

Table Tennis Times

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

Issue 31

Editorial

Summer 2023

There is only one place to start this editorial and that is with the passing of Diane ‘Di’ Scholer (Rowe) who died on 19th June 2023 and we include the obituary which was carried on the Table Tennis England website. Harvey flew to Germany for the funeral and reports “As to be expected there was a large number of the great and good of German Table Tennis and the arrangements that had been made by Ebby and the family were exemplary.

After the church service, as the weather was kind this enabled us to walk behind the coffin to the burial. The cemetery was immaculate, the nicest I have ever been in, and extremely well looked after, and for Di’s final resting place it is perfect. A fitting farewell to a great lady – never to be forgotten”.

In this edition we have another guest contribution from Graham Frankel – this time looking at the enormous contribution George Yates made to table tennis and in particular his editorship of the house magazine, Table Tennis News.

There are numerous tournament reports, both domestic and what seems to be an ever-increasing number of international events, particularly at junior level. One can only wonder how sustainable some of these are. There are a considerable number of reports as a result but we didn’t feel we could leave any of them out.

We also offer our usual features “What was Happening” which looks back at 1933, also “The Good News” page which happily records British Empire Medals for three of the best volunteers in table tennis, Margaret Calver, Ken Eliot and Gary Howes.

We hope you find something of interest in this edition of our magazine and the time to read it now that Wimbledon is coming to a close and before the Women’s Football World Cup starts.

Finally, and as always, we must thank the photographers who have given their approval for us to use their images throughout. Their contribution enhances the words.

Best wishes

Diane and Harvey Webb

Cadet, Under 17 & Junior National Championships
29th-30th April 2023: University of Nottingham
Photos by Michael Loveder unless named otherwise

On the first day of the Championships there was double gold for 13-year-old Sienna Jetha and for 14-year-old Naomi Coker. Jetha also got a silver to add to her collection.

In the Cadet Girls' Singles the top four seeds reached the semi-finals. Top seed Jetha beat third seed, Jonabel Taguibao, whilst fourth seed Coker beat second seed, Ella Pashley. Good friends Jetha and Coker met in the final and it was a win for Coker 7, 8, 9.

The corresponding Cadet Boys' event was a title for number one seed, Ralph Pattison, over Max Radiven, seeded three, by 6, 9, 6 in the final. In the semi-final Pattison had a tough match against fourth seed, Rohan Dani, and scraped through 9, -6, 4, -15, 5. In the other semi-final Radiven had beaten eighth seed Harry Randall 4, -5, 9, 7.



Coach, Phil Vickers with Naomi Coker and Ralph Pattison

The Cadet Girls' Doubles saw Coker and Jetha combining for the gold medal with a win over Taguibao and Isabella Turner-Samuels 10, 6, 8. The runners-up had an impressive win against the second seeds Mia Lakhani and Eva Eccles in their semi-final match 4, 8, -3, -11, 11. Tilly Simms and Sophie Ackred were the other semi-finalists.

Opponents in the singles turned into partners in the Cadet Boys' Doubles as Radiven and Randall had a brilliant run to take the title. In the semi-final they beat the number two seeds Kacper Piwowar and Abraham Sellado 9, 6, -8, -8, 8 before defeating top seeds Isaac Kingham and Pattison in the final 7, 6, 5. Brothers Leo and Hugo Nguyen were the other semi-finalists.



*Jonabel Taguibao & Isabella Turner-Samuels and Naomi Coker & Sienna Jetha
Isaac Kingham & Ralph Pattison and Max Radiven & Harry Randall*

The Under 17 Girls' Singles saw a second gold for Jetha still only 13 years old, seeded four, who had surprisingly come second in her group after a defeat at the hands of the unseeded Coker. Her opponent in the final was Pashley and the score 5, -8, 5, 4. Pashley had beaten the number one seed, Anna Green, in the quarter-finals and then Saskia Key in her semi-final match 1, -8, 6, 6. Maliha Baig, seeded two, fell in the semi-finals to Jetha 6, 6, -10, -7, 9.



Ella Pashley, Sienna Jetha, Maliha Baig, Saskia Key

Jakub Piwowar, Connor Green, Adam Dennison, Rohan Dani

It was the start of an excellent weekend for the Green family as Connor Green won the Under 17 Boys' Singles with a win over Jakub Piwowar -11, 3, 6, 5. Green had disposed of Dani in the round before whilst Piwowar had defeated Adam Dennison in his semi-final match 8, -6, 8, 2.

Pashley at last got a gold medal when teamed with Mabel Shute, they won the Under 17 Girls' Doubles beating top seeds Anna Green and Key in the semi-finals -4, -8, 6, 15, 5, and then the second seeds Evelyn Pace and Bethany Ellis in the final 8, 7, 12. Baig and Isabelle Lacorte were the other losing semi-finalists.

In the corresponding Boys' event it was a win for James Hamblett and Joseph Hunter, seeded two, over the top seeds, Green and Jakub Piwowar -4, 8, -5, 9, 8. The semi-finalists were Krish Chotai and Jake Haygarth and Adam Dennison and Larry Trumpauskas.



Mabel Shute & Ella Pashley



James Hamblett & Joseph Hunter

The end of a very long day with some of the players playing an incredible number of matches.

The first event to be decided was the Junior Mixed Doubles and the title went to siblings Connor and Erin Green, seeded two. In the final they beat the top seeds, Felix Thomis and Mari Baldwin 7, 7, -5, 4. Ben Piggott and Anna Green and Louis Price and Amy Marriott were the semi-finalists with Price and Marriott just losing in their semi to Connor and Erin in what must have been one of the closest matches of the day 10, -9, -10, 9, 10.



Felix Thomis & Mari Baldwin



Erin Green & Connor Green

The Junior Girls' Doubles was another triumph for the Green family as Anna and Erin beat off the challenge from Key and Jetha in the final 12, -8, 6, 8. Key and Jetha had disposed of top seeds Baldwin and Lauren Loosemore in their semi-final 8, -9, -8, 6, 8. Anaya Patel and Millie Rogove were the losers in the other semi-final to the Green combination -8, 8, 9, -9, 8.



Erin Green & Anna Green



Ben Piggott & Tom Rayner and Joshua Bruce & Connor Green

Photo by Chris Rayner

The Junior Boys' Doubles saw another series of five game matches as top seeds Connor Green and Joshua Bruce got the win over second seeds Piggott and Rayner in the final -5, 3, 7, -7, 9. Green and Bruce had a close match in their semi against Naphong Boonyaprapa and Rhys Davies 9, -10, -11, 9, 8 though Piggott and Rayner had a slightly easier time in their semi against Thomis and Jakub Piwowar 9, 9, -10, 6.

Top seed Connor Green secured another gold medal in the Junior Boys' Singles and had a fairly comfortable event only dropping one game on his way to victory. He first beat his doubles partner Bruce in the first knock-out round 4, 6, 6. Olly Cornish was up next and this was a 9, -9, 9, 6 win. Onto the semi-final against Rhys Davies with the score 7, 6, 8 and the final against Louis Price also lasted three games 7, 7, 5.

With all the money and training invested in Green from the GB programme it is good to see the dividends. Price, seeded sixth had got the better of second seed Piggott in the quarter-finals -5, -9, 7, 9, 8 and Pattison in the semis 6, 6, 8. A good result for top cadet Pattison to reach this stage. Unseeded Rhys Davies also did well in this event: having come runner-up to Pattison in his group, he went on to beat Joseph Hunter and Jakub Piwowar in the knock-outs to earn a bronze medal.



Louis Price and Connor Green

The last match to finish saw Anaya Patel successfully defend her title in the Junior Girls' Singles with a win over Erin Green -3, 6, 6, 6. A well-deserved victory in the final although spare a thought for Green who played three finals consecutively. Second seed Patel did earn her title the hard way. She won her group and then had three five game matches in the knock-out rounds before the four game match in the final. First win was against Mia Lakhani 9, 8, -9, -10, 5, the second against Maliha Baig 6, -6, 5, -6, 10 and her semi-final against Scarlett Anders was 7, -7, 8, -8, 3. Green also had some long matches, in her quarter-final match she beat top seed Baldwin 9, 10, -6, -9, 6 and then her semi victory over Evelyn Pace was 8, -6, 10, 10.



Erin Green



Anaya Patel. Photo by Raj Patel

For the first time a Junior Mixed Para Singles event was played with two groups of four. The win went to Joseph Fortnum-Adams who defeated George Jarvis in the final 6, -9, 11, 3. Jaiden Caldeira and Bly Twomey were the semi-finalists.



Joseph Fortnum-Adams

There were two very long days with some players playing up to 16 matches in one day and 24 over the weekend. Sunday went over time by around three hours. It also meant the live streaming was shut down several hours early although it was reinstated. With the extra age group, the Under 17s resulting in more events perhaps there needs a rethink on how the extra events can be accommodated.

The Rise and Fall of a Table Tennis Superhero

By Graham Frankel



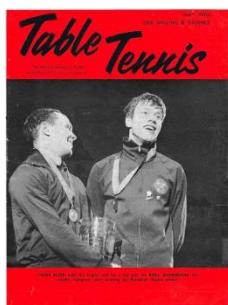
George Yates is one of the unsung heroes of English table tennis. His name may be known to anyone who has been involved in the sport for more than 30 years, but few will be aware of the massive impact he made, not as a player, but as the longest-serving editor of the ETTA magazine *Table Tennis News*.

His achievements were acknowledged with various awards in his lifetime, and in obituaries when he died in March, 2000. Now, almost a quarter of a century later, those awards and tributes will have been largely forgotten. I hope this will provide a timely reminder of his outstanding contribution, and a fresh look at how his era as editor came to a rather sudden and premature end.

Ground Floor

Born in Chorley, Lancashire in 1921, George Yates left school in his early teens to join British Rail, clocking up 44 years' service before retiring. It is unlikely he ever had any training in writing or journalism, acquiring those skills by practice. By the end of the 1940s he had married and moved to Bolton, which would be his home for the rest of his life. There is no record of his playing career, but in the early 1950s he became secretary of the Bolton League, writing regular match reports for the *Bolton Evening News*. It took a while for his alternative career as a journalist and editor to take off, but in 1961, at the age of 40, he joined the Lancashire County Association and took on the job as Press Secretary of the Lancashire & Cheshire League. This was the start of his long association with the official ETTA magazine, as he began contributing county reports.

Five years later, he would become editor, but there is something of a mystery surrounding his taking on this position. Readers of *Table Tennis* were given no warning of the magazine's dramatic transformation in the summer of 1966. The final edition of the 1965/66 season, published in May, contained no hint of what would happen during what must have been a busy summer for the ETTA.



The final edition of *Table Tennis* and the first edition of *Table Tennis News*

Harrison Edwards, who had been editing the magazine for almost 12 years, simply vanished from the scene. He didn't only disappear as editor, but apparently from the sport – without any further mention in the revamped magazine. George Yates' appointment, replacing Edwards as editor, was similarly played down in his first edition, published as usual in October. Not a word was said about him, other than his name appearing

on the list of officials. Even the ETTA annual report failed to record the details of this editorial coup. It merely stated that the magazine “for many years had been losing support.”

In his first editorial, Yates mentioned the changes without going into a lot of detail. He referred to a “budget squeeze” and that the magazine, now relaunched as *Table Tennis News*, was now an “ETTA publication.”

Subscribers could be excused for missing the fact that their magazine had a new editor, but they couldn’t fail to see the other changes. The size, unchanged since 1949, increased from 18cm x 24cm (smaller than the old quarto size) to 29cm x 44cm - something approaching a broadsheet. The newspaper format, clearly an economy measure, meant that the earlier colour enhanced front cover was dropped, and the number of pages reduced from 28 to 10. George’s editorial included a veiled threat that the magazine had only just been rescued from extinction: “The ETTA have provided a ground floor from what could well have been a ruin.”

Going Up

If the ETTA established the ground floor, it was George Yates who was the driving force enabling the magazine to reach the top. It was a superb achievement, and once momentum had been gained, the development was steady, hardly faltering.

The progress during the first two years was very moderate. This was a period of consolidation, although the ETTA reported an increase in sales during the first year. This success was celebrated with a splash of colour, but limited to the title. A year later, in October 1968, the broadsheet format was dropped. *Table Tennis News* settled on a page size (22.5cm x 29.5cm) that would remain almost unaltered for the rest of its life.

