



England legends named in Europe Hall of Fame

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English table tennis legends Jill Parker and Johnny Leach have been named as inaugural inductees into the European Table Tennis Hall of Fame.

The names of the first players to enter the Hall of Fame were revealed at a launch reception hosted by the European Table Tennis Union at the European Championships in Ekaterinburg, Russia.

The website honours the champions, legendary players, coaches and others who have made an exceptional contribution to the development of Table Tennis in Europe.

A total of 36 have been inducted and the list will be extended every year. The full list of inductees can be seen at the new Hall of Fame website: etthof.org

ETTU President Ronald Kramer said: "I feel quite fortunate the European Table Tennis Hall of Fame come true during my Presidency. The great champions of Europe do deserve their Hall of Fame."

Jill Parker (Hammersley) was European Women's Singles champion in 1976 and runner-up in 1978 and 1982 and also won the doubles with Linda Howard in 1976. She won three Europe Top 12 titles and reached a world ranking high of No 6 in 1976.

She won three English Open titles and was seven times singles champion at the Senior Nationals.

Jill said: "I'm really chuffed, it's a complete surprise. I didn't know they were going to do anything like this – it's a great idea and I'm very honoured to be among the first players named."



Johnny Leach

Johnny Leach was a former world No 1 and world champion, winning the Men's Singles title in Stockholm in 1949 and Vienna in 1951. He was also part of the 1953 England team which won the World Championships (Swaythling Cup) in Bucharest, Romania.

In total he won 16 World Championship medals (three gold, five silver and eight bronze) and went on to become President of the then English Table Tennis Association (now Table Tennis England) and Honorary Life Vice President of the organisation. He was inducted into the ITTF Hall of Fame in 1997.

Johnny's son Jeff was delighted with the news. He said: "It's fantastic, anything like that is great – I'm very proud of him."

There are two other inductees with strong connections to England – Victor Barna and Richard Bergmann (AUT).



Victor Barna

Budapest-born Barna became a naturalised British citizen in 1947 and represented both Hungary and England. He was a World No 1 and winner of 22 World Championship titles, including seven Swaythling Cup gold medals and five Men's Singles events. He was English Open Men's Singles champion in 1933, 1934, 1935, 1937 and 1938.



Richard Bergmann

Bergmann represented Austria and England and, alongside Leach, was part of the England Swaythling Cup-winning line-up of 1953. He was Men's Singles world champion in 1937 (for Austria) and in 1939, 1948 and 1960 (for England). He also partnered Barna to the 1939 World Championships Men's Doubles title and was English Open Men's Singles champion on six occasions.

Also in the Hall of Fame is Romania's Otilia Badescu, who is currently Bristol Academy TTC Talent Development Centre's full-time performance coach.

A former European champion, Badescu was also a bronze medallist in the 1993 World Championships and has helped to coach world-class players, such as Romanians Adrian Crisan and Elisabeta Samara.

Table Tennis England Chairman Sandra Deaton and Chief Executive Sara Sutcliffe attended the launch of the Hall of Fame in Ekaterinburg and Sandra said: "It's wonderful to see the achievements of so many great players

from around Europe marked in this way, and we're delighted that the rich history of English talent is so well represented.

"We look forward to seeing further deserving players inducted into the Hall of Fame in the years ahead."

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