



Senior International Representation 2021/22



Senior International Representation – 2021/22

Summary

This report describes our participation and results in the 2021/22 international (FIPJP & CEP) season. It does not provide any detailed commentary on the technical, tactical or mental performance of players at the tournaments which is confidential to our coaches.

Since the 2021 Annual General Meeting of Pétanque England (PE) our Senior Men and Women have participated in the following international tournaments:

- The 19th World Women's Triples Championships held from 12 to 14 November 2021 in Santa Susanna, Spain organised by the FIPJP;
- The 49th Men's World Triples Championship held from 19 to 21 November 2021 in Santa Susanna, Spain organised by the FIPJP;
- The 4th World Singles and 3rd Doubles and Mixed Doubles Championships held from 12 to 15 May 2022 in Karlslunde, Denmark organised by the FIPJP;
- The 10th Women's European Triples Championships held from 2 to 5 June 2022 in Torelavega, Spain organised by the CEP; and
- The 3rd European Singles and inaugural Doubles and Mixed Doubles Championships held from 13 to 17 July 2022 in 's-Hertogenbosch, Netherlands organised by the CEP.

Key highlights

- In 13 separate tournaments we hit our target of qualification for the top 16 on seven occasions, the best ever run in an international playing season;
- We qualified for the Top 16 stage in all five tournaments at the European Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles, our best ever achievement; and
- We won historic medals at European level in both Women's and Men's Doubles.

Tournament by tournament

Women's World Triples Championship, 12 to 14 November 2021

Team: Becky Edwins, Hannah Griffin, Sarah Huntley & Rachel Kelly.

Coach: Matt Blyton.

Head of Delegation: Not sent.

Team selection

Initially scheduled to take place in Ayutthaya (Thailand) between 4 to 8 November 2021, the World Women's Triples Championships were cancelled by the Thai Pétanque Federation in June 2021 due to the world COVID-19 pandemic.

It came as quite a surprise when the Spanish Federation stepped in with an offer in September 2021 to be hosts for the Championships. Taking into account the latest changes by the UK Government on overseas travel and the COVID-19 restrictions which applied in Spain, the PE Board met on 29th September 2021 and agreed to participate following a careful risk assessment.

The background to the selection of the Women's team was far from ideal owing to the lack of structured Squad days following the three SSE Triples events in 2021. The Board therefore agreed that the fairest process was to offer three of the places to the winning team members from the 2021 series – Emma Coggins, Becky Edwins and Sarah Huntley and to then select the fourth player from the team that finished second.

Regrettably, Emma was unable to take up the representational opportunity. It was decided by the National Women's Coach, Matt Blyton, to offer the two remaining places to Hannah Griffin and Rachel Kelly, members of the second placed team in the SSE. For Becky, Hannah and Rachel, this would be their first experience of representing England at this level of the sport.

Given the very tight six-week preparatory timescale, there was limited time for team preparation, but the players and coach worked together to prepare as best as they could.

Precision shooting

Sarah Huntley was selected to undertake the precision shooting and scored 21 points, with one three-point score ruled out on the basis of a marginal foot fault call by an umpire.

This left Sarah in 17th place by just one point, with the cut off for participation in the repêchage set at 16th.

Triples - Swiss

With an entry of 37 teams, the format for the Triples was a five round Swiss with the top 24 teams going into the World Championships and the remaining 13 going into the Nations Cup. The top 8 after the Swiss would go directly to the Quarter Finals, while teams ranked 9 to 24 would play a cadrage knockout round.

Game 1: v Belgium	L 5-13
Game 2: v Andorra	W 13-6
Game 3: v Demark	L 9-10
Game 4: v Sweden	L 4-10
Game 5: v Austria	W 13-3

After the Swiss we were in 27th spot in the rankings, with a BhN of 11, meaning that on average our opponents won 2.2 games. Four teams made the cadrage on 2 wins, but the lowest qualifying BhN was 13. Fine margins, but the critical match was against Denmark where we very narrowly lost in the timed game.

Nations Cup

We were not required to play the cadrage for the Nations Cup, and progressed straight through to the Round of 16, which also included the losers in the cadrage of the Championship. We faced Slovakia, who had been ranked 22nd after the Swiss and who were defeated 9-13 by Cambodia in the Championship cadrage.

R16 v Slovakia	W 10-3
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Our opponents in the Quarter Final were Canada. This team had been ranked 30th after the Swiss and had defeated Malaysia and Scotland in the Nations Cup.

QF v Canada	L 2-13
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Assessment

The pre-tournament targets set by the Coach were to make it through to the knockout stages of the Championship and failing that to medal in the Nations Cup.

