

Sports Top Honour For Keith

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Exeter's Keith Ponting is to take on the top job in table tennis.

He will succeed former England and former World Champion Johnny Leach MBE as President of the English Table Tennis Association, a position Johnny has held for the last 24 years.

Keith has the right credentials with over 60 years experience as a volunteer ranging from Press Secretary of the West Wiltshire Table Tennis League in 1949 to his current position as a member of the sports influential Management Committee.

But it's his varied and wide experience in the sport that won him the position.

From secretary of the Devon County Table Tennis Association where he is also president, to Vice Chairman competitions and Secretary Devon TTA.

He is particularly proud of his involvement with the British League which was launched in 1979 and since gone from strength to strength with 14 divisions and 600 players.

He's also worked as a volunteer at the 1977 and 1997 World Championships, the 1994 European Championships and the 1998 World Veterans Championships.

In 1972 he became the first winner of the Ivor Montagu Award, then came the Leslie Forrest Award for work at the County Championships in 1982, followed by the Malcolm Scott Award for services To table tennis in 2002.

He was made a life member of the Association in 1983 in recognition of his outstanding work for the ETTA and is the only person in the ETTA to win every award the ETTA has to offer.

"It's a great honour, especially to take on the job following such a fine figure as Johnny Leach MBE. Johnny was a fine ambassador to the sport and a great character and if I can represent the ETTA to anywhere near the level that Johnny did, I'll be well pleased.

"Over the last few years , we've laid the foundations for growth and can now build on that by focusing our attention on getting more people playing," he said.

Keith officially took on his new role at the ETTA's Annual General Meeting in Nottingham last week.

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