



Table Tennis Times

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

Issue 25

Editorial

Winter 2021

Just in time for some Christmas reading is another bumper issue of our magazine, which we hope will help you forget, at least for little while, words like, pandemic, covid, delta and omicron,

and let you dive into our reports of current tournaments and let you bathe yourselves in some nostalgia.

For the last few months, the International Table Tennis scene has been very busy, World Championships, European Youth, Home Countries International, European Under 21, and a number of the new WTT events, and we have reports on most of these. On the domestic front we have reports on two Junior 4 Star events and the start of another season of Grand Prix.

For those of you who enjoy trips down memory lane we have the latest offering from Ken and Karenza Mathews, and the second instalment of the “Chinese Diary” by Nora Vint.

We also include another thought-provoking, and perhaps slightly controversial, article from our regular correspondent, Brian Kean.

We have another Book Review in this edition as we look at Ian Marshall’s biography of one of the all-time greats, Angelica Rozeanu. This can be purchased from Richard Scruton at RichardofYork187@outlook.com Price 25 euros or sterling equivalent.

Regular favourites, “What was Happening” looks at 1976, and “Spotlight” featuring George Tyler are here, together with information updates on Table Tennis England Governance, ITTF and Swaythling Club International Elections and appointments.

We also pay tribute to Connie Warren and David House, both former Internationals who have passed away recently.

We would like to take the opportunity to wish all our readers a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Best wishes
Diane and Harvey Webb

ITTF World Championships

All photos courtesy of WTT

The delayed ITTF World Championships took place on the American continent for the first time in Houston, Texas from 23rd-29th November 2021. The turn of the individual events and qualification was by world ranking and continental allocation.

England had three players in the Men's Singles from 120 entrants – Paul Drinkhall (ranked 45), Liam Pitchford (seeded 11), Sam Walker (ranked 78), Tin-Tin Ho (ranked 66) was the sole England female qualifier in the Women's Singles, Charlotte Carey from Wales (ranked 94) also qualified. The Men's Doubles (48 pairs) saw Drinkhall and Pitchford seeded at 11 and the Women's Doubles with 46 pairs had Tin-Tin Ho and Austrian, Karoline Mischek seeded at 16. There were no players from England in the Mixed Doubles.

Men's Singles: The first day's play saw all three England men in action. Walker (WR 97) was the first on court against Daniel Gonzalez of Puerto Rica (WR 147) and it was a positive start with a 4-1 win. Drinkhall (WR 57) had the toughest draw with his opponent, Marcos Freitas of Portugal (WR 25). Despite Drinkhall winning the first game the rest of the match went against him and he lost 4-1. Last of the three was Pitchford (WR 15) and he looked to be struggling against Ukrainian, Kou Lei (WR 59), well known to many English players 20 years or so ago but Pitchford came through with a 4-2 win.



Sam Walker



Liam Pitchford

Day 2 saw Walker against Frenchman, Emmanuel Lebesson (WR 39), a tricky opponent. Despite battling valiantly, Walker went down 4-2. Pitchford met Spaniard, Alvaro Robles (WR 66) who he beat 4-1 and the following day had success against Jonathan Groth of Denmark (WR 33), setting himself up for a last 16 clash against Liang Jingkun of China (WR 9). A match that was so close but it was Pitchford's opponent who went through to the quarter-finals with a 4-3 win.

Women's Singles: Ho had a successful start to her campaign with a win over France's Marie Migot (WR 176) by 4-2 but meeting the seeded Cheng I-Ching (WR 8) was a step too far and Ho lost 4-0.



Tin-Tin Ho



Paul Drinkhall & Liam Pitchford

Men's Doubles: Seeded at 11, Drinkhall and Pitchford had a bye in the 1st Round. USA opponents Nikhil Kumar and Kai Zhang did not appear too much of a challenge, a 3-1 win. The Round of 16 saw a European clash and a successful one for the English pair as they had a good 3-0 result against Belgium's Cedric Nuytinck and Jakub

Dyas from Poland. Drinkhall and Pitchford seemed on top form and playing well together but the quarter-final match went against them and they could not quite get past the post against the Japanese partnership of Shunsuke Togami and Yukiya Uda.

Women's Doubles: As a seeded pair, Ho and Mischek had a bye in the 1st Round into the last 32 where they met Suthasini Sawettabut and Orawan Paranang of Thailand. Their first match was also their last as they went down 3-0.

For the Record:

Men's Singles: Fan Zhendong (China) beat Truls Moregard (Sweden) 4-0.

Women's Singles: Wang Manyu (China) beat Sun Yingsha (China) 4-2.

Men's Doubles: Mattias Falck & Kristian Karlsson (Sweden) beat Jang Woojin & Lim Jonghoon (Korea) 3-1.

Women's Doubles: Wang Manyu & Sun Yingsha (China) beat Hina Hayata & Mima Ito (Japan) 3-0.

Mixed Doubles: Wang Chuqin & Sun Yingsha (China) beat Tomokazu Harimoto & Hina Hayata (Japan) 3-0.



Fan Zhendong



Wang Manyu



Kristian Karlsson & Mattias Falck



Wang Manyu & Sun Yingsha



Sun Yingsha & Wang Chuqin

Star of the Show: The star of the championships without a doubt was Truls Moregard who ranked 77 on the World Ranking list (we won't go into our concerns about the current ITTF ranking list here) defeated Ahmed Salah (WR 50), Chuang Chih-Yuan (WR 25), Patrick Franziska (WR 14), Lim Jonghoon (WR 70), Quadri Aruna (WR 17) and Timo Boll (WR 11) before succumbing to Fan Zhendong (WR 1) in the final. Outstanding for a 19-year-old. We were impressed with Moregard when we saw him at the European Championships in Nantes in 2019 and he has had some excellent results since including winning the WTT Contender tournament in Budapest and the Men's Doubles with our own Sam Walker at the ITTF Czech Open both in August 2021.

Young, charismatic and playing with a highly distinctive heptagonal bat we look forward to a lot more to come from this young man.



Truls Moregard



Quadri Aruna

We were delighted to see Quadri Aruna, aged 33 years, with the new green rubber, reach the quarter-finals in the Men's Singles, the first African to do so. An amazing Championships for Timo Boll too, who was a losing semi-finalist in the Men's Singles. Having won the European title this year, it shows life can begin (again) at 40. It was a good tournament as well for Luxembourg players, Sarah de Nutte and Xia Lian Ni, who reached the semi-final of the Women's Doubles despite being ranked 27 in the event.

Richard Bergmann Fair Play Award: Congratulations go to USA's Lily Zhang who was the recipient of this award which was presented by Zoran Primorac on behalf of the Swaythling Club International.



Zoran Primorac and Lily Zhang

Comment: There were major technical problems with the scoring system and in many instances the results shown on the screens in the venue were different to those on the live feed, match scores were frozen – one at 9-6 in the first game even when the match was over. The voice recognition translation just didn't work with "motorcycle, motorcycle", "Mr Pittsburgh", "Brenda Pitchford" and many other obscure translations. Perhaps the biggest gripe was that matches on tables 1 and 2 could not be viewed unless you paid for subscription television. This meant some of the best matches in the earlier rounds could not be seen and no matches from the quarter-finals onwards unless you paid. Despite writing to the ITTF no response has been received.

It was disappointing as well that many of the world's top players were missing, there was no World Number 2, Ma Long or World Number 3, Xu Xin, Dimitrij Ovtcharov was injured and so unable to play. In the Women's Singles, the Chinese World Number 5, 6 and 7 were not part of their team – Ding Ning, Zhu Yuling and Liu Shiwen - all missing. At a World Championships you expect the best in the world to be taking part and they are the players who spectators most want to see. Does it devalue the Championships?

With WTT now in full flow it is important to distinguish between the ITTF World Table Tennis Championships, first established in 1926 in London and the WTT or World Table Tennis events particularly as, even on the ITTF website, the most prestigious event in the table tennis calendar was not titled as an ITTF event, similarly so on the WTT website. Photographs too were only on the WTT website and not on that of the ITTF. The dividing line is confusing and not clear cut.

European Youth Top 10

The tournament for the cream of European youth took place in Tours, France from 15th to 17th October 2021. Although there were no players from any of the Home Countries participating, we nevertheless wished to report on the top junior and cadet players of our continent.

Cadet Boy, Iulian Chirita of Romania, the number 1 seed, was the only player to go through the tournament undefeated. Compatriot, Dragos Alexandru Bujor, ranked 10th, took home the silver medal and Tom Closset of Belgium, the bronze.

The Cadet Girls was a mixed affair with 5th ranked player, Ukrainian Veronika Matiunina finishing in pole position with one loss. Four girls finished on equal points to battle it out for the other medals with three losses each. The games ratio meant Anastasiia Ivanova of Russia was second and Bianca Mei Rosu of Romania was third.

The Junior Boys' title was another closely contested event as four boys finished with 16 points all having two losses. Another games ratio decision which went to Borgar Haug of Norway (33-17), second was Ivor Ban of Croatia (30 -17) and third was Maciej Kubik of Poland (33-23).



Iulian Chirita



Borgar Haug

Photos courtesy of the ETTU

The Junior Girls, too, did not go according to ranking and it was Camille Lutz of France playing on home turf who stood on top of the podium with one loss which was to the number 1 seed, Vlada Voronina of Russia. Voronina tied on 16 points with Elena Zaharia of Romania and Hana Arapovic of Croatia for the other medals. Games ratio resulted in the silver medal for the Romanian and bronze for the Croatian, with the Russian just missing out.

An incredibly tight competition with all players winning at least one match and definitely some names to watch out for in the future.

Let us hope there will be some England participants next time.



Veronika Matiunina



Camille Lutz

Photos courtesy of the ETTU

Didier Andre's Table Tennis Exhibition

At Tours was a table tennis exhibition put together by dedicated collector and our friend, Didier Andre. Although we have not had the opportunity to meet Didier yet we have been in regular touch for some time. Sadly, Didier lost his wife, Jacqueline, earlier this year but still found the strength to put together his exhibition in Tours which included his delightful 3-D images of the players.

