



## **January 2025**

### **Chairman's Message**

Happy New Year!

I hope all of you had a restful Christmas break (unlike me – the festive season lumbered me with a cold I couldn't shake off until January), and are all comfortably back in the swing of matchplay by now.

Congratulations to Tim, Bev and Bryce who won this season's Doubles League, performing under the pseudonym "Teebees" – and thanks to Neil for organising the event.

The Day League has just kicked off again, with 9 teams competing; and thanks to Tim for organising this one! It's great to see so much competitive play going on in the afternoons.

The Winter League has obviously reached its half-way point, with Divisions 1 and 2 having teams standing out ahead (Ryde C and Ryde Revellers, respectively), but Division 3 is looking a bit more complex. Re-arranged matches make it difficult to guess a likely winner, but Wroxall Warriors, St Lawrence Lizards and Ryde Retailers all look to be in contention. Keep up the good work, a place in Division 2 awaits!

Speaking of re-arranged matches, your Committee has been fielding numerous questions about last summer's AGM rules change, whereby reserves were banned. To say this has had an effect on the league would be an understatement, so I thought I would let you know that the Committee has started working on proposals for rule changes to alter the rules around match reserves. This does not mean that rule changes should not be proposed by the membership, of course – quite the reverse. But if anyone does have a rule change proposal to make, I would remind them that they must be received by the Gen Secretary (Pat Thorley) at least 28 days in advance of the AGM. Regarding matters of form at the AGM, I would also remind all members that rule changes require a two thirds majority in order to be carried, so please do not stay at home if you want your voice to be heard!

Finally, we will once again be hosting our annual charity tournament in aid of the Mountbatten Hospice this summer. The date I am hoping for is the 7<sup>th</sup> of June, but I still need to get the paperwork sorted with Table Tennis England before I can say it is set in stone. I will drop an email out to all members nearer the time, but suffice it to say, I will be begging for volunteers, drivers, raffle prizes – and, of course, spectators! It has turned into one of the key dates in our calendar each year, so please come and support it.

Enjoy the rest of the season, I will be in touch later in the year.

Alex Rorke

(Chairman, IWCTTA)

## **News**

### **Saturday Coaching**

Please note that the Saturday morning coaching sessions have unfortunately been discontinued at present owing to a low number of attendees. The situation will continue to be assessed and, if interest increases, the sessions may be re-started in the future.

The other coaching sessions are unaffected and will continue as normal. These are held on Monday and Thursday evenings between 5pm and 7pm at the cost of £3.50 per session.

### **Gordon Burns Handicap Singles 2024**

There were twenty six entrants to this popular tournament, and we are looking forward to the final which will be contested on Finals Night between Danny Burns and Theo Lewis.



**Danny will meet Theo in the final**



### **Brian Warne Drawn Doubles 2024**

This was another popular tournament with twenty six entrants, so thirteen pairs taking part. Both pairs who reached the final are a mix of 'experience' and youth, with Bryce Wilson and Thane Taylor meeting John Cornforth and Theo Lewis on Finals Night.



**Bryce and Thane will play John and Theo in the final**

## Primary Schools Tournament 2024

A very successful tournament was held at the IW Table Tennis Centre recently and the top three teams were Newchurch, Carisbrooke and Summerfields. All the children enjoyed the tournament and joined in with great enthusiasm and sportsmanship.



Summerfields, Newchurch and Carisbrooke teams

## Christmas Fun

The annual Christmas Fun Tournament had a good turn out and was enjoyed by all who took part. Many wore appropriate Christmas finery as can be seen below.



Mike, Pat, Roger, Tim, Bev, Bryce, John and Graham

The Junior Christmas Handicapped Tournament was another fun event, organised by Elaine. The winner was Theo Lewis, with Thane Taylor runner up. Ollie Lewis received an award for most improved player.

Theo



Thane



Ollie





## Presentation of T-Shirt



Ollie Lewis was the latest young player to be presented with an Isle of Wight Table Tennis T-shirt. Ollie plays for Ryde Rustics in Division Three.

