

CIPPENHAM TABLE TENNIS CLUB

ANNUAL REPORT 1989-90

INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the seventeenth season of Cippenham Table Tennis Club, and its sixth since moving to the present multi-table headquarters at Haymill Centre in October 1984.

The highlights of the year were a second championship title for our mens "A" team in the Southern Region League, and Anna Watton's selection for England Schools last summer, the first international recognition for a Cippenham player.

MEMBERSHIP

Over the past twelve months a total of fifty-eight players have represented the club in match play, and all but two of these currently hold full membership. These club's full membership thus remained at the 1988-9 record level of fifty-six. With non-members regularly attending club practice and coaching sessions, there are now about seventy players associated with the club in one way or another. Cippenham Table Tennis Club is truly one of the largest and most successful sporting organizations in Slough.

Twenty teams were run in various leagues during the past season - one less than in the previous season owing to the withdrawal of our one team from the High Wycombe League after just one year. Fourteen teams operated in the Slough League, ten in the senior divisions and four in the Youth, while three more played in the Maidenhead League.

Three teams were once again entered into the Southern Region League, one in each of its three divisions.

During the past year Graham Trimming celebrated his 300th appearance for the club, Ken Phillips his 300th, Gareth Lovell 200th while Julie Bell, Steve Crow, Mike Davis, Jacquie Lovell, John Potts and Mike Wright all passed the 100 mark. The all time leading appearance list now reads: Graham Trimming 331, Peter Hillier 557, Frank Earis 477, Ken Phillips 326, Frank Cowley 283, Jackie Thomas 282, Rodney Potts 276, Dave Pountney 250, Alec Watson 239 and Gareth Lovell 202. The busiest players over the past year were Graham Trimming and Neil Bird with 60 and 49 appearances respectively.

This season the Management Committee has become disturbed at the lack of discipline shown by club members in certain areas. This was precipitated by letters from Haymill in January concerning two occasions when the gymnasium was left unlocked overnight. Into the general subject matter of discipline, the management of the club added the timeliness of members arrival for matches, and their conduct during matches, especially with regard for consideration to others in respect of movement about the venue, and procedures for tidying and locking the venue after the finish. Subsequent to a letter being sent to all senior league members in February, there appears to have been some improvement in most areas.

ADMINISTRATION

The Management Committee, elected at the Annual General Meeting last May, met six times. Constitution and personal attendances were as follows:

Name	Position	Meetings	Attendance at meeting	
Alec Watson	Chairman	5		
Graham Trimming	Secretary	6	26th July	3
Peter Hillier	Treasurer	6	6th September	3
Ken Phillips	Deputy Chairman / Coaching Administrator	6	28th December	3
Jackie Thomas	Venue Liaison Administrator	6	21st February	6
Neil Bird	Press Secretary	4	18th April	6
Frank Earis	Committee member	6	21st May	7
Steve Joel	- do -	3		
Phil Woodhouse	- do -	1		

Thanks are due to the above and also the teams captains who have organised their sides in an efficient and responsible manner.

A selection committee for the Southern Region League teams consisted of the three teams captains - Jackie Thomas, Graham Trimming and Alec Watson.

As always the Management Committee of the Slough League had a large Cippenham contingent. Graham Trimming completed his ninth year as Chairman and fifteenth as Fixtures Secretary, while Peter Hillier extended his current spell as Treasurer to nine years. Gareth Lovell now has five years as Press Secretary and Closed Championships Secretary, while his new wife Jacquie completed her second year in this spell as General Secretary. Mike Rhodes joined this season and has deputised for the Inter-League Secretary. For services to table tennis in the Slough area two club members have been the recent recipients of the Coral Racing Trophy - Gareth Lovell in 1989 and Ken Phillips in 1990.

Peter Hillier has now completed more than three years as Treasurer of the English Table Tennis Association, a very busy office, and has been returned unopposed for a fourth term. To add to the honour of the Malcolm Scott Award bestowed upon Peter by the ETTA last summer, he is now to be nominated for a Vice-Presidency at July's AGM. Graham Trimming has for the second season been the main organizer of the Southern Region leagues in his position as Match Secretary. Ken Phillips has this season taken on dual roles for the Buckinghamshire County Association as their Coaching Secretary and Treasurer.