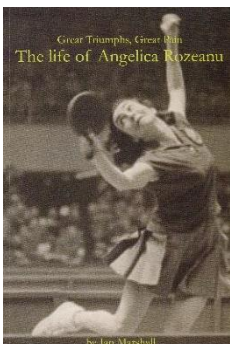


Didier is an avid collector of table tennis memorabilia and has an amazing collection of shirts amongst many other items, he and Jacqueline had a dream to open a table tennis museum in France to display over 30,000 pieces of his collection. It is a hope he will still bring to reality.



Great Triumphs, Great Pain: The Life of Angelica Rozeanu - By Ian Marshall

Review by Harvey Webb



This account of the life of one of the greatest table tennis players of the 1950's has been immaculately researched and is packed with details of her successes and disappointments.

I particularly enjoyed the many excellent photographs that help tell the story and are evocative of a different time, and indeed world.

Whilst the book concentrates on the Great Triumphs of her Table Tennis career it also alludes to the problems she encountered, both on and off the table, being a Jew in Romania prior to the Second World War, during it, and immediately after. Although it is not stated one can assume that these had a major bearing of her decision to move to Israel in 1960. I found myself wanting to know more about her life during these times.

The second half of the book is full of tributes from the other great Romanian players and many others from around the world who knew her in her prime.

The Ken and Karenza Mathews Story continued

June 1973:

Karenza: The ETTA had been approached by the Minister of Transport, the Rt. Hon. Ernest Marples M.P., who wanted someone to coach him table tennis. Knowing that I was available to do coaching they asked me to go and see him – which I did on 22nd of June. He was very friendly and I met both him and his wife, Ruth. They were very keen on keeping fit, and, as they had a table tennis table at their house in Eccleston Street near Victoria, they thought that this would be a good way of doing so. I started coaching both of them – mainly Ernest – and would continue to do so for several years. After he died in 1978, I continued to exchange Christmas cards with Ruth for many years. If I had known back then all that has since been revealed about the shady goings-on in the career of Ernest, I don't know that I would have felt that comfortable about coaching him! Anyway, he and Ruth were always very polite and kind to me whenever I visited them.

Ken: On 27th July I attended another meeting of the ETTAs National Development Committee. The Association seemed to have concluded that I could be useful and they were now keen to have me doing useful things! The Chairman of the committee was Norman Reeve; he was a very nice chap and was full of good ideas. His joke was that a committee was a group that took minutes and wasted hours! Fortunately, his meetings were run much more efficiently than that!



x, Roger Chandler, x, Mike Johns, Karenza, Ken

On 25th of August we were off to Mosney in Ireland again for the annual coaching week. This is a picture of Karenza and me taking it easy in the bar with the other two coaches, on the left is Roger Chandler of Sussex and in the middle, Mike Johns of Cheshire. We are pretty sure that the girl that Roger has his arm round later became his wife. We are not sure of the name of the girl who Mike had his arm around!

After we got back, Karenza had to go to a training camp at Lea Green. She recalls that on one of her visits to Lea Green at about that time, the Derby County Football Club team

were training there. Their manager was Brian Clough, arguably one of the most successful managers in English football history. Denis Neale and Chester Barnes were part of the table tennis group at the camp and, when they were making a lot of noise and clowning around, Clough went over and told them what he thought of them – particularly, he said, as they were there as members of an England Team. In some respects he was quite right. On the other hand, table tennis, like football, is a sport and is meant to be enjoyed. Clough was very serious about his sport; maybe he shared the view of the Liverpool Manager, Bill Shankly, who in 1973 said: *'Some people think football is a matter of life and death ... I can assure you it is much more serious than that'*.

The new season was ushered in by the North Middlesex Two Star tournament on 15th and 16th of September. Karenza lost to Shelagh Hession two straight in the final of the Singles. But, she won the Doubles with Linda – and then lost in the semi of the Mixed.

Len Pilditch was the non-playing Captain of the Middlesex County Team. At about this time Len was stricken with an illness which meant that he had to give up his full-time job and also his other interests. I was asked by the Middlesex Association to step in as Non-playing Captain and, for the next couple of years until the end of the 1974-1975 season, I took over the job. It entailed selecting the team and being at the home and away matches. Malcolm Sugden was the Scottish number one at this time and had been playing for Middlesex. He

had planned to finish playing in the County Championships but I asked him to keep going for at least one more season - which thankfully he did. With him, Andy Barden and of course Karenza we would have a strong team. Although it is jumping forward a bit, in the 73-74 season we ended second in the Premier Division and in the 74-75 season we would end up third. At that point Len had recovered from his illness and was able to resume his role with Middlesex.

On the 28th, Karenza played for Gainsford against a Women's team from Luxembourg in the Europe Club Cup. We won that match 5-0. Our next match was to be against STK Mladost, a team from Zagreb in Yugoslavia.



At this time the new European Ranking list was published. Karenza was ranked twenty in Europe.

Another training camp at Lea Green for Karenza from 1st-8th October. At the very least there was a determination that the members of the England Team would be fit! This camp was almost immediately followed by a European League match against Hungary – this was at Reading on 10th October. England lost 7-0 to what was certainly a very strong Hungarian side - except possibly for Sweden, perhaps the strongest side in Europe at that time.

On Thursday the 19th Karenza played in the fourth Nissen Invitation at Picketts Lock. She beat Lesley Radford in the semi but lost to Jill in the final.

The Sussex Open on 20th-21st October brought no titles for Karenza as she lost in the final of the Singles to Jill. She also lost in the semi of the Mixed - and Karenza and Linda had a disaster in the Women's Doubles when they, the English Champions, lost in the second round. Not good again in the Humberside Three star at Teesside on the 27th and 28th. Here Karenza lost in the semi to Linda who lost to Jill in the final. She and Linda lost in the semi of the Women's Doubles, and, partnering Denis, they lost in the final of the Mixed to Nicky and Jill.

Karenza: Next day, Monday the 29th, I met the team at Heathrow for a flight to Vienna and then onward travel to Traismauer, a town about 60 kilometres to the east. There we played newly promoted Austria in the second European League match of the season. We were a bit worried about this match as Austria had beaten England in the Men's team event in the World Championships last April. But all was okay as we won the match 6-1. Jill won the Singles and Denis and I won the Doubles. The Men's Doubles was our only loss. We flew back to London the next day.

The England Squad were excused playing in the Midland Three Star tournament as, on Sunday, 11th November, we had to fly out to Cologne for the European League match against West Germany. We travelled on to Julich, about sixty kilometres east of Cologne. We won the match. We lost the first two Men's Singles but then Jill won her match against Hendrikson, the men won the Doubles and Denis and I won the Mixed. Nicky then won his reverse Singles and so we edged home 4-3. We had now won two of the European League Matches which meant that we would probably be safe for the season. I was a bit surprised to find my picture on the cover of Deutscher Tischtennis Sport, the national magazine in Germany for table tennis.

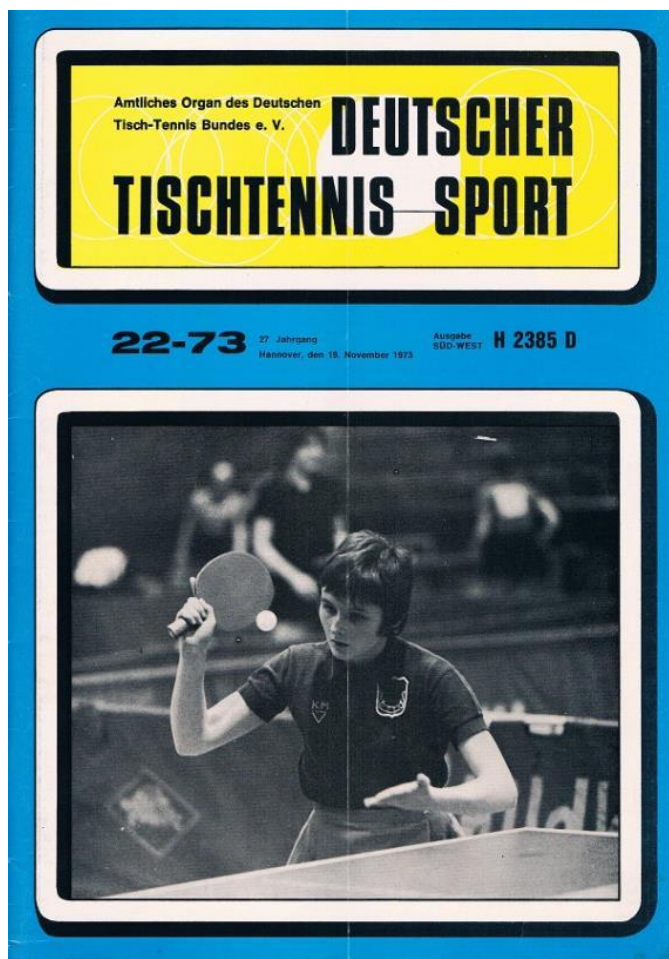
Next day we went back to Cologne from where we flew to Frankfurt - and then changed planes to fly on to Budapest for the Hungarian Open. Tiring! This tournament gave Jill her first international title when she won the Singles. Table tennis is a game where, one day you can be desperately trying to beat someone and the next they are on the same side as you and you really want them to win! Anyway, we were over the moon at England's first major title for some time. I did reasonably well beating two Hungarians before having to play Grofova – who had reached the final of the last world championships. I won the first two but then lost the third 22-20. Curses! She won the last two. I partnered Angela Papp of Hungary in the Women's Doubles – we lost in the second round, but Jill and Kishazi reached the final where they lost to two Hungarians. Denis and I had a good win over the top German pair in the second round of the Mixed but then lost in the third round. All this was after Jill and I won through to third place in the Women's team event, Russia and Hungary coming home in first and second place.

On 23rd November, Jill, Denis and I attended the Sportsman of the Year Luncheon. Jackie Stewart who was then the Formula One Motor Racing World Champion won the title. Later that same day, Gainsford played the Europe Club Cup match against ASTK Mladost. This was at the Inns of Court Mission. Adrian Howard was our team manager – and it certainly was a strong team as Jill had now joined Gainsford. With Jill, me and Shelagh Hession the team was virtually an England team – but then most of the top clubs in the competition from other countries had their top players representing them. Anyway, we won 5-1. I was pleased to beat the Yugoslav number one, Resler, who I had struggled against in previous matches.

