the players. It is not gaining knowledge of the sport or the




players which she sees as the biggest pitfall in the way of successful coverage, however.

"Running smoothly I think is the biggest challenge," she said. "No matter how many times you rehearse there is always that possibility of something going wrong – whether that's technically, with yourself or with your guests. It really is quite unpredictable."

"A few weeks ago I was hosting a live broadcast and just moments before going on air the commentator and myself lost communication with the director, so he couldn't tell us who was on air, what camera we were talking to, or anything."

"In moments like that you have to have confidence in yourself and trust in your team. We managed to get through it between us."

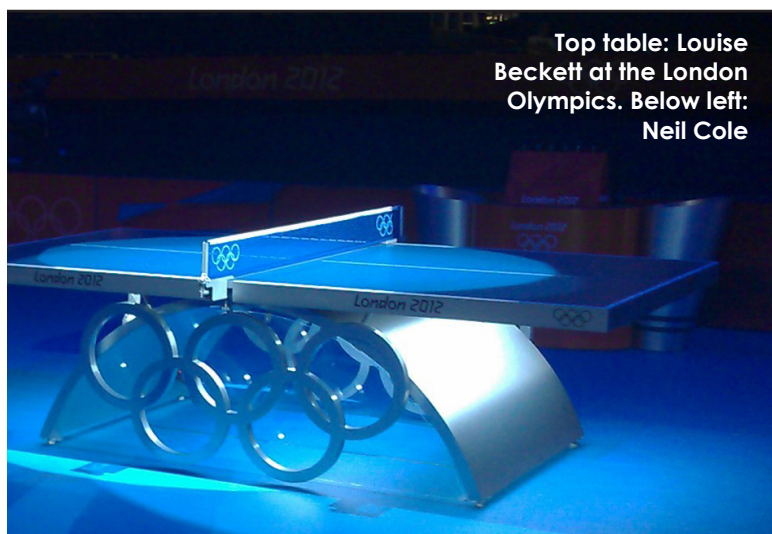
"As a presenter you cannot let the viewers know if there is any sort of problem, or show you may have four people talking into your earpiece at once whilst trying to talk yourself."

"A swan floating on water whilst their legs are going like crazy underneath springs to mind!"

Neil added: "My first years in TV were all live, so I've had the requisite skills drummed into me."

"Fundamentally, it's the same sort of skills that you need, as long as you can learn what you need to know about the subject beforehand. It's about hitting timings, interviewing people and being enthusiastic."

Both are confident that modern



Top table: Louise Beckett at the London Olympics. Below left: Neil Cole

production values and technological advancements will deliver a great spectacle for the viewers.

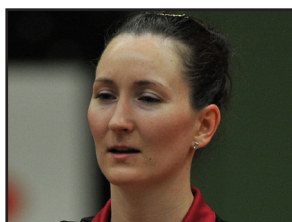
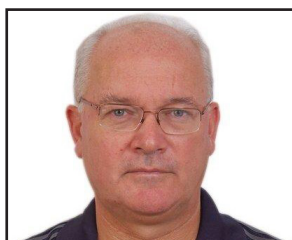
Neil said: "I remember watching it as a kid in the 80s and I remember how ridiculously fast it was – and I get the feeling it's got faster.

"I watched it at London 2012 as well and what I loved is that not only is it insanely fast but it's incredibly tactical as well. Even though it happens so quickly, there's so much going on.

"The way that modern televised live sport has improved in the last five years, let alone the last 25, we'll be able to analyse in super slow-mo, which is something quite exciting for the viewers."

Plenty of knowledge in the com-box

Don Parker will lead the commentary team for ITV4's live coverage. Having represented England more than 200 times at table tennis and later worked as National Coach for the then English Table Tennis Association, Don (pictured) brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to his role as lead commentator, including the London Paralympics and the recent World Team Championships for the ITTF TV channel. Don will be joined on air by Joanna Drinkhall (pictured), a three-time Women's Singles National Champion and Commonwealth



Games gold medallist, former England player, Colin Wilson, who has previously commentated on table tennis for Sky Sports and BT Sport, and national Performance Coach Alan Cooke, a six-time National Champion.



IT WILL TAKE 39 staff, 12 microphones, eight cameras, three replay machines, two satellites and a £1.5million Outside Broadcast (OB) truck to bring the National Championships to Britain's TV screens.