## Ryde Table Tennis Club v Cowplain and Purbrook Club

Ryde recently played host to Cowplain and Purbrook in a friendly tournament, instigated by Mike Lee and co-ordinated by Peter Clarke. The visitors were very impressed with the venue and expressed their thanks for the warm welcome and hospitality they received. The tournament ended in a win for Cowplain and Purbrook 12-6, and they have invited Ryde back to their club for a re-match in the summer, when Ryde will hope to get their revenge.

The Cowplain and Purbrook team were:

Chris Bone  
Roger Winkworth  
Steve Waterson

Mike Lee

Pete Newman  
Bob Shaw  
Ian Wield



The Ryde team were:

Des Wiltshire  
Tom Waddell  
Tim Wakeley

John Cornforth  
Peter Clarke  
Rob Smith

## Doubles League

The Doubles League concluded before Christmas, and the winners this year were the Teebees comprising Bryce Wilson, Bev and Tim Giles, who finished ten points ahead of second placed Above Par – Peter Burger, Alan Dennis and Robert Wendes.

Bryce, Bev and Tim – champions of the Doubles League 2025



Peter, Alan and Robert were runners up this year



## **Daytime League 2025**

The league started on 21<sup>st</sup> January and nine pairs have entered this season. The format is similar to that of the Summer League.

Some of the teams expected to do well are The Harriers - Tim & Bev Giles (last year's winners), The Red Squirrels - Peter Burger & Robert Wendes (runners up in the Doubles League 2024) and The Hippos - Graham Evans & Elaine Mills (a formidable and experienced pairing). However, there are sure to be some surprises in store and we will wish all the teams an enjoyable and competitive season.

**Graham and Elaine of The Hippos**



## **Mainland News**

### **Tim Giles Tournament Success**

Tim entered the Vets Eastern Masters held in Norwich and he made it to the final of the Over 70's doubles where he gained a runners up medal. Congratulations Tim!



## Ryan Cates Tournament Win

Ryan was Number 1 Seed for the Hollingbury 1\* Tournament held in Brighton recently, and won the tournament with ease, dropping only two ends in seven matches played. Congratulations Ryan!



## Senior British Clubs League

Alex Rorke has been in action this season for Isle of Wight 1 in National C (5) Division, whilst the all Island team of Isle of Wight 2 have been competing in National C (7) Division.

Alex has a 62% win average so far and his team lie third in their division.

The Island's representative team, comprising Hugh Idle, Paul Rainford, Ryan Cates and Lewis Johnstone have enjoyed a successful season so far and lie fourth in their division.

In November they had a full weekend of matches in Harlow, playing against teams from the London area. They won two and lost two over the weekend, including a 9-0 whitewash of Batts.

Their last fixtures were on 7<sup>th</sup> December at Norwich City, where they beat Norwich easily by 8 games to 1, with Lewis unlucky to lose out in his final match, losing 11-9 in the fifth set.

The match against Mossford Coaching was another fine win for the Island team, and Hugh and Ryan showed great character in their matches against Stephen Spry, both winning in five sets by the closest of margins. The match ended 8-2 to the Island.

At present, Paul is our top performing player, on 75% win average, with Ryan close behind on 70%.

Their last fixtures of the season are on the weekend of 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> April where they will play four matches, and with only two points separating them from the third placed team, they are in with a chance to move up the table. We wish them the best of luck!





Paul, Ryan, Lewis and Hugh – Isle of Wight 2

### **Island Echo Handicapped Singles**

The popular Island Echo Handicapped Singles was held on 24th January, with thirty four entrants from all Divisions. Owing to the generosity of the Island Echo there was prize money available of £150 to be split between the winner and runner up.

There were a total of 234 games played throughout the night in the group and knockout stages, and the semi-finals did not conclude until 11.30 pm. The final will be held on Finals Night on 30th April 2025 and will be contested between Alex Rorke and Tom Johnson.

Our thanks go to the Island Echo for their continued support of Island table tennis, and to Rob Smith for the organisation and smooth running of the event.

