



Cippenham Table Tennis Club

Annual Report 2023-24

Highlights of the Year

This report summarises the fifty-first season in the history of Cippenham Table Tennis Club and the twenty-eighth since the opening of our purpose-built premises. This has been another successful year, the highlights of which were:

- The 50th anniversary celebration in June 2023;
- Sustaining the first team's place in Senior British League National Division A after promotion last season;
- Runners-up position for our young second team in Senior British League National Division C-5;
- Winning Division 3 of the Women's British League with a team of juniors;
- Retaining the Maidenhead League Division 1 title;
- Staging another successful Cippenham Junior 4-Star Open;
- Staging of a second Cippenham Women & Girls' Open;
- The emergence of Sai Prasanna Kumar, winner of the England Under-10 Boys' Singles title and also winner of the Championship Singles event at the Maidenhead Closed;
- Increased attendances at the Club's Tuesday and Thursday practice sessions;
- The continued success and attendances at the Club's three weekly coaching sessions.



Cippenham Table Tennis Centre



Cippenham Table Tennis Centre was opened on 1 October 1996 as a result of the hard work and enterprise of the Club's Management Committee. It was a joint project with The Westgate School and is used by the School during school hours for a variety of sporting activities. Outside of school hours it is used exclusively by the Club for table tennis. The Centre is managed by Cippenham Table Tennis Centre Limited, a company formed by the management of the Club for the sole purpose of managing the facility. The Board of Directors includes three Club members while the School is also entitled to nominate two representatives although these positions are currently vacant.

The Centre comprises a playing hall (25m x 22m) with adjacent storage, plus an amenities area that includes a lounge area with servery and which has a full width, glazed screen providing views into the playing area. This facet of the design attracts many compliments from visitors. There is a spacious reception area and an office that doubles as a control point for tournaments. In the opinion of many, the Centre remains one of the finest table tennis facilities in the country. The Club has access to adjoining changing and shower facilities in the school block but this access is used only during some weekend events.

The floor of the playing hall was renewed in January 2016 and after an initial spell in which it was slippery, it settled down with the help of a £1,500 investment by the Club in a floor-cleaning machine.

The Centre owns 22 Butterfly Centrefold Rollaway 25 green tables. Nine of these were purchased new in August 2023 while of the existing stock, thirteen were retained and six disposed of. A selection of net and posts sets services those tables. Finding suitable scoring devices that do not break remains a big problem as no commercially produced devices have yet to demonstrate the quality we require and more recently some of the "home-made" ones have been repaired and brought back into service. The old Cippenham/Butterfly-branded screens had become unfit for use by last summer and were replaced by eighty new Butterfly-branded screens in November.

There are also about 70 quality spectator chairs which are stored on a purpose-designed trolley.

The Club has a series of approved court configurations for use in competitive events. These configurations cater for four Grade 2 courts, eight and nine courts of at least Grade 3 size and eleven courts for lesser events. The National Junior and Cadet leagues utilise a 12-table configuration although this configuration prevents access to the main amenities block.

The playing hall is lit by 180 high-frequency fluorescent tubes in 45 installations. However, as part of the host school's extensive upgrade of electricals, these are to be replaced by an LED solution in the summer with the Club having specified a minimum of 750 lux output. The Club will pay the additional amount for the lux upgrade over and above what the school would have specified and the cost of this will be a little over £7,200.

Following a complete revamp of the lounge furnishings in the summer of 2019, there are now five coffee tables and three dining tables and enough upholstered chairs to serve them all. One group of these chairs is arranged around a coffee table in the alcove. There is a drinking water dispenser for topping up players' water bottles.

Thanks are due to the members and their families who spent a few hours at the Club just before the start of the season cleaning the premises and all the equipment therein. A great effort!

Administration and Management

The Annual General Meeting, held in June 2023, was attended by only eight members and elected the following Management Committee which met six times. Constitution and personal attendances were as follows:

Name	Position	Meetings	Attendance	
Ken Phillips	Chairman/Coaching Officer	6	June 6	6
Graham Trimming	General Secretary/Treasurer	6	June 23	8
Elena Tant	Deputy Chairman/Bookings Officer	5	September 12	8
Martin Adams	General Committee member	2	October 31	9
Keith Hall	General Committee member	6	January 26	7
Sue Hayes	General Committee member	1	March 28	7
Elroy Hull	General Committee member	4		
Steve Piercey	General Committee member	6		
David Tant	General Committee member	4		
Sunjay Thakker	General Committee member	3		

No nominations were made for the positions of Events Officer, Club Captain, Social Officer or Public Relations Officer.

