

# Obituary: Harry Venner, Swaythling Cup star

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Harry Venner (picture copyright John Warburton)

It is with much sadness that we report that Harry Venner died on Sunday April 12, 2015.

Harry was member of the World Championship England Swaythling Cup team in 1952 (runner-up) and 1954 (bronze).

Here is a personal tribute to Harry by **Barry Meisel**:

Harry was one of England's top players during the 1950s, and represented England in the Swaythling Cup World Championships 1952 and 1954.

He was a world class all-out attacking player who for most of his career used a hard rubber bat but later turned to sandwich.

He played at a time when England had some of the world's top players including Richard Bergmann, Victor Barna, Johnny Leach and Aubrey Simmons.

Not only was he a great player who won many tournaments and international matches he was also one of England's finest coaches who coached many youngsters that became top international players including Mary Wright and Chester Barnes.

He also gave me some coaching when I first started at 15, and the best advice he gave me was that I should pay no attention to criticism for my unorthodox style – which gave me an advantage in later years.

I first met Harry when he ran the famous Putney Club in London, many of England's top players and also foreign internationals practised and competed in his very popular Sunday tournaments. The Putney Club was one of the very best at the time which attracted players from around the world mainly due to the dedication and hard work by Harry.

Later he took a coaching contract in Australia for a few years before returning to UK.

England has lost one of its finest players and a great ambassador to the world of table tennis – RIP Harry Venner.

**May 13, 2015**

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