

BLACKMORE VALE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

Newsletter – August 2007

Dear B.V.T.T.L members,

During our first committee meeting held in the first week of August, we considered the league format for the coming season, commencing Monday 24th September. This year, it has been decided there will be three divisions running throughout the entire winter period whereby each team will twice play the others in the respective division. All three divisions will comprise of 9 teams and a table of ten permutations has been drawn up which means there will be **one bye** only in each division. This format also means there will be less matches this year so it is proposed the team handicap or team tournament be reintroduced in the latter part of the post-Christmas period.

Team captains and club organisers are reminded that players' details for each team need to be urgently submitted to Malcolm if they remain outstanding.

In addition, we have again sent all players (via team captains or club organisers) a registration form issued by the E.T.T.A which has a requirement to build up a nationwide data base of player details. Please complete the form as soon as possible (even if you completed one last year) and return it to Malcolm or David by the end of August/1st week of September.

The new handbooks are being prepared and will be ready prior to the start of the season. All clubs are once again invited to send a representative to the next committee meeting to collect the books in order to reduce the distribution problem. The meeting will be held at the Saxon Inn, Child Okeford on 11th September at 7.45pm. The handbook will contain the rule change on postponements passed at the last A.G.M – if you are not aware of this, the details of the rule change are shown here:

4. Postponements

- 4.1 The absence of regular players or their inability to play is not sufficient reason for postponing a match. Reserves must be played or the team play with two players.
- 4.2 Unless there are exceptional circumstances agreed with the Executive Committee before 1st of October, all matches after the first Monday in October are to be played before or ***within seven days of the date scheduled in the handbook.***
- 4.3 If the match is not played ***within seven days of the date scheduled in the handbook***, match points will be allocated as follows – postponing team, 0 points: Opponents, 15 points.
- 4.4 In the event that the team postponed against believes the allocation of 15 points is unfair, they should appeal to the Executive Committee in writing via the Match and Press Secretary.
- 4.5 In any case, all pre-Christmas matches must be played by the nominated Sunday ending the first half of the season and all post-Christmas matches by the nominated Sunday ending the last week of the season.

The reason for the slight change to the rule is because in its current format it disadvantages teams who play later in the week.

The league hardbat tournament will be held at Child Okeford on 21st September at 7.30pm. Entries should be sent to Steve Ible by 18th September. (3 Field View Road, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT1 7JH. Tel: 01258 451448).

The committee would like to heartily report on Nell Penney's remarkable achievement at the European veterans championship at Rotterdam in June. Nell took a tumble on a Friday evening whilst playing a casual game at the Broad Chalke leisure centre breaking her wrist in the process and ending up in A & E. Undeterred, she flew to Rotterdam two days later, insistent upon participating in the vets' championship there. Despite her obvious handicap, she immediately mastered an alternative method of serving and came away with a bronze medal in the doubles and she then went on to win the consolation singles outright. Well done Nell – a tremendous result.

The summer leagues held at Child Okeford and Broad Chalke have been enthusiastically supported by all participants and many competitive yet friendly matches were played over the mid-summer period. Broad Chalke's fixtures continue until the first week of September, therefore their results will appear in the September newsletter. Child Okeford's completed table shows that Adrian's Imports finished top – well done to them. (Adrian Grimstone: Karl King: Charlie Brown)

Child Okeford summer league results.

1. Adrian's Imports – 156 points
2. Out of Towners – 146 points
3. Compton Hillsiders – 130 points
4. Hale's Bells – 125 points
5. Luke Skywalkers – 105 points
6. The Good, Bad and Ugly – 103 points
7. Gray's Gladiators – 97 points
8. The Young Ones – 90 points
9. Blandford Young and Old – 81 points
10. Ronnie's Raiders – 68 points
11. Richard's Ravers – 49 points
12. Bod's Bashers – 24 points

The Dorset Table Tennis Association needs funds in order to help finance matches involving young county players incurring costs travelling to away games and requiring overnight accommodation. As a consequence, the Association has commenced a D.T.T.A 100 Club which aims to raise monies for this purpose. There will be six draws over the year, each producing three prize winners - £50 (1st): £30 (2nd): £20 (3rd) and the annual cost to prospective 100 Club participants will be £12.00. If you would like to purchase a place in the draw, it would cost you only a percentage of the annual £12.00 (in the first year) depending upon when your name is added. Application forms are available from Miranda Edwardes (MirandaEdwardes@aol.com) and David Hughes (davidjohnhughes@waitrose.com).

Sec's Sagacity

A few weeks ago, I took on the voluntary job of honorary secretary of the Blackmore Vale Table Tennis League following Rod Fry's vacation of the post after 2 years committed service. (A very big thank-you to Rod). So it now falls to me to produce the league's monthly newsletter which recommences with this end-of-August edition.

In addition to any attempt to keep everyone up to date with league news, I thought I would introduce a regular spot that poses a question or highlights a relevant subject which will be answered or discussed the following month. The first question relates to something that happened at a world championship in the middle of the 20th century which changed the game forever. What was it? Where was it? Who was involved? Well, that's three questions – but you get the general idea, and hopefully it will set you to thinking upon the events of that particular occasion.

Meanwhile, for this newsletter, let's take a moment to consider the origins of the game of table tennis and one or two interesting bits and pieces besides. Table tennis commenced in England as an after-dinner amusement for upper class Victorians in the 1880s. Emulating the game of tennis, indoors, it soon became popular whereupon manufacturers began to sell the necessary equipment commercially. Early bats were often pieces of parchment or skin stretched upon a frame and the sound of the ball coming into contact with the surface made a drum-like noise. But as the tension of each skin varied, the pitch of the sound generated varied also. One player would create a *ping-like* noise whilst his opponent's bat would produce a different, *pong-like* sound. The name ***ping-pong*** was born and remained in vogue for decades.

It was an Englishman called James Gibb who discovered celluloid balls on a trip to the U.S in 1901 whilst Mr E.C. Goode invented the modern version of the racket in 1903 by fixing a sheet of pimpled rubber to a wooden blade. In 1921, the Table Tennis Association was founded in England and the International Table Tennis Federation followed in 1926. London hosted the first official world championship in 1927.

Since then, the game has gone from strength to strength, witnessing several major developments in equipment and playing technique. In recent years the world arena has been dominated by the Chinese with the game being played at breathtaking speed.

Some facts and curiosities:

The table is 9 feet long, 5 feet wide and 30 inches high. (Apologies to our younger metric minded readers).

Table tennis balls were once deployed to surface a sunken vessel and were also used in an aeroplane for flotation in 1936.

The International Table Tennis Federation's founding president, Hon' Ivor Montagu, used a type of sponge bat in the 1920s – a racket surfaced with springy aerated rubber.

An early design of racket from 1902 was equipped with strings on one side and elastic bands on the other side for picking up a ball.

Vintage Stiga bats command premium prices these days. A Tage Flisberg 'Filsan' hard rubber bat sold a couple of years ago for 427 U.S dollars and an Ehrlich short pimped bat with the characteristic slant-cut perforated handle, realised 306 U.S dollars. Your new league secretary (yours truly) plays all his table tennis with such a 1960's Ehrlich endorsed Stiga bat (and always has done) albeit surfaced with modern reversed pimped rubber these days.

Perhaps one more question for next time. What nationality was Ehrlich?

David Hughes

We hope you all have a successful and happy season and that everyone gets the opportunity to play lots of challenging table tennis.

The Committee