

Bristol Civil Service



Table Tennis Club

Bristol Civil Service
Table Tennis Club
Newsletter

Issue 10

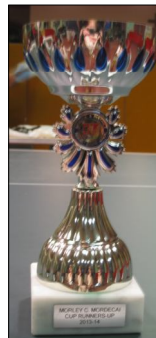
May 2014

Annual General Meeting and Committee elections Wednesday 25 June 8pm

The AGM and elections are especially important this year as we will be looking for a new Chairperson and Club Secretary as Terry Toghill and Paul Barlow have decided to step down from these roles. This will have an impact on team and individual registrations for the Bristol League for next season and also on the running of the Club as a whole. Please make every effort to attend. Nominations for Executive posts must be received by Paul Barlow by Wednesday 18 June. He welcomes enquiries from anyone interested in any of the Committee roles: paulbarlow@blueyonder.co.uk
Do be aware that table tennis facilities will be closed for the duration of the AGM. Arrangements for any Summer League fixtures should avoid this date.

Civil Service Partizans runners-up in the Mordecai Cup

The Partizans took some notable scalps on their journey through to the final of the Mordecai Cup. After a bye at the start of the tournament, Julian, Quang and Lawrence beat Southmead Merlins, Civil Service Saracens, Portishead A and KCC E. The final saw them pitched against KCC C on Thursday 15th May at the Knowle & Brislington club. The match was hard-fought and the team put up a gallant defence but sadly KCC proved too strong and came out the winners.



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Having more than one bat – Mark Kinlocke

There's a saying in the watch-collecting community, "*when you have one watch you always know what time it is, when you have more than one, you're never sure*".

There something to be said for having one TT blade and rubbers (a bat) and striving to improve one's game with it. More than one bat and the player is always wondering if it's the correct one.

OK, we sometimes argue that we need a spare. That's fine if that is how it's used. But most times it's simply an excuse to try something different.

This driving need to try out different combinations can cause players to end up with many different bats. They excuse this by calling themselves collectors. But a more apt name for them is Equipment Junkie or EJ.

Here you see some of my collection of hardbats.



Aubrey Simons RIP

It is with great sadness that I have to announce the death of our friend, Aubrey Simons, President of the Bristol and District Table Tennis Association.

His funeral will take place at 2pm on Friday 6 June at Canford Crematorium, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol BS9 3PQ. A reception will be held afterwards at the Bristol Civil Service Club, Horfield, Bristol BS7 0AT. Terry Toghill

Disability sport – an insight offered by Ian Thomas: Part II

This is a much abridged version of the second half of Ian's article, the full version of which is now available on our website.

I got extremely excited watching the Athens Olympic Games and I thought 'let's go onto the Paralympic website to view the different disability sports on offer'. I vividly remember scrolling down through the list of sports thinking to myself 'too old, too old, can't run' and the list was getting smaller and smaller until table tennis (TT) appeared and I thought 'yes, I can do that.'

I contacted the Bristol and District TT League and they put me in touch with Filton College TT club. It was pretty daunting because I didn't know anyone or the expected standard of play. I loved playing but also appreciated my game was at a low standard. My forehand shots had to be seen to be believed but I have progressed enormously over the years.

I was offered some coaching lessons on a Saturday morning with a coach who later became a personal friend, Di McIlwain. For the first three months we practised the same range of shots trying to get me to use my forehand correctly. This proved difficult and because of my disability I was jerking at the same time. I slowly started to use my forehand correctly but it was hard work. I can also remember sitting down to watch TV after a coaching session and I couldn't work out why my right shoulder was aching. I then realised that I was using a different part of my body that it wasn't used to. Gradually as I played forehand shots more correctly my muscles got used to this routine.

In 2005 or 2006 I was asked if I would like to play in the Bristol and District summer league and so I joined Filton College to play in the Bristol league.

My table tennis handicap was pretty high, but after a few matches other people felt that I had a very long way to go to improve my game and my handicap was increased to the highest level. The majority of my opponents were very considerate – whilst thrashing me in every match they were allowing me to make mistakes instead of smashing me off the table because it is no fun being at the end of a true thrashing and equally my opponents wouldn't enjoy themselves knowing that someone trying their hardest was being smashed into oblivion. This approach ensured that I didn't have any negative thoughts as I could have lost heart and interest in the sport and left.

However not all my opponents were considerate and some people were disrespectful of my disability and questioned whether I should even be playing table tennis. It just proves how narrow-minded and shallow some people's view can be of individuals with a disability. However I brushed their crass comments aside and carried on playing table tennis relentlessly because I knew in time I would be able to compete against other players on equal terms. It is only years down the line that I started to ask myself 'what must those people be thinking now?' because my play has improved. Today some opponents, as a term of affection, call me 'an awkward bugger to play against' and I take this as a great compliment. Now, even if I lose, I can walk away from the table with my head held high and a smile on my face knowing that I must have played quite well. Winning is not the be all and end all, but it helps!



