

WARREN SPRING TABLE TENNIS CLUB NEWSLETTER

Cup Semi Finals

The club had six teams contesting this season's cup competitions throughout the various divisions, one from division one, one from division two and four from division three.

McClaughlin Cup – Division One

Warren E vs Royston C - Our E team did not relish the prospect of travelling to Royston in their semi as they were beaten 9-1 in the league by the same side just a week earlier. However, with captain and No 1 Rob Worrell back in the team they were perhaps a little better equipped this time around and that is exactly as it turned out. Rob got his team off to the perfect start with a win over Alf Mills and a rejuvenated Erol Hasan and Paul Waterman also added their names to the score sheet. The battle of the No 1's ended with Rob getting the better of Mike Malone which made the score 4-2 in our favour. With five needed to win, it was left to Erol to come through and defeat Derek Fuller and so give us a place in the final which will be against Bedwell D.

McClaughlin Inter – Division Two

Warren G vs Bedwell K Our opponents turned up with a player we had not seen before (Richard Gonzales) and when he knocked up he certainly looked pretty useful. Fortunately Captain Kells who played him first did not find his consistency matched what we had initially expected and won -5, -9, -3. The 2nd match of the evening was pivotal as Alan Dorn (joining Division 2 only this year but playing as if he has spent several years in the division) had a brilliant win over Ewan Fewell. The 5th set saw Alan race to a 10-4 lead before a superb comeback from Ewan took the decider to deuce but Alan held his nerve to win 15-13.

John Cox made quite light work of beating Phil Smith (-9, -4, -7) to put us 3-0 ahead but the Bedwell team pulled the score back to 3-1 after Ewan (whose nerves from his first match against Alan had well and truly gone) proceeded to smash David Kells off the table in 3 straight sets. John then dispatched Richard Gonzales dropping just 1 leg and giving our team a commanding 4-1 lead. Alan finished off his excellent night's work by taking us over the finish line with a well executed strategy against Phil Smith in a tight fought 5 setter (winning 11-6 in the 5th). Despite having already won 5-1 we played 2 of the remaining rubbers which saw Alan Dorn beaten 3-1 by Richard Gonzales and John Cox, despite his usual unrelenting ability to defend, succumbed to defeat against Ewan who put in a tremendous display of his smashing abilities.

Thanks to David Kells for this write-up

Henderson Cup – Division Three

Warren L vs Warren M - The L team had won the corresponding league match comfortably and arrived in confident mood. However they were met by a new face,

as Piers Gibson-Birch playing his first match in at least 2 years lined up with dad Nigel and Toby Snoxell for the M team. L was a family affair as well as all 3 Livingstone's turned out. The first match pitted two opposing styles as Doug's consistency overcame Toby's loop in straight sets. Carrick playing confidently with only one loss all season then took on Piers, who looked worrying consistent in the warm up. As the match unfolded and apart from the odd error, Piers serve and attack game proved too strong for Carrick and he came through again in straight sets. In one of the best games of the night, Findlay, playing in his first season came through to win against his more experienced opponent Nigel 12-10 in the fifth. The M team were not downhearted however and they saw the momentum swing back in their favour as Toby played out of his skin against an off form Carrick to take the match back to 2-2. Although Doug continued his good form beating Nigel in 4 Finlay could not quite match Piers and the match was evened once more. Carrick broke his duck with a comfortable victory over Nigel and then another great match saw Findlay and Toby trade the first two ends, before Toby edged both the third and fourth games by 12-10 and 11-9. So at 4-4, the final match pitted the two unbeaten players. During the warm up it looked like it would be a massacre, with a classy Piers and Doug who seemed hardly able to get a ball over the net.

Piers took the first game with some lovely attacking shots on both wings. However Doug changed tactics in the second leg and keeping the ball short and taking the pace off his serves broke back. Piers then won the third, but Doug just held on to take the fourth. Doug then shot to a 4-1 lead and a shock was on the cards, but strong serving saw Piers take 8 straight points. Despite a couple of attacking winners from Doug it was Piers who served the match out to win 11-9.

