

# **WARREN SPRING TABLE TENNIS CLUB NEWSLETTER**

## **Annual Club Tournament 2014**

This season's club tournament attracted an entry list of 39 members across all divisions; unfortunately, the premier division was a little under represented.

There were five titles up for grabs.

Things kicked off on the morning of 22<sup>nd</sup> February with the division 3 singles. Played in five groups the winners and runners-up of those groups with four players and the winners of groups containing three went on into the K.O. stages with the group losers taking part in a consolation event. After some tough group games, the dust settled (there's lots of it at Wymondley) and we had our quarter finalists. Last year's winner and back to defend her title Elaine Hanworth took on Jim Keirl and bowed out gracefully going down by a score of 11-6, 11-4, 11-5. Eleven years old Bruce Yao who had caused the upset of the morning by defeating club newcomer Chris Denman had then to face No 2 seed and dad Kevin and continued his good work with an 11-7, 11-6, 12-10 win. No 3 seed Doug Livingstone faced stern opposition in Toby Snoxall before coming through 12-10, 8-11, 11-8, 8-11, 11-1, whilst No 1 seed Alan Dorn despatched Arun Dhaliwal 11-5, 11-9, 11-7. The semis paired Jim with Bruce and Alan with Doug. Jim continued his good form by finally eliminating young Bruce 11-5, 11-7, 13-11 and in what should have been a cracking semi between Alan and Doug was marred by Alan being taken ill during the first leg and although he bravely continued eventually had to concede defeat. So the scene was set for a Doug vs Jim final. Doug's league performance since Christmas has been nothing short of phenomenal and this was shown in the final as he blew Jim away 11-5, 11-2, 11-9.

In the consolation event, Chris Denman after his shock group exit had no difficulty in reaching the final where he overcame club cadet Gabriel Ryan 11-6, 11-6, 11-7.

The division two event played on the same day was a format of groups with the eventual winners and runners-up determining the semi finals. Under our rules those who have played up a division have the right to compete in the higher division competition, and it was Alan Dorn and Kevin Yao playing up under this rule who distinguished themselves in the later stages. A fantastic

clash between Alan and the No 1 seed John Cox was fought out to determine who would fill one semi final place with John just edging things 11-6, 15-17, 11-13, 11-6, 11-8. John was joined in the semis by Elaine Hanworth who recorded a good win over Roger Willoughby, Kevin and No 2 seed Dante Lacorte. These matches saw John take on and beat Elaine 11-4, 11-5, 11-6, whilst Dante finally had to move into top gear to overcome Kevin 11-13, 11-8, 11-3, 5-11, 11-5. The final itself was an advertisement for consistent table tennis with some terrific rallies as John confirmed his top ranking by beating Dante by a score of 6-11, 11-9, 11-8, 11-9.

The following day promised to be a full one, with the division one, premier and handicap events all to be played. First up was division one with 16 players in 4 groups of 4 battling for the first prize of the cup plus £25.00 of Argos vouchers.

With Pooja Sharma now at University and not able to defend her title it was pretty much left to the seeded players to come through. The only exception to this was James Abrams who failed to make it out his group. The quarter final stage saw No 1 seed Bill Price take on Robert Chapman who had run Bill very close in a recent league match, No 2 seed Erol Hasan was drawn to play Dante Lacorte continuing his good form from the previous day, whilst No3 seed Mark Redford and Paul Waterman sought to overcome Dave Saunders and John Cox respectively. Bill managed to avoid potential drama by beating Robert somewhat easier than the previous meeting 11-7, 11-8, 11-6, whilst Erol faced stern opposition in Dante before the latter ran out of steam against Erol's consistency succumbing 11-8, 9-11, 11-8, 11-8. Mark dominated his match against Dave winning 11-7, 11-7, 11-7, as did Paul (apart from a 3<sup>rd</sup> leg slip up) against John 11-4, 11-5, 10-12, 11-6. The semi finals brought together Bill and Mark for what was undoubtedly the match of the divisional competition with Bill finally gaining the upper hand 12-10, 7-11, 11-9, 6-11, 13-11, and in yet another five setter Paul got the better of Erol 11-4, 8-11, 11-6, 8-11, 11-2.

A disappointing final saw Paul never really get into his stride and Bill take the 2014 title with an 11-3, 11-5, 11-7 win.

