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**John
Jaques**



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Front cover: The jubilant NFD Grove team that beat World Champions Sweden in the team event final, at the Peniel 5 Star (Picture by John F.A. Wood)

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Player of the Month



Desmond Douglas had two great victories at the Peniel 5 Star, beating Sweden's Peter Karlsson and Thomas Von Scheele

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TABLE TENNIS NEWS 1992

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Jane is off to Belgium

JANE BARELLA has been given a great opportunity to increase her table tennis experience, with the news that she will be playing in the Royal Federation of Belgium Table Tennis for the Royal Alpha CTT Ixelles club in Brussels, for the 1992/93 season.

Jane, who is 26 years old, is disappointed that she will not be able to play in this season's Women's British League, but looks upon this opportunity as a great chance to learn and of course enjoy the travelling and meeting new people.

Barella has been the Surrey No.1 for the past eight years and is currently ranked at No.34 in England.

She plays with a Nittaku Best of Five offensive blade and uses Tibhar Speedy Spin rubbers.



Jane Barella

Viking Victory

ENGLAND's men were sunk 4-1 by World Champions Sweden in the Super Division of the Joola European League, in Malmo on 22nd September.

Carl Prean won the consolation game for England beating Sweden's Peter Karlsson 18 and 17.

Sports reunion

THE largest ever reunion of sports players from Exeter University will take place at the Hurlington Club in London on 6th November 1992.

Further details are available from Chris Bignell, Sports Reunion Ball, Northcott House, Queens Drive, Exeter EX4 4QJ.

Father & Son

STEPHEN MOORE of Sussex and his number one fan, two and a half year old son James, were a picture of happiness at the Peniel 5 Star Championships, in September.

The reason for their happiness is the good news that eight month old Alexander Moore has made a splendid recovery and is now doing very well.

Alexander at the age of one day old underwent a five and a half hour operation, after it was discovered that he had a heart defect at birth.

The operation, transposition of the great arteries, was successfully performed at Guys Hospital in London.

World Corporate Games

SEVEN HUNDRED table tennis players were expected to play in the World Corporate Games which were held at the Goresbrook LC, Dagenham on October 3 and 4.

Companies from all over the world entered teams in a variety of sports. The Greater London and South East Region under chairman Michael Close were asked to lend their expertise and to take an active role in recruiting (expenses paid) personnel to run this event.



Stephen and James Moore

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TIME FOR CHANGE

THE main event on the international scene this month was the European Masters which was very well staged by the German Association in Karlsruhe. It brought together 12 of the best players in the world, including Chen Xinhua and Carl Prean. The winner was the Olympic Champion, Jan-Ove Waldner, who again proved his class when the stakes are high, and this was one of the richest prize money tournaments in the world.

The best English performance was Chen's 3-0 victory against Jean Philippe Gattien the Olympic Silver medallist. Xinhua lost narrowly in the 5th game against World Champion, Jorgen Persson in the quarter finals.

As well as bringing together the top players in the world, the leading officials from both the International Table Tennis Federation and the European Table Tennis Union were present for informal meetings and much of the discussion centred around trying to make table tennis more attractive for the spectators and television. This tournament was itself an experiment in that for the first time in a major international senior event the scoring system was changed to play to 16 points rather than 21, by starting each game at 5 all. The object was to shorten the games and increase the frequency of exciting climaxes. Overall it seemed to work - all concerned seemed to be pleased with the outcome.

In discussion it was generally accepted by the I.T.T.F. President Ichiro Ogimura, and European President, Hans Wilhelm Gab, and their colleagues that more needs to be done to bring back spectacular play and excitement, particularly in men's table tennis in which, like tennis, the rallies are regarded as being generally too short. One reason is the use of the fast glues which not only shorten the rallies but also can be a health risk to the players. Legislation may well come forward at the I.T.T.F. Congress in Gothenberg next year to ban the use of fast glues.

Not only is there an argument in favour of change at the international level, the same discussions need to take place at the local level. Membership of the English Association has been declining steadily since 1979 and I would like to invite every local league throughout the country to discuss with



Alan Ransome

their members the ways and means of stemming the decline and starting to increase the membership once more. This is not just a concern of mine, I have received a number of letters on the subject from members and held discussions with concerned parties as I have travelled around the country.

Some possible reasons for the decline are facilities, loss of business premises, lack of suitable premises. The whole question of facilities is currently receiving a lot of attention jointly by the Sports Council and the E.T.T.A. We are working closely with the Technical Unit for Sports, the Sports Council's facilities arm, to produce updated specification sheets for a) play in sports centres, b) data sheets covering all facilities, c) new build specifications for table tennis centres ranging from 4 to 16 tables. Once completed this information will be very widely circulated to table tennis clubs, both government and private facility providers, etc. The intention is to improve facilities generally for playing table tennis, particularly in sports centres, and to provide new permanent centres, both as a separate build and as an add-on to existing leisure facilities.

Another reason cited for the loss of members is the systems that are used for league play in our local leagues. Matches which start at, say, 7.30pm and finish at 10.30pm are regarded by some as being unattractive to new people wishing to join the sport, particularly youngsters. In this respect

league committees might like to discuss with their members the possibility of the system used in the European Masters with games starting at 5-all, so reducing the evening's play by 25%, or running separate divisions of 2 a side consisting of 4 singles and 1 doubles. These alternative systems could be introduced as an extra division to bring new people into the league as existing members may well be very satisfied with the current arrangements.

These are some ideas. You may have others. If so, please write to the Letters column of the magazine and put them forward. Innovative thinking is really necessary if we are to stem the loss of members.

The Focus Sport programme is continuing to gain momentum and the Development Department is planning a series of 6 one day conferences in different parts of the country during the season to inform members about the opportunities which the Focus Sport programme proposes, including sections on development, coaching and Sports Council and local authority support. Another section of the conferences will be an open forum which will invite members to put their questions or suggestions to senior members of the E.T.T.A. Management Committee. Further details of these conferences will be issued by the Development Department shortly.

Another initiative introduced into the Focus Sport programme designed to increase membership is the "Join a Table Tennis Club" campaign. According to official statistics there are approximately 3,000,000 people who play table tennis for leisure in this country, but only 50,000 are members of the Association. The E.T.T.A. are planning a major advertising campaign to inform and encourage the leisure players to join a club and thereby join the Association. Posters are being produced for display in sports centres and other public places as appropriate and the manufacturers of the hobby bats and balls are being requested to include information of how to join a table tennis club within the packaging of their equipment. The Association is building up a database of clubs in each league that are able to take new members so that as inquiries generated by the advertising campaign come into the Association's office, informa-

tion on a local basis can be provided. The co-operation of every league throughout the country is sought in the compiling of this data bank and secretaries will be receiving information on the campaign towards the end of October after the project has been discussed by National Council.

Over the last month a new Development Officer has been appointed for the East Midlands. He is Harold Taylor, a former member of the National Council and a very experienced person in local authority recreation departments, having been a senior recreation officer with Nottingham County Council prior to his early retirement. I am sure that Harold will add a great deal of experience to our Development team.

With a very busy domestic and international programme planned for the 1992/93 season, I hope that the months ahead will prove enjoyable and successful for everyone.

THE FIRST WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

See Page 26



Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, London. The playing venue in 1926 for the First World Championships

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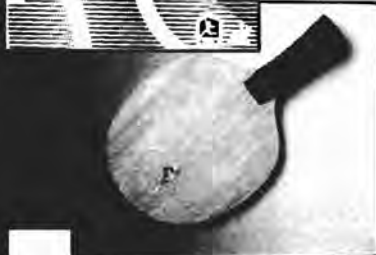
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Sensation of the season



Pictured above are the two NFD Grove gladiators Nicky Mason (left) and Desmond Douglas

NFD Grove's Desmond Douglas and Nicky Mason created the sensation of the season as reigning world champions Sweden were beaten 3-1 in the final of the Peniel Five Star Open Team Event in Brentwood in September.

Meanwhile, there was to be a welcome return to the tournament scene for Chris Oldfield playing his first competitive table tennis since an horrific car accident last November. Oldfield partnered Mason in the opening group match against Team Peniel and impressed immediately with a straight sets win over young Vince Avery whilst Mason proved to be to sharp for Clive Carthy. Oldfield's good form continued in the next match against Scotland as John Broe fell in straight sets and Des Douglas overcame the impressive Euan Walker.

The final group match was to be against the hot favourites Sweden with Peter Karlsson and Thomas Von Scheele proving to be in fine form against Douglas and Mason, with the Scandinavians winning 3-0.

In the groups Sweden beat Grove 3-0 so the spectators were looking for another win for

Sweden. Des Douglas v. Peter Karlsson, 12 in Europe, was the first game and Des went straight for the jugular in his own inimitable way, he smashed everything that bounced higher than two inches off the table and hit the rest.

After taking an early lead, Des was pulled back to 14-14, but he upped a gear and took the game 21-17. The second was a copy of the first with Des forcing every shot and Peter doing his best to counter. Des was enjoying the game and never once lost control. Peter came into the game at 17-18 but Des coasted home on the other points to take the match 21-17, 21-17.

Von Scheele 30 in Europe v. Mason was the second match, but for some unforced errors in the first game against a very confident Von Scheel, Mason would have been closer to his opponent than the 12 he managed to muster. The second

game saw Nicky take an early lead being 10-2 in front at one stage but Thomas gnawed away at the score and pulled back to 10-9 before Nicky with some good serving crept slowly in front to lead 19-11. He was too experienced to allow another revival from his opponent and took the game 21-12.

In the decider Nicky copied his teamster Des and went straight into the attack keeping the few points in front that forced Thomas to attempt suicidal attacking shots, some came off but Nicky stuck to his task and he hit some superb passing shots to take the final game 21-15. 2-0 to Grove.

The doubles came next and Des and Nicky went out to face the World Champions in this event. The first game was played with all 4 participants attacking at every opportunity. Sweden kept their noses in front all through the early stages

finally allowing Grove to pull back to 14-14 it went to 17-17 then at 20-20 two unforced errors from the Grove boys saw Sweden home 22-20.

The 2nd game brought the World Champions to life and they played a much tighter game with few loose shots. Des and Nicky came into the game for short spells but could make no impression on the Swedish pair until the end when they won 8 out of 10 points to pull level at 20-20, two points later and Grove were home. The final game saw Sweden go into a lead then Grove decided to join in and drew level at 6-6, change of ends came at 10-8 to Sweden who managed to stay in front gradually increasing their lead to 16-10. Grove then swept back to 15-16 but Sweden nosed ahead again to win the decider 21-17.

The fourth contest was between Douglas and Von Scheele and with Grove needing



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just one more game to win the event, Des went into the attack once more with serves that were troubling Von Scheele and close to the table attacking shots that were proving fruitful he took the game 21-14. The second slowed a little and Des took some easy points with some finely placed shots. Von Scheele could not seem to get into the game and Des romped home 21-10.

Saturday also saw the start of the mens and ladies groups and it was not long before we had the first upset when Nicola Cowley (Bu) climinated Sally Marling (Y) England No.6 lady. Nikki played some superb attacking shots and kept Sally under constant pressures. At one game all the third turned out to be a real nail biter with Nikki forging ahead just for Sally to pull the points back at 20-20.

Nikki really went for the points and success was hers. Linda Radford also lost to her close rival Helen Lower with no other surprises Lisa Lomas (1) Alison Gordon (3) Andrea Holt (4) Elena Timina (2) reached the semi finals. Lisa had a terrific match against Alison with the latter winning the first 21-17, following some lengthy rallies. The second was a real scorcher with both players forcing the pace and the points being evenly shared at 20 all the rallies became fiercer and neither player giving a thought to safety, the points were there to be won and they went for them, 24-22 to Lisa was the result and a third game was necessary. This started in similar style and after numerous exchanges, Lisa won 21-18.

Andrea Holt's opponent in the other semi was Russia's No.1 lady Elena Timina and this also was a great contest, although Andrea won 21-8, 16-21, 21-13.

The mens singles saw an early casualty when No.4 seed Skylet Andrew went out in the

third round to Jonathan Taylor. The mens doubles saw the World Champions from Sweden Peter Karlsson and Thomas Von Scheele facing two young men just returning to competitive play following accidents. Bradley Billington of Derbyshire having a year out due to a thigh strain and Chris Oldfield following a serious car accident in 1991

The World Champions really showed their class and although the English pair tried desperately to unseat their rivals they coasted home 21-10. Brad and Chris changed tactics in the second and seemed to keep the ball short and wide but the Swedish pair were not to be deterred, and although scores were close to start with, the Champs were not troubled in winning 21-14.

The ladies doubles was between the Grove pairing of Russian No.1 Elena Timina and England No.3 Andrea Holt on one side and England No.2 Alison Gordon with England No.4 Fiona Mommessin Nee Elliott, on the other. Andrea and Elena swept into an early lead but Alison and Fiona pulled back at 5-5 and crept ahead leading 14-11. The points were being quickly won with the occasional long rally being thrown in and the English pair had no trouble in taking this game 21-13.

Alison and Fiona carried on where they left off and forced the pace from the start in the second game, but this seemed to set their opponents alight and they responded with some fine defensive play that swept them into the lead at 10-8. There was never more than two points separating the teams and the rallies were getting longer and more fiercely fought.

At 18 all Elena and Andrea forced two errors from their opponents to win 21-19. The final game was very lively with the ladies really moving the ball around the table. There were defensive and attacking sessions with points being won mainly with attack. Andrea and Elena had the better shots with the little luck needed to sweep home 21-12.

The ladies singles final was between Lisa Lomas of Bedfordshire and England and Andrea Holt of Lancashire and England both ladies started capgily, knowing and respecting the others capabilities and the score crept up with Lisa, a recognised defensive maestro, making a lot of attacking shots which were winning her points. Lisa now

Top picture: Thomas Von Scheele (left) and Peter Karlsson, Sweden's triumphant Mens Doubles Winners, far left is Peniel's Michael Reid, and far right is Brentwood District Council's Jim Shawcross. 2nd from top: Russia's Elena Timina. 3rd from top: England's No.1 lady and pre-tournament favourite Lisa Lomas. Bottom picture: the likely lads of the tournament, organiser Dick Roffe (left) and Referee Peter Roden



Women's Singles Champion Andrea Holt (left) and Men's Singles Champion Peter Karlsson

attacking strongly and this started Andrea hitting but the accuracy of Lisa's passing shots saw her comfortably home 21-15. Andrea started the second with some fierce hitting and took an early lead of 11-4 only to see Lisa chopping her way back to 13-15 but finally being beaten 21-18. The final had Andrea going straight into the attack bringing the defensive skills of Lisa into operation, but Lisa had no intention of letting her opponent dictate the game and proceeded to hit out at all the high balls. Play was very even with both girls converting defence into attack and points were evenly shared. Andrea then hit a period where she was forcing Lisa into making mistakes and swept home 21-12.

Sweden's Karlsson No.12 in Europe went into an early lead counter attacking Des Douglas with forehand smashes. Des was out hit at this stage but with fine close table play he pulled his way back to 12 all. Peter then proceeded to pressurise Des again and took the game 21-14. The second game went point for point with Karlsson hitting strongly and Douglas countering the low crosses. Karlsson appeared unstoppable and hit everything that came at him, finding the wings of the table with ease. Douglas could find little answer and finally went down 21-17.

