

Isle of Wight

Table Tennis League

March 2019 Newsletter

Chairman's Message

Firstly, please allow me to introduce myself: my name is Alex Rorke and I am the new Chairman of the Association, taking over after John Cornforth's resignation last month. The Committee co-opted me on as Chairman as John's resignation was mid-season, but of course the position will be open to anyone who wishes to stand at the AGM. I'd like to thank John for his hard work and dedication over the last three seasons, guiding Island table tennis through the important issues as they arose.

I realise some of you won't know me, so here's a quick introduction: I was born and brought up in Ryde, and started playing table tennis as a teenager, when Ryde club used to play in the old Vectis Hall in Melville Street. Despite moving to Portsmouth in 2000 I continued playing on and off on the Island, coming over for half a dozen or so matches each season, trying to stay in touch. Last September I moved back to Ryde, and I am now enjoying getting used to living on the Island again!

I find Island table tennis in good health, and have been pleasantly surprised by the keenness and dedication that many players are showing to the sport, and am pleased to see our Centre being so well used. It is a facility that many associations would be jealous of, so it's nice to see our members making the most of it.

So, on to recent news to update you with. The Island Games team has completed its final selection process, and will consist of Anna Joyce, Temeesha Hobbs, George Downing, Dan Burns, Simon Proffitt and myself. All the players are practising hard and very much looking forward to the experience.

The Premier Pairs League also kicks off soon, with first matches to take place on 20th March and the rest scheduled over the following four Wednesdays. I'm sure the players will have plenty of fun and good competition, and spectators are always welcome.

Our season might be drawing to a close, but we still have plenty of table tennis to look forward to. In addition to the outstanding tournaments, the season will culminate with Finals Night on Monday 29th April. Even if you are not competing this year, please come along to cheer on the players if you can, I'm sure they will appreciate it. Also, we have the Summer League on the horizon; more information will follow about that in due course.

So, enjoy the Spring sunshine (when it finally arrives), and feel free to contact me with suggestions for the future direction of Island table tennis.

Best wishes,

Alex.

League News

Division One

Ryde A became League Champions after an exciting finish, which went right to the wire and culminated in both them and Shanklin Piranhas ending the season on 113 points, with Ryde taking the title as they had won all their matches, whilst Shanklin had lost two.

Congratulations to Lee, Ollie, Alex and Roger for their great achievement this year and also to Shanklin's Don, Temeesha and Mike who just lost out by the smallest of margins.



Lee in action for Ryde A

The fight for third and fourth place was equally close with Ryde Raiders and Vics A level on points, with Ryde pipping Vics to the post on countback.

Vics B's Danny finished with a 100% win average, with Ryde A's Alex on 93%, but, with Shanklin's Don having played the full complement of matches, he leads the players' averages table with over 90%. Other notable performances came from Lee, Ollie and Temeesha. Special mention to Ryde Royal's 16 year old Hugh who had a brilliant season, gaining over 73% win average.



Thanks to Don for sending in this lovely picture of Shanklin and Vics A at the final match of the season, which Shanklin won 9-1 despite some heroic resistance from Vics, especially Ricky! Temeesha had to save 11 match points to overcome Ricky in their match, which may be a record!

Division Two

With the league finished by the middle of February, Havenstreet were the runaway winners by 20 points, although there was a close battle for second place, with Shanklin B taking the honours by one point from Ryde Peers.

Ian from Ryde Peers performed particularly well this season, improving on last season's performance dramatically and ending with over 91% win average. Vics C's Trevor, playing a whole season in Division Two for the first time, gained an impressive 88%. Others with high averages include Havenstreet's Alan (100%), Kevin and Dave. Shanklin B's Darol, Tom and Alan all improved their performances greatly from last season, and the Rascal's Alison was another player who performed particularly well this season.

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Photo by permission of IW County Press

Karen from Havenstreet

Division Three

This division was hotly contested this year and introduced a number of new players to the league, plus a new club, Wootton, who entered two teams.

