



Obituaries: Hill Dowsett and Roger Fuller

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It is with great sadness that the Chelmsford & District Table Tennis League Committee report the death of Life Member Hill Dowsett, a coach of over 40 years' standing in Chelmsford and Essex, and also of former league player Roger Fuller.

Hill died on Tuesday 18 October 2018, aged 81. Hill became a Life Member of the League in 2002 and was also the recipient of the League's service award, the Rosebery / Pope & Smith Award, in 2005. As a player he was the League's Seven Down Singles winner in 1977, 1979 and 1980. He first played in the League in the 1960s.

However, it is as a coach that Hill is best known. Daughter Julie (now Julie Johnson) has been the winner of the M&G Investments Ladies' Singles title in the Chelmsford Championships an incredible 23 times. Julie was a magnificent winner of the English Schools Table Tennis Association International event Intermediate Singles title in 1979.

Son Terry is a six times winner of the Men's Singles in the Braintree League. Keeping it in the family Hill's grandchildren – Scott Dowsett, Ryan Gooday and Rykki Vansertima – all became County ranked Juniors and all benefited from Hill's coaching.

Hill was Chelmsford League Coaching Officer for a number of years and worked in both the Chelmsford and Braintree Leagues with another well-known local coach, Peter Hill.

Hill had a spell as County Coaching Officer having also been the Assistant County Coaching Officer to Ron Gore in the early 1970s. Literally hundreds of different players have benefited from his coaching and insight. For those with good memories the following players from Chelmsford and Braintree have all been the beneficiaries of Hill's Coaching – Brandon Crouchman, Neil Gooday, Richard Darnell, Shane Champion, Dave Richardson, Paul Richardson, Paul Wellington, Kevin Howard, Martin Wells, Steve Kerns, David Kerns, Cathy Eakin, Claire Milburn, Paul Chaplin, Nick Mills, Martin Green, Robin Lang, Tricia Taylor, Paul Ashley, Steve Scholz, Stevie Pell and Dacre Pell. These are just a few of the players who Hill was able to enthuse.

Hill had a spell as county coach in Suffolk as well and ran the Suffolk County second team. When the British League started Hill was the Manager / Coach of the Witham Town Football Club team whose players included son Terry, Robin Lang, Peter Hayden, Derek Wood, Malcolm Francis and Nick Standen. Hill's commitment to encouraging Juniors to play the sport can be seen by the fact that in 2007 the Hill Dowsett Junior Award was established to reward the Junior player who having played in 80% of their side's games has the best percentage record in the Chelmsford League.

Always mindful of the fact that players have different levels of natural ability Hill had no problem if it became clear that a player's likely potential wasn't too high. However he had little time for players who didn't put in maximum effort. Hill is the most prolific coach ever in the history of the Chelmsford & District Table Tennis League.

The funeral is at Chelmsford Crematorium on Wednesday 14 November 2018 at 13.30 hours with a wake to follow at Baddow Village Recreation Ground.

Sadly, we also have to report the death of another former table tennis player from the Chelmsford & District Table Tennis League. Roger Fuller, died aged 74 on Tuesday 30 October 2018 at Basildon Hospital where he had spent the last three weeks of his life.

Roger was a member of Chelmsford Table Tennis Club who played in a variety of different venues – Broomfield Village Hall, Springfield Community Centre, Moulsham School and St John Payne School as part of teams that included among others Alan Clancy, Phil Sharp, Chris Knight, Steve Kerns, Gary Copsey, Norman Hayes and John Wickens.

He also played for Stock Table Tennis Club in the Brentwood League – again with Alan Clancy and Phil Sharp and he had a three-year spell as Press Officer for the Brentwood League. He reached top division level in both Leagues and it is recalled that he coped well when the loop was introduced into local League play when many players took a lot of time to adjust.

Roger loved all sports and apart from table tennis he also loved badminton, football (he was an Arsenal supporter), snooker and golf. He was also a very keen gardener and a great friend of Ted Knight (father of Chris).

Roger was extremely generous and would regularly give friends and colleagues gifts of produce he had grown in his garden. He was also very intelligent and well-read and a great raconteur and he loved meeting up with friends in the local Pub to debate all manner of subjects including of course sport.

He will be sadly missed by all those who knew him. The funeral is at Chelmsford Crematorium at 14.30 hours on Thursday 15 November 2018.

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