Another Swedish player took the arena for the second mens singles semi final and his

opponent the defensive machine from Berkshire and England, Matthew Syed. Syed fell behind when Von Scheele lured him to the table and then hit past him.

The Swede showed no respect to defensive play and sprayed his shots all round the table surface. Syed came more into the game and the rallies became longer, but still his opponent came at him. Towards the latter part of the game Syed was finding his length and won points with unbelievable returns, chopped from the floor.

This seemed to upset Von Scheele's flair and Syed came home 21-19. The second started with Matthew unwilling to hand over the initiative and Thomas's sweeping shots were being meticulously chopped back with returns far back in the court. With the flurry of shots still coming at him from all angles Matthew started to wilt. The Swede kept up the pressure and won 21-17. The final game saw Matthew going 9-1 down and never being able to pull back into the game, finally losing 21-12.

The Swedish pair Peter Karlsson and Thomas Von Scheele met in the mens singles final and we saw a well contested match. The first was a mixture of both attack and defence with attack winning the points. The points were shared with exciting bouts of attack and Von Scheele was determined not to be outgunned by his higher regarded friend and

rival. The score reached 20-20 and Von Scheele just sneaked in at 24-22 with some passing shots. The second saw some great cross court hitting with Karlsson drawing ahead and eventually winning 21-13.

The final game saw Karlsson moving Von Scheele

around the table, varying his attack both in peace and direction and building up a 6 point lead. Ends were changed at 10-4 with Peter keeping up the pressure and although making some loose shots which cost him points, won easily 21-10.

RESULTS

Mens Singles Semi Finals

P. Karlsson (Swe)	v.	D. Douglas (Wa)	21-14, 21-17
T. Von Scheele (Sw)	v.	M. Syed (Bu)	19-21, 21-17, 21-12

Final

P. Karlsson	v.	T. Von Scheele	22-24, 21-13, 21-10
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Ladies Singles Semi Finals

A. Gordon (Bk)	v.	L. Lomas (Bd)	21-17, 22-24, 18-21
A. Holt (La)	v.	E. Timina (Russia)	21-8, 16-21, 21-13

Final

A. Holt	v.	L. Lomas	15-21, 21-18, 21-12
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Ladies Doubles Final

E. Timina	v.	A. Gordon	13-21, 21-19, 21-12
A. Holt		F. Mommessin (St)	

Mens Doubles Final

P. Karlsson	v.	B. Billington (Dy)	21-10, 21-14
T. Von Scheele		C. Oldfield (Y)	

Saive makes progress - but Waldner still the master

FEW pundits will dispute that Sweden's Jan-Ove Waldner is currently the world's best player. Some will even say he is the best player of all time. What was spelt out in Karlsruhe at the splendid Europahalle was that he has no intention of resting on his laurels now he has won the Olympic gold medal.

His serving has improved dramatically. At the press conference after the tournament finalist Jean-Michel Saive said "At times I could not cope with his service spin."

Waldner's strengths are so widespread. He is incredibly fast in retrieving, his venomous top-spin, his angles are brilliant and he rarely makes reckless shots.



Xinhua Chen

putting the Chinese player into the quarters.

Eliminating Gatién the world No.2 was of course proof that Chen can still beat the best in the world on a "good" day. On the second day, he again conjured excellent form, but just lost 17 in the fifth to Jorgen Persson.

With both England men relegated to the spectator seating, the crowd sat back to watch some excellent world class play in the final stages - Saive sparkled like a diamond from Amsterdam as he whipped out Persson three-straight, whilst Waldner took out Lindh who had a good tournament - he defeated both Grubba and Kim Tack Soo in the groups.

The Saive success in finishing runner-up and winning 18,000 DM - Waldner netted 36,000 DM - was surely helped by the absence of Roskopf and the double defeat of Gatién, but the popular Belgian player took full advantage of the scenario and who can blame him?

Gatién looked a trifle jaded - on Friday night he was a guest of honour in Paris at a glittering occasion to honour three French sportsmen who did well in Barcelona. Four thousand French people wined, dined and saluted the Olympic medalists until midnight.

As Gatién looked anxiously at his watch, the local Mayor offered his limousine and his chauffeur to transport Jean-Philippe to Karlsruhe. They drove through the night and arrived at 4am! Distance, some 300 miles.

KARLSRUHE RESULTS

Quarter finals:

J. Waldner (Swe) b A. Grubba (Pol) 20, -14, 19, 17
E. Lindh (Swe) b Z. Primorac (Croa) 20, -20, 19, 20
J. Persson (Swe) b Chen Xinhua (Eng) 16, -20, 17, -17, 17
J. Saive (Bel) b M. Appelgren -13, 13, 17, 20

Semi finals:

Waldner b Lindh -17, 17, 17, 18
Saive b Persson 17, 15, 16

Final:

Waldner b Saive -16, 12, -16, 18, 19

WOMEN (four players only):

Semi finals:

B. Vreisekoop (Holland) b N. Struse (German) 19, -14, 19, 13
C. Batorfi (Hungary) b O. Nemes (Germany) 19, -19, -12, 23, 19

Final:

Batorfi b Vreisekoop 16, 14, -18, 15



Carl Prean

JOHN WOODFORD REPORTS FROM KARLSRUHE

Having said that, he did not rush through his list of opponents so quickly as he did in Barcelona. He beat Carl Prean 3-0, dropped a game to Zoran Primorac, another to Andrzej Grubba, another to Erik Lindh and in the final he was a game down, 2-1 down, to the still-improving Saive but still hung on to win at 19 in the fifth.

Waldner fully deserved his gold medal in Barcelona and he was a worthy winner, retaining the European Masters Cup in Karlsruhe, simply because when he gets in a corner, he can whip up quickly a batch of points faster than anyone else.

A word or two on Jean-Michel Saive: His attack is becoming even more volatile, especially on the forehand. He has now reached three major finals - the World Cup, the European Championships and now The Masters, three times the "bridesmaid" - he will surely win his first title before long.

The England squad have never under-rated Jean-Michel - they will have to take him even more seriously at the second European League match at Newton Aycliffe on October 13.

England supporters did not have a lot to cheer on the first day - Carl Prean seemed to have the troubles of the world on his shoulders but he never gave up as he lost 15, 12, 20 to Waldner and 19, 17, 20 to Primorac.

Originally, Prean had been drawn to play Jorg Roskopf and Kim Tack Soo of Korea, but Roskopf had to pull out with a cyst on his left wrist and there was a re-shuffle that brought in Erik Lindh, despite the

fact that Matthew Syed was supposed to be the reserve player.

The only explanation on why Syed was not sent for was that he was "only a wild card reserve". However, the re-shuffle seemed to help Prean, but it seems that Primorac has also improved since Prean beat him in the semi-finals of the U.S. Open.

Chen survives

England had therefore to look to Chen Xinhua - so did the Germans - robbed of Roskopf and with Stefan Fetznér not quite "speedy" enough - he lost both his group games to Persson and Saive, the crowd (2,500 on the Sunday) cheered the Xinhua show that included the usual cartwheels and the attempts to retrieve from the third row of the seating.

On his first visit to the arena however, Chen was taken apart cleverly by Mikael Appelgren 12, 17, 9. What was the problem for Chen? For starters, he did not like the

scoring format of starting at 5-5 in each game.

Most of the players including Waldner said they did not like the 5-5 start. Chen said it was bad for defensive players as it did not give time to warm-up or consider tactics, Waldner said "The game was originally designed to be played to 21 points and I have not seen any better format."

Spectators, officials and of course journalists were happier with the 5-5, but of course, only in five game matches.

Recovery

On his second group appearance however, the tables were turned for Chen. He roundly defeated Jean-Philippe Gatién 11, 17, 20. The French No.1 and World No.2 had squeezed past Appelgren 18 in the fifth, but once again he had more trouble coping with Chen's back-spin.

In a tense situation, Gatién needed to take one game from Chen to go through but failed 11, 17, 20,

England go down in Budapest

ENGLAND's womens team travelled to Budapest, where they lost to Hungary 4-1, on 15th September, in the Womens European League, where the consolation win for England came from Luton's Lisa Lomas.

England's team of Lisa Lomas, Andrea Holt and Fiona Mommessin played against Scilla Batorfi, Kristina Toth and Vivien Ello, at the famous Statislika Club.

With the two No.1's playing in their designated positions, Fiona went on first against Batorfi. Fiona played very well and was leading 9-3 in the 3rd, but Batorfi stepped up a gear to take the game 21-14. Ello who had difficulties in the 1st game against Lisa, played extremely well in the 2nd and 3rd games - both deuce. However, Lisa's experience came through from 11-14 down in the 3rd to take the game 22-20.

The 1991 Junior European Girls Singles champion then went on to



Lisa Lomas

play Andrea. I felt Toth had improved since the Europeans in Stuttgart and was very consistent with excellent touch play. Andrea was under pressure, and attacked a little too much and lost 16 and 15.

Our doubles combination of Lisa Lomas and Andrea Holt played the two young players Toth/Ello, but never really got going and struggled before losing 18, 16.

The two No.1's were to play next, Batorfi and Lisa. Batorfi having just returned from the European Women's Masters tournament in Germany beating Vriesekoop in the final, took the 1st 16, and was 21-20 up in the 2nd, but Lisa fought back to take the 2nd 24-22. Lisa started well in the 3rd and was 7-3up, but she made some enforced errors and found it difficult to get back in the game and lost in the 3rd 21-16.

Lisa and Fiona chose to stay on after the match in Budapest to practise for 4 days with the Hungarian team.

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Handsome victory for NFD Grove

NFD GROVE started the new season where they left off last time round with a handsome victory in the Premier Division. Ian Marshall played the same players that finished in the first team last season - Desmond Douglas, Nicky Mason, Michael O'Driscoll and Jonathan Taylor and they had little difficulty in beating DML White Hart Launceston 8-0 with Douglas taking the Player of the Match award.

Team Peniel brought in Clive Carthy in place of Sean Gibson who was unavailable for their visit to Bathwick Tyres and he did not let them down, winning both of his singles and also his doubles match partnered by John Holland. Matthew Syed and Andrew Eden were both unbeaten in their singles matches, but lost out to Adrian Moore and Paul Lewis in the doubles. Holland beat Lewis but lost to Moore as Peniel ran out 8-2 winners.

Sedgefield District had their new stars Ian Stokes and John Hilton on view against Confederated Life St. Neots, but both of them dropped a singles set when



Sedgefield District's new star Ian Stokes

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Stokes was beaten by Keith Richardson and Hilton went down to Stuart Palmer. It was left to local 'boys' Eddie Smith, who was Player of the Match with three victories, and Ian Robertson, who won both of his singles, to set them up for an 8-4 success with Stokes (2) and Hilton (1) winning their remaining sets.

Rushton Marconi Lincoln got off to a good start in the first division North when they had the edge from the start against Bribar Humberside. Good displays from Player of the Match Steven Shaw and Richard Tilford helped them to a 6-2 victory.

Mark Owen gave an impressive display for Cheltenham Saracens who won 5-3 away to Well Connected Menswear whilst Phil Gunn had two good wins in Chan Construction's 5-3 home win over West Warwickshire.

A strong NFD Grove second team of Euan Walker, Brian Wright, Steve Ward and Helen Lower defeated British Gas CMK 6-2 but CMK's Colin Bowler took the Player of the Match award.

NFD's third team recovered from 1-3 down against Larkhall in the first division South to win 5-3. Steve Slater was the only player to win both of his matches in a very competitive and hard fought match.

Ellenborough got off to a good start away to Bathwick Tyres II

and raced to a 3-0 and then 4-1 lead, but the home team pulled it back to 4-3 before John Lennon steered the visitors to victory.

Horsham Angels had an easy 8-0 home win over BSG Brentwood with Peter Bartram outstanding.

Vymura International II looked set for a shock victory over City of Sunderland in division 2 North when Stephen Horsfield, Keith Whittaker and Steve Dobbins gave them a 3-1 lead, but the Wearsiders came back strongly to win 5-3, their sets coming from Ian Collier (2), Dave Robson, Cliff Olsson and Malcolm Lusk.

Leicester Lions recovered from 1-3 down to lead 4-3 against Vale Royal Warrington, but had to settle for a draw when Martin Simpson was beaten by Rob Bevan.

In the same division Sedgefield II overcame City of Leeds 7-1. In division 2 South East, JAGS were generally too good for Britannia Ipswich and thoroughly deserved their 7-1 success. Kleinwort Benson Gillingham beat Fellows Cranleigh 5-3 and Pillingier Air Croydon defeated Norwich Foxwood 6-2. Best quote of the week came from Linda Farrow's John Taylor after his team had defeated Rejects 6-2: "Duncan Taylor had a 7-5, 6-4 victory at Queens LTA rating tournament at 9 o'clock in the morning. Arrives just before the start and is the only player to win his sets comfortably.

No more to say, but Dave (Tan), John (Payne) and myself are taking up tennis!"

Only two matches in 2 South West with VRS Fareham and Nigel Thomas in particular playing well to beat O.L.O.P. 6-2 and Horsham Angels defeating Leckie by the same score.

Two players shared the Player of the Match award in 3 East when Chelmsford's Rik James and Ashford's Matt King took two sets each as Ashford gained a 5-3 success.

British Gas CMK II lost 5-3 away to BSG Brentwood II, but had the Player of the Match in Craig Millwood who won one set and came close to making it two in his first British League match. Reuben Albert steered Fellows Cranleigh II to a 6-2 success over Brent Juniors and Daniel Yardy was outstanding for Team Peniel II who defeated Norwich Foxwood II 7-1.

Some very entertaining table tennis was played at O.L.O.P. T.T. Club despite the home side's 8-0 defeat at the hands of Kinghurst Bribar who had strength in depth in division 3 Midlands. The same went for the match at Newport where Parkside Dragons crashed 6-2 to NFD Grove Colts. In the same division Hawbush C.C. and DML Launceston III shared the points in what was described as a 'nice friendly match'.

In the third division North 15 year old Gary Pestka of Uxbridge Burton took the eye with victories over Ormesby's Mike Nesbit (who went on to beat Nicola Deaton) and Karl Shaw. Uxbridge won 5-3.

Newcomers AALCO Leeds made an early impression with a 6-2 home win against Crusaders Lincoln, their number one Kevin MacKey being named Player of the Match. Paul Smith (Sedgefield III) won both of his sets on his Friendly Hotels B.L. debut in a drawn match with NFD Grove IV whilst Michael James and Andrew Nicholls did likewise for newcomers Senior Thermal Derwent who shared the points with City of Sunderland II.

Another team new to the league are WSIHE Lennox House Group and they made a winning start (6-2 against Ellenborough II) in the third division South, Nick Gamblin being outstanding.

Jean Philippe Foucher versus Daren Charlemagne sounds like a match from across the Channel, but in fact, it was the final set at Euston where Linda Farrow II beat Rejects II 7-1. For the record, Foucher was also Player of the Match.

