



# ENGLISH SCHOOLS' TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION

## SPRING NEWSLETTER 2010

### SCHOOLS' TABLE TENNIS – A NEW ERA

#### Butterfly National School Team Championships 2009/10

- Partnership Rounds – completed
- County Events – completed
- Zone Finals – 23<sup>rd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> January 2010
  - Zone 1 – Billingham
  - Zone 2 – Bradford (2 venues)
  - Zone 3 – Blackburn (2 venues/2 days)
  - Zone 4 – Grantham
  - Zone 5 – Cheltenham
  - Zone 6 – Tower Hamlets (2 venues)
  - Zone 7 – Tooting Bec
  - Zone 8 – Plymouth
- Regional Finals – 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> February 2010
  - North – Blackburn
  - East – Grantham
  - South & East – Southall
  - West – Cheltenham
- Butterfly National Finals – Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at 10am  
Hinckley Leisure Centre – all welcome

A big thank you for the hard work of County Secretaries and Competition Managers in this first year of Partnership events linked to the well established ESTTA County School Team Championships. This has resulted in a **BUMPER** entry for the Zone Finals.

Putting the new structure into place was never going to be easy – it has been in some counties but in others it has been a struggle. However, creation of new events which are more inclusive and developmental encouraging greater participation can only be good for the sport and the players themselves.

Communication is a key issue for the present and the future. It is essential that Competition Managers and County Secretaries communicate pre season to determine the structure of events and fix dates in accordance with the guidelines proposed by ESTTA/ETTA – thereafter to work together to deliver the events with mutual co-operation for the benefit of the participants.

A full list of Zone finalists can be found on the ESTTA website – [www.estta.org.uk](http://www.estta.org.uk). Check it out, who has qualified for your area, are there gaps which your school could fill in the future?



## **The role of the Competition Manager – Information for County Secretaries**

In order to give County Secretaries an idea of the role of the Competition Manager they have received with this Newsletter copies of the National Competition Calendar and NGB Matrix for Table Tennis produced by the YST. We hope this information will give a greater insight into how Competition Managers and County Secretaries can work together to develop Table Tennis in schools.

## **Thoughts for the Future for your School, for your Partnership**

### Get It Right

If competitive table tennis in schools is to be attractive for the widest possible audience it is essential to have the:

- Right Format – 2-a-side / 4-a-side / 1 Game to 11 / Best of 5 .....
- Right Level – Beginners / Improving Players / Talented .....
- Right Conditions – Outdoor / Indoor / Single Table / Multiple Tables / On-site / Off site .....
- Right Time – Pre School / Curriculum / Lunch Time / After School Club / Evening Activity .....
- Right Opponents – Intra School / Inter School / Partnership / League / Club / County .....

### Rationale

In order to attract and retain players it is important that competition is provided at the right level, at the right time and with the right conditions to maintain interest and provide enjoyment for beginners, but also stretch players who obviously show talent for the sport.

This is important in all branches of table tennis but none more so than for table tennis played in schools. All providers working with players of school age must address two issues:

- Talent Identification
- Restricted Competition Entry

Both of these areas, if correctly followed, should assist in making table tennis a more attractive sport and lead to stronger School/Club Links – all for the benefit of the players.

ESTTA has prepared a paper on these topics which it is hoped will stimulate discussion and lead to improvements in the present pathways. Already some Partnerships are organising 2-tier events – let me know how these have worked.

Another issue which has been raised is the timing of events. Should they be weekday or weekend, morning, afternoon or evening?

- Traditionally, local intra school events have been played late afternoon (partially in school time / partially in extra curricular time).
- County events have been held on a Saturday or Sunday.
- ESTTA Zone, Regional and National Finals are either on a Saturday or Sunday.
- Competition Managers have successfully run their events mostly mid week.

Many counties are now moving to hold some events late afternoon and some at weekends dependent upon availability of venues. Of course, Zone, Regional and National Finals need larger venues. The National Individual Final is played on 20 tables – one of the Zone Finals is played on 24 tables. These often take a full day of up to 12 hours of play. There is a balance between cost of venue, availability of equipment and the organising team.

We ask for the co-operation of schools to release players and teachers at whatever time events are held.

***Your views on these issues are important!***

## Affiliation Fees

New structures may cause a rethink in how ESTTA funds its events – and the County Secretaries, their events.

There are many questions – here are some facts:

Fact: Each County Schools' Association must pay an affiliation fee of £46 to ESTTA.

Fact: For each team entered by the County into the National School Team Championships a fee of £22 is payable. The same fee applies for the ESTTA Individual Championships.

Fact: There are no additional fees for Zone winners to compete in the Regional or National Championships.

Why have affiliation and entry fees? We have to pay for the hire of venues, trophies, certificates – print handbooks, newsletters and generally pay for the Executive Committee to function. The above fees allow us to break even each year.

Traditionally, how have Counties raised funds? By charging entry fees to their County rounds, inviting the Senior County TTA to make a donation, invite winning schools to contribute to payment of fees ..... and of course, County Secretaries may have to pay for a venue, provide trophies .....

NGBs have been invited by the Youth Sport Trust to look at a common scheme for Partnership contribution ..... a debate took place ..... the jury is still out! **Watch this space!**

## **Butterfly Press Cutting ..... and Developmental Activity Reports Competition!**

Calling all Schools, Partnerships, Counties – Teachers, Coaches, SSCos, CMs, PDMs, County Secretaries!

- We want to hear your **success stories!**
- We want to hear about your **good practice!**
- We want to see **reports** you have filled about your events!!!
- We want to see your **Press Reports!!!!**

Butterfly has, as part of its sponsorship of ESTTA, donated valuable prizes including holdalls, net/post sets, bats, balls ..... you could win one of these to help boost table tennis in your schools by taking part in the Press Cutting/Developmental Activity Competition. Entries to John Blackband, Chairman ESTTA, 5 Fairfield Mount, Highgate, Walsall, WS1 3HZ. E-mail: john\_blackband@fsmail.net.

**And finally** – please let us know if:

- You no longer wish to remain on the ESTTA mailing list.
- Your contact details are inaccurate or you receive more than one copy.
- You know of any school actively involved in table tennis who might wish to be added to the ESTTA database, please send their full contact details by e-mail to the address below.

Keep in touch [www.estta.org.uk](http://www.estta.org.uk)

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11<sup>th</sup> January 2010

