

Isle of Wight

Table Tennis League

July 2023

Chairman's Report – AGM 2023 (Alex's report to the AGM held on Monday 17 July)

As another busy season draws to a close, it's nice to reflect on some of the high points we have enjoyed over the past 12 months.

Firstly, congratulations to Ryde A, Vics B and St Lawrence Lizards for winning their respective Winter League divisions. All three teams ended up comfortably on top with a good distance between them and their nearest rivals.

We have once again had opportunities to show off our amazing table tennis centre to mainland visitors. Back in May we hosted the English Leagues competition for both adults and juniors, welcoming decent players from across our region. Our Juniors and our Ladies both went on to the next round in Derby, where they encountered very stiff opposition, but did themselves credit while gaining valuable experience. In June, we again hosted our annual Charity Tournament, raising £1650 for the Mountbatten Hospice, and attracted some talent to our Island. Our home-grown star George Downing tried to defend his title, but found Matt Ware too strong on the day. My thanks go to all those businesses and individuals who sponsored the event, donated time or money, and helped out on the day. The list is too long to mention everybody by name, but Pat's contribution to the lunches and Martin's hard work keeping the Centre in tip-top condition are worth special comment.

We have two open positions to fill on the committee, those of General Secretary and Welfare Officer. Peter Clarke has done an admirable job as General Secretary role for the past couple of years, but now feels it's time for someone else to take over. This is an essential role, as the General Secretary is our point of contact between our association and the outside world. If you feel you can step up and do this, Peter has assured us of a thorough handover. Heather has decided to step down as Welfare Officer this year also.

Glenn and his coaching team have done sterling work in bringing on our junior players this year, the results of which are self-evident. It's great to see young players competing at the top levels of Island Table Tennis, which is a testament to their hard work and also Glenn's.

Congratulations go to our Island Games team, for bringing home bronze medals for the team event last week. The team has pulled out all the stops, working hard under the careful eye of both Dan as Team Captain and Glenn as Team Coach, and judging by the reports that came in, they all thoroughly enjoyed themselves. I won't say any more, as Pat has a separate report later, just "Well done".

Island Games

As you will all be aware by now, the Isle of Wight table tennis team brought back a magnificent bronze medal from the Island Games in Guernsey.

On their way!



Danny sent back daily reports for us and these are printed below, they make interesting reading and give a full flavour of the week.

Diary of the Island Games 2023 by Danny Burns

Day One:

First up Gibraltar. 6-1 won.

Then Guernsey, a cunning plan was formed so we deliberately played a weaker side to rest George for use in the later rounds. Lost 7-0.

Isle of Man - big game for us. Isle of Man had some good results throughout the day so expected a hard battle.

We got off to a flyer with Scott getting us 1 nil up, then Temeesha made it 2. George quickly made it 3. Next up were Anna and Temeesha in the womens doubles and it was 4-0. We were on a roll, and so it continued for the next 3 matches and a well deserved 7-0 win.



Encouragement for Hugh from the team



George in action against Gibraltar



Danny and George after their wins



Pat and Scott made a great mixed doubles partnership

Day Two

3 matches today, win all of them and we will finish second in our group and play in the semi finals for a minimum of bronze. Lose just one and we could only finish 5th place at best.

9am Greenland- our old enemy.

As usual the ever dependable George got us off to a flying start, 1 nil IOW.

Next up was Temeesha, playing an incredible match and winning 3 straight to take us 2 up. Greenland have a trump card in their number 1 player, Ivik who won gold last time out in the men's singles and looks likely to do the same again this time around, comfortably beating Danny. 2-1 IOW. Ladies doubles next and after some close games and great rallies, we lost and the match score was even at 2-2.

An incredible match between George and Ivik followed, magnificent, high quality table tennis from both and George lost in the 5th set, the only one to take sets off ivik the whole tournament so far. 2-3 down. If we lost again our dreams of a medal were over.

Temeesha and George in the mixed doubles were up and they played the game of their lives to come out winners 11-9 in the 5th. 3-3.

This left the deciding game between Danny and the number 2 from Greenland. The pressure was on. Danny lost the first set close 12-10. Remaining calm under pressure and blocking out the constant cheering from the Greenland bench, he took the next 3 games and with it the match 4-3 to IOW. The dream was still on.

Game 2 – Falklands

They are a great bunch of people and therefore a pleasure to play against but the weakest side in the group. A line up change for IOW saw us through to a 7-0 victory and on to the next game against Cayman Islands. Win and we had a minimum of bronze, lose and it was over!



With the friendly Falkland Islands team

Game 3 - Cayman Islands

Caymans are probably the nicest, friendliest team in the tournament but still highly competitive. Once considered one of the weaker sides, they have 3 new players and a victory for them would see a 3 way tie between us, Greenland and Caymans and a countback on legs. It was a must win.

George as usual came out of the blocks flying, massive powerful shots on both wings and we were 1-0 up. The lady was very strong beating Temeesha 3-0 to level the match.

Ryan was too strong for Danny and we were 1-2 behind. Next up was the ladies doubles, this was a must win for both. A tactical switch saw Temeesha play with Pat in the hope that the pimples of both would be a challenge for the Cayman pair, and so it proved to be. A back and forward, nail biting tussle ensued and we were back on level terms 2-2. A fantastic victory for our girls.

