



Obituary: Hampshire and Waterside TTC stalwart John Fox

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Waterside TTC in Southampton is mourning the passing of match secretary John Fox. Club Chairman Colin French here pays tribute:

John started playing table tennis at Brockenhurst Youth Club in the early sixties. He entered the Youth Club into the Southampton TTA League.

Some years later he joined Lyndhurst TT Club and then in the mid-70s formed a club in Lyndhurst called Forest Circle. A few years later he rejoined Lyndhurst and played there in the first division for another ten years. After moving from East Boldre to Holbury he eventually joined Esso Table Tennis Club where they played at the Esso Recreation Club opposite the Fawley Oil Refinery.

In 1992 he became the STTA Match Secretary and continued in that role for 19 years. In addition to that role he also took on the task of Tournament Secretary in 2005 and organised the Southampton Closed for the next six years. He was made an Honorary Vice President of STTA in 2002.

In 1998 when the Esso Table Tennis room was turned into a bar, John and I looked for new premises and set up a new club called Waterside TTC. John started coaching juniors and a good group of young players started playing in the league and in only a few years the club's juniors began to enjoy success at county level. John was match secretary for WTTTC up until the day he died.

When Waterside TTC moved to new premises at Testwood in 2011 John started organising a wide range of TT Competitions. His junior competitions were very successful in that they catered for beginners and more established players. He then organised ETTA 1 Star and 2 Star competitions and hosted British League matches. With Dave Wiles John ran the Hampshire Closed for Juniors and Seniors as well as many other county and inter county matches.

Over the years John has been recognised by various different associations for his work in table tennis and has received a number of awards both at local and national level. These include, Volunteer of the Year, Contribution to Table Tennis and Service to Sport from New Forest Sports Council, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sports, Hampshire Table Tennis Association, ETTA and Table Tennis England.

During his time at Waterside TTC John has been ever present at Testwood and for many years would be at the club five nights a week as well as at weekend competitions. In more recent years when he was not so active you would still see him at the desk doing the register, collecting fees and occasionally having a snooze when it was not so busy!

John will be greatly missed by the table tennis community and especially at Waterside TTC, in this day and age it is difficult to imagine that you can find a volunteer who would devote so much of their life to the sport that we all love.

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