RESULTS 23 AUGUST 1992

Premier

Sedgefield 8 4 Conf. Life St. Neots
NFD Grove 8 0 DML Launceston
Bathwick Tyres 2 8 Team Peniel

1 North

Well Connected 3 5 Chelt. Saracens
Bribar Humb. 2 6 Rushton Marconi
Chan Const. 5 3 West Warwickshire
NFD Grove II 6 2 British Gas CMK

1 South

Horsham Angels 8 0 BSG Brentwood
NFD Grove III 5 3 Larkhall
Bathwick Tyres II 3 5 Ellenborough

2 North

Sedgefield District II 7 1 City of Leeds
Leicester Lions 4 4 Denall Harcross
Vymura Int'l 3 5 City of Sunderland

2 South East

Fellows Cranleigh 3 5 K.B. Gillingham
Pillinger Air 6 2 Norwich Foxwood
Linda Farrow 6 2 Rejects Lambeth
Britannia Ipswich 1 7 Jags

2 South West

Horsham Angels II 6 2 Leckie
VRS Fareham 6 2 Olop

3 East

Fellows Cranleigh II 6 2 Brent Juniors
Team Peniel II 7 1 Norwich Fox. II
Chelmsford League 3 5 Ashford (Kent)
BSG Brent. II 5 3 British Gas CMK II

3 Midland

Parkside Drag. 2 6 NFD Grove Colts
OLOP II 0 8 Kinghurst Bribar
Hawbuch C.C. 4 4 DML Launc. III

3 North

Sedgefield District 4 4 NFD Grove IV
City of Sund. 4 4 Senior Thermal
AALCO Leeds 6 2 Crusaders Linc.
Uxbridge (Burton) 5 3 Ormesby

3 South

Linda Farrow II 7 1 Rejects Lamb. II
WSIHE Lennox 6 2 Ellenborough II

nine months has seen the introduction of regular coaching sessions on eight tables and a club night on twelve. Previously the area could boast only one junior player and a handful of clubs making up the two division Darlington league. The coaching sessions have been attended by over 50 youngsters and the club night by over 80 players of all standards. Sedgefield District Council see the British League involvement as the pinnacle of the scheme.

Council Chairman Christine Gowton said: "Our British League teams are the vision of excellence for our young to aim for. We as a local authority are proud to put our support behind such a dedicated and forward thinking club. With their past success, both on the table and in gaining a rich reputation for organisation, I am certain that together we can make Sedgefield District a major name in the sport."

The 1992/93 season sees the Sedgefield District first team elevated to the re-organised Premier Division. Last seasons squad has been strengthened by the arrival of former European champion John Hilton, Scottish No. 3 Ian Stokes, ex-Scottish No.1 Keith Rodger, and North-umberland No.1 Eddie Smith. The aim is to establish a place in the division.

Club Manager Keith Wilson is fully aware of what lays ahead but he is still optimistic about the future of the club, "Premier Division has arrived a season earlier than we had planned but we now have three sides in the league which gives us a perfect link through to our development structure. We do not have the financial muscle of the Groves or Peniels but we should find out feet first time round. We may not be a match for the top clubs yet, but we have everything in our favour to eventually get there," he said. Taking into consideration that the club has come from Regional League obscurity in 1988 to the top division, and having played in a small village hall in contrast to the luxurious surroundings of Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre, they are certainly a club to watch in the next 18 months or so.



Sedgefield District Development

STEPHENS NYSD, South Durham's British League club, raced through the 2nd Division North last season winning all fourteen matches, the last of which taking only 1 hour 50 minutes to dispose of Yugo Cars. With their three year sponsorship deal with the

Stephens electrical group now ended, they have adopted the name of their partners in a development scheme aimed at increasing the image and participation in the sport. Sedgefield District Council have put a lot of time and resources behind the plan which in only



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ETTA County Supplement

AVON

Bob Murray

AVON COUNTY TTA has seen a change of President during the close season with Henry Whitmore having to stand down for personal reasons. Henry has been President since the county's inception in 1974 and has been extremely active in supporting country events. The new President is another Bath and Avon stalwart, Bob House - also there at the birth.

Chairman Eric Wynn, at the county AGM, thanked all those who had contributed to a successful 1991/92 season. He paid special thanks to Dave Nipper for his excellent work as referee during the Closed Championships, June Watts and Peter Sandford for their hard work in organising that event, John Burtenshaw for his National Councillor work and the County Championships sub committee for ensuring the smooth running of all our teams.

I understand that Eric has been very ill recently and I know that the whole Avon table tennis community will wish him a speedy and complete recovery.

On the playing side Avon have entered the same sides as last year in the County Championships. Our senior lists will be hoping to go one better than last year's runners up spot in Division 1B. The senior 2nds however, appear to have a tough task in Division 2B and avoiding relegation will be an achievement whilst I expect both the Junior and Veterans sides to be pushing for promotion.

Bath League

My information is that Mayfield, both champions and cup winners in recent season, have withdrawn their Premier side from the league. This should mean that the title battle this year will be between last year's champions Longwell Green and Oldfield although Mayfield's Trevor Lloyd will significantly strengthen whichever team he joins.

Times have been difficult in Bath lately. As well as Eric Wynn, both John Higgs and Gordon Holley have been laid up and I look forward to seeing all three fit and well in the very near future.

Bristol League

The shock news from Bristol has been the withdrawal from the league of Nailsea Leopards, champions for the past five seasons. Brian Reeves has transferred to his former club, Failand, in Division 1, but it appears that Steve Bettison and Gary Baldwin will not be playing regularly in the league this season. Knowle and Brislington A therefore will be warm favourites to take this season's title but expect BAWA Brigands and Bristol Club B to be strong challengers.

Weston Super Mare League

Weston enjoyed a successful campaign last year with Cleeve and Claverham Tigers taking the Division 1 title and the Musketeers winning Division 2. Tigers completed the league and cup double by defeating Bleadon youth Club in the Archdale Cup final.

There has been a significant breakthrough of younger players into the league in recent seasons. This is a direct result of the coaching initiatives At Cleeve and Claverham YMCA and Worle School.

BERKSHIRE

John Cunningham

GOOD NEWS FOR Ali Subhan, Berkshire's 12 year old table tennis star. The World Federation of Khoja-spre Shia-speu Ittina-Asheri have awarded

him a £750 grant. This worldwide group have a base in Stanmore, Middlesex. Without the help of this Muslim Communities group it would be difficult for Ali to meet his tournament schedule for the coming season. Ali has also sent me a letter thanking all those who raised the £500 for his trip to the European Youth Championships. He makes particular mention of REME Arborfield, Our Lady of Peace Social Club, Kingfisher TTC and members of OLOP TTC. The Chairman and Secretary of the Bracknell and District League also made individual contributions even though Ali does not play in that league.

End of an Era

Bracknell TTL President John Stickland has stood down from the post due to temporary ill health. John's involvement in the league goes back to 1956, shortly after the league was founded. In those days the league was organised by local companies and known as the Bracknell and District Industrial League. John became a senior league management member in 1967 and also found time to form the Secomastic TTC. During the next ten years he held every position on the Bracknell Committee and became a talented and much respected player. Together with Eric Townshead, a director of Secomastic he organised and funded a variety of functions, ranging from representative and exhibition matches to social functions and AGMs. At the same time his own club became a significant force within the league. During that 10 years the growth of local table tennis was mirrored by the growth of industry in Bracknell. The league increased from 5 to 9 divisions. John was appointed life Vice President in 1967/8 for services to the league and could well have enjoyed a back seat position. However, when he returned to the area in 1987 he returned to an active table tennis life. He was elected President, a post that he held until this year. Every year the John Stickland Shield award is presented to an individual who has contributed most to local table tennis. His son is a regular player for Bracknell TTC and a key member of the Bracknell League Committee. Just starting to play are John's two grandsons Stuart and Thomas Hughes. We now look forward to Grandad and son Mike playing at league tournaments.

Local Leagues

Not much to report on the local league scene at present. However, all the leagues are set for an exciting season. Sonning Common and Peppard look to be too strong for the rest in the Reading 1st Division. Telephones are out to ring the bell in the Bracknell Premier. OLOP have spread their wings to the Maidenhead Premier and will have 9 teams in the Reading Youth league. Finally, would the Maidenhead and Newbury Press representatives keep me in touch with their local highlights in particular tournament news.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Yvette Hooks

AFTER A FEW years absence from Table Tennis, the county's recently elected Vice President suggested it would be appropriate to include some Cambridgeshire Notes.

Cambridgeshire is divided into four leagues, Cambridge (7 divisions), Wisbech (3 divisions), Ely (1 division) and March (1 division). In the forthcoming season, the county has three teams, senior, junior and veterans. The county had entered a second team which unfortunately had to be withdrawn due to lack of ladies. This appears to be a common problem within the counties.

There are 3 competitions held each season - County Championships,

Counties 2

Constable Cup (round robin competition for under 21's) and Kekki Mistri Cup. This Cup was donated to the county by an Indian gentleman called Kekki Mistri. Each league is represented by a team of four players (Senior Men, Senior Women, Juniors and Veterans) and is played on a round robin basis. These events will be reported throughout the season.

In the meantime the notes will end with this season's senior rankings. The junior and veterans will following in a future report.

Men

1. K Richardson
2. M Harper
3. A Withers
4. G Davies
5. M Livermore
6. G Jordan
7. T Ashman
8. T Smith
9. J Turner
10. K Gray

Women

1. H Newbound
2. Y Hooks
3. A Edge
4. A Mills
5. H Phillips
6. J Pettitt
7. J White
8. C Shaw

ESSEX

Alan Shepherd

IN MY APRIL report I indicated that all was not well in our camp and that the Management Committee was investigating. I can now reveal that in January I received a telephone call from a spokesman for the Peniel academy which is not only a club in our Brentwood League, but also a specialist table tennis school. The message I received was that the five players from the school who had been selected by me to play in the series of matches against other counties due to be played during the following two weeks would not be available. No reason was given for this extraordinary behaviour, the direct result of which was that the second and third junior county sides had to settle for the runners up spot in their respective divisions of the County Championships instead of being champions.

From February until June the General Secretary of the County awaited the receipt of an answer to the letter which she had sent to the Peniel Academy requesting an explanation for their conduct. None was forthcoming until the Chairman intervened and wrote personally. Eventually a letter came in giving as the reason for the withdrawal of the players that the mistress in charge of table tennis at Peniel was 'fed up' with the way in which the junior affairs of the County were being run. The meaning of this was obscure and in the light of the fine record of the county teams during almost every one of the last five years.

The Management Committee met in August and unanimously resolved that the Chairman should write a final letter to Peniel informing them of the confidence which the county had in its elected representatives and inviting them to nominate the players they wished to take part in the Junior Trials, through the Brentwood League of which they were members.

I regret to say that no such nominations were received and no Peniel players took part in the Trials. It is very sad that, through no fault of their own, but purely because of some imaginary grudge held by their teachers, players of the calibre of Vincent Avery, Jenny Coleman, Daniel Yardy, Alex Yardy, Tracy Davies, Verity Cleminson and no doubt many others, have been deprived of the opportunity of representing their county.

Nevertheless, life goes on and the county staged very successful trials over two days at their SETTS Centre. The formal ranking lists have yet to be compile, but Cris Sladden and Shelley Ruocco were unbeaten and fine performances registered by Ryan Savill, James Wickens, Steve Joslin, Reagan Nettleingham, Karen Mason, Michelle King and Nikki Kennard, around whom the plans of the county will have to be formulated during the coming season.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Alf Peppard

CHELTENHAM'S DAVE HARVEY, England's No. 1 Veteran player of a couple of seasons ago, and one of the original player/members of Gloucestershire's Cheltenham Saracens team in the British League will, I understand this season, be playing for Bathwick Tyres in the Premier Division, all the best to Dave.

Another local player, Elaine Marshall who lives in Gloucester, and is a disabled player, flew out to Barcelona in early September to represent Great Britain in the disabled Olympics, better known as the Paralympics, despite her disability Elaine plays in the 3rd division of the Gloucester league, and regularly attends weekly coaching sessions to further her progress. To the best of my knowledge, Elaine is the sole disabled table tennis player from Gloucestershire to be selected to represent Great Britain in Barcelona. I fully anticipate that a BBC radio interview will be awaiting upon her return, and indeed why not? Win or lose, she certainly deserves it.

Ever since the Gordon League TTC was formed in Gloucester, many decades ago, several international names have played for that club - to name a few, Bryan Merrett, Ian Harrison and Roy Morley leap to one's mind. A few years ago, a major road development scheme involving the complete demolition of the old Gordon League's playing venue took place, which meant the club were forced to acquire new premises elsewhere, these premises were eventually located and a brand new building was constructed at Hempstead Village, for two or three years at these new headquarters table tennis has flourished, season 1989/90 saw 12 teams entered in the handbook, last season 8 teams were registered, and then came the early summer of 1992. The authorities, who presumably own and run the Gordon League's new venue, have apparently decided that table tennis financially does not pay its way, and the two rooms laid aside for table tennis has had a wall knocked down and is now turned into a disco/dancehall. So once more, in a very short time, Bill Dawe (senior), Secretary of the tt section of the Gordon League, found himself seeking new playing premises.

Bill has, I understand, now booked the village hall at Hempstead for two nights a week, that will enable him to run 4 teams on an alternating weekly system, which is better of course than nothing, but greatly having to curtail teams to a minimum. One feels great sympathy for bill, he has done much for the Gordon League for well over 50 years and is to be congratulated for his efforts. And finally, I understand that as far as it goes - the name of the Gordon League goes also, to be replaced by the club's new name, The Wanderers.

Counties 3

Odds and Ends

Gloucester's General Secretary Sten Salisbury, informs me that at least two clubs in the City league have recently purchased Blue Stiga tables, those clubs are Tibberton/Taynton and the Rudford and Highleadon Club, one supposes that with the League's approval orange table tennis balls (as used in the Barcelona Olympics) could now also be used in these clubs respectively. AFTER ALL, WHAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR INTERNATIONAL TABLE TENNIS AT THE OLYMPICS - IS SURELY GOOD ENOUGH FOR LOCAL LEAGUE PLAY?

HAMPSHIRE Brian Lamerton

GREETINGS FROM HAMPSHIRE for the new season; not much news about when having to write in August but if I miss two months there will be a rumpus!

However, if there are any new press officers out there amongst our ten member associations, Lamerton is my name and 0489 781266 my telephone number. I have already contacted 3 from the eastern part of the county as a first in writing and talking about the sport for well over 20 years, a period in which i have always found the media people very cooperative, is that I have had a visit to my home by a press man. David King from the Portsmouth News came seeking my cooperation in coordinating news from these Associations. A great start to the season so, long before you read this, the five of us will have had a meeting in a cosy local hostelry and the treasurer will have choked on my expense chit!

Entries for the inter-town leagues are UP in most divisions but down in the juniors. The Isle of Wight who have gradually returned to the mainland fold have entered the mixed and are set to renew old battles with Bourmemouth; both geographically outside of Hampshire, but we are pleased to have them both. A very poorly attended AGM (was it the change of venue to Winchester Conservative Club - politics in table tennis? Surely not!). Nigel Lodder takes on the match secretary role from the late Doug Balchin and at the time of writing we have no coaching officer; otherwise everything and everybody as before.

