

World Badminton Championship Success for Ulster Inter-Provincial Tennis Player, Pam Peard

Ulster Tennis Inter-Provincial player, Pam Peard, recently missed playing at the Senior Veteran Inter-Provincial Championships at Belfast Boat Club. However, she had a very good reason as she was completing the final steps of her journey in achieving the World Over 50 Ladies Doubles Badminton Championship title in Ankara, Turkey, from 9th to 14th September 2013.



Left to Right: Sian Williams and Pam Peard are welcomed back to Ireland by Tommy McGrath, Leinster Branch, after winning a gold medal at the World Badminton Championships; and, Sian Williams and Pam Peard celebrate their achievement.

Pam hails from a family of competitive racquet players. Her mother, Sue Peard, is a member of a Badminton dynasty and a former US Open Tennis player. In a YouTube interview with Caroline Murphy on 17th March 2013, at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryCO-SFfv4E>, Sue talks about her father, the legendary Frank Devlin, her sister, multiple All England winner Judy Devlin, and herself - All England winner along with Judy, many times. More than 50 years ago, Sue married Irish Badminton international Frank Peard and between them, the couple contributed hugely to the development of Irish Badminton. Pam's father, Frank Peard, also played in Wimbledon. As one of the top players in his era he gained automatic entry without having to qualify and played doubles with Raymund Egan. Pam plays for the 1st Donegore Badminton Club in Antrim and plays competitive tennis for Belfast Boat Club.

Leading up to the World Badminton Championships Pam and her doubles partner, Sian Williams, played at the All-England Veterans event to gauge their standard relative to the best in Europe. Pam set up a gym in her garage with an exercise bike and weights machine and trained there 4 times per week since January 2013. Sian is a coach and fitness instructor at Mount Pleasant Club in Dublin, who coaches Leinster squads, and at Clubs and Schools. The pair have played together for over 30 years. Over the summer time Pam and Sian arranged 8 matches at Mount Pleasant in Dublin with 2 male or female Open tournament players for 2 hours on Saturday and Sunday afternoon, as well as matches in Dundalk.

Pam said, "Ankara is a very difficult place to play badminton, as it is at an altitude of just over 3,000 feet. The combination of heat, a large arena, and the slight lack of air makes for an unusual shuttle trajectory, which is hard for the players to cope with. It greatly helped that we were able to get practice time in the arena on the day before the tournament started, and also to have entered the singles and mixed, to get extra games in the arena."

Pam and Sian, sponsored by Metal Technology Limited, progressed to the final by winning each round in two straight sets. In the final they faced singles title winner, Lone Knudsen from Denmark and Mixed doubles winner Mei-Ying Lee from Chinese Taipei. The Irish pair claimed victory over their opponents with a score of 22-20, 16-21 & 21-19.

Ulster Tennis would like to congratulate Pam on her tremendous badminton achievement and hope that her journey inspires Ulster Tennis players to reach their sporting goals.