



Obituary: Derek Sherratt, International Umpire

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Tributes have been paid to International Umpire Derek Sherratt, who has died at the age of 82.

Derek, who last month became a Vice-President of Table Tennis England at the AGM, was a regular at tournaments all over England and travelled widely to international competitions.

He qualified as a County Umpire in 1982, becoming a National Umpire in 1991 and joining the IU ranks in 1994. He attained his Blue Badge status, the highest grade, on May 10th, 2010.

He officiated at many major tournaments, including the World Championships in China (1995), Manchester (1997), Kuala Lumpur (2000) and Rotterdam (2001) and European Championships in Birmingham (1994), Slovakia (1996) and Italy (2003 and 2008).

The Manchester Commonwealth Games in 2002, Olympic Qualifiers in the same city in 1996, Commonwealth Championships (Glasgow, 2009), five English Opens and two Euro Top 10s were also on his list of achievements.

Derek also officiated at more than 30 National Championships since 1990, at every age group.

Off the court, Derek had been National Councillor from Staffordshire since 2008 and General Secretary of Staffordshire CTTA since 1982, combining the role with that of Treasurer since 2007. He had been President of Stafford TTL since 2000.

He was awarded the Maurice Goldstein Award by the ETTA in 2005.

Derek was Vice-Chairman of the English Table Tennis Umpires' Association since its inception in 2004. The Chairman, George Tyler, said: "With Derek, the glass was always half-full, whatever the situation. He was a lovely man and always spoke up for the underdog.

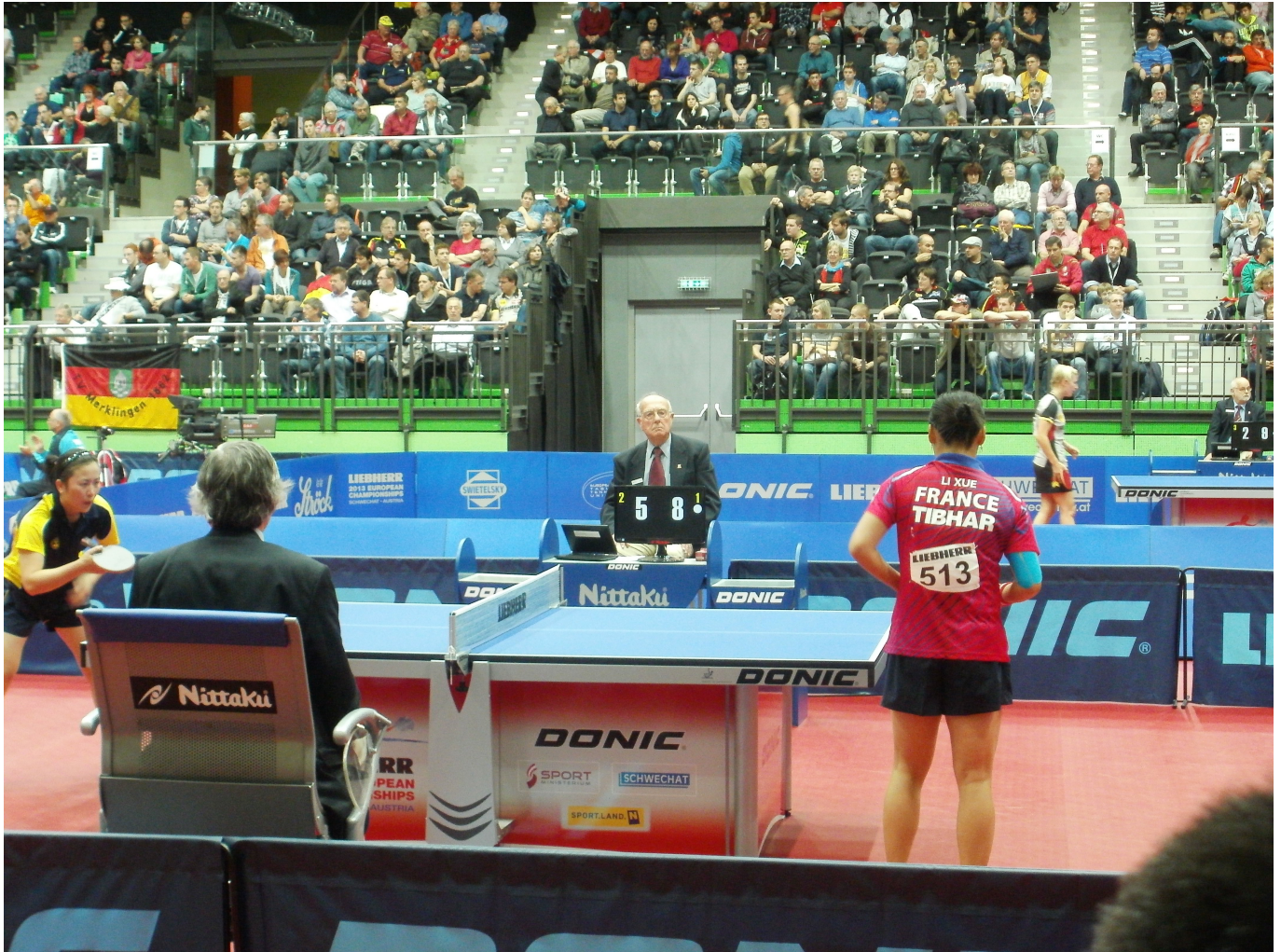
"He was very active and fit, still playing table tennis – he played in the umpires' tournament every year – and he went out walking every morning.

"The previous day I had talked to him for half an hour, so it came as a great shock to me.

"He worked very, very hard in Staffordshire for table tennis and worked actively for many years for the umpires' association and his nature and his humour came out. You couldn't find anyone with a bad word to say about him.

"He and I went to a lot of events together and we used to have a regular wine-tasting session on Saturday evenings! He was a very erudite man as well and wrote very interesting articles for the association magazine.

"I imagine a lot of umpires will be at his funeral wearing the blue blazer as a mark of respect."



Derek Sherratt 'in action' at an international event

Former Staffordshire Chairman and current Umpires' Secretary Brian Watkins, who knew Derek for more than 50 years, said: "I shared a room with him for many years at tournaments and he made me a cup of tea in the morning. He had a fantastic sense of humour and was also a very clever man and not to be underestimated.

"He would be devil's advocate at times and made you think maybe you should be doing something a different way.

"He's always been there and prepared to do anything and he did it with good heart and good humour and was appreciated by his peers.

"He was a man you could love, a gentleman."

The funeral service will be at Stafford Crematorium at 1pm on Friday August 19 and afterwards at Stafford Cricket Club in Riverway.

Donations may be made to the Stroke Association or the British Heart Foundation.

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