



Cippenham Table Tennis Club

Annual Report 2020-21

Introduction

This report summarises the forty-eighth season in the history of Cippenham Table Tennis Club and the twenty-fifth since the opening of our purpose-built premises. This year has been dominated by government restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic and this has resulted in no competitive table tennis having been played under the Club's auspices. This totally unique situation means that this annual report is much shorter than usual and does not include the usual appendix of results.

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 but this access is used only during weekend events.

The floor of the playing hall was renewed in January 2016 and was initially a little slippery but this defect has since been rectified by the use of a powerful cleaning machine and natural "bedding down".

The Centre owns 20 Butterfly Centrefold Rollaway 25 green tables. A selection of net and posts sets services those tables with the most recently purchased being retained for weekend events. There are also 12 Butterfly scoring machines plus some older ones that remain in service for local league matches. Still giving service are the 80 Butterfly surrounds in blue with "Butterfly" printed on one side and "Cippenham" on the other in light blue that were purchased in 2012. Many of these surrounds are stacked on a specially design wheeled trolley.

There are also about 75 quality spectator chairs which are stored on a purpose-designed trolley. The Club also owns a robot ball-feeding machine which is used for coaching and training purposes.

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 make use of 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. In order to maintain the lux level at or near its original rating of 600, these tubes are replaced every three years or so and this was last done in August 2018.

The lounge area benefitted from a complete revamp during the summer of 2019. The existing tables were all replaced and additional chairs purchased. A group of easy chairs and a coffee table were added and these provide a comfortable seating area within the alcove. The curtains were replaced and blinds added, as was the linoleum floor in front of the servery. In addition, the drinking water dispensary was replaced with a more modern and cleaner piece of equipment.

Administration and Management

The holding of an Annual General Meeting was not possible, due to Covid-related restrictions, during its normal time period in 2020 and so the Management Committee elected at the 2019 AGM has continue to serve. With Covid-related restrictions having been in place throughout the entire year, not a lot of work has been necessary and the Management Committee only met formally twice with two more unofficial meetings being held via Zoom.

Name	Position
Ken Phillips	Chairman/Coaching Officer
Graham Trimming	General Secretary/Treasurer
Elena Tant	Deputy Chairman/Bookings Officer
Julia Piercey	Events Officer
Keith Hall	General Committee member
Elroy Hull	General Committee member
Bassam Mocharrafie	General Committee member
Dave Tant	General Committee member

Steve Piercey was co-opted onto the Management Committee on 1 June 2021. Bassam Mocharrafie resigned from the Committee on 2 June 2021.

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.

Most other volunteering roles have been inactive during the year but Sue Hayes has served as General Secretary and National Councillor for the Buckinghamshire County Table Tennis Association while Graham Trimming was accepted onto Table Tennis England's Competition Review steering group.

The Club accepted an invitation to participate in one of a series of Zoom meetings on club development organised by the Management Advisory Group of Table Tennis England. Graham Trimming was our representative on this.

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.

Congratulations to Steve Piercey who qualified as a Tournament Organiser during the year.

Membership

Because of the lack of permitted activity for an extended period time, it was agreed by the Management Committee that membership years be extended. Those that had paid for membership for the year up to 31 August 2020 have had their membership extended until 31 August 2021 while those who paid for membership for the year 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 have had theirs extended until 31 August 2022.

Including the four life members, there were 140 members registered for 2020-21, down 5 from the previous year. However, registration effectively stopped with lockdown in March 2020. At the time of writing, there have been 76 membership forms received for the year 2020-21. Eliminating duplicates, the number of current members is 177.

Finance

Taking the Club and Cippenham Table Tennis Centre Limited together, the consolidated results of the year are a net deficit of £2,216. This is not surprising during a year when very little activity has been permitted and would have been worse had the host school chose to invoice the Club for its share of the costs of the premises. The last such invoice

received was for the month of February 2020. The deficit was also reduced by £451 for the write-back of an un-presented cheque dating back several years and £380 received during the year for entry fees for a tournament run in the previous year. The cost of readying the premises for return to play under Covid regulations, together with the purchase of new software for the booking system, amounted to about £450.

Luckily, the Club is easily able to absorb such a deficit as it still had cash reserves of £78,770 as at the end of the financial reporting year.

Annual membership fees are £18, halved for students and the over-60s. During the year, practice fees have been charged at £5 per table while the only other revenue arose from a coaching group charged at £35 per person per term.

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 of 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

Very little work has been done in respect of public relations during the past year. No press reports have been submitted as there has been nothing to write about!

In May 2018 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. Google Analytics reports the following statistics for the twelve months from June 2020 to May 2021: 1,709 unique users (2020: 4,138); 2,793 sessions (2020: 7,441). Unsurprisingly, the number of visits to the website have been much reduced due to the lack of table tennis activity. Many of the membership enquiries received by the Secretary originate from the website.

The Club's Facebook page is also used to drive readers to the website and has been used, this year, to update readers about news relating to the opening and closing of the Club due to Covid. At the time of writing, the Club had 745 followers on Facebook and 559 on Twitter. The Club's Flickr account has 63 followers but no new photographs have been uploaded during the past year.

No editions of the Club's Newsletter have been issued since April 2020.

Venue Utilisation

For much of the year, the venue has had to be closed in line with government restrictions. Having closed on 17 March 2020 the Club did not re-open until August and was then closed again from late October until April (May for practice sessions) 2021. During the time that the Club was permitted to be open, only two types of activities have taken place.

Head Coach Ken Phillips has run coaching sessions for invited juniors while permitted and, in line with government restrictions, these have restricted to a maximum of fifteen players.

Normal practice sessions have been suspended and replaced by eight bookable tables on Tuesday evenings. Initially, there were two one-hour sessions but the later session was not popular and the two sessions were soon replaced by one session of one and a half hours. This was strictly members only and new members were permitted to join only from September 2020. A booking form, accessible from the Club's website and a specially initiated app, was used by members to book a table, nominate their playing partner, and pay for the booking online via Paypal. This has worked well with all eight tables being booked on most occasions. However, the number of players wishing to play did not merit the promotion of a second session on Thursday evenings, something that was under consideration.

All sessions were conducted under Covid-secure regulations issued by the government and Table Tennis England. The premises were kitted out with cleaning equipment for the tables, hand sanitizers and a temperature reading gauge and additional software was purchased to assist in the booking procedure. The Club wrote a Risk Assessment and issued a Code of Conduct which was required to be read by players before booking a table.



Graham Trimming
General Secretary
June 2021