Tim Kiteley was co-opted as a General Committee Member on 26 January and attended both of the meetings thereafter.

The Club benefits from having the services of people that have amassed a wealth of experience between them. Graham Trimming has been General Secretary ever since the Club was founded in 1973. Ken Phillips re-joined the Committee in 2012 after a few years absence but had been a foremost member for a great many years prior to that, including several as Chairman. Elena Tant joined the Committee in 2014 having previously served more than twenty years as League Secretary for the Maidenhead & District Association while Elroy Hull served many seasons on the Slough & District League committee as Inter-League Secretary. Sue Hayes also has extensive experience both with the Club and Bucks and also previously in roles at other leagues.

The Management Committee again drew up an organization chart. This has two purposes: it formalises the structure of responsibility with officers showing the scope of their departmental responsibilities and it identifies gaps in the management hierarchy. Some positions remained unfilled.

The following appointments were made:

Welfare Officer:	Sue Hayes	Weekday Duty Manager:	Ken Phillips
Volunteer Champion:	Sunjay Thakker	Club Championships Organizer:	Elena Tant
Head Coach:	Ken Phillips	Grand Prix Administrator:	Graham Trimming
Committee Secretary:	Graham Trimming	Catering Liaison:	Steve Piercey
Membership Secretary:	Graham Trimming	Facilities Manager:	Dave Tant
Press Secretary:	Graham Trimming	Westgate School Liaison:	Elena Tant
Newsletter Editor:	Graham Trimming	Health & Safety Advisor:	Dave Tant
Webmaster:	Graham Trimming	Club Supply Agent:	Steve Piercey*
Calendar Coordinator:	Elena Tant	Members Supply Agent:	Steve Piercey*

- Tim Kiteley replaced Steve Piercey as Club Supply Agent and Members' Supply Agent during the season.

In addition, secretaries and captains were appointed for all teams and organizers and referees appointed for all major events. These are noted later in this report.

The following sub-committees were also elected:

Karen Mitchell Memorial Fund:	Charles Mitchell; Frankie Butterworth
Calendar:	Elena Tant; Sue Hayes; Ken Phillips; Graham Trimming

Necessarily, the more active Committee members do far more than might be supposed from their job titles. Thanks are due to all who have contributed to the administration of the Club, including all the team captains and event organisers.

External appointments included:

Ken Phillips:	Coaching Officer, Closed Championships Organiser and Selector (juniors) for the Buckinghamshire Association; a tournament assessor for Table Tennis England
Graham Trimming:	Auditor for the Maidenhead Association; member of the Table Tennis England Archives, Records and Museum Committee
Sue Hayes:	General Secretary, National Councillor and Selector (seniors; veterans; over-60s) for Buckinghamshire County Association; member of Table Tennis England Disability Select Committee
Martin Adams:	Divisional Fixtures Secretary for Reading Association
Jan Chapman:	President and Management Committee member of Maidenhead Association
Steve Joel:	National Councillor for Somerset County Association
Hari Prasad:	Treasurer of Maidenhead Association
Steve Smith:	Referee of inaugural European Under-13 Championships (Zagreb); Referee of Gloucester Grand Prix, Deputy Referee of Senior Nationals Qualifying Tournament; member of the Table Tennis England Competition Committee
Senga Thomson:	Director of Coach Education for Scottish Association

Many of those listed above have held their positions for many years and given great service to those organisations.

For more than twenty years the Centre has employed a paid Duty Officer to be present on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. This post resumed post-Covid in March 2022 and since then has been filled by Arjun Prasanna Kumar, aided by his mother Jyothi Puttaswamy.

Much of the work that is necessary to run a club with such high activity levels goes unseen by the general membership and some of it is far from glamorous. A good example is setting up for weekend events. Many late afternoons or evenings on Fridays see a team of people at the Centre moving tables, chairs and screens into position so that a perfect arena awaits the first participants on a Saturday or Sunday morning. The set-up teams are arranged individually for each event and usually comprise members of the Club's Management Committee to whom we express our thanks.

The Club has a reduced requirement for a photocopier/printer nowadays because of the extensive use of email communication but, nevertheless, it was still necessary to replace the ailing machine with a new Brother multi-purpose machine in May 2023.

Volunteer Investment and Awards

For their immense service over a great many years, four individuals are honoured with Life Membership of the Club. These are: Peter Hillier; Jacquie Lovell; Ken Phillips; Graham Trimming.

