

Table Tennis Times

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

Issue 34

Editorial

Spring 2024

Welcome to the Spring Edition of Table Tennis News. Officially it is Spring, but certainly here on the South Coast, despite some occasional sunshine, it is still decidedly chilly, and we await some warmer days.

In this, our 34th edition, are comprehensive reports from the World Championships in Busan, our National Championships in Nottingham, the Europe Top 16 in the delightful city of Montreux, the WTT Feeder event in Manchester, the European Under 21 Championships in Skopje, the WTT Champions in Incheon, the World Mixed Doubles Qualification event in Havirov, and the Wolverhampton Grand Prix.

We have advance notice of a unique opportunity that has been given to Brighton Table Club to use the iconic Dome and Corn Exchange on 27th May to hold a family day of activities to celebrate the history of Table Tennis in Brighton. Entrance is free and all are welcome to drop in anytime between 9.30am and 7pm.

In previous issues we have tried to keep everyone updated on Table Tennis Governance and this feature has now morphed into National & International News.

It is ten years since the old ETTA moved from Hastings to Milton Keynes and we have a report from a small group of former employees who met in March for a very convivial dinner and we look back at what has changed in those ten years.

Our regular “Spotlight” falls on Joola Plymouth Table Tennis Club who have built one of the best clubs in England.

“What Was Happening” revisits 1994 and as usual throws up several names that prompts a “whatever happened to” response and makes us wonder were those 30 years have gone.

In Memoriam celebrates the lives of Christine Lewis and George Tyler, who both made significant contributions to table tennis in England over many years. They will both be missed but not forgotten.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and that it serves to entertain whilst we wait for warmer days to arrive.

Best wishes

Diane and Harvey Webb

**ITTF World Championships:
16th-25th February 2024: Busan, Korea Republic**
All photos courtesy of ITTF/WTT



The Mascots

The World Championships, team events commenced on 16th February 2024 in Busan, the city where but for Covid-19 the 2022 Championships would have been held.

The format for the men and women's teams was eight groups of five teams with the top three teams from each group going into the knockout stages. 40 teams in all and it was pleasing to see that more teams have been allowed to play this time around. The top team in each group automatically went through into the round of 16 whereas those placed second and third had a round of 32 match with the winner going through to

the next round. Perhaps as importantly as the results of these Championships, was the fact that those teams that reached the quarter-finals, qualified for the team events at the Olympic Games in Paris in the summer as well as two singles places.



The colourful opening ceremony

England only had a team in the men's event as the women did not qualify due to their performance at the European Championships. The men were drawn in Group 2 along with second seeds, Germany, plus the USA, Kazakhstan and Saudi Arabia, our team was Paul Drinkhall, Tom Jarvis, Liam Pitchford and Sam Walker with John Murphy as the coach.

England's first match was against Kazakhstan and resulted in a 3-2 win with Drinkhall and Pitchford both winning one and losing one and Jarvis, playing at number three, having a comfortable victory.



Paul Drinkhall



Liam Pitchford

Next were the USA and England were expected to win. However, the first two matches went the way of the Americans and England had to fight from 2-0 down. Jarvis pulled one back for the men and then Pitchford levelled the score but Drinkhall could not secure the victory and in a close match lost the final

game 11-9 in the fifth. A disappointing result which placed the men in jeopardy of finishing in third place and, therefore, having to play a second placed team in the round of 32.

The third match was against top ranked team in the group and second seeds in the event, Germany. England's number one, Pitchford, did not play and his place was taken by Walker who was first on court and met Dang Qiu. Perhaps unsurprisingly Walker lost 3-0, a tough match against the European champion. Jarvis was on at number two against Dimitrij Ovtcharov and despite putting up a spirited fight also went down 3-0. Third on the table was Drinkhall whose opponent was Patrick Franziska. The first game went to the German but Drinkhall, as determined as ever, made it one all. However, that was the only game for the team as Franziska won the next two to give the match to the Germans.



Tom Jarvis



Sam Walker

The fourth and final match was against Saudi Arabia. England needed the win here to ensure at least a chance of going through to the knockout rounds. In what position would be dependent on the result of the match between Kazakhstan and the USA. Fortunately, it was a 3-0 win for our men with Drinkhall, Jarvis and Walker all winning their matches.

Drama followed. Kazakhstan v USA began. The first went to Kazakhstan's Kirill Gerassimenko who had won all his matches to date. The second match went the way of the Americans, the third also went to the USA player, Jishan Liang, in a thrilling and tight match. Gerassimenko pulled it back for Kazakhstan, so all depended on the fifth and final match - or so we thought. The players went to the table only to be sent back to their corners by the umpire. Time went on and the players again approached the table and again were sent to the back of the court. Eventually, it was said the third match which the USA player had won would be given to Kazakhstan due to the American's racket failure. This meant the result would show as 3-1 to Kazakhstan. Initially, the commentators said this meant England would finish second in the group on countback, but this was later changed to our team finishing third, giving them a much harder draw in the round of 32.

So it was, that England met Romania in the knockout rounds. Jarvis was on first facing Eduard Ionescu, a match he lost 10, 5, 7. Drinkhall then faced Ovidiu Ionescu and although it was close, it was the Romanian who got over the line -3, -8, 8, 8, 8. It was going to be a big comeback if England were going to go through to the next round. Again, Pitchford wasn't playing, and it was Walker who faced Darius Movileanu. He didn't start well losing the first 11-2 but pulled level winning the second 12-10. The next two went to the Romanian, game seven in both, which gave the match to the Romanians. England were out which also meant they would not be going to the Paris Olympics in the team event.

Germany who topped England's group went on to meet Chinese Taipei in the quarter-finals and it was a 3-0 victory for the Asian players who then lost in the semis to the young French team who had reached that stage with wins over Poland 3-0 and Portugal 3-1. The French dispatched the Chinese Taipei team with a 3-1 victory before facing China in the final. China had not been as emphatic as has been the case

in the past, just sneaking past home nation, Korea Republic 3-2 in their semi-final although having previously beaten Romania 3-0 and Japan 3-0.

It was China versus France for the Swaythling Cup, the last time they had met in a final was 1997 when China was victorious. Expectations must have been high for the French team with their young players 17-year-old Felix Lebrun (WR 6), older brother Alexis Lebrun aged 20 (WR 21) and older statesman Simon Gauzy, aged 29 (WR 30). However, they faced the might of the Chinese, world 1, 2 and 3 – Fan Zhendong, Wang Chuqin and Ma Long. The semi-final must have been a wakeup call for the Chinese as Wang came out of the blocks firing on all cylinders and demolished Felix Lebrun 4, 8, 3. Alexis was up next and had Fan as his opponent for what on paper should have been an easy victory for Fan. Knowing that their only previous encounter resulted in a win for Alexis there was hope in the French camp, this was increased when Alexis came flying out of the blocks to win the first game 11-9, the second went to Fan 11-4 but in the third Alexis again took the lead 11-8 before Fan levelled for the second time 12-10 but not after Alexis had match point. It was close in the fifth, but Fan's experience told and he went on to win 11-7. China 2 France 0. The play and drama in this match were outstanding and a joy to watch, whoever anyone was supporting.

Simon Gauzy now had a mountain to climb to bring France back into the match. As with Alexis, he started well and won the first end 11-7, with again some stunning rallies. Ma Long then showed his class winning the next three games 2, 4, 6. Game, match and championship to China for the 23rd time. Although France will be disappointed with the final result, I am sure if they had been told at the beginning of the championships that they would take home a silver medal they would have grabbed that with both hands. With such a young team the future of European table tennis looks bright and with France hosting the Olympic Games in the summer there is more action to look forward to from this team.



Nick Donald and Petra Sorling present the Swaythling Cup



Swaythling Cup medallists

China made it a double celebration when they held aloft the Corbillon Cup in the women's event. However, it was a much closer victory than the men's team. China's women had shown vulnerability in the group stage when India nearly had a surprise result, although it ended 3-2 to China. After that it was fairly plain sailing to reach the final with wins in the knockout stage over Thailand 3-0, Korea Republic 3-0 and France 3-0. Japan were their opponents for the championships title. They had reached the final via Croatia 3-0, Romania 3-0 and Hong Kong China 3-0. Could Japan upset China? Sun Yingsha started off with a win over Miwa Harimoto 3-0 but then the next two went to Japan with Hina Hayata and Miu Hirano defeating Chen Meng and Wang Yidi respectively by 3-1 and 3-0. It was up to Sun to fight to stay in the match and she duly defeated Hayata 3-0. Down to the wire and Chen versus Harimoto to see who held the trophy aloft. The first went to Harimoto 11-4 but then Chen swung into action and took the next three games 7, 8, 7. So close for Japan but at the end of the day the honours went to China. Again, the French team, seeded eight, performed well above expectations, a bronze medal for their ladies. An excellent and well-deserved result. There are obviously amazing things happening in France.



