

TABLE TENNIS GROUP - Report by Peter Singer



A recent city break to “wonderful, wonderful Copenhagen” proved an extremely enjoyable, if far from cheap experience. Perhaps “salty old queen of the sea” (pace Danny Kaye) doesn’t quite capture the contemporary buzz of colourful canal-side buildings, excellent restaurants, art galleries and museums and a wide selection of tasty craft beers (marginally less pricey than wine), but maybe “a welcome so warm and gay” is nearer the mark. Highly recommended. Anyway, we came away with a definite feeling of “hygge” (pronounced something like hoo-ger), defined as “a quality of cosiness and comfortable conviviality that engenders a feeling of contentment or well-being”. The term would apply equally, of course, to our table tennis group. The main hall of the leisure centre on a Friday afternoon positively vibrates with hygge, as our very sociable and friendly members exchange pleasantries, health reports, reading choices and holiday plans etc. as well as playing a few games. At the tables, the hygge is perhaps a little more elusive, when a more competitive streak creeps in, winning shots are celebrated and mishits bemoaned loudly. Nevertheless, we all get on well and generally enjoy the sessions, however well or badly we may have played.

With regard to improving our play, table tennis guru Ben Larcombe offers some advice on how to play aggressively at 50+ (obviously advanced years in table tennis terms, although many of us can barely remember such halcyon youth!). The key points are: stay very close to the table (phew, that’s an easy one); have a strong serve (mmm! - maybe try harder on this); attack early in the point (well, we rarely manage long rallies anyway) and be aggressive in defence (although he uses the dreaded American spelling of “defense” and perhaps easier said than done). So, that’s wrapped up how to improve our play and over to all our members to start implementing this simple formula next Friday – watch out for fireworks!

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.