Many thanks to L team captain Doug Livingstone for this match report

Warren J vs Warren K – In another all Warren Spring affair, our J and K teams slugged it out for the honour of meeting the M team in the final. The J team opened up a 2-0 lead as firstly Kevin Yao and then Jim Keirl overcame Ian Drakes and Matt Smith respectively. The third game involved Chris Denman and Fabian Smith with Fabian having a great season and still unbeaten. He was made to work hard however, and it took him a leg or so to fathom out Chris' serve and defensive game before coming through strongly to win. Further wins for the J team took them to 4-1 before Fabian took on Kevin. These are two of the best players in the division and the ensuing game certainly did not disappoint. Kevin knew his only chance of success lay in trying to get his attack in first and this he did by playing some very good offensive table tennis. Unfortunately, he was unable to keep up the momentum and Fabian's consistency together with occasional hard hitting well placed forehands finally proved decisive. With Fabian also getting the better of Jim and the score at 4-3 it was left to Kevin to wrap up a J team victory which he did as he defeated Matt in straight sets.

National Junior League

The intrepid youngsters from Warren Spring, Carrick Livingstone, Charlie Shephard and Amit Shah reinforced with Ewan Fewell from Bedwell, made the trip to Slough on December 6th for the second round of the National Junior League. Having been promoted to Div 3 in October, they knew they would face a sterner test. First match up Chiltern B. Ewan started with a win, and played really well throughout the match to take a maximum. Unfortunately Carrick and Amit lost four tight games in the fifth rubber between them and the team lost 6-3. Match two against Ashford saw Carrick sit out and Charlie come in playing a typically battling game coming back from 2-1 down to win in the fifth. Ewan then took on a strong Ashford player whose anti spin rubber caused him some problems. However with some game adjustments made he managed to overcome his opponent in five. Amit was next up and again Ashford were utilising anti-spin rubber. In spite of some great rallies, Amit couldn't quite get to the fifth, losing 14-12 in the fourth. Further wins from Ewan and Charlie the latter playing another typical match for him, losing one, winning two rubbers and then once again going to the fifth before his forehand loop from deep proved decisive to take the match score to 4-2. Amit was then determined to break his duck and did so with a fine 3-0 win despite a few nervous errors. Ewan then continued his consistently high standard to win making the score 6-2 with one match to go. This saw two players who seemed phobic of nets, so far away were they from the table. Charlie must have been surprised to be facing someone smaller than him for a change but he took the first rubber 11-8. A good comeback saw Ashford draw level 1-1. before Charlie took the third end with some consistent looping. His odd combination of fast rubber on the forehand and long pimples on the backhand was causing uncertainty in his opponent and he pulled 7-4 ahead. Some of Charlie's forehands were played from so deep it looked like he was in Windsor rather than Slough. The Ashford player came back to take the fourth before Charlie closed the match out in the fifth 11-9, making us 7-2 winners. The final match saw us take on Hillingdon B who had struggled in their earlier games. Carrick started with a win, in a battle of fewest errors, Charlie was next giving his opponent about 12 inches in height (despite his 2 inch quiff) and to the crowds utter amazement won in four. Ewan was just a class above the whole day and again won in 3 comfortable sets. Charlie was back to form in his second match, winning 11-6 in the fifth. Carrick was next on winning the first two rubbers. The third was tight with some simple errors costing Carrick the third, however he then found some form again in the fourth, using his backhand chop to some effect to take the match. Ewan was becoming sadly predictable by now, comfortably winning his match in 3 straight to take the score to 6-0. Charlie determined to spend more hours on the table than anyone else was in between moments of slumber going to five again but this time his luck didn't quite hold and he lost his unbeaten record. Ewan made it 9 from 9 with another straight sets win whilst Carrick in the last game won in straight sets for an 8-1 victory. So played 3 matches, won 2 for an overall score of 18- 9.

A special thank you to David Kells, youth coach for WS, who gave up his Saturday to help coach the boys during the day.

