

A History of Northumberland Table Tennis Association
By Aubrey Drapkin

CHAPTER SEVEN

Declining Numbers

1980-1981

The start of the **1980/81** season saw the duties of Alan Morpeth lessened slightly with Ron Wilson taking on some of the load when he was appointed as County Match and Tournament Secretary.

As Aubrey Drapkin relinquished the position of Handbook Secretary and had to cease being an E.T.T.A. National Councillor as he was now E.T.T.A. Treasurer Sid Holt took on the handbook with Alan Morpeth elected as National Councillor.

Members of the Executive Council were Dave Armstrong, David Lush but he resigned in the January as he was leaving the district, Arnie Warents, who resigned part way through the season because of pressure of business, Mrs. Audrey Buck, Aubrey Drapkin, Jimmy Scope, Charlie Mouzon, Jack McAllister, Alan Livingstone and Brian Thompson. Alex Olsson was co - opted during the year.

The J.R.Waugh award for the previous season was presented to Sid Holt at the Annual General Meeting in recognition of the work done by him. He had been on the Council since 1953/54 season and League Secretary since 1958.

A decline in the number of Clubs and teams in the Northumberland League began with the number of clubs decreasing from seventy two to sixty and the number of teams from one hundred and fifty four to one hundred and thirty three which meant the number of divisions reduced from eleven to ten, with the loss of one of the fourth divisions.

The Knock Out Cup Competition and the Women's Knock Out Competition both continued to be staged.

As well as the Northumberland league the Tyneside Summer League and the North Tyneside Youth Conference League continued to be affiliated to the County with the Tynedale League affiliating later in the season.

The playing strength of the county senior team increased, and an opportunity arose for some coaching of both senior and junior players with the arrival of a refugee from Vietnam, Chu Van Que. He had represented Vietnam at international level, and it did not take long for him to be involved.

He also joined the Briarside National League side who now played at Eldon Square Recreation Centre and had changed their name to City of Newcastle. With his addition to the squad of Andrew Clark, Durham's Svenson brothers, Keith Paxton (now a Cleveland player), Ian Robertson and Steve Robinson they had little difficulty in

winning all of their matches in Division Two North and then went on to beat Bristol both home and away in the Promotion Challenge to reach the Premier Division.

The Evening Chronicle were by now giving decent coverage to the Association and published a weekly column in 'Grass Roots Sport' from copy given to them by Aubrey Drapkin.

They had also sponsored the previous season's Open Tournament and they agreed to sponsor the Open again but at a reduced figure. However, they also agreed pay £5.00 for each week's copy. Pauline Jackson continued to submit monthly articles to Table Tennis News.

Charlie Mouzon organised a course for coaches at Ashington Leisure Centre which was taken by the National Coach for the Area, Donald Parker. This was very successful, and twelve players qualified to become coaches.

Phil Clark continued to hold regular coaching sessions at Eldon Square Recreation Centre and at the Lightfoot Stadium. New tables and lighting were purchased for a centre in Jesmond where regular coaching was also taking place.

A grant was received from Newcastle City Recreation and Leisure Department in order to pay Chu Van Que for coaching. This coaching was to be twenty hours per week in schools, youth clubs and other centres in Newcastle and also for coaching the county team squads at the centre in Jesmond organised by the association. Phil Clark was instrumental in organising and assisting.

Cramlington Phoenix Club promoted a table tennis exhibition after the end of the season.

On the umpiring front there were three new County Umpires as Jimmy Scope, Jack McAllister and Alex Olsson had all qualified.

As it was the International Year of the Disabled it was agreed to help with the organisation of a tournament for the disabled.

Phil Clark once again organised a schools' league at Eldon Square Recreation Centre with divisions for Seniors, Intermediates and Girls but there is no record of how many participated or of the winners.

The Royal Grammar School Under 19 and Under 13 teams got through to the Area finals but did not progress any further this year.

Representative teams this year were two senior and one junior in the County Championships and league representative teams in the Wilmott Cup, Rose Bowl, Carter Cup and Bromfield Trophy.

Some of the County squad had a lucky escape from serious injury when returning from a tournament in Hull. Their car was written off in an accident in Yorkshire but

thankfully none of them suffered any serious injury. Those involved were Steve Robinson, Andrew Clark, Chu Van Que, Kit Cheung and Cleveland's Keith Paxton.

Ranking lists were produced as usual, but Brian Thompson objected to a cadet list saying that it was unfair even though it had been compiled after a cadet assessment event!

He said all results of cadet players in the league should be taken into account and offered to keep a record of these. His offer was accepted by the executive council.

The question of a review of expenses to away county matches when travelling by car resulted in a payment to the driver of eight pence per mile being agreed.

The County Senior team won three and drew two of their matches in the County Championships Division Two North to finish top of the table and qualify to play in the challenge matches for promotion to the Premier Division. The team of Chu Van Que, Andrew Clark, Ian Robertson, Barbara Kearney and Kit Cheung then gained promotion when they finished second behind Berkshire.

Caron Buglass, Christine and Fred Short were also involved in the team during the regular season.

The second team could only win one match in Division Three North and lost their other three whilst the juniors found life hard in Junior Division Two North, winning only one match and being relegated.

The Northumberland League ladies team lost 3 - 5 to Sunderland in the Rose Bowl, the junior boys beat Sunderland 8 - 1 but then lost to Stockton 4 - 5 in the Carter Cup while the junior girls beat Sunderland 5 - 2 and Ormesby 5 - 3 before losing 2 - 5 to Preston. The men's team of Chu Van Que, Ian Robertson and Andrew Clark reached the final of the Wilmott Cup but were beaten 5 - 4 by Dagenham. On the way to the final they put out Sunderland 5 - 2, Harrogate 5 - 0, Stockton 5 - 3, Bradford 5 - 2, Preston 5 - 4, and Ely 5 - 4.

The Tyneside Summer League teams lost to Stockton 0 - 5 in the Wilmott Cup and after defeating Carlisle 8 - 1 lost 0 - 6 to Ormesby in the Rose Bowl.

There was a change of venue for the Closed Championships which this year were held at Blyth Sports Centre. Unfortunately, this change was not a success from the point of view of the number of entries which was extremely disappointing, being the lowest ever and there was not one player from Blyth.

However, the playing conditions were good, and fifteen tables were in use. The star of the tournament was Barbara Kearney who won three titles, the Ladies Singles, the Ladies Doubles with Kit Cheung and the Mixed Doubles with Andrew Clark.

Chu Van Que won the Men's Singles as well as the Men's Doubles with Andrew Clark, Jimmy Scope was victorious off scratch in the Handicap Singles and Terry Wilkinson was the Veterans Singles winner.

The Junior Closed Tournament was again sponsored by Crow's Transport Limited and was staged at Scotswood Sports Centre with just under one hundred entries.

Neil McMaster (Byker C.C.) was the Junior Boys Singles winner whilst Christine Burke (Electrics) won the Junior Girls Singles for the second year running and the Junior Girls Doubles for the second year running, this time her partner being Clare Mouzon of Ashington Leisure. Neil also took the Junior Boys Doubles title with his Byker C.C. team-mate David Maughan.

Clare also retained the Cadet Girls title with the Cadet Boys event being won by Martin Schapira (Royal Grammar School) for the second time in three years. There was a Cadet Boys Doubles event for the first time and this was won by the Royal Grammar School pairing of Schapira and J.Mitten. Blaydon Youth Club's David Watson was the Under 11 singles winner.

Several players did well on the tournament scene with Chu Van Que winning the North Of England Men's Singles which led to him being placed at number 12a for National Ranking purposes and to being called the Vietnamese Geordie in the headline to his picture on the front of Table Tennis England.

He lost in the final of the Yorkshire Open when the local organiser described him as having a sporting attitude and obviously enjoying his table tennis.

He also reached the semi finals of the East of Scotland and the quarter finals of the Durham County 2 Star.

Ian Robertson got to the semi finals of the Men's Singles and the semi finals of the Men's Doubles partnered by Cleveland's Keith Paxton at the Durham 2 Star.

Barbara Kearney won the Women's Doubles at the Hartlepool's Open with Cleveland and England's Carole Knight where she also reached the semi finals of the Women's Singles.

Kit Cheung got to the Women's Doubles semi finals with Yorkshire's Julie McLean at the Yorkshire whilst Arnie Warents and Terry Wilkinson both lost in the semi finals of the Men's Veterans Singles at the Durham. Also at the Durham, Bob Dodds reached the quarter finals of the Class 2 Mixed Singles.

There was also a measure of success for some of the young players with Neil McMaster featuring in the semi finals of the Boys Singles at the Pontefract Open and at the Durham Open as well as the quarter finals at the Cumbria 2 Star. Christine Burke was the Girls Singles losing finalist at Pontefract and in the quarter finals of the Girls Singles at the Cumbria.

Martin Moore was in the Boys Doubles semi final with S.Craggs of Cleveland at the Durham tournament where Judith Drapkin got to the semi finals of the Junior Girls Singles.

Clare Mouzon, Martin Schapira, David Maughan, Neil McMaster, Martin Moore, and Christine Burke were all nominated for the Junior and Cadet Area Trials and David

went through in the Junior Boys to the National Trials in London where he was placed in the 30s.

Martin was fourth in the Cadet Boys and named as a reserve for the Nationals.

Neil, Martin and Christine all reached the final groups of their events but did not qualify to go any further.

Clare was, however, the star when, having qualified for the Nationals in the Cadet Girls she was unbeaten in London and became ranked at number 14 in the England Cadet ranking list.

The Evening Chronicle Northumberland 2 Star Tournament was again held at Cramlington Concordia Sports Centre and was organised by Aubrey Drapkin who also arranged a prize fund of £750, a reduced rate at the Europa Lodge Hotel for competitors and umpires as well as sponsorship of £60 from Cramlington Developments Limited for the junior events and £50 from the Northern Area Sports Council.

He also assisted the referee who was the E.T.T.A. Vice Chairman George Yates from Bolton and there was a good entry with some top-class players although at 182 it was slightly down on the previous year. A pleasing thing was that it included approximately eighty local players.

At an Executive Council meeting after the event it was described as the most successful tournament ever organised in the County in what was its fiftieth year of existence. Aubrey was congratulated on the excellent organisation which had been made possible by a number of hard working and willing volunteers.

David Constance of Dorset won the Men's Singles title with Melody Hill of Yorkshire claiming the Women's Singles and the Women's Doubles with another Yorkshire player Helen Shields.

Nigel Eckersley, now of Lancashire and Tony Sanderson of Yorkshire were the Men's Doubles winners, Tony also being crowned Junior Boys champion. Northumberland's Christine Burke won the Junior Girls event.

Results of Northumberland players saw Ian Robertson and Andrew Clark getting to the quarter finals of the Men's Singles, Barbara Kearney to the semi finals and Pauline Long to the quarter finals of the Women's Singles. Ian Robertson and Cleveland's Keith Paxton were in the semi finals of the Men's Doubles and John Burke and Neil McMaster got to the quarter finals.

The Women's Doubles saw Barbara Kearney get to the final with Carole Knight of Cleveland, Kit Cheung to the semi finals with A.Smith of Durham, Caron Buglass partnered by Cleveland's June Williams and Pauline Long partnered by J.Woodcock of Cleveland to the quarter finals.

Christine Burke, as already mentioned, won the Junior Girls Singles with Tanya Cramman, D.Wallace and Judith Drapkin all reaching the quarter finals.

The Executive Council had to deal with two disciplinary cases during the season one of which related to a complaint about Westerhope Table Tennis Club's general behaviour in a match in the previous Tyneside Summer league. This resulted in a letter being sent to them warning them about their future behaviour.

The other concerned two players who had started a doubles match in the Open with one of them taking the place of one of the original pairing without asking for a change to be made. The referee had picked this up and reported it to the Council. Both players were suspended from taking part in the next tournament to be arranged by the association.

The Northumberland League ran smoothly and there were no causes for complaint apart from the usual one about the scorecards.

The winners of the Premier Division were Electrics who now had Chu Van Que in their team as well as Andrew Clark. Simonside Methodist Youth Club won Division One and were congratulated for progressing from Division Four to the Premier Division in only four years.

Gladstone Terrace 'B' and North Shields YMCA 'B' were the second division winners with D.H.S.S. 'B', B.R.S.A. and Cullercoats Methodists topping the three third divisions. The fourth divisions were won by Byker Community Centre 'H', East Cramlington 'C' and Thompsons 'C'.

Gladstone Terrace triumphed in the Knock Out Cup and John Boste Youth Club were the winners of what turned out to be the last ever Women's K.O. Cup.

In an effort to increase both numbers of people playing table tennis and the level of achievement the E.T.T.A. appointed a Regional Development Officer. Maureen Goosey from Cleveland was appointed, and she was based in Middlesbrough with her area being Cleveland, Durham, Northumberland and Cumbria.

Alex Olsson and Harry Dignan attended meetings of the new Northern Area Development Council on behalf of Northumberland.

Towards the end of the regular season Bill McMaster organised a fund-raising event for the association at Byker Community Centre. This took the form of a medieval banquet and was well supported with ninety-eight people attending. It turned out to be a very enjoyable evening and just over £100 was raised.

The J.R.Waugh Award was made to Byker Community Centre in recognition of the hospitality and support they had given to the home County Championship matches and for staging the fund-raising event.

The end of season presentation night was also organised by Bill and his wife Lily and this year it returned to the Highlight Suite at Parrish's in Shields Road, Newcastle.

Despite escalating costs of having teams in the County Championships there was a financial surplus for the year of £284 making total funds to carry forward of £609. This was achieved mainly because of the funds raised from the Lincoln Draw and from the medieval banquet.

The summer saw ten divisions operating in the Tyneside Summer League as well as a cadet division and a handicap cup competition.

Washington T.T.C. won the Premier Division and the two first divisions were won by Whitehouse Lane and Great Lumley. John Boste Youth Club and Ouston Community Centre 'A' came out on top in the second divisions. There were two third divisions which were won by Thompson's T.T.C. and Ashington Leisure Centre 'B' and likewise two fourth divisions where the top teams turned out to be Ouston Community Centre 'C' and Byker Community Centre 'E'.

The cadet division champions were Byker Community Centre and the Handicap K.O. Cup went to Delaval Community Centre 'D' team.