The Club has a Privileged Membership scheme. This is awarded to Management Committee members who have been in office for at least one year and a few others who have been rewarded for their outstanding contributions. There is also a higher tier, the Gold Privileged Member. To qualify for this, members must have given outstanding service to the Club over



a period of at least two, but usually many more, years and the benefits include not having to pay any fees for local league matches, coaching and practice. During the past year there have been nine Gold Privileged Members and two ordinary Privileged Members. A practice voucher scheme is in place, but rarely used, whereby volunteers are incentivised to assist the Club and are rewarded with a voucher that they can use to pay practice fees at a Tuesday or Thursday session.

The usual annual awards were for the second time presented at the Festive Evening just before Christmas. The Karen Mitchell Outstanding Contribution of the Year Award was made to Tim Kiteley who has provided great assistance to the coaching team over the past few years. The Player of the Year awards were made at the same time and these went to Maciej Dlugozima (senior) and Sai Prasanna Kumar (juniors).

Congratulations also to Jamie Woodford who qualified as a TTE-accredited coach following his attendance at the Level 1 coaching classes hosted by the Club.

Membership

Membership of the Club currently stands at 166 and this compares to 199 this time last year. The final figure for last year, in August 2023, was 209.

Over the past twelve months a total of 70 players have represented the Club in match play, five more than in the previous season. 21 of these made their debuts for Cippenham during the year, four more than in the previous season. 21 teams were entered into various leagues during the past season, the same as in the previous season. 10 teams were operated in the British League, 5 in National leagues and 6 in the Maidenhead League. There was also a team in the VETTS Super 60s

Team Competition.

The Club is now 51 years old and during that time a total of 910 players have played in our teams. The Club's founder, Graham Trimming, is easily the player with the most appearances with over 1,650. Sue Hayes, who has the sixth most appearances all-time celebrated her 600th appearance during the season. Rachael Iles joined the list of players with a century of appearances for the Club. The all-time leading appearance list now reads:

Graham Trimming	1668	Gareth Lovell	381	Dave Pountney	276
Peter Hillier	858	George Appleby*	372	Steve Crow	268
Mike Rhodes	708	Frank Cowley	363	Roland Clapton	257
Frank Earis*	669	David Hayes	350	Jane Dickens	235
Paul Baker	632	Georgia Veneer*	336	Ashley Shaw	234
Sue Hayes	610	Rodney Potts*	316	Ricky Hardcastle	217
Ken Phillips	549	Denise Weller	305	James Milton	205
Armando Borges	467	Alec Watson*	301	Anna Watton	204
Neil Bird	435	Steve Joel	287	Andrew Dickens	203
Martin Adams	427	Gemma Chapman	282	Steve Dorrell	202
Jackie Napper	403	Jacquie Lovell	282	Catherine Hayes	200
Robert Hansell	388	Wendy Barlow	279		

- known to have deceased

The busiest player during the past season was Bharath Prasanna Kumar who played 41 matches in the Maidenhead League, National Junior League and National Cadet League. Bharath's brother Sai was next with 34, followed by Aarav Seth 33, Sue Hayes 32 and Mary Heffernan 30.

Finance

Taking the Club and Cippenham Table Tennis Centre Limited together, the consolidated results of the year are a deficit of £6,782 compared to surplus of £7,685 in the previous year. While gross revenues were down just over £1,000 from the previous year, there were two main reasons for the huge turnaround in the finances. The first of these is that the host school did not pass on any of the utility and other expenses associated with our use of the premises from April 2020 until June 2023. The costs associated with the building are estimated at over £10,000 this financial year although the Club is still in dispute with the school about the amounts recharged, especially for gas usage and waste disposal. Also, nothing has been actually invoiced to the Club since December 2023 and so the four months January to April have had to be estimated and an accrual made in the accounts.

The second major cause for the increase in expenditure arises out of the expense of running our teams, especially in the British League. Along with a general increase in league fees, the Club ran one additional team in the Junior British League. However the major impact was made by the purchase of a new club kit for players and this cost about £4,000. This is a cyclical cost and should not re-occur, except to kit out new players, for another three years.

The Club signed a four-year supply contract with Tees Sport in August 2023 and thanks are due to Steve Piercey for negotiating this contract on behalf of the Club. Following the signing of this agreement, the Club purchased nine new tables and eighty court surrounds at a total cost of £9,200. The depreciation of these items added £1,280 to the year's deficit.

The Club still has substantial cash reserves that on 30 April 2024 stood at £85,811 although about £8,400 of this is estimated to be owed to the host school. £64,374 is invested in a 95-day deposit, earning interest at 4.17% p.a., at NatWest Bank. This represents the transfer of funds arising from the closure of the old Cater Allen term deposit plus an additional £10,000 transferred from the current account. The remainder of the cash is in other accounts at NatWest and Barclays plus a residual balance in Paypal into which fees have been paid during the past year. The net assets of the Club and limited company together stand at £99,293.

