

## ELECTION STATEMENT FOR RITCHIE VENNER (*April 2025*)

I have been a Board member of TTE for four years and I am asking for your support to re-elect me to that position for another four years. During that time I have always put our sport and our members front and centre in every contribution and decision I have made. It has not always made me popular, but for me it has been the right thing to do.

Like many of you, I have been frustrated at some of the decisions and the direction we have been taken in the past four years, but I do believe we are turning a corner, with more people with the best interests of the sport now becoming part of the decision-making process. I have been one of the people who have campaigned to achieve this and want to be part of the future to ensure we stay on track. I would ask for your support to help me achieve what is in the best interest of table tennis and the many people, of all abilities and ages, who play it.

On a few specific points...

- **Competition Programme:** Our competition programme needs to meet the needs of the people who play the sport. For the past few years, I have chaired the TTE Tier 1 Competitions Committee, where we have brought together experts from within the sport to advise the Board of improvements which could be made to the programme. In recent years, the competition programme has fragmented and this trend needs to be reversed. I am pleased to say that by bringing together people with experience, expertise and personal knowledge we are making progress. I want to work to continue that.
- **National Championships:** Like many of you, I can remember the buzz of the National Championships in years gone by. We have made progress in many areas, and it is great to be able to show-case our top talent at this event. But we must not be complacent. I believe that this event is ready for a refresh and am working to build on the progress made so that it is enjoyed and experienced by more people. We should be taking what works now and what worked in the past, and build the best event we can.
- **Governance:** The contribution of members of our table tennis community has been down-graded in recent years. I have been actively campaigning to increase the number of people on the Board from within the table tennis community and I am pleased to see that we are now in a more balanced position. While we can appreciate the skills and contribution of independent people from outside the sport, we must not allow people from within the table-tennis community to be under-valued again. I will work to ensure that the interests of the sport are well represented.
- **Talent & Performance:** In order to perform at the highest level internationally, we need to ensure that we have the right environment for our young talent to be identified and supported in order for them to achieve their full potential. I enjoy a close working relationship with the T&P side of table tennis, particularly Don Parker, and we both recognise the importance of providing the right competition landscape to complement the development of our elite athletes.
- **No barriers:** I am actively involved as a volunteer and coach in local leagues and clubs in Liverpool, and I enjoy regular coaching sessions with players of all standards, abilities and disabilities, and ages. We must ensure that everyone who wants to play table tennis is welcomed into our community – and that we do not place unnecessary barriers or restrictions in their way. Our regulations and structure must facilitate play, not hinder it, and I actively oppose anything which may create barriers – intended or otherwise.

**Table tennis background** - I was born into a table tennis family and have played our sport all my life at junior, senior and veteran level. My father, Harry Venner, was an England international who played in the World Championships and countless international opens, he ran the famous Putney club and was a renowned coach at national and international level. I have a life-long involvement and passion for our and still play local league, county, British League and VETTS.

I hope you will give me your support. Please don't hesitate to contact me: [ritchie.venner@sky.com](mailto:ritchie.venner@sky.com)