A new format for the handicap was tried and it proved highly successful. There were so many tight games that it would be impractical to mention them all here, but this is a sample from round 1. Steve Kilford (div 1) just edging out Fiona Whittaker (div 3) 21-18, 19-21, 21-20, 20-21, 21-19, and Mark Redford (div 1) beating Steve King (div 2) 21-19, 20-21, 21-20, 20-21, 21-18. At the quarter final stage and after two exhaustive rounds we had left one representative from the premier, two each from division's one, two and three

and one young cadet. First match up was an all division three affair as Toby Snoxall beat Jim Keirl 21-14, 21-20, 17-21, 21-17. Then Arthur Hawkins (div 1) faced one of the club's young cadets twelve years old Eve Whittaker who saw off her more experienced opponent in straight sets 21-17, 21-11, 21-13. Mark Redford then accounted for John Cox (div 2) again in straight sets 21-19, 21-16, 21-16, leaving our remaining premier player Radovan Zivkovic knowing too much for Dante Lacorte (div 2) who went down by a score of 21-18, 20-21, 21-16, 21-19. Two thrilling semi finals then ensued. The first brought together two young people who had equipped themselves admirably throughout this competition with Toby coming back from two sets down to finally beat Eve 18-21, 17-21, 21-17, 21-17, 21-19, and Mark overcoming Radovan in a match full of quality 21-16, 19-21, 21-10, 13-21, 21-17.

The final was again a five set affair with Toby having match point in the third against Mark before eventually losing out 12-21, 16-21, 21-20, 21-18, 21-17.

The premier event represented the club's "blue ribbon" competition and as stated previously it was a shame that more premier players did not make the event. It was played as two rounds of group matches with the most successful four players going on to a knock out semi final and final stage.

Once again last year's winner Isaac Beevor was now at University and consequently not able to compete. The star of the show in this particular event and some would argue the whole day was without doubt the young England ranked junior Branislav Zivkovic (son of Radovan). Branislav playing in the tournament as a guest showed fighting spirit, determination, manners and an attitude of fair play all in equal measure. Indeed, it was Branislav who caused the first major upset in the early group stage by beating A team captain Arron Beckett who luckily survived his group and lived to fight further. After all group matches had been completed the semi final line up drew Radovan against Simon Proffitt and Arron who once again had to face Branislav. The Radovan-Simon match up saw Simon play arguably his best table tennis of the season (must have been the cup and £40.00 Argos voucher at stake) as he inflicted a 12-10, 11-7, 6-11, 11-3 defeat over his opponent. In the other semi Arron avenged his earlier defeat by beating Branislav 11-7, 12-10, 11-4. The final saw two past winners of this competition go head to head. Arron opened up a two set advantage, but the match seemed set to continue when Simon lead 10-9 on serve in the third only for his opponent to win the next three points and take the 2014 title. This year's winner and bringing to a close a great weekend of sport, Arron Beckett by a score of 11-9, 11-7, 12-10.

## Junior Corner

### Harlow Junior Tournament

Played at the impressive BATTs centre, this local tournament is a must for up and coming young players. The club had four representatives taking part. Both Bruce Yao and Charlie Shephard played well and managed to progress to the later stages of the competition before they succumbed to very good opposition indeed.

If the accolades in the girl's competition went to the high flying Gracie Edwards (Essex) who finished as both the U/13 and U/15 champion then our own Charlotte Marsden also had a pretty good day. Charlotte won the U/13 consolation final and finished as runner up in the U/15 consolation final. She was also the only young lady on the day that managed to take Gracie to a deciding fifth leg when they had met earlier in the group phase. Our other female representative Eve Whittaker competed well and gave her all as is always the case but failed to make it through to the later stages on this occasion.



**Charlotte being presented with her U/13 trophy by the tournament administrator Lynne Mansfield.**

### National Cadet League

With the NCL for our zone now completed and with both our teams having a good last weekend, I can now report that our A team finished as runners up in division 3 whilst our B team finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place in division 4.

When you bear in mind that both teams were in bottom position after the first round of matches last October these final placings shows what a vast

improvement has been made by our youngsters over the past few months. I would like to congratulate all of them on the hard work, commitment, and attitude and fighting spirit they have shown. Special mention should go to Jaimin Shah who saved his best table tennis until the last day in winning six out of his eight games played. This feat was also achieved by Charlie Shephard and so well done Charlie. The A squad were without Bruce Yao for the last weekend (injured right hand) but it was Bruce's and the fourth member Lukas Wait's previous performances that paved the way for the ultimate finishing spot.

The B team's final position was due in no small part to Charlotte Marsden's fine performance in the last round of matches. In achieving a "clean sweep" winning all of her eight matches played, Charlotte ensured that her team would finish third. She was well supported on the day by Eve Whittaker who won four from eight.

### **Subscriptions**

Now that the league has finished for another season I am now able to work out who owes what for those members who have played less than 50% of matches. Those players who are affected should receive a letter from me within the next few days showing what is owed.

### **Talent Development Centre**

BATTS Harlow was recently chosen as one of only four new ETTA Regional Development Centres in England. Each centre will take up to 20 young players with the aim of maximising their potential. The club is very proud to announce that Charlotte Marsden was the first U/13 girl in the Eastern Region to be selected by the Chief Talent Scout for this programme. This is a wonderful opportunity for Charlotte who now has to continue to work extremely hard in her quest to become one of the best.

### **Club AGM.**

This year's AGM will take place on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 8.00pm at the Bucks Head, Little Wymondley. An agenda and minutes of the last meeting will be sent to members nearer the time.