



# Table Tennis Times

**A quarterly, independent, magazine from the world of  
English Table Tennis and beyond**

**Issue 32**

**Editorial**

**Autumn 2023**

We hope you are enjoying the late surge of warm weather and that you have had a successful start to the new season at local league level.

At International level, particularly with the juniors, there is no season nowadays and this issue covers many of the tournaments that have taken place over the last few months. Another aspect that is increasingly common is the globalisation of our sport with many of the junior tournaments taking place in new areas of the planet.

Our regular Spotlight feature turns the light on Ian Harrison who had a remarkable career in the 50's and 60's. We hope you enjoy the article as much as we did meeting up with Ian and listening to some of his experiences. Whether it was in the 1950s or the summer of 2023 when some of our youngsters went to Rio de Janeiro it shows that you never know where playing table tennis will take you.

A longer than usual "What was Happening" looks at 2003, which quite unbelievably is 20 years ago but seems like five minutes. The length of this article bears out the old adage "we can remember these events but have trouble with what happened last week!"

The Good News page is, well just that, and we are sure you will be happy to know that the 2026 World Team Championships have been awarded to England and will take place in Wembley.

In Memoriam sadly records the passing of Sue Collier, Keith Thomas and Stan Clarke, all of whom made enormous contributions to our sport and will be missed.

We do not have any guest contributions in this edition – if you have something you would like to write about or if you would like us to tell your story, then please get in touch.

We hope you enjoy this edition.

Best wishes

Diane and Harvey Webb

## European Youth Championships (EYC) 14<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> July 2023: Gliwice, Poland Photos courtesy of the ETTU

The EYC is the biggest tournament in the junior and cadet calendar and one which challenges the youngsters over a full ten days.

England had one team in each of the four events – Junior Boys, Junior Girls, Cadet Boys and Cadet Girls, with three players per team. The junior teams played the best of five singles whilst the cadets had four singles and a doubles match.

**Junior Boys' Team (Ranked 19):** Connor Green, Louis Price, Ben Piggott

**Stage 1: Group – Level 2:** The first match against Scotland (ranked 36) was a good win to start the campaign with all three singles won 3-0. Green beat Nathan Hogg, Price beat Jamie Johnson and Piggott beat Kieran Walker.

Next was Serbia (ranked 29) and it was another win for England by 3-1 with all the lads winning one match with Green the player who lost the one game.

Day two, Saturday, saw England face Norway (ranked 26) to decide the final group places. First on the table was Green but it was Norway who were first on the scoreboard. Price was next and just lost 11-9 in the fifth. Piggott pulled one back winning in three and then Green levelled the score with a 3-1 win. Everything was on the last match and Price again went to five but the win was Norway's.

Three teams finished with two wins and one loss but games ratio put Serbia in first place 7-3, England second 8-4 and Norway third 6-5.

**Second Stage: Group:** Switzerland (ranked 17). A win for England 3-1 with Green getting two, Price one and Piggott losing his one match in five. Spain (ranked 7) were England's next opponents in the group and it was a 3-2 win for the Spaniards. Green won one and lost one, Piggott got the victory in his five-game match and Price lost both his matches. This placed England in the 21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> play-off matches.

**Positional Match 21-24:** Estonia (ranked 28). A win against Estonia 3-1, Green with two wins, Piggott won yet another five-game match whilst Price lost his one singles.

**Final Position: 21<sup>st</sup>=**



*Louis Price, Ben Piggott, Connor Green*

**Junior Girls' Team (Ranked 15):** Mari Baldwin, Erin Green, Anaya Patel

**Stage 1: Group – Level 1:** Playing in the top tier was always going to be tough for the girls, playing against higher ranked opponents in all their group matches. They went down 3-0 to Slovakia (ranked 7) in the first match. Baldwin and Green both lost 3-0 but Patel put up a real fight before going down -9, 11, -2, 9, -9.

Victory was so close for the girls against Slovenia (ranked 12) but they lost 3-2 to the higher ranked team. Baldwin won both her singles, Patel lost her one and Green her two but that doesn't reflect the true picture. With the score standing at 2-2 Green went on to play the decider and it was a match which swung first one way and then the next. In the end it was a win for Enya Moltara over Green -7, 9, 10, -9, 8. It couldn't have been much closer.

The third match was the hardest of all, Germany (ranked 2) and it was no surprise the German girls won 3-0 placing England in fourth place in their group.

**Stage 2: Play-off:** Greece (ranked 23) were the opponents to decide where the team would be placed for the positional matches in Stage 3. It was a good 3-1 win for England with Baldwin winning two and Patel winning one, the sole loss was by Green.

**Stage 3: Positional Match: 1-16:** Poland (ranked 3). Another difficult match so far and the scores reflected the difference between the teams. A straight 3-0 win for Poland.

**Positional Match 9-16:** Spain (ranked 9). Another tough challenge against Spain who were the victors 3-1 with Patel gaining the sole victory for England, Baldwin lost two and Green one but the scores were close.

**Positional Match 13-16:** Wales (ranked 19). It was old rivals, Wales, who got the better of England. Anna Hursey of Wales, the number two seed, not unexpectedly won both her matches against Patel and Baldwin. Green's victory against Lowri Hurd put England within touching distance of a win as this followed on from Baldwin's victory over Lara Whitton but in the last match Patel lost to the same player making it 3-2 to Wales.

**Positional Match 15-16:** Croatia (ranked 5). With Hana Arapovic in the team it was always going to be difficult to gain victory and of the matches played Croatia won all three, Green got a walk-over in her singles giving England at least one match on paper.

**Final Position: 16<sup>th</sup>**



*Anaya Patel, Mari Baldwin, Erin Green*

**Cadet Boys' Team (Ranked 10):** Rohan Dani, Isaac Kingham, Ralph Pattison

**Stage 1: Group - Level 1:** Not an easy first match against the home country, Poland, (ranked 2) and it was a 3-0 loss for the team. Kingham started the proceedings but lost 3-1, next was Pattison with a 3-0 loss. Kingham and Dani then paired up for the doubles and that too was a 3-1 loss.

The second match was against Bulgaria (ranked 15) and this resulted in a win for the boys. Pattison won his two singles; Dani lost his one in five. Kingham and Pattison got the win in the doubles and so the victory went to England.

The third and final group match was against Romania (ranked 7), on day two. Pattison lost the first in five by 7, 10, -15, 8, 2. Dani was the second player and he too lost -7, -8, 10, -6. Kingham and Pattison played the doubles and went down 3-0. The match was Romania's putting England in third place in the group which was according to ranking.

**Stage 2: Play-offs between 3<sup>rd</sup> placed Level 1 Teams:** Spain (ranked 13) were the next opponents and Pattison started the proceedings well with a 3-0 win. Kingham was next but he went down 3-0. The doubles still proved a problem and Dani and Pattison just lost 11-9 in the fifth. Pattison won his second match to level the score before Kingham got the victory for England with an 11-9 win in the fifth end.

**Stage 3: Positional Match: 1-16:** Austria (ranked 1). It was a straight 3-0 loss as could be expected against the number one seeds. Pattison and Dani played the two singles and Pattison and Kingham the doubles.

**Positional Match: 9-16:** Hungary (ranked 6). Another tough opponent but England started well with a win by Pattison. Unfortunately, that was the only victory as Kingham in the singles and Pattison and Dani in the doubles both lost as did Pattison in his second singles match.

**Positional Match: 13-16:** Czechia (formerly Czech Republic) (ranked 8). The boys finished on a positive note with an excellent 3-2 win against the higher ranked Czechia team. Dani was on first and that result went to Czechia, then Pattison levelled the score. The doubles went to Czechia with a win over Dani and Pattison. Pattison played his third match on the trot and again levelled the score. Dani finished with a win in the final match giving victory to England.

**Final Position: 13<sup>th</sup>=**



*Rohan Dani, Isaac Kingham, Ralph Pattison*

**Cadet Girls' Team (Ranked 21):** Naomi Coker, Sienna Jetha, Ella Pashley

**Stage 1: Group - Level 2:** It was a successful start for the girls as they defeated the Netherlands (ranked 30) 3-2. Pashley was the star, winning both her singles, Jetha won one and lost one. Coker played in the doubles with Jetha but they weren't able to effect the win which resulted in a 3-1 loss.

The Cadet Girls also won their second match against Azerbaijan (ranked 20) by 3-1 and again it was Pashley who won her two singles, Jetha didn't quite get over the line in her match although it went to five. Pashley and Jetha won the doubles meaning Pashley had won all her matches on day one.

Day two saw another win for the girls against Bulgaria (ranked 27) by 3-1. Pashley continued her unbeaten run in the singles winning both her matches, Jetha scraped through in her singles but the doubles went to Bulgaria with Coker and Pashley playing. The result meant England were top of their group, one place better than their ranking.

**Stage 2: Play-Off:** The Cadet Girls' play-off match was against Belgium (ranked 11) and they did very well to win 3-2. Jetha and Pashley both won one and lost one but they combined to win the doubles giving England the result and placing them in the top half in the positional matches.

**Stage 3: Positional Match: 1-16:** Ukraine (ranked 10). It was 3-0 to Ukraine although all matches went to four. Jetha and Pashley were the singles players and combined in the doubles.

**Positional Match: 9-16:** Turkiye (ranked 12). It was Turkiye who went through as victors by 3-1. Pashley lost the first in a close contest just missing out 11-9 in the fifth. Jetha levelled before playing with Coker in the doubles but no win this time. Jetha was straight back on the table for her second singles but this one she lost. Match to Turkiye.

**Positional Match: 13-16:** Portugal (ranked 7). Another 3-0 win for their opponents and again it was Pashley who started proceedings and again it was a loss in five, so close. Jetha was next and also lost her singles and it was the same result in the doubles when the two girls played together.

