

Newsletter 2: November 2013

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To: Members of the English Table Tennis Association

A few weeks ago I sent the first newsletter to members of the ETTA with the promise that I would keep you informed about developments which affect table tennis in this country. Since then, we have been working to ensure that we present the best possible case to secure our future funding with Sport England and to make English table tennis a sport fit for the 21st century.

This newsletter brings you up-to-date with events of the past few weeks. As before, we will keep the content of the newsletter quite short, but will point to where further information on each article can be found on the ETTA's website.

This issue contains:

- Relocation of head office to Milton Keynes and restructuring
- Renewal of ETTA membership
- Young players
- Events
- Congratulations to...
- Good luck

Relocation of head office to Milton Keynes

My [first newsletter](#) as Chairman outlined the changes and challenges which our sport is facing. I made no secret that Sport England, our main funding body, has clearly set the parameters for us to continue. We need to modernise ourselves as a sports governing body and the way we approach the promotion and participation of table tennis in England.

£8 million of funding for the next three years is at stake – with possibly more in the future.

Part of this process is to relocate the ETTA from our current offices in Hastings, which are due for demolition next year, into a sports complex fit for the future.

We have visited and assessed six potential locations set against the following criteria. We decided our new table tennis base needed:

- quality facilities, accessibility and modern staff accommodation;
- playing facilities within the premises in terms of training and competition, residential accommodation for overnight stays, conference/meeting space and cost-effectiveness;
- central England location would be preferable given infrastructure links;
- close to or with another national sports governing body.

I am pleased that the Board has unanimously supported the decision to relocate to Milton Keynes which meets all of our requirements. We will be partnering with Badminton England and possibly another sporting body to move into a purpose-built location which, as well as acting as our administrative head office, will have table tennis facilities for small and national events, training camps with overnight accommodation, and conference and meeting rooms.

This will give table tennis a home and a focal point to develop our sport for the future. The advantage is that we are 'in' at the planning and development stage and can influence this new-build to match our requirements. The disadvantage – and I believe it is a small price to pay – is that we will not be able to move there until 2015. In the meantime, we will find suitable interim accommodation in the Milton Keynes area.

In line with this relocation and modernisation, we are also looking to the future in terms of restructuring the way table tennis is run in this country. In order to have a focused and targeted approach we need to have larger teams operating in larger regions. We are looking at how these are defined and how we can utilise our resources to maximum effect. This is still a 'work in progress' and I will report back to you on our progress.

Our staff have been kept informed about these developments and we are working through possibilities within departments and with individuals. I am grateful for their professional approach to these changing times and the support we have received to date.

The decision to move to Milton Keynes and the restructuring plans are the beginning of a long journey we are undertaking to make English table tennis a sport fit for the future. There is much work to be done and changes are inevitable and necessary. Sport England has made it clear it will not be providing our future funding unless they see change for the better.

We have certain targets to hit and I am determined we will not only hit them but surpass them. But this will not happen overnight. I will keep you, as our members, informed of developments and progress throughout the coming months.

There is an Executive Summary of the recent National Council meeting on the ETTA website [here](#).

Renewal of ETTA Membership:

Individual membership can be [renewed online](#) or you can telephone the ETTA on 0845 0500 388 for assistance. It is important that we keep an accurate record of players and we have had some reports that some Leagues are allowing non-affiliated players to play which breaches ETTA rules. For more information about membership [click here](#).

Young players:

Our junior and young players are continuing to make significant progress at home and abroad and it is encouraging for the future of the sport to see their achievements. There was also a top class field of enthusiastic youngsters when table tennis played a [major part in the Sainsbury's School Games](#).

Tin-Tin Ho's was selected to play for Europe at the [World Cadet Challenge](#) in Slovenia, where the European team finished in second place to Asia and Tin-Tin reached the last eight in the individual event.

The recent [Stockton-on-tees Junior 4 star](#) also had an excellent attendance and quality performances with Helshan Weerasinghe and Emily Bolton taking the main events.

Events

European Team Championships: England men's and women's teams were on duty at the [European Team Championship in Vienna](#). Our women's quartet of Joanna Drinkhall, Kelly Sibley, Hannah Hicks and Tin-Tin Ho were unfortunate to narrowly miss promotion to the Championship Division with a third place the Challenge Division. The men finished on a positive note as 18-year-old Sam Walker's secured a double victory to help England finish in 19th place following a 3-2 win against Serbia.

Latest Grand Prix: The Grand Prix programme continues as players from Wales and France continue to dominate their respective men's and women's singles events. Welsh no. one, Ryan Jenkins won his third consecutive Grand Prix with victory in the Tees Sport Newcastle Grand Prix to add to his triumphs at Liverpool and Guildford. While French defender, Sarah Berge prevailed once again at Newcastle as she had done in the first Grand Prix of the season in Liverpool. However, congratulations must go to England's young prodigy, 15-year-old Tin-Tin Ho who secured her maiden Grand Prix title at Guildford.

[Full report on Tees Sport Newcastle Grand Prix here.](#)

[Full report on Bribar Guildford Grand Prix here.](#)

To keep up-to-date with tournaments, see the [ETTA's calendar](#)

Congratulations to...

..... England's Sam Walker (18) on being selected for the World Junior Championships in December.

.....two table tennis officials, Joshua Reynolds, who won the Young Official of the Year award, and Tony Chatwin, who picked up the Lifetime Achievement Award at the [Sports Officials UK \(SOUK\) awards recently](#).

Good luck to...

Martin Perry, a member of GB Para Table Tennis Pathway Squad who is one of five young people who have been chosen by [BBC Television's The One Show](#) to take part in this year's Rickshaw Challenge for Children In Need.

Andy Seward

Chairman of ETTA

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