

## **REMINISCING – PAUL RANDALL AND OTHER ITEMS**

Many years ago (I live in the past) when the junior set up and coaching was organised by the County Association, and I am going back 50-60 years or so, the orchestration was first class with several tiers such as County Squad, Reserve Squad, Improvers' Squad etc. All the youngsters knew exactly what the score was and where they were and were given numerous opportunities to climb the ladder by way of ranking events.

It was a good time with the County Junior team winning several National titles under the guidance of head coach, John Ellis. I tagged along as "mind" coach and there were any number of helpers and other coaches coming through.

What prompted this article was something I saw on U-Tube recently when a player cleverly hit a ball to send his opponent back and then deliberately missed the return to back foot him following by actually touching the ball over the net to win the point. You need to see it.

Back then in Leicester a young lad by the name of Paul Randall came through the ranks, climbing rapidly into the county junior team purely being self taught. He was virtually un-coachable because it would mean stopping everything he did and starting from scratch, and he was doing very well, thank you, with his unique style. Several times during his career I saw him do just what I have described – deliberately miss the ball only to then take it later and it virtually always reaped a point.

Paul eventually became County Senior Champion as well as topping the Division One averages but his table tennis career was relatively short lived and he went to live in Spain with his family. I understand he came back to Leicester a few years ago but not to play table tennis.

John Bowness.