Corbillon Cup medallists



Chinese supporters

It would be remiss not to mention that after 18 years, this was Ma Long’s last World Team Championships. One of the true greats of the game, now aged 35 years, he announced his retirement, from these championships at least. He won the World Men’s Singles Championships in 2015, 2017 and 2019, the World Men’s Doubles Championships in 2011 and 2019, the World Team Championships in 2006, 2008, 2020, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2022 and now 2024 – 14 titles in total. He also won two Olympic golds in the Men’s Singles in 2016 and 2020 as well as three team golds in 2012, 2016 and 2020. His other achievements are huge. Hopefully, there will be one last opportunity to see him play in Paris this summer.



Ma Long

The list of Olympic Qualifiers from this event is:

Men: China, Chinese Taipei, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Korea Republic, Portugal

Women: China, Chinese Taipei, France, Germany, Hong Kong China, Japan, Korea Republic, Romania

Other teams will come from the continental qualifiers and then the world ranking list.

A brilliant show by the Korea Republic – but maybe not everyone was quite so enamoured....



A lone ball boy

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

It was a record-breaking weekend in Nottingham at the National Championships as Paul Drinkhall took his seventh Men's Singles title putting him second on the all-time list behind Desmond Douglas's 11, it also leaves Drinkhall with a total of 26 senior titles catching up with Douglas who has an all-time high of 30. It was first time on the podium for Chris Doran who reached the semi-finals after being a twelve-time quarter-finalist. Tin-Tin Ho made it six in the Women's Singles equalling Mary Wright's total and one behind Jill Hammersley (Parker).

Friday started with the Under 21 events with 16 entries in both singles. The top four seeds went straight to the quarter-final stage and the remaining 12 players were in four groups of three. Three of the top ranked group players in the men's went through to the knock-out stages, Felix Thomis, Nahom Asgedom and Louis Price, whilst in group four it was Isaac Kingham who progressed. Asgedom met top seed, Connor Green, Price met seeded Ralph Pattison, Thomis played Larry Trumpauskas and Kingham met Toby Ellis. This resulted in semi-final slots for Connor and Price, and Thomis and Ellis. It was Green and Thomis who met in the final which was a closely fought contest with Green gaining the title for the first time -9, 4, -7, 2, 3.



Connor Green by Mike Rhodes



Felix Thomis by Alan Man

In the Under 21 Women's Singles, all the top ranked group players went through to the knockout draw – Sienna Jetha, Ella Pashley, Erin Green and Anna Green. There were surprises at this stage as Anna Green defeated seeded Scarlett Anders and 15-year-old Pashley beat second seed Mari Baldwin. The other two matches went according to ranking with Tianer Yu overcoming Erin Green and Jasmin Wong getting the better of 14-year-old Jetha in five, It was another five game battle in the semi-finals but this time Yu got the better of Wong and Pashley progressed in four with a win over Anna Green. It was another first time winner in this event as Yu won the final in four.



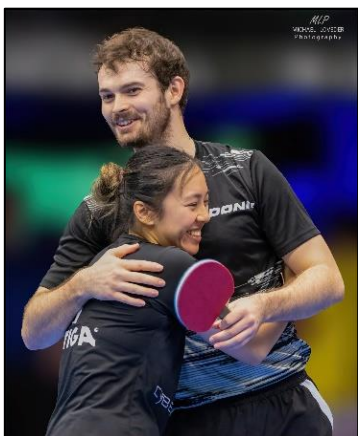
Tianer Yu by Roger Hance



Jasmin Wong by Michael Loveder

Group matches for the Men's and Women's Singles followed with the Mixed Doubles round of 16, quarter-finals and semi-finals rounding off the day.

Saturday morning started with Men's and Women's Doubles plus two para events and at midday the Mixed Doubles final. The latter event had 16 entries with Sam Walker and Tin-Tin Ho the number one seeds, a pleasure to see them back together, and Chris Doran and Emily Bolton at number two. The semi-finals had seen a comfortable win by Walker and Ho over Connor Green and Anna Green but the other semi-final was a tight match between Shayan Siraj and Jasmin Wong and Doran and Bolton, one which Siraj and Wong eventually won -6, 7, 11, -10, 8. The experience of Walker and Ho proved decisive in the final and they took their fifth title together 7, 7, -10, 7.



Tin-Tin Ho & Sam Walker by Michael Loveder



Jasmin Wong & Shaya Siraj by Mike Rhodes

The Men's and Women's Doubles had entries for 16 pairs and Drinkhall and Walker took the title, the first time they had played together. It was a 14th title for Drinkhall who had previously won with Alan Cooke, Darius Knight, Liam Pitchford and David McBeath. Walker, too, had won previously with Tom Jarvis. Their opponents in the final were the unseeded youngsters Larry Trumpauskas and Joseph Hunter who were not overawed by the occasion and put up a spirited fight before going down 3, 5, -7, 5. They had beaten Oliver Cornish and Jakub Piwowar, Owen Brown and Joe Sawyer and seeded Doran and Pattison. Drinkhall and Walker started with a win against Aaron McKibbin and Billy Shilton followed by Josh Bennett and Shayan Siraj before taking care of seeds, Connor Green and Ben Piggott.



Paul Drinkhall & Sam Walker by Roger Hance



Joseph Hunter and Larry Trumpauskas by Alan Man

The Women's Doubles saw success for Tin-Tin Ho and Emily Bolton in the final in a close match where second seeds Mari Baldwin and Jasmin Wong took them all the way with the score -6, 9, -10, 8, 6.

Tianer Yu and Scarlett Anders were defeated in three in the one semi-final and Ella Pashley and Mabel Shute, also in three, against Baldwin and Wong in the other semi-final match. Before that Ho and Bolton had beaten Millie Rogove and Anaya Patel, whilst Baldwin and Wong had victories over Sophie Ackred and Brooke Morris and Jetha and Saskia Key.



Tin-Tin Ho & Emily Bolton by Michael Loveder



Mari Baldwin & Jasmin Wong by Mike Rhodes

Two seeds pulled out of the Women’s Singles, both through injury, Lois Peake and Sophie Earley. The format was the same as the men with 32 players, the seeds in the knock-out draw and the remaining players playing in eight groups of three. Tin-Tin Ho was at number one, Emily Bolton at number two, Tianer Yu at three and Mari Baldwin at four. All but Baldwin reached the semi-final stage with Jasmin Wong first of all beating Ella Barnard and then Baldwin. Ho defeated Anaya Patel and Millie Rogove to reach the semi-finals whilst Yu had got the better of Erin Green and Sienna Jetha, the fourth semi-finalist, Bolton, had wins against Sally Hughes and Letitia McMullan. Both semi-finals went the distance with Ho having her hardest match for some time against Yu and just got over the line -6, 7, 2, -8, 4, -7, 9. In the other match it was a win for Wong over Bolton 6, -7, 6, -8, -9, 6, 6.

After two tremendous semi-final matches the final was a little one sided with Ho winning 4, 8, 1, 8. However, all credit to Wong for a tremendous championship.



*Women’s Singles: Jasmin Wong, Tin-Tin Ho, Tianer Yu, Emily Bolton
Photo by Alan Man*

The championships finished with the flagship event, the Men’s Singles which had 32 entries. However, as with the women, two seeds, Darius Knight and David McBeath, had also withdrawn before the start of the tournament. McBeath for the best of reasons as his partner, former international Emma Vickers, gave birth to a beautiful baby girl on Saturday morning. Our congratulations to them both.

There were eight groups of three with the top eight seeds starting in the round of 16. Paul Drinkhall was the number one seed with Tom Jarvis at two, Sam Walker at three and Chris Doran was moved up to four with the withdrawal of McBeath.

All four players moved into the semi-finals with Drinkhall beating Ralph Pattison and Toby Ellis on the way, Jarvis defeating Larry Trumpauskas and Joseph Hunter, Walker overcoming Nahom Asgedom and Shayan Siraj and Doran victorious over Sam Mabey and then a titanic match against Connor Green 8, -11, 5, 8, -9, -11, 10, in what must have been the match of the tournament.

In the semi-finals Drinkhall faced Walker and it was a win for the number one seed -4, 9, 10, -15, 9, 5. In the second semi-final it was Jarvis against Doran which saw the result in Jarvis's favour by -8, 9, 8, 9, 5. This set up the final between the holder and twice champion, Jarvis, against the six times champion, Drinkhall.

