



Spotlight 1 on Chrissy Sykes L1 Female Bursary applicant

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Over recent months Table Tennis England have been supporting over 21 Females to gain their coaching qualifications through a Female Bursary Scheme. The aim is for Table Tennis England to increase it's female coaching workforce to help sustain and increase table tennis activity, along with promoting more females involved in table tennis and the great work they are doing and want to do in the future for table tennis.

Each month, one of the females from the bursary will be promoted on the Table Tennis England website. This month's spotlight is on Chrissy Sykes who will be gaining her Level 1 coaching qualification. To find out a bit more

about the females who are part of the bursary, the following questions were asked and Chrissy has kindly submitted her responses below:

1. How did you get involved in Table Tennis?

My husband Stuart has played table tennis for a number of years and when the last of my children left home – I decided that I wanted to learn to play. I have absolutely loved the past 6 years and I now play in Barnsley and Sheffield Leagues and some Vetts competitions.



2. What or who encouraged you to take your coaching qualification?

I am also working with a young member Joe Race (who is also doing his coaching course) we are going to visit the schools to see if we can encourage some young players to get involved with our club. I hope to encourage the girls to come and try. I think sometimes it can be a bit daunting for young girls when they come into a male dominated club.

3. What are your areas of strength for being a coach? I think I am fairly good with making people feel comfortable and believe I can create a safe and fun situation for learning the game of table tennis. I have also worked with children for many years and feel comfortable working with them.



4. Are there areas that you lack confidence and knowledge on?

I would like to brush up on the rules and regulations to make sure I am teaching everything correctly from the start.

5. What do you want to gain from being part of the female bursary mentoring group?

I believe it will be a great place to get advice for different situations we may encounter with our coaching students.

You all as our mentors have a wealth of experience and it will be advantageous for all of us to have your experience to hand.

6. How would you like to be supported once you qualify as a coach?

I would like to know things that we might need to be aware of, areas where we might encounter problems.

I will be so nice to know we have a place to ask any questions we may have.

7. What is your goal with coaching

I would like to make sure that the players we have stay playing – I would like to help them with their confidence to grow to be better players. I would also like to progress to Level 2 so that I can grow with my players



8. What do you think would encourage more females to play, coach and be part of table tennis?

I do think the environment is important – I had the pleasure of starting to play in Halifax where they started a women only league.

I did my first year there and felt more confident as a player before I moved into the Barnsley League where there were only 3 women in the league that year.

I think supporting women in the game will help as well – it can be a lonely place in many leagues. Maybe we could start a Facebook Group to mentor ladies and encourage more ladies to get involved.

Thanks to Chrissy for providing us with an interesting read and to have some feedback from females working and supporting table tennis within local communities.

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