The pace of change speeded up. Yates was gaining confidence. After another year, the page count had increased from 20 to 24, there were more photos, and a much-improved front cover with more colour and a bolder title.

A few months later, there was another step forward to improve the magazine’s impact. All body copy was removed from the front cover leaving a single photo with a headline caption. Below the photo was a colour banner giving a taster of one of the major news items inside. This became the standard for a long period, other than the replacement of the news taster with advertising.

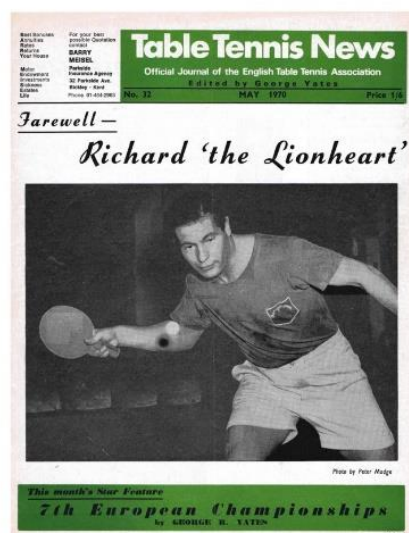


Table Tennis News November 1968 and May 1970

These design improvements were very visible to readers, but they were just a small part of Yates’ achievement. A less obvious, but equally important skill he developed, was to consolidate the different aspects of his table

tennis interests. He did much more than simply edit the magazine and write reports. His contributions included umpiring, organising tournaments ranging from league and county level to international events. He also became manager for England international teams and was a member of a various senior organising committees. We can only speculate now whether he had a deliberate plan in selecting these various roles, but the resulting synergy had a tremendous positive effect on *Table Tennis News*. All his activities helped him become more effective in his main job as editor. He was present in one capacity or another at most important events and many others besides. The contacts he developed gave him huge influence in securing an increasingly healthy flow of news.

Even higher

During the 1970s *Table Tennis News* almost doubled in size. By the end of the decade 44 pages was the norm. But there was no loss of quality. All the major national and international events were covered. Yates used his influence to pull in contributions from a steadily increasing number of reporters and photographers. He developed a keen sense for good photographs and punchy headlines. This is most evident in the front covers.



A selection of George Yates' editions from the 1970s

The early 1980s saw even greater growth in the size of the magazine. Every edition was now more than 60 pages and several editions approached 70. We may ask how did George Yates manage to achieve this while holding down a full-time job with British Rail? Enquiries from two people who knew him confirmed that his work was administrative, possibly working in a ticket office. Perhaps his work allowed him plenty of spare moments to concentrate on his next edition. But in the days without internet and mobile phones he couldn't possibly have done an effective job closeted in an office. We may never discover how he managed it, but everyone I spoke to commented about his phenomenal work rate.



George Yates in 1978 presenting the men's doubles trophy at the National Championships to the winners Paul Day and Andrew Barden. Photo Allan Batchelor

A sudden departure

The end of Yates' spell as editor came suddenly and unexpectedly. Unlike his predecessor, Harrison Edwards, George Yates did not simply disappear without trace. But the reason for his departure was not entirely clear.

One of the essential skills of an editor is to deal with controversy. A good editor will not shy away from issues but deal with them impartially. There was never any shortage of hot topics landing on George Yates' desk. He welcomed them, open to all sides of the argument, and never seeking to sensationalise. But during the latter part of the 1970s, a new correspondent began sending in comments about problems he perceived in the sport. John Prean, who lived on the Isle of Wight, ran a successful business and table tennis club there. He also had high ambitions for his nine-year-old son who went on to become the England number one senior player.

The volume and frequency of John Prean's contributions steadily increased over the next few years. In 1980, he established a regular column following a successful argument to allow the Isle of Wight to be recognised as a separate county by the ETTA. The Isle of Wight reports became Prean's launch pad for missiles that were aimed ever higher in the hierarchy of the national governing body.

It was obvious to at least some of the staff working at the ETTA that John Prean's stream of invective had an ulterior motive. George Yates had the unenviable task of maintaining the balance between encouraging healthy debate without allowing a single voice to dominate his columns.

Given that George Yates is no longer with us, and given the passing of almost 40 years, it is unlikely we could ever discover the real reason behind his decision to suddenly step down without having quite made it to 20 years in the job. Here is his final editorial in the May/June 1985 edition.

Despite the statement in his first paragraph, I feel there is an element of doubt whether the primary reason was his new position as Honorary Secretary at the ETTU. He had held many other committee jobs (including having been Deputy Chair of the ETTA for 15 years) alongside his main role. When he was appointed to the ETTU position – more than a year earlier – there had been no hint that the workload would mean giving up his job as editor of *Table Tennis News*.

On the other hand, there is evidence that the constant barrage may have become intolerable. In his January 1985 editorial, five months before he stood down, Yates wrote:

There is little doubt that when John Prean draws his gun, bullets are meant to be fired. And what's more they fly in all directions. Granted some of the targets are legitimate but not all. John, often in defence of his talented son, is apt to bring out weaponry of sufficient calibre to blast holes into anyone regardless.

Aftermath

After standing down as editor, Yates continued to report on both international and local news, submitting reports for Lancashire until 1992, by which time he had clocked up 31 years as the county correspondent. But then he suffered the first of a series of strokes that would eventually lead to his death in 2000. Never again did *Table Tennis News* reach the size of the most substantial editions he produced during the period before his sudden and unexpected departure. None other editors, either before or after, came close to achieving 19 years in the job.

By the time the final edition was published in July 2010 it had been transformed into something that was, for many readers, a far less attractive journal. The focus had shifted from reporting news to marketing. The professionally designed full colour offering will have led to a substantial increase in production costs which could not be justified by the subscription income. George Yates would not have been pleased to see the eventual outcome of his efforts. We can only speculate how *Table Tennis News* might have evolved if its finest editor had not made a reluctant exit.

I am grateful to Diane and Harvey for providing helpful background information for this article. Thanks also to several others, including Colin Clemett and Ken Muhr, who provided some personal recollections of George Yates.

Graham Frankel
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PERSONAL COMMENT

Some nineteen years have passed since I took over the editorship of this magazine and much as I would have liked to have reached one further milestone to make it twenty, pressure of work in connection with my new role as Hon. Secretary of the European Table Tennis Union has made it impossible to continue.

To do so would have meant falling between two stools and it would not have been fair to either commitment, as it has been these past twelve months, to continue building up pressures and falling down on either one or the other.

It is with reluctance therefore that I quit the post of Editor having enjoyed my stint notwithstanding the slings and arrows that have crossed my desk during my period in office. I have tried to keep a balance and have been indebted to all my correspondents, those for and against, and, more latterly, my decision to curb, not silence, the outpourings from a certain gentleman and his wife in the Isle of Wight.

The magazine is, after all, the official journal of the Association and although free speech is to be encouraged it is not for me, a member of the establishment, to let criticism run out of hand to an extent which could upset, and possibly deprive us of, sponsors.

To all those writers and photographers who have contributed, freely and unstintingly, to the welfare of this publication, and to those advertisers who have, throughout the years, supported the magazine I would express my gratitude with the sincere hope that this be the lot of my successor.

Final editorial May/June 1985

Senior British League Cup: 4th June 2023, BATTs, Harlow

A new competition for the teams who played in the Senior British League Premier division. A knockout competition as opposed to a league format. The idea was the brainchild of Cliff Carder who purchased and presented the trophy – knowing Cliff we were a little surprised the cup was not embellished with one of his colourful T-shirts. It was BATTs who beat Brighton in the final with Fusion in third place.



*Winners BATTs - Josh Bennett, Shayan Siraj, Ralph Pattison with Cliff Carder
Photo by Michael Loveder*

European Under 21 Championships

5th-9th April 2023: Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina

England had two players who qualified to play for this tournament, Connor Green and Mari Baldwin. The singles were played in groups with the top two in each group going through to a second group stage before the knockout rounds began.

Baldwin had a difficult first match and just lost to Hungarian, Helga Dari, 11, -7, 7, -10, 10, -8, -8. In her second match she beat Luxembourg's Enisa Sadikovic 4, 8, 9, -4, 5. Her third and final group match was a loss to Sara Tokic of Slovenia -6, 4, -5, -8, -3. As a result, Baldwin finished in third position and so did not move onto the second group stage.



*Mari Baldwin and Connor Green
Photos courtesy of the ETTU*

Green had had an equally close first match in his singles and just lost 9, 12, -7, -6, 9, -3, -9 to Italy's Andrea Puppo. Next up was Jakub Goldir of Slovakia and Green took the win 10, 9, -8, -8, 8, 6. He was successful in his third group match, too, against Andrii Grebeniuk of Ukraine but another long match which went 7, 6, -15, -7, 12, 9. This put Green into the second phase of the event which was another set of group matches. First up was Darius Movileanu, Romania and although Green started well it was Movileanu who moved up a gear to win -8, -11, 5, 3, 4, 9. In Green's second match he was up against Miguel Nunez of Spain and it was a fairly straightforward win for the Spaniard 5, 10, 12, 9. The final group match was against Ivor Ban and it was the Croatian who won 5, 4, 4, 7 leaving Green fourth in the group and so the end of the event for him.

The Mixed Doubles was a mixed bag for the English players in their first round matches with Baldwin, partnered by David Bessa of Portugal, going out 3-0 to Tom Closset of Belgium and Tokic who Baldwin had already met in the singles. Green and Anna Hursey of Wales won their first encounter 3-1 and so moved forward to the round of 32. There they met Romanians Elena Zaharia and Movileanu who Green had already faced in the singles and it was here the English and Welsh pair bowed out of the event with a loss -8, -11, 11, -8.

In the Under 21 Men's Doubles Green fell at the first hurdle with his partner Gabriellus Camara of the Netherlands 3-1 and so was out of that event. Baldwin did not have a partner in the Under 21 Women's Doubles and so there were no matches for her.

Well done to Hursey who reached the quarter-finals in the Women's Singles losing to the eventual runner-up Sophia Klee of Germany who was defeated in the final by Hana Arapovic of Croatia, Arapovic had won the Europe Junior Top 10 in Tours last September and is developing as a top European player transitioning into the senior game. The Under 21 Men's Singles winner was Milosz Redzimski of Poland who beat Csaba Andras of Hungary in their final.

British Para National Championships
22nd-23rd April 2023: Sheffield
All photos by Chris Rayner

It was a very welcome return of these Championships which were last held in 2019 and due to Covid-19 hadn't been played since. It was a familiar venue at the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield and some familiar established names as well as some new faces. The Championships cover England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales and due to the number of classification groups there are a high number of titles to be won. A reminder that categories 1-5 are for wheelchair players and 6-12 are the standing categories.

Class 1: A round robin of three and it was Rob Davies who came out on top. Unfortunately, top player Tom Matthews was not in attendance.



Rob Davies, Kevin Plowman, Paul Karabardak

Classes 2-3 (combined): Veteran Kevin Plowman (Class 3) got the win over Romain Simon in the final in a well fought match that went all the way with Plowman just getting over the line 12-10 in the fifth.

Classes 4-5 (combined): Jack Hunter-Spivey won his three matches in another round robin event. The remaining places resulted in Megan Shackleton beating Simon Heaps and Lee York beating Shackleton. In the end it was Heaps who finished in second place.

Class 6: Welshman Paul Karabardak took the title beating Scotland's Martin Perry and England's Fliss Pickard.

Class 7: It was another title for Will Bayley who beat youngster Theo Bishop in the final of this event 3-1.

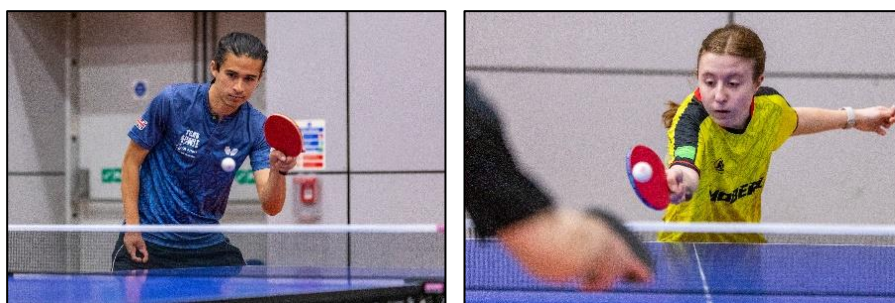
Class 8: A tough event with several players at the top of their game but it was a win for Ross Wilson over Billy Shilton in the final 3-0. They had met earlier in the group stage and it was Ross who had also won that encounter although it was a much closer 3-2 result.



