

MILLENNIUM TABLE TENNIS CLUB

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22nd JULY 2009 AT THE MOLLINGTON VILLAGE HALL

This year we reached a milestone in the club's history and celebrated our tenth anniversary with yet another successful season. I will say more on this later in my report.

PLAYING RECORD

As usual I will start by reviewing the seasons playing results.

In the First Division we registered three teams - With our 'A' team, comprising Barry Hook, David Webb, Peter Boyd-Leslie and John Camilleri, successfully regaining the division one title which they narrowly lost to Sibford 'A' the previous season.

Our 'B' team – This season without Lynne Bowen who took time off to have a second baby, and Colin Astbury who left us to join the newly formed Wardington team, comprised regulars Paul Saunders and Bob Clarke, together with new members to the team Ashley Cox and William Chan. They finished in fifth position, one place higher than last time.

The newly promoted 'C' team represented by Steve Whelton, Jeff Ward and Richard Pickering, and joined later by Rob Warnes finished second from bottom. They faced an uphill struggle throughout the season but nevertheless enjoyed their experience at the much higher level of play. Hopefully they will be able to convince the BDTTA Management Committee that they are worth another season in the first division.

In the Second Division two teams were registered, with John Cook captaining the 'D' team - John's team mates were Jonathan Pape, Becky Bragg and Mark Fairbairn. This season they achieved sixth spot just two places behind the 'E' team of Robin Aston, Michael Harrison, Luke Blades and joined half-way through by Peter Harris. Peter's presence was significant in boosting the points level for the team.

Incidentally Becky's original plan was to go off to university before the start of the season, but obviously the lure of playing along side some of the club's legends and superstars proved too much to resist, but sadly this season she is definitely going to Uni. and will be missed.

Finally, in the Third Division we fielded three teams initially, but due to the unreliability of some of the players in the 'F' team it had to be disbanded and the remaining available players slotted into the 'G' and 'H' teams.

Starting with the 'G' team, represented by Elliott Roberts, Callum Fairbrother and Harry Bissett, who at times struggled to turn out with a full side, they managed to avoid the wooden spoon finishing second from bottom, four points above fellow strugglers BGN 'B'

In contrast the 'H' team made up of Jack Shardlow, Oliver Mason, Cahn Gulliver, Matthew Brag and Eric Knowles performed extremely well achieving third place behind two very strong teams from Bloxham and Sibford respectively.

In addition to the league competition we also participated in the Handicap Cup Tournament and over recent years the club has performed consistently well in this competition, with this season being no exception. This time it was the turn of our 'H' team to emulate the success of the previous season by our 'D' team, and once again bring home the Handicap Cup beating Ratley 'B' at the neutral venue of Chacombe village hall.

Turning now to individual performances:

- 1 Starting with the Top Twelve Tournament John Camilleri took the honours, repeating Jay Allen's success of the previous season.

In the Advertiser Cup Competition the following players performed with distinction:-

- 2 Barry Hook won the Men's Singles with Rob Warnes runner up.
- 3 Jack Shardlow won the Cadets singles
- 4 Barry Hook partnered Gary Jackson to win the Men's Doubles
- 5 In the Veterans Singles Rob Warnes was runner up to Colin Astbury
- 6 Mark Fairbairn partnered Joe McGivern and won the Junior Doubles, beating Jack Shardlow and Oliver Mason in the final
- 7 Kitty Webb in her first Advertiser Tournament came runner-up to Alison Riley in the Ladies Singles

In the Divisional Averages the most notable performances were:-

- 1 First Division - Barry Hook – 1st place on 92%
- 2 Second Division – Peter Harris – 1st place on 92%
- 3 Third Division – Jack Shardlow – 5th place on 79%

BDTTA & COUNTY PARTICIPATION

Our involvement and support for BDTTA and County Association affairs – to a lesser extent as far as the OTTA is concerned - continues.

Barry Hook completed his third successful term of office as League Chairman and Peter Boyd-Leslie continued his administration of League tournaments in his usual down to earth and efficient way. Our thanks to both club members for the vital service they perform for the good of table tennis in our part of the world.

The Mollington Village Hall and our club facilities were made available to the League for various events such as Top Twelve Tournament, League AGM and the end of season Presentation of Trophies Finals Night.

In the Oxfordshire inter league competition we provide a number of players to represent Banbury.

COACHING

Friday night coaching continued and a number of promising young players emerged, who if they stick at it will soon be regular playing members of one of our teams. At the last count I reckon around 35% of our current players have come through the Friday night coaching system, which I hope you will agree has many benefits for the Millennium Table tennis Club, not least continuity.

Another vital aspect of Friday night's activities is the excess income it generates which goes into the general kitty and helps keep down the cost of member's annual subscriptions. This season due to a fall off in numbers attending the first session income from Friday night's activities shrunk by a round £300 but I am confident we can pull some of that back this forthcoming season, or reduce the hours slightly to cut down the hall hire charges. This is something to consider before we start up in September.

Finally, and once again with fingers well and truly crossed, I make my annual plea to senior members of the club to come along on Friday nights and help organise these sessions. A couple of extra bodies would make such a difference in the rate of improvement of the young beginners and I guarantee job satisfaction when you see what your efforts can achieve.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

It was the turn of our Dutch friends from Schijndel to pay us a visit during the latter part of October, and although John and I had very little time to cobble up a programme of visits and a table tennis tournament, things turned out fine with everyone enjoying themselves over a five day period. The table tennis tournament as far as I can remember was won by us and the final night spent at the Sun Inn ,Hook Norton, playing traditional nine pin bowling was also won by the wife of yours truly.