We narrowly missed out on these objectives and in comparison with the previous World Championships (Cambodia, 2019), where we were ranked 40th after the Swiss and were eliminated in the Cadrage of the Nations Cup, there was progress in that we won one more match and were ranked 27th by the FIPJP.

Having said that, it is important to recognise the very late decision to send a team and the limited time for preparation for the Coach and team undoubtedly impacted on performance.

The top score in the precision shooting qualification was 33 points and the minimum cumulative score to qualify for the Quarter Final head to head was 52 points, meaning an average of 26 points per round. The highest score was 42 points and the gold medal was won by a score of 37 points.

At the 2019 WC (Cambodia, Sammy Thatcher), we scored 18 points in the qualification and 11 points in the repêchage. We were placed 22nd. The cumulative score to qualify for the shootout was 58. At the 2017 WC (China, Sarah Huntley), we scored 24 points in the qualification and 35 points in the repêchage, missing out on a Quarter Final shootout by three points (62 points got 8th place). We ended up 10th. Sarah has medalled in this discipline before and it is a realistic target for England to medal again in the future but based on an average of the last three WC's, the target points score to qualify (assuming repêchage) is 58.

We should think of a minimum target of 30 points in a complete precision shooting round to give ourselves a fighting chance of qualification for the head-to-head in the knockouts.

Men's World Triples Championship, 19 to 21 November 2021

Team: Jack Blows, Matthew Eversden, Sofiane Lachani & David Plumhoff.

Coach: Jonathan Sewell.

Head of Delegation: Not sent.

Team selection

PE originally intended to send a team drawn from the 2019 Men's Squad to the World Triples Championships in the summer and a team drawn from the 2021 Squad to the European Triples Championships in September. Unfortunately, both the scheduled World and European Championships were cancelled due to the impact of COVID.

Completely unexpectedly in September it was confirmed that the World Championships would be held in Spain in November. The European Championships remained cancelled.

The decision was taken to draw the team from the 2021 squad – on the basis that the 2021 squad had demonstrated their form and consistency through the SSE events as well as having played together to prepare for international representation in appropriate competitions after SSE. The decision was based on taking the best possible team.

Precision shooting

Sofiane Lachani was selected to undertake the precision shooting and scored 24 points. Sofiane was ranked 27th out of 47 and was nine points short of qualification for the repêchage.

Triples - Swiss

With an entry of 47 teams, the format for the Triples was a five-round timed Swiss with the top 24 teams going into the World Championships and the remaining 23 going into the Nations Cup. The top 24 would play a 'mini barrage' with three teams in each barrage. The top 2 in the poule would progress to the last 16 and the third would drop into the Nations Cup.

Game 1: v France L 2-13

Game 2: v Greece W 13-7

Game 3: v Latvia W 13-8

Game 4: v Netherlands L 2-13

Game 5: v Scotland. W 13-2

After the Swiss the published rankings showed that we were in 18th spot, which put us in the third pot of seeds for the barrage. On this basis we were drawn with Netherlands (the top seeds) and Madagascar (the second seeds in the group). This meant that we would play Madagascar in the first poule game.

After we had played Madagascar it became apparent that a mistake had been made in the scores for one of the final Swiss games. The scoresheet for Mexico against Greece had shown a Mexico win – when in fact the game was won by Greece.

The draw for the poules was therefore done on the basis of the Mexico win, resulting in incorrect BhN and fBhN. After the result was corrected, England were stated as being in 15th place in the Swiss rankings with a BhN of 15, meaning that on average our opponents won 3.0 games. A correct ranking would have placed us as second seed in a league with France and the USA.

This was only picked up/disclosed after the first round of barrage had been played and despite our protestations the organisers were not willing to make any changes. What was most disappointing was that no effort had been made to contact those teams who had been disadvantaged by the mistake to explain what had happened.

Triples – Barrage (Round of 24)

Game 6: v Madagascar L 2-13

Game 7: v Netherlands L 6-13

The two losses meant that we were eliminated from the World Championships and were placed automatically in the Nations Cup at the final 16 stage.

Triples – Nations Cup

Round of 16: v Poland W 13-2
Quarter Final: v Estonia. W 13-5
Semi Final: v Luxembourg L 4-13

Assessment

It turned out that a minimum total of 80 points was needed to qualify for the knock-out rounds (Quarter Finals) of the precision shooting. Scraping into the repêchage (required 33 points minimum) would have left Sofiane needing to score 47 points – a very tall order.

In 2018, at the previous World Championships, Sofiane was also our representative and was ranked 24th out of 41, scoring 27 points (the qualifying score for entry in the repechage being 36 points and Quarter Final qualification post repêchage requiring a combined total of 78 points).