One innovation this year, in January, was to introduce the facility of card payments. A card reader is used at the Club to take match fees, practice fees and, especially, charges for refreshments with the proceeds being credited to the Club's Paypal account. For a few years now, membership fees and entry fees for open tournaments have been collected via Paypal from which the balance is transferred to the Club's Barclays account.

The rate charged to external hirers is £23 per hour. Annual membership fees are £18 but the additional £18 payable for registration in the Maidenhead League was dropped this year. Practice and local league match fees are £4. All these are halved for juniors and over-60s. Practice fees for non-members carry a £1.50 (75p) surcharge. A special Family Membership fee of £30 is available to any number of related persons residing at the same address. Attendees at the Monday evening coaching classes pay a term fee of £25 while those attending Wednesday evening elite coaching pay a fee of £35 each term. Players in the National Junior League and National Cadet League pay a £12 fee to part cover the season's expenses although this has been covered by the Karen Mitchell Memorial Fund for several years. In the British League a £5 match fee is payable with players also contributing their individual registration fees. This fee structure has remained largely unchanged now for many years.

The Club maintains the Karen Mitchell Memorial Fund which was started many years ago with a very generous donation from Charles Mitchell and is being topped up by a contribution of 5% of the entry fees from all junior and younger age open tournaments run by the Club. The aim of the Fund is to provide financial assistance for children's activities and that includes support for children who may, for one reason or another, need help with expenses incurred in the pursuit of table tennis. The current value of the Fund is separately disclosed in the accounts.

Public Relations

Although the Club has not been able to find an appointee for the position of Public Relations Officer, a significant amount of work has, nevertheless, been undertaken, and much of it for a great many years by Graham Trimming. Press reports, usually accompanied by photographs from the event, have been submitted to the local newspapers in Slough and Maidenhead. Reports of open tournaments also appeared on the Table Tennis England website.

Six years ago Graham Trimming revised the Club's website and the current (third) incarnation uses the Wix software and platform. It is a modern type of website, optimised for viewing also on smart phones. The website is a valuable vehicle for members' information, introductions to the Club for outsiders, results of Club events as well as providing an opportunity to download colour copies of the Club's newsletter and entry forms for forthcoming tournaments. The website is also used for the online membership form and for sign-ups to the Maidenhead League and the open tournament mailing database. The Club almost certainly owns the most extensive and regularly updated club website in the country. Google Analytics reports the following statistics for the twelve months from June 2023 to May 2024: 4,506 unique users (2023: 4,666); 8,867 sessions (2023: 9,216). The highest number of visitors in any single day was 116 on November 29th when the draw for the Junior 4-Star Open was published. Many of the membership and coaching enquiries received by the Club originate from the website.

The Club's Facebook page has also been used to drive readers to the website. All reports have been linked and many events have been advertised on Facebook. As at the end of May, the Club had 927 followers on Facebook, up from 841 a year ago, and 611 on Twitter, up from 599. Facebook and Twitter postings are also used to drive users to the Club's Flickr account which has 86 followers, up from 81. A further 11 albums of photographs have been uploaded onto Flickr this year, all by Graham Trimming. Together, they represent 3,461 photos and the albums have attracted over 4,500 views. These statistics show that this service is appreciated by members and visitors. The photographic backdrop purchased in 2015 is used for most presentations at tournaments.

An edition of the Club newsletter has also been published seven times during the past year. These provide the reader with reports of events that have happened and news about events yet to occur. The articles are enhanced by many photographs.

Social Activities and Amenities

One of the best features of the design of the Centre is the lounge and refreshment area with its viewing aspect into the playing hall. This area and the servery cope well with the demands placed upon them to feed as many as 80 competitors plus their coaches and parents.

Catering at weekend events continued this season in the same format as previously post-Covid. When sufficient numbers of players are present, the Club sources filled rolls delivered by Lunchbox, a sandwich shop in Burnham High Street. These rolls and various drinks are served by Club volunteers. Special thanks must be given to Jyothi Puttaswamy who has provided this service on Senior British League, National Junior League and National Cadet League days and often augments the food offering with samosas and other tasty Asian delights.

The lounge has become a magnet for players at events while they are not actually playing. Many members and visitors prefer to sit inside the lounge area where they can eat, drink and talk rather than stay in the playing arena. Broadband wifi provides a valuable service to members and visitors and has also helped considerably with live uploading of Senior British League results onto Table Tennis England's website.