**Final Position 15<sup>th</sup>:-** Well done to the girls who exceeded expectations in the team event and a big improvement on last year's 26<sup>th</sup> finishing position. The only England team to finish above their starting ranking.



*Sienna Jetha, Ella Pashley, Naomi Coker*

### **Individual Events:**

**Junior Boys' Singles:** Round of 32 – Connor Green, Round of 128 – Louis Price, Group – Ben Piggott

**Junior Girls' Singles:** Round of 128 – Mari Baldwin, Group - Erin Green, Anaya Patel

**Junior Boys' Doubles:** Round of 64 – Connor Green & Ben Piggott, Louis Price & Timothy Falconnier (Sui)

**Junior Girls' Doubles:** Round of 64 - Mari Baldwin & Erin Green, Anaya Patel & Hannah Silcock (Jey)

**Junior Mixed Doubles:** Quarter-final – Connor Green & Anna Hursey (Wal), Round of 128 – Ben Piggott & Erin Green (lost 13-11 in the fifth), Round of 256 – Louis Price & Anaya Patel, Rhys Hetherington (Wal) & Mari Baldwin

**Cadet Boys' Singles:** Quarter-final – Ralph Pattison, Round of 64 – Isaac Kingham, Round of 128 – Rohan Dani

**Cadet Girls' Singles:** Round of 64 – Sienna Jetha (lost 11-7 in the seventh), Group - Naomi Coker, Ella Pashley

**Cadet Boys' Doubles:** Round of 16 – Isaac Kingham & Ralph Pattison, Round of 64 – Rohan Dani & Aaron Sahr (Lux)

**Cadet Girls' Doubles:** Round of 32 – Sienna Jetha & Ella Pashley, Naomi Coker & Darcey Taylor (Wal)

**Cadet Mixed Doubles:** Round or 32 – Isaac Kingham & Ella Pashley, Ralph Pattison & Sienna Jetha, Round of 128 – Rohan Dani & Naomi Coker (lost 12-10 in the fifth)

Ralph Pattison, seeded 15, showed his class and emerged as England's player of the Championships reaching the quarter-final in the Cadet Boys' Singles, one step away from a podium place. Starting in the main draw Pattison had a bye in the first round, then beat Vadym Soltys (Ukr – ranked 98) 5, 3, 6, -4, 2 before he had another win, against Czechia's Matyas Koleckar (ranked 32) 12, 9, 3, 5. Next was a superb 4-1 win 9, -7, 10, 9, 8 against the third seed, Hungarian Botond Zoltan Varga, and then his quarter-final match which was so close. Pattison, eventually, lost to Polish player Patryk Zyworonek, seeded five, who went on to become the runner-up, -8, -4, 9, 6, -7, 6, 7 in a titanic battle. Although disappointed in not getting a medal the bonus for Pattison was his elevation to 11 on the European Cadet ranking list.

Connor Green and Anna Hursey of Wales, also, were just short of a podium place in the Junior Mixed Doubles. Their final placing reflected their seeding, losing to Teodor Istrate of Romania and Nicole Arlia of Italy 6, 3, 9 the fourth seeds in the last eight. Hursey went on to win a bronze medal in the Junior Girls' Singles.

Romania won both Junior Team events, Portugal the Cadet Boys' Team and Germany the Cadet Girls' Team. Romania also won four gold medals in the individual events – Eduard Ionescu (JBS), Elena Zaharia (JGS), Eduard Ionescu & Dariusz Movileanu (JBD), Dariusz Movileanu & Elena Zaharia (JXD). Poland won the one remaining junior title with Zuzana Wielgos & Anna Brzyska (JGD). Romania also received four of the five silver medals with Poland winning the fifth.

The Cadet individual events gold medallists came from five different countries. Tiago Abiodun of Portugal won the Cadet Boys' Singles, Hanka Kodetova of Czechia the Cadet Girls' Singles. Polish pair Patryk Zyworonek & Mateusz Sakowicz were the Cadet Boys' Doubles winners with Germany's Koharu Itagaki & Josephina Neumann the Cadet Girls' Doubles champions. Finally, the Cadet Mixed Doubles title went to France's Nathan Pilard and Nina Guo Zheng.

## Wolverhampton Grand Prix: 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> July 2023

The last Grand Prix of the 2022/23 season was a double triumph for Mollie Patterson as she won both the Women's Singles and Under 21 Women's Singles, having a comfortable win in the Women's Singles 8, 5, 8 over Ewelina Sychta and a 6, 8, 6 win over Mabel Shute in the Under 21s. This was Patterson's second Grand Prix title during this season having also won in Gloucester.

England international, David McBeath was the Men's Singles champion and he too had a good win in his final over Toby Ellis 8, 7, 7.



*Mollie Patterson and David McBeath  
Photos courtesy of TTE*

The Under 21 Men's Singles title went to Maxim Stevens with victory over Joseph Marlor 6, 8, 8. Umair Mauthoor was the victor in the Restricted Singles defeating Adam Nutland 10, 11, -8, 7. Veteran Lorestas Trumpauskas had the win in the oldest age group 5, 6, 8 with Ferxey Ayala the runner-up.

## Crawley Grand Prix: 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> September 2023

The first Grand Prix of the 2023/24 season took place in Crawley over 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The usual format was in operation with banded events on Saturday and Men's and Women's Singles, Under 21, Veteran and Restricted events on Sunday. It was a busy two days with a good entry of 167 men but only 32 women.

Mihai Nemaucic, seeded 10, won the Men's Singles final with a win over Lorestas Trumpauskas, seeded 11, and Yat Poon defeated Tianer Yu in the Women's final which was according to ranking.



*Mihai Nemaucic and Yat Poon  
Photos by Michael Loveder*

Larry Trumpauskas won the Under 21 Men's Singles final defeating Isaac Kingham whilst Poon made it a double victory over the weekend by taking the Under 21 Women's title beating Ella Pashley in that final.

Lorestas Trumpauskas won the Veterans' Open event, starting the season as he finished the last one, so a very successful weekend for the Trumpauskas household. Lorestas beat Rory Scott, Ireland, in his final.

## Euro Mini Championships: 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> August 2023: Schiltigheim, France

Over 400 players born in 2010 or 2012 from 31 countries took part in the annual Euro Mini Championships in Schiltigheim and our intrepid photographer, Michael Loveder, was there once again to cover the action. Although the title is the Euro Minis there was a smattering of players from countries outside Europe as well to add a worldwide flavour to the tournament. There are always plenty of matches with group stages followed by main and consolation groups and then positional matches.

Three English players played in the 2010 boys' category – Adam Alibhai, Ryan Goodier and Abraham Sellado. Bly Twomey was the sole girl in this age category.

The younger 2012 English players were Hannah Saunders and Amber Lemmon for the girls with Zihan Lin and Lewis Wu taking part in the boys' event.

Saunders was the star of the England squad finishing in an impressive ninth position. She got through three group stages before losing in the round of 16. Further successes in three positional play-off matches resulted in that ninth place. Lemmon, although not getting into the main draw finished a creditable third place in the consolation event.



*Bly Twomey, Amber Lemmon, Hannah Saunders*

Twomey made the main draw in the 2010 category but lost in the round of 32 and the positional play-off matches left her in 24<sup>th</sup> place.

The 2012 boys' competition saw both England players not quite able to make it to the main draw. Lin and Wu both lost in the round of 32 and so it was a 17<sup>th</sup> place finish for the pair.



*Zihan Lin, Lewis Wu*

In the older age group Alibhai and Sellado got through their first three group stages but then lost out at the fourth group stage placing them in the consolation event where they went out in the round of 32 placing them in 17<sup>th</sup> position. Goodier also did not make the main draw losing four of his six group matches before winning three from five in the consolation groups and so placed 57<sup>th</sup>.



*Adam Alibhai, Abraham Sellado, Ryan Goodier*

## Can You Help Michael Loveder



*Michael Loveder  
by Mike Rhodes*

We are always thankful when photographers allow us to use their images at no cost. Table Tennis Times would be pretty dull without any photographs.

Michael Loveder has been granted accreditation at the Paralympics in Paris next year but he has to pay his own costs. Paris 24 have offered Michael the cheapest accommodation they have available in the area for the Paralympics – at just over £2,000 for bed and breakfast. Taking into account travel, meals etc the total is likely to be in the region of £2,500.

A Crowdfunding page has been set up to try and raise some money towards this cost. If like us, you appreciate looking at Michael’s pictures and look forward to seeing more from the Paralympics and would like to make a contribution then go to his Just Giving page.

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/michael-loveder>

## Table Tennis Artwork



For those of you with an appreciation of artwork we thought you would like to see this photograph of a rather lovely wooden sculpture sent to us by our dear friend, Didier Andre, of his daughter, Christel.

## Spotlight on Ian Harrison, England International

### All photos from the Ian Harrison Collection

When a 12-year-old schoolboy asked for a table tennis set for Christmas he couldn't have known that it would lead to becoming England number one with a world ranking of 13, nor that it would lead to travelling around the world with many adventures and experiences along the way.

The start of the burgeoning career wasn't that auspicious as the first time Ian played in a match at school he was beaten by a fellow pupil. The determination that came to the fore later on was evident this early as Ian went home and practised and practised to make sure he got his revenge. Two months on and he joined the Montpellier Club in Cheltenham and by the start of the 1952 season he was in the Cheltenham Junior Boys' team and won the Cheltenham Junior Boys' Singles at the end of the season.

Ian's rise was meteoric. His continued progress led to a place in the Cheltenham Senior team the following season and one year later he earned his first England Junior cap: a match against Wales on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1955 in Worthing. The team of Ian, Tony Cornell, Terry Densham and Laurie Landry won 9-1. Ian won both his singles and the doubles with Cornell.

