



IWD: Kate Hughes Story

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For International Women's Day 2021 we're highlighting and celebrating women's achievements in table tennis.

Kate Hughes inspires young girls to take part in table tennis through her love of the sport. She plays, coaches and volunteers in table tennis, and uses her position as a P.E Teacher to educate and inspire children.

What's your involvement with table tennis?

"I play county matches, and British League, and have played in several Senior National Championships. I help with the coaching at my local club, supporting the development of other players, sharing my knowledge and experience. Being a member of the club management committee enables me to contribute to the overall running of the club, as well as its development for the future. I have recently joined the Table Tennis England Schools Committee and have been involved in helping to run the Butterfly National Schools Individual and Team Events for many years."

What do you enjoy most about table tennis?

"I have played table tennis for nearly 30 years and it has changed so much in that period (a larger ball, glue, no glue, a new scoring system), and I would say, I just enjoy playing! Meeting different people, playing and coaching in different places helps provide positive experiences and memories. I really enjoy playing in team events, such as county matches and British League."

Have you faced any challenges as a female in table tennis?

"At my local club and across the county, there are less female table tennis players, which means I have become used to training more often with male players. However, instead of seeing this as a challenge, I have always viewed it as an opportunity to train with stronger players on a regular basis."

International Women's Day 2021 goal is exceptionally positive to help celebrate and promote women's achievements across multiple areas. It is an honour to be involved!"

Have you faced any challenges as a female outside of table tennis?

“As a PE teacher, I feel one of the biggest challenges is aiming to engage more girls in physical activity and sport, and thus being a role model to help share my experiences and success with the hope of inspiring and motivating other girls and women into table tennis where possible. This includes encouraging more female coaches and volunteers.”

What’s your biggest accomplishment in table tennis?

“Over 30 years involved in table tennis, it is hard to identify a single stand-out achievement. I have lots of happy memories of success, including becoming Women’s British League Premier Division Champions in 2018, and winning a Women’s Doubles Bronze medal at the Senior National Championships 2018. As a child, I was selected to represent England in the Cadet Six Nations in France, and the English Schools Teams on four occasions in the Senior Schools Internationals.

As a coach and volunteer is very satisfying to give something back to the sport I love and enjoy so much and being selected to be a non-playing captain in two ISF World Schools Championships and multiple Senior Schools Internationals has been an honour.”

What’s your biggest accomplishment outside of table tennis?

“Again, it is hard to identify a single accomplishment, however, I am proud to be a successful PE teacher, educating, inspiring and motivating children, supporting them with their future.”

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