

Southern Table Tennis Newsletter May 2013

Winter Season

Putting together this year's winter season has probably been one of the most straight forward draws we have had to do in a number of years. We started out with 92 entries and after a few phone calls we soon had this to 96 players (we need a number dividable by 6). It was tempting to try to get this to 102 players as we did have a couple of people who would have been prepared to play on two nights but we were running out of people to try and convince.

The fact that this season we were going to be able to have the top and bottom divisions on separate nights probably made the biggest difference in easily being able to split players equally between the two nights. We were also helped by the fact that only 1 player in the 18 highest ranked players could not play on a Thursday night. It was a similar situation for the bottom division with all but two of the lowest ranked 18 players being available on the Wednesday night. The reason that this does not occur in the spring and summer season's is that there are too many of the top and bottom ranked players who cannot play on a Thursday night for those seasons. Hopefully that will change in the future

So with the top and bottom divisions pretty well taking care of themselves the next task was splitting the remaining players between the two nights. Of those remaining 60 players we had 27 people who could only play on Wednesday nights and 9 people who could only play on Thursday nights. The most difficult thing was that there were some high ranked players left at the top of both nights which we had to cater for. This meant that we had to share around players who could play on either night evenly between the two nights rather than just assigning the next 18 highest ranked players to Division 2. This is not ideal but is something that we just have to deal with as there will always be some people only available on one night.

There are quite a few players returning to our competition who have not played at our club for awhile as well as 6 new player's, we hope you all make them feel welcome. We would also like to encourage teams to come up with their own team name rather than staying with those that we have assigned. Names like "Loopy Loopers", "The Smashers" or "Try Hards" are much more interesting than those that we give out. To change your team name just write the new name on the score sheet in the first round.

All players should know who the coordinator is for their division and record their phone number somewhere so that you can call them when you are unavailable to play. These details are on our website under the competition schedule. Please also remember to pay your fees or speak to us about alternative arrangements by the 2nd round otherwise a weekly \$5 late fee may apply. Fees can be paid online.

We hope everybody has a fun and challenging winter season.

Rankings

All of our players are assigned ranking points according to their results and it is this rather than your percentage that we use to determine how we construct teams from one season to the next. It is important that all players have some understanding of how their ranking points are calculated. The best way to describe the formula that we use is that you gain or lose ranking points according to what the ranking point difference is between you and your opponent. So if you beat somebody ranked a lot higher than yourself you will receive a lot of points, if they are similar in ranking to yourself you will receive some points and if they are ranked a lot lower than you then you will only receive a few points. So winning or losing games against people ranked similar to you will not have a huge affect on your ranking. But winning or losing to players who are ranked a lot higher or lower will.

I have attached a copy of the rankings list that we used for this winter season on the notice board. For the new players their ranking points have been assigned to them according to how they have been graded by the competition committee.

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Free practice on Friday nights for the month of May

The Friday night practice sessions are not normally very busy so in order to see if we can increase the number of people coming out for a hit we have decided to make these sessions free for the month of May. So organise some other players or friends and come out and have a free hit. If you are unable to come out on a Friday night there are also the Monday night, Tuesday morning and Friday morning sessions where you can get a good hit. Practice is the only way to really improve your game.

Rapid Fire League

It is interesting to see that Mark SMYTHE has set up a competition in Victoria that he is calling a "Rapid Fire League". He is attempting to address the late finishing time of competition nights, which I consider to be one of the biggest draw backs to attracting new players to competition table tennis, by restricting the playing night to two hours and finishing by 9.30pm. The competition is set up with 3 person teams and each player plays 3 singles matches but they are the best of 3 games. There are 2 doubles matches but you change partners after each game and cannot repeat a combination in any one match. **No warm ups are allowed between matches.** We have no intention of introducing anything like this at our club but I did find it noteworthy that Mark obviously also sees the length of a night of table tennis as something that may stop people from playing competitive table tennis.

To avoid having late nights in our competitions it is important that matches commence at 7.30pm sharp, that players are ready to go when a table comes free, warm ups between matches are kept short and that the spare tables are used efficiently. It is interesting to note that if there are 11 matches to be played on a table and there is a 5 minute gap between when one match finishes and the next starts that adds almost a whole hour onto the length of the night.

Table Tennis or Ping Pong

Ping Pong was the name under which table tennis was first played. However in 1901 an American company called Parker Brothers successfully registered the name "Ping Pong" as a brand under which to distribute their table tennis products. So sporting groups had to adopt another name under which to play the sport and began using the term table tennis. Table tennis equipment under the brand name of "Ping Pong" can still be bought in America today.

Junior Competition

The term 2 junior competition will have 12 players this season and is run on Tuesday nights between 7.00 pm and 8.30 pm. For those juniors not playing in the competition there will still be coaching. If anybody knows of any children that might be interested in playing this would be the ideal time for them to come out and have a look as the coaching group will not be very big in term 2.

Can you help?

We have made up laminated A4 posters to promote our Tuesday and Friday morning social sessions and are looking to put them up in areas where table tennis tables are sometimes set up. We are thinking of places such as retirement homes, churches and community groups. If you know of any such areas can you please let me know, or if you have contact with those premises, see if you can organise for a poster to be displayed there. The posters will be available from the canteen.

Marcel STORKEN
President Southern Table Tennis