Premier Trophy winners play on premier tables
Memories of the English Open

Three local Birmingham school-children, Emma Wiseman, Liane Graham and Jonathan Reynolds meet the ETTA Chief Executive Elaine Shaw, on the ETTA Development stand.

President of the Irish Table Tennis Association, Eddie Limberg, enjoys a cup of Cadbury’s Chocolate Break.
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Editor's Note

GREAT news! Matthew Syed, Lisa Lomas and Alison Gordon, will be joining Carl Prean in Barcelona this Summer for the Olympics Games, following their singles successes in Bolzano (see Alan Ransome’s ‘Chairman’s Report’, page 5, for further details).

Sadly, Chen Xinhuas will not be joining them due to China’s objection.

Why not come and see our Olympic competitors in action at the English National Championship at the Oldham Sports Centre, in Lancashire, on Saturday and Sunday 7th and 8th March 1992.

This issue also reports the great news for Devon, with their Senior team winning the Premier Division title for the first time in their history. See County Championships, page 14. I expect the cider is still flowing.

On pages 22 and 23 Table Tennis News features the official opening of Grantham’s new purpose-built centre. This is truly a fabulous arena, probably the best of its kind in the country. Built, mainly, due to the generosity of the South Kesteven District Council.

I would like to personally welcome Rea Balmford as the new English Schools Table Tennis Association correspondent, and thank Joe Walk for his past, albeit brief, efforts on behalf of English Schools, in Table Tennis News.

Whilst Chris Oldfield and George Yates are recovering, I sadly have to report that Mike Watts has been admitted to Southend General Hospital, on Thursday morning the 20th February 1992, suffering with chest pains.

At the time of going to press Mike was still being monitored, but was stable.

On behalf of Table Tennis News, I wish Mike a speedy recovery.

John F.A. Wood

TABLE TENNIS NEWS 1992
Publishing dates:

APRIL
1st April 1992
(Copy date 1st March)

MAY/JUNE
1st June 1992
(Copy date 30th April)
Milton Keynes new centre

MILTON KEYNES new purpose-built table tennis centre, which is part of a huge Tesco shopping and sporting development, in the heart of the City of Milton Keynes, was officially visited in February by Mike Lewis, the ETTA Vice-Chairman (Development).

New Development Officers
Under the ETTA Sports Council Focus Sport programme, the first two full-time Regional Table Tennis Development Officers have been appointed.

Colin Wilson - Greater London and Ray Burch - Yorkshire/Humberside have already commenced their duties. More details in next month’s issue.

Jackie Bellinger
TABLE TENNIS SERVICES
Ex-England International & National Table Tennis Coach

ELITE TRAINING CAMP
I am pleased to invite you on the Elite Training Camps. These camps have been approved by the ETTA, and the aim of them is to give promising young players the opportunity of an intensive 3 days coaching with some of England’s leading coaches and players. Players parents and coaches are welcome to attend.

FURTHER DETAILS

Dates Fri 24th-Sun 26th April; arrive 6pm depart 4pm
Venue The National Badminton Centre, Loughton, Central Milton Keynes. This is a superb totally self contained complex with a large sports hall, accommodation, dining room and lecture rooms. It is ideally situated with many other leisure facilities close by.

Meals All meals are included and will be at the centre and are prepared by a qualified caterer.

Coaching Play will commence on Friday evening and players will receive a total of 11 hours coaching. With only small numbers on the course close individual attention is guaranteed.

Coaches for the courses will be
24th-26th April Jackie Bellinger plus another England Snr Player/Coach

Other Activities include a lecture on match preparation, Saturday evening visit to the cinema.

Price £55 each course, inclusive of all meals, accommodation, and coaching. An excellent 3 days coaching at a superb venue.

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Don't throw your votes away

THE CONSTITUTIONAL IMPORTANCE OF THE (GENERAL) SECRETARY
(required reading for County and League Chairmen and Secretaries).

ALL official communications are sent to the (General) Secretary of a County Association or Local League. It is therefore essential that the ETTA and County Association have on record the name and address of each Local League’s current (General) Secretary, and that the ETTA has on record the name and address of each County Association’s current (General) Secretary, and that any change is notified STRAIGHT AWAY.

Your organisation must never be without someone fulfilling the functions of (General) Secretary. If there is a vacancy in the Office, somebody must be designated as “acting” General Secretary and his or her name and address sent to the ETTA and County Association STRAIGHT AWAY.

Not only communications are affected. VOTING RIGHTS may be LOST by not appointing an acting General Secretary. Ballot Papers are sent to whoever is on record as being the (General) Secretary and certain documents, including Ballot Papers and General Meeting Voting Cards, must under ETTA Rules be signed by the (General) Secretary of the organisation - nobody else will do. This includes an “acting” one, provided that the ETTA has been notified.

CHAIRMEN, make sure that a notification is sent STRAIGHT AWAY when appropriate (tomorrow may be too late) - DO NOT LEAVE IT TO SOMEONE ELSE.

Tony Wickens
Returning Officer
success in bolzano

The highlight this month has been the success of most of our players representing the British Olympic Association in the European Olympic Qualification tournament in Bolzano, Italy, for places in Barcelona.

Out of our five nominations, three, Matthew Syed, Lisa Lomas and Alison Gordon, will play in Barcelona in the singles, whilst Andrea Holt will be the fourth reserve.

In the Men's event, Matthew Syed's performance was magnificent. Matthew won his first eight matches, which included victories over Stefan Fetzner of Germany, Philippe Saive of Belgium and Zsolt Harczi of Hungary. Matthew fully deserved all of his victories and his place for the Olympic Games.

Our girls also provided some magnificent performances. Lisa Lomas was at her absolute best. Being top seed in her group Lisa won her first three matches easily and then went on to win her second group which included victories over Fluria Bulatova, now of Italy, Jasna Pazlic of Yugoslavia and Gerdie Keene of the Netherlands, to qualify. In the section for the top eight, Lisa went further by beating Alessia Arisi of Italy, Elena Timina of C.I.S. before losing 23-21 in the 5th game to Bulatova in the expedit final.

Alison Gordon also produced some of her best table tennis ever. Alison qualified for the 9 - 16 section, which culminated in a sudden death match against former European Champion, Valentina Popova of the C.I.S. A win would give Alison qualification, defeat the opportunity to play off only for reserve places. In one of the most electric matches that I have ever seen, Alison lost six match points in the fourth game after a brilliant recovery by Popova, but she then saved four match points in the decider to win 22-20 in the fifth game!

Our one casualty in Bolzano was Alan Cooke who was expected to qualify but by losing his first two matches to Robert Smrekar of Slovenia and his bogeyman, Qian Qianli of Austria, did not qualify. Due to a club match in Sweden two days earlier, Alan did not have the same amount of preparation time as the rest of the GB team and this may have made a difference.

Andrea Holt came close to qualifying but in the end had to be satisfied with 4th reserve place. She did very well to beat Asa Svensson of Sweden and finished in fourth position in the second stage group. Andrea then had to play English Open Champion, Mirjam Hooman of the Netherlands for a place in Barcelona and found Mirjam in the same good form that she showed in Birmingham.

Overall the preparations for Bolzano was very good. With assistance from the British Olympic Association and the Sports Council, Donald Parker was able to engage a coach for each player as well as a physiotherapist and Sean Gibson as a sparring partner. One of the coaches was Desmond Douglas who helped Matthew Syed to qualify and this could be a role that we see Desmond in more often in the future, as well as being an excellent practice partner for both the senior and junior teams at the training camps. It is good that we were able to take advantage of Desmond's talent and great experience to the benefit of our current and future players.

The results in Bolzano gives us a total of four players out of a maximum of six through to Barcelona, with Carl Prean an automatic entry due to his World Ranking. Chen Xinhua was deemed ineligible by the I.T.T.F. because the Chinese Olympic Committee refused to give their permission for him to play.

The Doubles Qualification Tournament takes place in Gdansk, Poland at the end of February. We have three pairs participating, Carl Prean and Alan Cooke in the Men's Doubles, Lisa Lomas and Andrea Holt and Alison Gordon and Fiona Elliot in the Women's Doubles.

The British Olympic Association and the Sports Council have invested in our preparation training and in Bolzano we repaid that investment with interest. Of course, the biggest test will be Barcelona in July.

The big events in March are, of course, the two leg final of the Joola European League against Austria and the National Championships, supported by Manchester 2000, the British Olympics bid, at Oldham on 7/8th March.

The first leg of the match against Austria will be played in Salzburg on 14th March, and the second leg at home on Friday, 20th March in Hull. Austria have a strong all-round team with two Chinese, Ding Yi, Qian Qianli, plus top defender Dietmar Palini and the up and coming star who did so well against England at Ipswich, Werner Schlager. With Carl Prean, Alan Cooke, Chen Xinhua, Matthew Syed and Skyler Andrew all available, Donald Parker has a very strong squad to select from. Our chances are good, but victory is by no means certain and good support in Hull will be a prerequisite to success.

With the entry of all of our top players, our National Championships at Oldham on 7/8th March have all the makings of a first class event. Several players have a chance of winning the Men's Singles, including Carl Prean, Alan Cooke, Chen Xinhua, Desmond Douglas, Matthew Syed and Skyler Andrew, whilst the Women's Singles could be won by any of our leading four players, Lisa Lomas, Andrea Holt, Alison Gordon or Fiona Elliot.

The Referee, Doug Young, has carefully scheduled the tournament to give maximum spectator appeal for the supporters and suitable rest periods for the players. Good matches can be seen from 3pm until 7.30pm on Saturday and from 11.30am through to the finals that commence at 5pm on Sunday.

Alan Ransome

Alison Gordon also produced some of her best table tennis ever. Alison qualified for the 9 - 16 section, which culminated in a sudden death match against former European Champion, Valentina Popova of the C.I.S. A win would give Alison qualification, defeat the opportunity to play off only for reserve places. In one of the most electric matches that I have ever seen, Alison lost six match points in the fourth game after a brilliant recovery by Popova, but she then saved four match points in the decider to win 22-20 in the fifth game!
As well as paying close attention to our senior teams performance, special efforts are being made to give our juniors and cadets every assistance to improve their performance and build up towards this year's European Youth Championships which are to be played in Topolcanny, Czechoslovakia in July. A programme has been devised which gives our players far more international opportunities for experience than at any time that I can remember in the recent past. This includes a tour in May by the Japanese Junior team for the English Junior Open at Bridlington, two internationals and a round robin tournament. The German national team will participate in both the training camp and the round robin tournament.

The cadets will participate in the Six Nations tournament in Germany in June and the juniors will play in both the Czech and Hungarian Junior Opens. A series of training camps are being planned and this season each of the four squads, junior boys, junior girls, cadet boys and cadet girls have a single coach/captain, Donald and Jill Parker, Martin Bawden and Jenny Heaton, responsible for their preparation and performance. Over the last couple of years our junior performances have only been moderate. The programme is intended to give our players the opportunity to improve and restore our prestige in Europe in the junior field, as well as provide a strong future senior squad.

The Focus Sport programme continues to make progress. The first two Development Officers, Colin Wilson in London and Ray Burch in Yorkshire and Humberside, started work on 1st February. Negotiations are proceeding with the other eight Sports Council Regions and all development plans should be in place before the end of this year.

Progress is also being made with the appointment of Regional Staff coaches. The finance for this programme will not be as straightforward as for the Development Officers as, in the eyes of the Sports Council, it does not have the same high priority. Nevertheless we are anxious to establish the programme so that we can commence their training and create the work for them at the earliest possible date. This is being managed by our National Coaching Manager, Jill Parker from whom all information can be obtained.

Following the success of Birmingham, we are looking into the possibility of staging the European Championships in England in 1994. The option to run this tournament will be returned by the Yugoslav Association as its venue, Zagreb, is no longer under their jurisdiction. In excess of a million pounds will be required to run the event and we are doing our best to raise that fund in advance of this year's European Championships in Stuttgart when the E.T.T.U. Congress will have to decide the 1994 venue for two years time.

Halex hail Champions of the future

by Elaine Shaw

NATIONAL age group championships form the backbone of the ETTA Junior events programme as Spring and Summer approach. Halex will, for the second year, sponsor five age group championships, namely Under 10, Under 11, Under 12, Under 18 and Under 21 and their support in encouraging the junior game is warmly welcomed.

Competition begins in the north when Bridlington hosts the Halex National Under 18 Championships on Sunday 3rd May, immediately followed by the Halex National Under 21 Championships on Bank Holiday Monday, 4th May. Both these events were introduced into the calendar for the first time in 1991 and attracted a high quality entry with the current English Senior Women's Champion, Andrea Holt picking up the Under 21 Women's Singles title.

Bridlington has again been selected as the venue and players will be pleased to see progress has been made in the three main areas of teething problems with the introductory event. Firstly a prize fund of over £1,000 will be available this year, so making an additional incentive for success. The other added incentive for victory is the introduction of ranking points in the Halex National Ranking Scheme. Finally, the timing at the end of June last year proved problematic for many players, hence the use of the May Day bank holiday weekend for the 1992 event. "The following weekend, i.e. Sunday 10th May, the Under 11's get their opportunity to show themselves as the stars of the future in the Halex Under 11 Championships. The prestigious new table tennis centre in Grantham opened by Johnny Leach MBE in January will play host to this event. The remaining events, the Halex Under 10 and Halex Under 12 Championships will take place in the South Midlands at Bletchley Leisure Centre, Milton Keynes, on 13th and 14th June."

Mr. Merrick Wolman, Managing Director of Halex commented "Halex are delighted to be supporting Junior Table Tennis again. With the re-launch of the Halex brand we hope to bring further success to this country. I am sure most parents will remember when Halex and England led the world in Table Tennis."

Organisation has already started on each of these events in the effort to make them the biggest and best ever.

Young people considering entering any of these tournaments are invited to ring for further information and entry forms from the ETTA Office, Tel: 0424 722525.
ONCE AGAIN Sweden were top-seeded as Swaythling Cup holders to win the second European Nations Cup, again at the plush Rudi Sedlmayer Halls in Munich, again run beautifully by Germany and again Sweden crashed out.

It all happened during the three days January 10, 11, 12, when in my view it was reconfirmed that the fairly old Masters - Jan-Ove Waldner, Mikael Appelgren and world champion Jorgen Persson - are finally running out of steam and are gradually being replaced by the new generation of superstars - Jean-Philippe Gatien and Jean-Michel Saive are the leaders in this group.

Others are very close to the fringes - Carl Prean, Peter Franz and there are others. Zoran Primorac, now with Croatia, does not appear to have a strong enough team to play with him. The two top players in Munich, the pair with the most wins, were Jorg Rosskopf and Gatien.

