

BATTS Junior Open League - A Flying Start



Ready for action at the start of the second round of matches on Saturday 17th October

photo Andrew Webb

Starting a new league has been an exciting venture for BATTS. This meets the urgent need to provide regular competition for young players ranging from near beginners to advanced.

The league is based at BATTS but welcomes participation from juniors anywhere. The format is extremely flexible - players compete on an individual basis, not in teams. All matches take place on Saturday afternoons. The league system makes full use of our great facilities, with continuous play on all tables.

There are two groups, based on age - the Under 12 group is for players in school years up to Y7 and the Under 15 group is for those in Y8 - 10.

Each age group is then split into a number of divisions. During the afternoon everyone plays all the others in their current division. We have six rounds, spread over six Saturday afternoons starting from mid-September and finishing in

March. After each round, we publish the latest tables. For the following round, the top players in the lower divisions are promoted, and some may be relegated. This means that the competitors will not be playing against the same people in each round.

We have had 50 players register so far and there is a waiting list of others who would like to join. At the end of the season we shall present prizes based on various criteria. These are still being considered but we shall definitely take progress and persistence into account.

It is very clear, from having just completed two rounds, that the league is a popular idea. I have had many positive comments from parents about how much their children enjoyed the afternoon, and I think they were also pleased that play was continuous so that they were not waiting around with long periods of inactivity.

The league has been so popular that we are now thinking seriously about how we should extend the idea in future. We are aware that in some areas a similar flexible format has been adopted to allow senior players to take part, sometimes as a summer league. Let us know your thoughts and ideas about this. You can see the latest league tables on our notice board at BATTS or (if you are reading the online version of BATTs News) by clicking [HERE](#).

The next round of matches is on Saturday 14th November.

New Bats from Old

Thanks to all our kind members who have donated their used sheets of rubber and spare blades. This has allowed us to refurbish rackets for beginners. Please continue passing on these items - just leave them in the office for my attention.

Graham

Crystal Award for BATTs

We received another welcome boost for our club funds during October when we were chosen to receive a special crystal award by the **Jack Petchey Foundation**. Marking the charity's 15th birthday, they selected 150 of their groups to receive an extra grant of £1,500. This is over and above the regular support we receive from the generous foundation. Neil and Josh went to the awards ceremony at County Hall in London, where they were photographed along with some of the other Harlow-based winners including our friends who run the karate club at Norman Booth.



We shall soon be selecting the winners of our regular monthly awards for October and November.

British League Update

It has been a busy few weeks for our British League teams. Only a fortnight after hosting the first weekend of the Premier Division matches we had another army of visiting players when we staged the first round of matches in Division 1.

The eight teams played some very fine table tennis, with much of the play on a par with the thrilling encounters we'd seen in the Premier Division. We had six players in our squad playing for BATTs 2 in four matches. Our team finished the weekend creditably in third place in the division having lost only one match to Nottingham Sycamore 2. The Nottingham team look favourites to win the division - they dropped only 8 sets over the weekend and 4 of them were to BATTs.

Our most successful players were **Peter Cleminson**, **Ryan Fellows** and **Jordan Wykes** who all won 5 out of their 6 singles. That will be the last opportunity to see our team at BATTs this season, and in the next edition we shall report on their progress during the next set of matches being held at Draycott TTC in Derby.

While our second team were playing at BATTs, our third team – captained by **Josh Dye** – had travelled to Wellingborough for their first round of matches. Our young team found themselves up against some very experienced campaigners and, apart from two singles wins by Josh and one by **Justin Jeffery**, came away empty handed. But it was all good experience, and they will be returning to Wellingborough shortly for the second round.

In the Junior British League the first weekend of matches was played at Derby on the weekend of 17th/18th October. Our boys team (**Jordan Wykes**, **Viktor Kjellvander** and **Joe Walker**) finished the weekend in second place in their division, winning 3 out of their 5 matches. Our girls' team (**Stephi Cross**, **Hannah Burrows** and **Gracie Edwards**) finished in 4th place in division 1, having won 2 out of their five matches. We don't have to look much further ahead before our top team in the Senior British League take on another huge challenge at Nottingham on the weekend of 7th/8th November when they play the next three matches.

Coaching: Breaking all Records

Our coaching sessions at BATTS have never been busier, as you can see by the figures in the chart below. The chart shows the monthly attendance figures for each month since we became one of Table Tennis England’s first Talent Development Centres. During 2015 we have had over 300 attendances on all except two months. Judging by the number of new players joining it will not be very long before we break through the 400 barrier!

The figures include only junior players and they do not include any of the sessions organised for specific school groups - whether at BATTS or at the school.

Ultimately our success as a TDC will be based on quality not just quantity. In the end it’s all about teamwork, with three fundamental components:

- The hard work and dedication of the players
- The support of parents and other carers
- The enthusiasm and energy of the coaches

