



THE FIRST SEVENTY YEARS

A brief history of the Wembley & Harrow Table Tennis League

compiled by

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<p>1931-32</p>	<p>First league match played on Monday 9th November 1931 in Division , between G.E.C. and Alperton Baptists. Other Division 1 teams:- Geeandee, Lads Brigade, C.L.B., L.N.E.R., Institute, Harrowdene and G.E. & Co. Ltd. In Division 2:- Lads Brigade 'A', St. Cecilia's Calvert and Institute 'A', 'B' & 'C' teams.</p> <p>Ladies' Section also formed with Virol Ltd, G.E. & Co. Ltd., Hamilton Sports, Geeandee and Preston Road T.T.C.</p> <p>Institute (Wembley) are the first League Champions.</p> <p>Men's teams were five a side, all play all at one game only, making a total of 25 games to a match. Ladies had three players per team and played a similar format as for league matches today, although only 2 points were awarded for a win.</p> <p>First Closed Championships held with the Men's Singles played for Haynes Cup, and won by J. Gill (Wembley & Sudbury).</p> <p>NOTE: It would appear that during the first few seasons the Closed Championships were actually held by Wembley Hospital under the auspices of the League. Entries were accepted from any players in the Wembley area and not restricted to League players only.</p>
<p>1932-33</p>	<p>Only two Men's Divisions this season, but more Clubs join the League:- Met. Rly., L.M.S. Rly., Forward Works, Oxford University Press, and three Lawn Tennis Clubs: Woodland, Eastwood and Wembley Hill.</p> <p>Team Knock-Out Competition introduced. Entry fee 2/6d. (12 ½p) per team of four (three to play). First won by Geeandee.</p> <p>Wembley Open Championships held for the first time with the Men's Singles event won by Alec Brook (West Ealing).</p>
<p>1933-34</p>	<p>Public demonstration of table tennis given by the League at Lancelot Hall, Wembley</p> <p>Open Championships enlarged to five events: Ladies' and Men's Singles and Doubles, and Mixed Doubles. Men's Singles attracts 75 entries.</p>
<p>1934-35</p>	<p>League increased to four divisions, including one Ladies' Division. Men's Inter-League matches played for the first time.</p> <p>Closed Championships introduce a Ladies' Singles event to be played for the Sampson Cup, won on the first occasion by Miss P. Hodgkinson (Woodland).</p> <p>G Marshall (Kingsway) first to win three titles in Wembley Open Championships.</p> <p>Management Committee meeting held in May to allocate points for all matches not played!</p>
<p>1935-36</p>	<p>League increased to seven divisions (5 Men, 2 Ladies).</p> <p>Ladies' Inter-League played for the first time with matches against the North Middlesex League (Drew 6-6 & Won 12-0). Men's Inter-League opponents were:- North Middlesex (4-8, 0-12), Railway Athletic Association (5-7, 5-7), and the Aylesbury League (12-0).</p>
<p>1936-37</p>	<p>The League Handbook (almost identical to the present handbook) cost 3d. (1 ¼p), but was free to players on receipt of their 6d. (2 ½p) registration fee.</p> <p>Sir Isidore Salmon C.B.E., D.L., J.P., M.P., (Harrow) was the President, JW Tebb was the Chairman, and OW Shaw the Secretary and Treasurer.</p>

