



Issue 15

July 2010

## NEWS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It is now five years since the first A.G.M. in 2005 when membership stood at 60, today membership stands at 90. In the six years of our existence the Association has addressed the issues of recognition, communication, welfare, selection and uniform. We have also moved from Association challenge matches to an Association Tournament Now we have taken the lead in promoting a training seminar for umpires. This will be held prior to the season in conjunction with the N.U.R.C. and with financial support from the ETTA Management Committee.

At the inaugural meeting of the Association in 2004 the NURC Chairman claimed that the idea of an umpires association and the NURC would not work. Six year later both are committed to work together for the benefit of umpires. This is due in the main to the determination and experience of your committee.

However, I would not want the Association to forget the man who was catalyst for the emergence of the Association, Ken Armson MBE. The man who believed it could happen, and made it happen, just as he believed the sun always shone over Liverpool - but he could not make that happcnt

I would also like us to remember a member who passed away recently. Pat O'Byrne. Pat was one of the nicest men I knew, he was mad about table tennis, especially umpiring and was always ready and keen to go to the table. I was sorry I could not attend his funeral as I was stranded in Teneriffe by volcanic ash; apparently another important Chairman was stranded at the same time in Spain.

I look forward to seeing those of you who can make the AGM at Bulkington; for those of you who can't I hope you have a pleasant summer break and I look forward to seeing you again when the tournament roundabout starts.

GEORGE TYLER.

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### **UMPIRES' SEMINAR**

The AETTU and the NURC are to hold an Umpires' Seminar on Sunday 29th August 2010 before the start of the 2010-2011 season. The purpose of the seminar will be to give umpires, at all levels, refresher training in their roll as umpires.

The majority of umpires pass their CU/NU/IU badges and apart from assessments at ETTA National Tournaments most umpires do not receive any refresher training or assessment. The AETTU has recommended that there should be an umpires' seminar before the start of each season to bring umpires up to date with the Laws and

Regulations, match procedures, exam procedures and good practice. After discussion, the AETTU and NURC have agreed to hold a joint seminar at the Bulkington Village Centre, School Road, Bulkington, Bedworth, near Coventry on Sunday 29th August 2010.

It is hoped that the seminar will become an annual event. The ETTA is supporting the seminar by paying for refreshments and travel costs and the NURC and some of the senior umpires will have an input into the seminar. It is important that as many umpires as possible, at all levels, attend the seminar. Umpires have complained for some time about the support given to the umpires by the ETTA but the seminar is the ideal opportunity for us all to work together to improve our skills and experience.

You will probably notice that Sunday 29/8/10 is part of the August Public Holiday week-end. Unfortunately because of tournaments on other week-ends the 29th August is the only week-end available for the seminar.

The agenda for the seminar has not yet been set so if you have any suggestions for items you would like to see on the agenda or any particular areas where you wish for clarification let me know ASAP. Put the date in your diary. Let me or Stuart Sherlock know if you will be attending and I will circulate further details nearer the date.

Tom Purcell

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### **SECRETARY'S REPORT - AGM SUNDAY 1st AUGUST 2010**

It is with regret that I start this report by reporting the death of Pat O'Byrne Association member and umpire from Cambridgeshire. Pat had been an umpire and involved in table tennis for many years. He had not umpired a great deal during the last couple of years due to bad health. He will be sadly missed.

The Association continues to grow from strength to strength however, there is a need for members to become involved in the Committee. Seven of the current eight committee members have been in office since the Association started in 2004. Geoff Taylor plans to stand down as a committee member at this AGM although he will stay co-opted to the Committee as the Editor of the Magazine. Fresh blood is needed on the Committee to ensure that it grows and develops.

The English Open took place at Sheffield during the year. It was a Pro - Tour event, the biggest seen in England for many years. Up front most things went to plan,

however, behind the scenes the umpires' schedules turned chaotic because there wasn't enough umpires for the tournament. The Association submitted a report to the organisers reporting good areas and areas that needed to improve. Although the report was acknowledged by the organisers they have never replied to the report giving feedback on the subjects reported. Hopefully the next English Open in January 2011 will show improvements for the umpires.