With some games still remaining, the winners and runner ups have been decided. Ryde Rockers top the table with a gap of 11 points over Vics D. This was a great achievement with newcomer Spike gaining an impressive 89% win average, with Neil hugely improving on last year by gaining 85%. Vics D held onto second place with Debbie, newcomer Chris and Roger all having a good season, but they were pushed all the way by the youngsters of Ryde Rookies - Joe, Ollie and Ross who performed brilliantly to finish in third place in their first season in league table tennis.

Joe has gained a particularly impressive 83% win average in his first season in league table tennis.



Ross, Joe and Ollie

The Rebels' Martin tops the player's averages with 100% and he introduced his 12 year old twin grandson's Ethan and Joe to the league.

Other notable performances came from the Rustics Alan, and Wootton Wolves Trevor, playing in his first season.

News

The Isle of Wight Table Tennis Premier League sponsored by Trigg & Co.

by Ian Loosemoore



What is The Premier League? Why have a Premier League? Who is it for?

The name "Premier League" seems to stir emotions. It's very common now in many sports to have a "Premier League" or "Players Championship". Very simply, it's a league or tournament where the sports best compete against each other. It's jam on top of the bread & butter of league competition. It doesn't undermine existing competition but adds a new level to recognise talent and challenge those at the top of a sport.

The Isle of Wight Table Tennis PL is the brainchild of Dan Burns and was launched experimentally last year. The idea is for a competition that pits the top Island players against each other.

The PL is formed of six teams comprising 2 players per team. Matches therefore have 4 singles and a doubles (the same format as The Summer League). A point is awarded for each match won, thus five points are up for grabs per match. The teams play each other once.

The selection criteria is simple: Be talented; be in the top 10 of the Div 1 averages or be recognised as being amongst the top players on the Island; be available when the PL is being played; if you're

good enough you will be invited to join the PL.

As the name implies, a Premier League looks to promote and reflect excellence.

We have looked to give the Isle of Wight PL an identity - hence the logo. We also want it to be fun. We want to regulate it with a light touch and introduce innovations that enhance the players' enjoyment and make them want to be part of the PL scene.



This season we have a sponsor - **Trigg & Co. Estate agents**. Their support has enabled us to provide the players with Premier League shirts and fund trophies and an end of season awards evening. In return we look to provide them with a competition of quality & high calibre in all respects.

Yes - PL is different! Branding, sponsorship, PR can all be dismissed as gimmicky, but what is the harm in creating an identity? Surely this is a positive in that it gives those taking part a sense of belonging to something.... something recognisable and a bit stand out.

There is a PL trophy, a player of the tournament award, medals for taking part and you get to keep your PL shirt. That all sounds pretty good to me! Although I'm never going to be of a high enough standard for the PL I say "good on those who are good enough to be part of it."

The PL is a showcase for talent. Last season those who played in it found it challenging and exhilarating. Those who watched the matches found it inspirational and exciting. The feedback from players and spectators was uniformly positive and enthusiastic.

The PL is aspirational too. We can see players such as Conal Howells, Ed Kennedy, Sean Joyce, Joseph Chapman and Oliver Yelland being future PL players ... do they want to be? You bet they do!

Last year, Dan Burns & Simon Proffitt won the Premier League. Temeesha Hobbs was voted player of the tournament.

This year there are new players and new teams. Tom Johnson, Hugh Idle, Tim Giles, Rob Smith, Anna Joyce have all joined the PL 2019. This reflects the diversity, development and influx of talent on the Island. The PL is no closed shop ...but you've got to be among the Island's best to get in (NB: Ollie Staniforth would have been in this year's tournament but for having a commitment related to his University course).

The PL is at a fledgling stage, but already it does seem to have fulfilled a need for the top players and given an impetus to those wanting to reach that level. We hope that the PL can be an exciting addition to Island table tennis and come to be seen as an innovative competition that motivates talented individuals and encourages improvement.

Historically, in all sports it's the best against the best that we all want to see and that brings the best out of the competitors. Whether it's Ali vs Foreman, Liverpool vs Man Utd, Djokovic vs Nadal, or Burns vs Rorke/Hobbs vs Orton!!!



