

Senior British League: A New Era Dawns

Exciting times are ahead. With the announcement of an important change in the structure of the Senior British League, leading clubs will be able to stage a series of spectacular matches throughout next season.

BATT'S now has a very good chance of being part of this new era. It could be the start of a fundamental transformation for table tennis in the UK.

The recent decision is that starting from next season, the Premier Division matches will be played on a "home and away" basis. This means that instead of combining the matches at a single venue over a weekend, each of the clubs will play one of the opposition once at home, and once away during the season.

It will enable the clubs to create a football-style spectacle that will be a superb family attraction.

In order to be part of this, it is essential for BATT'S to hold our place in the Premier Division. Shortly before the last round of matches on the weekend of 7th and 8th November, Neil was faced with some tricky problems. Ethan Walsh was away in Hungary on international duty, and Peter Cleminson had an injury.

A last minute decision was taken to use another of the Swedish players who had been registered to play for BATT'S.

The new player was Johan Hagberg. Johan is 21 and was recommended to Neil via a mutual acquaintance. He is a full time professional player in Sweden, and has also trained in China and Japan. Johan certainly delivered the expected victories on his UK debut for BATT'S at Nottingham. Some sensational play saw him win 6 out of his 8 singles including victories against four players in the top 20.

Our other overseas signing, Michael Tauber, again contributed to a successful weekend of matches, also winning 6 of his 8 singles.

Adam Nutland, playing at 3, won three



© John Upham

Johan Hagberg

Photo John Upham

singles, and Jack Bennett playing at 4 won one singles.

So Neil's rescue plan was entirely successful, with the final result being a spectacular win against Ormesby - last year's champions. That left BATT'S sitting in a fairly comfortable mid-table position at the end of the weekend. With 6 matches still to play we reckon that we now just need one more draw to guarantee our place in the top tier next season. The team will be travelling to Cardiff for two more matches on 9th January, followed by the final decisive weekend at Middlesborough (Ormesby) on the weekend of 13th and 14th February.

The BATT'S second and third teams have also been in action recently, with a further round of matches on the weekend of 31st October/1st November. The 2nd team won 3 out their 4 matches, placing them 3rd in their division at the end of the weekend. A welcome return to winning form for Jimmy Walsh, who won 6 of his 8 singles, but the star was Jack Bennett who only dropped one singles. Also in the squad were Ryan Fellows and Ethan Walsh.

The 3rd team again found the going tough in their division. Although they

have yet to win a match there was a superb performance by captain Josh Dye who managed to win four of his singles, picking up a victory in every match. Among his scalps there were some highly ranked players including a three straight win against Patrick Thomas, the Welsh number 5 player who was ranked almost 400 places higher than Josh! Read more about Josh in the profile on page 2.

Junior Christmas Party
Wednesday 16th December
5pm - 9pm

With special guest...
Leon the amazing Magician!

Fun competitions

This replaces normal coaching sessions: all juniors (Beginners, B and A Squads) are welcome from 5pm



Umpiring: Get Qualified!



With the great upsurge of interest in table tennis at BATTs we now have a great need to recruit qualified umpires.

The umpire has a very important role in ensuring competitions run smoothly, as well as a great opportunity to get a close up view of the play.

We have the possibility of running a County Umpires course at BATTs, if there is enough interest. This would be **free for participants**.

If any of our younger players would like to start getting qualified there is also a **Junior Umpire Award**.

Contact Graham if you would like more information or to list your name for the County Umpiring course.

Meet Josh



Josh Dye has been a welcome member of our coaching team since the beginning of 2015.

Josh started playing table tennis when he was 15, when his grandmother

Latest Jack Petchey Awards



The winners of our monthly Jack Petchey awards for October and November were **Christian Brissett** (left) and **Té Steward**.

Both boys joined our coaching scheme earlier this year and have been showing great promise, attending regularly and willing to work hard to improve. They have both started entering competitions, and both told me their first ambition is to win a

tournament!

Christian is in Y8 at St Edmunds College. He had played a little at school and started taking a serious interest in the sport when he joined BATTs in April. He has recently been promoted to our A squad.

Té is a pupil at Leventhorpe in Y9. He joined us as a beginner in June and has recently been promoted to the B squad.

bought him a net to start playing on the dining room table at his home in Woodford. He then joined Mossford TT Club where he received his first coaching. Only two years after starting to play, Josh became interested in coaching and started developing his ambition to combine a career in coaching and playing. He left school after doing A Levels in economics, history and English Literature, and went to study a degree in Accountancy at college.