With cooperation all round I might just have some county results before it's time to write to you again. Cheerio for now.

HERTFORDSHIRE John Wood

ADEYFIELD'S SECOND FRIENDLY Hotels British League match saw them gain their first point in Division 3 South, when they drew with Linda Farrow II.

This match pitched Watford's father and daughter combination of Dave and Sarah Seaholme, playing for Linda Farrow II against Hemel Hempstead's Mark York, Gary Keers and Kevin Masters, and Watford's Mike Levene, playing for Adeyfield.

But on the day, it was the match between Mark York of Adeyfield and Linda Farrow II's Dave Seaholme that brought the crowd to its feet. These two men did Hertfordshire proud, playing superb table tennis, with

Seaholme taking the first 21-10, and leading the second 12-3, Linda Farrow II looked home and dry with the match score standing at 4-2 in their favour. But Adeyfield's York mounted a tremendous comeback, taking the second 22-20, and the third 21-17 to earn man of the match award.

Meanwhile on the Junior and Cadet scene, following the county trials held at the Barnet TT Centre on 6th September, the following ranking positions were attained:

Junior Boys

1. Tim O'Leary
2. Stephen Taylor
3. Steven Nelson
4. John O'Leary
5. Arun Dhar
6. Josh Lury
7. Darren Turpin
8. Nick Hart
9. Mark Seaborne
10. Pat McCarthy
11. Alex Common
12. Tom Barnes
13. Danny Sturges
14. Ijor Hirons
15. David Warren
16. Tim Seaholme
18. Michael Common
19. Paul Tandy *
20. Steven Higgins
21. Gary Day
22. Jonathan Freeman
23. Paul Higgins *
24. Conrad Brown*
25. Jonathan Brown *
26. Russell Bennett *
27. Andrew Hart
28. William O'Leary
29. David Soloway
30. Peter Knust
31. Liron Hirons

Junior Girls

1. Caron Harber
2. Marie Masters
3. Michelle Budden
4. Anna Warren

Cadet Girls

1. Marie Masters
2. Michelle Budden
3. Anna Warren

Under 12 Girls

1. Anna Warren

Cadet Boys

1. John O'Leary
2. Josh Lury
3. Tom Seaholme
4. Michael Common
5. Paul Tandy
6. Steven Higgins
7. Gary Day
8. Paul Higgins

Counties 4

9. Russell Bennett
10. Andrew Hart
11. William O'Leary
12. David Soloway
13. Peter Knust
14. Liron Hirons

Under 12 Boys

1. Paul Higgins
2. William O'Leary
3. Liron Hirons

* Indicates all games not completed, hence ranking may be lower or higher than indicated.

ISLE OF WIGHT John Prean

FOR THE THIRD year running the Isle of Wight League managed to increase membership, though this time only by one extra team. This is very much against the long term national trends. It is the results of LOCAL rather than central efforts. It remains my view that this is the way this problem should be solved. We got £500 from the so-called (though not by me) John Prean £100,000 Development Fund and it was that summer when energetic coaching initiatives led by our Chairman Alan Hulbert began and brought new people into the game. We found no lack of interests in our sport among the young. Only mild encouragement is needed by way of indication that newcomers are welcome. The ONLY obstacle remains the shortage of decent premises where one can play the game as it should be played.

Our first Division has reverted to 12 teams, having tried an 8 team format last season. I am mystified by this apparent voluntary reduction in standards. The main reason advanced was that players were tired of playing the same, old faces too often. It looks as if the title will return to Sandown. Champions Wroxall have lost two key players, Chris Angus joining Newport Vics and Steve Bearsdell crossing the water each week to play in Southampton. It is unlikely therefore that Roger Hookey, Mike Turner and newcomer Ian Urry will be troubled too much when they seek to return the title to Sandown.

Those who expected Carl Prean to return quickly to the No. 1 spot on the English Ranking List were disappointed. He undoubtedly had good results (finalist in the US Open and last 16 in the Olympics). If he had NOT played in the US event, he would now be No. 1! Make of that what you will.

I conclude with the sad news that a significant figure of Island table tennis has died. Brian Pierce, who was for many years one of our best players and had immense influence off the table was lost to us at a tragically early age - not yet 60. He is perhaps best remembered as the moving spirit behind the old Sandown Club of the late 60's and early 70's which was a veritable table tennis academy in which the sport, its tactics and techniques, players, good and less good, were debated until deep into the night! It was not until 2am or so that our weekly indoor football match began! Those were the happiest days of my own table tennis life. I remember particularly our doubles marathons, usually played to best of 13 or even 17, which we called the "World Series". We all improved as doubles players as a result. Above all. Brian had a tremendous sense of

humour and love for the sport, which suddenly seemed more important than it had been before. We all began to take it more seriously and Island table tennis scored numerous successes in our expeditions to the 'mainland' where previously we had been thrashed.

Brian leaves a widow, Kathy, herself one of our best-ever lady players, who shared his table tennis passions and sense of fun and her part in the things I have tried to sketch was immense. As we paid our tribute for the last time, the many who had come to Brian's funeral, were the clearest indication of how much loved Brian had been.

KENT Adrian Hall

China Trip a Great Success

The 15 players and two coaches that spent the whole of August in China training at the Tianjin Institute of Physical Culture have come home thrilled by the experience and by all accounts anxious to go again. All have learnt an enormous amount about themselves and table tennis at a level totally new to most of them. Three national Chinese champions and world champions feeding and coaching is an experience that the players are unlikely to forget and from what I personally have seen since their return, the players level of play is noticeably higher in terms of consistency and concentration. Let's hope that this experience can be turned into positive results on the table.

Start of Season Junior Ranking List

Boys

Craig Hastie
Jason Cheeseman
Christopher Hall
Glen Ritchie
Christian Thompson
Peter Barrow
Ben McCarthy
Paul Smith
Ben McCarthy
Allen Crowe

Girls

Nicola Duke
Natasha Barham
Joanne Barham
Heidi Steers
Alison Smith
Crystal Hall
Angie Bristow
Rachel Woollven
Claire Chamberlain
Jade Stutely

Cadet Boys

Christian Thompson
Scott Friday

Counties 5

Antony Lickfold
Adam Beasley
Jonathan Cheng
Ashley Steers
Stephen New
Robert Gates
Alastair McTavish

Helen Garlick (Canterbury)	9	8	88.89
Lynne Martin (Bromley)	9	8	88.89
Kristina Cox (Canterbury)	12	8	66.67
Julie Pinfold (NWK)	12	8	66.67
Brenda Aherne (NWK)	9	6	66.67
Kim Smith (NKW)	9	6	66.67
Carol Homewood (Bromley)	9	6	66.67

Cadet Girls

Alison Smith
Angie Bristow
Rachel Woollven
Jade Stutely
Laura Pethers
Carrie Blake
Charlotte Eke
Ruth DaCosta
Cally Howes

Veterans Division 1 Points

1 Bromley A	49
2 Thanet A	46
3 NWK	40

Veterans Division 2 Points

1 Bromley C	49
2 Tonbridge A	45
3 Thanet B	32

1991/2 Kent League Results

Mens Division 1 Pts

1 Woolwich A	35
2 North West Kent A	34
3 Canterbury A	30

Mens Division 2 Pts

1 Medway C	26
2 Tonbridge A	24
3 Medway B	19

	P	W	%
Dave Davies (Woolwich)	15	12	80
Miles Willey (NWK)	9	7	77.8
Dave Emery (NWK)	12	9	75
Dave Griffiths (Woolwich)	15	10	66.67
John Huskel (NWK)	15	10	66.67
Ian Mileham (Thanet)	15	10	66.67
Ian Martin (NWK)	9	6	66.67

Paul Bannister (Medway)	11	10	80
Wayne Young (Medway)	8	7	87.5
Mark Henderson (Tonbridge)	6	5	83.3
Graham Diplock (Gravesend)	5	4	80
Neil Lemiillier (Medway)	11	8	72.7
Mike Cripps (Tonbridge)	6	4	66.67

Ladies Division 1 Points

1 Maidstone A	25
2 Bromley A	23
3 Gravesend	20

Ladies Division 2 Points

1 NWK B	26
2 Bromley B	26
3 Canterbury	21

	P	W	%
Tina Stewart (Maidstone)	9	8	88.89
Jackie Mersh (Gravesend)	11	9	81.82
Marylyn Dudgeon (Medway)	12	8	66.67
Jane Robinson (Bromley)	12	8	66.67
Alison Pearson (Maidstone)	9	6	66.67
Julie Lawrence (Bromley)	9	6	66.67
Carla Wilson (Folkestone)	6	6	100

	P	W	%
Keith Clarke (Thanet)	21	20	95.24
Dave Emery (NWK)	15	14	93.33
Tom Adams (Bromley)	18	15	83.33
Graham French (Maidstone)	12	9	75
Dave Kellard (Bromley)	18	13	72.22
George McGlone (Bromley)	21	15	71.43

John Neal (Tonbridge)	14	12	85.71
Tony Johnson (Bromley)	20	15	75
Mick Eames (Thanet)	15	11	73.33
David Cue (Ashford)	21	14	66.67
Colin Henderson (Woolwich)	15	10	66.67
Alan Stevens (Woolwich)	12	8	66.67

Junior Division 1 Points

1 Sittingbourne A	28
2 Tunbridge Wells A	22
3 Folkestone A	20

	P	W	%
Peter Barrow (Sittingbourne)	14	13	92.8
Glen Ritchie (Folkestone)	10	8	80
Christopher Hall (Bromley)	14	11	78.5
Charlie Chamberlain (Sittingbourne)	14	9	64.3
Jason Cheeseman (Tunbridge Wells)	14	9	64.3
Tim Pichowski (Ashford)	14	9	64.3
Paul Smith (Ashford)	14	9	64.3

NORTHUMBERLAND

Aubrey Drapkin

THE NORTHUMBERLAND ASSOCIATION are delighted to have obtained sponsorship from National Power at Blyth Power Station. National Power's Dave Rogers handed over a cheque for £500 towards the running costs of the Northumbria League at the League's presentation evening.

Counties 6

The new season gets underway shortly, although many teams have played non spot in the summer league, when North Shields YMCA will start the defence of their title.

Only one change on the Management Committee this season with Blaydon Youth Club's Brian Thompson being elected at the AGM.

The County selectors have issued their initial ranking lists for the season and these are as follows:

Senior Men

Eddie Smith
Ian Robertson
Barry Forster
Mark Christie
Stephen Coverdale
Andrew Wilkinson
Malcolm Lusk
Fred Short
John Russell
Pat Tindale
Steve Allen
Steve Penman
Jonathan Miller
Phil Robson
Neil McMaster

Senior Women

Caron Guthrie
Karen Newby
Christine Burke
Margaret Whellans
Joanne Donnelly
Denise Wilkinson
Pauline Long
Debbie Scholfield
Diane Cartmell

Veteran Men

Ian Robertson
Fred Short
John Russell
Pat Tindale
Maurice Cheek
Bob Dodds
John Williamson
Brian Bateman
John Donnelly
Keith Bibby
Charles Robertson
Charles Mouzon
Alan Livingstone
Dave Swann
Terry Straughan

Veteran Women

Pauline Long
Lily Aust

Junior Boys

Andrew Wilkinson
Martin Gibson
Oliver Court
Gareth Brown
Gordon Keogan
Paul McCann
Billy Stokes

Andrew Dinning
Neil Catley
Christopher Douglas
James Gray
Graham Bland

Junior Girls

Joanne Donnelly
Diane Cartmell
Susie Atherton
Leah McCullough

SOMERSET **Andy Seward**

AS INDICATED IN last month's Table Tennis News, little table tennis news this time around.

However, congratulations to Melonie Carey who has been selected to represent Great Britain in the World Student Games currently being played in Lyon, France. Melonie was earlier this year awarded a degree after three years study at Cardiff Institute of Higher Education.

Next month, a report on preliminary Regional Trials and an update on the county rankings - in the men's ranking have we a new No. 1?

SUSSEX **John Woodford**

SOME SUSSEX SENIOR players who normally work or play football on Saturdays are set to look at their priorities on Saturday 24th October the very unusual date set for the all-Sussex Championships.

the Worthing TTA, organisers of the major events in Sussex these days, are setting a new high target for expanding the Sussex junior championships due to take place, also at Lancing on the following day, Sunday 25th October.

To encourage expansion amongst the juniors, the aim is for 150 players and an extra incentive a schools team event, with each of three players appearing only once.

Apparently homework is a major factor, it is easier for the youngsters to play on a Sunday, so the major switch round is to take place despite some howls from middle and north Sussex where the younger players like Chris Munday and Scott Greenbrook play soccer on Saturdays.

One argument is that it is an annual event, some hopefuls who work will get time off and perhaps the soccer players will be excused. It would be a pity of British League players like Greenbrook and Munday cannot play in the County Championships.

Horsham Angels seeking promotion and a £2,000 win bonus if they can win Division 1 of the Friendly Hotels British League came unstuck away to Edison (Haringay) losing 6-2 as Ritchie Venner was seen off by David Goode.

Counties 7

But the Angels were without their No. 1 Mike Hammond who was away on holiday. It could be that Angels and Edison are the two strongest teams in the division. If so then the return match at Horsham after Christmas could be the decider for promotion.

WORCESTERSHIRE

Steve Horton

THE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS are underway with all of our teams looking to improve this season.

Our first team, relegated from division 1B to 2B are away to Cornwall for their opening fixture. Sandra Roden, our top ranked lady, will be missing, as she is still recovering from a knee operation. We hope that she can make a full recovery and be back in action soon.

The county 'seconds' who found the going tough last season take their place in division 3A and travel to Clwyd for their first match. They will be looking for the form and inspiration that almost gave them a league championship two seasons ago.

Can the veterans, who finished second in division 1A last year, go one better and gain promotion to the Premier division? Their first match is a tough one, at home to Leicestershire. Some of our top Veterans (Ray Dixon, Mervyn Wood, Janet Hunt and Linda Reid) were involved in some serious per-season training "the World Veterans Championships in Dublin! Mervyn Wood played well to qualify from his group and make progress through to round 4 of the straight knockout, in the over 50's. Reaching the last 32 was an excellent achievement - well done Merv.

John Smith (in charge of Juniors) informs me that Lee Horton, Keith Dean, Jonathon Briscoe and Craig Harris move out of the junior age group, leaving gaps in the team that finished second in division 2C last year. The Junior trials should determine their replacements for the coming season. Carrie Hunt, Zoe Evans and Stephenie Price will still be available to play.

Incidentally, Worcestershire County Committee have decided to play senior matches on a home and away basis having found the County 'weekends' unacceptable due to the heavy expenses that they incurred. The county could not afford another year under this system. The second team payers, in particular, look forward to playing their matches on an individual basis, which in the past has produced a good atmosphere, plenty of team spirit and no interruptions from other game s(interruptions one would only expect at tournaments). Results of the first county matches in next month's report.