Another training camp at Lea Green from 25th-28th November before we flew out to Malmo for the Scandinavian Open. Jill and I beat Finland but then lost to Czechoslovakia in the Women's team event. (The men also lost to the Czechs). Jill reached the semi of the Women's Singles and won the Women's Doubles with Beatrix Kishazi. She had a really good tournament as she also reached the semi of the Mixed with Desmond Douglas. In the Women's Doubles I was partnered with a girl called Ulla-Marta Gustavsson of Sweden and we reached the quarters before losing to the two Hungarians who lost to Jill and Kishazi in the final.

Back home and off to Stoke Mandeville on 5th December for our European League encounter with Russia. We lost 5-2, winning two of the Men's Singles. Jill lost to Rudnova and Denis and I lost our Mixed. The following evening, we played them again, this time a friendly at Cheltenham. This was a 6-2 defeat for us; I lost to Rudnova and Linda and I lost a Women's Doubles against Rudnova and Gedraitite 15 in the third. I didn't play in the third match, held at Rainham in Kent the next evening. Again, we lost, this time 7-1 the only win coming from Jill. Shelagh was very unlucky to have to play Rudnova in her first international – a baptism of fire!

Ken: The December issue of Table Tennis News gave the new England ranking list in which Karenza retained her place at number two behind Jill. Shelagh Hession had been having some good wins at home which got her into the third place with Linda at number four. The Russian team was due to come to England in December and so, as Karenza noted above, Shelagh had been selected to play for England in one of the matches.

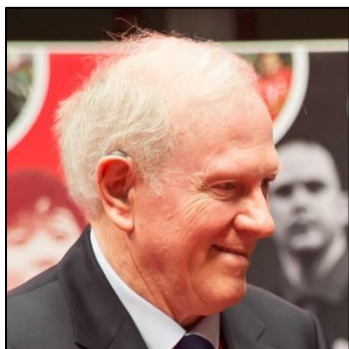


The same edition of the magazine had an article by Ron Crayden who was Chairman of the National Selection Committee, about the 'Selectors and their Policies'. The Senior and Junior International Squad system would continue and, 'Ken Mathews has joined the Selection Committee and will act as a link between players and officials.' As I was still managing Denis and, to some extent, the up and coming player from Birmingham, Desmond Douglas – and as I was in close touch with all the players over the International Squad exhibitions, the Association thought I could be useful. This appointment led to me having almost daily contact with Ron. We would discuss various issues concerning the players and make plans about the trips and events they would be involved in.

Karenza. On 8th December we went to Susan and Linda Howard's house at Burpham for Sue's 21st birthday party – great evening! A week later saw us at the Middlesex Open. I lost to Leslie Radford in the semi-final but Linda and I won the Women's Doubles and I won the Mixed with Denis.

Swaythling Club International AGM

Tricky logistics but at last the Swaythling Club International (SCI) AGM took place, via Zoom, on Saturday, 11th December 2021. It should have happened at the World Championships in Houston but Covid-19 prevented that from happening. The meeting was attended by 32 members from around the globe and despite different time zones and different languages the meeting went smoothly.



Ebby Scholer

After many years involvement, latterly as President, Ebby Scholer, stood down from the Executive Committee.

It was agreed that the number on the Executive Committee should be increased from five to seven. Claude Bergeret of France, the last European female to become a World Champion took over the position of President, she was previously the Secretary. Reto Bazzi of Switzerland was elected Deputy President, formerly Rules Expert, Harvey Webb, England, moved from Deputy President to Secretary with Richard Scruton, England, remaining Treasurer.

The remaining places on the Executive Committee went to Oivind Eriksen of Norway, Milan Orlovski of the Czech Republic and Lilamani de Soysa of Switzerland.

As the retiring President, Ebby Scholer was entitled to become an Honorary Life President and was unanimously elected with acclamation, Hans Westling was elected as a Personal Honorary Life Member for his work on the World Veterans Championships Committee (WVC). Also recognised for their work on the WVC were Reto Bazzi, Ina Jozepstone, Torben Gunter and Michael Theis. A presentation will be made as soon as it is possible to meet.

Finally, Ian Marshall was thanked by all for all his work on the SCI website and in producing the SCI magazine which he re-vamped a few years ago and which is now considered the best table tennis magazine in the world. It is jam packed with information, reports and photographs and for anyone wishing to read it, it can be found on the SCI website.

Home Countries International

The Home Countries International was restructured six years ago amalgamating senior, junior and cadet events in one tournament for seven home nations and to be held every two years not annually as in the past. A total of five nations attended, no Guernsey or Isle of Man players this time around. The event took place in Largs, Scotland from 12th-14th November 2021.

England had 12 players for the 18 events accompanied by four coaches, Craig Bryant, Evie Collier, Lois Peake and Kelly Sibley. It wasn't the top England players who were selected for these matches and their England ranking as at September 2021 in the respective categories is shown below:

Men: Ben Piggott (38), Connor Green (40)

Women: Mari Baldwin (7), Amy Marriott (20)

Junior Boys: Jakub Piwowar (36), Larry Trumpauskas (112)

Junior Girls: Connie Dumelow (39), Bethany Ellis (35)

Cadet Boys: Kacper Piwowar (23), Abraham Sellado (13)

Cadet Girls: Eva Eccles (22), Sienna Jetha (4)



*England squad with their medals.
Photo courtesy of Evie Collier*

Men's Team Event (5 teams): First senior caps for Piggott and Green but not an auspicious start as they lost their first match against Jersey 3-1, England had never lost to them before. Round 2 saw a 2-2 draw with Scotland. A similar result against Wales and a 3-1 win against Ireland meant England and Ireland were level on points. As England beat Ireland they were placed 2nd.

Jersey won this team event with Luc Miller and Jordan Wykes. Congratulations to them, the first time Jersey had won. We have a great affection for the island after attending their Grand Prix at Easter for a number of years, so we were delighted to see these young players develop and achieving such an excellent win. England ended in second place and Ireland third.

Women's Team Event (4 teams): New senior internationals, Baldwin and Marriott, had a 3-1 win over Wales and 4-0 win over Scotland. A third win for England came when they defeated Ireland 4-0 and so won the gold medal. Wales were second and Scotland third. Disappointingly, there were only four teams in this event.

Junior Boys' Team Event (5 teams): A good start for Jakub Piwowar and Trumpauskas as they beat Jersey 4-0 in match number one. Scotland got the better of our pair with a 3-1 result in their favour. A 2-2 draw against Wales and a 3-1 loss to Ireland left England with three points, equal to Wales. As England had a better game ratio, they took the bronze medal with Scotland claiming the gold and Ireland the silver.

Junior Girls' Team Event (4 teams): A mixed first day for England losing to Ireland 3-1 but better fortune with a win over Jersey 4-0 for Dumelow and Ellis. Day 2 saw their final match a 2-2 draw with Scotland. Following in the junior boys' footsteps it was another bronze for England with the gold going to Ireland and the silver to Scotland.

Cadet Boys' Team Event (5 teams): A 4-0 win against Jersey in their first match for Kacper Piwowar and Abraham Sellado. A draw against Scotland for their second match. Two 4-0 wins against Ireland and Wales and Ireland saw another equal points finish, this time with Scotland. A sets countback resulted in England having a better ratio earning a second gold in the team events. Silver for Scotland with the bronze going to Ireland.

Cadet Girls' Team Event (5 teams): Eccles and Jetha lost to Jersey 3-1 on day one but had a better result against Scotland with a 3-1 win on day two. Two 2-2 draws against Ireland and Wales left the girls with 4 points and in bronze medal position with a combined Wales/Jersey team taking the gold and Wales the silver.

Men's Singles: An all Jersey final as Luc Miller met Jordan Wykes and it was Miller who came out on top. Colin Dalgleish and Chris Main, both of Scotland were the losing semi-finalists. Piggott and Green were both knocked out in the quarter-finals.



Luc Miller, Jersey



Mari Baldwin



Amy Marriott & Beth Richards, Wales

Photos courtesy of Paul Walker

Women's Singles: Another gold medal for Baldwin as she defeated Scotland's Rebecca Plaistow in the final. Marriott picked up a bronze along with Beth Richards of Wales.

Junior Boys' Singles: No medals for England with Ireland's James Skelton winning the gold with runner-up Martin Johnson of Scotland. Losing semi-finalists being Louie Evans of Wales and Dillon Byrne of Ireland. Jakub Piwowar and Larry Trumpauskas were quarter-finalists.

Junior Girls' Singles: Ellis made the final but lost out to Ireland's Silke Heinen. Irish girl, Nicole Scott and Scottish, Faye Leggett were the bronze medallists. Dumelow was a quarter-finalist.



Bethany Ellis, England.

Photo courtesy of Paul Walker



Sienna Jetha.

Photo courtesy of Paul Walker

Cadet Boys' Singles: Bronze medals for the two English lads, Kacper Piwowar and Sellado. It was an all-Scottish final with Bonui Chen beating compatriot Kieran Walker.

Cadet Girls' Singles: Jetha reached the final but it was Jersey's, Hannah Silcock who won the event, Ireland, in the form of Grace Looney and Ruby Elliott of Wales were in the semi-final slots.

Men's Doubles: Semi-final for Green and Piggott and so a bronze medal along with Jersey's Miller and Wykes. Ryan Farrell and Alexander Gillen of Ireland took the gold and Dalgleish and Main for Scotland the silver.

Women's Doubles: More success for Baldwin as she collected her third gold medal alongside Amy Marriott. Wales, Lara Whitton and Richards, were the losing finalists and bronze to Plaistow and Elliott for Scotland and also for Ireland, Erin Thompson and Anjali Singh.