The former annual Anniversary Party was merged once again this year with the Festive Grand Prix, becoming a Festive Evening and took place a few days before Christmas. Thanks are due to Martin Adams who made the arrangements for this. There was plenty of food and drink and some games to aid to the merriment of the occasion. The evening was extremely well attended and witnessed the presentation of the annual awards. Some of the attendees just partied while a very encouraging number also took to the tables for a friendly hard-bat competition.



The social highlight of the year was the celebration of the Club's fiftieth anniversary. A party was held in June 2023 to which all current and past members were invited. There was plenty of food and drink, games and a fun doubles hard-bat tournament and a commemorative mug was given to all attendees. This evening was also very well organised by Martin Adams. Club Founder Graham Trimming addressed the audience with a welcoming speech highlighting episodes from the fifty years of history of the Club. He also presented an 80-page publication detailing every aspect of the Club's history and this was well-received by members. A ceremonial cake was cut by the three Life Members present, Graham, Ken Phillips and Peter Hiller. Graham also displayed a small selection of his collection of table tennis artefacts, showing how table tennis was played in the past, dating right back to 1900.

Venue Utilisation

Since the opening of Cippenham Table Tennis Centre two principles of utilisation have been established: weekdays should be for regular events, and weekends should be filled on an ad hoc basis with no regular weekly events impeding this.

The current weekday format is:

Monday	6:00 to 7:30 pm 7:45 to 9:15 pm	Beginners' coaching group (term-time) Advanced coaching group (term-time)
Tuesday	7:15 to 11:00 pm 7:15 to 10:00 pm	Local league matches (seasonal) General practice
Wednesday	7:30 to 9:30 pm	Elite coaching (term-time)
Thursday	7:15 to 11:00 pm 7:15 to 10:00 pm	Local league matches (seasonal) General practice

Privileged Members are allowed to play when the Centre is not in use for other activities. Many weekend dates have been sold to outside events, detailed below, or used for tournaments organised by the Club.

On each occasion that the Centre is officially open a Duty Officer is nominated. The responsibilities of the Duty Officer include the collection of fees, health and safety, the proper use and storage of the Club's equipment together with security.

External Events

The Club continues to be successful at marketing the Centre for external events. Extensive use has continued to be made by Table Tennis England and local associations continue to hold events at Cippenham. Apart from the provision of a venue and the effort involved in setting this up, there is also a great deal of organizational work involved on these occasions and the Club is especially indebted to Ken Phillips who has acted as Duty Officer for a great number of bookings.

Once again, we also hosted all weekends of the Senior British League playing host to National Divisions A-2 and C-5. These weekends were organized by Graham Trimming with Ken Phillips in the role of Referee. We also hosted all sessions of the National Junior League and National Cadet League.

A full list of external events (June 2023-May 2024), totalling 28 weekend days, two more (although on two occasions county sessions for Bucks and Surrey were concurrent) than in the previous year, was as follows:

Weekend dates:

Table Tennis England:	Senior British League (7) National Junior League (4) National Cadet League (4) Level 1 coaching course (2)
Bucks County TTA:	County Championships sessions (3) Bucks Closed Championships (1)
Royal County of Berks TTA:	Inter-Town Competition (1)
Surrey County TTA:	County Championships sessions (3)
Maidenhead & DTTA:	Maidenhead Closed Championships (1)
Reading & DTTA:	Reading Closed Championships (1) Individual Handicap Competition (1)

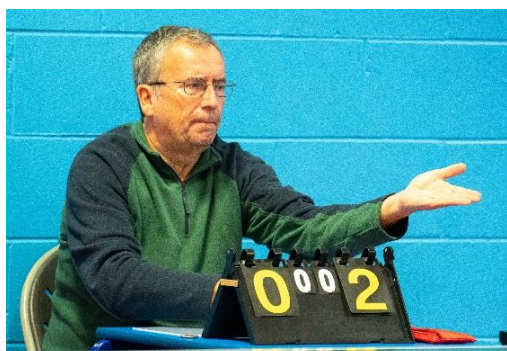


Club Events

Open Tournaments

The Club scheduled four open tournaments for the season, as follows:

Date	Event	Organizer	Referee	Entries
24-25 Jun 2023	Young Players' Summer Festival	Steve Piercey	Ken Phillips	128
2-3 Dec 2023	Junior 4-Star	Ken Phillips	Steve Smith	190
6 Jan 2024	Team 1-Star	Graham Trimming	Sue Hayes	24 pairs
28 Jan 2024	Women & Girls' 1-Star	Elena Tant	Sue Hayes	72



The Junior 4-star takes a great deal of organising. The official Organiser was Ken Phillips but the huge task of Entries Secretary was performed by Steve Piercey. Steve Smith was the Referee, a qualified International Referee. Graham Trimming produced the Draw Sheet and was also responsible for the publicity and photography. The Club is indebted to an army of other helpers and qualified umpires without whom the event could not have been run. The tournament ran over two days with cadet events on the Saturday and junior events on the Sunday.