JOHN WOODFORD REPORTS FROM MUNICH

We saw the Swedes beaten in Barcelona at the World Team Cup, we saw them beaten again 3-1 by France - Patrick Chila beat Waldner 17, 13 - in Munich, so whether they can hold onto the Swaythling Cup in Gothenburg a year and a bit from now is a matter of intense speculation.

However, after failing to qualify last year despite beating Hungary and the Soviet Union, England put on a sterling performance to win £20,000 of the £50,000 on offer as prize money and reach the semi-finals after capeizing arch-rivals Belgium 3-2 and Czechoslovakia for the third time in three weeks.

Casting aside memories of losing the first clash to the USSR last year, England went ahead in the opening match as Carl Prean defiantly set about the downfall of the explosive tempered Thierry Cabrera 13, 17.

During that game the volcanic Belgium was shown the yellow card by the umpire. Later, as he lost the deciding
around £6,000.

The second day evening match against Sweden was something of an anti-climax as both teams were through. Alan Cooke was brought into the singles fray whilst Chen was rested. Twice the hard-hitting looper from Derbyshire got to "deuce", once against Persson and once in the doubles, but just lost. Carl Prean maintained his surge of success with a smart win over Mikael Appelgren, still the European champion 12, 14.

The Crunch

Germany seem almost unbeatable in this tournament on their own territory. With something like 4,000 fans urging them forward they certainly provide a most formidable barrier for any other team in Europe, at least in this stadium.

But having said that, Prean was quickly on court, providing all sorts of problems for Jörg Rosskopf who lost the first game, winning only eight points, but slowly Rosskopf weighed up and coped more often with the Prean onslaught which quickened in pace.

Prean was 17-15 up in the third game, but finally lost 20-22. Alan Cooke, who seems to specialise in beating Germans - after beating Rosskopf and Prane at Birmingham - found an improving Stefan Fetzner just a fraction too speedy.

Finally, in the doubles, England took the first game with Prean and Cooke looking impressive against such illustrious opponents as Roskopf and Fetzner, but again they could not hang on to the advantage and lost -17, -13.

It was the end of a fine England run. Don Parker said: "It was a pleasing team effort. To get to the semi-finals is I think a fine achievement we can be proud of."

The Final

France and Germany clashed in the final which continued for well over three hours with Germany winning a memorable battle 3-2. Patrick Chila is another young player making progress. Although he lost both his matches to Rosskopf and Fetzner, there is no doubt he is providing excellent support for Jean-Philippe Gatien who provided both French wins over Rosskopf and Fetzner.

With the score a 2-2, it was Fetzner who provided the final Thrills as he won the first 15 points adrift in the middle of the second game. "Speedy" Fetzner, bounced back to 20-20 and got home 23-21 that provided pandemonium as the fans expressed their delight at a memorable home victory.

Facilities

The arrangements for the tournament were excellent, the presentation up to the usual high German standards with two professional-sounding "baritone" MCs. The hotels were several miles from the venue - that needed a fleet of Opels, especially when the snow was deep and crisp and even.

A restaurant another two miles distant was the setting for the farewell party where the cheque presentations were made. A fine, well-organised evening of wine, beer, food and laughter, although being an all-male tournament well short of female company, although one of the glamorous young German hostesses was Cindy Scholer, daughter of Diana and Ebby Scholer.

ENGLAND RESULTS:

ENGLAND 3 BELGIUM 2
C. Prean b T. Cabrera 13, 17
Chen Xinhua b J. Saive -16, 18
Prean-Cooke I Saive-Cabrera -16, 19, -19
Prean b Saive 21, 17
Chen b Cabrera -18, 11, 7

ENGLAND 3 CZECHOSLOVAKIA 0
Chen Xinhua b P. Korbel 13, 15
C. Prean b R. Vmi 17, -16, 15
Prean-Cooke b Korbel-T. Janci 15, 19

ENGLAND 1 SWEDEN 3
A. Cooke I J. Persson -21, -12
C. Prean b M. Appelgren 12, 14
Prean-Cooke I Appelgren-J. Waldner -16, -20
Prean I Persson -11, -17

SEMI-FINALS:

ENGLAND 0 GERMANY 3
C. Prean b J. Rosskopf 8, -19, -20
A. Cooke b J. Fetzner -19, -16
Prean-Cooke I Rosskopf-Fetzner 14, -17, -13

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Boy player of the day

Vincent Avery from Essex, who was the No.2 seed, beat the all England ranked No.1 Cadet Stephen Meddings from Warwick in impressive form, both of these lads then joined forces to win the Under 14 Doubles event.

Played at the Gloucester Leisure Centre, over the weekend the above National Junior Tournament which was OPEN to youngsters from all over the Country, celebrated its 25th Jubilee year in great style, and with an overall entry of over 300 participants.

The second days play featured four events, the girls U17 Singles and U17 Doubles, and the boys events likewise. Of the four titles that were up for grabs most local (Gloucestershire), players were soon dispensed with - with the exception of Jeremy Hyatt the No.8 seed who fought his way successfully right through the groups, but unfortunately lost in the following early rounds - but 'Nil Desparandum', there was still one Gloucester 16 year old lad left in, that was Raymond Powell, ranked at No.5 in England (as a Junior), and seeded No.4 Ray played with great authority all through the Tournament and actually made the Semi-Final where he lost to the eventual winner Eddie Hatley from Surrey. Powell however, in partnership with Barry Forster from Northumberland got to the Final of the U17's Boys Doubles, where they were beaten 22-20, 16-21, 17-21, by Chris Sladden and Darren Blake.

In full recognition of Powell's performance, he was awarded 'The Len Huff' annual trophy for the best local player in the Tournament, an honour that he has won once before.

COMMENT UPON PLAY OF THE DAY

Both respective Boy and Girl Under 17 singles winners namely Sally Marling and Edward Hately managed to retain the titles that they won here in Gloucester at last years Cotswold Junior, and indeed - are to be congratulated.

The Tournament was well publicised by the presence of Central I.T.V. South on the second day, and BBC Radio Gloucestershire South and West on both days, with professional broadcaster Pete Wilson joining forces with myself on the afternoon of the first days play, to keep a regular half hourly commentary between 2 and 6pm going live to the Saturday sports prog all afternoon, I think we combined somewhere around 50 minutes of reporting.

Finally - I must pay homage to the back room boys and girls whom in many Tournaments seldom if ever, get a word of praise. That is not the case in this Championship - for without the head Organiser, Mr. Jack Reeves, Chief Referee, Mr. Leslie Smith and his two stalwart helpers, Tim Harris and Dave Nipper, plus the Tournament General Secretary, David Dean, so often playing the role of the Scarlet Pimpernel - popping in here - popping in there and sorting out everybody's problems and many other voluntary workers, in context of Umpires, Stewards etc, some giving up their entire weekend, this Tournament would just not get off the ground.

Thank you all, and of course not forgetting the players and parents for coming.

FINALISTS:

**BOYS SINGLES U12:** Christian Thompson (K) beat Ali Subhan (BK) 20-22, 21-12, 22-20

**GIRLS SINGLES U12:** Debbie Peteks (NG) beat Tracy Davies (E) 18-21, 21-18, 21-16

**BOYS DOUBLES U14:** Vincent Avery (E) and Stephen Meddings (WA) beat Owen and Simon Thomas (GN) 21-14, 21-13

**GIRLS DOUBLES U14:** Shelly Ruocco (E) and Glenda Ashinson (SY) beat Crystal Hall (K) and Joanne Barham (K) 21-7, 21-15

**BOYS SINGLES U14:** Vincent Avery (E) beat Stephen Meddings (WA) 21-13, 21-9

**GIRLS SINGLES U14:** Shelly Ruocco (E) beat Joanna Bush-Harris (SX) 21-12, 21-17

**BOYS U17 DOUBLES:** Chris Sladden (E) and Darren Blake (SY) beat Ray Powell (CS) and Barry Forster (ND) 20-22, 21-16, 21-17

**GIRLS U17 DOUBLES:** Kate Goodall (Y) and Caroline Bentley (Y) beat Sally Marling (Y) and Tracey Garrett (SP) 21-15, 21-17

**GIRLS U17 SINGLES:** Sally Marling (Y) holder beat Kate Goodall (Y) 21-16, 21-13

**BOYS U17 SINGLES:** Eddie Hatley (SY) holder beat Alex Perry (DV) 18-21, 21-13, 21-19
St. Neots first point

Eckersley. Well Connected Menswear now against Fellows Cranleigh. From 1-3 down and Stephen Rand. They lost 3-5 including two losses at deuce games against Tony Healan and Jeff

Leckie jumped up Division 2 South East


Richardson also put St. Neots 5-4 ahead with a 16 and 17 win over Grant Solder. On his premier debut John Taylor gained Match for beating Mick Harper at 19 in the third and for just losing to Steve Moore 17, -15, -23. Team Peniel, in the absence of Matthew Syed, beat Yugo Cans 8-4. Andrew Eden started with wins against Denis Gannon and Carl Morgan. When NFD Grove I beat Bathwick Tyres I by 8-1 it was Kevin Satchell nominated Man of the Match for a fine doubles performance. In partnership with Paul Lewis he beat Jonathan Taylor and Dee Douglas.

DML, White Hart Launceston just held on to second place in Division 1 South by a draw with Horsham Dolphins. Richie Venner chucked up two useful wins against Mike Short and Paul Whiting. Surrey's Mike Hammond lost to Steve Slater - 20, -19 and beat Malcolm Green 19 and 18 for Larkhall's sole win against NFD Grove III. Garry Knights beat Brian Garroway and Dave Harding. Victoria Park Mazda were unlucky not to take points from Bathwick Tyres II. They lost 3-5 including two losses at deuce in the third. Andy Creed survived deuce games against Tony Healan and Jeff Morgan. Colley Toyota stayed on top with a convincing 7-1 win over Ellenborough II. John Dennison beat Dave Barr for consolation.

Keith Richardson (top) and John Taylor

Cockburn's Special

Norwich Foxwood picked themselves up with a 6-2 win against relegation rivals Ruston Marconi Lincoln in Division 1 North. Jonathan Cockburn did well to beat Richard Tilford and Dave Skennett. It was Darren Howarth who recorded Vymura Internationals only win against a strong NFD Grove II, at the expense of Nigel Eckerley. Well Connected Menswear now hold second place with a whitewash of Liverpool led by Andy Withers. Leckie jumped up Division 2 South East with a 5-3 win over Pillinger Air Croydon. Adrian Thorp was in form with wins over Henry Boul and Phil Cox. Tony Clayton led bottom-placed Jallife Poole to a draw against Pollows Cranleigh. From 1-3 down the Dorset club pulled back to 4-3 before sharing the points. City of Milton Keynes fought off a challenge from BSC Brentwood I. Richard Hynacht gave them the edge with victories against David Cole and Stephen Rand.

Mayur Majithia made short work of Blaine Short and Steve Giles as Hornham Dolphins overcame DML White Hart. Launceston II 7-1. Edson stayed on top of Division 2 South West with a 6-2 defeat of Amity Generation 2 Fareham. Ramesh Bhalas threatened David Good's record but lost 12, 18, 20. Cheltenham Starcast collected their easiest two points of the season winning 7-1 at home to Gurnersbury Triangle. Chris Boothby beat Darren Griffin to prevent a whitewash. Kleinsworth, Bexon Gillingham remained in contention with a 5-3 defeat of Colley Toyota II. Mark Brown put the Kent side 5-1 ahead with wins over David Buck and Jeremy Hobbs.

Linda Farrow introduced Costas Papantonio at No.3 to punish Rejects II 7-1 in Division 3 South. Jason Blake beat Paul Jablon for some consolation while veteran Trevor Campbell bagged a duck at No. 4 for Rejects. JAGS marched on with a whitewash of NFD Grove IV with Derek Holman at the helm. Ashford (Midvr) beat White Hart Launceston 5-3 as Homer Satchell chucked up two wins against Martin Rowe and Adrian Vincent. In Division 3 Midland Ashford (Kent) lost 2-6 to OLOPS in a match that was closer than the score suggests. Four games went to three with OLOPS winning 3 of them, with two of those going to David Reeves who beat Phil Saxby and Justin Goodall. Larkhall II were crushed 7-1 by Thorns, the one being the closest with Steve Davis taking consolation in beating Ken Walton 22, -14, 19. Julian Wootton beat Tom Adams and Surrey's Richard Tanner. Compliments came from Sandra Roden who said it was a pleasant match to urllib with all games played in a sporting manner. Tony Jones lost led Chan Construction II to a 7-1 win over Bathwick Tyres. Lindon Douglas looked convincing. Hugh Dalton beat Andrew Hare to prevent a whitewash.

Up in Division 3 North Uxbridge Burton were entertaining away to Lifeline Developments Crusaders. Peter Furneaux starred for the visitors, helping them to a 6-2 victory. He did not have things all his own way as he beat Andy Wignall -17, 15, 14 and rod Ogletby -11, 21, 20. John Hope battled his way to two third-game victories, helping Vymura International II to beat Stephens NYSD II 5-3. John Crawford resisted with two wins, but the only other came from Darren Liddle. Borough of Sunderland won 5-3 away to Kingshurst Bribar, thanks in part to an impressive performance from Tony Gelder. Bribar trailed 1-4 before pulling back to 3-4, but then losing the last as Stuart Taylor fell to Lynne Yarnell. David Adshead won two for Omlet against Vale Royal Warrrington but Vale won the other six. Terry Turner did well to beat Andrew Wilkinson and Steve Brunskill.

Mayur Majithia made short work of Blaine Short and Steve Giles as Hornham Dolphins overcame DML White Hart. Launceston II 7-1. Edson stayed on top of Division 2 South West with a 6-2 defeat of Amity Generation 2 Fareham. Ramesh Bhalas threatened David Good's record but lost 12, 18, 20. Cheltenham Starcast collected their easiest two points of the season winning 7-1 at home to Gurnersbury Triangle. Chris Boothby beat Darren Griffin to prevent a whitewash. Kleinsworth, Bexon Gillingham remained in contention with a 5-3 defeat of Colley Toyota II. Mark Brown put the Kent side 5-1 ahead with wins over David Buck and Jeremy Hobbs.

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Topi Tops Top

Ellenborough III, bottom of Division 3 East with 6 points, knocked Chelsford off the top the table. Dipak Topiwala accounted for Terry Dowsett and Richard James. From trailing 1-2 the Enfield side rattled off the remaining games with Paul Hudson beating Andrew Watling and scraping home against Stephen Kerns 20.-

Fellows Cranleigh took over the top spot by virtue of a draw with Norwich Foxwood. John Tindler was Man of the Match for beating P. McCloughan and S. Molloy, both by scores of 18 and 14. Dave Soliman, disgruntled by his plunge down the ranking list, beat No.1 opponent T.S. Bunn. Levi's Westfield moved up at the expense of title contenders Team Peniel II. Levis won 7-1 with Kieron Debel leading with wins against Matthew Reid and Keith Hudson beating Andrew Wadling and Levi's won 7-1 with Kieron Dabbs leading Richard Hutchinson 21, -9, 20 to stop the dreaded whitewash.

