



England international Brian Brumwell dies at 88

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Former England international Brian Brumwell has died at the age of 88.

He made his senior England debut in February 1950, against Wales, playing alongside Richard Bergmann, Aubrey Simons, Ron Crayden and Diane and Rosalind Rowe.

Brian competed at World Championships in 1948, 1954 and 1955 and at the English Open every year between 1950 and 1963, reaching the Men's Singles last 16 on three occasions.

He used to recall fondly playing against Bergmann in one of those last 16 matches – he took a 2-0 lead but Bergmann then complained of a slippery floor and stopped playing until the issue had been dealt with. When the match resumed, Bergmann went on to win 3-2.

Here, Essex TTA president Stuart Gibbs pays tribute to Brian:

"I first recalled meeting Brian Brumwell as an 11 year old, when I was given a ticket to watch Essex County first team play against the great Middlesex side in 1958 and was fortunate to play with him in my first game for, Essex which coincided with this being his last game for the county.

"Brian was a remarkable sportsman who excelled at football and more notably at cricket, as captain of Wanstead Cricket Club, the premier side in Essex, where he won numerous trophies.

"However, it is in his achievements and influence in Essex table tennis that I and many, many others will remember him for.

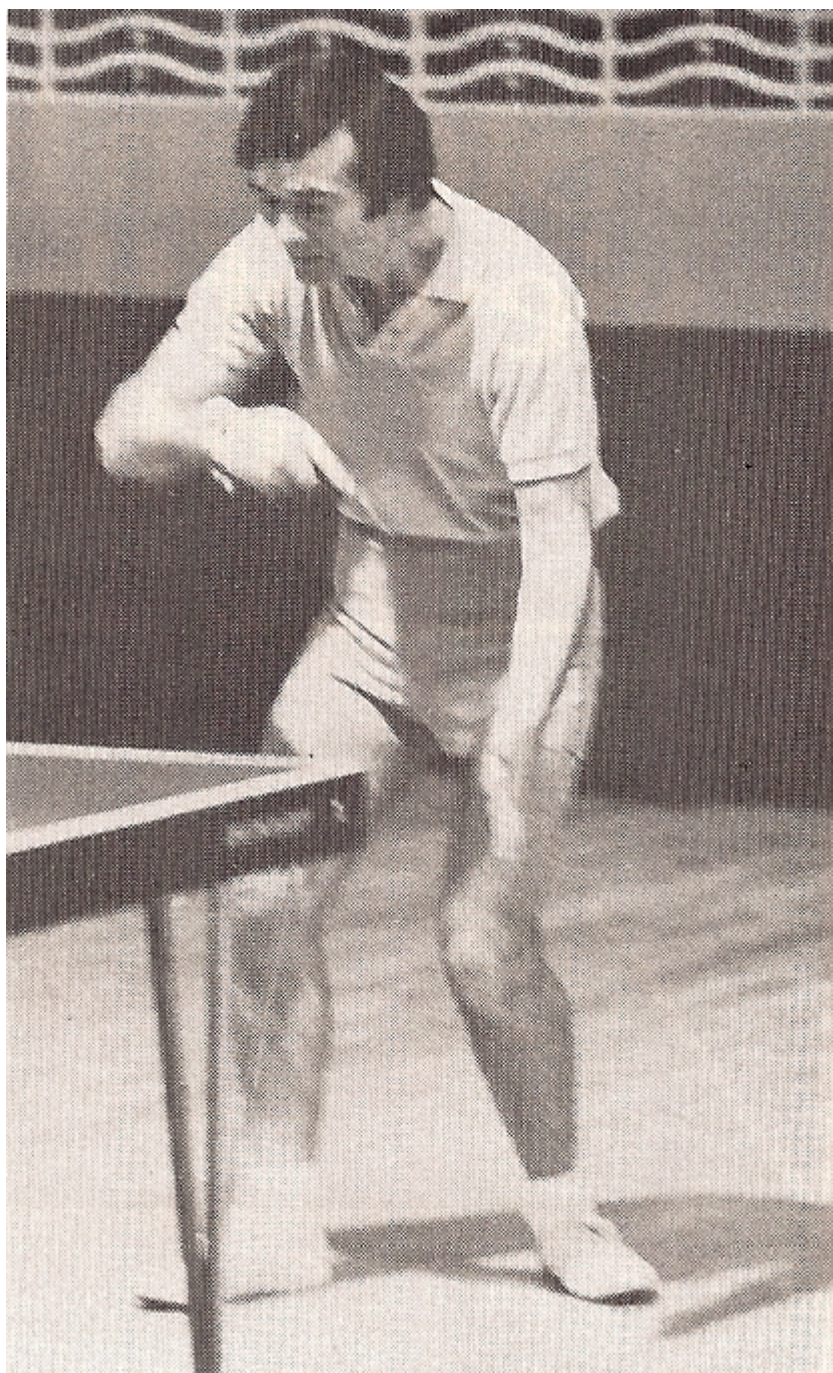
"Brian played for England on a number of occasions and was ranked No 5 in the country, not an easy feat when you had such great players to compete with, notably Johnny Leach, Richard Bergman and Aubrey Simons, to name but a few.

"During his time as a player, Brian was always ready to help and influence those youngsters making their way in

the sport and became captain of the England Junior side in 1960.

"It was a year later that he insisted that the then ETTA include a precocious 14-year-old in the England Junior Team to go to the European Junior Championships, as he had recognised the potential. However, despite his insistence, the request was not upheld and on principle, Brian resigned from the captaincy. The following year, this 14-year-old became England No 1 Senior at the age of 15 and this was Chester Barnes. This proved Brian's uncanny ability to recognise natural talent when he saw it.

"During his time coaching juniors, Brian had considerable involvement in Ray Dorking becoming England No 1 Junior at the age of 15 and also helped establish the St Luke's Table Tennis Club in an underprivileged area of East London, to such an extent that it was able to host England Junior International matches.



Brian Brumwell

"On his retirement from playing nationally, Brian became president of the Ilford & District Table Tennis League and was made a life member of Essex County Table Tennis Association.

"In closing, how will we remember this great man? He was ferociously competitive, a visionary who was

responsible for the golden age of Essex table tennis in the 1960s, but more importantly, he was a true gentleman, with a heart of gold.

"May you rest in peace Brian and thank you so much for everything you have done."

Brian Brumwell's funeral takes place on **Tuesday April 26 at 11.45am.**

It is being held at St Mary's Church, Overton Drive, Wanstead E11 2SW. Afterwards there will be refreshments next door at Wanstead Cricket Club.

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