Once again thanks to Doug for his blow by blow account

National Cadet League

The second round of matches in the NCL took place over the weekend of 29/30 November and our A team of Bruce Yao, Charlotte Marsden and Cian Armstrong had high hopes of promotion. Before this could be achieved they had to face a dangerous Chiltern team and Reading who were laying in the bottom half of the division. First up were Chiltern and it was Bruce who gave us a dream start by inflicting a defeat on the highly rated Buckinghamshire youngster Laurence Pennant-Jones his first in this season's competition. We kept up the pressure as Charlotte took out Greg Ball in four sets and with further wins by Bruce and Charlotte (the latter also gaining a win over Pennant-Jones) we were looking good at 4-1 with four more to play. The team win was secured by Charlotte who overcame Adam Perkins 11-9, 6-11, 11-9, 11-7 and by Bruce whose comfortable win over Ball saw us through by a 6-3 score line. Surely nothing could go wrong now? But this is table tennis and surprises are always just around the corner. Against Reading who had had a somewhat mediocre set of results to date we really struggled. Their No 1 Leo Thomis played a "blinder" winning all three of his matches and with Cian failing to make headway - although his battling performance against Thomis where he just lost out 16-14, 11-6, 11-13, 10-12, 12-10 deserved much credit- we were always playing catch up. At 4-4 Charlotte needed to beat Thomis in the final game but it was not to be and so we went down by 4 games to 5. A frantic calculation of all the results showed that in spite of the Reading defeat we had done enough to gain promotion to division two.

The team's first match in the new division and the final match of the day saw us take on the Berkshire club Kingfisher A and the step up in class was apparent as we succumbed by a score of 3-6. Congratulations to both Bruce and Charlotte who managed our three wins which included a fine last match-up that saw Charlotte come from 1-2 down against the Kingfisher No1 Alex Squire to storm to victory 2-11, 11-9, 8-11, 11-5, 11-7.

Whilst the drama concerning our A team was unfolding the B team were busy securing a mid-table position in division four. Two matches remained in order to settle the table position at the halfway stage of the competition. These were against Dacorum and Ashford. For the Dacorum match we fielded a team comprising George Whitley, Oliver Dorn and William Pastor. Our opponents however proved too strong and we lost by a score of 2-7. George was our star in this contest winning two before losing to Dacorum's Ben Moss. For the Ashford game we brought in Ilyssa Lacorte for William and ran out comfortable 9-0 winners. This has been a good performance thus far by our four youngsters who are all new to competitive table tennis. At the halfway stage George has a 73.3% average, with Oliver on 58.3% and Ilyssa and William both on 55.5%.



Our A Team
L to R: Bruce, Cian. & Charlotte

Our B Team

L to R: Ilyssa, George, Oliver. & William



Annual Club Tournament

You should all have received the entry form and explanatory letter concerning this year's tournament, if not do get in touch. Please be reminded that the closing date is Friday 27th February.

Annual Dinner

This year's club dinner will take place on **Saturday 25th April** and will again be held at the Green Man, Stanford, Beds. Please call our Chairman, Bill Price on 01462 612948 (H) or 07951 384271 (M) to book your place, Bill would appreciate early responses.

Annual Club Subscriptions

Those members who have not yet paid their 2014/15 subscription need to do so as soon as possible. If you are unsure as to whether or not you have paid please contact me for an update.

Hertfordshire County Schools Tournament

The Warren Spring club was heavily involved in this event which took place at the Bushey Mill Academy. At the end of an exhausting days play the following members of the club came away with honours.

Charlotte Marsden took the girls U/14 title, George Whitley won the boys U/11 and Ilyssa Lacorte was runner up in the girls U/11. This means that Charlotte and George will now represent Hertfordshire Schools in the National Finals.

Thank you to David Kells for providing this information

Player Alert

Players moving out of the area combined with long term injury problems mean that the club is looking for new committed members. The premier division is most affected and I would ask all players currently playing in that division to keep a look out for any prospective candidates. I myself am following a couple of lines of enquiry but I need all the help I can get.

Congratulations

To the N team's Prash Murigendrappa, who recently became a father to a baby boy; we send Prash and his wife all good wishes and look forward to hearing his tales concerning sleepless nights and dirty nappies.