



Pride of Table Tennis winners announced!

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The unsung heroes of table tennis were honoured at the Pride of Table Tennis Awards dinner on Saturday night.

Hosted by Table Tennis England, the annual awards seek to honour the volunteers, officials, coaches and personalities who are the heartbeat of our sport.

This year, more than 70 nominations were received from the table tennis family, in a range of categories including clubs, leagues, coaches, volunteers and officials.

A judging panel selected the shortlist, and last night the winners were revealed at the awards ceremony at the 2019 National Conference.

Pictures by Ian Hebden

Inspirational Story of the Year



Philip's award is collected on his behalf by Jim Hurford from Stroud TTC. It was presented by Table Tennis England Chief Executive Sara Sutcliffe

Winner: Philip Batchelor

Parkinson's patient Philip Batchelor was apprehensive about attending Stroud Table Tennis Club for the first time, thinking that someone who was unsteady on their feet and with shaking hands, would not be welcome and that he wouldn't be good enough.

However, he took the plunge, and with support from club members giving him table time and a few tips to help his technique, he has gradually developed his forehand and backhand to such an extent that he can now play 20-30 shot rallies – and has a mean forehand – demonstrating his determination not to let Parkinson's dictate every aspect of his life.

You can watch the below video, where he talks about the importance of the sport.

Philip was unable to collect the award in person, as he is currently in America undergoing a new treatment for Parkinson's.

Young Volunteer of the Year



Jordan Abbot receives the award from Board member Simon Grew

Winner: Jordan Abbott; runner-up: Ben Kelly

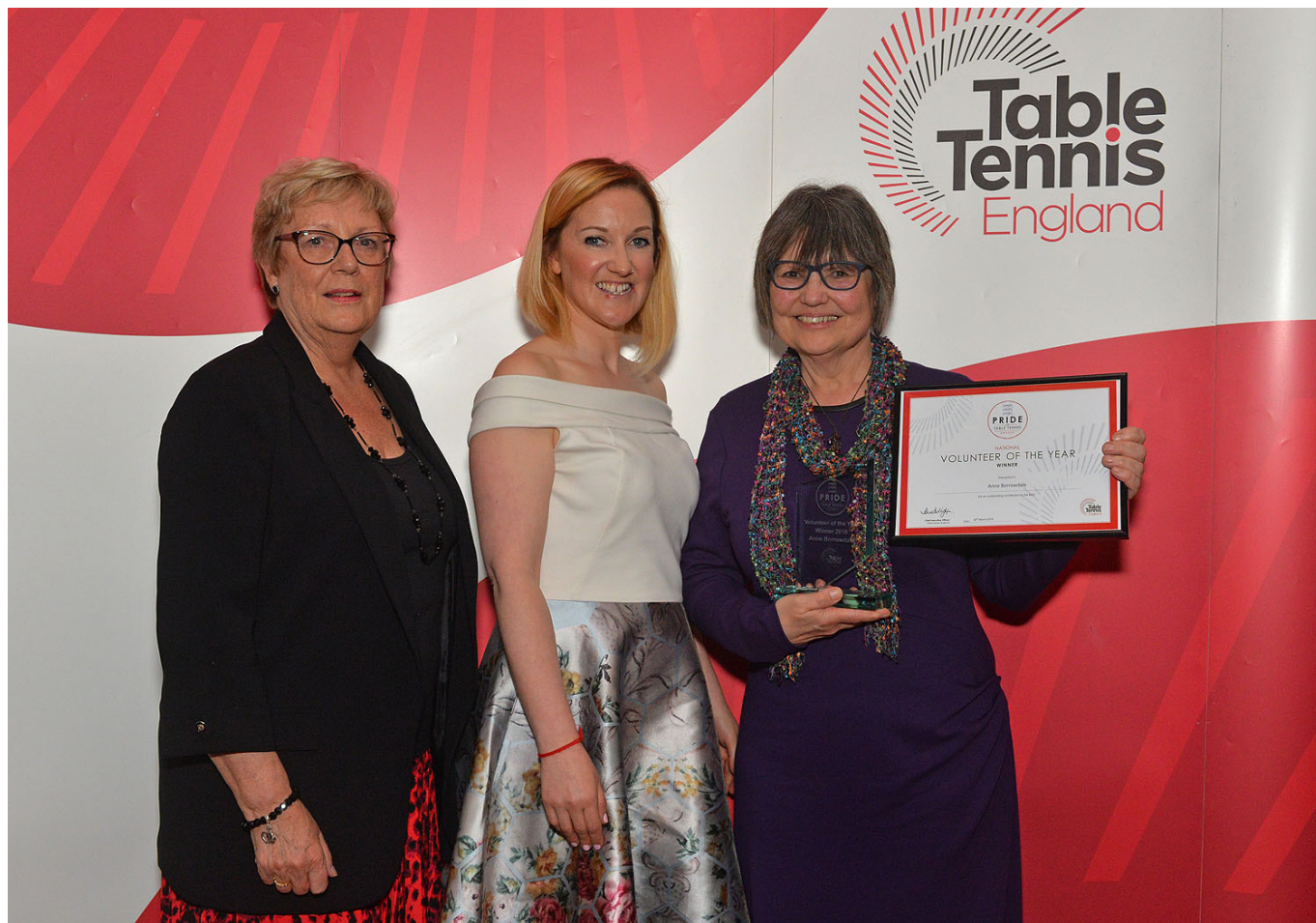
Jordan, 23, has made an outstanding contribution to Halton Table Tennis Club this year, encouraging more people in the local community to play table tennis.