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LEAGUE TABLES AS AT 19TH JANUARY 1992

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DIVISION 1 (NORTH)

| NFD Grove II | 8 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 54 | 10 | 16 |
| Well Connected Menswear | 8 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 37 | 27 | 9 |
| Vymura International I | 8 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 31 | 33 | 9 |
| West Warwickshire | 7 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 30 | 26 | 8 |
| Liverpool | 7 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 24 | 32 | 6 |
| RM Lincoln | 8 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 22 | 42 | 3 |
| Norwich Foxwood I | 8 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 18 | 46 | 3 |
| Britannia Ipswich | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 55 | 1 |

DIVISION 1 (SOUTH)

| Colley Toyota I | 9 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 55 | 17 | 16 |
| DML Launceston I | 9 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 41 | 31 | 14 |
| Horsham Dolphins II | 9 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 49 | 23 | 13 |
| Bathwick Tyres II | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 38 | 34 | 10 |
| NFD Grove III | 9 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 38 | 34 | 9 |
| Larkhill I | 9 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 26 | 46 | 6 |
| Ellenborough II | 9 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 24 | 48 | 3 |
| VP Mazda | 9 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 17 | 55 | 1 |

DIVISION 2 (NORTH)

| Stephen NYSD I | 9 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 56 | 16 | 18 |
| Chan Construction I | 9 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 47 | 25 | 13 |
| Bribber Hamberside | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 37 | 35 | 10 |
| City of Leicester | 9 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 41 | 31 | 8 |
| Yugo Cars I | 9 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 48 | 36 | 7 |
| Borough of Sunderland | 9 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 28 | 44 | 6 |
| Burston | 9 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 25 | 47 | 5 |
| City of Leeds | 8 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 18 | 46 | 3 |

DIVISION 2 (SOUTH EAST)

| City of Milton Keynes | 9 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 43 | 29 | 25 |
| BSG Brentwood I | 9 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 43 | 29 | 13 |
| Fellows Cranleigh I | 9 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 39 | 33 | 11 |
| Pillinger Air Croydon | 9 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 37 | 35 | 8 |
| VBS Fareham | 8 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 31 | 33 | 7 |
| Leckie TTC | 9 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 32 | 40 | 7 |
| Rejects I | 8 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 30 | 34 | 6 |
| Jolliffe Poole | 9 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 25 | 47 | 3 |

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DIVISION 3 (NORTH)

| Vale Royal Warrington | 9 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 55 | 17 | 16 |
| Borough of Sunderland II | 9 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 40 | 32 | 14 |
| Vymura International II | 9 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 46 | 26 | 13 |
| Osbridge (Burton) | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 37 | 35 | 10 |
| Ormsby | 9 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 36 | 36 | 8 |
| Stephens NYSD II | 9 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 36 | 36 | 8 |
| L D Crusaders | 9 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 19 | 53 | 2 |
| Kingshurst Bridge | 9 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 19 | 53 | 2 |

DIVISION 3 (SOUTH)

| Fellows Cranleigh II | 9 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 43 | 29 | 11 |
| Team Peniel II | 9 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 41 | 31 | 11 |
| Chelmsford League | 9 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 39 | 33 | 11 |
| Norwich Foxwood II | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 39 | 33 | 10 |
| Britannia Ipswich II | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 39 | 33 | 10 |
| Levis Westfield | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 39 | 33 | 9 |
| BSG Brentwood II | 9 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 24 | 48 | 3 |
| Ellenborough III | 9 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 28 | 46 | 6 |

DIVISION 3 (MIDLAND)

| OLOP TTC | 9 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 49 | 23 | 16 |
| Chan Construction II | 9 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 48 | 34 | 16 |
| NFD Grove Colts | 8 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 35 | 29 | 10 |
| Larkhill II | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 37 | 35 | 10 |
| Thorne Dudley | 9 | 4 | 0 | 5 | 30 | 33 | 8 |
| Bathwick Tyres III | 9 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 33 | 39 | 7 |
| Lambeth 4 Tote | 8 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 18 | 46 | 3 |
| Ashford (Kent) | 9 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 21 | 51 | 0 |

DIVISION 3 (SOUTH)

| JAGS SC | 9 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 55 | 17 | 16 |
| Linda Farrow | 9 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 47 | 25 | 13 |
| Ashford (Middx) | 9 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 38 | 34 | 12 |
| Rejects II | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 37 | 35 | 10 |
| NFD Grove IV | 9 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 31 | 41 | 8 |
| Parkside Dragons | 8 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 26 | 38 | 5 |
| White Hart Launceston III | 9 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 30 | 42 | 5 |
| Alpha Southampton | 8 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 16 | 48 | 2 |
Devon win premier title

The final series of the Senior Premier Division matched, at St. Neots T.T.C., brought some tasty turnery results, excitement and tension! The championship, promotion and relegation issues were not decided until the very last match!

In the final round Devon had to beat Sussex to take the title. After a four and a half hour struggle to save Devon, the Yorkshire team had a 6-4 win and took a big title. At a crucial stage Paul Whiting (Dv) beat Adrian Moore 27 and 20! This defeat for Sussex meant they are for relegation. In their last match Middlesex met Lancashire and a draw would have made them the Champions. However a disastrous start took them 4-nil down. Middlesex, who did not have the services of John Souter and Lesley Kent, fought back but lost 4-6 and were pushed into 3rd place.

Devon started with a drawn match against Yorkshire. They fought well to come back from 3-5 down to get what proved to be an absolutely vital point. At this stage, Carol Giles (Dv) made a great effort to beat Sally Malling 19 and 20. Sue Ruddell (Dv) had already beaten Joanna Roberts 21 in the 3rd game. Devon later lost to Yorkshire and could have felt their chance had gone. But both Lancashire and Yorkshire beat Middlesex. Lancashire was the star team of the final series. They made a great bid to retain the championship winning all 4 matches, including a crucial 6-4 against Yorkshire, after a meteoric rise from a 3rd place finish last year. Middlesex and could have felt their chance had gone. But both Lancashire and Yorkshire beat Middlesex. Middlesex met Lanes and a draw would have decided until the very last match 1

In Junior 2B Devon lost their unbeaten record when defeated 6-4 by Buckinghamshire, who took over the leadership. The Buckingharnshire boys were the very successful ladies, who had previously beaten Joanna Roberts at 24 in the 3rd game. Devon later lost to Yorkshire and could have felt their chance had gone. But both Lancashire and Yorkshire beat Middlesex. Middlesex met Lanes and a draw would have decided until the very last match 1

In Senior 2B Devon had a 7-3 win over Dorset. In the 3rd game, lost at 17 in the 3rd game to Clive Morris.

RESULTS

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In Junior 1B Essex 2, after inflicting a heavy defeat on nearest rivals Hertfordshire, then, perhaps being complacent, lost 4-6 to Glamorgan. However, in their last match, promotion and relegation issues were not decided until the very last match!

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League tables include all results received as at 14th February 1992

Compiled by Leslie Smith
**AVON**

Bob Murray

**County Scene**

Well, a New Year brings with it a new County Ranking List. Paul Lewis and Varsha Majmudar keep their places at the top of the senior rankings but expect to see Michelle Cohen challenging strongly for the top ladies spot next month. The top five in each list are:

**Men**

1. P Lewis
2. A Creed
3. D Gray
4. C Holley
5. S Bettison

**Women**

1. V Majmudar
2. M Cohen
3. H Perrott
4. C Webb
5. D Booy

**Veteran Men**

1. J Hibbs
2. D Price
3. E Brown
4. M Kimber

**Veteran Women**

1. J Kettle
2. M Lewis
3. J Aitken
4. J Watts
5. B Pankhurst

The newly formed Veterans side have certainly had an interesting first season. Their latest fixture, away to Gloucestershire 2nds, was another four and a half hours marathon. Len Upward and Paul Etherington were 11th hour call-ups but with 2 wins and 1 win respectively certainly justified their inclusion. John Higgs took one of his singles and teamed up with Paul for the vital doubles win. I am told that the 40 mile journey took almost as long as the match itself with John's car obviously playing for expedite.

**County Schools**

Avon's school teams are looking to better last year's excellent performance in the English Schools Championships. Brislington are represented in the Under 16 boys, under 13 boys and under 13 girls whilst Holymead will contest the Under 11 boys and Under 11 Girls events at Stroud in the Regional Finals.

**Bristol League**

Bristol representative sides have once again started well in the Leach Cup and Rose Bowl. The Cadet boys have reached the semi final stage after comprehensive victories over Swindon (7-2), Bridgewater (8-0) and Guildford (9-0). The ladies team have come past their first hurdle with a 5-3 victory over Swindon but will have to be at their best to overcome Plymouth.

Avon sides appear to be well represented in the South West Regional Cadet League. At the recent event played at St Georges School, Bristol, I was pleased to note Bristol and Knowle and Brislington teams in action as well as two from Holymead.

At a recent League game at Portishead I was delighted to play against Charles Leighton-Scott once again. The former Gloucestershire County player tells me he is the oldest current player in the Bristol Premier, admitting to 66. That situation may not last too long as a review of the first division shows me that Aubrey Symond's team Bristol Civil Service, are challenging strongly for a promotion place. Their success may depend on the form of Johnny Wise who had an excellent first half.

No surprises at the top of the Bristol Premier at the halfway stage with last year's top three (Nailsea Leopards, Knowle and Brislington 'A' and Bristol Club 'B') holding identical places.

**Bath League**

Bath, in their 60th year, are looking forward to their annual tournament to be played at the Bath Sports Centre between 17th and 21st February. I understand that an entry has been received once again from George Ery which maintains his unique record of having played in every Championships since 1932!

This year sees a Veterans doubles event for the first time, reflecting the growth of interest in table tennis at this age group.

The Premier Division title race looks like being very close. Oldfield 'A' currently hold a slight lead over Longwell 'A' but the latter do have a match in hand.

---

**BERKSHIRE**

John Cunningham

**Newbury**

No real surprises in Newbury's Division 1 with Thatcham A and Woolton Hill A once again involved in their personal duel for the championship. In fact this season Thatcham look like retaining their crown, Dave Barr, Clive Payne and Dave Wise beat the Woolton Hill trio of Dave Reeves, Malcolm Cummins and Darren Jones 7-3 (These top players certainly get around the leagues). Mention must also be made of Terry White and Alan Palaszcy who have played several matches for Thatcham and contributed to their success. However Coaching A and Ashford Hill might disagree that it is a two-horse race and Coaching can point out that when they went down 7-3 to Thatcham D they were without Martin King.

Last season Job A ran away with Division 2 and it looks likely that West Ilsley A in the form of Ron Jones, Bob Jones, Clive Mitchell and Terry Wheeler will do the same this season. Two teams from Hurst, the A and B squads are in hot pursuit. The A team went down 8-2 to the leaders but the B team have yet to do battle with them. Steve Morris, Chris Lliukin, Jim Gavin and Phil Davenport make up a useful B team squad.

Division 3 is wide open, three teams are unbeaten to date and two others have only lost one match. Woolton Hill D are the current leaders, closely followed by AWE B and Ash Hill Hikers. Thatcham are currently clear in Division 4, their trio of Geoff Norman, Bob Edwell and Stuart Wise have opened up a three point gap, but they are aware that Limitorque are hot on their heels, while Wash Common - Falcons and Upper Bucklebury are ready to take advantage of any slipups.

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Division 5 is nicely balanced, this division abounds with promising youngsters, experienced adults, complete newcomers, plenty of enthusiasm and above all much evidence of enjoyment and good sportsmanship. The coaching junior trio of James Rivers, John Bradford and Mark Roberts remain favourites for the title.

**Junior and Cadet Outlook**

Derek Langley was disappointed at the turnout of Newbury in the Junior trials. Only five made the trip to Maidenhead for the County trials. However, he was well pleased with the cadets turnout. Youngsters came from Enborne Lodge, Wash Common, Lambourne and Newbury Junior Coaching, making a splendid contribution. Their overall performance was good and it makes for an encouraging future. He would like to thank Ian Langley, Wally Smith and Chris Baker for taking an interest in the players throughout the day.
on to a well deserved title with a 19,10 victory over Bamford. Bamford, but was outmanoeuvred by Jason Bamford 13, 19 in the semi finals. Stephen Shaw beat leading junior Jack Boult 15,15 in the semis and went to beat Shaw and Kinsella 16, 14.

THE RETURN TO Derby of the Derbyshire Closed Championships at Derby League headquarters. attracted the best entry for some years at the Derby High School, the view the all afternoon but the Wheatsheaf's No.1 Brian Johns was courageously disgrace herself. She took Zoe to three games, losing the first 14-21, was 23rd in the Cadet Boys ranking list in 1989 produced some magnificent her sets, and so it was against Cheshire.

Steve Green scored valuable points for Cheshire with a deceiving, but perfectly legal serve, drawing his arm across the ball to shield from the grade and require further information, John Freeman would like to hear from you. His address is Juls, 29 Haywood Way, Reading, Berks RG3 2HE (Tel: 0734 428697).

Bracknell and District
With the second half of the season underway, the Premier League is still headed by OLOP A. The likely runners up are the small but active SSV squad. It look seven at this early stage that Bracknell A will grace Division 1 next season. In the closest contest for years only one of seven teams could win Division 1, KWC are the current leaders. Division 2 could well go to Lightwater A o while SSV B look the best bet in the third. The basement battle is between new club Redingensions and the Surrey club Lightwater B.

CUMBRIA
Gordon Brown
CUMBRIA'S CAPTAIN JULIE McLean has maintained consistent form this season. The Carlisle school teacher can usually be relied upon to win her sets, and so it was against Cheshire. But her victories over 17th ranked national junior Zoe Buchanan and the seasoned Denise Conroy were not enough to prevent the visitors from registering an 8-2 triumph at Cleator Moor Civic Hall.

No. 2 woman Fiona Harris of Barrow who, herself, has figured prominently as a junior, made her senior county home debut and did not disgrace herself. She took Zoe to three games, losing the first 14-21, winning a tight second 25-23, before succumbing 6-21.

