

Sandy's Handy With A Racket

In a week in which the New Milton Table Tennis Club won three, drew one and lost three matches in the Bournemouth and District league, Sandy Fagan was the star player for the Club.

Sandy, wife of club chairman and stalwart Bob Fagan, only returned to the sport this season after a two-year break and has shown that she has forgotten nothing about the sport. In this, only the fourth match of her comeback, she helped her H side to an 8-2 away victory over Shamrock D in Div 5 with a spectacular hat-trick. She really had to fight hard for her treble as she went 2-0 down against Shamrock's Lawrie Phillips in the first match of the evening. However, she showed true grit to come back to take the next three ends and claim victory. Fern Daish also went 2-0 down against Phillips and only just missed out on her own hat-trick by losing 9-11 in the fifth. Recent signing Richard Barrett also lost to Phillips to match Fern's brace. The ladies teamed up for the doubles and saw off the Shamrock pairing over four ends to clinch the maximum four points.

At the opposite end of the league, the A team had a bye in the Premier but they were consigned to the bottom as fellow strugglers Kinson A picked up a point in a 3-7 defeat against league-leaders Bournemouth Sports B.

In Div 1, the B team of Malcolm Floyd, Paul Bolter and Bob Fagan were grateful for a 6-4 home win over Broadstone A having suffered a whitewash in the first round at Broadstone. Admittedly Milton were missing two regulars in the away drubbing and Broadstone turned up a player short in the return match. Captain Floyd and Bolter added to the three game advantage by winning one apiece and it was 5-3 when Fagan stepped up to play Broadstone's Nigel Green in the last singles of the evening. Fagan had lost three straight against Green in the first round so Shaun Newcomb, who was nursing a sore elbow, was waiting in the wings to play in the doubles to hopefully help convert the draw into victory. His services were not required however because Fagan played an absolute blinder to gain revenge over four ends and give his side the much-needed three points.

In Div 2, the C team of Terry Jenvey, Mick Barry and Roy Hobbs visited Bournemouth Sports J hoping to improve on their first-round 4-6 home defeat, but left empty handed with a disappointing 2-8 loss. Hobbs won Milton's only singles and joined with Barry to take the doubles over five ends. Hobbs could so easily have come away with a brace but he just lost out to Bourne's Greg McLaughlin by an incredible 16-18 in the fifth end of a spellbinding encounter. Barry also came close to beating McLaughlin over five ends but lost 7-11 in the final end.

Div 3 saw the D team of Bev Scott-Johns, Malcolm Elliott and Alex Everett-Bolter repeat their first-round 5-5 draw against high-flying Nimrod B, this time in Nimrod's own backyard. Captain Scott-Johns bagged a brace as did Everett-Bolter but Elliott had to be content with his one win from a five ended battle of attrition with Nimrod's Dave Grant which said it all at 13-11, 10-12, 9-11, 12-10, 9-11. Teenager Everett-Bolter could so easily have come away with a much-deserved hat-trick but he lost out 7-11 in the fifth end against Ken Burrage having taken the first two ends. The doubles were needed for victory and the extra point and it was level pegging after the fourth end. However, Scott-Johns and Everett-Bolter lost their way a bit in the fifth and went down 3-11.

Div 3 also saw the E team of James Lewis, Gerard Redman and Dave Sutton dislodged from the summit by fellow challengers Merton F in a 3-7 home defeat. Milton beat Merton 6-4 in the first round at Southbourne but this time Merton brought out their big gun in the form of the unbeaten Phil Beeden who won all three. Milton really had to battle for their point which was richly deserved. Sutton played out of his skin and was very unlucky not to join Redman in beating Ray Davis by losing 10-12 in the fifth end. Captain Lewis went 2-0 down against Peter Dexter and was 10-6 behind in the third but came back to take it 15-13 and went on to win the game. In the end, the doubles were needed to salvage the point and Lewis and Redman duly obliged in a hard-fought battle over five ends against Beeden and Dexter.

In Div 4, the F team of John Parkhouse, Les Smith and Richard Barrett looked like improving on their first round 4-6 away defeat against Nimrod C when the visitors turned up a player short at Mudeford Wood. However, Milton were unable to add to the three-game advantage so they ended up losing 3-7.

The Club's other Div 5 team, the G's Keith Kensley, Peter Scott and Sam Watkins suffered a repeat of their 2-8 first-round defeat against Nimrod D, this time away at Winton. Kensley and Watkins won Milton's singles and they were oh so close to coming away with a point from the doubles as they went 2-1 up against the Nimrod pairing. However, they saw the point slip from their grasp as they lost tantalisingly 12-14 then 11-13.