Josh had his first table tennis success playing for a Mossford team that won their division in the National Junior League. His debut in the Senior British League was marred by a serious knee injury, which stopped him from playing competitively for 9 months during 2014.

Since joining BATTs he has been training hard, and is now competing

on the tournament circuit, appearing for BATTs as captain of our third team in the Senior British League.

As a result of his intensive training he has risen 261 places in the senior ratings in the last two months. He is now focused on building his career around coaching and as well as participating in most of the regular sessions at BATTs he has also been responsible for county coaching for Essex and completed his UKCC Level 1. In recent weeks Josh has spearheaded the BATTs initiatives to coach at local schools and is currently running sessions at The Downs, Passmores, and Harlow College. Another exciting development for Josh has been that he has now been selected for a "player/coach" sponsorship by Stiga. Josh is available for 1 to 1 coaching and you can contact him at: joshddye@gmail.com

Diesel: A Bright Hope for BATTs



Diesel Harvey

photo www.sprocketphotography.com

After playing table tennis for only 15 months, **Diesel Harvey** has turned into one of our best young prospects. Just a few days before his 12th birthday Diesel had a sensational win in the **Hope Cup**, the tournament for Division Two players in the Harlow League.

It was an incredible performance, involving wins against a string of seniors with many years of league play behind them. Among Diesel's victims was Garry Hudson, his own team captain, who is unbeaten in league matches this season.

As well as training hard at BATTs several times a week, Diesel is also starting to gain a variety of competition experience, and performed very well in the first round of National Junior League matches recently.

Building on Success

We are always thinking about ways to develop and improve our facilities, and we would really like to build a new extension/annexe that would be available for table tennis at any time. At the moment this is just a germ of an idea, but who knows where it might lead....

Right now we need to identify a small team of individuals to turn this into reality. In particular, an architect, a project manager, and someone to take the lead on grant applications/funding.

Any ideas who might be able to help us get started? Speak to Neil or Graham for more information.

Harlow League

Almost at the half-way stage in the season and the 11 BATTs teams in the Harlow League have not yet dominated any of the three divisions. Our best chance of a division winner looks to be the Gorillas whose squad of **Simon Jarvis, Keith Fung, Josh Dye, Jess Jarvis and Paul Martindill** is neck and neck with Allnutts. Much will depend on the match between the two teams being played at the end of November. The remaining five BATTs teams in the Premier are bunched around mid-table, but the Orang-Utans are languishing at the foot of the table, 16 points behind the next team. Extra bananas needed perhaps.

Unusually, we have no teams leading either of the other two divisions and our three teams in Division One and two teams in Division Two are all hovering around the middle of the tables.

Junior British League

The BATTs campaign in the Junior British League hit a few problems, when it was discovered that we had been placed in Division Two, which was lower than our expectation. This meant that **Ethan Walsh**, unfortunately for BATTs, decided to play for another club. This left us with a tricky problem, given that Ethan was expected to be the mainstay of our team. The solution came from Adam and his connections with the Swedish club who lent us one of their top juniors, Viktor Kjellander, for the first round of matches. The other team members were Jordan Wykes (from Jersey) and our own Joe Walker. They performed creditably, finishing in second place after the first weekend of matches.

Our girls' team also missed one of its key players as Jess Jarvis was unavailable. But the team of Stephi Cross, Gracie Edwards and Hannah Burrows managed to win two of their five matches which left them in a middling position in Division One.

Cadet Super Series: Off to a Great Start



Jaycee Chan: Runner Up



Joe Walker: Winner



Damien Gray: Third Place



Gracie Edwards: Fourth Place



Christian Brissett: Band One Winner



Matthew Neil: Band One Runner Up

They have every reason to look happy. These were the prizewinners in our first Cadet Super Series tournament held on Sunday 22nd November. Between them, they picked up £215 prize money. That completes the first cycle of competitions - each month we run a senior, junior or cadet tournament. All three have been a great success and entries are arriving thick and fast for the next series. See page 4 for dates, and visit our website (the "tournaments" page) to download entry forms. But don't leave it too late: the Senior Super Series on 4th December had filled up two months beforehand. In fact it is so popular we have now converted our Senior Super Series on 21st February to an all-day 2 Star tournament and double the prize fund!