Will Bayley, Ross Wilson, Joshua Stacey

Class 9: There were five entrants who played a round robin and it was Joshua Stacey who won this title.

Class 10: Kim Daybell came back from retirement to show he hadn't lost any of his skill when he took the title with a win over Jack Stockdale in the final.



Kim Daybell and Lianna Shillani

Open Standing Singles: Another title for Joshua Stacey making it a good weekend for him with two golds and one silver. He beat Ross Wilson in three straight in the final giving an impressive display.

Women's Standing Singles: With top players Fliss Pickard and Grace Williams in the event it was a surprise when 14-year-old Lianna Shillani became champion, although born in London she had been living in the Ukraine before returning to England. She has been playing since she was nine.

Open Wheelchair Singles: Another title for Jack Hunter-Spivey beating Lee York in the final 3-1.

Women's Wheelchair Singles: Victory for Megan Shackleton in the three way round robin group with wins over Bethany Kelf and Beth Kyte.

Open Standing Doubles: Aaron McKibbin teamed up with Billy Shilton and they made a pretty formidable pair who went on to beat Martin Perry and Joshua Stacey in the final.



Billy Shilton & Aaron McKibbin, Jack Hunter-Spivey & Megan Shackleton, Joseph Fortnum-Adams

Open Wheelchair Doubles: It was a second title for Jack Hunter-Spivey who partnered Megan Shackleton, they beat Andrew Green and Romain Simon in the final.

Junior Singles: A win for Joseph Fortnum-Adams who beat Max Flint 3-1 in the final.

Open Wheelchair Band B: Winner Chris Ryan.

Open Wheelchair Band C: Winner Tom Hepburn.

Open Standing Band B: Winner Bailey Page.

Open Standing Band C: Winner Adnan Janoowalla.

European Championships Qualifiers: Women's Team 5th-6th May 2023: Osijek, Croatia



*Jasmin Wong, Tin-Tin Ho, Matej Mamut (coach),
Emily Bolton, Mari Baldwin*

England were up against Israel, Netherlands and Bulgaria on 5th and 6th May 2023 with the matches being played in Osijek, Croatia. The top two teams automatically qualified for the European Championships in September and the third placed team had another chance to qualify in a further play-off. It was a close call but England just made it in second place.

Israel were the first opponents and this resulted in a fairly comfortable 3-0 win for England. Tin-Tin Ho started with a 6, 7, 9 win against Itshak Sinay. Next was Emily Bolton who also won 3-0, 5, 5, 6 against Elinor Davidov and third up was Mari Baldwin with another win, 8, 7, 4, against Vital Karlin. A good start to their campaign.

The Netherlands was the second match on day one and Bolton was first on the table playing against Emine Ernst and it was a win for Bolton although it went the distance 5, 8, -6, -5, 6. Ho versus Shuohan Men was the next match and it was a win for Men 7, -8, 9, 7. Jasmin Wong in her senior debut fought well against Tanja Helle winning the first end 15-13 but lost the next three with the final score 13, -3, -6, -8. Ho played her second match, against Ernst, and it was another win for England -6, 5, 7, 5, thus levelling the match score. It was up to Bolton to secure the win for England with her match against Men and what a close affair it was. The score was 2-2 and 10-10 after Men had missed a sitter to win the match for her country, in the end Bolton got over the line 8, -6, 9, -7, 11 giving England the victory.

After two wins England looked fairly secure to qualify for the European Championships finals but a win against Bulgaria would have made it certain. Day two and it was Ho who started for England and won against Tsvetelina Georgieva -9, 6, 8, 2. Wong was next and went down to Maria Yovkova 6, 6, 3. Baldwin was the third player for England and she too lost -3, 9, -6, -3 to Kalina Hristova. Ho pulled it back level beating Yovkova 5, -6, 8, 11. The final match was Wong versus Georgieva. It was nip and tuck with the first going to the Bulgarian, Wong levelled in the second, third went to Bulgaria, Wong again levelled but in the fifth end it was Georgieva who won, final score 7, -9, 7, -9, 7.

As Bulgaria had also beaten the Netherlands it placed them in first position in the group, England second, the Netherlands were third and so went through to the play-off stage, and Israel finished in fourth place and so were out of the competition.

Wales were also aiming to qualify for the finals. In their first group match they faced a very strong Austrian team and Charlotte Carey did well to win against Karoline Mischek but understandably Anna Hursey and Carey both lost to Sofia Polcanova who is ranked 18 in the world. Lara Whitton, too, had a tough challenge against Amelie Solja and lost in three. The Welsh ladies then faced Belgium and it was a 3-2 loss with Hursey winning Wales' two matches, Carey lost her two and Danielle Kelly just missed out to Sara Devos 3-2.

So, the Welsh team headed into the play-offs where they met Finland and there was joy for them as they defeated the Finns 3-1 with Hursey winning two, Carey one and Whitton having the closest of matches losing 17-15 in the fifth. A good win for Wales which meant they will be joining England ladies in Malmo for the European Championships main event.

The Good News Page

- * Following on from Gorazd Vecko's honour from the Slovenian Table Tennis Association, he is now the proud possessor of an Honorary MBE for his services to Paralympic Table Tennis. Congratulations Gorazd.
- * More honours to three who between them have given well over 100 years of service to table tennis – Margaret Calver, Ken Eliot and Gary Howes. In the King's first Birthday Honours list they were all awarded the British Empire Medal.



Margaret Calver, Ken Eliot, Gary Howes

- * The England squads for the forthcoming season have been announced and the senior squad comprises Paul Drinkhall, Tom Jarvis, David McBeath, Liam Pitchford, Shayan Siraj, Sam Walker, Emily Bolton, Charlotte Carey (Wal), Tin-Tin Ho, Mollie Patterson, Denise Payet, Jasmin Wong.

The National Training Squad for the best U15 and U19 players comprises: Adam Alibhai, Scarlett Anders, Maliha Baig, Mari Baldwin, Naomi Coker, Rohan Dani, Adam Dennison, Toby Ellis, Anna Green, Erin Green, Joseph Hunter, Isaac Kingham, Ella Pashley, Anaya Patel, Ben Piggott, Jakub Piwowar, Louis Price, Max Radiven, Hannah Silcock (Jersey), Larry Trumpauskas

- * There are also GB squads and there are four English players in the U15 squad: Sienna Jetha, Ralph Pattison, Kacper Piwowar and Abraham Sellado with Connor Green in the GB Potential Squad for Under 19s.
- * Table Tennis England have announced that there will be no increase in membership fees for the forthcoming season. The Supporter and Club Player remain free, Compete stays at £9 for Juniors and Cadets and £18 for Seniors. Compete Plus for those who play in higher level events will have to pay £20 if they are a Junior or Cadet and £40 if they are a Senior.
- * Three players have qualified for the Ping Pong World Cup in Mexico City next January from a recently held qualifier. Chris Doran, Ethan Walsh and France's Bryan Aiglemont were the three who go through to the finals of the sandpaper tournament.
- * Mary Wright was interviewed on BBC Radio 4 on Friday, 7th July 2023 at 4pm and talked about her time playing with Diane Rowe (Scholer) and earning many medals between them. The interview was interspersed with sound clips from what sounded like Pathe News programmes. A nice tribute.
- * Matthew Syed has also been on BBC Radio 4 with a three-part series on Ping Pong Diplomacy and China, with reminiscences from Ian Harrison and Trevor Taylor. Well worth listening too. Both Mary and Matthew's recordings are available on BBC Sounds.

World Championships Durban, South Africa: 20th to 28th May 2023

Five English players qualified to go to the World Championships in Durban, only the second time the Championships had been held on the African continent, the first being in 1939 when England returned home with two gold and two bronze medals from Cairo.

It was individual events only this year and the Championships were played as a straight knockout starting at the round of 128 in both men's and women's singles and round of 64 in the three doubles events.

There were four English participants in the men's singles and they had differing challenges in their first round matches. Liam Pitchford, (WR 23, seeded 21) faced Joao Geraldo of Portugal (WR 46), the first opponent for Paul Drinkhall (WR 118) was Olajide Omotayo of Nigeria (WR 157), Sam Walker (WR 112) had the toughest draw as he met Wong Chun Ting of Hong Kong (WR 30) and Tom Jarvis (WR 101) also had a difficult first match against Indian, Sathiyam Gnanasekaran (WR 51).



Sam Walker, Tom Jarvis, Liam Pitchford

Walker was the first to play and he couldn't get past the higher ranked Hong Kong player, losing 4, 7, 7, 7. The match between Jarvis and Gnanasekaran always promised to be a good match and so it proved. It went to seven but unfortunately for Jarvis it was Gnanasekaran who won the seventh game. All credit to Jarvis for taking his higher ranked opponent so close. The final score 9, 8, -7, 2, -13, -11, 6. Pitchford, too, went out in the round of 128 also in seven and must have been disappointed losing to his lower ranked opponent, with Geraldo winning 10, -6, 9, -7, 5, -5, 11.

It was left to Drinkhall playing in his 16th World Championships to carry on flying the flag for England and he did with a win 6, -13, -10, 5, 8, 5 against his Nigerian opponent. The only English player to go through to the round of 64 where he met Filip Zeljko of Croatia. Although Zeljko was only ranked 146 in the world, he had beaten the world number 27, Benedikt Duda, Germany, in his previous match so it was not going to be as easy as it looked on paper. It was one all after the first two games which were both close, Drinkhall had an easier win in the third but Zeljko pulled back in the fourth, another close game in the fifth which Drinkhall won, he then pulled ahead in the latter stages of the sixth game to take the match and put him through into the round of 32 by 10, -9, 6, -9, 13, 8. A very different challenge against the number five seed, Jingkun Liang of China. The Chinese player came out of the blocks firing on all cylinders winning the first two games comfortably but then Drinkhall played brilliantly and won the third, and after leading in the fourth just missed out giving Liang a 3-1 advantage. Battling hard Drinkhall played some superb, intelligent table tennis in the fifth which went to deuce. It couldn't have been any closer but it was Liang who won 4, 5, -9, 10, 11 and went on to win a bronze medal.



Paul Drinkhall

Tin-Tin Ho (WR 135) was the sole English female and she had a tough first round draw against Ying Han of Germany (WR 10, seeded eight). Not surprisingly it was Han who won in straight games 3, 7, 6, 8.

The Men's Doubles is an event England has done well in recently and we had two pairs in the first round of 64. Jarvis and Walker met Wong Chun Ting and Ho Kwan Kit of Hong Kong, Walker always seems to get the most difficult of draws and to meet the same highly ranked player in both singles and doubles is very tough. Nonetheless, the English pair started well and won the first game 11-6 but that was their sole win as the Hong Kong duo won the next three 7, 3, 5.

Drinkhall and Pitchford's first doubles match was against David Serdaroglu and Alexander Chen of Austria. It was a slow start for the English pair and they were 9-3 down in the first end but they pulled back to 10-8, saved two game points and went on to win 12, 6, 8. Match number two was against the Chilean pair, Nicolas Burgos and Gustavo Gomez, both ranked much lower than our players in the singles list at 184 and 232 but good doubles pairs aren't always the same as good singles players and vice versa. Talk about living dangerously – it went to 9-9 in the fifth and fortuitously the English pair won the last two points and the match 8, -9, 9, -8, 9. With a huge sigh of relief Drinkhall and Pitchford were through to the round of 16 where they faced their Commonwealth Games finalists who they had overcome last summer – Sharath Kamal Achanta and Sathiyan Gnanasekaran. It was another success for the English pair who won -9, 8, 12, 10 which put them through to the quarter-finals for the second successive time at the World Championships. In this round they were up against top German pair, Patrick Franziska and Dimitrij Ovtcharov. It was nearly but not quite for Drinkhall and Pitchford, such fine margins, not helped by the German pair getting a fortunate net and edge at quite crucial points. England won the first game 11-7, came close in the second but lost 9-11, the third was similar with an 8-11 scoreline and in the fourth and final game Franziska and Ovtcharov went ahead early on and stayed in front winning 11-7. They were the only non-Asian players to win a medal in the whole Championships, a bronze. The English pair certainly earned their place in the quarter-finals and showed they are one of the world's top doubles partnerships.