Our best individual score in a round of World Championship precision shooting is 41 points (Scott Ashby, Madagascar 2016). After the repêchage, Scott achieved a total of 70 points, still 16 points short of Quarter Final qualification. This 12th place is our best result to date at Men's World Championship level.

The standards in Men's precision shooting are such that to progress to the Quarter Final and compete for a medal, we have to think in terms of scoring at least 40 twice (which in itself may not be enough to qualify automatically after the first round, 49 points on countback was the target this time to be placed in the top 4 and avoid the repêchage).

There is little room for low scores in any one of the five stages if you wish to succeed and we are currently some way short of performing at this level. Unlike our Senior Women It does not appear to be realistic to set Quarter Final qualification as an objective until we are able to raise our performance significantly in this discipline.

In the Triples, we achieved broadly what we had set out to do, albeit we knew that we could have played better. Our minimum target in the Swiss is to win three out of five games and we achieved that.

The shortcomings in the competition organisation meant that we were given a much harder task in the Round of 24 and ended up playing the Netherlands a second time in the tournament. If the draw for the standings after the Swiss had been calculated correctly and the Round of 24 poule formed on that basis, we may well have made the last 16 (last achieved by an English Men's Triples team in the World Championships in 2010). It would have probably come down to a barrage game against the USA who were ranked 24th after the Swiss qualification. The team would have been very competitive in that match.

We were officially ranked by the FIPJP as 17–24 in the final standings, meaning that we were in the top half of the World rankings for 2021. This is a level from which we can progress and achieve that elusive Top 16 knockout position which remains our primary target. This should be viewed as progress from the last time we competed in 2018 in Canada when we won only two games in the Swiss qualification and were ranked 34th out of 42. We performed better in the Swiss stages, but ultimately the Bronze in the Nations Cup actually ended up matching the result in Canada.

2021 was a difficult year in many respects with the ongoing COVID-19 situation, but the Squad and the selected team were positive and committed to working together in the lead up to this tournament, an ethos which we can build upon going forward.

World Championships for our Men is an intensely challenging environment where we face professional and semi-professional pétanque players as well as players whose countries can provide indoor facilities and regular high level competitions.

Our ability to provide such facilities and the right level of playing opportunities in England falls way short in comparison, which leads to the continued conclusion that we need to travel internationally to find those opportunities.

World Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles Championship, 12 to 15 May 2022

Team: Karen Lombard Alex Spillett, Sofiane Lachani & Callum Lombard

Coaches: Jeremy Huntley (Women) & Jonathan Sewell (Men)

Head of Delegation: Martin Hughes (self-funded).

Team selection

The selections were made by the respective coaches.

The format for this tournament is that the matches in the Singles and Mixed Doubles competitions are played at the same time. This means we have to designate which players compete in the Men's and Women's Singles and which players compete in the Mixed Doubles.

In the case of the women, the criteria for international selection in 2022 published in 2021 was followed. Squad days were organised to assess the top twelve ranked players.

This process led to a decision to select Alex Spillett (Singles) and Karen Lombard (Mixed).

In the case of the Men, the criteria for international selection published in 2021 was followed. This established a squad of six based on the 2021 rankings from which the selection would be made. A Squad day was organised and the coach considered performance in the 2021 World Championships, relevant performance in the playing formats of the Championship and the need to consider representation in the later European Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles.

Additional pre-selection dialogue also took place between the coaches around the Mixed Doubles selection.

One of the Men's Squad (Jack Blows) was not available for selection for the World Championships and along with taking into account a desire to send the best performing Singles player in 2021 (Sofiane Lachani), it was concluded that based on assessed 2021 performance, Callum Lombard (Mixed) should be given his first opportunity to play at Senior Men's level.

The Men's coach also decided that the best performing Doubles team (Jack Blows and David Plumhoff) would be offered the opportunity to play in the later European Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles Championship (see below).

David Plumhoff indicated to the coach that he was not happy with this selection outcome and withdrew from the Squad, signalling that he did not wish to be selected for the later European Championship. This disappointing decision led to David being replaced by another Squad member, Matthew Eversden.

Women's Singles (Alex Spillett)

With an entry of 41 players, the format for the Singles was a four-round timed Swiss with the top 16 players progressing into the final stages and the remaining 25 players eliminated.

Game 1: v Denmark 1	L 4-13
Game 2: v Finland	W 12-9
Game 3: v Andorra	W 13-6
Game 4: v Morocco	L 6-13

After the Swiss we were in 28th spot in the rankings, with a BhN of 6, meaning that on average our opponents won 1.5 games. None of our opponents qualified for the Top 16. This meant we were eliminated from the tournament.

Men's Singles (Sofiane Lachani)

With an entry of 43 players, the format for the Singles was a four-round timed Swiss with the top 16 players progressing into the final stages and the remaining 27 players eliminated.