	<p>In Men's Divisions 1 & 2 teams now consist of 4 players. The 1 & 2 in each team play the opposing 1 & 2 the best of three games, and similarly the 3s & 4s play one another making a total of 8 sets.</p> <p>In the other Men's Divisions, teams remain 5 a side, all play all at one game.</p> <p>Extracts from other rules in force at the time are as follows:-</p> <p>Annual subscription, including E.T.T.A. fees, 12/6d. (62½p) per Club, additional teams 8s. (40p). Donation of 5s. (25p) must be made by each Club towards the Wembley Championships in return for which 5 admission tickets will be given for the Finals Night.</p> <p>Lady players are not permitted to compete in Men's teams. (No rule to stop Men playing in a Ladies' Team!)</p> <p>Score card to be with Results Secretary within 48 hours! If not received in time or not correctly signed a fine of 6d (2 ½p) will be incurred.</p> <p>No club shall be allowed to have more than one team competing in any division.</p> <p>Standard refreshments consisting of tea or coffee and biscuits are to be provided for all League matches.</p>
1937-38	<p>League increased to ten divisions including three ladies' divisions. Players Registration Fee increased to 1/- (5p).</p> <p>Harry Finch first joins Management Committee as a Divisional Results Secretary.</p> <p>With the exception of the Secretary, the League Handbooks of this era did not show the telephone numbers of any league officials as any communication was expected to be in writing.</p>
1938-39	<p>League reaches pre-war peak of 12 divisions (4 ladies), and is the 5th largest in Great Britain.</p> <p>Teams in all Men's divisions now consist of 4 players with matches of 8 sets. Ladies' teams remain 3-a-side.</p> <p>Severe criticism of the Secretary/Treasurer forced him to resign in mid-season. Harry Finch was elected to take over this post and continued to do it throughout the war years and up to 1956-57.</p> <p>A.J. Elvin, later to become Sir Arthur Elvin, M.B.E., is elected as President and continues to support the League in this post for 19 years.</p> <p>The entries for the Championships this season totalled 666 (Open 543, Closed 123).</p> <p>The Men's League Representative Team won the Metropolitan Association Competition.</p> <p>Miss Jean Nicoll (Herga) won the Ladies' Singles in the English Open Championships.</p> <p>The handbook for this season with 72 pages was the largest produced in the history of the League, and contained detailed fixture lists for each of the 117 teams, although it omitted to include details of the previous season's winners of the Wembley Championships.</p>

	<p>The cost of printing the handbooks was high at £50 and added to the league's financial problems of the time. The Wembley News (printers of the 1936-37 handbook) gave a quote for the next season of only £13-1-6d (£13.07½) for 1,000 handbooks!</p> <p>Advertisements in the handbook at this time offered a Jacques Tournament Table for £9-17-6d (£9.87½p), Barna bats at 3/9 (19p), spare rubbers 6d (2½p), and Barna 3 Crown balls at 3/9 (19p) per dozen.</p>
<p>1939-40</p>	<p>Outbreak of war. Usual league Competition abandoned.</p> <p>51 teams enter hastily arranged Emergency Competition. 3-a-side, men, ladies or mixed teams, and to minimise travelling, grouped into areas. Two sections in Wembley, three sections in Harrow, irrespective of strength.</p> <p>No limit to the number of players registered - no fees to be charged.</p> <p>Score cards to cost 6d (2½p) for 25 or 9d (3¾p) for 50 - post free.</p> <p>No handbooks - Matches scheduled for week nights but by mutual arrangement could be played on Saturday or Sunday afternoons or evenings.</p> <p>In the event of an Air Raid where the "All Clear" is not sounded until after 6 p.m. the match shall be considered abandoned and rearranged for another date.</p> <p>Chairman resigns mid-season. R.C. Mortlake Mann appointed and remains in Chair for 9 years.</p> <p>Wembley Open Championships abandoned for this season. Committee Minutes indicate Wembley Closed held at B.O.C., but no record of winners of the events.</p> <p>At the end of the season there was a playoff between the winners of the Wembley Section (Institute) and the Harrow Section (Herga) which Institute won 5-4.</p> <p>Miss Jean Nicoll (Herga) partnered by Miss D. Beregi (Hungary) won the ladies' Doubles in the English Open Championships.</p>
<p>1940-41</p>	<p>Name changed to Wembley and Harrow Table Tennis League.</p> <p>War Emergency Competition continues, but with teams placed in two divisions according to strength.</p> <p>Management Committee decide to discontinue with league telephone at Secretary's house and it was duly disconnected.</p> <p>Player Registration Fee re-introduced at 3d (1¼p).</p> <p>Financial position improves - loan taken out two years ago repaid.</p> <p>The Wembley Championships to be held at the Town Hall, Wembley, on Sunday 18th May 1941, postponed until Saturday 7th June due to threatened action by the Lord's Day Observance Society. Many Polish and Czech army players entered, and nearly 1,000 spectators watched the continuous play from 9 a.m. until the last final at 11.30 p.m.</p> <p>Richard Bergmann and Victor Barna also gave an exhibition match.</p> <p>Further success for Miss Jean Nicoll (Herga) who won three Open titles with the Ladies' Singles, Doubles, and Mixed Doubles.</p>