The Tyneside Summer league also organised a Summer Tournament with no less than seventeen events.

Winners from Durham were Tony Gelder in the Men's Singles, Maureen Morley in the Women's Singles, Maureen Morley and Julie Smith in the Women's Doubles and Dave Godbold and Cliff Olsson in both the Men's Doubles and the Men's Team Event.

There were four divisional events with Derek Williamson taking the First Division Singles, Alan Matthewson the Second Division Singles, Phil Solomon the Third Division Singles and Robert Hurren the Fourth Division Singles.

Junior and Cadet event winners were Alan Matthewson (Junior Boys Singles), Judith Drapkin (both Junior Girls and Cadet Girls Singles), David Maughan and Martin Tate (both Junior Doubles and Junior Team Event), Peter Curry and Dave Watson (both Cadet Doubles and Cadet Team Event) with the Under 11 Singles being won by Dave Watson.

1981-1982

As Ron Wilson had left the area Aubrey Drapkin was appointed as Vice Chairman and Jimmy Scope was appointed as Match and Tournament Secretary for the **1981/82** season. Jimmy also replaced Ron on the Umpires Committee.

The Executive Committee was now called the Management Committee and Larry Cartmell, Ken Lusk, Colin Aitchison and Arnie Warents (back again) replaced Dave Armstrong, David Lush, Aubrey Drapkin and Jimmy Scope.

The number of clubs in the Northumberland league decreased again to fifty-four and the number of teams was down to one hundred and twenty-three which meant that there was one less fourth division.

Other affiliated leagues were again the Tyneside Summer league, the North Tyneside Youth Conference and the Tynedale league that now had three divisions with eight teams in each one.

The County rules had been re written in the format of the Model County Rules as required by the E.T.T.A. and these were adopted at the Annual General Meeting. The league regulations had also been revised but little had changed, and these were also adopted.

Alex Olsson and Harry Dignan agreed to represent Northumberland at any of the Area Development Meetings.

On the publicity front the weekly articles written by Aubrey Drapkin continued to be published in the Evening Chronicle. Pauline Jackson, who had married Graeme Long during the close season, continued to submit her regular articles to Table Tennis News.

Jack McAllister took on the role of Coaching Officer during the season as well as Area 5 representative on the Northern Coaching Panel. Owing to domestic commitments Phil Clark decided to lessen her involvement in the coaching activities and was thanked for all of the work she had previously done.

The Newcastle City Recreation Department appointed Peter McQueen, an E.T.T.A. 2 Star coach, as Table Tennis Coach in Newcastle City. He was already coaching at Eldon Square Recreation Centre and other centres in Newcastle and his appointment was expected to be beneficial to the advancement of table tennis in the area.

His programme was to be largely geared to youth and school organisations, but he also arranged regular Wednesday evening sessions at Eldon Square Recreation Centre for juniors from 5.00 p.m. until 7.00p.m and then seniors until 9.00p.m.

The association received a grant of £2694 from Newcastle City Council towards the cost.

Charlie Mouzon once again organised a course for coaches at Ashington Leisure Centre which was attend by fourteen hopefuls and taken by Robert Wiley, a 3 star coach from Cleveland. The practical's and assessments, were held at Eston under the auspices of Donald Parker.

Jimmy Scope organised County training sessions during the season at the United Reformed Church Hall in Jesmond and at Eldon Square Recreation Centre, being assisted by Arnie Warents.

Other coaching at Jesmond petered out because of lack of numbers and interest.

Junior and Cadet trials were held at Scotswood Sports Centre and Senior ranking trials at Byker Community Centre. A Junior Assessment competition was held at Blaydon Youth Club.

A schools league was once more in operation at Eldon Square Recreation with the Royal Grammar School finishing on top of the Senior Boys and Intermediate Boys Divisions. Walker School won the Girls Division.

In the National Schools competitions three Royal Grammar School teams got through to the Regional Finals which were played at Leeds but none of them managed to progress any further.

The under 19 team was Nicholas Jefferies, Nicholas Ringrose, Paul Martin and Martin Schapira, the under 16's were Andrew Beattie, Andrew Drapkin, Jonathan Miller and Wasim Shakoor. Mark Blanchard, Kevin Shakesheff, Darren Shaw and Darren Selig represented the Under 13's.

On the County team front the senior team was entered in the Premier Division of the County Championships but lost all of their matches to make a swift return to Division Two. Because of the cost involved a second senior team was not entered.

The Juniors had a fair amount of success in the Junior Division 3A, winning four, drawing one and losing only two of their matches to finish in third place. Neil McMaster, Martin Tate, Alan Matthewson, Clare Mouzon and Christine Burke were the main players in the team.

The Northumberland League men's team did quite well in the Wilmott Cup by defeating Stockton 5 - 1, Harrogate 5 - 4, Sunderland 5 - 4 before losing out 5 - 4 to Huddersfield. In the Rose Bowl the women were well beaten 5 - 0 by Sunderland.

The junior boys went down 5 - 0 to Stockton but the junior girls won matches against Ormesby 7 - 2 and Bishop Auckland 5 - 1 before losing to Sheffield. Clare Mouzon beat two nationally ranked juniors in the match against Sheffield.

The Tyneside Summer League men's team beat Carlisle but lost out to Sunderland whilst the women beat Bishop Auckland but went out in the following round.

The first ever national computer rankings were published by the E.T.T.A. and Andrew Clark was in the Men's list at number 37. Unfortunately, by the end of the season he did not feature.

However, in the Cadet Girls first list Clare Mouzon was at number 14 and after coming fourth in the National Cadet Ranking Tournament moved up to number 4.

Later she played in National Trials and her performance took her up to third on the list. At the end of the season she had slipped back to fifth.

An exhibition by a Chinese International team was organised by Newcastle City Recreation Department at Eldon Square Recreation centre before a good crowd who were privileged to witness a fantastic and spectacular display of table tennis by the world's top nation's players.

Sid Holt refereed to event with Bill Brown, Jimmy Scope, Alex Olsson and Jack McAllister all involved as umpires.

Unfortunately, it was felt that the arrangements for the guests could have been better.

The local National League team was now based at Eldon Square Recreation and were now known as Mayfair Wallcoverings after the local firm who has sponsored them. The squad of Chu Van Que, Ian Robertson, Keith Paxton, Andrew Clark and Dave Svenson just managed to retain their place in the Premier Division.

Clare Mouzon, Neil McMaster and Martin Tate all entered the English Junior Closed and Clare had a great tournament, being runner up in the Cadet Girls Singles.

Andrew Clark travelled to Oslo to take part in the Lorenskog Cup and turned in a fine performance to beat the Norwegian Number two and the Norwegian number five before losing to the eventual winner.

Ian Robertson won the Men's Doubles with Cleveland's Keith Paxton at the Hartlepool Open and also paired up with him to get to the semi finals at the Durham 2 Star. He also reached the semi-finals of the Men's Singles at the Hartlepool tournament.

Chu Van Que and Peter McQueen both got to the semi-finals of the Men's Singles at the Durham where they also teamed up to reach the final of the Men's Doubles.

Martin Tate did well to reach the final of the Boys Singles at the Hartlepool Open and Clare Mouzon went one better by winning the Junior Girls Singles at the Durham tournament.

In the Northumberland Open Chu Van Que got to the quarter finals of the Men's Singles and Jimmy Nelson reached the semi finals of the Veterans Singles.

Clare was the most successful junior player when she won the Girls Singles. Christine Burke had England ranked senior Alison Gordon of Berkshire as her partner in the Women's Doubles and they got to the semi finals. Neil McMaster reached the quarter finals of the Boys Singles.

The Junior Closed Tournament, which was sponsored by Crow's Transport Limited, was held at Scotswood Sports Centre in good conditions, the Centre being thanked for their hospitality and help in the organisation of not only this event but also the Senior Closed Tournament.

Nine events were held including a Junior Mixed Doubles for the first time and four of them were won by the same players as the previous year. Byker Community Centre's Neil McMaster retained the Junior Boys title, Christine Burke of Electrics the Junior Girls, Ashington Leisure Centre's Clare Mouzon the Cadet Girls and Christine and Clare again won the Girls Doubles.

In the Junior Girls Singles, Christine beat Clare in the final to win it for the third year running. Christine won a third title when she partnered Neil to success in the Junior Mixed Doubles.

Blaydon Youth Club's Peter Curry won the Cadet Boys Singles and also the Cadet Boys Doubles with his club colleague David Watson.

The Junior Boys Doubles winners were Martin Tate and Nicholas Jeffries of the Royal Grammar School and Maccabi's Darren Shaw won the Under 11 Singles.

Chu Van Que retained the Men's Singles title at the Senior Closed and the Men's Doubles was also won for the second year running by Que and Andrew Clark.

Clare Mouzon became the youngest player ever to win the Ladies Singles and she also won the Ladies Doubles with Pauline Long.

The Mixed Doubles was won by Neil McMaster and Christine Burke and Larry Cartmell was the victor in the Veterans Singles.

The Handicap Singles was split into two with Dave Allison winning the Premier/Division One event off a handicap of plus seven and veteran Pat Tindale taking the Lower Division event off plus two.

The Northumberland Open was again staged at Cramlington Concordia Leisure Centre and again sponsored by the Evening Chronicle and was described in the Management Committee's Annual Report as the highlight of the season and possibly the best Open ever, even surpassing the '50th Anniversary Open' held in the previous year.

Prize money totalled £1005 including that for the junior events donated by Revol Limited and there were over 150 entries including several highly ranked players from various parts of the country.

Radio Newcastle also sent a reporter who at one stage reported live for the afternoon sports programme.

George Yates was referee assisted by Aubrey Drapkin and play was organised in a most efficient and business-like manner.

There were, however, problems of an unusual kind with two of the seeded players being dispatched to the local hospital for treatment.

Yorkshire's Kevin Beadsley was the first to go having suffered a muscular spasm in his neck which left him unable to straighten his head.

Later on, Cleveland's Keith Paxton had a nasty fall and hit his head on the floor. This knocked him out cold for a few minutes. Fortunately, neither of them was seriously injured.

Max Crimmins from Surrey won the Men's Singles with Cleveland's Carol Knight the winner of the Women's Singles. The winners of the Men's Doubles were the Yorkshire pairing of Alan Fletcher and Steve Mills while Knight partnered another Cleveland player, Julie Williams, to success in the Women's Doubles.

Mark Emerson of Yorkshire was the winner of the Junior Boys Singles with Northumberland's Clare Mouzon winning the Junior Girls Singles.

A Veterans Singles was included, and this was won by Peter D'Arcy of Cheshire.

A party of players had come from Northern Ireland, arriving on the Friday before the tournament and they played friendly matches against some of Northumberland's players at Byker Community Centre in the evening.

The Northumberland League encountered the usual problems with the completion and submission of the score cards but of greater concern was the fact that eighty-two matches were not played. This was either by default or some teams failing to arrive.

There was also concern at the reduction of the number of clubs participating and an advert for teams was put in the Evening Chronicle for the following season.

North Shields YMCA won the Premier Division and Gladstone Terrace Boy's Club 'B' the second division.

High Pit Social Club won the Division 2A as well as winning the Knock Out Cup.

The other second division winners were Cullercoats Methodists.

The three third division winners were Post Office, John Boste Boy's Club and Blyth Town Boy's Club 'B' team.

The two fourth divisions were won by Northumberland Water Authority and North Shields YMCA 'E' team.

Financially there was a small surplus of £82 for the year and the balance to carry forward to the following year stood at £691.

Towards the end of the season a 100 Club, to raise funds for the association, was set up by Aubrey Drapkin.

The former treasurer Bill Dixon died suddenly in the October and Bill McMaster, Sid Holt and Alan Morpeth attended his funeral.

On the national scene Aubrey Drapkin, who was now chairman of the County Championships instead of administrator, received the Malcolm Scott Award for services to the E.T.T.A. at the E.T.T.A.

Annual General meeting and Alan Morpeth received the Leslie Forrest Memorial Trophy for work done for Northumberland in the County Championships at the County Championships Conference.

Bill and Lily McMaster once again organised the presentation night at the end of the winter season, this time at the Grosvenor Ballroom in Chillingham Road, Newcastle which was very successful.

A large number of teams again took part in the Tyneside Summer League but for this season there is no record of how many or, indeed, of the number of divisions or of the various winners.

The Tyneside Summer league tournament was also held with over seventy entries and fifteen events played on eight tables. Results of the main events show that Nigel Jobling won the Men's Singles and Clare Mouzon the Women's Singles while Dave Godbold was successful in the Premier Division Singles and Keith Matthewson in the Divisions one and Two Singles.

Goldbold and Cliff Olsson won the Men's Doubles and Olsson also won the team event with Robert Hurran.

The Junior Boys Singles winner was Martin Tate, the Cadet Boys Singles was won by Thomas Blackman and Darren Shaw won the Under 11 Singles.

Clare Mouzon was a winner in the Women's Doubles and completed a hat trick of successes by winning the Junior Girls Singles.

A Handicap Cup Competition was also played and was won for the first time by an all-female side, the West Avenue trio of Olive Drapkin, her daughter Judith and Denise Campbell.

A presentation dinner for the Tyneside Summer League was arranged at Woodlands Park Community Centre when the awards were presented by the E.T.T.A. Chairman, Tom Blunn.

1982-1983

1982/83 season saw no change in the Officers of the association although Alan Morpeth took on the job of Handbook Secretary from Sid Holt and Jack McAllister was officially appointed as Coaching Officer.

Audrey Buck, Brian Thompson and Colin Aitchison had all resigned from the Management Committee and were not replaced at the A.G.M. but later in the season Bill Hodgkins and Ray Main-Brown were co-opted onto the committee.

There was another decrease in the number of clubs that entered the Northumberland league with the numbers now being one hundred and thirteen teams from fifty clubs. A new club was Washington TTC who were to stay until the end of the 2009/10 season.

There was no change in the affiliated leagues and Jimmy Scope had taken over from Aubrey Drapkin as secretary of the Tyneside Summer league.

The fees for entry into the Northumberland League were increased to £13.50 per team and a fine of £1 was introduced where a team cancelled a match. A fine of £2 was also brought in for failing to play without giving prior notice and clubs were also now liable to be fined £1 for each occasion on which a team forfeited a match.

Pauline Long continued to send copy to the E.T.T.A. magazine Table Tennis News and Aubrey Drapkin continued with his copy for the Evening Chronicle.

