



Obituary: Doug Young, 'gentleman referee'

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The loveliest of men and one of our top-class referees, Doug Young, passed away on 10th February in Worcester.

Doug, who was born on 30th May 1934 in Luton, was involved with table tennis for very many years at local, county, national and international level. He was well loved and respected by those who came across him for his quiet charm and gentle sense of humour as much as his professionalism as an official.

Worcester and Worcestershire are synonymous with Doug. He held many roles in the Worcester League including President, Fixtures Secretary (for over 30 years) and Secretary for both Division 1 and Division 2.

At county level, Doug was Worcestershire's Chairman from 1994–2016, Umpires Secretary 1972–2007 and National Councillor 1995–2013. He only gave up his roles in 2016 when his health began to fail as he felt that he would not be able to properly fulfil his duties.

Doug served on several ETTA Committees and took an active part in meetings. He was County Championships Chairman 1987–96, Trade Committee Member 2007–13, National Championships Committee Member 2000–10, National Umpires and Referees Committee Member (Qualification Panel) 1980–1997 and Umpires Review Panel Member 1994–97.

Doug's achievements were honoured by the ETTA when he was made a Vice-President in 1994 and then he became a well deserved Honorary Life Member in 2004, an award which Doug accepted with his usual humility and grace.

As well as the strong connections with his county Doug was a first-class umpire and referee. He gained his County Umpires badge in 1962 and then went on to become a National Umpire in 1970 and an International Umpire in 1975.

Some of the major events Doug umpired at included the World Championships, Tokyo, in 1983 where Doug umpired the Women's Team final in front of 11,000 spectators; two European Championships in 1972 in

Rotterdam (umpiring the first match in the Women's Team finals) and 1988 in Paris; and two Commonwealth Championships in Cardiff, 1973 and Isle of Man, 1985.

Doug umpired at numerous other internationals at home and abroad as well as many National Championships in all age groups and many other domestic tournaments. The BBC programme "Top Table" which was recorded in Birmingham and then shown over an eight-week period was another series of matches at which Doug umpired.

Doug was a prominent referee who first became a Tournament Referee in 1972, a National Referee a year later before gaining the status of International Referee in 1992. He was appointed the Referee at the Commonwealth Championships in Nairobi in 1991 and relayed the story of chasing his luggage across the country when it was lost at the airport.

In 1988 and 1990 Doug was the Referee at the English Opens and also refereed seven National Championships between 1979 and 1992. As Deputy Referee, Doug officiated at the World Championships in Gothenburg in 1993, the European Championships in Birmingham in 1994 and two English Open Championships in 1986 and 1992. A remarkable record.

Doug was most proud of being named by John Wright, the world renowned and possibly the best referee ever, as his successor and the only Deputy John would leave in charge to have a break for lunch.

Doug was a popular and long-time member of the ETTA 100 Club, and with his wife Wanda, regularly attended the annual get-togethers.



Doug Young and his wife Wanda at the 2007 100 Club dinner (picture courtesy of Doreen Stannard)

I will miss Doug tremendously, as will all who knew him, and our sincere condolences go to his daughters, Sandra and Carole, and the other members of Doug's family.

Doreen Stannard, Table Tennis England Honorary Life Member said: "As Chairman of National Championships Committee when Doug was appointed referee, 99% of your worries were taken care of, like the man himself his paperwork was immaculate, Doug was very well respected by players both at home and abroad.

"We sat together for many years at National Council, a great friend gone but never to be forgotten. His greatest pride was his family."

Lynda Reid, International Umpire, said: "Doug encouraged me to become an umpire in the 1980s when a county match was on a Saturday afternoon and two umpires shared the work. I watched how he umpired and tried to follow his example, for example, the apparently casual stroll around the edge of the court to ensure the barriers were correctly aligned.

"He was always calm. I remember him saying that he considered he had failed if he had to issue a yellow card; that a good umpire should always be in control of the players.

"I sat my IU exam on his dining room table. Doug always made sure that the County AGM report included a record of the umpiring done by Worcestershire umpires and encouraged us to broaden our horizons. I have enjoyed many great experiences in the world of table tennis thanks to following his guidance."

Martin Clark, Table Tennis England Honorary Life Member said: "Doug was the nicest of people one would ever wish to meet. I never heard him say a bad word about anyone.

"Not one to blow his own trumpet, he was committed to his table tennis from grassroots right up to the international levels that he served with integrity, class, elegance and such distinction throughout the years as a player, umpire and referee.

Never one to cut corners, the time and effort he put wholeheartedly into all the voluntary work he gave was second to none. I feel privileged to have known him and fortunate to have benefited from his knowledge and experience whilst serving alongside him on committees both within the county and nationally.

"A true gentleman with a wicked sense of humour, he will be sorely missed by all those blessed to have known him."

The funeral service will take place at Worcester Crematorium, Tintern Avenue, Worcester WR3 8HA on Monday 12th March 2018 at 3.15pm. All are welcome ,family flowers only.

For anyone who wishes to send a donation in memory of Doug they can send it to the funeral directors E J Gumery & Son, 68/70 Ombersley Road, Worcester WR3 7EU, they are happy to receive donations for up to a month after the funeral.

Two charities have been nominated by Doug's daughters: Ronald McDonald House Charities who provide free 'home from home' accommodation to families with children in hospital (they really helped Doug's family when his great-grandson Bailey needed open-heart surgery aged just four months), and RSPB, because Doug loved his garden birds and was a member of RSPB as he wanted to help nature.

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