

## **CRITTALL**

The history of the Crittall club goes back well beyond the beginning of this section and is synonymous with the early history of the league. Not only were the individual preliminaries and finals night held at the Crittall Social Club for many years, but Crittall A spent much of that time at the top of the first division.

From their first championship in 1955 to their last in 1973, they won the league a total of 11 times, the last six on the trot, a record for successive wins that remains unequalled.

Len Woolmer, Dave Atterbury and Tony Guy were there throughout the six-year run and they were joined for the last two years by Rob Milne and Ron Fosker. The run was halted in 1974 by the Colin Hughes-Charlie Wheeler-Dave Willoughby combination at Crittall Witham and Guy's disappearance the following year.

For the next season they recruited Ron Cuddeford, a most unlikely looking table tennis player, who occasionally turned up in carpet slippers, moved very little at the table and had a curious style that went against any form of teaching. But he was very good. And he, Milne, Atterbury and Woolmer came within one point of getting the title back.

They then lost Milne to Colne and for the next few seasons took on the cloak of mid-table respectability (4<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>). Cuddeford was joined first by Dave Willoughby and Dave Hutley, from the short-lived Bocking End club, then by Ivan and Nigel Palmer from Hedingham.

The club folded at the end of the 1981 season when Cuddeford and the Palmers moved to the new ASE club at Great Yeldham and Len Woolmer hung up his bat, although he remained league chairman for another eight years.