The Team 1-Star Open is for teams of two players and, following a short preliminary round in groups of three, utilized the progressive knock-out format to ultimately place all twenty-four teams in their ranking order. The Women and Girls' event, for which the entry doubled for its second

season, featured three competitions. In the morning there were separate events for the under-40s and the over-40s and then both age groups came together in the afternoon for the open singles. This event is one of several such events across the country as Table Tennis England endeavours to promote female participation in the sport. The annual Young Players' Summer Festival covers two days and four age-groups and uses smaller courts to allow for additional tables. It was not possible to hold the 5x2 Senior & Veterans' 1-Star Open this year because available dates in the calendar did not match up with availability of officials. Table Tennis England's requirements for officials have been a bit burdensome for the last few seasons but it is expected that these will be relaxed from next season.

Cippenham players have tasted some success in the Club's own open tournaments during the season. At last summer's Young Players' Summer Festival, all four of the older age groups were won by Cippenham players: William Saint; Rachael Iles; Jamie Woodford; Mia Lakhani. Three of the finals were contested by two Cippenham players. Rachael was also successful at the Women & Girls' Open, winning both events open to her while she was also a deserving runner-up at the Junior 4-Star Open.



The Club places on record its thanks to the organisers and referees, listed above, who give their time to help the Club.

Club Championships

The Club Championships ran via its now familiar format on weekday evenings in May. Bharath Prasanna Kumar won the Open Singles while Martin Adams and Hari Gehlot combined to win the Open Doubles. The Veterans' Singles and Tweenies' Singles were both retained by the defending champions, respectively Maciej Dlugozima and Michal Garski. The Junior Singles has been deferred until later.

Hard-Bat Competitions

Two friendly fun hard-bat competitions have been run over the past year with the now established festive event, played just before Christmas, being augmented by another at the 50th Anniversary Party. Both attracted good entries and were very enjoyable occasions.

The event at the 50th Anniversary was run as a doubles event with partners being randomly drawn between the twenty-four players. It was won by Maciej Dlugozima and Steve Piercey with the runners-up being Elroy Hull and Parminder Singh.

At the Festive Evening, twenty-nine players took part in a singles competition won by the then nine-years-old Sai Prasanna Kumar over Jamie Woodford in the final.

Team Competitions

The Club ran twenty-one teams in various leagues and competitions this season, the same as in the previous season.

The following managerial positions were appointed and are acknowledged with thanks for their time and energy:

Senior British League	Captain and Secretary:	Martin Adams, assisted by Ken Phillips
Women's British League	Captains and Secretaries:	Ken Phillips; Denise Weller
Veterans' British League	Captains and Secretaries:	Paul Baker, assisted by Martin Adams; Denise Weller
Junior British League	Captain and Secretary:	Ken Phillips, assisted by Steve Piercey
VETTS Super 60 Comp	Captain and Secretary:	Denise Weller
National Junior League	Captain and Secretary:	Ken Phillips
National Cadet League	Captain and Secretary:	Ken Phillips
Maidenhead League	Captain and Secretary:	Elena Tant
	Team Captains:	Graham Trimming; Louis Alexander; Qasim Hussain; Paul Dennis; Priyanka Sabharwal; Jan Chapman
	Selection Sub-Committee:	Elena Tant; Dave Tant; Graham Trimming

British League Competitions

The Club ran ten teams in the British League, one more than in season 2022-23 following the addition of a second boys' team in the Junior British League.



Cippenham was once again the host venue for both our teams in the Senior British League. The first team, following promotion last year, held on to their place in National Division A-2, finishing sixth out of eight. Shae Thakker was available for only two matches and so Tom Windram, who played for the club a decade or so ago, was drafted in to deputise. Martin Adams and Robert Hansell featured in all fourteen matches while Martin Gray and Steve Munson shared the other spot. Martin became the first player to appear for Cippenham 300 times in the Senior British League, having made his debut in 1998, during the opening match of the season.