PLEASE NOTE A CORRECTION TO LAST MONTH'S WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY NOTES:

From Line 16 the text should have read:

"Thorns, inspired by their season's leading player Ken Walton, remained unbeaten on the way to the league championship. Jeremy Duffield powered his way to a record 11 Kidderminster Men's Singles with Mandy House winner her 4th consecutive ladies final."

GRASS ROOTS

GRASS ROOTS is a new regular column that starts with this issue, that will feature news and gossip in the regions and counties.

So please send your photographs and interesting stories to John Wood, 5 The Brackens, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 5JA.

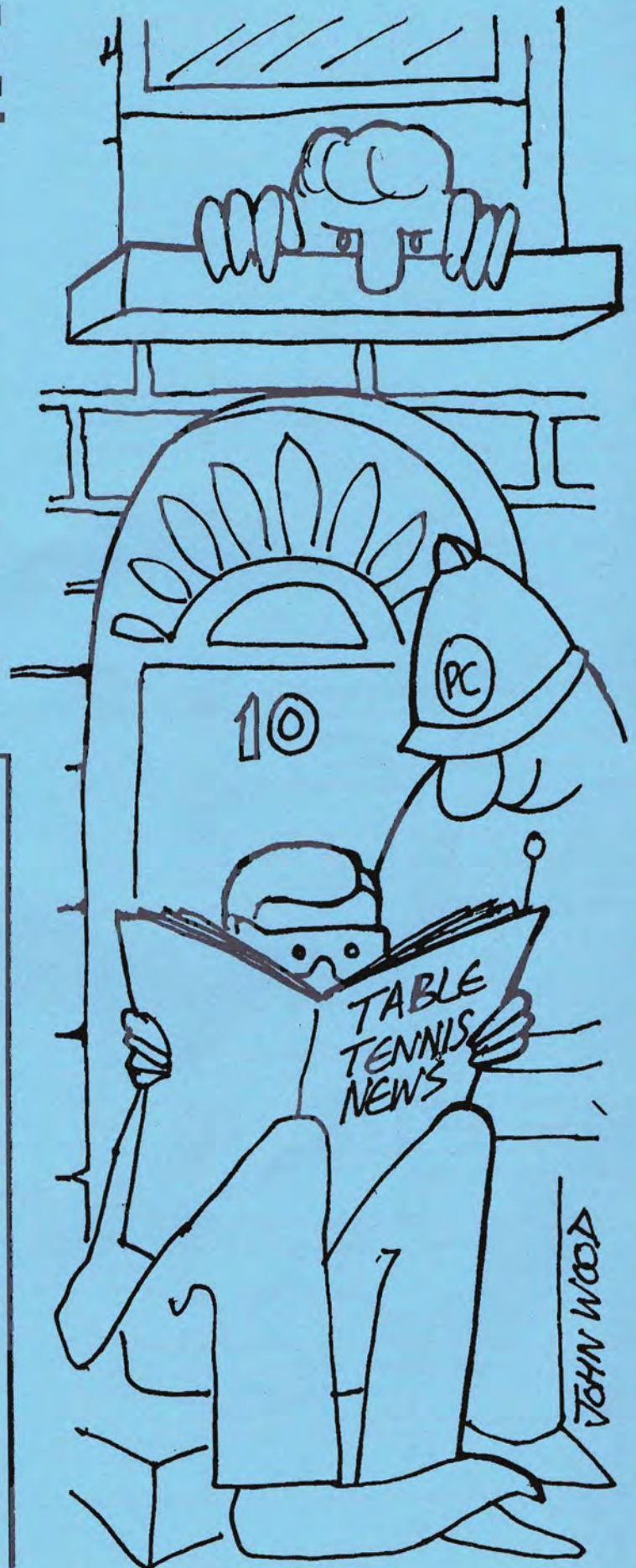
This column will be specifically for players, officials and supporters of table tennis, who don't normally see their name or photograph in this magazine.

So support your area by supporting Table Tennis News.

SEE PAGE 21

Counties 8

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Modern techniques and trends

by Ken Muhr

Versatility

THE top European men are able to block, drive and loop on both wings and, though they mainly hit the ball at peak bounce to maintain dominance, they can vary their timing points from early to late, late to early. Speed players like Roskopf and Waldner can also play well back from the table when forced to and late timers like Appelgren come/stay in sometimes to pick off winners. Add to this the ability to change pace, length, spin and direction (including to angles well wide of the corner), and to loop the ball straight and with two way sidespin ('hooking' and 'fading'), and opponents are kept guessing as to what is going to happen next. This induces hesitation, weaker openings and mistakes.

Also, the best modern players can chop block, stun block and slide block against loop close to the table (though chop block is becoming less effective as players can hit right through it); loop the loop early, peak of the bounce, or late; parry the ball back from away from the table; throw in the odd chop or lob; or 'wiggly' (with disguised sidespin kick left or right) against the short ball when required. Therefore they have many alternative ways of winning the point or of staying in the rally - some sort of answer to every situation. Sometimes when they are so out of the rally that they have little chance of winning it anyway e.g. when they are driven away from the table, they will chance a near 'impossible' winner which actually improves their (slim) odds of taking the point.

The Swedes such as Waldner and Persson are particularly skilful, imaginative and creative but this does lead to some inconsistency (a problem of having so many options?). But because most Asian attackers, although technically and physically excellent, lack the same versatility (and the penholders tend to lack strong backhands), they are doing relatively less well against the top Europeans - they are 'messed up' by their unpredictability. It is the two wing power and range of shots that has given the Swedes a recent slight edge over the Chinese in World mens team and individual events.

One Swede, Eric Lindh, seems to be paying for lack of variety in his game. His very early timing point on both wings, once heralded as the way top table tennis would be going, is not so effective now as opponents have become quick enough to attack his shots as top of the bounce, and he is generally too erratic as he has no margin for error (though he still has occasional moments of

brilliance). And he is not very good once away from the table.

In order to develop anticipation and a variety of 'intelligent' responses and adaptations at an instinctive level - the game is usually fast to analytically work it out while the rally is in progress - the top Europeans are doing a lot of 'irregular' table exercises: either starting from a set (regular) sequence after a few shots of which the rally is played out 'free', or where a controller distributes the ball irregularly (to different degrees) while the other players return it to a predetermined position or positions. The latter category of exercises might also end up free. The player being moved irregularly can decide which appropriate (usually attacking) shots to use, and obviously when the rally is free both players try to do what is necessary to win the point. These type of exercises are tough, demanding excellent stamina and footwork.

Service

Top players are not using the 'high toss' serve so much, though Skylet Andrew and Csilla Batorfi (Hungary) in the womens game, still use it. However, the forehand 'pendulum' serve, particularly the 'kicker', is still popular, with the forearm shielding the ball (from the sight of the opponent). Backhand sidespin serves are coming back into popularity and the tennis/'tomahawk' serve is also occasionally used.

Serves are mixed short and long to gain a tactical and surprise advantage. Short serves are played both with a pitch near the server's side of the net producing a shorter bounce on the other side of the table, and, more commonly nowadays, with a pitch close to the server's end of the table which first bounces near to the net on the opponent's side and then (were it not to be struck) would land just on or very near to the base line. This creates indecision in the receiver who is uncertain whether to push or 'flick' it, or to drive it (and risk damaging bat and/or hand on the table!). Another advantage of this type of serve is that the receiver has less time/chance to read the spin and length as the (often shielded) service is delivered almost immediately into the table from the server's bat.

Service technique, the most important part of table tennis, continues to improve but I cannot go into the disguise and tactical elements here.

Receive (return) of short serve

This is the second most important

aspect of the game. Long serves are attacked. Short serves are returned with a variety of (usually forehand) strokes, to keep the server guessing; touch (short push), or long fast push, or flick, played to the 'crossover' or wings. The touch shot, hit early, is generally played slightly longer than years ago, so that a second bounce on the opponent's side would land on or very near to the base line (thus creating possible indecision in his mind). The attacking push hit at peak bounce, hopefully forces opponents to get in with relatively weak attacking strokes which can then be successfully counter attacked, and is still widely used. The Swedes in particular are sometimes using an offspin, forehand push deep to a right-handed opponent's backhand, making it more difficult for him to run round.

Plicking is again becoming popular. The flick is not now produced with a turnover of the wrist but with a more consistent, usually slightly closed bat angle and fast wrist and forearm coming from behind the ball, hitting it at peak bounce. The elbow is low with the forearm used to give any necessary lift and extra leverage. Roskopf flicks very hard and the Swedes use a range of flicks (in terms of pace, spin and positioning). England's Michael O'Driscoll, and Waldner (who can do everything!), can backspin flick with an open batface. Possibly another category is loop-flick, which is covered by the next section.

Loop over the table

I still use the term 'loop' to describe very heavy topspin - it is a term that almost everyone recognises and I see no point in changing it! The 'loop the loop' off the bounce has been around for sometime now. However, a relatively new development is a loop, top of the bounce, against a short ('tight') backspin or float ball that would probably otherwise bounce a second time on the table.

With glue and a fast whip of the arm and wrist, and the (very closed) bat starting behind the ball, it is possible to loop over the table. For example, Gatien (France), can backhand (and forehand) loop a short ball and Waldner can also do this, though he normally favours looping with his forehand rather than backhand. Chen Xinhua, even without glue, can forehand loop almost every ball, however short.

Choppers

There are still a few backspin 'defensive' players at international

level, but in order to be successful, they must be able to attack decisively to put the pressure on opponents - brilliant retrieving and deception is not enough. In England, Chen Xinhua is constantly looking to attack with his forehand and Matthew Syed has greatly improved his ability and willingness to attack - and thereby his long term prospects. Lisa Lomas's excellent all-round game gives her the edge over most women defensive players (and attacking players!). She is still working on her forehand to compliment her backhand loop and drive.

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Mental toughness

Players are prepared to be brave and go for their shots, particularly on pressure points. If they see/read it, the top players can not attack with full commitment awkward shots like pimple or chop blocks, which they might once have treated with caution. But of course, being brave, being positive means doing what is right in the particular moment and circumstances to win the point, which may mean for example using a difficult or unexpected serve, delicate touch, 'dummy' loop or faded forehand - not always the power shot. The top players are 'cool' enough to do the necessary.

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equivalents once did with Jonyer, Klampar and Gergely. The Germans, on the other hand - always 100% workrate - seem to maintain a more consistent standard.

The women's game

The European women tend to play more straight forward and defenders less positive than the men. However, apart from sheer power there is no physiological reason why their game should not develop on the same lines and this is likely to happen.

Summary

There are no totally new techniques, though European players are becoming more all-round, versatile and imaginative. Their play is very positive with two wing power attack and the increased use of big forehands from the backhand side, trying to win the point as opposed to trying not to lose it. The short serve is a little longer than previously, with a second bounce on the opponent's side (were the ball not hit) near the base line - causing indecision in the receiver. Defensive players who attack can still be successful.

The implications for English coaching are that at beginners levels we should perhaps teach and combine two wing drives before pushes. At an advanced level we should develop: in combination backhand and forehand power play (with a fuller forehand body action from side square stance) and advanced topspin technique, anticipation and versatility of shot through the increasing use of irregular footwork exercises (and occasional lobbing and smashing, looping and chopping etc.), and (vitaly) service and return technique. We must get our players physically fitter, and also mentally fit enough to really play positive - how? is a big question I won't attempt to answer here but it has something to do with self discipline and thinking for themselves! When they are ready (another debatable issue), attackers will almost certainly need to go on to glue. And a player who wants to be a defender should not be put off, though he will also need to be able to attack well.

We must encourage youngsters to play in a positive, adventurous way that will bring them long term benefits, rather than in a safe, timid way for limited or short term success only. To many coaches this will be 'old hat', but the way most of our juniors now play on the tournament circuit indicates that there is much work to be done to catch up with the best of their age in Europe.

Winning at Junior International level

by Jenny Heaton

THE strength in depth at the European Youth Championships in Topolcanny was even greater than in previous years. There are few, if any, 'easy' matches now, especially with the inclusion of the 'new' countries, in particular Slovenia and Lithuania who finished 2nd and 4th respectively in the junior girls team event.

The gap between the top teams and the rest is however bridgeable and here are the areas in which we need to work if we are to close it.

Good serving

The most used service is the short one, where the 2nd bounce would be on the base line. It is better to sacrifice spin rather than length. If by trying to put more spin on the serve gets longer, use less spin until both can be achieved.

There are two reasons the short serve is effective; a) it stops an opponent from getting in on the offensive and b) it often produces a loose return that can be attacked.

In the girls game, against many opponents a good short serve to the f/h is most effective. It puts an opponent at full stretch making it difficult to maintain control and also leaves them vulnerable to an attack into the middle or b/h part of the table as they try to recover.

The long serve can also be useful in producing a weak opening shot by an opponent provided it is placed well to exploit weaknesses i.e. usually to cross-over or b/h but sometimes wide to the f/h! The long serve also has to land in the last 4 inches of the table with good variation of spin to be effective.

Any player can be a good server as this does not require a practise partner, just a lot of hard work and dedication. Yes it's boring but how good do you want to be? It can add 5 points on your game straight away.

A good example in Topolcanny was Pinter (Hun) who reached the semi final of the junior girls, partly because of her good high toss serves. Once in a rally she was no better than a lot of other players. Sally Marling played Pinter in the 3rd round and easily matched her in the rallies. However the pressure of having to win 4 points off her own serves every time finally proved too much and she lost 16 in the 3rd.

Positive play

We don't get in regularly or consistently enough or when we do it isn't strong enough or placed well enough to put the opponent on the defensive. The result is that we only get in first 40% of the time and then only win about 60% of the points. If

we improve this to getting in 60% and winning 90% of them we would always win!

Third ball aggression has to be practised regularly until it becomes automatic both in practise and matchplay. In the first instance some matches may be lost by always trying to attack every loose ball but once it becomes automatic and consistent you will find that you are able to beat better and better players.

Good opening shots

A topspin played into the middle of the table gives an opponent the initiative. The cause of these is in having too much upward swing in the stroke. A good opening topspin is one that is deep. To achieve this the stroke must have a forward swing at 45° to the table.

Touch returns must be short enough to prevent the opponent from getting in.

Flick returns must be long and fast with good placement.

A fast long push return can also be effective in the girls game but it requires good use of the wrist to produce enough backspin, speed and placement. Kusch (EUN) used this return very effectively from all parts of the table with her b/h! More of Kusch later.

Playing spin

We tend to use the block shot too much and negatively. It is also difficult to judge against a lot of spin.

It is far better to learn early on how to play through spin with more positive results. This is achieved close to the table at peak bounce, contacting the ball at about 12 o'clock with an horizontal swing. This has two effects a) it helps take the spin off the on-coming ball and b) it doesn't give an opponent as much time to recover.

Line balls

We don't use enough line balls. A good line ball will often force an opponent out of position and on the defensive but we predictably favour the diagonal ball and over use it. So practise those line balls just as much as the diagonals.

Fitness

Lastly but probably the most important area in which we are behind is in our fitness level. We simply aren't as fit as many of our opponents and this is an area, like

service, where a player has complete control. Players can be as fit as they are willing to be and it can put as much as 5 points on your game!

