

REPORT FROM CHRIS TURPIN ON HOW THE KENT VETERANS 3RD TEAM WON DIVISION 3C OF THE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

This years squad was as follows;-

1. Tom Adams
2. Dave Fraser
3. Alex Facey
4. Steve Johnson

Carol Homewood

Reserves: - Chris Turpin – Captain, Martin Smith and Marianne Jorgensen

Sat. 20/10/2007

Weekend 1 - Venue/Kingfisher TTC, Reading (Team: - Tom Adams/Dave Fraser/Steve Johnson/Carol Homewood)

Middx 3 -V- Kent 3

Kent III started their campaign at Kingfisher TTC, Reading and the team were confident after narrowly missing out on promotion last season. Our first game was against Middlesex '3' who went into 2-1 lead after Steve Preston beat Tom Adams in a really 'Topsey Turvey' encounter that went to five and Dave Fraser lost a very close match to Lee Middleton eight in the fifth, the rallies in this match were excellent to watch but unfortunately for Dave the lack of space on one side of the court stopped him from retrieving Lee's excellent hooked forehands.

From 2-1 down Kent then managed to forge into an impressive 4-2 lead after excellent displays from Carol and Tom in the first mixed doubles winning in 12-10 in the fourth and a mammoth display of controlled power and tactics from Steve Johnson to beat Steve Preston 14-12 in the fifth. Carol then followed this up with a very impressive display of controlled attacking play against the long pimples of Lorna Slifkin, winning 3-1.

The men's doubles swung one way then the other with finally Preston/Gennari finally beating Fraser/Johnson 11-5 in the fifth, Dave then stayed on to play Gennari and pulled through a very close game 12-10 in the fifth, Dave found Gennari's left handed style of long pimps on the backhand and a very strong forehand very difficult to get to grips with but after going 2-1 down managed to win the fourth easily and pip Steve in the fifth. Tom then lost to Lee Middleton 3-1 but did not appear to be at this usual best and was not getting that bit of luck, this made the score 5-4 to Kent with the final mixed doubles to play, Carol and Dave managed to secure the win for Kent with a great display of attacking table tennis, winning 11-6 in the fifth game.

Kent 3 -v- Herts 3

The 2nd game was against Herts '3' and Kent raced into a very quick 3-0 lead with Dave Fraser beating Mark McCarthy 3-0, Steve Johnson beating Jim Craggs 3-0 and finally Tom Adams playing like his old self winning 3-0 over Dennis Robinson. Tom and Carol teamed up

for the first mixed doubles and went down 3-0 to Robinson and June Nelson. This made the match score 3-1 after four matches. Then Dave had a fine 3-0 win and was just too strong for Jim Craggs, Carol then lost 3-0 To June Nelson who proved to consistent on the day, this made the match score 4-2 to Kent.

The last four games produced the best TT and the closest games as Dave and Tom won the men's doubles 3-1 and Steve Johnson won a very tight match against Dennis Robinson in the fifth 13-11, Tom Adams then did the same by beating Mark McCarthy 11-7 in the fifth in another very close game and finally Steve and Carol lost the last mixed double 3-0 to McCarthy and Nelson. Although the match score of 7-3 suggest a rather easy win this was certainly not the case and the two five set wins for Steve and Tom in matches 8 & 9 were very crucial.

NB. Player of the weekend for Kent was Steve Johnson with 4 wins out of 4 in the singles, also a very important men's doubles win against Middlesex '3' with Dave Fraser.

Sat. 15/12/2007

Weekend 2 - Venue/Graham Spicers, Morden (Team: - Tom Adams/Alex Facey/Steve Johnson/Carol Homewood)

Berks '2' -v- Kent '3'

After their first weekends success Kent III arrived at Graham Spicers in good spirits and full of confidence, Unfortunately Berks '2' could only turn-up with 2 men and their lady player due to a 'late' pull out by their third men's player, this gave Kent a massive advantage. Kent duly raced into an unassailable lead of 7-0 with Tom Adams and Alex Facey winning 3-0 Against Geoff Civil and David Streak respectively, Carol Homewood and Alex Facey followed this up with a controlled display of mixed doubles to win 3-0 whilst Carol and Steve both won 3-1 against Denise Rolf and Geoff Civil. Both the Kent players dropped the third games but managed to hold it together to win both their matches, and with the walkovers this made the match Score 7-0 to Kent.

