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Dates for your diary:

- 18th–19th April– Cardiff City I fight for promotion in the British League Play-Offs in Cippenham.
- 23rd April– Cardiff Closed held in Sophia Gardens.
- 26th April– Dragon Tournament takes place in the club for juniors.
- 5th May– Summer League Division 2 matches begin.
- 7th May– Summer League Division 1 matches begin.
- 9th–10th May– Club players compete in London GP.

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New Players Targeted During ‘Over 50s Month’

The club are inviting retired and older people in the city to try table tennis for free during ‘Over 50s Month’. Building on the success of the club’s sessions for players over fifty, and on the increasing popularity of the sport amongst older people generally, the club will be running four sessions a week for the age group between 10 and 12 every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The new timetable is intended as a temporary trial to make certain that the club can attract new players while ensuring that table availability is not affected.

As a low impact non-contact sport, table tennis is one of the most accessible and rewarding ways for people to keep



The club are looking to add more Over 50s slots to avoid sessions becoming congested.

physically and mentally active at any age. In addition to the physical benefits, such as improved cardiorespiratory functioning and the strengthening of muscles in the arms and the core, studies have shown that the rapid tactic-formation required by the sport may even have a positive impact on overall mental cognition as a person gets older, with ‘table tennis therapy’ being adopted by several influential Alzheimer’s care projects.

The sessions also provide a regular social opportunity for retired people in the city. During these casual gatherings players rotate around the tables, meeting and playing with a wide range of people and abilities. The club’s lively pre-existing Over 50s community can testify to the welcoming atmosphere on weekday mornings.

Ever competitive though, current players are now battling it out to win courses of free 1-on-1 coaching by introducing friends and relatives to the club as part of the Over 50s Referrals Competition. The competition is open to anyone and any new players can have their first three sessions for no charge. Over 50s Month runs until 21st May.

Cardiff City I Make the Play-Offs in Successful British League Season

Cardiff City I confirmed their place in the Division 1 Play-Offs in the final weekend of the Senior British League season. Another strong weekend from Cardiff City II meanwhile left the young side waiting to hear from league organisers if their third place finish in Division 5 South will prove good enough for promotion.

A win and a draw on the Saturday made progression into the play-offs a mathematical certainty for Cardiff City I. A late title challenge for the club was ruled out on Sunday morning, however, as Cardiff went down 6-2 to Bristol Academy. The team bounced back though to take a point from a hard-fought draw with Ormesby, securing the division’s runner-up spot.

For Cardiff City II three wins and a draw over the weekend made for a third-place finish in only the team’s first season competing at the senior level. League organisers are still undecided as to whether or not Cardiff’s strong finish will see them promoted, since the fifth tier is a relatively new addition to the league system.

New Summer League Launches in May



A sign-up sheet for the league is located in the club behind 'the robot'.

With the close of the local league season in April, the club are launching a new team event providing competitive opportunities into the summer. The 'Summer League' opens during the week commencing May 4th, and the new league system will consist of a first division playing on Thursdays and a second division playing every Tuesday.

For those joining from the Cardiff League, the Summer

League Division 1 is recommended for players of a 'W.I.S Division' or first division standard, while Division 2 is best suited to those in Division 3 or 4 of the local league system. The Summer League is open to anyone though, so players don't need to have already been involved in any other competition before entering.

The club are looking for six teams of three players to commit to five weekly match days.

Individuals who would like to be involved but are lacking a team should speak to club coaches, who may be able to group them with other players in a similar situation. The two tier format of the league means that the event will cater for a broad range of abilities and teams new to competitive play are more than welcome at the event. A sign-up sheet is available in the club or, alternatively, interested players can email the club.

*"Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I
remember. Involve me
and I learn."*

- Benjamin Franklin

Scheme Planned to Offer Players Experience of Coaching

An opportunity will soon be introduced for players wishing to gain an understanding of coaching whilst earning credit to spend in the club. The coaching scheme will allow players from across the age groups to assist club coaches in running the larger group coached sessions.

The scheme offers players the chance to experience the sport

from a coach's perspective. The project can also provide those involved with demonstrable leadership skills that could be used to boost CVs or university applications. Participants will be strongly encouraged to attempt the TTW 'Leader's Award' or the UKCC 'Coaching Award' to supplement their new found practical know-how.

As the scheme will be an unpaid opportunity, the club are keen to reward those involved by giving out club credit via a points system. By helping out at sessions players will be able to gain points which can be collected then exchanged for club merchandise, free admission for coached group sessions or 'Pay as you Play' or even full courses of 1-on-1 lessons.

Club to Feature on 'Made in Cardiff' TV Sports Show



Footage of club players in action will be broadcasted across the city to promote 'Over 50s Month' .

A camera from Made in Cardiff was in the club recently to film footage for the station's 'Left Field, Right Pitch' sports show. Presenter Siriol Griffiths visited the facilities on Monday 12th April to cover the launch of 'Over 50s Month', as the club look to encourage more older people to get involved in the sport on weekday mornings.

Several Over 50s players are now scheduled to become stars

of the small screen, having given interviews to Made in Cardiff between games. After the session Siriol stuck around to speak to coaches about other goings on at the club, There was even an opportunity to cover the more elite level of the game as Paralympian Paul Karabardak was filmed in training.

Made in Cardiff broadcasts twenty four hours a day across the city on Freeview channel 23,

Sky channel 134 and 159 on Virgin. The club are provisionally scheduled to feature on 'Left Field, Right Pitch' on Thursday 23rd April from 8:30 with repeats airing throughout the week.