Steve Green scored valuable points for Cheshire with a deceiving, but perfectly legal serve, drawing his arm across the ball to shield from view the type of spin being used. he sailed home without dropping a game all afternoon but the Wheatheaf's No. 1 Brian Johns was courageously taken to three by his opponent Kevin Hodgen. The Barrow lad who was 23rd in the Cadet Boys ranking list in 1989 produced some magnificent shots which had the 38 year old Johns baffled. But the veteran gradually wore Kevin down in the third 21-14.

DERBYSHIRE
Malcolm Allsop
THE RETURN TO Derby of the Derbyshire Closed Championships attracted the best entry for some years at the Derby High School, the Derby League headquarters.

The Championships proved a triumph for youth with Stephen Shaw and Nicola Deaton taking the major titles.

In the men's singles Martin Kinsella was hoping to retain his title but was outmanoeuvred by Jason Bamford 13, 19 in the semi finals. Stephen Shaw beat leading junior Jack Boul 15, 15 in the semis and went on to a well deserved title with a 19, 10 victory over Bamford. Bamford gained revenge in the men's doubles when he teamed up with Neil Slater to beat Shaw and Kinsella 16, 14.

Nicola Deaton retained her women's singles title with an easy 9, 11 victory over Rose Haggard, but the women's doubles title went to Haggard and Jane Vickers 10, 17 over Cheryl Fisher and daughter Michelle.

The singles winners teamed up to win the mixed double sin the best final of the day by 22, -20, 12, over Martin Kinsella and Jane Vickers.

Eric Hall gained his expected veteran singles title with a 15, 18 victory over Mick Fisher, having struggled to come through his semi with Steve Blackshaw by 14, -15, 14.

The Derbyshire Association are grateful to Trancher Engineers of Burton who once again sponsored the trophies. The first stage of the Derbyshire Inter-Town League featured Derby and Matlock with honours finishing even. Matlock won the senior match with Geoff Gill winning his 3 singles and combining with John Davies to win the doubles in a 7-3 victory. Derby gained revenge in the junior match with Matthew Orchard winning his 3 singles and combining with Russell Winfield to win the doubles.

Congratulations to the Derbyshire senior team who won their opening four county matches at Lodge Moor, Sheffield with John Holland, Bradley Billington and Nicola Deaton going unbeaten. Glad to see you back Brad.

The county Junior 1st team were hammered 1-9 by Staffordshire Junior 1st at Hill Street, Burton. The county junior 2nd team travelled to Holmes Chapel, with Michelle Fisher and Sarah Milnes winning all the girl's singles, but ended up on the losing side when the boys failed to score in a 4-6 defeat.

Burton League
In the schools division, de Ferrers Plus and Granville A are leading the way in this interesting competition. Scott Ferris is doing particularly well for Granville, being the first defender to emerge from this hotbed of table tennis talent.

Uttoxeter A and Stretton SC Red are locked at the top of Division 1 with Granville Aos and RH Sherpa Orange their nearest challengers. Granville Kings have run away with Division 2, leaving Trancher, Hill St Red and Granville Jacks to contest runners up spot. Hill St Black lead Division 3 with unbeaten Hill St Green leading the chasing pack.

ESSEX
Alan Sheperd
AN EXTREMELY TRAUMATIC weekend took place in January for the Junior second and third teams following the receipt by me of withdrawal symptoms from all of our players who attend the Peniel Academy in Brentwood. This necessitated our digging deep into our fortunately ample reserves and coming up with the name of Stephen Joslin (our No. 13 junior) to face Suffolk in Ipswich as a member of our third team. There followed (and I expect that all team secretaries have experienced this scenario) the gathering of all members of the team in the carpark of the Post House Hotel. At the time when we should have been setting off it was discovered that we were one short! Frantic phone calls ensued, a scenario) the gathering of all members of the team in the carpark of the Post House Hotel. At the time when we should have been setting off it was discovered that we were one short! Frantic phone calls ensued, a diversion to Chelmsford was decided upon, and a fairly keen (although flu ridden) Wayne Smithies (County No. 12) was prised from his afternoon siesta and informed that he was now playing in the match. I am very pleased to say that our much changed team left the 'Dome' with a 10-0 win, a terrific outcome to a very trying day.

Meanwhile, back at South Hanningfield, our second team lacking Vincent Avery and Jennie Coleman called up Peter Worthington and Michelle King (County No. 8) to face Oxfordshire. One must rather feel sorry to our visitors, as last season they annihilated us with Martin
COUNTIES 3

Adams, Martin Haycock, Matthew Sims, Dawn Barnett and Sally Hughes in their lineup. This season the sole survivor was Matthew. The Oxon boys actually fought very hard and were no push-overs but their girls were weak, and the result was 9-1 win. The next match for this team will be a much sternier test (against Kent) and success cannot be guaranteed. Report next month!

I was at Lilleshall at the end of December for the National Ranking Trials. One does wonder what is the purpose of this tournament and I feel very strongly that Donald Parker should consider making some revisions to the system. We now have the Halex Ranking Scheme which, of course, produces day to day variations of the ratings of the different players. That being so, are the Ranking Trials necessary? Players qualify for them by struggling through the Regional events and try desperately hard to achieve good results at Lilleshall. The rewards for their efforts do not seem to justify the travelling, the expense of an overnight stay, and the blood, sweat and tears expended. In my view, if this event is to be retained in anything like its present form, a substantial award of points must be given (a) for qualifying (b) for any wins secured in the initial groups and (c) on an upwards sliding scale for any wins secured in the knockout section. I have said it before and I will say it again, it is essential that a full squad of qualified umpires be seconded to the event, bearing in mind that it is a National event, and that the careers of the players taking part are in the balance.

A few days after these Notes are being written, our County first team will be hoping to come away from their weekend of matches at Chelmsford against Middlesex, Wiltshire and Avon in Division 1B, with sufficient points to give them promotion back to the Premier Division. It has been too long since Essex has regularly played in the top flight and surely even the northern strongholds of Yorkshire and Lancashire must see the Premier Division without Essex on a par with the Barclay's Division 1 without Arsenal or Liverpool. I hear that Skylet Andrew has been tempted from his television appearances, overseas commitments and other involvements, to turn out once more for the county, a wonderful news that is. With Steve Dorking, Grant Solder, Des Chartery, Linda Radford and Alison Gower as backup, surely we cannot fail? Again, see this column next month to learn what happened!

Although this year sees the Jubilee year of The Cotswold Junior Select Tournament at the Gloucester Leisure Centre, it now appears that this is the sole tournament of national standard to be held in Gloucestershire at all, much hard work and careful planning goes into the Cotswold as indeed it does in any tournament anywhere, few people really appreciate what immense pre-thinking is involved, therefore fellow Gloucestrians, join me in a toast to the head organiser - Jack Reeves; the Chief Hon Referee - Leslie Smith and the County Secretary David Dean, plus many others who annually formulate the nucleus of this tournament's success for indeed, without them, some 300 or so youngsters would have to go elsewhere.

Our only hope in the English Open at the Birmingham Indoor Arena, namely defending Veteran champion, Cheltenham's Dave Harvey, fought his way gallantly into the third round and then met the formidable John Hilton, alas it was curtains for Dave but I am sure that he enjoyed his year's reign of being England's No. 1 Veteran.

I try to cover most of the Cheltenham Saracens British League home matches in Division 2 South West region, at the time of writing Saracens have only played one match this year of 1992, that was against the Acton (London) based team of Gunnersbury Triangle, Saracens romped home the winners 7-1 in this encounter, the visitors, Chris Boothby played extremely well to beat the home side's No. 1 Darren Griffin - 18, 15, 16. Saracens' next match will be a tough one v top of the table Ediston TTC whom Saracens held to a draw in the first half.

One young lady in the county, well worthy of a mention is 12 year old Kerry Hogarth from Newent who plays in the Gloucester League Division 2 at a recent Cotswold Ladies match and playing for Gloucester against Cheltenham ladies, Kerry beat ALL OF THE TOP RANKED CHELTENHAM LADY PLAYERS and deservedly so, made her senior Gloucester debut, in fine form.

HAMPSHIRE

Brian Lamerton

FOLLOWING DECEMBER'S SENIOR Championship, the top item on January's agenda was the Junior Championship played in Southampton from which Andover's Jeremy Wilson emerged as a surprised boys winner after defeating 4 year old Gareth Scadden (Gosport and Fareham) in the final. Gareth was just delighted to be in the final having disposed of favourite Kevin Macken (Basingstoke) in the semis. Scadden retained his under 14 title and Tim Clark, one of a small number of Bournemouth players retaining allegiance to Hampshire won the under 12 event. Girls winners were two from Portsmouth, Heidi Wheaton (Under 17) and Donna Granville (Under 14) and at under 12 another Bournemouth youngster Georgina Poulton. Staying with the juniors the three who qualified for the final national trials, Kevin Macken, Gareth Scadden and Caroline Newling Ward found the going tough. There is a school of thought which is saying does an impossible mission justify the cost; I personally believe that as with World Championships and Olympics whatever the odds your own best are entitled to compete.

With the men's league joining the cadets and juniors in playing on the block system most life in the inter-town leagues is generated by the Veterans, and most of that is blown in by the sea air of Bournemouth with their A and B teams leading Division 1 and the C's leading Division 2. Nice to see the Isle of Wight back in the fold and with 2 wins out of 3 again, sea air is paying off (or is it sea sickness by their opponents?).

The Veterans appear to hold the honours hopes in the County Championships, with the second string having 100% record with one match to go and a sets average of 38-7 but with the first team likely to hold their place, will the Pompey squad of Norman Stagg, Ken Burton, Bob Cnct, Rav Lush and Marv Barron be allowed to take up their earned
GREAT NEWS! HERTFORDSHIRE'S two first teams Seniors and Juniors, should, if hopes are realised, win their respective County Divisions and gain promotion.

On Saturday 8th February 1992, the Senior 1st team of John Taylor, Pete Harris, John Lennon, Emma Hurling and Maria Williams, beat Cambridge II 7-3, thus setting themselves up for promotion when they play their last game at Norfolk, where a draw will be good enough to win them the title.

The Junior team of Chris Shetler, Justin Skinner, Darren Humber, Sarah Seabourne and Caron Haber, beat Surrey II's 8-2, virtually ensuring their promotion, whilst Hertfordshire's Veteran 1st and 2nd teams also have a good chance of promotion, with both teams undefeated with two games to play.

Meanwhile in the Senior Inter-League competition, North Herts have got their noses in front, after the first Sunday of tournament held at Barnet Table Tennis Centre on 2nd February 1992.

North Herts team, Dave Hyde, Jimmy Walsh and Sandra Harper, firstly beat Watfold 6-1 then went on to beat the highly fancied Barnet 4-3, to take a vital lead in these popular championships.

Barnet actually led 3-2 and looked favourites to take this top of the table clash when Barnet's Duncan Taylor stepped onto the arena to face North Herts' Dave Hyde. But Hyde emerged the winner, following a tough three setter -10, 18, 12. Then North Herts' Sandra Harper completed the victory by beating Lynne Flowers 13 and 16. Barnets are in joint 2nd place with Hemel Hempstead, who will meet North Herts in the second Sunday, on 12th April in the last match of the day.
Top seed in the mens singles Andy Cunningham progressed comfortably to the semi final but then in an exciting match was finally beaten by Paul Rainford. Reigning champioin Joe Kennedy reached his allotted semi final place and in perhaps the best match of the day just lost to second seed Justin Goodall. Service dominated the final but on this occasion it was Goodall that could not contain the Rainford serve.

Juliet Houghton as expected retained her Ladies Singles title for the 9th occasion. A semi final victory against Julie Thorne put her in the final against Maidstone’s Alison Pearson. Pearson never found her touch in the final, Houghton winning 2, 17.

Matthew Vardy/Nell Highams upset the seedings in the first round of the mens doubles putting out 5th seeds Dave Davies/Dave Griffiths but could not get past No. 1 seeds Phil Cox/Cunningham. The bottom half of the draw proved more straightforward until the semi final where the 4th seeds Joe Kennedy/Ian Kenyon beat 2nd seeds Mark Brown/Paul Rainford and went on to win the final.

Top seeds and reigning champions Houghton/Caroline Brown retained their womens doubles title.

In the mixed doubles 4th seeds Mark and Caroline Brown beat the top seeds Rainford/Thorne in the semi finals and in the bottom half of the draw 2nd seeds Spencer Thompson and Lesley Hollingworth lost to Harris/Houghton. In a most entertaining final the Brown’s overcame the odds for a splendid championship winning performance.

Both top seeds went out of the Veterans singles at the quarter final stage, No. 1 Henry Buist to Keith Clarke and No. 2 Dave Kellard to Adrian Hall. Tom Adams beat Clarke to reach the semi final against Dave Emery who outplayed Hall. Emery beat Adams in the final.

Bob Groves - Obituary

It is with regret that we learnt recently of the death of one of the stalwarts of Kent table tennis. Bob, who had been ill for a number of years had served on the Kent Committee for 23 years and for his tremendous services to the county was made a Life Vice President in 1989. As well as being both Chairman and Treasurer to the NWK league for many years he also held various posts for Kent, including Vice Chairman, Kent League Secretary, Handbook Editor and until his death Trophy Secretary. All members of Kent share the grief of his wife Jean - he will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Tournament

The combined tournament organised by Paul White was held recently at St Gregory’s School, Southborough. Michael Harrison reached the final of the mens singles with a semi final win over last year’s champion Michael Cripps. Paul Crisp won the other semi final with a good win over Mark Henderson. In the final Paul Crisp came back from 7-3 down in the third for a fine win. Cripps and Harrison teamed up to take the Open doubles title against Paul Duke and Henderson. Paul White became Veterans champion with a win over Albert Crisci, but Crisci got his revenge in the doubles when partnering Mike Selton they defeated White and Malcolm Cole. With many of the Juniors at a Kent training camp, it was left to Paul Duke to retain his junior singles title, beating Heidi Steers and with Daniel Cheeseman won the junior doubles against Steers and David Richardson.

Coltswood Junior Select

Midway’s Christian Thompson won the Boys under 12s when he beat No. 1 seed Ali Subhan (Berks) in the final. Dominated by fierce looped topspin drives, it was Thompson (No. 2 seed) who executed the better return of serve to deprive Subhan of the third ball attack, even so the match was evenly contested with Thompson finally winning. No. 1 seeds Shelley Ruocco (Essex) and Glenda Ashston (Stour) won the under 14 doubles, beating the unseeded Crystal Hall and Joanne Barham who had already beaten the second seeds in the second round.

Scott Friday won the Under 10 and Under 12 at Elmbridge and won the Under 10, Under 11 and Under 12 singles and Under 13 doubles at Grove Tern Hill. Alison Smith won the Under 14 girls event at Elmbridge.