Warren from the Island Echo came along and spent a couple of hours taking photos of the players in action and some of these photos are shown below:

Joe



Chris



Marlene





Richard



Jye



Tim



Theo



Charlotte



Robin



Rebecca



Bert



Steve



Thane





Bryce and Paul made the semi-finals



The finalists are Alex and Tom



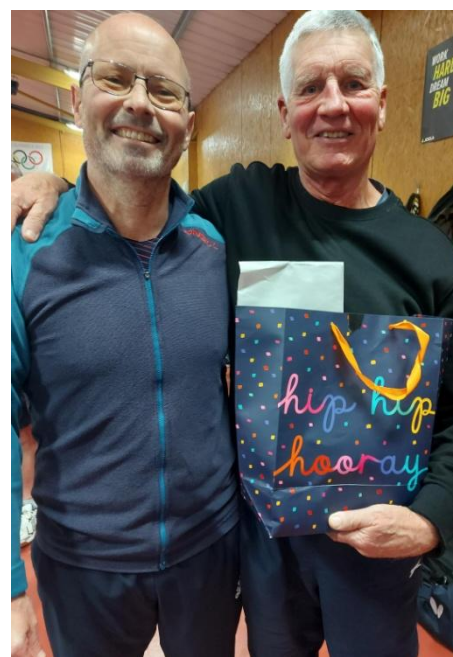
### **Stop Press!**

Thanks to Peter for sending in news from yesterday evening's Handicapped Doubles:



Andy Hookey and Jo Hurt were the runners up, whilst the winners were Jye Lock and Alex Rorke.

A presentation of an Island Table Tennis T-shirt was made to Keith Baker from Havenstreet A who is moving to Devon. Keith was a regular at practice sessions at Smallbrook as well as playing in the league. We wish Keith all the very best for the future.



### Dates for your Diary

Vets Singles Over 70's *	14-Feb-25	Fri	7pm
SuperVets Over 60's Singles H/Cap *	21-Feb-25	Fri	7pm
Men's Doubles	22-Mar-25	Sat	9:30am
Mixed Doubles	22-Mar-25	Sat	1pm
Women's Doubles	22-Mar-25	Sat	9:30am
Vets Over 60's	28-Mar-25	Fri	7pm
Hard Bat Singles *	29-Mar-25	Sat	9:30am
Hard Bat Doubles *	29-Mar-25	Sat	1pm
Vets Singles Over 40's	04-Apr-25	Fri	7pm
Division 3 Championships (Singles)	11-Apr-25	Fri	7pm
Juniors	16-Apr-25	Wed	7pm
Cadets	16-Apr-25	Wed	7pm
Division 2 Championships (Singles)	18-Apr-25	Fri	7pm
Men's Singles	27-Apr-25	Sun	9:30am
Women's Singles	27-Apr-25	Sun	9:30am
Finals Night	30-Apr-25	Wed	7pm
Summer League start	07-May-25	Wed	5pm/7pm

The finals of these competitions will be played on Finals Night with the exception of those with \* next to them, they will be played to completion on the day.

### Winter League (details correct at time of going to press)

#### Division One

Ryde C are favourite for the Division One title as they lead the table by 17 points over Ryde Rankers. The Rankers do have a game in hand so they can still catch the C team if things go their way.

Ryde players dominate the averages table with Scott on 92% win average, Alex on 89% and Steve on 87%. The highest ranked non-Ryde player is Havenstreet's Michael who has 61%.



Scott of Ryde A

Steve of Ryde Goshawks



## **Division Two**

Ryde Revellers are the favourites to win the Division Two title, leading second placed Ryde Detonators by 11 points, although Havenstreet B have a game in hand in third place and are only 3 points behind the Detonators.

Trevor of Ryde Rockets has a 95% win average, whilst Julie of Ryde Quintet has 93%. However, Spike of the Revellers has played considerably more games and is on 89%. Havenstreet's Carl also has 89% win average.



