

WARREN SPRING TABLE TENNIS CLUB NEWSLETTER

June Edition

Welcome to this the last newsletter for this season. We shall return again in early September

Final Positions

With the league season now over, we can reflect on how our teams performed. Best of the bunch were our B team finishing in third place in the premier division, our E team occupying the same spot in division one whilst the H and J teams finished as runners up and third respectively in division two.

North Herts Senior Closed Tournament

The North Herts Senior Closed Divisional Tournament took place last month with club members achieving good results. The premier division title was won by the B team's John McCance who defeated Gavin Booth from Letchworth Settlement in the final. The division one event was won by Charlie Baines with Ilyssa Lacorte winning division three. Charlotte Marsden was runner up in the division two event.

North Herts Junior Closed Tournament

Warren Spring juniors swept the board at this year's North Herts Junior Tournament taking all but one of the trophies on offer. In the boy's U/18's Bruce Yao beat Bedwell's Josh Ybenez, in the U/15's Bruce beat George Whitley and the U/11's was won by Danny Emery who defeated James Hamblett. In the junior girl's event, Charlotte Marsden just edged out Ilyssa Lacorte in five close sets, with Isabelle Lacorte beating Maddie Whitley in the girls U/11.

North Herts Cobb Cup Final

This season's Cobb Handicap Cup final brought together two teams from Warren Spring. Our B team were giving away 199 points over thirty six sets to our J team from division two and they knew the task would not be an easy one. Things started well for the B team with Gabriella Tankel scoring a decisive victory over Charlie Shephard, and with Marek Mastalerczyk and John McCance scoring just about what was needed against Piers Gibson-Birch and Bruce Yao. The match was very much "up for grabs" until the sixth game which saw Piers' in tremendous form to take two sets from John. This gave Bruce real inspiration when in game seven he did the same to Marek and the team from the premier division was now beginning to waver. Points were then not easy to come by against a J team who really had their "tails up" and by the ninth and final game even a player of Gabriella's class could not pull the deficit back. When all the points were added our J team had won by a respectable 46 points but well done to our B team on making it to the final something that very few teams from the premiership do.

Club Tournament 2016

The 2016 Annual Club Tournament saw a near record number of entries contesting the four events on offer. In the division three competition, both the groups and quarter finals went to form the quarters seeing only Oliver Dorn dropping a set to Thomas Ronayne before making it through to the semis. In the semi finals John Gallagher (seeded 1) saw off young James Hamblett in a good contest coming through 12-10, 11-7, 11-9 whilst Ilyssa Lacorte (seeded 2) had no difficulty in beating Oliver 11-7, 11-3, 11-6.

The final provided us with a marathon of a match as Ilyssa struggled to get her game going against the more experienced John who started in dominant fashion taking the first two sets 11-5, 12-10. However it was then Ilyssa who at just twelve years of age started to show real resilience as she clawed her way back into the match taking the next two sets 11-9, 11-8 to level at 2-2. The final set saw Ilyssa really up her game being prepared to trade blows and out push her opponent before using her hitting ability to take the set out 11-7 and so become the club's division three champion by a score of 5-11, 10-12, 11-9, 11-8, 11-7.



Division 3 champion Ilyssa and runner up John

The division two event saw fourteen competitors playing in two groups of five and one of four. Almost immediately, the fancied players began to fall with the top two seeds Samantha Pearson and Kevin Yao failing to make it out of their group. The winners of groups one and two Dave Saunders and Charlotte Marsden automatically went through to the semi finals whilst the other two places were determined through the play offs which saw Charlie Shephard defeat Ilyssa Lacorte and Bruce Yao defeat Dante Lacorte to make it through. The semis brought together Dave and Bruce and Charlotte and Charlie. Both games were extremely tight affairs indeed, with the conventional styles of Charlotte and Bruce taking on their more unorthodox and awkward pimple rubber exponents. In the first, Dave took a two set lead only for Bruce to pull back the third. Everyone felt the fourth could be vital as Bruce was slowly beginning to get into the match. Despite a gallant effort from the young man Dave just held on to ensure his place in the final winning 11-7, 11-7, 8-11, 11-8. The second brought together Charlotte and Charlie in what was the contest of the day. In a marvellous game of thrills, spills and emotion the game ebbed and flowed. Charlotte took the first set with some fine attacking play, Charlie the second with some amazing retrieving, back came Charlotte 2-1, Charlie levelled again at 2-2, but it was Charlotte who held her nerve to run out the winner 11-8, 10-12, 11-8, 9-11, 11-9 in a thrilling exhibition of fine table tennis. The final was a different affair entirely, the game being much more "cat & mouse" with the chance to open up play being very difficult indeed. Dave won the first two sets only to see Charlotte come back to level. With the final set standing at 5-5 Dave produced first a net and

then an edge to sink Charlotte's hopes and willpower as he went on to win 11-9, 11-3, 8-11, 7-11, 11-7 to become division two champion for 2016.



