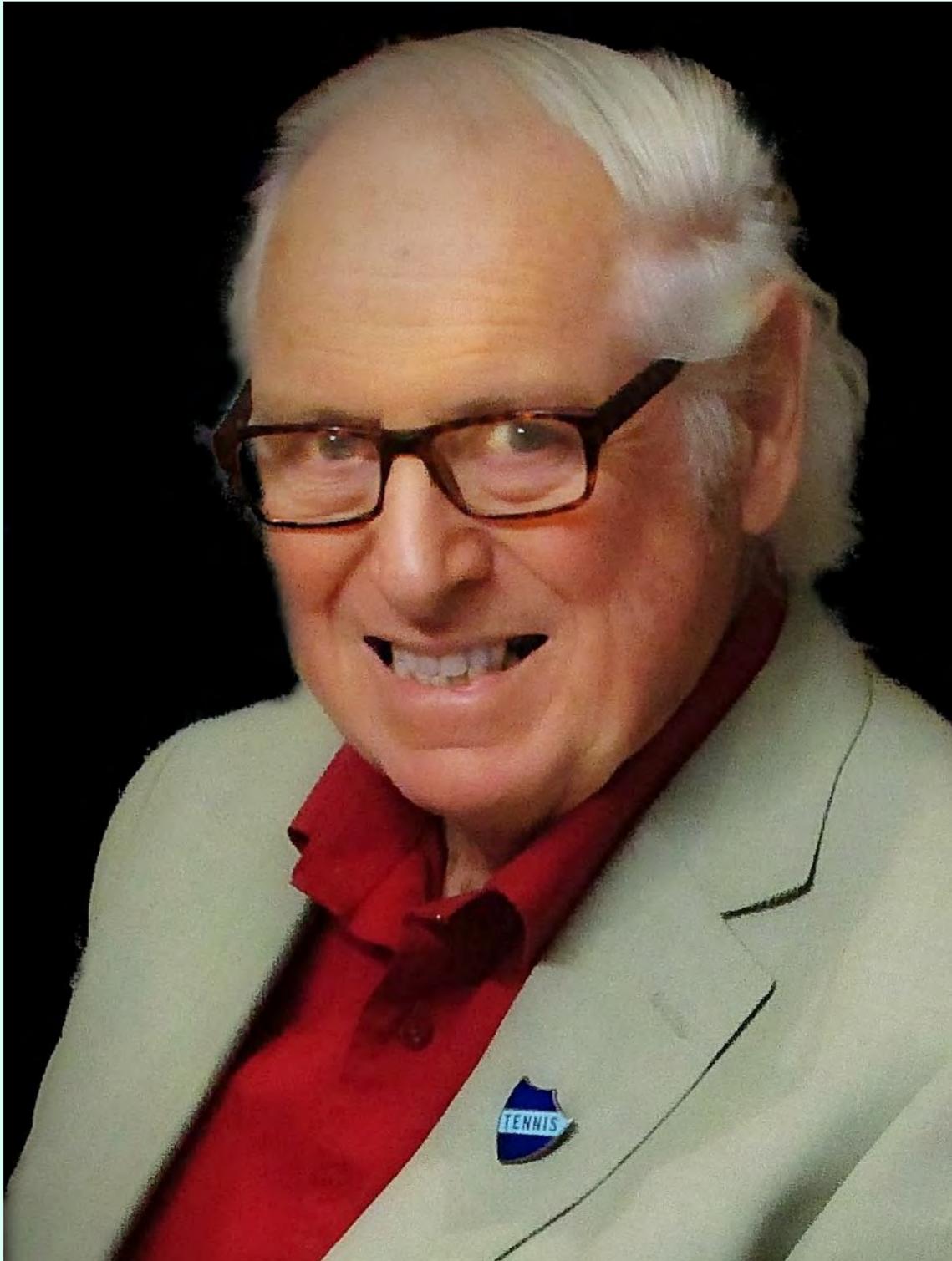


92

# *Table Tennis History Journal*

October  
2020

Excellent reading for Historians, Collectors,  
and all Lovers of our Great Sport



Gerald Gurney (1931-2020)  
In Memoriam

# Table Tennis History Journal



## No. 92

### October 2020

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 June 1 Submit articles by May 15  
 Oct 1 Submit articles by Sep 15  
 Feb 1 Submit articles by Jan 15

## From the Editor

Dear Friends,

Sadly we begin with news of the passing of our founding father, Gerald Gurney (1931-2020). I knew him for over 40 years, and often teased by saying that the ITTF Museum was 'all his fault'. Our tribute to Gerald is presented on the following pages.

**Fabio** has found another fine array of interesting and rare items. **Alan Duke (ENG)** continues his series on early magazine and newspaper articles. **Jorge Arango (COL)** sends his 11th installment on early pirated images. **Bruno Lancon (FRA)** found an ad with a photo of the exquisite Barna hand ceramic, as well as some new old stock.

**Gunter Straub (AUT)** returns with a fascinating story about the remarkable achievements of **Kurt Defris**. A big welcome to **Jota Ito (JPN)**, who recently published a two volume set of books about TT history in Japanese Manga style, and to **Stuart Sweeney (ENG)**, who explores the troubled times of Apartheid South Africa & efforts to join the ITTF. Our **Philatelic Update** is brief, largely due to the lack of TT events during the pandemic. **Auction Action** reports on recent pricing trends.

Hope you enjoy the new issue. Feedback always welcomed. Next edition scheduled for **February 1, 2021**. I encourage our readers to share their experience, research and writings about Table Tennis history.

For our sport, Table Tennis. For All. For Life.

*Chuck*

## Gerald Gurney 1931-2020 R.I.P.



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# Gerald Gurney ENG

1931-2020  
In Memoriam



I am deeply saddened to announce the death of our longtime friend and fellow collector, Gerald Gurney of England. Gerald founded collector societies for Tennis, Badminton and Table Tennis, and launched a popular series of magazines. He published the *Table Tennis Collector* from 1993 to 2002, 27 editions. These are preserved on my ITTF website, at: [ittf.com/history/documents/journals](http://ittf.com/history/documents/journals)

I knew Gerald for over 40 years, and he was always very friendly and helpful. Indeed he inspired me to continue to expand my collection. After I formed the Museum, I often teased him by saying that the Museum was "all his fault". The same can be said about the History Journal.

Although we enjoyed a robust correspondence friendship for many years, I did not meet him until 1991, when we co-exhibited at the World Championships in Chiba, Japan. In a special ceremony we were formally presented to HIH Prince Akishino, then the Emperor's son, and to Olympics President Juan Antonio Samaranch, who accepted our gifts and then toured the exhibition. Great memories!

A special memory that Gerald held dear was an invitation to a Royal Garden party at Buckingham Palace. This was a result of an application I prepared to recognize Gerald and his accomplishments by formal British O.B.E. Honours. Ultimately this was not successful, but they did at least arrange for the invitation to Buckingham Palace. Here are Gerald and Joan at the Palace:



His wife of 60 years, Joan, wrote this eulogy:

Gerald was born during a snow storm at Great Bromley Rectory in 1931, the youngest of 7 children. His father was the Rector of the parish from 1929 to 1944. His mother gave each older child the task of being a mentor and guardian to a younger one.

It was an idyllic country setting with a tennis court and the remains of a moat in the garden. One would have thought that Gerald's passion for, and expertise in the racket sports began here - but no ! All his brothers and sisters were good tennis players and told him that he was too young to play tennis with them, but he could be the ball-boy if he liked.

Neither did swimming become a favourite childhood sport after he attempted to paddle himself across the moat in a biscuit tin which quickly capsized. His mentor got into terrible trouble from their mother! He could not possibly have imagined then that he would spend 60 years being married to Joan who occupied most of her time teaching swimming! Their individual sports were never mutual, but their interest was always shared. Together with her, he enjoyed the beauty, peace and wildlife of the countryside in a house on the site of the old Guildhall in Great Bromley and close to the place of his birth.

Gerald had a very mixed education - firstly from a governess, then at Great Bromley Primary School, followed by schools in Colchester, Holmwood House, the Boys High School and Colchester Royal Grammar School; after National Service intervened, he attended Oxford University and finally Cambridge. He was elected captain of Oxford University Table Tennis, and was awarded half blue. At these universities he achieved the rare distinction of playing table tennis for Oxford versus Cambridge, and then for Cambridge versus Oxford.

After university, he returned to Colchester Royal Grammar School as Head of the English Department, and became a well-respected teacher.



In 1960 he married Joan, a farmer's daughter and also a teacher and avid collector of Bathing Bygones, and started to develop his interest in the history of racket sports, and built up an extensive collection of related items. This led to exhibitions at major events in 13 countries with 3 at Wimbledon. In addition, he made several contributions to films and television programmes. He also qualified as a coach in tennis, table tennis and squash, and campaigned for the Country to set up a National Sports Museum.

After his teaching life concluded at Colchester Royal Grammar School, he devoted his retirement to his collection of racket sports antiquities, set up two collectors' clubs, edited the Tennis Collector magazine and the Table Tennis Collector magazine for many years whilst he continued exhibiting both here and abroad. He wrote extensively including books on the interrelationship of the racket sports. A creature of habit, most of his writings were immaculately hand-written with a fountain pen, although a trusty old typewriter was sometimes a standby. Modern technology was never his forte.

In 2012, in recognition of his outstanding service to British Sports History, he was invited with his wife Joan, to Her Majesty the Queen's Golden Jubilee Garden Party.

Joan survives him together with their son, daughter-in-law and grand daughters. Gerald's sporting legacy will live on in them, and in many other people, both in this country and worldwide, who have been inspired by his dedication to the history of sport.

From **Chris Elks (ENG)**: Gerald Gurney always gave an enthusiastic welcome to anyone who shared his passion for collecting racket sports items. He was a "there you are" person rather than a "here I am" individual. So, when I contacted Gerald almost thirty years ago regarding my passion for tennis antiques and history, he generously drew me into a wider world-wide circle of like-minded collectors and researchers that he had nurtured for several years.

He was equally generous with well-chosen words about any of my recent finds but not so generous with dealers who attempted to charge him over the odds for his potential acquisitions! His legacy is this very fraternity of collectors, researchers and friends. Gerald loved the items that he had carefully gathered but he always made it clear that his real pride and joy lay with his wife Joan, son Anselm and wider family. He will be missed by all of us.

