

Your Keith Ponting Memories

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Such an amazing Grandad, I am such a lucky and proud girl to be able to call him my Grandad. He will be missed by so many people. He was such a loyal and caring man, whoever was lucky enough to know him would of experienced his kindness. Rest in Peace Grandad, I love you forever.. Jazmyn xxx

Jazmyn Preece, Family

In all the years I have known Keith, as with others, I have been able to see the dedication he has given and the expertise he has been prepared to give all for the benefit of our sport.

The recognition of such dedication by being offered and accepting the Presidency of the Association sadly lasted less than twelve months. No one deserved the accolade more than Keith who was fair minded to everyone he came across in whatever situation arose.

More than anything, I found that Keith was proud, humble and appreciative of being able to represent the ETTA as President not only by attending virtually all the National and regional competitions, but more so when invited to major external culminating in representing the ETTA at the Queen's Jubilee celebrations together with Rosemary, in St. Paul's Cathedral and at the Guild Hall.

Socially, Keith was a delight to be with, always happy to discuss any topic one wished to chat about and a splendid host when visiting him.

It was just a week last Saturday Maggie and I called in the Ponting's home to say 'hello' to Rosemary whilst Keith was in the Midlands attending the 11-14 National championships. What a shock to hear so soon afterwards of his passing.

Keith will be missed by so many of the table tennis fraternity, none more so than those of us who came to benefit from the help and advice he freely gave for the benefit of all. He was a friend indeed.

Our thoughts are with Rosemary and the family at this sad time.

Martin Clark, ETTA Director & Treasurer

Everything Keith did for table tennis was special; he worked so hard to make sure it was.

At the news, my second reaction after shock and sadness at Rosemary's and our loss, was thanks for the special time that Keith spent in his last months in our sport.

His joy and pride in becoming the ETTA's President was very clear to see; yet another role he performed with commitment and enthusiasm.

This is truly a sad day for English table tennis; we have lost a really good man.

Peter Charters, ETTA Vice-Chairman Coaching & Performance

It is with great sadness that I have just learned of the passing of Keith. He was a man I much admired, having known him for many years through my involvement as a weekend organiser of the British League and before. Keith epitomised all that is good about voluntary work – he was dedicated, thorough, always helpful and at all times very fair in his dealings.

Of the many great English table tennis volunteers, Keith is the one that stood out for me as the very best role model. RIP – you will be sorely missed and never forgotten.

Graham Trimming, ETTA Vice-President

The sudden passing of Keith President of ETTA and Devonshire County Secretary, residing in the South West

Region, It cannot be mentioned how much work he undertook with success in so many aspects and levels of our sport, No one person will be able to take his place in the ETTA.

Our sincere condolences go to Rosemary and family.

John M. Burtenshaw, ETTA Vice-President

I have just read the shocking news about our President Keith Ponting's sudden and untimely death on the ETTA website. Just a matter of weeks before the London Olympics that I know he was so looking forward to.

I only spoke to him a few weeks ago at the under 11-14 National championships when he came up to me and told me the PM had said how impressed he was with the kids (including Liam) that had gone to Downing Street as part of the Olympic Celebrations in the Spring. There was no obvious sign of any ill health and he seemed genuinely well and full of his infectious enthusiasm.

Although I didn't know him very long, he always took time to say hello and asked me how I (and my kids) were doing. I was moved that he took time out of his busy schedule to personally register his appreciation in writing of what Alan Dines had done over the years following his death in January. Nothing was ever too much and position meant nothing to him. He was such a lovely genuine man and a brilliant administrator the like of which we'll probably never see again in our sport. He was quite simply Mr Table Tennis and will be sorely missed by us all.

I'm sure the ETTA AGM is sure to be a very sombre occasion now but we must all celebrate a great sporting man whilst mourning his tragic passing.

Deepest sympathies to his family...

Adam McTiernan

Keith was a constant presence and an influence for excellence in table tennis administration throughout my time in our sport. Since I first played on the national circuit in the Seventies until this special London Olympic year I would see Keith working tirelessly at events and in meetings. As a player from the beginning of the 'National League' in 1979 to my retirement I benefitted constantly from his work. Now my children benefit from the legacy of his work over many decades as they begin to play in junior events influenced over the years by Keith's hand.