Last year the NURC was discussing the possibility of changing the umpires' tie from blue to red to fall in line with the ITTF tie and raise the possibility of having the ETTA logo on its ties for when our umpires umpired abroad. On your behalf I queried this with the NURC pointing out that the ITTF only recognises the ITTF logo on its ties. I have not received a reply from the NURC on this subject.

A few years ago umpires who were required to attend National ETTA events on a Friday evening for an evening or early Saturday morning Referee's briefing didn't receive a meal allowance for the Friday evening. As a result of questions asked by the AETTU a meal allowance was granted.

Over the last couple of years the same problem has occurred. Umpires have been travelling to National events for a Referee's briefing on the Friday evening to be told they would not be receiving a meal allowance. At the National U11/12/13/14 tournament in Doncaster, in May, umpires travelled for many hours from Cornwall, Northumberland, Sussex and other distant counties to be told they would not be receiving a meal allowance for the Friday evening. On behalf of the umpires Margot Fraser and I discussed this problem with Sandra Deaton, the Tournament Manager, and we were told that the rules only allowed for a Saturday evening allowance. I However Sandra obviously understood our concerns and authorised a payment for the Friday evening.

Umpires and other match officials travel in their own time to events. On occasions this is on a Friday night when they are required to be at an event on the evening before the event begins for a referee's briefing so that they can start early the following morning.

Friday travel often occurs during peak travel time for long distances and it is appropriate that umpires should receive a meal allowance for the Friday evening.

Sandra Deaton stated that she would raise the subject with the National Championships Committee and hopefully a satisfactory result will be achieved.

The AETTU now has its own website. It was created by Steve Welch and I have been updating with details of the Committee, copies of our magazine and other items of interest. It will be an ideal means of advertising the AETTU and forging links with other umpires' associations. Visit the site and let me know if you have any ideas about content.

The AETTU has for some time has been calling for an umpires' seminar before the start of each season so that umpires can be updated with New Laws, Regulations, good practice and other issues related to umpiring. The AETTU Committee decided that we would hold such a seminar before the start of the 2010-11 season and invite all umpires. The seminar has now been confirmed for 11.00am on Sunday 29th August 2010 at the Bulkington Village Centre, School Road, Bulkington, Bedworth, Warwickshire CV 1 2 9JB. It is important that as many umpires as possible, at all levels attend the seminar. Members of the NURC and Mancom will be attending the seminar. We have complained for some time about the support umpires receive from the ETTA. The ETTA will be supporting the Seminar by providing refreshments and mileage will be paid for attending. The agenda for the seminar has not yet been set so if you have any items that you would wish to be on the Agenda please let me know as soon as possible.

Tom Purcell Secretary AETTU

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## **AETTU COMPETITION RESULTS AND REVIEW 2010**

The 2010 competition for the Association of English Table Tennis Umpires (AETTU) took place at Wood Green TTC, Wednesbury, Staffordshire over the week-end of 3rd/4th July 2010. For the last two years the competition has been dominated by the umpires from the North East but this year Lancashire ruled the roost with Ray Jackson winning three events including the Open Singles and Graham Rollison winning the over 70's event. Tom Purcell reached 4 finals but didn't manage to beat an in form Ray Jackson in 3 of the finals and John Lawton in the final of the Hard Bat final. Lynda Reid had a very good win over Bob Evans in the Over 50's final and Ron Douglas and Bob Evans beat Geoff Taylor and Ray Jackson in the Doubles final.

