



Table Tennis Times

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

Issue 28

Editorial

Autumn 2022

Along with many throughout the world we lament the passing of Queen Elizabeth II but celebrate her life of service to the nation. Amongst her many roles she was Patron of The English Table Tennis Association, following on from her father, King George VI. We await who will be her successor in that position.

And so, to another bumper edition of Table Tennis Times. It seems that with each passing edition there is more and more to report on, and whilst our focus will always be what is happening in England today and in yesteryear, we try to cover the most significant events from around the world.

In this issue there is a comprehensive report on the Commonwealth Games held in Birmingham, the Crawley Grand Prix, the European Championships, several age group European events and the World Championships.

We have two feature articles written by guest contributors, Graham Frankel and John Ruderham.

Graham reports on a long-lost table tennis magazine and the mystery surrounding its demise, and John details his search, and ultimate success, in tracking down a fantastic table tennis film from the 1920's.

There is also our usual "What was Happening" feature, this time looking at 2002, which sounds quite recent but was 20 years ago, and we have another table tennis book review, which looks at an entertaining account of the author's "Late Return".

In memoriam celebrates the life of former England International, Anita Stevenson, who passed away in July this year.

One of the nicest things about writing this magazine is the people it has put us in touch with and it was with the utmost pleasure that we visited a former junior England international and one of the top junior players of his era, Ray Dorking, in Bournemouth in September. We spent a delightful couple of hours in his company reminiscing about the golden time of English table tennis. Although we had had email contact with Ray for some time, due to Covid, we had not been able to meet him before.

Finally, we must end with an apology. We had promised the continuing story from Ken & Karenza Mathews from where Karenza retired from competitive play but we have simply run out of space in this issue. We promise to include it next time.

Best wishes
Diane and Harvey Webb

Commonwealth Games 28th July-8th August 2022, Birmingham, England

The Commonwealth Games in Birmingham started with a bang and a superb opening ceremony with the mechanical bull as the highlight, it certainly put everyone in the mood for a wonderful fortnight.

The table tennis was held at the National Exhibition Centre, home to the World Championships in 1977, and with team and individual events as well as para competitions there was a very full programme.

Women's Team: In Group 1 the ladies started with a very hard fixture facing the number 1 seeds, Singapore. Charlotte Bardsley and Maria Tsapsinos were first on the table but as expected it was Singapore who won. Tin-Tin Ho was next up and she lost 3-1, followed by a loss for Tsapsinos to give Singapore the win.

Match 2 was against St Vincent & The Grenadines and this time the victory went to England with all scores 3-0, Bardsley and Tsapsinos started the proceedings followed by Ho and then Tsapsinos.

The next match was on Saturday morning against Nigeria, again tough opponents. This was going to be a difficult match particularly as the winner would be the team to go through to the quarter-finals. Bardsley and Tsapsinos started well in the doubles and put England ahead with a 3-0 score although they had to work for their points, the last game going 14-12. Ho was next on the table and also won her match 3-0. Tsapsinos in the second singles did well in the first game which she won 11-4 but went down 11-9 in the second and two deuce games followed 13-11 and 12-10 both of which she lost. Nigeria had pulled one back. It was Ho next trying to put the fixture to bed for England but she couldn't get over the line in a five game match and the teams were now level. The fifth and final match and it was Bardsley on the table again, she showed a very cool head in such a crucial match. It was close but she secured the victory for England -6, 7, 8, -3, 9 to put England into the quarter-finals as runners-up in their group.



England celebrate their win



Wales celebrate victory over England

A massive quarter-final match for England against Wales who had unexpectedly topped their group. First on the table was Bardsley with Tsapsinos in the doubles who faced Chloe Thomas Wu Zhang and Anna Hursey. First blood went to Wales and Thomas was on fire in this game, England then came into their own and won the second but this was followed by two close games both of which Wales won. Final score 3, -5, 9, 9 to Wales. The second match had Ho meeting Charlotte Carey who has been such a faithful servant to Wales. The first was very close with Carey winning 14-12, the second went to Ho but Carey got ahead in the third and never looked back winning 12, -6, 5, 6. Wales 2-0.

The third match had the 16-year-old youngster, Hursey, playing Tsapsinos and there was only going to be one outcome as Hursey won 8, 9, 4 to give Wales the victory 3-0 and a place in the semi-finals. A very jubilant Welsh team captained by Stephen Jenkins.

The semi-finals saw heartache for Wales as they lost by the smallest of margins to Malaysia 3-2 and then also lost to Australia in the bronze medal play-off match. So close for the Welsh girls to getting a medal and a massive disappointment for their players but they must be so proud of their performances played with real heart.

Medals: Gold – Singapore, silver – Malaysia, bronze – Australia

Men's Team: England as number 1 seeds had a very easy draw in their group and first met Guyana which proved a straightforward win in their first match for Paul Drinkhall and Tom Jarvis. This was followed by Liam Pitchford with a 3-0 win in his singles and then Drinkhall wrapped things up with another 3-0 victory.

England's next match was against Fiji and Jarvis was partnered with Sam Walker for the first match, it was a rather brutal game which England won 0, 3, 3. It was no better for Fiji as Pitchford demolished his opponent 2, 0, 1. The final match and Jarvis showed no mercy with a 3, 1, 1 win.

The final group match was versus Bangladesh and it was more of the same with a win for doubles pair Drinkhall and Walker, followed by wins in the two singles matches for Pitchford and Drinkhall – all matches being won by England 3-0.

The quarter-final stage and it looked a fairly comfortable draw against Cyprus. Drinkhall and Jarvis started off not playing at their best and they just won the first game 12-10 but after that it was plain sailing as the Cypriots only got five points in the next two games. Pitchford and Drinkhall then won both their singles giving England the win.

The semi-final and the competition reached another level as England faced Singapore whilst India met Nigeria. England coach, Gavin Evans, changed the playing order and started with Jarvis and Pitchford playing the doubles but it wasn't a good combination as they lost 9, 7, 7. First blood to Singapore. Drinkhall played the first of his singles, against Zhe Yu Clarence Chew, won the first, lost the next, won the third and got over the line 12-10 in the fourth to level the score. Pitchford then faced Yew En Koen Pang and was very disappointing against a player ranked considerably below him, not playing anywhere near the level he is capable of and lost 3-1. Drinkhall then faced Yong Izaac Quek and continued to play at a very high level to win 7, 5, 4. An impressive performance to level the overall match score. The final match saw Walker play Chew but he wasn't able to emulate Drinkhall and lost 3-1 giving Singapore the place in the semi-final leaving England to battle for a medal in the third/fourth place play-off match.

England's final match was against Nigeria, who, in the other semi-final had lost in an excellent tussle against India. This time there was no holding England back as Jarvis and Drinkhall reverted to playing in the doubles and had an easier than expected victory 6, 7, 7. Pitchford and Quadri Aruna, who last met in 2014, were second on the table and picking himself up from the day before, Pitchford played much better and put England in a 2-0 lead. Drinkhall continued in his superlative form from the day before and demolished Olajide Omotayo who had played so well against India, winning 4, 2, 4. The match and the bronze medal to England.



Champions India and bronze medallists England

Medals: Gold – India, silver – Singapore, bronze - England

Individual Events: The format for the individual events was up to three from each team to play in the singles, two pairs in the doubles and three pairs in the Mixed Doubles. With a team of four this meant some players missed out on playing in some events.

Men's Singles: The three in the Men's Singles for England were Pitchford who was seeded 2, Drinkhall at 6 and Walker at 7. As they were all seeded none of them had to play in group matches and started at the round of 32. It was 4-0 wins for both Drinkhall and Walker against Fahad Khawaja, Pakistan and Kevin Farley of Barbados respectively. Pitchford had the win but dropped one end against Qi Shen Wong of Malaysia.

The round of 16 saw 4-0 wins for all players with Drinkhall against Zhe Yu Clarence Chew of Singapore, Walker against Jeremy Hazin of Canada and Pitchford against Yew En Koen Pang, Singapore. Quarter-finals and Drinkhall came up against Quadri Aruna of Nigeria and played superbly to win 4-1 against the number 1 seed by 10, -8, 7, 4, 6. Walker had a tough task against Indian, Sathiyam Gnanasekaran and despite playing well it was Gnanasekaran who was the victor. Pitchford too had an Indian opponent, Sanil Shetty, a match he won 4-1 with the score -9, 6, 8, 8, 4.

On to the semi-finals and it was England versus India in both matches. Drinkhall met the old warrior, Sharath Kamal Achanta, whilst Pitchford met Gnanasekaran. Despite another superb performance from Drinkhall, it was Achanta who won the close match. Drinkhall had been inspired throughout the tournament with this being his first loss in any event. Great credit to Achanta who won 8, 8, -8, 7, -9, 8. Pitchford had the better of Gnanasekaran in the other semi-final 5, -4, 8, 9, 9 making it another England v India clash in the final.



Sam Walker, Paul Drinkhall and Liam Pitchford

The third/fourth play-off match for the bronze medal was one of the best matches of the tournament in terms of tension and an almost brilliant comeback by Drinkhall. He was 3-0 down losing 9, 3 and 5 in the first three ends and the pressure of trying to secure his first singles medal seemed to have an impact on his play. Known for his tremendous mental strength Drinkhall gradually clawed his way back winning the next three ends 8, 9 and 10. Down to the seventh and final game which had us all, whether watching on television or at the venue, on the edge of our seats. Disappointment for Drinkhall and all the English supporters as it was Gnanasekaran who won the last game 11-9. The final between Achanta and Pitchford was a bit of an anti-climax after the bronze medal match. It was a 4-1 win for Achanta, a well-deserved champion. Score -11, 7, 2, 6, 8. The final did finish on a controversial note. As Achanta was declared the champion by the umpire Pitchford claimed that the ball had hit Achanta's shirt and so the last point was his. The big screen replayed the point which didn't show this – even if it had, it was the umpire's decision which he had already made, and it should not have been affected by anything shown on the screen. Achanta, one of the fairest players about, did not concede the point and then for whatever reason, the umpire changed his decision. The match continued and Achanta went on to win it, this time there was no doubt about the winner and champion. Pitchford had gone into the tournament with his eye on four gold medals but ended with only the one, plus one silver and one bronze.



Sharath Kamal Achanta, the champion and runner-up Liam Pitchford

Medals: Gold Sharath Kamal Achanta, silver – Liam Pitchford, bronze - Sathiyam Gnanasekaran.

Women’s Singles: As she was seeded at number 12, Ho went straight through to the main draw. Bardsley and Tsaptsinos were the other two England players and it was the younger, Bardsley, who made it out of the group and into the round of 32 where she lost to Reeth Tennison of India 4-1. Ho won her first match in this round but lost in the next 4-0 to Australian, Yangzi Liu.



Tin-Tin Ho, Charlotte Bardsley, Maria Tsaptsinos

Medals: Gold – Tianwei Feng, Singapore, silver - Jian Zeng, Singapore, bronze – Yangzi Liu, Australia

Men’s Doubles: The best event of the tournament for England with both pairings performing well. The unseeded pair of Jarvis and Walker had Kevin Farley and Tre Riley, Barbados, as their opponents in their first, round of 32 match, which they won 3-0. Next was another 3-0 win against South Africans, Theo Cogill and Chetan Nathod which put them through to the quarter-finals. Meeting the number 2 seeds would not have been their choice of opponents and so it was that the Indian pairing of Achanta and Gnanasekaran were the victors by 3-0.

In the other half of the draw Drinkhall and Pitchford as the top seeds went through the early part of the event with ease defeating first Scottish, Colin Dalgleish and Gavin Rungay 3-1, then Tyrese Knight and Ramon Maxwell of Barbados 3-0 and then Amadi Omeh and Olajide Omotayo, Nigeria, by the same score. The semi-final match was trickier but a 3-1 win against Zhe Yu Clarence Chew and Shao Feng Ethan Chew gave them a chance of retaining their title. So, once again England met India and in an enthralling match it was Drinkhall and Pitchford who defeated Achanta and Gnanasekaran 3-2 by -8, 8, 3, -7, 4. It was to be England’s sole gold medal.

Drinkhall and Pitchford not only successfully defended their title but followed in the footsteps of Andrew Baggaley and Gareth Herbert who won the men’s doubles in the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in 2002, the first time table tennis was played.



Champions Paul Drinkhall & Liam Pitchford, quarter-finalists Tom Jarvis & Sam Walker

Medals: Gold – Paul Drinkhall/Liam Pitchford, England, silver – Sharath Kamal Achanta/Sathiyam Gnanasekaran, India, bronze – Zhe Yu Clarence Chew/Shao Feng Ethan Poh, Singapore.

Women's Doubles: The well tried and tested pair of Tin-Tin Ho and Maria Tsapsinos along with Charlotte Bardsley and Emily Bolton, playing in her first event, were the two England pairings. Both pairs had byes in the first round and both won their second-round fixtures. However, the round of 16 saw their downfall, Bardsley and Bolton by 3-0 to Singaporeans, Feng Tianwei and Zeng Jian and Ho and Tsapsinos by 3-1 to Australians, Jee Minhyung and Lay Jian Fang.