Division 2 champion Dave with runner up Charlotte

The division one event saw no less than eighteen players bidding to become the club champion for 2016. The group stages threw up no real surprises as the top eight came through to take their place in the quarter finals. Top seed Maciej Demski then took out John Cox in straight sets, whilst David Kells needed four to account for Mark Redford. Paul Waterman provided stubborn resistance for Charlie Baines, Charlie making a comeback to competitive table tennis after four years away but it was he who finally came through 11-3, 7-11, 11-13, 11-8, 11-4. The match of the round saw Bill Price come back from 0-2 down to finally get the better of Dilshan Wijesekera in a thrilling 4-11, 8-11, 11-8, 11-8, 11-8 contest. The semis brought together a mouth watering tie between Maciej and Charlie with the contest fully living up to its pre match expectation as both players treated us to a grand display with two differing styles making it all the more interesting. Maciej's game is all about aggressive top spin attack whilst Charlie's is more technical (some may say laid back) but still very much spin orientated. In the end laid back triumphed as Charlie came through 11-9, 17-15, 11-9. The other semi saw David somewhat surprisingly beat Bill, surprising in that it was such a comfortable 11-5, 11-7, 11-8 victory.

In the final Charlie demonstrated just why he was so highly ranked as a junior as he proceeded to inflict severe damage against an opponent who had played really well all day coming through to a 11-4, 11-3, 11-6 victory over David.



Division 1 winner Charlie with runner up David

The handicap event saw some fantastically close matches as only this competition can. The pick of these took place in the last 16 as Ilyssa Lacorte came through in

three extremely close sets against Charlie Shephard who I am sure was fed up to the back teeth meeting girls who just pipped him to the post (remember Charlotte the previous day). The quarters saw an all division one affair as Paul Waterman overcame Roy Jager; two youngsters both under ten years of age in James Hamblett and Danny Emery with Danny just sneaking it, and another young player Oliver Dorn getting the better of Charlie Baines. In the semi finals it was an easy win for Ilyssa over Oliver and with Paul only needing two sets to defeat Danny.

The final saw Ilyssa put in a performance far beyond her years. She took the first against Paul but then was caught in the second set at 6-6. Instead of crumbling against a player of vast experience the young lady took time out drew a breath and then went on to take the set 21-12 in a storming finish to become handicap champion.

Handicap singles winner Ilyssa with runner up Paul



A really good weekend's table tennis which I am sure everyone (even Charlie Shephard) fully enjoyed.

English Regional Finals bring Heartbreak and Joy for our Youngsters

The inaugural regional finals competition played at The Arena Sports Centre, Kettering over the weekend of 21/22 May saw a full gambit of mixed emotions. Four of our young players were on show all representing the Eastern Region. In the Girls Cadet Event Charlotte Marsden topped her group which included a really impressive win over the England No 28 Shristi Ghosh (Southern Region). Unfortunately, Charlotte could not keep the momentum going and went out in the first round to Habina Seo (Southern Region) in a really tight game finally losing out 8-11, 11-8, 7-11, 11-7, 11-9.

In the girls U/13's, Ilyssa Lacorte who was seeded one for this event, made it through the groups and to the quarter finals before being shot down by an "on fire" Mukmanee Warbuton (Yorkshire) in straight sets 13-11, 11-9, 11-5.

Competing in the boy's U/11, Danny Emery missed out on a possible semi final place when at 10-11 in the 5th set an atrocious umpiring decision saw the winning point awarded to his opponent. Despite appeals from Danny's coaches and even some members of the audience the umpire's decision stood.

A fine weekend's play from Isabelle Lacorte (Ilyssa's younger sister), saw her win silver in the girls U/11 team event on the Saturday and then win silver again on Sunday when she came runner up to Megan Jones the 3rd seed from the West Midlands in the U/11 individual competition. Isabelle had to put in a really gutsy performance in her semi when she saw her two set lead levelled by her opponent Erin Richards (South West) who had earlier put out the number 4 seed Saskia Key from the South East. However, Isabelle kept her nerve to come through 11-4, 13-11, 4-11, 9-11, 11-7. In the final against Megan although Isabelle tried her hardest it was not to be as she lost out by a score of 11-9, 11-8, 11-9.

Isabelle wearing her team and individual silver medals won at Kettering



Summer Practice Sessions

Would members please note that the club summer practice sessions will begin at Wymondley on Tuesday 21st June starting at 7.30 pm. Cost for the evening will be £3.00 per person.