

ABERDEEN AND DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION

SECRETARY'S REPORT - SEASON 2022/2023

This season saw activities return to almost normal with EC meetings taking place regularly in person rather than via Zoom. It was also pleasing to see an increase in the number of teams competing with four healthy divisions although doubles play has not yet returned to league play. Chris Davenport has covered all the league and cup competitions in his final report before he heads off to pastures new therefore I have just detailed some of the highlights both locally and nationally.

Thanks to the efforts of Gregor Ksiazek another successful **Ping Pong Tournament** was held at Woodbank Sports Centre in November 2022. On the day 16 players competed in 4 groups of 4 with the top 2 from each group then progressing to the quarter finals while the bottom 2 from each group played in the plate event. Charlie Matthew and Daniel Tibbetts progressed to the final where they gave an absolutely amazing show, easily the best ping pong match in the short history of this event here in Aberdeen. Charlie's experience with the sandpaper bat ultimately proved decisive and he won the event 3-1. Andy Keith took the honours in the plate event with Chris Davenport runner up. Thanks go to Dave Curry and Chris who helped secure Woodbank for the event. Charlie Matthew went on to play at the Scottish Ping Pong Championships in Dundee and was the first Aberdeen player to reach the final, losing out to last year's champion Ian Johnston.

After an absence of two seasons the **North Open** made a very welcome return to Aberdeen Sports Village on Saturday 7 January 2023. The tournament attracted an excellent entry with just under 100 players from as far afield as Shetland and Inverness to Dumfries and Ayrshire with representation from all other leagues ensuring a lively atmosphere on the day. All events were keenly contested and there was a high standard of table tennis on display. The Men's Singles was won by Danny Bajwa (Dumfries), making his first appearance in Aberdeen, who defeated veteran Elgin player Niall Cameron in a five set thriller while Drumchapel's Lucy Elliott claimed the Ladies Singles title with victory over her clubmate Alisa Khalid. Niall gained some consolation by taking the honours in the Over 40's with victory in the final over Ross Martin. Local successes came in the Junior events with Harry Blackhall and Maja Wojcicka claiming the titles following thrilling five set matches in their respective finals. Kiishi Adekola won the Minor Girls event with Nikki Mo runner-up while Victor Chen was runner-up in the Minor Boys.

The final local tournament of the season, the **North Confined**, took place on Saturday 28 April 2023 and attracted a great entry (eventually!). We also extended our invitation to players from Elgin, Inverness and the Shetlands and they were delighted to come down to compete. The premier events of the day were of course the Rubber Shop Trophy, the AU Open, and the Watt Cup. The AU Open dates back to 2008, but the other two go back as far as the 1930's, and are highly prized titles for our local players. Congratulations go to Harry Blackhall who lifted the Rubber Shop Trophy following a four set victory over Daniel Tibbetts. Mitch Reid defeated Maja Wojcicka in a thrilling five set final to win the AU Open, interestingly he was the first winner of this trophy in 2008. Mathew Pszonka was delighted to win the Watt Cup with the fast improving Kiishi Adekola runner-up. In the days' other events, Uwe Petermann defeated Gregor Ksiazek to take the Over 40's while Mitch Reid claimed his second title in the Over 60's event with Doug Seller runner up. The newly created Over 19 to Under 40 event is proving increasingly popular and this was won by Ilona Obst-Wojcicka with Gavin Elliot taking second place. Allan He and Robbie Martin took the honours in the U19 and U15 events respectively with Jakub Krzyzostaniak having to settle for the silver medal in both. The Bert Park Trophy, which is presented to the winner of the U13 event, went to Mathew Pszonka who claimed his second title, and trophy, of the day with a convincing victory over Shetland's Ross Drakeford in the final. Thanks go to all the players who supported the event.

Table Tennis Scotland events continued as normal and I have detailed below some of the highlights:

The Perth Grand Prix was the first event to be held during the season and attracted a healthy number of players from throughout Scotland who competed in the ten events on the day. Local successes were few and far between, however Ilona Obst-Wojcicka won the Ladies Singles, topping the group of five, while Maja Wojcicka was runner-up in both the Cadet and Junior Girls events.

There were some excellent results for the ASV contingent at the combined **Scottish Primary & Senior Schools Championships** which took place in February. In the Primary events all four titles headed north with Victor Chen taking the Boy's singles and again teaming up with Mathew Pszonka to claim the doubles title. Kiishi Adekola also had a fantastic day securing the Girl's singles without dropping an end while Nikki Mo took second place. Kiishi and Nikki also retained the doubles title for a clean sweep. Victor, Mathew, Kiishi and Nikki therefore qualified to represent Scotland at the British Primary Championships which took place last month in England. There the girls took home bronze medals for their efforts in the team event. Aberdeen youngsters secured three qualifying places for the British Senior Schools International which takes place next month. Maja Wojcicka claimed her second consecutive U14 girl's title while Jakub Krzyzostaniak was delighted to secure his first Scotland cap by finishing in the top four in the U14 boys event. Daniel Tibbetts was runner-up in the U16 boy's event. Good luck to Maja, Jakub and Daniel in Ireland.

The **Scottish National Championships** took place in early March in Perth where Aberdeen again had great representation across all categories, with some great performances resulting in players reaching the quarters and semi-final stages. However Kiishi Adekola claimed Aberdeen's only title of the weekend with victory over her ASV Academy clubmate Nikki Mo in the final of the U13 girls. Kiishi also claimed the runners up spot in the U15 girls.

The final event of the domestic season, the **Scottish Interleague** took place a couple of weeks after the SNC's and a strong contingent of players travelled to Perth to compete over the weekend. Congratulations go to the Minor Girls (Kiishi Adekola, Nikki Mo) who claimed first place in their event. For the first time in nine years the Minor Boys team (Mathew Pszonka, James Tait, Dean Robertson) had to settle for second place while the Cadet Boys (Robbie Martin, Jakub Krzyzostaniak, Ben Stewart) and Junior Boys (Harry Blackhall, Daniel Tibbetts, Allan He) put in some great performances to secure second place in their events. In other events contested over the weekend the Veterans team (Uwe Petermann, Ikenna Asogwa, Andy Keith) were very unlucky to miss out on a medal as they finished third on countback while the Ladies team (Ilona Obst-Wojcicka, Maja Wojcicka) were also third. The Senior Men (Ross Martin, Andrew McRae, Gavin Elliot) finished in a very respectable fourth place in a competitive category. It was great to see a few new youngsters playing for Aberdeen at this event – James, Dean and Ben – and hopefully they enjoyed their experience playing as part of the team.

Finally

Thanks go to my fellow EC members for their continued hard work and efforts throughout this busy season. We will definitely miss Chris Davenport as he has done a fantastic job as Match Secretary and been an integral member of the EC however we wish him well for the future and hopefully he might return to play in a tournament! I am sure however that Neil Paterson will be a splendid replacement and look forward to him joining us officially at the AGM. Gregor Ksiazek continues to do a great job on the social media front, updating our [tabletennis365](http://tabletennis365.com) website on a regular basis and adding items of interest. We also have an ADTTA Twitter page which Gregor and Craig Blackhall have been utilising very well. I have continued to keep the Aberdeen Table Tennis Facebook page updated with news and other items which may be of interest to members so please send in a member request if you wish.

As always a large of vote of thanks go to Max, Dick, Natalie, Donald and all the coaches and volunteers who dedicate many hours of their time to ensure table tennis in Aberdeen continues to flourish. It is thanks to their efforts that our players continue to be successful.

Wishing all our members a good break over the summer period and we hope to see you all refreshed next season.