Styles of play

Here are a few observations on the changes that have happened in the girls game at international level over the last few years. This will mainly be of interest to fellow coaches.

Attacking players

The number of girls who are successful at topspinning on both wings has increased. It is a physically demanding style, requiring strength and a high level of fitness. 3 players; Muller (NED), Bakker (NED) and Negrisoni (ITA) reached the last 16 in the junior girls and 2 reached the same stage in the cadet girls; Frtalova (TCH), Bottcher (GER).

The drive players are very fast around the table taking the ball very early, some using pimples on the b/h but the big change is in their ability to spin well on the f/h thus enabling them to play well against backspin players. e.g. Cadet girls team final; Steff (ROM) bt. Ganina (EUN). Quarter final junior girls; Cojocar (ROM) bt. Tauschanova (EUN) 15, 16.

In the past most of the good drive players have been suspect against defense.

Backspin players

The most notable ones were Tauschanova, last 8, Ganina, cadet winner and Myskova (TCH) last 16. They were all more effective when close to the table where they used the wrist for variation of spin, twiddled below the height of the table and kept the ball very low making it difficult for their opponents to read the spin.

However once they were forced away from the table they invariably lost the point, however only a small number of players were able to do this consistently.

'One off'

There is always room for that elusive 'one off' player but of course this kind of player cannot be reproduced. They are unique and Kusch (EUN) junior girl finalist is one of these rare players.

She is very fast and able to attack any loose ball on either wing. Most of these loose balls she forces out of her opponent by using a fast wristy b/h push from both sides of the table.

However her downfall is her temperament as she often has lapses in concentration as she did in the final at Topolcanny, losing it deuce in the 3rd after looking well in command.

Grass roots development

Sportsmatch

THE Institute of Sports Sponsorship is about to launch, on behalf of the Government, a Business Sponsorship incentive Scheme for Sport to be known as "Sportsmatch". New sponsorship money going towards grass roots development will be matched on a £ for £ basis.

The aim of Sportsmatch is to encourage new and existing sponsors to support or extend grass roots development in organised schemes either locally or nationally.

Capital, as well as revenue, development initiatives will qualify providing the support is commercial sponsorship and the beneficiaries are non-professional. Awards are expected to be between £1,000 and £75,000 in any project in one year.

The launch, originally planned for September 1992, has had to be postponed due to certain unresolved issues, but the Government remains committed to the scheme and intends to be in a position to announce the launch date as soon as possible.

To receive detailed guidelines, rules and application form when available, contact Mike Scott at the Institute of Sports Sponsorship, Francis House, Francis Street, London SW1P 1DE.

The ETTA Development Department will also be happy to assist members in connection with the scheme. Contact either Diccon Gray or Doreen Nightingale on 0424 722525.

Staff Coach Southern Region Ken Muhr

I took up the game seriously when attending John and Margaret Cornwell's coaching sessions at the old Cambridge YMCA almost 30 years ago.

I am a former Cambs and Bucks county player and competitor on the open tournament circuit, and still play occasionally in the British League, Bucks inter-league etc., as well as the Milton Keynes



Ken Muhr

League. I am now, at the age of 41, a veteran and Bucks veterans champion!

I have been heavily involved in coaching and administration, in Cambs, Middlesex and now Bucks, for well over 20 years, and in fact was Cambridgeshire County Coaching Officer as a teenager, and National Councillor shortly afterwards. I am an ETTA Senior/Regional Coach and am currently coach in charge of Stopsley Regional Centre of Excellence and Milton Keynes (local) Advanced Training Centre, player/coach at the Regional ATC in Milton Keynes, Director of Coaching at the new Milton Keynes Table Tennis Centre and run several other local sessions. I am a member of the ETTA National Coaching Committee, secretary of the Southern Region Coaching Panel and a member of the Southern Region (Focus Sport) Discussion Group. Other positions I hold include general secretary of Milton Keynes TT League, National Councillor for Hunts TTA, and chairman of City of Milton Keynes (British League) Club. I have written articles and reports for the local (and national) press, and am a contributor to Table Tennis

News and other magazines.

Professionally, I am a qualified teacher and health education/promotion specialist. I enjoy good food and wine, blues and jazz music, plus following politics, current affairs and other sports (I am also an inactive LTA Part One Coach and former county tennis player).

The Les Bridges Interview

Table Tennis News interviews the most recently appointed Regional Chairman - Les Bridges (South-West).

Q - Well Les, it has been all Focus Sport Table Tennis planning since your appointment. How does the S-W Regional plan stand at present?

A - Our plan had a fairly smooth passage through to final draft stage. By the time the October T.T.N. appears it should be very close to publication.

Q - So, what comes next?

A - When I look at the work to be done it looks like 24 hours a day! However, while tremendous enthusiasm and energy is vital it is up to us - the Regional committees and Diccon Gray - to sort out clear priorities.

Q - And what might they be?

A - Well, we have recently appointed Kevin Satchell as staff coach for the South-West and an improved coaching structure is especially important.

Q - You are a coach yourself - have you any special thoughts?

A - Yes. It will be no use at all if we simply organise coaching without organised follow-up. Kevin can't do it all! We must motivate local players and officials to get involved. Initially qualifications are less important than willingness to commit a couple of hours or so a week, week-in, week-out.

Q - What do you think will be your main problem?

A - Getting T.T. people motivated at grass roots level. Too many people are doing multiple jobs while most players and former players either just play a league match once a week or have retired altogether. If we can get them involved we can really get things moving.

Regional Table Tennis Development plans

THE extract below is taken from a message by ETTA Chairman Alan Ransome, which is to appear in all Regional Focus Sport Development plans. It seems to provide useful ammunition.

"Table tennis is a great sport for all ages - a real lifetime sport - for families, schools, 50+, women, disabled - in effect for everybody who wants to become active. It can be played all year round in all weathers. It is safe and comparatively injury free. It is good for fitness of both the body and the mind, it is very space effective - 16 can play on four tables on one badminton court; 64 can play on a 5-a-side football pitch or tennis court."

Gold medal for Raylee

THE 15th British Transplant Games was held at Exeter in which over 800 competitors took part in events such as athletics, swimming, canoeing, racquet sports and many more.

Transplant

30 year old Raylee Burton of Latimer, Northants, who underwent a kidney transplant eight months ago represented the Oxford Transplant Centre team and achieved their first ever gold medal in winning the womens table tennis singles. She plays her table tennis in the Wellingborough & District League and is the daughter of Ken Marchant who is an ETTA Vice-President, National Councillor, Deputy Coaching Chairman, Regional Coaching Chairman (Eastern) and a Senior Coach.

Donor Card

Having been given a new lease of life, she is urging all sportsmen and women to carry a Donor Card and so enable many others to have the chance she has had.



Raylee Burton

Video of 1992 European Championships in Stuttgart by Don Parker

WE took our video camera to the European Senior Championships and filmed the England players in action from the corner of the court. We then made a copy for each player of their games plus any other games they may have wished to watch for tactical reasons.

While the quality is only as good as one would expect for home movie production, it is still possible to observe service and receipt techniques, advanced topspin and backhand techniques, positive play high level tactics etc. You can hear in some cases comments from the bench and I have put a brief commentary, which again is not too clear, but certainly audible, to highlight the important points. Bearing in mind the above points I have put together a 3 hour tape of a mixture of matches for any coaches or players who may be interested in buying a copy. The matches on the tape are:

Prean v Ding Yi (3rd Game)
 Chen v Palmi (2nd Game)
 Prean v Haldan (3rd Game)
 Syed v Appelgren (3rd Game)
 Prean v Eloi (2nd Game)
 Chen v Gatien (3rd Game)
 Cooke/Prean v Gatien/Eloi (2nd Game)
 Prean v Appelgren (3rd Game)
 Syed v Waldner (2nd Game)
 Prean v Persson (2nd Game)
 Lomas v Guergeltcheva (2nd Game)
 Holt v Vitcheva (2nd Game)
 Lomas v Wang (2nd Game)
 Gordon v Schalle (2nd Game)
 Lomas v Nemes (3rd Game)
 Syed v Mazunov (3rd Game)
 Lomas v Melnik (4th & 5th Game)
 Syed v Saive (3rd Game)
 Rosskopf v Saive (1st & 2nd Game)

With the England teams doing very well it makes the tapes more enjoyable as do the matches between topspin and backspin. I would stress the quality is not up to professional standards, however from a coaching point of view it is particularly interesting for up and coming players.

Should you wish to purchase a copy please send a cheque (payable to Mr. S. Fryer) for £12 to: Mr. S. Fryer, 8 Cleveland Road, Hale, Altrincham, Cheshire WA15 8AY.

Kate marries Andrew

THE wedding of Essex County Senior 2nd team player Kate Gower to British League player Andrew Wadling took place on 2nd May 1992 at St. Nicholas Church, Chipping Hill, Witham and afterwards a reception was held at Spring Lodge Community Centre, Chipping Hill, Witham. They now live in Witham.

Table tennis guests included bridegroom's parents Bill and Jean Wadling, Brian and Sheila Brumwell, David Cole, Martin Cole, Claire Weston. Alison Gower, Kate's younger sister was chief bridesmaid who is now recovering from a back operation. Kate, Andrew and Alison will hopefully be returning to the tournament scene very soon.



Andrew Wadling and Kate Gower

Comfortable win for Douglas



MARIE CURIE CANCER CARE BLACKPOOL 60th ANNIVERSARY 2 STAR OPEN TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS

ON 30 and 31 of May this year to celebrate the League's 60th Anniversary the Blackpool League in cooperation with Marie Curie Cancer Care held the towns first National Open Table Tennis Championships. The tournament, held at the Norcalympha Complex at the Norbreck Castle was one of the largest championships in the country.

The event held on twenty courts comprised of an Open Singles, Class 2 and Mixed Class 3 Singles as well as other events including Doubles, Junior and Veterans competitions. The Leagues appreciation for this inaugural event must go to Marie Curie Cancer Care whose backing contributed greatly to the success of the tournament.

The Mens Singles event was won by Desmond Douglas who ran out a comfortable winner against the young German international, Thomas Schroeder. Schroeder had played magnificently in the semi final against England ranked No. 15 Jonathon Taylor from Oldham, only to be overcome by Des who pulled no punches to win in two straight games.

The ladies final was a much closer affair with the Japanese



Paul Connolly (centre) with the Japanese and German teams

international Rika Matsuoka winning a hard fought battle against England ranked No. 3 Andrea Holt from Bury, the final game went to the Japanese girl in a very tight contest which she eventually won 23/21.

The mens doubles was won by Toshio Tazaki and Ryou Yuzawa who defeated Andrew Eden and Jonathon Taylor of Lancashire in the final. The Ladies doubles was very much dominated by the Japanese with all four players coming from that country. Murakami and Sakata ended up as winners over their fellow countrymen Matsuoka and Okazaki. The German team of Becker and Delle managed to

restore the balance a little by beating Tazaki and Matsuoka of Japan in the Mixed Doubles.

All of the Junior finals were contested by the Germans and Japanese with the Boys final being won by Tazaki of Japan who defeated Richter of Germany. Both of the finalists in the girls event came from the land of the Rising Sun with Matsuoka beating Murakami.

John Hilton won the Veterans tournament defeating Brian Allison in the final. The Class 2 Mens and Womens events were won by Steven Scrowcroft and Joanne Shaw respectively, the runners up being Graham Clarke and

Joanne Roberts.

Finally the Mixed Class 3 Singles was won by Eddie Smith with Malcolm McEvoy the runner up.

Cut glass trophies were presented to the winners by Nick Hawkins M.P., Alan Ransome (ETTA Chairman), Andy Williamson (Marie Curie), Alwyn Burrough (League President) and Paul Connolly (League Chairman).

A feast of table tennis and an excellent weekend, many thanks to Marie Curie Cancer Care who's backing made this a most memorable Tournament which was enjoyed by spectators and players alike.

"Swiss" tournament

WEST MIDLANDS "SWISS" TOURNA- MENT

THE first table tennis "Swiss" Tournament in the country (and possibly the world!) took place at Stockland Green Leisure Centre in Birmingham. A full house of cadets aged from 8 to 14, boys and girls, all competed together in a single event and gave the new format an enthusiastic welcome. The round-by-round ranking lists drew eager crowds of players and parents, as friends tried to beat each other and the better players tried to beat the rest. *Writes Geoff Twiss.*

Chess players will be familiar with "Swiss" Tournaments which allow entrants of widely differing standards to compete in the same event. All players play in every round, being drawn at random for the first round, but with winners drawn against winners (and losers against losers) in the next round. In subsequent rounds players are drawn against those with similar scores, giving a very fine gradation of playing standard by the end of the tournament. The final round produces the most evenly balanced matches, and players are ranked



The photograph shows the winners of the various categories with Graham Haynes who shepherded players to tables, Adam Twiss who wrote the computer program, and the computer itself! Winners from left to right: Timothy Evans (3rd), Daniel Belcher (2nd), Kim Brison (top girl), Helen Turner (top Under 12 girl), Andrew Smith (top Under 12 boy) and Tony Brabazon (1st)

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against all other players at the end.

The key to the adaptation to table tennis is a computer program written by my son Adam, just 16 years old, and developed over several months. This program RUNS the tournament; all the organiser needs to do is to enter the names at the start, enter results as they come in and pin up the ranking lists as they are printed. The computer does the rest!

The administration time (and effort!) has been reduced to a minimum by committing all the tiresome bits to the computer. At the end of each round it calculates the players' points, adds up the scores of all the players they have met so far, calculates their ratio of games won to games lost, ranks them relative to each other and draws the next round, allocating matches to tables, selecting umpires, etc - all in the space of TWO SECONDS!! It makes sure that no pair of players meets more than once, and chooses the players who have umpired least to umpire in the next round. It then takes about two minutes to print the ranking lists and match tickets, allowing the turn-around to be simple and very quick. The program came through its initiation without a hint of first-night nerves; it does, of course, save itself regularly in case of

accidents (?) to power leads or switches!

Our intention is to distribute the program, which will run on any IBM-compatible PC, as widely as possible, as it seems to offer anyone a chance to run a simple, different and thoroughly enjoyable tournament. Certainly it was a pleasant change to be able to accept entries right up to the start of the tournament without any concern about the playing standards, age or sex of the competitors. We want to support the package and its users, and to offer a telephone advice service, but we are confident that it only needs a minimum of computer expertise to cope with it. We still need to sort out the documentation and establish a method of licensing it that will allow us to keep tabs on its progress and allow circulation of any updates and developments.

We are running another Swiss Tournament in a fortnight's time, prompting the request from one young player "Are you going to run one EVERY fortnight!" We then need to assess the results and incorporate any improvements before unleashing it on the world! WE ran the computer last time; it's other people's turn next time, which will provide a sterner test. The final package should be available soon.

Impressions of a trip to China

By Alan Woollven

TWELVE children and six adult players were part of a recent trip to China, organised by Reg Thompson on behalf of the Kent Table Tennis Association.