Emily Bolton & Charlotte Bardsley

Medals: Gold – Tianwei Feng/Jian Zeng, Singapore, silver – Minhyung Jee/Jian Fang lay, Australia, bronze – Charlotte Carey/Anna Hursey, Wales.

Mixed Doubles: Overall, not a successful event for England as Walker and Tsapsinos went out in the first round, the round of 64, to Callum Evans and Charlotte Carey of Wales in a close match 3-2. Liam Pitchford and Tin-Tin Ho, the number 3 seeds, fell at the quarter-final stage to Sharath Kamal Achanta and Sreeja Akula of India 3-2. Jarvis and Bardsley appeared to gel in the first major competition in which they had played together and reached the quarter-finals eventually losing 3-0 to Nicholas Lum and Jee Minhyung of Australia after coming successfully through three earlier rounds including an excellent win against the number 2 seeds Pang Yew En Koen and Wong Xin Ru of Singapore in five.

Medals: Gold – Sharath Kamal Achanta/Sreeja Akula, India, silver – Javen Choong/Karen Lyne, bronze – Zhe Yu Clarence/Jian Zeng, Singapore.



Tom Jarvis & Charlotte Bardsley



Maria Tsapsinos & Sam Walker

Magic Moment: For me, the magic moment of the whole 11 days was when Charlotte Carey of Wales, who had had a magnificent tournament, won the bronze medal in the Women's Doubles with Anna Hursey. After missing out so closely in the Women's Team event it was a well-deserved reward for a player who has given so much to the game. The emotion and the jubilation, the tears and the smiles, overcoming disappointment and celebrating that medal were a joy to behold.



A delighted Anna Hursey and emotional Charlotte Carey celebrate their bronze medal

Para Events

There were five England players in the Para events with Sue Bailey, Dan Bullen, Jack Hunter-Spivey, Fliss Pickard and Ross Wilson representing their country in the four para events.

Men's Class 3-5 Singles (Wheelchair): A fabulous win by the ebullient Jack Hunter-Spivey in the final against Nasiru Sule of Nigeria 4, -9, 6, 7. Hunter-Spivey had earlier won his semi-final match against another Nigerian, Isau Ogunkunle. Having lost one of his group matches it wasn't a clean sweep for Hunter-Spivey but he came good in the latter stages when it really mattered.

Dan Bullen, in his first major championships, was unable to match his England teammate in getting into a medal winning position after losing his final group match. Playing in a major home tournament puts tremendous pressure on a player and perhaps nerves played a part. We wish him well in future events.

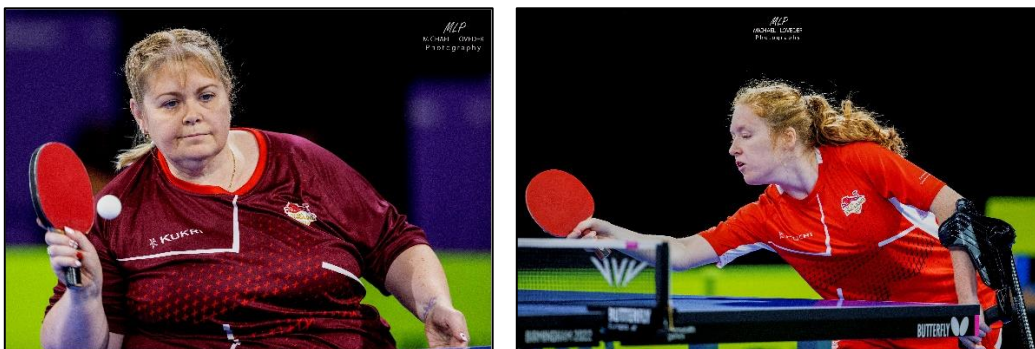


Dan Bullen, Jack Hunter-Spivey with coach, Andrew Rushton, Ross Wilson

Men's Class 8-10 (Standing): Defending champion, Ross Wilson took home the bronze medal. He lost in the semi-final to Welshman, Josh Stacey, the ultimate champion by 1, -6, -11, 7 but then won the bronze medal match against Tajudeen Agunbiade of Nigeria 9, -9, 4, -15, 6. Not the colour medal he wanted but a medal nonetheless.

Women's Class 3-5 Singles (Wheelchair): Sue Bailey (formerly Gilroy) couldn't emulate previous performances in Commonwealth Games as she finished as the losing player in the bronze medal match 5, 2, 3 against Indian, Sonalben Manubhai Patel, no medal this time around.

Women's Class 6-10 Singles (Standing): A close match but Fliss Pickard couldn't quite get over the line in her bronze medal play-off match against Faith Obazuaye of Nigeria losing 6, -7, -6, -8. This category covered a wide range of impairment and Pickard at Class 6 playing against a Class 10 player was at a considerable disadvantage so it was great credit to her to reach the semi-final and come close to winning a medal. The lower the classification number the greater the impairment.



Sue Bailey and Fliss Pickard

Some Favourite Photos

All photos from the Commonwealth Games are by Michael Loveder, we thank him for the use of his images and also thank all those who supported his attendance through donating via his crowdfunding page.



Australia ladies in a 'Perry' pose



The colourful Ghanaian team



Malaysia celebrate and inspect their medals



Perry the mascot



Sathyan Gnanasekaran & Sharath Kamal Achanta



Colour co-ordinated Nigeria - shirts, bats, barriers



Jack Hunter-Spivey acknowledging the other medallists

THE MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF *TABLE TENNIS REVIEW*

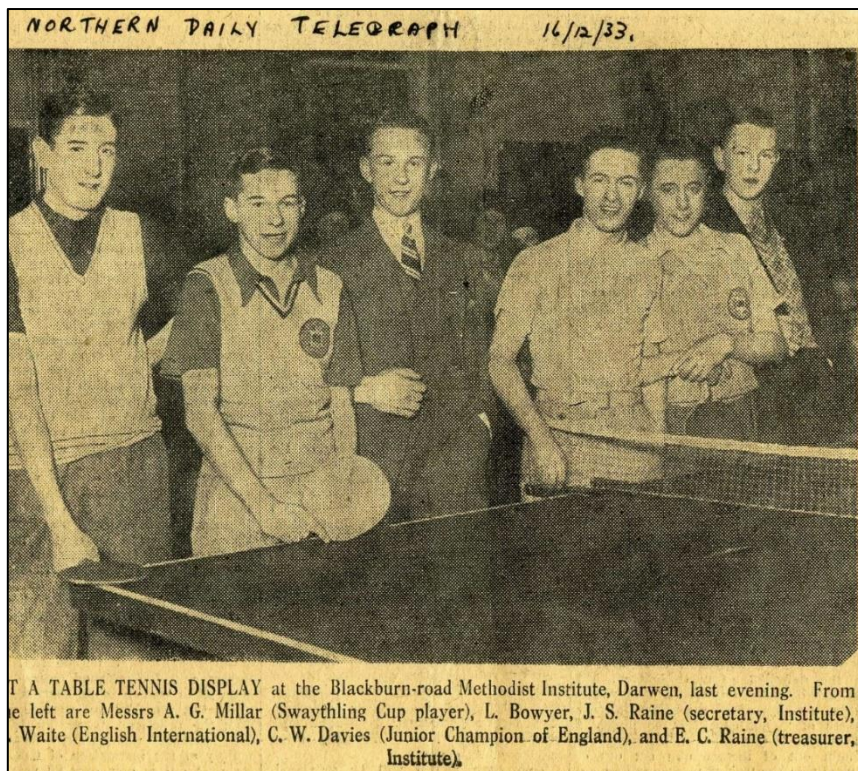
By Graham Frankel

I'm a glutton for punishment. After scanning every edition of the ETTA's official magazines (about 15,500 pages) I swore I'd never repeat such a tiresome task. But in a moment of weakness earlier this year, I volunteered to tackle around a thousand more pages that formed the entire output of another table tennis magazine that very few living players remember.

Table Tennis Review was launched in 1946 as a rival publication to the ETTA's official journal, then called *Table Tennis*. England had been among the leading countries in a spectacular boom of interest in table tennis that had spread across Europe and beyond in the mid-1920s and which continued until the outbreak of war. The enforced war break was about the length of three end-to-end pandemic lockdowns. With all that pent-up energy to resume pinging, an additional magazine was a logical development.

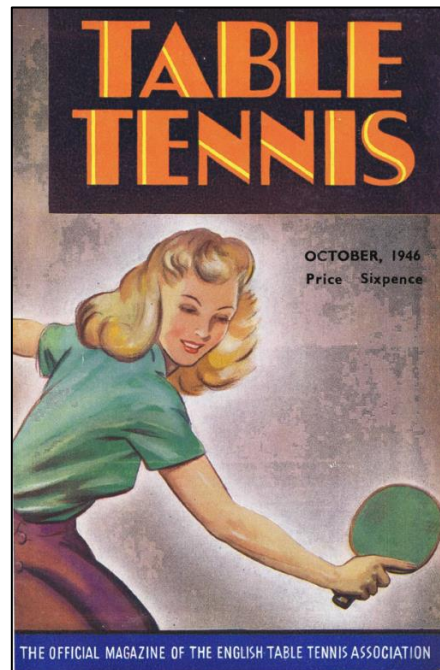
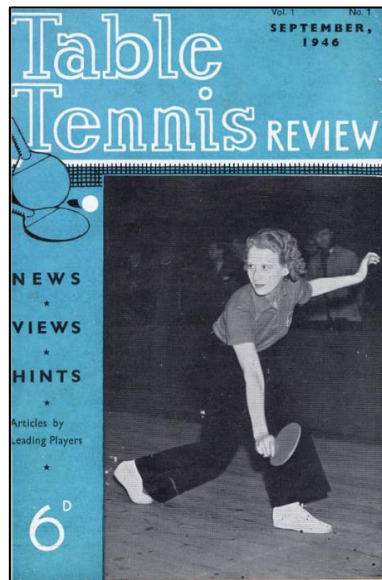
When I had embarked on the scanning of the ETTA magazines, Malcolm Allsop – the well-known national council member from Derbyshire - had kindly sent me his copies of *Table Tennis Review*. A few editions were missing but Diane Webb fortunately had them in the TTE archives.

Table Tennis Review, initially published in Manchester, was the brainchild of a former England international Arthur Waite, who aimed to give it country-wide coverage. In his first editorial, Mr Waite promised high-quality journalism and a "fair rate of remuneration" for feature writers.



Andy Millar, Leslie Bowyer, Arthur Waite and Charles 'Dibs' Davies were all England senior internationals

The first edition of *Table Tennis Review* had the same number of pages, and identical selling price as its rival, but the page format was substantially smaller. Just over a year later, when reporting on the world championships in Paris, its initial 16 pages increased to 32, along with a doubling of the cover price to a shilling (5p).



While scanning the magazines I didn't pay too much attention to their content, but it was tempting to skim some of the features and editorial. I wondered if I might spot any new information that might add something to the massive amount of data that I had harvested from the official ETTA magazines. That research had enabled me to write my first book *Ping!* published in 2020.



There were no dramatic discoveries in the pages of *TT Review*, but I was shocked by the tone of some of the content. When it goes on the TTE website for I think Diane may want to consider a warning rather like the content advice tags you see alongside censorship ratings in films. Something along the lines of "beware: bigoted and discriminatory content" might be appropriate. Of course, the writing only reflected the attitudes of the time. Here is an example. A suggestion from the editor in autumn 1951.

The following edition contained an objection: "Let us keep to table tennis," was the plea from Mr. Senior, the Hon. Sec. of the Darlington & District League. We will never know if Arthur Waite received any photos, but he seemed to take heed of Mr. Senior's sound advice. The idea for a glamour series never took off. By the following summer Arthur Waite had retired as editor.

The departure of the founding editor was handled in a very curious way. The edition of Summer 1952 contained no announcement that Waite would be standing down. The following edition, Autumn 1952, contains the strapline at the top of page 1: "Founded by our Associate Editor, Arthur Waite." It also revealed that the publisher was now B.F.R Publications, based in Liverpool. Incredibly, a further eleven editions appeared before readers discovered the identity of the new editor. His contributions continued to be anonymously labelled "The Editor". Finally, in the winter of 1954, he wrote in the editorial:

Incidentally, may I introduce myself: my name is Robert Blackburn, newly appointed as Editor of "The Review".

Mr Blackburn remained a mystery. He stated that he had previously helped in the production of the magazine, but it was unclear if there had been an interim editor when Arthur Waite stepped down. Robert Blackburn's tenure was short-lived. Less than a year later, the final edition was published in autumn 1955 and *Table Tennis Review* disappeared without trace.

The closure of the magazine was even more mysterious than its change of editor. The Autumn 1955 edition contains no hint that it would be the last. Subscription information was still being printed, along with various marketing snippets aimed at encouraging wider readership. I am 99% certain that no more editions were produced, but if anyone can prove me wrong, please let me or Diane know.

