

OBITUARY

It was with deep regret that we learned of the deaths in the past year of Anand Kaila CU, Connie Moran TU, Brian Rowlen IU and Andy Seward IU, TR; they will be sadly missed.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Recent events have drawn attention to the risks from the careless use of social media, and the Communications Department has produced advisory notes for players and officials. It is not practical to include these notes in full here, but some of the main points are:

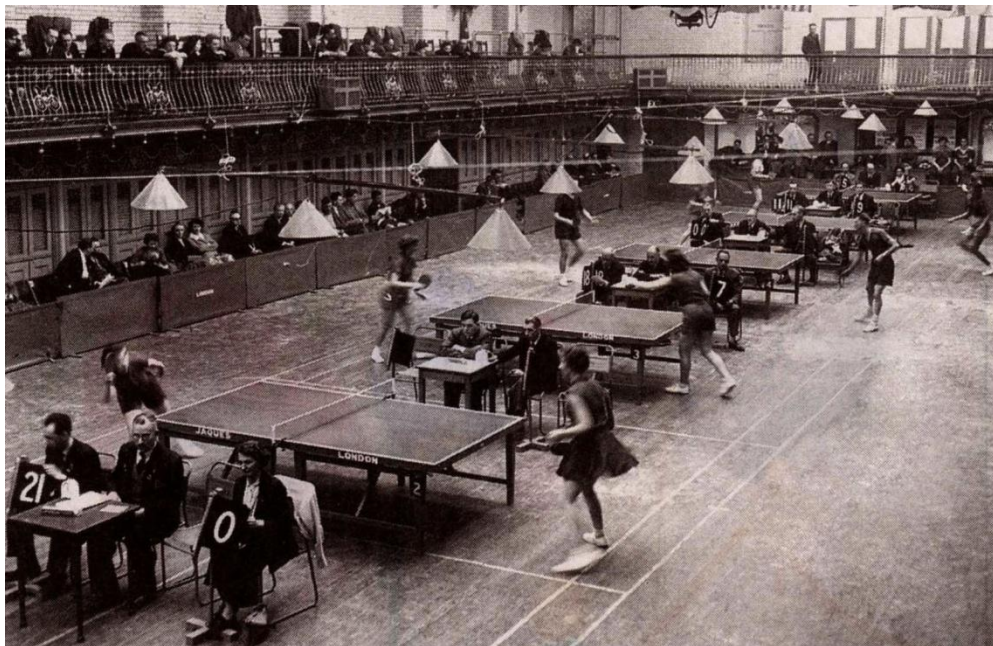
DON'T forget that anything you write is public and that anyone can take your words and put them in a newspaper, on a website or on TV. If you're in doubt, don't post it.

DON'T talk negatively about Table Tennis England, players or other umpires, countries, Associations, sponsors or brands. Remember that you are an ambassador for your sport.

DON'T engage in discussions about contentious subjects such as religion or politics, and avoid any comments that may offend others. It's not just a question of how the person you are replying to will react - comments on the internet are for all to see.

DON'T assume anything you delete will completely disappear. It's almost impossible to completely remove information on social networking sites and there is no way of knowing where it may have been re-posted.

THOSE WERE THE DAYS



1948 English Open Championships in progress at the Empire Pool, Wembley, The umpire at bottom left is Geoff Owen, a former member of the NURC.

ENGLISH TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION Ltd

Trading as Table Tennis England

TOC NEWS

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The Technical Officials Committee and the panels appointed for 2014/15 are as follows:

Committee	Stuart Sherlock (Chairman), David Edwards, Margot Fraser, John Mackey, Amanda Robinson, Graham Rogerson, Steve Smith, Mick Strode, Karen Tonge & Colin Clemett (Sec'y)
Umpire Training & Development	Karen Tonge (Co-ordinator), David Edwards, John Mackey, David Edwards, John Mackey, Tom Purcell, George Tyler
Umpire Review	David Edwards (Secretary, domestic selections),
Umpire Selection	Margot Fraser (Secretary, Int'l selections), Lynda Reid
Referee Review	Stuart Sherlock, Steve Smith, Karen Tonge
Tournament Management Officials	Stuart Sherlock, John Mackey, Amanda Robinson

We welcome Amanda Robinson as the new Staff Representative, replacing Diccon Gray.

ITTF RULE CHANGES

The only changes to Laws and Regulations this year were essentially editorial, either to make established principles clearer or to alter some procedural details of administration. However, it had been suggested that consideration be given to a change in the service Law, whereby a net-cord service would no longer make the rally a let, and it was agreed to conduct experiments to determine whether this was acceptable. The first such experiment was carried out in the Under-21 event of the Belarus Open Championships and a report on the outcome is awaited. Experiments are to be conducted also on the use of a multi-coloured ball, a Chinese proposal which, it is claimed, will enhance the presentation of sport for players, spectators and TV by making the spin visible. The favoured design is a ball which is half white and half orange, with a black line dividing the two halves, but no doubt there are people working on combinations that are more psychedelic.

