



# Pre-season Report

## 30<sup>th</sup> August 2008

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**A** number of the Leamington League's table tennis players have been keeping themselves busy over the close-season by competing in the World Corporate Games, which were held in Leeds back in July with some success.

Current Mens Singles champion, Ian Ferguson of Colebridge, picked up the gold medal in the 30-39 Mens Singles category, beating St Georges' Ian Packford into silver. In a big hitting game, it was Ferguson who found that extra sharpness and consistency to run out a 6/11, 11/3, 11/4, 11/3 winner. Another Leamington player, Gary Jackson of BGN, picked up the bronze in the same event to complete the domination of the podium positions.



Ian Packford also made it through to the Mens Doubles final with St Georges colleague Earl Sweeney, in which they faced Ian Ferguson and corporate team member Tim O'Mahoney. The match went the full distance, with Ferguson/O'Mahoney 10/8 up in the fifth, only for Packford/Sweeney to take three straight points to gain a match point of their own, before Ferguson/O'Mahoney responded with a run of three of their own to clinch the title 13/11.

Earl won silver in the 40-49 Mens Singles, grabbing an excellent win over tough opponent Steve Kearns in the quarter final. Unfortunately he came up against an inspired Mark Fiddian in the final and narrowly missed out on taking gold.

**T**he 2008/09 season is only a few weeks away now, with the first matches due to be played during the week of 22<sup>nd</sup> September. The Club Secretaries meeting, where clubs can collect their handbooks and other important information is due to be held at WCC Staff Club on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm. All clubs should be represented at the meeting – any who are not able should contact the league Chairman as soon as possible.

The anticipated re-structuring of the league, which could have resulted in more teams than usual being relegated has not been necessary. With the league losing a few teams and gaining some others, it has left Divisions 1 with a full twelve-side compliment, Division 2 with eleven and Divisions 3 and 4 with ten teams in each. The two-a-side competition continues to be popular and Divisions A, B and C all have ten sides registered.

Once teams have their handbooks and fixture lists, they are advised to confirm their first fixture of the season with the opposition to prevent any confusion.

**T**his season, the League Committee has decided to revamp the cup competitions. There will be three competitions which will see 3-a-side teams from Divisions 1 and 2 compete for a new trophy; 3-a-side teams from Divisions 3 and 4 compete for the Coronation Cup; and 2-a-side teams from Divisions A, B and C compete for the Southwell Trophy. The match will consist of nine singles in the 3-a-side competitions and four singles in the 2-a-side, with each match consisting of four games to eleven – no deuce – with all four games always played. Every point scored in the match is important, with the winner being decided after the handicap is applied. The handicap is calculated based on which players compete in the match and will not be disclosed until after the match has been played.

**F**or anyone who is looking for some competitive pre-season practice, Lillington Free Church will be holding the first of their graded tournaments on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September at Sydenham Sports Centre. The morning session is an age group competition, with the afternoon session being graded to allow players to compete at their own level. This first tournament of the season always proves popular, so anyone who wishes to enter should contact Hugh Matthews on 01926 314539 as soon as possible.