Among his efforts this year are: covering for over two months when sickness kept the chairman and organiser away, initiating a summer camp, helping run an after-school club for a local primary school and over-50s daytime sessions, assisting in event set up for national, regional, county, schools and local competitions and clearing up after the events, and coaching young players at events around the country.

Speaking after receiving his award, he said: "I feel very proud to have received this award. It's really important for people, particularly young people, to volunteer at clubs because without them, many clubs would struggle to run.

Volunteer of the Year

Sponsored by Sport:80



Anne Borrowdale with Table Tennis England President Jill Parker MBE (left) and Development Officer Gemma Parry

Winner: Anne Borrowdale; runner-up: Derek Connop

Anne Borrowdale is an exceptional individual who goes far beyond the call of duty to raise the profile of table tennis, ensuring that the community of Oxford and beyond can access a range of table tennis activities.

As Development Officer of the Oxford Table Tennis League, Anne puts in countless hours organising, coaching and developing the sport in the area. In the past 12 months, Anne has worked with Table Tennis England staff on creating a new action plan through the BeTT project, to encourage more people to consider coaching. She is also at the forefront of league table tennis activity at Cowley and supports Oxford City Council's Ping! Project, which has been instrumental in transitioning the occasional player to regular sessions at Cowley.

Speaking after receiving her award, she said: "It was really surprising. It is just really nice to feel appreciated because you don't do these things to get an awards or anything, but it is great that people recognise that I put in a lot of hard work."

Coach of the Year

Sponsored by Sportscover



Coach of the Year Graham Coupe with Table Tennis England Head Coach Alan Cooke

Winner: Graham Coupe; runner-up: John Dennison

Graham set up Garstang Table Tennis Club from scratch and gives up his time seven days a week to make it a success. As well as developing Garstang as a regional training centre and raising countless funds from local businesses, he has produced several members for the county and England squads. He has set up regional training days, brings top coaches in, and runs National Cadet Leagues events. He also spends his weekends travelling around tournaments coaching kids.

Speaking after the award ceremony, he said: "I am feeling surprised. There is such a great calibre of coaches all over the country, so I really didn't expect to be nominated for the award, let alone win it. The Pride of Table Tennis Awards was a really good evening with well deserved winners in all categories."

Contribution to Table Tennis

Sponsored by The Jockey Club Services



Table Tennis England Chairman Sandra Deaton presents the award to Don Evans' son Russell

Winner: Don Evans; runner-up: Peter White

Don has been responsible for running Droitwich Spa TTC since 1977. He attends every home league match for all eight sides which play in the league, ensures that the sports hall is cleared of all other equipment, clearing all workout equipment out of the way, before setting up the hall with enough tables to go ahead with matches.