Up next was George, a powerful performance once again from our number one man and he won comfortably to give us a 3-2 lead. Having won silver in the mixed at the last games and unbeaten so far, we were expecting a tough game but ultimately a victory and with it the match for our pairing of George and Temeesha. Wrong we were, the Cayman pair had other ideas and played incredibly to win the game 3-0. A shock to say the least.

As against Greenland earlier in the day it was now 3-3 with one singles game remaining. Danny up against their number 2. The atmosphere was loud, raucous and tense and not helped when Greenland came to cheer for Cayman, realising they still had a chance of finishing second in the group on count back.

The first leg went to Cayman 12-10. Danny fired back to take the next, before losing the 3rd. At 9-7 up in the 4th game, the shot of the tournament took place and would be on YouTube for all to witness. Stretching for a wide forehand he tripped and fell mid forehand, landing heavily but making the shot, the Cayman man returned it with a block and whilst laying on the floor an outstretched Danny somehow got his bat to the next ball imparting loads of back spin which just made it over the

net to win the point. The hall erupted! Danny won the next point to level it 2-2 in games. Can it get any closer or any more tense? The next 11 points would determine the team event...

A close fifth set of cat and mouse and cagey play, but our man was rolling back the years. It was 6-6, then 8-6, then 10-6, 1 point from victory and with it the semi finals. 2 match points blown as the Cayman man hit back winning the next 2 points, it was now 10-8. A short service, flicked in to Danny's backhand and Danny hit wide causing the Cayman man to hit the net. Game 11-8. Barriers were crashed through and the explosion of emotion and relief obvious to all, we had done it! We were through and guaranteed bronze as a minimum.



Danny gave a Captain's performance, winning the final game in five sets, despite a nasty fall and making the shot of the tournament from the floor!

A thunderous applause from the entire hall, including the Cayman team themselves who were gracious in defeat. What a team performance.

The excitement was intense!





With the lovely Cayman Island team after their classic match for a medal

Day Three

Our semi final this morning vs Jersey.

As usual the ever dependable George got us off to a bright start with a combination of powerful backhands and forehands.

However, Jersey are multiple past winners and after some close games, their class shone through and we lost the match 4-1. As it would end up being, we would lose to the eventual gold medalists.

This time around we have had to settle for bronze, an incredible achievement for the team and everyone involved. Delighted to captain this team and couldn't be prouder of what has been achieved.

Special thanks to Glenn for all his help both before and during the games.



Bronze medallists!

Flying the flag



On the medal podium with Jersey and Guernsey



Day Four

Been a tough day for everyone today for sure. Men's and women's singles.

George reached the quarter finals and lost to Luc Miller 4-3. He had beaten him in the team event a few days before.

Scott lost 3 straight to the man from Menorca. Same thing with myself losing to the 6th seed from Aland.

Hugh played well but sadly didn't get through the group, losing his last match 11-9 in the fifth.

Pat played well in her group of 4 but ultimately didn't get through to the next round.

Anna played really well and finished 2nd in her group and went on to play in the knockout stage before losing to the Gotland girl.

Temeesha was runner up in her group and went on to play well in the next 2 rounds before succumbing in the last 16.

Player of the day was Elaine. A great win in her group, followed by another in the next round, eventually losing in the last 16.

We have changed our pairing for the men's tomorrow as the shoulder I fell on is damaged and the muscles torn. Been having physio and acupuncture, along with painkillers and some gin! To give us

the best chance of a medal, Scott will play with George as a 100% Scott is much stronger than a 50% me.

Glenn will enjoy his sleep tonight, he's had a busy day rushing from table to table.



Danny, Elaine and Pat with friend.
Elaine was player of the day on Day Four.

Day Five

Men's doubles and Women's doubles

Hugh and I were runners up in our group, beating Isle of Man in a 5 set thriller, but then sadly losing to the strongest pair from Faroes.

Scott and George played excellently to win their group and progress to the knockout stages. In the quarter finals they came up against the pair from Gotland who ran out winners 3-0.

Scott and George were quarter finalists



Anna and Temeesha again played excellently to win their matches and proceed further. The girls were playing great and their confidence was increasing all the time. They then drew the number 1 pair and eventual silver medalists from Jersey. In three close games lost chances could have been had and changed the result. A great game from them both. Get them next time!!!

Pat and Elaine had a tough draw so were always up against it but they did themselves proud. They lost both games in the group and, whilst naturally feeling disappointed, positive thoughts are required for mixed doubles tomorrow.



Anna and Temeesha played well but lost to the silver medallists

Day Six

Mixed doubles.

Tough day again, I think we peaked on the 2nd day of the team event.

George and Temeesha won their group and got through the next rounds until the quarter finals, where they lost in 5 sets to the number 2 seeds from Jersey. An excellent performance and they narrowly missed out on a medal.

Scott and Anna played incredibly well. They won the group and only lost to the eventual winners from Guernsey. Whilst the score was 3-0 the games were close and some of the rallies were incredible.

Hugh and Pat played well, tough group and didn't progress any further.