The second team went one better than in the previous campaign and secured the runners-up spot in National Division C-5. Unfortunately, this will not be enough for the team to gain promotion. All the players that

featured in this team are products of the Club's coaching scheme with William Saint, Jamie Woodford and Jaiden Caldeira being ever-present. The fourth place was allocated to Anna Piercey and Rachael Iles with Louis Alexander and Mia Lakhani standing in when necessary. With the exception of Anna, all the players achieved an average of at least 50% with Jamie, playing in the number two position, being the most successful.

Two teams were run again in the Women's British League with the youngsters placed in Division 3 and the veterans one division lower. This was a successful season with the first team of Rachael Iles, Mia Lakhani and Anna Piercey being crowned champions of their division and the second team achieving fourth place in theirs. Team captain Denise Weller suffered an unfortunate injury after just one match which curtailed her season and this left Mary Heffernan, Sue Hayes and Julie Dean to carry the team forward.

It proved to be a step too far for the men's first team in the Veterans' British League Premier Division following promotion last year. Unfortunately, the team finished bottom and will be relegated back to Division 1 next time. The men's second team were more successful and finished a creditable second in Division 4B. Steve Joel made a welcome return to Cippenham colours in this team, having last represented the Club in 2001 prior to his move westwards. Steve Munson, on debut in this competition, led the team from the top position and was unbeaten during the first weekend. Steve was ably assisted by the other Steve, Paul Baker and Samson Bekele. Mary Heffernan also had a very successful season personally as the women's team ultimately finished fourth in Division 3.



In order to provide William Saint with the opportunity to play in a higher division, an additional boys' team was entered into the Junior British League. William teamed up with Ben Dunkley and Ryan Chung and that team finished fifth in Division 2. The second team, comprised of local players with Louis Alexander, George Driscoll and Nick Carter promoted from the National Junior League to support Jamie Woodford, finished fifth in Division 7.

The girls' team had the distinction of playing higher up the pyramid in Division 1 against, amongst others, the second teams of three of the most prominent clubs in the country. The same team as won their division of the Women's British League finished ahead of the rest in fourth place.

National League Competitions

Only five teams were entered in total this season, three in the National Junior League and two in the National Cadet League. This represents a reduction of one in each league since the previous season. These leagues, however, continue to provide opportunities for new players to commence their competitive pathway.

In NJL, our three teams were well spread out amongst the divisions with the first team operating in the top division throughout and the third team in the bottom division, with one excursion into Division 5. The second team started off in third position in Division 1 but then non-availability of first-choice players saw the team suffer two consecutive relegations and end up in Division 3. The top team of Bharath and Sai Prasanna Kumar plus Matthew Ley, having won Division 1 in the first round, had to settle for second place thereafter.

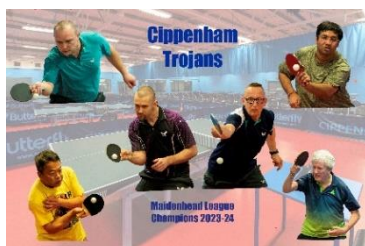
In the NCL the first team finished second in Division 1 during the first three rounds and held that position until the very final match of the season when an unexpected defeat led to them slipping down to third place. Bharath Prasanna Kumar had a fantastic season with only four defeats in thirty-six matches and was very well backed up by his brother Sai. The second team held a position in Division 5 until the third round after which they dropped into Division 6, finishing second there in the final analysis.

VETTS Super-60s Team Competition

This VETTS competition, inaugurated last season, ran again over a single weekend. With Denise Weller out through injury, Senga Thomson and Celia Hooker were added to the team to supplement Mary Heffernan and Sue Hayes and a fifth-place finished was secured in Division 2. On an individual note, Mary excelled, winning all of her matches.

Local League Competitions

The Club ran six teams in the Maidenhead League this season, one more than in 2023-24. This equals the most teams ever entered by the Club in the Maidenhead League and represents us as easily the club with the most teams in the league.



Although the personnel has changed over time, the title won by Cippenham Trojans represents the sixth consecutive season the the Club has won the Maidenhead League and the thirteenth overall. Congratulations to the team of Maciej Dlugozima, Michal Garski, Hari Prasad, Graham Trimming, Igor Liiko and Albert Cheung. Maciej and Michael both excelled with averages in the high eighties. The Cippenham Saxons team of Louis Alexander, Bharath Prasanna Kumar, Troy Williams, Jemma Walker and Peter Chipperton finished runners-up, securing a one-two for Cippenham for the fourth season running. The third team in Division 1, Vikings finished at the foot of the table.