Keith's devotion to our sport was unbounded and he will be sorely missed but, of course, also so well remembered.

We offer our condolences to Rosemary and the family, and if there is anything we can do, we are here to support and help.

Colin, Kim, Adam and Sam Wilson

I'm extremely sorry to hear of the passing of Keith Ponting, his contribution to Table Tennis will be greatly missed. Whenever I met him – usually in Sheffield – he always had a kind word for me.

On behalf of the South Yorkshire County Table Tennis Association I offer our sincere condolences to Keith's family and friends.

Rob Loxley

Keith was a constant source of good advice during our years together on Management Committee and this continued right up until his death. His unfailing courtesy, dedication and attention to detail were models for all who worked with him.

We were honoured when he became President and he clearly enjoyed this role.

He spent his last weekend supporting the English Leagues Cup Competition Finals with his usual interest; I spent the Saturday with him not only watching the matches but also reminiscing as we perused the "Who's Who of

English Table Tennis ". His email on his return home showed his pleasure at the weekend and his happy anticipation of the Olympics and Paralympics.

Keith will be remembered with great affection ; I have lost a much valued friend as so many of us have. Our thoughts are with Rosemary and their family

Mike Smith, ETTA Vice-President

I first came into contact with Keith when as vice-Chairman of the Competitions Department he would attend meetings of the National Umpires' and Referees' Committee. He had a great love for and dedication to our sport.

He was very supportive of our work and the contribution made by umpires and referees. His quick mind coupled with an affable manner are rare and I very soon developed the utmost respect for Keith. As well as a table tennis colleague I could count Keith as a good friend and he will be deeply missed. Our sport has lost a true gentleman. My thoughts are with his wife and family.

John Mackey, NURC

I am very sorry and shocked to learn of Keith's sudden death. I knew Keith for many years and had hoped that the initial message from the ETTA was some sort of spam, but sadly it was true.

Keith did a super-human amount for table tennis in his lifetime, particularly regarding administrating/organising national competitions with instigating and then running the Senior British League from the late '70s being a highlight. He was passionate, painstaking and conscientious in his dedication.

Although his last tenure of office was all too short, I am glad he had his moment of glory in representing the ETTA as President, along with the great and good, at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations at St Paul's Cathedral. My thoughts are with his wife and family.

Ken Muhr, ETTA South East Coaching & Performance Chairman

I was devastated to learn of the passing of my friend and colleague, Keith. I will remember him with great affection. We enjoyed a close working relationship for many years both as members of National Council and for about nine years as Management Committee colleagues.

His contribution to the ETTA 's Competitions Department was awesome, and his conscientiousness was an example to us all. I enjoyed his dry sense of humour and above all he was fun to be with. The ETTA is so much poorer for his passing. To Rosemary and his family I send my sincere condolences.

Brian Halliday, ETTA Vice President, National Councillor

Keith and I go back to the late 1960's here in Devon. I was on the County Committee when Keith became Secretary 40 years ago and at that time, when occasionally meetings took place at his home, I got to know Rosemary and Keith very well.

As a member of that committee today, I have been a regular passenger in his car to Okehampton (the current base for County meetings) when the conversation always included our favourite football club. Chelsea.

Keith was meticulous. I admired his administrative skills, and his total knowledge of table tennis beyond Devon's borders.

He had recently told me of the wonderful time he and Rosemary had at the Queen's Jubilee (combined with visits to relatives). His daughter, Sandra, is a neighbour of ours and she has passed me a satchel of Keith's papers. Keith had already prepared everything for our Devon AGM on the 10th July. An AGM that will never be the same without it's driving force.

Keith, you made an impact here in Devon, of the very highest order. Nobody will forget it. Thank you True Blue.

Brian Worts

Sorry to hear about Keith Ponting passing. condolences to his family. he served table tennis with great passion and dedication.

Anthony Corbin

Very sad news. Keith was a true gent and professional in our sport and always gave time to everyone to say hello and never missed a thankyou with a well done after working on events.

For me a role model of how to be better and strive forexcellence. A massive loss to the sport and a loss to us all as a friend has gone. My thoughts go to his family during this time. Rest in peace Keith you're a class act, gone but never forgotten.