Drinkhall won the first two ends followed by Jarvis winning the next two and so levelling the score. However, Drinkhall's experience proved decisive and he won the next two games, the final score was 10, 8, -7, -12, 7, 8, to give Drinkhall his seventh victory and move him up the list of all time champions to second and very well deserved in his twentieth year of playing at senior international level.



Paul Drinkhall by Roger Hance



Tom Jarvis by Michael Loveder



*Men's Singles: Tom Jarvis, Paul Drinkhall, Sam Walker, Chris Doran
Photo by Mike Rhodes*

There were also two para competitions, one for Classes 2-5, the wheelchair categories, where the British Para Table Tennis Association had selected six players for this event. It was a win for Jack Hunter-Spivey over Megan Shackelton. The standing classes, 6-10, resulted in a win for Ross Wilson over Aaron McKibbin, again there were six entrants.



Jack Hunter-Spivey by Mike Rhodes



Ross Wilson by Michael Loveder

As well as the play there were a range of activities in the FanZone including an archive display based around the 98 years of England players at the World Championships. Both photographs and artefacts were on display which had been put together by yours truly. Photos had been found for every player, bar two, who had represented England at the various World Championships along with other English players who had won medals.



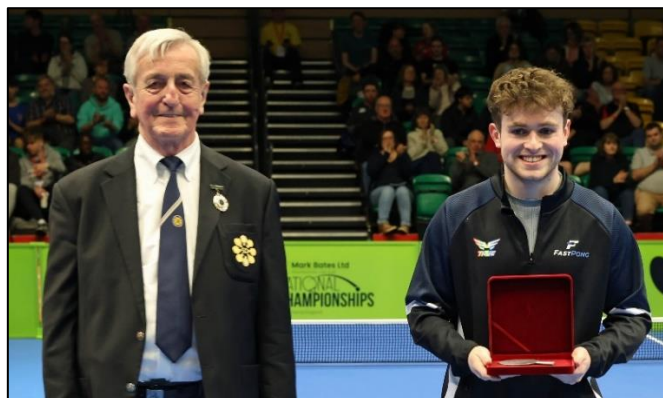
Section of the archive display
Photos by Mike Rhodes

Harvey was in attendance, too, as the English representative of the Swaythling Club International which held their annual meeting on Sunday morning. As well as members of the English branch, Gloria Wagner (formerly Sayer), was visiting from Germany and was welcomed to the meeting.



SCI Gathering: Richard Scruton, Harvey Webb, Stuart Sherlock, Don Parker, Jill Parker MBE, Alan Ransome OBE
Beverley Godfrey, Gloria Wagener, Karen Tonge OBE
Photo by Mike Rhodes

Harvey later had the pleasure of presenting the SCI Fair Play Award to a delighted Louis Price. Price acknowledged the ball had hit his shirt which the umpire had missed.



*Harvey Webb with Louis Price
Photo by Mike Rhodes*

The Mike Watts Achievement Awards were also presented. They are for the boy and girl who have moved up the ranking list by the most places during the previous season. Parmis Ahsani and Kacper Piwowar received their accolades from TTE President, Jill Parker, MBE.

As many of you will know, Mike Watts was a powerhouse within the Association being influential on many committees as Vice-Chairman of Marketing and of Administration as well as various staff roles including that of National Events Manager. He was Tournament Director at both the World Championships in 1997 and the World Veteran Championships the following year. He had been a major mover in the setting up of the veterans' scene and was a member of the ETTU Veterans Committee. Mike's wife, Hilda, donated the trophies following Mike's death in 2001.



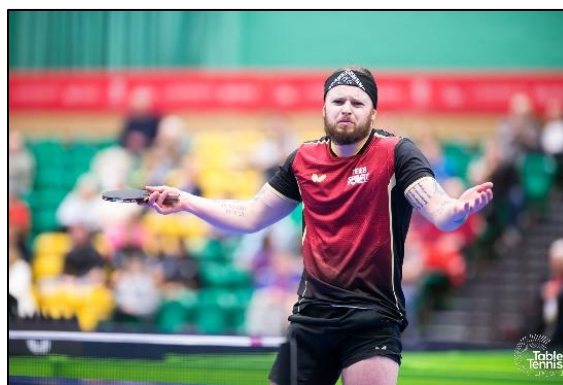
*Jill Parker MBE with Parmis Ahsani and Kacper Piwowar
Photos by Mike Rhodes*

Overall, a well organised Championships, perhaps not as well supported as in other years and it was rather disappointing there was no VIP reception which there has been for as long as we can remember, we missed seeing the Sherrif!

Thanks go to the four photographers at the event – Roger Hance, Michael Loveder, Alan Man and Mike Rhodes - for the use of their excellent images.

Thanks too, to Mark Bates Ltd and China Taiping for their sponsorship of the Championships.

Emotion by Alan Man



The Drinkhalls

AllStars Extravaganza

Brighton Table Tennis Club

Mon 27 May 2024



Join Brighton Table Tennis Club for a day of activities and re-create the excitement of Brighton's ping pong past with a modern twist.

Did you know that Brighton has a proud history of hosting international table tennis events at Brighton Dome Corn Exchange?

Join in as we attempt to break our own Guinness World Record for the greatest number of consecutive players in a table rally. Try out a Mega Table and old school hard bats.

Play *AllStars* Table Tennis - a new model for mass participation table tennis for everyone. We've even used pizza paddles and frying pans as bats...

Watch international superstars including Paralympic gold medallist Will Bayley and maybe even snatch a match with them.

CHILDREN & FAMILY

This event is taking place in Brighton Dome Corn Exchange

[VENUE AND SAFETY INFORMATION](#)

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Mon 27 May, 9.30am–7pm

FREE

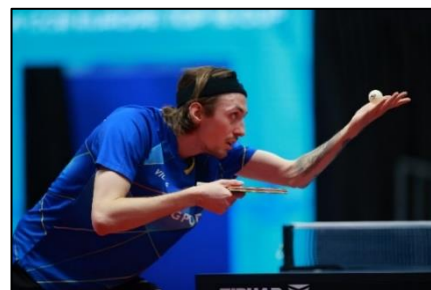
Europe Top 16: 20th-21st January 2024: Montreux, Switzerland

Photos courtesy of Remy Gros, ETTU

Most of the top 16 players of Europe took part in the Europe Top 16 held in the Swiss city of Montreux over the two days of 20th and 21st January 2024.

Liam Pitchford was the sole English representative in the tournament. The competition these days is a straight knockout compared to all play all in days of yore.

Pitchford had a tough first round match, drawn against the number one seed, the young and highly talented French lad, Felix Lebrun aged 17, the world number eight. Pitchford was not able to emulate his bronze medal position of last year and was outplayed by the higher ranked player 8, 2, 6, 9. Felix went out in the next round to his older brother, Alexis, in a highly entertaining match. Alexis then went out to Sweden's Truls Moregard in the semi-final. Moregard had previously taken care of Tomislav Pucar, Croatia, and then Dimitrij Ovtcharov, Germany, who he was leading before Ovtcharov retired injured.



Liam Pitchford

Winning the last two events, Slovenian Darko Jorgic, world ranked 15, made it through to the final courtesy of Joao Geraldo of Portugal, followed by Anton Kallberg of Sweden and then blasted Marcos Freitas of Portugal in the semi-final 1, 3, 4, 4.

The final was a match of supreme skill which entertained anyone watching between two of the best talents in European table tennis, Moregard and Jorgic. It was Jorgic who celebrated the win, making him the second man to have achieved the remarkable record of three consecutive wins, Ovtcharov being the only other player to do so. The score was -9, 8, 6, 7, 7.



Truls Moregard, Darko Jorgic,
Marcos Freitas, Alexis Lebrun



Sofia Polcanova, Jia Nan Yuan,
Bernadette Szocs, Nina Mittelham

The women's event saw Jia Nan Yuan of France defeat Sofia Polcanova of Austria in a tight match with the score 6, -9, 6, -10, -5, 4, 6. Yuan had another seven-game battle in the semi-finals beating the number one seed, Bernadette Szocs of Romania and prior to that Elizabeta Samara of Romania in the second round and Ni Xia Lian of Luxembourg in her first match. Polcanova, seeded two, had victories over Tatiana Kukulkova of Slovakia, Prithika Pavade of France and then Nina Mittelham of Germany, in the semis.

It was a pleasure to see our good friend, Nico Caltabiano, umpiring the Men's Singles final, officiating with his usual aplomb.



