



**DID HE REALLY WIN?
2015 CLUB CHAMPION
JOHN BALD**



**JAMES, ABBY & GARY
DIV 2 CHAMPIONS**



**MACKENZIE TROPHY
TOURNAMENT**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

So another season over and all in all I think we can regard it as a very successful one for the Club, both on and off the table.

Season 2014/15 has seen the Club grow in size - at the last count we had just over 50 paid up Club members which is fantastic news with enquiries continuing to come in regularly from potential new members. Having talked for years about having a social media presence, we at last took the plunge and comments from other Clubs and individuals alike have all been very positive in relation to our Website, Facebook page and Twitter presence (does anyone actually understand how Twitter works!!) Our Social media presence has certainly helped attract new members as well as keeping everyone updated in relation to Club News and Reports. As I mentioned in my Xmas Report, our Press Officer / IT Guru has also managed to ensure that the local community get to know what's going on with the Club via the great ongoing coverage in the Midlothian Advertiser.

On the table, we were able, for the first time in a number of years, to increase our League presence by introducing a fifth team to compete in the ELTTL. Looking forward it looks as if next season we will be able to register at least one more team, if not a couple. The Club is nothing without it's youngsters and it's great to see so many taking up the opportunity of playing in the League - in that regard, as always, the Club are indebted to Tom for all his hard work with the kids. It really does take huge dedication and commitment to keep the Coaching sessions going - obviously he has the help of our two Assistant Coaches who turn up most Saturdays and contribute hugely to the sessions by eh..... Anyway thanks to Tom!

Nearly completed a whole page and I've not even got on to any of the table tennis that was played yet - this could be a long report! In the Premier Division, as I said in my Xmas Report, new boy Iain Johnstone has fitted in well to Team 1 - he has continued to laugh appropriately at El Presidente's jokes but more importantly is the first player in 6 seasons to have managed not to fall out with Colin - the result is that the Team that started the season has remarkably finished the season together and a commendable sixth place finish was secured. Greig and Colin both finished with a +60% average and although Iain found the going tough the experience will hopefully stand him in good stead for next year.

The battle for the Division 2 title was the main Club talking point from early in the second half of the season when it became apparent that our two teams were pulling away from the rest. It was

fitting that it all came down to the very last match of the season when the two teams met in a tense, dramatic finale. Team 2 knew that a win by any margin would secure the title for them as they had a better game difference. Team 3 knew that a draw was good enough for them - the scene was set for some really great intra-club rivalry, hostility, bad sportsmanship, arguments and general contempt for one another - just how we like it!! OK maybe a little bit of an exaggeration but only a little bit! In the end Team 3 scraped the draw they needed to win promotion to Division 1 for next year. Well done to James, Abby and Gary for an excellent season. Individually, Clive finished best in the individual averages with 85% followed closely by Gary with 83% and James with 77%. Tony had an admirable 66% in his first season at this level, Brian managed to battle through various injuries week after week after week after week (you get the point) and end on 57% whilst Abby improved in the second half of the season to finish on 50%. Some selection headaches await for next year perhaps!! It would appear that whichever players represent us in Division 1 next season, they will have to up their game if the playoff match is anything to go by. Team 2 took on the 2nd bottom team from Division 1, Corstorphine and were completely outplayed as the Edinburgh side maintained their Division 1 status for another season.

In Division 3 our 4th Team harboured hopes of at least a play off berth after an excellent end to the first half of the season. Unfortunately for them 3 draws and a defeat in the second half ended their hopes as they finished the season in third place in the division. Perhaps with a smaller pool of players and a more settled team things may have been different. Only 2 players, Gavin and Mr Lazzkiezzwiczzzzzzz (I'm sure that looks a bit wrong) played more than 10 matches in the season. They both did well with Gavin ending the season just shy of 70% and Kris on 64%. According to the Ratings Central system, Kris can take heart from the fact that he is our most improved player this season - mind you he played soooooo badly last year that he clearly had this award in mind!

The Club's new 5th Team is full of inexperienced players and they were always going to find it tough in the League's new Division 4. Team 5 won 3 matches in the season and whilst that may look a bit disappointing, I think all the players in that team have benefited from a season of competitive play and have improved throughout the season - hopefully that will continue next year.

Away from the League El Presidente, Iain and Abby made a valiant effort to defend their title in the Handicap Cup losing out in the semi final to the eventual winners Murrayfield 1. I take all the credit for getting us as far as we did - 2 whitewash wins engineered by me as our opponents had to concede before a ball was struck and then a moment of genius by dropping myself in the 1/4 final and bringing in young Louis Myatt who played a stormer - if only I had been more ruthless and dropped Iain and Abby for the semi!!

In other news we had a number of representatives from the Club at Largs for the Interleague - whilst I know this report is not meant to be all about me I have to say what an achievement it was as I guided Edinburgh Vets Team 1 to a 3rd consecutive title - well maybe with a little help from Colin and Stan Stoodley from Murrayfield!

Nearly finished - honest!

There were two other significant events which I'd like to touch on from last season. Firstly congratulations to Tom on running the inaugural MacKenzie Trophy Junior Tournament - hopefully the tournament will run for many years to come. It was great to see so many youngsters

having a taste of tournament play and all the Club's young players seemed to thoroughly enjoy the day and took home the vast majority of the medals up for grabs.

And then the season ended with our own Club Handicap Tournament - another excellently organised event and anyone who hasn't read the Full Report from the day should visit the website for that masterful piece of journalism. Suffice to say that no one was shocked when John Bald won the event - JOHN BALD!! Really?? No way?? John "*I've been playing TT since you were all in nappies*" Bald!! Did he really win? It's a bit of a blur really after I was treated by Clive, the worst physio in the country, who diagnosed cramp as the problem and proceeded to stretch, push and pull my leg to get rid of the cramp - turns out I had torn my calf muscle - Doctor says I may be able to sue him - If only I knew a good lawyer!

The day was a great success and for the first time in about 10 years we had sunshine by the end of the tournament which would have meant that the legendary Wiersma Family End of Season BBQ could have actually taken place in dry weather! (I can't do a President's report without mentioning Jan and family at least once!)

And finally.... Did I say this wasn't all about me - I lied - I also played a blinder in the Scottish Veterans Tournaments last season. After 3 tournaments I sat in 2nd place in the rankings. Assessment 4 arrives; wife's at work; Colin decides to travel to Bathgate on his own; I get the kids all organised to be looked after; get to my front door to find no keys to get out the house and more importantly no car keys - my chance of glory gone - depressed, frustrated, disconsolate, devastated at missing the chance of potentially representing my country but hey I've got good mates who would cheer me up - then I get a text from Colin to tell me what an easy opening group I had and what a pity I couldn't make it but never mind, he says, there's always next year - yeah cheers mate!!

So there we have it - another season over and just as I had managed to fit in to my new Babu G sponsored Club Shirt I'm told that Babu G's has closed down and he's unlikely to ever be seen again - I think in future we should get shirts with disposable velcro strips on the back upon which we can put the sponsors name. Pizza Hut for next year?? Hope everyone has a good summer.

El Presidente

