



Press Release: Portishead Table Tennis Club

Portishead named Club of the Year

February 11 2019

Portishead has been named as the South West Region's first ever Club of the Year in the Pride of Table Tennis Awards.

The club beat off competition from hundreds of others throughout Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Avon, Somerset, Devon, Dorset and Cornwall, to scoop the prize.

As South West winner, Portishead has now been shortlisted for Table Tennis England's National Pride of Table Tennis Awards, where the winner will be announced on March 30 in Leicester.

South West regional chairman, Jos Kelly, who made the presentation at Gordano School, said: "Portishead Table Tennis Club seems to have burst on to the scene in a big way. The club's drive and energy to promote the sport, and also bring its many benefits to the local community, has seen it grow at a tremendous rate and attract new players from all age groups.

"It is very fitting that it should be recognised as the South West Table Tennis Club of the Year."

Many of the innovations of the last couple of years have been overseen by Portishead Club Development Officer, Derek Connop, who said: "We are absolutely delighted to be named regional club of the year. It is particularly special as this is the first time such an award has been made under the Pride of Table Tennis Awards banner.

"We have made huge leaps forward in our table tennis offering in the last year and we are proud to continue to promote and grow the sport in our local area."

The Portishead innovations that so impressed the judges included:

- Seven members attending courses to become Table Tennis England grade one coaches;
- The club launching regular Monday evening coaching sessions at a local youth centre;
- In partnership with Gordano School, setting up a regular after-school table tennis club attended by more than 30 youngsters;
- Establishing a 15-table regular club training night, which even attracts players from other clubs;
- Recording what the club believes is the best-ever member satisfaction score in a Table Tennis England national survey;
- Making history by competing in the British League – the UK's premier club competition – for the first time in Portishead's 72-year history.
- Providing the local Bristol Table Tennis League with the most teams entered in both the winter and summer league competitions.
- Entering the Weston Table Tennis League in 2017-18 and doubling the entry in 2018-19.
- Entering three teams in the 2017-2018 Bristol Junior League, finishing first and second in Division 1;
- Entering two teams in the 2018-2019 National Junior League and two teams in the Bristol Junior League.





“This has been a real team performance,” said Connop. “We couldn’t have done any of this without establishing a very strong and well run committee, without the support and funding from Table Tennis England (the governing body of our sport), or without the commitment and participation of everyone associated with the club – the players, coaches, captains and the parents of our junior members.

“In addition to my role on club development and the usual chairman, secretary, treasurer etc, we have a welfare officer a junior player officer, a press officer, a league representative, and we have also just introduced a young ambassador (junior under-18) into the committee and written that post into the club constitution.

“We have the right people doing the right things and have created a very warm and open culture for our members and for anyone wishing to join in with what we do. This is just the start of what we can achieve.”

PHOTO CAPTION

Portishead Table Tennis Club members and friends celebrate being named regional Club of the Year at a Sunday night training session at Gordano School.

NOTE TO EDITORS

Portishead is a Table Tennis England Premier Club. It was established in 1946.

It has around 60 members of all ages – the youngest is 10 and the oldest in his 80s.

The club encourages members of all ages and ability ranges. New members are always welcome.

The club plays matches at the Portishead Lake Grounds and at Walton Hall. It also has regular training nights at Gordano School.

It currently has 14 adult teams and four junior teams playing in the British League, the Bristol and District League, The Weston-Super-Mare League, the National Junior League, and the Bristol Junior League.

For more information see: <https://www.tabletennis365.com/Portishead> or contact:

Stephen Knight
General Secretary, Portishead Table Tennis Club
01275 871925
steve@knighttrain.co.uk

Or:
Derek Connop
Club Development Officer
07779 118936 (m)
derek.connop@hotmail.co.uk





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