Nico Caltabiano

WTT Feeder: 1st-4th February 2024: Manchester, England

The first WTT tournament to take place in England happened in Manchester over four days. There were a number of players from England and other Home Countries as well as around the world, although mainly from Europe. After the initial list of players being announced there were several withdrawals which gave several England players the opportunity to go straight into the main draw rather than start at the qualifying stage. Probably the biggest disappointment was when Germany's Timo Boll withdrew as many would have liked to see him play in England again. As this was a WTT Feeder event there was a restriction that players in the world top 30 could not play although one home nation place was permitted.

Men's Singles: Qualifying Round: England had two players in the first round of the Qualifying Draw, Connor Green (WR 699) who met Daniel Pinto, Italy (WR 312) and Ben Piggott (WR 820) who faced Jordy Piccolin, Italy (WR 258). Green had a good 3-0 win against his higher ranked opponent to put him through to the second round in the qualifying event where he faced Eric Jouti of Brazil (WR 142). Piggott was, however, unable to get past Pinto the score also 3-0 but on the losing end.



Shayan Siraj and Louis Price by Michael Loveder



Ben Piggott by Pawel Meryn

Green had the misfortune to meet an on-fire Tom Jarvis (WR 195) in the first round of the main draw, a match Jarvis won 9, 7, 1. Also, going out in the round of 32 were David McBeath (WR 825) to Martin Allegro of Belgium (WR 64) after a good start; Shayan Siraj (no ranking) took an end from much higher ranked opponent Matteo Mutti of Italy (WR 190) but lost in four; Louis Price (no ranking) had a tough draw against Germany's Stefan Mengel (WR 59) and the difference showed in the scoreline 6, 4, 8. Along with Jarvis, Paul Drinkhall and Liam Pitchford proceeded to the round of 16. Here, Drinkhall (WR 114) and Pitchford (WR 25) had wins but Jarvis fell to the second seed, Denmark's Anders Lind (WR 29).



Paul Drinkhall and Liam Pitchford both by Chris Rayner

There were high hopes in the quarter-finals for the England pair but unfortunately, Pitchford sustained an injury whilst playing Mutti and lost in four after winning the first game. Drinkhall lost in three to Elias Ranefur of Sweden (WR 286) who had an exceptional tournament and who went on to reach the final before losing to Cho Daesong of the Korea Republic (WR 70).

Women's Singles: Qualifying Round: Tianer Yu (WR 600) was the only English player in the Qualifying rounds and her opponent was Isa Cok of France (WR 244), a difficult match for Yu and one she lost 3-0. Hannah Silcock of Jersey (WR 586) also played in the first round against Malamatenia Papadimitriou of Greece (WR 413). Although Yu and Silcock have the same number of ranking points, the ITTF/WTT ranking

system has consecutive numbering, even when players have the same points so it showed them over 100 places apart. An odd situation.



Mari Baldwin by Michael Loveder



Tianer Yu by Pawel Meryn

Mollie Patterson (no ranking) was the sole English player in the morning session of the second day and she too met a highly ranked opponent and fought hard but the ultimate victory went to Audrey Zarif of France (WR 71) by 10, 6, 12. The second session of the day saw four English players in action in the round of 32. Mari Baldwin (WR 708) met Korean, Liu Hsing-Yin Of Chinese Taipei (WR 59) who proved too strong and went down 7, 9, 1. Tin-Tin Ho (WR 141) also lost in the round of 32 playing against Yang Ha Eun of Korea Republic (WR 60) and it was a similar result for Emily Bolton (WR 689) going out to Ukrainian, Margaryta Pesotska (WR 86). Wales's Anna Hursey (WR 96) also went out in the round of 32 to Hana Matelova (WR 77), Czech Republic. The only Home Countries player to reach the second round was Irish born Sophie Earley (WR 309), who is able to play under the England flag in WTT events, although not able to represent England in World or European events at present. She had an excellent first match against Britt Eerland from the Netherlands, seeded 4 (WR 42) but then lost her next match to Debora Vivarelli of Italy (WR 139) who had come through from the qualifiers.

The title went to Lily Zhang, USA(WR 37), the number one seed, who had the win over Natalie Bajor of Poland (WR 61) -9, 13, 3, 8 in the final.

Men's Doubles: Due to some withdrawals, there were only seven entries in this event, four of them from England. All four ended in the lower half of the draw with McBeath and Jarvis meeting Price and Siraj, a 3-2 win for the former pair. Green and Piggott had the misfortune to meet Drinkhall and Walker and as expected the more experience pair won that match 9, -10, 9, -8, 4. This set up the semi-final between the four England internationals and although close, it was Jarvis and McBeath who won -2, 10, 11, -6, 9 giving them the chance for the title. They met Martin Allegro and Florent Lambiet of Belgium in the final where it was the Belgian pair who won the match 7. 7, -8, 4. Despite not standing on top of the podium the English pair must have been delighted with their performances.



Tom Jarvis & David McBeath by Michael Loveder

Women's Doubles: There was a better entry in the Women's Doubles than the Men's with 14 entries. Ho and Hursey were seeded two which meant they went straight through to the quarter-finals. Emily Bolton and Mollie Patterson lost in the round of 16 to Margo Degraef and Nathalie Marchetti of Belgium and Mari

Baldwin who partnered Elvira Rad of Spain lost at the same stage to Sabina Surjan and Izabela Lupulesku of Serbia, seeded four.

Yu and Earley won their first match against Cok and Audrey Zarif of France but then went out in a close match to Ho and Hursey in the quarter-finals, the latter then progressed to the final, courtesy of Degraef and Marchetti but again a gold medal eluded the Brits as Barbora Balazova, Slovakia, and Matelova won that match -6, 7, 8, 4.



Emily Bolton & Mollie Patterson by Pawel Meryn



Tin-Tin Ho & Anna Hursey by Chris Rayner

Mixed Doubles: Again, there were several pairs who withdrew leaving 16, who all started in the main draw, half of who had GB interest.

The round of 16 saw losses by McBeath and Bolton against top seeds Nando Ecseki and Dora Madarasz of Hungary; Siraj and Yu against Luka Mladenovic and Xia Lian Ni of Luxembourg the third seeds; Price and Baldwin in a close 3-2 match to Harrison Docherty, Wales and Silcock; Piggott and Patterson to Yoo Siwoo and Park Gyeongtae of Korea Republic; and, finally, Green and Earley to second seeds Dimitrije Levajac and Lupulesku of Serbia.



Connor Green & Sophie Earley by Michael Loveder

All GB interest was lost at the next round as Jarvis and Ho, Pitchford and Hursey and Docherty and Silcock all lost, no podium places in this event. Champions were the number one seeds Ecseki and Madarasz with Anton Limonov and Solomiya Brateyko of Ukraine who were ranked fourth were the runners-up.

There was promise from some of the up-and-coming English players and it was a good experience for them to play at an international event on home soil. 2001 was the last time an Open international event was held in England when Sheffield hosted the English Open.

National and International News

First the Good News

- * Two of our top umpires have been selected to perform in Paris in the summer – Nico Caltabiano at the Olympic Games and Tom Purcell at the Paralympics. Congratulations to them both on their selection.
- * Peter Jackson on BBC Wales's 'Jacko's Sporting Almanac' gave an alternative viewpoint on 1971 Ping Pong Diplomacy in China with the role that Roy and Nancy Evans played in the successful breaking down of barriers between China and the West. There were contributions from Jill Parker and Harvey Webb and the hope that there would be some recognition of that momentous occasion in 1971 at the World Championships in 2026. You can catch up with the half hour Podcast on BBC Wales.

TTE News

- Work on the new competition structure means changes for next season. Replacing the 1*, 2*, 3* and 4* tournaments will be Local Open, Zonal Open and National Open events. The qualifying route to the National Championships at cadet, junior and senior age groups will be via National Open Tournaments. Local and Zonal Open tournaments will run concurrently on designated dates with the aim to give a geographical spread around the country. The officiating and physical standards for the various level of tournaments are to be reduced.
- A new coaching strategy is to be introduced based on continual professional development (CPD) rather than the emphasis being on qualifications with CPD. From March 2024 there will be no more coaching courses, apart from those already scheduled. A review is underway and it is anticipated that the new coaching strategy will be rolled out in April 2025.
- Two new Board Members have been appointed, Anna Whowell and Katharine Curran. They replace Priya Samuel who resigned last July and Steve Kemish whose four-year tenure had come to an end.
- Richard Scruton has been appointed chairman of a new company, Table Tennis International Events Ltd (TTIE), which is the partnership between TTE, ITTF and WTT to provide oversight of the events strategy and objectives, together with consideration of future major events before and after 2026. Adrian Christy became a director last autumn and recently appointed directors are Sandra Deaton, Nick Donald and Jonny Cowan.