The OB truck will be home to 25 staff from Cloudbass, headed by Technical Director James Wilson. Here, vision engineers will process the 1.3 gigabit per second stream of signals which arrive via armoured fibre optic cable from the cameras on the field of play.

Graphics are overlaid and the pictures are then passed to two satellite uplink vehicles which beam them from a 1.8m dish to two different satellites in geostationary orbit 22,500 miles above the equator. From there, the signals are transmitted back to ITV's transmission centres in Chiswick and passed around the country via fibre optic cable.

As well as the Cloudbass staff, production company artifexmedia will have a 14-strong team on site, comprising a director, VT producer, production assistants, a floor manager and camera operators.

Heading this team is Steve Saint, an old hand at TV sports coverage. He explained that of the eight cameras, one will provide the wide shot of the table which viewers will see most of, with another camera on each of the players. The other five will focus on the table from other angles but would almost exclusively be used for replays.

"TV sometimes overcomplicates sports coverage and sometimes simple is best. We want the coverage to be easy to follow," he said.

Being live also provides challenges, not least that the length of the matches is unpredictable, yet the production team are under strict obligation to ITV to provide gaps in the coverage for commercial breaks.

"If a match over or under-runs, our schedule becomes a moving feast," says Steve. "We will have only minutes to decide upon and then inform ITV transmission of the change to our programme and advert schedule. Throughout the broadcast we have a telephone hotline into ITV to convey any changes to our programme plan."

DID YOU KNOW?

Live TV programmes generally take around eight seconds to reach viewers at home



Men's Singles

Liam Pitchford bt Paul Drinkhall 4-3 (8-11, 6-11, 7-11, 11-9, 15-13, 11-6, 11-8)

Women's Singles

Kelly Sibley bt Tin-Tin Ho 4-2 (14-12, 11-4, 9-11, 9-11, 11-6, 11-9)

Men's Doubles

Paul Drinkhall & Liam Pitchford bt Sam Walker & Danny Reed 3-2 (6-11, 7-11, 11-9, 11-6, 11-5)

Women's Doubles

Tin-Tin Ho & Maria Tsaptsinos bt Karina Le Fevre & Emma Vickers 3-1 (11-5, 11-9, 4-11, 11-8)

Mixed doubles

Sam Walker & Tin-Tin Ho bt Danny Reed & Kelly Sibley 3-1 (4-11, 11-8, 11-9, 12-10)

U21 Men's Singles

Sam Walker bt Helshan Weerasinghe 3-1 (11-6, 11-8, 8-11, 11-5)

U21 Women's Singles

Tin-Tin Ho bt Maria Tsaptsinos 3-0 (11-6, 11-5, 11-9)

Winners: 2015 champions, clockwise from above, Liam Pitchford (Men's Singles), Kelly Sibley (Women's Singles), Sam Walker & Tin-Tin Ho (Mixed Doubles), Paul Drinkhall & Liam Pitchford (Men's Doubles), Tin-Tin Ho & Maria Tsaptsinos (Women's Doubles)



National Hall of Fame

Men's Singles titles

- 11 Desmond Douglas
- 6 Denis Neale
Alan Cooke (pictured)
- 5 Chester Barnes
- 4 Paul Drinkhall
Matthew Syed
- 3 Andrew Baggaley
Liam Pitchford
Carl Preat
- 2 Ian Harrison
Alex Perry
Trevor Taylor
Chen Xinhua
- 1 Bryan Merrett
Bobby Stevens
Paul Day



Women's Singles titles

- 7 Jill Hammersley (nee Shirley)
- 6 Mary Wright (Shannon)
- 5 Nicola Perry (Deaton)
Andrea Holt
Kelly Sibley
- 4 Alison Broe (Gordon)
Lisa Lomas (Bellinger)
Diane Scholer (Rowe)
- 3 Joanna Drinkhall (Parker)
Carole Moore (Knight)
Helen Lower
- 2 Fiona Mommessin (Elliot)
Karenza Mathews (Smith)
- 1 Judy Williams
Karen Witt
Joy Grundy

Help us Stoke up some support for England!

In the Autumn, England launch their qualifying campaign for the 2017 European Championships.

Both the men's and women's teams will play home and away matches, with the men drawn in the same group as Greece and the Netherlands and the women up against Germany and Slovenia.

Fenton Manor Sports Centre will be the venue for the men's match against Greece on Tuesday November 1, at a start time to be confirmed.

Stoke on Trent is European City of Sport for 2016, and this England Leopards match is part of a wider bill of sport they are hosting this year.