Motel Accommodation was the Holiday Inn at Walsall and the evening meal was held at the Village Hotel (about 150yards from the Holiday Inn). Dave Edwards

provided an excellent teasing Quiz and the Chairman ended the evening with a few words of thanks to the assembled Members and guests. Wood Green proved to be (as was expected) an excellent venue with good playing facilities. There was a small kitchen area where Joyce with the help of Barbara Watkins and Judy Lawton provided a refreshment buffet for players and guests. Also present were Mrs Faith Moore, Maureen and Tom Davis, Lillian and Mike Paine and Mrs Joan Taylor. Faith presented the Ken Armson Trophy to the Open Winner Ray Jackson, who in his acceptance speech reminded us that fittingly, he was the last County Umpire passed out by our late Secretary. The unfortunate side of the tournament was the lack of players as we only had 19 in total, we do have a great week-end and it would be great to see more members turning up to play. Our Referee a certain George Tyler played a cameo role in one event allowing him a short time off from his vexacious task.

**ROLL OF HONOUR FOR 2010**

- Open Singles Winner  
**Ray Jackson**
- Open Singles Runner-up  
**Tom Purcell**
- Over 40 Singles Winner  
**Ray Jackson**
- Over 40 Singles Runner-up  
**Tom Purcell**
- Over 50 Singles Winner  
**Lynda Reid**
- Over 50 Singles Runner-up  
**Bob Evans**
- Over 60 Singles Winner  
**Ray Jackson**



**Faith Moore presenting the Ken Armson Cup to Ray Jackson and the Runner Up trophy to Tom Purcell**

- Over 60 singles Runner-up  
**Tom Purcell**
- Over 70 Singles  
**Graham Rollinson**
- Over 70 Singles Runner-up  
**Stan Clarke**
- Hard Bat Singles Winner  
**John Lawton**
- Hard Bat singles Runner-up  
**Tom Purcell**

- Doubles Winners  
**Ron Douglas / Bob Evans**
- Doubles Runners-up  
**Geoff Taylor / Ray Jackson**



## **SUMMARY OF AETTU COMMITTEE MEETING SUNDAY 16th MAY 2010**

The meeting was held at the Bulkington Village Centre near Coventry. The Chair George Tyler opened the meeting and apologies were received from Nick Osland and Barry Granger. Present at the meeting were George Tyler (Chair), Derek Sherratt (Vice Chair), Tom Purcell (Secretary), Steve Welch (Treasurer), Stan Clarke, John Lawton and Geoff Taylor.

The minutes from the last meeting on 21/11/09 were agreed and the following actions were recorded:

- 1) Committee agreed to issue new members with an umpires pack consisting of a set of cards, net measure and tossing disc.
- 2) List of members and their Counties to be included in the AETTU magazine.
- 3) Secretary submitted report from umpires attending the English Open in Sheffield to the Organising Committee.
- 4) Secretary to provide list of members to organisers of tournaments.

**Chairman's Report.** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reported on the recent death of member Pat O'Byrne from Cambridge. He also congratulated Stan Clarke on being awarded an ETTA Vice Presidency and Steve Welch for being awarded the Ivor Monague Award to service to the JBL. Chair also reported that the committee needed to encourage Association members to become involved in the committee.

**Secretary's Report.** Secretary reported that the AETTU now had a website which was being developed. A number of documents including copies of the Magazine, TT Laws and Regs, and photos from the umpires' tournament were being loaded on the site. Secretary reported that the ETTA had made money available to assist with the recruitment, training and retention of umpires. After a general discussion it was agreed that the AETTU would host an Umpires' Seminar before the start of the 2010-11 season to brief all umpires on the laws and regulations, good practice and areas to improve umpires skills. **Secretary to invite the NURC to take part in the Seminar.** Secretary informed the meeting that he had submitted a report to the English Open Organising Committee with the views of all participating umpires on how the Open was managed from the view of the umpires. Members of the Organising Committee and NURC had acknowledged receipt of the report but no feedback had been received about the report. **Secretary to contact Organising Committee for feedback on the umpires' report.**

**Treasurer's report.** Treasurer reported that the AETTU had current net assets of approximately £1200. The AETTU competition had reported a loss of £156 but the loss was caused by one off costs which shouldn't be repeated. It was agreed that AETTU membership would remain at £5 per year. Jackie Williams IU from Wales had applied to be an Associate member of the AETTU. **Agreed.**

**Umpires' Tournament:** The 2010 Tournament will be held at Wood Green TTC, Walsall on 3-4/7/10. The cost of entering the tournament will be £15. Derek Sherratt will make arrangements for the tournament with the Secretary.