Danny and Elaine again had a tough group with the number 1 from Greenland and Faroes. Did not progress through the group.

Difficult day but ultimately we couldn't have tried any harder.

So proud of the team and the bronze was a bonus having played out of our skins to get there.

**Hugh, Glenn, Elaine, George,
Anna, Scott, Pat, Danny and Temeesha**



Our Flag carrier for the the Closing ceremony will be Pat Thorley from Table Tennis. Pat embodies the spirit of the "friendly" Games so has been unanimously chosen to be the Isle of Wight's flag bearer at the closing ceremony of Guernsey's Island Games 2023. Her journey in table tennis began at the age of 12, and it took a significant turn when she met her coach, who later became her husband. Table tennis became an integral part of their lives, as did their love for the Isle of Wight, where he would always want to holiday. Though their plan to retire to the island together altered with the unfortunate passing of her husband, Pat decided to make the move anyway. Little did she know that joining the local table tennis club would open the door to the Island Games. At the amazing age of 72, Pat's dedication and skill earned her a spot on the Table Tennis team, and her pride knew no bounds. However, Pat's contribution to the Games went beyond her personal achievements. She wholeheartedly embraced the essence of the sport.



**Kevin Winchcombe, Chairman of Team IOW
with Pat, flag bearer for the Closing Ceremony**

Proud Pat with our Isle of Wight Flag



Table Tennis England – English Leagues Tournament

Glenn and Pat have kindly provided us with a comprehensive report on the finals of the English Leagues Tournament held in June in Derbyshire:

Isle of Wight Boys team – Ryan Cates & Lewis Johnstone – by Glenn Morley

The boys first match was against Northumbria. Both lads were ranked in England and very strong players. It was Lewis & Ryan's first appearance in a tournament of this quality, and unfortunately, nerves got the better of them, so they didn't perform to their normal level. We lost 5-0.

Second match on was against Wembley and Harrow. Both Ryan & Lewis performed much better in this match. However they were up against it with both of their opponents England ranked. Once more they tried hard but went down 5-0.

Third match on was against Nottingham. Once more we had the same scenario, with both players in the ranking list, so another tough assignment, the lads whilst losing, were gaining in confidence and adjusting to the extra pace of the matches. Ryan picked up his first set in the singles. We were 2-0 down then came the doubles it looked to be going the same way but the lads kept fighting and managed to turn it around winning their first game of the weekend in great style with both playing exceptionally well and Lewis hitting some fantastic forehands.

A 4-1 defeat but with the lads realising that they were capable of mixing it at that high level, the smiles returned.

Finally came the 7/8 play off match when we were up against a really strong side once more in Leicester. Lewis went on first played well but lost. Ryan then squared up the match against their No. 2 with a confident performance. The doubles didn't quite go as we hoped and we were 2-1 down.

Ryan then produced a great performance doggedly fighting back to overcome their No. 1 by 13-11 in the 5th after an epic encounter, 2-2.

The pressure was now on Lewis. Could he produce a win to give us our first victory? There was no doubt, Lewis produced a superb performance showing maturity beyond his years to bring home the spoils and a deserved first victory 3-2 !

As one of the coaching team I was proud of the way the lads performed, not only the way they played, but their general attitude and etiquette was excellent. This was mentioned not only by the other coaches but also the organisers. Both Ryan and Lewis gave it there all. Their heads never went down at any stage. They did the Island proud, I was also proud to be their coach. I'm sure they will now go on to even greater achievements in the future.

Isle of Wight Ladies team – Anna Joyce & Pat Thorley - by Pat Thorley

Anna and Pat found that their first match was against last year's winners, Norwich; with both players in that team ranked in the top 20 in England, so it was a very tough 'baptism of fire', but we did our best, played well but lost. We then played Nottingham, followed by Leamington, where once again we were beaten by top ranked players. In our final match we only just lost to Stockton, but again we tried and gave our best, but it wasn't to be. It was an incredible experience for us both and has given us a taste of what the ISLAND GAMES tournament in a few weeks time in Guernsey will be about. We both thank the Isle of Wight Association for supporting us. I'm sure it's put us in 'Good Stead' for the Island Games.



Isle of Wight players in action in the English Leagues' National Finals

Mountbatten Charity Tournament

For the second year running, the Isle of Wight County Table Tennis Association held a charity tournament in aid of the Mountbatten Hospice, which was held on Saturday 24th June 2023. This attracted 48 competitors, with 32 coming from the mainland, and included a number of players ranked in the top 100 in England, and raised an incredible £1650 for the hospice.

Four Islanders made it through the group stages – Alex Rorke, Don Hobbs, Hugh Idle and George Downing. In addition three of our top junior players entered – Ryan Cates, Lewis Johnstone and Ethan Millward, and all gave commendable performances.

The Island's Rorke and Downing both made it to the semi-finals, with Rorke playing Dorset's Matt Ware, ranked 29th in England, and Downing meeting Devonshire's Dom Sussex, who lies just outside the top 50.

The final between Downing and Ware was closely contested, with the Island's Downing eventually losing 3-1 to Ware, who picked up the £500 prize. Ware, who was previously the British Under 21 Grand Prix champion, commented on the excellent and well organised event.