Liam Pitchford & Paul Drinkhall

In the Women's Doubles, Ho played with her usual partner, Karoline Mischek of Austria and their first round opponents were Janet Mwelwa and Latifa Nalavwe of Zambia. It was rather a one-sided match against the two African players who lost 1, 4, 7. Ho and Mischek's second match was against a seeded pair, from Sweden, Linda Bergstrom and Christina Kallberg, they lost this one 3-1 with the score 10, 4, -8, 7.



Karoline Mischek & Tin-Tin Ho

There was only one English pair in the Mixed Doubles, Pitchford and Ho. Lubomir Pistej and Barbora Balazova of the Slovak Republic were their opponents in their first and what proved to be their last match losing 6, 3, 8. The day two had not been a propitious one for the England players.

The eventual winners and runners-up of the Championships were:

Men's Singles: Fan Zhendong, China, beat Wang Chuqin, China -8, 9, 7, 10, -11, 3

Women's Singles: Sun Yingsha, China beat Chen Meng, China -5, 8, 7, 7, -7, 6

Men's Doubles: Fan Zhendong & Wang Chuqin, China beat Jang Woojin & Lim Jonghoon, Korea Republic 11, 6, 5

Women's Doubles: Chen Meng & Wang Yidi, China beat Jeon Jihee & Shin Yubin, Korea Republic 8, 7, 10

Mixed Doubles: Wang Chuqin & Sun Yingsha, China beat Tomokazu Harimoto & Hina Hayata, Japan 6, 2, 7



A full house for China and the full Chinese contingent

The Swaythling Club International held their AGM in Durban, it was attended by Harvey Webb who was returned as Secretary. Claude Bergeret was unopposed and so continues as President, as does Reto Bazzi as Deputy President and Richard Scruton as Treasurer. Lilamani de Soysa, Zdenko Krisz and Gloria Wagener were elected as committee members.



Claude Bergeret presenting the SCI Richard Bergmann Fair Play Award to Wang Yidi

European Games: 23rd June – 2nd July 2023: Krakow, Poland

The third European Games, where players play under the Great Britain banner rather than their home nation country, commenced for table tennis on 23rd June 2023. There were five English players taking part – Tin-Tin Ho, Paul Drinkhall, Tom Jarvis, Liam Pitchford and Sam Walker – as well as Charlotte Carey from Wales.

There were five events: Men's Team, Women's Team, Men's Singles, Women's Singles and Mixed Doubles. There was the incentive in the Mixed Doubles that the winning pair automatically qualified for the Olympic Games in Paris in 2024. GB had an entry in the Men's Team, two in the Men's Singles, two in the Women's Singles and one in the Mixed Doubles.

The first match was Liam Pitchford and Tin-Tin Ho in the Mixed Doubles which had only 16 entries. Unfortunately, they lost their match to Slovakia's Lubomir Pitstěj and Barbora Balazova -6, 5, -5, -8.

Next to play was Paul Drinkhall (WR 84) in the singles and he was up against Ukraine's Ievgen Pryshchepa (WR 279). It went the distance and it was the Ukrainian who led in the seventh and had four match points but with Drinkhall you never know what he will pull out of the bag and so it proved as he won the next six points for an 12-10 victory. The final score -9, -9, 7, 7, -9, 6, 10. His next opponent was the number one seed and European Champion, Qiu Dang of Germany.

Ho (WR 181) was the next contender and she had to face France's Prithika Pavade (WR 66) and it was a straight four game victory for Pavade 9, 12, 9, 4. GB's second lady, Charlotte Carey (WR 197) was pitted against Ukrainian Solomiya Brateyko (WR 155) and this too was a 4-0 win in favour of Brateyko 8, 5, 7, 8.

Pitchford (WR 35) as ninth seed went straight through into the round of 32 where his opponent was Daniel Habesohn, Austria. Pitchford went into a 3-1 lead but Habesohn pulled level and then won the seventh game to go through into the round of 16, final score to Habesohn -6, 8, -6, -10, 8, 5, 5.

Drinkhall's next challenge was a tough one against Qiu Dang, European number 1 and European Champion. He lost 4-0 but was never far away in the first three ends and led in fourth 8-4 before Qiu drew level and then went ahead to win 9, 7, 8, 9.

The end for Team GB in the individual events with only Drinkhall winning a match.

The Team events started on Wednesday, 28th June and Great Britain Men's Team who were ranked seventh had their first round of 16 match against Romania ranked twelfth. It was the lower ranked team who went through to the next round as Drinkhall and Jarvis lost the doubles 3-1, Pitchford levelled with a 3-0 win. Drinkhall lost the third 3-0 and Jarvis had a similar scoreline in the fourth.

Not the best tournament for the players.

Throughout the tournament there were many unexpected results with none of the top four seeds making it through to the semi-finals in the men's singles. Victory went to the younger of the LeBrun brothers, Felix, who defeated Marcos Freitas of Portugal in the final -9, 5, 5, -4, -6, 2, 11. Alexis LeBrun received the bronze medal as he had a walkover against Andrej Gacina of Croatia who had to withdraw due to a hamstring injury.

Yang Xiaoxin of Monaco was the only one of the top four seeds in the Women's Singles to make it through to the semi-finals but it was Romania's Bernadette Szocs who won the event by beating Yang in a match which went the distance. Another Romanian, Elizabeta Samara, was the bronze medallist with a win against Natalia Bajor of Poland in the 3rd/4th play-off match.

A place in the Olympic Games in 2024 went to Germany's Qiu Dang and Nina Mittelham, seeded fourth, when they won the Mixed Doubles final 3-0 against Nandor Ecseki and Dora Madarasz of Hungary, seeded seven. Number one seeds, Ovidiu Ionescu and Szocs, were third and second seeds Alvaro Robles and Maria Xiao of Spain were fourth.

Germany won the Men's Team title with Qiu Dang, Patrick Franziska and Dimitrij Ovtcharov. Sweden were runners-up, with France winning the bronze medal after defeating Portugal in the third/fourth play-offs.

Romania's win in the Women's Team event gave Bernadette Szocs her second gold medal of the Games, she played alongside Adina Diaconu and Andreea Dragoman. Germany were runners-up, Portugal the bronze medallists and France in fourth place.

Jersey Satellite Grand Prix: 7th-9th April 2023

Photos by Paul Routier

Easter didn't seem like Easter when the Jersey Satellite Grand Prix wasn't on the calendar due to Covid-19 but it was back this year to help celebrate the Jersey Association's centenary. With the wonderful Jersey hospitality, the tournament was always one of the highlights of the season and we are certain it would have been enjoyed by all who were there.

It is a while since Harvey and I visited the island to play and/or officiate and it was a pleasure to see many familiar names in the entry list, many of our friends from the island as well as several players who had become regulars at the tournament.



Chris Doran and Hannah Silcock with the magnificent Open Singles trophies

Two of England's stalwarts at the tournament met in the Men's Open Singles final and it was Chris Doran who got the better of Darius Knight. The main Women's event was won by local junior, Hannah Silcock, who is doing well on the international stage, she beat Sussex's Jodie Morris in their final.

The Under 21 singles were won by Djen Bakx, Netherlands, and Hannah Silcock with Owen Brown and Jodie Morris the runners-up. The Veterans' Singles went to Mariusz Cieminske with Eugene Ellis the runner-up, and the Restricted Singles was another win for Doran with Luke Greenfield in silver medal position.

Team events were on the menu and it was Doran playing with Jersey's Jordan Wykes who won the Men's, Luc Miller and Garry Dodd were the runners-up. The two finalists in the Women's Singles combined to take the Women's Team title with a win over Kathryn Silcock and Scotland's Holly McNamara. The Under 21s was a win for Joseph Dennison and Joseph Marlor with Bakx and Gabriel Schogger the runners-up. It was another gold for Cieminske who partnered Grzegorz Frankowski for victory over Ellis and Ian Lambert in the Veterans event.



Darius Knight in action



Hannah Silcock interviewed for local radio

Note: Congratulations to Hannah Silcock who won the Women's Singles at the recently held Island Games.

Table Tennis England Governance

As the current TTE chairman's term of office finished in February 2023 after nine years in post, the position was advertised, a short list was then drawn up followed by interviews of five candidates. For those not aware, the chairman is now appointed by the TTE Board and no longer elected by the membership. The five were reduced to two who met the CEO, Adrian Christy, before a second, formal interview. One candidate declined the position and the other was not deemed suitable and so the process is beginning again. The job advert is expected to have a closing date towards the end of August and it was said at the AGM it was hoped that the new chairman would be in post by the end of October at the latest and earlier if possible. In the meantime, the current chairman will remain in place.

Susie Venner's term of office as Deputy Chairman and Elected Board Member finished in May. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Susie for all her work on the Board.

This left a vacancy for an Elected Board Member which was advertised amongst the membership where it is the ETTA Company Members who have a vote. The Company Members are the Board, National Councillors (one for each county) and the League Company Member (one for each affiliated Local League). Three candidates stood, two women and one man. The Nominations Committee of the Board considered the candidates and as a result the membership were informed that the Board's preferred candidates were the two women because they were female which would help redress the imbalance of male to female on the Board. This caused some comment and adverse reaction.

However, it was left to each Company Members to vote for any of the three candidates as they wished and it was Sally Hughes of Sussex who was elected. We wish Sally well in replacing Susie.

Susie Venner also held the title of deputy chairman, which is a purely titular role, a hangover from the days when the membership voted for their chairman, deputy chairman and treasurer. The four elected directors vote or come to an agreement as to who is designated this rather meaningless title. We await notification of which of our four elected directors – Sally Hughes, Jos Kelly, Don Parker or Ritchie Venner will be Susie's successor.

There is one vacancy to be filled for an Appointed Director following Emma Vickers' resignation from the Board at the end of March 2023 subsequent to her being employed by TTE. This vacancy was advertised for someone with financial expertise. At the time of writing, no appointment has been notified.

The Board of TTE has proposed the setting up of a new company to ensure that any major event plans minimised the financial risk to TTE.

Until recently, honorarium were received by elected directors and the chairman but not by the appointed directors. The Board agreed that from 1st April 2023 all directors would receive £150 per Board meeting attended, subject to legal discussions.

A new England Selection policy has given rise to several comments and queries.

ITTF Governance

December 2022 saw the first ITTF Summit in Amman, Jordan and their second Summit is due to take place in Bangkok, Thailand from 22nd-24th August 2023 along with the ITTF AGM. Amongst other matters, it is here where it will be decided whether it is England or Thailand who will be awarded the World Championships in 2026.

Cadet National Cup **13th-14th May 2023: Plymouth**

20 of the top cadet players, ten boys and ten girls, took part in the Cadet National Cup which was held at the hospitable Joola Plymouth Table Tennis Club over two days.

It was only a couple of weeks previously that all the players had taken part in the Junior, Under 17 and Cadet National Championships, so, this was another opportunity for the players to challenge each other. Most of the top players were there but Ralph Pattison, our number one cadet and so the highest ranked male player, did not take part as he was participating in back-to-back WTT Youth events.

It was a full weekend, although most of the players did not play as many matches over these two days as they had at the age group National Championships a couple of weeks ago.

Sienna Jetha and Isaac Kingham were the number one seeds, Jetha also being the title holder. It wasn't to be the same result this year for Jetha although it was close. She won all her first eight matches and looked in line for another championship win but in the last set of matches Ella Pashley beat her 11, 8, -4, 7. Pashley, like Jetha, also won eight matches with her one loss, surprisingly, to tenth seed, Tilly Simms.

So, Jetha and Pashley finished level on points. Countback resulted with the title going to Pashley.

Naomi Coker was third, Jonabel Taguibao fourth, Mia Lakhani fifth, Brooke Morris sixth, Eva Eccles seventh, Tilly Simms eighth, Alyssa Nguyen ninth and Luna Archard tenth.

The Boys' event was even tighter with a three-way countback. Rohan Dani, Isaac Kingham and Max Radiven all finished with eight wins. Dani had lost to Radiven, Kingham lost to Dani and Radiven lost to Kingham. Countback resulted in Dani being crowned the new champion with Radiven in second place and Kingham third.

Kacper Piwowar was fourth, Harry Randall fifth, Adam Alibhai sixth, Fernando Frandes seventh, Leo Nguyen eighth, Janak Shah ninth and Abraham Sellado tenth.



