

## Chairman's Report

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Owing to the spread of the Coronavirus into South Korea the Team World Championships have been postponed with a tentative alternate date identified for some time in June. This has been followed by the cancellation of three events in Italy with the ITTF monitoring other world senior and junior tour host nations.

I attended the Senior National Championships qualification and was delighted to see an increase in the number of participants particularly the men. There is still a much smaller number of women taking part which continues to be disappointing. However, it is a very well organised event with the playing system providing a large number of matches. Both the junior girls and boys who take part certainly benefit from this format.

By the time National Council meet we will have had our flag ship Senior National Championships in Nottingham. I hope those of you who attended enjoyed the experience. I am delighted we managed to secure the financial support of Mark Bates Ltd which has allowed us to continue to produce an elite event with enhanced facilities and promotion of the sport through BBC Sport live streaming production, and using the ITTF live scoring system. It was exceptionally well organised without standing delivery. Our thanks go to all those involved.

We have secured a five-year deal with Mark who is not only a highly successful business man but has a deep love for our sport. We are indeed fortunate to have him and his company at our side and we will be working very closely with them to further enhance our partnership.

The results in Portugal were to say the least, very disappointing. Although the teams play as GB they are seen as a representative of English Table Tennis. Our men's team have made such great strides over the last four years that there is now an expectation to be amongst the best in the World. None of us want to go backwards and there has to be a concentration on individual qualification for the Olympics.

Whilst Sara and I were in Portugal we had the opportunity to continue our discussions with the ITTF on the 2026 World Championships and 100 years Celebrations. The next stage is to provide an MOU between us and the ITTF and get this agreed in Qatar in early March. This will then enable UK Sport to consider their position as a partner in the project.

There was an unofficial open debate about the issues between the ETTU and the ITTF. I attended and eventually there was a focus on the ETTU needing a strategic business plan which could be supported by a positive partnership with the ITTF. This discussion continued at a special congress which was arranged the weekend of February 22/23 in Budapest. There are still a few details around the new World Team Championship format which will be discussed at an ITTF working group.

I attended the UK Sport International Relationships seminar in London where there was a presentation from the CEO of the 2024 Paris Olympic Games. The organising group are pressing forward with all the necessary preparations at this stage of the programme but the one clear message that came across was the emphasis of an eco friendly games and a sustainable legacy.

Ironically following this I attended the Sport and Recreational Alliance Conference in Loughborough where once again the one of the presentations was the effect of sport and events on the carbon footprint. In addition, there was a



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presentation on diversity in both governance and participation.

There was a thought-provoking seminar on strategic planning around the concept of the fundamental basis of any organisation is "purpose".

Tim Hollingsworth CEO of Sport England closed the conference with once more emphasising the social impact of activity. He made it very clear that Sport England and the other home nations sports bodies need to be aligned with UK Sport.

You will receive an update from Simon Griew the Ranking Review and the importance of feedback on the online survey. There is also a membership consultation survey on the British League review and I would like to ask all National Councillors to encourage their county and league players to respond with their views.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask National Council to consider supporting our affiliation proposition along with our rationale showing the benefits to our members through the continual development and promotion of the sport.

I also need to give my apologies for leaving the meeting at lunch time.

I am going directly to Hinckley to support our schools National Team finals.

Sandra Deaton