An incredible £1650 was been raised for the Mountbatten Hospice, and the IWTTA would like to thank everyone who came along to watch and support the players.

Thanks are due to all those who helped or organised: especially Alex for planning and co-ordinating; Rob who organised and scheduled the entire day's play, ably assisted by Paul Cates, whose hard work ensured continuous play throughout the tournament; Dave Wiles, our overseeing official referee; Pat, Pauline and Mike for the catering; Martin who kindly donated the vast majority of the raffle prizes, and Marlene for organising the raffle on the day (it took £400); those who assisted with transport to/from the ferries and those who helped with umpiring and everyone else who assisted in any way.

Lastly special thanks is reserved for Martin, whose tireless work (as usual), both on the day and leading up to the event, ensured that our amazing table tennis centre was proudly shown off to our mainland guests. They were certainly impressed. Many visitors remarked *"what a well organised tournament and such a friendly atmosphere."*

The IWTTA would also like to thank the sponsors of the tournament:

Mike Turner Solent Pools and Hot Tubs
John Kerr Balfourkerr Properties
Woodcliffe Holiday Apartments



Matt Ware and Alex ready to meet in the semi final



Matt on his way to winning £500



Matt Ware, ranked in the top 30 in England, and IWT TA Charity Tournament champion

George and Matt, runner up and winner



Summer League

With the Summer League moving into its closing stages, it has been very popular once again, with two separate leagues and twenty three teams competing. There are a number of family teams taking part. Here they all are, looking like they are enjoying taking part in this fun competition!



Paul and Lyndsey (The Northerners)

Bev and Tim (The Harriers)



Grace and Phil (Winford Wombles)



Lin and Albert (Cedar)





Paul and Shane (Ryde Retailers) with Ryan who plays for the Juniors



Rebecca and Bert (Paice Setters)

In the 5pm League, heading the table at time of going to press are The Northerners, comprising Paul, Guy and Lyndsey, on the same points as Cedar's Albert and Lin.

Third placed Grazak, comprising Zak, Graham and Elaine, have a game in hand, and are only one point behind the leaders, so could take top spot.

In the 7pm League, Cocowall, comprising Bryce, Keith and Julie, lead the table by one point over the Pimple Players' Ethan and Alex.

The Juniors' Ryan and Jye are in third place whilst Two Mikes and A D, comprising Michael B, Mike T and Don, are in fourth on the same points.

The Pimple Players look favourites to take top spot as they have games in hand over their closest rivals.

News

Junior Coaching

We are keen to attract more players to Junior Coaching sessions on the Island, so please do let your friends and colleagues know about them. There are sessions available at Shanklin and Smallbrook, see details below:

Youth Table Tennis



Don Hobbs and Paul Harris with young players. pic: Kevin Weeden

Following a successful season of coaching and developing young table-tennis players, Shanklin Voluntary Youth & Community Centre (SVYCC) coaches, Don Hobbs and Paul Harris, presented players with certificates of achievement ahead of the summer break.

Training and coaching will return to SVYCC in the autumn with further details available at iow.life/SVYCC.

Isle of Wight Table Tennis Association

**Junior Table Tennis Coaching
is available at the Island Table
Tennis Centre, Smallbrook**



Mondays & Thursdays

5-00pm – 7-00pm

Saturdays

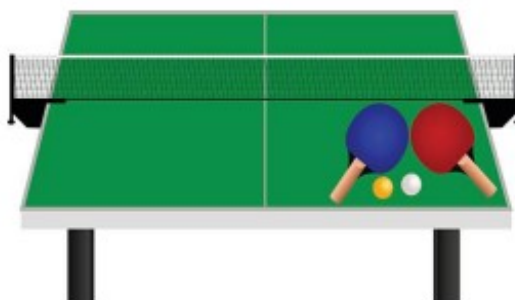
9.30am -12.30pm

All sessions £3-50 (bats & balls provided)

Further information from Glenn Morley

zaffrel@uwclub.net

Mobile 07799145504



Isle of Wight Table Tennis Clothing

**Table Tennis T.shirts,
Polo necks & Hoodies**

The **BigWight** Sports clothing company at Newport have an excellent range of T shirts, polos, sweatshirts and hoodies, in various colours, with a choice of front and rear logos. Something for everyone hopefully. You can make your selection and then order direct from the company <https://www.bigwight.com/iw-table-tennis>.



IWTTA Committee

Here is the committee as voted in at the recent AGM. Changes of posts/new posts are Pat Thorley – General Secretary, Debbie Yates – Welfare Officer and Paul Cates – Trophy Officer.

Isle of Wight Table Tennis Association
Meet the Committee elected by you – the members.
They are happy to listen to your views / suggestions

			
Bert Paice President	Alex Rorke Chairman	Tim Giles Vice Chairman	
			
Martin Dove Treasurer	Pat Thorley General Secretary	Rob Smith Minutes Secretary	
			
Glenn Morley Coaching Officer	Debbie Yates Welfare & Publicity Officer	Tom Waddell League Secretary	Paul Cates Trophies Officer

Dates for your Diary

Non League players' tournament

Tuesday, 29th August – 2-00pm

Smallbrook Table Tennis Centre

This is a tournament
(non handicapped)
is open to all non league
players.