The 2019 PL teams are:

Lee Orton & Tim Giles (Gold Shirts): Team name: Ryde Realists

Rob Smith & Alex Rorke (Blue Shirts): Team name: Spinalot

Mike Bulpitt & Don Hobbs (Red shirts) Team name: Follically Challenged

Simon Proffitt & Tom Johnson (Green Shirts) Team name: The Lefthookers

Temeesha Hobbs & Anna Joyce (Pink Shirts) Team name: The Ball Crushers

Dan Burns & Hugh Idle (Black Shirts): Team name: The Untouchaballs

Matches will be played on Wednesday evenings at The Isle of Wight Table Tennis Centre in Smallbrook, Ryde . The League gets underway on Wednesday March 20th at 7.30pm. All are welcome to come and watch some top ping-pong action!

Look out for match reports in The County Press and an end of season report in the next newsletter.

Dan Burns would like to express his thanks to Ian for his contribution to the league – he has put all the fixtures together, produced the press releases and score cards, and manages the financials, and the league wouldn't be able to happen without all the work he does.

Press Reports

We hope that you have all enjoyed reading the press reports in the County Press paper, and online, plus in the free Observer. However, please be aware that the reports can be altered, added to, or reduced by the editors, and will not normally be printed as submitted. In addition, most of the reports that are sent in are put together by looking through the weekly result cards, player's averages and league tables, and unfortunately there is not time to research thoroughly each player and their history. The best way to make sure no important information is left out is to send in match reports by email to deboldyard@hotmail.co.uk. This way any notable performances will not be missed and hopefully no one will be disappointed. Next season, the County Press will be focussing more on Division One; however, the Observer will continue to cover all divisions equally, plus there will be added coverage online by the IslandEcho at <https://www.islandecho.co.uk/>

More memories of the old days by Matt Mair

In the last newsletter we featured an article and photographs kindly provided by Bert Paice, which stirred some memories for Matt Mair:

Well, wow, that brought back MANY memories for me, especially the Cowes venues, two venues where I was a player.

The wooden step venue, Cowes Liberal Club, I played for during 1972-1974 with fantastic fond memories. We had 3 teams. Myself, Joe Landy, Dave Cooke and Barry Betchley had many a brilliant night firstly trying to console any opposition arriving for the first time that it was perfectly ok to participate in the old beer cellar which had the nickname, the 'Dungeon'. As Bert well described there wasn't a lot of room to the sides, back or even the ceiling (Jack Ince was unable to play for us because he was too tall!). I actually managed to perfect a jumping technique one footed off the walls in order to 'jump' back into play landing around the middle of the table to take the next shot. Trouble is the same technique doesn't work at Smallbrook, I just end up crashing into the barriers! But maybe then it's just as well the barriers are not solid for my techniques.

The working men's club Bert mentioned was J.S. White's Sports Club for whom I played for from 1969-1972. Whites had 4 teams at the time (there were 4 divisions in those days). Yes, the rallies were frequently interrupted by the drinkers from the bar on their way to the toilet but nevertheless it was a terrific place to play TT and had many fine players: Mick Strand, Robin Denness, Ray Chivers, Chris Blow, Steve Evans to name a few.

Reference the portakabin, I think I'm right in saying Plesseys used it for a period before moving into their clubhouse. And talking about portakabins, Vics started off playing in one at Mount Pleasant Road.

As for the Vectis Hall at Ryde, I'm sure there was a stage next to the far end table, which I quite often ended up on going for the shot, - or was that somewhere else?!

AH! - THOSE WERE THE DAYS!!

Thanks Matt for more lovely memories of the good old days. And thanks to Ian Loosemore who pointed out a small error in the identification of the 1970's photo. No's 23 and 24 were Jim and Kathy Waugh and not Wall as stated.

From the Archives

The English Table Tennis Association (now Table Tennis England) printed a regular magazine for many years from 1935 until 2010. These are all now available on the Table Tennis England website at <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/our-sport/news/archives/table-tennis-news-archive/> I thought it would be interesting to have a look at mentions of the Isle of Wight within the magazine. So this is the first of a new feature – we start with the 1930's and 1940's.



The first issue was published in November 1935 (and there is a player in our league who was around at that time!). The cost was 1 penny. The Island had two mentions:

The ETTA announced the registration of thirty new leagues, including the Isle of Wight. Other teams accepted were London Old Scholars, Manchester Business Houses and The Dukeries.

GV Bama, the world champion and M S Zabados, the runner up were to play a number of exhibitions in England, including on the Isle of Wight.