LEICESTERSHIRE

Derek Butt

IN DIVISION ONE of the Leicester TTL Loughborough Kingfishers I lead the way still unbeaten and they look odds on to lift the Championship, but may be someone will prove me wrong. For the Kingfisher’s Mark Illingsworth has so far to be beaten and has good support from Chris Kinsey who has lost only four so far.

Great Glen are having a good season with Maurice Newman at the helm and are at present in third position.

Meanwhile in the remaining divisions there seem to be many close divisions, both in promotion spots and equally in relegations. But already a few divisions have almost certain winners at this stage of the season.

The Phil Reid Memorial Trophy has been played this month and it turned out to be another very good event. Player over four days, the early stages played with eight groups, all played on a round robin basis, and the top two from each went on to the finals on the Sunday at Knighton Park. The quarter finals produced some very exciting matches and close (credit to the handicapper) four groups with four players in each again played a round robin and the winner of each group went into the semi finals.

Group A was won by Tony Walker. Group B was also won quite comfortably by Steve Pratt. Group C was close with Matthew Hobday coming out on top on sets average over Martin Bolton. Martin previously had beaten Matthew. Group D was another very close encounter with Lisa Hovingby having to beat Derek Butt two straight to go into the semi final on sets average, this she just managed.

The semi finals produced some good table tennis. Steve Pratt overcame Tony Walker mainly due to his spin services. The second semi final produced one of the closest in the tournament with Matthew Hobday beating sister Lisa. The final was an exciting match and the first game was close, going to Matthew 23-21, the second was not quite so close at 21-16. So Matthew Hobday was this year’s champion.

Coaching at the Soar Valley Community College is still progressing smoothly with a regular attendance every Saturday morning. I know the organiser is happy and tells me that he is hopeing to have a couple of teams playing in the league next season. The Eynes Mancell project has still not got off the ground yet, but it is still on the cards.

The Leicestershire Schools Championships are to be held at the Soar Valley College on 15th February, there are four events for boys and girls under 11, 13, 16 and 19. Last year was a big success. Let’s hope that there is a large entry this year.

The Leicestershire Inter-Towns competition is taking place on Sunday 5th April at the Parklands Leisure Centre with teams from Loughborough, Hinckley and Leicester.

The Closed Championships entry forms have gone out and this event will be held at the Leicester Leys Leisure Centre on 22nd March.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Dennis Millman

FIRST THE GOOD news. When I last reported on the County Championships, I was unable to report a single victory. Now, ten weeks later, the senior firsts can boast of three successive wins, coinciding with an unbeaten run
The County Senior team clinched the Division 3A Championship with one match still to play. With Linda Collins coming through with a 6-4 victory over Herts when Tim Sheppard, Junior Stoddart and Mark Short, the juniors had levelled the scores in one of the matches. The team needed more players to play and the County committee appointed two new members, Mike Pond and Joyce Porter, to help to counter the current trend of teams carrying large squads of players in particular.

Unfortunately the Veteran firsts, the Veteran thirds and the juniors have failed to record a victory, despite some consistent displays from Keith Jones, Margaret Malby and young Sally Russell whose sequence of eight wins was broken only when the juniors faced Yorkshire. At British League level, Well Connected Menwear continue to maintain a mid-table position in Division 1 North with Andy Edmonds producing the best individual results but in Division 3 East, Levi’s Westfield, fielding an all local side, have now registered three consecutive wins in comprehensive style, with BSG Brentwood 2, Fellows Cranleigh 2 and Peniel 2 heavily defeated. In these matches, the flair of Andy Trott has enabled him to remain unbeaten, while Kieron Dabbs and Richard Elliott have lost only once and Ian Hawes twice.

The St Neots invitation League is also providing the county’s representatives with their usual success story, Wellingborough holding the lead at both Senior and Junior level, with the Veterans First Division again dominated by Northampton. If the good news is about quality, the bad news concerns quantity, and in particular the low entry at the recent County Closed tournament, which provided scant reward for the originality of, and the enthusiastic application by, the appropriate county sub-committee. To some degree the blame must be attributed to a congested table tennis calendar at national level, with two consecutive county championship weekends at the end of November. This necessitated the County Closed taking place on the first two Saturdays in December and in this material world, it proved an unacceptable choice for many of the would-be participants.

Further changes in the national calendar have now determined that the three major league closed events- Kettering, Northampton and Wellingborough will have to take place on successive Saturdays from 22nd February, and with some players normally involved in all three, it will be interesting to see if the usual fine entry is maintained. It does appear however that the grass roots end of table tennis doesn’t always get a fair deal.

Following the demise of the Pennine County computer ranking scheme, the Wellingborough League has become the first in the area to adopt its own computer system with the crucial criteria for all five divisions being those of previous achievement, quality of activity, consistency, current form, endurance and peak ability. These criteria do tend to reward those players who represent their clubs on a regular basis, and therefore the scheme has much to commend it and could eventually help to counter the current trend of teams carrying large squads of players to the general detriment of table tennis in general and local leagues in particular.

The Committee, whose time has been taken up running the league, have been boosted by the addition of John Williams, who has many new ideas upon development and promotion which he is working on.

Nottingham - A recent doubles match in Division 1 claimed combined ages of 226 years. Ron Bolton 69, John Ellis 58, John Slater 53 and young Ken Philpson 44 (please note it was not my addition!) Can anyone beat that?

Mansfield - The Mansfield Championships, sponsored by Openca.st, attracted a very large entry which meant many of the finals having to be held over until a future date.

A new venture was the John Collen Cup, a competition for under 14’s not competing in the league. Matthew Thompson won this event which attracted an extremely good entry of players who are now interested in competing in the League. Especially pleasing was the interest from parents of these players, and two extra divisions could result from the players attracted to this initiative. Well done Mansfield.

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Restford - The National Power sponsored League Championships were very well attended, but details not yet to hand. A friendly match against Gainsborough will be an annual event despite a 4-5 defeat.

Schools - The county were pleased that two winners emerged from the Regional Schools competition, High Pavement College (under 19 boys) and Redlands Primary (under 11 boys).

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Malcolm Allsop

THE COUNTY SENIOR team clinched the Division 3A Championship with a 6-4 victory over Herts when Tim Sheppard, Junior Stoddart and Richard Tilford won all 6 mens matches to ensure the victory and the Championship with one match still to play. With Linda Collins coming out of retirement to play and coach in the Notts training scheme, the county could do well in the higher division next season.

The county junior team gained a 7-3 victory over Staffordshire with Mark Short and Sarah Smith each winning 2 singles; and Kevin Green, Gary Pestka and Debbie Pestka each contributing a singles victory apiece.

The Veterans team suffered a 3-6 defeat from a strong Lancashire team, but the withdrawal of Alf Saunders weakened the Notts team and their chances. However, spirits recovered in time for a 9-0 win over Cheshire 3rd which keeps hopes high of a runners up position ahead. Our best wishes to Ron Bolton and John Ellis to the World Veterans Championships in Dublin.

Nottingham won the Carter Cup Zone 3 Final by 5-2 against Chesterfield with Gary Pestka winning his 3 singles.

On the tournament circuit, congratulations to Anne Marie and Michelle Haynes who, I am told, made a clean sweep at the British Gas tournament at Grove; and Debbie Pestka on winning the Under 12’s at the Cotswold Select - one of the few tournaments NOT at Grove this season.

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Schools - The county were pleased that two winners emerged from the Regional Schools competition, High Pavement College (under 19 boys) and Redlands Primary (under 11 boys).

SOMERSET
Andy Seward

THE COUNTY VETERANS first team attained yet another 6-3 win in the chase for the Championship, this one against Wiltshire 2nds. The usual double from Brian Reeves, two also from John Crabtree, a ladies singles victory for Shirley Dark plus the men’s doubles and Somerset were home and dry. The seconds were not so successful, losing 2-7, wins here for Alan Maidment and Martin Rumary.

nice to see Brian Reeves enter the charts at No. 31, a new entry in the Veterans national ranking list. Whether he will make No. 1 in the Top of the Pops we will have to wait and see but he did reach the last 8 of the Veterans at the English Open which must lift him a few more places.
The Junior A team continue their winning ways with a 7-3 win at Clwyd. Tomlinson and Richard Tilley recorded 11 out of 12 wins. The girls also won a 9-1 win following the long trip to Suffolk. Matthew Brown, Paul John Riley, Martin Pickles and Shirley Boone who each recorded wins. and lost a close match to Clwyd 54. The team for both matches included Jose Bongers.

At local league level, Wolverhampton ladies continue defence of the Rose Bowl. Wins against Leicester and Burton see advancement to the quarter final stage. The absent Sandra Roden has now had an operation on her troublesome knee injury and is on the slow road to recovery.

Congratulations to Brian Watkins on his advancement in the umpiring circles. A recent visit to Europe saw him testing his knowledge with 3000 spectators, very successfully apparently, although he had some difficulty calling for silence from a partisan crowd. Perhaps you have whetted my appetite Brian.

Our best wishes for a speedy recovery go to two of our top county juniors, both of whom play in the Mendip League. Andrew Hewitt suffered a cracked kneecap and Andrew Rumary an ankle injury, both requiring a lengthy spell in plaster. It should be added that neither injury was sustained play table tennis!!

Next month, news from another of the local leagues and a report on the next county Veterans matches.

**STAFFORDSHIRE**

**Tony Clift**

THE COUNTY CLOSED Championships took place on 26th January at the Whitehall Community Junior School, Walsall. This was a change of venue following several years at Lilleshall Sports Centre and was somewhat of a gamble. With easy access from the M6 motorway travel proved easy and more importantly the playing conditions proved to be superb, ideally housing the 8 table requirement, and receiving many complimentary comments from the players.

A late hiccup saw the loss of the top 4 men’s seeds due to a change of County Championship weekend date. Despite the necessary adjustment to the draw, all 11 events saw excellent competitive table tennis. The men’s singles became a very open event and after a number of exciting matches the final saw Tony Isaac overcome Mark Evans in one of the best finals for years. With both players attacking on both wings most points to a team who gained to gain promotion. South Mitcham Aces scored most points in winning Division 4.

Tony Isaac also contested the men’s and mixed doubles finals, losing (with partner Eddie Wilkes) and 3 setter to Mark Evans and left handed John Hancock. He came good in the mixed with Jan Dunning, winning a comfortable straight sets match.

The county league is progressing well with Division 1 having completed 4 fixture dates and Division 2 completing 3 fixture dates. Wolves Ladies are leading Division 1 having recorded wins of 10-0, 9-1 and 8-2 with the strong team of Jan Dunning, Helen Lower, Jill Harris and Jose Bongers. In Division 2 West Bromwich are presently leading the way with 2 wins of 6-4.

In the County Championships, the Vets beat Cheshire II Vets 6-3 and lost a close match to Clwyd 5-4. The team for both matches included John Riley, Martin Pickles and Shirley Boone who each recorded wins. The Junior A team continue their winning ways with a 7-3 win at Clwyd and a 9-1 win following the long trip to Suffolk. Matthew Brown, Paul Tomlinson and Richard Tilley recorded 11 out of 12 wins. The girls also played their part with nicky Meddings and Vicky Fox both doing well, and this was further supplemented by Michelle Martin in the latter match who overcame illness and injury to record 2 wins. The team appear well on course for promotion to the Premier League.

Without Stephen Moore who was expecting an addition to his family and Janet Smith who was not selected, Sussex were relegated, which means that the other two senior teams will each slide down one division.

In the Wandasworth League Division 1 York Gardens were the champions, beating Earlsfield A’s 9 year winning sequence. In Division 5 Triangle A have withdrawn. Crescent A in Division 2 set a record for most points to a team who gained to gain promotion. South Mitcham Aces scored most points in winning Division 4.

By the time this is printed, the draw for the South of England 3 Star tournament will have taken place. Please come along to the new venue at Westcroft Sports Centre, Cashall, Surrey on 14/15th March to watch some really exciting table tennis.

**SURREY**

**Terry Vance**

BEST WISHES TO Emil Emecz on a swift recovery from his back operation and our congratulations on refereeing the Hungarian Open.

**Counties Championships**

Nicky Mason proved yet again what a stalwart he is for Surrey when at the Senior Premier Weekend in January he put county before ranking points. Suffering from a nasty dose of flu, with the majority of his 8 matches going to 3, he only lost 1. The team of Nicky, Nigel Thomas, Mike Hammond and Jane Barella took along our latest recruit from Vietnam (via Derbyshire) Zung To. She won 2 of her 8 matches one of which enabled us to draw with Berkshire.

Alexandra 2 have withdrawn from the Thames Valley League division 2 and all results have been amended. Chessington 3 lead this division by 13 clear points, but Rosehill 3 are in second place with 2 matches in hand.

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**SUSSEX**

**John Woodford**

SUSSEX WERE AMONG several teams who were for various reasons unable to field their strongest players at the County Championships Premier Weekend at St Neots on 25/26th January.

Without Stephen Moore who was expecting an addition to his family and Janet Smith who was not selected, Sussex were relegated, which means that the other two senior teams will each slide down one division.

Trying to get the top players to play for their counties amongst a mass of other commitments is an ever-increasing major problem for counties. That is why Devon, all credit to them, without international players but with two high rankers - Paul Whiting and Carol Giles - managed to win the trophy for the first time.
Counties 8

Trying to work out whether or not Sussex could have been saved had Miss Smith been chosen in not easy. Losing Stephen Moore was a crucial blow. All Sussex can do now is to fight their way back up next season - at least they will not have to play Devon - their stumbling block on a number of occasions in the past.

Butcher Strikes - Paul Butcher, 15 just, lived up to his name in the Sussex Junior Championships at Worthing Leisure Centre in January, run for the first time with a huge entry by the Worthing TTA.

106 players took part, many without much experience, but to get that number playing in a superior venue was a development breakthrough, the sort that National Council and Management are looking for.

Butcher dominated the tournament, beating Paul Ciccelli in the final, whilst Sarah Sedman from Arundel broke a record by winning all six titles, three in both age groups.

Watching her play for half an hour, I came to the conclusion that her left-handed forehand loop is so fast that few opponents had any idea how to get it back, but coach Pat Ginnaw agrees that there is a lot of work still to be done with the rest of her game. Malcolm Francis played a large part in promoting the tournament and doubling the entry.

Worthing Leisure Centre is a splendid hall for a table tennis tournament, but to run a tournament there means the players paying extra entrance fees. Some, including me, would say the value is there, but there are others who would still opt for less impressive arenas.

WORCESTERSHIRE

Ken Walton

THE 40TH COUNTY Closed Championships were held once again at the Thorns Community Centre, on 26th January with an entry similar to that of the previous years.

