

Week Commencing 7th October 2002

The new President of the Leamington and District Table Tennis Association for 2002/2003 is John Earles. As a young teenager John was invited to take part in the league when it was first formed in 1946 and he has continued to play in it ever since. He was Men's Singles champion in 1980 and 1981. John Earles succeeds as President Phil John who founded the Free Church Club in 1972 and has introduced many new young players to the sport.

The popularity of the Leamington League has been confirmed again this year with the affiliation of another out of area club. The Blessed George Napier Club from Banbury has joined the league for the first time this season and entered two teams which will play in Divisions 1 and 3 respectively. Leamington changed its rules in 1998 to remove all residential restrictions provided teams use a home venue in the Leamington area. George Napier follow in the footsteps of Nuneaton and Marconi who joined last year. Both are playing again this season and Marconi, who earned promotion from Division 3 to 2 last season, have entered a second team in division 3.

The first Free Church Tournament of the season is this Saturday, 12 October at Sydenham Sports Centre, Leamington Spa. There is likely to be a large entry with a high standard of play. A contingent of players from Wales is expected for the first time for a couple of seasons. All spectators are welcome.

Whitnash B may have been demoted from Division 1 at the end of last season but they are determined to return to top flight table tennis as soon as they can. Certainly their first two matches in Division 2 are setting them on the right path. First they eclipsed AP Sports B 9-1 and then they edged out Free Church C 6-4. Against AP Graeme Cunnington, Paul Riman and Jane Dickens all took their singles whilst Eddy Stafford and Stephanie Hawkins held the doubles in consolation for AP. Then three, two, one from Dennis Woodhead, Graeme Cunnington and Paul Riman respectively gave 'Nash the victory over Church C, Chris Mulligan holding two for Church, Stuart Mills one and the doubles between them. Free Church A and B both came out on top this week. Church A repeated their 7-3 score with a win over RNA A with braces from Les Booth, Dave Daniels and Hugh Matthews plus the doubles by Daniels and Matthews. Tony Thomas kept two for the navy, Ken Southwell one.

Closer for Free Church B who only squeezed the 6-4 win over RNA B thanks to an excellent treble from Tom Brocklehurst, a brace from Emma Churchley and a crucial single from Cherry Matthews. Richard Smith took two for the naval B side, Steve Poole one and the doubles between them. RNA B also fell foul of newly promoted Marconi A who were led to 7-3 success by Dennis Mockford who took his three and the doubles with Gordon Tucker who also took a single and Richard Jardim chipped in with a brace. Duncan Hall, Tony Bennett and Richard Miles all kept one for the B's. RNA C had better luck as did the D crew, with both sides winning 7-3 on the same night. Graham Heath took his three, Daryl Burgess and Dot Macfarlane two each to give RNA C the 7-3 result over Eathorpe A, for whom Matthew Cooper kept two and the doubles with Chris Atkins. Steve Kurlle and R Lancuki (in his first league match in Leamington) took singles and doubles for RNA D 's victory over AP Sports B. Tony Williams, Gerald Taylor and Stephanie Hawkins all keeping one for AP (their first div 2 wins).

New faces in Division 3 and the Leamington league, Blessed George Napier B have started with a tremendous 8-2 over Myton A led by trebles from young brothers Daniel and Michael Rowan and backed up by a brace from Mum Janice. Jonny White held onto two for Myton. County Council C started with a bang with an 8-2 victory over AP Sports C -but then Council fell in a 7-3 whisper against Ashorne A. Against AP Tony Ford and Doug Lowe took three each and Pat Woolvin added a single and the doubles with Tony Ford. AP's Carol Meredith and Charlotte Freeman held onto one

each. Against Ashorne Tony Ford kept his three for Council but Simon Chalker, Roger Kelley and Chris Bowles all made braces for 'Horne and Chalker and Kelley the doubles.

Top dogs in Division 1 County Council A have kept their unbeaten record intact for a second week - with another 10-0 result. This time it was Phoenix who were eclipsed by the Council trio of Phil Paine, Mark Jackson and Clive Irwin. Phoenix had done better in their first match, picking up a 6-4 success despite only having two players. Martin Tallis took his three, Allan Stockham two and the doubles between them for Phoenix whilst Len Coonan took one single for opponents Flavels, who also gained the three forfeited points. St. Georges A threesome, Earl Sweeney, Martyn Todd and Bert Banks all picked up braces in their match against Wellesbourne and Todd and Sweeney the doubles to give Saints the 7-3 advantage. None could stop 'Bournes' Andy Cockerill who held onto his three singles.

In the 2-aside Division A St. Georges C overcame FISSC B 4-1 led by Richard Grover in singles and the doubles with partner Philip Morby who also added a single. Mark Kingham kept the sole point for the Farmers. Tighter for two Free Church teams who battled it out all square until the doubles which the Church F pair of Jonathan Mason and David Whittaker won, David having won both his singles already to give F the match 3-2. Opposition in this local derby was from Church E, Estyn Williams and Keith Knott both holding onto one.

In Division B Free Church I's duo of Luke Hobbins and Joseph Cox trampled over newcomers and clubmates Church K 5-0. Closer contests for Eathorpe teams. First Eathorpe F took two out of the three 5-setters in a tight match against Eathorpe E which finished 3-2 to the F's, Ian Western taking both his singles and the doubles with son Lawrie. Katie Hawker and Nicola Rossington both kept one for the E's. St. Georges D also gained 3-2 - Eathorpe D the unlucky ones. Ryan Fenwick took his two, Philip Morby one for Saints, Jim French holding one for 'thorpe plus the doubles with Pauline Parkes.