From **Alan Duke (ENG)**: Looking back, it's a surprise to realise that I probably only actually met up with Gerald on 3 occasions, twice at events in Manchester, followed by a weekend's hospitality at his home admiring his huge racket sports collection. But it seems more than that, probably as we corresponded quite often over the years (possibly the only person I still had to buy stamps for!). Gerald was always very helpful when I had a query, and I was able to return the favour on a few occasions. He was always surprised when he rang and I answered immediately with a 'Hello, Gerald' - nothing to do with number recognition, more voice recognition! But not any more, he will be greatly missed. Thanks Gerald, not least for bringing us all together via this Journal.

From **Graham Trimming (ENG)**: It was with great sadness that I learned of the recent passing of Gerald Gurney, a man I held in very high esteem. I first met Gerald in 1988 when he exhibited his collection of table tennis memorabilia at the English Open Championships. I was a regular visitor to international table tennis events at the time and I came across his exhibition again at the English Open of 1992. Meeting Gerald, witnessing his collection and acquiring his fantastic book "Table Tennis: The Early Years" as my guide, gave me the inspiration to start my own collection.

Without Gerald, before the days of Ebay of course, I would not have known that such table tennis memorabilia existed and was out there ready to be acquired. I joined his Table Tennis Collectors' Society and coveted the magazine he produced. When Gerald decided that he could no longer maintain the magazine I could not let such a valuable asset die and so volunteered to take on its editorship, with some trepidation knowing that my expertise could never match Gerald's and that I would be heavily reliant of contributions from others.

Gerald: without you my knowledge of table tennis history would be much poorer. I valued your friendship and influence and will be forever in your debt. RIP

Tennis de Table No. 43, 20 Mars, 1949

by Bruno Lancon (FRA)



**BARNA**

La première marque mondiale

**EST EN VENTE PARTOUT**

**RAQUETTES**

5 plis, caoutchouc marron spécial, manche acajou (*marque incrustée*).

**BALLES**

3 couronnes (*étui transparent*).

**Seule balle sélectionnée pour les Championnats du Monde 1947 et 1948.**

Employées par tous les Champions du Monde entier

*Jeunes joueurs, exigez-les*

Bruno sends some wonderful news, an advertisement for Barna rackets and balls, which appeared in 1949. The ad includes a photo of the Barna hand ceramic which was introduced in TTC58, when I donated it to the ITTF Museum. So now we have evidence of when this rare ceramic was used. The ad does not mention a specific shop, instead 'en vente partout' (on sale everywhere). Thank you Bruno for your excellent research ! See also pages 26-27.

## *New Discoveries - Old Treasures*

### Fabio's Fabuloso Finds

Fabio has an amazing ability to find 'the good stuff', especially rackets, and I believe he has the finest equipment collection in the world.

Following is a summary of some 'Fabuloso Finds'. Thank you for all your hard work Fabio!



What a beautiful set !! Fine compartmented wood box, pair of interesting strung rackets with triangular flat-top heads and short handles, free-standing net fixture, rare ball pick-up device. The set has benefited greatly from Fabio's masterful restoration skills.



Postally sent envelope from 1927, with a very rare label on verso showing a family playing Table Tennis (using perforated wood bats). A translation (with thanks to Jota Ito):  
 Upper text: Please come to SANUKI Trust and Banking Co., Ltd for a selling and buying of stock, a public bond and corporate bond etc.  
 Lower text: Simple life makes your family happy.





The famous 'Bulldog' vellum drum racket by Mally, Club model, English Patent number 24272. Seldom found in original box.



A fine silver Barna racket mounted on a plaque and presented in a plush custom case.



Slazenger Demon thick sponge



'Extreme' thick sponge with knob handle.



Hanno bat with unusual shape - rare.



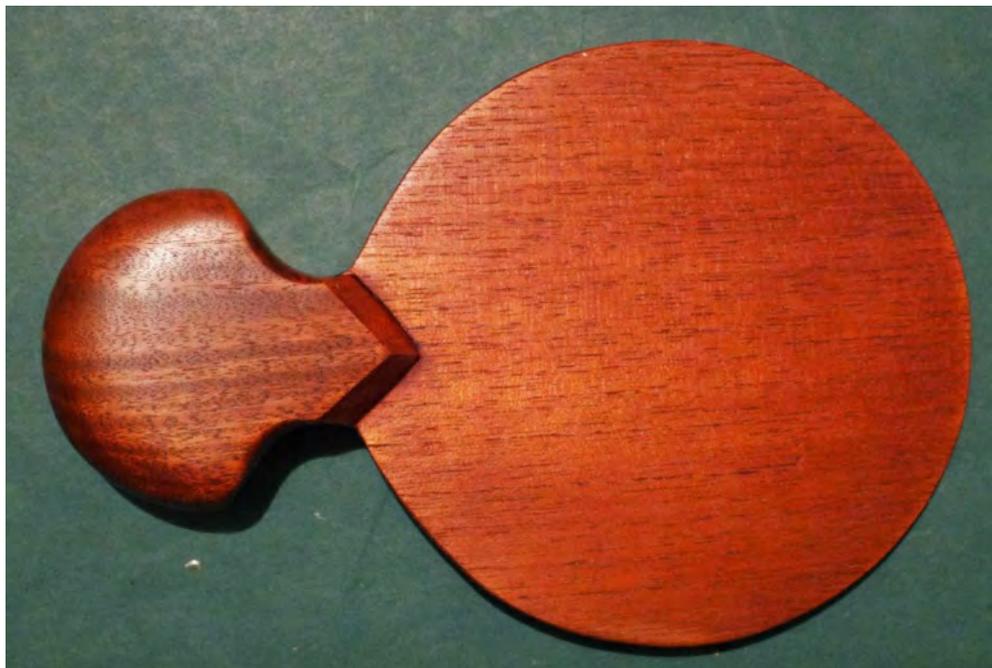
Edan wood bat with perforations. Under the brand is 'gez. gesch.', a German abbreviation for 'protected by law'. This style bat was often used in Japan



Fine example of a Mac Crossen hard bat, with large head. The detail on the handle is very clear - quite often the text has been very rubbed and indistinct. Many hard bat players prefer a Mac Crossen bat, and they have become very difficult to find.



Fine pair of wood bats with bamboo style handles.



Copy of a wood bat with unusual handle, the Tom Thumb bat



Two highly unusual bats



Fabio's New Discoveries, Old Treasures  
Harry Hardesty Pyrographic Art Bats



The above set by Harry Hardesty with pair of pyrographic art bats was found on ebay for only \$30. The always astute Fabio remembered another set with Hardesty pyrographic art bats ... from *Table Tennis Collector* #29 in 2002, shown below.



TABLE TENNIS  
MANUFACTURED BY  
HARRY HARDESTY & CO.  
173 Greenwich St.  
NEW YORK.

## EARLY MAGAZINE ARTICLES – PART 12

by Alan Duke

*This final part features a further story typical of the times, a few advertisements from the same era, and a rather novel way of using the net as part of a verse!*

*Drifffield Times* 25 April 1903

**BUCK HOTEL,**  
DRIFFFIELD,  
**JOHN HOLTBY, PROPRIETOR.**

**BILLIARD and PING PONG SALOON**  
always open.

Special accommodation for Motorists, Cyclists,  
Horses and Traps, &c.

PRIVATE SITTING ROOM FOR LADIES.

*The Boy's Own Paper*

25 April 1903

### THE DEFEAT OF MR. WICKHAM.

A STORY OF PING-PONG AT KING ALFRED'S,  
AS RELATED BY HANLEY OF THE FIFTH.

BY W. E. CULE,

*Author of "Mr. Herne's Hallucination," "Mortimer's Marrow," etc. etc.*

#### PART I

The thing was very unpleasant while it lasted. Sometimes even now Talbot wakes up at night all in a sweat, after dreaming that he is in the middle of that final game once more, with an enemy before and a greater enemy behind. But really the thing is over, and Mr. Wickham is gone. So the story may well be told, partly in relief because it is finished, and partly as a warning to all those junior masters whom it may concern.

It is quite a modern story. When we reassembled last September, it was found that ping-pong had come to King Alfred's with us, as well as all its necessaries and accessories. In a couple of days it was all the rage, and the whole school, from fags to monitors, went in for it with all their hearts. It was not only the chief subject of talk at dinner and tea and supper; but it was strong enough, in some cases, to find its way into the region of our slumbers. Such was the case with my particular chum.

"Say, Hanley," cried Talbot, coming to me one morning in much excitement. "I've had such a dream!"

"Oh? What about?" I asked carelessly.

"Why, I've dreamed a perfect Stroke. There isn't one like it. It was as plain and simple as A B C. It's a masterpiece!"

He was so much in earnest that I began to be impressed. "What was it like?" I inquired.

"Well, I'll tell you." And Talbot took his hairbrush to play the dream-stroke out before me. "To get it in properly, the ball must be rising pretty well. You hold the racquet firmly, but straight up and down—like this. You hit hard, drawing the racquet from left to right as it

touches the ball. That puts a screw on—see? But even without the screw the return is so swift that no one could play it."

By this time I was full of interest. "Hold on," I said, as I slipped my collar on. "We'll go and try it"; and in three minutes we were down in the common-room, racquets and balls in hand. I took the balls, Talbot took his position, and I began to serve him just the kind of thing he wanted.

He couldn't manage it at first, but at about the sixth service it came. The ball was rising a little, but not more than usual. He caught it hard and sudden, holding the racquet in a curious position which I had no time to study. The ball came to my left corner like a flash, and was gone. I knew that it had skimmed the net and touched the table, and that it was now upon the floor; but that was all. I could scarcely claim that I had seen it even.

"Got it!" I cried in admiration, and "Got it!" cried Talbot in triumph. I had never seen him so radiant, so excited; but he had good cause, for that stroke was absolutely unplayable, in my opinion at any rate, and I am of the same opinion still. I served again and again; again and again he brought it off successfully. We began to have visions of a championship, and could scarcely consent to make a pause for breakfast.

