



## To our fantastic volunteers – thanks a million!

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The National Championships saw some fantastic action, but were just as memorable off the tables for one group of people.

They were the recipients of the Table Tennis England Volunteer Awards 2015, which honoured the dedicated work of unsung heroes from the grassroots of our sport.

A total of 10 individuals and two clubs were honoured, and received their trophies at a presentation during our flagship event in Redbridge at the weekend. The ceremony was attended by Table Tennis England Board members including Chair Sandra Deaton, President Doreen Stannard, Deputy Chair Susie Hughes, Treasurer Keith Thomas and Mike Smith.

[Click here to read more about all the award winners](#)

Among those honoured was 90-year-old Leonard Hoffman, a coach and helper at various London clubs for 67 years. He is still a regular helper during weekly junior sessions at Mossford Premier Club and organises tournaments and fun events, even providing prizes out of his own pocket.

At the other end of the age spectrum were Nicholas Li, the 18-year-old Young Coach of the Year who has helped Hillingdon TTC's membership grow by 90 per cent in less than a year and who works extensively in local schools, and 17-year-old Shyam Bavalia of Wellingborough and District Hindu Association TTC, who gives up hours of his own time to help run the club's coaching sessions for younger and beginner players.



The Volunteer Award winners with Table Tennis England Chair Sandra Deaton (front) left and President Doreen Stannard (front right). Picture by Alan Man

Table Tennis England's Safeguarding & Ethics Manager Judy Rogers said: "It was a lovely afternoon and it was very emotional, particularly with the unsung hero – everybody gave him a standing ovation.

"We were there to celebrate our volunteers and it's our way of saying thank you for everything they do.

"We can't do what we do if we don't have volunteers. Without them running the clubs, leagues and country structures, Table Tennis England would not have a job to do, and some of our top players wouldn't be here if it wasn't for volunteers."

The winners were:

**Club of the year**

Winner – Brighton TTC; Runner-up – Waterside TTC

**Young Volunteer of the Year**

Shyam Bavalia

**Adult Coach of the Year**

Winner – Rachel Kashi; Runner-up – Philip Walker

**Equality Award**

Jayantilal Ganatra

**Young Coach of the Year**

Winner – Nicholas Li; Runner-up – Himanshu Ganatra

**Unsung Hero of the Year**

Winner – Leonard Hoffman BEM; Runner-up – John Fox

**Adult Volunteer of the Year**

Winner – Colin French; Runner-up – John Quinn

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