With ladies champion Sandra Roden sidelined through injury, a new name would be finding its way onto the trophy and so it proved, with Mandy House defeating Alison Westwood in the final and then combining together to collect the ladies doubles award, defeating Sue Horton and Joanne Hill in 3 games.

Not to be outdone, Sue then teamed up with husband Steve to collect the mixed doubles title, at the expense of Helen Pogmore and Mark Roden. Nice to see Mark back in action after several years absence, and playing well, reaching the men’s single quarter finals before losing to a powerful looking Lewis Sike, also playing very well on the day.

At this stage of the proceedings, County No. 1 Malcolm Green, clearly the best player in the county, and on view, demolished Lewis, 11, 7 whilst in the other semi we had a repeat of last year’s final, with defending champion Lee Horton taking on yours truly.

Thankfully for me Lee’s backhand was not firing on all cylinders and I managed to reverse last year’s result with a 18, 20 victory, leaving me with the dubious honour of facing Malcolm in the final. Scores of 6, 15 to Malcolm tell their own story, although at 15 all in the second I felt a glimmer of hope! However, it was no disgrace to lose to such a good consistent player, and congratulations all round to a deserving county champion.

In partnership with Nicky Mytton, Malcolm collected the men’s doubles title, defeating Mark Brooks and Ken Walton at 19 in the third, from 19-16 down, a second consecutive title for Nick, well done.

Ray Dixon and Janet Hunt took the veterans singles titles, defeating Roy Norton and Linda Reid respectively, and Roy and Merlin Wood took the Veterans doubles.

Other news from within the county, starting with Junior Regional Finals, held at Lilleshall, where Lee Horton, Carrie Hunt and Zoe Evans took part. All found the going tough and failed to progress far. Peter Birds county competitions are progressing with the handicap down to the last 8, and the scratch competition down to the last 4. Looks like a Thorns/Bromley final once again although Wothrs A and SEJ Rubber will be doing their best to prevent that happening.

Finally a thank you from Sandra Roden to everyone who has phoned her, spoken to her, wished her well, sent her cards, visited her etc, during her long layoff from the sport, due to severe knee injuries. Obviously when she is back in action, Sandra will be only too pleased to buy us all a drink! But until then, she wishes it to be known, that she really appreciates everyone’s concern.

YORKSHIRE

Rea Balmford

A LETTER FROM John Caton, the Secretary of the Scarborough League informs me that if information is not forwarded, League’s cannot expect a mention - all Leagues take note!

But where better to begin than at the popular North Yorkshire resort where the League’s official title is the Scarborough and District McCain Table Tennis Association and they are to be congratulated on gaining the support of the major local business who are also heavily involved with Scarborough AFC and newly formed Rugby club Scarborough Pirates.

Last September a three year development plan got underway and results have exceeded all expectations. With the support of the Sports Council and the North Yorks County Youth Service ‘Come and Try It’ coaching sessions have been established for beginners, covering an area from Filey in the south to Whitby on the margins of Cleveland.

Richard, at the age of 41 took over the long standing record of Maurice Pitts, who claimed the last of his fourteen men’s singles when he was 37 and the new champion is the oldest man to hold the title after overcoming the challenge of top seed Tony Bottomley in a straight sets final.

Caroline, a familiar figure on the Junior tournament circuit, came past Helen Shields in the singles final, after collecting the ladies doubles (with Helen) and the junior mixed singles.

At Sheffield long service John Hatfield who has also joined the Yorkshire Management Committee, has taken over the secretaryship following the resignation of Alan Battye. Like myself, John has been around in table tennis for a long time, but this is his first venture into county affairs. A very sincere welcome John.

Still in the steel city, super division leaders Dial House A retained their undefeated record with a 6-4 win over World of Sport but it was the end of the road for Sheffield Closed Champion Clive Guest whose 39 game unbeaten record came to an end when he fell to 15 year old Nicola Deaton, England No. 3 ranked junior girl and already at No. 12 among the ladies. Dewsbury are, like Scarborough, making excellent progress on the Junior front with the news that the first winners of the new GB Securities Junior League are the aptly named Ballbashers for whom Dominic Scaife was unbeaten, while 15 year old David Robinson (Joe Bloggs) proved too steady for 12 year old Andrew Gettings of The Gildi Mob in the individual competition.

Stop Press! - At just 72 hours notice Yorkshire’s top girl Katie Goodall was invited to fly out to Istanbul to compete in the European Top 12. The Leeds girl, ranked 13 in Europe, earns a place following the withdrawal of the players form the CIS.

Yorkshire are delighted to learn of the appointment of Ray Burch the county Coaching Secretary from Huddersfield to the post of Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Development for table tennis under the Focus Sport initiative. Further details next month.
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**BRITAIN'S TOP TABLE TENNIS HOLIDAY AT DURHAM CASTLE**

**1992 DATES**

5th - 10th AUGUST

- **Top coaches**
- **Good class**
- **1st class organisation**
- **Excellent value**
- **Plus Beautiful Durham Castle and City**

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**FOR PEOPLE WHO LIKE THE BEST**

- **Top coaches**
- **Good class accommodation and meals in fabulous surroundings**
- **Large modern sports hall**
- **32 Butterfly tables**
- **Seminars and video**
- **Tournaments**
- **Social evenings**
- **Robot**
- **Bat testing**
- **First class organisation**
- **Excellent value**

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**FOR ALL COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS**

**TELEPHONE 0891 664300**

Calls are charged at 36p per minute cheap rate and 48p per minute at other times
BRIDLINGTON boasts the title the Resort for Sport and for good reason. It is proud of its place in the table tennis calendar which each year sees at least one major event held usually at the magnificent Spa Royal Hall.

Now they have brought a brochure aimed directly at attracting those sporting thousands who have yet to experience brilliant Bridlington.

Besides our own sport they will be holding cycle racing, national yachting, volleyball, windsurfing, jet-skiing and even dominoes.

Just so that you can make a date in your diaries, the English Junior Open Championships and the English U21 and U18 Championships will be taking place again in May.

SPORTING UPDATE

ATTENTION all you coaches. The National Coaching Federation have introduced a subscription service which they claim is second to none. For an annual sub of £20 you get a Coaching Focus magazine, the opportunity to buy products at reduced prices, regular information on courses, seminars and products.

Free copies of SuperCoach, a news and information bulletin as well as offers on sports goods all come for that annual outlay. And that's not all. You receive automatic coaching liability insurance as well as entry into prize draws for tickets to major sporting events and a lot more.

Table tennis is included as part of a series of their Update titles and covers all the latest coaching ideas in racket sports.

Details from Information Centre, National Coaching Federation, 4 College Close, Beckett Park, Leeds LS6 3QH.

Olympic Games

WITH the Olympic Games around the corner what better way than to have your own portable TV set to keep in touch with the action. By portable I mean real portable, like 2.5 inches screen.

Casio have launched an exciting new model - the TV-570 which is the ultimate in portability. You can carry this around in your pocket and simply tune in wherever you are.

It is so small you can sit it in your hand. So on your way to work in the train or bus you could bring it out and become an instant favourite with your fellow travellers.

The set is battery powered as standard and includes provision for optional mains or car battery power. The cost just £119.99.
World gymnastics

SPORTS PR who handle advertising for this magazine, has been appointed to manage media relations at the World Gymnastics Championships in Birmingham next year.

This latest assignment follows a similar role at the World Student Games in Sheffield last year.

The event in April 1993 is the showcase of the gymnastic calendar with over 800 journalists and photographers from all over the world attending.

TV coverage will be beamed to over 50 countries to an estimated audience of 250 million viewers.

Toothbrush

THE humble toothbrush is coming to the aid of local sports clubs. In a recent batch of post, landing on the desk of Trade Page is an idea which is claimed will boost club funds.

At least that is what a marketing company feel who have just tasted their idea on local schools with overwhelming response.

The idea is that you have your association or club emblem printed on the brush handle. You could have a table tennis bat, your club logo or club name, you then order a minimum of twenty dozen (240) and sell them to friends taking the mark-up price as your profit. Something, perhaps, to get your teeth into.

Recurring injury problems

FOR table tennis players recurring injury problems can ruin a tournament, season or even a career. So any help must be seriously considered.

In our sport it is the repetition of certain strokes that can give cause for concern, hence the increase in use of sports supports. Seaton Healthcare have developed the Prosport range and tell us that their products are particularly effective for common injuries such as sprains, strains and pulled muscles.

They claim they give maximum support to joint structures and help you to play on ensuring an uninterrupted fitness route.

Coaching

THIS National Coaching Federation are hoping to sort out Britain's sporting future - in just five hours.

That is the title of their annual conference being held in Nottingham in March and that is how long it will last. The main topic of debate will concentrate on after school sport, its past, its present, and future. A subject worthy I would of thought of more than five hours.

They point out that the conference is not just for coaches but everyone who is concerned about the future of young people in Great Britain. The Minister of Sport Mr. Robert Atkins will be attending.

Travel bags

YOU could hardly have missed those vast sports/travel bags that almost every player lugged around during the English Open. The smaller the player the bigger the bag, it seemed.

Some were big enough to carry the proverbial kitchen sink and naturally they came in all shapes and colours.

Some of the more colourful are produced by Joola ranging from the small but compact Spring, the Trophy, Nation Cup and finally the jumbo version entitled the Travel.

All neat, hard-wearing and very colourful and shown in Joola's new brochure.
Corbet Arms Graded Singles

TEN year old Trudie Bloor proved to be NFD Grove's most successful player in the February Corbet Arms Graded Singles Tournament held at Grove School on Sunday 2nd February 1992. The diminutive NFD Grove player continued her domination of Under 10 events as she won the age group singles tournament in the morning ahead of Chester based duo Michael Matthias and Thomas Kennedy, whilst she reached the final of the Grade C Singles competition in the afternoon at her first attempt, before losing to Keith Parton of Stone in an exciting match.

Parton of Stone in an exciting hard fought match. Meanwhile, daughter Michelle Fisher clinched gold in the Junior Singles finishing in top spot ahead of Potteries youngster Richard Mounsey. There was to be further success for the Potteries as Gary Pickford won Grade A2 beating NFD Grove's John Goodall in the final and brother Paul clinched Grade B with success over NFD Grove's Philip Parton at the same hurdle, whilst Norton veteran Dennis Butcher finished runner up to Newcastle's Jane Barnett in the Consolation A2 event.

The Senior Singles saw success at the first attempt for Bolton's Bill Russell over Victorian youngster Richard Mounsey. There was to be further success for the Parton family as father Dave reached the final and brother Paul clinched Grade B with success over NFD Grove's Philip Parton at the same hurdle, whilst Norton veteran Dennis Butcher finished runner up to Newcastle's Jane Barnett in the Consolation A2 event.

The Senior Singles saw success at the first attempt for Bolton's Bill Russell over Victorian youngster Richard Mounsey. There was to be further success for the Parton family as father Dave reached the final and brother Paul clinched Grade B with success over NFD Grove's Philip Parton at the same hurdle, whilst Norton veteran Dennis Butcher finished runner up to Newcastle's Jane Barnett in the Consolation A2 event.

The Grade E event saw the usual high number of hard fought matches with Stockport's Anthony Sadoo the eventual winner beating Chester's Adam Burns in the final, whilst the rapidly improving NFD Grove girl Layla Shaw reached the consolation final before David Matthews of Leamington clinched success in a hard fought match.
Qualified for Phyllosan

WHEN I recently took part in my local league's Closed Championships I was struck by the "maturity" of the competitors. I have qualified for Phyllosan for a number of years yet I apparently was not much above the average age of all those in the hall.

Projecting forward I wondered whether in ten years time I would still see the same faces or whether the infusion of young blood which is so vital to every sport will have arrived on the scene.

I do not know whether my inevitably local impressions are reflected elsewhere but certainly there is a need in the sport to attract young players.

This item is being read by the "converted"; you wouldn't subscribe to Table Tennis News without a certain degree of commitment; we need to get out and sell our "product", otherwise as we go into the 21st Century it will wither away.

There are a number of ways in which this problem could be and is being tackled. Coaches are doing stalwart work up and down the country, cultivating and nurturing talent and the Sports Council "Focus Sports" initiative will soon be showing results.

However there is one body which has the structure and organisation to promote Table Tennis among the young people of the country - the English Schools Table Tennis Association. This provides an ideal way for youngsters at all levels of ability to experience competitive play as members of a team and later in the season as individuals. For many pupils (and teachers) the county championships are an introduction to what competitive Table Tennis can offer and as the more experienced players move towards the national finals they are involved in matches at the highest level.

At the time of writing the team championships for 1991/92 are well under way, county championships have been played and Geoff Gardiner (Team Competition Secretary) tells me that entries for the Area Finals are "holding their own", this means that 212 teams were entered, 76 from the North, 79 from the South and 57 from the Midlands and West. Certain areas continue to flourish, 12 counties have entered teams into all categories, while others are much more sparse - only one team from Merseyside and none at all from Cornwall.

As usual certain establishments are represented in strength in the Area Finals - Peniel Academy from Essex have teams in six age groups (they are leaving others to take over the mantle of national champions in Boys U19 and Girls U11). Grove School (Market Drayton) also provide six teams and defend the Girls national U19 title. Parkview School (Barrow in Furness) send four teams, Brislington School (Avon) defend the boys U13 crown and Archbishop Crammer (Leeds) include defence of the Girls U13 title among their three representatives.

There is a wealth of untapped talent in schools, the ESTTA and others are promoting the sport through all channels available to them; however there is another avenue which merits consideration. Many youngsters being coached do not take part in ESTTA competitions, they should be encouraged to take part themselves and also to act as publicists in their schools so that the sport can look forward to a healthier and more successful future in the new millennium.

Joe Walk (ESTTA)
A dream to reality

in just over two years

THE South Kesteven Table Tennis Centre is an example of what can be achieved in a very short time. In just over two years, the Centre became a reality. It was in 1989 that a possible Centre plan was put forward by the Plamore Table Tennis Club to the Grantham League, original drawings were supplied by Michael Sims. Shortly afterwards an open meeting was called by the league to get the feeling of all the clubs. Although some members expressed doubts about such a large undertaking, it was voted unanimously that all clubs would support the new centre. Meetings with South Kesteven Council followed and with the help of Herbert Pacey, plans were soon underway for the first purpose built centre of its size in the U.K.

Various fund raising events were organised, ranging from cycle rides to raffles and discos to help with the finance of running the new centre. Over the past few years, table tennis has become one of Granthams premier sports. With the dedication of individuals such as John

Four trustees of the Grantham Centre are (left to right) (back row) Malcolm Simms, Peter Chalk. (Front row) John Mapleton and Peter May

WORDS AND PICTURES
BY
JOHN F.A. WOOD

RESULTS - TELEPHONE 0891 664300
Calls cost 36p per minute cheap rate and 48p per minute at other times
Mapletoft on the coaching front and the success of Playline Sovereigns in National Competitions, Grantham is firmly on the table tennis map.