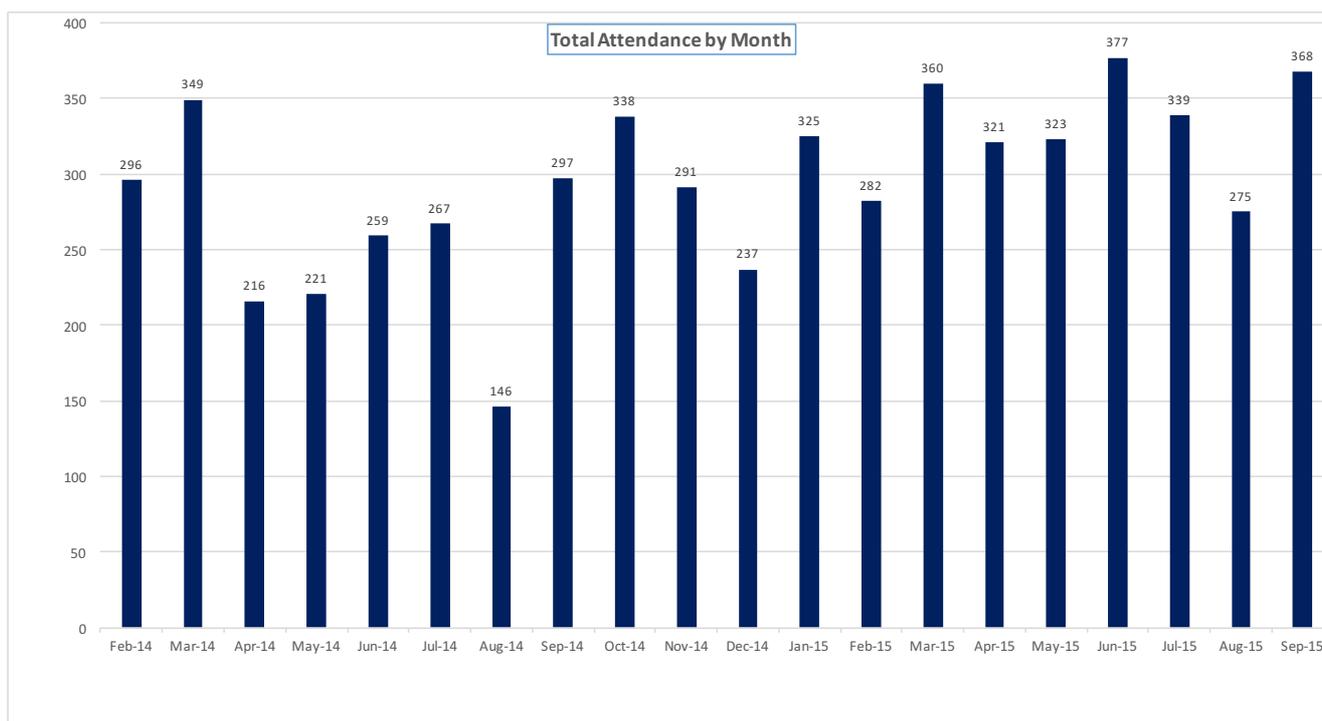
As far as the players are concerned, the emphasis is very much on their willingness to put in effort to improve. Having some natural ability does help of course, but the real champions are those who have the persistence to keep working to improve even at times when it seems like progress is slow.

Attending coaching sessions regularly is really essential for players to improve, and one our younger players, Declan Garner, has recently set an attendance record that will be very hard to beat. Declan has, at the time of writing, been at BATTS on **thirty consecutive sessions!** He is one of eight youngsters who have attended more than 150 coaching sessions since we started as a TDC. Out in front is still Alana who has notched up 202 attendances.

We are always keen to get feedback from parents and players about how we could improve our coaching, so let’s hear from you!



Declan: 30 not out!



Congratulations

Joe Walker continues his amazing progress in the national rankings with a further leap taking him to number 33 in the Cadet ranking list. Joe has again been very busy on the tournament circuit and had many excellent performances during October including reaching the final of the Band 2 event at the Sussex 4 Star

Our two teams in the National Junior League played their first round of matches at Ellenborough and had a successful day. Our teams have both been allocated to the second division which means they will end up playing each other at some point. In the first round, on 10th October our B team (**Charlotte Marsden, Diesel Harvey, Jaz Harvey and Samadhi Udamulla**) won all three of their matches and finished the day at the top of the division. Non-playing captain Josh Dye reported that Charlotte played particularly well and was unbeaten. Our A team (**Methmal Udamulla, Isaac Hughes and Charlie Read**) had only two matches winning one and losing one.

Ethan Walsh marches on with more tournament successes including the Cadet event in the Sussex 4 Star. Congratulations also for being selected again for the England Performance Squad, which means he will be training with the national team. More globetrotting for Ethan shortly - he has also been chosen to play in the Hungarian and Portuguese Open tournaments!

Another recent batch of promotions for members of our coaching squads. Congratulations to the following who have moved into the "B" Squad:

Oliver Brewin, Jake Harvey, Cody Prentice, Te Steward and Zen Rapley. These players have now been promoted to the "A" Squad: **Christian Brissett, Diesel Harvey, Jaz Harvey and Charlie Read.**

Finally, well done **Jess Jarvis** for winning the Band 1 event at our recent Junior Super Series tournament.



Joe Walker: Sussex Finalist



Charlotte Marsden: Unbeaten

What's @ BATTs

Monday 9th November

Harlow League tournament starts 7.30pm (we shall need to finish coaching then, so A Squad are welcome to arrive early)

Wednesday 11th November

Same as Monday (see above)

Saturday 14th November

BATTs Junior Open League - 3rd Round. Arrive by 12.30pm play starts 1pm.

Sunday 22nd November

Cadet Super Series play starts 10am **£215 prize fund!**

Friday 4th December

Senior Super Series from 7.30pm (replaces Club Night). Entry is now full for this event.

Sunday 20th December

First ever BATTs Club Championships - see Adam to register.

Sunday 3rd January

Junior Super Series play starts 10am **£375 prize fund!**

Entry forms for all the Super Series competitions are on our website on the Tournaments page.

Natasha Walsh hopes to organise a Christmas social for adults at BATTs. As soon as the details are finalised we shall email members with the information. Meanwhile you can contact Natasha for more information: njwalsh@live.co.uk

Life Saver

Did you know that we have a defibrillator at BATTs? If used promptly it could save the life of a heart attack victim. The machine is simple to use but we plan to have some training sessions over the next few months when our friendly first aid trainer **Tony West** will visit BATTs during one of our busy periods to show everyone the basics. The defibrillator is in the cupboard shown in the photo (right).