At breakfast we told the story to our table. Fellows naturally refused to take it in, and demanded to see the thing with their own eyes. Full of confidence, we agreed, and went back to the common-room the instant the meal was over.

But, alas! for poor Talbot and his stroke. Something had come between him and the full realisation of his dream. Perhaps it was the washy tea we had been drinking, or perhaps the thick bread and butter; things enough in themselves to spoil the beauty of any dream that ever came. Anyway, the wonderful stroke was clean gone, and it was in vain that he postured and protested. It was in vain, too, that I sent him in some of the very easiest balls that had ever run the length of a table. Most of them were shot back into the net, many flew against the walls at a tremendous pace, and the last of the series made straight for Cantling's eye. After that, amid the jeers of the spectators, Talbot threw down his racquet in disgust.

"I've lost it," he groaned. "It's gone!"

So it was; and it has not returned up to the present moment. The worst of it was that the dream stroke ruined Talbot as a player, for he never found himself at the table after that without feeling an irresistible desire to try once more to recover it. Thus he made the wildest shots imaginable, and quite ruined a style of play which had once been very promising. Sometimes he gets in a shot which has some resemblance to the unplayable one, but it is never the real thing. For the rest, he grieves and

## EARLY MAGAZINE ARTICLES

worries about it, thinking of the great things he would have been able to do if the secret hadn't vanished in such a disappointing way. He had some faint idea, too, that he might dream the same stroke again, but it hasn't happened up to this time.

All this, however, is only the introduction to my story, put in to give you some idea of how the ping-pong craze took on at King Alfred's. I must now move a little forward with my chronicle.

It was not to be expected that the thing would be allowed to continue. The football captain began to complain that he couldn't get the fellows to the field, they were so taken up with the new craze, and, on the other hand, the masters began to notice how the school work suffered in every direction from the same cause. There must have been a consultation between the various powers, and I have no doubt that a proper plan of campaign was drawn up.

One day we received a gentle warning that there was to be no more playing either in the studies or the common-rooms, or, indeed, anywhere upon the School premises. For a couple of days the thing was checked, and we kept quiet; but as there were no signs of danger, we soon went at it again as hard as ever. Then the masters made a sudden raid one evening just before preparation, when a score of games were in full swing. Dozens of racquets and piles of celluloid balls were ruthlessly seized, and a stern warning given for future players.

"Well," declared Cantling when we of the Fifth had found time to draw breath, "that was a real stroke, anyhow. Doesn't seem like dream, Talbot, does it?"

"Not at it all" admitted Talbot sadly.

"It's old Wickham's idea, you may depend," said Roberts. "Anything keen and mean and dodgy must be Wickham. I vote we protest."

"How?" asked Smythe.

"By holding a grand tournament!"

Roberts was sure to think of something bold and desperate, and just at that we were quite in the mood to go with him. We waited eagerly.

"It's this way," he explained. "Of course we can't expect to play much more after this, but we might as well have a real good wind-up. Then, if the head gets to know of it, let us say straight out that we did it as a protest against the confiscation of our things. That will show them just what we think of a move like Wickham's."

The idea was taken up at once, and the six of us who were present turned ourselves into a committee. It was agreed that the tournament should be held in Talbot's study, which was the largest at our disposal. The table there was only three-foot-six square, but I volunteered to add my own to it. This made an excellent board, just seven feet long. The time chosen was Saturday evening, and it was unanimously agreed that only the Fifth Form should be made aware of what was to take place.

Things went swimmingly after that. Indeed, they went so well that some of us began to have qualms. The Fifth

fellows were delighted at the idea, but it soon became plain that very few of them would have the courage to take an active part in the affair. They would come to see it—that was well enough; but they steadily refused to identify themselves too closely with the actions of the committee.

We asked for entries, but on Saturday morning had only received two from outside our own body. But all the while the other outsiders were egging us on with keen delight, and declaring that a protest of the kind was not only perfectly legal and proper, but that it was also the boldest and brightest idea that had ever been heard of. This, of course, although it was very pleasant and very encouraging, made it almost impossible to draw back even if we had wished to. So, if some of us did wish to, they were obliged by the power of circumstances to go straight ahead.

### KING ALFRED'S COLLEGE.

The Grand Final Cup Tournament,

Oct. 26, 1901.

A Protest against Robbery, Oppression, and Tyranny.

Referee (possibly)—the Doctor.

Mr. Wickham will be present—if he possibly can.

Owing to the Scarcity of Seats, you are cordially invited to Stand. No extra charge!

First Prize—A Cup. (Value unknown.)

Presented by the Committee.

Any Persons wishing to secure other Prizes are advised to apply to the Doctor (Referee). No Applause! No Chairs! No Noise! No Fees! As it may be easier to get in than to get out, no charge will be made for Admission. Motto:

"Who would not break a Tyrant's Laws,  
And strike a Ball in Freedom's Cause!"

One great feature of that tournament was the Rules. The thing was to be done in style, if it was to be done at all; so Christopher, one of the committee, set his wits to work to frame a set of rules that would be in keeping with the rest of the proceedings. He wrote it in pencil first, and afterwards copied it out neatly on a sheet of foolscap. The fate of this last copy has yet to be described; but it was my good fortune to get possession of the first draft for myself. Thus I am enabled to give it here in full [*above*].

It was agreed, at Christopher's suggestion, that after the tournament the fair copy of the Rules should be pinned to the public notice-board. That would show the enemy how neatly they had been done; for while it was a great thing to play the forbidden game in this grand style, the playing would be of very little effect unless Mr. Wickham could know that it had taken place. He would understand the document well enough, but he would hardly be able to take notice of it officially. He could really prove nothing, and would only make himself absurd by a fuss.

Thus we planned and argued, little knowing how the thing would go.

## EARLY MAGAZINE ARTICLES

The Rules were secretly passed from hand to hand among the Fifth, and were received with much appreciation. They helped to increase the general interest, so that when Saturday evening came all who were in the know found themselves on the tiptoe of expectancy. By seven o'clock Talbot's study was crowded with some eighteen or twenty who had resolved to risk their safety as spectators. The Cup—a tin one, by the way, and dear at one penny—was placed in the centre of the mantelpiece, and the rules were pinned to the wall behind it.

My table was moved in quickly and quietly; but then we were face to face with a difficulty. All the studies were small, and even Talbot's was not large enough to accommodate a seven-foot board comfortably. Making the very best of it, we had to run it straight from the window to the door, and then we found that the door wouldn't shut. Besides, the fellow playing at that end would have to stand right in the doorway, and sometimes, no doubt, outside, in the corridor itself. When we saw this we were taken aback, but Roberts soon discovered another side to it.

"That doesn't matter a bit," he declared. "In fact it's quite an advantage. The fellow playing that end will be able to keep a keen look-out, don't you see, which would be impossible if the door were shut. When he sees danger he has only to rush inside—or, for that matter, to step in quietly and coolly in the ordinary way—and we would have the table moved and the door closed in half a shake. No danger, now, of the Doctor passing by and hearing the tick-tack of the balls."

Roberts persuaded us, as he generally did. A few of the spectators looked rather uneasy, but the majority applauded the suggestion. Two minutes later the tournament had opened.

In the first round I was to play Cantling, Talbot had to meet Roberts, Christopher faced Smythe, and Stuart was to try conclusions with Erne. Stuart and Erne started, the game being for twenty-one points. There was no applause, for good and sufficient reasons; and the spectators, indeed, were packed so closely against each other all round the wall that they could not move their hands to clap. Stuart played at the door and Erne at the other end, these positions being drawn for. Time did not allow of changing ends once the game had begun. It was a most exciting affair from the very beginning. Stuart had not only to play Erne, but also to keep a proper look-out, and to race after any ball that might fly off down the corridor. On the other hand, Erne was so tightly fixed between the table-end and the wall that the advantage was not by any means all on his side. When the ball reached the floor it was very hard of recovery, and when it missed the floor it could scarcely fail to reach some one's face. This added to the interest of the proceedings, and kept things lively.

Stuart defeated Erne, and then Christopher finished up five points ahead of Smythe. Talbot was beaten by Roberts, solely because he insisted upon trying to get in two or three of his dream strokes. During those three

games there were several alarms, which gave us the opportunity of showing with what smartness we could move the table and shut the door; but there was no serious danger. The masters were apparently busy, and for the rest the Fifth Form corridor was not a public highway.

Then came the turn of Cantling and myself. I was rather glad when he drew the post of danger, and took his place by the door. He took the first service, and we were soon in the thick of a fast and close game. I suppose the truth is that we had become careless in the lookout, and that the interest of the game had caused us all to forget its dangers. Besides, Cantling had clearly made up his mind to win, and couldn't be bothered over-much to keep an eye on the other end of the corridor. So the thing that happened was only natural, and the very thing we should have expected.

It was when we were half-way through, and I was two points ahead. I had the ball in my hand, and Cantling was waiting for me to serve. He stood on the alert, his racquet resting on the table; and I was just calculating where to place the ball, when some one came suddenly and quietly behind Cantling in the doorway, and surveyed the room calmly over his shoulder.

It was Mr. Wickham!



*Fraserburgh Herald*

28 April 1903

### Dalrymple Cafe.

RECREATION ROOM,

TWO PING PONG TABLES—

Regulation Size

FIRST-CLASS BAGATELLE TABLE

Newly Added.

PRIVATE PING PONG PARTIES

May be arranged.

GEORGE IRONSIDE

*The Boy's Own Paper*

2 May 1903

### THE DEFEAT OF MR. WICKHAM.

PART II.

That situation was a very painful one. A deep silence fell as the master's eyes ranged round the room. The spectators would have liked to sink into the walls against which they leaned. Cantling, quite unconscious, waited for me to start; then he noticed the silence, turned slowly, and said, "Oh!" with a gasp.

We could see that Wickham was in his most dangerous mood. He was most dangerous when there was a sarcastic smile on his thin face, and when his manner was smooth and quiet. We knew that we were in the net, and that there was probably a bad time before us. He liked to play with his victims before despatching them.

## EARLY MAGAZINE ARTICLES

“Don’t move, any of you,” he said gently; then he came into the room, walked straight up to the mantelpiece, and began to read our Rules! He must have spotted them at the very beginning.