As we went through customs on the outward journey the realisation of months of hard work, blood, sweat and tears trying to wring money out of big business hit us. We were China bound. With tearful sad faces from parents and players we waved goodbye and we started our 18 hour flight. The seasoned travellers on our party tried to look blasé and indifferent whilst the first time flyers looked wide eyed and worried yet with all of us there was that air of excitement and anticipation for what lay ahead.

After one and a half hours we arrived at Zurich, and what a disappointment that was - not a mountain in sight - after a one and a half hour stop over to take on more passengers our 400 seater Jumbo Jet lumbered into the sky bound for Shah Jar in the Arab Emirates. When we arrived seven hours later it was 92°F - at night!!! What was it like during the day - I dread to think? After a further nine hours we were at last in China at 1.15pm, a very tired jaded party.

We ushered the party into the 5* hotel (Chinese style), had our first meal and tried to get the children to unpack and get some shut eye, but to no avail.

At 9.00am the following day we assembled at the Tianjin Institute of Physical Education for our first session in table tennis training - Chinese style. Also our first cultural shock. Chinese style toilets - they were disgusting, literally two foot holds and a hole in the ground giving direct access to the sewer. No water trap



Some of the travellers that visited China

or flush arrangements so the stench was unbearable. My immediate reaction was I wonder how much money had disappeared from unsuspecting Chinese and Western users trouser pockets. We found out later that flush w.c.'s are a luxury of the larger hotels only.

The temperature inside the table tennis halls was 89°F, soon to rise to 92°F and no air conditioning. Our feeders consisted of six ex-national team players, four current national team players and eight Tianjin provincial representative players of both sexes and all ages from 12 upwards. These feeders changed throughout the four weeks but all maintained a very high standard.

Very soon our players were suffering with heat exhaustion and jet lag and dropped out like flies. The Chinese were extremely sympathetic and went into a light training mode! This was the only day that the children flagged, the training and preparation in England proved to be invaluable and gradually they responded and by the end of the first

week the only problem was one of tiredness - we had very little trouble getting them to bed at 10.00pm - except for a couple of them who shall be nameless.

The intensity and consistency of the training was unbelievable. It was just like playing an intelligent ball machine the usual England scenario of laughing, joking, arguing with your feeder and spending a large amount of time picking up the balls just did not exist. In any case they understood very little English and were to dedicated to the task in hand. Every afternoon for two and a half hours the players were subject to the Chinese torture of multi-ball. Every feeder was a coach in their own right and could use this training method to good effect. The players started off with 3 baskets full of balls in the two and half hours, each basket containing approximately 200 balls. The sight of 4,000 balls on the floor at one time was a sight to see. By the end of the four weeks it was eight baskets in the two and a half hour period.

The cultural visits to the Great Wall, Beijing Zoo, The Forbidden City, Tianamen Square, the biggest McDonalds in the world Culture Street, are sights that will stay with us for the rest of our lives.

The question that arises is, after all the hard work and expense was it all worth it. As an overall package it was mind blowing. The table tennis was superb and an eye opener to what can be done with the correct discipline, dedication and application. The food, although monotonous was tremendous. The cultural shock was very wide indeed, and we shall never forget the sincerity, dedication and kindness of our Chinese hosts. When everything else fades due to dotage and old age the impressions that will remain are the table tennis, the food, the disgusting toilets and the thousands upon thousands of cyclists that exist on the roads. I think all the 1.2 billion Chinese must have a cycle and the 8.5 million Tianjin residents must turn out on a Sunday afternoon.

The first championships

CONFRONTATION in sport provides one of the few chances to pit one's skill against a rival and it occurs at all levels whenever human beings strive to stretch themselves to new limits. At the highest level it demands that the mind and body work in full accord and it has a particular appeal not only to the competitor but to the person in the street. The introduction therefore of the First World Championships was greeted with enthusiasm and looked forward to with great expectation.

The First World Table Tennis Championships were held in the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, London from 6th-11th December, 1926, except for the final of the men's team championships (the Swaythling Cup) which was held over until Monday, 13th December. This postponement was due to the many protracted games that had taken place during the course of the week. For the first time extensive coverage was given by the national press and in particular by a correspondent of 'The Times'. Compared to the magnificent setting of a modern championship it was rather an inauspicious gathering. Only seven teams competed for the Swaythling Cup, with 52 entries for the men's singles and a mere 14 for the women's singles event. Four tables in a line were used for play. It was however a beginning and a springboard for future championships - which annually grew in size and stature. The betting favourites to take the major honours were England and India, but there was a rude awakening when an unsung team from Hungary swept the board, winning not only the team event but all four individual titles. There was no women's doubles event in these championships. The first winner of the men's singles title was Dr. R. Jacobi of Hungary who upset the form book by beating his countryman M. Zoltan Mechlovits. Among the ladies Maria Mednyanszky won the first of her five successive singles titles, beating in the final Dolly Gubbins of Bridgend, Wales, who, it is interesting to note, played with a plain wooden racket.

The venue for the Second World Championships was Stockholm, Sweden, and play took place each day from the 25th-29th January, 1928. Hungarian players once again dominated the scene in the arena and Zoltan Mechlovits, runner-up previously, took the men's singles title beating his compatriot Laszlo Bellak over five games. Zoltan Mechlovits became the first champion to use the pen-holder grip and was considered by many of his contemporaries to be the most fortunate of all champions. In the final, his opponent Bellak actually led two games to nil and by 20-17 in the third, when a sudden rush of blood to his head made him try a spate of impossible shots so as to finish spectacularly. Bellak managed to lose not only that game but eventually the match. Maria



Maria Mednyanszky

Mednyanszky continued her winning ways and won three titles, including the women's singles in which she beat Erika Metzger of Germany in the final. It was another huge success for the Hungarian team who again won the Swaythling Cup in which nine teams competed and found their players on the winners' rostrum in four out of the five individual events.

One of the topics at Congress centred around the scoring system; there was conflicting views at the time as to the suitability of the 21-up method. Hungary had been experimenting with lawn tennis scoring as an alternative to 21-up, while it was noted that in other quarters single games of greater length (e.g. 31-up and even 51-up) had been tried. It was generally considered that lawn tennis scoring took far too long, and when the Hungarian proposition was duly dropped, the 21-up system was officially approved.

Largely owing to the amazing successes of the Hungarians, the Third World Championships were assigned to Budapest and they took place from 14th-21st January 1929. Unpredictably, the host nation lost two of the major titles but there were two other happenings that were perhaps even more notable. One was the winning of the men's singles title by a little-known Englishman by the name of Fred Perry who later became even more famous for his lawn tennis successes. The other was the appearance of a young Hungarian bearing the name of Victor Barna. England,

more than any other country, had been responsible for pioneering the sport of table tennis on a worldwide scale, but their players had failed quite miserably in the heat of battle. It was therefore a traumatic experience for the Hungarian enthusiasts to see their young idol dumped out of the championships by an English pen-holder. Adrian Haydon, and then later to see another Englishman decisively beat their local hero, Michael Szabados, in the final. For Victor Barna excuses could be made as he was only 17 years old and it was his first World Championships. He did however gain consolation from his disappointment in the singles event by winning the men's doubles in partnership with Perry's victim, Michael Szabados. The irrepressible Maria Mednyanszky yet again won the women's singles - for the third year in succession.

Maria Mednyanszky

Maria Mednyanszky was born in Hungary in 1901 and became the world's dominant female player from 1926-1935 during which time she won 18 individual world titles, three more even than the legendary Victor Barna. Her tally included five successive singles, seven women's doubles and six mixed doubles titles, a record that never likely to be beaten, at least not while the championships are held biennially.

Maria's superiority over her contemporaries was unquestionable and yet her style of play was unlike any other champion and would be frowned on by today's coaches. She based her technique on a close to the table half volley laced with chop, a most difficult shot to execute and even more difficult to handle. Her quick angled returns allowed her to take the offensive from a commanding position and because of her stance she favoured the backhand hit played in front of her body. Like so many champions she had a ruthless dedication and practised for long hours to perfect her technique. She was determinedly methodical in her approach to matches and her accurate placing of the ball allowed her to exploit the weaknesses of her opponents. Although by text book standards she would be considered unorthodox, all her strokes were correctly executed and she was a model of consistency.

The prowess of this outstanding world champion was officially recognised in the seventies when she received her country's highest sporting honour - the Golden Order of the Hungarian People's Republic.

In the last few years of her life Maria Mednyanszky was beset by serious illness and despite all possible care she died after an operation in Budapest Sport Hospital on 22nd December, 1978, at the age of 77. Our sport is the poorer for her passing.

Manchester Olympic bid

MANCHESTER'S bid to host the Olympic Games in the year 2000 is gaining momentum. But whether or not they get it, they are all set to become the country's number one sporting city.

One reason why Manchester failed in its last bid was its lack of completed facilities. That lesson learned, they have come up with a multi-million pound plan that will transform the entire area.

In less than twelve months from now a £50m complex will be well underway and nearby a £9m Velodrome is already being built. Building of the Olympic stadium itself is due to start in October 1993. It will cost £200m, have seating for 60,000 along with a smaller arena which will be available for a range of sports including gymnastics, basketball, boxing, ice hockey and for concerts.

Bob Scott, Chairman of Manchester 2000 said: "This is beyond all our dreams and the speed with which the package has been put together is phenomenal."

If all goes well, the table tennis will be played at G-Mex, the impressive city centre venue which hosts many international events and concerts.

Fiona's back

FIONA ELLIOT, the 25 year old Wolverhampton player, is again featured in her sponsors sales catalogue. Recently married and now living in Paris, Kettler Sport are still backing her and doubtless will be pleased to note that she is back in the England side.

Fiona transferred from top British club Grove to Kremlin-Bicentre, Paris earlier this year.



G-Mex where table tennis will be held

Round table for disabled

A new form of table tennis in which a round table replaces the traditional oblong shape, is proving quite a hit at a hospital in Stanmore.

Scotball incorporates any number of people but is particularly useful for the disabled.

The idea was thought up by Scott Glickman, a senior registrar at the Northwick Park Hospital and the countries only round table now stands in the Mike Heaffey Centre at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital.

The table has no net, but instead a divider from which the ball bounces back to keep the game going. The pace is fast and furious, keeps players moving and stretching and is ideal from a rehabilitation point of view.

VACANCY FOR MC

The ETTA is looking to increase the number of MC's within the Events Department. Duties generally are to act as Master of Ceremonies at International matches, particularly European League and tours, also finals of National Championship events.

If you feel this is something you would enjoy and be good at, and you preferably have some experience in using a microphone, local radio etc., give the Events Manager, Clive Oakman, a ring at Hastings on **0424 722525**

A short towelling break...

Sweaty point

DURING a discussion amongst umpires the subject of towelling after every 5 points was brought up.

Imagine a situation in which you are umpiring a singles match and at the score 5-5 one of the players stops to towel down. Play restarts, and the next two services are 'lets'. The next rally is long, but is interrupted by a ball coming into your court from an adjoining one. So, another 'let'. The player who did not towel down earlier, now decides that he will do so. When told that he should have towelled at the last change of service the player replies that the score is still 5-5 and no points have been scored since then.

Regulation 4.4.4.2.

states:- "The umpire may allow brief interruptions to the continuity of play for towelling, after every five points from the start of each game and at the change of ends in the last possible game of a match; to restrict the duration of these pauses, towels should be kept in the playing area, near the umpire."

Notice that the Regulation says "may" and not "must". Further guidance in the Handbook for Match Officials is given in Section 12. Here we see mentioned "A short towelling break....(which) normally coincide(s) with the change of service, but not after 20-all...." It goes on to refer to particular problems encountered by spectacle wearers and an umpire using his discretion. Also it is pointed out that towelling may occur without interrupting the continuity of play when the ball is being retrieved from outside the court. We have all come across the "necessity" to wipe sweat off the bat when a quick wipe of the brow also occurs.

We think that this may all be summarised by noting the intention of the rules to restrict unnecessary interruption of the continuity of play by normally confining towelling breaks of the shortest duration to be



Emil Emecz

taken after every five points. However, the umpire has a certain amount of discretion, and noting the ways by which a player may engineer a break during which towelling could be accomplished (be careful about this, it says in Section 12), and the extremes of temperature in which the game is now played, we are not inclined to rule out categorically any action taken in the circumstances given at the beginning of this piece.

What would you do?

Olympic Games

Jack Melnick was the only English table tennis umpire at the recent Olympic Games in Barcelona, and below we give some points of interest from Jack's report of his visit.

There were 36 umpires in 12 squads of three, all three on court at the same time, one umpire and two assistants. The assistant umpires operated as end line judges (I thought these were obsolete) watching for foul services. With end line judges it looks as if the Olympics is something different. (Comment: two assistants were used in the same way at the World Championships in Chiba).

My squad number was 11 and we started duties on the second day at 10am. There were always two reserve squads on duty outside the main hall half an hour before the sessions were due to start, the players had to be there 20 minutes beforehand to select 2 balls for their match. They had to have

their clothing checked to make sure the doubles partners had the same colours and the opposition colours were not the same. If they were the same a toss-up decided who had to change. Some of the shirts were really colourful, even white was used a lot, orange balls also being used. (Comment: although the rule says the ball may be yellow, a lot of them do look more like orange). Then the umpire of that particular match led the players to their respective tables in the hall. The players had to be in their playing gear, no tracksuits to be worn on entering the playing arena.

Eight tables were used in the main hall with 12 practice tables in another, and 2 ordinary tables for re-gluing rubbers. No gluing was allowed in the main hall.

Some of the umpiring did leave a lot to be desired. There looks to be a difference of umpiring between European, American and the African countries. The main difference seems to be the calling of players names and calling the score after a let. This, I fear, is one place where a lack of consistency creeps in. One umpire before the start of every game spread out his arms and all he said was Oh-Oh (0-0).

The good thing about something like the Olympics is the many friends you make with other sports officials discussing into the early hours the knotty points and personalities from theirs and your own sports.

So ended for me a fantastic experience which was really the highlight of my career, and under the present age limit put on umpiring at International Open events, gives me just one more year at the top level, which to an umpire like me with my experience, is a bitter pill to swallow. I can only hope for change in the very near future.

A Self Portrait

Our pen-picture this month is of Emil Emecz

I was born in Hungary and spent my youth playing all kinds of sports. My ambition was to become a P.E. teacher, but this was not possible in Hungary. I started playing table tennis at the age of 9 and progressed to represent my county in the national league.

I left Hungary in 1956 and studied at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. While a student there, I played for the Welsh Universities and British Universities. After 2 years I qualified to, and did, play for Wales.

Table tennis was not my only interest. I still wanted to teach P.E. and so I carried on with swimming, football and basket ball and represented my college in all these.

In 1960 I came to London and qualified as a P.E. teacher at St. Mary's College, Twickenham. I played in the Sutton and Croydon leagues and have always believed in players becoming involved in the organising and umpiring of games. I qualified as an umpire in the early 60's and in the mid 70's passed the international umpires examination. I also took my coaching diploma under Jack Carrington.

I have been teaching P.E. at the Thomas More School, Purley, since 1968, and run a team in the Sutton and Croydon 1st Division. My umpiring has taken me to many European countries, and last season was invited to referee the Hungarian Open Championships.