In 2006 I entered my first disability table tennis tournament at Grantham, Lincolnshire organised through Disability Sport England (DSE). I was given the details by CP Sport (for people who have cerebral palsy).

Again not knowing what to expect I ventured to Grantham with my friend Di and her husband, Dave. Friday night it was strictly off the beer in preparation for the tournament. On Saturday, tournament day, my nerves got the better of me and my jerks became uncontrollable and my match play was extremely poor. Saturday night was a time of relaxation and reflection and it was felt that I should have a few pints to help me to relax. Not only is the Lincolnshire ale highly recommendable, it also went down well. Believe it or not, on the Sunday my game was slightly better compared to the day before!

Whilst I lost all my matches it was equally important to get myself known on the disability table tennis scene. Di and I talked to many people about the struggle to find someone to coach me in Bristol who also understood disability. I was invited to join Mencap Sport's national England training camps because CP Sport at the time was advertising table tennis on their web site but were not involved with any aspect of table tennis.

I was soon back in Grantham on a disability training camp. The nicest aspect of my first training camp was that everyone made me feel so welcome regardless of my standard of play. I attended as many of those training sessions in Grantham and Crewe as possible until they stopped due to a lack of funding, which is a big shame.



Disability sport – an insight offered by Ian Thomas: Part II continued

Over the years I have had great support from Mencap head coach Mick Vessey, who I have great admiration for; he understands the nature of disability whilst at the same time trying to get the best out of each athlete. It is no good talking to someone with an intellectual disability using words they cannot understand or demonstrating to someone with a physical disability a table tennis routine they are intellectually or physically unable to achieve because these techniques would become self-defeating.

Around 2007 Di felt she had taken me as far as she could and we explored various options to take my game to the next level. I had already met Marcus Berry a few times and so the next step of my table tennis journey was to approach him and ask to join the Civil Service Table Tennis Club. I would return from my disability national training camps and would explain to Marcus the aspect of my game Mick Vessey was keen for me to work on. Marcus was very supportive and would give me some of his precious time to practise that range of shots. I have a lot of respect for Marcus and must confess I missed him when he moved to Devon to live.

At this time I was playing TT wherever possible, Filton College, Thornbury TT Club and Civil Service and was loving it. I started playing in the winter league in the Stroud and District League before starting to play for the Filton Typhoons in the Bristol and District League. The first few seasons I was losing most of my matches but didn't let this deter me from playing as many league matches as possible. Whilst I was still losing quite heavily, bit by bit I was improving. In those early league matches my nerves would get the better of me; my muscles would tighten up and my jerks would increase, which is not a good combination when playing table tennis.

Nowadays I am winning 25–33% of my league matches and bit by bit my match play is changing; it can be frustrating because in a coaching environment my forehand is developing nicely but I am unable to replicate the range of forehand shots in a league environment; my muscles are quite tense so I still have to develop some relaxation techniques to overcome this hurdle. This approach would not only help me in my matches but more importantly in every aspect of daily life. Table tennis is helping me to keep mobile and you cannot put a price on someone's mobility and freedom to maintain a good standard of life.

Currently I am travelling to Maidenhead once a month to join other athletes at the Southern Region table tennis squad for coaching for standing and wheelchair players. I am also developing my backhand and must confess it didn't go well in my last league match, but perseverance will bring rewards in the long term.

What are my aspirations for the future? People who have known me for many years appreciate I have a great love of all sports, but especially disability sports. I am currently the treasurer and webmaster of Bristol and South Gloucestershire Unions of disability sports and have a Community Sports Level 2 qualification. I've attended the last two United Kingdom Special Olympics for those with an intellectual disability as a Bristol sports coach and enjoyed the experience.

I've found a sport that I love and am waiting to go on a level 1 TT course and I would like to encourage more people, especially with a disability, into table tennis, regardless of age or disability because sport should be for all people at every level. I know from first-hand experience the struggle and prejudice I had to overcome to reach the standard I am currently performing at and would encourage individuals to battle against those odds and to prove the doubters wrong.

I would like to become a TT coaching assistant because this approach would help me enormously to learn the technical part of the game, whilst at the same time improving my own game.

Finally I would like to put something back into the Special Olympics, through Dennis and Wendy Beech who kindly invited me to join their national England training camps, and I would love to see a western TT team competing at the next UK Special Olympics in four years' time.