Members have also been very active in other areas. Mike Davis has for many years superbly organised the Maidenhead Closed Championships, renowned as one of the best local league tournaments in the country, while Ken Phillips has become the main coach at the Maidenhead League's Friday evening coaching at Altwood School. In recognition of his services to the county, Alec Watson was elected as a Vice-President of the Bucks Association at their AGM last June.

Frank Earis has once again represented the club on the Haymill Centre Management Committee, elected to serve all users, and enables a dialogue to be maintained with the "landlord".

Much coverage of the club's activities has been enjoyed in the local press, with the Slough Express, Slough Observer, Maidenhead Advertiser and their sister newspapers reporting all major events including matches in the Southern Region leagues. In addition, of course, the club's exploits in the local leagues attracted extensive coverage, as did the success of our players in local tournaments.

VENUE AND EQUIPMENT

The £5500 investment made over the period between the end of 1984 and early 1986 continues to meet our requirements, and the only new acquisitions have been two further scoring machines for use at our Southern Region League matches, and two replacement net and posts sets. The club justifiably boasts having the finest playing conditions, an opinion shared by many visitors including those in the Southern Region leagues. For match and tournament play four Butterfly Nippon Rollaway tables are used, each court individually enclosed and lit by four 500W tungsten halogen lamps permanently attached to the ceiling at a height of eighteen feet. For practice and coaching five or six tables are erected.

The Haymill gymnasium has been used each Thursday throughout the year, and Tuesdays during the winter and summer league seasons. Eight Slough League teams have utilised Tuesday, with the remaining two Slough League teams and the Maidenhead League sides playing on Thursdays. On all but odd occasions space has been allocated for at least two practice tables on Thursday evening throughout the winter. Two hours each Sunday afternoon have been reserved for coaching, and occasional use has been made of Sunday evenings for matches in the Southern Region leagues. From May 1990 coaching has been switched to Tuesday evening on an experimental basis.

The Slough League has made use of Haymill on six Saturday afternoons for its Youth Division, and on another occasion for its Hard Bat Tournament. Considerable use has also been made for inter-league matches, providing income to the club.

For the third time, the club bulk purchased a supply of green shirts and printed the club's name on the back. These have been sold to members and most now proudly wear them when representing the club. A stock is now carried by the club for future requirements.

FINANCE

The Treasurer has reported another financially successful year, with a cash surplus of £340, a seasonally adjusted surplus of £518, and cash balances of £2376. The surpluses are just short of the amount of £542 deemed necessary to cover depreciation of the club's equipment, thus generating a reserve for its eventual replacement. The adjusted surplus includes the non-recurring income of £130 prize money from the Southern Region League.

It should be understood that the financial position during the past year, as in the previous year, is the maximum that can be achieved as the venue has been utilised to capacity. The club is considering a policy of expansion which would require a substantial increase in numbers of members to pay for the additional time required at Haymill. This policy might cause the club to make a small loss in the period until additional income earned matched the additional expense incurred.

No sponsorship receipts were forthcoming during the year.

Fees remained unchanged from the previous season. Members currently pay an annual fee of £10 plus match fees of £2, both halved for junior players and OAPs. Practice fees are £1.20 for members and £1.50 for non-members, again both halved for juniors and OAPs.

The club has been notified of increases in the hiring charge at Haymill, effective from April 1990. The full rate for Tuesday and Thursday evenings is set to rise to £32, but negotiations with Haymill appear to have effectively reduced this to £29. However this still remains a substantial increase from the £22.50 paid this year, and makes an increase in fees unavoidable.

TEAM COMPETITIONS

National Club Championship

As champions of the Slough League, Cippenham was once again proud to represent the town in the Ormesby Cup. We were, however, unable to repeat the successful run of 1988-9, losing a first round match to the powerful Graham Spicer club of Thames Valley.

Southern Region leagues

Title regained! The Southern Region League championship title proudly resides once again at Cippenham, for the second time in the three year history of the league. Having gone unbeaten throughout the year, including a memorable 6-3 win over close rivals Kingfisher just before Christmas, the last fixture was faced with no more than a 7-2 defeat required to clinch the title. That was exactly the result achieved, and we won the league by a single set after having acquired the same number of points as the Woodley based club. Operating without a regular third player all season, great credit must go to evergreen veterans Alec Watson and Frank Earis, both of whom played superbly throughout and made it a one-two for Cippenham at the top of the players' averages. Each of the other four players to appear played his part, often winning important sets, all of which were to prove vital in the final analysis.

