

MKTTL Nick Warton – unsung hero

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MILTON KEYNES TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

NICK WARTON-AN UNSUNG HERO

The local table tennis fraternity is mourning one of its most well-known characters following the death on 15th February of Nick Warton, following a short but devastating illness.

A player with the Milton Keynes Club at Kingston, for most of the time since the table tennis centre was opened nearly 20 years ago, Nick had also played for the Newport Pagnell and Woburn Sands teams within the Milton Keynes Council Keynes & District Table Tennis League. Nick and his family had moved to this area from Bedford in the 1970s and continued his league table career following the move.

Nick's other sporting interest was football. He had been heavily involved with New Bradwell Football Club. He was also a Newport Pagnell Town Councillor for several years.

Nick was not content just to play league table tennis matches or practice on club nights. Very quickly he became a league committee member and this continued up to the present season, in which he was the league's general secretary and registrations secretary. During the last 25 years, Nick had at one time or another performed all the senior duties on the league committee. He served as Chairman in 1995/6, Treasurer for 4 years, General Secretary 8 times and arguably the most demanding post of Fixtures and Registrations Secretary on no less than 7 occasions including from 2007/8 to 2010/11.

Never one to use his membership of the league committee for personal glory, Nick was one of the enthusiasts for his chosen sport who simply wanted to see the game flourish and did all that he could to achieve that end. His talents won him recognition on 3 separate occasions of the President's Trophy, voted for by the Committee for services to the League. He was elected a Life Member of the League in 1999.

Nick regularly supported the League tournaments and functions and was the MC at the annual presentation evening last May. As a player, he was a tough competitor, always taking the view that the game could be won with resolve and application. Primarily a defensive player, Nick had taught himself to attack and often caught opponents by surprise when he did so. Modest in victory and generous in defeat, it was always a pleasure to play Nick. He also took the time to qualify as an umpire and his knowledge of the rules of the game was immense as a result.

Nick's knowledge of, and enthusiasm for, table tennis and of local players over many years has been invaluable. It is a mark of the esteem in which was held that virtually every conversation I have had with players of all standards during the last two months prior to his death had commenced with an enquiry as to his health. Nick will be sorely missed and will be a very hard act to follow.

Michael Howard-Chairman Milton Keynes Council Keynes & District Table Tennis League

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