

Table Tennis Ulster



Jan 2010

Farewell to Jing Yi Graham

It was with great regret and extreme reluctance that the Executive of the Ulster Branch received and accepted the resignation of Jing Yi from her post as High Performance Coach to Ulster Table Tennis.

Ulster Table Tennis owes Jing Yi a great debt of gratitude for the work that she has put in over a long period of time. She drove herself hard, often working well beyond her contracted hours, to ensure the improvement of both player performance and the standing of Table Tennis Ulster within Ireland and abroad. She also gave the Branch Executive the incentive to work to improve standards of administration. Players were given challenging but realistic goals as well as incentives to improve their own performance, but she was also involved in improving participation levels among young players. She has gained the respect and admiration of

everyone with whom she has worked.

Within Ulster she can be justly proud of her achievements:

- Success in Inter-Pro competitions
- Medals at the UK School Games
- Liaison with European Clubs to give players opportunities to experience high levels of competition
- Improved rankings of Ulster players
- Regular trips to British and European tournaments
- Training trips to China, Poland and elsewhere
- The introduction of playing partners from China and Europe
- The selection of Na Liu for the British Olympic Squad

Outside Ulster she has been closely involved with

UKCC in developing and producing coaching qualifications as well as acting as a selector for the Great Britain Olympic Squad.

In the Autumn of 2008 the Branch produced and submitted a 4-Year Development Plan to Sport Northern Ireland that was of high quality and well-regarded by those who considered it. On the basis of this we were awarded a high level of funding for 2009-2013 by SNI. This would not have been possible without the atmosphere of high level ambition that was by then extant within Ulster Table Tennis and which had been promoted by Jing Yi's example.

Whilst very sad that we will lose the expertise that Jing Yi has brought to the sport, we wish her every good fortune in whatever she decides to do in the future and will be jealous of whoever benefits from her talents.



Jing Yi with the winning Inter Provincial Junior Squad at Mayo 2009

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Antrim Open Results



Keith Knox, winner of Class 1 Singles receiving his winners trophy from Tournament Referee Michael Maguire

“TORNADO KNOX PLAYS THE GAME AT DYNAMIC SPEED AND IN THE TOP 4 SHOWDOWN HE KEPT HIS OPPONENTS UNDER THE COSH FOR LONG PERIODS WITH RELENTLESS SMASHES.”.

Ulster champion Keith Knox steamrollered the opposition at the Co Antrim Open in Ballyclare on Saturday to win the class one title with ease while Norman Nabney (Belfast) Andrew Davies (Knockagh) and Pawel Sulkowski (Poland) also claimed silverware at the Newtownabbey Borough Council sponsored event.

Tornado Knox plays the game at dynamic speed and in the top 4 showdown he kept his opponents under the cosh for long periods with relentless smashes. He beat Polish teenager Dawid Sulkowski 3-1, the much improved Mark McGuiggan 3-1 and combination bat specialist Amanda Mogeey 3-0. Sulkowski just claimed silver after an entertaining five set marathon with Dangerman McGuiggan while Irish international Mogeey who had played superbly all day finally met her Waterloo against the topspin trio, losing out in an extremely close match to Mark McGuiggan.

Despite losing to Ashley Given (Dungannon) evergreen Glenburn captain Norman Nabney snatched victory in class 2 on countback from Peter Clarke after beating the Annahilt player 3-1. Topspin supremo Gary Crawford can count himself unlucky to lose out to both Nabney and Clarke 13-11 in the fifth. The class 3 section was also strong in depth with many top players placed there due to their low Ulster ranking which ensured an extremely high class competition ensued. At its conclusion local favourite Andrew Davies used his smooth textbook attack to see off both Cookstown battler Mark McAllister and Queens chopper Robin Agnew by 3-1 scorelines to loud cheers from the partisan crowd.

There was a major shock in the veterans class when Portadown defender Randolph Loney used his hocus pocus defence to force class 2 winner Nabney into a 3-0 submission to book a semi final place and McAllister joined

him when he just got the better of the popular Barry Dickson in five close sets. However neither made it to the final where Pawel Sulkowski, who was struggling with a foot injury, looked to be down and out against Clarke but survived match points to stage a marvellous comeback to take the fifth and retain his unblemished veterans record.

Thanks go to Newtownabbey Borough Council for sponsoring the event as well as Tournament Referee Michael Maguire and Norman McBride for running such a successful event.