Game 1: v Canada	W 11-10
Game 2: v Lithuania	W 13-9
Game 3: v Latvia	W 11-10
Game 4: v Denmark 1	L 2-13

After the Swiss we were in 5th spot in the rankings, with a BhN of 10, meaning that on average our opponents won 2.5 games. Two of our opponents also qualified for the top 16.

In the Round of 16 Sofiane was drawn against Andre Lozano (Belgium) a former World Champion and also Belgian and French Champion.

Round of 16: v Belgium L 1-13

Lozano went on to win a Bronze medal (lost to Diego Rizzi of Italy in the semi-final who ended up as runner-up).

Women's Doubles (Karen Lombard and Alex Spillett)

With an entry of 37 teams, the format for the Women's Doubles was a four-round timed Swiss with the top 16 teams progressing into the final stages and the remaining 21 teams eliminated.

Game 1: v Singapore W 13-2

Game 2: v Malaysia W 12-11

Game 3: v Denmark 2 L 7-13

Game 4: v Poland. L 7-9

After the Swiss we were shown as being in 15th spot in the rankings, with a BhN of 9, meaning that on average our opponents won 2.25 games. This was a very tight tie break with five teams below us with a BhN of 8. Two of our opponents Denmark 2 (4th) and Malaysia (11th) also qualified for the top 16.

In the Round of 16, we were drawn against the 2nd ranked team (Germany).

Round of 16: v Germany L 0-13

Germany went on to win the Bronze medal and it should also be noted that Malaysia finished runners up, having defeated Norway, France and Germany en route to the Final.

Men's Doubles (Sofiane Lachani and Callum Lombard)

With an entry of 40 teams, the format for the Men's Doubles was a four-round timed Swiss with the top 16 teams progressing into the final stages and the remaining 26 teams eliminated.

Game 1: v Greece	L 12-13
Game 2: v Malaysia	L 6-13
Game 3: v Austria	W 13-7
Game 4: v Estonia	L 9-13

After the Swiss we were shown in 39th spot in the rankings, with a BhN of 6, meaning that on average our opponents won 1.5 games. Only one of our opponents (Malaysia) qualified for the knockout Round of 16. We were eliminated from the tournament.

Mixed Doubles (Callum Lombard and Karen Lombard)

With an entry of 39 teams, the format for the Mixed Doubles was a four-round timed Swiss with the top 16 teams progressing into the final stages and the remaining 26 teams eliminated.

Game 1: v Australia	L 11-13
Game 2: v Malaysia	L 8-13
Game 3: v Bye	W 13-6
Game 4: v Poland	L 10-13

After the Swiss we were in 38th spot in the rankings, with a BhN of 5, meaning that on average our opponents won 1.25 games. None of the teams we played made the knockout Round of 16 and we were eliminated from the tournament.

Analysis

This was a very intense tournament with a gruelling schedule requiring early starts and late finishes. In terms of a physical and mental challenge it is probably the hardest international test faced by our players.

A measure of the quality of the field across the tournaments was indicated by the fact that France did not win a single medal. Some of the level of play was incredible.

On the positive side, we managed to make the top 16 knockout stages in two out of the five tournaments. The only time we have bettered that in the past was in 2017 (Ghent) when we made the Top 16 knockout stage in three out of the five competitions: the Women's Singles (Sammy Thatcher), Men's Doubles (Jack Blows and Dean Seville) and Mixed Doubles (Jack Blows and Sarah Huntley).

In the Men's Singles, this was the highest ranking after the Swiss at World Championship level we have ever achieved. The Top 16 qualification was also a first for us (this tournament played in 2015, 2017 and 2019).

Although placed 28th in the Women's Singles, we did win two out of four matches, and it came down to the result in the fourth match against a strong opponent. Our best previous result in the Women's Singles was in 2017 when we qualified for the Top 16 (Sammy Thatcher - placed 16th after the Swiss). In 2019, we did not qualify for the Top 16.

In the Women's Doubles, we achieved a Top 16 qualification and had a notable victory against Malaysia who proved that they were one of the top teams in the world (they ended up as Silver medallists). However, this was not our best placing in this format, as we made the Quarter Finals in 2019 (Emma Longstaff and Sammy Thatcher, Almeria, Spain). It was better than our performance in 2017 where we did not qualify for the Top 16.

The results in the Men's Doubles and Mixed Doubles were not what we were hoping for. In the Men's Doubles in 2017 (Jack Blows and Dean Seville, Ghent, Belgium) we qualified for the Top 16 and lost a very close match 11-13 to Cambodia to miss out on the Quarter Finals. We were also very unfortunate not to qualify in 2019 (Sofiane Lachani and Monty Quaia, Almeria, Spain) after losing a final knife-edge Swiss match against Ivory Coast.

