

Table tennis features at Festival of Sport

Author: Russell Moore

Posted On: June 11, 2014



The table tennis tables illuminated in the scorching sunshine

On Sunday 8th June the Queen Elizabeth II Olympic Park hosted a scorching day of sport, music, and food as part of the Queen's Commonwealth Baton Relay and the launch of the Active People, Active Park programme. Table tennis proved to be extremely popular with the Ping! table and five instant ping pong stations all being used for most of the day, especially in the afternoon.

The table tennis programme was part of the biggest mass participation event held at the Olympic Park with 30 different sports showcased throughout the day. There was also time for all of the participants to watch the Queen's Baton Relay as it passed through, carried by four-time Olympic gold medallist Sir Matthew Pinsent and former boxer Barry McGuigan MBE among others.

Alongside the general play, the "challenge the robot" set-up was also well received, with people having great fun struggling to return the balls, but also enjoying the small improvements they were able to make after a few basic pointers.

The public were lucky enough to see some high quality table tennis alongside the casual play from up and coming players Sam and Jamie Liu, Hiba Feredj, and Kate Cheer who recently claimed the U14s title at the U11-14s National Championships in Doncaster. For those amongst them who are supported by the GLL Foundation, attending the event was a chance to show their appreciation and illustrate their ability to inspire others with the skills they have acquired through their dedication to practice.

Moving forward its hoped that more sessions can be held on the Park in the future, with the ultimate ambition being to have an established club set up in the Copper Box.

A special mention of thanks has to be made to volunteers Umar Ahmed and Luke Footman for coming down to help and to Michael Loveder for taking some amazing photographs. Thanks also to Greenhouse Morpeth School for providing the robot.

Tom Browne, London Development Officer (June 11, 2014)

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