That is players who have not played in this
year's Winter or Summer leagues. Entry fee £4-00.
Please sign the list at Smallbrook if you wish to enter
or E.mail Tim: wychboldwarrior@icloud.com



These are the two
finalists in last year's
tournament –
Roger and Jye.
Just 70 years between them!

Guess who won the
final?

Please help to publicise and
promote this tournament
by encouraging all non
league players to enter.

Isle of Wight Table Tennis Association Centenary Year

Annual Presentation Evening

Saturday, 9th September
7-00pm

Ryde Castle Hotel



A celebration of Island Table Tennis

Buffet & Bar

Tickets (£10) from Martin Dove E.mail: martin.dove@blueyonder.co.uk



Photo of trophy winners from 2022 Presentation Evening

Archive

In our regular look through Table Tennis News we move into 1991, with the January issue giving us plenty of Island news, including mention of Heather Wykes who was involved in an outstanding win for the Isle of Wight ladies team, plus local league news including current players from Ryde and Vics. Dave and Barry still play together in the same team all these years later!

ISLE OF WIGHT Brian Lamerton

EARLY (YES I know it is January but this has to be written in November and we don't start until October) signs are that Sandown will again be the team to stop at the head of Division 1.

Leaders	P	W	L	Pts
Wroxall 'A'	6	5	1	18
Sandown	5	5	0	17
Plessey 'A'	7	3	3	14

Wroxall are this season represented by Alan Hulbert, Chris Angus and Kevin Gattrell whilst Ray Winter has joined the all conquering Roger Hookey and Mike Turner to maintain Sandown's challenge.

Last seasons early runners, Rookley have not started this term too well - Pete Urry is blaming his indifferent form on the demise of his Johnny Leach hard bat and I am under instructions to find a replacement (are you listening Mr President or does anybody else have one in their archives?)

Newport Vics 'D', promoted from Division 3 last season are now carrying all before them in Division 2 (well done Ray Ferris, David Newnham, Barry Joyce and Rick Jackson) whilst the individual star of Division 3 is 'Super' Veteran Fred Mitchell who has won 16 of his 21 sets.

Overall this season the Islands Leagues have increased from 48 to 54 teams. By the time these notes are read our Junior and Cadet teams will have played their first matches in the Hampshire Inter-Town Leagues; they will undoubtedly have looked the part - grateful thanks to Ventnor member Paul Redman who has donated team shirts.

Junior coaching, instigated following a successful development fund application is proceeding at three centres; such is the interest that we are now planning another course for new coaches to cope with the demand - incidentally congratulations to Alan Hulbert and Mike Platt, Chairman and Secretary respectively of the Island association for obtaining their coaching badges.

Both our ladies and mens teams have now chalked up victories in the Southern Region Leagues. The ladies pair of Heather Wyke and Amanda Elvers overcoming Cippenham by 3 sets to 2, and the mens team with Roger Hookey at last getting the breaks he deserves defeating near neighbours Amity Generation by 5 sets to 4. For both ladies and men their other 3 matches 'got away'.

Outstanding result in the Ladies league was that which saw the Isle of Wight's Amanda Elvers and Heather Wykes defeat Cippenham 3-2.

First				
O.L.O.P.	4	3	1	8
Kingfisher 'B'	4	3	1	8
Merton	4	2	2	7
Cippenham 'B'	4	2	2	6
Amity Generation B	4	1	3	4
Isle of Wight	4	1	3	3
Ladies				
Kingfisher	4	3	1	9
Cippenham	4	3	1	9
O.L.O.P.	4	2	2	7
Aldershot 'A'	4	2	2	5
Aldershot 'B'	4	1	3	3
Isle of Wight	4	1	3	3

Serious interest is being given to sending a team to the 27 strong Island Games in Oland (Scandinavia) in June (the 1993 Games are in the Isle of Wight), but whether we eventually go or not we shall be represented abroad before that (other than our permanent Ambassador Carl of course) as Brian Lamerton our Umpire Secretary and National Councillor (and mainland representative) has been selected to umpire at the European Top 12 in Holland at the beginning of February.

The February issue had more news of some of our current players, including Chairman Alex Rorke, plus Carl Preat was still in his ascendancy:

ISLE OF WIGHT Brian Lamerton

OUR JUNIORS AND Cadets acquitted themselves well on their first visit to many years to the mainland to take part in the Hampshire inter-town leagues. Resplendent in their new Paul Redman sponsored shirts, the Cadet team of Stuart Dover, Steven Holbrook, Geoffrey West and Claire Waghorn were a little overawed at their first experience of representative play but each player had the satisfaction of one singles win as they went down, 7-3 to Gosport and Fareham and 9-1 to Portsmouth.

The following week Claire was back again, this time with Junior colleagues Alan Hulbert, Marcus Garman and Alex Yorke and with a 7 sets to 3 victory over Southampton 'B' and a 9 sets to 1 demolition job over Winchester they happily caught the ferry home as joint leaders and eagerly await the next session in March when they will tangle with Andover, Aldershot and Bournemouth.