Some of us turned cold. Some felt very hot, and we all felt wild. He calmly read the thing through, while the silence was unbroken; then he turned round to me:

“Very good! Very good indeed! Who are the originators of all this? Cantling, I see, and you, Hanley. Who are the others?”

The others owned up at once. It was useless to try an escape. He ran us over quickly, considering busily all the while.

“H’m! Eight of you. Well, I am sure you will not mind if I take a part in this tournament. I think I will give you all a final round!”

He was too pleasant for anything, and we six were not at all deceived. We guessed and feared that he had got hold of an idea that was just a little more clever and more cutting than even his ideas usually were. And so he had.

“My idea is,” he said, “that each of you shall play a short game with me; for, say, six points. Each point that you fall behind will represent a thousand lines. Thus, if I beat Cantling by six to four he will write two thousand lines for me. If I beat him by four points, he will bring me four thousand.”

Our feelings were mixed when we heard that. It was plain that Wickham could play, or he would never have suggested a plan like this. Four thousand lines! Well, if he had said, “Write four thousand lines each,” the thing would have been bad enough, but we could have borne it. Instead of that, he had arranged to make us so ridiculous into the bargain that we would be certain never to hear the end of this grand tournament of ours. It would be in our ears to the last day of our school lives.

That was just like Wickham; but there seemed to be no help for it. And in a moment he added, to clinch the thing—

“And, of course, if there is any dissatisfaction, you know what to do. You have simply to appeal to *the Referee!*”

Some of the spectators tittered at that. They had taken Wickham’s side, like the chickenhearted lot they were. Cantling picked up his racquet, and returned to his place. Wickham took mine with a dry “Thank you, Hanley!” and prepared to serve.

There is no need to describe the events of the next fifteen minutes in full. Wickham was a good player, and naturally he was able, on an occasion like this, to do just as he pleased, for all our nerve was gone. Cantling finished up with five thousand lines to write—enough to keep him in for the whole term, not to mention the humiliation of it.

“I’m afraid you’re not in form, Cantling,” said Wickham. “Next, please!” And amid the grins of the spectators, Christopher slunk forward and took Cantling’s place. He made two points, and was left with a thousand

lines less than Cantling. Smythe came next, but made a terrible hash of the thing and did not score at all. Roberts succeeded him, and came off with three thousand. I, determined not to fall below Roberts, played up a little better, and to my delight acquired four points when the enemy had scored six.

“Come,” said Mr. Wickham. “we are really improving. If you were not quite so nervous, Hanley, you would do very well!”

Nervous! The wretch! We had good cause to be nervous. Talbot came forward to take my place. “Nevertheless,” continued the master, “I do not think my supremacy is in danger. I fancy I have won the cup!”

The spectators laughed outright that time. They had seen a better tournament than they had ever expected to. Little did they guess that the best was yet to come. Talbot, although more nervous than any of us in some respects, is a fellow with a good deal of spirit, and when occasion serves can be the boldest of the bold. This evening he was to have such an opportunity as would never come again, and I have to show what use he made of it.

*Kentish Independent*

8 May 1903



He took his place, and started by serving. Mr. Wickham returned with a swift shot that was very difficult to play. Talbot not only failed to play it but allowed it to pass him, and rebound from the farther wall of the corridor. He ran to recover it.

As he picked it up he glanced, quite accidentally, down the corridor to the end; and he saw some one come through the door in the distance, and start to walk up the corridor towards him. This some one was no other than the Doctor!

If some fellows had been in Talbot’s place then, they would have acted very differently from what Talbot did. Some would have slipped into the room and given the news in startled tones; some would have stood stock-still and stared until the Doctor reached them. In either case, no doubt, we would all have taken the alarm. Mr. Wickham would have thrown down his racquet and become, instead of a tormentor, a judge; and the Doctor,

## EARLY MAGAZINE ARTICLES

on his arrival, would have found him rating us soundly, and distributing punishments right and left.

But Talbot managed it differently. He turned cold at first, and would have done just as other fellows; then the great idea came to him, and he seized it like a flash. Picking up the ball, he returned to his place as if he had seen nothing. Then he served, keeping his ears for the footsteps behind and his eyes for the enemy before. That is the thing he sometimes dreams of still.

The result was very simple, and quite inevitable. A moment later Mr. Wickham, playing back to Talbot, and placing the ball with great care, found that a tall figure was standing in the doorway behind his opponent. Then he realised that the Doctor was watching his shot in mingled amazement and bewilderment.

He also realised, probably, that he was lost. In matters of punishment the Head of King Alfred's was very straight and plain. He could not see the beauty of tormenting fellows; and even if he could be brought to see it, it was most unlikely that he would appreciate it or approve of it. So Mr. Wickham looked, and as he looked his face changed. He quickly laid down his racquet, and tried to smile. Seeing that smile, some of us pitied him.

And the Doctor? It was no wonder that he stood and stared in bewilderment. Here was one of his assistants, deeply and earnestly engaged in a forbidden game, in a Fifth Form study, and with the majority of the Fifth as delighted witnesses! It was incomprehensible! He looked from one to another; and then he saw that a fellow named Scott, who happened to be nearest the mantelpiece, was taking down a sheet of foolscap from the wall, with the evident intention of hiding it.

"Give me that paper!" he said calmly.

And Scott gave it. The Doctor put up his glasses and began to read. No one dared to interrupt, not even Mr. Wickham. Perhaps the poor fellow had not yet found anything to say.

"Ha! H'm!" said the Doctor, in his very best manner, after he had examined the Rules. "This is interesting! And may I ask who has won the cup?"

There was a brief and terrible silence. Then the hero Talbot answered, as innocently and as gravely as possible:

"Please, sir, Mr. Wickham!"

We were breathless after that stroke. The Doctor glanced at Wickham.

"Ha! H'm" he said again.

"I can explain all this, Doctor Holmes," stammered Wickham, again trying to smile. "I can explain it all."

"Ha! H'm!" said the Doctor, for the third time. "I thank you." Then he folded up the Rules and slipped them into a book which he was carrying. After that, without another word, he turned round and stalked off down the corridor.

A moment later, Mr. Wickham went off too. He was so much engaged with his own thoughts that he could not

find a word to utter. And we all realised that he had quite enough to think of.

Thus came to its end our Grand Final Cup Tournament. We agreed unanimously that Talbot deserved the Cup, and it was hung around his neck. Mr. Wickham had beaten all of us, but he had beaten Mr. Wickham in the last round, with the Doctor as referee!

As for Mr. Wickham, I have no doubt that he did explain the thing to the Head, and that they came to some patchwork sort of understanding about it. It couldn't well be anything more, because the ways of the two men were so utterly different. There was nothing mean or small about the Doctor, and he would find it very hard to understand his assistant's conduct. For our part, we are convinced that matters were considerably strained between them as a result, and that this was the real cause of Mr. Wickham's leaving us at the end of term. He went to another school, a sadder, if not a wiser man; but perhaps it shows some good points in him that he never even mentioned the lines he had given us to write in such a clever and unfortunate way. Possibly, however, he felt that Fate had intervened on our behalf, and that we were best left alone.

FINIS

*The Smart Set*

*October 1902*

### PING-PONGOMANIA

WHEN first at ping-pong I essayed,  
Alas, to my regret,  
The airy sphere sailed far away,

And nowhere near the net.

I persevered and changed my aim;  
The best that I could get,  
Would be to send that horrid ball

Right underneath the net.

Success I hoped would some day come  
And I might win a set;  
But still that irksome ball, you see,  
Went plumb into the net.

At last success has come to me—  
The smile is with me yet!  
I've learned the way to send the ball

So nicely o'er the net.

HARRY CROWN BLOOMBERG.

# Table Tennis History Manga Style

by Jota Ito (JPN)

Jota Ito is an international Table Tennis columnist, and we are grateful for his recently published books on the history of Table Tennis, presented in Japanese manga style.

For those not familiar with Manga, this genre can be described as comics, graphic novels or cartooning from Japan. In this 2-volume set Jota Ito skillfully uses manga graphics to show key moments in Table Tennis history. A selection of manga frames is presented on the accompanying pages.

Jota Ito's books can be purchased on amazon.com, including his previous work from 2014: Yokoso Takkyu jigoku e Takkyu mania yosei gipusu (Welcome to the Table Tennis Hell - Training cast for making Table Tennis Enthusiast).





This page shows Foster's Table Lawn Tennis game, 1890



Above, bottom frame shows the ultra rare JH Singer board & dice game, Table Tennis, 1887

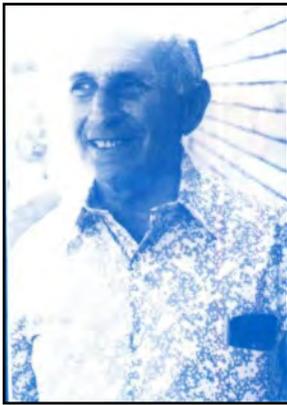


Here we see 1931 World Champion Miklos Szabados visit to Japan with a suitcase full of rackets and balls.



The champagne cork ball & cigar box racket story





Kurt Defris

## Living for (at least) three sports in three countries – Kurt Defris by Ross Carpenter & Gunter Straub



Ross Carpenter (AUS)



Gunther Straub (AUT)

Recently, Gunter Straub came across the name of Kurt Defris in the autobiography of the legendary Richard Bergmann (1919-1970), a four-time World Singles Champion in table tennis. In the chapter entitled “Table Tennis Around the Globe” in the book *Twenty-One Up*, Bergmann had this to say about his fellow sportsman:

6. China and Shanghai.

Several hundred clubs. Approximately 80,000 players, of which 15,000 resided in Shanghai.

Kurt Defris, an Austrian emigrant, became President of the Shanghai T.T.A. in 1938 and organized the sport on a nation-wide scale. All commercial firms, schools and universities had their own T.T. teams, and the latter included a few hours Table Tennis practice in their sports curriculum. [...]

