

# Bristol Civil Service



# Table Tennis Club

Bristol Civil Service  
Table Tennis Club  
Newsletter

Issue 8

December 2013

## Welcome from the Chairman



I would like to wish all of our Club players the Season's greetings and every happiness for the New Year.

We seem to have our usual crop of injured players this year, you know who you are, so all I can say is that I hope that you all recover soon.

Finally, thank you all for

your efforts and especially our volunteers who work unseen behind the scenes to keep our club working and successful.



**Terry Toghill**

## Morley Mordecai Cup update: Round 1 matches to be played week commencing 30th December

Almondsbury F v **CS Buccaneers**  
**CS Saracens** v Westbury D  
Portishead E v **CS Spartans**  
KCC B v **CS Trojans**

**CS Cadets** v Pongwell Green Dragons  
**CS Vikings** v **CS Saxons**  
Southmead Merlins v **CS Partizans**

Good luck to all our Civil Service teams in this tournament!

## If you want to enter the Hard Bat tournament or the Bristol Closed Championship...

The **John Mycroft Boucher Hard Bat Competition Cup** is on Saturday 18th January at our club. Entries should be sent to John Ruderham, 43 Pursy Drive, Bradley Stoke, Bristol BS32 8DJ.

The **Bristol Closed Championship** is on Sunday 2nd February at the WISE Campus. Entries should be sent to Chris Edwards, 61 Filton Avenue, Filton, Bristol BS7 0AQ.

All tournament entries must be in by **Tuesday 31st December**. The entry forms can be found in the Bristol and District Table Tennis Association handbook or downloaded from [www.tabletennis365.com/bristol](http://www.tabletennis365.com/bristol)

## Come and shake off the Xcess Xmas pudding!

There will be a Christmas CSSC TTC round robin tournament to be held at the club on Saturday 28 December, starting at midday, doors opening at 11.30am. Come and shake off the Xcess Xmas pudding!

Contact Mark Kinlocke for more details: [mark.kinlocke@googlemail.com](mailto:mark.kinlocke@googlemail.com)



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## Fees

First six visits cost £3.50 per session.

After six visits you **must** apply to become a Full or Linked Member of the Civil Service Sports Club (£44.40 pa). CSS Club members pay £2.50 per session.

Membership of the Civil Service Table Tennis Club is £28.00 pa which includes the cost of a club shirt. Table Tennis Club members pay £1.50 per session.

## Disability sport – an insight offered by Ian Thomas: Part I

This is a much abridged version of Ian's article, the full version of which will be on our website after the publication of the next newsletter

**Childhood** I have always been an active person and loved sport. My earliest recollection was as a child, horse riding with the disabled at Rockhampton, just outside Thornbury.

In 1977, when I was 12, I attended a boarding school in Tonbridge, Kent, for teenagers with cerebral palsy, which was then run by the Spastic Society, now known as Scope. I have many happy and carefree sporting memories from this period 1977–1983. I carried on horse riding and went to a riding stables in Sevenoaks. I had some amazing experiences including riding inside Buckingham Palace stables and in the mountains in Norway and not many people can say that.

Other sporting recollections include swimming, football, table tennis and snooker.

Misspent youth or not but I loved it! Groups of people used to arrive at the school to play games against us from wheelchair races, wheelchair basketball, football, table tennis to swimming races. When people first arrived, if anyone felt sorry for us due to our disabilities, it soon evaporated when the wheelchair races were held and the visitors were trounced, even when they were given a lead. I remember on one occasion Gillingham Football Club sent a group of players to play games against us and one of the teenage footballers was Steve Bruce.

My love affair with football started in the mid-1970s when my father took me to watch my first live league match at Ashton Gate. I also remember fondly having a season ticket in the 1976–77 season when Bristol City were promoted to the then 1<sup>st</sup> Division and were playing against some of the big clubs, Arsenal, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester United. However with my secondary school days beckoning I only had the joys of watching the boys in red and white playing at the top table for one season before heading to Kent to further my education.