Richard Scruton

Additionally, Ed Warner has been appointed the chairman of the Event Delivery Board which has been established to deliver the 2026 World Championships at Wembley with involvement of all key partners - TTE, ITTF, UK Sport and the Greater London Authority.

Scruton has a very strong table tennis background at international level whilst Warner, although not coming from a table tennis background, has held several senior positions in various sports and at major sporting events.

- The move has been made from Nottingham University to the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield for the Performance team.
- Many of the membership were disquieted by the TTE Board's decision to hold the AGM as a virtual only meeting. The Board reconsidered this but have stuck with their original decision for a virtual only meeting.
- Several rule change propositions are to be put to the AGM by the Board which will have significant implications to the governance of TTE if adopted.
- Ryan Jenkins and Kelly Sibley have both left their coaching roles with Table Tennis England.
- Membership fees for the Compete category are to go up for the 2024/25 season to £22 from £18 for seniors and from £9 to £11 for juniors (from 11-19 years old), under 11s are free. Compete Plus is to go from £40 and £20 to £44 and £22.

ITTF News

- TTE was represented by the new chairman, Nick Donald, at the ITF AGM and Summit in Busan during the World Championships. The CEO did not attend as he was on holiday.
- At the ITTF Awards ceremony in Busan, Will Bayley MBE won the ITTF Male Para Player of the Year Award for 2023.
- World Table Tennis Day will celebrate the theme of diversity and inclusion on 23rd April.



- The 2026 World Masters, formerly World Veteran Championships, is to be held in Korea.

Commonwealth Table Tennis Federation (CTTF)

The CTTF AGM was held on 10th February 2024 in India where Vivek Kohli was re-elected as Chairman beating off a challenge from Scotland's Phil McCallum. There were several new appointments with Yusuf Carrim of South Africa elected as Deputy Chairman replacing England's Susie Venner, M P Singh of India was elected as the Secretary General, Andrew Immanuel Mudibo of Kenya became the Treasurer taking over from Audrina Macdonald and Kudzanani Motswagole, Botswana, was elected as the Technical Committee Chairman. The AGM was a hybrid meeting with many African nation representatives attending in person. The last Commonwealth Championships were held in 2019 so it is hoped that the new committee will organise another in the near future.

European Under 21 Championships: 24th-28th January 2024

Skopje, North Macedonia

Photos courtesy of ETTU

Connor Green and Mari Baldwin were the two English players who qualified by ranking for this event which comprised 48 players playing in Stage 1 of the tournament in groups of four in the singles events. The winners and runners-up went through to Stage 2 where the top eight seeds joined the competition. Again, groups were created, eight in both singles events with the top two proceeding to the Stage 3 and a straight knockout to decide places. Doubles was a straight knockout from the start.

Baldwin, ranked 41, played well in her first set of group matches in the Under 21 Women's Singles, winning two and losing one. One of her wins was against the 18th ranked player, Leah Tveit Muskantor of Sweden, in a close five game match. The two wins put Baldwin through into the next set of group matches where she met the number one seed, Hana Arapovic of Croatia and although losing, she did take an end off her. Baldwin also lost her other two matches, both 4-1, and so did not progress in the tournament.

Green, ranked 22, went one better in his first group matches winning all three. However, success eluded him in the second tranche of group matches, losing all three. It was a close call against the seventh seed, Thibault Poret of France, which went the distance, eventually losing 4-3.

In the Under 21 Women's Doubles Baldwin partnered Hannah Silcock of Jersey and the pair lost in their first match, round of 32, to French duo Leana Hochart and Elise Pujol.



Hannah Silcock, Jersey, and Mari Baldwin



Connor Green

Green, partnering German, Wim Verdonchot, in the Under 21 Men's Doubles won their first match and then had to face the number one seeds, Hugo Deschamps and Poret of France in the round of 16 and although it was close it was the French pair who secured the 3-2 victory.

The Mixed Doubles saw Baldwin and Slovakian, Filip Delincak, lose in the round of 64 in another tight match despite leading 2-0. Final score -9, -17, 8, 6, 7 to the Dutch pair, Gabrielius Camara and Emine Ernst. Green was playing with Spaniard Ainhoa Cristobel and they won their first match but then in the round of 16 lost to Deschamps and Hochart of France 3-0 who were seeded eighth.

Finals:

U21 MS: Compatriots from Poland and doubles partners, Maciej Kubik, seeded 3 and Milosz Redzimski, seeded 2, faced each other in the final. It was the higher ranked of the two players, Redzimski, who became the new champion with a win 9, 9, 3, -7, -9, 9.

U21 WS: Ukraine versus Romania in the Women’s Final as Veronika Matiunina, ranked 11, opposed Elena Zaharia, seeded 2. The game swung one way and the other as the ladies alternated in taking an end and it was Matiunina who took the vital seventh game to give her the title. Final score 9, -6, 4, -4, 9, -12, 5.



U21 Men's Singles Medallists



U21 Women's Singles medallists

U21 MD: It was a win for the two finalists in the Under 21 Men’s Singles, Poles, Maciej Kubik and Milosz Redzimski, over Romanians Eduard Ionescu and Darius Movileanu, they had led 2-0 but the Romanians drew level before the fifth and final game going the Poles’ way. Final score 9, 2, -11, -9, 5.

U21 WD: Romania’s Elena Zaharia and Bianca Mei Rosu beat fellow Romanian Luciana Mitrofan and partner Slovenian Sara Tokic by 3-1 in the final, score being 5, -8, 0, 3.

U21 XD: Croatians Ivor Ban and Hana Arapovic won after a very close contest against Darius Movileanu and Elena Zaharia of Romania -8, 9, 7, -11, 8.



Milosz Redzimski & Maciej Kubik



Bianca Mei Rosu & Elena Zaharia



Ivor Ban & Hana Arapovic

WTT Champions: 27th-31st March 2024: Incheon, Korea Republic

Due to the plethora of WTT events we have cut back on reporting on them except for the major events or where England players have done particularly well.

The WTT Champions is a major WTT event with nearly all of the top 32 players participating. England’s Liam Pitchford (WR 27) was required as part of his contract to play and in order to acclimatise for the tournament he was in the Far East for the best part of a week beforehand with England/GB coach, John Murphy. He, therefore, did not play in our National Championships.

Unfortunately, Pitchford’s first match was also his last as he lost 7, 1, 9 to Slovenia’s Darko Jorgic (WR 15) in the round of 32.

In the Men’s final China’s Liang Jingkun (WR 3) defeated Hugo Calderano (WR 8) of Brazil 6, -6, 8, 7, 5 and in the all-Chinese Women’s final it was a win for Sun Yingsha (WR 1) over Wang Manyu (WR 2) 7, 5, 4, 4. Both champions took home 15,000 US dollars and were awarded 1,000 ranking points. Those losing in the round of 32, the first round, still ended up with 3,500 US dollars and 15 ranking points.

Can You Help?

Salisbury and Swindon Leagues: Following our last issue when we asked if anyone can help with handbooks, photos or anything to do with the Salisbury League, Alan Duke is also looking for anything about the Swindon League. If you can help Alan or if you had a previous connection to the Swindon League and would like to be notified of any social gatherings during the centenary season in 2025-26, or to register an interest in the publication planned for the end of that season 'The Story of Table Tennis in Swindon', a fully illustrated colour booklet, of approximately 120 pages, cost around £12, then please get in touch with Alan at alan-duke2@talktalk.net

Mike Loveder: If you, like us, enjoy looking at our photographers' pictures, who for the most part attend events at their own cost, would you be willing to contribute towards Mike Loveder's expenses at the Paralympic Games in Paris later in the year? Although Mike has accreditation for the event, he estimates it will cost him around £2,500 to attend for the duration which includes travel plus highly inflated hotel costs. Any and all help would be much appreciated. His crowd funding page is <https://justgiving.com/crowdfunding/michael-loveder>

World Veteran Championships: I have been asked to work on a project about the history of the World Veteran Championships by the Swaythling Club International. Do you have any programmes, photos or other memorabilia or maybe an interesting or unusual story to tell? I am especially looking for anything from the earlier years. If you can help, can you contact me at DianeK1414@hotmail.co.uk

10 Years on from Hastings

13th March 2014 was the last day for the ETTA at Queensbury House in Hastings after being in the town since 7th October 1972. It was the day when most of the staff were made redundant, 35 left during 2013/14, with a few either moving to Milton Keynes permanently and a few others who worked there during the week and returned home at weekends.

Ten years on and a small group of former colleagues met in Hastings for an enjoyable meal to reminisce, renew the acquaintance of old friends in a convivial atmosphere.