Dave Cochrane

I am totally shocked at hearing of the passing of a great man, i have known Keith a for a number of years and he was a top class administrator and one of the great volunteers! Keith was always just a phone call away when clubs needed any advice when it came to British League, Like Dave Cochrane said – gone but never forgotten!

Phil McCallum

I was fortunate to have worked with Keith on a number of committees and he was always so supportive, thanked you for everything and appreciative. He was a real gentleman and I will miss him!

Judy Rodgers

Really sad to hear the news about Keith. Our thoughts are with his family and all those of the wider table tennis family.

Lee Dolby

So sad to hear about the passing of Keith.

A true gentleman with a huge passion for the sport. In my time in England always a friend with an objective mind and always looking out for our sport.

Steen Kyst Hansen, Former Performance Director

During my 24 years at the ETTA Keith was one person who always acknowledged the work carried out at head office. I always received a thank you for booking his hotel accommodation and without fail he would thank me for every match programme I produced.

We worked very closely to produce the British League Handbook which he typeset himself perfectly. He always asked about my family and I would send photos of my grandchildren. He often told me how special his Rosemary was; they were a wonderful couple. I shall miss his phone calls so much. God bless you Keith.

Vanda Jones, National Events & Competitions Administrator

On behalf of all table tennis clubs, players and administrators in Plymouth we would like to offer our sincere condolences to Rosemary and the family. Keith was the backbone of table tennis in Devon for the past 40 years. Devon County meetings with him were always constructive and passionate about the sport he truly loved.

He was so proud and humble to have become our ETTA President and only a week or so ago he spent all day with me watching and encouraging all of the juniors at the National Team Finals in Wellingborough. He had also recently supported our inaugural Woolwell Open in December last year when Rosemary and Keith spent all weekend watching, encouraging and proudly presenting the honours to all of the players.

Keith could always be relied upon. His meticulous attention to detail was unrivalled. I can never recall a meeting he ever missed. He was a true gentleman who will be sadly missed by all of us in Devon and table tennis will miss an inspirational President.

Kevin Buddell

I was shocked and deeply saddened to learn of the death of my friend Keith Ponting.

I was privileged to have known Keith for nearly 40 years, and worked closely with him on many committees. He was an exceptional and hard working administrator at both local and national level and it was wonderful that this was recognised when he became President of the ETTA.

He was totally committed to achieving the highest standards in table tennis competitions and his dedication gave thousands of players across the country the opportunity to compete in such prestigious competitions as the British League and County Championships.

In his position as Vice Chairman Competitions I could always rely on his good, knowledgeable and fair advice and unstinting support regarding the County Championships.

Over the years we became good friends and I have many happy memories of times spent together at table tennis events and during visits to Devon.

Keith was a devoted family man and my thoughts at this time are with his family, particularly Rosemary who supported him so lovingly and proudly in all aspects of his life including his table tennis commitments. I was delighted they had the opportunity to attend the Jubilee events together and had hoped to hear all about it from them when we next got together – sadly this will not now happen – Julia and I will really miss this friendship.

Keith was highly respected by all who knew him, a true gentleman who will be greatly missed. The world of table tennis has lost a remarkable volunteer who will long be remembered for his great contribution to the sport.

Leslie Smith, Chairman/Administrator County Championships Committee & ETTA Honorary Life Member

Keith was League Secretary here in Exeter for over 20 years and continued to support us very actively even after he had moved on to greater responsibilities. It was a particular pleasure that Keith and Rosemary were able to attend our Finals Night again this year, and a great honour for the players to have their trophies presented by the ETTA President, no less.

Echoing the comments of others, members of our league have told me that “Keith did a lot of work that no-one knew about”. His dedication will be a continuing inspiration to all.

Steve Derbyshire

A true gentleman who always had a smile and a kind word, who was a great ambassador for our sport and he will be greatly missed

Don and Jill Parker MBE

I have only just learnt of the death of your President, Mr Keith Ponting, and I wanted to convey the collective condolences of the Irish table tennis community.

Whilst I did not know him personally, it is clear from reading the wonderful obituary on the ETTA website, that he was an exceptional volunteer and ambassador of our sport. I have no doubt that he will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

May he rest in peace.

Joseph A. Hickey, ITTA President – on behalf of the Irish table tennis community

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