Peter McQueen's coaching at Eldon Square continued to be grant aided by the City of Newcastle and was having a marked impact on the standard of play by the juniors and also in promoting table tennis in the city.

Coaching took place at Wallsend Sports Centre and there was also a session at Killingworth Sports Centre which was attended by England international John Hilton.

Ronnie Scott was asked to take charge of coaching at Whitley Bay High School and Ray Main-Brown volunteered to help with the coaching of the girls and women in the county.

Ray also took on board coaching at an event organised by the Boys' Brigade at Headlam Street in Byker and Harry Dignan was still interested in the coaching and assessment of prospective coaches.

National coach Donald Parker visited Newcastle towards the end of the season in order to carry out assessments of prospective coaches. Derek Williamson and David O'Neil who had taken part in a course at Byker Community Centre both qualified as club coaches.

The United Reformed Church in Heaton requested a coach and Ray Main-Brown undertook this and a five-week course was most successful.

Unfortunately, the use of the United Reformed Church in Jesmond for coaching and training of possible county team players was discontinued because of lack of interest and the fact that the cost of the premises had increased to £5 per night and the tables were moved to Byker Community Centre. It was found out later that the nets and posts were sold in a jumble sale by the church!

Junior players Neil McMaster, Peter Curry and Clare Mouzon together with a cadet player David Watson were all nominated and took part in regional trials in Leeds. As a result, Clare and David were invited to take part in the National trials in Ipswich. The association agreed to allow them £20 each towards their costs.

Anthony Black of Washington TTC and Neil McMaster of Byker Community Centre along with Ashington's Clare Mouzon were invited to and took part in a Vaux School of Sport event.

There was a deal of discussion by the management committee about the possibility of league matches being played at a central venue, and as a result Alan Morpeth and Peter McQueen met with John Stephenson of Newcastle City Recreation Department when Peter's programme was also fully discussed and it was agreed that a project should be set up in the Scotswood area of Newcastle. This went ahead in February 1983 and proved to be popular.

On the question of a central venue a number of possible venues were mentioned including a school at Newbiggin Hall Estate and Byker Boxing Club at Shipley Hall, Newcastle but neither proved to be suitable. There is no record of any further progress being made in this direction.

The City of Newcastle team in the National League were no longer sponsored and they asked the association for help with their administration and Jack McAllister agreed to help if necessary. As it happened Andrew Clark had passed all of the information on to Peter McQueen.

The squad of Chu Van Que, Keith Paxton, Andrew Clark, Ian Robertson, Dave Svenson and Peter McQueen had a poor season and finished bottom of the Premier Division.

However, another team entered the National League, that being Byker Community Centre and their squad consisted of Nigel Jobling, Dave Godbold, Martin Moore, Cliff Olsson, Neil McMaster and Martin Young. In their first season they finished in third place in Division Three North.

It was hoped that the exchange visits with Bergen which had not taken place for some time might be revived and Alan Morpeth wrote to Bergen stating that a team would like to visit in September 1983 but nothing transpired.

Two of the young players Clare Mouzon and David Watson were to appear on a children's television programme 'Mad About' after the end of the winter season.

Although Northumberland were not involved a Gateshead Challenge Tournament took place at Gateshead Leisure Centre with internationals from England, Poland, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, Canada and the U.S.A. taking part.

It was won by Eric Boggan of the United States who beat England's John Hilton in the final.

Jose Ransome of Cleveland contacted the association regarding Women in Table Tennis and the formation of a regional league. It was felt that the distance and expense might be prohibitive for players from Northumberland, but Aubrey Drapkin agreed to look into the possibility of our involvement in such a league during the summer season.

Pauline Long also agreed to look into possible future participation.

A women's action day held in Cleveland was reasonably successful, but the number attending was disappointing.

Locally a Ladies League of six teams was played at Byker Community Centre in April and May 1983 which was set up as an all Byker Community Centre matter and all of the ladies and girls taking part became members, if they were not already, of the Community Centre. It turned out to be quite a successful venture.

There is no record of a schools' league taking place but the Royal Grammar School under sixteen team won their event at the National Schools Area event. They then played at Leeds in the Regional Competition but did not progress any further despite playing a draw with the eventual winners.

A regional conference was held in Middlesbrough which Jimmy Scope attended but little new had transpired although there were twenty-nine representatives present.

Jimmy said that that a report on Maureen Goosey's impact on table tennis in the region had been mostly favourable, but Aubrey Drapkin stated that he had some doubts about her achievements.

Maureen actually resigned before the end of the season, her place being taken by Tom Snowdon of Cleveland.

Alan Livingstone kept records of the county standard players and these were used for ranking purposes.

New shirts were purchased for the County teams.

On the playing side, however, it was not a good season for the County first team in Division 2A of the County Championships as they only won two matches. Losing the other five meant that they finished second bottom of the division and were relegated to the third division.

The second team were in Division 3A and they won one, drew one and lost four to finish second bottom of that division.

The junior side were reasonably successful with four victories and four defeats in the Junior Division 3A.

The Northumberland League ladies side in the Rose Bowl beat the Sunderland League 6 - 0 but then lost 5 - 2 to Preston, the junior boys beat Stockton 6 - 0 in the Carter Cup then Hartlepoons 5 - 1 before losing 5 - 3 to Ormesby, and the junior girls beat Ormesby 5 - 4 and Sunderland 5 - 1 in the Bromfield Trophy before going out to the Sheffield League.

The bright spot was the performance of the men's team who got to the semi finals of the Wilmott Cup with victories over Sunderland 5 - 1, Stockton 5 - 2, York 6 - 0, Leeds 5 - 2 and Liverpool 5 - 3 before losing 6 - 0 to Chesterfield.

Three junior players, Clare Mouzon, Neil McMaster and Peter Curry along with cadet player David Watson, were nominated to play in the Northern Area Trials in Leeds and their results were good with Neil, Clare and David being invited to play in the National Assessment Final Trials in Ipswich.

At Ipswich the three of them did well and Clare was placed at number 18 in the Junior Girls National Rankings, Neil at 26 in the Junior Boys and David at 28 in the Cadet Boys. During the course of the season Clare reached number thirteen in the Junior Girls list.

Clare, who was fortunate to receive a grant from Wansbeck District Council for travelling and equipment, gained a bronze medal in the Under 16 Girls Singles at the Schools National Tournament and was selected to play for England 'A' in the Schools International Tournament.

In the Senior Men's Ranking Lists Chu Van Que varied between 21 and 14, Peter McQueen between 34 and 38, Ian Robertson between 67 and 80 and Andrew Clark dropped out of the list after starting at 100.

Results at various tournaments during the season saw Neil McMaster win the Boys Singles at the Pontefract Tournament and also get to the final of the Junior Boys

Singles in the Northumberland where he lost to the future England star Alan Cooke. Peter Curry got to the final of the Boys Singles at the Meadowbank 2 Star in Edinburgh.

Peter McQueen had a good day at the Pontefract when he won the reached the final of the Men's Singles but lost to Kevin Beadsley of Yorkshire with whom he teamed up with to win the Men's Doubles. For good measure Peter also got to the final of the Mixed Doubles with Warwickshire's K. Groves. At the Northumberland he got to the quarter finals of the Men's Singles.

Chu Van Que who reached Men's Singles quarter finals at the Northumberland as well as the quarters of the Men's Doubles with Alan Cooke.

Ian Robertson managed to get to the quarter final stage of the Mixed Class 2 Singles at the Cleveland 3 Star event.

At the Northumberland the sisters Karen and Denise Wilkinson both reached the semi finals of the Junior Girls Singles and Caron Buglass got to the quarter finals of the Women's Singles.

A successful Northumberland Closed Tournament was held at Scotswood Sports Centre with an entry of nearly one hundred competitors and the highest ever prize money for this event.

The organisation was good and former Northumberland official Ron Wilson actually came from Leeds to help out as assistant referee.

Chu Van Que and Clare Mouzon both retained their titles in the Men's and Ladies Singles as did Clare and Pauline Long in the Ladies Doubles and Clare completed a hat trick by winning the Mixed Doubles with Cliff Olsson.

Peter McQueen and Ian Robertson were successful in the Men's Doubles and Peter also won the Premier/ First Division Handicap Singles off scratch. Tom Robson won the lower division Handicap Singles, also off scratch. A new event, the Hard Bat Singles proved to be popular and the winner was Pat Tindale who had been a Men's Singles champion back in 1955/56 season.

Arnie Warents managed to win the Veterans Singles despite having broken his left wrist when he fell heavily earlier in the tournament.

The Junior Closed was also successfully staged at Scotswood Sports Centre with a good entry. Sid Holt was the referee and nine events took place.

Byker Community Centre's Neil McMaster won the Junior Boys Singles for the third year running and Clare Mouzon (Ashington Leisure Centre) won the Junior Girls event. Darren Shaw of Maccabi was the Cadet Boys Singles winner and Byker's Tracy McMaster took the Cadet Girls title. M.Karczewski of Reyrolles was the Under 11 winner.

In the doubles events the Junior Boys was won by Peter Curry of Gadstone Terrace and Eddie Smith of Byker, the Junior Girls went to Clare Mouzon who was partnered by Denise Wilkinson of Dunston Hill Hospital, and the Junior Mixed winners were Neil McMaster and Dunston Hill Hospital's Karen Wilkinson. The Cadet Doubles was not staged.

A new Class 2 Singles took place with Washington TTC's Anthony Black being the winner.

Another successful Northumberland Open was organised at Cramlington Concordia Sports Centre by Aubrey Drapkin, together with the Referee Stuart Sherlock from Blackpool and Ronnie Wilson from Leeds.

The smooth running of the tournament was also helped by the number of qualified umpires with five from Durham, three from Yorkshire as well as Ron Wilson, and four from Cleveland as well as the locals. Olive Drapkin was in charge of hospitality and the event was again sponsored by the Evening Chronicle whose Promotions Manager Derek Thompson presented the prizes along with Colin Toothill, the Assistant Manager of Concordia.

The tournament was played in excellent spirits with 157 competitors including twenty-one England Ranked men and nine England Ranked women taking part. The Prize fund amounted to £1005.

Alan Fletcher of Yorkshire was the Men's Singles winner and Berkshire's Alison Gordon won the Women's Singles. The Men's Doubles was won by Philip Bradbury of Buckinghamshire and Kenny Jackson of Essex while Jill Harris of Warwickshire partnered Gordon to success in the Women's Doubles.

Derek Schofield of Cheshire took the Veterans Singles title and the Junior Singles were won by Derbyshire's Alan Cooke and Yorkshire's Joanne Shaw.

Friendly junior matches were played with some of the competitors from Edinburgh on the Friday evening before the tournament.

The Northumberland league had the usual problems relating to score cards causing extra work for the League Secretary.

Unfortunately, there were two sad incidents during the season with the death of two players. Mike Birley, aged 46, who played for various Civil Service teams collapsed and died during a third division match at Byker Community Centre and another player, Trevor Frost was killed in an accident at work. His widow wished to have a trophy presented in his memory using the £100 which had been raised by his colleagues and

this offer was taken up. A trophy bearing his name was made available for the Handicap event at the Closed Tournament.

North Shields YMCA retained the Premier Division title and Cullercoats Methodists, who had won Division 2 B the previous year were the winners of Division One.

Reyrolles 'C' and Tyne Dock 'B' were the winners of the second divisions with Washington TTC 'B' and the Byker Community Centre 'F' and 'G' teams finishing top of the three third divisions.

Saint Charles 'B' won Division 4A, Tyne and Wear Fire 'B' won Division 4B and Newcastle YMCA were the winners of the Knock-Out Cup.

Mrs Philomena Clark received the E.T.T.A. Certificate of Merit in recognition of her work for the County. As well as being a player of distinction, representing the County and Northumberland league on innumerable occasions, she later spent much of her time in coaching the young players and organising the schools' competitions.

Aubrey Drapkin was on the organising committee for the European Top Twelve Tournament in Cleveland and Jack McAllister and Alex Olsson were assistant umpires.

After that competition there was a 'Top Table' event in Gateshead that attracted approximately 150 spectators.

The inauguration of a 50+ event was also held at Gateshead Leisure Centre in January 1983 which resulted in useful television and press coverage. Harry Dignan and Alan Morpeth took part in a table tennis demonstration along with Durham's Ken Taylor and Don Charlton.

Former Northumberland umpire Ron Wilson qualified as a National Umpire during the season.

On the National scene Aubrey Drapkin was again elected as E.T.T.A. treasurer.

Bill McMaster was again the organiser of the end of season presentation night which was held at Woodlands Park Community Centre and whilst it was a success financially it was felt that this year as a social event there was little atmosphere and was generally disappointing.

Financially it was not the best of years with a deficit of approximately £125 being incurred mainly due to the costs incurred in running three teams in the County Championships. Peter McQueen's coaching had been grant-aided by Newcastle Recreation Department to the tune of £4416.

The Tyneside Summer League had eighty-seven teams taking part in eleven divisions, had a handicap cup competition and as usual organised a summer tournament at Scotswood Sports Centre which had thirteen events all in group form.

Jimmy Scope took over as secretary of the league.

North Shields YMCA won the Premier Division North with Washington YMCA winning the Premier Division South. The two first division winners were North Fire and Washington TTC 'B' and the second divisions were won by North Fire 'B' and South Shields YMCA. Reyrolles and Blyth Town Boys Club won the third divisions with Jarrow Community Centre and Byker Community Centre 'J' the fourth division winners.

There was also a cadet division which was won by Washington TTC and the Handicap Cup final was between North Shields YMCA 'A' and Blyth Town Boys Club but there is no record of the winners.

The tournament winners, however, were recorded and Peter McQueen won the Men's Singles, Caron Buglass the Women's Singles, Neil McMaster the Junior Singles, David Watson the Cadet Singles and Steven Riggins the Under 11 Singles.

There were four doubles events with McQueen and Cliff Olsson winning the Men's, Buglass and Christine Burke the Womens, Eddie Smith and Peter Curry the Juniors, and John Morton and Paul Swift the Cadets.

In addition, there were four graded singles events, Michael Bannon winning the Division One Singles, Paul Bullars the Division Two Singles, Karen Wilkinson the Division Three Singles and Ian Phipps the Division Four Singles.