Carol Hackett, Harvey Webb, Jackie Sands, Colette Sargent, Brian Skinner, Sheila King

What has changed since then?

The **name** - the Association is now commonly known by its trading name of Table Tennis England although the company name remains the English Table Tennis Association Limited.

Governance has changed significantly with new articles brought in, in line with Sport England requirements. Major changes included that the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Treasurer are no longer elected by the membership. Vice-Chairman positions have been deleted from the establishment as has the position of Treasurer. The TTE Board now comprises the Chairman, elected by the Board, the CEO appointed by the Board, plus Board appointed and Board elected directors. The function of National Council has become one of discussion and advisory with its decision-making powers gone.

What has happened on the **playing front** during the ten years?

The **National Championships** has become an elite event with the top players invited and others reaching the finals via a qualifying event, in the individual singles. The veterans' events no longer take place.

There has been success on the international stage for the men with a bronze medal at the **World Championships** in 2016 and at the **Team World Cup** in 2018 as well as a quarter-final place at the **Olympic Games** in Rio in 2016, although the men's team have failed to qualify for the Olympic Games since then. The men's team world ranking was 16 in 2015 and now is 22. The women's game has sadly deteriorated to the extent that England's world standing is presently 79 from 24 in 2015 (2015 is the earliest date for ITTF records), there has been no team representation at the last two Team World Championships or at the Olympic Games since 2012 for the ladies.

England has not hosted the **Home Countries International Championships** during the ten-year period, it was last held in England in 2011, the Championships are now held every two years and the three age categories - seniors, juniors and cadets – have been combined in one event. The last **English Open** was held in 2011 although recently a WTT Feeder event has taken place. England withdrew from the **International Cadet Six Nations** and table tennis is no longer part of the **School Games**. The last **Commonwealth Championships** were in 2019. Overall there has been a diminishing opportunity for players to represent their country in team events in all age categories.

Membership figures in 2014 were 2,935 Licenced Players and 24,350 Player Members. During season 2022/23 the corresponding figures were 2,717 for Compete Plus and 18,635 for Compete. Covid-19 obviously had an impact on the figures.

Our Patron, HM Queen Elizabeth II, celebrated her platinum jubilee in February 2022 and passed away the September of that year. At the present time there has been no replacement.

Some other **highlights** over the last ten years: the Association's **centenary** was celebrated in 2022 with a gala dinner and a book highlighting many of the major events, the **Commonwealth Games** were held in Birmingham in 2022, the trials and tribulations of Covid-19 were overcome with some innovative ways to deal with various issues and problems. Webinar and Zoom became words familiar to everyone.

England was awarded the **2026 World Championships** which are to be held in London in April 2026 with exact dates have yet to be confirmed.

**Spotlight on Joola Plymouth Table Tennis Club
and Report on the Junior 4*: 10th-11th February 2024
All photos courtesy Tim Diss, Joola Plymouth Table Tennis Club
Presentations by Ryan Jenkins and Paul Whiting**

At the beginning of half-term, the Bribar Plymouth Junior 4* tournament took place in the Devon city. There were team events for the cadets on Saturday as well as individual cadet events plus an Under 11 Boys Singles whilst there were singles for Juniors and Under 13s on the Sunday. There were also consolation events ensuring all the players had a good number of matches over the weekend.

Joola Plymouth TTC, formerly Woolwell TTC, must be one of the best run and organised clubs in the country as well as being one of the friendliest and most successful with the young players it is producing. It became an ETTA Talent Development Centre in 2014 and more recently one of four Pathway Development Centres with a focus on engaging primary school age children. The Club has gone from strength to strength with a strong and dedicated team at the top. Paul Giles is the Chairman, Debbie Whiting the Secretary and Treasurer and Kevin Buddell the President. They also benefit from the very experienced Paul Whiting as Head Coach.

Others in a supporting role for the well-run club are an IT specialist, Henry Tam, who supplies livestreaming, including at the recent Junior 4* tournament; a dedicated photographer in Tim Diss who is also the Club's Website Manager, plus many other volunteers. Amongst the club's assets is a volunteer run café where homemade food and other refreshments are available. The hot and cold meals are much appreciated by those who attend events.

The club has built up a strong team of umpires and officials which helped with the smooth running of the tournament on 10th and 11th February. There are now ten qualified umpires from the club's members who were aided by two others from the local area, the club also has a qualified referee and three qualified Tournament Organisers including Jason Cornish who was the main man for the recent tournament. Having all local officials certainly helps with the financial viability of events.

There was recognition at national level for his contribution to the club for one of the younger club members when Bailey Page received the Young Male Volunteer of the Year at the Pride of Table Tennis Awards during the National Championships in March.



Bailey Page, centre with Club Chairman, Paul Giles

What an excellent setup and something for others to emulate.

Back to the tournament - the results from the weekend also produced considerable success for many of the Club's young players.

The U11 Boys' Singles had a small entry of three and Luke Evans won the round robin event with Thomas Nguyen the runner-up. There was no U11 Girls' Singles event.



Luke Evans



Thomas Nguyen

U13 Boys' Champion was Noah Byrne-Smith with Oscar Nikolli the runner-up and Violet-Lily Marquis won the U13 Girls' Singles defeating Charlotte Wong in the final.



Noah Byrne-Smith



Oscar Nikolli



Violet-Lily Marquis



Charlotte Wong

It was success for the local lads in the Cadet Boys Team event as Joola Plymouth (Hugo Nguyen and Leo Nguyen) beat Torbay/Grantham Academy (Kacper Piwowar and Abraham Sellado). It was a double for the home club (Eva Eccles and Alyssa Nguyen) as the Cadet Girls also were victorious, with a win in the final over Amazing Grace (Grace Liu and Grace Wang).



Hugo & Leo Nguyen



Kacper Piwowar & Abraham Sellado



Eva Eccles & Alyssa Nguyen



Grace Liu & Grace Wang

The Cadet Boys' Singles was won by Leo Nguyen defeating Kacper Piwowar and Violet-Lily Marquis was successful against Lok You Lam in the Cadet Girls' Singles giving Marquis another title.



Leo Nguyen



Kacper Piwowar



Violet-Lily Marquis



Lok You Lam

There were victories for Jakub Piwowar and Jat Sum Ma in the Junior Singles with James Hamblett and Rachael Iles the runners up.



Jakub Piwowar



James Hamblett



Jat Sum Ma



Rachael Iles

What was Happening 1994? 30 Years Ago

- ❖ It was a good year for Sally Marling which started when she qualified to play in the Europe Junior Top 12 in Tikra, Israel, in January and went on to win a bronze medal at the European Youth Championships despite the rest of Europe having the significant advantage of using glue.
- ❖ There was a four-venue tour by the Japanese at the end of December 1993/beginning of January 1994 and success for England as the men won 5-1 in Andover, 4-2 in St Austell, 4-2 in Grantham and 4-2 in Bletchley. The women played two fixtures and won the first in Hull 6-4 but lost the second 4-6 in Warwick.
- ❖ The Commonwealth Championships were held in Hyderabad, India, from 25th January-1st February 1994. There was gold for England's Men's Team of Alan Cooke, Andrew Eden, Chris Oldfield and Matthew Syed, silver for the Women's Team of Alison Gordon, Andrea Holt and Lisa Lomas, silver also for Cooke in the Men's Singles plus bronze for Syed in the Men's Singles and also Cooke and Oldfield in the Men's Doubles.



Matthew Syed, Donald Parker, Andrew Eden, Alan Cooke, Chris Oldfield

- ❖ The National Championships took place on 5th-6th March 1994 at Kings Lynn. The Men's Singles was won by Chen Xinhua who beat Alan Cooke in the final; Lisa Lomas defeated Andrea Holt in the Women's Singles to take her third title; the Men's Doubles went to Skylet Andrew and Nicky Mason who beat John Holland and Cooke; Lisa Lomas and Fiona Mommessin combined to overcome Kate Goodall and Andrea Holt and the Mixed Doubles was success for Andrew and Mommessin who beat Alex Perry and Sally Marling. In the Veterans events Nigel Eckersley beat John Hilton in the VMS; Doreen Schofield beat Marjorie Dawson in the VWS; Hilton and Phil Bowen beat Dave Harvey and Gary Baldwin in the VMD and Connie Moran and Schofield beat Margaret Dignum and Penny Perry in the VWD.
- ❖ Euro' 94 – the European Championships were held from 25th March-4th April 1994 at the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham. There was a quality field and the highest number of participants ever, there were past and present world and European champions along with the current Olympic champion, Jan-Ove Waldner. It was Jean-Michel Saive from Belgium who took the honours in the Men's Singles justifying his world number one ranking by beating Olympic champion Sweden's Waldner in the final. Marie Svensson of Sweden won the Women's title with a win over Gerdie Keen of the Netherlands. There was a double bronze for both England teams as they finished fourth, the players for the men were Chen Xinhua, Alan Cooke, Andrew Eden, Carl Prean and Matthew Syed and for the ladies, Alison Gordon, Andrea Holt and Lisa Lomas.