I was curious to try and discover more about why publication ended. Internet search was fruitless. There were no clues from the British Newspaper Archive. It was unlikely that any readers would be able to help me. I was grateful to Susie Venner for putting me in contact with Bill Fawley, President of the Liverpool League and involved in TT in the north while *TT Review* was flourishing. Bill, who is a sprightly 92, had been aware of the magazine, but didn't know why it had suddenly ceased.

My best bet to solve the mystery was in the columns of the rival *Table Tennis*. To help me in my earlier research I had combined full decades of the ETTA magazine, so it was simple enough to search through the whole collection. My hopes were raised when I found a mention of Arthur Waite's return following a spell of illness in 1950. This had caused a delay in publishing the first edition of 1951. Leslie Woollard, one of the outstanding editors of *Table Tennis*, wrote the following generous snippet in April 1951:

ARTHUR WAITE, editor-publisher of *Table Tennis Review*, has been seriously ill, so that publication has been delayed. We are very pleased to hear he is now thoroughly fit and in harness again, and as may be seen from the announcement on page 14, the *Review* is to resume regular publication immediately.

By 1955, Leslie Woollard had been replaced by Harrison Edwards, another distinguished *Table Tennis* editor. The disappearance of the rival magazine was not mentioned. The only reference to it in later editions was in the classified columns, where a few readers offered old magazines for sale. I shall be very surprised if we ever hear any more about it, but I'd love to hear if anyone can throw light on the mystery.

My personal view is that *Table Tennis Review* was never a serious rival to the official magazine, and especially after the founding editor stood down. While I am sure there were some excellent contributions, the overall standard of the editing was never up to the level of *Table Tennis*. The coverage of the World Championships, held in Utrecht in 1955, didn't do much for the popularity of *TT Review*. It had been customary to devote most of an edition to the World Championships. Although the copy was labelled as "World Championship Issue" the coverage only stretched to six pages and the name of men's singles champion – Toshiaki Tanaka – was misspelt several times, including in a headline. There was a subsequent complaint published by one reader, and I sense that the magazine was doomed by then.

My cursory reading of these magazines revealed something of the same impression I had gleaned from the ETTA magazines. There was a certain arrogance, perhaps derived from the fact that England undoubtedly played a leading role in transitioning table tennis from an after-dinner pastime to a serious sport. The same attitude was strongly evident during the decade-long battle when the ETTA believed that its influence would persuade the rest of the world to make sponge illegal.

That battle, and later developments, formed the basis of my first book *Ping!* If you haven't read it yet, take a trip to Amazon where you can get it as a paperback or e-book. You could also visit [my website](#) where you can check readers' comments about *Ping!* and the sequel *Kate's Progress*, which I published in 2021.

If you have any comments or questions, you are welcome to contact me: grahamf49@gmail.com

Congratulations

Congratulations to Steve Smith who has qualified as an International Referee and also to Dan Bullen, Beate Nicol, Vladimir Shadrinov, Sheila Walshe and Gary Whyman who have qualified as International Umpires.

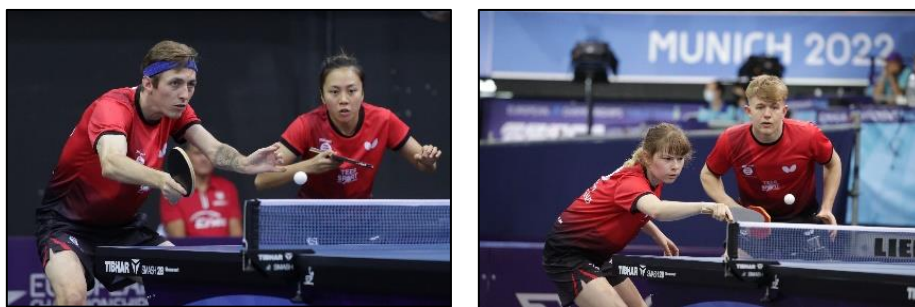
European Championships 13th-21st August 2022: Munich, Germany

All photos by Remy Gros, courtesy of the ETTU

Following on very shortly after the Commonwealth Games it was the turn for the European Championships, individual events this time round.

Due to England's team rankings, they were entitled to send five men and three women but only three men – Tom Jarvis, Liam Pitchford and Sam Walker played and Charlotte Bardsley and Tin-Tin Ho were England's representatives on the female side. No Paul Drinkhall or Maria Tsaptsinos who opted not to play.

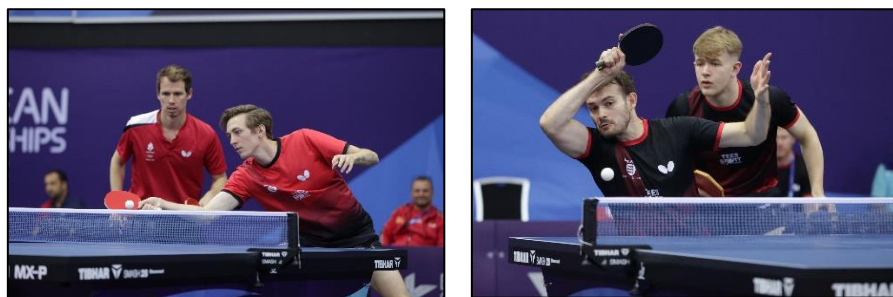
Mixed Doubles: This was the first event to take place and Tom Jarvis and Charlotte Bardsley teamed up as they did in the Commonwealth Games. Their first match was the preliminary round of 32 and they faced Greece's Giorgos Konstantinopoulos and Aikaterini Toliou. It was a win for the English pair 11, 8, 4. A good start.



Liam Pitchford & Tin-Tin Ho, Charlotte Bardsley & Tom Jarvis

Their next match in the main draw, round of 32, was against two of Europe's strongest players, Robert Gardos and Sophia Polcanova of Austria but despite putting up a good fight they went down 3-1. At the same time Liam Pitchford and Tin-Tin Ho were on the adjacent table against the Polish pair, Samuel Kulczycki and Katarzyna Wegrzyn, and also went out in this round losing 3-2.

Men's Doubles: Liam Pitchford was partnered by Jonathan Groth of Denmark and had to play in the preliminary round of 32 as there are not an established pairing. Their opponents were Filip Mladenovski, Republic of North Macedonia, and Fatih Karabaxhak of Kosovo. Pitchford and Groth had a fairly straightforward win 12, 5, 4. The main draw round of 32 saw their exit as they lost to Lubomir Pistej, Slovakia and Aleksandar Karakasevic, Serbia. Tom Jarvis and Sam Walker also exited at this stage of the event in their first match, as Danes, Tobias Rasmussen and Martin Andersen, won the fixture 8, 12, 4.



Jonathan Groth & Liam Pitchford, Sam Walker & Tom Jarvis

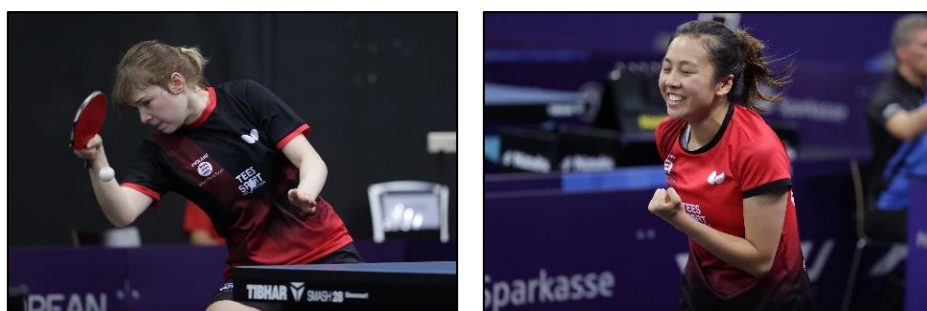
Women's Doubles: Tin-Tin Ho teamed up with Karoline Mischek of Austria, a strong pair who had previously won the U21 European Women's Doubles title. They faced Ivana Malobabic, Croatia, and Solomiya Brateyko, Ukraine, in their first match and ended up the winners by 8, -8, -6, 6, 8 to progress into the round of 16. Here,

they faced a harder challenge and so it proved as they went down 8, 4, 5 to Hana Matelova, Czech Republic, and Barbora Balazova, Slovakia, in a match lasting just 18 minutes.

Bardsley was unable to secure a partner and so was not able to participate in this event.

Women's Singles: Both Bardsley and Ho had to play in group matches. Bardsley won her first match against Italian, Nicole Arlia, after losing the first two ends she won the next three, final score -9, -4, 8, 6, 4. Her second match was more straightforward with a 3-0 win against Reelica Hanson of Estonia 3, 8, 7. Ho in her first group match faced Sanne De Hoop of the Netherlands and had a comfortable win 5, 6, 5. A similar 3-0 win against Anna Wegrzyn of Poland 4, 3, 12 meant both ladies were top of their group and went through to the knockout rounds.

Bardsley had a very tough draw in her round of 64 match against Jieni Shao of Portugal, a most awkward player. Ho too had a difficult draw facing Sarah de Nutte of Luxembourg. Bardsley lost 4-0 but Ho had an excellent win against De Nutte, just clinching the match in the seventh game -9, 6, -9, 6, 6, -5, 10. Onto the round of 32 and although the scores were close it was Sofia Polcanova, the eventual champion, who not unexpectedly won 9, 9, 9, -9, 8. Nonetheless a good effort by Ho.



Charlotte Bardsley, Tin-Tin Ho

Men's Singles: Both Jarvis and Walker had to play in the group stages and both won their two matches. Jarvis beat Andrei Putuntica from Moldova in a close match 6, -10, 9, -9, 9 and then Luxembourg's Eric Glod 8, 10, 8. Walker defeated Marko Jevtovic of Serbia 3, -10, 7, 9 and then Abdullah Talha Yigenler of Turkey 5, 8, 6.

Round of 64 matches and Walker faced Jon Persson of Sweden, Jarvis met Lubomir Jancarik of Czech Republic and Pitchford who joined the fray, seeded 9, opposed Tomas Polansky of the Czech Republic.

Pitchford was the only player to proceed to the round of 32 where he came up against Tiago Apolonia from Portugal. The Portuguese started well winning the first two ends and Pitchford then levelled the score but they were the only two games he won as Apolonia went on to win 8, 9, -9, -7, 9, 2. The last English interest in the championships.



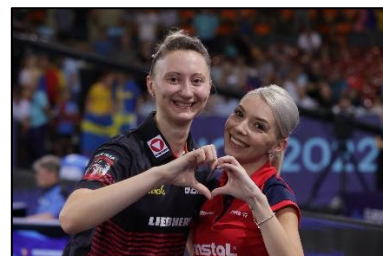
Tom Jarvis, Sam Walker, Liam Pitchford

The Champions:

Mixed Doubles: Emmanuel Lebesson & Jianan Yuan, France, beat Ovidu Ionescu & Bernadette Szocs, Roumania -8, 6, 5, 9. Bronze medallists were Lubomir Pistej & Barbora Balazova and Robert Gardos & Sofia Polcanova, Austria.

Men's Doubles: Mattias Falck & Kristian Karlsson, Sweden beat Robert Gardos & Daniel Habesohn, Austria - 10, 1, 5, 11. Bronze medallists Jon Persson & Anton Kallberg, Sweden and Alexis Lebrun & Felix Lebrun, France.

Women's Doubles: Sofia Polcanova, Austria & Bernadette Szocs, Romania, beat Andreea Dragoman & Elizabeta Samara, Romania. Bronze medallists Sarah De Nutte & Xia Lian Ni, Luxembourg and Adina Diaconu, Roumania & Maria Xiao, Spain.



Jianan Yu & Emmanuel Lebesson, Kristian Karlsson & Mattias Falck, Sofia Polcanova & Bernadette Szocs

Women's Singles: Sofia Polcanova was declared champion after Nina Mittelham, Germany, had to retire in the final with an injured shoulder with the score standing at 9, 2. Bronze medallists Sabine Winter, Germany, and Xiaona Shan, Germany.

Men's Singles: Dang Qiu, Germany beat Darko Jorgic, Slovenia, -10, 12, 8, 9, 2. Bronze medallists Mattias Falck, Sweden and Kristian Karlsson, Sweden. Karlsson had to retire in his semi-final match against Jorgic when he damaged his hand badly on the table edge and was unable to continue.



Women's medallists

Nina Mittelham, Sofia Polcanova, Xiaona Shan, Sabine Winter



Men's medallists

Darko Jorgic, Dang Qiu, Mattias Falck, Kristian Karlsson

Summary: Overall a disappointing tournament for England with only Ho getting as far as the round of 16 in the Women's Doubles with her Austrian partner.

A new name on the Men's Singles trophy and a well-deserved win for Dang Qiu who defeated his compatriot and holder, Timo Boll before taking Jorgic, the number 2 seed in the final. An excellent tournament for Polcanova who went home with two gold and one bronze medal but sympathies go to Kristian Karlsson and Nina Mittelham who both had to retire due to injuries at critical stages of the tournament.