**Spike of Ryde Revellers**

## **Division Three**

At present, newcomers Wroxall Warriors head the Division Three table, with St Lawrence Lizards only 4 points behind and with a game in hand. Ryde Retailers are close behind in third place and with 2 games in hand, so the title is up for grabs.

Wroxall's Andrew Bailey is unbeaten at the top of the averages table, whilst St Lawrence's Derek is on 90%. Ryde Retailer's Shane is on 81% in third.



**Shane from Ryde Retailers**

## **Around the Island**

### **Shorwell Table Tennis Club** *by Tony Pearse (edited)*

We started ten years ago and have gone from strength to strength. We have eighteen members ranging in age from 12 years to 80 years (not quite reached upper limit)!! We draw members from



Brighstone, Whitwell, Northwood and Freshwater, and advertise in our local newsletter, social media and online.

We managed to enter two teams in Division Three, because Barry Joyce from Newport Vics visited our club on a club night. We hear that there were seven divisions in the 1970's, only two and a half now!! Very sad, only two years ago Ventnor had two teams in the league and none now. Maybe some money needs to be spent on getting the message about table tennis out to villages.

Shorwell Club has four tables and they meet every Wednesday, 7pm - 9pm. Luckily, we have Shorwell Social Club next door (it has been known for members to go next door and have a pint or three)! We have tea, coffee and chocolate biscuits at 8pm. We're a friendly lot and new members are welcome. It doesn't matter if you've never played, not played for thirty years or are Olympic standard. All are welcome.

### **Wootton Table Tennis Club** *by Peter Clarke*

Wootton Table Club meet every Friday (9-30am – 12 noon) at Wootton Community Centre, Brannon Way. There is a car park right opposite the Centre. We have four tables and a wide range of abilities with six players participating in the Winter League. Towards the end of last year, we had a waiting list for new members. This problem has eased and attendance has moderated. There is a social dimension to the Club as well, with an annual Summer Garden Party and a Christmas Lunch in a pub. Why not come along on a Friday morning? There's always a warm welcome at Wootton Table Tennis Club. Why not visit our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/groups/681073297393488](http://www.facebook.com/groups/681073297393488)

### **Memories**

Below are some photos from the 2013/14 season which Barry Joyce from Newport Vics took when he was the IWTTA chairman.



**Chris Angus who was one of the top Island players with Danny and Anna**



**Our chair Alex with Ollie Staniforth and Roger Nevell**



**Brian, John and Pauline who all look exactly the same!**

**Anna and Michael Joyce with Jack Stapeley and Ollie**





Temeesha, Anna, Michael, Olly, Jim Hall, Don, Lee, Andrew Ely, Matt Cornforth and Pete Moore, with young Sean at the back

## Archive

We have reached 1997 in our look back at Isle of Wight news in the ETTA Table Tennis News magazines, and we cover the issues up to September. The first two issues of the year were noticeably missing Island news as John Prean's column had been left out, a fact that he was not happy about.

In the April issue Johns' column focussed on our young players and particularly Danny Burns who was achieving great success.

### **Virtuoso Performances by Danny Burns**

I begin by extending my warmest thanks to those who had not only noticed the absence of my county notes, but had also talked, written or phoned about these missing papers. It offers encouragement to go on in the face of recent disappointments, when this journal seemed to have disappeared off the face of the earth and when it re-appeared what I had submitted was not printed.

My last (unpublished) notes ended with Carl Prean's return to the England team after a long absence. Nothing was written about the match when TT News appeared again, although it was one of our rare victories and a very good one at that, as Slovakia were defeated 4-1 and Carl celebrated his return with two victories. One noted that far more space was given to two subsequent defeats against the Czech Republic, when Carl played less well and our hopes of returning to the Super League were buried for another season.

Our youngsters had a most wonderful "Hampshire Junior Closed" where they won six of the available eight titles, the one in the Boys' Doubles being shared by Chris Butt (Southampton) and our own Danny Burns. In the other two events we reached the Final, Deane Whittington in the Cadet Boys and Lucy Pointer in the Junior Girls. So it was 6 "gold" and two "silver". I am reminded of 1982 when I wrote of our Juniors in Europe: "It was a stunning success. We may not see its like again." English Juniors then won 8 medals. Last year's tally was one bronze and team places of such as 25th are not exceptional.