Junior Boys' Doubles: No medals in this event for England. The winning pair were from Ireland, Byrne and Tom Colvin, who defeated Scotland's, Johnson and Danny Bajwa in the final. Evans and Hari Docherty of Wales and Ireland's 2nd team of Skelton and Isaac Ellison were the losing semi-finalists. Jakub Piwowar and Trumpauskas were quarter-finalists.

Junior Girls' Doubles: Only four pairs in this event and with Dumelow and Ellis winning their first match they reached the final where they succumbed to Scotland's Leggett and Paula Callaghan. Kathryn Silcock and Holly McNamara for Jersey and Ireland's Heinen and Scott took home the bronze medals.

Cadet Boys' Doubles: Kacper Piwowar and Sellado earnt a second gold defeating Scotland's Chen and Walker in the final. Jersey's, John Le Fendre and Kevin Moreira along with Ireland's Matthew Mooney and Senan Sheridan were the bronze medallists.



*Abraham Sellado and Kacper Piwowar.
Photo courtesy of Paul Walker*

Cadet Girls' Doubles: A third medal for Jetha, her second silver, as she and Eva Eccles reached the final but lost to the combined pairing of Hannah Silcock of Jersey and Darcey Taylor of Wales. Bronze medals for Wales, Elliott and Lowri Hurd, and Scotland, Shannon Brown and Maja Wojcicka.

With 18 gold medals, 18 silver medals and 30 bronze nearly every player went home with something.

The final table saw England take the title of Overall Champions.

	Gold	Silver	Bronze
England	5	5	7
Ireland	5	1	9
Jersey	3+1/2+1/2	1	3
Scotland	3	8	6
Wales	1/2+1/2	3	5

U21 European Championships

Two English players qualified for the U21 European Championships – Denise Payet and Matthew Daish. The Championships were held in Spa, Belgium from 10th-14th November 2021. There were 48 players in the singles events who were selected by the ETTU from their ranking list plus eight wildcards in each event.

The eight seeded players went straight through to the knock-out stage leaving the remaining 48 players to battle it out in 12 groups of four.

U21 Men's Singles: Daish was in Group 3 but lost all his matches and so finished in fourth place. The end of the event for him.

U21 Women's Singles: Payet played in Group 12 and had slightly better result than Daish but losing two matches and winning one put her in third place, so she too did not go through to the main draw.

U21 Men's Doubles: Daish and his partner, Mattias Mongiusti of San Marino withdrew.

U21 Women's Doubles: Payet and her Croatian partner, Andrea Pavlovic lost their first-round match in a close contest -11, 9, 7, -9, -9.

U21 Mixed Doubles: Daish and Payet withdrew.

The end of the tournament for the English players.



*Denise Payet and Matthew Daish.
Photos courtesy of the ETTU*

WTT Cup Finals

Another tournament that now comes under the umbrella of WTT moving over from the ITTF. The finals were held in Singapore from 4th -7th December 2021 and Liam Pitchford (WR 14) was England's sole representative. There were 16 players in both the Men's and Women's Singles and the tournament ran as a straight knock-out. Pitchford met Korean, Jang Woojin (WR 12) in his first match and had a good win by 3-2, the score 10, -8, -13, 8, 6. Next, he met China's, Wang Chuqin (WR 17) but a 3-0 defeat by 8, 6, 10 saw Pitchford leave the tournament at the Quarter-final stage. Nevertheless, a good pay day as he took away \$18,000 and also receives considerable appearance money due to his world ranking.



*Liam Pitchford.
Photo courtesy of WTT*

China's, Fan Zhendong and Sun Yingsha were the winners of the two events.

END OF AN “ERA” (ERROR?)

From the pen of Brian Kean

It came as no surprise when I read that our Chief Exec. Sara Sutcliffe is leaving our organisation for a Royal “LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVES”. However, let’s hope she is replaced with a vibrant non-career tourist who will be prepared to address the fundamental issues that prevail within our sport.

Many people like myself who have spent a lifetime in industry are very quick to spot external appointments to an organisation for the sole purpose of unemotionally clearing the decks and implementing change supposedly to the long-term benefit of the business.

I, like other regional coaches and volunteers attended a gathering in Milton Keynes when the new regime took office and 20 minutes into the meeting an unknown lady quietly walked into the room and took her place at the table. Business continued unabated and when the Chairperson closed the meeting, I asked fellow regional coach Sally Shutt if she knew who the lady in question was “That’s Sara Sutcliffe our new chief exec” was Sally’s answer. I was astounded that neither she (Sutcliffe) or our Chairperson had the courtesy and respect of attendees to introduce herself.

My only other encounter was when Ms Sutcliffe and Neil Hurford toured the regions (PR Roadshow) and addressed the locals via slideshow or flip chart (of which I have no recollection as to what the content related to).

Ms Sutcliffe kicked the meeting off by introducing herself and Neil upon which she duly sat down leaving Neil to run the show. For the duration of the meeting she contributed nothing as it appeared her attention was focused on her mobile phone under the table.

It was abundantly clear from that point she had no interest in making friends or enquiring as to the TT backgrounds of the gathered volunteers. My early assessment of her has proved wholly accurate and highlights the “old boys’/ladies’ network” that prevails throughout government funded public sectors, why else would you appoint a winter sports enthusiast as your performance director.

The recent termination of the employment of Aston Villa’s football team manager Dean Smith was met by him, with great sadness. He asked himself is the club in a better position that it was when I took over and was confidently able to say YES.

The same question has validity in relation to Ms Sutcliffe, is Table Tennis in 2021 in a better and healthier position than it was when Ms Sutcliffe joined in 2014?

There are numerous ways this could be answered and no doubt there are those members of her team around the MK Headquarters would list and support her achievements, but I ask have they fundamentally been to the long-term benefit of table tennis. I should say in fairness I supported the move from Hastings to Milton Keynes however as has been seen in football moving to a new stadium doesn’t always make the business or the team any better.

Let me pose a salient question, what is the main purpose of our game? Given that we are an Olympic sport and compete in World, European and international competitions, surely answers the question. Table tennis is a competitive sport a fact that is illustrated with the number of teams up and down the country competing every day of every week throughout the year.

Therefore, having established that, schemes such as the Kidz zones and the growing number of tables found in pubs shopping centres and outdoor areas is serving the purpose of getting bats in hands and serves the leisure purpose of increasing people’s activities. What, however, does that do for enhancing the solid foundation on which the competitive side of the game exists? The clubs and leagues are (or should be) the breeding grounds for many players who of course rightly pay annual TTE fees all of which contribute to the

overall administration of the sport, without which could adversely influence government's considerations to our funding.

It's been suggested the aforementioned activities feeds through to clubs and by definition more players. Ok in theory sounds about right, however in my experience that's not vindicated in the leagues around the North West.

I am not in position to answer the following questions as I do not control the data however the answer to these questions would go a long way in deciding whether or not our chief exec's tenure was or was not to the long-term benefit of table tennis.

- 1 Have numbers of playing venues increased or decreased
- 2 Have numbers of clubs increased or decreased
- 3 Have player registrations increased or decreased
- 4 Have numbers of Junior & female players in local leagues increased or decreased
- 5 Have more England Juniors achieved top 150 ranking in Europe
- 6 Have centres for excellence increased or decreased
- 7 Have numbers of qualified coaches increased or decreased
- 8 Have numbers of Open competitions increased or decreased
- 9 Have numbers of qualified umpires increased or decreased
- 10 Has our volunteer force increased or decreased
- 11 Has number of paid-for development/support staff in the field increased or decreased

The answers to many of these questions and many more not listed would go a long way to providing answer to the success or otherwise of our chief exec and the team around her.

The buzz phrase around government at the moment is "LEVELLING UP" this is a phrase that should also apply to Table Tennis. I was asked recently by a parent as to what tournaments would I recommend for his son to attend. On checking the TTE web site and under competitions just over 30 events were listed however not one of these were north of Nottingham.!!! Sorry Northerners to quote an erstwhile politician from the Thatcher government "Get on Yer bike"

VOLUNTEERS

Another area that our new chief exec may need to pay heed to is the work of our volunteer force. I detect considerable dissent in the ranks and questions being asked as to what do the staff in MK actually do apart from "Pen Pushing" (ok what's the equivalent term for being sat behind a screen and pressing buttons)

I am not in possession of staff numbers or relative functions in MK, what I do know is there are no visible signs of adequate staff operating in the field. In a sport that is overwhelmingly run by volunteers supporting them physically should be a priority as this serves to keep them motivated, valued and listened to when they have issues that require addressing. It's too easy to sit behind screens pressing buttons much of which of course is prudent however it will never be a substitute for keenly managed human grassroots communicative investment which provides accurate informative feedback that can used to the sports benefit and future development.

SCHOOLS

Table Tennis England having taken Schools TT under its wing could have the answer to some of the aforementioned. I often ask the question when are we going to realise, in the main, the present local league club structure "aint fit for purpose" it fails on numerous counts to accommodate adequately for the inclusion of youngsters and as a matter of urgency attention must be given to viable change.

The majority of schools have weekly inter-school competitive matches in football, rugby, cricket, basketball etc so extending this to table tennis and making extensive use of the facilities would create an essential platform from which we could see the resurrection of our game. It would however require proactive bodies on the ground driving Milton Keynes initiatives ensuring that table tennis retains international competitive status.

CONNIE WARREN "LEGEND"

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the passing of my first true TT hero CONNIE WARREN.

In my first season attending tournaments the buzz around the venue focussed largely on the larger-than-life character of Chester Barnes. While I too admired Chester greatly it was CONNIE who lit up the tournaments with his heart on his sleeves antics and passion. His encounters with Roy Morley were in my eyes legendary as their outstanding "battling rallies" and volatility provided entertainment of the highest order. It often took the authority of legendary umpire PAT ARCHDALE to bring a semblance of order to the proceedings. My first selection for Scotland in the 1967 Quadrangular's brought me face to face with CONNIE and as expected I lost comfortably but at no time did he make me feel intimidated and went about his business in a respectful and professional manner. A sad loss to table tennis.

*It should be noted this article was written before the appointment of the Interim CEO.