	<p>In addition, a Wembley Tournament was held for league players and any other players living within a 10 mile radius. The Wembley News reported, "One Kenton resident, Mr Norman Reeve, who had been evacuated to Colwyn Bay made a special trip to take part." He didn't win! Results: Men's Singles - A. Berg; Ladies' Singles - Miss G. Mace; Men's Doubles - C. Merrett & R. Hook; Ladies' Doubles - Miss E. Finch & Miss G. Mace; Mixed Doubles - W. Stennett & Miss E. Finch.</p>
1941-42	<p>War Emergency Competition continues with two divisions.</p> <p>The President, A. J. Elvin, presents the League with a silver cup for the Wembley Championships. 167 entries received for the Open.</p> <p>On account of paper restrictions, the Harrow Observer advise they will only be able to print our League tables once a month.</p> <p>A. V. (Bert) Meyern first elected to Management Committee.</p>
1942-43	<p>Management Committee to use discretion as to which clubs allowed to enter War Emergency Competition as many do not have home facilities. Clubs wishing to play all away matches restricted to Service Clubs only.</p> <p>The Open Men's Singles Final was a closely fought all-Czechoslovakian affair with E. Berger beating K. Sebastek 21-19 in the fifth game.</p> <p>Cost of prizes in Wembley Championships increased as trophy replicas were unobtainable and National Savings Certificates were given instead.</p>
1943-44	<p>Fellows Cranleigh Club accepted for this season, but as they were an East London club and had a fairly high standard of play they would not be included in the points for position in the League!</p> <p>Rule change allows players to play up in a higher team on six occasions during season.</p> <p>League presents a dozen table tennis balls to Czechoslovakian players as they have great difficulty in obtaining them.</p> <p>In the Wembley Championships the Men's Open Singles title goes overseas to G. Nash (U.S.A.). Miss Vera Dace wins three titles - the Mixed with G. Nash.</p> <p>Mr. Mortlake Mann, the League Chairman, earned himself an eight week contract at the London Palladium when, in an emergency and at the request of Victor Barna, he stood in successfully at the last minute to comper an exhibition between Victor Barna and Alec Brook. He still carried on with his normal job and fitted in the 2.30 p.m. show during his lunch hour.</p>
1944-45	<p>Secretary instructed to apply more often for permits to obtain table tennis balls.</p> <p>Allocation of balls to teams to be based on the number of players registered for each club.</p> <p>Closed Championships held for Men's Singles with the final played at the Open Championships at the Wembley Town Hall.</p>
1945-46	<p>War Emergency Competition to continue this Season as sudden end of the war with Japan had not left time for new rules to be formulated.</p> <p>League increased to three divisions of 9 teams each. Elvin Cup restarted.</p> <p>The Men's Cup for the Closed Singles is lost.</p> <p>Another closely fought Men's Singles Final in the Open Championships with Johnny Leach just beating Richard Bergmann 15-21, 22-20, 21- 18, 17-21, 24-22.</p>

	<p>League Players Geoff Harrower (Parkfield) and Mrs. Connie Miles (Wembley Institute) are chosen to play for England.</p> <p>The Mayor of Wembley had in the past automatically become Vice-President of the League on the expiration of his year in office. The co-operation of the present Mayor had not been marked, and it was decided that in future the honour should be reserved for those whose help and encouragement made them worthy of the position.</p>
<p>1946-47</p>	<p>League supports the formation of the Middlesex Table Tennis Association, and the Chairman, Mr. Mann, also becomes the first Chairman of the new Association.</p> <p>For the first post-war season to be played under modified pre-war rules, 30 Clubs enter a total of 50 teams and 5 divisions are formed.</p> <p>Unlike the pre-war mixture, all teams now consisted of 3 players, all play all, with 2 points for the winning team.</p> <p>As the League was only just solvent a nominal charge of 6d (2½p) was made for the handbooks for this season only.</p> <p>Fees increased to £1-1-0d (£1.05) per Club, and 10/6d (52½p) for each additional team, which included the new M.T.T.A. affiliation fee in addition to that of the E.T.T.A.</p> <p>Rule amendments included reverting to only allowing a player to play up for a higher team on 3 occasions. Refreshments are to be the 'best possible'.</p> <p>The Wembley Open Championships attracted 216 entries for the Men's Singles and 64 entries for the Ladies' Singles. The finals at the Wembley Town Hall were televised by the B.B.C and the League received half the fee, £10-10-0d (£10.50).</p> <p>To raise funds the League held a dance at the Century Hotel, Wembley, and a profit of just over £3 was made.</p> <p>First 'Cyril Merrett' Memorial Trophy match held away to the Croydon & District T.T. League. This is to be an annual event in memory of players of both Leagues killed in the war. All profits to be donated to charity.</p> <p>Jaques advertise they are unable to offer their Tournament Table as supplies of suitable timber are not available.</p>
<p>1947-48</p>	<p>League increased to 8 divisions. Ladies' Division reintroduced, but ladies are now also permitted to play in men's teams.</p> <p>To save space and expense, coded fixture list introduced in handbook. Telephone numbers of League officials also included for the first time.</p> <p>Players Registration Fee increased to 1/- (5p) with free handbook!</p> <p>Open Championships held for last time. Ladies' Doubles event added to Closed. Sir Arthur Elvin presents a cup to be played for by teams in the lower divisions. The Elvin Junior Cup is first won by Wembley Police Garage</p> <p>In the handbook advertisements, Jaques are still looking for suitable timber. Vana 'speed bats with precision' cost 9/6d (47½p), and the Harrow Building Society offer House Purchase loans at 4%.</p>
<p>1948-49</p>	<p>League increased to 11 divisions including 2 ladies' divisions</p> <p>Herga win ladies' Middlesex Club Knock-Out Team Championship.</p>