I hope our own Juniors will continue to enjoy success at county and national level. Chris Hughes won the U-12 Boys' and Lucy (of course!) the U-12 as well as U-14 Girls'. The treble, such as once achieved by Carl Prean, eluded her when she lost to Tina Young in the Girls' U-17. Deane Whittington and Nathan Godolphin won the Boys' U-14 doubles and Danny Burns retained his Boys' U-17 title against Chris Butt, against whom he has often lost in the frequent meetings of these outstanding juniors.

For all that, our Juniors did NOT win the Hampshire Inter-Town Junior Championship and so lost the title they had won last year. In team terms it was a lack-lustre effort, but perhaps someone "up there" had decided we had won enough.

We were delighted to provide the stage for the Southern Region Championships which took place at our Carl Prean Centre on the 23rd March. It is, of course, an excellent venue and the Referee was Mick Strode, no less, who



was in charge of the National Championships a week earlier, preparing for the bigger event, no doubt. The Organiser, Brian Lamerton, the Regional Chairman, also did an excellent job. The entry could have been bigger. In my view it should be. With ranking points at stake and such good "value" the entry should have been higher and serious thought needs to be given to pre-event publicity.

The silver lining of this cloud of low entries was that it gave those who came plenty of play, none more so (again) than Danny Burns who seemed to be in "everything" in the final stages. Curiously, he won both the junior and senior events against the excellent Dorset Junior Lee Dredge in two epic encounters which neither boy deserved to lose. Burns also won the Mixed Doubles with Lucia and Roger Hookey the Men's Doubles with the Hampshire County Player Graham Pointer. At last Danny had to settle for Silver, partnered by Chris Angus. A fuller report will no doubt appear via the pen of Brian Lamerton. So I stick only to the Island successes. It was a tournament I very much enjoyed. I look forward to an early encore.

No stopping Burns. He also won the Island Senior title for the first time, defeating Roger Hookey in the final. This gave him the junior/senior double which has only been done four times since our Association began in 1923. Other winners were Steve Harris, Ray Hayter (hard bat era) and Carl Prean. Burns has also led Newport Vics to our first division title. Vics have just beaten Sandown 7-3 which clinched it, though Hookey gave Burns a stern reminder that the trees are not allowed to grow into the sky by beating him in this league match. It ended a long Sandown reign and in the end they lost the title because it seemed to matter more to the hungrier team. The battle between Burns and Hookey will remain of absorbing interest. Hookey won our Top 12 and much will depend on the form of the day they meet.

Lucy Pointer won her third national U-12 tournament, the Cotswold, but was beaten by Katy Parker in the Kent final, an epic match according to reports I received.

Good reports also on Carl Prean (Qatar Open) where Italy were defeated 3-2. Carl won two, including Yang Nim, World No.21. It was a highly emotional match. Sweet revenge for our team after losing 4-1 and 4-1 to the Italians. Carl's return produced a bonus this time. He now looks forward to the World Championships where we have much to prove after last season's European disasters which Carl could only witness "from the outside looking in". I wish our teams and the whole event every success. It is something badly needed after last season's dark clouds which never seemed to lift.

In the June issue, John reported on the World Championships held in Manchester, which had proved disappointing for the Island's Carl Prean.

## *Isle of Wight* *John Prean*

### **SYMPATHISE**

Some of our members visited the World Championships in Manchester and returned with worrying reports. I could only sympathise with those who had booked and paid for their seats long ago only to find someone else sitting there, whilst they queued to sit somewhere else. Often, they told me, there were rows of empty seats in which they were not allowed to sit "to support our man Carl Prean" as they put it. It was an embarrassing time for me, as I had encouraged friends to go. It was advice not many appreciated in the light of what went on.

Carl Prean tells me that he, too, was not allowed into the hall in order to watch and other players 'enjoyed' the same fate. He saw the finals in his hotel room on "Sky".