Another season and progress continued as Ian gained his first England Senior cap on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1956 when he faced France in his home town of Cheltenham and it was a successful outcome as England won 7-2 with a hat-trick of wins for the young Gloucestershire player.

The English Open took place in Manchester from 27<sup>th</sup> February-2<sup>nd</sup> March 1956 and Ian came away with two junior titles as he beat Laurie Landry in the final of the Junior Boys' Singles and with Kevin Edwards beat Landry and Tarling in the Junior Boys' Doubles – three Cheltenham lads in the final. There was a third medal in the Junior Mixed Doubles where he reached the semi-final with Mikki McKeekin.

16<sup>th</sup> March 1956 saw a further junior international, another win against Wales, this time in Aberdare. 8-2 in favour of England with two wins for Ian in the singles and a win with Keith Tarling in the doubles. John Collins and George Gladwish made up the rest of the team.

All this and Ian was still only 16 years old.



*Back: Tommy Sears npc, Keith Tarling, John Collins, George Gladwish, Ian Harrison with Welsh team.*

Ian was certainly in the right place at the right time. He was born in Tunbridge Wells in 1939 but moved to Cheltenham with his mother when war broke out and stayed there until he was 21. At the time it was a hot

bed of table tennis talent in and around the town. Top juniors Keith Tarling, Kevin Edwards and David Griffiths vied for places and at senior level there was Bob Griffin, Peter Cruwys who all represented Cheltenham, and, travelling in from Gloucester, were Bryan Merrett and Roy Morley. Plenty of strong competition and good practice at the Spa Club in Cheltenham. With so many top players it was perhaps unsurprising that Ian played for his country before his county. Later, in order to play with Merrett and Morley, Ian travelled to Gloucester and the three represented that town and had success in winning the Wilmott Cup three times.

All that local practice served Ian well as by 1957 he was selected for the Swaythling Cup team to play in Stockholm with the legendary Richard Bergmann and also alongside Johnny Leach, Brian Kennedy and Alan Rhodes. Quite a daunting prospect for a 17-year-old to play with three World Champions and two of the greatest players to have ever donned an England shirt. Ian conducted himself well winning four of his six matches in the team event and reaching the round of 16 in the Men's Doubles with Brian Kennedy. By selecting Ian, England were looking to the future, wanting to give the young prospect the opportunity and experience to play on the biggest stage. It was shown to be a valuable decision.

Ian could not have imagined where his bat would take him when he first started playing, after the World Championships in Stockholm, the next port of call was Moscow as a member of the team who played in the III International Friendly Youth Games, part of the VI World Festival of Youth, which started on 28<sup>th</sup> July and ran until 11<sup>th</sup> August 1957 with 34,000 sportsmen and women from 131 countries taking part.

As there wasn't much money about the players travelled by boat and train on a journey which took several days. As well as Ian the table tennis contingent comprised Yvonne Baker, Ken Craigie, Eddie Hodson, Ivor Jones, Brian Kennedy, Laurie Landry, Johnny Leach and Bryan Merrett. Bill Vint was Chairman of the Appeals Panel. There were very few foreigners visiting Russia at this time, Ian succinctly put it "the only visitors were spies or diplomats".

It was quite an eventful journey on the way home. The team returned with the British Water Polo team who had paid to travel first class. When they all reached the Russian border, still in communist Europe, there were no first-class carriages, communism = equality. The water polo players refused to travel in the basic carriages which were on offer, insisting they had paid for first class and that was what they wanted. The table tennis team stayed close to them. There was an impasse. So, the train carriage they were in was shunted into a siding and there they stayed for three days. Food was given to them which was passed through the train window.

Eventually, a carriage was put on a train taking them westwards but there was a lot of curiosity and hostility from other passengers. Some wanted to look and see what the upgraded carriage was like while others objected to the higher status of the foreigners. In the end they had to be barricaded in but eventually arrived home safely.

With his junior days behind him, Ian became a mainstay of the England team for the next 13 years during which time he gained 178 caps. By the end of the 1956/57 season he was England's number one and stayed there for the next seven years – an impressive record, his highest world ranking was 13. Ian was a regular on the domestic Open circuit and won over 100 Men's Singles titles during his career.

However, it was on the international stage that Ian was making his mark. He played in the first European Championships in 1958 in Budapest, Hungary, the team finished fifth and Ian won eight of his 12 matches in the team event, the other players were Brian Kennedy, Bryan Merrett and Alan Rhodes. The World and European Championships were then held alternate years and so it was a visit to Dortmund in West Germany in March 1959 for his second appearance at a World Championships which led to the best performance by a team member with 11 wins from 15 matches, England beating seven teams and losing only two. Along with Jeff Ingber, Brian Kennedy, Johnny Leach and Michael Thornhill, the team finished ninth. 1960 saw a bronze medal at the European Championships in Zagreb, Yugoslavia, the team of Ian, Derek Burridge and Bryan Merrett finishing third.



*European Championships bronze medallists 1960. NPC Ron Crayden, Ian Harrison, Derek Burridge, Bryan Merrett.*

1960 proved to be a wonderful year for Ian, full of numerous triumphs including his proudest achievement – winning the Men’s Singles at the English Open in March at the Royal Albert Hall in London, beating the Hungarian refugee, Joseph Somogyi, in the final. Ian also won the Mixed Doubles with Diane Rowe and was a semi-finalist in the Men’s Doubles with Jeff Ingber. Later in the year, in September, at the second English Closed, Ian won the Men’s Singles title. The stellar year resulted in Ian being awarded the Victor Barna Award for the best performance by an England player. He became the only English born player to hold both the Open and Closed titles at the same time and the only player to have won those and the Junior Boys’ Singles. Ian made it a double triumph at the Closed with Bryan Merrett in the Men’s Doubles, the player who had thwarted him in the first English Closed Men’s Singles final in January. Ian won two silver medals in that first championships, his second with Yvonne Baker in the Mixed Doubles.



*Ian with the Cup and English Open Mixed Doubles and Men's Singles trophies*

So far, travel had remained within Europe but the trip of a lifetime came Ian’s way as he was selected to play in the World Championships in Peking in April 1961. Due to the cost, it was only a small handful of players who went, travelling via Russia with several refuelling stops on the way. Jeff Ingber and Bryan Merrett made up the Men’s team and Diane Rowe and Jean Harrower the ladies. It was the first time any World Championships for any sport had been played in China. The country had been closed to foreign visitors for many years and it

wasn't long before the borders were again closed and not reopened until the renowned Ping Pong Diplomacy of 1971. Ian was the star of the Men's team winning 17 from 21 matches and this included a stunning win over World Champion Ichiro Ogimura of Japan in the team event. The team just missed out on a medal finishing second in their group and fourth overall.

The arena was huge, seating 12,000 spectators and each day there were three sessions and every one was filled to capacity with a different crowd each time.

There was time to visit some of the sights while in China including the Great Wall where the players were greeted with a spontaneous outburst of applause as they walked along the famous path. What was significant was that everyone wore the same style of clothing in either dark blue or khaki. The only difference seemed to be in the quality of material for those with a higher status. Ian visited China again recently and the difference was quite remarkable, where previously there had been rice fields, there were now large residential areas, where there had been nothing more than bikes to travel on, now there were cars. Before clothing was restricted to 'Mao' uniforms, now clothing was light, bright and colourful. The noticeable poverty in 1961 was replaced with a healthy-looking population.



*The Great Wall of China, Ian Harrison and Ron Crayden*

The summers of 1960 and 1961 saw Ian passing on his knowledge and experience as a coach at Butlin's Holiday Camp in Clacton. An enjoyable time and one which benefitted many youngsters.



*Ian signing autographs at Butlin's Holiday Camp, Clacton*

There was a second visit to Russia in October 1961. Ian, Jeff Ingber and Stan Jacobson, captained by Len Adams, were supposed to play three internationals but once they arrived in Russia, they found the itinerary had been



*Ian Harrison, Stan Jacobson, Len Adams plus Russian minder*

changed and now it was one international plus three tournaments. Our players were not impressed. It wasn't a successful trip, the only international, played the day after arriving, went Russia's way 7-2. Tournaments then followed in Moscow, (Men's Singles runner-up, Men's Doubles runner-up with Jeff Ingber), Leningrad (Men's Singles third, Men's Doubles winner with Jeff Ingber) and Vilnius (Winner of Men's Singles and Men's Doubles, the latter with Jeff Ingber). On the journey home the team stopped in Warsaw for a match against Poland which England won 5-4, finishing the tour on a high note.

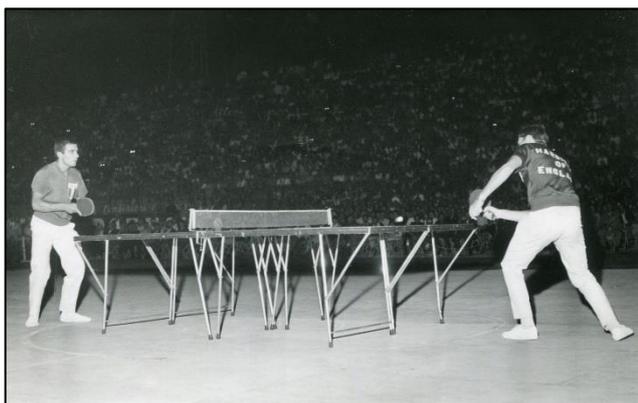
October 1963 saw Ian leave the shores of England to play in Sweden for several months wanting wider experience than that provided on the domestic scene and to gain more experience. He joined Hans Alser at his club for what proved to be a very beneficial time. Sweden was the top team in Europe and third in the world behind China and Japan. They had achieved this by accepting the change to sponge – at a time when it was banned in England – even producing their own rubbers and having Ichiro Ogimura to help them use it to the best advantage. Everything was based around a club, no dingy and dark halls, but all had modern premises with central heating and showers.