Whilst these are my sporting dreams and aspirations, my motto is 'If you haven't got a dream why get out of bed in the mornings if you have got nothing to look forward to in life?'



Table tennis club committee

President

Ken Simmonds

Chairman

Terry Toghill –

STEPPING DOWN

Deputy Chairman; Coaching and Competitions

Mark Kinlocke

Secretary

Paul Barlow –

STEPPING DOWN

Treasurer

Richard Oram

Welfare Officer

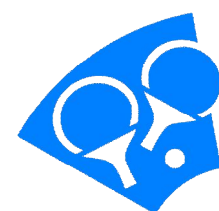
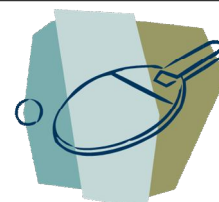
Tim Harris

Publicity Officer

Charlotte Taylor

Visiting the club

Visitors can come to the Table Tennis Club three times, paying £3.50 a time. Once you have been three times as a visitor, you need to join the Civil Service Sports Club.



The Bristol Hard Bat Tournament, Saturday 18th January – two perspectives

Sven Pettersson

It's quite amazing that the record continues – one new name on the trophy every year. The expectation that players from the higher divisions will always win against lowly opposition does not hold true. This all points to the level playing field created by the Bristol Hard Bat Tournament, but with a superior level of fun which is clear to see.

Some of the big names who played in last year's tournament were not here this time, but many of the old faithful were. And I do mean old. So, would it be an old dog or a young pup for the title this time? You can usually rely on the seedings to be accurate with regard to the finalists, but not always so getting to that point. The number one seed fell at the semi-final stage, which left the number two seed through to the final. But this was not before one of our own, Chris 'scraping the bottom of the barrel' Adamek, gave them both the fight of their lives. And with three divisions' difference between Chris and his opponents!

In the other semi I was beaten two-straight by a prem standard defensive player. The interesting thing about that match was the spin variation used by my opponent, which shows that hard bat is not just a deadball game. I managed to win the remaining dead rubber in that three-way semi against a prem attacking player, which was fun.

The final stage was now set between Paul 'splitting the atom' Hooper and Chris 'chop 'em till I stop 'em' Edwards. I remember saying that this was Paul's title, as I thought his power would just be too much for Chris. This proved to be the case for much of the first game, which gave Paul a number of game points which Chris saved with great court coverage and fine defensive play. First game to the pup 25–23.

The second game saw Chris get even better as he found his range to good effect, chopping the ferocious shots being thrown at him. At times he switched from defence to attack, and also mixed in some great positional shots that left his opponent stranded. He gained a big lead which he never lost, winning that game 21–14. The title went to Chris Edwards, his first. Paul had lost his second final.

Here's looking forward to next year. Perhaps the title will go to a player for the second time! Maybe it will be won by a player we have not even seen before. Perhaps a lady champion? Come on, you golden oldies, let's show them how it's done. What? Speak up! (Don't shout, I'm not deaf.)

Chris Adamek

A thoroughly enjoyable day expertly arranged and organised by John Ruderham and the BDTTA.

This was a great opportunity for us mere mortal club players to play some of the best players in Bristol without putting in the hours of practice required to get to the premier league.

A great leveller in which the black arts of sponge, spin and pimped rubbers are replaced by the clunk of the unresponsive hard bats and the occasional helpless feeling of hit and hope.

Talent always rises to the top so it was fitting to witness a great final between Paul Hooper and Chris Edwards. It was the attacking flair of Paul v the defensive counter-hitting of Chris and extremely exciting to watch with Chris coming out on top just. A pleasure to watch and a fitting finale to the day.

I'm glad to put my hard bat away for now but am looking forward to next year already.

Hard Bat winners

James Hamilton Plate Trophy

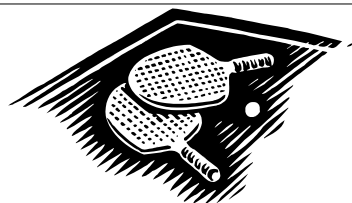
Winner: Dennis Coombe

Runner-up: Andy Cooper

John Mycroft Boucher Hard Bat Trophy

Winner: Chris Edwards

Runner-up: Paul Hooper



Eight essentials for your kitbag – Mark Kinlocke

We've all heard the expression "Preparation is key". Part of this is not to leave anything at home that may reduce our performance on local league match night.

So let us look at these eight essentials to always have in your kitbag:

Main bat plus spare – Have a spare bat that is close in specification to your main bat. This is in case you damage the main bat. It doesn't happen often but I've both seen it happen and experienced it.