There were 47 umpires from England plus 40 from abroad, Stuart Sherlock was the referee assisted by Doug Young. There were 427 players, 44 Men's Teams and 38 Women's, over 2,500 matches, over 200 volunteers, easily recognisable in their bright yellow T-shirts, and over 300 journalists and photographers, 80 million viewers in 100 countries were expected to see the action.

- ❖ Junior English Open took place from 30th April-2nd May 1994 at Bridlington. Nicola Deaton and Sally Marling won the Junior Girls' Team event after being 2-0 down, a tremendous comeback, the pair also won the Junior Girls' Doubles. Belgium won the Boys' Team event. Other winners were JBS Jorg De Cock, Netherlands, JGS Martine Hubert, Belgium, JBD De Cock/Jurgen Pastoors, Netherlands, CBS Klaudio Kirou, Greece, CGS Tracey Davies of England who beat England's Debbie Pestka in the final. There was an issue with glue which was banned in England and not allowed at this event, although it was waived for the English Open. There were some disputes with players and teams threatening to withdraw. The English results were even more impressive as it was not a level playing field for them.

- ❖ It was to the Antipodes for the World Veteran Championships with Melbourne, Australia, hosting. 1,800 competitors from 48 countries took part playing on 66 tables. There was success for England in the O60 MD with gold for Derek Schofield and Matt Sheader, silver in the O40 MD for Nigel Eckersley and Benny Robertson and bronze in the O60 WS for Connie Moran, Dennis Clare in the O80 MS and bronze as well for Brian Hill and Denis Neale in the O50 MD.

- ❖ It was the first year of The National Lottery and the first draw took place on television on 14th November. Over £150 million went to sports projects in the first year including a number of table tennis applications. Up until the National Lottery, the Foundation of Sports and the Arts was a major source of funding and the ETTA facilities programme recommended funding for six schemes to the tune of £350,000.

- ❖ Another inaugural event was the Women's European Team Cup. Andrea Holt and Lisa Lomas represented England and finished third in their group. England's women won their group in the European League Super Division to reach the final but lost home and away to Germany and so finished second.

- ❖ The idea of playing up to 11 and not 21 was mooted but it didn't come into force until 2001.

- ❖ The Woolwich Junior League was launched at Euro' 94 and started in September with 74 Local Leagues deciding to run an event. The aim was to have more localised matches to reduce travel. It was also the inaugural season of the Junior British League with the first matches played in April with 44 teams participating. Hull Sandhill won the Girls' and Kingfisher the Boys' events; Sally Marling received the Woolwich Player Award. Terry Young had 95 consecutive wins before losing to Irish Boys.

- ❖ A player from Sheffield was suspended from playing for a year as he had played "with or against unaffiliated players".

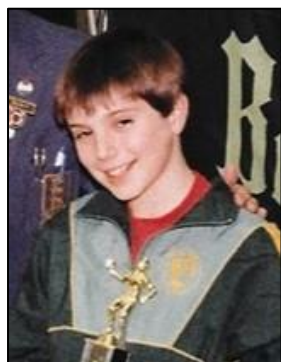


Lisa Lomas and Andrea Holt

- ❖ The National Under 15/18/21 Championships were held in Bridlington. Andrew Eden and Kate Goodall were the U21 Singles champions, Steven Meddings and Sally Marling won the U18 Singles and Steven Meddings and Kathryn Woodward the U15 events. At U21 level, doubles titles went to Andrew Eden and Grant Solder, Nicola Deaton and Sally Marling and Andrew Eden and Kate Goodall. U18s provided further titles for Deaton and Marling whilst Mark Smith and Andrew Wilkinson won the boys U18 event. There were no doubles for the youngest age group.



Sally Marling JGS Champion



Scott Friday

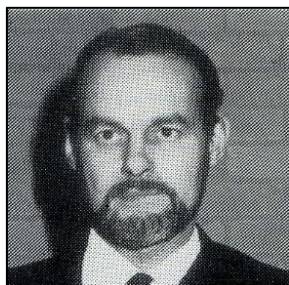
- ❖ Scott Friday won his tenth national title at the National Under 10/11/12 Championships at Bletchley on 4th- 5th June 1994 winning both the U12 Boys' Singles and with Andrew Baggaley the U12 Boys' Doubles. Baggaley also won the U11 Boys' Singles and with David Porter the U11 Boys' Doubles. Stephen Davies won the remaining Boys' title, the U10 Boys' Singles. Girls' champions were Katy Parker at U10 Girls' Singles, Hannah Yardy at U11 Girls' Singles and Karen Lockwood at U12 Girls' Singles. U11 Girls Doubles champions were H Swierkowski and B Joshi and U12 Girls' Doubles title went to Karen Lockwood and Trudy Bloor.
- ❖ The National Team Finals were held on 12th June 1994 at Grantham. Northumbria won the Wilmott Cup, Wolverhampton the JM Rose Bowl, Hull the Carter Cup and Carlisle, the Bromfield Trophy. Cadet trophies went to Reading in the Leach Cup, and Carlisle in the Hammersley Cup. The club cups, the Gainsford Cup and the Ormesby Cup, went to South Kesteven and Ifield respectively.
- ❖ In the European League England's men finished a creditable second.
- ❖ The ITTF Council in 1994 made the decision to ban gluing up at venues from 1st August 1995 and dispense with glue rooms straightaway due to glue and its vapours being a danger to health. So, another twelve months plus before coming into effect and after many years and protests, particularly from England who had already banned gluing up. Another good decision was to remove the over 60 age ban on umpires, a discriminatory age consideration as well as one that could not be justified. Where would we be if only 60-year-olds and under could officiate? Germany and Sweden proposed that the World Championships should have a restricted number of entries and not be open to all member associations, an unpopular proposal and one which was defeated although a few years later came into force.
- ❖ Jia Yi Liu was appointed full time junior coach replacing Carole Moore who retained her position as women's team coach. Denis Neale became England men's captain; he was one of England's most capped players with 495 caps.

- ❖ Lisa Lomas appeared on a Question of Sport and Forrest Gump showed how table tennis could be played!



*Carl Prean, Matthew Syed,
Chen Xinhua, Alan Cooke*

- ❖ England received a wild card at the Team World Cup in Paris in October and reached the quarter-finals with a team of Chen Xinhua, Alan Cooke, Carl Prean and Matthew Syed.
- ❖ Harlow opened a 16-table centre in June originally called Burnt Mill Academy of Table Tennis Skills, hence BATTs.
- ❖ The Pat Archdale Women in Table Tennis Trophy was awarded to Jill Parker.
- ❖ Died: Dennis Reed, Chairman of Sussex TTA and recipient of the Leslie Forrest Memorial Trophy in 1988; Frank Clay, ETTA Vice-President 1974; Mike Greatrex, ETTA Treasurer 1978-80 and recipient of the Ivor Montagu Award in 1974, and former internationals Rita Doolan and Allan Brown in the 1930s (no photo).



Dennis Reed, Frank Clay, Mike Greatrex, Rita Doolan

World Mixed Doubles Olympic Games Qualification: 11th-12th April 2024: Havirov, Czechia

Four Mixed Doubles places were up for grabs at the World Mixed Doubles Qualification event in Havirov with players from all over the world.

Anna Hursey of Wales was due to play with England's Liam Pitchford under GB and Northern Ireland. Unfortunately, due to Pitchford's injury they were unable to participate.

After two days of play, the four places went to:

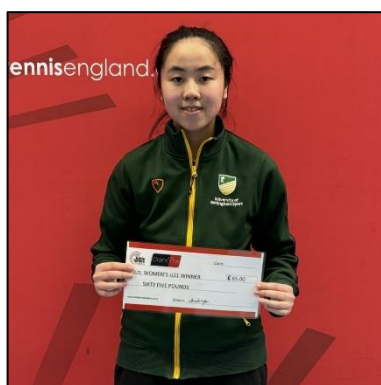
- Ri Jong Sik and Kim Kum Yong of Korea DPR
- Wong Chun Ting and Doo Hoi Kem of Hong Kong China
- Alvaro Robles and Maria Xiao of Spain
- Kristian Karlsson and Christina Kallberg of Sweden

Wolverhampton Grand Prix: 2nd-3rd March 2024

Photos courtesy of TTE

This is the last season for the Grand Prix series to be run as the new competition structure comes into force next season. The Grand Prix have been one of the highlights in the calendar each year since 1996/97 and although the number of tournaments has varied from 12, to latterly, four a year, plus Satellite tournaments, the series has still proved popular and a good grounding for many players as well as being the only high level individual open tournaments run by TTE.

