



Our brightest stars of 2021

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After the enforced break from competition brought on by covid restrictions, competitive table tennis was finally back on the calendar from spring 2021 as athletes returned to the national and international stage.

There were some standout performances and achievements, from British League all the way up to flagship World Table Tennis and of course the delayed Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics.

Here, in no particular order, we feature the brightest and best of the year's achievements at home and abroad.

1. Kacper Piowar

One of the brightest future stars of English table tennis, Kacper Piowar has had an incredible year. [Piowar won both the under-11 and under-12 National Championships](#) titles in July and has since gone on to impress on the international stage at various events, including reaching [the semis at the WTT Youth Contender Lignano](#) and [winning silver at the WTT Youth Contender Varazdin](#).

Piowar was also [selected to attend the ITTF World Hopes Week & Challenge in Jordan](#), and has been [selected to join the elite European Table Tennis Union \(ETTU\) under-13 squad for 2022](#).



2. Sam Walker

Sam Walker became the first English player to win a doubles title on the international circuit since the advent of the ITTF World Tour in 1996.

Walker and his Swedish partner Truls Moregard lived up to top seeding at the Czech Open in Olomouc as they defeated French duo Leo de Nodrest & Lilian Bardet.



3. Paralympics GB

The Tokyo Paralympic Games were the [most successful in the modern era for the Paralympics GB](#) table tennis team with seven medals.

Silver medals:

Will Bayley & Paul Karabardak – men’s class 6-7 team

Will Bayley – men’s class 7 singles

Bronze medals:

Sue Bailey & Megan Shackleton – women’s class 4-5 team

Aaron McKibbin, Ross Wilson, Billy Shilton – men’s class 8 team

Tom Matthews – men’s class 1 singles

Jack Hunter-Spivey – men’s class 5 singles

Paul Karabardak – men’s class 6 singles



4. Tin-Tin Ho

England’s [Tin-Tin Ho participated in her first Olympic Games](#) in Tokyo this year, and was the first British female table tennis player to qualify for the Olympics in her own right since 1996.



5. Dan Bullen

British Para Table Tennis athlete Dan Bullen achieved his [first gold on the international circuit](#) in late 2021. Bullen came through the round-robin men's class 5 singles unbeaten to take gold at the ITTF Para Copa Costa Rica.



6. Liam Pitchford and Paul Drinkhall

Liam Pitchford and Paul Drinkhall have displayed brilliant doubles performances throughout 2021, including reaching [the final of the men's doubles at the WTT Star Contender Doha](#) and the [quarter-finals of the men's doubles at the World Championships in Houston](#) – a great sign ahead of defending their Commonwealth Games title next year!



7. Fliss Pickard

Fliss Pickard won gold in the women's class 6 singles [at the ITTF Costa Brava Spanish Para Open](#) in Platja d'Aro and took gold in the women's class 6 singles [in the SQY French Para Open](#) in Saint Quentin en Yvelines.



8. Sam Mabey

Sam Mabey stormed to victory in the [Crawley Grand Prix](#) men's singles in September and narrowly missed out on a spot in the final of the [Preston Grand Prix](#) later in the year.

Mabey has also been influential in his team Ormesby's form in the Premier Division of the Senior British League, and is currently unbeaten in his six matches.



9. Mari Baldwin

Mari Baldwin won all her matches and came away with three gold medals to spearhead [England's overall victory at the Home Nations International](#) in November. Baldwin and her doubles partner Charlotte Bardsley also reached the [junior girls' doubles last 16 at the European Youth Championships in Croatia](#).



10. Connor Green

In the ITTF's world rankings published in November, Connor Green moved up to number 30 in the U15 Boys category. Green has had a great season on the international circuit including positive performances [at the WTT Youth Star Contender in Lisbon](#).



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