	<p>A. V. Meyern elected Chairman and remains in this post for ten years, followed by a further 19 years as a Vice-President.</p> <p>W. H. Mildenhall first elected to Management Committee as Magazine Secretary.</p> <p>Middlesex to distribute their handbook to all players in the area (over 8,000), and it is hoped that every player in our league will give a small donation to help towards the cost.</p> <p>Ladies lost in semi-final of J.M. Rose Bowl 1-5 to Manchester.</p> <p>Jaques still looking for suitable timber, but can provide 1/2" table for £26-7-0d (£26.35)</p> <p>Wembley Open Championships not held as Town Hall floor no longer suitable and no other satisfactory venue found.</p>
1949-50	<p>League reaches pre-war peak of 12 divisions (2 Ladies).</p> <p>Norman Reeve first elected to Management Committee as Press Secretary.</p> <p>Wembley Institute win Men's Middlesex Club Knock Out Team Championship.</p> <p>League 2nd team win West Zone Middlesex Inter-league.</p> <p>At last! Jaques Tournament Tables available at £40. Also advertised - Halex 3 Star balls 1/- (5p) each, but still rather scarce, 2 Star balls in fair supply.</p>
1950-51	<p>New peak for league with 15 Divisions (3 Ladies).</p> <p>Herga win eighth consecutive league title - last 3 pre-war seasons, first 5 post war seasons.</p> <p>Wembley Lion introduced to front cover of handbook.</p> <p>Rule changes introduced a 7.30 p.m. start to matches, and 1 point to be awarded to a losing team scoring 4 sets (still only 2 points for a win).</p> <p>Junior Boys (under-19) event added to Closed Championships.</p> <p>League Junior team wins Junior (West) Division Middlesex Inter-league.</p>
1951-52	<p>League increased again to 17 divisions (4 Ladies').</p> <p>Alma Reeve first elected to Management Committee as the Ladies' Representative.</p> <p>Junior Girls' event added to Closed Championships.</p> <p>Complete overhaul and rearrangement of Rules. Re-registration of players extended from end of December to end of February.</p>
1952-53	<p>Highest number of divisions in League history with 18 (including 4 Ladies' Divisions). Number of registered players totals 1,112.</p> <p>Alan Rhodes wins third consecutive Men's singles title in Closed Championships, and is also selected to play for England v Ireland.</p> <p>Cost of raffle tickets at Closed: 1/- (5p) for 5!</p> <p>Age for Juniors reduced to Under-18.</p> <p>League 2nd team win 3rd Division Middlesex Inter-League.</p>