Maybe it was destiny that decreed that Cippenham would have to be content with runners-up in the Ladies League, as twice they looked capable of beating Kingfisher, only to lose twice. So the 1989 champions had to settle for second best in an elongated and more competitive league, and thus the mens and ladies titles were swapped between the two elite clubs in the league. Jacquie Lovell and Jackie Thomas both had excellent seasons to finish second and third in the averages.

So compelling was the competition that our mens "B" team finished bottom of their division, winning only one of their ten matches. It was a case that not all three of the players ever played well at the same time, and many matches were lost 5-4 and 6-3. The only victory came in the match against Generation at Fareham, when we fielded what on paper was the weakest team of all. Perhaps it was a case of never being at full strength through calls from the "A" team, but the same players who failed in the First Division were those which brought off brilliant and telling victories in the Premier Division!

Cippenham can justifiably claim to be the fourth strongest club in the entire region, after British League clubs Amity Generation II, Kingfisher and AHW.

Slough League

Perhaps the Southern Region League championship was given too much importance, as results in the local leagues were slightly disappointing. To many clubs, runners-up in the Slough League, plus fourth, seventh and eighth in the Slough Division One, and third in the Maidenhead Premier Division, would be success beyond their dreams, but to a club like Cippenham which has been totally saturated with success throughout the eighties, it is a disappointment.

Having been champions five times in the last six years, and eight times in twelve years, a certain amount of complacency might have arisen. Certainly, the Management Committee did not select its best side for the assault on the championship, and finally paid the price. Cippenham Outlaws had gone through 1988-9 without dropping a single point, and had been unbeaten for two and a half years when the bubble burst at the Nalgo clubhouse in December. This was followed by defeat in the all-important match at Burnham a month later, and from that point the outcome was out of our hands.

The policy of spreading remaining talent over the other three Slough First Division teams to protect players promoted from a lower division, meant that a repetition of four of the top five placings as in 1989 was never a possibility, and the eventual positions gained by our teams must be viewed with satisfaction.

Ken Phillips elected to play in Division Two with a team of youngsters promoted from the Third and Fourth Divisions and led his side to a creditable eighth place, one above the more experienced Villains outfit. In the Third Division Rascals managed to steer clear of the relegation zone, an important factor to this club which needs teams in all divisions in order to provide its younger and improving players with a path of progression.

In the Fourth Division the newly built team of Bandits failed by a whisker to win promotion, while Vandals and Rebels filled the bottom two places. It was interesting that these two teams were far from outclassed in the division that was the most competitive of all - clearly the opposite of the more usual situation in the bottom division.

In the Youth Division, played in six weekend sessions at Haymill, the four Cippenham teams contrived to fill the middle four positions in the table, and good match experience was provided to our improving youngsters.

In the League's official averages, Frank Earis was second, Steve Dorrell seventh, Graham Dixon eighth and Mike Rhodes tenth in Division One. In Division Two Ken Phillips was second, Terry Stevens and Lindsay West were third and sixth in Division Four while Ben Taylor topped the Youth Division averages for the second time.

There was no success either this season for Cippenham in the Dilger Cup. The last remaining team, Vagabonds, blew their chance when conceding a quarter-final match they won on the table, through playing an ineligible player.

However the Youth Division equivalent, the Tunes Cup, was won by Wendy Barlow and Ashley Cox, the Urchins, with a four points final win over Castle Hill.

Maidenhead League

If second in the Slough League was a disappointment, then so was third place in the Maidenhead League. This ended a run of three successive championships for the club, and six overall since 1981. It is fair to say that, with the possible exception of Frank Earis, none of the Spartans players realised their full potential, and certainly did not recapture the form that had made the title virtually their own. Indeed, it was the first time that a designated challenge for the championship had not met with success, but it is also true that the Maidenhead League has grown in strength during that time.

Having won promotion the previous year, it was always going to be tough for Trojans in the Premier Division, and they were not able to escape from bottom position. Lynford Roundheads, who had played at Haymill the previous year, became an integrated part of the club and provided our third team in the League under the title of Cippenham Roundheads. They finished fourth in a very tight First Division.

