



## Chairman's Message – August 2016

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As we are on the eve of the greatest sporting occasion in the world, I could not be prouder of our young men and women who will be representing our country in the Olympics and Paralympics in the next few weeks.

Each person has their individual story about how and why they started playing table tennis, the people who have influenced and helped them and the memories and details of their own journey to Rio.

However, they all share the same dedication to be the best they can be; and have all made personal sacrifices in their quest to be among the elite athletes in the world.

I am so proud of what they have achieved already and I am sure that everyone associated with table tennis in his country wishes all of our Olympians and Paralympians the best of good fortune and hope they all have an incredible experience. They have truly earned the right to perform on the world's greatest sporting stage.

We will all be supporting you, so best wishes to the athletes Liam Pitchford, Paul Drinkhall and Sam Walker, reserve athlete Tom Jarvis, coach Alan Cooke, team leader Simon Mills and everyone else involved with Team GB.

I should also mention that our own Stuart Sherlock is refereeing the table tennis tournament, so good luck to him as well.

When it comes to the Paralympics, there will be 12 GB athletes competing – Will Bayley, Jane Campbell, Paul Davies, Rob Davies, Kim Daybell, Sue Gilroy, Sara Head, Jack Hunter-Spivey, Paul Karabardak, Aaron McKibbin, David Wetherill and Ross Wilson – and we wish them every success.

You will be able to keep up with their progress via the Table Tennis England website and our social media news feeds, as well as the matches which are streamed. [You can find more details by clicking here](#)

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There will be an opportunity to see our Olympic Leopards on home soil when they take on Greece in the European Championships qualifying campaign in Stoke on Tuesday November 1. Tickets are now on sale and Table Tennis England members are entitled to a reduced price.

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I have been delighted to see so much media coverage of table tennis at many levels. As well as the profiles of our top players, there has been considerable focus on the social aspect of our game as the Ping! tables again prove so popular in outdoor venues around the country.

As a sport we are well placed to reach out to people of all ages and all abilities, and this should stand us in good stead for the future.

Can I also take this opportunity to remind you that you can renew your membership via the phone as well as online. Your membership of Table Tennis England, either as a competitive player or taking advantage of becoming a free Associate Member helps us to build and develop our table tennis community.

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