Upon leaving my boarding school, Thomas Delarue, in 1983, the next chapter of my life began. Having had different advice on my job prospects from four different school career officers I still didn't have a clue about what I wanted to do. In the end I took my own decision and went on a Youth Training Scheme at Rolls-Royce aero engines in Bristol. I am still employed with Rolls-Royce as a business analyst.

**Disability sport** I was a late entrant into this world at the age of 35 when I thought my life was going nowhere and out of the blue in 2000 I received a letter from South Gloucestershire Council saying there was going to be a disability sports taster day held at Bradley Stoke Leisure centre. I ventured along to the leisure centre after work to find only one sport demonstration taking place, 'Special Needs' judo. I had no intention of watching judo, let alone giving it a go. Anyway a member of the leisure centre staff took me along and the judo instructor (Sensei) enquired whether I was going onto the mat (Tatami) and I replied "No". The Sensei sat me down next to the parents of one of the players and they suggested that I should give it a try. I thought why not and got onto the tatami. It was good fun and I thought, yes, I can do this. After a few weeks I went over to Southville where the Kodachi Special Needs judo club dojo (School or training hall for studying judo) is based and started judo at the age of 35, which isn't bad going for an old'un. Juggling work full-time, attending college one day a work studying towards my HND qualification in Business Studies and practising judo all at the same time was a pretty hectic period in my life.

Judo certainly opened up so many doors and I've met so many wonderful people during the four years that I played this sport. I was privileged to be selected by the club to enter numerous 'Special Needs' tournaments in the United Kingdom from Cardiff, Glasgow, the South-east, the Midlands, but my favourite venue in the UK was at Crystal Palace. Travelling around Europe was a fantastic experience and I entered tournaments in Germany, Holland, Slovenia, Finland and Sweden. For four years I trained and worked hard towards my green belt and won various tournaments along the way in the UK and Europe.

Beverwijk, in Holland was the main European tournament the club attended every year. This was where I met a good friend and fellow judo competitor, Tim from Holland. Due to the nature of my disability, I could only train and compete at judo from a kneeling or sitting position (newazi) because standing judo would have been far too dangerous for me. Each judo bout lasted three minutes and if the scores were equal, would go into extra time for another minute until the golden score or shiho (penalty point) was awarded and resulted in the end of the contest. If after

this period the score was still unchanged then the three judges would vote on the overall winner of the contest. Three minutes might not seem long but the athlete had to be fit to compete at a good standard due to the high intensity of the sport and I would attend the gym two or three times a week. Tim and I were great friends off the mat, but on the mat there was no quarter given and friendship went out of the window. From the start of the contest when the judge would say "Hajimi" (start) and for the next three minutes or longer we would fight like two war warriors, with honours even. Due to both players competing at a newazi position our feet would rub on the tatami and get painful mat burns. To overcome this problem and prior to the tournament contests Tim and I would have our feet bandaged up. Looking back it was an amusing sight.



Towards the end of my judo exploits in 2004, when the sport was getting too much for my legs, my attention was beginning to turn to what I could do next. It would turn out the tournament in Stockholm, Sweden would be my final contest.

**'Part II: Table tennis' will follow in the next newsletter.**



## This is the fifth in our series where we say hello to some of our club members who hail from foreign parts. Here we say "Bonjour!" to Quang Vu

### What is your background and how did you come to be in Bristol?

I am a French citizen but was born as a South Vietnamese in Rome (Italy) in August 1963.

My mother tongue is Vietnamese, but since I have never learnt it at school, I only know the basic vocabulary. I am more fluent in French and English.

I arrived in Bristol in August 2011 as I volunteered to be the French representative in a freshly created joint UK/French project office at the MOD Abbey Wood. This is a 3 to 4 year assignment, after which I would return to France, most likely to the Paris region where I lived before coming here.

I really like the city of Bristol and its surroundings. It has all the advantages of a city – cinemas, theatres, shopping centres, restaurants – without the hassle of a big city such as Paris. The people here are also very nice and friendly.