Towels – As the match progresses in the vigorous manner that we play TT, sweat invariably becomes a factor that can be very distracting. In TT we are allowed a towel break every 6 points. Top players always take this break even if it's just to give themselves some thinking time. You may also like to have a second towel as we tend to use our towel to wipe the table in order to clear dust and sweat.

Water flask – It goes without saying we need to keep hydrated and the halls sometimes don't have access to drinking water. Use the time between sets and after the game to have a drink in order to maintain healthy performance.

Food – Bring along a snack that is reinvigorating and healthy to eat between games. Good foods include bananas, apples or plain biscuits. Avoid foods with a high fat content as they take time to digest and can leave you feeling lethargic.

TT shoes – Keep your TT shoes in your bag and use them only for the match itself. Having a familiar comfortable pair of shoes that hasn't picked up muck from outside the hall is great.

Extra Clothing – Shorts, shirt, socks and deodorant spray. I've seen several matches where the player gets ready to play, only to find that he's forgotten to put on a pair of shorts under his joggers.

Notebook and pen – Use it to record your observations of your opponents' equipment type and style of play. It's also good as a reminder of your tactics for the next time that you play.

Toilet paper – Last but not least essential. Many times I've been to a venue where they have run out of this vital piece of equipment.

You can also think about having your TT kitbag permanently at the ready. This allows for a rushed exit to the playing hall as you only need to grab the bag and go.



Summer League

The Civil Service Club is putting out three teams in the summer league:

Team A - Chris Adamek, Dean Barmby, Sangha Bhattacharya, Alex Ono and Andy Cooper

Team B - Duncan Jones, Steve Kingscott and Dean Wilson

Team C - Charlotte Taylor, Bryan Taylor, Julian Boucher, Quang Vu and Stuart Murray-Williams

Good luck to all our teams!

Bristol and District Table Tennis Association Annual General Meeting and presentation of trophies

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the Almondsbury Sports and Social Club, on Monday 2nd June 2014 commencing at 7.30pm. The annual presentation of awards will take place after the AGM at approximately 8.30pm. Trophies are awarded to winners and runners-up in the different divisions of the League so please be sure that your team is represented.

The bar facilities are available to everyone from 7.30pm and you are permitted to take drinks into the hall for the meeting.

Filton Avenue
Horfield
Bristol
BS7 0AT

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



Civil Service teams in the B&DTTA league: a snapshot as we come towards the end of the season

The Civil Service club has fielded 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 on 25 May.

Congratulations to those teams going up!

| | | |
|---------------|-------------------|------|
| Prem division | Raiders | 8th |
| Division 1 | Nomads | 2nd |
| | Saracens | 8th |
| Division 2 | Warriors | 9th |
| Division 3 | Vikings | 2nd |
| | Saxons | 4th |
| Division 4 | Spartans | 1st |
| Division 5 | Buccaneers | 2nd |
| Division 6 | Trojans | 4th |
| | Commandos | 9th |
| Division 7 | Partizans | 2nd |
| | Cadets | 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

Do send me your comments and ideas for articles for the next newsletter. It would be good to have a piece on how to prepare for the new season.

Charlotte
charlottejanetaylor@tiscali.co.uk.

**HOLIDAY TRAINING CAMPS WITH
BRISTOL ACADEMY TABLE TENNIS CLUB**

DATES:
18TH & 20TH FEBRUARY 2014
10TH, 11TH, 15TH & 17TH APRIL 2014
29 & 30TH MAY 2014

TIME: 10AM - 3PM

COST: £15 PER DAY

VENUE: SGS COLLEGE, WISE CAMPUS, NEW ROAD,
STOKE GIFFORD, BRISTOL, BS34 8LP

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
TO BOOK CONTACT:**
CHOISZE.TO@SGSCOL.AC.UK
0117 919 7616 / 03967578513

WWW.BRISTOLACADEMYTABLETENNIS.CO.UK

@TABLETENNISACAD /BRISTOLTABLETENNISACADEMY

Do you want to play in the League next season?

All players from last season please indicate their intentions and preferences for playing next season by answering the following questions. This needs to be returned to Paul Barlow [by Sunday 22 June](mailto:paulbarlow@blueyonder.co.uk).

- Do you wish to play for the Civil Service TT Club next season? If yes:
- Do you wish to play in the same team? (*If no, please give the name of your preferred team/Division*).
- If yes, would you be prepared to move teams if required?
- If you wish to form a new team, which division do you wish to play in and what players have agreed to join you? (*only new teams with enough agreed players will be considered*).
- If you are a team captain, do you wish to continue in that role?
- If you are a team captain, do you know any players that wish to join your team? (*Please give players' names and current team/club*)