The Island League has reached the halfway stage with a familiar look - Sandown at the top. Roger Hookey, Mike Turner and Roy Winsor removed any doubts of their superiority by soundly defeating their nearest rivals, Wroxall 8 sets to 2 in the last match of the half - this match did however produce the second defeat of the season for Island champion Hookey who lost to league chairman Alan Hulbert having previously lost to Rookley's Martin Mitchell.

Hulbert senior was also successful in the annual Rookley-Newport Vics Handicap tournament defeating young Alex Rorke of Ryde who found his 11 point start not quite enough.

In December's regional league clashes the ladies were whitewashed by Aldershot and the men went down 7-2 to OLOP with 6 of the losing sets going to a third game - more stamina training lads!



Carl Preat is our leading player and one of the most tactically sound in Europe where he is ranked No.13. Still only 22 years old he won the Daily Telegraph Masters in Gateshead and plays for Grenada in the German Bundesliga

The March issue was of less interest, with the Isle of Wight languishing at the bottom of the tables in both the First Division and Ladies Division, but some good news on Carl Preat's performances:

EUROPEAN NATIONS CUP

PREAN, O'DRISCOLL BEAT WORLD DOUBLES CHAMPIONS

Has England at last found a double partnership to take on the world? Carl Preat and Michael O'Driscoll seem to have the qualities necessary. John Woodford reports from Munich.

In the April issue there was no news on our teams, except the usual tables showing us at the bottom of the County Leagues; however, Island lad Carl was in good form, whilst John Preat was stepping down as Chairman after a successful few years:

Preat's devastating display

CARL PREAN (23), is the new English National singles champion after one of the most devastating displays of attacking table tennis seen in this country for a very long time.

As our American friends would say, it was 'awesome'. The Isle of Wight player was in a class of his own throughout the two days losing only one game during his five matches.

DYNAMIC

I note from the National Press, that the Chairman of the ETTA for the last four years, John Preat, will not be standing again. He has proved to be the most dynamic Chairman of at least the post 1945 period, having together with his Management team achieved an incredible turnaround of the financial position from being heavily in debt, and carrying the liability of the old headquarters, to being in credit with modern HQ facilities and to have increased media coverage of the sport.

It is to be hoped that with his departure we will not see a return of the deadwood and self seekers that allowed the Association to get in such a mess in the first place.

My thanks to John Preat for what he has done for Table Tennis during his period in office.

L. Howick,
Ware, Herts.



The May/June issue was full off our local Island news:

ISLE OF WIGHT

Brian Lamerton

MARCH WAS A good month for Roger Hookey; with a 21-12, 21-19 final defeat of Chris Angus, Roger retained his Island Men's singles title; together with Mike Turner and Ray Winter his Sandown club held on to, for yet another season, the first division championship and a hat-trick in

the Regional League gave the Island only their second win of the season with a 5-4 success against Kingfisher 'B'.

Other Island title winners from the Championships held at the Ryde club's new headquarters were Ladies Singles: Regina Stevens, a schoolteacher newly arrived in the Island this season and playing for Plessey; Mens Doubles: Chris Angus/Chairman Alan Hulbert; Ladies Doubles: Regina Stevens/Mary Wheeler; Mixed Doubles: father and daughter Chris and Michelle Angus (a busy day for Chris!) who overcame at the last hurdle the brother and sister partnership of Ian and Sharon Urry.

Peter Urry together with Paul Moreton and Mark Mitchell representing Rookley 'A' are this season's Knowles Cup (Handicap) winners following their final victory over Newport Vics 'A'.

Returning to the League, it was always one way traffic for Sandown in a First division reduced to 9 teams; up from division 2 next season will come champion, Ryde 'A' (Barry Howlett, John Rawlings, Bill Paul and Brian Farrelly) and also possibly second and third team Wrexall 'B' and St Lawrence 'A' in order to

establish a larger division.

Tim Lewis of Ventnor 'C's fourth division team provided the season's only 100% individual record.

1st Division

	P	W	Pts
Sandown A	16	15	56
Newport Vics A	16	11	47
Wroxall A	16	12	45
Shanklin	16	7	37
Rookley A	16	8	36
Plessey	16	8	35
Rookley B	16	5	23
Newport Vics B	16	2	8
Ventnor A	16	0	1

Finally, our next contribution will include truly overseas news as it has now been definitely decided to send a team to the Island Games in Oland (Scandinavia) in June.

Finally 2, congratulations to Carl Prean who has finally landed the English Men's Singles title after two previous disappointments, and finally 3, we look forward to seeing more of John Prean as he goes into well earned retirement from his very successful four year stint as National Chairman.

Lots more Island news in the August – September issue:

ISLE OF WIGHT

John Preat

AFTER A LONG absence and stint of National Service I return as County Correspondent. I shall try to look at national issues from time to time, as they affect the local scene and depart occasionally from the parochial, which is of limited interest to most readers.

In one sense it was a remarkable year for our small Island (pop. 120,000). Last season we supplied both the National Chairman and National champion. You have read enough about my time in my former hot seat. I return to the grass roots with some pleasure. The Ryde Club elected me as their chairman in record time. Our coaching schemes are beginning to bear fruit in terms of increased membership and improvement in standards of the young. I hope to be closely involved.