But for a first-round concession, the Cippenham Normans team of Aqeel Raza, Dave Carter, Paul Dennis, Marek Kik and Jarek Skowera would have won Division 2 but ultimately had to settle for runners-up position. In the same division, Titans

finished third and Spartans fifth out of six. Several players had successful seasons but special mention must be made of Sai Prasanna Kumar who was not only unbeaten for Spartans but also when he played up in the top division a couple of times.

Saxons were also runners-up in another competition, the handicapped knock-out cup.

Coaching

Coaching of young players has been one of the most important tasks undertaken by the Club for nearly four decades and is one of the cornerstones of the Club's enviable reputation nationally. The products of the Club's coaching scheme are currently being more successful, both collectively and individually, than has been the case for more than a decade.

The weekly timetable this year followed the pattern that was established in January 2022 after attendance numbers had increased following the post-Covid re-start. There were two classes on Monday, an early evening class for beginners and a later advanced class for improvers. The elite class on Wednesday evening continues for the Club's better players.

Ken Phillips has been Head Coach at the Club for nearly forty years now and he is still the mainstay of the operation, running the Monday and Wednesday groups while also engaging in one-to-one coaching with the more promising youngsters. Jan Chapman, Sue Hayes, Tim Kiteley and Margaret Thornton have also provided Ken with great assistance as have some of the Club's senior players, especially Alan Moss, who have helped as practice partners. Grateful thanks are due to all.

Tournament Successes for Individuals

The greatest result came right at the end of a busy season as, well into June, Sai Prasanna Kumar won the English National Under-10 Boys' Singles title. For good measure, he was also successful in gaining a bronze medal in the Under-11 event the previous day.

Rachael Iles and Mia Lakhani were the two top performers at the Sussex Women & Girls' 1-Star Open, meeting in both the finals for which they qualified and winning one each.



The Club had a near clean sweep of the titles at the Bucks Closed Championships. Robert Hansell and Steve Munson both won two events, the Men's Doubles in tandem, while Robert also won the Men's Singles and Steve the Veterans' Singles. Rachael Iles also won both her main events, the Women's Singles and the Women's Doubles when she was partnered by Anna Piercey. The other main prize, the Mixed Doubles, was captured by William Saint partnered by a non-Cippenham player.

The Maidenhead Closed Championships were dominated by Cippenham's younger players. Sai Prasanna Kumar demonstrated his huge potential by winning the Championship Singles at the tender age of 10 years and 40 days. Quite incredible, and by far the youngest winner ever. His opponent in the final was 16-years old Louis Alexander and then Louis and Sai's brother Bharath combined to win the Championship Doubles.

Andy Trott was once again very successful in doubles events on the VETTS circuit and also featured in the England Over-50s men's team that won the Home Nations.

Representative Honours and Rankings

Seven Cippenham members represented Buckinghamshire during the season. The county junior team was very successful, winning Division 1A with a Cippenham quartet in all seven matches of Rachael Iles, Anna Piercey, William Saint and Jamie Woodford aided by a non-Cippenham player. Rachael, Anna and William also played for the senior team that finished second in Division 2B and they were assisted by Rob Hansell and Steve Munson. Steve also was ever-present for the veterans' first team that were runners-up in Division 1A as was Mary Heffernan in the over-60s team that were third in Division 1B. Altogether, a successful season for Bucks for whom two teams were largely built around the Cippenham contingent.

An incredible number of twenty-two Club members have been included in the top 100 England rankings at various age categories over the past season. Several players appeared in multiple lists. Eight of these made it into the top twenty and these were Ben Dunkley, Rachael Iles, Mia Lakhani, Anna Piercey and William Saint in various junior age groups, Andy Trott and David Barr in Veteran Men, and Sai Prasanna Kumar in three of the youngest age groups including finishing the season as England's number one in the under-10s..

Obituary

We were shocked to hear of the sudden and untimely death last summer of former member Sue Collier at the age of just 56. Sue played for Cippenham on thirty-four occasions between seasons 1991-92 and 1999-00 and was part of three winning teams in the British League. Sue spearheaded our team to the Women's British League Division 3 championship in 1996-97 and repeated this the following season in Division 2. That latter season she was also part of our inaugural Senior British League team that were winners of Division 3 South.

Sue had an illustrious playing career having been ranked number five in the country at senior level and appeared in international matches for England. She was also very highly ranked in her younger days in the national cadet and junior lists and then, later in life, was the number one in England at veterans' level. Before moving to Cheshire, Sue was the best player in the Maidenhead League and won the Ladies' Singles title at the Maidenhead Closed on no fewer than eighteen occasions including sixteen in a row between 1985 and 2000.

Please see the attached Appendix for a complete statistical review of the playing season.

Graham Trimming
General Secretary
June 2024