In the Mixed in previous tournaments, we have performed much better – we qualified for the Top 16 in 2017 (Jack Blows and Sarah Huntley, Ghent, Belgium) after being ranked 7th in Swiss. In 2019 (Sofiane Lachani and Emma Longstaff, Almeria, Spain), we finished 17th after the Swiss, only narrowly missing out by a single BhN point.

Women's European Triples Championship, 2 to 5 June 2022

Team: Becky Edwins, Gay Evans, Hannah Griffin & Alex Spillett.

Coach: Jeremy Huntley.

Head of Delegation: Not sent.

Team selection

The selection was made by the Coach.

The criteria for international selection published in 2021 was followed. Squad days were organised to assess the top twelve ranked players who wished to be considered for selection.

Precision shooting

There were 24 players competing in the precision shooting. Hannah Griffin was selected and scored 6 points.

This left Hannah in 24th, with the cut off for participation in the repêchage set at 20th. We were eliminated from the competition.

Triples - Swiss

With an entry of 24 teams, the format for the Triples was a five round Swiss with the top 16 teams going into the European Championships and the remaining 8 going into the Nations Cup.

Game 1: v Belgium	W	13-11
Game 2: v Czech Rep.	L	8-13
Game 3: v Italy	L	11-13
Game 4: v Hungary	W	13-2
Game 5: v Spain	L	4-13

After the Swiss we were in 17th spot in the rankings, with a BhN of 12, meaning that on average our opponents won 2.4 games. Four of our opponents made the knockout stage indicating that this was a difficult draw. We missed out by 7 fBHN points (sum of the BHN's of our opponents). The failure of Hungary to win a single game certainly adversely affected our BHN.

Nations Cup

The teams ranked 17 to 24 were placed in the Nations Cup and we were top seeds.

QF v Hungary.	W 13-3
SF v Austria	W 13-12
Final v Estonia.	W 13-7

We ended up as winners of the Nations Cup and ranked 17th overall in the tournament.

Assessment

Our usual pre-tournament targets applied which were to make it through to the knockout stages of the Championship and failing that to medal in the Nations Cup.

We very narrowly missed out on qualification for the Championship but bounced back from that setback to win all three matches in the Nations Cup and end up as winners.

At the previous Women's European Triples Championships (France, 2018) the England team (Sarah Huntley, Emma Longstaff, Sabrina Seville and Claire White) was ranked 16th after the Swiss and progressed to the poules (Round of 16) where we were eliminated after losing to France and Sweden and finished the tournament ranked 9-16).

This was Hannah's first time competing in precision shooting. The top score in the precision shooting qualification was 39 points and 30 points was required to progress automatically in the Quarter Finals head to head shootout. The minimum cumulative score to qualify for the Quarter Final head to head was 46 points, meaning an average of 23 points per round. The highest score in the shootout was 43 points (Sara Diaz, Spain in the Final), but there were two other players who scored 41 in the Quarter and Semi Finals.

The performance levels required in precision shooting are not as high as the World Championships but nevertheless, we should think of a minimum target of 30 points in a complete precision shooting round to give ourselves a fighting chance of qualification for the head-to-head in the knockouts. It does appear from this Championship that to medal, we have to think in terms of 40+ points, which is a tough ask.

European Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles Championship, 12 to 15 May 2022

Team: Hannah Griffin, Alex Spillett, Jack Blows and Matthew Eversden

Coaches: Jeremy Huntley (Women) & Jonathan Sewell (Men)

Head of Delegation: Colin Roper

Team selection

The format for this tournament is that the matches in the Singles and Mixed Doubles competitions are played at the same time. This means we have to designate which players compete in the Men's and Women's Singles and which players compete in the Mixed Doubles.

In the case of the women, the Coach used the same selection pool as set out in the criteria for international selection, the squad days and consideration of performance at the preceding World Triples Championship and World Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles. This process led to a decision to select Alex Spillett (Singles) and Hannah Griffin (Mixed).

In the case of the Men, the criteria for international selection published in 2021 was followed by the Coach. This established a squad of six based on the 2021 rankings from which the selection would be made. A Squad day was organised and the coach considered performance in the 2021 World Championships, relevant performance in the playing formats of the Championship and the interface with the subsequent European Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles.

As discussed above, the original selection was Jack Blows and David Plumhoff, but the latter's withdrawal led to his replacement with Matthew Eversden. Matthew was selected to play the Singles and Jack the Mixed Doubles.

Additional pre-selection dialogue also took place between the Coaches around the Mixed Doubles.