**Magazine.** Magazine No 14 had been circulated in February 2010 and the next one will be due in July. Discussion as to whether the magazine should be circulated by e-mail. It was agreed to continue with hard copy of the magazine.

**Annual General Meeting.** The AGM will be held at 14.00hrs. at the Bulkington Village Centre, Nr Coventry. **Secretary to circulate Agenda and previous minutes.** Geoff Taylor informed meeting that he was standing down as a Committee member at the AGM but he agreed to stay co-opted to the Committee as the Editor of the magazine. Jim Kenney has agreed to join the AETTU Committee. Chair advised the meeting that all members should be encouraged to help the Committee whenever possible.

#### **Any Other Business.**

- 1. CRB Checks.** There was a general discussion on the need for umpires to have a current CRB Certificate. The ETTA was starting to renew Certificates. The forms had been shortened and there wasn't the need for as much detail.
- 2. Noisy players.** Steve Welch informed the meeting that the Tournament's Committee had received complaints about the excessive noise caused by players. This was an increasing area of concern for the Tournaments Committee and many umpires were unsure about how to deal with the problem. The NURC was preparing advice on the subject.
- 3. Date of Next Meeting.** Committee meeting 12.00 Sunday 1st August 2010  
AGM – 14:00hrs Sunday 1st August 2010.

**Tom Purcell Secretary AETTU**

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## **UMPIRES' SEMINAR**

**BULKINGTON VILLAGE CENTRE  
SCHOOL ROAD, BULKINGTON, BEDWORTH,  
WARWICKSHIRE CV12 9JB.**

**SUNDAY 29th AUGUST 2010**

**COMMENCING AT 11.00 HRS**

**A BUFFET LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED AND TRAVEL MILAGE  
WILL BE PAID FOR BY THE ETTA. WE WISH TO SEE AS MANY  
UMPIRES AS POSSIBLE IN ATTENDANCE.**

**IF YOU INTEND TO BE AT THE SEMINAR CAN YOU PLEASE LET  
EITHER TOM PURCELL OR STUART SHERLOCK KNOW SO WE CAN GET  
AN IDEA OF HOW MANY PEOPLE WE NEED TO CATER FOR**

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### **WANTED UMPIRES** by Derek Sherratt

Recently i received my first request to umpire at an event next season and this set my mind to one of my favourite subjects. Read on.

#### **This is an advertisement?**

An Experienced Umpire invites applications from Tournament Organisers to officiate at events during the coming season. Submitted applications should include full details as outlined below:-

- Tournament dates should not include Bank Holidays or the period prior to Christmas.
- Starting times should be 10am or later and no matches should start after 6pm.
- Umpire to table ratio should never be less than 1 .5 per table with a figure of 2 considered acceptable.
- Lunch Break a minimum of 45 minutes, afternoon tea 4pm for 30 minutes.
- A buffet lunch with a wide selection of hot and cold dishes followed by a sweet trolley.

- Alcohol whilst considered desirable would perhaps send out the wrong message.
- The umpires' area should have an adequate supply of tea/coffee and cold drinks together with a generous selection of biscuits such as chocolate hobnobs.
- Hotel accommodation should be mid range with leisure facilities and be located off main routes where traffic noise could be a problem and preferably not exceeding a mile from the tournament centre. Ideally umpires should not be expected to share a room.
- A three course dinner, preferably not at the centre, should be provided each evening, that is Friday and Saturday, and Sunday if matches should continue beyond the 7pm watershed. In the unlikely event that the matches finish after 8pm Bed and Breakfast for Sunday will be required.
- Travel expenses of 35p per mile or first class rail, including taxis shall be paid. In appropriate circumstances flights will be considered.
- Cash gratuities or gifts in kind will be welcome.
- Submissions should include the names of the appointed Referee and Deputy.

