

Leicestershire TTA: Social scene is thriving

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Helen Lower is the local Coach Development Officer on behalf of Table Tennis England and she is making big strides into the social table tennis scene with all types of events to draw would-be players in, including women only sessions, some "come and try it" sessions at various venues as well as setting up social groups in other centres. And, of course, Ping! is up and running again all over the City.

Knighton Park has had a thriving social club on Tuesday afternoons for many years and they were able to expand this when they moved premises a couple of years or so ago and now have a healthy number making full use of the 10 tables available every week. So popular has it become that it has been extended to Friday afternoons.

The club also plays an annual friendly competitive daytime match against Draycott each year, each hosting in turn. This year Draycott came to Knighton Park and won the six two-person matches 4-2 with five of the six matches ending 3-2 one way or the other.

Details (Knighton Park first):

Charlie Bateman/John Bowness lost 0-5 to David Holness/Gareth Hickline

Steve Bessant/Robert Geary beat Paul Chadwick/David Wilson 3-2

Mike Smith/Tim Cawston lost 2-3 to Keith Wright/Zia Kashefi

Bill Walmsley/Aga Hirt lost 2-3 to Tony Geanta/ Euan Zhane

Phil Wood/ Shusheel Kumar lost 2-3 to Lewis Chadwick/Nat Rash

Simon Taylor/Pat Evans beat Sue Gooch/Tony Deegan 3-2

Local table tennis lost one of its past hard workers when Pat Pickles (nee Ball) died after a short illness. Pat was secretary of Knighton Park from 1978 to 1989 and was also an administrator of the Leicester League in many capacities over the years, including General Secretary from 1986 to 1991. She was instrumental in the formation of the Junior League in the 1980s along with Mike Smith and Steve Zanker. She will be sorely missed.

The Leicester League's summer competition for the Elbow Tankard (named after the two initial sponsors John Ellis and John Bowness) has been running for over 50 years and has 10 entries this year split into two groups of five, each playing the others home and away. It is a handicap event with three players per side and includes, for a change, two doubles sets. The two groups are:

Group A

Park Rangers, Blaby and Whetstone, Nomads II, Bishops and KP for England.

Group B

KP Dry Roasted, KP Nutters, Nomads, Vicars and Park Keepers.

Matches start this week.

John Bowness (publicity officer)

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