*Hans Alser, bottom centre, Ian Harrison, bottom right*

In 1965 Ian took over from Richard Bergmann for a summer season with the Harlem Globetrotters. It was a 13-week tour of Europe and the Near East visiting 14 countries and covering 40,000 miles mostly by coach but at one time took 15 flights in one week.

Ian met Richard Bergmann at Waterloo Station, London where Richard proceeded to take out from two bags the special table which was in quarters and erect it in the middle of the concourse during rush hour – to some very strange looks. After being shown how to set the table up Ian travelled to Federal Germany for the first



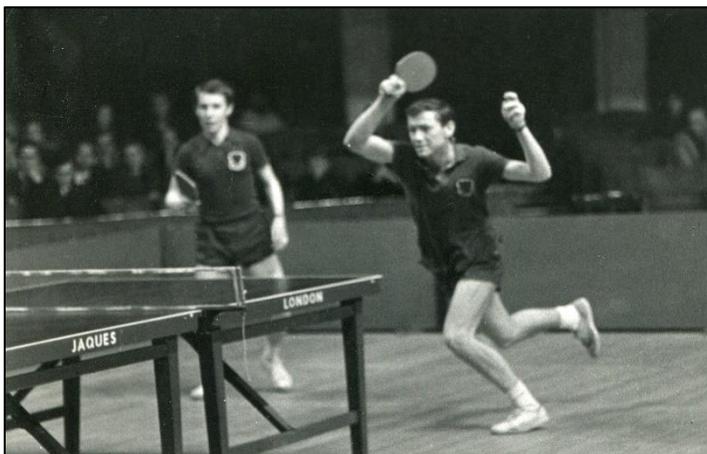
*Gerard Chergui and Ian Harrison*

exhibition match which took place during the interval of the Globetrotters match. It wasn't a success as Ian and Frenchman Gerard Chergui played it straight and not as an entertaining exhibition. A phone call from the Globetrotters had Richard make a quick dash to Germany and showed the pair how to make it an entertaining exhibition lobbing the ball up and then playing the last few points competitively. Success followed, despite the difficulties at times, particularly when they had to play in the middle of a football field in wet and windy weather in front of 40,000 plus

spectators. It was an art just to keep the ball on the table.

In 1969 Ian retired from playing table tennis. He was working full time as a buyer for Simpsons whereas other players were playing full time and Ian could not keep up the standard he needed against the other top players. After losing to Denis Neale in the English Closed he decided to call it a day. Earlier he had been offered the opportunity to tour New Zealand. He had to make a choice – work or table tennis. The decision to be made was to concentrate on his career and so one of England's top players retired from the game.

Altogether Ian played in six World Championships, six European Championships and six Quadrangular tournaments. He represented England in the first European League season and played international matches against China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, West Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland, USA, Yugoslavia and Wales. He won a total of 178 senior caps and reached a world high of 13. At the English Open he won the two gold medals, two silver and four bronze plus two gold and one bronze at junior level. The English Closed saw two



*Chester Barnes and Ian Harrison in action*

Men's Singles wins in September 1960 and in 1967, five Men's Doubles wins – one with Bryan Merrett and four with Chester Barnes (who he enjoyed playing with the most) and one Mixed Doubles win. There were



*Ian Harrison, Roy Morley, Bryan Merrett celebrating their 1964 Wilmott Cup victory*

also four silver medals and four bronze. He twice won the Top 10 tournament and was a member of the Gloucester team which won the Wilmott Cup four times. During his playing career Ian had many impressive victories, not only Ichiro Ogimura in the World Championships of 1961 but also three times World Champion, China's Chuang Tse-Tung (Zhuang Zedong).

The list of achievements is impressive but even more so when it is realised that originally Ian played, as did everyone, with a pimped rubber bat. He made the change from being a superb defender to a more attacking player with the advent of sponge. Hours and hours of practise enabled him to retain his number one spot during the transition. Ian was the only player to successfully transfer to the new medium.

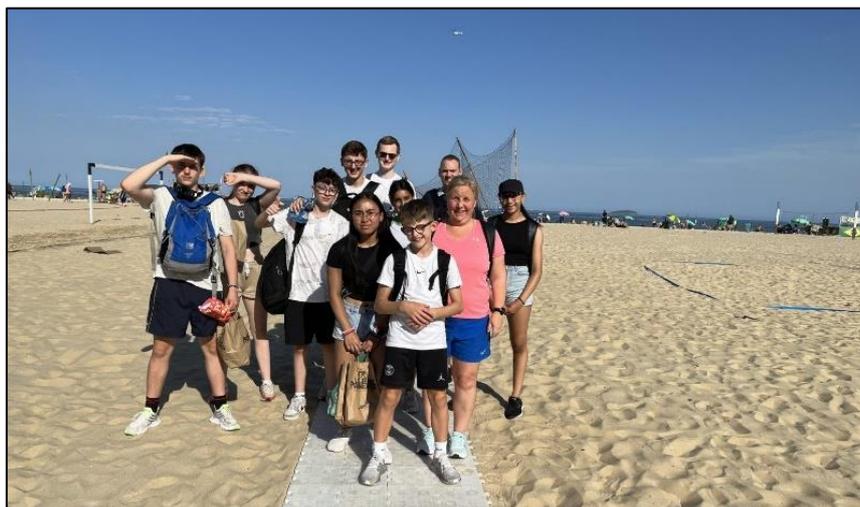
In 2022 Ian was made a Vice-President of Table Tennis England.

*Harvey and I must express our grateful thanks to Ian for sharing his story with us over two very long and delightful lunch times which extended considerably into the afternoon. We thank Ian, and his wife, Jennifer, for their hospitality when we visited them. It was fascinating listening to Ian and hearing about a time when table tennis and the world were so different. We also thank Ian for lending his priceless collection of photographs several of which have been used in this article.*

*Diane Webb*

## International School Sport Federation (ISF) World Schools Gymnasiade Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: 19<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> August 2023 Photos courtesy of Gail Johns

A group of England's best Under 15s competed in the second World Schools Gymnasiade in Rio, a multi-sport event with more than 2,000 competitors in 18 sports. It wasn't just about competing though as the players visited some of the sights of the city, took part in cultural activities and exchanges and attended workshops. What a wonderful experience for Naomi Coker, Sienna Jetha, Ella Pashley, Jonabel Taguibao, Isaac Kingham, Ralph Pattison, Kacper Piwowar and Max Radiven and what a great way to spend a week of your summer holidays.



*On Copacabana Beach*

It was certainly a very competitive tournament with China dominating, nearly all our players lost to a Chinese player in their groups, with only Ella Pashley making it through to the quarter-finals.

There was a consolation mixed event for those not reaching the quarter-finals which Jetha partnered by a Romanian won and Piwowar with his Brazilian partner finished runners-up.

There was a medal for the squad as the boys' team finished third whilst the girls just missed out finishing fourth.

A nice touch was the receipt of the Fair Play Award for the squad.



*The England squad and team captains*

Overall, taking into account all sports, England finished in fourth place with 22 gold medals. It was the home nation, Brazil, who topped the table with China second and Chinese Taipei third. A total of 39 countries took part and every continent was represented.

Naomi Coker says of the experience: “It was a chance in a lifetime experience and I am very grateful to have been selected as part of the squad. It was a fantastic opportunity to learn about different cultures and play against different countries. The coaches treated everyone equally and I would love to do it again given the chance”.

### **European Para Championships: 4<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> September 2023, Sheffield**

It was 2012 when the last major para event was held at the English Institute of Sport (EIS) in Sheffield when the Factor 40 Championships were held, the test event for the Olympics. Several players then are still at the top of their game and so with the EIS being their training ground, the 18 GB players were on familiar territory.

35 countries participated with 267 players entering in the ten para classes - five wheelchair and five standing. Singles and doubles matches were played, but no team events this time. The winners of the singles all automatically qualified for the Paralympics in Paris in 2024. There was one GB player who achieved that – Will Bayley MBE who will no doubt try and emulate his gold medal winning performance in Rio.

Although there was only one gold medal for the GB squad there were a good number of silver and bronze medals from a wide range of categories. A special mention should be made of Bly Twomey who at only 13 and in her first major championships won a bronze medal in Women’s Class 7 beating the world number six and only losing in the group to the world champion 9, 10, 14.

Men’s Class 1: Rob Davies – silver, Thomas Matthews - bronze

Men’s Class 5: Jack Hunter-Spivey – silver

Men’s Class 6: Martin Perry - bronze

Men’s Class 7: Will Bayley – gold



*Thomas Matthews, Will Bayley, Rob Davies*

Women’s Class 6: Felicity Pickard – bronze

Women’s Class 7: Bly Twomey - bronze

Women’s Class 8: Grace Williams – silver



*Bly Twomey*

Men's Doubles Class 14: Aaron McKibbin & Martin Perry – bronze

Men's Doubles Class 18: Joshua Stacey & Ross Wilson – bronze

Women's Doubles Class 14: Felicity Pickard & Grace Williams - bronze

Mixed Doubles Class 10: Jack Hunter-Spivey & Megan Shackleton – silver



*Aaron McKibbin & Martin Perry   Ross Wilson & Joshua Stacey*



*Grace Williams & Felicity Pickard   Jack Hunter-Spivey & Megan Shackleton*

We are sure many of these players will be joining Will Bayley in Paris through the qualification process.