It was a tournament dominated by Sweden and Germany but watch out for the French, Lebrun brothers who at 15 and 18 became bronze medallists in their first European Championships.

The Find of the Centenary

By John Ruderham

For the last fifteen years I have been researching the history of our sport, mainly focussing on the Bristol & District Table Tennis Association, which is the oldest, continuous league in the world, but also working on our English nationals and World Championships assisting Colin Clemett and Chuck Hoey at TTE and the ITTF respectively. During that time, I have made some amazing finds, such as discovering England's forgotten champion of 1913¹, but back at the end of March this year I happened to stumble across a newspaper article in the Yorkshire Post & Leeds Intelligencer dated 9 January 1929 (see below left) which reported that the ITTF Chairman, Ivor Montagu (see right, courtesy of TTE), had produced a film entitled Table Tennis Today (the same title as his 1924 book), in which it showed a number of table tennis players in action in the 1920s, including Percy Bromfield (the English champion of 1903/1904 and 1923/1924).² Delving further, the following day I uncovered four more articles in the Liverpool Echo, Kinematograph Weekly and the Bioscope, all of which endorsed my first finding. Already aware that 2021 was the Centenary year for Table Tennis England, I realised that this discovery could become a key feature of those celebrations when they commence on 7 November, so I immediately checked with the "doyen" of historical table tennis facts, Colin Clemett,³ but he was unaware of this film's existence, and agreed that this could be something "big." And so my journey began.



A Table Tennis Film.

Thanks to the initiative of the Hon. Ivor Montagu, founder of the Film Society and President of the English Table Tennis Association, English players of the game will now have an opportunity to improve their play by studying an excellent little two-reel film which he has specially made with this intention. For as with other games, both the World's title and the English title have deserted England. The great centre of the game now is Hungary, where the English team will soon be fighting in the championships, and both champions are Hungarians.

"Table Tennis To-day," as the film is called, is an admirable illustration of the methods of famous players, and includes numerous "slow-motion" studies. It shows the veteran English player, Mr P Bromfield, who won the first championship in 1903, and was largely responsible for developing the modern attacking game; Miss Joan Ingram, the leading English woman player, R G Suppiah, the Indian master of defence; Fraulein Metzger, holder of the English Ladies Championship, and the reigning champions, Dr Pecsí and M Mechlowitz. We learn all about tactics and topspin, and in the end are forced to realise - perhaps a little sadly - that even table tennis nowadays requires the most vigorous scientific study from anyone who ever hopes to reach the first rank of players.

I did not want to alert anyone else at that stage, until I was able to glean more information. I could already see that the film included a number of our English Open national champions and runners-up in the 1920s, and some who would go on to become so after the film was made, or even world champions too, but I was unaware of any of them ever having appeared in any video footage before. However, I was aware that the British Pathé News website had a 1924 silent film of the cricketers Jack Hobbs and Andy Ducat that lasted just over two minutes, but the next recording of any recognised table tennis players does not occur until 1933 with Victor Barna practicing against R D Jones, before we are then able to view international matches from 1935 onwards. This film completed in December 1928 by Ivor Montagu is therefore the earliest footage of players in existence that we are aware of today. On that basis, it became even more clear to me how important this film was, and especially so in our Centenary year. My first step on this journey was therefore to make contact with the British Film Institute, because in the Bioscope publication dated 6 February 1929, it showed that a film was registered between 22 and 29 January 1929 by "Brunel and Montagu" entitled Table Tennis Today. The Liverpool Echo dated 6 April 1929 also mentioned that the film was shown for a week at the Century Theatre, Mount Pleasant, so we know that it was revealed to the general public. Coincidentally, Ivor Montagu was also the founder of the Film Society in 1925! I emailed the BFI providing them with my finds plus the registration details, etc, and asking whether this film might possibly still exist and if they could help. Remarkably, and within just three hours, I had heard back from their Cultural Sales Officer, Espen Bale, confirming that "the BFI does hold material for this title, in the form of a digibeta, so we could supply a digital copy of the film - at a cost. Before we can supply however, you will need to get permission from the rights holder. According to our records, the film was produced by 'Brunel and Montagu'. It's a little unclear where the rights may be now, but it may be worth trying the Montagu estate." I replied almost immediately saying that I couldn't believe it and that I thought the chances of me ever being able to track this possible film down was less than 0.1%, or even if it still existed, and that these images had probably not been seen by anyone for nearly a century! I further informed him that I would now try my utmost to make contact with the Montagu estate in order to make this next crucial step. However, that's when the difficulty started!

I deduced that I needed to make contact with the 5th Baron Lord Swaythling, as Ivor Montagu was the third son of Gladys and Louis Montagu, 2nd Baron Swaythling, but trying to make contact with a peer of the realm was something I had never attempted before and never even thought I would ever have to do. I had trawled the internet, but could not see anything that would really help, so my starting point was the House of Lords. Amazingly, I managed to find an email address for them on 31 March 2021. Not really believing I would receive a response, within the hour I did, but they informed me

¹ See Table Tennis Collector No. 67 on the ITTF website.

² See Appendix for all other players involved and their achievements at the English Open championships.

³ Colin was also on the ITTF Board of Directors for thirty years until 2003 and is a life member of TTE.

that “Lord Swaythling lost his seat in the House of Lords in 1999, due the House of Lords Act, which removed the majority of hereditary peers from the House. As he is no longer a member we do not hold any contact information for him, so we are unable to assist in the instance.” Back to the drawing board.

I had also discovered that this two-reel film had been shown in January 1929 in Budapest, so I emailed a contact that I was in touch with at the Hungarian TTA several years earlier when I was delving into some World championships’ missing scores, but despite some reminder emails afterwards, I never did hear back from him, or their Association, which was a shame. In the meantime though, I had enquired of Espen Bale at the BFI on the length, quality and state of the film itself, should a purchase of it in the future transpire, but more importantly whether any associated terms and conditions would restrict it being shown to the table tennis community.



I then thought I would try Lord Montagu of Beaulieu on 14 April, even though I didn’t really think there was a family connection – but you never know. They might just have had a way of making contact with the person I needed to, but in the end it was more bad news when they kindly responded a couple of weeks later, after following up with a telephone call, confirming what I already knew, saying there was no familial connection, and that unfortunately they could not help. However, what I was aware of throughout this process, was that there was a Charles Montagu who was a qualified clinical hypnotherapist practising in South Kensington and I could see that, not only was he a director and founder of the Health Partnership, but that he was also on the board of other associations, eg the Eric Clapton Partnership, and had some remarkable reviews of his work with many celebrities. He also had a LinkedIn page, which stated that he was only contactable on Zoom. This had always looked promising to be honest from the start, however, there was no email address, which is what is needed anyway to make contact through that medium, but there was a telephone number for the practice. However, whenever I tried, it simply continued to just ring and ring – and I must have tried dozens of times over many weeks! I then elected to ring the Health Partnership and ask if they could possibly provide Charles Montagu’s contact details, but they were not forthcoming, and would not even contemplate forwarding an email on to him for me, as they said they didn’t have it! I had hit a brick wall.

In mid-May I decided to email the National Council for Hypnotherapy, but they emailed back as follows: “*Our members update their own practice listing information so I am not in position to tell you whether it is correct or not, just that it’s what has been entered for that therapist. If a member chooses not to provide a website, phone number or email address that is up to them.*” Also at this time, I was heavily involved in finally trying to collate fifteen years of research material for a book on the history of table tennis in and around Bristol, and so I put the Montagu film search on a temporary hold, but did still continue to look on the internet for anything else that might arise. I also continued to ring the telephone number in Thurloe Street, but still there was no pick up.

I thought I would ring the Health Partnership one last time to see if there was just any way they could assist, mentioning once again that there were no contact details anywhere for Charles Montagu, but again they said they couldn’t help. However, a few days later, I looked again at the LinkedIn page, and couldn’t believe it when I saw an email address, which had not been there before. I can only assume that perhaps someone at the Health Partnership somehow alerted Charles Montagu to the fact that “possible future clients” were not able to make contact with him. Anyway, on 26 August 2021, I emailed my request to him, detailing what I had uncovered so far but, more importantly, asking whether he could please just grant his permission for the film to be purchased. Nineteen minutes later I received a reply! It read: “*Dear John, Thank you for your most interesting email. You are correct in thinking I am Charles Montagu, 5th Baron Lord Swaythling. I’m not sure what would be required in the way of signed paperwork, but I would be delighted to give you the permission, on behalf of the family, to purchase a copy of this rare film. Please feel free to contact me to let me know how I can help further, once you know how the process works. You are welcome to contact me by phone if you need to. Kind regards, Charles Swaythling.*”



I was gobsmacked! He was completely on board and up for the ride. Within just a few more minutes, he had kindly sent an email to Espen Bale at the BFI as follows: “*I would be more than delighted to give my permission, on behalf of the Montagu family estate, for you to receive this footage from the BFI for your archive. I am copying in Mr Bale of the BFI, who is more than welcome to contact me directly, should my seal of approval be required in further form. Best wishes, Charles Montagu, The Rt Hon Lord Swaythling.*” When neither of us had heard back from Espen sometime later, Charles (see left) suggested we telephone, but also saying to let him know straight away if there was any way he could help, which was again really kind of him.

It was 13 September before we heard from Espen, but I still needed further information on the film itself before I knew anyone would be willing to purchase it, eg, how long the footage lasted, what the quality was like, was it silent, etc. He confirmed that the email chain which I had re-attached for his information, was now perfectly sufficient for him to release the film, and he went on to say that he would now recall the file from storage, which was great news after trying for almost six months.

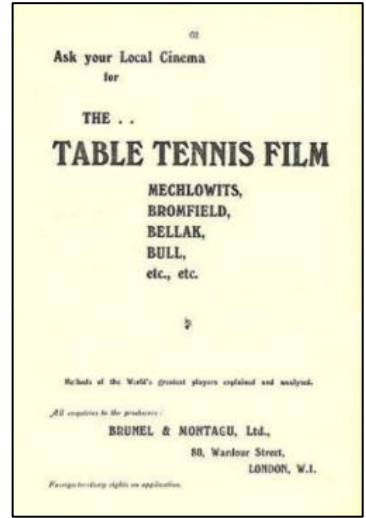
I let Colin Clemett know the current situation, but went on to say that with the Centenary event coming up in November, and if this film was available in time for that, especially as it shows the likes of Percy Bromfield, our 1904 and 1924 English champion, and other English Open champions in action, would it not be a real coup and a fantastic addition to that celebration? Up until this stage I had not informed Diane Webb, the Chairman of the Archives, Museum and Records Committee of this at all yet, as I wanted to concentrate on finalising the permission for its purchase in the first instance. I went on to reiterate to Colin that this was probably the most important and amazing find I had made over the last 15 years of research, and that I would really hope that one day this film would see the light of day after nearly a century and be made available for everyone to view. It just needed to be paid for. However, I was hoping that as the film was the “property” of the Montagu estate, that there may just be the possibility that there might not be a cost involved at all.

Anyway, by mid-September, Charles and I had an answer. On the 24th, Espen wrote back *“In terms of fees – the cost is purely there to cover the operation of having the tape digitised. In terms of costs, if the license holder wished to access the material – these are typically the same as the fee is there to cover the cost of work involved. I have discussed this with my manager, however, and given the circumstances, on this occasion we would be happy to provide a watermarked MP4 copy of the film to you and waive the fee. This would be on the condition the file is used purely for private research purposes. If you or Table Tennis England wished to acquire a higher quality file of the film and or/disseminate or otherwise make the footage available online or otherwise, we would need to charge a fee for that. I hope that is OK.”* Another gobsmacking moment! Naturally I agreed to those terms and conditions, and sat back and waited for the film to materialise. A “water-marked” copy would be perfect at this stage, even if that were the end of this journey. At least I could then see exactly what it showed and report back to Colin and TTE with those findings. I was of the opinion that there’s probably nobody alive in the world today that will have seen Percy Bromfield, as just one of the players in the film, either playing in real life or on any film anywhere, and I couldn’t believe that I might be the first to do so for nearly a century! Charles himself was so delighted that he immediately emailed Espen Bale at the BFI and myself, *“Dear John and Espen, thank you both for copying me in on these emails. I am delighted to witness the spirit of kindness as evidenced by this correspondence. Perhaps it’s the times we live in, but it’s special to come across a spirit of cooperation motivated by a shared passion for keeping history alive. From where I stand, you are forces for good in a world that needs more stories of cooperation like this. I shall watch on as this story unfolds, and meanwhile I thank you both for giving me the privilege. With warm regards, Charles Swaythling.”*

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CODENAME INTELLIGENTSIA

Montagu made another film in 1928 – an instructional short, *Table Tennis To-day*. Produced for Brunel & Montagu and shot mid-year at the Islington studios, this silent two-reeler featured world champion Zoltán Mechlovits and other leading players. Surveying the equipment of the game and demonstrating strokes by means of slow-motion analysis, the film perhaps did not benefit from the fact that its director was the world’s leading authority on table tennis; it has a very pedantic feel, with a pace that at times is deadly slow. Released early in 1929, it secured few bookings, though prints were also sold (at £10 each) for private exhibition.