As a relaxation from sports I play bridge.

Cynical account

I wish to reply to Mike Loveder's rather distorted and cynical account of events at the British League conference in the September issue.

In his opening paragraph he complains that much of the discussion centres around the top clubs in the Premier Division, but I would like to point out that no clubs from the other divisions submitted any proposed regulation changes. Whilst other delegates were given every opportunity to express their views, it was inevitable that the Premier Division clubs would be more involved since, the majority proposed regulation changes on the order paper affected those clubs who have a different playing format. He goes on to imply that all the money is with the top clubs which is not the case. Many clubs in the other divisions attract substantial sponsorship, indeed I know of one such club whose annual turnover is many thousands of pounds, obtained by hard work and dedication, not easy in a recession, but it can be done.

With regards to the placement of teams into respective divisions, the British League committee spend many hours sorting through applications and, after taking promotion and relegation issues into account, arrive at what they consider a satisfactory outcome. For the 1992-93 season all special requests were met including those from clubs who preferred to travel, avoiding teams they would normally meet in their local leagues - after all, they say, it is a British League. When the proposed formation of divisions was distributed at conference not one complaint or comment was made, which, I would have thought indicated satisfaction. Similarly, all special requests for fixture changes are fairly considered and for the current season, only one such request was not possible.

Mr. Loveder refers to the lack of umpires in the London area but it should be noted that all clubs wishing to enter the British League are required to complete the entry form and sign an undertaking that they can comply with all the regulations governing that competition. Among those regulations 27.1 clearly states that for each match the home club shall appoint at least two officials at least one of whom must be a qualified umpire. The secretary of Mr. Loveder's club signed such an undertaking and were accepted on that basis. The point I made at the conference was the entering the team in the British League requires considerable planning, and if a club is unable to meet the requirements they should not enter. As members of the E.T.T.A. we are governed by the rules and various regulations of that body and the sport would be in a sorry state if we all pleased ourselves what we did.

I resent the implication that my fair and honest comment in any way hinders the development of our sport, as nothing could be further from the truth. Having been involved with the

planning of the league in 1978 and its inception in 1979, and, apart from a short break, ever since, I have been delighted, indeed proud, at the way it has progressed, and I would never do anything to harm it. To my certain knowledge no club has ever been refused admission if all the obligations can be met, nor will it be if I am involved. I also welcome the introduction of a Veterans British League and, whilst there was no great enthusiasm from delegates at conference for a Junior section, should this become a reality that I will receive my full support.

Finally, may I say that my colleagues and I are given the responsibility of organising the British League in accordance with the regulations by the National Council - the governing body for our sport - we make no apology for doing that and will continue to do so, within our control and to the best of our ability.

Keith Ponting, Chairman, Friendly Hotels, British League Committee

'Uncle' Percy

WE should be grateful that people like Gerald Gurney and Ron Crayden are interested enough to write about the earlier days of table tennis. This was brought home to me even more by the recent sad death at 95 of Milton Keynes League President Percy Hyde, affectionately known as 'Uncle' Percy. When loss of balance forced him to give up when he was 90, he had played almost 80 years of table tennis. For getting on for half of that time he had assisted in organising - before, during and after the Second World War - major championships in this country. What a wealth of knowledge and experiences he must have had!

With this in mind and inspired by a chat with Gerald Gurney at the English Open, I had written to Percy a few months ago to ask if I could interview him about his life in table tennis, particularly pre-war. Alas, it was already too late, his son Geoffrey rang to say that Percy's mind, clear only a year previously, had 'gone'. Memories, unrecorded, gone forever.

We should find out more from those dwindling few who were there at the beginning of the ETTA. And those pioneering workers for the game should be given proper recognition and respect. In researching Percy Hyde's career for the local press, I spoke to Geoff James who said he was appalled at the lack of acknowledgement given on the death of Leslie Woollard, a post-war editor of the magazine 'Table Tennis'. As it happened, also in my researches, I had come across in the March, 1961 edition, a beautifully written and moving appreciation by Leslie of Leslie Forrest, another founding father of table tennis.

Table tennis should value it's workers, and see them not as faceless, colourless bureaucrats, but as rounded, thinking, feeling, living human beings who love the game. And we should treasure our history. And yes, Percy was a charming man, a real gentleman.

Ken Muir, Milton Keynes



Turning point

I started playing table tennis about two years ago. It was the turning point in my life.

I was very lucky to have met a good coach who taught me every basic strokes (hitting, top spin first then push etc.), mental attitude, and gave me all sort of general information about table tennis.

Before I started table tennis, my life was very passive and my husband and children's interests came first. I was afraid of driving at night so I used to stay at home during the long lonely winter nights when my husband went away on business trips which he still does.

Since I started table tennis, I have to go out to play matches at night so I don't get winter depression anymore and my fear of driving in the dark has gradually disappeared.

My first coach hammered in me to play positively so I start thinking and behaving more positively in my own life as well. I took up a computer course at college once a week and started a part-time job.

My children remarked that I became more outgoing and encouraged me to continue to play table tennis.

I'm fitter, slimmer and more independent now than two years ago and keep telling myself that it's never too late to learn - that life is all about learning.

*Haruko Brown
Croydon, Surrey*

Oldest?

AN item in the May/June issue (Newsdesk) asked if the North Middlesex League is the oldest in the country. The Birmingham & District Association was formed in 1922 with one division, but it grew rapidly and by 1934 there were 83 clubs. The late Maurice Goldstein was a founder member and served for over 60 years as Secretary before his death in 1987.

We have just completed our 65th season (the Association was not operating during the war years). The Midland 'Open' Championships also date back as far as 1923. The oldest Handbook in my possession is the 1934/5 edition which advertises tournament tables for 7 guineas!

*Veronica Jackson
Hon. Secretary
Birmingham & District T.T.A.*

Chinese dominate

AT international levels for at least much of the past decade, China has dominated world class table tennis, their players, both men and women are physically, so well built that at least, in sheer stature alone they have achieved a great advantage over the more hefty built Europeans.

Didn't their women players do well to achieve Gold and Silver in the all important Barcelona Olympics TT Ladies Final? When Deng Yaping beat Qiao Hong, 6, 8, -15, 21.

However, the Chinese men at these Olympic competitions did not fare as well as their lady players did, with the mens singles final between Jan-Ove Waldner and Jean Philippe Gatin, which Waldner the current World No.1 won, surprisingly - no Chinese male player reached the final.

Was there a reason for this? Let us go back to earlier in the year, the English Open in fact, when J.P. Gatin beat Wang Yansheng to claim the title, Wang was listed as Norwegian, but obviously of former Chinese extraction.

The World looked on in total horror at what happened in Tianamen Square in June 1989, and shortly afterwards, (as maybe before), a small exodus of top ranked Chinese players were to be seen, seeking permanent political Asylum, all over the world - furthermore, various countries wasted no time at all, to accept them.

We ourselves welcomed with open arms Chen Xinhua - and we all know why he was not allowed to represent G.B. in the recent Barcelona Olympics - don't we?

What a pity that petty politics have to creep into sport all over the World.

All Pepperd, Gloucestershire

PLEASE NOTE

We would like to make it clear that 'Table Tennis News' does not necessarily agree with the views made by those correspondents whose letters are published in Mailbox.

Your letters that are NOT abusive or libellous are always welcome, as are replies.

Only those when names and addresses are supplied for publication will in future be considered.

OBITUARY

PERCY HYDE

by George White

PERCY HYDE, Life Member of the E.T.T.A., President of the Milton Keynes League, died in Newport Pagnell early in September. He was 95.

Not many of today's magazine readers outside the Milton Keynes area will recall Percy. Few even of his acquaintances locally will know how he earned the Life Membership he was accorded twenty-five years ago of why he deserves a place in the records of the sport.

When Percy was a boy, "ping pong" had gone through the turn-of-the-century craze and had ceased to be played in an organised, competitive way in many places other than Sunderland. Nevertheless, Percy took up the game in 1908, aged 11, on the dining room table at home, with wire and curtain trimmings begged from his mother to make a net. He was still playing eight years later.

In 1922 a National Association was formed and the next year the London Civil Service League came into being. Percy had come to London to work in the Ministry of Labour, and became first a player in that league and a key worker at Civil Service championships, and then, in succession, Secretary, Chairman and ultimately President of the Civil Service League.

By 1936, when I first met him, the quality of Percy's work at other championships had already established him in the referee's team at the English Open - then an annual event almost as important as the World Championships. Following the 1935 Worlds, when finals were first played at Wembley, the game in England was enjoying a boom.

Another World Championship here was planned for 1938; the Albert Hall was booked for ten days and major finals were at Wembley on the second Saturday. There was an unprecedented entry and an eagerness to set new standards for organisation.

Till then, most tournaments were run on the basis of calling all players in an event, or perhaps half an event, for the same time, playing matches as soon as a complete match was available, and hoping for the best. Now we began to do better; at least for the opening

rounds in each event, there was a timed schedule planned in advance. Percy was one of the team who established the way forward.

It was not until after the war that advance scheduling progressed to the point where each player in the English Open Championships could be sent beforehand a card showing the time for every match he or she would play, assuming reaching the final in every one. Remember, we were still in the days before photocopiers were available and when printing was slow and expensive. Each card was done by hand. Every entry was checked from draw sheet to schedule, from draw sheet to player's card, and then back from player's card back to schedule. When all checked, but not before, Percy would accept that the job was done.

It is the establishment of this standard that everything must be right and that the players must be given good information which is so much his personal contribution to the development of tournament management. Of course, others contributed substantially; and many of the tasks needed forty years ago have been eliminated by the simple expedient of copying timed draw-sheets. But Percy's meticulous care and willingness to give holiday days to the job were vital ingredients at the time; and he went on participating in organising national championships long enough to see the end of the checking system he had helped to create and to greet the change with delight.

In all this time, and for long after he ceased to participate in organisation at national level, Percy continued to enjoy playing. He played in every English Open from the war till 1966. He went on playing in league events until he was 90 and retired to Presidential duties in his local area only when his health prevented him from playing.

I never met anyone who spoke ill of Percy Hyde. Not surprising, perhaps, for he himself spoke ill of no one. A modest man always ready to smile, blessed with a fund of humour and a capacity for work quite out of the ordinary. We shall miss him.

Table Tennis Insurance

IT'S hard to imagine a more boring subject than insurance where sports men and women are concerned but few of us can have failed to notice that lately it's made headline news. The problems faced by major Insurers have been given substantial publicity by the media, and both in the Insurance Company market and Lloyd's there has emerged a marked reluctance to take on board risks in view of the high losses sustained. The Mortgage Indemnity crisis is still with us but more important to Sport as a whole has been the crisis in the Liability insurance market.

More and more people are now turning to the Courts for compensation following injury or damage, the awards made by the Courts are increasing steadily and the scatter gun approach by Lawyers acting for injured parties now brings into the legal trawl individuals and organisations who at one time would in no way have been involved in such an action. It is fashionable nowadays that where a person sustains an injury or their property is damaged they feel that it is somebody else's fault and automatically turn to their nearest Solicitor. This starts a chain of events which can prove enormously expensive - not only the legal costs involved in the claim and defending the action but the exceedingly high damages being awarded by the Courts.

A large number of house owners are now provided with Legal Expenses Insurance Cover and do not have to think twice about taking action against anybody they feel has caused them an injury. Lawyers, knowing that they are going to be well paid in pursuing such action, tend to bring as many parties as possible into the Court case no matter how remotely involved they seem to be from the incident. Owners of schools, leisure centres and other premises insist that any teams or clubs leasing the premises must have in place proper Public Liability insurance cover extended to include the interests of the property owners as Principals.

The result is that the cost of purchasing this essential Public Liability insurance protection

has increased dramatically, so much so that cover is beyond the scope of many smaller clubs and teams with their limited finances. Whether clubs like it or not they are shortly going to have to face the requirement to have insurance for Public Liability, commonly known as Third Party, cover.

All sports organisations must protect themselves against the disastrous consequences of liability for injury or damage arising out of their activity and this includes the actions of all executive, officials, members and voluntary helpers. Such officials and members at all levels could find themselves held **personally** responsible for Court costs and damages awarded where an action has been brought against the club for negligence. Unless adequate liability insurance cover has been arranged the consequential effect on members could be disastrous.

Where clubs try to make their own individual arrangements with insurers the cost nowadays is prohibitively high (some insurance companies are asking £100 a year for each Club!) and there is not enough money in table tennis to face these expenses. The ETTA recognising this fact have now negotiated through their Insurance Brokers, Perkins Slade, a particularly wide Public Liability insurance cover with a £2M limit of indemnity which can be administered by counties or leagues who include all clubs and teams within their control. This dramatically reduces the high administration expenses and provided all teams participate the cost will be under £2 per team subject to minimum premiums of each League or County.

Other insurances are available to provide automatic compensation for Death or Permanent Total Disablement at a very low cost and also sports equipment belonging to clubs, counties or leagues.

Details of these insurances can be obtained from the Brokers, Perkins Slade Ltd., telephone 021-625 8080, where the Sports Unit will be pleased to help you and discuss requirements.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

For details of events, dates, organisers and telephone numbers buy the 1992/93 EVENTS DIARY. (Price £3.50).
Ring 0424 722525 - Bethan Davies - pay by credit card or send cheque to
ETTA, Queensbury House, Havelock Road, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 1HF.

Women's European League

ENGLAND
v
GERMANY

Tuesday 6th October 1992
7.00 pm

The Spa Complex,
Scarborough, Yorkshire

Players could include:
*Lisa Lomas, Alison Gordon,
Andrea Holt, Fiona Elliot,
Olga Nemes, Jie Schopp,
Nicole Struse, Elke Schall*

Tickets from:
John Caton 0723 360939 or
The Spa 0723 367774

Men's European League

ENGLAND
v
BELGIUM

Tuesday 13th October 1992
7.00 pm

Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre,
Nr. Darlington, Co. Durham

Players could include:
*Chen XinHua, Carl Prean,
Matthew Syed, Alan Cooke,
Jean Michel Saive, Thierry Cabrera,
Philippe Saive, Frederic Sonnet*

Tickets from:
Keith Wilson 0325 354249 or
Box Office 0325 300500

VETTS NORTHERN MASTERS - NEW DATE - 31ST OCT/1ST NOV 1993
The Armitage Centre, Manchester Details: *Mike Watts - 0702 548886*

VETERANS BRITISH LEAGUE WEEKENDS - CHANGED DATES
16TH/17TH JANUARY - BURTON ON TRENT
8TH/9TH MAY - GRIMSBY
Details: *Mike Lewis 0272 730788 or Brian Halliday 0734 722421*

VETTS WESTERN MASTERS - NEW EVENT - 1ST/2ND MAY 1993
Thornbury Leisure Centre, Bristol Details: *Mike Watts - 0702 548886*

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS
Junior Premier Weekend
10/11th October 1992
Meadowside Leisure Centre,
Burton on Trent, Staffs

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS
Senior Premier Weekend
7th/8th November 1992
Milton Keynes Table Tennis Centre,
Kingston Centre, Milton Keynes



25TH MARCH TO 4TH APRIL 1994 - *Be part of it!*