(Bergmann, 1950, p. 224)

This shed some light on a man from Europe who helped to lay the foundations for table tennis in China, at a very early stage in the development of the sport. But the name of Kurt Defris could not be found in the many issues of the *History Journal* published on behalf of the International Table Tennis Federation. So Straub started to explore the world wide web. He discovered a couple of illustrative articles on the life of Kurt Defris, a Jewish engineer, entrepreneur, athlete, and official who escaped from Nazism to Australia via Shanghai. They were researched and written by Ross Carpenter from Australia, who studies the history of ice hockey and ice sports. Ross has agreed to reprint one of these articles about the life and work of Defris in the current issue of the *Table Tennis History Journal*.

Defris, Kurt (1909-1983)

AM [Order of Australia]

BORN IN 1909 IN VIENNA, his father was an electrical engineer and officer in the Austrian army who was highly decorated in the First World War. Defris became an electrical engineer like his father, but developed a fanatical interest in sport, beginning with soccer at 14 for the Vienna Association Football Club, the most successful and famous Jewish multi-sports club in Europe, where he was a famous outside right. Later, after four years with the highly-ranked Fair Unitas Academic Club, he was elected by 500 clubs to represent them on the Austrian Football Association. He also played table tennis, but as second fiddle to his wife, Steffie, who at one time was ranked third in the world of women players!

For 2 years he managed the Austrian national amateur soccer and table tennis teams on their tours of France, Czechoslovakia and Hungary and was nearing the top of the tree as a sports administrator in his homeland when Vienna fell under Nazi control. He escaped to China by devious means where he organised a special Jewish athletic competition involving 60 football teams and more than 200 table tennis teams in Shanghai, with sections for boxing and swimming. The influential positions he held with the virile sporting communities of Shanghai's wartime population drew the attention of the Japanese Occupational Force who stripped him of all appointments.

In September 1946, he made his way to Hong Kong with his wife and boarded the ship Yochow to Melbourne, where his parents and sister had earlier emigrated. He formed a club there in memory of Shanghai and won many Victorian table tennis premierships. At the same time he ran the Melbourne Hakoah Table Tennis Club and became vice-president of the Victorian Table Tennis Association. He held senior positions in the Victorian Soccer Federation, became an official for the Olympic Games in Melbourne in 1956, and helped organize the nation's first Olympic football (soccer) competition.

Disinterested in self-glorification, Defris focused mainly on the welfare of players and clubs in general, and the association in particular. Under his direction and guidance, the VIHA became a strong organisation, both on and off the ice.

Assisted by Russ Carson, he encouraged the formation of the Pee Wee division, which was a big step towards the establishment of the Junior Association, and ultimately its absorption by the senior clubs, bringing into being a requirement for all clubs to field A and B grade teams at both senior and junior level. At the time, it produced a total of 24 competition teams.

He was awarded Life Membership with Football Federation of Victoria, Table Tennis Centre of Victoria and Ice Hockey Victoria who bestowed on him Honourary Life Presidency after retirement. He was a long-serving member of the Victorian Amateur Soccer Football Association and its successor, the Victorian Soccer Federation; foundation president of Maccabi Basketball Victoria in 1951; holder of senior positions in the Victorian Soccer Federation; foundation president of Maccabi Basketball Victoria in 1951; holder of senior positions in the Victorian Soccer Federation; and vice-president of the Victorian Table Tennis Association. He was inducted to the Maccabi Victoria Hall of Fame in 2000, and made a Legend in 2011.

He hated to sit in judgement and so, of all his duties, he only disliked serving on disciplinary committees. He liked everybody and was enormously popular. His memory is perpetuated with an annual trophy awarded in his name by the national ice hockey association. Awarded the Order of Australia in 1976 for services to sport, his contribution as a builder and administrator of Victorian ice hockey from 1955 continued for almost three decades up until his death in March 1983 at Balaclava in Melbourne. These were the years Victorian ice hockey paid back its Olympic debts and consolidated its participation in international championships.

(Carpenter, 2015a)

In another published article entitled “Shanghai Ghetto”, Ross Carpenter further explores the Defris story. “Defris also played table tennis for the Fair Unitas Club in Vienna, home of seven-time world champion Richard Bergman (Carpenter, 2015b).” Indeed, the paths of both Viennese might have crossed, although Kurt Defris was older by ten years. At the time 13-year-old Richard Bergmann started playing table tennis in 1933 (Bergmann, 1950), Defris seems to have already had the opportunity to compete at the 7th World Championships in Baden near Vienna (ITTF, 2019).

The Austrian “was elected president of the International Table Tennis Association of Shanghai, which boasted over 10,000 registered players” in those days (Carpenter, 2015b). It is said Defris paid his way to Shanghai then Australia, by winning countless table tennis matches against fellow passengers (Stadt Wien, 2019). Today, the name Kurt Defris is well-known in Australian sporting circles. A perpetual trophy named after him is awarded each year to the winning state team of the under-15 national ice hockey tournament. In 2017, a book was published under the title “Hakoah Heroes”, a tribute to Kurt Defris’ life and work (Goldberg, 2017).

### **References:**

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Carpenter, R. (2015a). Defris, Kurt AM (1909-1983). Retrieved from [http://icelegendsaustralia.com/legends-2/bio\\_defris.html](http://icelegendsaustralia.com/legends-2/bio_defris.html). Accessed: 26 May 2019

Carpenter, R. (2015b). Shanghai Ghetto. Retrieved from [http://icelegendsaustralia.com/article\\_44.html](http://icelegendsaustralia.com/article_44.html). Accessed: 26 May 2019

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Ice Hockey Australia. (2019). Wikipedia. Retrieved from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ice\\_Hockey\\_Australia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ice_Hockey_Australia). Accessed: 26 May 2019

ITTF. (2019). Past World Championships Results: Men’s Doubles. Retrieved from <https://ittf.cdnomega.com/eu/2019/05/WorldChResultsMD3.pdf>. Accessed: 26 May 2019

Stadt Wien [City of Vienna]. (2019). Kurt Defris. Retrieved from [https://www.geschichtewiki.wien.gv.at/Kurt\\_Defris](https://www.geschichtewiki.wien.gv.at/Kurt_Defris). Accessed: 26 May 2019

### **CAREER SUMMARY**

Birth: 1909, Vienna (Austria) Death: March 1983, Balaclava Melbourne Australia

Clubs: (Manager) VIHA Arkana, VIHA Raiders-Arkana, VIHA Hakoah Victoria

Participations at World Championships in Table Tennis: one (1933)

Life Memberships:

- Ice Hockey Victoria
- Football Federation of Victoria
- Table Tennis Centre of Victoria

Victorian Ice Hockey Association President for record 17 years

VIHA Honourary Life President

Order of Australia



New Old Stock  
Bruno Lancon (FRA)

Always fun to find 'new old stock', and Bruno recently noticed several fine old rackets from the Stefano Bosi shop, Ju Rapida. The Butterfly Tamaropa bat in original box sold on ebay for 423 Euros after 17 bids. It is a one-ply hinoki blade from the 1980s. Haven't seen this racket before.

The next page shows Jonyer ST-SR, Stipancic ST, Gergely and Tibor Harangozo blades with Ju Rapida sticker logos. More blades for the want list?



Butterfly Tamaropa 1-ply hinoki c. 1980s with Ju Rapida logo



Such Butterfly pamphlets are invaluable sources of information about blades & rubbers



Butterfly Jonyer ST-SR with Ju Rapida sticker



Butterfly Stipancic ST with Ju Rapida logo



Butterfly Gergely with Ju Rapida logo



TSP Tibor Harangoza with Ju Rapida logo

## EARLY PIRATED IMAGES

By Jorge Arango

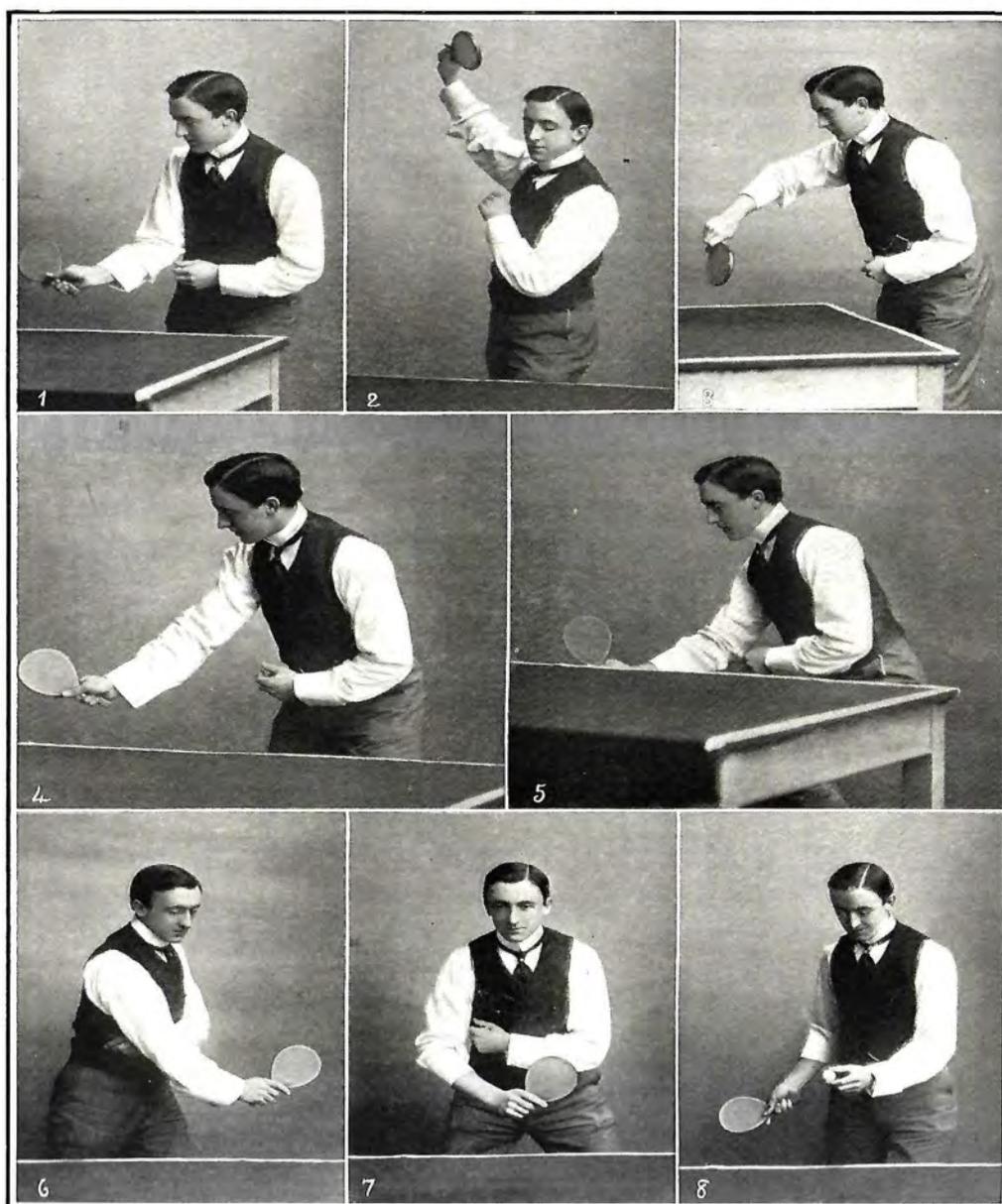
Continuation

This is the eleventh article of my series about early pirated images.