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### **SELECTION**

I passed some of the summer 2009 posing the usual questions "Was Hamlet really insane? Whatever happened to Macfisheries? and of course toying with the 'hot chestnut'. Why cannot the NURC Selection Panel be entrusted with all selection matters?

More to the point, do our colleagues who grace this panel, raise this issue with the Chairman? 2009 saw a couple of examples where the matters were taken out of their hands viz/viz The Commonwealth Championships in Glasgow and the English Open in Sheffield.

The usual explanation is something along the lines "Because the panel members wish to be considered for selection, a more equitable way for this particularly demanding task to be carried out is by someone else. On the face of it this seems fair and reasonable: the NURC in fact provides for this under 'Procedural Guidelines' on the Web site.

One could of course present a counter argument that if, selection followed a clear set of principles that was totally transparent to all but the casual observer, and any subsequent criticism would be reduced to mere nick picking. Panel members would be seen to be included on merit and beyond any hint of criticism.

I suspect however that historically selection for international / open events held in England and in some cases the more attractive foreign events, has always been subject to interference from the powers that be.

Returning to the question of 'Selection Policy, guideline', call it what you may. Direct quotes from the said Website include:-

1. For Pro-Tour tournaments preference will be given to experienced IU's.
2. Due consideration will be given to those working towards achieving Blue Badge status.
3. Selectors will always try to ensure that umpires each have a fair and equitable allocation of events.
4. For International Events where assessments of the Blue Badge are to take place due consideration will will be given to existing Blue Badge umpires and those umpires who are working towards acquiring the Blue Badge qualification
5. The Selection process will take into account the umpire's qualification, their activity (as an umpire, by inference) both domestically and internationally.

Since the advent of the *Blue Badge Scheme* invitations from foreign Associations frequently appear to contain a Rider stipulating that nominees for selection must be either a Full Blue or at least be partially on the way to a Blue. The NURC Panel have therefore have a restricted choice in the matter.

This means that criteria No.3 cannot be met because of the reduced pool and therefore discriminates against umpires who for various reasons cannot or indeed will not travel, and of course, those umpires have no interest in the Blue Badge route.

This is all very well, it the individual's choice and one can hardly attach any blame to the Panel for this state of affairs. Where criticism does occur is where major events are held within Britain. As stated, 2009 saw the English Open in Sheffield and the

Commonwealth Championships in Glasgow. Is it merely a coincidence that the selection was dominated by the same names: is this an example of 'policy'?

Taken in isolation, for each event referees would prefer a strong squad of umpires (sec) but this begs the question, if there was immediately another event within these Isles would the usual suspects be on parade? Nothing wrong with that you may say. Certainly not providing the selector keeps the big picture in focus. Most of our top domestic events are now unable to provide sufficient umpires to ensure a well run disciplined tournament. The first JBL at Stoke had about 66% of the number to provide one umpire per table and even our blue ribboned had to literally scrape the barrel.

It appears to me that sometimes selectors merely pay lip service to the published guidelines. An examination of the English umpires list (both initial and final) at Sheffield seemed to indicate a total disregard for the said policy. There may be valid reasons why, as a one off, this can be considered expedient, even acceptable, what is short sighted is the perceived damage done to the fabric of the English umpiring fraternity: I fear the number of active umpires will sadly continue to decline.

Derek Sherratt

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### **LETTER TO TOM PURCELL**

May I suggest all tournament programmes include, inside the front cover, a local umpire paper and information on how to become qualified. The Liverpool Open programme last year included a good "Why become an umpire" piece at the back.

There does not appear to be enough umpires to fill the compliment for tournaments. Will we have enough umpires in the future? Looking at the ages of those who turn out, it does seem in 20 to 30 years time, or even sooner, there will not be sufficient to provide officials for our own events let alone International and Olympic tournaments.