*Cadet National Cup Champions Rohan Dani and Ella Pashley
Photo courtesy of TTE*

Junior National Cup 17th-18th June 2023: BATTIS, Harlow

Maybe the hardest challenge during the season is when all play all in the Junior National Cup. Ten players in each event over two days. There were some omissions in the entries from the top players which was partly down to exams at this time of year for many juniors. Ralph Pattison withdrew due to injury, as did second seed, Junior National Champion, Anaya Patel, who was unable to play due to illness; she was replaced by Rebecca Savage. There was no replacement for Pattison.

Invitations went to the top eight on the ranking list plus the top two from the Cadet National Cup. Those players were Rohan Dani and Max Radiven and Ella Pashley and Sienna Jetha. The places of any player not taking up their invitation was offered to the next player on the ranking list.

The Junior Boys' event resulted in a three-way countback for the medals as Larry Trumpauskas, Joshua Bruce and Ben Piggott all finished with six wins and two losses. However, as Trumpauskas had beaten both Bruce and Piggott he was declared the champion with Bruce in second place and Piggott third. Louis Price, the champion for the last two years was in fourth place, Joseph Hunter fifth, James Hamblett sixth, Rohan Dani seventh, Tom Rayner eighth and Olly Cornish ninth.



*3rd place Ben Piggott, Winner Larry Trumpauskas, 2nd place Joshua Bruce
Photo by Michael Loveder*

The Girls' event ended with Mari Baldwin a clear winner with just one loss over the weekend, to Maliha Baig. The youngest competitor at 13, Sienna Jetha, took the silver medal and Anna Green the bronze. Saskia Key just missed out on a medal in fourth place on countback finishing on equal points with Green. Baig finished fifth, Pashley sixth, Savage seventh, Megan Jones eighth, Isabella Lacorte ninth and Evelyn Pace tenth.



*3rd place Anna Green, Winner Mari Baldwin, 2nd place Sienna Jetha
Photo by Michael Loveder*

WTT Senior Events

WTT Champions: Xinxiang, China: 9th-15th April 2023

A restricted tournament of 32. Liam Pitchford was the only English player eligible and he lost in the first round, round of 32, to German Qiu Dang 6, 4, 9. The third time in a relatively few number of weeks that Pitchford had lost to the German. Consolation was that he earned 15 ranking points and took home 8,500 US Dollars. The winners earned 35,000 US Dollars and 1,000 ranking points.

WTT Champions: Macao, China: 17th-23rd April 2023

Another restricted tournament of 32 and again only Pitchford from England was eligible. He beat Simon Gauzy in the round of 32 and then lost to Ma Long in the next round -10, 8, 6, 4. This still gave him 11,000 US dollars and 90 ranking points.

Comment: By restricting these tournaments to only the top few players it makes it very difficult for any below the top level to catch up with them giving them, what would appear to be a significantly unfair advantage.

WTT Star Contender: Bangkok, Thailand: 23rd-29th April 2023

Hot on the heels of the Macao tournament and staying in the Far East was the WTT event where there were four English players – Tin-Tin Ho, Paul Drinkhall, Liam Pitchford and Sam Walker.

Walker (WR 108) met the young German, Kay Stumper (WR 125), in his first qualifying match which Stumper won 3-0. Drinkhall's (WR 112) first match was in the main draw in the round of 64 against the higher ranked Alvaro Robles (WR 43), a match the Spaniard won 10, -6, 3, 5. Pitchford's (WR 27) first opponent was against Ovidiu Ionescu of Romania, (WR 118) in the round of 32 and Pitchford won that 4, 7, 4 and also won his next match against Quadri Aruna, Nigeria (WR 12) 11, 8, 6 before losing to China's Lin Gaoyuan (WR 10) 8, 8, 7.

Ho (WR 135) won her first qualifying round match against Thai, Wirakarn Tayapitak (WR 491) 1, 7, 7 but did not have success in her next match, losing to much higher ranked Qi Fei of China (WR 73) 7, 6, 2.

The Men's Doubles, as one of the highest ranked pairs, Drinkhall and Pitchford started in the round of 16 in the main draw, their opponents being China's Xue Fei (WR 67) and Xu Yingbin (WR 47). It was the Chinese pair who were victorious 6, 10, -7, 8.

Ho teamed up with her usual Women's Doubles partner, Karoline Mischek of Austria (WR 224), but they went out in the first qualifying round to Australians Yangzi Liu (WR 32) and Minhyung Jee (WR 39) with a score of 5, 7, 8.

The Mixed Doubles saw the former partnerships of Walker and Ho revived and they had a good win in their first qualifying match against American's Jishan Liang (WR 204) and Lily Zhang (WR 23) 9, 6, -8, 5. Their next opponents were Manav Vikash Thakkar (WR 124) and Archana Girish Kamath (WR 128) of India and that too saw the English pair progress to the main draw with a win -5, 10, -10, 7, 5. Brian Afandor (WR 71) and Adriana Diaz (WR 14) were their round of 16 opponents and it was a superb victory for Walker and Ho 8, -4, 8, -10, 7. Next up were the very strong Chinese pair, Lin Gaoyuan (WR 10) and Chen Xingtong (WR 5). This time it was the Chinese pair who won, the score 4, 4, 6, and they went on to win the event. It had been an excellent run for Walker and Ho.

WTT Contender: Lagos, Nigeria: 12th-18th June 2023

Tin-Tin Ho (WR 177) and Sam Walker (WR 137) travelled to Lagos to take part in the WTT Contender event, Charlotte Carey from Wales also went and partnered Ho in the Women's Doubles. Both the English players had a bye in the first qualifying round in the singles but neither was successful in their first matches in the second qualifying round, Walker losing 3-2 to Jeet Chandra of India (WR 272) and Ho going out to China's Wang Xiaotong, unranked, 3-0. Carey (WR 201) went one better than Ho when she reached the third qualifying round in a close match against Reeth Tennison (WR 129), just edged out in the fifth -7, 7, -9, 7, -10.

In the Women's Doubles Ho and Carey went straight into the main draw but lost their first-round match, round of 16, against the Chinese pair Guo Yuhan and Li Yake 3-1. The Mixed Doubles for Walker and Ho was a similar story losing in the round of 16, their first match, to Indian's Manav Vikash Thakkar and Archana Girish Kamath.

WTT Star Contender: Ljubljana, Slovenia: 3rd-9th July 2023

The Men's Singles saw Tom Jarvis (WR 108) lose in his first qualifying round match to Takuya Jin of Japan (WR 150). Sam Walker (WR 139) won his first match, a good win against Tomas Polansky (WR 141) of the Czech Republic and had a close match in the second qualifying round against higher ranked Liao Cheng-Ting of Chinese Taipei (WR 82) just missing out 3-2 after leading 2-1. Liam Pitchford (WR 36) started in the main draw, round of 64, but lost his first match to Walker's conqueror, Liao, also 3-2.

Tin-Tin Ho (WR 186) had an excellent result against France's Camille Lutz (WR 91) in her first match but then went out in the second qualifying round, losing to Bernadett Balint (WR 310) of Hungary 3-1.

In the Men's Doubles Jarvis and Pitchford beat Puerto Rica pair, Angel Naranjo and Daniel Gonzalez 3-2 but in their second match, round of 16, facing Iranians Noshad Alamiyan and Nima Alamian, they couldn't get the win and went down 11, 5, 10.

The Mixed Doubles proved no better for the English pair of Walker and Ho who went out in their first match to Poland's Samuel Kulczcki and Anna Wegrzyn, -5, 3, -5, 7, -9.

Reunion of some of Table Tennis Greats



*Back: Bob Tuckett, Don Parker, John Hilton
Front: Jill Parker, Kerry Tuckett, Brian Kean*

We always say the best part of table tennis is the friendships we make and this was certainly the case when former international players from three countries met up at the magnificent Trafford Centre in Manchester in early July 2023.

Bob Tuckett (Australian international and Australian National Champion) with his wife, Kerry, were visiting from Australia and met up with Brian Kean (Scotland international and Scottish Champion), John Hilton (England International and European Champion), Jill Parker (England International, European Champion, European Top 12 winner and multiple National Champion) and Don Parker (England International).

Desmond Douglas (England International, European Top 12 winner, multiple National Champion) joined by telephone link.

There must be well over 1,000 caps between them.

What was Happening 90 Years Ago? 1933

It was a year of two World Championships, several internationals and a Hungarian Tour and French Tour, a change in the ETTA Chairman and General Secretary and a successful English Open at Buxton

- ❖ England men met Wales on 7th January 1933 at the South London TTC, Merton. England won 9-2 and it was debuts for Allan Brown and Thomas Ewbank, the other players were Alec Brook, David Jones, Andy Millar, Stanley Proffitt, Edward Rimer and captain, Adrian Haydon. The match finished at midnight and the trials for the Swaythling Cup team were held the following day at Friar's Hall, 237 Blackfriars Road, London. All nine players who were selected had to play each other, the matches were best of three. Smoking was still an issue and there was an appeal for players and spectators alike to desist.
- ❖ There was another international match on 24th January 1933 at Wembley against India which England lost 4-3. Allan Brown, Frank Burls, Eric Findon, David Kaffell, Teddy Stillwell and captain Frank Lawes were the England team.
- ❖ On the day the England team left for the World Championships in Baden, 28th January 1933, there was yet another international, this time against the Irish Free State. Those who had missed out on a place at the World Championships were given their chance to represent their country at international level. Liverpool was the host city where England won 11-0. There were new caps for brothers Eric and Ken Hyde and also Gustav Rich who played alongside Don Foulis, Stan Proffitt, Joyce Bartholomew, Phyllis Moser and Nora Norrish, plus captain James Thompson.
- ❖ The World Championships were held in Baden near Vienna, Austria from 30th January – 5th February 1933 and the successful Men's Team finished in third place, winning seven matches and losing three. Alec Brook, Adrian Haydon, David Jones, Andy Millar and Edward Rimer were the players. Adrian Haydon won a second medal when he reached the semi-finals of the Men's Singles. There was also a quarter-final place for Haydon alongside Jones in the Men's Doubles. No official female team or players although Daphne Roberts entered, the only female. Her brother, Leslie, also played as did Herbert Bridge, Eric Findon, Ivor Montagu, Maurice Rose and Arthur Wilmott.



Alec Brook, David Jones, Adrian Haydon, Edward Rimer, Andy Millar

- ❖ 11th February 1933 saw England ladies at Cardiff Corporation Baths for their annual fixture against Wales. A win 7-2. This match saw the emergence of Margaret Osborne who went on to win several world championship medals and it was a first international for Rita Doolan, Dinah Newey and Mrs Jeanie Maude Scott-Hall. The other members of the team were Connie Attree, Marjorie Berry, Dora

Emdin, Mrs L Mary Holt, Nellie Wood and Wendy Woodhead, who also later became a world champion in Mixed Doubles.

- ❖ The English Open was held on 17th and 18th February 1933 in the Pavilion Gardens, Buxton, Derbyshire and there was considerable success for English players although the main event, the Men's Singles, was won by the Hungarian, Victor Barna, he beat Adrian Haydon in the final, a close game with Barna winning 17, -16, 8, -19, 15.

Losing semi-finalists in the Women's Singles were Marjorie Berry and Nellie Wood both of St Albans. It was Dora Emdin, also of St Albans, who became the Women's Singles Champion with a win over Birmingham's Margaret Osborne. Dora then went on to win the Mixed Doubles partnering Victor Barna. Miss Nellie Wood and Miss Wendy Woodhead won the Women's Doubles. Fred Perry, who had lost to Don Foulis in the second round of the Men's Singles, went on to win the Consolation Singles. A significant year for juniors as for the first time a junior event was introduced into the English Open but only for the boys, it was won by Charles Davies of Manchester who beat E Hunt, also of Manchester. It was the first time for a Veterans event as well which was won by Hungarian Zoltan Mechlovits with a win over Frank Lawes of Birmingham.



Charles Davies

Rather delightfully all the main roles such as referees, hall manager, reception stewards etc wore different colour rosettes to identify them, white, pink, blue, green, mauve etc.