The venue has hosted England's table tennis finest before, though, most recently in 2009 as part of India's tour of this country.

Then, the match finished 5-5 as England women (Joanna Parker, Kelly Sibley and Hannah Hicks) won 4-1 and England men (Paul Drinkhall, Danny Reed, Gavin Evans) lost by the same score.

Councillor Terry Follows, cabinet member with responsibility for leisure

at Stoke-on-Trent City Council, said:

"The venue is no stranger to hosting big events and it's great to be welcoming this international match during our year as a European City of Sport.

"I am sure we will have a sell-out crowd on the night who will get right behind the team."

The Greece match will be the first chance to see England men in action on home soil since the 'Ashes' victory over Australia in Preston just before the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Ticket details will be announced later this year – so keep an eye on our website or sign up to receive our newsletter!

England men are away to the Netherlands on November 22.

England women will be away to Germany on September 27, at home to Slovenia at Medway Park on November 22, and at home to Germany on December 13 2016. The venue for the Germany match will be announced in the near future.

The remaining fixtures will be in 2017 on dates to be announced.

Follow us on social media

Keep up with the latest from the PG Mutual National Championships – and all the news from Table Tennis England – on our social media platforms.

- Follow @TableTennisEng on Twitter and watch out for the #PGMutualNationals hashtag during this event – and don't miss out on your chance to win some fantastic prizes, as detailed elsewhere in this programme!

- We will also be live streaming a selection of matches from this event up to 3pm on Sunday – tune in via youtube.com/tabletennisengland

- On Facebook, why not visit our page at facebook.com/TableTennisEngland

- And pictures from this and many of our events can be found via our Flickr page – visit flickr.com/tabletennis






Better by Des-ign

40 years since his first title, Douglas is still an icon of our sport

This year marks 40 years since Desmond Douglas MBE, a true gentleman and iconic figure in English table tennis, won his first of 11 National Men's Singles titles - nine of which were in consecutive years. As England's No 1 in the 1970s and 1980s Des remained undefeated by an English player for more than a decade.

1976 was the year of Des's first National triumph and the first of four occasions when he swept the board, taking a hat-trick of individual titles. A remarkable achievement and one enhanced by the fact that Des lost only one game in the whole tournament.

That first year Nicky Jarvis was Des's victim. Subsequent opponents in the finals included Duggie Johnson, Paul Day, John Hilton, Graham Sandley, Alan Cooke and Carl Prean.

Even in his last year of playing in the National Championships, aged 42 years in 1998, Des still reached the final and it took all Matthew Syed's skill, and maybe the advantage of legs 15 years younger, to take the title, 18-21, 21-10, 21-16, 15-21, 21-16. The match was described at the time as "one of the finest contests of recent times the standard of which would have graced any European or World Championships".

However, those 11 singles titles were only part of the story at the



Title haul

Men's Singles

1976, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1990

Men's Doubles

1976, 1977 (with Denis Neale); 1979 (Jimmy Walker); 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984 (Paul Day); 1985, 1986 (Carl Prean); 1990, 1992, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998 (Alan Cooke)

Mixed Doubles

1976, 1979, 1981, 1982 (with Linda Howard)

English National Championships as Des added a further impressive 19 titles in doubles events. The full tally is unlikely to be emulated.

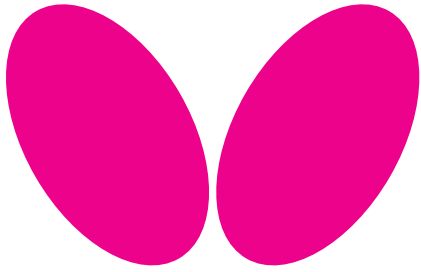
On the world stage, Des had many outstanding successes reaching World No 7 and European No 3. Des played in the Seoul Olympics in 1988, the first year that table tennis was played, was the last Englishman to win the Men's Singles at an English Open, in 1984, won eight Commonwealth Championships gold medals and was the winner of the European Top 12 in Basle in 1987 after coming second on three occasions.

Despite all these achievements Des's finest hour is probably when he won all 19 of his European Championships matches in Duisburg, 1978, helping the England team into a silver medal position.

A delightful and unassuming legend, the name and the man are still an inspiration.

DIANE WEBB





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With manufacture in Germany, Butterfly have launched the new G40+ plastic 3 Star ball which has widely been acclaimed as the best ball for match play and the Easy ball which is perfect for school, recreation and club practice play.



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