As usual the faithful few who acted as hosts were superb and on behalf of the club I wish to thank them again for being a crucial part of the whole proceedings.

From the 28th of October to 1st November it is our turn to pay a return visit to Schijndel, but this time due probably to the dire economic situation not as many members will be going. The current figure is eight and flights have been booked with our hosts in Holland who are well advanced with their programme, which as usual they will keep a closely guarded secret until we arrive in Schijndel.

As most of you know, but unfortunately was not well supported by a large section of the membership, we had a 10th Anniversary Tournament and Disco on Sunday 21st June. For those who did participate it was a good day out and in spite of the low turn out we managed to make a small profit of around £60 plus.

A huge vote of thanks is owed to David Webb and his family, especially wife Sonia, for all the time and effort put into preparing the tournament, barbecue, disco food, disco provider etc., etc. Had we had only say a dozen more people there, the profit would have been much higher and gone a long way to significantly reducing the end of season financial deficit. More of that later.

For the future, with fund raising in mind and trying to keep the annual subscriptions

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to sensible levels, we have had an offer from ex-member Nigel Davies to run a quiz night later in the year, which here in Mollington is very popular and normally guaranteed to raise at least one hundred pounds towards the clubs funds.

FINANCES

You have just heard our Treasurer's report and it is quite clear we need to look seriously at finding alternative ways of raising money in order to keep the club afloat.

One way, as already mentioned, is a Quiz Night and possibly repeating the Barbecue, Tournament and Disco format held recently. However, if the latter is tried again all our members must respond positively and take into account that their support will help them keep the club alive and ensure that annual subscriptions are within sensible and affordable limits.

On the subject of annual subscriptions I cannot stress enough the importance of all members paying them on time. The start of any season is when we need adequate funds available to pay the initial costs that occur – mainly registration fees to the BDTTA and other items that we inevitably require in order to ensure that all members have the best facilities on hand for when the matches start.

WEB SITE

As you know we have a website, albeit somewhat dormant due to lack of experienced people to run it. I still believe, however, that it can and ought to be a vital communication tool which should be exploited, and with this in mind I am going to ask Rob Warnes for his help, as I understand that he has offered to look after the BDTTA website for the next season.

TEN YEARS

At the beginning of this report I mentioned that we had reached a milestone and just finished a successful ten years as an affiliated member of the Banbury and District Table Tennis Association. To date after the Forum Club in Oxford we are, as far as I know, the second largest club in Oxfordshire and well placed to consolidate and improve our current situation.

Over the past ten years we have grown from an initial four teams set up to seven teams, even fielding nine teams a couple of years ago.

During that time we have won the First Division Championship twice, the Second once and been runners up on numerous occasions in all three divisions.

In the Top Twelve tournament we have had three successes.

The Handicap Cup has been won three times.

Our Juniors have played for the county on numerous occasions.

In the Advertiser Cup we have had massive success right across the board.

In the Divisional Championships and end of season averages we have also excelled.

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So as you can see our presence on the table tennis scene in the Banbury area has been influential and quite simply down to the efforts and loyalty of our members.

Talking of members I recently checked the numbers who have been registered with the club since 1999-2000 season and it amounts to just seventy. Currently it about thirty four. The other thirty six have either decided to hang up their bats, move out of the area or like Lynne Bowen and Rebecca Teideman have babies and ensure that the future membership is adequately catered for.

Where the next ten years will lead us, it is anyone's guess, but I am sure with the present people and its record of success this club can go on to achieve much more.

CONCLUSIONS

It is now close to the end of this report and as usual I cannot end it without saying a few words about the efforts and contributions made by my fellow committee members.

Starting with Malcolm who has served the club as its treasurer for five years and throughout has handled its finances impeccably. I am grateful that he has agreed once again to continue in this all important role. With his firm hand on the club's finances you can rest assured that its funds are safe. On behalf of Millennium many thanks for his dedicated service it is genuinely appreciated.

John likewise has been your constantly reliable and enthusiastic secretary. He keeps me on my toes whenever I need reminding of things to do. He is always around to lend a helping hand and play an important part in all matters relating to the club's affairs especially in organising the Schijndel exchange visits. This season, as well as the Ten Years Celebration where he helped out in many ways before and during the event, he also played a major part in the Handicap Team Tournament the club organised for the Third Division teams towards the end of the season. Thank you John for your valued contribution.

Finally, Peter Harris who is the Junior Representative on the Management Committee and a fairly quiet modest person. He is a great asset to the club in many ways, and in spite of his many other activities outside the club – he has assisted me at the coaching sessions, and amongst many other things made himself available for opening up the premises when other key holders are not present due to other commitments. So thank you Peter for your contribution to the smooth running of this club.

So we come to the end of my annual report and I would like to say thank you for your attention and if it is your wish, I would like to make myself available for the position of Chairman once again for the next twelve months - thank you.

R Aston - Chairman 22.07.09

PS - I forgot to mention when covering my coaching comments that Jack Shardlow

was the tenth recipient of the President's Shield, which was presented to him at the Tenth Anniversary Disco night by our President Mr Bobby Bragg.