Our cadets did less well, winning about 1 match in 3, but with most of them in the first year of their table tennis life, the scope for improvement is immense.

We suffer, as does much of the rest of the country, from lack of facilities where one can play good table tennis without paying an excessive rent.

We were grateful for our development grant from the ETTA which financed an excellent summer coaching scheme which brought us new members and helped to increase our teams from 48 to 54. I see lack of space as the main obstacle to growth here. I know other leagues suffer greatly from the lack of volunteers needed to do the development work. It was a matter of some sorrow, when I was ETTA Chairman, that so many leagues failed to apply for their grants.

We noted that the local council had spent millions to build a new ice rink. Whether we shall ever get a few thousand to build a table tennis centre must be open to doubt. However, it will not be for lack of pressure and effort.

Sterling work is being done by the Newport Vics club, led by Bill and Joan Rossi, where youngsters are getting a real chance to play regularly and so improve their game. My own club (at Ryde) is only available twice a week, but we hope to get a regular session moving on Saturday nights, which may help things along. We depend very much on what happens nationally, particularly TV, to create interest in the sport and we hope the trend towards more TV will continue.

Some of our players competed in the Inter-Island Games, a multi-sport mini-Olympics, which attracted teams from as far as the Faroes, Jersey, Gibraltar and Saaremaa (Lithuania) and many other islands which I had to look up on my maps. Our best results were achieved by Pete Urry and Heather Wykes, both of whom reached the Quarter Finals. Heather lost to the eventual gold medallist, a lady from Gotland (Sweden - as I suspected) whilst Pete lost to a young man from Prince Edward Island (Canada) whom he found a hot potato.

The event took place in Aland (Finland). In 1993 it will be staged on the Isle of Wight

to which we are looking forward with excitement, wondering whether our facilities and infrastructure will be equal to the task and hoping for some improvement as well as new venues as a result. We may have our best players on view then, perhaps Roger Hookey and Mike Turner and even Carl Preat.

Our Juniors and cadets returned to the Hampshire Inter-Town Leagues last season. We felt immense gratitude to our good friends in the neighbouring county, particularly their Secretary Harold Albery, for this opportunity.

Our Juniors nearly gained promotion to the 1st division and with the likes of Ali Hulbert and Alex Rorke still young enough, promotion must be a real hope.

Carl's National title was gained after three losing finals. So it was fourth time lucky. He certainly played well and the three-zero wins against Chen Xinhua and Desmond Douglas speak for themselves. Sound technique was the secret of his success against the Chinese star. That has to be the basis of victory against defence. The red/black rule has decimated defenders at world level, a sad business. Good to see that defence is alive and well in this country with Chen, Syed, Lomas and Holt. What is better to watch than a good defender against a good attacker? I think this was the first subject I ever wrote about in these columns. Even I am astonished to have seen the future so accurately! My sorrow about the treatment of defenders via ITTF legislation remains. More about this, perhaps, later.

May I take this opportunity to thank those who have written to me and have spoken to me on the 'phone to express their appreciation of what I tried to do as Chairman? One often feels one has laboured in some isolation. The letters were appreciated, because they showed that a lot of people cared about the sport.

Please keep up your good

work all over the country without which the sport cannot survive, let alone progress.

In the October 1991 Carl had been a senior international player for ten years, and the Island were awarded a grant from the ETTA Development Fund:

A decade of a great survivor

"DID he ever throw the discus?" asked my overseas colleague about the forceful fellow with the unusual sidespin forehand loop who was hurling himself into a successful medal bid at the European Championships.

"What does England do with them?" he added, apparently mystified. "Whatever happened to that other young one who helped you to a medal at the worlds. Looked like a chemistry student and served the ball under his arm."

I never discovered whether he was being ironic or ingenuous. Did he not know the two different-looking young men were the same? Both were Carl Preen. Not only in image had the Isle of Wight player startlingly altered, but in style there were some surprising changes too. Perhaps this metamorphosis was what my companion had been trying humourously to highlight.

This season Carl will have been a senior international player for a whole decade. He made his debut, incredibly, in February 1982. Yet according to England captain Donald Parker: "He still hasn't reached his best. You can see how he can improve his game."



ETTA LEAGUE DEVELOPMENT FUND - 2

ISLE OF WIGHT

521.64

To set up new coaching sessions

A report on the Island Games in Aland was in the November issue and the Isle of Wight had finished fifth:

ISLE OF WIGHT John Preen

FURTHER NEWS FROM the Inter-Island games, the mini-Olympics for small islands all over the world - we gained 5th place in the Team event, which was contested by line-ups of 2 men and 1 lady. Alan Hulbert, who is the chairman of the Isle of Wight Association, played splendidly

with fine support from Martin Mitchell and Heather Wykes, our new Secretary.

We began with a defeat against Faroe Isles (5-2), a team who have competed in the full European Championships, though not with quite the success they enjoyed here! From then it was success all the way with victories against Asland (6-1), Shetland (7-0) and the Isle of Man (5-2). Three out of four with by no means our strongest team must be regarded as an excellent effort. We hope to do even better when the event moves to the Isle of Wight in 1993. Something to look forward to.

