

BATTS Youngsters TV Debut



There was an extra buzz at the National Championship finals held at Hatfield in March. The event, magnificently staged by Table Tennis England, came hot on the heels of the astonishing achievement by the England Men's team who had secured third place in the World Team Championships at Kuala Lumpur just a few weeks earlier.

At BATTs our hopes in the National Championships were resting on another good performance by Adam Nutland and he played superbly to reach the quarter-final stage for the second successive year, falling only to England number 1 Liam Pitchford.

But we had a further interest in the finals, televised live in a three hour programme by ITV4. After taking part in a ballot, four of our young players were chosen to be mascots, leading the finalists into the

arena.

A capacity crowd were gathered, and the atmosphere was electric, with some fantastic play throughout all the events.

The photo shows our four hopefuls being welcomed at the start of the mixed doubles final, in which Sam Walker and Tin-Tin Ho beat David McBeath and Emma Vickers.

For our young players it was an unforgettable experience. Here is a selection of their comments afterwards. Farrah: "... a wonderful experience - I loved watching the players so I could learn to improve my play."

Nico: "...all the finalists were very nice and down to earth."

Will: "...amazing to see how fast they played."

Harry: "...great to feel the excitement in

the air as the finals were played."

The ITV4 programme really captured the excitement, and brilliantly put table tennis in front of the public - something that has happened all too rarely in recent years.

The level of interest in table tennis now is increasing at an amazing rate. At BATTs our competitions are filling up ever-earlier, and we are getting many enquiries from new players of all ages.

Adam's efforts earned him promotion to number 12 in the Senior Men's rankings, and we hope that he could make it into the top 10 before long.

As far as our young mascots are concerned, who knows where they may get to? Perhaps ten years down the line and after another 9,900 hours of practice, we'll see one of them walk back into the same arena.....

Senior British League: Poised for Action



Michael Tauber [Current England rank 12, latest world rank 345]



Adam Nutland [Current England rank 13]



Peter Cleminson [Current England rank 54]



Jack Bennett [Current England rank 25]



Ethan Walsh [Current England rank 55]

We are looking forward with eager anticipation to seeing our team begin their campaign in the UK's flagship competition - the Premier Division of the Senior British League.

The new format will give BATTs members, for the first time, a chance to support our team playing individual matches against all the other top clubs during the season.

Our home matches will mostly be held on Saturdays - see schedule below.

They will be superb entertainment, and we hope all our members - including our younger players - will turn out in force with all the family to support the BATTs team.

Neil has now established our squad for the coming season. The change in the league format means that matches will be played in a wide area and on up to 14

dates. Neil realised that a small squad would be risky. Fortunately, we had no shortage of players wanting to represent BATTs. As well as plenty of familiar faces we have a welcome newcomer (see below, left).

We think our squad could have the youngest average age in the Premier Division, so the challenge will be tough, but we know we can count on the club giving them maximum support.

Our players from last season - Michael, Adam, Jack, Peter and Ethan - will be looking to build on their excellent performances that secured a place for BATTs at the top flight of the UK table tennis scene.

All photos courtesy of John Upham

Meet Alex: Our New Signing



We are delighted to welcome **Alex Ramsden**, an exciting young international prospect, into our Senior British League squad for the coming season.

Despite having only just completed his first season as a Junior, Alex is currently ranked 3 in the Junior Boys' and 17 in the Senior Men's list.

Alex has had an outstanding season, finishing runner up to Tom Jarvis in the Junior Nationals, also reaching the

semi-finals of the U21 event, and winning a bronze medal in the men's doubles, playing with Luke Savill.

Alex's training schedule often takes him away from his home club at Northampton - he travels regularly to Grantham and Nottingham for extra training, and is a member of Table Tennis England's Youth Squad. He has already played for England as a senior in the Six Nations competition, where he picked up a bronze medal.

Alex has made a number of appearances at BATTs. Most recently he reached the semi-final of our Senior Super Series in February.

With GCSEs looming there are plenty of demands on his time, but Alex is keen to continue his impressive progress and hopes to begin entering European competitions next season.

We look forward to seeing Alex playing for us in these crucial matches and training with the squad at BATTs.

**PREMIER DIVISION
HOME MATCHES
Dates for your Diary!**

Here are the dates of our Premier Division home matches for the coming season. The start times, and more information about the matches and other attractions will be sent nearer the time - make sure you are on our mailing list to receive this information.

**Saturday 24th September
BATTs v Fusion**

**Saturday 5th November
BATTs v Nottingham Sycamore**

**Saturday 11th February
BATTs v Ormesby**

**Saturday 25th February
BATTs v Halton**

**Saturday 11th March
BATTs v Drumchapel Glasgow**

**Saturday 8th April
BATTs v Cardiff City**

**Sunday 30th April
BATTs v North Ayrshire**

BATTS Tournament Round Up

Our season of new Super Series tournaments came to a successful conclusion on 8th May with **Joe Walker** emerging the worthy winner. In previous events he'd come close to winning, and now his prodigious efforts in training paid off.