A presentation evening was held at Cramlington Concordia Sports Centre.

1983-1984

The officers of the association continued unchanged for **1983/84** but Arnie Warents had taken up a course in Cleveland and resigned from the Management Committee as did Alex Olsson who was now fully involved in table tennis in Durham.

Bill Hodgkins and Ray Main-Brown, who had both been co-opted on the Management Committee during the previous season were both elected this season along with newcomers Henry Ross and Alan Hill.

Jimmy Scope took over from Alex Olsson as representative on the Regional Development Committee.

The number of clubs in the Northumberland remained at fifty but there was another decrease in the number of teams which was down to one hundred and seven. This resulted in the number of divisions being down to eight with now only one fourth division.

Mortimer Community Association of South Shields joined the league and stayed until the end of season 1987/88 and then came back in 1992/93 and were then members up to and including 2014/15 season.

The North Tyneside Youth Conference league, the Tyneside Summer League and the Northumberland League continued to be affiliated to the county. The South Shields League wanted to affiliate but when Durham objected the E.T.T.A. refused to give them permission.

Rule changes saw the Northumberland League fees increased by one pound to £17 per team and attendance at the Annual General Meeting was made compulsory for all clubs in the Northumberland League, a fine of £1 being imposed for non-attendance.

Amendments were made to the penalties imposed regarding the incorrect completion of score cards and falsification of completed ones.

Pauline Long continued to get excellent coverage of the affairs of the county in Table Tennis News and Aubrey Drapkin continued to have a weekly column in the Evening Chronicle.

Jack McAllister continued doing a good job as Coaching Officer and Peter McQueen continued to be grant aided to the tune of £4500 by the Newcastle City Recreation Department and was at their disposal.

He set up coaching centres at Scotswood Sports Centre and at John Boste Youth Club and also started new schools' leagues in Scotswood and Walker as well as continuing the one at Eldon Square Recreation Centre.

He was also instrumental in improving the play of the county junior team, holding special coaching and training sessions at Eldon Square Recreation Centre.

Another project that he undertook was the setting up of a course for beginners at the Lightfoot Stadium in Newcastle.

Other coaches were active in North Tyneside at Whitley Bay Campus as well as at clubs in the Northumberland League.

Ray Main-Brown was appointed coach at Aston Adult Association, Ron Scott was active until he started work in London, Alan Hill began coaching at King George VII Grammar School in Morpeth, and Ray also made arrangements for the Boys Brigade tournament.

A course for coaches was arranged at Byker Community Centre and coaching sessions were held at the sports centres in Wallsend and Killingworth with England's John Hilton in attendance.

A full week's training was held in January under the guidance of National Coach Don Parker.

There was a measure of success for a number of the younger players in the county. Damien Linskill and Darren Shaw both received Halex Gold Star awards for their competence, Eddie Smith and Clare Mouzon both qualified for the National Junior Trials, both David Watson and Darren Shaw qualified for the Cadet National Trials and Peter Curry did well in the Regional Trials.

Clare reached the semi finals of the Girls Doubles at the English Junior Closed. She also attended a sports star awards banquet and was accepted as a 'rising star' in her sport.

Peter Curry reached the final of the Boys Singles at the Pontefract tournament. Eddie Smith got to the quarter finals of the Junior Boys Singles and to the semi finals of the Junior Boys Doubles with Durham's David Blackburne at the Lancashire Junior tournament. He also got to the quarter finals of the Class 2 event at the Northumberland Open.

Clare reached the quarter finals of the Junior Girls at the Yorkshire Junior Select and Thomas Blackman was the Boys Singles winner at the Durham 2 Star,

Eddie Smith, Peter Curry and Keith Patterson each received a grant of £50 from Newcastle Sports Council towards the cost of their equipment and travel.

Of the senior players only Peter McQueen had any success, winning the Class 2 Singles at both the Durham and Northumberland Opens.

Chu Van Que, still officially registered as Northumberland, got to the semi finals of the Men's Doubles with C.Morgan of Warwickshire at the Northumberland. He also featured in the Computer Men's Rankings at number 46 at one time during the season.

In the Junior Rankings Clare Mouzon varied between 10 at the start of the season and 7 at the end, Eddie Smith got to 38 in the Junior Boys and Peter Curry to 47. Clare also had a brief spell at number 40 in the Women's list.

David Watson started at 8 in the Cadet Boys but fell away to 28, Darren Shaw started at 28 but dropped down to 40 and Michael Roughley got in at the end of the season at number 36.

The County Senior team suffered a set back when Chu Van Que informed the committee that he no longer wished to play for the county as he was moving to South Yorkshire, but they still managed to finish third in the County Championships Division 3A.

The juniors had an excellent season and won the Junior Division 3A, the squad being Keith Patterson, Thomas Blackman, Peter Curry, Clare Mouzon, Denise Wilkinson and Denise Campbell.

In the National League K.O. Competitions the Northumberland junior girls' team of Clare Mouzon, Denise Wilkinson and Denise Campbell did well in the Bromfield Trophy beating Sunderland, Bradford and Sheffield on their way to the semi finals where they went out to the strong Wolverhampton League.

There was no success in the men's Wilmott Cup for either the Northumberland league who lost 5 - 3 to Stockton or for the Tyneside Summer League who went down 6 - 0 to the Sunderland League.

The women did slightly better, losing in the quarter finals the Rose Bowl to Bradford after beating the Tyneside Summer 6 - 0 League.

In the Carter Cup the junior boys beat Stockton and the Tyneside Summer league but went out to Ormesby.

The two teams in the National League from within the county were now playing at Byker Community Centre and were known as Byker Newcastle. The first team lost a lot of their players and finished bottom of the first division and the second team finished mid table in Division Three North.

The Royal Grammar School Under 19 team led by Martin Schapira won through the local and area competitions to get to the Regional finals at Leeds but made no further progress.

Whilst the association was not involved in the organisation of them two international matches were held locally. England played Sweden in a European League match at the Crowtree Leisure Centre in Sunderland in October and Northumberland league teams were given permission to postpone matches if players wished to go to watch. Unfortunately England lost 5 - 2. Approximately 750 attended.

The other one was a friendly at Gateshead Leisure Centre between England and Japan later in the season on a night when the weather was described as being Artic conditions. As a result, the attendance was only 150 - 200 but they saw a very entertaining match which Japan won 4 - 3.

With an ever increasing number of older players wanting to continue competitively 1984 saw the setting up of a new body, the Veterans English Table Tennis Society known as the VETTS for short and which was to be very successful in the future.

The Boys Brigade National Finals were held locally, and Jimmy Scope, Bill Brown and Jack McAllister were all involved as umpires. Bill McMaster attended and presented the trophies.

Aubrey Drapkin was re-elected as Treasurer of the E.T.T.A.

Sid Holt had been involved with the association for many years and this was appreciated when he received the E.T.T.A. Merit Award.

The Senior Closed Tournament was held at Scotswood Sports Centre again but this time the entry was disappointing. It also finished much later than anticipated largely due to the time taken to play the hard bat event.

Chu Van Que had been allowed to enter and he duly won the Men's Singles for the fourth year in succession as well as the Men's Doubles with Peter McQueen. The Ladies Singles winner was Caron Buglass and she also partnered Christine Burke to success in the Ladies Doubles.

Cliff Olsson and Clare Mouzon were successful in the Mixed Doubles and Larry Cartmell won the Veterans Singles. The Hard Bat Singles winner was John Russell and

the two handicap event champions were Peter McQueen off scratch in the top event and Paul Bullars (plus seven) in the division two downwards event. Paul became the first winner of the Trevor Frost Memorial Trophy and Mrs Frost was present to present the cup.

The Junior Closed Tournament was also at Scotswood Sports Centre again and this time Thomas Blackburn of North Shields YMCA did the double by winning the Junior Boys Singles and also the Junior Boys Doubles when his partner was Keith Patterson of Byker Community Centre.

Clare Mouzon,, now of Wansbeck, won the Junior Girls Singles but a Junior Girls Doubles event did not take place. However there was a Junior Mixed Doubles which was won by Clare and her partner Peter Curry.

The Cadet Boys Singles winner was David Watson from Byker Community Centre, no Cadet Girls Singles being played.

There was a Cadet Doubles which was won by Darren Shaw and Kevin Shakesheff, and an Under 11 Singles where Steven Riggins was the winner, and a Class 2 Junior Singles which was won by David Watson.

For the fifth year running the Evening Chronicle sponsored the Northumberland Open at Concordia Leisure Centre in Cramlington and their promotions manager Derek Thompson attended and presented the trophies.

Once again it was an excellent event and well controlled by the referee George Yates, the E.T.T.A. Vice Chairman from Bolton. There was a change in the format with a Class 2 Singles replacing the junior events.

There was once more a good quality standard of play with thirty-one England ranked men taking part, fourteen of whom were in the top fifty.

The Women's Singles entry of only 26 was disappointing but there were still twelve ranked players among them.

David Wells of Middlesex won the Men's Singles and Alison Gordon from Berkshire retained the Women's Singles title. Alan Cooke (Derbyshire) and Graham Sandley (Middlesex) won the Men's Doubles and the Women's Doubles was won by the Staffordshire pairing of Fiona Elliot and Jill Harris.

Lincolnshire's Matt Sheader was the Veterans Singles winner and Northumberland's Peter McQueen won the Class 2 Singles.

The new rules regarding postponed matches in the Northumberland League were strictly enforced during the season which had the desired effect of reducing the backlog of fixtures at the end of the season.

No other major problems were encountered, and the fixtures were all completed in good time.

Washington T.T.C. did the double of winning the Premier Division and the Knock Out Cup. Gladstone Terrace Boys Club won the first division and their 'B' team won Division 3A.

The two second divisions were won by Byker Community Centre 'E' and Wansbeck TTC, Saint Charles and North Fire Brigade 'B' finished top of the two third divisions and Division Four was won by Newcastle YMCA 'C' team.

All was well financially this year and a surplus of £293 was achieved making the total to carry forward of £858.

This year Bill McMaster organised the end of season presentation night at the Rainbow Room at the Newcastle Co-operative Society in the centre of Newcastle with a 50 -50 disco. Approximately eighty people attended, and it turned out to be the best one for a few years.

As was now usual, organised play continued during the summer with sixty four teams playing in eight divisions of the Tyneside Summer League and a Summer League Tournament taking place at Scotswood Sports Centre on eight tables.

The winners of the various divisions were Byker Community Centre in the Premier Division North, Washington T.T.C. in the Premier Division South, North Shields East End Boys Club (Division 1a), Byker C.C. 'E' (Division 1b), Dunston Community Centre 'B' and Saint Charles in the two second divisions, Jarrow Community Association and Heaton United Reformed Church in the third divisions and North Shields YMCA 'D' in the fourth division.

The Handicap Knock Out winners were Sunderland West Community Association. This year there was not a very good entry into the tournament and some of the events were played as round robin groups.

Peter McQueen won the Men's Singles and Clare Mouzon won the Women's Singles round robin of only five women. Peter also won the Men's Doubles with Thomas Blackman. The Women's Doubles winners were Linda Spensley and Shirley Gelder. Thomas Blackman was also the winner of the Junior Singles and the Junior Doubles partnered by Michael Roughley.

Young Roughley picked up four titles by also winning the Cadet Singles, the Cadet Doubles with Paul Swift, and the Division One Singles. Swift was successful in the Division Two Singles, Brian Bell won the Division Three Singles and Michael Curry was the Division Four Singles winner.

1984-1985

1984/85 saw the financial affairs of the Association under new control as Dave Scholfield took over the position of Treasurer from Bill Brown.

There was only one change to the Management Committee with Gerry Cunningham replacing Henry Ross.

Bill Brown also relinquished his position on the Umpires Committee leaving three members in Sid Holt, Aubrey Drapkin and Jimmy Scope.

Unfortunately, there was a further drop in the membership with three less clubs and a loss of eight teams leaving ninety-five. As a result, there were now only seven divisions - Premier, Division One, two second divisions, two third divisions and one fourth division.

Affiliated leagues continued to be the Northumberland League, Tyneside Summer League, Tynedale league and the North Tyneside Youth Conference.

Rule changes saw the fees for leagues, other than the Northumberland League, increased to 50p per team and the fees for entry into the Northumberland league increased to £19.50 per team.

An amendment to the Northumberland League regulations to allow visiting teams to have ten minutes practice before the start of a match was defeated.

The Evening Chronicle continued to print weekly copy supplied by Aubrey Drapkin and Pauline Long continued to supply copy to Table Tennis News which regularly appeared in that monthly magazine.

Peter McQueen continued to be very much involved in coaching in Newcastle and Newcastle City proposed a community project scheme to promote table tennis in Newcastle. This would replace the arrangements that were in force and would co-ordinate the organisation of coaching in schools, youth clubs, playground centres and community centres in Newcastle.

The management committee agreed to support this new scheme and asked for one full time and three part time helpers under the supervision of Peter McQueen.

Jack McAllister continued as Coaching Officer until late in the season when Ray Main-Brown took over on a temporary basis.

A full week's coaching was arranged at Gibson Street baths in Newcastle at which twenty-three players attended. Unfortunately, only one girl, Clare Mouzon,, attended.

Coaching was led by Peter McQueen and included the attendance of England player Nicky Jarvis from Cleveland as well as a visit from the national coach for the region, Peter Simpson, who had taken over from Donald Parker.

Assessment sessions for juniors and cadets were held at Byker Community Centre.

Harry Dignan was again involved in coaching and included a session in Cramlington.

Ray Main-Brown conducted two coaching courses a week in Whitley Bay and a weekly one at Astley Youth Club in Seaton Delaval.

Manpower Services posts continued to operate at John Boste Youth Club and at Scotswood Sports Centre.

With coaching taking place and also the possibility of the Closed Tournaments being staged there it was agreed to apply for a grant from Tyne and Wear Council for equipment which would be kept at Gibson Street Baths.

A grant of £3600 was received to cover the cost of ten Dunlop tables, surrounds, and nets and posts.

The position of the Regional Development Officer was still not resolved with Cleveland's Tom Snowdon continuing on an expenses only basis.

Although the county was not involved, a European League match against Hungary was staged at Willington in October 1984 and an International Match was held at Gateshead Leisure Centre in January 1985.

Schools table tennis at Eldon Square Recreation Centre continued although records of the league results were not forwarded to the county.

