

Chairman's Report 2009 -2010

Introduction

This has been a very successful year and looking back it is truly satisfying to see what has been accomplished during the year.

World Class Program

Appointing someone of the calibre of Gorazd Vecko to the post of Performance Director was a major triumph for the BTTAD. Already, the benefits are visible. Together with our coaching staff of Greg Baker, Matt Kenny and Neil Robinson, Gorazd leads a squad which has tremendous potential and their results over the last year reflect this. UK Sport, our funders, have indicated how pleased they are with the progress that Disability Table Tennis has made since Beijing, both from the performance side and the governance of the program.

The Service Level Agreement with the ETTA to handle the financial administration of our WCP is working out very well. The service provided has been excellent and has allowed us to manage the program far more effectively.

The BTTAD Committee has met three times this year and all the meetings have been very productive. Although the majority of the work is still done by the officers of the BTTAD, the members of the Committee have taken on greater responsibilities and have freed up the time of the officers. Shaun Newcomb has taken on the chairmanship of the Selection Panel, with Dennis Beech joining Gorazd Vecko and Greg Baker as the other members. Louise Stotesbury has taken over the editorship of the Newsletter. Dennis Beech has taken over the organisation of the Michael Hawkesworth Championships (BTTAD National Championships) and this year's event at Crewe regained the atmosphere that was missing from last year's event due to the two halls in use.

Links

A lot of work has gone into improving our links with various bodies. This has entailed attending numerous meetings all over the country, often during the weekday. Our attendance at these meetings are important as they demonstrate our commitment and support and much of this work, by necessity, has fallen on myself and Mike Smith our secretary. ETTA, UK Sport, BPA, LOCOG and TASS are some of the bodies whose meetings we regularly attend. The officers of the BTTAD have established good working relations with these governing bodies and the feedback suggests that they see the BTTAD as an effective body and one they can trust and rely on to work with.

In April, Shaun and I spent the weekend in Glasgow, attending and helping out with the newly formed Scottish Disability Squad. Both of us were impressed with the enthusiasm and structure that has been created in Scotland and we will be looking to help to develop that over the next few years.

P2P – Playground to Podium

The P2P program will provide a good base for developing young talent and having 10 regional coordinators working 12 hours a week on disability will obviously make a tremendous difference to the pathway that players can access all the way from beginners

(Playground) to medallists at international events (Podium). Most are now in post and already making an impact.

Tournaments

The BTTAD were very pleased to announce the news that they were to receive a further £18000 legacy from the late Michael Hawkesworth's estate. This money can only be used for the National Championships and the event has to bear the name of Michael. I have always felt it important to maintain good links with any sponsors that the BTTAD has and it is gratifying to know that the family feel pleased in the way we have handled the legacy given to us. The effect of the additional funds should secure the future of our championships for many years to come.

There is considerable interest in staging one day events to enhance our tournament program but it is important that members and players recognise that these events are run at a cost and it is vital that the event receives sufficient entries. These events must be supported by players if they are to continue and so it is vital that the recent decline in numbers to some of the Grand Prix events is reversed before we progress to new events.

One exciting development is that BTTAD are currently in negotiation with UK Sport re staging an international tournament, Factor 40 event in September 2011, based at Sheffield.

Learning Disability

The Para ITTF meets in June to make the final decision as to whether Class 11 table tennis athletes will be allowed to compete in London 2012. The signs are very encouraging and we have already made steps to incorporate Class 11 into our elite squad.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the members of the BTTAD to thank the members of the committee for their hard work during the year. Being a small organisation, a lot of the workload tends to fall on the committee and in particular the chairman and secretary. Mike Smith, our Secretary, has worked tirelessly and very effectively on behalf of the BTTAD. His experience and dedication have been invaluable to the BTTAD and we are fortunate as a body to have such a capable volunteer in the role as secretary

Peter Taylor

Chairman BTTAD