Alec Watson finished in third place in the race for the Wilkinson Sword, but only eighth in the total list of averages, one place ahead of Frank Earis.

Summer League

For only the second time in eight years, Cippenham failed to win the Slough Summer League. Beta eventually finished runners-up to Burnham 1, one point ahead of Alpha, who lost only to the champions. Altogether seven teams were run, with the young Epsilon team excelling to gain runners-up medals in Division Three for the second time.

TOURNAMENTS

The club organised three tournaments during the season.

Club Championship

Held in early April, this annual event attracted an entry of thirty-four participants, two more than last year. The day was enjoyed by all, with plenty of table tennis for everyone. The two singles events open to all, the Mens and Ladies Singles, were played in groups for the first round. It was a little disappointing that some juniors chose not to enter the senior events and thus deprived themselves of a good learning opportunity.

Frank Earis, Alec Watson and Lindsay West all won two titles. Frank beat last season's champion, Alec in the final of the Mens Singles, and then combined with his victim to win the Championship Doubles. Alec retained his Veterans Singles title with a final win over Steve Crow, who had earlier knocked Frank out. Lindsay's two titles came in the Boys Singles and Junior Doubles with Greg Stevens.

Jacquie Lovell repeated her Bucks Closed final win over Anna Watton in the Ladies Singles, while the Girls Singles provided a repetition of the Slough final with Wendy Barlow victorious over her sister Julie. The Tweenie Singles, for players between junior and veteran status was won by Steve Dorrell.

Handicap Tournament

For the third year, the Handicap Tournament was staged in the first half of the season, away from the main championship events. The entry was thirty-one, seven up on the previous season, and provided many hours of enjoyment to all participants.

The event proved a triumph for ten-year old Terry Young who won all three events open to him. As well as winning the Junior Handicap Singles, he also provided winners medals for his two partners, Jonathan Phillips in the Junior Handicap Doubles and Neil Bird in the Top and Tail Doubles. In the senior events, the Handicap Singles title went to Ken Phillips, and the Doubles to John Potts and Jackie Thomas.

Invitation Tournament

The third Cippenham Invitation Tournament was played in September with, for the first time, a maximum entry of eight teams. Invitations were accepted by Amity Generation II (Fareham), Castle Hill (Maidenhead), Kingfisher (Reading), Purbrook (Portsmouth) and Pyestock (Aldershot). The late withdrawal of Burnham necessitated the introduction of a third Cippenham team.

The tournament was played in two groups of four, then cross-over semi-finals and finals to establish all positions one to eight. Thus each team played five matches of six sets, under the experimental scoring system of thirteen-up.

The event attracted very good quality players and was won by Pyestock, who fielded a team stronger than that which represents them in the Southern Region League. Runners-up were Purbrook, likewise strengthened, while 1988 champions Castle Hill finished third and a full strength Cippenham "A" team only fourth. Very good pre-season practice was thus provided for all participants who clearly enjoyed and benefitted from the occasion.

COACHING

Now into its sixth year, the Cippenham coaching scheme has continued under the expert guidance of Ken Phillips every Sunday afternoon. Attendances have varied greatly and the average of eight was generally less than in the previous years.

During last summer, and after attending an advanced coaching course and several tournaments, Ken Phillips was awarded his qualification of ETTA Coach.

Three quarterly awards were made during the year - to Craig Dommett, Wendy Barlow and George Moore. The club's Boy and Girl of the Year awards were made to Terry Young and Wendy Barlow. Wendy also received the Leo Thompson Memorial Trophy as the Slough League's most improved junior.

TOURNAMENT SUCCESSES FOR INDIVIDUALS

Club members could not quite repeat the incredible success of the previous year when thirty winners and twenty-five runners-up awards were achieved. This season only eighteen winners and fifteen runners-up trophies were acquired. But then that's not a bad collection!

Wendy Barlow and Steve Crow were our most successful players with four titles each. Generally, it was the ladies who led the way as Jacquie Lovell, Anna Watton and Jackie Thomas all won important events.