### What was your first experience of table tennis?

I started playing ping pong in 1976 with a friend who had a table in his garage. We both joined a club a year later but began to improve our skills only two years later when the club hired a coach.



### What differences do you notice between table tennis here and in France?

There are many differences between TT in France and in the UK. In France you pay an annual fee to join a club, which covers all expenses, including the coach, the training sessions, registration in the leagues, practice balls, table and net maintenance, and drinks and snacks for the home games. Most of the clubs are subsidised by the city council. There are usually two fees, one for those who wish to play in TT leagues, and one for those who only come to practise. There are also usually lower fees for children and members of the same family.

The league games are also different: all players are ranked according to their results of the past seasons. All games of the same division are played on the same day, according to a schedule established by the French TT association at the beginning of each season. The teams do not bear names like Partizans or Cavaliers, they are just numbered (like CSSC 1 to 7). In the division where I played, the teams were composed of six players, three of whom were in sub-team 1 and the other three in sub-team 2. The top two players must be in sub-team 1 and the two who have the poorest rankings out of the six players must play in sub-team 2. This leaves the captain flexibility to compose the sub-teams so that the overall team has the best chances to win the game. Once the sub-teams are established, you have to play the games in the order written in the game sheets. No coin flipping!

Once the game is over, the home team buys the away team a drink, which allows all 12 players to socialise and usually talk about their past and future games and opponents. In some leagues, there is even a 'third half' ('troisième mi-temps') where the casual after-game drinks are replaced by a more substantial meal: French sticks, charcuterie, wine etc.

### What sort of bat do you use and what sort of player do you like to play against?

I use a medium speed bat with RITC 729 or Mark V rubbers. My favourite stroke is the forehand topspin. The opponents I prefer playing against for a good game are those who do not take the game too seriously and who are playing just for the fun of the game.

I joined the CSSC after having seen an advert for a taster organised in March or May 2012. I like the spirit of the club which is quite similar to the one I was in before moving to Bristol. I love playing with the Partizans. We have a great team, a great team spirit, and a great captain!

*Merci, Quang!*



## Materials and Strategy – Sven Petterson

At the start of my league matches I ask my opponent if I can look at their bat. Very few people do this, although you see a lot of this being done in international matches. Sometimes I have been asked "Do you get anything from doing this?" My answer is that I find it helpful to know what I am up against. I have played with so many rubber types that I am very familiar with the playing characteristics of most. Using this knowledge helps me to formulate a general plan about how I may be able to exploit a potential weakness. For example, in my first match of this season I played someone who last time played with short pimples on the forehand. Short pimples allow a very flat hit which can be difficult to lift. Also, it is not affected as much by the spin put against it. This time he was using a slow reversed rubber on the forehand. I figured that heavy backspin low to his forehand would cause him problems, and it did, giving me many points.

I find that people open themselves up to losing points they might not otherwise have lost, if only they had known from the start what their opponents were using. And if an online search is made for a particular rubber type, then a wealth of information via user reviews can be found on about every blade and rubber out there. The best I have found is: <http://oakforum.com/>.

Some time back, I was a spectator at a Saracens match. After a while had passed with quite a few points lost by the attacking opponent, he asked Rob Kendall "Is that anti-loop on your backhand"? If he had known that from the start, maybe he would not have lost so many points, because a completely different playing strategy is needed when playing against rubber with very little friction as opposed to standard reversed rubber. There are pros and cons to every rubber type, and a more complete knowledge of these will lessen the frustration of lost points.

Going back to my first league match, another of my opponents was using a very fast rubber with thick sponge. Interestingly, he puts over very slow spinny loops. Last time he used sticky Chinese rubbers, which in my opinion were much more suited to his game. I figured that he would suffer from a lack of control due to the speed of his current setup. This proved to be the case as the spin variation that I put over caused him to net many balls, and to lift quite a few others which I often put away.

Knowledge is the name of the game, and the more we have and apply, then the more fun we have due to reduced errors on our part.