Tom Adams then had a hard game against David Streak, but Tom turned on the style to win 3-1, Carol and Steve then teamed up in the last mixed doubles and duly lost 3-0 to Rolf and Streak making the final match score 9-1 to Kent.

Kent '3' -v- Surrey '4'

Kent went into this afternoon game high on confidence and where soon racing out to a 3-0 lead, however anyone that expected a big win was in for a nasty surprise from the Surrey team who fought hard all through this great match.

Tom Adams, Steve Johnson and Alex Facey where all too strong for their opponents Winston Wong, Rolland Mclellan and John Fannin with Tom and Steve winning 3-1 with polished displays of controlled table tennis and great tactics. Alex Facey's all out power game was too much for John Fanin and Alex came out on top with a 3-0 win. Now the Surrey comeback started and what a comeback it was, from 0-3 down to 4-3 up and a great chance of upsetting the currently unbeaten Kent team. First Carol and Alex could not get past John Fanin and Sandy Simpson and lost closely 3-0, Winston Wong then best Steve Johnson 3-1 with the last two games going to Winston 18-16 and 13-11, Carol then went on against Sandy Simpson and also lost a very close game 3-1 winning the first 8 and the losing next three -7, -10 and -7.

The match score was now tied at 3-3, our strongest men's doubles pairing on the day of Tom Adams and Alex Facey then went on against Winston Wong and Rolland Mclellan and were duly beaten 3-0 with scores of (-7, -8 and -9). Kent were now 3-4 down having led 3-0, but when the 'Going gets tough, the tough get going' and Alex and Tom then produced their best performances in the next two singles, Alex winning 3-1 against a very determined Winston Wong with Alex's three ball attack off his serve being the decisive tactic. Tom Adams then produced a great display of power hitting and control against the Combi bat of John Fanin to win 3-0 which made the score 5-4. Steve and Carol then played the last mixed doubles but could not make any impression on Sandy Simpson/Winston Wong who were worthy winner 3-0.

A great match therefore ended as a 5-5 draw, a fair result for such a great game enjoyed by all and played in the most sportsmen like spirit.

NB. The Kent player/s of the weekend would have to be Tom Adams/Alex Facey although Tom probably just edges it with his display against Surrey as the players he had to play against are his team mates from the VBL/Spicers local league teams, so they knew his game inside out.

It has to be said that Alex Facey's old school game of the 'Three ball attack' is a joy to watch and long may it continue....!!!

Sat. 09/02/2008

Weekend 3 - Venue/Milton Keynes TTC, Milton Keynes (Team: - Dave Fraser/Alex Facey/Chris Turpin/Carol Homewood)

Kent '3' -v- Oxon '2'

This was it, the last County Vet weekend for Kent '3' in division 3C and the scenario was simple we were in first place by one point from Bucks '1' who had played one more game and two points in front of Oxon '2' who had played the same number of games as us. Therefore win both of our games and we were champions with one match still to be played against Sussex '4'.