Nobody, including the players, could follow the new format in order of play. It seemed extraordinary to start with 4 groups of 6 instead of the previous first category matches over two groups of 8 which ensured much better matches. Having ended in third place in their group, England then had to play Egypt who had arrived from nowhere and defeat would have meant a very low place indeed after so promising a beginning. Having won that match, however, Sweden's men were matched with Sweden and the victorious Swedes had to play China in the quarter finals. Everything worked out so badly that later developments came as no surprise.

Our own main hope had been that the event would stimulate interest and that new players would appear as a result. That certainly happened in 1977 when the event was last played in this country. We went from five divisions to seven. No such luck this time. Interest seems at a record low and not a single new enquiry was received during or after the event. I thought the coverage on "Sky" of good quality, better than what is usually on BBC, rare though this now is. What let us down were probably the low viewing figures and the generally off-peak times when our sport was shown. Instead of enthusiasm what I heard most were complaints about the

organisation and the venue which most thought very poor.

Our man, Carl Prean, had quite a good team event in which our team generally did well and 14th place was a very poor reward. I found it hard to follow the tactics at times as expressed by the order of play. After his big day when he won two against Japan (England lost 3-2) and after winning his solitary singles against Hungary (England won 3-1) Carl found himself at No. 3 against France the following day! In the final match against Italy (England lost 3-2) he did not find himself in the team at all, although he had won against the Italians in the Qatar Open, the only time we did beat them last season. A meaningless match perhaps (for 13th place) but this was the World Championships, after all, and ranking points at stake.



In the singles Carl was the only one to reach the fifth round from a very large British contingent and so we saw one of our players on the box at least. In Round 5 Carl had an excellent win against the former Olympic Champion Yoo Nam Kyu when he certainly played very well. Less so perhaps in the earlier round against the Italian Piacentini when, after leading by two games to nil and 17-4 he went to a fifth and final game. He went out against a Chinese in Round 6, the last 32. If he had won, he would have played Samsonov, not the greatest of draws.

Our players did enough to indicate that in team terms better days may be ahead after last season's nightmare (I refer to 95/96 when everything went wrong and deserved to). One hopes, of course, that the rumours are wrong which forecast that some top players will stop playing to go into coaching, as the latter will be so much better paid within current ETTA plans submitted to the National Lottery. I can well believe this, knowing that Carl has to go abroad to make a living. I doubt whether his English earnings have ever topped in any one year the take home pay of an unemployed man, such is the reality of life in English Table Tennis. The departure of Don Parker is a further tragedy. He was a man who understood such things and under whom English Table Tennis enjoyed enormous success in happier days.

My last notes were near the end of our domestic season, but our highlight, the Island Games are yet to come. This time they will be played in Jersey and many of the world's smaller islands will do battle, including some who actually played in the recent World Championships. We shall have Carl, who was also there, Roger Hookey, Danny Burns, Mike Turner, Lorna Dutch and Lucy Pointer, a very good team. The Swedish Island of Gotland will be our main rival.

Lucy Pointer won the English Schools Under 13 Girls, adding this to the two Under 11 titles won previously. She ended at No. 4 in the national Under 12 rankings and will now bow out of that group to compete more often against the Under 14 girls. I hope to see her knocking at the gate of a place in England Teams and the "European Youth" should be the ultimate incentive. Enormous dedication will be needed to get there. Even then the competition is strong.

I shall be stepping down as Chairman of the Island Association at our AGM after a 3 year term, a period of substantial achievement in finance, structure and facilities, but one in which we did not manage to buck the national trend of reduced membership completely. I shall remain involved in the management of our centre, coaching and writing and whatever else the future may bring. I hope to continue with this column, not least because I have had such a good response from time to time and made so many new friends as a result.

The September issue reported that the Isle of Wight had achieved outstanding success in the Island Games held in Jersey.