This fabulous purpose-built centre, which is probably the best of its kind in England, is a fourteen-table arena, big enough for 5-star, and European events.

The centre cost £442,000 to build and furnish. The South Kesteven District Council paid £400,000, the East Midland Sports Council supplied £35,000 and the Grantham Table Tennis League raised the remaining £7,000 and it's on a 30-year renewable lease from the Council.

Councillor Jeffrey Thompson (left) of the South Kesteven District Council and Johnny Leach President of the ETTA, officially open the Grantham Centre.

Isle of Man Table Tennis Association

Easter Festival of Sport

Saturday & Sunday 18th - 19th April 1992

* * * * £500 in Prize Money * * * *

Saturday: Team Tournament. This event will be for teams of 2 (two) players, any age, group and sex. Full details are available on request. Plus: Open Junior Singles Under 14 (Boys and Girls) and Under 12.

Sunday: Open Tournament of Men's Singles and Doubles, Women's Singles and Doubles, Veterans over 40 and 50, Mixed Doubles, Junior: Under 17 and Under 21 Mixed.

Transport available, if needed, to venue in Ramsey Grammar School (50p per journey)

Closing date for entries: 23rd March 1992 Age restrictions as at 30th June 1991

Maximum of 4 events may be entered plus team event.

Enquiries for travel and accommodation should be addressed to:

Festival of Sport, Isle of Man Department of Tourism, 13 Victoria Street, Douglas, Isle of Man
Tel: 0624 674323

Entry forms available from:

Mrs. M. Mulhearn, "Burnkbank" Main Road, Higher Foxdale, Isle of Man
Tel: 0624 801795
Some of the highlights

ENGLISH SCHOOLS TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION

IN taking over this column from Joe Walk, to whom go the Association's sincere thanks for his work in recent issues, I hope to touch on some of the highlights of the Area Finals of the E.S.T.T.A.'s 1991-92 Dunlop National School Team Championships, which covered a spread of no less than 37 counties (based on Local Education Authorities) from Kent and Devon in the South to Cumbria and Tyne & Wear in the North.

Inevitably some of those highlights will have escaped my notice, and my apologies go to those who may feel that they have been passed over, but, although in the end the glory goes to the winners, the real inner satisfaction comes from playing as a TEAM and the individual giving his or her best for that team. Well done, all of you.

Honours were well shared, with 31 of those 37 countries due to be represented at the National Finals scheduled for mid-February - full details next month.

Familiar names were again prominent, with Grove (Market Drayton) and Peniel Academy, both of whom embrace T.T. from Schools level right up to the Premier Division of the British League, each providing six of eight finalists in the Regional Finals, while no less than six title holders - Peniel (G16, B11, G11), Grove (G19), Brinsington (Bristol) (B13) and Archbishop Crummer (Leeds) (G13) - will be battling for the right to move on to the National Finals and defend their titles.

There was a real thriller up in the North West where the B16 holders from the host school, Parkview (Barrow), with both Kevin Hodgson and Jamie Harris from that title winning side in their ranks, needed a draw from their final match to qualify.

Opposition was the St. Helens quartet from Sutton High, who led 4-3 with just the two No. 1's, Hodgson, the winner of the 'Boys' Best Performance' award at the 1991 Finals, and Saints' Philip Musgrove to do battle.

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Opposition was the St. Helens quartet from Sutton High, who led 4-3 with just the two No. 1's, Hodgson, the winner of the 'Boys' Best Performance' award at the 1991 Finals, and Saints' Philip Musgrove to do battle.

Only two places separate the pair in the national Junior rankings, and this time it was the turn of Musgrove to come out on top and lead his side into the North Regional Finals.

A four team competition in the South East left Croydon High to take on The Grove, St. Leonards on Sea, with a 4-4 draw allowing the Metropolitan school to go through on sets ratio, but the G13 from the same school were not so fortunate when they faced opposition from the South Coast, a doubles decider putting St. Andrews (Eastbourne), the only other contenders, into the next stage.

Another East Sussex team, Thomas Peacock (Rye), also needed a doubles victory to move on at the expense of Nonsuch Girls High (Chesham) in the G19, while crossing to the North of the Thames, Wanslea High, who shared the points with Colchester 6th Form College, topped the table by virtue of a better result against the third side in the group, Enfield Grammar.

In the Midlands a closely fought Under 11 competition saw Leasowes Junior (Stafford), regular competitors in the age group over recent years, but often overshadowed by the powerful Market Drayton Junior, take both Boys and Girls places, while pleasing news from Area 10 was the first Girls competition for a number of years. Joanne Barrow showed up well for G16 winners John O'Gaunt (Hungerford), while outstanding for G13 winners Cavadish (Hemel Hempstead) was T.T.N. cover girl Marie Masters.

Still in the same area St. Andrews (Pangbourne), in their first year in the competition, beat Wallow (Weybridge) in the B13, but the lads are faced with a different decision - all the quartet are due to take part in a Rugby Union tour of the Netherlands which clashes with the Regional Finals.

And a final word from Area Organiser Ian Langley - a big thank you to the Basingstoke League for the loan, at a moment's notice, for surrounds.

The East Midlands competitors enjoyed the experience of playing in Lincolnshire's brand new 14 table Kesteven T.T. Centre, which has already staged a match in the England v China Test series and has been promised a full international - good to see T.T. at all levels integrated under one roof.

And, to conclude this roundup where we began, on the fringes of the Cumbrian Lake District, it is back to the G19, often the Cinderella event, with teams breaking up as a result of the school leaving age.

Runshaw Tertiary College (Leyland) led by Junior International Maria Thornley, beat Barrow 6th Form college with top Cumbrian girl Caroline Watt, a familiar figure on the schools' T.T. scene over recent years, in their ranks.

REGIONAL FINALS LINE-UP

NORTH

B19 - Monkwearmouth 6th Form College; Hulme G.S. (Oldham); Birkenhead 6th Form College; High Pavement College (Nottingham).

B16 -Grangefield (Stockton); Warneth (Stockport); Stuton High (St. Helens); Dronfield.

B15 -Acklam Grange (Middlesborough); Kettlethorpe High (Wakefield); Parkview (Barrow); Dronfield.

B13 - Dame Allan's Boys (Newcastle-on-Tyne); Archbishop Crummer C.E. Middle (Leeds); Parkview (Barrow); Dronfield.

C19 - Fulneck Girls (Leeds); Runshaw Tertiary College (Leyland); Kesteven and Grantham Girls.

C16 - St. Joseph's College; St. Mary's R.C. College; Colchester 6th Form College; Runshaw Tertiary College (Leyland).

C13 - Northfield Comp. (Billingham); Archbishop Cranmer C.E. Middle (Leeds); Parkview (Barrow); Dronfield.

B11 - West Jesmond Jill; Holy Rosary R.C. Primary (Oldham); Christleton C.P. (Chester); Redlands Primary (Weston).
**School Report - 2**

**Midlands and West**

B19 - Grove (Market Drayton); Wollaaston Comp. (Northants); Hele's (Plymouth); Barton Peveril College (Eastleigh).

G19 - Grove (M.D.); Kinerton High; Wellington.

B16 - Grove (M.D.); Wheeleys Lane Boys (Birmingham); Wells Blue; Brisington (Bristol).

B16 - Grove (M.D.); North Leamington; Wellington.

B13 - Grove (M.D.); Smestow (Wolverhampton); Chilton Trinity (Bridgwater); Brisington (Bristol).

G13 - Grove (M.D.); Newent (Gloucester); Chilton Trinity (Bridgwater); Brighton Hill Community (Basingstoke).

B11 - Leasowes Jnr (Stafford); Warstones Primary (Wolverhampton); Tortington Jnr; Holymead Jnr (Bristol).

G11 - Leacowses Jnr (Stafford); Warstones Primary (Wolverhampton); Holymead Jnr (Bristol).

**South & East**

B19 - Beford Modern; Hitchin Boys; Wanstead High; Maidstone Gr.

G19 - Peniel Academy; Thomas Peacock (Rye).

B16 - Bedford Modern; Stantonbury Campus; Peniel A. Whigton (South Croydon).

G16 - John O'Gaunt (Hungerford); Peniel A; Croydon High.

B13 - Bedford Modern; St. Andrews (Pangbourne); Peniel A; Cummor House (South Croydon).

G13 - Cavendish (Hemel Hempstead); Peniel A; St. Andrews (Eastbourne).

B11 - Bedford Modern; St. Georges College (Jnr) (Addleston); Peniel A; Downside (Putney).

G11 - Peniel A; West St. Leonards C.P.

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**Greater London Closed Table Tennis Championships 1992**

at Waterfront Leisure Centre

Woolwich, SE18

Saturday & Sunday 30/31 May

Total Prize fund £2,000, Medals for placings 1st, 2nd and 3rd

Events for Men, Women, Boys and Girls

Singles: Under 14, Under 17, Senior and Veteran.

Doubles: Senior only

Entries are invited from competitors with Greater London qualifications of birth, residence, work or full time education.

Closing Date for Entries 15 May 1992

For further details and an entry form telephone 071-798 2209

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**Jackie Bellinger**

**Table Tennis Services**

Ex-England International & National Table Tennis Coach

**Summer Schools 1992**

This year due to a demand I have expanded the summer school program to 3 weeks. As usual we are running the ever popular week at Norwich, but have added 2 weeks at the National Badminton Centre, Milton Keynes. This is a superb totally self contained complex.

**Weeks 1 and 2**

**Dates**

Week 1 - Mon 27th to Fri 31st July

Week 2 - Mon 3rd to Fri 7th Aug

**Venue**

The National Badminton Centre, Milton Keynes.

**Accom.**

will be at the National Badminton Centre and is good. There is a boys and girls dormitory.

**Meals**

All meals are supplied and are at the centre. A qualified caterer will be preparing your meals making sure you never go hungry!!!

**Coaching**

There will be at least 5 hours of coaching each day, therefore with only small numbers on each course, close individual attention is guaranteed. Each player will be videoed and also receive a written analysis on their game.

**Inclusions**

There will be at least 5 hours of coaching each day, therefore with only small numbers on each course, close individual attention is guaranteed. Each player will be videoed and also receive a written analysis on their game.

**Activities**

Other include videos, quiz, visit to the cinema, last night party/barbeque, tournament and T.T. seminars. There will also be the opportunity to play other sports in your free time. Lots of prizes to be won!!!

**Contact**

7 The Dell, Wigmore Park, Luton, Beds, LU2 8SX

Telephone (0582) 454636
“To ping or not to ping
- that is the question”

IN ENGLAND, the old vellum battledore was now abandoned in favour of a solid wooden racket. Arnold Parker recommended that this should be covered with cork, but often the wood was plain or corrugated - or covered with rubber, emery paper or leather.

Henry Essex - supported by the Perry Mason Advertisements - states that 99 per cent of games were played "upon that familiar article the dining-room table", but it seems to have been almost universally accepted that for tournament play a table 9 feet by 5 feet was needed. Arnold Parker raised a solitary voice in favour of a table 9 feet by 6 feet.

The immense popularity of the game led inevitably to one or two variations. 'Pouch Ball - An Improved Table Tennis' manufactured by Horsman, employed a table, rackets and a ball, but introduced a highly original net. this consists of a pole on which six 'pouches' are fixed, three facing each end of the table. The only set which is known to survive does not, unfortunately, include any rules, but presumably the main idea was to gain such control over the ball that it could be hit into a pouch and thereby win the point outright. The principle of this goes right back to the 'grille' of real tennis, a square metre section of the wall which constitutes a 'hazard' or outright winner.

The extraordinary vogue for table tennis in the United States around 1900 is nowhere better displayed than in A Little Book of Ping-Pong Verse published in 1902. This bizarre collection of over eighty 'pieces' ('poems' would be a misnomer) was compiled from nearly a thousand entries to a competition organised by the San Francisco Examiner. We are not told who won the cash prize of 10 dollars which was offered. Entries are reprinted from English journals such as Punch and the Sketch, and from American journals as widespread as Spokane in the north west; San Francisco, west coast; Denver, Rocky Mountains; Chicago, St. Louis, Columbus, Omaha, the mid west; and New York, Pittsburgh, Boston, Baltimore, Buffalo, Washington, the East.

The verses give many examples of pastiche based, for example, on Shakespeare, “To Ping or not to Ping that is the question..." and "If Ping-Pong be the food of love, play on..." or, on Ben Johnson “Ping to me only with thine eyes/And I will pong with mine..." Nearly all would qualify for Verse and Worse, but perhaps one example should be quoted; this, although no doubt much exaggerated, will also serve to show how the game was commercialised.

PING - PONG POSERS
If up-to-date you'll advertise,
Ping-Pong shoes and Ping-Pong ties,
Ping-Pong cakes and Ping-Pong clothes,
Ping-Pong pills and Ping-Pong hose,
Ping-Pong crackers, Ping-Pong soap,
Ping-Pong cocktails, Ping-Pong "dope",
Ping-Pong cigarettes, Ping-Pong cigars,
Ping-Pong motors, Ping-Pong cars,
Ping-Pong tea, Ping-Pong brew,
Ping-Pong ice cream, soda too,
Ping-Pong couches, Ping-Pong beds,
Ping-Pong hats for Ping-Pong heads,
Ping-Pong gowns for Ping-Pong girls,
Ping-Pong irons for Ping-Pong curls,
Ping-Pong shirts and Ping-Pong stocks,
Ping-Pong watches, Ping-Pong clocks,
Ping-Pong curtains, Ping-Pong rugs,
Ping-Pong remedies for bugs,
Ping-Pong hairpins, Ping-Pong nails,
Ping-Pong carpets, Ping-Pong veils,
Ping-Pong plasters for yourcorns,
Ping-Pong whistles, Ping-Pong horns,
Ping-Pong goods and Ping-Pong trash. Why, then, you'll Ping-Pong lots of cash!

LA TOUCHE HANCOCK
Torrington (Conn.) Register

It is astonishing to discover that no fewer than eighteen pieces of music - comic and marching songs, barn dances and polkas, are to be found in the US Library of Congress - all dating from 1901-1903 and all with 'Ping-Pong' in their title.

Table tennis even found its way into commercial relations - at least if we are to believe the anonymous author of Table Tennis - A Description of the Game - published in New York in April, 1902. He describes how, "on the other side of the water" the craze for the game had invaded country houses and hotels. "If you play table tennis well you are persona grata anywhere; if you don't, and you are expecting to put through some company deal in England, you had better learn the game before you start."