It was, therefore, good to see the Wolverhampton Grand Prix well supported, not only by English players but a number from other nations. It was Yat Poon, studying at Nottingham University from Hong Kong, China who took the Women's Singles title with victory over Jersey's Hannah Silcock. Semi-finalists were Darcey Taylor of Wales and Ewelina Sychta.



Yat Poon



Kevin Brunzell and Larry Trumpauskas

The Men's Singles was won by scratch entry Kevin Brunzell of Sweden with Larry Trumpauskas taking the runners-up spot. The semi-finalists were Ralph Pattison and Jakub Piwowar.

The two Under 21 Singles titles went to Poon for her second victory of the weekend whilst Joseph Dennison first of all beat his older brother Adam in the semi-final before taking care of Tianyi Yu in the final. Joseph Marlor was the other semi-finalist.

It was a good weekend for the Trumpauskas household as Lorestas won the Veteran Singles with a win over Ireland's Rory Scott. Mircea Neagu and Kevin Nicholls were the semi-finalists.

The Restricted Singles, for those between the Under 21 and Veteran ages, resulted in a close win for Bryan Kwan over Umair Mauthoor whilst Ethan Walsh, nice to see him back on the Grand Prix circuit, and Josh Bennett were the semi-finalists.

Other winners:

Band 1: Juan Carlos Pomares Gallardo and Ella Pashley

Band 2: Juan Carlos Pomares Gallardo and Darcey Taylor, Wales

Band 3: Tom Irwin and Grace Looney, Ireland

Band 4: Pablo Ramirez Rioja and Grace Looney, Ireland

Band 5: Shun Hei Chang

Band 6: Oliver Jordan

In Memoriam

Christine Lewis



All the ladies who have ever played in the Women's British League from its inception to today have a great debt of gratitude to pay to Christine Lewis who passed away peacefully on 12th January 2024 aged 89 years.

Christine was ever present at all major events and at National Council weekends supporting her husband, Mike, who was the ETTA Vice Chairman Development for many years. So, it was natural for her to become the Assistant Organiser of the Women's British League (WBL) when it was launched in April 1989 with Mike holding the main organising role. That first weekend it was not only the play that was described as magical with 130 players taking part to an incredibly high standard but Saturday evening saw a delightful dinner with time for socialising as well. The whole weekend was a real treat. The WBL launch followed from the Women in Table Tennis Conference where MP Edwina Currie was a speaker amongst other prominent people.

Christine continued in her role as Assistant Organiser until 1992 when she and Mike reversed roles and Christine continued as the Organiser until 2005 when she retired. Her contribution to the WBL was immense both in its early stages and as it developed into a unique and very popular tournament in the event calendar for women. Christine was also secretary and administrator during those 17 years. She received The Solihull Trophy twice, a trophy presented by the WBL, for an individual who enhanced the Women's British League. She was the first recipient in 2000 and was a recipient for the second time in 2005 jointly with Mike.

Other ETTA committee positions which Christine held were Women's Steering Committee Member 1991-92, Women's Development Committee Member 1993-97 and Secretary 1997-98, Membership Committee Secretary 1996-97, Veterans' British League (VBL) Organiser for several years, again, assisting husband, Mike who helped launch it.

At regional level, Christine became secretary of the South West Region from 1989-90.

Perhaps one of the more pleasurable roles that Christine undertook was as VIP hostess at the European Championships in 1994, popularly known as Euro '94 in Birmingham, the World Veteran Championships in Manchester in 1998 and the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in 2002. A role which Christine performed admirably.

For her contribution to table tennis, Christine was honoured by becoming an ETTA Vice President in 2003 followed by the Ivor Montagu Award in 2005 "for her work as Secretary/Organiser of the Women's British League Committee since its inception 17 years ago".

At the WBL 25th anniversary weekend over 14th-15th February 2014, Christine was invited to attend as a special guest with her son Paul, husband Mike sadly having passed away shortly before.

Christine was a charming lady and worked tirelessly and quietly for the benefit of so many. Her gentle demeanour and graciousness will be remembered by all who knew her.

Our sincere condolences go to all Christine's family and friends.

George Tyler



ETTA Vice-President and International Umpire passed away on 22nd January 2024 aged 92 years.

George was born in Newport, Monmouthshire on 15th July 1931 but lived most of his life in England. However, he was always a proud Welshman and it was for Wales that his three children, Bryn, Nigel and Lesley, all played at international level.

George was one of our best and most experienced umpires, becoming a County Umpire in 1981, National Umpire in 1984 and International Umpire in 1986. He officiated at some of the most prestigious tournaments and championships not only in England but around the world. He was at the World Championships, Manchester 1997 and the following year at the World Veteran Championships in the same city and also at the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in 2002, the first time that table tennis was played in the Games.

George was part of the umpires' team in Glasgow at the Commonwealth Championships in 1997, the Disabled World Championships in Paris 1998 and the Paralympics in Athens in 2004. He officiated at various European Championships at all age levels including Euro '94 in Birmingham, Stuttgart 1992, Czech Republic 1996, Eindhoven 1998, Italy 2001 and at several International Schools Championships.

George was a regular on the domestic scene, including, the English National Championships from 1992-2004 and many English Opens during the same period. Other duties included the Island Games, Jersey in 1997 and the Isle of Man in 2001. In 2004 and 2005 George led the umpiring for the prestigious Ocean International Cup held at Fairfield Halls, Croydon. Although George last umpired at the National Championships in 2004, he was still present after this, clipboard in hand, as he took on the role of Umpire Assessor, firm but fair in his judgements. George ensured that the high quality of umpiring that England was so well renowned for was maintained.

In 2004 the Association of English Table Tennis Umpires (AETTU) was formed, an independent body to look after the welfare of umpires and raise any issues with the national governing body. George was its first Chairman and continued in that role until 2021 when at the age of 90 he decided that it was time to hand the baton on, the following year he was made the Association's President. George's experience and wisdom were greatly valued. In recognition of his valuable work with the AETTU, George was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation, a book of photographs and a crystal bowl.

As well as his umpiring prowess, George also passed his knowledge and experience on to others in an administrative capacity serving as a Member of the ETTA Umpires and Referees Committee (NURC) from 1992-2004, the Umpires Review Panel 2002-2010, the Umpires Review and Mentoring Panel 2010-14, Umpires Selection Panel 1994-2002 and the Umpires Qualification Panel 1994-97. At regional level George was a Committee Member of the East Midlands Region where he was first appointed in 2007 and at county level, he became Chairman of Lincolnshire in 2007 until 2022 and also their Deputy National Councillor in 2006/07 and National Councillor 2007-2021.

In recognition of George's significant contribution to table tennis he was made a Vice-President of the ETTA in 2009.

Although George was best known for his umpiring duties, he was no mean player and represented both Hertfordshire and Lincolnshire at county level. Perhaps one of his proudest moments was when he became the Men's Veterans Champion of Wales in 1987.

Our sincere condolences go to wife, Sylvia, children Bryn, Nigel and Lesley, all George's family and friends. He will be missed by all who knew him.

Future Dates

Domestic Events:

Junior National Cup: 20th-21st April 2024, BATTs, Harlow

Junior, U17 & Cadet National Championships: 4th-5th May 2024, Nottingham

Cadet National Cup: 18th-19th May 2024, St Neots

Gloucester Grand Prix: 25th-26th May 2024

ELCC Finals: 1st-2nd June 2024

U11-U13 National Championships: 8th-9th June 2024, Wolverhampton

London Grand Prix: 29th-30th June 2024

Also note the TTE AGM will be held on Saturday 20th July 2024. This will be a remote meeting only; it will not be possible to attend in person.

International Events:

ITTF Singles World Cup: 15th-21st April 2024, Macao

World Table Tennis Day: 23rd April 2024

European Olympic Qualification: 15th-19th May 2024, Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina

European Under 13 Championships: 22nd-26th May 2024, Bucharest, Romania

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

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

Paralympic Games: 28th August-8th September 2024, Paris, France

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

World Youth Championships: 1st-8th December 2024, Helsingborg, Sweden

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

European Veteran Championships: 15th-22nd June 2025, Belgrade, Serbia (note it is not possible to get to Belgrade by train)

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