Some of the footage may also feature in news broadcasts as the station look to cover both the launch of 'Over 50s Month' and Cardiff City TTC's involvement in the British League Play-Offs.

Sunday Super League Season Starts Over

The opening season of the Sunday Super League concluded this month as Louise Islip carried away the top prize from the weekly competition. Louise's closest challenger over the six week season had been her Bridgend TTC teammate Dean Richards who had to settle for the runner-up spot after the final games. Cardiff City junior Benedict Watson carried away the third cash prize of the season after being a consistent feature of the top three on every match day

he competed in.

The season saw a total of twenty-five different players in action at the Sunday evening sessions. The popularity of the league has led to the introduction of a second division for the new season which began on April 12th.

Joe Williams was the big winner on the opening match day of the second season. The teenager beat experienced competitors Louise Islip and Paul Sweetland on his way to becoming the first

division's early leader. Five weeks remain for the table to change though and the competition is likely to heat up as more players enter the race for the cash prizes.

Anyone keen to compete on a future match day in either division should get in touch with the club as soon as possible.



Third place Benedict Watson meets eventual champion Louise Islip at the end of last season.

World Table Tennis Day Celebrated With Day of Free Play

The club celebrated the first official World Table Tennis Day by opening on Bank Holiday Monday for a full twelve hours of free play. Easter Monday had been chosen by the International Table Tennis Federation as a global day of promoting participation in the sport across more than fifty countries around the world. Cardiff's contribution to the festivities saw fifty-three

players enjoying the club's facilities along with many newcomers to the sport.

In Argentina tables were packed into a square in central Buenos Aires as players from the national team wowed crowds alongside musicians and tango dancers before the public were invited to have their turn. Malaysia held an extremely open 'National Open' as players of any ability were

invited to compete against the country's top internationals in a 'just-for-fun' tournament. In colder climes Scottish club Garnock Valley made the most of the spring sunshine by setting their tables up outdoors for the day. The weird and wonderful ways the day was celebrated around the world is sure to provide the club with inspiration as they plan for next year.

"The response has been amazing. Being the first year, we were expecting between twenty and forty events but there were more than a hundred in around fifty countries."

- Leandro Olvech,

ITTF Development Director

Junior Players on the Medal March Again

The club's top junior players continue to develop well as three rising stars took home medals this month from prestigious competitions across the UK.

An experienced international at just eight years old, Anna Hursey added a silver medal to her growing collection while representing Wales at the

International Primary Schools Competition in Blackburn.

On the same weekend Cardiff City Junior player Cade Short proved his Senior credentials by winning the Men's band 5 category at the Blackpool GP. Cade bounced back from a group stage defeat at the hands of Scotland's Dylan Curry to beat the same player in the final to

clinch the trophy. Back in Wales, Tommy Heydon was missing from his usual place in the Cardiff City II side as Tommy competed in the Swansea Closed. The sixteen year old dominated proceedings in his home city, claiming the title in both the Junior and the Senior categories.



Anna Hursey with the silver medal she picked up from the International Primary Schools competition.



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Cardiff City Table Tennis Club- ‘A club for all.’

Cardiff City Table Tennis Club is Wales’ only dedicated, full-time table tennis centre. Located in Cathays in the heart of Cardiff, our state of the art facilities are open to the public six days a week for casual ‘Pay as you Play’ sessions as well as international-standard coaching.

The club extends a warm welcome to players of all abilities and levels of experience. Newcomers to the sport can have as much access to our tables as the pros, and can also access individual or group coaching from our friendly team of top quality coaches. The more competitive players will also find themselves well catered for by club teams going strong across the British and local league systems.

Since opening in 2012 the club has built strong links with the local community. Our coaches work alongside the council initiative Sport Cardiff, sharing their ambition of providing sporting opportunities for every schoolchild in the city. The club constantly seeks to build partnerships with local businesses and organisations, supporting the enterprises of our members and neighbours wherever we can.

The club prides itself on its exceptional spirit of inclusivity. We believe that almost anyone can take part in our sport either in its full format or when various adaptations are made. All facilities have been specially designed for wheelchair use, and many of our coaching team have experience of competing at the highest levels of para-athletics.

Our overall ambition is to increase participation in table tennis amongst all ages, genders, backgrounds and abilities both leisurely and competitively. We aim to promote our facilities as a major asset of the city, whilst maintaining the character of the centre as a friendly community hub where anyone is welcome to join us for sport, play and socialising.

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Future of the Club Shaped by First Player Survey



Feedback forms were available in the club throughout March and were also completed online.

In March users of the facilities had their say on the future direction of Cardiff City in the first ever club survey. The club were extremely grateful that so many people took the time to complete the questionnaire, and were delighted with the overwhelmingly positive feeling players expressed towards the club generally. There were also some excellent points raised about how to develop the club in future.

A lack of space in some of the busier sessions was one issue raised repeatedly in the survey. Players’ input on this subject has spurred on the club’s

continuing search for a new home in the local area. The motivation behind the planned move is primarily to increase the number of tables the club can offer, but finding new facilities also means an opportunity to improve parking, the flow of air in the club and potentially for the addition of changing rooms; all points which were also raised in the survey.

In the current building steps are being taken to try to minimise the amount of light which comes through the front door, occasionally causing a distraction for players. Tables at

the club will also soon be numbered so that specific tables can be booked in advance for ‘Pay as you Play’ sessions.

Comments regarding the longer term ambitions of the club and the club’s approach to coaching the sport have also been taken on board with the input of players likely to inform upon the club’s decision-making for years to come.

The questionnaire will shortly be replaced by a permanent Comments Box so that visitors to the facilities can always leave feedback whenever it occurs to them.