ETTA REGULATIONS

Following the adoption of new Articles, the former Appendices to the Rules have been re-drafted as Regulations, and those relating to general play are now contained in the Regulations for Competitive Table Tennis. This document is still being developed and it is planned that eventually it will include standard and recommended playing conditions for different levels of play. The specific regulations for open tournaments and the various national competitions are published separately and all current regulations can be found on the Table Tennis England website.

TRAINING

Weekend umpire training courses were held in three Regions - at Bishop Auckland in the North-East, at Wood Green, Wednesbury in the West Midlands and at Basingstoke in the South & South-East. Once again, the majority of new CU registrations resulted directly from these courses and without them it would be difficult to maintain the umpiring strength needed for a steadily growing competitions programme. It is planned to run courses in other Regions during 2014/15 but the dates and venues have not yet been fixed.

UMPIRE QUALIFICATION

There were 6 LU and 17 CU registrations during the season. The LU qualification is coming to be regarded primarily as the appropriate qualification for senior students for whom the Junior Umpire test is too elementary, and not as an introductory grade for adults who wish to progress to become CUs. No-one who wishes to take the LU test should be precluded from doing so, but CU Secretaries should try to encourage anyone who is interested in qualifying as an umpire to go straight to the CU test.

The results of this year's NU examination were disappointing, the only candidate to pass being Nico Caltabiano, of Southampton. Applications are invited for the next examination, which will be held towards the end of the season. Candidates should be CUs with at least 2 years' experience of officiating at open tournaments and other competitions played under international regulations, and the application form is available from the TOC Secretary. Those wishing to take the 2015 examination should apply not later than 15 January 2015.

We were more successful at international level, with Alex Mercer and Joshua Reynolds qualifying as IUs under the ITTF Young Umpires Project and Dave Gough, Brian Jackson, Harry Jutle, Steve Smith and Alan Thomas passing the 2014 IU examination. This brings to 177 the total of English umpires achieving the IU qualification since it was introduced in 1973. In addition, Neil Curtis completed his qualification as an ITTF Blue Badge umpire and Tom Purcell was reinstated to this grade after correction of an earlier mistake.

REFEREE QUALIFICATION

Sean Haskell, John Mackey, Jason Ramage and Joshua Reynolds were all registered as Tournament Referees but there were no new NR qualifications. In order to reduce the demands on current NRs we need to build up their number as soon as possible and any TR who has been active for at least 2 years since qualifying and who has refereed 4 or more tournaments of 2-star rating or the equivalent is invited to apply for the examination. This examination also will be held towards the end of the season.

HONOURS

We were again honoured at the annual SOUK (Sports Officials UK) awards ceremony, where Alex Mercer emulated Joshua Reynolds' 2013 success in being chosen as Young Official of the Year; Colin Clemett was runner-up for the Life Achievement award.

FOREIGN APPOINTMENTS

The task of the Selection Panel is becoming increasingly difficult now that for many international tournaments the real selections are made by the organisers, from players nominated by Associations. This means that it cannot be guaranteed that these appointments will be shared as widely as might have been wished, and it is not possible to guarantee that those needing assessments in order to qualify for Blue Badge status will be selected for appropriate competitions, although every effort is made to achieve these objectives.

English umpires officiated at the following events:

European PTT Championships, Lignano	Neil Curtis, Lynda Reid
European Championships, Schwechat	Derek Sherratt
Belgian PTT Championships, Sint Niklaas	Neil Curtis, Dave Gough, Alan Thomas
German Open Championships, Berlin	David Edwards, Tom Purcell
Swedish Open Championships, Stockholm	David Brown, John Mackey
Youth Olympics Qualifying Tournament & Junior Global Finals, Vilanova de Gaia	Joshua Reynolds
Luxembourg Open Championships, Luxembourg	Neil Curtis
World Team Championships, Tokyo	John Mackey
World Veterans Championships, Auckland	Harry Jutle
Youth Olympic Games, Nanjing	Alex Mercer

English referees were appointed for the following competitions:

European Youth Championships, Ostrava	Karen Tonge
European Championships, Schwechat	Stuart Sherlock
Slovenia PTT Open Championships, Thermana Lasko	Karen Tonge
6-Nations International Championships, Inverclyde	Steve Welch
Commonwealth Games, Glasgow	Stuart Sherlock

UMPIRES' UNIFORM

It has been agreed to accept a recommendation from the AETTU that navy blue blazers become standard for umpires at National Championships, starting at the 2015 Senior Championships, and that light blue blazers be phased out by the end of 2016/17 season. It is planned also to introduce a new design of umpire's tie later in the season.

PUBLICATIONS

An updated version of the Handbook for Umpires is to be printed shortly. Revision of the Memorandum on the management of umpiring and refereeing in England has been postponed pending the outcome of some organisational reviews but leaflets outlining the procedure for qualifying as an umpire or referee are published on the TOC section of the website. An Umpire's Personal Record Book is available on application to the TOC Secretary at a cost of £2.00, post free; cheques should be made payable to ETTA Limited.