- ❖ As well as the English Open there were eight other Open Tournaments in England during the season.
- ❖ Hungary was next to meet England in an international, at the Memorial Hall, London on 27th February 1933. It was a close match but one Hungary won 5-4. Fred Perry was due to play but was injured during practice and was replaced by W Millar. Adrian Haydon and David Jones made up the team.
- ❖ A continental touring team visited 18 towns and cities and a tour by Victor Barna and Frenchman, Michel Haguenaer, classified as a French Tour, played 11 matches including against All India in London and in Dublin.
- ❖ The finances to the end of 30th June 1933 resulted in a total deficit of £34 14s 8½d mainly due to the cost of the Hungarian Tour where the expenditure had been £236 12s 4d but the income only £196 17s 10d resulting in a deficit of £39 14s 6d. Despite the loss the tour was regarded as a success from a development viewpoint and the increased membership figures reflected this with the number of Affiliated Leagues jumping from 38 to 67 from the 1931/32 season and club numbers increasing from 714 to 1,202. The experience gained by English players was also regarded as a huge positive.
- ❖ A Special General Meeting was held in September 1933 where an Emergency Committee was formed to take over the running of the Association for the year. This resulted in a change of some officers of the ETTA as Corti Woodcock took over the Chairman's role from Ivor Montagu and continued until 1936, John Siddron became the General Secretary for two seasons and the rock of the Association, Bill Vint, remained Treasurer.
- ❖ The first Dinard Cup match took place on 26th August 1933 with captain Adrian Haydon, David Jones and Tommy Sears securing the victory for England 6-3 against France's Daniel Guerin, Michel Haguenaer and Raymond Verger.

- ❖ There was another World Championships held right at the end of the year in Paris from 2nd-10th December 1933. For the first time there was a Women's team event with the magnificent Corbillon Cup for the champions. The French Table Tennis Association President, Marcel Corbillon, donated the trophy. The first winners were Germany with Hungary the runners-up, Czechoslovakia third, our ladies just missed out on a medal, finishing fourth. France and Holland were the other countries who fought for the honour of winning the cup for the first time. Dora Emdin, Nora Norrish, Margaret Osborne and Wendy Woodhead made up the female England team.



Andy Millar, Herbert Hales, Margaret Osborne, Dora Emdin, Eric Findon, Corti Woodcock, Wendy Woodhead, Don Foulis, Nora Norrish, Ken Hyde

13 teams challenged for the Swaythling Cup, with all, apart from India, from Europe. It was not such a successful tournament for the Men's Team as was expected or hoped for. They finished a disappointing seventh with the team of Eric Findon, Don Foulis, Herbert Hales, Ken Hyde and Andy Millar. Corti Woodcock was the non-playing captain.

The individual events did produce medals as our players reached two semi-finals. Dora Emdin in the Women's Singles took home one bronze and the other went to Kathleen Berry who with Hungary's Laszlo Bellak reached the semi-finals in the Mixed Doubles. The main events were won by Victor Barna playing for Hungary and Czechoslovak, Maria Kettnerova.

England Senior International Caps Project

For a little while I have been working on creating a record of all players who have played for England at senior level and are eligible to be awarded an England cap, i.e. for each team match they play in.

The first part of the work was to establish a record for those who played pre Second World War and thanks to Gunther Angenendt and John Ruderham amongst others, a virtually complete record has been created.

The next step was to create a discrete record of World Championships caps and again this has been achieved as far as possible. This also names the 'Great Eight' who have achieved the wonderful landmark of representing England 50 times or more at the Worlds – Lisa Bellinger (Lomas), Richard Bergmann, Desmond Douglas, Paul Drinkhall, Jill Hammersley (Parker), Adrian Haydon, Johnny Leach and Diane Rowe (Scholer).

The final part is going to take a while – 1945 to the present day – and I will work through this gradually, nearly 80 years' worth of records. Information will mainly be gleaned from magazines, programmes, website reports and, I hope, from anyone who has been or still is an international at senior level. If players, family, friends, officials, supporters, anyone have details which could help would you please contact me to help build a unique record and show appreciation and respect to all our top players.

If anyone would like a copy of the work to date and/or updates as the work progresses let me know.

English Leagues Cup Competition Finals

3rd-4th June 2023: Draycott & Long Eaton TTC

Photos courtesy of TTE

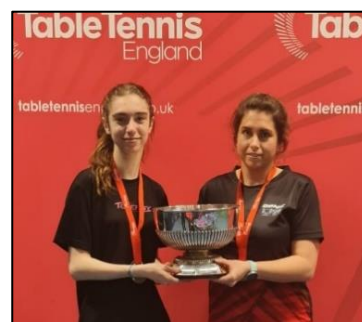
The ELCC finals were at Draycott & Long Eaton TTC again this year and there had been a good entry from Local Leagues around England culminating in the finals where 30 teams competed for the valued trophies.



Dominic Sussex & Oliver Cornish

As usual, Saturday was for the senior events and it was Plymouth players Oliver Cornish and Dominic Sussex who took the title defeating Norwich's Neil Charles and Tony Zeqiri in the 1st/2nd place play-offs. Wembley & Harrow, (Derek Abrefa, Sujay Jagannathan, Agnelo Naik) were the bronze medallists having overcome Guildford in the 3rd/4th place play-off. Nottingham finished in fifth place, Newbury sixth, Hull seventh and Northumbria eighth.

Ella Barnard and Lauren Charles of Norwich successfully defended their title in the J M Rose Bowl with victory against former champions, Leicester, whose team comprised Jessica Birbeck, Karen Smith and Anna Wereszczaka. Stockton were third with Karina Le Fevre (lovely to see her back playing competitively) and Ella Pashley who had beaten Plymouth in their 3rd/4th place play-off match. Hull were fifth, Nottingham sixth, Leamington seventh and Isle of Wight eighth.



Ella Barnard & Lauren Charles



Hugo Nguyen, Bailey Page, Leo Nguyen

Sunday was time for the juniors to shine and Plymouth made it a double victory for their league as Bailey Page, Hugo Nguyen and Leo Nguyen were victorious and won the Carter Cup. They had got the better of Shayan Parmer, Max Radiven and Angad Saggi of Wembley & Harrow in the final. Leo Conn and Oliver Ho took home bronze medals, the duo from the Northumbria League having the win over Leamington's Christopher Ho and Rex Wong who unfortunately had to concede the play-off match due to injury. Nottingham was fifth, Liverpool sixth, Isle of Wight seventh and Leicester finished in eighth place.

There were only six teams in the finals for the junior girls and it was a win for Derby who had last won it in 2015. Their team was Naomi Coker and Connie Dumelow. Their opponents in the final were the holders, Norwich, represented by Ella Barnard and Eva Eccles. Bronze medallists were Leicester's Catherine Lv, Roma Morjaria and Eppie Southern. Millie Noble and Millie Ufton from Loughborough were the fourth placed team with Leamington fifth and Liverpool sixth.

Congratulations to all the winning teams.



Connie Dumelow & Naomi Coker

London Grand Prix: 27th-28th May 2023

All photos courtesy of Michael Loveder

The last major Grand Prix was back in November, although there have been two Satellite Grand Prix since, so it was nice to see the London Grand Prix in the calendar. Grand Prix events are one of only a few individual events which senior players can play in as opposed to team events. There was a good entry for London, as always, with 180 men and 39 women playing over the weekend. There were several players from other countries Russia, Guernsey, Bulgaria, Netherlands, Sweden, Ireland, Jersey, Turkey, Wales, Romania, Hong Kong and Barbados. It was Dobrila Jorguseska from the Netherlands who dominated the tournament. Given a dummy ranking she beat top seed, Mollie Patterson, in the quarter-finals, Aleksandra Titievskaja in the semi-finals and Linda Zheng in the final.

Toby Ellis had an excellent weekend winning the Men's Singles with wins over multiple GP winner Grigory Vlasov, Russia, in the semi-final and Radoslav Kamberov, Bulgaria, in the final.



Toby Ellis and Dobrila Jorguseska

Justifying her number one ranking in the Under 21 Women's list, Patterson made up for her disappointment in the singles by winning the U21 event defeating Tianer Yu in the final. Gabriel Schogger won the corresponding Under 21 Men's event with Jesse Bath the runner-up.



Mollie Patterson and Gabriel Schogger

Top veteran, Lorestas Trumpauskas, won the Veteran Singles with a victory over Neil Charles and Alim Hirji was victorious in the Restricted Singles with a win against Fredrik Nordahl.



Lorestas Trumpauskas and Alim Hirji

The Banded events were held on Saturday and the winners were:

Women's Band 1 and Band 2 - Dobrila Jorguseska, Women's Band 3 - Linda Zheng, Women's Band 4 - Holly Holder

Men's Band 1 - Andrei Flamind, Men's Band 2 - Mihai Nemaciuc, Men's Band 3 - Emmanuel Kwesi Asante, Men's Band 4 - Max Radiven, Men's Band 5 and Band 6 - Ananay Jain

Gloucester Grand Prix: 24th-25th June 2023

All photos courtesy of TTE

Sometimes it pays to turn up for a Grand Prix and hope for a scratch entry and this was certainly the case with Louis Price who had the good fortune to replace top seed Grigory Vlasov, Russia, and ended up as runner-up in the Men's Singles, just missing out on the top prize of £500 when he lost in the final 14-12 in the fifth to the fourth seed, Radoslav Kamberov of Bulgaria. Guernsey's Garry Dodd and Bogdan Postudor were the semi-finalists.



Radoslav Kamberov and Mollie Patterson

Top spot in the Women's Singles went to Mollie Patterson who took home £320. There was a low entry in this event and so the lower prize level kicked in. She defeated Tianer Yu 3-1 in her final. Semi-finalists were Aanchal Malhotra and Linda Zeng.

Umair Mauthoor won the Restricted Singles with a victory over Dodds whilst the Under 21 titles went to Joseph Hunter and Yu. Ferxey Ayala from Colombia won the Veterans' Singles defeating Zayd Mauthoor in that final.



Umair Mauthoor and Ferxey Ayala

Banded Event titles went to: Band 1 - Larry Trumpauskas and Tsz Yan Nancy Yeh, Wales; Band 2 – James Hamblett and Lok Sze Sum, Hong Kong; Band 3 – Emmanuel Asante and Aanchal Malhotra; Band 4 – Lewis Waddup and Malhotra; Band 5 – Lucien Boulet; Band 6 – Gabor Bodnar.

The last Grand Prix of the season takes place in Wolverhampton on 15th and 16th July 2023.

Ping Pong Diplomacy

By Harvey Webb

Back in 2021 the Chinese Embassy in London planned a celebration to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the historic visit to China by England's table tennis team.

The Covid pandemic meant that the celebration was postponed. This has now happened some two years later on 12th June 2023 when Alan Hydes, one of the original England team members, was invited by the Embassy to meet Minister Counsellor Bi Haibo and Press & Public Affairs Attaché Wang Ping.

Alan invited Harvey Webb to join him as the Swaythling Club International representative.



Alan Hydes, Bi Haibo, Harvey Webb at the Chinese Embassy, London

The meeting was very convivial and Bi Haibo expressed the importance of keeping the story of Ping Pong Diplomacy alive and recounted how he had learnt about it at junior school. Alan added some fascinating stories especially recalling how welcome the Chinese people had made them all feel.

The meeting also touched on possible ways we could work together in the future to keep the legacy alive. It was agreed to meet again if any opportunities arose that could be mutually beneficial.

European Youth Championships (EYC)

14th-23rd July 2023: Gliwice, Poland

One of the best and longest standing tournaments for junior and cadet players is the EYC which has been going since 1955.

This year England's players will be:

Junior Boys': Connor Green, Ben Piggott, Louis Price

Junior Girls': Mari Baldwin, Erin Green, Anaya Patel

Cadet Boys': Rohan Dani, Isaac Kingham, Ralph Pattison

Cadet Girls': Naomi Coker, Sienna Jetha, Ella Pashley

Good luck to all, we wish you a good tournament. There will be a report in our next issue.

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

The youngest aged players took to the stage for their National Championships, two age groups, the Under 11s and Under 13s.

It was young Hannah Saunders who was the standout player of the weekend winning both the Under 11 and Under 13 Girls' Singles titles and earning a silver in the Under 13 Girls' Doubles with her partner, Amber Lemmon.

Alyssa Nguyen, last year's Under 11 champion, also had a good weekend with a runners-up spot in the Under 13 Girls' Singles and gold in the doubles for that age group partnered with Evie Knaapen. The doubles bronze medallists were Bly Twomey and Violet-Lily Marquis and Eva Yared and Nour Alamine.

