

WARREN SPRING TABLE TENNIS CLUB NEWSLETTER

February 2018 Edition

North Herts League Round Up

As we enter February and with seven matches to play before the end of the league season a fine 8-2 win by our B team over Royston now puts them in the driving seat to finish in second place in the premier division behind leaders Bedwell A. The win was secured by a fine maximum from Gabriela Tankel. Our A team lie joint fourth thanks to recent victories against both Settlement teams. Congratulations to both Steve Sale on achieving a very important maximum against Hawks and Ilyssa Lacorte gaining a very good victory over Janice Laing enabling the team to secure a 6-4 win over Skylarks. A team captain Arron Beckett is leading by example currently on 84%.

In division one our C team are currently second despite losing 7-3 to Broadway B. It was however gratifying to see that they bounced back from this disappointment to win their next two matches. The two youngsters within the team continue to dominate with Bruce Yao on 88% and James Hamblett on 86%. Our E team lay mid table with Jim Dodds and Alan Dorn leading the way on 92% and 72% respectively whilst our D team are close to the relegation area but should have enough points in the bag to remain safe.



Victor and Stuart in doubles action against Royston E

whilst team mates Stuart Marquis and Colm Bushell bagged two apiece, the latter gaining an impressive scalp beating Sean Loffman (82%) in straight sets. Elsewhere in the division our H team are seventh and our G team are ninth with H's Thomas Ronayne on 79%.

Warren K lead the way in division three with an almost insurmountable nineteen point lead over Royston F whilst teams J and L occupy fourth and fifth places respectively. The leading individual averages for this division are

Our F team in division two have an eleven point lead over their nearest rivals Royston E. The pressure is off slightly as they have just played the Royston team coming away with a good 8-2 win. Victor Ramirez Rioja kept up his fantastic winning ratio by once again coming away unbeaten

full of Warren players with Danny Emery on 100%, Arshbir Singh on 97%, Michael Roberts on 90% and Paul Cunningham on 89%.

Cup Final Results

Week beginning 5th February saw the divisional cup finals played and amazingly the club were represented in all competitions.

Premier Division - **Bedwell A 5** (Jimmy Walsh, Luke Walsh, Stuart Mylrea) vs **Warren B 1** (Gabriela Tankel, Jonathan Schuchart, Maciej Demski)

Premier division leaders Bedwell A were at full strength for this final which made them very tough opposition indeed. As Gabriela quoted *"when you arrive and see both Jimmy and Luke, e you know your chances of winning are not great"*. Despite this the team put up a good fight with Jonathan beating Stuart and Gabby just losing out to the same player 13-11 in the fifth set.

Division 1 – **Warren C 5** (Bruce Yao, James Hamblett, John Cox) vs **Warren D 2** (Mark Redford, Arthur Hawkins, Grant Whitfield)

Tension was in the air like it always is when two teams of the same club meet. With each occupying opposing ends of the league table, you may be forgiven for thinking the C team had this in the bag but you would be wrong. Wins for both Bruce and James put them two up but then Mark pulled one back beating John in straight sets. A very important game four where James was made to work exceptionally hard by Grant before just edging it 11-9, 14-12, 13-11. With both Bruce and James being taken to final legs and Arthur just losing out to John this was never an easy victory.

Division 2 – **Warren F 6** (Victor Ramirez-Rioja, Stuart Marquis, Colm Bushell) vs **KLM A 0** (Dave Saunders, Danny Bates, Steve King)

Our highflying F team took the cup with a fairly easy win dropping just two legs all evening. KLM despite bringing in their top player had no answer against the side that have yet to be beaten in this division. Once again Victor (who has lost only once this season) led the way and was ably supported by the rest of the team.

Division 3 – **Warren K 5** (Danny Emery, Arshbir Singh, Mike Roberts) vs **Royston F 4** (Alan Chapple, Steve Hutchings, Findlay Livingstone) We may have beaten this team comfortably in the league but we were made to work harder this time. The evening started badly with Danny surprisingly losing out to Findlay, and it got worse when



Warren K victorious cup winners; (l-r) Arshbir, Michael and Danny.

Michael lost to Steve. However, Arshbir pulled one back by beating Alan and this provided the catalyst for a fight back. Danny began producing the table tennis we know he is capable of and suddenly the match stood at 4-4. The honour was left to an extremely nervous Arshbir to see out the match with a win over Findlay and the cup was safely in our hands.

National Cadet League

The weekend of 20/21 January saw the second round of this season's NCL. We arrived in the midst of a power cut (well its different from having no heating which was the case on the first weekend) resulting in a two hour delay before matches could commence.