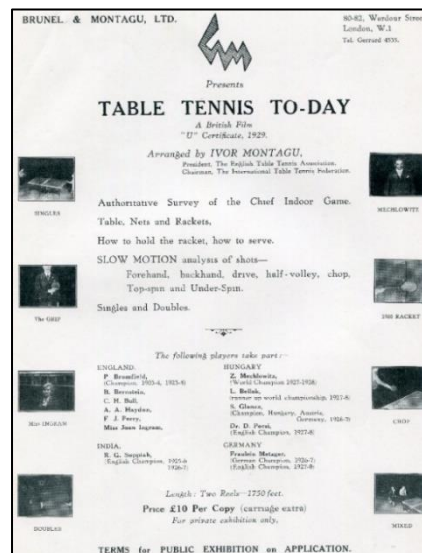


On Saturday 2 October 2021, a bombshell. The latest Collector magazine was published on the ITTF website, and their most prolific contributor, and fellow avid and diligent researcher, Alan Duke, who I have travelled up to the British Newspaper Library in London with on three occasions, as well as jointly writing articles, announced within it the results of his latest project which was published just the day before. Within that article, there was a brief mention of the Montagu film. There was me thinking I had a “world exclusive!” I couldn’t believe it, and rang him straight away that morning. Alan said that the film was *“not a surprise to him”* and that he had *“heard of it before.”* Later that morning he emailed me details of the film’s find by Chuck Hoey in the Spring 2008 (TTC 48) edition of The Collector, which both Colin and I had not seen before.⁴ It gives a brief description of the film’s contents and ends saying that *“their limited rights contract does not allow them to provide copies, but the film can be viewed in the museum.”* I have since learned from Chuck Hoey that he believes they purchased the film on EBAY, but it is a matter of conjecture as to where they obtained the rights to show it, or whether they are allowed to show it at all. I am still

⁴ The magazine goes back over 25 years, and I have not read all of them! There’s also no index available for them either to even know what each one contains.

awaiting their clarification. Alan also emailed me a screen-shot from a 2018 book entitled 'Codename Intelligentsia' (see above right) by Russell Campbell with a mention of the film too. He went on to write "after all, your searches may well have opened up public access to the film, not currently possible without a visit to the ITTF Museum (China!), or possibly BFI, I suppose." It was therefore with that moral support, along with hoping that I would also be granted permission by the BFI and the rights holder for TTE to be able to show the film legitimately on their website, if that was where they wished to hold it, that made me carry on, though still as yet, I hadn't contacted anyone at TTE yet to announce my discovery. Anyway, it was probably better I found out then, rather than after completion of my research and publication. If only I had emailed Chuck back in March, I would have saved myself a lot of pain, but then the film is probably more relevant to TTE than the ITTF, as it was filmed in London and shows so many English Open champions.

The film flyer shown on this page was coincidentally found in only the last two weeks within the TTE archives by Diane Webb, and an electronic copy has already been sent to the BFI for their Special Collections team. Interestingly, you will see that the cost of the film in 1929 was £10 which, in today's terms, equates to £667, i.e., an annual inflation rate of 4.67% per annum over 92 years!



On 20 October 2021 at 16:15pm, Charles and I received a belated email with apologies from Espen, but with a link attached that took us directly to the film, from which he said we could both download a copy. However, it was not water-marked and perfectly clear, which came as a huge surprise, so we immediately enquired as to the reason why. A week later he replied saying "Regarding the watermark – the copy that was uploaded didn't have one and my colleagues in digital were very busy, so I thought it best just to send over rather than wait even longer to get it to you." I had also mentioned that I was considering writing an article on my journey through this whole process, which I thought some might just find interesting, and asked if I could possibly use some still shots from the film. He duly obliged and there are four shown on this page (with kind courtesy of the BFI National Archive).

So, as regards the film, it is a massive 1.45GB in size, silent, black and white, and lasts 26 minutes 8 seconds. It shows all the players in real-time, as well as in several slow-motion sections highlighting the spin of the ball in practice play. Bearing in mind that it wasn't until 27 September 1928 that the first talkie film (The Jazz Singer) was premiered in Europe at the Piccadilly Theatre in London, it was understandable that this footage would be silent. The first 'non-silent' Laurel & Hardy film was still six months away too. However, although the film may well look archaic today, we must not lose sight of the fact that with the slow-motion shots depicting the various ball trajectories, this was still nevertheless at the cutting edge of technology in its day. Being able to persuade and gather so many top players to participate in the making of this film as well, we must count ourselves very fortunate that Ivor Montagu also had the means and the vision to be able to even produce this feature at all for the benefit of future generations and enable us to view the results now. The most overwhelming factor for me, though, was that it was just astonishing to be able to see the likes of Percy Bromfield (see right) actually moving rather than just perfectly still in the few photos of him that do exist, though he was really at his prime over twenty years before this film was made. There are also several shots taken outdoors and, assuming the indoor scenes were probably filmed at the St Bride's club in Bride Lane, especially as that was also Ivor Montagu's and the English table tennis' headquarters, then the street scenes showing the players in front of the camera were most likely taken on one corner of nearby Ludgate Circus, although I have not as yet been able



to match any buildings up with today's images. However, you may have also noticed in the Codename Intelligentsia image on the previous page, that there is mention of the film being shot "*mid-year at the Islington studios*",⁵ so perhaps the street scenes were filmed nearby there instead. If indeed this film was shot there, and it seems that many 'smaller budget' films were before the main focus shifted to the Lime Grove Studios, and the outdoor scenes were filmed here too, then it must have been extensively bombed during the War, as there are now just several blocks of flats, with just one corner of the original film studio still standing, although there is an open park area, which "may" be the one shown in the video footage but, if so, the whole area bears no resemblance today to the area back in 1928, so perhaps we will never know.

On Sunday 31 October I thought it was time I informed Diane Webb of my find. Instead of emailing, I thought it best to telephone. Also believing that this film would be a great addition to the forthcoming TTE Centenary celebrations, she suggested that I take part in the Zoom meeting that was planned to announce their ambitions the following Sunday at 7pm, which was to coincide exactly to the day when the Ping Pong Association was officially re-formed after WWI. We both agreed that if I could announce my finding at this event, then this would be quite something on such an auspicious occasion. However, the date and time duly arrived and I logged on to the meeting. I was all prepared to pass on the news, but was devastated when I realised that this was a Zoom meeting where no participant could be heard! The only facility available was a small dialogue box to ask a question and, bearing in mind that my intention was to provide some very necessary background information before asking if they might wish to consider the purchase of the film, it was therefore not possible. The only avenue open to me was to compose an email the next morning and send it to all the relevant parties.

Meanwhile, Charles had emailed me "*I viewed the film and was blown away, just as you were, by seeing actual cinematic footage of the players. With regards to your wish to purchase the film the TTE archive, I give my permission for you to do so. This said, I am rather hoping the BFI might consider donating it, as a gesture of goodwill and on the basis TTE is a non-profit organization, whose only remit here is to give the film archival relevance, as living history of the game. If a signed document is required, please do not hesitate to let me know.*" Again, Charles' help throughout this entire process, once I had made contact with him, has been brilliant, and his eloquence with the right use of the right words at the right time has been perfect, and you can see how he is so very well suited to the profession that he has chosen for himself. Thank you, Charles. However, our attempts to see if the BFI would allow even TTE to have the film for free, did not come to fruition, which I always thought would be the likely outcome. Espen kindly wrote "*Thank you for this and congratulations on the centenary. I'm afraid that we can't provide this free of charge as we have already undertaken a fair amount of work on this film and the fees discussed are really there just to cover the basic access to the material.*" This was perfectly understandable under the circumstances.

So, I duly sent my email to some individuals at TTE at 10.45am on the Monday morning, requesting they forward it on to any other Board or Executive Committee member who may be interested, and just before mid-day I received a reply from the CEO, Sara Sutcliffe saying "*thank you for your email and thank you for joining the zoom last night. I fully appreciate that it isn't an ideal way to hold a two-way conversation but I am delighted that you have got in touch straight away this morning. I am copying Steve Joel to this response and I see that Diane is already copied. Part of our plan is to have a permanent digital archive widely available from the website so your discoveries are certainly of interest. Rare footage of the early years would be fantastic and should absolutely be preserved. I'll ask Steve to respond in more detail. Kind regards, Sara.*" One hour later, and the TTE Chairman, Sandra Deaton, concurred with Sara, writing "*thank you so much for your detailed email and above all your dedication to our sport. I see Sara has responded with the next actions. I agree with Sara it would be very exciting to have visual representation of those earlier periods. I look forward to meeting you in the future.*" Steve Joel, the TTE Centenary Project Manager, duly contacted me later that same day, writing "*thank you for your email and taking the time to get in touch with us. I have no doubt that our Archives, Museum and Records Committee would be delighted to review this exciting footage and explore the most appropriate way forward for Table Tennis England to negotiate appropriate rights for use during the Centenary and beyond. Once again, thank you for taking the time to get in touch to share this opportunity and your thoughts with us.*" The wheels were in motion.

Since then, I spoke with Charles Montagu to let him know the latest situation and thanked him again for all his help, Diane was approached to see about the purchase of the film, contact was made with Espen Bale at the BFI and the film was duly requested in two formats: MP4 and MOV. If this has all gone according to plan, then Ivor Montagu's film is where it rightfully should be after nearly a century, and probably where he always intended it to be anyway, as well as a personal

⁵ Also known as the Gainsborough Studios, situated on the south bank of the Regent's Canal in Poole Street, Hoxton, Shoreditch between 1919 and 1949. Today, however, a block of flats stands where the studio used to be. Also, 'mid-year' may really mean 'mid-season', ie, perhaps December, as you will see there appear to be no leaves on the trees and Miss Metzger is wearing a fur coat.

copy being back with his own family for their archive too. On the assumption that the film has therefore been successfully uploaded on this website and you will have hopefully viewed it, and you just may have read this, then.....the rest is history! Thank you.

Appendix

Achievements of the players depicted in the film at the English Open Championships only

Percy Bromfield	Men's Singles champion 1903/1904	Dr Dan Peci	Men's Singles champion 1927/1928
	Men's Singles champion 1923/1924		Mixed Doubles champion 1927/1928
	Men's Doubles champion 1926/1927		
Raja Gopal Suppiah	Men's Singles champion 1925/1926	Zoltan Mechlowits	Men's Singles runner-up 1927/1928
	Men's Singles champion 1926/1927		Veteran Men's Singles champion 1932/1933
			Veteran Men's Singles champion 1938/1939
Bernard Bernstein	Men's Singles runner-up 1926/1927	Laszlo Bellak	Men's Doubles runner-up 1927/1928
			Men's Doubles champion 1935/1936
Joan Ingram	Ladies' Singles runner-up 1926/1927		Men's Singles runner-up 1937/1938
	Ladies' Singles runner-up 1927/1928		Men's Doubles champion 1937/1938
	Ladies' Doubles champion 1926/1927		Mixed Doubles runner-up 1938/1939
	Mixed Doubles champion 1926/1927		
	Mixed Doubles runner-up 1927/1928		
Fred Perry	Minor Singles runner-up 1926/1927	Erika Metzger	Ladies' Singles champion 1927/1928
	Men's Doubles champion 1927/1928		Mixed Doubles champion 1927/1928
	Men's Doubles champion 1928/1929	Sandor Glancz	Men's Doubles runner-up 1927/1928
	Mixed Doubles champion 1928/1929		Men's Singles champion 1929/1930
	Men's Doubles champion 1929/1930		Mixed Doubles champion 1929/1930
	Men's Consolation Singles champion 1932/1933		Men's Doubles runner-up 1930/1931
	Mixed Doubles champion 1930/1931		
	Men's Doubles champion 1932/1933		
Charles Bull	Men's Doubles champion 1927/1928	Adrian Haydon	Men's Singles runner-up 1932/1933
	Men's Singles runner-up 1928/1929		Men's Doubles runner-up 1932/1933
	Men's Doubles champion 1928/1929		
	Men's Doubles champion 1929/1930		
	Men's Doubles runner-up 1930/1931		

NB: This article was written in 2021 before the ETTA centenary.

Euro-Mini Championships 26th-28th August 2022, Schiltigheim, France

All photos courtesy of Michael Loveder

Six players represented England at this event which is for players born in 2009, 2010 or 2011, three girls and three boys played – Teagan Khazal, Max Radiven, Abraham Sellado, Sienna Jetha, Laura North and Isabella Turner-Samuels. It is a tournament with several group stages before the knockout rounds and so plenty of matches. Although most of the participants were from Europe, with a high number from France, there were a handful of players from Japan too, to add to the international flavour.