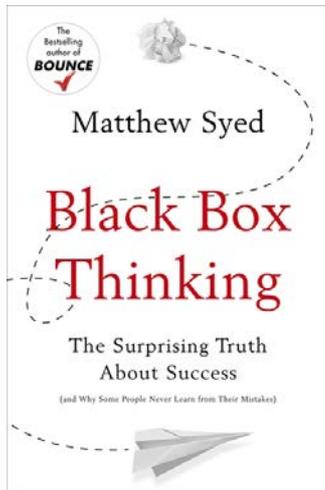
More tournament successes for **Joe Walker**, who won the Cadet event at the Plymouth 2 Star at the end of October, and our own Cadet Super Series (see p.3). Joe also reached the quarter final of the Chandlers 2 Star in November.

Declan Garner continues his amazing unbroken attendance record which now stands at 50. He has appeared at BATTs 4 times a week since the end of August! His hard work and enthusiasm were reflected in some great play in the National Cadet League matches this month.

Ethan Walsh is still globe trotting, representing England at the Hungarian Junior and Cadet Open, where he was successful in progressing beyond the group stage before falling to the number 4 seed in the Cadet event. Right now he is in Portugal playing in another Open tournament as part of the England squad.

Great performance by our three teams who played the first round of the **National Cadet League** at Ellenborough on 15th November. Between them, the teams won 6 out of their 9 matches, and the B team (**Samadhi Udamulla, Toby Moring and Matthew Neil**) was unbeaten.

Black Box Thinking by Matthew Syed



Matthew Syed, the author of *Black Box Thinking* was, of course, a former England number one table tennis player. You won't find a lot of table tennis anecdotes, but Matthew's latest book is a superb read, and highly relevant for our sport at all levels. He demonstrates very clearly how a sport can achieve national success, but at a more detailed level his ideas are highly relevant for coaching.

Matthew Syed has a writing style that engages the reader from beginning to end. He sweeps effortlessly between powerful examples taken from very different walks of life, showing the importance of analysing failure. Experts in many fields have tended to put themselves over as infallible, and many lives have been lost through the perpetuation of medical myths that have

absolutely no foundation. He shows how, instead of fearing failure and covering mistakes and shortcomings, we should be continually analysing performance and looking for marginal gains.

While failure is typically feared or denied, he demonstrates how, when failure can be used as an opportunity learn, it can be turned into a powerful positive force.

Black Box Thinking is the result of detailed research into a vast range of disciplines: psychology, pure science, politics, economics, philosophy are just a few. But don't be put off. This is never a dry and academic book. His ideas are rooted in the familiar and practical worlds of business, sport, education, and medicine: there is plenty of real-life drama which makes the book highly readable.

What's @ BATTs

7.30pm Friday 4th December

Senior Super Series

This tournament is full, but all welcome to come and view some great play during the evening. **Note that our regular coaching will need to finish at 6.30pm ('A' Squad are welcome to arrive any time from 4pm).**

5pm Wednesday 16th December

Junior Christmas Party

See page 1

Friday 18th December

Senior Christmas Outing

Natasha Walsh has organised a trip to "Bounce" in London. Contact Natasha for more details:

njwalsh@live.co.uk

NB Coaching sessions at normal times

10am-3pm Saturday 19th December

Training Camp

Adam Nutland is running a session mainly for seniors. Contact Adam for more information.

9.30am Sunday 20th December

BATTs Club Championships

Contact Adam (by 13th December) to enter.

12.30pm - 4.30pm Monday 21st December

Holiday coaching timetable, replacing normal coaching times. B Squad and A Squad: any time from 12.30pm-4.30pm. Beginners first hour only 12.30pm - 1.30pm.

10am-2pm Tuesday 22nd December

10am-2pm Wednesday 23rd December

Holiday coaching timetable, replacing normal coaching times. Beginners first hour only 10am - 11am. All others any time 10am-2pm.

Thursday 24th December - Tuesday 29th December

No coaching.

10am-2pm Wednesday 30th December

10am-2pm Thursday 31st December

10am-2pm Friday 1st January

Holiday coaching timetable, replacing normal coaching times. Beginners first hour only 10am - 11am. All others any time 10am-2pm.

10am Sunday 3rd January

BATTs Junior Super Series - Prize Fund £375!

Entry form on BATTs website.

Monday 4th January

Normal coaching times resume today.

12pm Saturday 23rd January

BATTs Junior Open League

10am Saturday 30th January

BATTs Cadet Super Series - Prize Fund £215!

Entry form on BATTs website.

The full calendar of all activities at the Norman Booth Centre is visible on our website.

BATTs News is published by BATTs Table Tennis Club, Harlow

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