The squad arrived at Milton Keynes TTC quietly confident but with a certain air of trepidation as we knew that we were playing both our closest rivals for the title on the same day also we were without two of our stronger players i.e. Tom Adams and Steve Johnson, Chris Turpin had come in as a replacement for Tom who was suffering with a shoulder injury. This proved to be a very close game and took well over three hours to complete, 4 games went to a fifth end and 4 games went to a fourth end which made for some great TT and high drama. Kent went storming out into a deserved 3-1 lead with Alex Facey disposing of a very awkward Jay Allen 3-1 in a close tense match with Alex's forehand drive and loop proving to be the match winner. Dave Fraser then quickly defeated Neil Hurford 3-1, but totally went off the boil in the third game losing it 11-6 but then came back very strongly in the fourth to win 11-2. Chris Turpin had a amazing game with Oxon '2' best player on the day Richard Taylor, the match was 'Nip and Tuck' throughout but Chris eventually lost (-16, 11, -9, 8 and -12). The final point proved too much for Chris as Taylor serving at 11-10 served an ace off the edge to win the match. Carol and Alex then managed to win a very close match 3-0 in the first mixed doubles against Anne Borrowdale and Neil Hurford, Alex's forehand doing most of the damage but Carol also chipping with some excellent attacking shots and set-ups....!!!

This made the match score 3-1. Alex then went on against Richard Taylor, he lost the first 11-6 and then proceeded to win the next legs comfortably 11-4 and 11-6, Alex then powered in front in the fourth leg but somehow ran out of stream after being in a winning position and lost the next two games 11-9 and 11-8. The gods seemed to be conspiring against us as any luck that was going seemed to be going to Oxon on every occasion,

Enter Carol Homewood who then proceeded to put on a great display of controlled attacking and good serves to beat Borrowdale 3-1. Dave and Alex then teamed up to win the men's doubles 3-0 to make the match score 5-2. Chris Turpin then went on against Neil Hurford a left handed blocker who proved to be consistent and Chris lost 3-1, Dave then played Jay Allen to go for the win, Dave started like an express train with great forehand loops and kills winning the first leg 11-4, Jay Allen then changed his tactics and Dave began to struggle finding himself now 2-1 down. Dave then played some of his best table tennis of the day and pulled through to win the next two games 11-5 and 11-6 to win 3-2.

Carol and Chris then nearly pulled off the recovery of the day from being 2-0 down in the final mixed doubles coming back to 2-2 but losing the last set 11-5, the final match score was 6-4 to Kent '3' but what a match and it could have gone either way....!!!

Bucks '1' -v- Kent '3'

And so to the final match of the day, a win and we would be champions and promoted back to Div. 2. Once again as had happened in so many of our games Kent '3' got off to a really good start and raced away into a 3-1 lead with David Fraser taking care of Alan Cherry 3-0 with Fraser's forehand doing all the damage and Cherry not being able to get enough heavy chops consistently back on the table. Chris Turpin then put in his best performance of the day by beating the awkward chopper Nick Hansell 3-1 in a very close contest with the scores of 11-6, 10-12, 12-10 and 14-12; Chris did ride his luck but hit some great forehand winners. Alex then beat Michael Wilkins 3-0 with an unstoppable display of forehand hitting and looping which the Bucks player had no answer to whatsoever.

Alex and Carol then lost to Wilkins and Sue Hayes 3-0 in the first mixed doubles and did not really ever get into the match and were always chasing the game, Chris then lost a very competitive game against Alan Cherry 3-1 that had lots of 'Banter' and some great rallies, finally Alan Cherry won 3-1 with some great flat hits in the fourth game. Carol then lost 3-0 to her old nemesis Sue Hayes, unfortunately for Carol this opponent holds a mental block for her but there were signs of improvement....!!

Suddenly from being well in charge Kent '3' found themselves at 3-3 in the match score, again on came our men's doubles pairing of Facey and Fraser and what a performance winning 3-0 against Wilkins and Cherry and although the scores were 11-8, 11-8 and 11-5 the Kent pair were never in danger of losing or dropping a set in this leg as they had too much power and spin for the Bucks pair. Alex and Dave then killed off the match in style both winning 3-0 against Hansell and Wilkins with quite breath taking displays of power hitting and looping that their Bucks opponents were unable to deal with.

The final mixed doubles of the day nearly produced the best comeback of the day again for Carol and Chris as they went 2-0 down very quickly and then came back to 2-2 but finally lost

out 11-7 in the fifth. A final match score of 6-4 and Kent '3' were Champions of Div. 3c with a game still to be played.....

