



Obituary – Peter Rainford

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I am sorry to have to inform you of the recent passing of one of Preston TT Association's longstanding members, Peter Rainford.

Although Peter never played table tennis himself, he became an important part of our league. Peter was connected to the [Preston league](#) from the early 1970's. All three of his sons, Phil, Adrian and Paul played in the Preston league. Phil and Adrian, the two eldest started playing at a youth club that Peter was one of the organisers of. This was at Penwortham St Teresa's Church Hall in Queensway. He decided, with one or two others, to start a club there and joined the league.

After a few years, the club amalgamated with Gryf TT Club and formed Penwortham Gryf.

Peter was a director of a family firm dealing in Poultry farming. On the land close to where he lived he had two chicken incubator huts which were no longer in use, so he converted one into a high class table tennis room and the club relocated there. The room, which could comfortably hold three tables for practice, was made available for players to use, having this facility available was one of the main reasons the Club did so well. It also provided a much needed home for our Town table tennis teams and practice facilities for our talented youngsters. It was also used as the practice base for the national team before playing in the Guild Hall.

Having this practice facility was one of the main reasons why Peter's youngest son, Paul, was able to reach the level he did at a very young age, representing the town team and the county team at senior level by the age of 15, he later became national boys doubles champion. Peter would spend many weekends taking Paul all over the country to compete in big tournaments.

The room was used for 30 years, by which time the new Preston TT Centre was open. Peter and his wife Pat (a behind the scenes star) then used the land the table tennis room was on, to build a new bungalow for their retirement. Their children had by this time left home, although their daughter, Liz, lived very close by, and they were able to be a big part of her family's life as her children grew up. Table tennis was by then no longer part of Peter's life and only Phil, of the three sons still plays now in Northumberland.

Preston was a strong league before the "chicken hut" was converted, but, when it opened, it took our league to another level. We went on to become a very strong league for quite a few years, winning the Lancashire & Cheshire title on numerous occasions, then winning the prestigious Men's Wilmott cup and the Women's Rose Ball Trophy.

I very much doubt all this would have been possible if we hadn't had "the room that Peter built".

Peter was always an active member of our League. He was Chairman from 1984 to 1995, then President from 1995 until 2005. He was also secretary for St Teresa's and Penwortham Gryf for many years.

He enjoyed playing golf in his later years and was an active member of Preston South Rotary Club.

Sadly, he died of pneumonia in Preston Royal Hospital on Monday 27th April, just short of his 89th birthday.

All at Preston Table Tennis send their sincere condolences to Peter's wife Pat, their sons Adrian Philip Paul and daughter Liz.

Preston Table Tennis will always be very thankful for the contribution and support Peter Rainford gave and for this, we are truly grateful.

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