

Goodbye to Ian McCarthy, the legend of the Wandsworth League retires after 50 years!

By John Llewellyn (19/9/17)



The expression “legend” is banded about quite often these days but in the case of Ian McCarthy it rings true. He has an amazing 50 years of organising table tennis in South London behind him and managed to keep the Wandsworth & District Table Tennis League alive through some of the most difficult times the sport has seen. His decision to retire from running the league means he will cut back a little on travel as Ian currently lives over 40 miles away from the league! He has held the role of Chairman, General Secretary, Match Secretary, Tournament Organiser and Cup Competitions organiser over the years. He has actually been a member of the league since the mid 1950’s when he started playing in it as a teenager. He has successfully run many different clubs and teams and today is still running St Pauls TTC, even though he moved to Kent some years ago he still does a 90 mile round trip to Wimbledon every week. On the organising league committee side his first involvement was in 1967 when he became the General Secretary of the league, then almost twenty years later in 1986 he took over as Chairman of the league after Keith Hurlock retired. In 1987 he organised the closed championships and continued to do so until 2012 when Mike Loveder took over. In addition to all this he ran the 2 cup competitions as well.

John Llewellyn took over Ian’s various roles in May this year and said “Ian’s contribution to the league is immeasurable and quite frankly I doubt that the league would have survived without Ian being there to keep it going, to say we are going to miss him is a huge understatement”.

Mike Loveder, Chair of Surrey Table Tennis Association, added “I have known Ian since I started playing TT in the early 70’s. In those days there were about 100 teams in the League and, despite the decline of more recent years, there is no doubt it has been Ian’s dedication that has enabled the League to survive. Such committed volunteers are a rare breed nowadays. I’m sure many players currently dotted around South London, Surrey and beyond would like to say “Thank you” even though that barely seems adequate.