He coaches every Thursday evening, runs weekly community sessions and is also Chairman of the Bromsgrove and Redditch Table Tennis League. Last year, Don also ran a table tennis marathon in aid of a machine which helps treat prostate cancer. After over four decades of contributing to table tennis in the area, he has now decided to take a step back from running the club.

Technical Official of the Year



Jim Kenny (left) receives the award from Board member Tom Purcell

Winner: Jim Kenny; runner-up: Nico Caltabiano

Jim has an outstanding level of dedication to table tennis – spending most weekends assisting at events all over the country. He acts as a Tournament Organiser (TO4) for a number of Table Tennis England events, including being the lead organiser for Women's British League and also assisting with the Junior British League and Veterans' British League, and referees and umpires for a multitude of clubs and leagues up and down the country. His expertise as a Field of Play Manager is invaluable to the Competitions and Events department.

Speaking after winning the award, he said: "I'm honoured to get this award. Without the other people I work with, it wouldn't be the same. We need more volunteers to come forward, especially at National events. You get to see the elite athletes close up."

Inclusivity Award

Winner: Hassan Ahmadi; runner-up: Jade Horsley

Hassan, a volunteer at the Abbey Community Centre in the London Borough of Camden, was recognised for his work within the area where 'social isolation, poor physical health and financial disadvantage affect many in the diverse community'.

He has been running table tennis session for nearly two years, having completed a coaching qualification with Table Tennis England, and helps set-up and run tournaments as part of its Neighbours2Friends programme. The programme aims to bring together people from two local housing estates using fun and inclusive activities. Many attendees come from disadvantaged or BAME backgrounds.

Hassan also supports community events, such as a table-tennis pop-up outside the local library, to help recruit more members to the club and to the community centre itself.

Ping! Personality of the Year



Derek Seager with Board member Doug Livingstone

Winner: Derek Seager; runner-up: Anna Whilding

Derek was recognised for his work in the Camberley Ping Pong Parlour, delivering coaching sessions and helping the parlour become the success it is.

Derek, who has also been the coaching officer for Aldershot & District Table Tennis league since at least 1980, gives up his bank holidays, weekends and evenings to help at the parlour, and now has over 70 people taking part in the coaching days – many of which now attend Derek's local club nights as a result.

Club of the Year

Sponsored by Tees Sport



Winners from Portishead with Table Tennis England Deputy Chairman Susie Hughes (right) and Clubs, Schools and Leagues Manager Claire Brockwell (left)

Winner: Portishead Table Tennis Club; runners-up: Goodwin Table Tennis Club, Waterside Table Tennis Club

The club has made huge strides in its table tennis offering in the last year and continues to promote and grow the sport in its local area. Among its key achievements in the last year are: a regular Monday evening coaching session at a local youth centre, the creation of a regular after school club with a local school, the establishment of a 12-table regular club training night that attracts players from other club, seven members attending a Level 1 Coaching course, two teams entered in the 2018/2019 National Junior League and two teams in the Bristol Junior League, participation in the Table Tennis England Young Ambassadors scheme, the establishment of a strong and well-run committee of volunteers – and on top of all this – providing the local Bristol League with the most teams entered in both the Winter and Summer League competitions.

Speaking on behalf of the club, Derek Connop said: “All I can say is that we are immensely proud to have received this award. It is testament to the hard work we have put in over the last few years and we see this as the start of our journey and not the end and we are going to create amazing things for table tennis in our community for the future.”

League of the Year



Board member Mike Smith (left) with representatives of Weymouth & District TTL

Winner: Weymouth and District Table Tennis League; runner-up: Liverpool & District Table Tennis League

The league has made a big impact in Dorset sport over recent years, transforming itself from a league where the average age of players was much closer to 61 than 16, to a League where 25% of the 31 teams comprise under-16s. Its participation levels have risen significantly across all age ranges, and players now have opportunities to receive coaching and play the sport six days a week.

Thanks to grants from Table Tennis England, the league set up three satellite clubs, has encouraged six players to train as coaches so youngsters no longer have to travel 40 miles to Bournemouth to receive coaching, and has enthusiastically responded to initiatives including This Girl Can. It also runs c-siders cancer rehabilitation courses in West Dorset.