The Royal Grammar School Under 19 team won their way through the English Schools Area Finals event but could not qualify from the Regional one.

Byker Newcastle continued to operate two teams in the National League which were based at Byker Community Centre. The first team squad of Peter McQueen, Neil McMaster, Thomas Blackman, Ian Robertson, Eddie Smith and Stephen George finished in mid table in Division 2 North.

The second team of Alan Matthewson, A Hammett, Peter Curry, Keith Patterson, Stephen Waugh, Jimmy Scope and Bob Dodds fared badly, finishing bottom of Division 3 North.

Clare Mouzon, Thomas Blackman and Keith Patterson were all invited to the National Junior Trials as was Darren Shaw for the Cadet event.

Clare reached the last eight but both Thomas and Keith put in disappointing performances. Young Darren did reasonably well in the Cadets.

Despite not doing as well as expected at the trials Thomas Blackman redeemed himself at the English Junior Closed Tournament where he reached the semi finals of the Junior Boys Singles. He was later ranked at number 10 in the English Junior Boys rankings.

During the season Clare Mouzon reached number 5 in the English Junior Girls rankings and number 53 in the Senior Women whilst Peter Curry reached number 28 in the Junior Boys and Darren Shaw got to 37 in the Cadet Boys.

Thomas Blackman played in the English Junior Top 12 event and finished at number eight. He also reached the semi finals of the Junior Boys Singles at the North Yorkshire Junior tournament. He was honoured by Newcastle City as a 'Rising Star'.

In events around the country Clare Mouzon lost in the final of the Junior Girls Doubles at the Wiltshire 2 Star, lost in the final of the Junior Girls Singles at the Grove School

(Market Drayton) Junior Open, reached the quarter finals of the Junior Girls Singles and the semi finals of the Junior Girls Doubles at the North Yorkshire Junior, the semi finals of the Junior Girls Singles at the Cleveland Junior and the semi finals of the Junior Girls Doubles at the Beneficial Trust Junior Grand Prix.

She also reached the semi finals of the Junior Girls Doubles at the English Junior.

At the Yorkshire Open Peter McQueen lost in the final of the Men's Singles, lost in the semi finals of the Men's Doubles partnered by Neil McMaster, and then won the Class Two Men's Singles. Neil reached the quarter finals of the Class Two and Stephen George lost in the semi finals of the same event.

At the same tournament Ian Robertson won the Men's Doubles with Brian Johns of Cheshire. He also reached the semi finals of the Men's Class Two Singles at the Lancashire 2 Star event.

Eddie Smith was a quarter finalist in the Men's Class Two Singles at the Humberside 3 Star tournament.

This season saw the senior county team of Peter McQueen, Neil McMaster, Ian Robertson, Caron Buglass and Christine Burke narrowly miss out on promotion from County Championships Division 3A whilst the junior team held their own in Junior Division 2A.

The League representative team of Peter McQueen, Stephen George and Neil McMaster beat Sunderland, Stockton, Bradford and Liverpool to get to the semi finals of the Wilmott Cup but lost out at that stage to Leicester.

The junior side of Thomas Blackman, Keith Patterson and Peter Curry defeated Ormesby, Tyneside Summer league, and Sunderland before bowing out of the Carter Cup to Sheffield.

In the Rose Bowl the ladies lost to Stockton as did the Tyneside Summer League team and unfortunately the junior girl's side did not have any players available to compete in the Bromfield Trophy.

Friendly matches were arranged with the Canadian Junior International side in April 1985 who were on a short tour of England prior to playing in the Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships in the Isle of Man.

The boys' team of Thomas Blackman and Peter Curry won 3 - 2 but the girls, Clare Mouzon and Denise Wilkinson lost 0 -5.

This season saw a new venue for the Senior Closed tournament which was staged at Gibson Street Baths in Newcastle. Apart from early problems and the lack of microphone facilities it proved to be a suitable hall. Tables were hired for the tournament thanks to a grant from Tyne and Wear County Council.

However, there had been a question of whether or not the event would be staged due to lack of entries and the management committee decided that if less than sixty competitors entered by the closing date then it would be cancelled.

However, a sudden rush of entries at the last minute ensured that it went ahead.

Peter McQueen won the Men's Singles and also partnered Clare Mouzon to success in the Mixed Doubles, it being the fourth year in a row that Clare was successful in this event. She also regained the Ladies Singles title.

The Ladies Doubles was won by Shirley Gelder and Linda Spensley whilst Eddie Smith and Ian Robertson were successful in the Men's Doubles event.

Ian also won the First and Second Division Handicap Singles with a handicap of plus four, Elaine Hopper (+16) won the Lower Divisions Handicap Singles and Larry Cartmell retained his Veterans Singles crown.

This year the Junior Tournament was staged at Blaydon Youth Club and sponsored by the Gateshead firm Crow's Transport Limited.

The organisers were Jimmy Scope and Bill McMaster with Sid Holt the referee. Brian Thompson and Blaydon Youth Club were thanked for their help in staging the tournament in which ten events took place.

The Junior Boys Singles title went to Peter Curry with Clare Mouzon being the Junior Girls Singles winner for the third year running.

The Cadet Boys Singles was regained by Darren Shaw with Rachel Shepherd winning the Cadet Girls Singles.

Two other singles events were held with Ian Collier being successful in the Under 11s and Derek Fairbairn taking the Class 2 event.

There were four doubles competitions with Clare Mouzon tasting success in two of them She won the Junior Girls Doubles partnered by Elaine Hopper and the Junior Mixed Doubles with Peter Curry.

Darren Shaw and Jonathan Miller were the winners of the Junior Boys Doubles and Michael Roughley and Ian Collier won the Cadet Doubles.

Concordia Leisure Centre in Cramlington was once again the venue for the Evening Chronicle Northumberland Open. Although the overall entry was down compared with previous years the standard of play was high. George Yates was once again the referee.

Derbyshire's Alan Cooke triumphed in the Men's Singles and Lancashire's Joy Grundy was the winner of the Ladies Singles. Dave Wells of Middlesex and Phil Bradbury of Buckinghamshire triumphed in the Men's Doubles with the counterpart Ladies Doubles title going to Joy Grundy and her Lancashire team-mate Jean Parker.

Leicestershire's Dave Gannon won the Class 2 Singles and Brian Allinson of Lincolnshire was the Veterans Singles winner.

A disabled tournament was held in Gateshead and Jimmy Scope arranged for Northumberland officials to assist with the umpiring.

Whilst the Northumberland League functioned successfully the problem of too many postponed matches resurfaced to cause a number of problems.

However, all of the fixtures were eventually either fulfilled or conceded and there were new winners of the Premier Division, Byker Community Centre being crowned champions.

Division One was won by Wansbeck Table Tennis Club with Boldon Community Association and Electrics 'C' team winning the two Second Divisions.

Third Division winners were Dunston Hill Hospital 'B' team and Shanklea Table Tennis Club with the only fourth division being won by Shanklea's 'B' team.

Byker Community Centre completed the 'double' by winning the Knock Out Cup.

The County was now short of qualified umpires and the management committee put out a plea for more people to come forward.

At National level Aubrey Drapkin continued in his role as Treasurer of the E.T.T.A. and was also chairman of the County Championships Committee.

Harry Dignan received the E.T.T.A. Merit Award for his services to table tennis.

The end of season presentation night was once again organised by the McMasters at the 'Room of the Top' Rainbow Rooms of Newgate Street Co - op in Newcastle and was once again a successful night.

The 100 Club had raised over £200 for the Association over the previous two years but was now down to 22 members and was disbanded.

The Association suffered a £150 deficit this year due to a number of factors - loss of teams in the Northumberland League, increase in E.T.T.A. fees, additional sundry expenditure including insurance cover for players and officials as well as the demise of the 100 club.

The Tyneside Summer League once again operated during the summer although there are no records of the number of teams, divisions or winners apart from the fact that there were three Cadet Divisions which were completely dominated by Northumbria Centre.

1985-1986

With Dave Scholfield anticipating that he would soon be working abroad there was a change in Treasurer for **1985/86** with Steve Wilson fulfilling the role.

John Greenway took over from Jimmy Scope as Match and Tournament Secretary and Ray Main - Brown took on the position of Coaching Officer.

There were additions to the Management Committee with Gordon Sinclair, Brian Thompson and Bob Dodds all appointed, Ian Robertson being added in September.

Affiliated leagues this time were the Northumberland League, Tynedale League and the Tyneside Summer league, the North Tyneside Youth Conference no longer being in operation.

Although the number of clubs taking part in the Northumberland League was one less than the previous year at forty-six, there was actually one extra team at ninety-six.

There was no change in the number of divisions but a major change in the Knock Out competition was that it became a handicap event which was organised by Bob Dodds.

A regulation change limited the number of times a player in a multi team club could play for a team higher than the one he was registered for to eight matches. After that he was to be registered for the next higher team that he played for.

Fees payable by teams in the Northumberland League were raised to £21 per team which included the supply of three handbooks.

At that time the cost of bat rubbers was approximately £11 per sheet with a blade costing approximately £12. A TSP shirt could be purchased for £8, and three-star balls cost £7 per dozen. The average wage at the time was approximately £173 per week.

Publicity remained unchanged with Aubrey Drapkin continuing to supply weekly copy to the Evening Chronicle and Pauline Long monthly copy to Table Tennis News.

Intensive coaching continued in Newcastle with Peter McQueen and his helpers from the Community Project Scheme covering three main areas. These were Scotswood in the west, John Boste Youth Club and the Lightfoot Stadium in the east and the new Cowgate Centre in the north.

The Community Project Scheme, with Bob Dodds as full time organiser, spread interest in the game into schools and other centre in all areas of the city. Exhibitions took place in seventeen schools and also at the new Montague Sports Centre.

Towards the end of the season a Centre of Excellence was set up at Eldon Square Recreation Centre with the assistance of the Sports Council and the Recreation Department of Newcastle City. This made a good start with Peter McQueen in charge of coaching on Wednesday evenings.

The table tennis equipment firm Butterfly (U.K) Limited gave a fifty per cent discount for the purchase of 150 bats and 2000 balls for use by the nine workers under the M.S.C. scheme. Under this scheme schools' leagues, schools' tournaments and events for the unemployed were organised.

County team trials were held at Gibson Street Baths where a coaching course for players and for prospective coaches was also held. Forty-five players attended this course which also featured England player Alan Cooke, England Regional Coach Peter Simpson as well as Peter McQueen and Chu Van Que.

Other courses set up included a teacher training/ club coach course in November sponsored by Newcastle City, a course for coaches at Gibson Street in February 1986 followed by a coaching course for players in May and one for one-star coaches in June 1986.

There was a tremendous experience for a number of the county's leading players when they were included in a trip to visit Newcastle's twin town of Taiyuan in China. They were included in the civic visit by Newcastle City Council which included the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress.

At a cost of £200 each, Peter McQueen, Neil McMaster, Ian Robertson, Eddie Smith, Thomas Blackman, Clare Mouzon, Caron Guthrie and Christine all got the opportunity to experience the Chinese facilities and also to play against top class Chinese players during the visit.

Some of the county's officials once again assisted in a Disabled Players Tournament that was held in Gateshead.

The Byker Community Centre based teams Byker Newcastle received a grant of £750 towards the cost of playing in the Halex National League.

Their first team, whose squad was Neil McMaster, Ian Robertson, Eddie Smith, Thomas Blackman and Stephen George had a good season finishing as runners up in Division 2 North but their second team struggled in Division 3 North.

On the umpiring front Steve Dickinson qualified as a County Umpire.

There was a chance to see top class table tennis when England played Japan in a friendly match at Gateshead Leisure Centre in January 1986.

Several younger players took part in the Junior Regional Trials which were held at Thornaby. David Watson turned in the best performance by finishing in third place and going through to the National trials. The other players involved were Darren Shaw, Steve Penman and Michael Curry.

The Japanese staff at the Nissan factory in Sunderland wanted a chance to play table tennis against local opposition and a Nissan Invitation Tournament was set up. This was held in Washington which was won by Northumberland's Neil McMaster who defeated Peter McQueen in the final.

A friendly match was also played in which the Northumbria Centre Table Tennis Club had a 9 - 1 victory over a team from Nissan.

There was not a lot of involvement by local players on the tournament scene, but Eddie Smith did reach the semi finals of the Men's Singles at the Scottish Midland event and

also lost in the final of the Men's Doubles with Ian Robertson. Eddie also got to the semi finals of the Men's Singles at the Cheshire 2 Star.

The best performances by Northumberland's players at the Northumberland Open came from Neil McMaster who got to the semi finals of the Men's Singles and Caron Guthrie and Clare Mouzon who both reached the semis of the Ladies Singles. Clare also got to the semi finals of the Ladies Doubles with Pauline Long whilst Peter McQueen lost in the final of the Class 2 Singles.

Two senior teams were entered in the County Championships but because of the lack of girl players it was not possible to enter a junior side.

The first team were in Division 3 North and the regular team was Ian Robertson, Neil McMaster, Peter McQueen, Caron Guthrie and Christine Burke. They played really well and won promotion to the second division. The second team were in the same division but achieved very little success.

A self-supporting veterans team of Maurice Cheek, Fred Short, Larry Cartmell and Pauline Long was entered in the Veterans Division 3 A for the first time and finished as runners up.

The League Representative side in the Wilmott Cup of Peter McQueen, Neil McMaster and Ian Robertson beat Stockton, Bradford and Warrington on their way to the semi finals where they were beaten 5 - 2 by Leicester.

The ladies lost at the first attempt to Bradford in the Rose Bowl and the junior boys went out of the Carter Cup when they beat Stockton but lost to Ormesby in the Area final.

It was not possible to enter a girls' team in the Bromfield trophy.

The Senior Closed tournament returned to Scotswood Sports Centre this year and had a better entry.

Peter McQueen captured three titles by winning the Men's Singles, the Mixed Doubles with Clare Mouzon and the top divisions Handicap Singles of scratch. The winner of the Ladies Singles was Clare Mouzon,

Fred Short triumphed in the Veterans Singles and Steve Riggins (+8) won the lower divisions Handicap Singles.

Ian Robertson and Neil McMaster were the winners of the Men's Doubles and the partnership of Christine Burke and Caron Guthrie won the Ladies Doubles.

