

Clacton & District League: Award-winning Juniors take centre stage

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Sam Hume is presented with the Harry Walker Memorial Award by Stuart Gibbs (President Essex County Table Tennis Association) and Jayne Johnson (Secretary Essex County Table Tennis Association)

Three Clacton juniors – Sam Hume, Gracie Edwards and Jonathan Found – took centre stage at the Clacton & District League's 2015 Annual General Meeting and Presentation Evening held this week at Clacton's Brotherhood Hall.

Pride of place went to 14-year old Hume, who received the prestigious Harry Walker Memorial Award, an annual award made to the outstanding player in the whole of Essex.

In making the award, County Chairman Ken Field said that Sam, as well as playing a major part in the County's successful Cadet team and being an outstanding player in the Clacton League, had also achieved exceptional results in the Premier Division of the Southend League where he had won the under-21 and Restricted Singles titles.

As importantly, Sam was a young player who was quick to compliment his opponents, sporting in both victory and defeat. Mr Field concluded by saying that Sam was a worthy winner and the youngest player ever to receive the award in its 30-year history.



Gracie Edwards and Sam Hume being presented with their Essex Cadet Team trophies by Arthur Clark (Essex County Table Tennis Association Junior Match Secretary)

Sam and 13-year old Edwards were also awarded trophies as successful members of the Essex Cadet team which won the National Division 1B. It crowned a memorable year for Gracie, who became the Ladies' Singles champion at the Clacton League's Closed Championships in April as well as being part of the successful Brotherhood B Cup-winning side in May.

The Brian Hogg Trophy, awarded annually to a junior player of whom the Clacton League is proud, was made to 17-year old Found.



Jonathan Found (winner of Brian Hogg Trophy)

In making the award, League Chairman Peter White said that Jonathan, now in his final season as a junior, had made significant progress since he started playing table tennis four years ago, last year being his first season in Division Two.

Peter said that, although Jonathan had shown much improvement on the table, the award was being made for his contribution to local table tennis as a whole – his excellent attitude to the sport, his politeness and good sportsmanship on the table, his helpfulness at local coaching and his willingness to enter all local Tournaments on a regular basis.

League trophies for the 2014/15 season were presented by Vice-President Shirley Rowlen.

The Nomads Panthers team of James Denyer, Gill Locke, John Monk and Colin Webber retained their Division One title, making it a hat-trick of successes, whilst it was a clean sweep for the Nomads Club as John Fenton, John Hatley, Paul Hume, Sam Hume and Adam Wilkin of Nomads Lions took the runners-up spot.

Brotherhood C's Fred Gallone, Kevin Pryor, Gary Stallwood and Laurence Torr were the Division Two winners, pipping Peter Giles, Harry Hawkes, John Hockley and Brian Parish of the Nomads Ocelots by a single point in the most tightly-fought contest of all the divisions.

In Division Three, the Windsor Buzzards' quartet of Pete Bloomfield, Ray Chillingworth, Dan Malinowski and Alan Rutledge won the title and were the only unbeaten side in all three divisions. And, to cap a good all-round season for the Nomads Club, the Lynx team of Brian Friday, Mike Hillier, Peter Miller and Mike Vilka took the runners-up trophy.

Officers elected for the 2015/16 season were: President, Sheila Howe; Chairman, Peter White; Vice-Chairman, Graham Parkes; Secretary, Lyn White; Treasurer, Mike Hillier; Press and Records Secretary, Tony Oswick; Tournament Officer, David Wilkin; Development Officer, Ferdy Rodriguez; Coaching Officer, Felipe Rodriguez; Minutes Secretary, Debra Found; Committee members, Lee Harvey, Doug Green, Tony Hooper, Tony Rayner, Dan Wright; Independent Examiner, Ray Chillingworth.

In his Tournament Officer's report, David Wilkin complimented Tony Hooper, Peter White, Lyn White and all members of the Tournament Committee who had rallied round after the 11th-hour change of venue for the Closed Championships. Despite the late change, the Championships had proved very successful and David thanked all the players, who had co-operated and adapted so well to the altered conditions.

David also expressed the League's continued gratitude to Paul Newbould for his overall sponsorship of the Championships, and to Angela Barratt for her individual sponsorship.

Treasurer Mike Hillier reported on a satisfactory financial year and said the League now needed to embark on a programme of renewing equipment and trophies. He recommended no increase in the team fees of £35.

It was agreed that next season the League will aim to run four teams in the Essex Inter-League – Men's (Secretary Felipe Rodriguez), Veterans (Colin Webber), Juniors (Ferdy Rodriguez), Super-Veterans (to be confirmed).

* The Clacton & District League's 'Come and Try' sessions begin on Thursday June 25 at 7.30pm at Clacton's Brotherhood Hall and continue on July 2, 9 and 16. Anyone who would like to take up competitive table tennis can attend on one or all of the evenings. For more information, ring Ferdy Rodriguez on 01255 830951.

Tony Oswick
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