## **ITTF AGM and Summit**

The ITTF AGM and Summit took place in Bangkok, Thailand from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023. England's chairman Sandra Deaton, CEO Adrian Christy and Richard Scruton attended. It was an important AGM for England as it was here that it was to be decided whether or not England would be awarded the centenary World Championships in 2026. There was only one other bid and that was from Bangkok and although they gave an excellent presentation the vote went in favour of England. There was a strong emphasis on the historical aspect of celebrating the centenary championships in the city of London where the very first was held in 1926. It was also pleasing to note that the number of teams in the Championships will be increased to 64 following a reduction in numbers over the last few years.

It was also announced that the World Youth Championships will be held in Romania in 2025 and Bahrain in 2026.

The next ITTF Summit is to be held during the World Championships in Busan, Korea next February.

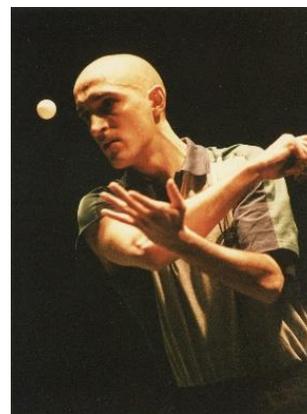
## What was Happening 20 Years Ago: 2003

- ❖ Alex Green and Claire Wilson were the recipients of the first Mike Watts Achievement Award for junior players, boy and girl, eligible to play for England who had improved their rating list points by the highest number between 1<sup>st</sup> August and 31<sup>st</sup> July, excluding the top five players in each category.
- ❖ Iris Moss received the Queen's Jubilee Award.



*Nicola Deaton*

- ❖ Matthew Syed and Nicola Deaton held the England senior number one positions at the start of the year. Juniors were Dale Barham and Joanna Parker, Cadets - Darius Knight and Kelly Sibley, Under 13s - Paul Drinkhall and Lauren Springthorpe whilst brother and sister Chris Rogers and Karen Smith (nee Rogers) topped the Veterans list. Andrew Baggaley later in the year took over the number one spot making him the youngest number one for 20 years before Syed reclaimed the spot. Helen Lower and then Joanna Parker succeeded Deaton as the ladies number one.



*Matthew Syed*

- ❖ The Newtonabbey Grand Prix in Ireland was refereed by Mick Strode assisted by Harvey Webb, the two also ran a Tournament Organisers course. Ryan Jenkins won the Men's Singles and Liu Na the Women's with England's Clive Carthy taking the Veterans' title.
- ❖ ITTF Global Junior Programme commenced 1<sup>st</sup> January 2003.
- ❖ Plymouth League celebrated 100 years.
- ❖ London Progress won the Senior British League Premier Division for the fifth consecutive year, also the Wilmott Cup and Ormesby Cup, both for the fifth year. Their players included Jason Sugrue, Cris Sladden and Marco Essomba. Grove won the Women's British League Premier Division with Naomi Owen, Louise Durrant and Zhao Shuang.



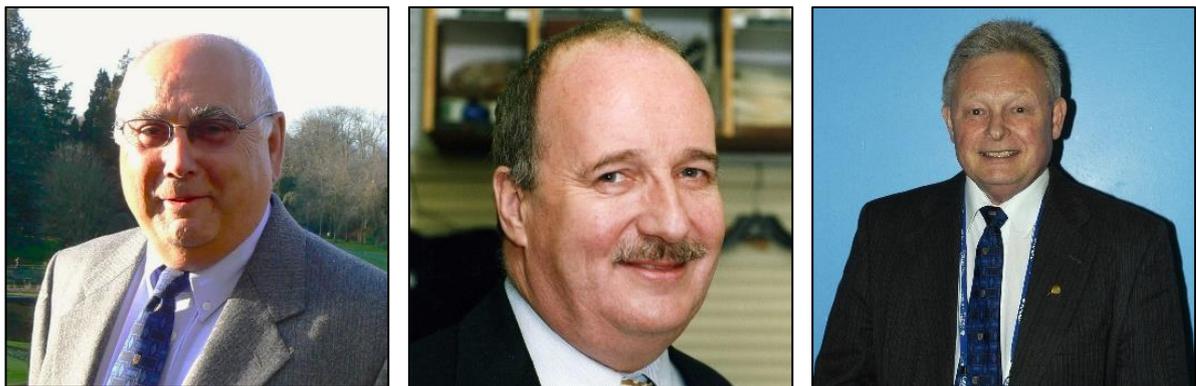
*Paul Drinkhall, Richard Caborn MP, Darius Knight*

- ❖ Richard Caborn, Minister of Sport attended the National Championships at Ponds Forge in Sheffield when the Men's Singles was won by 37-year-old Alan Cooke for the fourth time beating Andrew Baggaley in a titanic battle in the final. The Women's Singles saw the biggest shock for many years as Lindsey Thornton beat the number one seed, Nicola Deaton, in Deaton's first match and she immediately afterwards announced her retirement so she could concentrate on her studies at Nottingham University. Andrea Holt made it a fourth win in the Women's Singles with Helen Lower once again runner-up. Two aspiring

teenagers, Joanna Parker and Georgina Walker, reached the semi-finals. Teenagers Andrew Rushton and Bryn Drinkhall were runners-up in the Men's Doubles after disposing of last year's Commonwealth Games gold medallists, Baggaley and Gareth Herbert, but they succumbed to Alex Perry and Terry Young in the final. The Women's Doubles title went to Deaton and Kubrat Owolabi who beat Joanna Parker and Abigail Embling. The Mixed Doubles crown went to Perry and Lower leaving Rushton and Owolabi as runners-up.

The Men's Under 21 title went to Rushton who defeated his doubles partner, Bryn Drinkhall, who had earlier beaten his younger brother, Paul, in the semis. Georgina Walker gained her third victory in the corresponding Under 21 Women's Singles when she beat Joanna Parker. Veterans' titles went to David Harding and Judy Morley.

- ❖ Alex Murdoch was elected the new ETTA Chairman defeating standing Chairman, Alan Ransome, OBE. Mike Johns was elected as Deputy Chairman and Martin Clark as Treasurer. The start of the new era.



*Alex Murdoch, Mike Johns, Martin Clark*

- ❖ At the European Championships England's men (Baggaley, Herbert, Perry, Rushton) finished 16<sup>th</sup> and the very young women's team (Helen Lower, Joanna Parker, Kelly Sibley (14 years) and Georgina Walker) finished 23<sup>rd</sup>. Baggaley had the best win of his career beating world number 12, Peter Karlsson of Sweden.
- ❖ The European League was discontinued with a European Championships Qualification tournament taking its place.
- ❖ Lottery funding to the ETTA was reduced which resulted in the closure of the Table Tennis Academy in Nottingham as well as job losses.
- ❖ A new initiative 'Table Tennis for Kids' came into being in London to help youngsters play, particularly in deprived areas.
- ❖ The dominance of the Chinese was broken at the World Championships in Paris as Austria's Werner Schlager won the Men's Singles title.
- ❖ ITTF rules were amended so that when playing, the free arm had to be removed immediately once the ball had left the hand, no more shielding the ball.
- ❖ National Junior Masters Champions were Georgina Walker and Peter Cleminson whilst the Cadet Masters were won by Kelly Sibley and Paul Drinkhall. It was a double celebration for the Drinkhall family at the Junior and Cadet National Championships as Bryn won the Junior Boys' Singles and Paul

the Cadet title, Paul was also a semi-finalist in the Junior event. Georgina Walker continued her successes for the season winning the Junior Girls' trophy and Kelly Sibley was victorious in the Cadet Girls' final.

- ❖ Paul Drinkhall, Bradley Evans, Darius Knight and Tim Yarnall won the European Cadet (Under 15) Six Nations in Sweden.

- ❖ The Continental Masters took place at The Crucible in Sheffield in August, very aptly named as the event took place in searing heat on the hottest day of the year in over 100 degrees Fahrenheit. It was a star-studded line up with Timo Boll (the new world number one at 21 years), Kalinikos Kreanga, Vladimir Samsonov, Matthew Syed, Jan-Ove Waldner and Chen Weixing vying for the title. Paul Andrews, managing director of Ocean International Communications in Brighton was the sponsor and all the players were transported in style to and from Sheffield in a stretch limousine accompanied by their partners. Matthew Syed as well as playing in the event was the man behind the venture. It was the young Boll who survived the heat to take the title. For those who were unable to get a ticket an hour's long coverage on BBC Grandstand enabled them to watch the best of the action.



*Timo Boll, World Number 1 and Continental Masters Winner*

- ❖ Andrews also sponsored the Sussex Open Grand Prix in October and there was another cast of top international players with Chen Weixing winning the Men's Singles and Tong Feiming the Women's. One of the world's most popular players, Andrezej Grubba from Poland, won the Veterans event beating compatriot Lesek Kucharski in the final. Another feast for table tennis aficionados.



*Les Smith*

- ❖ At the ETTA AGM Les Smith was made an Honorary Life Member and Doreen Nightingale was made a Vice-President. The Malcolm Scott Award went to Doreen Stannard, Mick Strode was the recipient of the Ivor Montagu Award and Andrew Baggaley and Gareth Herbert shared the Victor Barna Award. (The Johnny Leach Award was presented later in the year to Kelly Sibley and Georgina Walker.) The 100 Club dinner, organised by Doreen Stannard, following the AGM, was a leisurely cruise out of Pitstone Wharf, with a delicious fish and chip supper washed down with plenty of wine and beer.
- ❖ British League was changed from 14 Sundays to four weekends for all divisions and prize money was increased.
- ❖ At the Teaching and Training Conference at Lilleshall in September former World Champion, Stellan Bengtsson was the keynote speaker.
- ❖ The first Junior World Championships were held in Santiago, Chile. Li Hu and Li Qian both of China were the two winners.