Then, to prove this point, he recounts a personal experience when he was visiting England on business. Entering the boardroom he finds himself interrupting a heated argument between the president and the underwriter, one at each end of the directors' table with racket in hand. The dispute having been settled, the three enthusiasts took over an hour to play one another before completing their business within five minutes, the underwriter remarking that he would agree terms if only the visitor would "teach him how to put a right screw on the ball when returning the service with a backhand stroke." This was possibly the first, but certainly not the last, occasion that table tennis has fostered Anglo-American relations.

FOUR:
THE TOURNAMENT SCENE

"Ping-Pong is, in spite of its name, a serious sport. It has risen to the dignity of a tournament or two, and it is even said that in some places it has ousted billiards. That is a pity because, after all, it is not an exhilarating spectacle to see companies of athletic, modern young women and strapping young men knocking a tiny tennis ball with a dwarf racket to an irritating accompaniment of unmusical tape."

So writes a reporter of the first Queen's Hall Tournament in the Daily Graphic of 27th December 1901. He is clearly not an enthusiast for the game, but he is forced to admit that it has to be taken seriously. He goes on to describe the players as "ping-pongists" a name which, fortunately, did not catch on. A few weeks later, in rather similar tone, the Field expressed surprise that "an adaptation of lawn tennis to the dining-room table should ever attain to the dignity of a popular game."

The Queen's Hall Tournament, organised by the Ping-Pong Association and refereed by its Secretary, Mr. Washington Gray, was not, in fact, the first open tournament played in and around London. This distinction - according to the table tennis notes in Lawn Tennis and Croquet goes to a tournament played at Chiswick Town Hall in October 1901, but the magazine also quotes a correspondent who puts the view that inter-club matches provide the better play and that tournaments are for 'pot hunters'. No details of the Chiswick tournament seem to have survived, nor of a presumably smaller - tournament at the Institute, Upper Clapton, London, at the end of November.

The first major open tournament was played at the Royal Aquarium, Westminster, from 11th to 14th December 1901. The second day of the tournament was marked by a highly important event - the formation of the Table Tennis Association, beating the formation of the Ping-Pong Association by a mere four days. Trouble was, inevitably, to follow.

Reproduced by kind permission of the publishers - The International Table Tennis Federation, 53 London Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex. TN37 6AY, from whom this interesting book is available.
Strictness

How strict should an umpire be, and should the same level of strictness be applied to all levels of the game?

This is a question that has been debated for many years. The regulations for international competitions lay down the guidelines within which these competitions should be run. They state that the officials should be an umpire and an assistant umpire whose positions are fixed and duties defined. At Chiba World Championships, there were two assistant umpires, each positioned in line with an end of the table, with one of them acting as timekeeper, and stroke counter when required for expedite. They were also used as line judges, to determine whether the ball, in service, was struck behind the body. These features find no basis in the rules of Table Tennis, but are within which these competitions should be run. They state that the officials should be an umpire and an assistant umpire whose positions are fixed and duties defined. At Chiba World Championships, there were two assistant umpires, each positioned in line with an end of the table, with one of them acting as timekeeper, and stroke counter when required for expedite. They were also used as line judges, to determine whether the ball, on service, was struck behind the body. These features find no basis in the rules of Table Tennis, but are within the rules and regulations current at the time of the World Championships.

Equipment

At the Midland Open in November, the table had a low horizontal bar between the legs at each end, parallel to the end of the table. Players remarked to some umpires that this could be potentially dangerous. If a player runs in to get the ball at short ball and slips so that his foot slides under the end of the table, the bar could injure the player's shin. This was discussed with the Chairman of the ITTF Rules Committee who said that the idea behind the change was that once both players had scored 19 points, expedite could not be brought in under any circumstances for that game, thus confirming the Referee's ruling.

Umpire Selections

Selections have been made for forthcoming events as follows:

Hales U10/21
May 3/4 Bridlington
E.A. Pentland; D.A. Poluney; S. Clarke; D. Shennatt; Mrs. H. Masters; B. Foggin; E. Edwards; W. Morris; J. A. Armstrong; G. Tyler; W. Spencer; R. Douglas; P. Hylatt; M. Strode; G. Lynch; R. Wilson.

English Jnr. Int. Open
May 23/25 Bridlington
Mrs. E.J. Wilson; E.A. Pentland; D.A. Poluney; S. Clarke; T. Vances; Mrs. H. Masters; F. Groom; W. F. Tyler; Mrs. D. Moore; B. Welman; M. Payne; B. Foggin; G. Tyler; E. Emery; W. Spencer; R. Vardon; D.A. Young; J. Randall; S. Sherlock; P. Williams; G. Parker; D.J. Miller.

VETTS National Masters
May 23/24 Brightlingsea
D. Perry; Mrs. A.P. Archdale; T. Darroch; T. Carpenter; D. Edwards; J. Melnick; P. Gower; Mrs. S. Gower.

This month's pen picture is of Fred Groom, written by his wife.

Your recent observations on the volley

By coincidence I had drafted a letter to the ETTA regarding the volley and enclosed a copy.

Fred Groom

Chiba World Championships

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THE Sports Council (SWR), as part of their "Going for Gold" project, have arranged a regional workshop aimed at providing some top level coaching for table tennis players with disabilities and able bodied players and coaches. The day is also designed to prove an insight for able bodied players and coaches into working with and coaching players with disabilities.

The workshop will be held at the Blackpool Sports Centre, at Taunton in Somerset on the 14th of March when the chief coach will be Dave Hewitt, an ETTA Senior coach, from Preston in Lancashire. Mr. Hewitt has considerable experience in working with table tennis players with disabilities.

It is also hoped to provide the able bodied players and coaches with detailed information on coaching players with disabilities. The day starts at 10.30am and ends at 4.30pm, details have been sent to all League and County secretaries in the South West Region, together with a number of coaches.

The "Going for Gold" project manager is Ed Leverton. "Going for Gold" is a scheme designed to assist sportspersons and women with disabilities in the South West, and to help them integrate into the able bodied sports scene.

Attendance at the day is by application only and anyone interested should contact Edward Leverton at 17 Southview Road, Paignton, PL24 2HJ or tel 072681 3671.

The appointment of a full time Table Tennis Development Officer for Humberside County Council has been completed and the post is to be filled by Steve Hopkins, who had a similar position with the Hull Table Tennis League.

At a meeting of the Selection Panel, held on Monday, the 20th January, at The Sports Council Offices, Leeds, the appointment was offered to Mr. Ray Birch, for the post of Development Officer for Table Tennis in the Yorkshire & Humberside Region.

Both are members of the Management Committee for Yorkshire Table Tennis Association and are to be congratulated on their respective appointments.

Members of the Yorkshire Sub-Committee for Coaching are in the process of visiting leagues throughout Yorkshire in order to stimulate interest for the ‘Focus Sport’ programme.

Due to internal re-organisation within Leeds City Council, there will be a delay in the setting up of a Table Tennis Centre at Armley Sports Centre, Leeds.

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Thank you

I should like to thank both the Association and the many individual umpires who contributed to the amount raised to mark the end of my 40 years membership, 35 years as Chairman, of the National Umpires and Referees Committee. Some silver has been purchased and I am very grateful to all - the gesture has been much appreciated.

Geoff James
Dover, Kent

Recently retired

Having recently retired and therefore having more time on my hands, I have become interested in competing a little more in competitions outside the local league.

However, it appears the information required to assess tournaments available, particularly where to send for entry forms, is not readily available, even though I have subscribed to the season copies of Table Tennis News. Not knowing, is there any information that only apply to our local league, or maybe it is more general, but for what it is worth, I would like to make the following suggestions:

If a small number of handbills were distributed with the magazine, for one would see it to that these handbills were distributed to players on match evenings, and ask their display one at their club premises. The cost may be more justified by increased attendance at big matches and tournaments, and I am sure more readers of Table Tennis News would also be only too pleased to see that local players received the information and distributed like myself. We can't expect to burden local league secretaries with more work, as they have enough on their plate. I recall a couple of years ago, being informed, fortunately, and by word of mouth, that the Chinese were playing against England, in the nearby town of Hallifax. My wife and I went along, and had an enjoyable evening's T.T. spectating, but were rather disappointed that the hall, which only seats perhaps a 1,000, was only half full. Perhaps lack of information had something to do with this.

Geoff Wildsworth
Huddersfield

English Open

I shall leave it to others to comment on the location and organisational aspects of the Cathay's Chocolate Break English Open on 9-11 January. Although not particularly spectacular, the play generally was of a high technical standard and I was pleased to have seen it. And I also enjoyed my free samples of Cathay's Chocolate Break!

But back to the play. I thought the English women performed very well, particularly Lisa Lomax - moving as fluently - and Andrea Hoti. They have must have hoped to take the team event final, but the Swedish women sensationally turned on the power to strain them out. Of the English men, I was most impressed with Alan Cooker, who stuck to the task with sustained athleticism and nerve. And it was good to see Desmond Douglas still (almost) there amongst the best. The Germans maintained a high standard and work rate throughout, and thoroughly deserved their team event victory - Franz looks a name for the future.

The taking point and big disappointment was the singles, far too much pressure and apparent indifference from the Swedish men. One can understand that for the world champions, probably more concerned with the European National Cup and the All Stars World Circuit, the English Open was little more than a warm up or practice session. There was marginal financial incentive, and besides, top players, particularly flair players, cannot perform well all the time. And it was not that the Swedish stars faced games but that they did not seem to have their hearts in it. Against this, I feel that they must have some responsibility (and in their own interest) in promoting the sport wherever they are playing. People who came to Birmingham (or watched TV) to see them should have felt let down.

The other disappointment to me was when Xiaohua I felt that when should have been eligible for selection for England, and now that he has British citizenship there can be no argument. And he has recently shown in the rail can still play. The world's best. But he does not have to be chosen for every match. At Birmingham he lacked something of the slick acrobatics and craftsmanship which is associated with his age had he been playing too much, what with the Chinese tour? Was he tired? Or do the Germans know (from the Bundasliga) how to play him? Is he getting past it? Was he fully fit? Does he have an attitude problem? Or was he simply off form?

England has a bad tradition of knocking players when they are down. Chen deserves our support, and the support of his colleagues - no good will come from barbed comments behind his back. Nevertheless, his performance at the English Open did raise slight question marks over his future international career. I hope that, like the Swedes, he will come bouncing back when it really matters.

Steve Stratford
Milton Keynes

A kick in the teeth

The treatment received by my son Darryl, from the persons responsible for selecting an English Cadet Team for the World Team Cup, can only be described as a 'kick in the teeth'. Darryl is currently ranked No.3 in Cadets and No.28 at Junior level and has this season reached five finals out of seven tournaments entered. This includes the winning of the recent National Cadet Ranking Trials. The 'Power' that be obviously do not recognize the National Trials or indeed the Ranking System as a guide to capability, as they have not selected Darryl as part of a squad containing five or possibly six other Cadets.

This is obviously a good incentive for young players on the circuit, who are aiming to achieve a top three place in the country; when others ranked somewhat lower are chosen.

Could anyone please explain to Darryl the point in holding the ETTA National Trials or the Ranking System for this matter, because I cannot!!!

Stuart Meredith
Chadlen Suburb, Oldham

Development Fund

Further to our recent telephone conversation, hereewith is a report of how my club in Thurrock has benefited from the development grant recently awarded to us.

The Thurrock Table Tennis Club has been purchased and I am very appreciative.

Chairman, of the National Umpires and Referees Committee

Barren seeds?

At the English Open I observed someone say that the No.2 seed in the Veterans event, Malcolm Cookson, shouldn't have played Tony Clayton (a highly rated senior player in his mid year as a veteran) in the 1st round. The inference being that Tony should have been seeded. But why? Surely that losses count when calculating computer points seedling should be abolished, because it gives the seeds an unfair advantage. I suggest by this action everyone would have an equal and fair chance to lose as well as gain computer points. It could rejuvenate tournaments and perhaps allow more chances to unseeded players to reach the later stages. This would not weaken a tournament. After all, the odds of all the good players being drawn together or in one half are inescapable. The interest of 3 potential tournament winners playing each other in an early round/group would be high (as in the case of Malcolm and Tony) and more spectators/players could watch. By retaining seeding the "points" gap between seeded players and others would get bigger, which with the new computer ranking system is unfair. Remember, the seeds of today, protected by the present system, will not be the seeds of the future. Surely it would be fairer for all players to be subject to the "luck of the draw".

Frank Hans
Morden, Surrey

PLEASE NOTE

We would like to make it clear that Table Tennis News does not necessarily agree with the views expressed by those correspondents whose letters are published in MailBox. Your letters that are NOT abusive or libellous are always welcome as are queries.

Only those when names and addresses are supplied for publication will in future be considered.
ENGLISH NATIONAL TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS
(Supported by Manchester 2000 - the British Olympic Bid)
Saturday and Sunday 7th and 8th March 1992
OLDHAM SPORTS CENTRE, LORD STREET, OLDHAM, LANCASHIRE. TEL: 061-678 4090
Come and see all of England's top players including Olympic competitors Carl Prean, Matthew Syed, Lisa Lomas and Alison Gordon in action together with Alan Cooke, Chen Xinhua, Desmond Douglas and women's defending champion Andrea Holt.
Play commences at 09.00 hours both days - Finals at 17.00 hours on Sunday 8th March

EVENTS
Men's Singles • Women's Singles • Men's Doubles • Women's Doubles • Mixed Doubles • Veteran Men's Singles • Veteran Women's Singles • Veteran Men's Doubles • Veteran Women's Doubles

FULL DETAILS OF ENGLISH NATIONAL RESULTS WILL BE GIVEN ON THE TABLE TENNIS INFORMATION LINE 0891 664300 (Calls cost 36p per minute cheap rate and 48p per minute at other times)

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28th and 29th MARCH 1992
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TOTAL PRIZE FUND: £3,300

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1st DIVISION FINAL (2nd Leg)
ENGLAND v AUSTRIA

Friday 20th March 1992
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WOODFORD LEISURE CENTRE,
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Come and support England in this crucial match on which promotion to the Super Division depends.
Match starts at 7pm
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14th and 15th MARCH 1992 (Sat & Sun)
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HALEX AGE GROUP CHAMPIONSHIPS
Halex National Under 18s - 3rd May Bridlington, Humberside
Halex National Under 21s - 4th May Bridlington, Humberside
Halex National Under 11s - 10th May Grantham, Table Tennis Lincolnshire
Halex National Under 10s - 13th/14th June Milton Keynes, Bucks
Halex National Under 12s - 13th/14th June Milton Keynes, Bucks
Entry forms and further information from ETTA Office Tel: 0424 722525