

WARREN SPRING TABLE TENNIS CLUB NEWSLETTER

May Edition

This is the final newsletter of the season. I hope you all have a good summer and come back again next season fully refreshed and raring to go.

THE SEASON

With the league season now over for Warren Spring teams, it is worthwhile reflecting on our successes over the past months.

Both our A and B teams consolidated their positions in the premier division finishing fourth and third respectively, with Arron Beckett (93%) and Gabriela Tankel (74%) our top players in that division. In division one, our F team led the way finally finishing third whilst our E, D & C teams took the mid table places. Our top ranking duo in this division was Jim Dodds (E) on 83%, Dilshan Wijesekera (D) 79% and Ilyssa Lacorte (F) 73%. The G team stormed division two finishing nineteen points ahead of Settlement Kestrels who were runners up. Congratulations to Bruce Yao who had a great season finishing with 94% closely followed by Bill Price 85%. In division three our team of mainly young juniors finished in third place, whilst the L squad were fourth just two points behind. Stand out players were Tim Huxtable 96% and ten year old James Hamblett on 94%.

In the cup competitions our A team were beaten finalists losing to premier champions Bedwell A in the Willmott whilst our M team won the Henderson by defeating our L team in the final. Only our F team made any real headway in the Cobb Handicap cup getting through to the semi finals before going down to Bedwell H by 29 points.

I would like to thank all team captains for their hard work on organising their teams and getting fixtures played. We held a series of training sessions for our cadets and juniors during the season and again I would like to thank Marie Emery for helping tie all this together along with those members who chose to give up their time helping as trainer/feeders. I will not name you but you know who you are.

National Junior League

Our A and B teams finished the NJL season in style both winning two from three on the final weekend's play. This meant that the A teams final finishing position in division one was fifth, whilst the B squad took a very respectable third place in division two. The opening match saw our A team go down 4-5

to BATTS Harlow the stand out player being BATTS Samuel Flaum. This was followed by a good 6-3 victory over Fusion from South London with Victor Ramirez-Rioja playing up and winning two from three. Victor was ably backed up by James Hamblett and Thomas Ronayne who also won two each. The final match of the campaign resulted in a 7-2 win over Ellenborough A with Bruce Yao getting a maximum and James and Thomas once more obtaining two each.

A close fought 4-5 defeat to Chelmsford A marred what was otherwise a good day for the B team who went on to beat both Fusion II 5-4 and Ellenborough B 6-3. A hat trick from Victor Ramirez Rioja and two from Samuel Dermont saw them through against Fusion whilst wins for Victor and Samuel was enough against a weakened Ellenborough team. In the defeat to Chelmsford both Samuel and Arshbir Singh took wins although this proved insufficient on the day.

Our other side in this competition Warren C have had a somewhat torrid time failing to win a match although the experience on the whole has been beneficial. Only Maddie Whitley was able to find some form, although she unfortunately had to miss some matches.

National Cadet League

The final outcomes of this competition saw our A team avoid relegation from division one, our B team just doing likewise in division two and our C team winning division four. The A team fought bravely in what was an extremely tough division, with Bruce Yao our most consistent player finishing on 50%. The experienced gained however by team mates James Hamblett and Danny Emery should hold them both in good stead. The same should be said about our B team who did themselves justice putting in many good performances. The main man (or should this be boy) for the team was Victor Ramirez-Rioja who like Bruce finished with 50% from games played. Many congratulations must go to our C team of Isabelle Lacorte, Maddie Whitley, George Thorn, Meth Wijeyekoon and Andrew Girkis on winning their division. Good performances from all players made this a truly team effort.



NCL Division 4 winners; L-R Maddie Whitley, Meth Wijeyekoon George Thorn and Isabelle Lacorte. Not shown in the photo is Andrew Girkis

I would like to take this opportunity to thank John Giles and Ilyssa Lacorte for taking time out and giving up their days to do an invaluable coaching job during the competition, John with the A squad and Ilyssa alternating between B and C. Thanks must also go to dads/mums who did a sterling job completing the paperwork.

Junior Tournaments

Many of our young players have been engaged in junior competition recently, here are just some of the results.

North Herts Junior Closed

Played at the Hitchin Boy's School Sports Centre, youngsters from Warren Spring were amongst the trophies again this year although they had to face opposition from other North Herts clubs' and the new "Spins" Table Tennis Coaching centre in Welwyn Garden City. Results were;

Boys U/12 – Winner: Victor Ramirez-Rioja (Warren); R.U. Ethan Eaketts (Spins)

Boys U/15 – Winner: Bruce Yao (Warren); R.U. Colm Kennedy (St.Albans)

Boys U/18 – Winner; Bruce Yao (Warren); R.U. Thomas Ronayne (Warren)

Girls U/18 – Winner; Ilyssa Lacorte (Warren); R.U. Charlotte Marsden (Broadway).

Three of the club's rising stars have also been busy on the English tournament circuit in the last few weeks. In the Harlow junior competition both James Hamblett and Victor Ramirez-Rioja enjoyed many successes some against older and more experienced opposition before being halted at the final stages. James being beaten in the quarters by Alex Attew of Sussex who has 135 more England ranking points, and Victor making it to the semi finals before being eliminated.

The 4* Cadet Event at Crippenham saw Ilyssa Lacorte involved in a really strong field. She played well to make her way through her group to set up a first round match against the Welsh No 1 and No 3 seed for this event Beth Richards. Ilyssa's tactics were spot on as she came through 3-1. In the quarters she faced her National Doubles partner Mari-Grace Baldwin from Devon who is fast gaining the reputation of becoming one of the most unorthodox and difficult to beat players on the circuit. Mari did not disappoint as she beat our young lady in straight sets.

The following day saw Ilyssa competing in the junior event where she made her way to the consolation final before falling to the powerful Jasmine Williams of Hampshire.



Cippenham 4* Runner-up Ilyssa Lacorte, with Winner Jasmine Williams.

Wolverhampton was the stage for the English Schools National Finals. Ilyssa qualified from Hertfordshire schools and certainly did not let her county down as she stormed through to take 3rd place overall in her age group. She was unlucky to once again face her Cippenham conqueror Marie-Grace Baldwin in the semis where alas the outcome was the same as she went down to the eventual schools age group winner by a score of 11-7, 11-6, 11-8.

Placed Third in National Schools Finals; Ilyssa Lacorte receiving her award from England National Senior Coach Alan Cooke



Club AGM

This year's AGM is set to take place at the Bucks Head, Little Wymondley on Tuesday 5th June commencing 8.00pm. Minutes and an agenda will be sent to all members nearer the time.

Newsletter Input

Having written and published this newsletter for several years now I do occasionally suffer from "writers block" which in the circumstances is quite understandable. Matters would be helped if members could themselves forward me any items they think interesting. This may be to do with match play or other items of general interest. Funny stories or happenings would be most welcome. The exception to this rule is Dante Lacorte who always supplies information on his two daughter's efforts very often together with photos. So take a leaf out of Dante's book and start those reports coming.

Junior Tournament Notification

When possible, I send details and entry forms of tournaments to those parents I think may be interested. However, I do not do this on a regular basis. Therefore I would urge parents to log onto the Table Tennis England website (say once a month) to find those competitions that may be of benefit to their children. National Competitions which only affect our very best youngsters are posted on the website and letters of invite should still be sent from the governing body. As a general rule of thumb, 1* events are for those just starting out on their competitive journey, whilst 2* are aimed at the more experienced player and 4* are directed at those with a high England ranking. By going into Rankings on the same website, you should be able to see your child's ranking point total to date.

I will be happy to help should you have any questions.