Max Radiven and Abraham Sellado played in the Boys' 2009 event and despite several wins in the various group stages couldn't quite do enough to go into the main event. They both reached the round of 32 in the consolation event.

Teagan Khazal was the sole representative in the 2011 Boys' Singles, a first international appearance for him and again despite several good wins in the various group stages finished in the consolation event and did well to reach the semi-finals and just missed out on a medal when he lost the third/fourth place play-off. He played 14 matches in all with opponents from Finland, France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Austria and Slovakia.



Max Radiven



Teagan Khazal



Abraham Sellado

It was the most experienced of the sextet, Sienna Jetha, who achieved the best result finishing in 13th place in the 2009 age category playing 12 matches in total as she progressed through the tournament. In this age category too, was Isabella Turner-Samuels, who went into the consolation event after her initial group matches and here too, she didn't progress from the group stage, nonetheless a good introduction to international table tennis.

Laura North, the youngest of the girls played in the 2011 age category and she too had her first international experience. North met players from Romania, France, Sweden and Ukraine and finished her tournament in the round of 32 in the consolation event. A wonderful experience at such a young age.



Isabella Turner-Samuels



Sienna Jetha



Laura North

What was Happening 20 Years Ago? 2002

- ❖ The National Junior Trials on 5th and 6th January were won by Matt Kenny and Kate Steward and the Cadets by Darius Knight and Kelly Sibley. The Junior Masters were won by Matt Kenny and Georgina Walker.
- ❖ Carole Moore won the North East Coach of the Year, her award was presented by Steve Cram.
- ❖ Work began on the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield with the first sod being turned on 15th February by the Sports Minister, Richard Caborn, MP.
- ❖ At the National Championships in Sheffield victory went to Andrew Baggaley and Nicola Deaton in the singles. Baggaley, seeded fifth, had a tremendous tournament defeating Cris Sladden, Carl Prean and Matthew Syed before overcoming Alex Perry in the final – a truly deserving champion. 19-year-old Baggaley got a second title with Gareth Herbert in the men's doubles and Deaton also claimed her second title with Helen Lower in the women's doubles. She had beaten Lower in the final of the singles after defeating Louise Durrant and Andrea Holt. The mixed doubles went to Alex Perry and Helen Lower and the Under 21s to Dale Barham and Georgina Walker. In the Veteran Singles, Joe Kennedy and Jane Durham were the champions and Kennedy with John Hilton took the veteran doubles.
NB: If anyone has any results or a programme from this event could they get in touch.
- ❖ The European Championships in Zagreb, Croatia took place from 30th March-7th April, the men finished in 17th place and the women in 25th.



England Squad in Zagreb.

*Back: Andrew Baggaley, Steen Hansen (npc), Terry Young, x, Alex Perry, x,
Soren Ahlen, Matthew Syed, Gareth Herbert*

Front: Nicola Deaton, Kate Steward, Georgina Walker, Katy Parker, Helen Lower

- ❖ Jai Yi Liu arranged a training camp in China for Paul Drinkhall and Darius Knight, the two young players were there for over a month and their time was spent training and playing in a tournament.
- ❖ ITTF rule changes were passed at their AGM in Zagreb which meant that serves now had to be behind the end line, above the playing surface and not hidden, to come into force on 1st September. Another rule change was the eligibility dates for juniors and cadets from Under 17 and Under 14 on 1st July in any year to Under 18 and Under 15 on 1st January.
- ❖ The new Junior National Champions were Dale Barham and Joanna Parker and the Cadets, Tim Yarnall and Abigail Embling.

- ❖ The Commonwealth Masters was held at Wembley Conference Centre on 17th May 2002. The concept and much of the planning was by Matthew Syed. In the highly entertaining final Yong Jun Duan from Singapore beat Syed whose defensive display could only be described as truly spectacular. The score 6, -9, 6, 6.



Yong Jun Duan and Matthew Syed

There was also an Under 12 Challenge between Darius Knight who was the victor by 9, 10, and Paul Drinkhall, in a brilliant showcase of their developing talent. The packed hall appreciated seeing the two young emerging players who handled the big occasion exceedingly well. There was excellent television coverage of the whole event as 75 minutes of play was shown on BBC Grandstand on 18th May.



Darius Knight and Paul Drinkhall

- ❖ Yorkshire won the County Championships Senior Premier Division, Cheshire the Veterans, Glamorgan the Juniors and Surrey beat Cheshire in the North v South play-off in the Cadets, the first Over 60 Veterans event was won by Essex.

- ❖ The ETTA Anniversary dinner organised splendidly by ETTA 100 Club Secretary, Doreen Stannard, marked 80 years since the birth of the Ping Pong Association and 75 years since the ETTA formation, it also marked 25 years of Doreen organising 100 Club dinners and events. There were speeches from Derek Tremayne, former General Secretary, Richard Yule, CEO and Alan Ransome, Chairman before the ninety guests were royally entertained by Ralph Gunnion with his dry wit and seemingly endless store of anecdotes and stories. There was a running display of photographs to bring back many memories and plenty of time to catch up with old friends. A fabulous evening.



ETTA Management Committee at the dinner: Mike Smith, Tony Chatwin, Carol Beames, Keith Ponting, Barry Granger, Karen Tonge, Brian Halliday, Alan Ransome

- ❖ The Under 10-Under 12 National Championships in June saw Paul Drinkhall and Lauren Springthorpe take the Under 12 titles, Gavin Evans and Emma Vickers the Under 11s and Gavin Evans and Jessica Macken the Under 10s. Springthorpe and Drinkhall were invited to attend an ETTU Eurokids Under 12 training camp in Istanbul.
- ❖ The first Mike Watts Achievement Awards for the boy and girl making the greatest improvement in rating points between 1st August and 31st July were presented to Clare Wilson and Alex Green by Mike's widow, Hilda Watts.



*Triumphant England Men's Team:
Matthew Syed, Andrew Baggaley, Gareth Herbert,
Terry Young, Alex Perry*

- ❖ Table tennis appeared for the first time in the Commonwealth Games in Manchester and three gold medals went England's way. In the Men's Team event, Andrew Baggaley, Gareth Herbert, Alex Perry, Matthew Syed and Terry Young triumphed, a further gold went to Andrew Baggaley and Gareth Herbert in the Men's Doubles and Sue Gilroy won a gold in the Women's Wheelchair event with Cathy Mitton taking a bronze. The Women's Team of Nicola Deaton, Helen Lower, Katy Parker, Kate Steward and Georgina Walker came 7th. Segun Toriola of Nigeria won the Men's Singles, Li Chunli of New Zealand the Women's Singles and Singapore the Women's Team event.

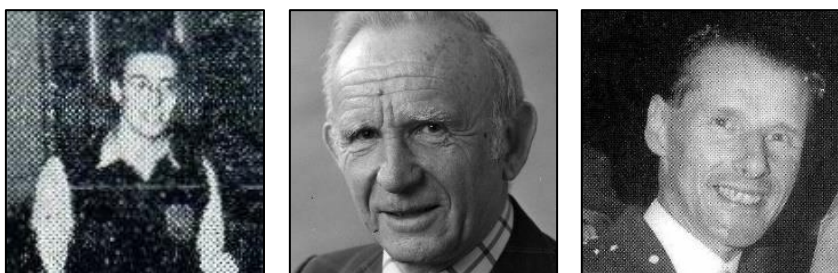
- ❖ Peter Charters received the Torch Trophy from football legend Sir Bobby Charlton at Old Trafford. The award was for outstanding contribution to sport and fittingly Matthew Syed, perhaps Charters star pupil had just won a gold medal in the Men's Team event in the Commonwealth Games. Charters had coached so many players to England international level including Andrew and Matthew Syed, Alison Gordon, Mandy Smith, Karen Witt, David Barr and Jimmy Stokes. Charters was also an influential and effective ETTA Vice-Chairman of Selection & Coaching and Coaching & Performance as well as serving on numerous committees including the ETTU Youth Committee.



Peter Charters with Bobby Charlton

- ❖ Following on from the Commonwealth Games, the first National Table Tennis Week was held from 3rd-11th August. Many leagues and clubs throughout the country organised events.
- ❖ The Table Tennis Academy at Grantham was launched with Bradley Billington as the chief coach.
- ❖ At the China Junior Open in the Under 12 Boys' Doubles Paul Drinkhall and Darius Knight were the winners, in the U15 Boys' Singles Drinkhall beat the China Number 1. The two boys also won the Under 12 team event at the Italian Youth Open and Drinkhall won the Under 12 title with Knight runner-up, the pair were runners-up in the Under 14 event too. There was further success at the Portuguese Youth Open where the two boys won the Cadet (Under 15) Team event. Fittingly the pair were jointly awarded the ETTA Johnny Leach Most Improved Player Award.
- ❖ The Woodfield Social & Sports Club, Penn Road, Wolverhampton received £1.45 million.

- ❖ Alan Sherwood started a charity with the ETTA to help inner city schools in London.
- ❖ At the Ocean International Sussex Open, sponsored by Paul Andrew, there was a star-studded field with Argentinian, Liu Song taking home the £1,000 first prize defeating Alan Cooke in the final. Terry Young had an impressive tournament reaching the semi-final after eliminating the number 1 seed Chen Weixing 5, 6, 6. The Women's Singles final was between two Chinese players, Xu Jie, the winner, and Zhao Shuang. There were a number of other top players from around the world including Poles, Andrezj Grubba, winner of the Veterans Men's Singles, and runner-up, Leszek Kucharski. To add to the atmosphere a James Bond look alike made the presentations of the trophies and cash prizes.
- ❖ 330 Sport England Award for All applications were successful to the tune of £1,120,515.
- ❖ The year saw the passing of Eli Goodman and Jackie Head both former England internationals and Cyril Hames, ETTA Vice-President and Birmingham and Warwickshire President.



Eli Goodman, Cyril Hames, Jackie Head

European Team Championships Stage 1

Women's Team: With all the other major activity with World and European Championships plus the Commonwealth Games the 1st stage of the European Team Championships seems to have been a bit under the radar. Nonetheless, the Women's Team played against Bosnia & Herzegovina and Estonia in Group B3 in Sarajevo over the weekend of 15th and 16th October 2022.

Their first match was against Bosnia & Herzegovina on 15th October and it was a good start for Tin-Tin Ho, Emily Bolton and Denise Payet. Ho had a comfortable first match victory against Harisa Mesetovic 6, 4, 7. Bolton added to the tally beating Dzana Biogradlic 10, -9, -6, 6, 3 before Payet went on the table. Not such a good game for her as she went down to Ema Lovric 7, -8, -8, -7. Ho then clinched the match with her second win, against Biogradlic 9, 3, 8. A win for England 3-1.

Match number two start at 7pm on the same day with Estonia the opponents and again it was a successful venture for the England ladies with the same 3-1 win. Ho started proceedings beating Reelca Hanson 3, -9, -9, 2, 3 and Bolton put the team 2-0 up when she won against Airi Avameri 2, 10, -7, 5. Payet narrowly lost to Vitalia Reinol -6, 2, -7, 3, -6 before Ho won the fixture for England defeating Avameri 6, 4, 7.

Estonia beat Bosnia Herzegovina 3-0 in the final match and so finished the group in second place.

The team will progress to Stage 2 and depending on how well they do there, will decide whether they will qualify for the finals in Malmo, Sweden, 10th-17th September 2023.

Men's Team: The Men's Team are in Group A3 and their matches will be against France and Serbia on a home and away basis. The dates are yet to be fixed although it is known their first match will be at home to Serbia and the second away to France.

ETTU European Under 21 Championships 14th-18th September 2022: Cluj Napoca, Romania

England's Mari Baldwin and Charlotte Bardsley were two of the 48 women who participated in these Championships, players were taken from the European Under 21 ranking list plus eight wild cards. No England men qualified.

The singles events were played initially in groups for all except the top eight seeds, the winners and runners-up from these groups then went into a further set of group matches along with the eight seeds. The knock-out stages then started, at the round of 16. All three doubles events started at the knock-out stage.



Mari Baldwin. Photo courtesy of the ETTU



Charlotte Bardsley. Photo courtesy of Michael Loveder

Under 21 Women's Singles: Charlotte Bardsley finished third in her group, beating Belgian, Sara Devos but losing to Kornelija Riliskyte, Lithuania and Rebecca Muskantor of Sweden and so did not go through to the knock-out stage. Mari Baldwin also finished third in her group despite winning two matches but lost out on count back by 8:5 to German, Sophia Klee 9:6 who she had beaten. Baldwin also beat Iolanta Yevtodii of Ukraine but her undoing was losing to Matilda Hansson of Sweden 4-0 which tipped the balance against her in the countback.

Under 21 Women's Doubles: Both Baldwin and Bardsley played but not with each other. Baldwin partnered Dasa Sinkarova of Slovakia and the pair had a walk-over in their first match and then had to face Hana Arapovic, Croatia and Linda Zaderova of Czech Republic. Bardsley partnered Naomi Pranjovic of Germany but the two lost in their first match 3-0 to Matilda Hansson and Rebecca Muskantor of Sweden.