Asland's line-up included a name as well known as Walhers (Andrew) Blackadder! He did not play against the Isle of Wight which presumably made his team's defeat inevitable. I had earlier congratulated Peter Urry on reaching the quarter finals of the singles. Much greater adulation came to Pete when a Swedish coach complimented him on his play with a hard bat - 'In our country' said the Coach 'such bats are only used by older players'. Pete, who is in his forties, was greatly encouraged in more ways than one.

Almost my first duty on being elected as Chairman of the Ryde Club was to call on our landlords with my colleagues to hear that our rent had been doubled! Though a compromise was reached which reduced the increase from 100% to 50%, we did not feel flushed with success. We live in times when the number of suitable premises is falling and rents are therefore rising. We compete with other sports not only for members, but also facilities. Few leagues, for various reasons, find sports centres suitable for league play. I get similar reports from all over the country. A number of clubs live on a knife's edge, wondering whether their premises will be taken or priced from them next season. This is the reality of sports like ours at this time.

Nevertheless, we again increased our membership, moving from 48 teams to 54 last season and to 56 now. Our fingers are crossed, so that late withdrawals do not halt this good trend. If repeated nationally, there would be much rejoicing.

We found the ETTA's Development Fund a great help.

We put the few hundred pounds we got to very good use. Quite a few young players also play on the fringes with every prospect that they may graduate to league play in future seasons. This is the direct result of summer coaching and general play we were able to introduce.

The last issue of 1991 had good coverage of our local Island League and current players:

ISLE OF WIGHT

John Preat

THE LEAGUERACE has not yet hotted up, but there was a first rate sensation when Wroxall A defeated Sandown A 6-4. The

latter have very much dominated our premier section in recent years, but Alan Hulbert has assembled a strong team at Wroxall and this time Sandown bit the dust. Wroxall's trump card was Steve Barsdell who won three, which included the infliction of a very rare defeat on the reigning island champion Roger Hookey. Steve is the Island's most dedicated player, travelling long distances to get practice which, sadly is what one has to do these days, as premises disappear. When I was a (relatively) young man of 40 plus (young only in my own eyes I imagine) three excellent venues were available at which one could practice regularly, always sure of a game. All have disappeared, as landlords realised the value of their real estate and put it to better, or at any rate, more profitable use.

I see this as English table tennis' major problem. I see it as Islands table tennis' only real obstacle to substantial expansion. It is heartening to see so many new youngsters coming into the game, sad that few have the opportunity to play more than twice a week and then on crowded club nights which offer little table time. You don't become an England junior that way, as Carl Preat did a decade ago and Derek Grant a quarter century earlier. Nevertheless, I hope for a good show by our juniors who will be competing in the Hampshire Association's Junior weekends. I have been delighted by the progress of Alex Rorke and Greg Burns, one a defender (mainly), the other an attacker in the modern manner. Both have moved up to our second division this season. I confidently expect both one division higher a year from now. Ali Hulbert is the fourth member of the so far all-conquering Wroxall team in

Division 1, which makes it the best Island junior team for some time. Lower down we have one or two youngsters of 11, of whom perhaps more at a later date, who certainly have the makings of future stars, if the required practice can be arranged (a big 'if') and school work does not 'interfere'.

Still sadly, no county team. If we had Carl Preat fairly regularly, we would feel confident of putting

up a useful show. Alas, he has had only one weekend on the island since July. Regina Stevens is back on the island, teaching at Cowes High School which would certainly win most ladies' matches for us in which she played. The basis for a useful side exists and youngsters will be knocking at the door soon.

Thus Carl remains our only 'overseas' traveller and mainly local matters have to be reported (after the excitement of the inter-island games featured in earlier columns). Despite the increased influx of youngsters as in most leagues many veterans continue to feature in our leagues. In that cause, I decided to ease my way back into the fold after a virtual absence of a dozen years. I managed to play about half the matches in our division 3, the other half being cut off by

conflicting duties as ETTA Chairman. To my great surprise I was 'promoted' to my club's division 2 side and, to my equal surprise, remain unbeaten. I fully expect that happy state of affairs to have ended by the time you read this. Alex Rorke, who is even younger than I am, is in the same team and is learning valuable lessons every night - mainly how NOT to play, which is as important as learning how to play. It is good to be back, but rather hard work. I live in terror that my team might be promoted!

And finally...

Did you know about the Ping Pong World Cup? Yes, it is an actual thing and it is for playing Sandpaper Table Tennis (which is the official name for Hard Bat Table Tennis, for which we have an annual tournament). It is a variation which returns to old fashioned equipment, using sandpaper instead of a soft, flexible, grippy rubber on bats, and this puts emphasis on the player's skill, agility and fitness. The World Cup is to be held in Mexico in 2024, and the UK squad have already been chosen via the UK Sandpaper Championships.

However, perhaps the best bit about taking part in Sandpaper table tennis would be getting to wear a t-shirt like this player's. Do we need a new design added to our IWTTA clothing collection?



Thank you for reading. The next newsletter will be in October 2023. All contributions are very much appreciated so do please send any suggestions, articles or photos to: deboldyard@hotmail.co.uk