Governance

Table Tennis England

After eight and a half years in post, the TTE Chief Executive Officer, Sara Sutcliffe, MBE has a new post at the Royal Yachting Association, also as Chief Executive. With a membership of over 100,000, income around £22,000,000 and a staff of 160 the appointment is a considerable step up. She will be leaving TTE sometime in December 2021.

An interim CEO has been appointed and he has already taken up his post. Adrian Christy, will be standing in until a permanent appointment is made. Christy had served as the CEO of Badminton England until September 2021, when after 15 years in post, he stood down.

ITTF

Petra Sorling from Sweden, was duly elected as the new ITTF President at the ITTF AGM in Houston, she was unopposed, the first female President of the ITTF.

Thomas Weikart, the retiring President has a new post as head of the German Olympic Sports Confederation. Jean-Michel Saive was elected as the President of the Belgian Olympic and Interfederal Committee in September too, so prestigious positions for both these men. We wish them all well in their new roles.

Gorazd Vecko and Karen Tonge, MBE were both appointed to the ITTF Para Committee, Tom Purcell was re-appointed to the Umpires & Referees Committee and Sandra Deaton has one year remaining on the ITTF Nominations Committee.

Sadly, Deaton's term of office on the ITTF Board of Directors ended and so for the first time there is no English representation on the Board. With Sara Sutcliffe's move away from table tennis her role on the Rules Committee also ended.

Grand Prix

Preston GP: 30th-31st October 2021

There was a good male entry in this Grand Prix, the second of the season, with a total of 118 taking part in the various events, the female side was disappointing with only 18 players in the six women's events.

It turned out to be an excellent weekend for Norfolk's Mollie Patterson who won not only the main event, the Women's Singles (£320) but also the U21 Women's Singles (£65) and Band 1 Women's Singles (£130). A well-deserved reward for all her hard work and commitment to the Grand Prix series. Her opponents in the finals were Hoi Ting Lam, Rebecca Savage and Bethany O'Connell respectively.



Mollie Patterson and Grigory Vlasov with TTE Board Member, Tom Purcell

Top seed Grigory Vlasov won the Men's Singles and the £500 cheque, he defeated the 11th ranked player, Radoslav Kamberov, in the final in five games.

The U21 Men's Singles was won by up-and-coming player, Toby Ellis who defeated Adam Dennison in the final, both players having recently taken part in the WTT Youth Contender in Lignano.

Veteran of the Grand Prix circuit, Rory Scott, won the Veterans Open with a win over Steve Brunskill and the Restricted Singles went to Bogdan Postudor with Ryan Fellows the Runner-up.

Another up-and-coming player, Joseph Cooper was awarded the Player of the Weekend who despite being ranked 50th in the tournament reached the quarter-finals of the Men's Singles.

Well done to all the winners and to Joseph but Mollie's achievements deserve special congratulations.



TTE Board Member, Tom Purcell, with Player of the Weekend, Joseph Cooper

Chinese Diary by Nora Vint: continued

Sunday, 20th September 1959

Nancy (*Evans*) not well – doctor arrived and diagnosed mild attack of dysentery. She stayed in bed all day on very light diet. Temperature well up in the eighties. Visited Wuhan Iron and Steel Corporation in the morning – received by PRO and given green tea! After lunch a siesta (very necessary in this climate) and then to visit the Bridge construction over the Yangtse River. This cost 138,000,000 yuan (about £19,000,000). This is a magnificent piece of engineering comprising highway for cars and pedestrians on the top deck and a double track railway below. Lifts at each end to take pedestrians from river bank to road above with stops at waiting rooms and railway track. Thence to visit sports facilities (hall seating 4,000) and stadium (seating 30,000).

On the way back to the hotel I went to buy some talcum powder. I went into two shops and on both occasions as I got out of the car I was surrounded by dozens of Chinese shoppers who followed me in and watched what I was buying – it was quite incredible!!

After dinner the evening was free – Bill went to see Nancy – Mr Kao, Mr Chao and I had long discussions on love, marriage, divorce, politics and table tennis!!!

Wind up to gale force but still warm enough to sleep without bedclothes.

Monday, 21st September 1959

Visit to heavy machine tool factory. We learned there are eight degrees of workers in factories and the average worker in this case was 3rd degree, earning about 50 yuan a month. Canteen meals cost approximately 50 cents a day – living quarters, clinics, nurseries, sports facilities, schools were all provided within the factory area. Many new living quarters being built – we saw whatever we wished. The director of the factory was aged 36 and earned about 140 yuan a month. An extremely keen and enthusiastic man. He had a family of nine!

In the afternoon we travelled about 50 miles on un-made roads to visit a People's Commune. Much hard work had had to be done this year to fight the drought which had lasted for 80 days!! The last time this had happened was in 1937 when there were 56 days without rain. Water was being brought to the rice fields from the river by means of hand and foot workers pumping primitive irrigation machinery – but they had saved their crops. Here again new living quarters were being built and we saw the old and the new. We saw also the clinic which consisted of doctor's room, Chinese medicine man's room and small maternity room. The most interesting was the Chinese medicine man's room filled with hundreds of different dried herbs, plants, seeds and roots etc. It smelt beautiful. Many Chinese people still believe in these potions which are made from the dried ingredients. Here, working side by side in apparent harmony, were the old and the new. This particular village, the headquarters of the People's Commune for the area, had also its own Old People's Homes. We visited all the old people – the oldest was 86 – considered a great age for the working class of China. The People's Commune covers an area of about 30 square miles and co-ordinates the work of the farmers, villagers and all welfare within that area. On returning to Wuhan we brought the Commune Director and his colleagues to the city for a 4-day conference.

Nancy was up when we arrived back – she looked much better.

Tuesday, 22nd September 1959

We left Wuhan for Shanghai. A two hour flight. Met at Shanghai by Vice President of Athletic Federation, Mr Koa (whom we had met in England during the summer) and the Secretary of the Table Tennis Association. There were, of course, the usual bunches of flowers all round but no tea! We were taken straight to the Huping (Peace) Hotel. This was formerly called the Sassoon Hotel. Another suite (even larger). After lunch we drove around the city, visited Sports Palace and saw gymnastics, table tennis wrestling and traditional dancing in action by young boys and girls. Also visited the Badminton Hall and other sports facilities. Had a bird's eye view of Shanghai from top of 17 storey building. Shanghai is obviously much more westernised than most of China – the influence of international occupation is very evident everywhere. In the evening we visited a recreational centre where for 20 cents you could spend any time from 1pm to 10pm watching any of 12 performances

including acrobatics, opera from different provinces, puppets and drama. A wonderful idea. Unfortunately it started to rain otherwise we were going to sit in the open air and watch acrobatics. In bed by 10pm!

Wednesday, 23rd September 1959

Up at 6.30am and walking along Shanghai waterfront opposite the hotel. Raining quite heavily but very warm. It could have been any waterfront – ferries and tugs at work all the time. Breakfast and then to visit the living quarters of the people. First to the old houses where we were welcomed by the Chairman of the Street Committee. This particular Street Committee was responsible for 3,000 households divided into 30 groups. These houses had been transformed from mud huts with bamboo coverings to reasonable dwelling houses with stone floors and watertight roofs. Very small and overcrowded by our standards but the ones we saw were clean and tidy and the occupants very satisfied. Much work is being done for the welfare of the people by District and Estate Committees. There are now nurseries for the children and clinics for dealing with minor ailments and a voluntary Fire Brigade. All houses had electric light and all families could get enough water.

After the old houses we visited a newly built estate. Firstly to the nursery and kindergarten – a beautifully set out building with plenty of playgrounds and open spaces. One classroom was having lunch and it was an amazing sight to see 3-year-olds eating rice and beans and gravy with chopsticks!! All had been taught to sing songs of welcome to us and all looked extremely well and happy. Then to the estate shops and hairdresser. Much the same methods as our own hairdressers. Then to see the house of a young couple, both working in the textile factory nearby. This was quite modern, very tastefully furnished and the lunch on the table looked good, well-cooked and very appetizing. A wedding photograph on the wall showed that some Chinese brides still wore white dress and veil for their weddings. Then we went next door to the house of a retired lady of 58 – retired from the textile factory and now living alone because all her five children had died through the appalling conditions of her former life and living conditions. Now she had a good home, (it looked like a new pin), a pension and she was working voluntarily on the Estate Committee to help the welfare of others. She was an amazing personality – she insisted we all went in and sat down and listened to her story which was told with great interest and vitality. Altogether a most interesting morning.

Shopping in the afternoon and then to Hangchow by train. This took about three hours and during the journey some young 16–17-year-old factory workers from the next carriage came to tell us about their lives. They had been in Shanghai for one year training and were returning to their factory in the south of China to resume their jobs. All very excited and serious to talk to us. Their train journey would take about 18 hours – but in this vast country it was nothing out of the ordinary!

And as to Hangchow. There is an old Chinese saying “Above there is Paradise, on Earth we have Hangchow”. Certainly a most delightful scenic spot on the West Lake. Our hotel overlooked the lake and the mountains. The usual warm reception with bunches of flowers, a remarkably good dinner which included the dish of the district – a fish from the lake cooked in sugar and vinegar and served hot – delicious! A film was being shown in the lounge of the hotel but by the time we had finished eating we only saw the very last bit – and so we went to bed for an early start.

To be continued.



WTT Youth Contender Tournaments

WTT Youth Contender Lignano, Italy: 24th-30th October 2021

There were 13 entrants from England in this tournament with the boys' events taking up the first half of the week and the girls' the latter half. Most tournaments have to be funded by the players themselves but this one was funded by TTE.

Of the 13, only two players reached the later stages of the knock-outs. Young Kacper Piwowar reached the semi-finals of the U11 Boys' Singles from a field of 12 and Mari Baldwin made it as far as the quarter-finals in the U17 Girls' Singles.



*Kacper Piwowar and Mari Baldwin at the WTT Youth Contender in Lignano.
Photos courtesy of WTT*

WTT Youth Contender, Senec, Slovak Republic: 1st-7th November 2021

Hot on the heels of the tournament in Italy were two further WTT Youth Contender tournaments. Senec saw three England junior players participating - Scarlett Anders, Sienna Jetha and Megan Jones.

