



**TEAM
OF THE YEAR???**



**2016 CLUB
CHAMPIONSHIPS**



**IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT THE
TABLE TENNIS**

END OF SEASON REPORT

So another season over for the Club - a season during which our Club membership again increased and a season which saw us enter a record 8 teams in the Edinburgh League. Whilst there were some ups and downs on the table, off the table we secured a terrific sponsorship deal from Saltire Roofing which will hopefully enable the Club to continue to grow over the next couple of years.

Saturday morning coaching sessions have again been popular with a number of new youngsters coming along and some good prospects for the future being identified - as always the Club are indebted to Tom for all his hard work with the kids. Having covered for Tom during his twelve foreign holidays this year (oh to be retired) I can confirm that it takes huge dedication and commitment to keep the Coaching sessions going so a massive amount of credit and gratitude to Tom for all his hard work.

So on to our League Teams and their performances this season - In the Premier Division, as I said in my New Year Report, Stuart had reached the turn of the year and no fallouts with Colin, a feat only achieved by two players in Team 1's history - the second half of the season did, however, prove to be a sterner test for the pair of them - it was only down to El Presidente's skills of mediation that they were still speaking by April - so for the second season in a row (and that's a record) the same three players who started the season have remarkably finished it together - the Premier division was certainly not as strong as it's been in the past but given that Colin missed 6 matches, Stuart missed 4 and Greig missed 2, a fifth place finish has to be regarded as a positive outcome for Team 1 - if El Presidente continues to lose weight (has anyone noticed how slim I'm looking these days?); if Colin can recover from his tennis elbow, arthritis in his knee, wrist injury and hamstring problems; and if Stuart can convince himself that he's not Gavin Rungay, surely there's more to come from this trio??

After getting in through the backdoor to Division 1, Team 3 called on the services of Iain Johnstone to join Clive and Brian - El Presidente takes all the credit for Iain's performances this season - his nurturing, guidance and coaching of Iain last year in the Premier Division clearly shone through as he finished 3rd in the Division 1 averages with just over 80% - and thank goodness for that as without him Team 3 may have been struggling down towards the bottom of the division - as it was though a 6th place finish for the trio was a good return. The real story of

the season however was the amazing transformation of Brian "Mr Nasty" Bailey into Brian "I'm nicer than James Wighton" Bailey - a man so disliked by others over the last twenty seasons that even when he performed really well in a match no-one would ever award him player of the night! Well he's unrecognisable this year - we at the Club have always known what a good egg he is but this year he was so nice to opponents that they too have recognised that he's a big softy at heart - so well done Brian - unbelievably not one controversy of the week piece in our weekly reports has centred on you - Weekly reports - now there's something that's kept our Press Officer busy this year - has Brian read one single report this season - despite being told repeatedly about them he seems every week to have that blank expression on his face when they're mentioned at the Club - maybe it's an age thing?

Anyway back to the TT - The news wasn't so good for last year's Division 2 champions as James, Abby and Gary had a pretty woeful season - 1 win from 22 matches was never going to be enough and even if they had converted their 5 draws into wins they would still have been relegated - we all know that Team 2 are better than that - it seems they just got in the habit of not winning and when confidence is low it's difficult to turn it around, not to mention that they seemed to have no luck whatsoever throughout the season. And as if that wasn't bad enough, James has now lost his title of our most liked Team Captain - Jings it's been a year to forget for Team 2!

In Division 2 our 4th Team were the surprise package of the season. Chris, Tony, Gavin and Mr Lazzkiezzwiczzzzzzz (can never spell that right) all played their part as they stayed with the young guns of Murrayfield 5 right up to the last couple of weeks of the season. A crucial win against 3rd placed Fife in March effectively secured 2nd spot in the Division and a play-off match against Corstorphine. Could the Club still end up with two teams in Division 1 after all - an update will follow at the AGM by which time the match will have been played.

Another 6th place finish was achieved for the Club, this time in Division 3 by the 5th Team of John, Gregory and Phil - whilst never in contention for promotion they were likewise always well clear of any danger towards the foot of the table. Our 2015 Club Champion, John, felt that the pressure of that title adversely affected his play this season - now come on - someone please wake me up from this ongoing nightmare and tell me he didn't actually win last year did he?? How long can he live on past glories? He also commented that his performances were affected as a result of the added onerous responsibilities he had as Club secretary this year! In fairness I think he did send at least 3 emails this season about the Handicap Cup - Ok so two of them were sent in error but that's not the point!

And so to Division 4 - there has continued to be some criticism of the fact that our weekly reports on the Website seem to have much less coverage of Teams 6, 7 and 8 than our other teams receive. Unfortunately the Club has no control over what our Press Officer includes in these reports (Brian, they're on the Website each Sunday night - you should try reading one now and again). Division 4 players can be assured that it's not because you're less worthy, less talented or less important - the truth is it gets really tiring (a bit like you all reading this - if anyone's still reading) and by about 10 pm on a Sunday night our Press Officer just wants to finish the report - maybe next season he could start the round-up in reverse order and work up from Division 4.

So anyway Division 4 - you were all great, especially.... eh who plays in division 4 again???? Team 6 were our best performers and had young Louis McLeod not gone and broke his ankle half way through the season surely a play off spot would have been achieved - they finished in 3rd place, just two points behind that play-off spot. Team 7 were all newbies to competitive League play so a

good achievement for Stuart, Millie and Craig who finished 8th. Team 8 probably didn't perform to their capabilities - they had two new players, Martyn and Sean, who both seemed to improve as the season went on. Six derby matches throughout the year and disappointingly everyone still seemed to be speaking to each other at the end of the season! That's why we now have the reputation of the friendliest Club in the League!

Away from the League El Presidente, Iain and Abby made another valiant effort in the Handicap Cup as they reached the semi-final, only to lose out to West Lothian with their dodgy high handicaps.

In other news we had a number of representatives from the Club at Largs for the Interleague - we'll gloss over the fact that even without El Presidente, Edinburgh won the Veterans Event - who says it was easier without him being involved!! And then the season ended with our Club Tournament - another excellently organised event - see the Full Report from the day on the website (another piece of terrific journalism - The Website Brian - does anyone know if he even has a computer?) Suffice to say that for next season we're doing away with handicaps - the Division 4 youngsters had a ball - 4 of them in the semi finals - eventually won by Luke who defeated Louis in the final.

So there we have it - another season over filled with excitement, tension, some great matches and a whole load of controversies (we could do a whole Report about them) and in the end a decent season for the club both on and off the table. Summer is virtually upon us (well if you ignore the snow) and a Club trip to Secret Harbour for a reunion with the Wiersma family is surely on the cards for next season (that's my annual mention of Jan, our most avid reader of our weekly reports - have I mentioned that Brian hasn't read one single report this season - in fairness he's from that generation where a typewriter was the most technologically advanced piece of kit anyone had ever seen).

I'll be meticulously honing my TT skills over the summer and working on my fitness so will no doubt see many of you at the Club over the next few months and before you know it Season 2016/17 will be upon us.

El Presidente