The Junior Tournament was again staged at Blaydon Youth Club when there was a small entry but sufficient to break even financially.

Brian Thompson of Blaydon Youth Club and his helpers did a good job in staging the event and were thanked for their efforts. Alan Morpeth was the referee assisted by Jimmy Scope and Bob Dodds.

The Junior Boys Singles was won by Northumbria Centre's Paul Swift, who also won the Class 2 Singles. Tracy McMaster won the Junior Girls Singles, Steve Riggins the Cadet Boys Singles and Graeme Sanderson the Under 11 Singles.

Dave Watson and M. Armstrong were the winners of the Junior Boys Doubles, Steve Riggins and Dermot Ledwith won the Cadet Doubles, and Mark Christie and Rachael Shepherd won the Junior Mixed Doubles.

Due to lack of girls the Cadet Girls singles and the Girls Double events were cancelled.

There was discussion in management committee regarding the staging of an invitation event featuring international players during which one member of the committee stated that it was a good idea as nobody else had done anything to raise cash for the benefit of the players, or to bring top players to the area.

The Vice Chairman, Aubrey Drapkin, who had done so much to bring top players to the Northumberland Open, immediately left the meeting.

However, arrangements went ahead for what turned out to be a very successful event. On 28th February and 1st March 1986 this invitation tournament and exhibition match with top international players Desmond Douglas, Alan Cooke and Lisa Bellinger was held at Cowgate Leisure Centre which was well attended. The three of them then took part in a Singles event along with thirteen local players.

They also assisted in coaching at Scotswood Sports Centre which was well attended and at the Lightfoot Stadium which, unfortunately was not.

At Scotswood a successful attempt was made to break the world record for the number of continuous strokes played in one minute. This was featured on television by BBC North East and by Tyne Tees Television.

The Evening Chronicle again sponsored the Northumberland Open Tournament at Concordia Sports Centre in Cramlington which was again organised by Aubrey Drapkin. In the absence of George Yates, who was unavailable, Aubrey Drapkin was also the referee.

The tournament was again a success but on the financial side the income from the Chronicle Sponsorship of £150 plus the £400 received from the Chronicle for the weekly press reports compared with the rising costs of staging the event made the staging of this tournament in the future looking very doubtful.

However, there was some very good play and Alan Cooke of Derbyshire retained the Men's Singles title and also won the Men's Doubles partnered by Yorkshire's Steve Mills. John Dennison of Essex was successful in the Class 2 Singles and Lincolnshire's Matt Sheader won the Veterans Singles. Staffordshire's Jill Harris was outstanding in the Ladies events, winning both the Ladies Singles and the Ladies Doubles with Lesley Popkiewicz of Surrey.

At National level Aubrey Drapkin continued in office as E.T.T.A. Treasurer and was also still chairman of the County Championships.

The Northumberland League secretary once again had the usual complaint that too many postponed matches and poorly completed score cards had made life difficult for him.

The Knock Out Cup was played on a handicap basis for the first time and the final which was contested by Blaydon Youth Club 'B' team and Byker Community Centre 'A' team ended up as a draw. The Blaydon side won the replay.

Byker Community Centre did however retain the Premier Division crown.

Division One was won by Norland Road 'B' team, Gateshead Leisure 'B' won Division 2A with Shanklea being successful in Division 2B.

The third division winners were Northumbria Centre and North Shields YMCA 'D' with the Division 4 title going to Lemington Community Centre 'B' team.

Towards the end of the season the sad news was received of the death of the County President, Bart Kinnair. He had been involved in the Association from the very beginning and had been Vice Chairman in 1931/32, then chairman until 1954/55. He was then President until his death.

Financially there was a surplus for the year of £216 meaning that the Association's reserves stood at £924. This was mainly due to a generous grant from the now defunct Tyne and Wear County Council.

It was anticipated that a large increase would take place in expenditure in the following year and the management committee agreed to put forward a steep increase in entry fees to the Northumberland League to £27 per team for the following year.

This would be put to the next Annual General Meeting. An increase in the Guarantee fee from £1 per club to £5 per club would also be proposed.

The Tyneside Summer League again had a good entry with sixty-three teams playing in eight divisions.

There is no record of any of the winners but details of the winners of the Summer Tournament show that Peter McQueen won the Men's Singles and Clare Mouzon triumphed in the Ladies Singles. McQueen and Ian Robertson won the Men's Doubles but there was no Ladies Doubles competition.

David Watson was the winner of the Junior Singles, Michael Curry and Steve Penman won the Junior Doubles, Ian Collier won both the Cadet Singles and the Under 12 Singles. There were also two handicap events with Clare Mouzon winning the Premier and First Division event and Bernie Morris winning the lower divisions competition.

1986-1987

Following the death of Bart Kinnair a new President in Harry Dignan was appointed at the beginning of season **1986/87**.

Dave Scholfield was once again available, and he took over from Steve Wilson as Treasurer. Charlie Mouzon and Gerry Cunningham both resigned from the Management Committee and part way through the season Bob Dodds also resigned.

There was no change in the leagues affiliated to the Association with the Tyneside Summer and the Tynedale Leagues still affiliated as well as the Northumberland League which continued to be administered by the County.

Unfortunately, the decline in the number of participants in the Northumberland league continued with the number of clubs down one to forty- five and the number of teams showing a decrease from ninety-six to eighty- seven with more resigning during the course of the season. However, the number of divisions remained at seven.

The possibility of starting a Junior/Cadet division was investigated but only two clubs showed any interest in this.

The increase in fees suggested by the Management Committee at the end of the previous season was duly adopted at the Annual General Meeting.

Publicity in the Evening Chronicle continued to be in the hands of Aubrey Drapkin and Pauline Long continued to supply copy to Table Tennis News.

Coaching was once again in full swing with the Centre of Excellence held weekly for up and coming young players as well as near county standard seniors. Ian Robertson, Maureen Robson and Eddie Smith were the regular coaches.

Peter McQueen, who was to be appointed as Northern Regional Coaching Chairman, continued to organise events for prospective coaches and for young players at Gibson Street Baths.

Bob Dodds was still employed under the Community Project Scheme for a while, in Newcastle, with regular coaching and practice in schools and sports canteens in the city before being replaced by a new scheme under the control of Newcastle City Recreation Department. This entailed the employment of Bob Dodds coming to an end and two new full time organisers being appointed who were Ian Robertson and Carlos Caldeira.

However, this meant that Newcastle City Recreation Department continued to help financially in the advance of table tennis in the area.

A course was arranged at Gibson Street which was attended by England player, Matthew Syed.

Ray Main-Brown continued as Coaching Officer and was busy with coaching activities outside of Newcastle city. He arranged coaching classes at Whitley Bay Campus and at Astley Youth Club both of which were very well attended.

Caron Guthrie commenced coaching girls at Cowgate Sports Centre and Jack McAllister and Bob Doods spent a week coaching at Wallsend Sports Centre.

There was coaching at Eldon Square Recreation Centre in the half term school holidays in early 1987 attended by leading English player Jill Hammersley as well as Regional Coach Peter Simpson. This was well attended with approximately fifty juniors attending on each day.

A new appointment was made by the E.T.T.A. for the region with Durham's Ken Taylor taking up the position of Motivator for Development of Table Tennis (Development Officer) for the old area of Tyne and Wear and the development of table tennis generally in the North East Region.

Monthly meetings of representatives of the counties were arranged and Gordon Sinclair represented Northumberland.

Byker Newcastle continued to have two teams in the British league (formerly National League). The first team played in Division One where they finished sixth out of eight teams and the second string played in the Third Division North but without much success finishing near the foot of the table.

The county senior team were in Division 2A of the County Championships and where they ended up in third place.

A Junior team was back in the championships, playing in Junior Division 3A and ending up in sixth position.

A veterans side, once again was self-supporting, and had been promoted to Veterans Division 2A where they found it hard going and only won one match.

Three League Representative sides took part in the National Competitions with the senior men reaching the quarter finals of the Wilmott Cup before losing to Bolton. The ladies reached the quarter finals of the Rose Bowl but then lost to the Castleford and Pontefract League. The junior boys went out to Sunderland in the area final of the Carter Cup.

Several players took part in the Junior and Cadet Trials at Thornaby from where Steve Penman and Stephen Coverdale won through to attend the Final Trials at Lilleshall. The county contributed £25 to each boy towards their expenses.

Stephen Coverdale was eventually placed at 22 in the national cadet rankings.

Blaydon Youth Club was at the fore in developing young junior players and two of them received £40 each in sponsorship from Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council.

Another Blaydon youngster, Barry Forster, was very successful on the tournament circuit, winning the Under 12 Boys Singles at the Kirklees Junior, the North Yorkshire Junior and the Derby Junior tournaments and being runner up in the Cotswold Junior Select.

He was also selected to play as an Under 12 Boy in the Luxembourg International Junior Tournament by the Jill Hammersley Foundation.

Peter McQueen, Eddie Smith, Clare Mouzon all took part in the Ulster Open in Belfast where they won the team event, beating Scotland in the final.

Clare also won both the Women's Singles and the Under 21 Women's Singles as well as combining with Peter to win the Mixed Doubles event, Peter and Eddie being successful in the Men's Doubles.

Ian Robertson was the Class Two Singles winner at the South Yorkshire and Humberside 3-star tournament and he won the Men's Singles title at the Pontefract 1 Star Open by beating Peter McQueen in the final. The two of them then won the Men's Doubles and Ian added the Class 2 Singles title for good measure.

At the Yorkshire 2 Star tournament Eddie Smith was the runner up in the Men's Singles event.

Nearer to home a number of Northumberland players took part in the Maureen Kerry Memorial Tournament in Stanley. Clare Mouzon took three titles, winning the Women's Singles, the Women's Doubles with Caron Guthrie and the Mixed Doubles with Durham's Darren McVitie.

Caron was runner up in the Women's Singles and also runner up in the Mixed Doubles partnered by Ian Robertson and Larry Cartmell beat Charlie Mouzon in the final of the Veterans Singles event.

There was an opportunity to see top class table tennis in the area when a friendly match between England and China took place in Sunderland.

A fine opportunity to see table tennis at junior level of the highest standard came when the E.T.T.A. decided to hold the English Junior Championships at Eldon Square Recreation Centre at the end of May 1987 with the help of Newcastle Recreation Department.

The Northern Sports Council provided a grant, the Evening Chronicle provided printing costs and the finals night buffet, and the Moat House Hotel in Wallsend offered extremely generous rates for accommodation. Aubrey Drapkin was responsible for the negotiations. This was a tremendous boost for the sport in the region.

During the two weeks leading up to the tournament an England junior training squad camp was held in Newcastle and local players were invited to attend.

Another chance to see some leading juniors came when a friendly international between England and the Netherlands was staged at Dunston Activities Centre.

The County Junior Tournament was once again organised at Blaydon Youth club, organised by Bob Dodds with the help of Blaydon's Brian Thompson.

Steve Penman was the winner of the Junior Boys Singles with Angela Whiffin winning the Junior Girls Singles title. Steve Riggins retained the Cadet Boys title and Barry Forster won the Under 12 Singles.

In the doubles events Stephen Coverdale and Barry Forster won both the Junior Boys and Cadet Boys events. Lack of girl players meant that Junior Girls Doubles and Junior Mixed Doubles did not take place.

Scotswood Sports Centre was again the venue for the County Senior Closed Tournament but the entry of only thirty-nine players was the poorest participation ever.

There was a new winner of the Men's Singles with Eddie Smith taking the honours whilst for the third year in a row the Ladies Singles was won by Clare Mouzon.

Fred Short won the Veterans Singles, Keith Bibby (plus fourteen) won the main Handicap Singles with Phil Robson winning the lower divisions Handicap Singles off plus eight.

Peter McQueen was successful in two doubles events. He won the Men's Doubles with Ian Robertson and for the third year running the Mixed Doubles with Clare Mouzon. Clare also took the Ladies Doubles title partnered by Pauline Long.

As previously anticipated the lack of sponsorship meant that there was no Northumberland Open Tournament.

At National level Aubrey Drapkin attended the World Championships in Delhi as one of England's delegates, the other being George Yates. Due to other commitments he resigned as Chairman of the County Championships Committee.

He later stood for E.T.T.A. chairman following the death of Tom Blunn but was defeated by John Prean from the Isle of Wight.

Later in the season he resigned as E.T.T.A. Treasurer, being unable to work with the new chairman.

The Northumberland League Secretary reported that it had been very disappointing that a number of teams had resigned during the season.

Byker Community Centre won the Premier Division for the third time in succession.

Blaydon Youth Club were the winners of Division One with their 'B' team winning Division 2B, Northumbria Centre winning the other second division.

Lemington Community Centre 'B' and Post Office were the top teams in the third divisions and Dunston Table Tennis Club 'C' finished in top spot in Division Four.

The Handicap Cup was won by Blyth Town Boys Club.

Financially the season saw a surplus of £419 being made, increasing the net assets of the Association to £1343.

Bill McMaster received the E.T.T.A. Merit Award for his services to table tennis but at the season's last meeting of the Management Committee he indicated that he was not seeking re- election as Chairman for the following season.

At the same time Sid Holt informed the committee of his decision to retire from the position of League Secretary.

Both gentlemen ad been stalwarts of the Association for many years with Sid serving on the committee for over forty years, the last thirty as League Secretary. Bill had been on the committee since 1971/72 and had been a popular chairman since the 1979/80 season.

Both of them had fostered interest in table tennis throughout the county and in the surrounding area.

The Tyneside Summer League had a change of secretary with Aubrey Drapkin taking over from Jimmy Scope and once again had a good entry with seven divisions in operation. Gateshead won the Premier Division, Lemington Community Centre 'A' team won Division One and Byker Community Centre 'C' team were the winners of Division Two.

The two third division winners were Ashington YMCA and Mortimer Trams,

Electrics won Division Four and Division Five was won by Washington 'C' team.

There was a good turn-out for the Summer League Tournament with nine singles events and two doubles events being staged.

The shock result came in the final of the Women's Singles when Caron Guthrie took the title by defeating Clare Mouzon. This was only the second time in six years that Clare had been beaten in local tournaments.

Caron was also the winner of the Women's Doubles with Christine Burke.

Eddie Smith won the Men's Singles and also the Men's Doubles with Peter Whiteman. He also won the Premier Division Singles.

