



## Special day makes a World of difference

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The stunning backdrop of Oxford Town Hall was just one of the locations as players joined in with the festivities of World Table Tennis Day.

Scotland international Gavin Rumgay demonstrated his skills and visitors were given the chance to play the game themselves, take part in competitions and watch exhibition matches.

The event was supported by Oxford & District Table Tennis Association, which pointed participants in the direction of further playing opportunities, and Oxford City Council.

Staff of the Council are also invited to play in a workplace challenge tournament over the lunch period.



Participants at Oxford Town Hall

David Browne of Oxford City Council said: "I thought it provided us with a nice opportunity to get table tennis into a slight different venue than usual and thus attract different people to the game.

"With the support of Unison and my friends in the Oxford District Table Tennis Association, fellow Council workers, Fusion [local leisure centre operator], and Table Tennis England we managed to put this together. It's a good venue and will encourage people to play table tennis which is an excellent sport."

Elsewhere, West of England County Sports Partnership celebrated their 10-year anniversary with a tournament which also showcased Table Tennis England's Loop in the Clubhouse offer to guests.

This event was in the new pavilion at Gloucestershire County Cricket Ground in Bristol, where former England netballer Pamela Cooley and former England Rugby player Andy Blackmore, who both now work for Wesport, played a nailbiting final, with Pamela eventually crowned the victor.





The Wesport final between Pamela Coockey and Andy Blackmore

Wesport CEO Steve Nelson is now looking to buy an outdoor table tennis table for the CSP to be launched on June 10 as part of the Bristol Ping! festival.

The centrepiece of the ITTF's celebrations was in Kathmandu, Nepal, where among other events, a ceremony inaugurated the newly renovated Para Table Tennis Training Centre which was damaged by last year's earthquake.

ITTF President Thomas WEIKERT, who was the guest-of-honour at the ceremony, said: "Table Tennis is not only a question of competition, as we have seen here, we can make a big difference in people's life using our sport for development and peace, in this case, improving the conditions of children with a disability.

"Today we inaugurated the newly renovated training centre for para-athletes damaged by the earthquake, it has been financed by the government of the Republic of Korea through the United Nations Office of Sport for Development and Peace but I am proud to say that the table tennis family also contributed financially, the ITTF, together with its six Continental Table Tennis Federations.

"That clearly shows that we are one sport one family, supporting those in crisis, in this case created by a natural disaster."

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