Will you please see that this is given to the right people for the necessary action.

Derek Sidaway.

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**Article from Sunday Mail 25th April 2010**

It's a no brainer - a healthy diet and plenty of exercise will keep the mind alert and table tennis is the perfect brain booster. Your eyes, hand and feet all work together while you are thinking about the ball. It is aerobic chess. According to new brain-imaging study from Japan, table tennis helps to balance the brain. Researchers studied a group of patients before and after playing and showed increased activity in the prefrontal cortex, and throughout part of your brain, and the cerebellum (responsible for co-ordination and processing speed) after playing for 10 minutes.

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**UMPIRING ABROAD      By the late    Jack Randall**

I was umpiring a match in the team final between Germany and Japan when there was a disputed point. I re-affirmed my decision and then saw the Japanese captain get up from his chair and walk towards me with a menacing look. Instinctively, I waived my hand imperiously at him, and somewhat to my surprise, he immediately turned round and resumed his seat. You have to show them who is in charge! On another occasion, in Zagreb I was umpiring a match in which the younger Mazunov was playing. The game went to expedite and Doris Moors was acting as stroke counter. After a couple of rallies he stopped and went to his coach, who came and told me that the player had asked "Why does that lady keep talking while I am playing"?

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**ANOTHER UMPIRING ABROAD STORY by HARRY SPRAGGS IU**

There was no planning for umpires and we just turned up to see if any matches had been allocated to us. On four occasions we umpired only one match in a day but we had to keep reporting every two hours "just in case". Communication from Umpire Control was almost non-existent. The umpires who had been nominated for the men's and women's doubles finals went to the hall on Saturday in "civvies", because the programme showed that both matches were to be played on the Sunday. During the day it leaked out that they had been brought forward to Saturday evening but some of the nominated officials were not told and replaced. I received a letter entitled "Instructions to Umpires" six days after the tournament had started; These instructions were subsequently changed regularly but not all squads were informed, so there was a wide variation of match procedure. The lack of organisation astonished me.

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**PATRICK JOSEPH O'BYRNE**

Tributes follow the death of Mr Table Tennis aged 78

Tributes have been paid to a keen sportsman who has died at the age of 78.

Pat O'Byrne, Vice-President of both the Cambridge Table Tennis League and the Cambridgeshire Table Tennis Association, has been remembered for his selfless commitment to the sport.

His involvement with table tennis in the region has spanned more than 40 years. He leaves behind his wife Sylvia and two children, Valerie and Barry.

He was appointed a County Umpire in 1973 and held the post of County Umpires Secretary from 1991 until 2006.

Pat who lived in Chesterton, Cambridge regularly umpired at County Matches and County and League tournaments, Wilmott Cup matches and British League matches. He was always happy to transport both junior and seniors to these matches. He even managed to transport tables on his bike.

Pat also held the post of County Coaching Secretary for several years and was also the Cambridge League's Coaching Secretary for 18 years. He ran regular coaching sessions in the area from 1970 until 2008 and encouraged many of today's current league players to take up the game.

Pat was awarded the English Table Tennis Association's Maurice Goldstein Merit Award in 2008 in recognition of his outstanding service to the sport.

Martyn Livermore, Chairman of the Cambridgeshire Table Tennis Association, paid tribute to Pat. He said "I for one would not have been as involved with table tennis without Pat. He got me started at the YMCA coaching sessions in 1976. He was always so enthusiastic.

Keith Richardson, President of the Association and the current Men' Singles Champion, said: "Pat was a legend, he drove my brother and I all over the country when we were juniors and if we had let him. he would have continued to do so when we were seniors. Nothing was ever too much trouble for him. He loved his table tennis so much".

A former player who now lives in Manchester said "People like Pat are definitely 'one offs' and all of the table tennis community including the hundreds of youngsters he coached, will miss his chirpy manner, positive outlook and selfless commitment to the sport.