The two bronze medals in the Under 13 Girls' Singles went to Bly Twomey and unseeded Maisha Patel whilst the Under 11 Girls' Singles silver medal went to Saunders' doubles partner, Lemmon, with Marquis and Assil Sarri the bronze medallists.

Zihan Lin was top of the podium in the Under 11 Boys' Singles having beaten Sinan Surensy in the final. Dimitar Dimitrov and Zaid Aldilimi were the losing semi-finalists. It was two gold medals for Kacper Piwowar in the Under 13 events, winning the Singles titles by defeating his doubles partner Abraham Sellado in the final with the pair winning the Doubles title together. Bronze medallists in the Singles were Theo Kniep and Adam Alibhai.

Alibhai stepped up one level in the doubles to earn a silver with Pablo Ramirez-Rioja. It was bronze for Dimtrov playing with Euan Hacking and Nishil Shah with Yacoub Rahmani-Walentynska.



Hannah Saunders, Zihan Lin, Kacper Piwowar

Congratulations and there are certainly names to look out for in the future.

Many of the players in these Championships have been selected to play in the Euro Mini Championships in Schiltigheim, France from 25th-27th August 2023. The Under 11 Girls' will be represented by Hannah Saunders and Amber Lemmon, the Under 11 Boys' by Zihan Lin and Lewis Wu, the Under 13 Girls' by Bly Twomey and the Under 13 Boys' by Ryan Goodier, Abraham Sellado and Adam Alibhai. Saunders, Lemmon, Lin and Wu are all members of the Peterborough Archway Club where former international, Gareth Herbert, is head coach.

European Under 13 Championships: Zagreb, Croatia: 14th-18th June 2023

All photos by Robert Valai, courtesy of the ETTU

England entered three boys but no girls. Adam Alibhai, Kacper Piwowar and Abraham Sellado were the players. Piwowar was ranked fifth, Sellado ninth and Alibhai 30th.

There were four events – Mixed Team, Boys' Singles, Girls' Singles and Mixed Doubles. As there were no English girls our players were not able to participate in the Team event. Piwowar and Sellado did pair up with two Croatian players for the Mixed Doubles which meant they were able to play in two events and Alibhai in just the one.

The tournament began on 14th June with the Team event and the individual events commenced Friday, 17th June, groups for the singles and a straight knockout for the doubles.

All three boys qualified from their groups for the 'A' knock-out rounds with Piwowar and Sellado winning their groups and Alibhai runner-up in his group. This meant Piwowar and Sellado had a bye in their first-round knockout matches whilst Alibhai won his round of 64 match. Both Alibhai and Sellado went out in the next round but Piwowar went on to the quarter-finals before he met defeat.



Adam Alibhai, Kacper Piwowar, Abraham Sellado

In the Mixed Doubles Piwowar and Sellado both played with Croatians: Piwowar with Lana Benko and Sellado with Viktorija Oslakovic. They both had byes in the first round, round of 128. Sellado and Oslakovic went out in the next round and Piwowar with Benko made it through to the round of 16.

There certainly looks some promise in this group of boys who competed well in this first European Under 13 Championships.



Making new friends

The Mixed Team event was won by Turkiye who beat Italy in the final. Spain and Germany were the semi-finalists. The Boys' Singles was an all-Italian affair with Danilo Faso beating Francesco Trevisan. It was a French victory in the Junior Girls' Singles as Alexia Nodin beat Czech Republic's Hanka Kodetova and in the Mixed Doubles a second win for France as Titouan Morel-Gonzalez and Eva Lam beat Poland's Jan Mrugala and Julia Czaja.

WTT Youth Events

NB: The ITTF Rules and Regulations allow a player to be entered into WTT events by the country in which they reside even though it is not their country of nationality. England has recently been entering several players who fall into this category. They are shown as England and have the England flag against their name but are not English nor eligible to play for England. In these and our future reports we will only record the results of those players we believe are eligible to play for England.

WTT Youth Contender: Berlin: 27th March-2nd April 2023

U17 Boys' Singles: Group – Isaac Kingham
U15 Boys' Singles: Round of 64 – Isaac Kingham, Adam Alibhai
U13 Boys' Singles: Round of 32 – Adam Alibhai

WTT Contender: Wladyslawowa, Poland: 27th March-2nd April 2023

U19 Boys' Singles: Group – Larry Trumpauskas, Jakub Piwowar, Ben Piggott, Round of 32 – Connor Green
U17 Boys' Singles: Group – Ralph Pattison, Round of 64 – Jakub Piwowar, Round of 32 – Connor Green, Larry Trumpauskas
U15 Boys' Singles: Round of 64 – Abraham Sellado, Round of 16 – Ralph Pattison, Kacper Piwowar
U13 Boys' Singles: Quarter-finals – Kacper Piwowar

WTT Youth Contender: Metz, France: 17th-23rd April 2023

U19 Girls' Singles: Group – Mari Baldwin, Maliha Baig
U17 Girls' Singles: Round of 32 – Sienna Jetha, Group - Ella Pashley, Naomi Coker, Maliha Baig
U15 Girls' Singles: Round of 64 – Sienna Jetha, Ella Pashley, Group – Naomi Coker
U19 Boys' Singles: Round of 64 – Joshua Bruce, Round of 128 – Joseph Hunter, Jakub Piwowar, Group – Larry Trumpauskas
U17 Boys' Singles: Round of 128 – Joseph Hunter, Ralph Pattison, Group – Larry Trumpauskas, Jakub Piwowar

WTT Youth Contender: Spa, Belgium: 17th-23rd April 2023

U19 Boys' Singles: Round of 64 – Connor Green, Jakub Piwowar, Round of 128 – Larry Trumpauskas, Group – Toby Ellis, Louis Price
U17 Boys' Singles: Round of 32 – Connor Green, Round of 64 – Ralph Pattison, Jakub Piwowar, Group – Joseph Hunter, Larry Trumpauskas
U15 Boys' Singles: Round of 32 - Ralph Pattison, Kacper Piwowar, Round of 64 – Abraham Sellado, Group – Adam Alibhai
U13 Boys' Singles: Quarter-finals – Adam Alibhai, Kacper Piwowar, Abraham Sellado, Group – Sinan Surensy, Dimitar Dimitrov
U11 Boys' Singles: Group - Dimitar Dimitrov, Sinan Surensy
U19 Girls' Singles: Group – Mari Baldwin

WTT Youth Contender: Girona, Spain: 10th-16th May 2023

U19 Boys' Singles: Round of 16 – Joseph Hunter, Round of 32 – Ben Piggott (beat world 14), Round of 64 - Toby Ellis, Louis Price, Connor Green, Jakub Piwowar, Larry Trumpauskas, Group – Adam Dennison

U17 Boys' Singles: Round of 32 – Connor Green, Round of 64 - Adam Dennison, Joseph Hunter, Ralph Pattison, Larry Trumpauskas, Group – Jakub Piwowar

U15 Boys' Singles: Round of 16 - Ralph Pattison, Round of 32 - Kacper Piwowar, Group - Abraham Sellado

U13 Boys' Singles: Winner – Abraham Sellado - Quarter-final - Kacper Piwowar (no 1 seed). Sellado, ranked five, beat Belgian Matt Closset, the number two seed, in the final 11, 6, 10. Closset had earlier beaten Piwowar in the quarter-finals.



Joseph Hunter



Abraham Sellado

WTT Youth Contender: Panagyurishte, Bulgaria: 15th-21st May 2023

U17 Boys' Singles: Round of 32 – Ralph Pattison

U15 Boys' Singles: Quarter-final – Ralph Pattison

U13 Boys' Singles: Group – Dimitar Dimitrov

U11 Boys' Singles: Group – Dimitar Dimitov



Ralph Pattison

WTT Youth Contender: Havirov, Czech Republic: 29th May-4th June 2023

U19 Boys' Singles: Group – Joseph Hunter, Round of 64 – Larry Trumpauskas, Jakub Piwowar

U17 Boys' Singles: Round of 64 - Jakub Piwowar, Round of 128 - Isaac Kingham, Group - Joseph Hunter, Ralph Pattison, Larry Trumpauskas

U15 Boys' Singles: Round of 32 – Kacper Piwowar, Round of 64 - Isaac Kingham, Ralph Pattison, Abraham Sellado

U13 Boys' Singles: Quarter-final – Kacper Piwowar, Round of 16 – Abraham Sellado

U17 Girls' Singles: Round of 64 – Sienna Jetha

U15 Girls' Singles: Round of 64 – Sienna Jetha

In Memoriam

Diane Scholer (Rowe)



The whole table tennis world will mourn the passing of a great player and a great lady. Diane Scholer (nee Rowe) passed away in Dusseldorf, Germany on 19th June 2023 aged 90 years. She was a true legend of the game and it all started way back in 1947.

However, as important as table tennis was to Di, so too was her family and to them we send our most sincere condolences, husband Ebby, daughter Cindy and son Christian and her grandchildren – Jenny, Jarne, Nele and Nicole – and to all the family. To all Di's table tennis friends around the world who will be saddened at her passing we share your sorrow.

Friendship and mutual respect are the keystones to the ethos of the Swaythling Club International which was so important to Di, and these two principles were ones which she held close to her and the strong and lifelong friendships that Di had with so many people around the world are a testament to those beliefs.

Where did it all start? It was Christmas morning 1947 when two excited 14-year-old twins woke up hoping they were going to get bikes as their present, so they were a little disappointed when they received table tennis bats. The disappointment didn't last long as the two teenagers, right-handed Rosalind 'Ros' and left-handed Diane 'Di', were soon hitting a ball backwards and forwards across the dining room table. It would have seemed inconceivable on that Christmas morning that less than three years later they would be world champions for the first time and on 14th April 1954, on their 21st birthday, a second world title was added.

However, back to 1947 where the dining room table and other furniture looked in jeopardy from the two girls and so it wasn't long before Dad bought a table tennis table and set it up in a spare room. Ros and Di practiced and practiced for hours; they soon joined a local club where they began to beat not only other girls but the boys as well. The famous West Ealing Club beckoned where top international player and coach, Ken Craigie, took them under his wing and trophies soon started appearing on the mantelpiece. Ros was the first when she beat Di in the West Middlesex Junior Championships in 1949 but they were both taking the tournament circuit by storm winning senior as well as junior titles in singles and doubles.

Ros was the first to be capped for England when she was selected to play in Czechoslovakia in November 1949 at the tender age of 16. Not to be outdone, Di soon followed and also had a major success when she won the Daily Mirror tournament in April 1950 in both the Girls' and Women's Singles events. The finals were played at the Royal Albert Hall in front of 4,500 spectators including Prince Edward, Duke of Kent and television cameras. As a result of the wins, Di was entitled to free coaching and so Victor Barna became her coach, she of course, took Ros along as well.

The improvement in their game was significant, bearing in mind they were already very good players, they moved up a level. Before they were 18 the pair had toured Belgium, Holland and France and were chosen to represent England at the World Championships in Vienna in 1950.

It was a magical Championships for England as first Johnny Leach won the Men's Singles beating Ivan Andreadis of Czechoslovakia in the final. Then it was Di and Ros's turn. In their first World Championships they had reached the final of the Women's Doubles and were facing two of the best players in the world, Rumanians Angelica Rozeanu and Sari Szasz. What a match it was – Di and Ros won the first game 22-20 but lost the

second 20-22, the third went their way 21-19 but the fourth saw the score levelled 24-22. All to play for in the fifth game which turned out to be the easiest of all as they won 21-13. Incredible scenes followed.

The Rowe twins were feted not only in England but around the world, they were true superstars of the 1950s and invitations came pouring in. A very official one invited them to play an exhibition match before the Swedish Royal Family in 1951. Prince Gustav, now the King of Sweden, who was then four years old went scrambling around the sumptuous room retrieving balls wherever they ended up.

Another remarkable tour was three months spent in New Zealand and Australia in 1953. The twins left England on 7th May and arrived back on home soil on 7th September, not only three months in the two countries but two long sea voyages as well. It was the sea journey home that changed both Ros and Di's lives as Ros met her future husband en route, she married in 1955 and retired from play shortly after.

Di and Ros' second world title came in 1954 at the Empire Pool and Sports Arena, Wembley, and it was an all England final with Kathy Best and Ann Haydon the opponents. The score -19, 10, 19, 20. Di and Ros held aloft the W J Pope Trophy for the second time, presented by the Dowager, Lady Swaythling.