The Junior Singles winner was Steve Penman and there were Singles events for each of the divisions one to five. The relevant winners were Mark Christie (Div 1), Dave Robson (Div 2), Rob Lawson (Div 3) Neil Lucas (Div 4) and Jason Hayward (Div 5).

1987-1988

Aubrey Drapkin was appointed as Chairman for the **1987/88** season with Ken Lusk as Vice Chairman and the League Secretary's duties were taken on by Larry Cartmell. Steve Dickinson was appointed as County Umpires Secretary.

Alan Livingstone came off the Management Committee and with Ken Lusk now being Vice Chairman their places on the committee were taken by Sid Holt and Bob Dodds.

Neil Dorney was appointed as the Schools Representative on the Management Committee and Fred Short was co-opted onto that committee in the November.

At forty-four the number of clubs taking part in the Northumberland was one less than the previous season but there was one additional team, making eighty-eight in total

There were still seven divisions but the 'pyramid system' was done away with and the divisions were a straight one to six after the Premier Division.

The Cup Competition was again on a handicap basis and was organised by Bob Dodds.

There was a change in the way merit points were awarded with one point being given for each set won.

Leagues affiliated to the County were the Northumberland League, the Tynedale League and the Tyneside Summer league. As from the beginning of the 1988 summer, the Tyneside Summer League was taken over by the Northumberland League.

Pauline Long was still Publicity Secretary and continued to supply copy to Table Tennis News.

Aubrey Drapkin continued to let the Evening Chronicle have weekly copy and also began issuing a monthly newsletter to all clubs in membership of the Northumberland League. He also made contact with BBC Radio Newcastle and began recording regular broadcasts on Fridays which were used during their Saturday afternoon sports programme.

The Coaching Scheme under the control of Peter McQueen continued to function successfully as did the Centre of Excellence and a feeder centre for young players at Eldon Square Recreation Centre.

The Manpower Services Scheme also continued with two full time coaches and eight part time assistants with three based at Scotswood Sports Centre, three at Walker and two in the Cowgate/ Kenton area. Unfortunately, the Manpower Services workers were for some reason not allowed into Youth Clubs.

All schools in Newcastle became involved with Junior School sessions being held at Scotswood, Cowgate and Walker. In addition, five schools' leagues were organised with forty schools participating.

Other sessions involved unemployment groups, disabled groups, groups for women, and ethnic groups.

Exhibitions were organised at schools and at playground centres.

Courses for players and coaches were organised at Gibson Street Baths during the school holidays and during the half term breaks. England player Fiona Elliott had attended on one occasion and had been very popular.

The Community Project Scheme continued in Newcastle.

During July and August 1987 coaching of players took place at Longbenton and Killingworth schools.

Ray Main- Brown continued with regular sessions during the year at Whitley Bay High School and at Astley High School.

A seminar for coaches in all sports was held at the Lightfoot Stadium but despite table tennis top names in Pop Robson, Donald Parker and Len Heppell only a dozen table tennis people attended.

Late in the season Peter McQueen left the area to go to Bahrein which left a big gap in the Newcastle Coaching scheme. However, this was filled by the appointment of Ian Robertson.

In April 1988 the Association's President, Harry Dignan, had now retired from work and wished to get involved on the coaching front and he agreed to act as Northumberland's representative on the Regional Committee.

In the schools' competitions Gosforth Central Middle School under eleven and under thirteen teams both won through to the Regional event at Hull but unfortunately did not progress any further.

Phil Robson played well to reach the final of the Under 13 Boys at the National Schools Individual competition in Mansfield.

Byker Newcastle again had two teams in the Leeds British League but fared badly with the first team finishing bottom of Division One and the second team third from bottom of Division Three North.

A Regional Tournament was staged for the first time at Eldon Square Recreation Centre, thanks to the financial help of the Evening Chronicle. Northumberland provided both of the Singles Winners with Eddie Smith being successful in the Men's event and Clare Mouzon winning the Women's.

A Junior International match was staged at Dunston Activities Centre with England playing the Netherlands in a friendly match. Durham's Ian Collier was included in the English Cadet team.

Northumberland supplied the Referee and three Umpires with the match being successfully staged. England Cadet Girls won 3 - 2 and the Cadet Boys played a 3 - 3 draw. The Dutch won both the Junior Girls and Junior Boys matches 4 - 1.

As in the previous year an Invitation Event was held at Cowgate Sports Centre with England players Alan Cooke, Lisa Lomas and Bradley Billington invited together with nine local players. The three England players also did some coaching and took part in an exhibition.

The County continued to suffer from a shortage of qualified umpires and the Umpires Committee instigated a recruitment drive. This resulted in several people taking the written examination but there is no record of how many went on to do the practical.

Several young players were nominated to take part in the Northern Area Trials in Thornaby. Michael Curry, who went on to qualify for the National Trials, Stephen Coverdale, Barry Forster and Mark Cavender all participated in the Junior events. Graeme Sanderson and Phil Robson were in the cadet events and both qualified for the nationals. Barry Forster was exempt from the area trials, going straight to the nationals. Unfortunately, there is no record of any further progress at the nationals for any of the players.

The County agreed to pay at least £50 towards the players expenses.

As last year, a group of players went to the Ulster Open tournament where Caron Guthrie won the Women's Singles, Ian Robertson got to the semi finals of the Men's Singles and Bob Dodds lost in the final of the Veterans Singles.

In the team event Peter McQueen, Ian Robertson and Caron Guthrie were beaten in the final.

A number of juniors as well as senior players were represented on the tournament scene:-.

Michael Curry won the Junior Boys Singles at the Scottish Open and at the East of Scotland.

Barry Forster reached the final of the Cadet Boys Singles at the East of Scotland, won the Under 14 Regional Competition beating Stephen Coverdale in the final, and beat Graeme Sanderson in the final of the Under 12 Boys Singles at the Yorkshire Junior Select.

Stephen Coverdale also reached the final of the Cadet Boys Singles at the Grove School Junior 2 Star where Graeme Sanderson got to the final of the Cadet Boys Doubles with Durham's Ian Collier.

Forster and Coverdale played a lot of doubles together and won two titles, the Cadet Boys Doubles at both the Grove School event and at the Tameside Junior tournament.

They also got to the semi finals of the Cadet Boys Doubles at both the Yorkshire Junior Select and the Derby Junior Select.

In senior events Eddie Smith got to the semi finals of the Under 21 Men's Singles at the Milton Keynes Under 21 Open and he also reached the same stage of the Men's Singles at the Yorkshire 2 Star Open.

Ian Robertson lost in the final of the Class 2 Singles at the North of England 2 Star but won the Men's Doubles at the Lancashire Open partnered by Steve Dorking of Essex and at the Pontefract 1 Star when his partner was Michael Stead of Bradford.

The partnership of Robertson and McQueen also won the Men's Doubles at the Scottish Open and at the East of Scotland.

Peter McQueen lost in the semi finals of the Men's Singles at the North of England and also at the East of Scotland Open.

The Thomas brothers, David and Michael, got to the final of the Men's Doubles at the Milton Keynes Under 21 Open.

Phil Robson played for the English Schools team in a Schools International tournament featuring teams representing England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

At the Civil Service Championships Clare Mouzon got to the final of the Women's Singles and Maurice Cheek reached the semi finals of the Veterans Singles.

In the County Championships Ian Robertson, Thomas Blackman, Eddie Smith, Mark Christie, Caron Guthrie, Clare Mouzon, and Margaret Morley all figured in the county first team during the season as they finished as runners up in Division 2A.

Robertson was their star player winning thirteen of the fourteen singles matches that he played.

The junior team held their own in Junior Division 3A, finishing in mid table, and the Veterans side did reasonably well in Veterans Division 3A.

The League Representative men's team lost to Harrogate in the third round of the Wilmott Cup but the ladies team got to the quarter finals of the Rose Bowl before being beaten by the Castleford/Pontefract side. The junior boys team beat Sunderland but then lost out to Ormesby.

The Northumberland Junior Tournament was held at Blaydon Youth Club and Bob Dodds and Larry Cartmell were thanked for their help in running it along with excellent organisation by Brian Thompson and the Blaydon helpers.

There was an entry of fifty with six singles events and three doubles events taking place. A very successful tournament with a good standard of play.

There were new winners in all of the singles events with Michael Curry winning the Junior Boys, Anna Cowan the Junior Girls, Barry Forster the Cadet Boys, Diane Cartmell the Cadet Girls, Mark Cavender the Class 2 and Oliver Court the Under 12s.

Barry Forster and Stephen Coverdale were successful in both the Junior Boys and the Cadet Boys Doubles with Steve Riggins and Anna Cowan winning the Junior Mixed Doubles.

The Senior tournament was also held at Blaydon Youth Club and was sponsored to the extent of £100 by Tyne and Wear Office Supplies. As well as the usual Blaydon people Alan Livingstone and Alex Olsson were both thanked for their efforts in staging the event.

An improved entry saw sixty-four competitors taking part and Eddie Smith retaining the Men's Singles title. The Ladies Singles was won for the third year running by Clare Mouzon who was also successful in the Ladies Doubles with Pauline Long. For good measure she also won the Handicap Singles from scratch.

Gordon Bissett was the winner of the Veterans Singles, Ian Robertson and Mark Christie came out on top in the Men's Doubles and Robertson also won the Mixed Doubles with Caron Guthrie.

Three new events were staged with Dave Godbold winning the Division 1/2 Singles, Phil Robson the Division 3/4 Singles and John Wesley winning the Division 5/6 Singles.

Gateshead Table Tennis Club were the top club in the Northumberland League winning both the Premier Division and Division One.

Byker Community Centre 'D' team won Division Two, Ouston Community Centre 'B' won Division Three, and North Shields YMCA 'E' won Division Four.

Electrics 'B' came out on top in Division Five and Graphex 'B' won Division Six.

Because Barry Forster had broken his thumb it was agreed that the Handicap Final between Jarrow Community Association and Blaydon Youth Club be held over until he was fit to play. When it was played the winners were the Jarrow side.

Sid Holt had been the secretary of the League from 1958/59 season until 1986/87 season and it was with great sorrow that the news of his death was received in April 1988.

On the financial side the year saw a surplus of £420 being achieved raising the total assets of Association to £1763.

There is no record of the number of teams taking part in the first season that the summer league was part of the Northumberland League, the only information available being that Gateshead T.T.C. won the first division.

The only information regarding the summer league tournament is that it was played at Blaydon Youth Club with over sixty entrants and that Eddie Smith won the Men's Singles and Clare Mouzon won the Ladies Singles.

The Bahrein national team visited the area during the summer and three very enjoyable matches against Northumberland teams were played at Blaydon Youth Club. The Senior Men's match was drawn, the Northumberland Ladies won their match 5 - 0 and Bahrein won the Junior Match 8 - 2.

1988-1989

John Greenway was leaving the area so, in **1988-89**, Pauline Long was appointed as County Match Secretary which meant that she gave up being Publicity Secretary and Aubrey Drapkin took on this task as well as continuing as Chairman for 1988/89.

Brian Thompson and Maurice Cheek assisted Pauline by looking after the Junior and Veteran teams respectively.

Gordon Sinclair replaced Alan Morpeth as National Councillor.

Alan Livingstone came back onto the Management Committee, but Alan Hill and Neil Dorney came off.

The only Leagues affiliated were the Northumberland League and the Tynedale League.

After the Annual General Meeting the number of clubs that were in the Northumberland league was down by one at forty-three but the number of teams was still eighty eight so seven divisions were once again created. However, a further five teams dropped out before things got under way which meant that the bottom division had to be cancelled and the season operated with six divisions numbered one to six.

The Handicap Cup competition continued to be played.

Changes to the regulations saw the adoption of the new I.T.T.F. rule that the rubbers on a bat had to be red on one side and black on the other.

Aubrey Drapkin took over sending information to Table Tennis News as well as continuing to send weekly copy to the Evening Chronicle and to have a weekly Saturday afternoon spot on Radio Newcastle's sports programme.

Later in the season he received an award from the E.T.T.A. for the most publicity of the County Championships in 1988/89.

A Cadet Division of the Northumberland League was started in November 1988 at Gibson Street with an entry of twenty teams including some from various schools.

Dave Scholfield obtained sponsorship of £50 from this venture from Mercantile Credit.

The eventual team to win this league was Blaydon Youth Club 'A' side.

On the coaching front Ray Main-Brown continued as Coaching Officer and was involved in coaching cadet girls in conjunction with Dave Scholfield.

They also coached three promising junior girls in Debbie Scholfield, Diane Cartmell and Joanne Donnelly.

Ian Robertson ran coaching courses for young novice players at Eldon Square Recreation Centre on Fridays on a regular basis.

Harry Dignan attended the Regional Coaching meetings on behalf of the Association.

Three Junior boys and five Cadet boys attended the Junior Regional Trials at Thornaby. In the Juniors Steve Coverdale finished first, Barry Forster third and Mark Cavender sixth, Coverdale and Forster qualifying for the final trials.

Phil Robson and Andrew Wilkinson qualified from the Cadet Boys finishing first and second respectively. S.Jones was third, Oliver Court fifth and Colin Harris eighth. Debbie Scholfield took part in the girl's events.

It was agreed to pay £20 towards the costs of travel for the finals to Barry Forster, Stephen Coverdale and Phil Robson. Andrew Wilkinson's entry was, unfortunately, not submitted by the closing date.

At the finals Barry Forster played in the Cadet Boys and despite losing in the final he actually maintained his England number one ranking. Coverdale did reasonably well in the Junior Boys and Phil Robson also gave a good account of himself in the Cadet Boys.

A school's tournament was held at the Lightfoot Stadium which was organised by Neil Dorney.

In the Schools Area tournament Gosforth Central Middle School were successful in the Under 13 Boys, the Under 13 Girls and the Under 11 Girls. Unfortunately, none of them progressed in the Regional tournament.

Women taking part in competitive table tennis was being well promoted in England, mainly through the efforts of Cleveland's Jose Ransome, and a women's coaching day was held at Dunston Activities Centre which was well attended.

A Women's Regional Team event was also staged at Dunston Activities Centre in January 1989 hosted by Northumberland and organised by Aubrey Drapkin and Jose Ransome with Joan Leslie as registrar. This was actually the first half of the event with the second one to be held in Cleveland in April.