Under 21 Mixed Doubles: Baldwin teamed with Barish Moullet of Switzerland whilst Bardsley played with Samuel Arpas of Slovakia. The luck of the draw, or the bad luck of the draw, saw the two pairs playing each other in their first match. It was Arpas and Bardsley who were the victors. The next round, the round of 32, saw their exit as they lost in a very close match after leading 2-0, to Csaba Andras and Helga Dari of Hungary - 1, -10, 7, 5, 9.

Winners and Runners-up

U21 MS: Samuel Kulczicky (Poland) beat Vladislav Ursu (Moldova)

U21 WS: Elena Zaharia (Romania) beat Franziska Schreiner (Germany)

U21 MD: Ivor Ban (Croatia)/Csaba Andras (Hungary) beat John Oyeboode/Carol Rossi (Italy)

U21 WD: Ozge Yilmaz/Ece Harac (Turkey) beat Nicole Arlia/Gaia Monfardini (Italy)

U21 XD: Luciana Mitrofan/Andrei Istrate (Roumania) beat Prithika Pavade/Lilian Bardet (France)

Europe Youth Top 10 30th September-1st October 2022: Tours, France

Forty of the best European young players in the junior and cadet categories for boys and girls took part in the Europe Youth Top 10 in the delightful town of Tours. This is a demanding tournament over three days with each of the ten players playing each other within their category.

As the World Championships were on at the same time some players who would have been eligible were playing in Chengdu and were not present. Despite this, the standard of play was very high and it appears there is significant talent developing in Europe.

There were no players from England or indeed from the United Kingdom, this year, although Jakub Piwowar was on the reserve list for the Cadet (Under 15) Boys' event. This event was won by the French lad, Flavien Coton, still only 14, who went through the tournament only losing one match which was to Julian Rzihaushek of Austria, Coton's compatriot Nathan Lam was second, his one loss to Coton, Balasz Lei of Hungary was third.

The Cadet (Under 15) Girls was won by top ranked player Bianca Mei Rosu of Romania who lost only one match which was to Zoofia Sliwka of Poland. There was success for France in this event, too, as Leana Hochart was second with Alesia Sferlea, third, another Romanian player.



Flavien Coton, Bianca Mei Rosa. Photos courtesy of the ETTU

The Junior (Under 19) Boys' title went to Iulian Chirita, a further medal for Romania, Chirita won eight of his nine matches. His loss was to Italian, Andera Puppo, who finished second. France again stood on the podium as Hugo Deschamps finished third, both Deschamps and Puppo lost two matches.

The Junior (Under 19) Girls' saw the Croatian, Hana Arapovic, take the gold medal ahead of Under 21 European Champion, Elena Zaharia of Romania. Both girls lost one match with Zaharia's defeat being at the hands of Arapovic in the final match of the series of nine. It was a tantalising finale to decide the eventual champion. In third place was Iona Singeorzan, another Romanian with two defeats.



Hana Arapovic, Iulian Chirita. Photos courtesy of the ETTU

Certainly, some names to look out for in the coming years.

Harvey and I had the pleasure of watching some of the play and TTE Chairman, Sandra Deaton, the highest ranked ETTU official was there also. For Harvey and me, the highlight of the long weekend was meeting up with Didier Andre, the great French collector, as well as two of his friends.



Diane and Didier

We had been corresponding with Didier by email for several years but because of Covid had not been able to meet before. So, it was lovely that we were able to see him at last and chat (with a little help from an interpreter!) about our great passion. Didier's collection, particularly of table tennis shirts is truly amazing, his hope of creating a museum in France is still afloat and it would be wonderful if he was able to achieve his dream.



Christel and Didier

Didier also puts on several exhibitions and one had taken place on 24th September in Nancay and amongst the exhibits was a beautiful piece of stained glass artwork of his daughter, Christel, when she was a teenager, and we think it is well worth showing.

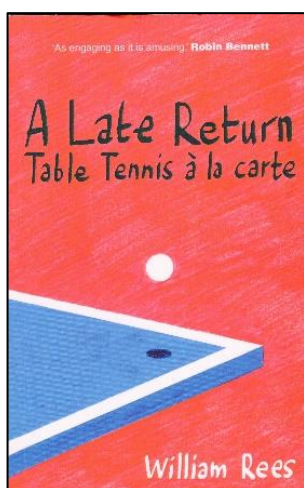
More Museums

Talking about table tennis collections and museums, we were told that there is a section of a museum in Montreux, Switzerland which now has a dedicated table tennis display.

We have also learnt via Chuck Hoey's Table Tennis History Journal of an incredible private collection of table tennis memorabilia, possibly the largest private collection in the world – on the island of Aruba. It contains over 2,400 bats as well as other artefacts, all beautifully presented in display cases. So, if you happen to be passing that way then go and have a look, sounds like a good excuse for a cruise ship holiday.

A Late Return - Table Tennis a la carte by William Rees

Review by Harvey Webb



The author re-discovered table tennis when over 50 and living in France, not having played since his teenage years in England. The book's focus is on a Regional Veterans Tournament and the exploits of the author and his teammates.

It is an entertaining read, albeit a little short at 70 pages, but accurately portrays the frustrations and elations that are always present in the sport.

The descriptions of his teammates and their opponents will be very familiar and recognisable adding fuel to the belief that tt players are a breed who inhabit the same world no matter where they are based.

The book will resonate with anyone who still has dreams of that "big win" no matter at what stage they have reached on their tt journey – it could be just around the corner.

Purchased through Amazon at £7.99.

In Memoriam



Anita Stevenson:

Tribute by John Bowness:

We have to report the sad passing of one of Leicestershire's most promising juniors when she made her very considerable mark in the early 1970s, firstly in local table tennis, extending this to a wonderful career as a junior in the top echelon in the country.

Eventually this was extended into senior level where she was knocking on the door close to the summit.

Just when her table tennis career was reaching towards that very top, with appearances in both England's World Championship team in 1979 and the European team in 1980 as well as runner-up in the National Championships Women's Singles in 1982, alas, soon after this she fell into an illness that she had to battle against for the rest of her life.

Born on 4 July 1956, she died just after her 66th birthday on 19 July 2022 after fighting against her illness for almost two-thirds of her life and is still remembered by many of her team-mates and opponents from her playing days with great fondness.

I had the privilege of being the Leicestershire Junior Team non-playing captain when Anita came into the side under the coaching guidance of John Ellis and took it by storm, helping the team to become one of the best junior teams in the country at the time and, at times, THE best.

A left-handed aggressive attacking player with a great deal of flair and a fierce competitiveness, my own most vivid memory of her came in around 1972 when, as non-playing captain of the Leicester Bromfield Trophy team for junior girls we had to travel down to Sittingbourne in deepest Kent for a quarter-final match – a 100-mile train journey to London, across the capital by tube and then a 50-mile train journey to Sittingbourne.

The girls with Anita and including Karen Rogers (now Smith) and Susan Baxter, did us proud as I believe the opponents were defending champions at the time. So, a full match and then three train journeys all the way back to Leicester, all in one day. That is how it was in those days and probably would not even be allowed now.

Although Leicester did not quite win this National event they did win the JM Rose Bowl for Women's teams with Anita leading the way once again and more than ably supported by Karen Rogers and Suzanne Hunt in 1981.

It was interesting looking through my press cuttings from back then and seeing that in the 1973/74 season the indelibly linked by this time Anita and Karen were in their last season as juniors and began the season as, respectively, one and two in the national Junior rankings.

1974 saw Anita as part of the England team to play in the European Youth Championships in Germany where she, together with Karen and Carole Knight won a bronze medal.

The season before I seemed to be writing about the two girls every other week with Anita having reached number two in the National rankings with some first class results on the tournament circuit and a brilliant display in the initial 12-player trials where in typical attacking style she won the first seven sets before tasting one defeat.

What a career she had albeit much shorter than it should have been, and who knows what heights she might have achieved if tragedy had not struck so early for a very popular person, team-mate and opponent.

Career Highlights:

Ranking: England Senior 2, Junior 1.

World Championships: Corbillon Cup player 1979 in Pyongyang, Korea DPR, finishing 12th with Jill Hammersley and Karen Witt.

European Championships: Women's Team 3rd in 1980 with Jill Hammersley and Carole Knight.

European Youth Championships: Represented England in 1972, 1973 and 1974 finishing 6th, 6th and 4th/bronze with Carole Knight and Karen Rogers.

Commonwealth Championships: Mixed Doubles quarter-final 1977 with Rob Wiley.

English Open: Women's Singles quarter-final 1977, Women's Doubles semi-final 1979, 1980, 1982 all with Carole Knight, Mixed Doubles quarter-final 1975 and 1976 both with Donald Parker.

English Junior Open: Junior Girls' Team winner 1974 with Carole Knight, runner-up 1973 with Linda Howard, runner-up 1973 with Linda Howard, Junior Girls' Singles semi-final 1973, 1974, Junior Girls' Doubles winner 1973 with Linda Howard, runner-up 1974 with Carole Knight, semi-final 1972 with Mandy Mellor, Junior Mixed Doubles winner 1974 with Andy Barden, quarter-final 1972 with David Alderson and 1973 with Andy Barden.

National Championships: Women's Singles runner-up 1982, semi-final 1975, 1978, 1979, Women's Doubles winner 1980 and 1982 both with Carole Knight, runner-up 1978 and 1981 both with Carole Knight, semi-final 1974, 1975, 1976 and 1977 all with Susan Lisle.

Junior National Championships: Junior Girls' Singles winner 1974, semi-final 1973, Junior Girls' Doubles winner 1974 with Carole Knight, runner-up 1972 and 1973 both with Judith Walker.

National Team Championships: J M Rose Bowl: Winner with Leicester League 1980 and 1981 both with Suzanne Hunt and Karen Rogers.

Senior Internationals against China, Czechoslovakia, Russia, Singapore, Sweden and Yugoslavia and Junior Internationals against Netherlands, Sweden and Wales.

Numerous wins in domestic Open tournaments at senior and junior level.

Anita toured China in May and June 1973 aged 16 years, the team included Karenza Mathews, Nicky Jarvis, Paul Day, Desmond Douglas, Donald Parker, Andy Barden and David Fraser from Scotland. She also took part in a junior tour of Sweden in October 1973 with David Alderson and Paul Day.



On the podium at the European Youth Championships 1974, Anita Stevenson, Carole Knight, Karen Rogers with non-playing captain, Peter Simpson. Photo by Tony Ross

ITTF World Championships 30th September – 9th October 2022: Chengdu, China

All photographs courtesy of the ITTF

Rightly or wrongly the World Table Tennis Championships took place in the Chinese city of Chengdu, a city of 21 million people who were all in strict lockdown and had been for some time. It was reported that even when tremors were felt in the city from the 6.8 magnitude earthquake in the region, residents were not allowed to leave their compounds.

The restrictions and conditions placed on players and others who were attending were draconian to say the least and no fault can be laid at the doors of those who decided not to attend.

Players had to take specially chartered flights to get to Chengdu leaving from either Singapore or Dubai.



Full protective clothing was worn by all the flight attendants on the plane and by the ground staff

32 men's teams attended and 28 women's teams. There were many top names missing from a number of countries. The first stage of the championships had teams in groups which were played as a round robin before a straight knockout for the latter part of the competition.

England's men sent three players, David McBeath, Liam Pitchford and Sam Walker. The Women's Team did not qualify originally but were invited as the ITTF worked their way down the ranking list to find enough teams willing to play. All England players and coaches were given the option of attending, as a result the Men's Team was not its strongest and there were no coaches with the team. There were insufficient ladies willing to travel and so no female team was sent. One of the unanswered questions from England was how long quarantine would last if a player tested positive whilst in Chengdu. With no definitive response the decision not to go was understandable. This, however, was not the only issue. There seemed inconsistencies as the protocols were rigid in some areas but seemed flexible in others, such as wearing masks or not, as can be seen from the opening ceremony and other photos.

Although entry into China was restricted, there were spectators as 1,000 attended by invitation, rather one-sided support. There were a huge bank of photographers also who were able to be there.



Some of the photographers

As well as England, several other countries also had top players missing, although whether by selection or the players' choice is not known. Germany only had one of their top five attending – no Boll, no Ovtcharov, no Filus, no Franziska, also no Gauzy for France, no Achanta for India, no Dyas for Poland, plus others. England were not the only team without a coach and one inventive country arranged for an iPad to be set up court side so they could be coached remotely.

There were 32 men's teams and 28 women's. There were four groups x five teams and three groups x four teams, seven groups in all for the men's event and four x five and two x four for the women. A strange format, eight groups of four for the men would seem to be more obvious and equitable. England, as the eighth ranked team were, therefore, ranked second in their group and not a top seeded team.

We were informed that three players tested positive whilst in Chengdu although we have no further details and there is no mention on the ITTF website.

The competition started with an opening ceremony in which 400 took part and the two cups, the Swaythling Cup for the men and the Corbillon Cup for the women were displayed.