Women's Singles (Alex Spillett)

With an entry of 27 players, the format for the Singles was a five-round timed Swiss with the top 16 players progressing into the final stages and the remaining 11 players placed in the Nations Cup. This format contrasted with the World Championships in that it had an extra qualifying round and the secondary Nations Cup tournament.

Game 1: v Norway	L 12-13
Game 2: v Latvia	W 12-9
Game 3: v Denmark	L 11-13
Game 4: v Poland	W 13-4
Game 5: v Lithuania	W 11-10

After the Swiss we were in 13th spot in the rankings, with a BhN of 11, meaning that on average our opponents won 2.2 games. Two of our opponents also qualified for the top 16. This meant we progressed to the knockout stage.

In the Round of 16, we were drawn against the 4th ranked team (Denmark).

Round of 16: v Denmark L 10-13.

We ended up being ranked 9-16 in the tournament.

Men's Singles (Matthew Eversden)

With an entry of 27 players, the format for the Singles was a five-round timed Swiss with the top 16 players progressing into the final stages and the remaining 11 players placed in the Nations Cup.

Game 1: v Turkey	W 13-10
Game 2: v Poland	W 10-9
Game 3: v Norway	W 13-3
Game 4: v Austria	W 13-5
Game 5: v France.	L 6-13

After the Swiss we were shown as being in 3rd spot in the rankings, with a BhN of 16, meaning that on average our opponents won 3.2 games. Four of our opponents also qualified for the top 16. This was our best ever Swiss position in this format.

Round of 16: v Israel. W 13-10

Quarter Final: v Spain. L 1-13

The Quarter Final draw was against Jesus Escacho (Spain). Escacho went on to secure a Silver medal (lost to Diego Rizzi of Italy in the Final 12-13).

We ended up being ranked 5-8 in the tournament.

Women's Doubles (Hannah Griffin and Alex Spillett)

With an entry of 27 teams, the format for the Women's Doubles was a five-round timed Swiss with the top 16 teams progressing into the final stages and the remaining 11 players placed in the Nations Cup.

Game 1: v Czech Rep. W 10-7

Game 2: v Slovakia W 13-5

Game 3: v Monaco L 7-13

Game 4: v Estonia W 10-8

Game 5: v Latvia L 8-9

After the Swiss we were in 9th spot in the rankings, with a BhN of 13, meaning that on average our opponents won 2.6 games. Two of our opponents Monaco (2nd) and Latvia (6th) also qualified for the top 16.

In the Round of 16, we were drawn against the 8th ranked team (Belgium).

Round of 16: v Belgium W 13-9

Quarter Final: v Holland W 13-7

Semi Final: v Spain W 13-4

Final: v Monaco L 9-13

We finished as Silver medallists.

Men's Doubles (Jack Blows and Matthew Eversden)

With an entry of 27 teams, the format for the Men's Doubles was a five-round timed Swiss with the top 16 teams progressing into the final stages and the remaining 11 teams placed in the Nations Cup.

Game 1: v Czech Rep W 13-10
Game 2: v France L 5-13
Game 3: v Belgium L 8-11
Game 4: v Slovakia W 13-8
Game 5: v Greece W 13-6

After the Swiss we were in 14th spot in the rankings, with a BhN of 12, meaning that on average our opponents won 2.4 games. Two of our opponents France (1st) and Belgium (9th) also qualified for the top 16.

In the Round of 16, we were drawn against the 3rd ranked team (Germany).

Round of 16: v Germany W 13-6
Quarter Final: v Turkey W 13-2
Semi Final: v Italy L 0-13

We finished as Bronze medallists.

Mixed Doubles (Jack Blows and Hannah Griffin)

With an entry of 26 teams, the format for the Mixed Doubles was a five-round timed Swiss with the top 16 teams progressing into the final stages and the remaining 10 teams placed in the Nations Cup.

Game 1: v Monaco L 8-13
Game 2: v Scotland W 13-0
Game 3: v Luxembourg W 9-8
Game 4: v Switzerland W 13-9
Game 5: v Italy L 10-13

After the Swiss we were in 10th spot in the rankings, with a BhN of 13, meaning that on average our opponents won 2.6 games. Three of the teams we played Monaco (4th), Italy (5th) and Switzerland (13th) also made the top 16.

In the Round of 16, we were drawn against the 7th ranked team (Poland).

Round of 16: v Poland L 3-13

We ended up being ranked 9-16 in the tournament.

Analysis

As with the similar format World Championships, this was a very intense tournament with a gruelling schedule, although it was spread out over a longer period. The iconic location in the historic heart of 's-Hertogenbosch made it a very special tournament.