Teams were of two a side and the pairing of Caron Guthrie and Christine Burke did well in this part of the competition.

The highlight of the season was the staging of an England v China International match at Eldon Square Recreation Centre which was part of a Chinese tour of England. It was well attended with approximately eight hundred spectators. Aubrey Drapkin was the referee and there was some very attractive play.

The England team was Desmond Douglas, Alan Cooke and Nicky Mason who each won one to give England a 3 - 1 lead. The Chinese, however, were not to be beaten and hit back to end the match at three all.

Dunston Activities Centre was the venue for Junior International friendly matches against France and Scotland in which Barry Forster was selected to play for England Cadet Boys. There was a good attendance and it was also supported by the attendance of the Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Gateshead.

England Junior Boys beat France 6 - 2 but the Junior Girls were beaten 3 - 2. In the cadet matches Scotland were a late replacement for the French cadet team but they lost both the boys and girls matches. Barry Forster won both of his matches for England.

On the day of the matches Aubrey Drapkin was involved in a 'table tennis marathon for BBC Children in Need' at the venue when he played against various league players from 9.00a.m. until shortly before the matches started in the evening and just over £1000 was raised.

Bri - Bar Byker Newcastle again played in the Leeds British League and finished fifth out of eight in Division Three North.

A North East Regional Junior League took place and Blaydon Youth Club and Blyth Town Boys Club both entered. Blaydon did well and ended up as the winners.

Young Barry Forster made his mark on the tournament scene and became England National Champion at Cadet level when he beat Alex Perry of Devon in the Cadet Singles final at the Leeds Junior National Championships.

Among his other victories were Junior Boys Singles at the Leeds Youth Regional event, the Under 14 Singles at the Cotswold Junior, the Cadet Singles at the Essex 2 Star Junior and the Cadet Singles at the East Yorkshire Junior.

Additionally, he was runner up in the Under 14 Boys Singles at the South of England 2 Star Junior, in the Cadet Boys Singles at the Derby 2 Star Junior, the Milton Keynes Junior and the Kent Junior.

Barry was also selected to play for England in a Cadet 5 Nation event in Denmark. At a lower age level Andrew Wilkinson, Oliver Court and Chris Dodd won the Under 12 National Knock Out Cup.

There were a couple of good performances at the North of England 2 Star tournament with young Phil Robson winning the Cadet Boys Doubles with K. Goodall of Yorkshire and Ian Robertson reaching the final of the Men's Doubles with John Hilton of Cheshire.

On the County Championships front the senior team finished as runners up in Division 1A and the juniors did likewise in Junior Division 2A with the veterans being fifth out of eight in the Veterans Division 2A. The juniors result meant that they gained promotion.

The Regional Motivator, Ken Taylor, arranged in conjunction with North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council to obtain a free venue for a table tennis event so the County Closed Championships were staged at Wallsend Sports Centre.

The council also provided £100 in sponsorship for the tournament which was also sponsored by Tyne and Wear Office Supplies again. Conditions were described as not being ideal, but it turned out to be a very enjoyable day.

Eddie Smith again won the Men's Singles and Clare Mouzon triumphed for the fifth successive time in the Ladies Singles meaning that she had won this event seven times in the last eight years.

Ian Robertson paired up with Eddie Smith this year to win the Men's Doubles and there were new winners in the Ladies Doubles in Christine Burke and Caron Guthrie. Ian Robertson and Caron Guthrie retained the Mixed Doubles title.

The Veterans Singles was won by Fred Short and the Handicap Singles by David Venus.

There were three new events. Clare Mouzon won the Class 2 Singles and Andrew Wilkinson won the Class 3 Singles with Gateshead 'A' taking the Team Event.

The Junior Closed tournament was once again successfully staged at Blaydon Youth Club. This time there were no Cadet Doubles, Junior Mixed Doubles or Under 12 events but there were new events with Singles events for Under 16 Boys, Under 15 boys, Under 13 Boys, Under 13 Girls and Under 11 Girls, making twelve events in total.

Barry Forster was the winner of the Junior Boys and also the Boy's Doubles with Stephen Coverdale who was the winner of the Under 15 Boys.

The Junior Girls winner was Anna Cowan who also won the Junior Girls Doubles with J.Marriott.

The Under 11 Boys Singles winner was Gary Sangster, Phil Robson won the Cadet Boys and Andrew Wilkinson won both the Under 13 Boys Singles and the Class 2 Singles.

The Cadet Girls Singles and the Under 13 Girls Singles were won by Susie Atherton, Sophie Edgar winning the Under 11 Girls Singles.

A Regional tournament was again staged, this time at Cramlington, but there are no records of the winners. The only reference to it being that it was marred by the lack of umpires.

The Northumberland League programme was successfully completed with Gateshead once again being champions, winning Division One.

Sunderland Echo won Division Two, Blaydon Youth Club 'C' team triumphed in Division Three and Tyne Gas finished top of Division Four.

Division Five was won by Washington T.T.C. 'B' team and Blakelaw 'B' won Division Six.

The Handicap Cup was won by Blaydon Youth Club 'C'.

Forty-three teams entered the Summer League The only records are that the champions were Sunderland Echo. and North Shields YMCA won the Handicap Cup.

It is not known whether the Summer Tournament continued or not.

Financially it was another good year with a surplus of £276 boosting the assets to £2039.

1989-1990

1989/90 saw the introduction of three new officer's roles with Peter Wilkinson appointed as County Junior Match Secretary, Maurice Cheek as County Veterans Secretary and the chairman Aubrey Drapkin taking on the Summer League Secretary's job.

Jack McAllister, Bob Dodds, Fred Short and Bill Hodgkins all came off the Management Committee onto which Ronnie Bell and Karen Newby were appointed.

The Northumberland League and the Tynedale League continued to be the only ones affiliated to the County.

The Northumberland League lost one more club and another three teams and started the season with the same six divisions.

This meant that since the start of the 1980/81 season the number of clubs taking part had dropped from seventy-two to forty-two and the number of teams from one hundred and fifty-four to eighty.

The cup competition continued to be held on a handicap basis and this has never changed.

On the publicity front Aubrey Drapkin continued to provide a monthly newsletter to clubs and to submit weekly copy to the Evening Chronicle. His Radio Newcastle broadcasts increased during the year with a preview of activities going out on a Saturday morning, a one to one chat with the Sports editor on the Saturday afternoon, and a results round- up on a Tuesday morning.

Unfortunately reports no longer appeared in Table Tennis News.

The Newcastle City Coaching Scheme ran until the end of March 1990, after which Ian Robertson was paid for twenty hours per week coaching by the city plus fees for the Centre of Excellence at Eldon Square Recreation Centre until it ceased in July 1990.

It was reported at a North Regional Meeting that the E.T.T.A. were withdrawing from the funding of all regional events.

Some of the young players qualified from the Junior Regional Trials at Thornaby to go forward to the National Trials at Lilleshall.

Stephen Coverdale, Phil Robson and Mark Cavender got through in the Junior Boys, Gary Sangster in the Cadet Boys and Diane Cartmell was a late replacement in the Cadet Girls. Barry Forster qualified automatically for the Junior Boys as did Andrew Wilkinson for the Cadet Boys. In the event Andrew was also a late replacement for Mark Cavender in the Junior Boys.

The Association gave £20 to each of the qualifiers to help with travel costs. Unfortunately, none of them achieved any further success.

The Cadet league again took place and was sponsored by Barclays Mercantile Credit to the extent of £50 but no details exist regarding it.

The promotion of Women's table tennis continued although a coaching event at Dunston Activities Centre was poorly supported. However, the Ladies League was successful with twenty-one teams of two being involved. It was staged in two parts with the first one in Hartlepool and the second in Seaburn.

Regina Stevens, a German coach who was at the time lecturing at Newcastle Polytechnic teamed up with Caron Guthrie to represent North Shields and they finished top of the first division and then won the play offs.

Karen Newby and Denise Wilkinson of Jarrow were runners up in Division Two and the North Shields Cadets team of Diane Cartmell and Joanne Donnelly came second in the third division.

The Gosforth 'B' team of Sophie Edgar and Louise Hewitt finished top of Division Four but lost out in the play offs to the Slatyford squad of Iris Catchpole, Eileen Thompson and Iris Henderson.

Caron Guthrie and Karen Newby represented the County at a Women's Seminar in Derby.

City of Newcastle entered a team in the Leeds British Women's League, and they finished in second place in Division Three.

The Schools area tournament was held at the Lightfoot Stadium in January 1990 and the Royal Grammar School Under 19 Boys team qualified for the Regional Finals at Pontefract. Unfortunately, they did not make any further progress.

There was another England v China friendly match in the area when approximately three hundred and fifty spectators were at the Gateshead Leisure Centre.

In September 1989 Dunston Table Tennis Club played a friendly match against a team made up of members of the crew of the frigate HMS Sirius which was on a visit to the Tyne.

Gordon Gregson, Graham Kellett and Steve Waterworth represented the club with the visitors team being Steve Harrison (ex- Nottingham League), Ivan Hazell (ex- Hull League) and Alex Grover (ex- Dunfermline league). The match was won 5 - 4 by HMS Sirius and they were presented with an engraved tankard.

A plaque of the ship's Coat of Arms was presented to Dunston and the centre provided a buffet supper. The following day the Dunston players were given a guided tour of the ship.

Bri-Bar Byker again had a team in the third division of eight teams in the Leeds British league as did Blaydon Youth Club Racers. Byker finished in third place with Blaydon seventh.

Stephen Coverdale, who was awarded a grant by Gateshead Metropolitan Council towards his travel costs, played for England Schools winning intermediate team in the Leeds Schools International Championships.

At the Tameside Junior tournament he lost in the final of the Class 2 Junior Boys Singles and was a Junior Boys Doubles winner with Ray Powell of Gloucester at the Kirklees Junior Open. During the season he reached number eleven in the England Junior Boys rankings.

Barry Forster varied during the season between fifteen and eighteen in the same rankings.

Clare Mouzon played in the Cleveland 5 Star tournament where she won the Class 2 Women's Singles.

Andrew Wilkinson was the county's leading player at Cadet level. In the English Junior Open he got to the quarter finals of the Cadet Boys Singles and reached number ten in the National Cadet Ranking list.

He also played for the winning England Schools Cadet team at the Leeds Schools International Championships.

As well as singles he had a couple of good results in doubles, losing in the final of the English Junior Select tournament Cadet Doubles with Cris Sladden of Essex. At the Tameside tournament he won the Cadet Boys Doubles with Yorkshire's Mark Smith.

The County Junior Closed tournament was once again staged at Blaydon Youth Club in May 1990 and was again successful with fifteen events despite no Cadet Girls Singles, Cadet Doubles or Mixed Doubles.

Stephen Coverdale won the Junior Boys Singles and the Under 16 Boys Singles while J Marriott won the Junior Girls Singles as well as the Junior Girls Doubles with Diane Cartmell and the Junior Class 2 Singles.

Andrew Wilkinson won no less than four events, taking the Cadet Boys Singles the Junior Boy's Doubles with C.Elliott, the Under 15 Boys Singles and the Under 13 Boys Singles.

The Under 13 Girls Singles was won by Joanne Donnelly, the Under 11 Girls Singles by Sophie Edgar and the Under 10 Girls Singles by L. McCullagh.

The Under 12 Boys Singles was won by T.Seymour, the Under 10 Boys Singles went to G.Brown and P.McCann won the Under 9 Singles.

A successful Senior Closed tournament was again held at Wallsend Sports Centre, again being sponsored by North Tyneside Council and The Wilding Group (previously called Tyne and Wear Office Supplies).

Eddie Smith won the Men's Singles for the third year running and he also took the Handicap Singles title.

Regina Stevens was the winner of the Ladies Singles event and Peter Hoyles triumphed in the Veterans Singles.

Dave Godbold and Cliff Olsson were the winners of the Men's Doubles, the Ladies Doubles being won by Regina Stevens and Caron Guthrie and the Mixed Doubles by Ian Robertson and Caron Guthrie.

Steve Penman won the Class 2 Singles, Miss J.Marriott won the Class 3 Singles and the team event saw the same winners as the previous year in Gateshead 'A' team.

The Regional Tournament this year took place under canvas at the Gateshead Garden Festival site on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th July which the Evening Chronicle agreed to sponsor.

There was a good entry and it was covered on Radio Newcastle with Aubrey Drapkin being able to make live broadcasts several times on the Saturday. No records were kept of any of the winners.

As in the previous year local table tennis supported the BBC Children in Need programme with Aubrey Drapkin organising an event at the Dawson and Sanderson travel agents in Blyth thanks to the help of Peter Wilkinson who was the manager.

Radio Newcastle covered this and sent two of their reporters along with one of them taking part and the other commentating. It was later featured on Radio Newcastle at about 11.00p.m. The sum of £1180.67 was raised.

In the County Championships the Senior team finished in fifth place in Division 1A, the Junior side did likewise in Junior Division 1A and the Veterans were third in Veterans Division 2A.

In the National league competitions the ladies beat Sunderland but then lost to Bradford in the Rose Bowl, the junior boys beat Sunderland but lost to Hartlepool in the Carter Cup whilst the cadet boys went out to North Yorkshire in the Leach Cup.

The senior men, however, had a good run in the Wilmott Cup where they beat Stockton, Sunderland, Leeds and Blackburn before losing to Chesterfield who included England international Alan Cooke in their side.

The Northumberland League received a complaint about Blaydon Youth Club from Saint Charles which had to be dealt with by the Management Committee at a special meeting where both parties were in attendance and gave their views.

The committee found that there was no evidence of deliberate cheating by Blaydon and no evidence of bad behaviour by the Blaydon players, but Blaydon were informed that they should endeavour to control excessive noise during matches and also do their utmost to improve the standard of umpiring.

Brian Thompson of Blaydon accepted the findings of the committee although he made it clear that he did not agree with them.

Saint Charles later appealed against the findings and the matter was eventually referred to a neutral tribunal that upheld the original decisions.

Financially it was another good year with a surplus of £380 being made making the cash assets of the Association at £2419. but the Management Committee still proposed to ask for an increase to £29 in the subscriptions for every team in the Northumberland League.

Forty-seven teams took part in the 1990 Summer league in six divisions. The first division was won by Blaydon Youth Club 'A' and Wansbeck won the Handicap Cup.