

TABLE TENNIS GROUP

Report by Peter Singer



Tum-ti-tum-ti-tum-ti-tum.....Yes, it's 3pm on a Friday afternoon and time for another episode of The Batters, an everyday story of table tennis folk, set in the idyllic, rural venue of Mickleton Village Hall. All of life unfolds there, with lively exchanges about the state of the world, the lack of buses, members' fitness (especially backs and knees) and holiday adventures (Iceland, New Zealand, Costa Rica and Malta so far this year – it's a wonder there's anyone left to play). There's impromptu coaching as well – “don't hit it with your thumb”, “try to get it on the table”, “you really need a longer arm” and so on.

Meanwhile, some of us ponder how best to return that wicked, backspin serve – according to the experts, usually with a backhand or forehand “push stroke”, hitting the ball at the top of its bounce, with the bat angled slightly backwards to strike the ball on the back, at the bottom, hitting it short and low over the net, to prevent your opponent from hitting an attacking shot back. That's the theory anyway! We continue with our different versions and hope for the best – it's all you can do.

On a more serious note and on the wider stage, Paul Drinkhall has recently won his seventh Men's Singles final at the Senior National Championships in Nottingham, dethroning Tom Jarvis, while Tin-Tin Ho took a sixth Women's Singles crown and Jack Hunter-Spivey retained his Para Class 2-5 (wheelchair) title. Hunter-Spivey, however, had suffered his first ever defeat in the earlier rounds and only qualified for the final on “countback”, which is where two players are tied and the winner is decided by counting the total number of games/points won. A close shave!

If you would like to join our group to learn the game, improve your skills or just enjoy playing and socialising, please contact Peter Singer (pandjsinger@btinternet.com 07508 663998). All are welcome, whether you play regularly, have not played for some time or have never played before.