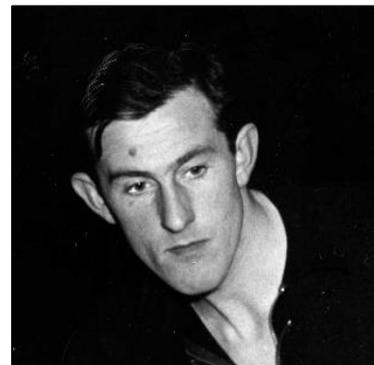
*Back Bryn Drinkhall, Craig Bryant, Peter Cleminson.  
Front Helen Lower, Georgina Walker, Joanna Parker*

❖ The Senior Six Nations held in Largs, Scotland, in September saw Helen Lower, Joanna Parker and Georgina Walker win the Women’s Team event and Lower beating Walker in the Singles. A youthful Men’s Team with Craig Bryant, Peter Cleminson and Bryn Drinkhall came fourth. Welsh top duo Adam Robertson and Ryan Jenkins battled for the Men’s Singles title with Robertson coming out on top.

❖ A new 12 table centre was opened at Ormesby.

❖ The Portuguese Junior Open saw considerable success for England’s players. Joanna Parker won the Junior Girls’ Singles, Paul Drinkhall and Darius Knight won the Cadet Boys’ Team event, Kelly Sibley got a silver in the Cadet Girls’ Singles, there were bronze medals for both Drinkhall and Knight in the Cadet Boys’ Singles and another bronze for the Junior Girls’ Team with Parker, Sibley and Georgina Walker.

The year saw several eminent players and officials pass away. Wendy Burbush (nee Woodhead) – England’s only ever Mixed Doubles World Champion, she played with Laszlo Bellak of Hungary in 1938, also a silver medallist in the Women’s Doubles; David Kaffell – former England international who first played for England in 1931/32 season; Arthur Upton – ETTA, Lancashire and Liverpool Honorary Life Member, President of Lancashire County and Liverpool League; Kathy Thompson (nee Best) - former England international who had won silver and bronze medals at World Championships; Maurice Shaffner OBE – ETTA Vice-President and Yorkshire County President for over 50 years, who successfully prosecuted the Yorkshire Ripper; Ken Craigie – former England international, a bronze medallist in the Swaythling Cup.



*Top: Wendy Burbush (Woodhead), David Kaffell, Arthur Upton  
Bottom: Kathy Thomson (Best), Maurice Shaffner OBE, Ken Craigie*

## European Championships – Finals

10<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> September 2023: Malmo, Sweden

All photos by Manfred Schillings courtesy of the ETTU

Both England's teams had qualified for the finals of the European Championships and it was familiar faces in the Men's Team with Paul Drinkhall, Tom Jarvis, Liam Pitchford and Sam Walker representing England. The Women's Team saw Mollie Patterson gain her first senior international cap whilst Jasmin Wong had only previously played in the Qualifying tournament for this event leaving Emily Bolton as the senior partner.

The Men's Team won their group, just. They were the highest ranked team and won their first match against Norway reasonably comfortably (Walker 0-1, Drinkhall 2-0, Jarvis 1-0). Their second match against Romania was a much closer affair and the team scraped through. England were 2-0 down with Drinkhall and Pitchford both losing their first matches before Jarvis set them on the road to victory winning the third. Pitchford then went on the table and he managed the win at the last knockings with the score 9, -9, -4, 13, 8 having saved three match points in the fourth game. With the score level, Drinkhall closed the match with an easier 3-0 win.



*Sam Walker and Tom Jarvis*

Finishing top of the group put England into the round of 16 and a seemingly good draw against a group runner-up. This led to a match against Hungary but this time England were on the losing end of a 3-2 result. Drinkhall lost both his matches and Jarvis his one. Pitchford gained two wins but overall it was not enough to put the men through into the next round.

New coach, John Murphy from Ireland, was in charge of the men and the women had Andrea Ostersejk of Slovenia in their corner.



*Paul Drinkhall and Liam Pitchford*

The young and inexperienced Women's Team could not have had a more difficult first match playing the holders and number one seeds, Germany. They went down 3-0, all three players not surprisingly losing their matches to the very strong German team who went through the whole tournament winning all matches 3-0. Bolton, Patterson and Wong then faced Austria, another strong team, and although the result was the same the three ladies all produced stronger performances with Patterson taking an end off Anastasia Sterner. Although not getting out of their group the experience of playing at a major international tournament will have stood the three women in good stead.



*Emily Bolton and Jasmin Wong*



*Mollie Patterson*

Wales ladies also qualified for the finals but they too failed to get out of their group losing to Luxembourg and Poland. It was Charlotte Carey, Anna Hursey and Lara Whitton who made up their team.

Sweden beat Germany in the Men's Team final, Germany were without three of their top players, Dang Qui, Dimitrij Ovtcharov and Patrick Franziska, but had the benefit of Timo Boll who had returned from long term injury. The win put Sweden through not only into the World Championships finals in Busan in February 2024 but also gave them direct passage to the Olympic Games in Paris next year. France and Portugal were the semi-finalists.

Germany's women again won the female team event with victory over Romania in the final. France and Portugal were again semi-finalists matching their men's teams. The German win meant they automatically qualified to play in both the World Championships and the Olympic Games in 2024.

Other automatic qualifications for the World Championships went to all quarter-finalists. There are four more European places available in each event for the highest ranked teams as at October 2023 from those who reached the last 16. In all probability England's men should qualify but regrettably not the women.

**Europe Youth Top 10**  
**29<sup>th</sup> September-1<sup>st</sup> October 2023: Bucharest, Romania**  
Photos courtesy of the ETTU

No participants from England or Great Britain at this year's tournament. Ralph Pattison must be the unluckiest player as he had moved up to ninth on the Cadet Boys European ranking list in September but it was one ranking list too late to play in the tournament. Anna Hursey from Wales at number two in the junior list, although eligible, did not play.

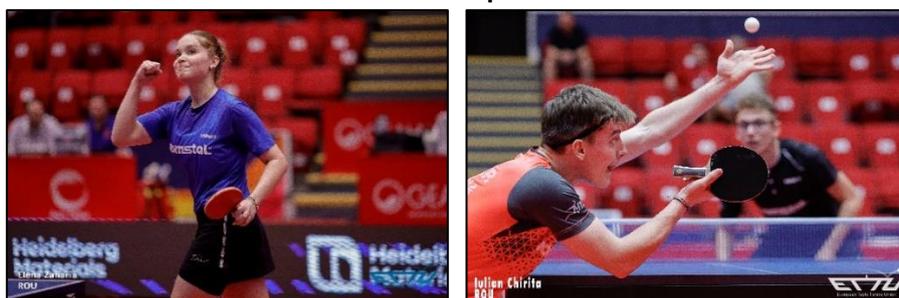
In the Junior Girls (U19), it was a victory, at last, for Elena Zaharia who was on home ground after finishing second in the last two tournaments and third in 2020: she won all her nine matches. Mia Griesel of Germany was second and Poland's Zuzanna Wielgos third.

It was a hat trick for Romania in the Junior Boys' Singles with Iulian Chirita successfully defending his title, losing one match. Compatriot, Eduard Ionescu, the number one seed, took the silver – also losing one match - and third place went to Darius Movileanu who won five and lost four matches. This too was on countback with France's Hugo Deschamps the unlucky player who missed out on a medal.

Leana Hochart of France was the Cadet Girls' champion and moved up from her second place last year, remaining undefeated throughout the three days. Three players finished level on the number of matches won and lost – 6 to 3 – and it was Koharu Itagaki of Germany who finished up with the silver medal and Hanka Kodetova of Czechia the bronze after the maths had been worked out. Nina Guo Zheng of France was the player who finished fourth.

It was proving to be a good year for Tiago Abiodun of Portugal as he added the Cadet Boys' title to his European Youth title earned last month. Last year in this tournament he finished in sixth place, so a big improvement. Abiodun went through the three days without a loss. Damain Floro of Slovakia won seven and lost two and received the silver medal and Patryk Zyworonek of Poland was third.

**The Champions**



*Elena Zaharia and Iulian Chirita*



*Leana Hochart and Tiago Abiodun*

## The Good News Page

- \* We start with the news that at the ITTF Summit in Bangkok the vote went in England's favour for the World Team Championships in London in 2026. Thailand was the only other country who had put in a bid. Several other countries had initially expressed interest but had not followed up. Wembley Arena is the main venue with practice facilities at Wembley Stadium. They will take place in May 2026, the final dates are to be confirmed. These will be the Centenary Championships as the first was held in London in 1926. It will be the eighth time the Worlds have been held in England with Birmingham in 1977 and Manchester in 1997 the last two. A new company is to be set up to deliver the championships and other major events and to manage the finances.
- \* More good news on the international front as England are to host a WTT Feeder event in Manchester from 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> February 2024. It is the first time since the 2011 English Open, that an event of this nature is being held in England, and although not quite at the same level as that tournament nonetheless it will give the opportunity to see some of the best players in the world.
- \* Players from the Isle of Wight won a bronze medal at the Island Games held in Guernsey, a good result for them in their centenary year.
- \* David McBeath has been invited to join the first professional circuit in the USA playing for Texas Smash in the West Division of the Major Table Tennis League comprising 64 players from 24 countries.
- \* Congratulations to Kacper Piwowar of Devon and Parmis Ahsani of Middlesex who received the Mike Watts Achievement Award for the two junior players, male and female, who gained the most ranking points during the 2022/23 season.
- \* National Sporting Heritage Day took place on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and to help mark the occasion, thanks to TTE, Diane attended a study day at Wimbledon where there were a number of likeminded sports archivists, researchers and historians, all working to preserve the heritage of sporting organisations. There were a number of interesting and informative speakers and the day was topped off with a guided tour around the grounds and museum.