1953-54	<p>League reduces by one division to 17.</p> <p>The first team of a Club is now to be known by the name of the Club - additional teams to be known as 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc., and not 'A', 'B', 'C'.</p> <p>Men's and Ladies' Consolation singles introduced to Closed Championships.</p>
1954-55	<p>League reduces to 15 divisions (3 ladies) where it levels out for several seasons.</p> <p>Dramatic change to game with introduction of sponge bats at 10/6d (52½p).</p> <p>Second and last season of Men's and Ladies' Consolation Singles in Closed.</p>
1955-56	<p>Lucy Murray is first to win three titles in a Closed Championships. Laurie Landry wins both the Junior Boy's and Men's Singles titles - also the first time this had been achieved.</p> <p>Michael Close first elected to the Management Committee.</p> <p>League 2nd team win 3rd Division Middlesex Inter-League again.</p>
1956-57	<p>First subscription increase for ten years, but only by 6d (2½p) for each team entered. Also introduction of fine 10/- (50p) if a Club is not represented at the A.G.M.</p> <p>George Walsh first elected to the Management Committee as Elvin Cup Secretary, and Michael Close becomes Press Secretary.</p> <p>Laurie Landry becomes first and only player to win 3 consecutive Junior Boys' titles in Closed.</p> <p>11th and last annual match with the Croydon & District T.T. League for the Cyril Merrett Memorial Trophy. It was decided not to continue with this event which was not achieving its objective of raising money for charity.</p>
1957-58	<p>Rule change awarded 3 points to a team winning a match by 6 sets or more.</p> <p>Sir Bracewell Smith elected President, but for one season only.</p> <p>Lucy Murray first elected to Management Committee.</p> <p>Another increase in subscriptions to £1-3-0d (£1.15) per Club.</p> <p>Harry Finch Trophy held for the first time and won by Wembley Institute.</p> <p>Closed Championships held over weekend at Kodak. Entry fee: 2/6d (12½p) singles, 2/- (10p) doubles, and 1/- (5p) juniors. Canteen open for refreshments 10-11 am., 3-5 pm., 7-9 pm. Admission to Finals by programme only, price 1/- (5p).</p> <p>By February there were 132 outstanding matches.</p>
1958-59	<p>Rules amended to ensure fixtures are completed in the week laid down in the League programme.</p> <p>W.H. Mildenhall elected Chairman in which post he served for 3 years followed by a further 4 years as Vice-president.</p> <p>In the Closed, Alan Rhodes wins third consecutive Men's singles title for the second time, and Michael Close & Lucy Murray win their 5th mixed title- a record.</p> <p>Jaques Tournament Table now costs £45-10-0d (£45.50) and Villa XXX balls 18/- (90p) per dozen.</p>
1959-60	<p>A.E. Amor of Kodak elected President, and Norman Reeve becomes Secretary and Treasurer.</p>

	<p>Rules introduced for Team K.O. Competition. Entry fee 4/- (20p) per team.</p> <p>Closed Championships now held over two weeks at Kodak.</p> <p>Fine doubled to 2/- (10p) for each week official scorecard is late.</p> <p>League 1st team are runners up in the Premier Division Middlesex Inter-League.</p>
1960-61	<p>Player's Registration Fee increased to 2/6d (12½p).</p> <p>Men's and Ladies' Veteran Singles events introduced to Closed.</p> <p>Junior coaching was abandoned after two months because of lack of support.</p> <p>In the Middlesex Inter-League Competition the Junior team won their division.</p> <p>The League 2nd team won the 3rd Division for the 3rd time, and the 1st team were runners-up in the Premier Division for the second successive season.</p>
1961-62	<p>Subscription <i>reduced</i> to £1 per Club and 10/- (50p) for each additional team.</p> <p>Miss Irene Ogus wins three titles in Closed Championships.</p> <p>Alan Rhodes now ranked as England number 2.</p> <p>John Jaques, Spaldings and Wally Kilmister are the only pre-war firms still advertising in the handbook.</p>
1962-63	<p>Club subscription increased to £ 1-10-0d (£1.50), but in addition to including the M.T.T.A. and E.T.T.A. affiliation fees there will be the free provision of eight issues of the magazine 'Table Tennis' during the season.</p> <p>Rule introduced that players representing the league will be expected to wear navy blue blouse or shirt, grey skirt, shorts or slacks, white socks and shoes.</p> <p>Don White elected to Management Committee as Press Secretary.</p> <p>Junior coaching restarted under Michael Close and held at the Kenton Club.</p> <p>League dance held in conjunction with Kenton Club, but not well attended.</p>
1963-64	<p>Last season in which there were separate Ladies' Divisions.</p> <p>Tony Kayes first elected to Management Committee as Handbook Secretary.</p> <p>League enters Master Points scheme.</p> <p>Alan Rhodes wins record 9th Men's Singles title in Closed Championships.</p> <p>Ladies' Team (Lesley Williams & Irene Ogus) win Middlesex 2-a-side Competition.</p>
1964-65	<p>Norman Reeve elected Chairman, and Alma Reeve elected Secretary, positions they held for 16 years until they retired.</p> <p>Player Registration Fee increased to 3/- (15p).</p> <p>Start of Schools league with nine schools entering 15 teams.</p>