Results

Class One

- 1 Keith Knox (Trillick)
- 2 Dawid Sulkowski (Poland)
- 3 Mark McGuiggan (Rasharken)

Class Two

- 1 Norman Nabney (Belfast)
- 2 Peter Clarke (Hillsborough)
- 3 Gary Crawford (Doagh)

Class Three

- 1 Andrew Davies (Newtownabbey)
- 2 Mark McAllister (Cookstown)
- 3 Robin Agnew (Belfast)

Veterans

- 1 Pawel Sulkowski (Poland)
- 2 Peter Clarke
- 3 Mark McAllister

Report by Peter Clarke

McCreery and Givan shine at Munster Open

Ulster excelled at the Munster Open Table Tennis Championships winning 7 events with Paul McCreery and Ashley Givan taking the lion's share of the medals winning 5 between them. Paul McCreery was victorious in the Men's singles defeating Sam Hanley in the closest of five set matches. McCreery defeated Conor Nolan in the semi-final who had earlier caused a major shock defeating current Irish Senior Number 1 John Murphy (Leinster). In the final McCreery got off to a slow start trailing 0-2 in sets, and even trailed 8-10 in the third, however his coach Daryl Strong called "time-out" and gave McCreery the confidence and advice needed to go on and take the set 12-10. McCreery then levelled it at 2-2 to set up a fifth set shoot out. The crowd were now gathering for a classic match with table tennis of the highest standard. McCreery looked to be down and out in the fifth with Hanley steam rolling to a 10-6 score line with some sublime play. However yet again, Paul dug deep and showed tremendous composure to bring the score to 9-10. Drama ensued when McCreery served and Hanley produced a wonderful winner with umpire Tom Mitchell calling game and match in Hanley's favour. However the great sportsman that Hanley is then raised his hand and declared the serve was a "net". Play continued, and after some spectacular rallies, McCreery went on to win 14-12 to win his first ever Irish Senior Tournament. Credit is due to both players for some exhilarating play, great fighting spirit from both players and fantastic sportsmanship from Sam Hanley.

Paul was equally as impressive in the Junior Boys defeating Sam Logue (Leinster) in the final to finish off a very successful weekend where he was undefeated in any of his singles matches, a fantastic achievement.

Meanwhile Ashley Givan was progressing to the latter rounds of the Ladies defeating Sara Dolan (Leinster) in the semi final to set up a final clash with Sabina Deveraux (Leinster) in the final. After some determined play, Deveraux took the first set, however Givan was not to be denied winning the second set. The third set proved to be crucial with Givan just edging it 12-10 to take a 2 sets to 1 lead. From then on, it was plain sailing, with Givan cruising to her first Senior Ladies Title.

Givan then teamed up with John Murphy (Leinster) to win the mixed doubles defeating the Leinster team of Rebecca Kenny/Conor Nolan.

Givan was also successful in the cadet girls beating Munster's Edel O'Reilly. Givan had to settle for the bronze medal in the junior girls with a surprise loss to Sara Timlin (Connacht), however young Givan can be extremely proud of her performances at the weekend winning a medal in all events she competed in.

Jonathan Porter was victorious in the minor boys when he defeated Ulster team mate Eric Shekleton in the final. This was Porters third consecutive win at an Irish u12 event, and is yet to be defeated this year at this age level.

There was further success for

Ulster's Susan Keating (Cavan) when she claimed gold in the Veteran Women's Singles defeating Kath Reynolds (Leinster) in the final.

Senior Singles Men :
1 : P. McCreery (U)
 2 : S. Hanley (L)
 3 : C. Nolan (L) / J. Sugrue (ENG)

Senior Singles Women :
1 : A. Givan (U)
 2 : S. Deveraux (L)
 3 : S. Dolan (L)

Veterans Men :
 1 : K Mackey (L)
 2 : K. Sabir (C)
 3 : S. Dunne / K. Devaney

Veterans Women :
1 : S. Keating (U)
 2 ; K Reynolds (L)
 3 : R. McCarran (L)

U21 Singles Women
 1. S Deveraux (L)
 2. C. McCullagh (L)

U21 Mens Singles
 1. G. Maguire (L)
 2. J. Hurley (M)

Junior Singles Men :
1 : P McCreery (U)
 2 : S Logue (L)
 3 : S Hanley (L)/ **A Robinson (U)**

Junior Singles Women :
 1 : S Dolan (L)
 2 : S Timlin (C)
3 : A Givan (U)

Cadet Singles Boys :
 1 : Shi Zhao LI (L)
 2 : I Morais (ENG)
 3 : R Farrell (L)

Cadet Singles Girls :
1 : A Givan (U)
 2 : E O'Reilly (M)
 3 : M Slattery (L)

U12 Singles Boys
1. J. Porter (U)
2. E. Shekleton (U)
 3. K. Hutchinson (L)

U12 Singles Girls
 1. K McGlone (L)
 2. E. McGlone (L)
3. H Dawson (U)

Men's Doubles
 1. Sugrue/Basterfield (Eng)
 2. Murphy/Nolan (L)

Womens Doubles
 1. Healy/McCullagh
 2. McCarran/Reynolds

Mixed Doubles
1. Givan/Murphy
 2. Kenny/Nolan

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Senior Ladies Champion



Table Tennis Ulster

Clogher Junior Ability Results



Sally McConkey in action—recent winner of the Munster Open U17 Girls Plate and Division 2 Winner in Clogher