### 49. ARNOLD PARKER 1

#### HOW TO PLAY PING-PONG

Told in photographs by Mr. Arnold Parker, the Winner of the Queen's Hall Tournament.



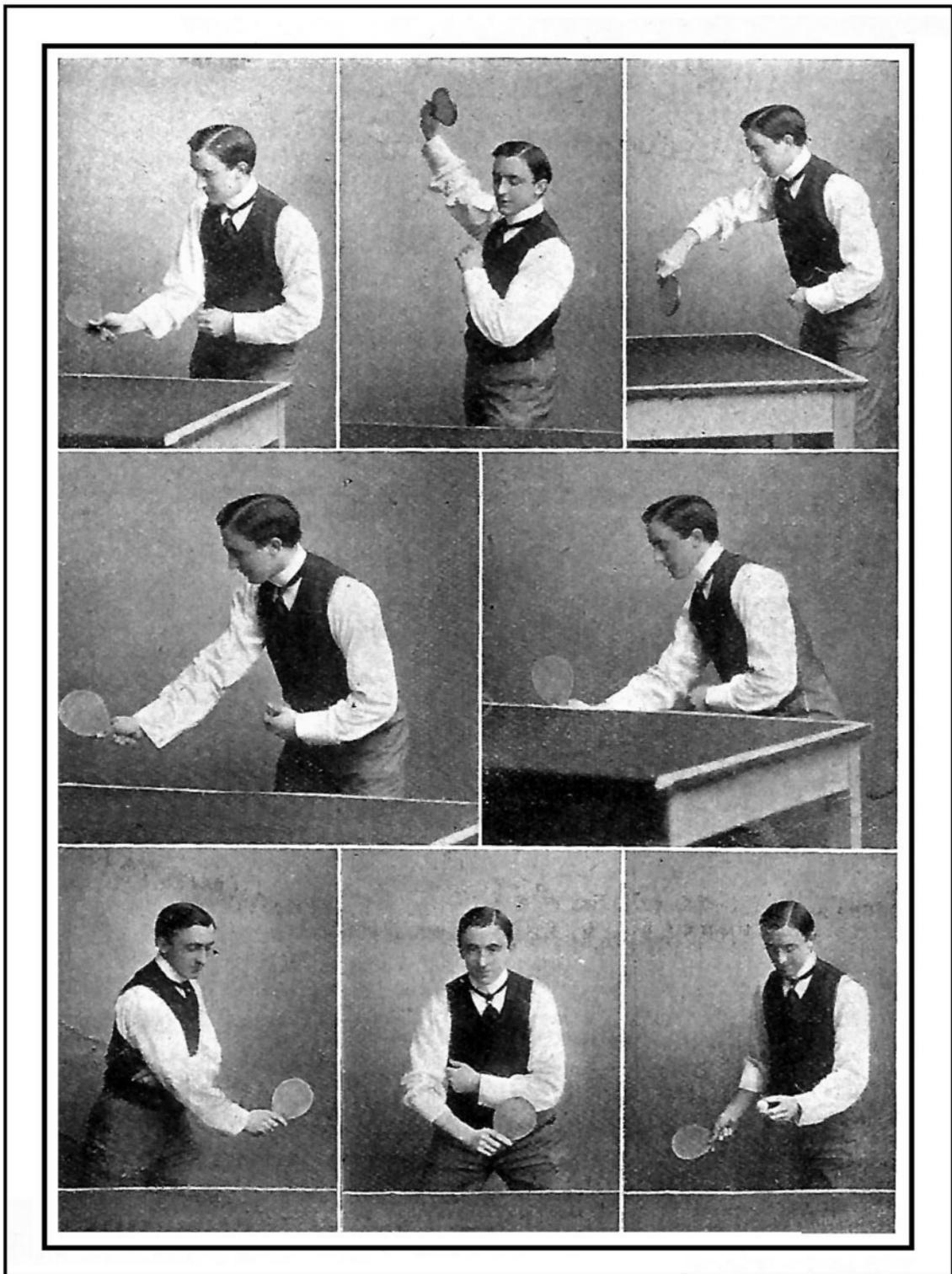
1. Fore-hand drive  
5. The "crouch" stroke

2. The smash  
6. Back-hand drive, left to right

3. Back-hand drive  
7. Receiving service

4. Round-arm fore-hand drive  
8. Delibering service

The Tatler, Feb 19, 1902. Alan Duke presented these images in TTC 06, and in TTC 80. Photos 7 and 8 were copied in The Captain, April 1902 (Alan Duke, TTC 81).



MR. ARNOLD PARKER AT PLAY.

- |                                      |                       |                        |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. FOREHAND DRIVE.                   | 2. THE SMASH.         | 3. BACKHAND DRIVE.     |
| 4. ROUND FOREHAND DRIVE.             | 5. THE CROUCH STROKE. |                        |
| 6. BACKHAND DRIVE,<br>LEFT TO RIGHT. | 7. RECEIVING SERVICE. | 8. DELIVERING SERVICE. |

The Ladies World, 1901 – 02, article by Beatrice Lewis, March 1902, page 678.

## 50. ARNOLD PARKER 2



2. Forehand Service.



3. Backhand Service from Righthand Ball.



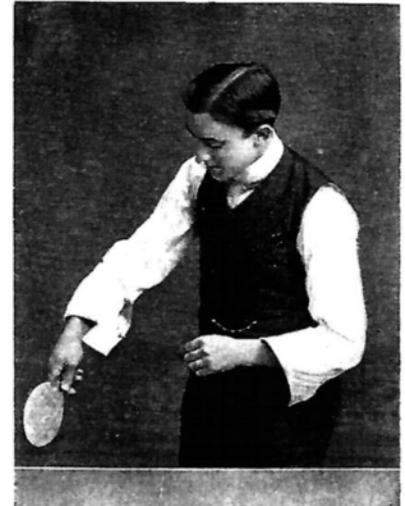
4. Backhand Flick Service. The Ball is Struck by the Face of the Racket.



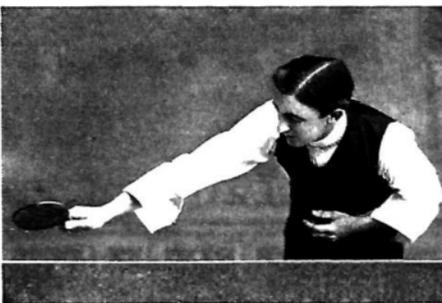
5. Screw-back Service. The Ball is Struck by the Top Face of the Racket, Not by the Face Shown in the Photograph.



6. Prepared to Receive the Service. Watch Your Opponent's Every Movement, and the Ball as Closely as Possible.



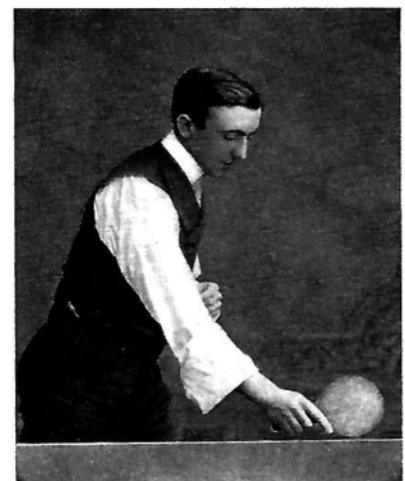
7. Underhand Forehand Drive



8. Round Arm Forehand Drive. The Ball is Struck on Top With the Face of the Racket.



9. Underhand Backhand Drive.



10. Round Arm Backhand Drive.



11. Commencement of Flick; the Ball is Struck by the Face of the Racket Shown.



12. The Flick Stroke, Half Way Through.



13. End of Flick Stroke. The Ball Has Been Whipped Over the Net.

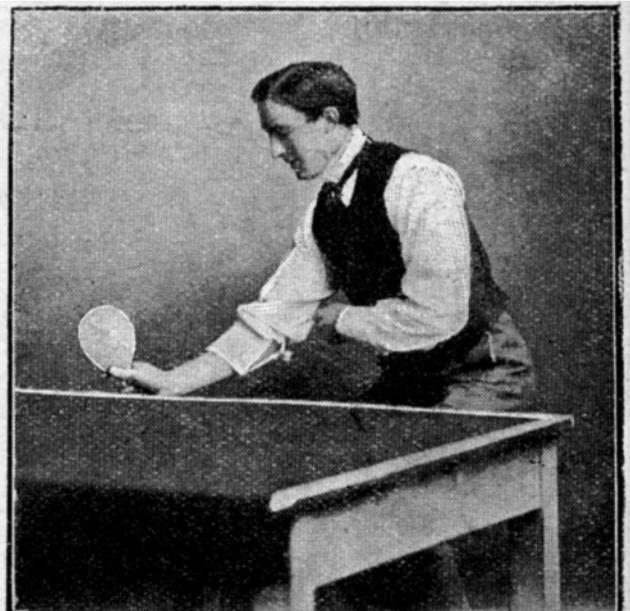
The images were presented in an eight-page article in the USA Outing Magazine. I think the article is a copy from an unknown English source. The images are different from those presented in 49. Parker 1.

Steve Grant presented photo 6 in his book, but without any reference to its source.

