

Swedes Mashed at BATTS



Photos: Mike Loveder

A truly heroic performance by BATT'S II in the Senior British League in January put them in contention for promotion to the prestigious Championship Division next season.

With two juniors in the team and the prospect of facing the division leaders Horsham Blades, it looked like a mammoth task ahead. The BATT'S youngsters, Sam Chesterman and Joe Walker, were inspired and encouraged by efforts of Steve Beerling and Tony Halling playing at 1 and 2. In the first match Joe Walker swept aside Bryan Kwan, ranked almost 200 places higher, to help

secure a 6-3 win for BATT'S. Sam also won both his singles. In the second match, the Horsham Blades team containing three Swedes were not sharp enough for our lads. With Joe Walker again unbeaten in his singles matches it was the turn of the reliable Tony Halling for heroics. Tony had been suffering all week from a virus and he played brilliantly to beat his two Swedish opponents, both of whom were ranked around 40 places higher.

Having beaten Horsham 7-2, the BATT'S team

finished the day in equal top position, and all now depends on the final weekend's matches. These will again be held at BATT'S on 14th and 15th April. We hope all BATT'S members will be there to support our team over that weekend. Check out the British League website for the match schedule.

Tables > Seniors 2017-18 > National A-2								
#	Team	P	W	D	L	SR	GR	Points
1	Horsham Blades I	10	8	0	2	2.60	1.73	16
2	BATT'S II	10	8	0	2	1.31	1.12	16
3	Brighton TTC I	10	7	0	3	1.50	1.26	14
4	Godalming Simply Let I	10	7	0	3	1.25	1.12	14
5	Fusion II	10	5	0	5	0.91	0.93	10
6	London Academy II	10	3	0	7	0.88	0.99	6
7	Cippenham I	10	2	0	8	0.55	0.74	4
8	York Gardens I	10	0	0	10	0.34	0.52	0

SBL Premiership: Present and Future



BATTS v Urban

Photos: Andrew Webb, Sprocket Photography

Our first team in the Senior British League Premier Division has had mixed fortunes so far in 2018.

The eagerly-awaited first home match of the year, on 13th January, had an international flavour when we were visited by Urban, the division leaders. Five of the eight players competing were from overseas and we were treated to a spectacular display of table tennis.

Fittingly, we achieved our largest home crowd of the season, and almost ran out of seats. Based on the rankings of the two teams, it looked like the task facing BATTS was impossible. Urban were fielding three Hungarian internationals, and their number one had been in the world top 100 not so long ago. While the BATTS players all had world rankings, they were in the 600s.

The match was much closer than we had dared hope. Thanks to an excellent pair of wins by **Helshan Weerasinghe** and a superb fight by our Swedish player **Malte Möregårdh** to beat the Urban number two, we had reached 3 - 3 and a draw now seemed

possible. But it was not to be, and the final score of 5-3 to Urban meant that BATTS were now destined to be fighting for Premier Division survival by the end of the season.

On the morning of the Urban match we hosted friendly matches between some of our junior players and teams from Urban. Organised by our Head Coach **Peter Cleminson**, this was a great way of giving the future generation of British League players a chance to be involved in the action. See below for photos of some of the BATTS players in the junior matches.

The next encounter for our top team was a tough away match in Belfast on 27th January, against the very strong newcomers Ormeau.

Neil was again faced with problems of team availability and our weakened side was beaten 7-1 with our sole victory coming from **Helshan Weerasinghe** playing at number 1.

The next fixture was another away match, this time at Fusion. With **Malte Möregårdh** and **Jack Bennett** both back in the team, we were hopeful of securing a draw. But **Ethan Walsh**

had more ambitious ideas, and put in a superb performance to win both his matches, including an excellent win against Emran Hussein, ranked 24 places higher in the England rankings. With two wins from Malte, and one



Ethan in action against Fusion Photo: Mike Loveder

each from **Jack Bennett** and **Steve Beerling**, BATTS ran out winners 6-2 giving us a good chance of staying in the Premier Division next season.

Our next home match is on Saturday 17th March against North Ayrshire. The start time is 2.30pm - come and support our team, and don't be late if you want a seat!



Some of the BATTS juniors playing in the matches against Urban before the SBL Premier match

Photos: Andrew Webb, Sprocket Photography

Declan Wins National Award



Declan receives his award from Susie Hughes, Deputy Chair of Table Tennis England

He has only just turned 15, but during the past 2 -3 years Declan Garner has made a phenomenal contribution to BATTs. All our beginners and intermediate players

have benefitted from Declan's work as an assistant coach. He is developing into a highly competent coach, and his patience and encouragement are greatly appreciated. But that is only

part of what Declan does for BATTs. He is a great help in organising our various competitions and tournaments - always willing to be on hand to do whatever is needed. As well as that, Declan's skills in computers and graphic design have been put to good use.

Each year, Table Tennis England make awards in various categories to volunteers in their "Pride of Table Tennis" Awards.

From more than 120 nominations submitted, a judging panel determine the national winner in each category, with the results announced at a ceremony in London.