Day 1 and the U13 and U17 Girls' Singles were the competitions of the day. Jetha played in the U13s whilst Anders and Jones played in the U17s. It was only Jones who made it out of the group stage but she was then defeated by Brazilian, Giulia Takahashi, in the Round of 32.

Day 2 saw Jetha play in the U15s and Anders and Jones in the U19s, all above their age categories. However, it was not the best of days as none of the players won a match in their respective groups. The end of the tournament for the England players.



*Scarlett Anders and Sienna Jetha.
Photos courtesy of WTT*

WTT Youth Contender, Szombathely, Hungary: 1st-7th November 2021

Running at the same time as the Slovak tournament was another WTT Youth Contender in Hungary. Here six English boys took part in the U17 Boys' Singles on Day 1. Three players reached the knock-out stages where Ben Piggott and Joseph Hunter went out in the Round of 64 whilst Louis Price went one stage further before leaving the tournament.



*Louis Price.
Photo courtesy of WTT*

Day 2 was the turn of the U15 and U19 Singles and it was Joseph Hunter who went through to the knock-out stage in the U15s and Naphong Boonyaprapa, Ben Piggott and Louis Price in the U19s. Hunter had a bye in the Round of 64 but lost in his first knock-out round match at the next stage. Boonyaprapa, Piggott and Price all were defeated at the first time of asking in the Round of 64.

ITTF World Youth Championships

There were no English players in these Championships which were held in Portugal from 2nd-8th December 2021. However, two prominent Home Country players in Anna Hursey (WR U15 21), Wales, and Sophie Earley (WR U15 99), Ireland qualified in the U15 events. The luck of the draw saw the two girls meet in the Round of 16 and it was the Irish girl who took the honours in a very tight 4-3 victory, an excellent win for her. She then met Miwa Harimoto of Japan (WR U15 109) in the quarter-finals but went down 4-0.



*Anna Hursey, Wales, and Sophie Earley, Ireland.
Photos courtesy of WTT*

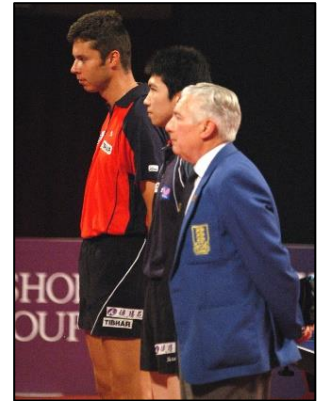
Earley reached the Quarter-finals in the U15 Girls' Doubles with Clea de Stoppelleire of France whilst Hursey went one stage further with Mathilde Pinto of Portugal. In the U15 Mixed Doubles Earley went out in the Round of 32 with Daniel Berzosa of Spain.

Spotlight on George Tyler – Retiring Umpire

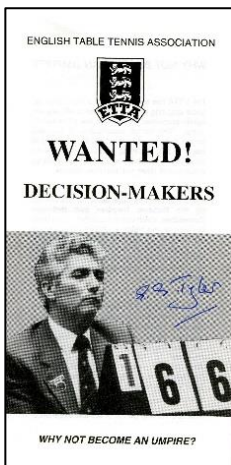
By Tom Purcell, Honorary Secretary AETTU

Table tennis umpires, like players, have many memories about events they attend and their experiences with players, coaches and colleagues. In the vast majority of occasions there are no problems but occasionally there are difficult and funny situations during a game and an experienced umpire can deal with the problems without too much difficulty.

Such an umpire is George Tyler who has just retired after reaching his 90th birthday in July 2021. He qualified as a County Umpire in 1981 and became a National Umpire in 1984 before qualifying as an International Umpire in 1986.



2005. Masters,
Fairfield Halls, Croydon



George has umpired for many years in domestic tournaments including the British League and National Championships. As an International Umpire George has umpired at many major tournaments including the World Championships, Manchester 1997, World Veteran Championships, Manchester 1998, Commonwealth Games 2002 and the Paralympics, Athens 2004. Before the World Veteran Championships in 1998 George was a poster boy for the recruitment of umpires.

In addition to being a very good umpire George was also a very good player. Over the years George played for many clubs including East Finchley, Highgate and Ellenborough. He had a very good average in Local Leagues and he also represented Hertfordshire and Lincolnshire at county level. In 1987 George entered the Wales National Championships. He had a very good tournament and became the Wales Veteran Champion.

In addition to umpiring and playing table tennis George was also involved in various national and county committees. From 1992 -2004 George was a member of the National Umpires and Referees Committee (NURC) and from 2006-2021 George was a member of the Lincolnshire County TTA and the East Midlands Regional Committee.

In 2004 English umpires were not happy with the way they were being treated by the ETTA and as a result they formed the Association of English Table Tennis Umpires (AETTU) and George was elected as the first Chairman, a position he held until his retirement in 2021.

On his retirement, the AETTU presented George with a Certificate of Appreciation for his services to umpiring, an album of photographs from his umpiring journey and a crystal bowl award in appreciation of his services to the AETTU.

George has been unwell for the last few years and because of the Covid pandemic he had not been able to meet his colleagues. However, as restrictions were eased fellow umpire Stan Clarke and I were able to visit George at his home to celebrate his birthday, his retirement and present him with his awards. We had a lovely day with George, his wife Sylvia and daughter Lesley reminiscing and wondering how the game was going to develop after Covid.





George Tyler and George with Stan Clarke, left, and Tom Purcell, right

In preparing the presentation to George, I would like to thank Diane Webb for the supply of data and photographs and Harold Webb from Ellenborough TTC for the supply of data relating to George's play in Local Leagues.

ETTA Centenary

The first 100 years of the ETTA, latterly trading as TTE, officially ended on 6th November 2021. What an incredible century of table tennis during that time. To celebrate the centenary several projects are underway or in the pipeline over the next few months.

- * 'Centenary Book': A coffee table book is nearing completion, a pictorial record of the last – or should that be the first – 100 years.
- * 'Centenary Gala Dinner': To be held on Sunday, 27th March 2022, the last evening of the National Championships in Nottingham. Invitations have been sent out to prominent people and there will be a member ballot for remaining places. Invitees will be able to bring one guest if they so wish at the cost of £50 per ticket, also the price for the tickets in the member ballot. Current and former ETTA/TTE members will be able to apply for a maximum of two tickets.
- * 'Centenary Heritage': This will involve plans to digitise the archives with an application for a Lottery Sporting Heritage grant to assist the work. This will enhance the work of the Archives, Museum and Records Committee and all being well bring to fruition many projects that the Committee would like to see happen as well as several new initiatives.
- * 'Centenary Fundraising': Sponsorship is to be sought, other aims are to hold a raffle and an auction at the gala dinner.
- * 'Centenary Seminars': Focusing on the future, seminars are to be delivered by key domestic and international thought leaders.
- * 'Centenary Legacy': To support the recruitment of a new generation, attract past players back and establish 100 TT Kidz projects. The ELCC, formerly the National Team Competitions, is to be promoted as the 'Centenary Tournament' with free entry for Local Leagues for the four events – Wilmott Cup (Senior Men), J M Rose Bowl (Senior Women), Carter Cup (Junior Boys), Bromfield Trophy (Junior Girls).
- * 'Centenary Celebration': To mark people who, and, events which, have made a significant impact.
- * 'Centenary Conversation': The one aspect that has been completed and which involved Leagues and Counties being contacted for their ideas on how to celebrate the centenary.

TTE Youth Events

Cleveland Junior 4*: 23rd-24th October 2021

Action Shots by Chris Rayner, Presentation Photos by Brenda Stephenson – with thanks

A good entry in this long-standing tournament that includes team as well as individual events. With the junior age group now being under 19 an additional event for the under 17s was added (do you remember when this used to be the junior cut off point!).

Junior (U19) Events: It was two Durham lads, Josh Weatherby, 4th seed and Tom Rayner, 5th seed, who made it through to the final. Rayner had beaten the Number 1 seed, Naphong Boonyaprapa, on the way but it was Weatherby who took the title. The Junior Girls was won by Megan Jones of Shropshire, seeded at number 2 she defeated the unseeded player from Buckinghamshire, Rachael Iles.

Lancashire's Rhys Davies and Nottinghamshire's Naphong Boonyaprapa, representing Formby, won the Junior Boys' Team event and Erin and Anna Green along with Megan Jones of Draycott who took the spoils in the Junior Girls'.



Josh Weatherby, Megan Jones, Anna Green with Alan Ransome, James Hamblett with Alan Ransome

U17 Events: Ladies first this time and it was the younger of the Green girls, Nottinghamshire's Anna, seeded 2, who won the event with the 4th seed, Saskia Key from Kent her opponent in the final. Key had a good tournament beating the U19 winner, Jones, in the Semi-final and earlier overcoming junior international, Bethany Ellis. In the U17 Boys' Singles it was the Numbers 1 and 2 seeds who met in the final and it was James Hamblett at Number 2 who was the victor with Naphong Boonyaprapa the Runner-up.

Cadet (U15) Events: The Cadet Boys went slightly more according to seeding but with the Number 1 and 2 seeds departing before the final it was left to Joseph Dennison from Lancashire, 4th seed, and Yannis Kazantidis from Essex, 3rd seed, to battle it out, with Dennison the victor. Unseeded Rachael Iles continued her successful weekend winning the Cadet Girls' Singles beating 4th seed, Sienna Jetha in a close tussle in the final which went to five games.

Draycott's duo, Joseph Cooper and Frederick Jones, were the victors in the Cadet Boys' Team event and there was success too for Draycott's team in the Cadet Girls with Naomi Coker and Bethany Ellis the winners.



Joseph Cooper, Rachel Iles with Alan Ransome, Abraham Sellado with Alan Ransome, Sienna Jetha

U13 Events: Top seed, Sienna Jetha took this title in a comfortable 3-0 win over Norfolk's Eva Eccles and it was top seed, Abraham Sellado, with the win getting the better of third seed, Adam Alibhai in the final in the boys' event.

Cippenham Junior 4*: 4th-5th December 2021

169 players entered the four events for the Cippenham Junior 4* Open on 4th and 5th December 2021 and there were certainly some topsy-turvey results throughout the weekend.