The following two Parker's images were not pirated ones, and they were presented in The Pictorial Magazine, May 10, 1902 (I think the legends were interchanged!)

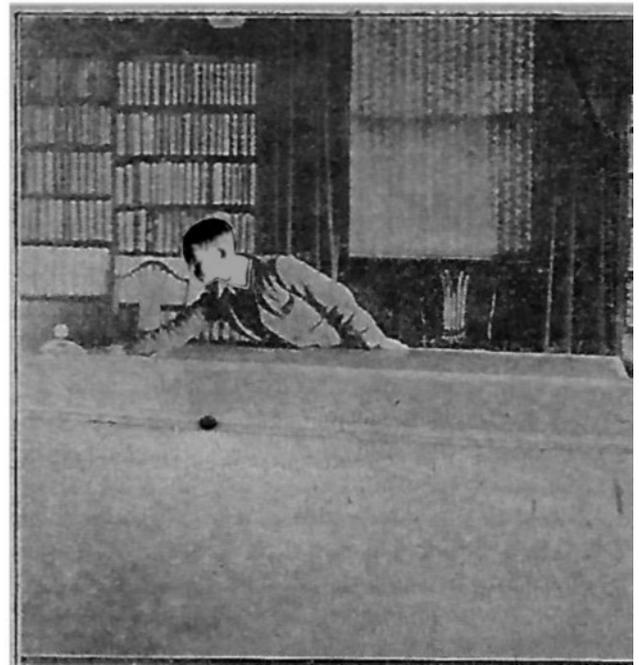


Mr. Parker, the greatest of ping-pong champions, receiving a ball.



Mr. Parker returning a ball which is to fall close to the net.

**51. MASTER MUIR N. STEPHENS, THE CLEVER PING-PONG PLAYER.**



MASTER MUIR N. STEPHENS, THE CLEVER PING-PONG PLAYER.

**Left:** Alan Duke TTC 84. **Right:** The Lady's World 1901 – 1902, page 681, article by Beatrice Lewis.

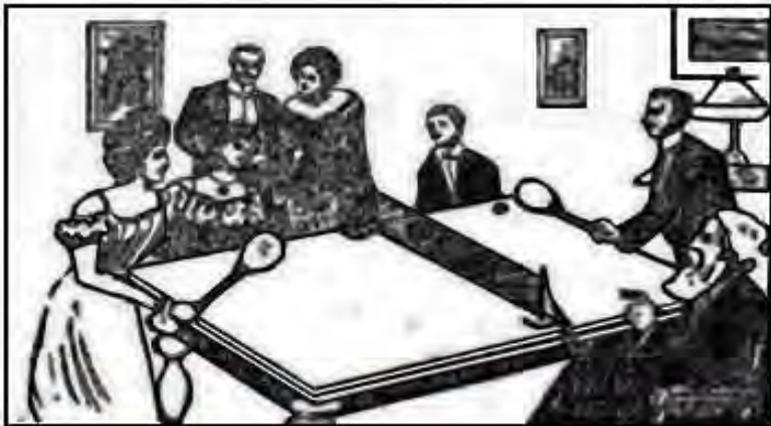
**52. PING-PONG EYE**



**Left:** The San Francisco Call, June 01, 1902. **Right:** Steve Grant's book. Two pirated images.

53. PARLOR TENNIS

**MALCOLM REID,** FURNITURE MANUFACTURER,  
Franklin-street, near Post-office,  
**ADELAIDE**



**PING-PONG**  
Parlor Tennis.  
The Popular Society Game  
for the Table.  
**5/6, 7/6, 10/6, 12/6**  
**18/6** PER SET.  
Complete, with Racquets,  
Balls, Net, &c.,  
AND FULL INSTRUCTIONS.

*Nov. 13, 1901, Adelaide*



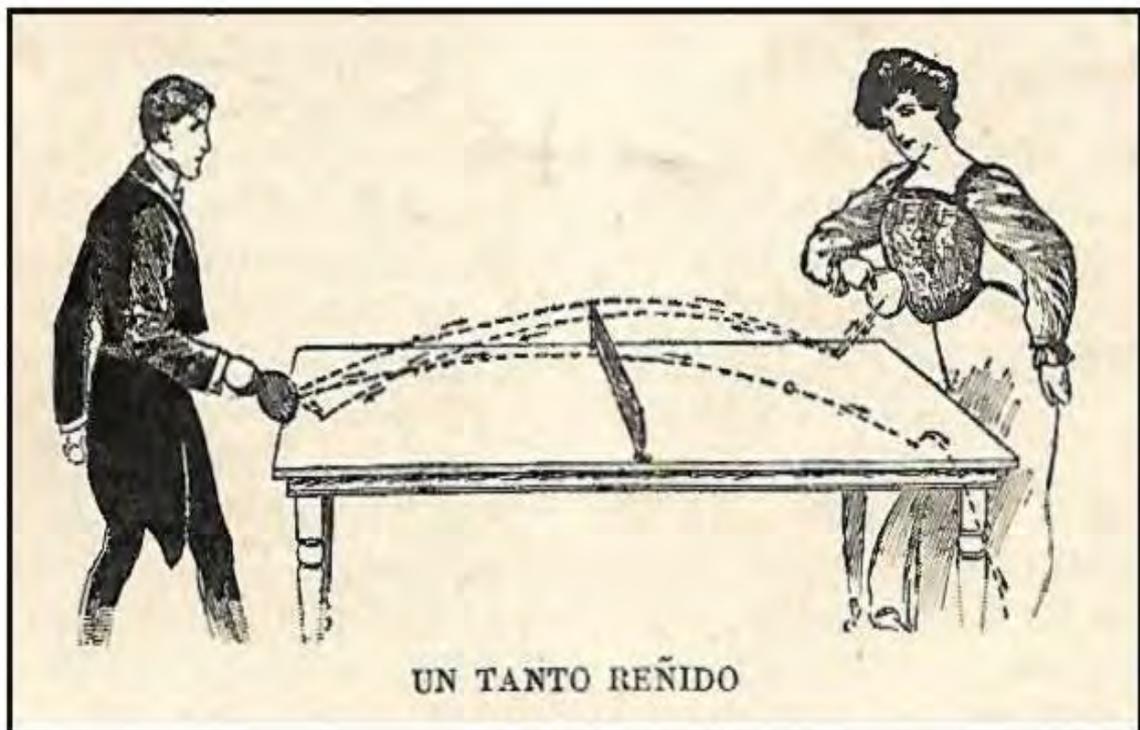
**Above:** Steve Grant, TTC 83. (This photo is from the ITTF Museum)

The images of the woman players are the same. The rackets of the men players are similar, but the man above is left handed, and the other one is right handed.

## 54. A LESSON IN STRATEGY



**A LESSON IN STRATEGY.** After a succession of corner-to-corner strokes the champion out-manceuvres his opponent by driving the ball to the opposite corner with a twist that causes it to leave the table at right angles.



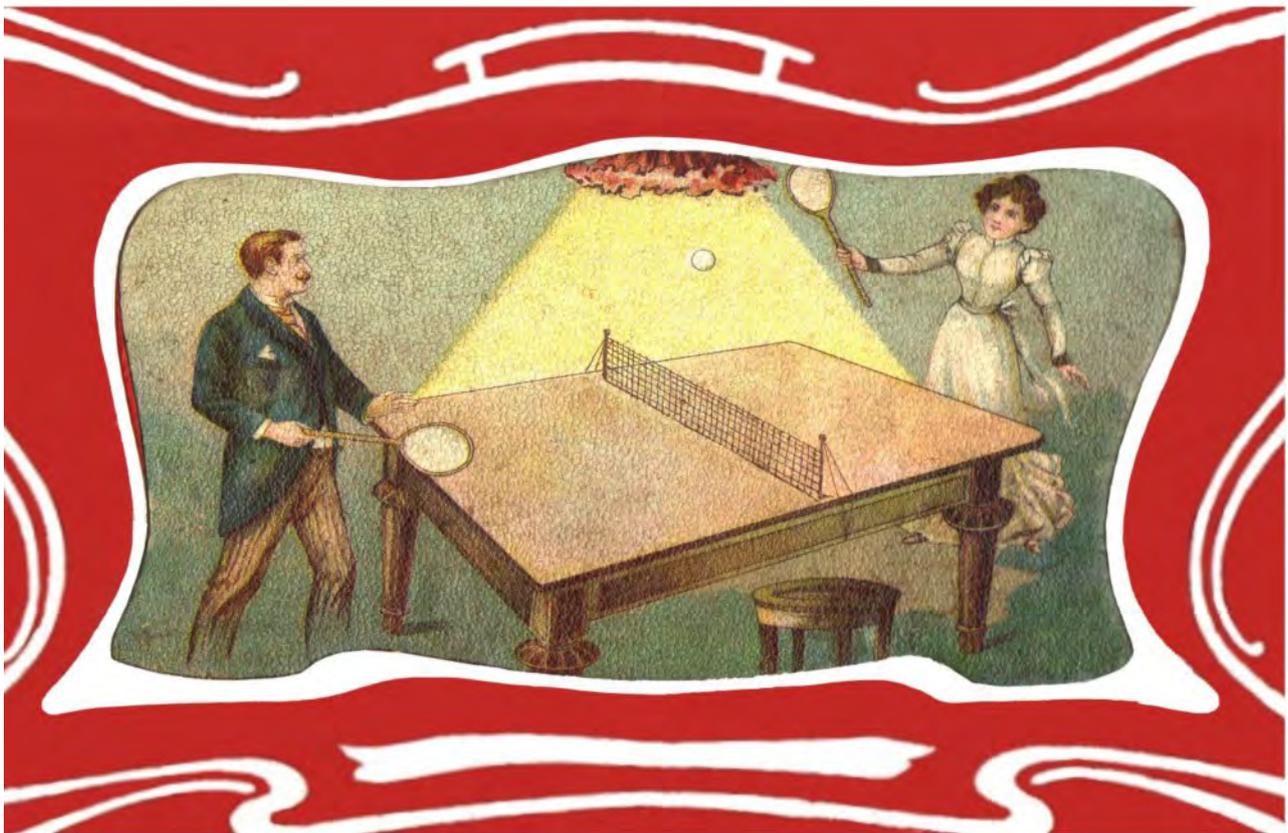
A DISPUTED POINT.