We were delighted to learn that Declan was the outright winner of the "Young Volunteer of the Year" for 2018.

This is a very fitting recognition for the many hours of his time he gives to BATTs.

Gritty Performances at the Velodrome

Our two Junior British League teams were in Derby for the final weekend of matches on 10th/11th February. Neil travelled with the teams and writes...

JBL premier division is a wonderful spectacle with the finest junior table tennis you could wish to see. The impressive 36-table venue has whirling cyclists flying round above, adding to the tension below

The fact that BATTs A may feel slightly disappointed to have finished fourth out of 50 teams competing at the venue says everything about the quality of the team we are blessed with at this time. **Ethan Walsh** finished with a remarkable 7 wins from 8 including victories over the England number 1, 2 and 4. That gave him an extraordinary 13 wins out of 16 through the season. **Sam Chesterman**, nursing a back injury, had a fine win too over England number 4 James Smith. **Joe Walker** had an amazing Saturday winning 3 of his first 4 matches to help secure our place in the top half of the play offs. He then continued to perform well against much higher ranked opponents. **George Hazell** didn't have his best weekend but his fluent and sparkling play has lit up JBL over



Match in progress at the Velodrome

Photo: Chris Rayner

many seasons. We wish him well as he moves into the senior game. BATTs B players have many more seasons in the junior ranks and their rapid improvement since the September weekend was very much in evidence. It's a glowing tribute to their dedicated training and the quality of the coaches who support them.

Finley Cameron-Prior finished with 9 wins from 20 over the season. Worth noting he was playing in the very tough number one spot and that he was battling tonsillitis this time but bravely refused to step down. **Charlie Read** finished with 8 wins and is starting to win regularly against highly

ranked opponents. **Sam Flaum's** five victories hide the fact that 4 of them were gained in the second half of the season. Further evidence of how hard he has been training.

A word about the coaches. Peter was unwell and Josh was at a family wedding so **Chris Jamieson** and **Cliff Carder** stepped up at the last moment. It's really vital to have coaches but they didn't merely make up the numbers. It was apparent straight away that they commanded the complete respect of the players they were coaching. They did a fine job and we're all grateful to them.

Adult Coaching: Never Too Late



Our first adult coaching group recently completed a ten-week course led by coach Keith Fung.

It was a great success. As the course reached the final week, his trainees were asking us to arrange another!

Keith was delighted with the improvement shown by the players, and we were pleased to include several non-members of BATTs. The new course is about to start, but if you would like to join please contact Graham (see details below) for more information.

Super Debut for Young Trio



Teddy Lewis. Photo: Sprocket Photography

Among the BATTs contenders in our Under 13 Super Series One Star on 18th February were three youngsters making their debut in formal competitions.

All three had a successful first outing. **Teddy Lewis**, who was 10 in December, reached the semi-final of the Band 2 knockout, beating several ranked players in the early rounds.

Mithran Patnaik and **Charlie Economou**, both aged 11, were the other two newcomers. Mithran could claim to be the most successful because he finished third in his group (including a win against Teddy!) As a result of that Mithran went

through to the Band 1 draw where he immediately met one of the top seeds in the first round. Charlie has only been coming to our coaching sessions for a month, but still managed to beat one of the Greenhouse players in the first round of the knockout. All our other five players put in creditable performances and it was unfortunate that the four who got through to the Band 1 knockout met other BATTs players in the first round, with the winners: **Sam Taylor** and **Harry Argent**, going out to seeds in the next round.

We were delighted that our entry was again very strong and that we filled all 48 places before the closing date. The overall winner was **Arthur Bracken** (England number 38) who played brilliantly to beat the top seed **Oliver Maric-Murray** (England number 10) in a thrilling five-set final.

National Schools Zonal Finalists

Four of our players from **Bishops Stortford Boys High** recently won the zonal final in the National Schools Team Championships.

The team, shown in the photo (right), were **Toby Petch**, **Ethan Willis**, **Kyle Cameron-Prior** and **Cassidy Fung**. Their win qualified them to attend a regional event in Bristol in January, where they just lost in the final round.

Neil, who organised the team, commented that they can be proud they were just a step away from reaching the final four teams in the country.

COMING UP @ BATTs

Saturday 10 March
Junior Open League - Final!

Saturday 17 March
SBL Prem: BATTs v Nth Ayrshire. See p 2

Friday 13 April
Open Singles League

Saturday 14 April
SBL National A-2. See page 1

Sunday 15 April
SBL National A-2. See page 1

Saturday 21 April
SBL Premier (TBC)

Saturday 5 May
SBL Premier (TBC)

Friday 11 May
Open Singles League - Final!

Sunday 13 May
Cadet Super Series 2*

Saturday 19 May
SBL Premier (TBC)

Sunday 17 June
Junior Super Series 2*

New Trustee



We were delighted to hear that **Helen D'Aguiar** has accepted an invitation to become a Trustee of the Norman Booth Centre. We shall

publish a profile of Helen in the next edition of BATTs News.



After another recent influx of Year 7s we now have a total of 29 players on our current register from Boys High.

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