Starting with successes in county championships, this really was where the ladies came to the fore. Anna won the Ladies Doubles titles at both the Buckinghamshire and Berkshire tournaments for a unique double, while the most prestigious title to come to the club was Jacquie Lovell's success in lifting the Bucks Ladies Singles title with victory in an all Cippenham final against Anna. Anna was also runner-up in the same event at Berkshire, while Jacquie and Jackie Thomas were her runners-up in the Ladies Doubles event at Bucks. Wendy Barlow achieved her greatest success at the Bucks championships becoming double county champion at Cadet Girls Singles and Junior Girls Doubles with her sister Julie, not bad for a twelve year-old! Finally on the county scene, Jackie Thomas and Frank Earis were the runners-up in the Bucks Mixed Doubles.

Our best results in league tournaments came in doubles events. At the Slough Closed, Graham Dixon and Graham Trimming took the Mens Doubles, while Steve Dorrell and Jacque Lovell were successful in the Mixed Doubles. At the Maidenhead Closed Jacque and Jackie played splendidly to take the Ladies Doubles. Steve Crow had a busy day at the Slough Closed winning both the Veterans Singles and Division One Singles, while further success became Wendy Barlow in the Girls Singles and for John Potts and Craig Dommett, victorious in the Junior Doubles. The Veterans Singles at the Maidenhead Closed was won by Frank Earis for the third consecutive year.

In the hard bat tournaments Steve Crow came to the fore with success in the singles at Slough and doubles at Maidenhead. The Slough doubles title also came the way of the club through Frank Earis and Alec Watson.

Both Slough handicap singles events were won by club members as Frank Earis took the Lynford Bowl, after many previous close failures and despite being the most heavily handicapped player in the event, while Wendy Barlow proved how much she had improved with a comfortable success in the Wharton Vase.

Unusually, the Slough Masters was not dominated by Cippenham players, even though four of the eight qualifiers came from this club. Steve Dorrell, beaten in the semi-final was our last hope.

Away from club activities, Steve Joel qualified for the National Association of Boys Clubs finals where he excelled in finishing second in his age group.

REPRESENTATIVE HONOURS AND RANKINGS

Pride of place this year has to go to Anna Watton's selection for England Schools "A" in the schools international series of matches against Ireland, Scotland and Wales in July 1989. Anna remained unbeaten in singles, winning all six of her contests, and also won two of her three doubles matches. England finished runners-up to Wales in the tournament. In the following day's singles events Anna did very well to reach the quarter-final.

Four players appeared in the England veterans ranking list published on 8th January - Alec Watson (33), Frank Earis (65), Kay Waters (17) and Jackie Thomas (32). More recent is the news that Wendy Barlow has obtained a ranking of 59 in the cadet girls list.

After winning the Bucks cadet girls ranking trial, Wendy Barlow went on to the Southern Region trial where she finished third, and with that gained a place in the national trials as a replacement at short notice.

Eight Cippenham players represented their counties over the past year while twenty-three represented their leagues. Alec Watson, Frank Earis and Kay Waters were ever-present in the Buckinghamshire Veterans I team which unfortunately was demoted from the Premier Division of the County Championship. Our ladies were well to the fore with Jacque Lovell and Anna Watton both representing the Bucks senior team, while Jackie Thomas made the second veterans team and Wendy Barlow debuted in the junior side. Additionally, Nick Heaps won honours in the Berkshire veterans second team.

Twenty-two club members represented Slough, including eleven in prestigious national competitions. At the time of last season's report the Slough veterans team had reached the semi-final of the VETTS championship. The team of Alec Watson, Frank Earis and Eddie Herrity were unfortunately beaten in that match, and with Steve Crow replacing Eddie, lost in the first round of this season's competition. Steve Dorrell, Steve Joel and Graham Trimming made up the mens side in the Wilmott Cup, while Anna Watton, Kay Kennedy, Jacquie Lovell and Jackie Thomas between them played Slough's two matches in the Rose Bowl. Thus Cippenham had the honour of supplying all the players used by Slough in national competitions this year. Mike Wright made it into Maidenhead's second veteran team to give the club its first Maidonian representation for a few years.

The Slough League presented badges recently to players who had played five times for the club, provided that at least one occasion was in the present season. Eighteen club members benefitted from this: Julie Barlow, Neil Bird, Steve Crow, Craig Dommett, Steve Dorrell, Frank Earis, Malcolm Hicks, Gareth Lovell, Jacquie Lovell, Ken Phillips, John Potts, Mike Rhodes, Emma Thomas, Jackie Thomas, Graham Trimming, Kay Waters, Alec Watson and Anna Watton.

Graham Trimming
May 1990