*David McBeath by Alan Man*



*Alan Hydes, Bo, Harvey Webb. Photo courtesy of the Chinese Embassy*

- \* Harvey, too, had a rather special day when he and Alan Hydes attended a rather sumptuous reception at the Landmark hotel in London at the invitation of the Chinese Embassy to mark the 74<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.
- \* Congratulations to Dennis Calver, international umpire, on his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on 16<sup>th</sup> September and 90<sup>th</sup> birthday greetings to Jose Ransome on 28<sup>th</sup> October.
- \* Well done to the England VETTS team who went to Dublin for the Home Countries Veterans Championships and came home with 15 gold medals and 11 silver or bronze.

## WTT Youth Events

### WTT Youth Contender: Tunis, Tunisia: 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Photos courtesy of WTT

U17 BS: Round of 16 – Rohan Dani, Max Radiven

U15 BS: Semi-final - Rohan Dani, Quarter-final – Max Radiven

### WTT Youth Contender: Otocec, Slovenia: 28<sup>th</sup> August-3<sup>rd</sup> September 2023

U19 BS: Round of 64 - Jakub Piwowar, Group – Toby Ellis, Joseph Hunter

U17 BS: Round of 64 – Joseph Hunter

U15 BS: Group – Wilson Zheng

U13 BS: Group - Wilson Zheng

U11 BS: Group – Li Hao Chen

### WTT Youth Contender: Podgorica, Montenegro: 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> October 2023

U19 BS: Round of 16 - Benjamin Piggott, Group – Jakub Piwowar, Felix Thomis

U19 XD: Quarter -final (First round) - Ben Piggott & Alice Nilsson (Swe)

U17 BS: Quarter-final – Jakub Piwowar, Round of 16 – Ralph Pattison, Group – Isaac Kingham, Max Radiven

U17 GS: Round of 16 – Sienna Jetha, Group – Ella Pashley

U15 BS: Runner-up – Isaac Kingham, Semi-final – Max Radiven, Quarter-final – Kacper Piwowar, Ralph Pattison, Round of 16 - Adam Alibhai

U15 GS: Quarter-final – Sienna Jetha, Ella Pashley

U15 XD: Semi-final - Isaac Kingham & Ella Pashley, Quarter-final – Ralph Pattison & Sienna Jetha, Kacper Piwowar & Maja Vanjo (Srb)

U13 BS: Semi-final – Adam Alibhai, Kacper Piwowar



*Isaac Kingham & Ella Pashley*



*Max Radiven*



*Adam Alibhai*



*Kacper Piwowar*

Comment: We have mentioned the low numbers in some WTT events before. In some events there have been only three entries whilst others had seven or eight. It is questionable as to how sustainable some of these competitions are and what benefit they have for the players.

## WTT Senior Events

### WTT Feeder: Havirov, Czechia: 27<sup>th</sup> July-30<sup>th</sup> July 2023

MS: 1<sup>st</sup> Qualifying Round – Connor Green (WR 417) lost to Antonino Amato (Italy - WR 630)

### WTT Contender: Lima, Peru: 31<sup>st</sup> July-6<sup>th</sup> August 2023

MS: Round of 16 - Liam Pitchford (WR 35) lost to Lim Jonghoon (Korea – WR 18), 1<sup>st</sup> Qualifying Round - Tom Jarvis (WR 173) lost to Jinbao Ma (USA – WR 640)

MD: Round of 16 (1<sup>st</sup> match) - Tom Jarvis & Liam Pitchford

XD: Round of 16 (1<sup>st</sup> match) - Liam Pitchford & Anna Hursey (Wal)

### WTT Contender: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: 7<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> August 2023

MS: Round of 64 - Liam Pitchford, Qualifying round 3 - Paul Drinkhall, Tom Jarvis

MD: Quarter-final - Paul Drinkhall & Liam Pitchford

XD: Qualifying Round - Liam Pitchford & Anna Hursey (Wal)

### WTT Feeder: Olomouc, Czechia: 22<sup>nd</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> August 2023

MS: Sam Walker beat Andrei Istrate (Rou - WR 171) in round of 64, lost to Joao Geraldo (Por – WR 46) in Round of 32, Paul Drinkhall (WR 89) lost to Huang Yan-Cheng (Tpe – WR 105) in round of 32, Tom Jarvis (WR 160) lost to Lubomir Jancarik (Cze – WR 97) in Round of 32.

MD: Round of 16 – Tom Jarvis & Martin Allegro (Bel), 1<sup>st</sup> Qualifying Round - Paul Drinkhall & Sam Walker

### WTT Star Contender: Lanzhou, China: 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> October 2023

A surprisingly, relatively, low entry for this Star Contender tournament in China. Paul Drinkhall (WR 91) and Liam Pitchford (WR 32) both entered the Men's Singles in the main draw, Drinkhall in the round of 64 and Pitchford in the round of 32. Drinkhall met Sathiyam Gnanasekaran (WR 107) of India, a rematch of the Commonwealth Games semi-final last summer and it was the same result with Gnanasekaran winning 3-2 with a score of -7, 9, 10, -8, 7. Pitchford's first opponent was Cho Seungmin of Korea Republic (WR 42) and it was a 3-2 win for the Korean.

Drinkhall and Pitchford teamed up for the Men's Doubles and secured the win in their round of 16 match against Jinbao Ma and Jishan Liang of the USA 7, 9, 9. Their quarter-final match should have been against Li Hon Ming and Pau Yik Man of Hong Kong but the English pair withdrew.

Pitchford and Anna Hursey of Wales formed a partnership in the Mixed Doubles and they won their first match in the round of 16 with a 13-11 result in the fifth game against India's Gnanasekaran and Manika Batra. The next opponents were Lin Shidong and Kuai Man of China. It was another match which went to five but this time it was the Chinese pair who won -9, 2, -7, 4, 8.

### WTT Feeder: Stockholm, Sweden: 2<sup>nd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Running at the same time as the Star Contender in China, many of the top European players opted to play in this event instead of travelling to Asia. Tom Jarvis (WR 163), David McBeath (No ranking) and Sam Walker (WR 192) were all participants and all entered the Men's Singles in the main draw round of 64. Jarvis had a superb win in his first match against Jonathan Groth, Denmark (WR 35 and seeded four) -6, 10, 8, -7, 9 and then had a walk over against Hampus Soderlund of Sweden who was injured. This put him through into the round of 16. Beating the number four seed put Jarvis in a good position in the draw but the round of 16 against Steffen Mengel of Germany (WR 420) proved his undoing as he went down 7, 6, 5. Mengel had previously been in the world top 30 and only twelve months ago ranked above Jarvis and his drop in ranking reflects the way the

ranking system works rather than the players ability. McBeath and Walker both went out in the round of 64, McBeath to Dimitrije Levajac of Serbia (WR 279) and Walker to Japan's Kazuki Hamada (WR 319)

Jarvis and Walker paired in the Men's Doubles and won their first match in the main draw against Angel Naranjo and Jabdiel Torres of Puerto Rico 3, 6, 8. They then had to play the number one seeds, Mattias Falck and Kristian Karlsson of Sweden in the quarter-finals and although they put up a good fight it was the Swede's who moved on to the semi-finals with the score 9, -5, 9, 9.

Sam Walker played in the Mixed Doubles with Tatiana Kukulkova of the Slovak Republic, they had a tough first round match against top Swedes, Mattias Falck and Linda Bergstrom, a match which went to five but they ended up on the losing end.

### **WTT Contender: Muscat, Oman: 8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

It was the most successful tournament for some time by English players with Tom Jarvis (WR 163) and Liam Pitchford (WR 33) both standing on the podium.

The Men's Singles saw Pitchford the runner-up to Hugo Calderano of Brazil (WR 5). It was a tight final that went the distance, the final score -6, -1, 8, 0, 4, -10, 7 in favour of the Brazilian. In the round of 32 Pitchford had beaten Cho Seungmin of the Korea Republic (WR 38) by three games to one. His next opponent was Lin Yun-Ju of Chinese Taipei, also a three to one scoreline, an outstanding victory against the world number eight. Sora Matsushima of Japan (WR 50) was next to exit the competition, yet another three one result which set up a semi-final match against Swede, Anton Kallberg (WR 23) and another three one victory.

Jarvis entered the Singles in the qualifying round and went out at the first time of asking to Ng Pak Nam of Hong Kong, China (WR 283), losing 3-2.

Jarvis and Pitchford paired up in the doubles winning their first match 3-1 against Chuang Chih-Yuan and Lin Yun-Ju, Chinese Taipei, there was further success in the quarter-finals 3-2 against Chan Baldwin and You Kwan To, Hong Kong, China before falling at the hands of Kallberg and Christian Karlsson of Sweden 3-0 in the semi-final.

In the Mixed Doubles, Pitchford again played with Anna Hursey, Wales, but they lost their first match in the round of 16 to Wong Xin Ru and Pang Yew En Koen of Singapore.



*Tom Jarvis and Liam Pitchford on their way to a semi-final place  
Photo courtesy of WTT*

## **Blackpool Junior 4\*: 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

The first Junior 4\* Star of the season was held in Blackpool and run with the usual efficiency by the local team. Team events as well as individual events were part of the weekend which saw an excellent entry from the young players with 116 boys and 43 girls.

