

The Weymouth League 2019-20

The Weymouth League has enjoyed another good season. We had 28 teams in the 3 divisions with 126 players in total, 26% of them being youth players. Sadly this year only 9.5% of players were female which was disappointing. Due to the curtailed season there was agreement amongst all the captains to decide the final positions using the average points scored per team and the Knockout Cup final will take place once we have the go ahead to resume playing. The individual league tournament was again successfully organised by the Preston club and a good number of entries enjoyed a full day of matches.

Andy Millar has continued his amazing work and expanded his full-on coaching programme and, as a result, new teams based in Dorchester entered the league. This has given the opportunity for new players of all ages to play, as well as experienced players who are returning to the sport. The WDTTL continues to organise a varied weekly practice schedule to facilitate the development of the game at junior and adult level. There has also been a specific focus on community and female sessions, the latter including a 6 week 'This Girl Can' project and a 'girls only' after school club which has attracted 25 girls since September. We have visited various schools in Weymouth, Dorchester and Bridport and also helped at community sessions such as at brownies and cubs. There is now a well established community club which this year has been attended by almost 60 people across the age range 11 to 70+ and we know that many of them are looking forward to being able to play again. All 3 secondary schools in Weymouth have teams in the Weymouth League and the main youth focus is to enter and train teams to compete at NCL and NJL and these players also feed into the county teams. This season Weymouth entered 4 NCL and 3 NJL teams and Dorchester entered 1 NCL team. The WDTTL also run the local schools competitions and assist schools who want to enter the national team and individual events. Budmouth again had two teams (Boys U19 and Girls U16) who reached the last 8 of the national schools team competition.

Following on from last year's TTE League of the Season award we were very pleased to celebrate with Sophie Storey when she was announced as the TTE Young Volunteer of the Year and she was presented with her award during the on-line streaming of the National Championships in Nottingham. We wish Sophie well as she leaves Weymouth and continues her education at Grantham College Table Tennis Academy in September. We look forward to seeing the improvement in her game and she hopes to continue to represent Dorset in competitions.

We are very blessed with an amazing committee who ensure that the league runs very smoothly. We now await news of how and when we will be able to resume playing and what modifications we will have to make in order to organise some sort of competition in the year ahead.

Neil Hardisty
Chairman WDTTL
June 2020