The competitors included a large contingent from London Academy and almost as many from Barnet. Great to see them at BATTS to guarantee tough competition for our own players, but we were pleased that our own **Ray Yan** and **Christian Brissett** managed to capture some of the available prizes. Christian reached the final of Band B and Ray the semi-final of Band A.

Our final Junior Super Series was held in April, with **Ben Cawston** - the England number 18 junior from Hampshire winning the event.

It is very encouraging to see these tournaments proving so popular. Our aim is to provide a fast-moving tournament where no competitors have to wait around too long in between their matches and where all entrants are guaranteed a minimum number of matches. And the final element in the winning formula is to run the events on a cost-neutral basis - so we give most of the entry fees back in prize money. This meant that in our final Cadet event in May we increased the prize fund from the advertised £215 to £400!

The only downside of this is that we hate having to turn people away. So to avoid disappointment, if you are keen to enter make sure you are on our mailing list for the new season. We shall again be running Senior, Junior and Cadet events with (roughly) one per month.

Another recent event held at BATTS was the Essex Junior Closed. Joe Walker swept aside all opposition to win both the Under 18 and Under 15 events without dropping a set in either final. His opponent in the Under 18 final was **Jack Stockdale**.

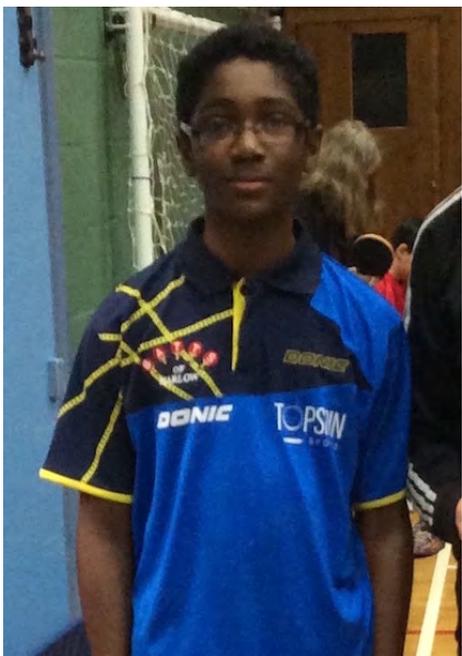
Congratulations also to **George Campell** who played very well to reach the semi-final of the Under 18 Restricted event.



Ben Cawston - Junior Super Series Winner 3rd April



Joe Walker - Cadet Super Series Winner 8th May



Christian Brissett - Cadet Super Series Band B Finalist



Ray Yan - Cadet Super Series Semi Finalist



Joe Walker and Jack Stockdale - winner and runner up in the Essex Junior U18 event

Congratulations

Alana Mansfield was selected to play for the English Primary Schools annual competition against the other home nations in April.

Held at Guernsey, and with seven countries competing, the England girls team finished second, losing only to Ireland. Alana also reached the quarter final of the girls' individual event.

Still keeping up a busy schedule of tournaments, Alana is now ranked 10 in the U13 girls list.



Peter Radford became the national Over 70s champion in May, beating Brian Hill in the final at Bristol. This is the second time Peter has won the event - previously at his first attempt in 2013.

Peter was also the O40s national champion in 1987.



Our latest Jack Petchey award winner was **Jake Harvey** (left) who received his award in April.

Jake was selected as a result of his excellent progress and great commitment to working hard in training. Jake also shows tremendous grit and determination in competitions.

Jack Stockdale (photo on p.3) played in the BTTAD National Championships at Grantham in March, winning a silver medal in the Junior Final. Jack also received an award as the junior player of the tournament.

Snippets

Our coaching programme is busier than ever. We have now started a Thursday session on a trial basis, which will be open to any of our A or B Squad who are signed up for at least two other regular sessions during the week. The aim of this is essentially to provide extra practice time. The session will run from 4pm - 5.45pm.

Some welcome additions to our coaching team recently. Keith Fung is now leading our beginners' sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday and involved in our schools outreach efforts.

We are also very pleased to have a group of parents helping at our beginners sessions. Gerry Cecil-Smith and Renate Weller are now qualified Level 1 coaches, and the others (Robert Gonda and Sandy Nash) are competent players and plan to get their qualifications soon.



A clutch of medals came our way at the end of the **National Junior League** and **National Cadet League** matches.

Our Junior team (below) were runners up in division 2 and our Cadet teams (left) finished top and runners up in division 2.