Changing direction a little, time was I used to be able to beat many attacking players at practice with ease. They tried to attack everything and the spin would just keep building up to the point where they could not control it. But now I have lost to these players because they are using all their shots at the right time. Instead of trying to loop everything, a few push shots are put into the mix. This has the effect of taking the heavy spin out of the rally often leaving them a ball which they can more easily attack. I now find that I have to improve my skills in order to win because of this, and this is making my playing experience much more challenging and enjoyable.

To conclude, I have often thought that you have to be prepared to lose in order to win. This particularly holds true for practice sessions. Practise not only your strokes and strategy, but also have a go with different rubber types. You will find this a great deal of fun, and I am sure that this will answer many questions. So, anyone for anti-spin or long pimples? It would be my greatest pleasure to welcome you to 'The Dark Side'. Enjoy!



## Table tennis club committee

### President

Ken Simmonds

### Chairman

Terry Toghill

### Deputy Chairman; Coaching and Competitions

Mark Kinlocke

### Secretary

Paul Barlow

### Treasurer

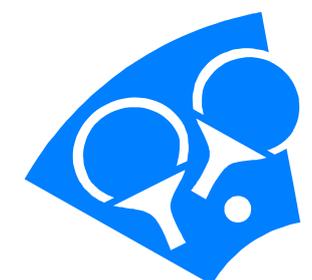
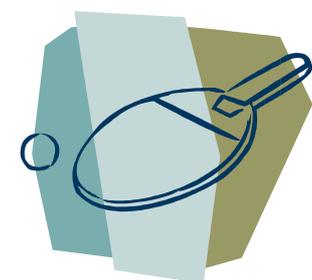
Richard Oram

### Welfare Officer

Tim Harris

### Publicity Officer

Charlotte Taylor



### Sunday nights at the club

You will all have seen Pawel Rekawiecki in action with his camera on Sunday evenings. Here is a small selection of his photos which really capture the atmosphere of the club



Filton Avenue  
Horfield  
Bristol  
BS7 0AT

See our website at  
<http://bristol-cssc-tabletennis.weebly.com/index.html>



The next newsletter will be prepared early in 2014 and will include the results of the Bristol Hard Bat tournament and the Bristol Closed Championship, along with the second part of Ian Thomas's article on disability sport and more of Pawel's photos of players in action. Do send me your comments and ideas for articles.

Charlotte  
[charlottejanetaylor@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:charlottejanetaylor@tiscali.co.uk)

Bristol and District Table Tennis Association



## Come and Try Table Tennis at Hengrove Park Leisure Centre

Hengrove Promenade, Bristol BS14 0DE

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2014  
Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2014  
Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2014  
Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2014  
Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2014  
Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2014

NOON UNTIL 2PM

EVERYONE WELCOME. £2 EACH OR £5 FOR A FAMILY OF 3 OR 4

EQUIPMENT WILL BE PROVIDED  
QUALIFIED COACH IN ATTENDANCE

### Civil Service teams in the B&DTTA league: a snapshot

The Civil Service club is fielding 12 teams in the 2013–2014 season, across all the divisions. These positions were taken from the B&DTTA website and represent the state of play at 20th December.

Premier division	<b>Raiders</b>	8th
Division 1	<b>Nomads</b>	4th
	<b>Saracens</b>	9th
Division 2	<b>Warriors</b>	6th
Division 3	<b>Saxons</b>	4th
	<b>Vikings</b>	5th
Division 4	<b>Spartans</b>	6th
Division 5	<b>Buccaneers</b>	7th
Division 6	<b>Trojans</b>	4th
	<b>Commandos</b>	9th
Division 7	<b>Partizans</b>	3rd
	<b>Cadets</b>	13th



### More information?

If you have any questions about any aspect of table tennis at the Bristol Civil Service Table Tennis Club – membership, coaching, costs, how to get involved in a team, what happens at club night on a Sunday – please get in touch with Paul Barlow at [paulbarlow@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:paulbarlow@blueyonder.co.uk)