Winners and Runners-up:

Junior Boys' Team: Grantham 2 (Adam Dennison/Isaac Kingham) beat Grantham 1 (Joseph Marlor/Joseph Dennison)

Junior Girls' Team Grantham (Anaiya Ali/Hannah Silcock (Jey)) beat Wensum (Eva Eccles/Anjali Singh (Irl))

Junior BS: Naphong Boonyaprapa beat Gabriel Schogger

Junior GS: Tianer Yu beat Hannah Silcock (Jey)

U17 BS: Gavin Yuan (Sco) beat Isaac Kingham

U17 GS: Tianer Yu beat Hannah Silcock (Jey)

Cadet Boys' Team: Woodfield Wells/EBATT (Adam Alibhai/Max Radiven) beat Joola Plymouth (Hugo Nguyen/Leo Nguyen)

Cadet Girls' Team: No event

Cadet BS: Max Radiven beat Leo Nguyen

Cadet GS: Eva Eccles beat Alyssa Nguyen

U13 GS: Alyssa Nguyen beat Charlotte Wong

U13 BS: Aarif Li beat Kai Lun Chow

## **Table Tennis England Governance**

- \* The vacant appointed director position to replace Dr Emma Vickers who resigned at the end of March 2023 was eventually filled in July by Mark Boote, a former finance director of Badminton England. Priya Samuel resigned in July but her position is not to be filled until after the new chairman is appointed.
- \* At the Board meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023 the Board members were reminded that the Incoming Chair is the Chair of the Board not of the organisation. The running of the organisation is the responsibility of the CEO. The Board was also reminded that strategy decisions should always be approved by the Board, not Committees.
- \* The vote to appoint the Board's Nominations Committee recommended candidate for the position of Chairman was a six to four split. The candidate who was offered the position did not accept the offer and it has been re-advertised.
- \* The CEO wished to ask Sandra Deaton to remain as an ambassador for the World Championships bid.
- \* Following the re-advertisement of the position of Chairman of the Board the second set of first interviews took place at the end of September 2023. Further details are awaited.
- \* A new Under 23 squad has been created and the five players in it are: Mari Baldwin, Mollie Patterson, Jasmin Wong, Louis Price and Shayan Siraj.
- \* Four clubs have been awarded the status of TTE Pathway Development Centres, Kingfisher in Reading, Joola Plymouth, Greenhouse in London and Ormesby.

## In Memoriam



### Sue Collier

Popular VETTS player and former England international, Sue Collier, passed away suddenly on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2023 aged 56 years.

Well known on the VETTS circuit Sue's table tennis career started many years earlier, when she was 12 years old, in Maidenhead, Berkshire, a county which she represented before moving to Cheshire. A cadet, junior and senior international perhaps her greatest achievement on the international front was at the European Youth Championships in 1981 winning a team silver medal with Lisa Bellinger and Jean Parker. A year previously she had earned her first senior England cap.

It was in 1984 that Sue earned the trip of a lifetime when she won the Beneficial Trust Grand Prix and part of the prize was to visit Korea as part of the National Squad.

In the 1980s and 1990s Sue was a regular on the Open/Grand Prix tournament circuit and a frequent medallist throughout the years. She played in the Israel Open in 1983 where she a runner-up in the Women's Singles.

Amongst her other achievements were twice the ESTTA Under 16 Girls' Singles and a two times winner of the Intermediate Girls Singles at the Schools International Championships, also winning Intermediate and Senior Girls Team gold. In 1983 she won the Sealink Youth Cup and that season also won the National Association of Youth Clubs National Championships. A representative in the Veterans Six Nations and a gold medallist in the Veterans International team event.

Those are the playing achievements but for those who knew Sue in her latter playing days she will be remembered not only as a real talent but as warm and generous, always willing to help and support others – a good friend to all.



### Keith Thomas

Keith Thomas former Table Tennis England Treasurer, Director and Board Member from 2013-19, died on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2023 in Hartlepool at the age of 74.

Keith's area of expertise and benefit to Table Tennis England lay on the financial front and he was a member of several TTE committees, many of them finance related and also an Audit Commission Member of the European Table Tennis Union (ETTU) in 2018.

Recognising his contribution at national level Keith was made a Vice-President of Table Tennis England in 2018 and an Honorary Life Member in 2020.

At a local level Keith served on the Cleveland County and Hartlepool League committees. He was a founder member of Hartlepool Table Tennis Club where he was the treasurer and the first chairman.

As well as his administrative work Keith was qualified as a County Umpire, Tournament Organiser and a UKCC Level 3 coach as well as being a coach tutor and assessor. Keith used his knowledge when in 2012 he was a Volunteer Team Leader at both the Olympic Games and Paralympics in London.

It was as a teenager that Keith first became involved with table tennis, playing for over 40 years but other aspects led to a 60-year involvement with the sport – a player, administrator, umpire, tournament organiser and coach.



## **Stan Clarke**

Stan Clarke, well known and popular umpire and TTE Honorary Life Member, passed away on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023 just days after his 87<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Stan was born in Bootle, Lancashire on 9<sup>th</sup> September 1936 and came to enjoy the pleasures and friendships of table tennis a little later than most, not becoming involved until 1967, when a work colleague and some of his relations formed a team to play in the Liverpool League. However, it wasn't long before Stan became involved on the administrative side when he took over his first role, as club secretary, two years later. A position he held for the next 22 years.

It was during this time Stan took his ETТА Level 2 coaching badge and also his county umpire exam before qualifying as a Diploma 1 Star Coach and a couple of years later gaining his Coaching Diploma 2 Star award. In 1996, Stan became a Tutor Assessor and later still an ETТА Level 4 Coach. He took on the role of senior coach at the North West Centre of Excellence at Bolton, then at the Merseyside Centre of Excellence.

Probably best known as an umpire, Stan gained his County Umpires badge in 1984 and his National Umpires badge in 1987. He then went on to become an International Umpire in 1990 and earned his coveted International Blue Badge, number 221, on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009. Stan umpired far and wide, not only in this country but also at some of the most prestigious international events – World Championships in Manchester in 1997, European Championships, Commonwealth Games in Manchester 2002, Paralympics in London 2012, ITTF Men's World Cup Liverpool in 2012, European Cup, Schools International and English Opens. On the domestic front he was an ever-present face at everything from Local League to National Championships.

From club to national level, Stan was heavily involved in numerous committees from 1969 onwards and still held many posts at the time of his death. Secretary of the Wavertree Labour Table Tennis Club until 2021, numerous roles on the Liverpool Table Tennis League Committee including Chairman, President and Chairman of the Southport League, from 1984 a member of the Lancashire County Association including Chairman and National Councillor, President, Honorary Life Member. A regular contributor to Table Tennis News writing Lancashire County Notes and other articles.

For most, the involvement at club, league and county level would fill sufficient time, along with umpiring and coaching duties. For Stan though, he continued contributing to table tennis at national level as well. He was on various ETТА/TTE committees including the Regional Development Committee as Chairman from 1987-98 and Secretary from 1989-90, National Co-ordinating Committee Member 1987-89, County Championships Committee Member from 1994-98, Press Officer 1998-2002, Publicity Officer 2019 until his death, Chairman 2002-05 and 2017 until his death, National Umpires & Referees Committee Umpires Qualification Panel 1996-97 and Umpires Selection Panel 2001-05, Trade Committee Member 2002-06 and Chairman 2006-16 and Veterans National League Organiser 2008-18.

One final string to Stan's bow was being a Committee Member of the Association of English Table Tennis Umpires (AETTU) from its inception in 2005 until his death. He also played in their annual tournaments and won the Over 70s category in 2013 and with Lynda Reid was the Open Doubles runner-up that year too.

Stan was rightly honoured with some of the highest accolades that the ETТА/TTE can award. He was presented with the Ivor Montagu Award in 2008, became a Vice-President in 2010 and an Honorary Life Member in 2017.

What a wonderful record of a wonderful man who served table tennis so well and who was highly respected throughout the table tennis community.

Our condolences go to all families and friends.

## Future Dates

### Domestic Events:

**Preston Grand Prix:** 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> October 2023  
**Stockton Junior 4\*:** 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> October 2023  
**Chandlers Junior 4\*:** 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> November 2023  
**Cippenham Junior 4\*:** 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> December 2023  
**Cardiff Satellite Grand Prix:** 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> December 2023  
**National Championships Qualifiers:** 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> January 2024, Nottingham  
**London Junior 4\*:** 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> January 2024  
**Plymouth Junior 4\*:** 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> February 2024  
**Wolverhampton Grand Prix:** 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> March 2024 – tbc  
**National Championships:** 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> March 2024, Nottingham  
**Jersey Satellite Grand Prix:** 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> April 2024 – tbc  
**Junior National Cup:** 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> April 2024  
**Junior, U17 & Cadet National Championships:** 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> May 2024, Nottingham  
**Cadet National Cup:** 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
**Gloucester Grand Prix:** 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
**ELCC Finals:** 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> June 2024  
**U11-U13 National Championships:** 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> June 2024, Wolverhampton  
**London Grand Prix:** 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> June 2024

### International Events:

**World Parkinson's Championships:** 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> November 2023, Crete  
**World Youth Championships:** 26<sup>th</sup> November-3<sup>rd</sup> December 2023, Novo Gorica, Slovenia  
**Europe Top 16 Cup:** 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> January 2024, Montreux, Switzerland  
**European Under 21 Championships:** 24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> January 2024, Skopje, Macedonia  
**World Championships (Team):** 16<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> February 2024, Busan, South Korea  
**European Youth Championships:** 12<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> July 2024, Malmo, Sweden  
**Olympic Games:** 26<sup>th</sup> July-11<sup>th</sup> August 2024, Paris, France  
**Paralympic Games:** 28<sup>th</sup> August-8<sup>th</sup> September 2024, Paris, France  
**European Championships:** 15<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> October 2024, Linz, Austria

There are also a number of World Table Tennis events

### Veterans Events: For the Over 40s:

**World Masters Championships (formerly World Veteran Championships):** 6<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> July 2024, Rome, Italy

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