



Schools table tennis enters a new era

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A new era for schools table tennis begins tomorrow as the merger between Table Tennis England and the English Schools Table Tennis Association (ESTTA) takes effect.

The two organisations have been working towards the alliance for a year and a Schools' Committee has been set up, Chaired by Table Tennis England Board member Mike Smith, to oversee the partnership.

Table Tennis England Chief Executive Sara Sutcliffe and ESTTA President John Arnold – who will continue to contribute as Deputy Chairman of the new Committee – have both welcomed the new era and the potential for growth which it brings.

Sara Sutcliffe said:

We are delighted to be joining up with ESTTA to enable schools' table tennis to continue to grow and improve.

ESTTA has done an incredible job to implement, develop and increase the level of schools' competition for over 50 years. Both organisations see merging as an opportunity to grow schools' table tennis even further and to utilise the experience and skills of volunteers and staff in both organisations to ensure that schools' table tennis is in the best position possible to realise its potential.

There are endless opportunities when working with schools and both organisations are aware of what a good school sport table tennis can be, making this a very exciting time for Table Tennis England going forward.

John Arnold added:

The decision taken by the Executive and then by the AGM, having consulted members, is one which will help Schools' Table Tennis in England to continue to grow at all levels and provide quality opportunities as part of a Whole Sport Plan.

Change will not happen overnight – it will be phased in following discussions about the future. The vastly experienced 'old hands' will still be at the forefront, giving much needed continuity to the programme but will benefit from working alongside staff from Table Tennis England.

We thank the army of volunteers who have supported us and made our events what they are – we still need your help and that of others!

I have witnessed many challenges in my time as a senior officer of ESTTA – this will be the greatest but one providing long term benefits to table tennis in schools.

The structure of schools competitions for the 2017/18 season will be the same as last season and will be delivered with support from Table Tennis England.

The Butterfly Schools' Team Championship Zone and Regional finals take place in January and February, with the National Final at Hinckley on March 10, 2018. The Individual Championship finals are at Aldersley Leisure Village in Wolverhampton on April 21.

April promises to be a busy month with the British Primary Schools' International (Scotland) from the 6th to 8th and the International School Sport Federation (ISF) World Schools' Table Tennis Championships in Malta from the 8th to 14th.

It is also England's turn to host the British Senior Schools' Invitation International in 2018, which will be from June 22-24.

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