Speaking on behalf of the league, Neil Hardisty said: "It is a surprise, and we feel honoured but humble as there are so many great leagues across England. We have done a lot for table tennis in the area and this is just such a nice surprise."

Partner of the Year

Winner: Jones Lang LaSalle; runners-up: Castle Mall Shopping Centre, The Jack Petchey Foundation

Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) have supported Table Tennis England's Ping Pong Parlour project since its inception in 2017. Due to their support, over 33 Ping Pong Parlours have opened since summer 2017, with eight of those being JLL centres. A further 11 are in the pipeline – with two of these being JLL centres. These parlours have helped engage thousands of people in our great game, and have the ability to attract the hardest to reach groups in

physical activity.

If you know someone whose dedication and hard work for our sport deserves to be recognised, you can nominate them for a Pride of Table Tennis Award. The nomination process will open in September 2019.

Regional winners

Presentations have been made around the country in recent weeks to the regional winners of Pride of Table Tennis Awards.

The full list of winners was:

North West

Club of the Year: Stockport Table Tennis Academy

Volunteer of the Year: Chris Garvin

Young Volunteer of the Year: Jordan Abbott

Contribution to TT: Robert Gale

Coach of the Year: Graham Coupe

North East

Club of the Year: Bishop Auckland Table Tennis Club

Volunteer of the Year: Giulio Pontone

Young Volunteer of the Year: Ben Kelly

Coach of the Year: Ben Kelly

Yorkshire

Club of the Year: Goodwin Table Tennis Club

Volunteer of the Year: Judith Silberberg

East Midlands

Club of the Year: Cliffedale Chandlers Table Tennis Club

Volunteer of the Year: Dave Silvester

Young Volunteer of the Year: Adam Harrison

Contribution to TT: Kelly Sibley

Coach of the Year: Shirley Pickering

East

Volunteer of the Year: Doug Randall

Young Volunteer of the Year: Jade Horsley

Contribution to TT: Peter White

Coach of the Year: John Alsop

West Midlands

Volunteer of the Year: Rob Whittaker

Contribution to TT: Don Evans

London

Volunteer of the Year: Sanket Shah

Coach of the Year: John Dennison

South West

Club of the Year: Portishead Table Tennis Club

Volunteer of the Year: Derek Connop

Young Volunteer of the Year: Sam O'Toole

Contribution to TT: Andy Millar

Coach of the Year: Nick Davidson

South

Club of the Year: Waterside Table Tennis Club

Volunteer of the Year: Anne Borrowdale

Contribution to TT: Colin French

South East

Volunteer of the Year: Mark Roper

Contribution to TT: David Steel

Coach of the Year: Caroline Hanson

Some of the presentation pictures are shown below:



North West Club of the Year Stockport TT Academy



East Midlands winners (from left) Kelly Sibley (Contribution to Table Tennis), Shirley Pickering (Coach of the Year), Dave Silverster (Volunteer of the Year), Cathy Steeples and Darran Leete from Cliffedale Chandlers (Club of the Year)



London Volunteer of the Year Sanket Shah



North West Volunteer of the Year Chris Garfin



North West Young Volunteer of the Year Jordan Abbott



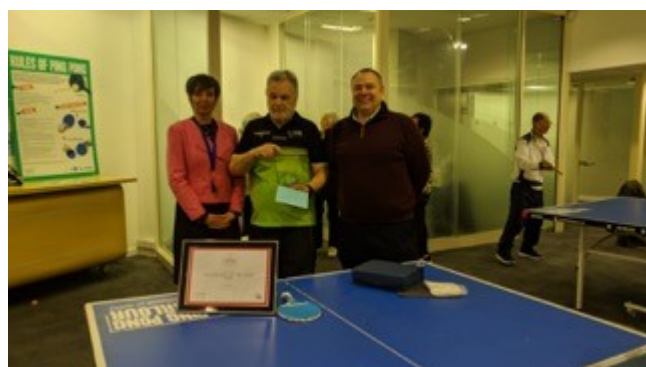
North West Coach of the Year Graham Coupe



South West Young Volunteer of the year Sam O'Toole and Coach of the Year Nick Davidson



South West Club of the Year Portishead TTC



Doug Randall, East Volunteer of the Year

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