Di made over 400 appearances for England, won two gold world championships medals, eight silver and ten bronze. She was a member of the England team which won the first European Championships Women's Team title and went on to win again in 1964/65, she also won the Women's Doubles twice with Mary Shannon/Wright with who she formed a world class partnership. She added five silver and five bronze medals to her collection. 19 English Open titles were added to the medal collection as well as innumerable foreign Opens. In the first English Closed (now named the National Championships) she won the treble, Women's Singles, Women's Doubles with Jill Rook/Mills and Mixed Doubles with Johnny Leach. She won 13 titles altogether before playing in and for Federal Germany following her marriage to Eberhard 'Ebby' Scholer, the top world class German international. They married in 1966 and she moved to Dusseldorf where she lived until her death.

When Di stopped playing competitively, she turned to coaching before following in the footsteps of her former coach and mentor, Victor Barna, as President of the Swaythling Club International (SCI). She held that position for many years before being elected as Honorary President.

Di has received many other honours and accolades over the years: the ITTF Merit Award in 1993, the ETTA's Victor Barna Award with Ros in 1954 and again in 1955, Player Achievement Award in 1983, Vice-President in 2021 and inducted into TTE Centenary Hall of Fame in 2022. The ETTU honoured Di when she was inducted into their Hall of Fame in 2016, she was also made a Vice-President of the International Club of England in 1964 and the Veterans' English Table Tennis Society in 1987.

It is over 75 years since Di first held a bat in her hand and since that time, she has been a player, a captain, a coach, a World, European and National champion and a superb role model. Di had a wonderful life and one for which we give thanks – and thank goodness the twins never received those bikes back in 1947!

Sadly, twin sister Ros passed away in 2015.

By Diane Webb



Mike Short



The table tennis community has lost one of its legends, a ferocious competitor, ultra reliable, doggedly determined, a loyal friend and a genuinely nice guy, former England Veteran Number 1 and Veteran International, multiple Devon County Champion & Grand Prix winner Mike Short, died on April 4th, 2023, aged 74.

Shorty, spent his life as a bricklayer from the age of 16, building many homes and extensions around the region and also helping with countless building projects for players and families from the Plymouth and Devon table tennis community.

He represented Devon proudly for decades and in his latter years dedicated his time to bringing on the youngsters who attended Joola Plymouth Table Tennis Club. He helped taking young players all over the country to tournaments and also to Europe. He would never say no to a knock with anyone, no matter what their ability, and always had a bit of advice to help them.

He would be ever present at Joola Plymouth Table Tennis club, a facility he helped build in 2013, sparring, knocking umpiring or having his favourite tipple a cup of tea.

He was a real old fashioned team player, would always be sat on the team bench and never leave, he taught many a junior the importance of respect, not only on but off the table as well. Many a junior had their headphones pulled out of their ears followed by a clip around their ear while umpiring or sat on the team bench supporting. This rubbed off on many Devon County teams as what they lacked in ability, they made up for in team spirit. This was down to Shorty.

Mike had lots of success in the Plymouth & District League, Devon County and latterly on the VETTS circuit but also had many friends from all over the country and regularly competed at the European and World Veterans tournaments.

Regarded as one of the most ferocious competitors on the table, many players had tremendous battles with him as he would simply never give up. But off the table a nicer person you could not hope to meet. A really good guy.

Mike had recently suffered a short illness but this didn't stop him attending junior county matches only last weekend and still playing his beloved table tennis only a few days before his untimely passing.

His enthusiasm for table tennis remained undiminished despite his illness, and he was being cared for devotedly by his wife, Elaine. Our sincere condolences go to Elaine, his daughter Michele and all his family and friends at this extremely sad time.

By Kevin Buddell

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

A good entry of 1,758 took part in the holiday village towards the north of Norway. Everything was all in the one venue – the playing hall, the accommodation, food. The usual singles and doubles events were played plus for those feeling energetic or did not want to go sightseeing on the Wednesday, the day off, mixed doubles could also be played. There were also several talks, a concert, plus the farewell party and a social event on the final evening. Something for everyone.

England had 76 entries and a good smattering from that number reached the semi-final stage of the main draw and of the consolation events and so came home with medals.

Gold in the main event went to David Mahabir (O70MS), Margaret Dignum (O80WS), Margaret Dignum/Monika Maul (Sweden) (O80WD), Betty Bird/Marianne Blasberg (Germany) (O85WD). Silver went to Margaret Welsman (O75WS), Audrey Robinson (O85WS), Rose Rainton/Michele Reeves (O50WD), Sandra Rider/Monika Hussmann (Germany) (O70 WD), Janice Crompton/Gill Knightley (O80WD).



David Mahabir, Margaret Dignum, Michele Reeves & Rose Rainton



Sandra Rider & Monika Hussmann, Janice Crompton & Jill Knightley

Bronze medallists were John Payne (O65MS), Carol Eckersley (O70WS), Betty Bird (O85WS), Keith Powell (O85MS), Paul Giles/Paul Whiting (O60MD), Nigel Eckersley/Gerd Werner (Germany) (O70MD), Janet Brown/Margaret Welsman (O75WD), Sally Bax/Carol Judson (O80WD), Keith Powell/Hans Westling (Sweden) (O85MD), Audrey Robinson/Pam Butcher (O85WD).



John Payne, Carol Eckersley, Betty Bird, Keith Powell



Paul Whiting & Paul Giles, Nigel Eckersley & Gerd Werner



Margaret Welsman & Janet Brown, Carol Judson & Sally Bax, Audrey Robinson & Pam Butcher

It was gold for Mike Rhodes and John Hook (Wales) in the O65MD consolation event and bronze to Tulay Dundar (O55WS), Carol Judson (O80WS), Andrew Eagles/Tom Lodziak (O40MD) and John Williamson/Andy Meads (O75MD).



John Hook and Mike Rhodes

Quite an impressive array in so many age groups. We were delighted to see roving photographer Mike Rhodes on the podium – as well as all the other medallists of course.

Table Tennis England Members Meeting, AGM and Chairman' Appointment Discussion: 8th July 2023

As the Minutes are not yet available I have reported as far as I can recall and from some notes.

The day was split into the three parts. The morning session was for presentations by staff and the Annual Review. The AGM and discussion around the appointment of the chairman were the pm items.

There was an update on the Table Tennis United plan, the newly formed Area Networks, Performance which included the ambition of having a dedicated table tennis centre in Sheffield, Nottingham or Manchester and the objective is for medals at the 2032 Olympic Games. The final presentation was on the planned Major Events programme including the hoped for World Championships at Wembley Arena from 30th April-10th May 2026 with 80 teams and 640 players. England and Thailand are the only two countries left bidding after four others withdrew. It was an impressive presentation.

Redacted copies of the presentation slides will be made available.

The Annual Review was presented and questions were asked. Unfortunately, time ran out and just over half an hour was left to cover all questions from the Review and for any other questions of a general nature which was insufficient. In previous year's written questions could be asked on the Review with responses available to all. Regrettably, this opportunity was not available this year.

Issues raised: poor communication; lack of minutes/reports available; potential loss of material for posterity; information/results not carried over from the old to the new website; governance processes; Rules Committee Chairman post vacant since February; comparative year on year figures for membership to include leagues, clubs and league players; funding awards; allocation of financial support to England players; England eligibility; selection criteria; insufficient top level domestic competitions for juniors; value of Ping Pong Parlours; Local Leagues and their development; change to coaching processes; whether members money would be used to help finance the World Championships if awarded and much more.

The afternoon was for the formal business of the AGM. The agenda had been reduced to cover the following: To Adopt the Standing Orders, To Confirm the Minutes of the last AGM on 16th July 2022, To Receive the finance report and audited financial statement for year ended 31st March 2023, To reappoint Haysmacintyre as auditors, To elect the Standing Orders Committee, To approve recommendations for Honorary Life Members and Vice-Presidents. No longer on the agenda were Report of the Standing Orders Committee, Declaration of Business Interests, Matters Arising from the Previous AGM and Any Other Competent Business.

Several members expressed concern at this reduction as it was felt the AGM was the time and place to bring matters to the Company's attention. It was felt that the influence and power of the membership had been eroded over the last nine years. The response was that it was not the place to have open discussion nor for members to share comments. The AGM was for formal business as recognised by Company Law.

The Standing Orders Committee report noted concern that the Terms of Reference for their Committee had not been complied with in respect of a proposed rule change proposition. The CEO apologised for not consulting them.

There were several questions around the Association's finances. One member was concerned about the reduction of the reserves by £185,384 to £408,552 which, taking inflation into account, is the lowest level for 20 years. He was assured this was considered adequate.

The chairman agreed to reconsider the lunch allowance for volunteers which had been gone down to £6.00 from £7.50 earlier this year. Figures were not to hand for some queries and answered subsequently - the deficit for the European Qualifiers in Crawley in January 2023 was £47,552. The deficit for the National Championships was £44,638 and for the Qualifying event £7,120.

There was a presentation of some flowers to Susie Venner in appreciation of her time on the TTE Board. Mark Bates, Steve Burge and Karenza Mathews were made Vice-Presidents, Karen Tonge, OBE received the Keith Ponting President's Award for Lifetime Achievement, staff member Samantha Garey received the Malcolm Scott Award, the Victor Barna Award went to para players Will Bayley MBE, Fliss Pickard and Billy Shilton, the Ivor Montagu Award was presented to Lois Peake and Dr Emma Vickers, Karl Bushell received the Leslie Forrest Memorial Trophy, the Johnny Leach Award for the Most Improved Player for England went to Ella Pashley and the A K 'Bill' Vint OBE Staff Award went to Sandra Pelizzoni.



Susie Venner, Mark Bates, Karenza Mathews, Karen Tonge, Sam Garey



Will Bayley, Fliss Pickard, Billy Shilton



Lois Peake, Emma Vickers, Karl Bushell, Ella Pashley, Sandra Pelizzoni

The final part of the day was a session during which members could ask questions about the appointment of the TTE chairman. Questions were asked and comments made about the process so far and information was provided on the next steps following the failure of the Board to make an appointment. This elicited lively discussion. Nearly all the members felt that the new chairman should have at least some table tennis involvement as the role involved not only chairing Board meetings but also leading the membership and representing the Association at international level. Some Board members did not consider any table tennis knowledge was required and that it was more important the chairman had the right skills. The current chairman will remain in post until a new appointment is made, hopefully by the end of October.

Reference was made to some of the memberships concerns about governance decisions made in recent weeks and there was an emphasis that we must all work together.

Future Dates

Domestic Events (up to end of March 2024):

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

Crawley Grand Prix: 16th-17th September 2023

Blackpool Junior 4*: 23rd-24th September 2023

Preston Grand Prix: 21st-22nd October 2023

Stockton Junior 4*: 28th-29th October 2023

Chandlers Junior 4*: 11th-12th November 2023

Cippenham Junior 4*: 2nd-3rd December 2023

Cardiff Satellite Grand Prix: 16th-17th December 2023

National Championships Qualifiers: 6th-7th January 2024 (if run)

London Junior 4*: 27th-28th January 2024

Plymouth Junior 4*: 10th-11th February 2024

Wolverhampton Grand Prix: 2nd-3rd March 2024 – tbc

National Championships: 22nd-24th March 2024 - tbc

The implementation of the ongoing Competition Review has been put back by six months and so no changes are planned for the 2023/24 season. Although it should be noted there is a possibility the National Championships Qualifying Tournament may not be run due to cost.

International Events:

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

European Para Championships: 4th-9th September 2023, Sheffield

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

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

World Parkinson's Championships: 1st-5th November 2023, Crete

World Youth Championships: 26th November-3rd December 2023, Novo Gorica, Slovenia

Europe Top 16 Cup: 19th-21st January 2024, Montreux, Switzerland

European Under 21 Championships: 24th-28th January 2024, Skopje, Macedonia

World Championships (Team): 16th-25th February 2024, Busan, South Korea

European Youth Championships: 12th-21st July 2024, Malmo, Sweden

Olympic Games: 26th July-11th August 2024, Paris, France

European Championships: 15th-20th October 2024, Linz, Austria

There are also a number of World Table Tennis events

Veterans Events: For the Over 40s:

World Masters Championships (formerly World Veteran Championships): 6th-14th July 2024, Rome, Italy

Entries are open for these Championships

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