	<p>Minor Singles event introduced to Closed for players in Division 6 or below. Ladies' Team Cup is new event in the Team Knock-Out Championships.</p> <p>Ladies' League team (Alma Taft, Irene Ogus & Jackie Redfearn) wins the National Inter-League J.M. Rose Bowl.</p>
1965-66	<p>Norman Reeve elected as Deputy Chairman of the E.T.T.A.</p> <p>To help finances the silver cups for the Open Championships are sold.</p>
1966-67	<p>Schools Competition now firmly established as part of the league activities.</p> <p>In only its 3rd season there are insufficient entries to hold the Ladies' Team Cup.</p> <p>Alan Rhodes elected as Vice-President.</p>
1967-68	<p>Club subscription increased to £2.</p> <p>League Team wins 2nd Division Middlesex Inter-league.</p> <p>Men's Team win Zone Final of Wilmott Cup beating Acton 5-4.</p>
1968-69	<p>Further increases with player's Registration Fee up to 4/- (20p) and Club subscriptions up to £2-5-0d (£2.25).</p> <p>In the Schools league 25 teams are entered from 11 schools.</p> <p>Victor Barna attended the Closed Championships and presented the trophies to the winners.</p> <p>Jean Williams (Northwood C.A.) wins Ladies' Veteran Singles in English Open.</p>
1969-70	<p>The league's 1st Team win 2nd Division of the Middlesex Inter-league Competition, and the 2nd Team win the 3rd Division.</p> <p>Don White presents league with silver salver for the Closed Veteran Men's Singles event.</p>
1970-71	<p>Lucy Murray elected Vice-President and remained actively involved in league affairs, particularly the Closed Championships, for the last 18 years of her life.</p> <p>Ann Brown first elected to Management Committee as Inter-league Match Secretary.</p> <p>Ladies' Team Cup held again after absence of four years.</p> <p>Last season of Schools league as only 45 out of 64 matches were played.</p> <p>Michael Close becomes only player to win both the Men's and Veteran Men's Singles in the Closed Championships in the same season.</p>
1971-72	<p>Use of yellow table tennis balls approved.</p> <p>Age for Junior events reduced again - now Under-17.</p> <p>League Junior Team win Junior Division Middlesex Inter-league.</p> <p>In the National Schools Under-13 Competition, Harrow County Girls School, playing in the league as Harrow Egrettes, played through to represent Middlesex, and went on to beat Surrey and Sussex before losing to Kent.</p> <p>The Middlesex Junior Open attracted 43 entries from our league Juniors.</p>
1972-73	<p>Change in Rules - Clubs must now nominate specific home night for each team which will eliminate the need to contact opponents to arrange a date for each fixture.</p>

	<p>Brian Tysoe elected to Management Committee and takes the position of Results Secretary for the next three years.</p> <p>In the Closed, Robert Huson wins the Junior Boy's and also the Men's Singles - only the second occasion on which this has been achieved.</p> <p>League 2nd Team win 2nd Division Middlesex Inter-League.</p> <p>Junior coaching now centred at Grant Road School.</p>
1973-74	<p>Brian Charman first elected to Management Committee as an Inter-League Match Secretary.</p> <p>Junior coaching now so successful larger premises are required as many youngsters have had to be turned away.</p>
1974-75	<p>Fine for Clubs not represented at A.G.M. is increased for the first time in 18 years to £1.</p> <p>In the Closed, Eve Britton & Jean Williams win a record 8th Ladies' Doubles title together.</p> <p>League 2nd Team win Victor Barna Division 2 in Middlesex Inter-League.</p> <p>Junior coaching is transferred to the new Harrow Leisure Centre.</p>
1975-76	<p>New Team Knock-Out Competition introduced for Juniors - the Olympus Youth Shield, donated by Olympus Sports, Wealdstone.</p> <p>Tony Kayes elected as a Vice-President.</p> <p>Michael Close wins 7th consecutive Men's Veterans Singles title in the Closed.</p> <p>League 1st team win Norman Pegg Trophy in Middlesex Inter-League.</p>
1976-77	<p>Although no titles were won in the Middlesex Inter-League, three of the League teams finished as runners-up in their respective Divisions.</p>
1977-78	<p>Bob McClelland and Don White elected as Vice-Presidents.</p> <p>First substantial increase in subscriptions since League was founded. The subscription, no longer included the free provision of 8 issues of the magazine 'Table Tennis News', nor the affiliation fees to the E.T.T.A. and M.T.T.A., which now had to be paid in addition. The Club Fee was increased to £3, and for additional teams the increase was from 50p (this was only 10p more than in 1936) to £1. Players Registration Fees were put up to 30p as were fines on overdue scorecards.</p> <p>Beryl Clayton wins a record 4th consecutive Ladies' Singles title in the Closed.</p> <p>League Junior 2nd Team win Division 2 of the D.W. Birmingham Middlesex Inter-league Competition.</p>
1978-79	<p>For the first time ever it was decided not to enter the Wilmott Cup because of indifferent results in recent seasons.</p> <p>League Veteran Team win Premier Division of the Ted Connell Middlesex Inter-league Competition.</p>
1979-80	<p>Subscriptions take another big jump - £6 per Club, £3 per additional team. Player Registration Fee up to 50p.</p> <p>New rule brought in to encourage teams to meet their commitments - should a team concede more than one walkover a £1 fine will be levied on each additional occasion.</p> <p>A new event, the Veteran Ladies' Singles, introduced to Closed Championships.</p>