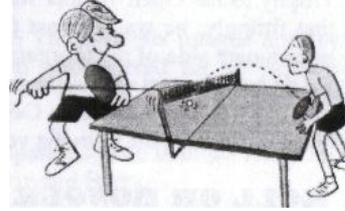
Pat died peacefully in hospital on Tuesday April 6th and his funeral was held on Wednesday April 21st in the West Chapel, Cambridge City Crematorium.

This tribute was published in the Cambridge News.

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## How to set - up and Measure a Table Tennis Net

A table tennis net isn't the most exciting item of equipment, but is important nevertheless. The net is intended to be an obstacle but it should not increase the probability of



a player gaining a lucky point. A ball hitting the top of the net should fall back on the hitter's side or bounce forwards – It should not fall over onto the receiver's side. This means that the tension along the top of the net should be significantly higher than the rest of the net. The height of the net above the playing surface should also be uniform and this is specified as 15.25 centimetres. The Laws of Table Tennis for the Net Assembly are as follows:-

### *THE NET ASSEMBLY*

*2.02.1 The net assembly shall consist of the net, its suspension and the supporting posts including the clamps attaching them to the table.*

*2.02.2 The net shall be suspended by a cord attached at each end to an upright post 15.25cm high, the outside limits of the post being 15.25cm outside the side line.*

*2.02.3 The top of the net, along its whole length, shall be 15.25cm above the playing surface.*

*2.02.4 The bottom of the net, along its whole length, shall be as close as possible to the playing surface and the ends of the net shall be as close as possible to the supporting posts.*

As an umpire it is your responsibility to ensure that the net assembly complies with the laws of table tennis.

It is important that the umpire, or assistant umpire, checks the height and tension of the net at the beginning of every match. It is also recommended that this should be done at the beginning of every individual match within a team match, although within domestic competitions this is rarely done.

Several manufacturers have produced plastic and metal net gauge measures to ensure consistency. A metal net gauge measure weighs 100 grams and should NEVER be used to measure the height of the net because the weight of the gauge

could depress the cord running along the top of the net. The height of the net is checked and set correctly before checking the tension is correct.

### HOW TO MEASURE

1. Place a plastic net gauge on the net so that the gauge hangs on the net as vertically as possible.
2. The gauge should be placed within a few centimetres of the edge of the table.
3. Check that the bottom of each arm of the net gauge is resting lightly on the playing surface whilst the gauge itself remains as close to vertical as possible.
4. If the net is too high then the base of the arms of the gauge will be floating above the level of the playing surface, conversely if the net is too low then the gauge will slip from its vertical position or if held in position then the top of the space between each arm of the gauge will be above the top of the net.
5. To adjust the height of the net make fine adjustments to the Height Adjuster. When the net is at the correct height the gauge will rest vertically on the net and the base of the arms will lightly touch the playing surface.
6. Repeat steps 1 to 5 on the other side of the table (if you have a second plastic net gauge then it is acceptable to leave the first gauge in position)

7. After the height has been correctly set using the plastic net gauges then in order to check the tension a metal net gauge is placed on the centre of the net above the centreline, using the lower step of the metal gauge (not the step for measuring the 12.25 centimetres height because that step on the metal gauge should never be used).



8. The tension is correct when the bottom of the metal gauge brushes the playing surface; a gap between the playing surface and the bottom of the gauge indicates that the tension is too high and if the gauge rests heavily on the playing surface then the tension is too low.



9. Adjustments to the tension can be made by pulling or loosening the cord from either end and securing the cord into its new position on the upright post.

**As we are now in the midst of summer I thought I would show you how I spend my time on the beach.**

John Mackey

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**WORLD SCHOOLS TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS Brno,  
Czech Republic, 25th / 31st March 2010.**

I was lucky enough to be selected to umpire at the WSTTC. I met my fellow umpire Margot Fraser and the rest of the England party at Heathrow Airport. I had to catch 4 trains to get there - but I do enjoy travelling by rail.