Our A team were unbeaten so far in division one going into the session and continued this with a 9-0 demolition of Twickenham Brunswick 1 in their first match. Well done to James Hamblett, Victor Ramirez Rioja and Danny Emery for keeping clean sheets. The second match was a much tougher affair against Fusion 1 who had strengthened their squad from the one we defeated in November and who now had three England Cadet ranked players to be overcome. Once again, James showed his class winning a maximum and with Victor pulling out a very good win over Larry Trumpauskas, whose father is the current England No 1 veteran, a scoreline of 4-5 was all we could achieve as Arshbir could not secure a win on this occasion. The team recovered well in their final match of the day seeing off Cumberland TTC 1 by a score of 8-1. In this match, both James and Arshbir came away unbeaten with Danny unlucky to lose out to Max Conway 11-6 in the fifth and final set.

Our B team meanwhile we're doing the business in division three -well, against the teams that turned up anyway as one failed to show. They opened with a 9-0 whitewash over Cumberland TTC 2 the team promoted from division 4 at the beginning of the day and followed this up with a 7-2 victory over Nightingale Academy 1. Both Isabelle Lacorte and Meth Wijeyekoon remained unbeaten whilst George Thorn managed four from six.

In division four, our C team continue to battle well winning two matches and losing one. Against Nightingale 2 we had a good 8-1 win with maximums from both Heidi Oestreicher and Matt Roberts with Indu Pawar winning two. Against Fusion 3, a game played against the backdrop of the most unsporting behaviour I have witnessed in my time covering NCL events, our team deserves great credit for not rising to the bait even though it played its part in us losing 1-8 . Our win came from Heidi who managed to shut out the abuse and focus on the task in hand. We could have and perhaps should have had a second win when Francesca Preston was extremely unlucky to lose 9-11 in the fifth set. However, the team were in control once more in their final match gaining a 6-3 win over Twickenham Brunswick 3. A good team performance this with Heidi, Indu and Francesca all on the score sheet with two wins apiece.

Milton Keynes Junior Open



James receiving his U/13 award from tournament organiser Mike Atkinson

Many congratulations to the club's James Hamblett on winning the U/13 event when this competition was held early in the New Year. Playing some awesome table tennis, James took out Bertie Kelly (Somerset) the England No 5 in the semis before going on to beat Felix Thomis (Berkshire) the England No 3 in the final. Although not reaching James' heights, some of our other competitors did well. Victor Ramirez Rioja almost made the final six, George Thorn

battled well and came away with a couple of wins, whilst relative newcomers to

competition Heidi Oestreicher and Indu Pawar were both on the score sheet and learning from the experience with Indu just failing to beat Sasha O'Halloran the current England U/13 No 35.

Isabelle named in England's Inaugural 9-13 Squad

Great things continue to happen for our young players with Isabelle Lacorte being named for the England 9 to 13 years squad.



Isabelle in action

Twelve boy's and eight girls made the cut with the group being based at the University of Nottingham under the direction of England Head Coach Alan Cooke. This will act as a feeder into the England Youth Squad.

England Junior Ranking Lists

The latest England ranking list has now been published and the club is proud to announce the following where it involves the clubs' junior members.

England U/12 Girls – Isabelle Lacorte – No 2

England U/13 Boy's – James Hamblett – No 11, Victor Ramirez Rioja – No 28

England U/13 Girl's – Heidi Oestreicher – No 41

England Cadet Girl's – Ilyssa Lacorte – No 16

Club Dinner

The Club's annual dinner will take place on Saturday 28th April at the Green Man, Stanford, Beds SG18 9JD. All members are invited including juniors and their families. I believe that our Chairman has already begun ringing round to get an idea of who may be interested in attending.

Club Tournament

We have a bumper entry for this years' event with all divisions being well represented. Battle will commence over the weekend of 3/4 March and spectators including family members would be most welcome. Start time on both days' is expected to be 9.00am.

Top seeds are;

Premier - Marek Mastalerczyk, Division 1 - Bruce Yao, Division 2 - Victor Ramirez-Rioja and Division 3 – Arshbir Singh

Could this be the end of the wooden blade?

The ITTF have begun a study and review of materials used in table tennis bats. The study could lead to the abolition of the rule specifying that at least 85% of the blade by thickness shall be of natural wood. Other sports, such as tennis, badminton and squash have previously made the switch to materials such as

carbon fibre, plastic and metal. A proposal has been put forward by Hong Kong and South Korea to change the rule. The ITTF are now expected to set up a Working Group to explore a change in the rules to: "the blade shall be made of one or more layers of natural wood or other solid materials, without cavities and not compressible". Changing the materials used to produce blades could reduce the cost of manufacturing and bring down equipment prices for players. *"but don't hold your breath"....."Editor"*.

Knowing the pace that the ITTF move, most of us will probably be pushing up daisies before anything is set in motion....."Editor".