Junior Singles (U19s): It was an early Christmas present for second seed, Rhys Davies of Lancashire as he took the Junior Boys' title beating Larry Trumpauskas, Essex, in the final. It was the second time the two had played each other on the day, having previously met at the group stage. The favourite and Number 1 seed, Naphong Boonyaprapa, lost one of his group matches to Yiannis Kazantzidis and so ended as runner-up in his group which resulted in him meeting Davies in the semi-finals, a gripping game which Davies won 11-9 in the fifth. Trumpauskas had a good day to reach the final, after coming runner-up in his group he went on to defeat the 3rd seed, Nahom Goitom and also beat Nahom's brother, Daniel, and up and coming, Ralph Pattison.

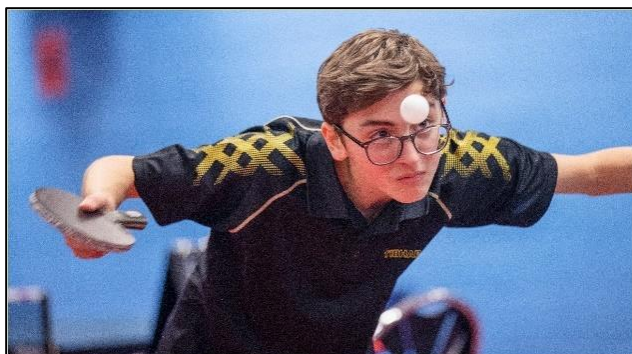
The Junior Girls' Singles was won by Tianer Yu of Middlesex who was a scratch entry and would have been the top seed if her entry had been received on time. As it was, a vacancy arose in the fourth seeded position and so she was able to play. A number of seeds did not reach their expected position and it was the unseeded Evelyn Pace from Surrey who reached the final but was unable to carry on her wins in that last match.



Tianer Yu and Rhys Davies. Photos courtesy of Graham Trimming, Cippenham TTC

Cadet Singles (U15s): The Cadet Boys' event saw a top-quality field with nearly all eight seeds reaching the quarter-final stage. However, it was the Number 6 and 8 seeds who met in the final with the win going to Suffolk's, Isaac Kingham over Ralph Pattison from Essex.

In the Cadet Girls' Singles all eight seeds reached the first knock-out round where half of them were eliminated. The final result was a vindication of the seeding as Number 1, Maliha Baig, Middlesex, overcame the 2nd seed, Jersey's, Hannah Silcock 3-0.



Isaac Kingham and Maliha Baig. Photos by Michael Loveder

What was Happening 45 Years Ago? 1976

- The English Open at Brighton saw the England 'A' Men's Team of Denis Neale, Brian Burn and Desmond Douglas win gold with the 'B' Team, Paul Day and Nicky Jarvis, taking home a bronze medal. The Women's 'A' and 'B' teams both reached the semi-finals and so it was medals for Jill Hammersley, Linda Howard and Carole Knight for the 'A' Team and Susan Lisle and Karen Rogers for the 'B' Team.' A further gold for England as Jill Hammersley won the Women's Singles title and a third gold was added when the Men's Doubles went to Desmond Douglas and Denis Neale. Carole Knight and Karen Rogers received a further medal to add to the England haul as runners-up in the Women's Doubles with Jill Hammersley and Linda Howard reaching the semi-finals. Swede, Stellan Bengtsson, won the Men's Singles title.



English Open Champions: Jill Hammersley and Denis Neale & Desmond Douglas

- Desmond Douglas and Jill Hammersley topped the rankings in the senior categories with Andy Barden and Melody Ludi heading the junior list.



Andy Barden and Melody Ludi

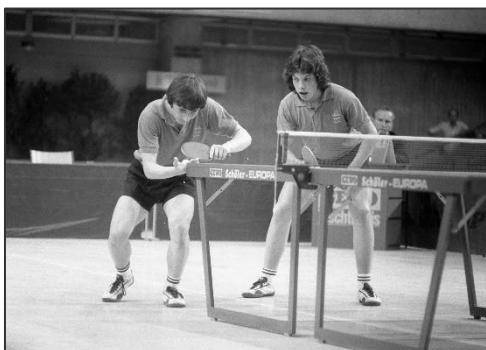
- A stellar year for Jill Hammersley as she won the European Championships Women's Singles in Prague, justifying her Number 1 position on the European ranking list. Jill then went on to win the Women's Doubles title with partner, Linda Howard. The Women's team finished 2nd (Jill Hammersley, Linda Howard, Carole Knight) and the Men finished in 6th position (Andy Barden, Paul Day, Desmond Douglas, Nicky Jarvis, Denis Neale).
- Albert Shipley was appointed the ETTA General Secretary replacing Roy Taylor.
- Her Majesty, The Queen, officially opened the National Exhibition Centre in Bickenhill, the venue for the World Championships in 1977. Tickets went on sale with daily tickets between £2-£5 and season tickets at £20 or £28.
- Cornwall County celebrated their silver jubilee.

- The 'News of the World' National Coaching Scheme finals were held at Butlins' Barry Camp at Easter for the 1975 season with Linda Hrysko and Sam Harmer being awarded the 'Girl of the Year' and the 'Boy of the Year' trophies. There had been over 40,000 entrants during last summer. The 1976 winners were John Souter, playing in a plaster cast, and Helen Williams.



News of the World Winners from 1975, Linda Hrysko & Sam Harmer and from 1976 John Souter & Helen Williams

- Desmond Douglas became a triple champion at the National Championships, partnering Denis Neale in the Men's Doubles and Linda Howard in the Mixed Doubles. Jill Hammersley went away with two titles, unsurprisingly winning the Women's Singles, and the Women's Doubles with Linda Howard.

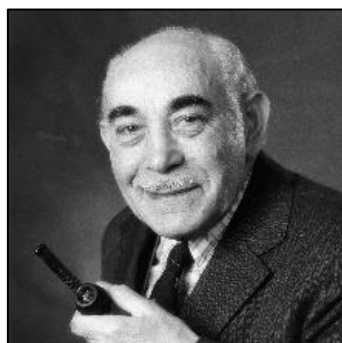


*Gold medal Winners, Paul Day & Andy Barden.
Photo by Tony Ross*

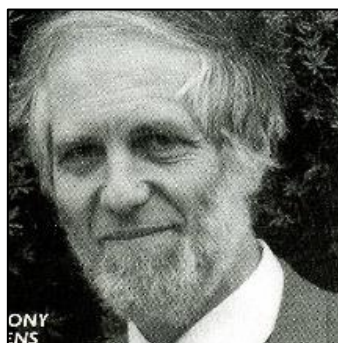
- One gold, two silver and a bronze medal was the tally at the European Youth Championships in Austria as the Barden/Day partnership bore further fruit. Day earned two silver medals as he reached the final of the Junior Boys' Singles and the Junior Mixed Doubles with Melody Ludi. Graham Sandley was a bronze medallist in the Cadet Boys' Singles.

- There was a tranche of medals at the England Junior Open (aka the Worthing Junior International) as Andy Barden and Paul Day won the Boys' Team event and Melody Ludi and Angela Mitchell were runners-up in the Girls'. There were three gold medals in the individual events with Andy Barden & Paul Day, Melody Ludi & Angela Mitchell and Paul Day & Melody Ludi all being successful.

- At the AGM in July, Maurice Goldstein was re-elected as President for a further three years and the honour of Honorary Life Member went to Tony Wickens.



Maurice Goldstein



Tony Wickens

Vice-Presidencies went to Mrs Nora Vint, Frank Newell, Gordon Steggall, Derek Tyler and Bill Worsley.



Nora Vint



Frank Newell



Gordon Steggall



Derek Tyler



Bill Worsley

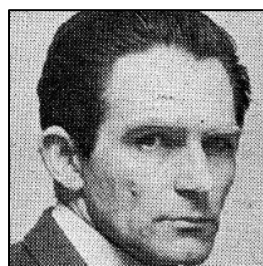
The Ivor Montagu Award went to Alan Ransome and Charles Wyles was the recipient of the Malcolm Scott Award, John Wright received the Leslie Forrest Memorial Trophy and Jill Hammersley was presented with the Victor Barna Award.



Alan Ransome



Charles Wyles



John Wright



Jill Hammersley

- The first National Cadet Championships were held with Colin Wilson beating Tony O'Connor in the Boys' Singles and Alison Gordon defeating Mandy Smith in the Girls'. Doubles titles went to Graham Sandley & Adam Proffitt and Sally Midgley & Helen Robinson.
- English table tennis suffered the loss of three of its earliest international players, Victor Blatchford, Frank Burls and Fred Cromwell as well as prominent administrator, Frank Newell.



Victor Blatchford



Frank Burls



Fred Cromwell



Frank Newell

WTT Contender, November 2021, Lasko, Slovenia

Three men entered this competition. It was a welcome return for Tom Jarvis and David McBeath coming back after prolonged injury whilst Paul Drinkhall was looking to make an impact after his successful Olympic Games.

Entering at the qualifying stage Jarvis and McBeath didn't make it into the main draw but the event should have given them an opportunity to test themselves after long layoffs. Drinkhall and McBeath went out at the first time of asking in the Men's Doubles too.



*Tom Jarvis and David McBeath.
Photos courtesy of WTT*

However, Drinkhall was the star of the England players, first having an expected win against Peter Hribar of Slovenia (WR 299). He then went on to defeat World Number 7, Lin Gaoyuan of China, a magnificent result and one of the best of his career.

After such a momentous victory it was hard to replicate the same result in the quarter-final but it was another tremendous match. Drinkhall was edged out, but only just, by Kirill Gerassimenko of Kazakhstan (WR 45), 13-11 in the fifth. It was so close and in no way detracted from the superb win the previous round.