1st: Emily Hill
2nd: Oscar Nelson

Division 6:
1st: Samuel Frazer
2nd: Zach Ng

Division 7:
1st: James McGrath
2nd: Jonathan Armstrong

Division 8:
1st: Jack Dick
2nd: David Frazier

Division 1
1st: Jonathan Porter
2nd: Edwin Lewis

Division 2
1st: Sally McConkey
2nd: Ryan Gilmour

Division 3
1st: Jamie Fawcett
2nd: Tristian Mallon

Division 4
1st: Megan Carson
2nd: Iain Dick

Division 5

Allianz Ulster Schools' Individual Championships

This year, there was a massive 179 entries for the Allianz sponsored Ulster Schools' Individual Championships held at the Valley Leisure Centre, Newtownabbey. This is an increase of 55 entries from last year and bodes well for the future. With 21 tables in use and 336 matches to get through, tournament organiser Tony Phillips certainly had his work cut out, however as usual Phillips did a magnificent job with help from Anne Ludlow.

There were no major surprises on the day with both Fivemiletown College and Royal School Dungannon claiming two gold medals. Paul McCreery (RBAI)

reigned supreme in the U19 Boys defeating Conor Savage (Bangor Grammar) in the final. Ashley Robinson (Fivemiletown College) was on top form defeating Ulster team mate Stephen Slater (Portora Royal School) in straight sets in the U16 Boys whilst Neil Irwin (Aughnacloy College) was successful in the U14 Boys defeating Kieran Reilly (St Clare's) in a 4 set match. The U12 Boys final was an all Fivemiletown College clash with Jonathan Porter just edging out Mark Gordon in 3 close sets.

Roisin O'Reilly (St Clare's) was never troubled in the U19 Girls defeating Lucinda Fannin from Royal School

Cavan. Kerry Jones (Royal School Dungannon) defeated Ballymena Academy's Amy Hawthorne in 4 sets in the U16 Girls. Royal School Dungannon claimed another gold medal when Ashley Givan defeated Ulster team mate Annalise Walker (Ashfield Girls High School). Finally Down High School claimed gold in the U12 girls when Laura Finn defeated Rachel Hall (Royal School Cavan) in an entertaining final.

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Table Tennis Ulster



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Table Tennis Ulster is sponsored by STIGA and Fitzgerald Table Tennis. The STIGA agent for Ireland is Tommy Fitzgerald and can be contacted at 00353-1-8428744 or by email at tfft@eircom.net. You can also view a range of his products at www.tfft.ie. STIGA sponsor a number of Ulster's elite players and will have a stand with all the latest equipment and clothing at most of the major tournaments held in Ulster throughout the year.

Upcoming Events

February

6	National Training Camp U12/Cadet
6	Womens British League (2)
6	Munster Veterans Tournament
11-13	Intervarsities Championships
13	TTU Elite Squad Training, R'port
13-14	Junior British League (2)
20	Fermanagh Senior Open, F'town (Ulster Ranking 3)
24-28	Safir Open
27	Ulster Junior Closed, F'town

March 2010

6	Senior National Championships
13	Jun/Cadet 6 Nations, Scotland
13	TTU Ability (tbc)
17-21	German Open
20	TTU Development Camp, F'town
20-21	TTU Elite Squad Training, R'port
26-27	Senior Inter Pros, Connacht
27	Ulster Junior Team Event

For entry forms or further information for any of the above tournaments, please contact Amanda at admin@ttulster.co.uk

Other Stories

Fermanagh Senior Open Entry Form

Entries are now open for the Fermanagh Senior Open to be held at **Fivemiletown College on 20th February**.

The closing date for entries is 15th February.

In recent years, the Open has become a popular tournament on the Irish calendar – it is the last major event in the build-up to the Butterfly National Senior Championships and represents ideal preparation for the players. This year an estimated £1000 prize money is on offer, with cash prizes for all of the events.

This is an Ulster and Irish Ranking Event. Entry forms can be found here:
<http://www.irishtabletennis.com/>

[itta/news/article/fermanagh_open_2010_entries_open/](http://www.irishtabletennis.com/itta/news/article/fermanagh_open_2010_entries_open/)

Ulster Junior Closed Entry Form

Entries are now open for the Ulster Junior Closed to be held at **Fivemiletown College on 27th February**.

The closing date for entries is 20th February.

This is an Ulster Junior Ranking Event.

Entry forms can be found here:
<http://www.irishtabletennis.com/itta/events/>

Academy Strongtower Table Quiz

Academy Strongtower,

based at Ballymena Academy will be holding a table quiz to raise some much needed funds for the club. The quiz will be held on Saturday 20th February at Wellington Church Hall, Sourhill Road, Ballymena starting at 19.45. The quiz promises to be a fun night for all with Robin McCeland acting as quiz master.

This club currently has 12 teams entered into the Co. Antrim League and recently hosted a very successful local tournament which was won by Dawid Sulkowski. Please support this excellent club.

For further information, or to enter a team, please contact Norman McBride:
n5mcb@btinternet.com