

Darius joins the Beano roster

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Darius Knight (front) with, from left, Ruairi Grew (Killymoon), Max Chenevix Trench (Bounce), Steven Wilson (Killymoon) and Ollie Raison (Bounce)

England star Darius Knight and Scotland ace Gavin Rumgay went into bat for BAT as the table tennis charity featured at a major event.

Bounce Alzheimer's Therapy had a stall at the three-day Brand Licensing Europe event at London's Olympia.

The charity teamed up with DC Thomson Consumer Products to create a themed Dennis the Menace table, complete with matching chairs, bats and balls illustrated with Beano characters.

The aim was to raise awareness of table tennis as an effective therapy for those suffering from dementia, while encouraging delegates to step up to the table and give the sport a go.



Gavin Rumgay prepares to test out a mini version of the Table Dennis table

Bounce staff and BAT creative director Ian Craigton-Chambers (who persuaded DC Thomson to get involved), plus Table Tennis England staff, were on hand to answer delegates' questions.

Also there were Ruairi Grew and Steve Wilson, from Killymoon Living, who designed and built the Table Dennis table and chairs along with other 'wiff-waff' inspired furniture.

Bounce spokesman Ollie Raison said: "BAT came about after I saw an article online one day and sent it to the owners of Bounce.

"It was a study from Japan which had found a positive link between playing table tennis and a positive reaction in people with dementia.

"Ian then came along at the same time and he had seen some similar studies in the USA. We were both approaching things at the same time, so rather than work against each other, we thought 'let's combine'.

"Ian has been terrific in developing contacts we would have no idea how to get to, and we are passionate about seeing what can come from the link between table tennis in the treatment of dementia – and we're passionate about social sport.

"It would be wonderful that there are positive results shown moving forward. It's just a really lovely thing, a sport that everyone can play that might have a genuinely beneficial effect on the brain."

Knight and Rumgay took part in some exhibition play, and Darius said he was happy to support the charity.

"My family has been quite fortunate not to have anyone with dementia, but it will probably affect us one day," he said. "Table tennis does a lot to help people like that, I'm always happy to support that kind of thing.

"It's a positive physical activity, something to do with your family and friends to keep fit, and it's another way of socialising as people get older – there's nothing bad to say about it."

On the Table Dennis concept, Darius added: "It's cool. It's different, and anything different is good."

The Table Dennis table will be moved to St Pancras International station from October 20th and will be available

for play into next year.

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