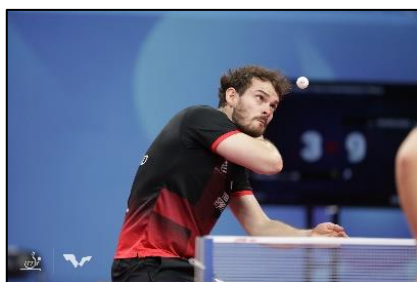


Opening Ceremony



Parading the Swaythling Cup

England were in a group of four and ranked second behind Sweden. Their first match was against Poland who like England also had a depleted team with their strongest player, Jakub Dyas, not in Chengdu. David McBeath was up first against a spirited Samuel Kulczycki and it was the Pole who won the match -12, 5, 5, 4. Next up was Liam Pitchford who had a comfortable victory against Milosz Redzimski 7, 4, 10. Sam Walker was hoping for a victory against Maciej Kubik but lost 3-1 by 6, -10, 8, 9. Pitchford then equalled the score beating Kulczycki 11, 6, 6 before McBeath went on the table to try and win the match for England but this time it was the Pole who won 7, 9, 8. It was going to be an uphill struggle to qualify for the last 16 with Sweden, the top seed in their group, the next opponents.



Sam Walker, David McBeath, Liam Pitchford

Although Sweden were slightly depleted as Jon Persson had tested positive for covid not long before the tournament started, fortunately, before he left (Swedish lady, Stina Kallberg also tested positive and so was not able to go) the Swedes still had a very strong team.

Walker started the proceedings against Truls Moregard (WR 6), his partner in the Czech Open in 2021 when they won the Men's Doubles together. Moregard, now one of the world's best players, started well but Walker levelled in the second game before Moregard once more went ahead and won 3-1 with the score 5, -9, 3, 5. Pitchford, again, went in at number 2 and had the better of Anton Kallberg 8, -5, 9, 9. McBeath at number 3 had a tough task against Kristian Karlsson and lost 9, 4, 4 before Moregard defeated Pitchford 8, 7, -7, 7. Match to Sweden 3-1.

The final group match was against Australia and England got the expected win with Walker defeating Nicholas Lum -9, 8, 7, 8, Pitchford beat Yonghun Lee 5, 7, 7 and McBeath beat Finn Luu -4, 1, 11, 3.

Due to the format of the competition two third placed teams went through into the last 16. The decision was not according to how well the teams had performed in the World Championships but according to their team world ranking – whether the team at the Championships was the one based on the world ranking or not. So, England were favoured as the eighth seeds in the competition and with India went through to the knockout rounds. It was a tough place to be though as India faced China and England faced France who had won their group above both Germany and India.

The round of 16 started with Pitchford as England’s first player against the emerging young talent of Felix Lebrun. It was a good start for England as Pitchford won -8, 9, -2, 7, 7. Next was Walker against the younger Lebrun brother, Alexis. The French lad levelled the score with a 5, 4, 9 win. McBeath then faced Jules Rolland and played well in a very close match, almost taking the victory but just losing by -6, 9, -6, 8, -7. A win would have put the England team in a commanding position. Pitchford then took on Alexis Lebrun and in another five setter just got over the edge -9, 6, -9, 6, 8. So, Walker was playing for the victory with Felix Lebrun as the opposition. The first game Felix won comfortably, game 4, but then Walker in very determined mood got so close but just lost out, game 10 and game 12 to give the match victory to France.

The Champions:



Corbillon Cup Winners - China



Swaythling Cup Winners - China

A difference in support:



Three for England, a few more for Germany and slightly higher for China!

Crawley Grand Prix: 17th and 18th September 2022

All photos by Michael Loveder

There was a good entry for the first Grand Prix of the season with entries from 159 men and 41 women. It was unfortunate that the top two men's seeds were not able to make the event, Mudit Dani of India and England's Chris Doran. This left Josh Bennet as the top seeded player with Lorestas Trumpauskas in the second spot.

Men's Singles: Although Bennet was the top seed it wasn't an easy ride for him into the final with some challenging matches along the way. Victims included Jie Fu Tham, a promising junior, along with top Guernsey player, Garry Dodd, before defeating Chun Wai Fung named as being of Middlesex who had no ranking points.

Although Bennett had a difficult route to the final the challenge for Lorestas Trumpauskas was even more difficult as he met his son, Larry, in the round of 32. It was the younger Trumpauskas who triumphed, a well-deserved win by the youngster, which shows how much he has developed in the last few months. Larry went on to reach the semi-final before losing to Bulgarian, Radoslav Kamberov, who then succumbed to Bennett in the final.



Josh Bennett with coach, Cliff Carder



Radoslav Kamberov

Women's Singles: The Women's Singles was more predictable than the Men's event, at least until the semi-final stage. Here, Hannah Silcock from Jersey, who played so well at the recent Commonwealth Games, defeated the number 1 seed, Mollie Patterson, who has recently returned from injury. Patterson as we have reported elsewhere, had the misfortune to qualify for England's team for the Commonwealth Games and then was unable to play due to her injury. We hope she has the opportunity to represent her country at senior level later on.

A face becoming very familiar at Grand Prix events, Tianer Yu, China and Middlesex, was the other finalist who had Sara Williams as her opponent in the semi-final. Once again it was Yu who took home the cheque for £500 as the winner after defeating Silcock in the final.



Tianer Yu



Hannah Silcock

Other Results: It was a further success for Josh Bennett as he took the Restricted Singles title with a win over Umair Mauthoor. The Veterans' Singles title went to Lorestas Trumpauskas defeating Zoltan Hosszu in the final. It was a double triumph for the Trumpauskas household as Larry won the Under 21 Men's Singles defeating Danny Bajwa. In the corresponding ladies' event, Tianer Yu, had a walk-over in the final against Mollie Patterson who received a further injury and so was not able to play the match.



Lorestas Trumpauskas and son, Larry Trumpauskas

Governance

Table Tennis England: At the TTE AGM in July the proposal to have four member elected Directors on the Board was passed and so it was, after some considerable delay, that the vacant post was advertised in September. There were initially four candidates but one withdrew which left Mike Bishop of Clevedon, Somerset who also stood last time there was a vacancy, he is Chairman of the TTE Disciplinary Committee, Neil Hurford of Abingdon, Oxfordshire, National Councillor and Chairman of Members' Advisory Group and Jos Kelly of Bridgwater, Somerset who is their National Councillor and a Member of the TTE Governance Select Committee.

The TTE Board's Nominations Committee viewed all three applications and felt that all three met the criteria set out in respect of the skills matrix. The Board accordingly gave its approval for all three applicants to the membership. Voting for Company Members from the Board, County and affiliated Local Leagues will close on 1st November and an announcement made shortly after the count.

A competition review has been ongoing for some time and a presentation was made to the Board in September. Two Zoom meetings have taken place and a presentation made to October's National Council to explain the proposals. Also, at National Council will be a presentation on the Strategy Reset document which will set out the vision for Table Tennis England over the coming months and years.

ITTF: Due to the restrictions at the World Championships in Chengdu the AGM was not held there as is usual. Instead, a summit is to be held in Amman, Jordan from 4th-6th December with the AGM on the 6th and other meetings on the other days.

It is a full agenda and as well as a plethora of reports there are several propositions. These include various changes to the ITTF Handbook including to review and reorganise the Constitution so that the ITTF Foundation and World Table Tennis are formally recognised. Other propositions include to suspend the Table Tennis Federation of India unless they comply with election procedures, a proposition on altering the rule on the composition of blades, another to remove time-out from matches and a proposition from TTE to give it 'preferred bidder status' to hold the World Championships in London in 2026. The host for the 2025 World Championships will also be decided.

We will await the decisions with interest.

Summary of WTT Tournaments

WTT Youth Contender: Helsingborg, Sweden: 8th-14th August 2022

U19 BS: Toby Ellis – Round of 32, James Hamblett – Group

U17 BS: Toby Ellis – Rd of 32, James Hamblett – Round of 32

WTT Youth Contender: Varazdin, Croatia: 30th August-5th September 2022

U19 BS: Toby Ellis - Group, Joseph Hunter - Group, Adam Dennison - Group, Joshua Bruce – Group

U19 GS: Mari Baldwin – Round of 64, Jasmin Wong – Round of 64, Megan Jones - Group, Anna Green – Group

U17 BS: Jakub Piwowar – Round of 16, Joseph Hunter – Round of 32, Ralph Pattison – Round of 32, Toby Ellis – Round of 64, Adam Dennison – Round of 64, Joseph Dennison – Round of 64, Larry Trumpauskas - Group

U17 GS: Megan Jones - Group, Anna Green - Group

U15 BS: Jakub Piwowar – Round of 16, Larry Trumpauskas – Round of 32, Ralph Pattison – Round of 32, Kacper Piwowar - Group, Joseph Dennison - Group

U13 BS: Kacper Piwowar - Group

WTT Youth Contender: Otocec, Slovenia: 30th August-5th September 2022

U19 BS: Joseph Hunter – Round of 64, Connor Green - Group, Toby Ellis - Group, Felix Thomis – Group, James Hamblett - Group, Joshua Bruce – Group

U19 GS: Mari Baldwin – Round of 32, Megan Jones - Group, Anna Green - Group, Jasmin Wong - Group

U17 BS: Connor Green – Round of 32, Toby Ellis – Round of 64, Joseph Hunter – Round of 64, Jakub Piwowar – Round of 64, Felix Thomis – Round of 64, James Hamblett – Round of 64

U17 GS: Anna Green – Round of 64, Megan Jones - Group

U15 BS: Jakub Piwowar – Round of 32, Kacper Piwowar – Group

U15 GS: Sienna Jetha – Round of 32

U13 BS: Kacper Piwowar – Round of 16

U13 GS: Sienna Jetha – Round of 16

WTT Youth Star Contender: Skopje, North Macedonia: 7th-11th September 2022

U19 BS: Connor Green – Group

U19 BD: Connor Green/Daniels Kogan (Latvia) - Quarter-final

U19 XD: Connor Green/Sophie Earley (Ireland) – Semi-final

U15 BS: Jakub Piwowar – Group

U15 GS: Sienna Jetha -Group

WTT Youth Contender: Podgorica, Montenegro: 2nd-4th October 2022

U13 BS: Prayrit Ahluwalia – Group

U15 BS: Prayrit Ahluwalia - Round of 16

WTT Youth Star Contender: Podgorica, Montenegro: 5th-9th October 2022

U19 BS: Connor Green – Quarter-final

U19 BD: Connor Green/David Szantosi (Hungary) – Quarter-final

U19 XD: Connor Green/Sophie Earley (Ireland) – Semi-final

WTT Champions: Macao, China: 19th-23rd October 2022

MS: Liam Pitchford – Round of 32 (won 8,500 US dollars)

Future Dates

Domestic Events:

Preston Grand Prix: 5th-6th November 2022

Cardiff Satellite Grand Prix: 17th-18th December 2022 – event to be confirmed

National Championships Qualifiers: 7th-8th January 2023, Nottingham

National Championships: 24th-26th March 2023, Nottingham

Jersey Satellite Grand Prix: 7th-9th April 2023 – event to be confirmed

ELCC Qualifiers: 16th April 2023 (juniors), 22nd April 2023 (seniors)

Cadet, Under 17, Junior National Championships: 29th-30th April 2023, Nottingham

Cadet National Cup: 13th-14th May, venue to be confirmed

London Grand Prix: 27th-28th May 2023, Redbridge

ELCC Finals: 3rd-4th June 2023, venue to be confirmed

Under 11 and Under 13 National Championships: 10th-11th June 2023, Wolverhampton

Junior National Cup: 17th-18th June 2023, venue to be confirmed

Gloucester Grand Prix: 24th-25th June 2023

Senior National Cup: 8th-9th July 2023 - Cancelled

Wolverhampton Grand Prix: 15th-16th July 2023 (change of date)

International Events:

World Para Championships: 6th-12th November 2022, Granada, Spain

ITTF World Youth Championships: 5th-11th December 2022, Tunis

Europe Top 16 Cup: 25th-26th February 2023, Montreux, Switzerland

European Under 21 Championships: 5th-9th April 2023, Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina

World Championships: 22nd-28th May 2023, Durban, South Africa

European Games: 23rd June-1st July 2023, Krakow and Malopolska, Poland

European Youth Championships: 14th-23rd July 2023, Gliwice, Poland

European Team Championships Stage 1: Group A3: England Men v France and Serbia, home and away – dates to be confirmed

European Championships (Team): 10th-17th September 2023, Malmo, Sweden

Europe Youth Top 10: 29th September-1st October 2023, Bucharest, Romania

There are also a number of World Table Tennis events

Veterans Events: For the Over 40s

World Veteran Championships: 15th-21st January 2023, Muscat, Oman

European Veteran Championships: 26th June-1st July 2023, Sandefjord, Norway

More details can be found on the VETTS website. Booking for both events is open

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