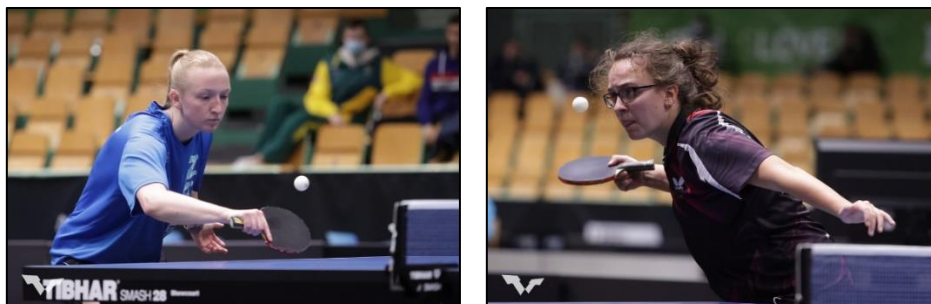


*Paul Drinkhall on the way to victory against Lin Gaoyuan, World Number 7.
Photo courtesy of WTT*

WTT Contender 11th-14th November 2021, Novo Mesto, Slovenia

Yet another tournament in Slovenia and at this one, Emily Bolton, Maria Tsaptsinos and Sam Walker took part.

Not a great outcome for the ladies as they lost in their first singles matches and together in the 1st Qualifying Round of the doubles.



*Emily Bolton and Maria Tsaptsinos.
Photos courtesy of WTT*

Walker entered the singles at the qualifying stage and won his first two matches but couldn't quite get past the post in his third to reach the main draw. It was a different result in the Men's Doubles where he partnered the Belarussian, Aleksandr Khanin. They won their first round match to go through to the quarter-finals although that was as far as they got. Nonetheless, a good result to get to the last eight.



*Aleksandr Khanin and Sam Walker.
Photo courtesy of WTT*

WTT Feeder Dusseldorf 7th-10th December 2021

Tom Jarvis and Sam Walker were the English participants in this event and they were seeded 10 and 5 respectively in the Men's Singles and at Number 2 in the Men's Doubles.

The Singles saw Jarvis (WR 179) losing in a tight match in the Round of 16 to Russian, Lev Katsman (under ranked at WR 280), by 4-3 and Walker (WR 99) went one further but was defeated 4-1 by the Number 1 seed, Sweden's, Anton Kallberg (WR 42) in the quarter-finals.

A small field of nine pairs in the Men's Doubles and Jarvis and Walker comfortably reached the final where they met Japan's Yuta Tanaka and Jo Yokotani where they lost 3-0. A well-deserved runners-up spot for the English pair and a first senior medal at a WTT event for Jarvis.

Well done too, to Charlotte Carey as the Welsh lady reached the semi-finals in the Women's Singles beating Amelie Solja on the way and losing to Sabine Winter. Carey also reached the semi-finals in the Women's Doubles with Australian, Yangzi Liu who went on to win the Women's Singles title.

In Memoriam



David House

Former England junior and senior international, David House passed away on 30th November 2021 aged 86 years old in the USA where he had lived for many years.

David was born on 1st November 1935 in Bath, Somerset and won many Open tournaments at both junior and senior level both in singles and in doubles with such top players as Ray Dorking, Laurie Landry, Bryan Merrett, Roy Morley, Kathy Best, Margaret Fry and of course with his first wife, Welsh star and World Number 6, Shirley Jones.

David started playing at the Bath YMCA when he was 12 years old and his first junior cap was gained in the 1951/52 season. He was one of England's very first junior international players and visited Sweden in 1952 alongside Ray Dorking and Geoff Pullar with Leo Thompson as the team captain. They left for Sweden on 31st December 1951 and were due to arrive in Gothenburg early the next morning which they did after a very rough crossing over the North Sea, a little later than planned. Although rather shaken and a bit the worse for wear the lads went on to play their first tournament that evening. The next day they played a senior team, SKF, who they beat 9-0. From Gothenburg they moved on to Valberg, followed by Halmstead, Laholm and Falkenberg.

More travelling followed, to Ystad, Hassleholm, Hogomas, Landskrona, Hassleburg, Nybro, Emmaboda and Mallaros. Then Boros and Lidkoping, Bolthorp and Skara before finishing in Falkoping and a farewell party. In all the trio played in five senior tournaments and two junior ones, plus nine matches against senior players and a further four against junior opponents. David's record was impressive as he won every junior match and only lost three against senior players.

Leo Thompson's summary of the tour read "Our boys made a grand team. Full of fun and high spirits but always well disciplined, considerate and well behaved. They gave a jolly good show of themselves". What an amazing experience for a young 16-year-old.

David played another junior international against Germany on 31st March 1952 in London before moving up to play his first senior international against Yugoslavia in Camborne on 2nd April 1958, the first of three matches against the visitors.

David had success at the English Open in the junior events where he reached the quarter-final and semi-final of the Junior Boys' Singles in 1951/52 and 1952/53 respectively; the Junior Boys' Doubles semi-final in 1951/52 with Bryan Merrett and runner-up in 1952/53 with Roy Morley; also in the Junior Mixed Doubles he was a semi-finalist with Shirley Jones in 1952/53.

13th May 1954 saw further success when David won the Daily Mirror Men's Singles title, the final being held at the Royal Albert Hall, there were over 11,000 entries in four events. A remarkable achievement in an incredible venue.

As well as the many Open tournament successes, David was also a champion of Somerset in 1957/58 in the Men's Singles and Men's Doubles, with brother, Robert. Added to which were Closed titles in both Bath and Bristol Leagues winning the Men's Singles, Men's Doubles and Mixed Doubles titles in January 1956 and the Men's Singles in the British Rail Championships in 1952/53 when only 16.

In November 1958, David and Shirley were married and a week after their wedding they were aboard the "Queen Elizabeth" sailing for New York and a new job with the British and Irish Railways. Originally intended to be for three years, David remained in the States, later moving to Chicago where he and Shirley set up their own travel company "Inter Trav" which is run today by two of their sons.

Life-long friend, Ray Dorking, pays tribute to David: "David was an extremely good player, a real fighter on the table and would never give up. More importantly he was a decent and friendly man who I am proud to say was a great friend of my wife and I for many years".

David, re-married, and it is to Margot we offer our sympathy and most sincere condolences, to David's sons and to all family and friends.



Cornelius 'Connie' Joseph Warren

A heart of gold, a loyal friend and a player who delighted in leading officials a merry dance but always with a twinkle in his eye: former England international, Connie Warren, passed away on 12th October 2021, aged 81 years.

Connie, or Cornelius Joseph to give him his full name, was first spotted by Harry Venner in 1955 and was soon playing at Wimbledon YMCA. Deciding he wanted to be the best he could, Connie put in hours of practice and the following year he had advanced enough to gain a junior cap for Surrey and one year on a county 2nd team place. In all he played for Surrey for 18 years and over 50 matches before retiring in 1973/74 but was called out of retirement a couple of seasons later and was still playing at veteran level for more than another ten years.

Connie had some success at junior tournaments and this continued as he moved up to senior level where his tremendous loop and attacking game earned him an England place and a debut against Sweden in Stockholm on 23rd February 1966. Regarded as one of the most astute thinkers and tacticians of the game, Connie's ability to work out his opponents' strengths and weaknesses was one of his greatest assets. He was one of the great characters on the tournament circuit in the 1960s and '70s, his wit was as fast as his forehand which on occasions led to clashes with authority which resulted in him not being selected for England as often as his ability warranted.

Nevertheless, Connie played in a number of international matches and was a member of the European Championships team at Wembley in 1966 with Chester Barnes, Ian Harrison, Dennis Neale and Brian Wright which finished 6th and with Chester Barnes, Ian Harrison, Judy Williams and Mary Wright won the Quadrangular Tournament against Ireland, Scotland and Wales in February 1967. He also played in the World Championships in Stockholm in 1967 and in the East German Open.

On the home front, Connie's best result was winning the Welsh Open in 1967 beating the England Number 1 Chester Barnes in the final. Just prior to this in the National Championships he reached the Men's Singles final losing to Ian Harrison having beaten Dennis Neale and Brian Wright in earlier rounds. He also reached the semi-final stage in the National Championships on three other occasions.

Connie won a number of tournaments in the UK during the 1960s and early 1970s before retiring. His highest ranking in England was number 3 behind world class players Chester Barnes and Denis Neale. Connie was certainly one of England's best and most exciting players of his era.

As a coach he set up, with his wife Joan, the famous Larkhall Table Tennis Centre in South London which became the practice centre for many international, county and club players.

Connie had suffered from Parkinson's Disease for several years but this didn't stop him attending many of the Veterans tournaments both at home and abroad. His spirit remained undiminished being cared for devotedly by his long-time partner, Diane Pearce. Our sincere condolences go to Di and all family and friends.

Future Events

Domestic:

National Championships Qualification: 8th-9th January 2022, Nottingham

Junior & Cadet 4* Open: 19th – 20th February 2022, Plymouth

Cadet National Cup: 5th-6th March 2022

Grand Prix: 12th-13th March 2022, Aldersley, Wolverhampton

National Championships: 25th-27th March 2022, Nottingham

Junior, U17 & Cadet National Championships: 30th April -1st May 2022, Nottingham

Junior & Cadet 4* Open: 7th-8th May 2022, St Neots, Cambridge

ELCC Qualification: Wilmott Cup and J M Rose Bowl: 7th May 2022

ELCC Qualification: Carter Cup and Bromfield Trophy: 14th May 2022

Grand Prix: 28th-29th May 2022: Redbridge, London

U11 & U13 National Championships: 11th-12th June 2022, Aldersley, Wolverhampton

Junior National Cup: 18th-19th June 2022

Grand Prix: 25th-26th June 2022, Gloucester

Women and Girls Event: 2nd July 2022 (tbc)

ELCC Finals: 9th-10th July 2022, Draycott

Senior National Cup: 16th-17th July 2022 (tbc)

International:

European Under 21 Championships: 13th-17th April 2022, Bucharest, Romania

ITTF World Championships: 23rd May-12th June 2022, China

European Veteran Championships: 25th June-2nd July 2022, Rimini, Italy

European Youth Championships: 15th-24th July 2022, Novi Sad or Belgrade, Serbia

Commonwealth Games: 29th July-8th August 2022, Birmingham

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

Europe Youth Top 10: 30th September-2nd October 2022, Tours, France

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

Additionally, there are several WTT events.

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