1980-81	<p>Special plastic handbook cover issued to commemorate League's Golden Jubilee.</p> <p>Alma and Norman Reeve retire from the Management Committee at the end of the season having served on the Committee for 30 and 32 years respectively.</p> <p>Change in colour to the League representative dress from navy blue and grey to red shirts and navy blue shorts or skirt.</p>
1981-82	<p>Alma and Norman Reeve elected as Vice-Presidents of the League.</p> <p>Michael Close takes over as Chairman, and Ann Brown takes over as Secretary. Brian Tysoe returns to the Management Committee and takes over from Michael Close as Coaching Secretary accepting responsibility for the Juniors.</p> <p>In the Closed Mary Symes wins her 4th consecutive Ladies' Singles title making a total of 7 in all - the most any lady has won.</p> <p>Michael Close in winning his 9th Veteran Men's Singles title (a record), and by also winning the Mixed Doubles with Mary Symes, brought his total number of Closed titles to a record 27.</p> <p>Alma Reeve Trophy introduced for Ladies' Knock-out Team Championship.</p> <p>League Veteran's Team win Premier Division of the Ted Connell Middlesex Inter-league Competition.</p> <p>John Jaques final advertisement appears in handbook after starting in 1938.</p>
1982-83	<p>Our longest serving advertiser, Wally Kilmister of Wembley, places last advertisement in handbook. The first appeared at least as far back as 1936.</p> <p>In Middlesex Inter-league our Junior Team win the Premier Division of the D.W. Birmingham Competition.</p>
1983-84	<p>League Junior Team again win the Premier Division of the D.W. Birmingham Trophy.</p> <p>Mr. A.E. Amor stands down as President due to ill health and is elected to new post of Life Vice-President.</p> <p>Michael Close is elected as Chairman of the M.T.T.A.</p> <p>In the Middlesex Closed Championships League players win or share five titles as follows:- Rachael Knight: Ladies' Singles & Doubles; Tony Taylor: Veteran Men's Singles; Mary Symes: Veteran Ladies' Singles; Joanne Solley: -Girls' Doubles.</p>
1984-85	<p>Registration Fee for players increased to £1.</p> <p>Closed Championship Regulations published in handbook for the first time.</p> <p>Allen Wheeler first elected to Management Committee as Handbook Secretary.</p> <p>League teams win three divisions in the Middlesex Inter-League competition. Veteran 1st Team win Premier Division of Ted Connell Championship. Veteran 2nd Team win Division 2 of the same competition, and the Men's 2nd Team win Division 2 of the Victor Barna Trophy.</p> <p>In the Middlesex Closed Mary Symes wins the Veteran Ladies' Singles again, and Rachael Knight shares in the Ladies' Doubles.</p>
1985-86	<p>Brian Charman elected as a Vice-President.</p>

