

# Colchester League's most prolific

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Holmwood House Sports Hall

When 2009 Men's Champion Greg Green first visited the Colchester Closed Table Tennis Tournament as a spectator at the age of ten he was inspired by two players knocking in front of the press photographers. Little did he know that he would be the next winner of that title but not for another eight years!

Such was the dominance of Dave Cole and Rik James that no other player won in fourteen attempts as the duopoly dominated from 1995 to 2007. The pair, both good friends won the Men's event no fewer than seventeen times in total with Cole taking nine and James eight. Not only were their encounters highly entertaining to watch but were played with consummate sportsmanship with most going the then full three set distance with normally only a few points separating them at the end.

Cole's trade mark, unique 'banana' loops countered by James 'back-from-the-table' style complimented each other perfectly. Dave and Rik both played for the Rowhedge club as well as Colchester Co-Op and the Civil Service.

When it comes to Ladies Table Tennis in Colchester one person stands out head and shoulders above the rest; Sue Welham, winning some fifty-two titles! For forty years Sue has dominated proceedings winning at least one title on thirty-two occasions and only two years ago reaching all three finals only to pull out through injury!

It's very unlikely this record will ever be beaten and includes five Mixed Doubles titles with her late husband, John. At one point Sue played two-hundred and forty-nine consecutive league matches for Saints, not missing a game for over thirteen years! Sue was Suffolk number one for six seasons and has represented both Colchester Ladies and Vets teams. Sue started playing for Lawford and has played for thirty-two years alongside Martyn Green at St Botolph's, Saints, St Mary's and currently Tollgate, making them the second longest serving players currently playing in the same team behind John Andrews and David Moss. This pair incidentally, has won the most Men's Doubles titles, six in total, incredibly one in every decade since their first win in 1976 and will team up again this year!



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