This was without doubt the best performance ever achieved at a top level European tournament for England. It was a superb achievement to have reached the knockout stages of all five competitions and we stood on the podium twice in the main championship of a senior international tournament for the first time ever at a CEP tournament (excluding precision shooting). A pretty sensational and game-changing outcome for us in England.

The continuity in selection of players – all had played in at least one of the previous championships in the cycle – and the continuity with coaches made a positive contribution to our performance. The players clearly bounced off each other's successes and this built confidence as the tournament progressed. Belief is a big thing in competitive sport and we had it at this tournament.

Looking at the individual competitions:

- In the [Women's Singles](#), we have had a better result in the past making the Quarter Finals in 2018 (Sarah Huntley, Savigliano) and the same finishing position in 2022 by making the Round of 16 in 2016 (Sarah Huntley, Halmstad) losing a barrage game which meant we didn't make the Quarter Finals. However, qualifying for the knockout stage of the championship was a creditable performance and even better when we acknowledge that this was the best result ever in this format achieved by an Espoir at Senior level.
- In the [Men's Singles](#), we made it to the Quarter Finals for the first time at European level, our previous best result was making it to the knockout stages in 2016 (Halmstad, Dean Seville) where we lost twice in the poules (R16) to miss out on the Quarter Finals.

- In the **Women's Doubles**, this was a historic breakthrough medal for us in Europe and the triple victories against Belgium, Holland (plus partisan crowd) and Spain in the knockout stage were exceptional. These are opponents against whom we have struggled historically. We were also very competitive in the Final, and only seemed to get undone by struggling to play in one of the two directions!
- The performance in the **Men's Doubles** was also historic. The Swiss qualification was tough with matches against two of the strongest nations in international pétanque. The big win was in the Round of 16 against Germany, a nation that has consistently defeated us in the Men's game when we have faced them. The convincing win in the Quarter Final against Turkey who had beaten Monaco in the previous round was a very good result indeed. Seeing the England team playing the 2022 World Doubles Champions in the Semi Final was also a fantastic spectacle.
- Statistically, we had a hard Swiss qualification draw in the **Mixed Doubles**. Achieving victories against both Switzerland and Luxembourg were very good results against nations where we have struggled in the past. We were also very competitive against Italy.

Overall summary of results

By tournament

Women's WC Triples – 37 entries		
Match	Result	Notes
Precision shooting	21 points	17th, no repechage
Game 1: v Belgium	L 5-13	
Game 2: v Andorra	W 13-6	
Game 3: v Demark	L 9-10	
Game 4: v Sweden	L 4-10	
Game 5: v Austria	W 13-3	Swiss ranking = 27
R16 (NC) v Slovakia	W 10-3	
QF (NC) v Canada	L 2-13	
Summary	W 3 L 4 Win % = 42.9%	Overall rank = 21-24
Men's WC Triples – 47 entries		
Precision shooting	24 points	27th, no repechage
Game 1: v France	L 2-13	
Game 2: v Greece	W 13-7	
Game 3: v Latvia	W 13-8	
Game 4: v Netherlands	L 2-13	
Game 5: v Scotland	W 13-2	Swiss ranking = 18
Game 6 (R24): v Madagascar	L 2-13	
Game 7 (R24): v Netherlands	L 6-13	
R16 (NC): v Poland	W 13-2	
Quarter Final (NC): v Estonia	W 13-5	
Semi Final (NC): v Luxembourg	L 4-13	
Summary	W 5 L 5 Win % = 50.0	Overall rank = 19-20
Women's WC Singles – 41 entries		
Game 1: v Denmark 1	L 4-13	
Game 2: v Finland	W 12-9	
Game 3: v Andorra	W 13-6	
Game 4: v Morocco	L 6-13	Swiss ranking = 28
Summary	W 2 L 2 Win % = 50.0	Overall rank = 28

Men's WC Singles – 43 entries		
Game 1: v Canada	W 11-10	
Game 2: v Lithuania	W 13-9	
Game 3: v Latvia	W 11-10	
Game 4: v Denmark 1	L 2-13	Swiss ranking = 5
Round of 16: v Belgium	L 1-13	
Summary	W 3 L 2 Win % = 60.0	Overall rank = 9-16
Women's WC Doubles – 37 entries		
Game 1: v Singapore	W 13-2	
Game 2: v Malaysia	W 12-11	
Game 3: v Denmark 2	L 7-13	
Game 4: v Poland	L 7-9	Swiss ranking = 15
Round of 16: v Germany	L 0-13	
Summary	W 2 L 3 Win % = 40.0	Overall rank = 9-16
Men's WC Doubles – 40 entries		
Game 1: v Greece	L 12-13	
Game 2: v Malaysia	L 6-13	
Game 3: v Austria	W 13-7	
Game 4: v Estonia	L 9-13	Swiss ranking = 39
Summary	W 1 L 3 Win % = 25.0	Overall rank = 39
WC Mixed Doubles – 39 entries		
Game 1: v Australia	L 11-13	
Game 2: v Malaysia	L 8-13	
Game 3: v Bye	W 13-6	
Game 4: v Poland	L 10-13	Swiss ranking = 38
Summary	W 1 L 3 Win % = 25.0	Overall rank = 38