	<p>League Veteran Team win the Ted Connell Trophy for the 4th time.</p> <p>David and Stuart Seaholme win their 4th consecutive Men's Doubles title in the Closed Championships, making a record total of 10.</p>
1986-87	<p>Ann Brown elected as a Vice-President, and Alma Reeve becomes a life Vice-President.</p> <p>Registration Fee for players increased again to £1.50. Allen Wheeler takes on position of Secretary.</p> <p>Vagabonds win ladies' National Club Competition - The Gainsford Cup.</p> <p>League Veteran 2nd Team win Division 2 of Ted Connell Middlesex Inter-league, and ladies' league Team win Premier Division of the Norman Pegg Trophy.</p> <p>Geoff Bax presents league with trophy for the Closed Veteran Ladies' Singles event.</p>
1987-88	<p>Subscriptions increase to £8 per Club, and £4 for each additional team.</p> <p>Cup Plate Competitions introduced for Elvin Cup, Elvin Junior Cup and Harry Finch Trophy.</p> <p>Junior Doubles and Cadet Boys' Singles held in Closed Championships for first time. Tom Cutler wins a record maximum 5 titles, winning the Men's Singles and Doubles, Mixed Doubles, and Junior Singles and Doubles.</p> <p>After 30 years these were the last Closed Championships to be held at Kodak.</p> <p>Ladies' league team again win Premier Division of the Norman Pegg Trophy.</p>
1988-89	<p>Although subscriptions are increased by £1.50 to £9.50 per Club and £5.50 for each additional team, they now include automatic free entry into the respective Team Knock-out Competition.</p> <p>Closed Championships played at Edgware General Hospital where both Tom Cutler and Rachael Knight each win a hat-trick of titles. After winning the Mixed Doubles together they then went on to win their respective Men's and Ladies' Singles and Doubles.</p> <p>Good season in the Middlesex Inter-League Competition with three trophies. The Ladies' team won the Norman Pegg Trophy, the Juniors won the D.W. Birmingham Trophy, and the Veteran Team won the Ted Connell Championship.</p>
1989-90	<p>Fine increased to £5 for Clubs not represented at the A.G.M.</p> <p>Closed Championships again held at Edgware General Hospital with a new event introduced, the Intermediate Singles, restricted to players registered in Divisions 3, 4, 5, & 6, and to be played for the Eve Britton Memorial Cup. For the first time sufficient entries received to hold Cadet Girls' Singles.</p> <p>Mary Sawyer (prev. Symes, née Stafford) plays her 100th County Match for Middlesex.</p>
1990-91	<p>Rule change allows players to play up in a higher team on four occasions during the season.</p> <p>In the Closed Championships David Seaholme and his daughters, Caroline and Sarah, appear in six of the fourteen Finals winning five titles between them, Mary Sawyer wins the Veteran Ladies' Singles, and takes the number of her Closed titles to 22, the most for any lady.</p>
1991-92	<p>To celebrate the League's diamond anniversary a 68-page handbook was issued containing all the records and a brief history of the first 60 years.</p>
1992-93	<p>Player registration fee increased to £2. (This amount would have registered 160 players in the 1940/41 season!)</p>

	In the Closed Championships David Seaholme equals the record held by Michael Close by winning the Veteran Men's Singles for a ninth time.
1993-94	Rule amendment increased total match points from 3 to 5.
1994-95	First commercial sponsorship from The Bat Workshop with prize money for the best performance in Division I under a rating system. Steve Leven joins the committee, and our longest-serving committee member, Michael Close, completes 40 years.
1995-96	Proposal to increase the size of the divisions from 10 to 12 teams is defeated only by the Chairman's casting vote. Player registration fee increased to £2-50. The League reduced to 8 divisions, the lowest since 1947-48.
1996-97	Club subscription increased to include a refundable deposit of £5 if not utilised for the payment of any fines. If any teams finish level on points at the end of the season the leading position will initially be decided by the most matches won and not the best sets average as before. George Walsh also completes 40 years as a committee member.
1997-98	Pre-season Summer League started on a handicap basis with Kodak the first winners In the tenth year of the Closed Championships at Edgware General Hospital, Stuart Seaholme wins his second consecutive Veterans title 33 years after his two Junior titles.
1998-99	The number of divisions in the League reduced to seven, the lowest post-war number since 1946-47. Closed Championships held this year at the Lowlands and Eastcote clubs with the finals at Eastcote, where David Seaholme won the Mixed Doubles to create a new record of 28 Closed Championship titles.
1999-00	League wins all three Senior Inter-League titles: Victor Barna (Men), Norman Pegg (Ladies) and Ted Connell (Veterans). Closed Championships held for the first time at the Harrow Leisure Centre. David Seaholme extends his record of title wins to 30 with victory in the Men's Doubles and Mixed Doubles.
2000-01	Introduction of the larger 40mm ball. Format of Cup matches changed to include doubles for the first time. League Website on the Internet organised by Steve Leven. Team fees increased for a second time in three years by another £2. League reduced to 16 member clubs, the lowest number since 1933-34.