NB. The Kent player of the weekend was Dave Fraser with a blistering display of power table tennis, his forehand is just getting better and better, watch out div 2 next season....!!!
It should also be mentioned that Alex's contribution along with Carol and Chris on the day helped to get the team over the finish line.

Averages

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Player	Played	Won	Lost	W/o	Percent
=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Tom Adams	4	6	2	0	75%
Dave Fraser	4	7	1	0	87.5%
Alex Facey	4	6	1	1	86%
Steve Johnson	4	6	1	1	86%
Chris Turpin	2	1	3	0	25%
Carol Homewood	6	3	3	0	50%

Saturday 15 March 2008 Final Game Venue Horsham TTC

Sussex '4' v Kent '3'

This game was played at Horsham TTC as the original match at Sturdee Hall, Gillingham had to be cancelled at the last minute due to Sussex IV being unable to field a team, and it became very apparent as to why they were so happy to offer their venue as an alternative when we could not get our normal venues. The hall and conditions appeared to be fine but as soon as we started playing it was obvious that the table/floor were very slow and suited the home players games.

The Kent team was as follows: - Dave Fraser/Alex Facey/Chris Turpin & Mariane Jorgensen

Kent stormed into a hard fought 4-1 lead as Sussex IV still had a slim chance of avoiding relegation from Div. 3c if they could pull off a surprise win over the division champions, they certainly did not play or look like a team that was bottom of this division.

Alex Facey lost the first match 3-1 to Graham Carter who was by far Sussex's best player on the day and Alex was clearly struggling with slowness of the conditions and could not get his forehand topspin game going, Chris Turpin then made it 1-1 all against the tall Andy Castle and managed to control the spinney backhands and big forehands without too much problem winning 3-1. Dave Fraser then went on against Steve Pound and won 3-1 with a determined display of topspins and hitting from both wings and proved too strong in the end. The first mixed doubles went to Kent Marianne and Alex after to going 2-0 down to Graham Carter and Pam Winter then somehow pulled it out of the bag to win the next three games and come thru 3-2, the match score was now 3-1 to Kent.

Alex then went on and somehow found the resolve and concentration to beat Andy Castle 3-1 as once again the conditions were the main problem rather than the player; the score was now 4-1 to Kent. We were then treated to one of the matches of the afternoon as a brave Mariane finally went down 3-2 (13-11 in the fifth) to the very steady and awkward Pam Winter, Mariane was 1-0 down, then 2-1 up and then in the fifth 9-5 and 10-6 down before pulling back to deuce, unfortunately she could not find the winning shots and lost deuce.

The Match score was now 4-2 to Kent and again the next match went to five legs with the men's doubles producing some excellent rallies, Facey and Fraser managed to secure a very tight win 3-2 against Carter and Castle. This proved to be a very important win on the day and made the match score 5-2 to Kent, Chris Turpin then went on and lost 3-0 to Graham Pound but really let the first game slip after being 9-5 up, Pound played the table very well and kept it tight when he needed to, the score was now 5-3.

The best match of the afternoon was now to take place between Fraser and Carter and what a match it was with Carter taking Fraser's 100% record away with a 3-2 win the scores were as follows (11-13, 13-11, 13-11, 8-11 and 6-11), in this game Dave found Carter's left-handed blocking style very difficult to handle and the conditions definitely suited the Sussex player, in saying this it must be said Carter played brilliantly and produced some stunning rallies which were excellent to watch, Dave gave it everything and some of his retrieving was of the highest calibre, the match score now stood at 5-4.

This left the last mixed doubles and considering that Turpin and Jorgensen had never played before and more to the point that Turpin had not won a mixed double for some time the pressure was on the Kent pair, but low and behold they ran out convincing winners 3-0 with a fantastic display from Jorgensen of hitting from both wings on the crucial points, both players afterwards admitted that they were so pumped up as this was for Dave after seeing him go down in the last match.

So the final match score was a great 6-4 win for Kent.