

Captain's Report – Peggy Bayer Feb 17&18 2007

The Junior Camrose and Peggy Bayer Home International matches took place at the Bunratty Shamrock Hotel, near Limerick in the Republic of Ireland on the weekend of 17th and 18th February. As always, the Irish were wonderful hosts and made everyone welcome. The bridge was played in a conference centre adjacent to the Hotel and the playing conditions and organisation were excellent – our thanks are due to Paul Porteous of the CBAI.

Wales fielded a team for the Peggy Bayer in Ireland, having failed to do so in Scotland in 2006 and they served their country well. They finished 4th out of the five nations but this position does not truly reflect their achievement as they were in contention for 3rd place in the very last match which was only narrowly lost. England, with a very experienced squad, and Scotland, whose team included a full Camrose member, were the favourites for the top two places and so it proved. The Wales team of 5 players had only one member who had played in the Peggy Bayer before, Claire Evans. Despite their lack of experience they acquitted themselves very well, including a winning draw in the first of their encounters with England. Of the 8 matches played, Wales won 4 (including the 1 point win against England) and narrowly lost 2 others. They went into the last match with Northern Ireland with only one point separating the teams – any win by Wales would have put them 3rd. Despite a valiant effort they lost by a mere 3 Imps (14-16 VPs) and so finished 3 VPs behind Northern Ireland. The Republic were 5th.

The team was:

Claire Evans and Becky Watkins.

Claire is the most experienced member of the team, having played in the Peggy Bayer, and also on occasion in the junior Camrose, since she was 9. She and Becky played throughout and Becky belied her inexperience and overcame her initial nervousness to play very steadily for all 96 boards. A very solid performance.

Matt Stephenson, Jonathan Richards and James Boulton.

These three alternated and played together very consistently. Matt played thoughtfully and with very good presence at the table. He combined well with both Jonathan and James.

Jonathan, the youngest member of the team at 13, impressed everyone with his playing ability and his manner at the table.

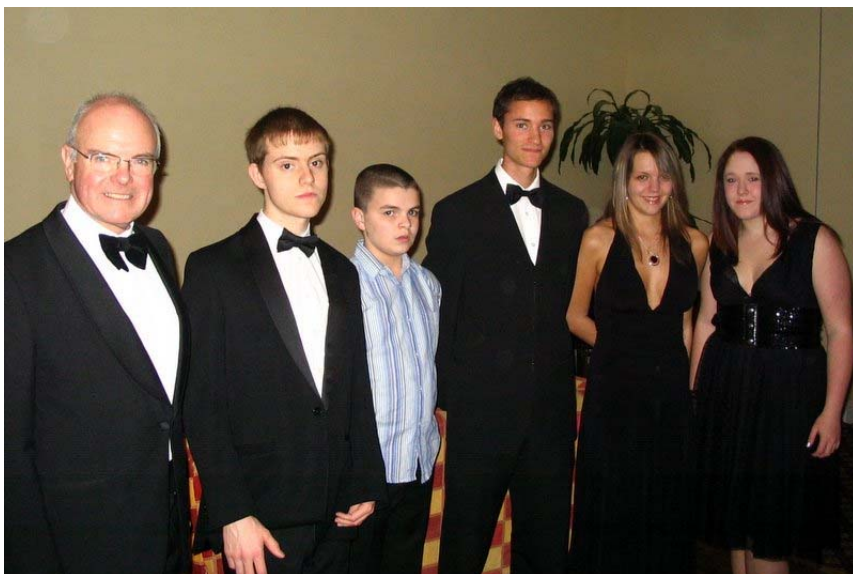
James has only been playing the game for 16 months but proved a very solid and thoughtful player as well as a relaxed and considerate partner.

Away from the table the team mixed well with the other countries and have made a lot of friends. They behaved impeccably and I was immensely proud of them. This bodes well for the future.

Report by Keith Sharp (Peggy Bayer npc)

The results:

Against Scotland	lost	4 – 25
England	drew	15 – 15 (winning draw)
R o I	won	20 – 10
NI	won	16 – 14
Scotland	lost	14 – 16
England	lost	10 – 20
R o I	won	20 – 10
NI	lost	14 – 16



The full team ready for the dinner: Keith Sharp(npc), James Boulton, Jonathan Richards, Matt Stephenson, Claire Evans and Becky Watkins.



Keith Sharp with Jonathan Richards, Becky Watkins and Claire Evans