



Table tennis has changed my life, says Carmen

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In her own words, Carmen Drysdale was “50, overweight, totally unfit and a novice” when she took up table tennis. She wanted to improve her motor co-ordination, memory, speed and get fit.

Less than two years later, the sport has become part of her life, so much so she describes her club as a family.

The Londoner, who hadn't picked up a bat before she joined Fusion TTC, is urging anyone in a similar position to consider joining their local club.

She takes up the story: “About a year-and-a-half ago, I wanted to get fit, and somebody I knew enthused about table tennis.

“In my local park, there is a table and I saw it every day on the way home from work and I kept thinking ‘I need to play, I need to play’ and it seemed like a quick sport and one I could enjoy.

“It was like ‘do something with your life!’ so I decided to find somewhere I could play. I Googled a few places and Fusion got back to me. I think I sent about 5-6 emails asking similar questions! They responded to each one.

“I told them I was 50, overweight, totally unfit and a novice and they were very, very good and invited me along to the adult coaching session. They were very responsive.

“I had my first session and thought ‘I want to do this’. The coaches were very considerate, encouraging and motivating even though I couldn't even hold the bat properly at first. It kept me wanting to go back and get it right.

“I was encouraged to play more and go along to other sessions.

“What's really nice about it is if you haven't got anyone to play with, they make sure you find someone and they rotate every 20 minutes so everyone gets a go. Members who have been there years and years will have a game with you.

"It's become part of my life, it's like a family. It's got such a lovely community feel – it's like they took me in.

"I became a grandma last year and my shifts at the hospital whilst my daughter was in labour were designed around my table tennis sessions. Yes, I have become hooked; the quality of my life, in particular, my health, fitness and energy levels have improved so much. I have lost weight and have a much healthier approach when it comes to my eating habits."

Carmen has even played in a couple of matches in the Central League fifth division, in new team set up by Fusion this year.

She said: "It was very nerve-wracking and I developed some strange habits, like having to touch the wall first before I served because I was so nervous and had to get grounded."

But Carmen, 52, urged others of a similar background to get involved in the sport through their local club, adding: "They will be welcomed whatever level they are at and will be supported and helped. You can go there and be yourself."

To find out more about how and where you can get into table tennis, [click here](#)

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