Women's EC Triples – 24 entries		
Precision shooting	24 points	24 th , no repechage
Game 1: v Belgium	W 13-11	
Game 2: v Czech Rep.	L 8-13	
Game 3: v Italy	L 11-13	
Game 4: v Hungary	W 13-2	
Game 5: v Spain	L 4-13	Swiss ranking = 17
QF v Hungary	W 13-3	
SF v Austria	W 13-12	
Final v Estonia	W 13-7	
Summary	W 6 L 3 Win % = 66.7%	Overall rank = 17
Women's EC Singles – 27 entries		
Game 1: v Norway	L 12-13	
Game 2: v Latvia	W 12-9	
Game 3: v Denmark	L 11-13	
Game 4: v Poland	W 13-4	
Game 5: v Lithuania	W 11-10	Swiss ranking = 13
Round of 16: v Denmark	L 10-13	
Summary	W 3 L 3 Win % = 50.0	Overall rank = 9-16
Men's EC Singles – 27 entries		
Game 1: v Turkey	W 13-10	
Game 2: v Poland	W 10-9	
Game 3: v Norway	W 13-3	
Game 4: v Austria	W 13-5	
Game 5: v France	L 6-13	Swiss ranking = 3
Round of 16: v Israel	W 13-10	
Quarter Final: v Spain	L 1-13	
Summary	W 5 L 2 Win % = 71.4	Overall rank = 5-8

Women's EC Doubles – 27 entries		
Game 1: v Czech Rep.	W 10-7	
Game 2: v Slovakia	W 13-5	
Game 3: v Monaco	L 7-13	
Game 4: v Estonia	W 10-8	
Game 5: v Latvia	L 8-9	Swiss ranking = 9
Round of 16: v Belgium	W 13-9	
Quarter Final: v Holland	W 13-7	
Semi Final: v Spain	W 13-4	
Final: v Monaco	L 9-13	
Summary	W 6 L 3 Win % = 66.7	Overall rank = 2nd
Men's EC Doubles – 27 entries		
Game 1: v Czech Rep	W 13-10	
Game 2: v France	L 5-13	
Game 3: v Belgium	L 8-11	
Game 4: v Slovakia	W 13-8	
Game 5: v Greece	W 13-6	Swiss ranking = 14
Round of 16: v Germany	W 13-6	
Quarter Final: v Turkey	W 13-2	
Semi Final: v Italy	L 0-13	
Summary	W 5 L 3 Win % = 62.5	Overall rank = 3rd
EC Mixed Doubles – 26 entries		
Game 1: v Monaco	L 8-13	
Game 2: v Scotland	W 13-0	
Game 3: v Luxembourg	W 9-8	
Game 4: v Switzerland	W 13-9	
Game 5: v Italy	L 10-13	Swiss ranking = 10
Round of 16: v Poland	L 3-13	
Summary	W 3 L 3 Win % = 50.0	Overall rank = 9-16

Combined

Category	Matches Won	Matches Lost	Win %	Ranking
Women's Triples x2	9	7	56.3	21-24 & 17
Women's Singles x2	5	5	50.0	28 & 13
Women's Doubles x2	8	6	57.1	9-16 & 2
All Women x6	22	18	55.0	
Men's Triples x1	5	5	50.0	19-20
Men's Singles x2	8	4	75.0	9-16 & 5-8
Men's Doubles x2	6	6	50.0	39 & 3
All Men x5	19	15	55.9	
Mixed x 2	4	6	40.0	38 & 9-16
Men + Women x11	41	33	55.4	
Men + Women + Mixed x13	45	39	53.6	

Conclusion

We should place on record our appreciation of the efforts of all our players in the 2021/22 international tournament season which one of the most intensive we have experienced, partly due to the knock-on impacts of COVID-19 where tournaments were postponed. In the space of 9 months, 13 separate tournaments took place at four different venues in three different countries. We played 84 matches where overall we won more than half our matches, qualified for the top 16 on seven occasions out of 13 (53.8%) and medalled twice in both gender categories.

Our Coaches, Matt Blyton, Jeremy Huntley and Jonathan Sewell made a hugely important contribution to the success of our players and teams. Consistency in coaching personnel and input is an important factor in achieving success and represents an improvement on past practice where we often had a different Coach for every tournament at Senior level.

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