### Island Games Success

The Island Games of 1997, staged in Jersey, produced quite outstanding success for the table tennis players of the Isle of Wight. Competing against other small islands, such as Jersey, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Faroes, Gibraltar and other Associations who have competed in World and European Championships, our players achieved four golds and two silvers in the six events of the table tennis tournament.

The team event was the most notable of these victories. This is played on a mixed basis, similar to the system abandoned some years ago by the

European governing body. On the occasion of the Games staged in Gibraltar in 1996, the system was changed to include a ladies' doubles. Some felt that this rule change owed much to the hope that the influence of the Island player Carl Preat would be reduced as he was unlikely to play in the ladies' events! His two men's singles and men's doubles would not be enough to win the match any more.

However, cometh the hour, cometh the man or in this case the woman in the person of Lorna Dutch who won the women's singles and so the match against the Swedish island of Gotland, who had dominated the event prior to 1996, when we began to field Carl Preat whose contribution was expected and proved to be outstanding. With two singles from Carl and the men's doubles with Danny Burns, our 4-3 victory was assured, if hard earned. It followed the 5-2 win in Gibraltar.

Lorna did not repeat her team triumph in the ladies' singles final where the Swedish girl triumphed, showing more aggression from the beginning and landing some big blows. Both girls had been the No.8 junior in their respective countries. Lorna won silver with Lucy Pointer in the ladies' doubles, which was good to see, as they had not been too effective in the team event. Lucy's time will, of course, come. Well as she did on the junior tournament circuit last season, we hope for even more this time round after hard work this summer on the things that tended to go wrong last season, notably the introduction of top spin as a regular diet. Flat-hitting low balls is not a winning game, spectacular though such 'impossible' shots appear to the outsider.

Lorna and Danny are now 'out of the juniors' and will embark on 'senior' careers. The 'ETTA' 3 Stars are an initiative from the governing body which has to be welcomed, notably the idea of banded events, something on which I worked hard in my time as chairman and made some headway. Less happy the concept of not having qualified umpires, players umpiring their own matches, the high entry fees and still low prize money, which is unlikely to attract the professional player, especially if he or she has to travel from abroad. After all, our top ten male players and top woman were last season playing for overseas clubs. The sight of players umpiring does not give the impression of a well managed, let alone major sport. England has had the reputation for producing good, often outstanding umpires and these have been in international demand. It is not clear where the next generation is to come from, if current practices continue. The lack of protest and silence has been 'deafening' and another good part of our game seems to be heading for oblivion.

Our new table tennis centre, the Carl Prean Table Tennis Centre is going well.

This summer we had a visit from Ken Phillips and coaching which was well received. I express our gratitude to him and hope for an early return.

We had an informal visit from Kevin Satchell, who practiced with Carl and also helped some of our young players. What a fine young coach he is. He ought to be captaining England teams. Instead intensive searches are reported for a 'foreign' coach.

Presumably grass is deemed to be greener in other lands and so our own talent is neglected and often ignored. Coaching badges have been awarded literally by the thousand over the last decade or two. Where did this gallant paper chase lead? The conclusion that coaches have to be imported, whilst proven and successful coaches and administrators like Don Parker and Kevin Satchell work for other sporting bodies. In the meantime we are about to import coaches who will probably do the job less well and will take years to get over the 'culture shock' they will feel when they see how we do things. The new Swedish Coach, it seems, could not depart fast enough to Japan.

I hope I will be forgiven for stating the obvious and point to the lessons which have not been learned.

### **And finally...**

Did you know you can buy a table tennis table that costs over £100,000? It's made of marble and can be used to play on and as a dining table.



The company have lots of other designer table tennis tables for sale, with the cheapest being around £13,000. Have a look if you have some spare cash hanging around! [1stDibs: Antique and Modern Furniture, Jewelry, Fashion & Art](#)

Thank you for reading. The next newsletter will be in April 2025. My special thanks go to Peter Clarke who provides a wealth of information, photos and posters for the newsletter. All contributions are very much appreciated so do please send any suggestions, articles or photos to: [debbiey1960@outlook.com](mailto:debbiey1960@outlook.com)