The plane was half an hour late taking off, but it arrived in Vienna O.K. There was a coach waiting for the party - but one of the boys had lost his passport. Back to the airport went the lad and his coach, it took the airport police to get onto the plane and find his passport, So we were nearly an hour late leaving Vienna to go to Brno. The teams were dropped off first at their hotel and then the officials at their hotel. Margot and I had single rooms. We had rooms opposite each other. We had to climb 30 stairs from level 3 cos that is where the lift stopped.

The venue was very good. At the opening ceremony I read out the Officials Oath to all the competitors on behalf of the officials. Food for me was awful until Saturday morning when an official found my dietary sheet. I was given a book of vouchers to spend in any restaurant which had the logo showing. So I took Margot to a restaurant 500 yards from the venue and we had a very good meal. The weather was very kind to us mostly sunny warm days. On the Sunday Margot and I were not needed until 2.30pm so we went into the town centre - it was Palm Sunday and we went into the cathedral and then outside to see people coming out of the monastery. An enjoyable morning and we went to the same restaurant as before and had our dinner - lovely. Monday was day off, we all went on an a trip to a country house and onto some caves (compulsory) for all teams - very enjoyable. There was a concert in the evening in which all countries showed off their wares from their own countries and some of them did little shows on the stage which was good entertainment.

I really enjoyed my stay there and also umpiring such talented young people. I umpired the China Taipei (boys) team twice - they were very good indeed - they came second to China in both the boys and girls National contest. I am pleased to say that the England National Team took bronze medal position. An enjoyable and exciting trip.

The Party arrived back in the U.K. around 5pm on the Wednesday. I had to get another four trains home arriving home about 10.35pm. Very tired but very happy.

John Hardcastle.

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### **Five secrets of a perfect relationship by John Hardcastle.**

1. It's very important to have a woman who helps at home cooks, cleans and has a job.
2. It's important to have a woman who can make you laugh.
3. It's important to have a woman you can trust and doesn't lie.
4. It's important to have a woman who is good in bed and likes being with you.
5. It's very, very, very important that these four women don't know each other.

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### **THE BOOK CLUB**

I have to confess that I am not really a bookworm; half an hour before dreamtime means a good novel will take me up to two or three months to complete. Not for me a quick snatch of a few pages between games at a tournament Those of you who know me will be only too aware that I like to rest my eyes at every opportunity.



It is not however that sort of book club to which I now allude. I am referring to the Umpire's Book Club. This is that little 10 x 15 cm. booklet which our leaders at the NURC distribute to qualified umpires for personal record purposes.

The exact date when this phenomenon was born is not clear to me but my very first entry is for the Kirklees Junior Open in September 1993 and was signed by Referee Bev Walker. Since that time I have filled almost three books. An oft repeated joke was something to the effect that "when you had a full book you were presented with a toaster". I still fill in my little book after each event, and as an umpire's personal record facility, it is brilliant When Colin requests some information for his records out comes my little book and hey presto. I cannot however, give, in all honesty, any additional praise. What exactly does it achieve? I have never been asked to submit my book for scrutiny and to tell you the truth for sometime now my little book has never left my desk at home.

It was a year or two ago when this mystery first dawned on me. What is the object of having the Referee's signature appended for each event? If the records are never to be

examined or verified by the powers that be, what is the purpose of the ritual we see at each tournament, where the desk asks for "the logbooks" to be handed in?

My records throw up some weird entries where working on my own in a County Championship or British League match I was also the Referee. Similarly I have on occasions been asked to act as Referee for an adjacent County.

I cannot of course lay the charge that the system is being abused; what use would that be? What could be gained by falsifying your entries? I suppose one could say the NURC could gain the impression of a higher level of activity for selection purposes; but I am not convinced that this would pass muster. In any event there is no correlation between the logbook and the survey carried out every year or two by Colin then any discrepancy is unlikely to be noticed.

Derek Sherratt