Issue 2 was published in December 1935

The World Champion and Runner up had visited the Island for their exhibitions:

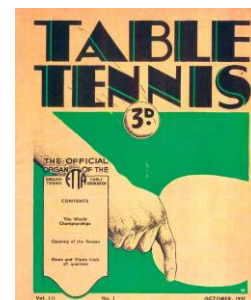
Another civic reception and the Mayor presented souvenirs – silver ash trays with the Island crest - to the Hungarians, and Haydon and Millar, who again accompanied them. Local champions, G. Young and T. W. Warrington, played a “curtain-raiser”.

The next mention of the Island was in November 1936

“Enthusiasm prevailed at the Annual Meeting” of the Isle of Wight Association. Twelve clubs are now in membership in two divisions”

(Enthusiasm at an AGM???)

In October 1937 – the cost had increased to 3d and it was now in colour!



January 1938

Apparently a method of district government existed in the Isle of Wight so we weren't fully fledged county members of the Association.

(but we've always been a little different...)

May 1938 –

There was an advert for a table tennis coaching weekend at Brighstone Holiday Camp:

TEDDY EDWARDS, Managing Director of Campers Ltd.,

wishes to announce that, by special arrangement with the English Table Tennis Association, he has arranged for Mr. ALFRED LIEBSTER, Captain of the Austrian Swaythling Cup team and winner of World and National Titles to be in residence at

THE BRIGHSTONE HOLIDAY CAMP, BRIGHSTONE, ISLE OF WIGHT,

Mr. LIEBSTER will give Exhibitions, Demonstrations and Talks on Table Tennis during the Summer, and his services will be placed at the disposal of visitors who are on holiday at the Camp, free of charge. Here is a golden opportunity for those who take the game seriously to speed up and improve their game. These Holiday Camp is set in beautiful natural surroundings, right on the sea, and have all the comforts which first-class organisation can provide. Table Tennis players especially catered for.

The magazine stopped for the war years and was re-published in October 1946



I've saved the best till last! - April 1948 issue:

Ahoy, Club-Mates! If the club secretary selected you to play an away match at the "Queen Elizabeth" T.T.C. your first impression would be that you were due for an evening at a local pub. But if you were a member of the Isle of Wight T.T. Association you would have to proceed to Ryde Pier, where you would step aboard the launch waiting to take you and all your clubmates (up to 50 in number) - to the handsome battleship "H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth" lying out in Spithead, somewhere between Ryde and Southsea.

The skeleton crew apparently all play table tennis, - and the Royal Navy's well-known reputation for hospitality is well maintained. No need to worry about the last bus home, either, in case of fog. With bunks for 1,000 they can put up not only the visiting team but the whole of a Final's Night audience as well!



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I hope you enjoyed the dip through the archives – in the next newsletter we enter the 1950's!

The oldest Table Tennis player on the Isle of Wight?

You may be interested to know that I have met the person who I believe to be the oldest table tennis player on the Island. Jack has kindly allowed me to feature him in the newsletter and he told me his story.

Jack Hutchins is 95 and plays at Seely Hall in Brook every Monday evening. Over his many years, as a teenager he started playing as a Youth Club leader, but was unable to play during the war years as he was a conscripted Bevin Boy down the coal mines. He retired from BT London to Torquay in 1983, then as a widower in 1988 he moved to his favourite place in Freshwater Bay. Jack has found the folk at the Brook and Brighstone Table Tennis club very welcoming.

Jack has never played in a league but just for fun; however he has won many tournaments on cruises and in holiday camps, his first being on HMS Canberra in 1984, after it had served as a troop ship in the Falklands War.

Jack attributes his fitness and longevity to being a non-smoker and a dancer. He is a life member of the International Dance Teacher's Association, so if you need a couple of Cha Cha moves for your next party, he's your man!

I can vouch for the fact that Jack is still very tricky to play, and he really is an inspiration to everyone!



If you are aged over 90 years of age how about challenging him to a game?

If you know of anyone who is even older than Jack and still an active player do please let me know!

Thank you for reading, I hope you have enjoyed the newsletter and do please send any comments, suggestions or articles to deboldyard@hotmail.co.uk