**Above:** An image from the Daily Mail, Jan 3, 1902 (Alan Duke TTH 88). **Below:** Spanish pirated article in "Alrededor del Mundo", Jan 30, 1902.

55. SPEAR



**PING PONG!**  
All the Rage  
We Sell the Only Genuine  
**PING PONG SETS**  
In the city. Complete sets from \$1.00 to \$15.00.  
Ping Pong Tables, \$0.50 to \$10.00.  
**FOOT BALL SUPPLIES**  
We Are Headquarters. Prices Wholesale.  
**WM. R. BURKHARD CO.**  
319 Robert Street.



**Below:** Spear boxed set.

The three images have several similarities as the positions of the players and the tables, the lamps, the men's rackets, the faces of the men players in right and below images, and the net fastened by cords to the tables in left and below images.

To be continued

## "Read All About It" – PART 9 (1903 to 1913)

by Alan Duke

The final parts in this series cover the frequently ignored years between the end of the Ping-Pong Craze and the 'revival' in the 1920s. Reports of this period often claim that the game died out as quickly as previous fads, 'apart from in a few isolated outposts'. There were even articles at the time proclaiming the death of the game, but as we will see, such announcements were a little premature. Admittedly, the initial craze calmed down (as any craze must), but the game continued to be played in homes, was a staple entertainment at events such as fetes, etc, and matches and tournaments (on a smaller scale than before) continued to be arranged. There were even Leagues and National Championships! I have divided this period into 4 phases, and will include just a selection of the many positive mentions for each year (plus a few 'obituaries' to maintain some balance), as examples of the game's continued popularity.

### ① The Calm after the 'Craze'

1903

*Hastings Observer*

3 January 1903

#### PARLOUR GAMES.

16, HAVELOCK RD., HASTINGS JENKINS. 33, KING'S RD., ST. LEONARDS.  
TABLE TENNIS, TABLE CRICKET (W. G. Grace's new game), TABLE BADMINTON.  
TABLE FOOTBALL, RINGS, DART BOARD, PUFF THE DART, TABLE PLANET,  
and all the latest high-class games for winter evenings.

From the *Herts and Cambridge Reporter* of 9<sup>th</sup> January came an "announcement of an alliance between the Table Tennis Association and the Ping-Pong Association" [TTH 91/38]. The following month there were a couple of announcements of pre-amalgamation events being organised by the TTA: On 2<sup>nd</sup> February the *London Evening Standard* reported on the draw for the Inter-Club Championships (teams of 5 players), to be decided in various club-rooms in the Metropolis, for possession of the Association's trophies, finals to be held in the centre transept, Crystal Palace, on 28<sup>th</sup> February; *The Sporting Life* of 23<sup>rd</sup> February announced the Association's Open Tournament for the Ladies' and Gentlemen's Championships of the UK (24-28 February) [TTC 67/21-22, TTC 80/24].

*Buckingham Advertiser*

17 January 1903

**TABLE TENNIS.**

SAVE scratching and spoiling Dining-room Tables, by using the new Patent

**FOLDING NETS.**

Require no clamping, always ready, and fold up after use.

**WALFORD & SON, Printers, Buckingham.**

*London Evening News*

19 January 1903

Messrs. Gamage say that ping-pong votaries are as enthusiastic as ever, although the champion ping-pongists no longer figure prominently in sporting news.

*Westminster Budget*

13 February 1903

#### PEACE IN THE PING-PONG WORLD.

What has become of ping-pong? many will ask; and the fact has to be recorded that, in villadom at any rate, among those who failed to contract a lasting attack of the celluloid disease, the game has been rather put in the corner as a parlour pastime. Not so, however, in the official and technical sense. It will not have been forgotten that the government of the game rested hitherto

in the hands of two rival associations, the Ping-Pong and the Table-Tennis, whose alliterative responsibilities made them somewhat jealous of each other's influence. But now peace reigneth. The two associations have agreed to amalgamate, on the condition that the united association is left free from trade influence. An agreement to this effect will be signed at an early date by the officers and six other members of each association, while the amalgamation will become a *fait accompli* on May 1 next.

*Black & White*

28 February 1903

#### PING-PONG AT OLYMPIA

Among the many blessings of civilisation adopted by the redskins in Colonel Cody's small army at Olympia is the game of Ping-Pong, which is played with a vigour which may be admired but not easily equalled.

[Caption to a photograph of an improvised game by some of the cast of Colonel Cody's Wild West Show]

*Fraserburgh Herald*

28 April 1903

#### Dalrymple Cafe.

RECREATION ROOM,

TWO PING PONG TABLES—

Regulation Size

PRIVATE PING PONG PARTIES

May be arranged.

In the publicity for the Fancy Fete<sup>1</sup> at Whitfield Court, Waterford, on 7<sup>th</sup> July, it was announced that "There will be a Ping-Pong Tournament", with prizes including a gold brooch. The justification for the event was that "Ping-pong tournaments are now the fashion of the day".

At the Al Fresco Fete<sup>2</sup> at Appeville Lodge, Archirondel, on 14<sup>th</sup> July it was reported that, "In another portion of the grounds was a ping-pong table which was well patronised".

On 18<sup>th</sup> December, at a Jumble Sale in Cerne Abbas schoolroom, "In the class-room a ping-pong tournament was played". (*Western Chronicle*, 25 December)

*Yorkshire Evening Post*

22 May 1903

#### A FORGOTTEN GAME.

PING-PONG AN EXTINCT PASTIME.

Ping-pong has had its day, and ceased to be. The Leeds firms which during the winter of 1901-2 waxed fat on the proceeds of their sales of ping-pong bats, balls, and other

## EARLY NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

accessories of the alleged sport, have done little or no business in this line during the past three months. At an eating-house in Briggate, and at the Y.M.C.A. in South Parade, the ping-pong tables have not yet been removed, but the interest in them is rapidly vanishing. Two or three of the most enthusiastic Y.M.C.A. ping-pongers are now putting in their time at the gymnasium. Their ping-pong team, which little more than a year ago wasted a lot of useful time in weekly matches, has not engaged in a single such conflict this year, and will probably never do so again.

Various reasons are suggested why the ping-pong enthusiasts of a year ago have cooled so rapidly. The serious view is that the introduction of wooden and rubber-covered bats made the game altogether too quick for the ordinary room. Light-hearted critics assert that with the invention of those pole arrangements to pick the balls off the floor, the scrambles under the furniture—a most interesting feature of the original game—departed. A slight revival of the game is expected next winter, but never again is ping-pong likely to be considered with gravity.

Later in the year there were a couple of rare references to the combined Association (at least confirming that the planned merger did indeed take place). *The Sportsman* of 17<sup>th</sup> September published the Notice "Table Tennis and Ping-Pong Association, Special General Meeting, at the Arcadian Restaurant, Queen Street, E.C. 7pm", that evening. Then on 21<sup>st</sup> September, the *Scottish Referee* reported: "A special general meeting of the United Table Tennis and Ping-Pong Association took place on Thursday to consider the proposal, "That the 'service law' be amended as follows:—

"That service shall be delivered by the ball being struck, however lightly, with the racket or hand holding the racket, and the ball is then in play. ... The service shall be under-hand, i.e. all of the racket except the handle shall be below the elbow. The server, when serving, shall stand with both feet grounded behind a line on the floor three feet from the table. The ball when struck shall be within the limits of the width of the table. The ball shall be served on to the opposite side of the table and alternately right to left of a line half an inch wide, running midway down the table from end to end. A ball dropping on the centre line shall be considered to have fallen on to the proper side of the line."

It was also decided that there should be a change of service every six points, and a change of sides after every twelve services. The game will be 31 points up as hitherto. After a lengthy discussion the foregoing rules were unanimously adopted."

**Daily Mail**

**17 September 1903**

### DECLINE OF PING-PONG.

The decline of ping-pong has been as remarkable as the craze which placed it at the head of indoor games two or three seasons ago.

At first there was no resisting the fascination of the new game. People in every walk of life became infected by it. From England the craze swept over the Atlantic, and continued its triumphal course to the Antipodes.

Now, save for a few scattered clubs and associations, in which enthusiasts cultivate a more elaborate and interesting form of the game, ping-pong is practically dead. Where dealers formally sold a hundred sets, they now sell one.

The *Hendon & Finchley Times* was of the opinion that "Ping-pong ... was a brief madness, but now a great calm has fallen upon this excitable pleasure" (18 September). And in its 'London Notes' column, the *Perthshire Advertiser* of the same date weighed in with "TENNIS in London has this season entirely recovered from the attacks of ping-pong. The decline of the latter is surprising. No game ever came in with such a flourish of trumpets, or roused more enthusiasm after a brief acquaintance from one end of the country to the other. ... It became a craze, and consequently furnished endless sport for the comic writers, and especially the artists. "Ping-pong has come to stay," was the cocksure verdict whenever an authority was interviewed. But it hasn't stayed very long. We rarely hear of it now; the sets are no longer displayed in shop windows; no tournaments are advertised; in short, ping-pong seems to have had its day and run its course like a brilliant meteor."

In reply to such articles, the *Nottingham Evening Post* responded "With regard to the alleged decadence [*in the little-used sense of decay or decline*] of ping-pong, or table tennis, Mr. A. J. Bryant, the hon. secretary of the United Table Tennis & Ping-Pong Association, points out that there are at present existing a central association, six sub-associations, and 40 other clubs, all playing the game." (20 October)

Finally on this theme, on 1<sup>st</sup> December the *Birmingham Daily Gazette* reported that "Ping-pong has not responded to the efforts to revive the glories of a year or two ago, and it is difficult now to find a place in the City where one can indulge in this most exciting game. It seems only yesterday since it was impossible to come across a restaurant or public-house that did not flaunt the alluring card "Ping-pong"."

28<sup>th</sup> October: An "interesting contest" took place in the Prospect Place Schoolroom, Swindon, between the South Street YM Club and Prospect Place Methodist Club<sup>3</sup>.

Meanwhile, on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, the *Western Daily Press* reported on "an excellent game" that had taken place in Bristol between teams from the Horfield and Bishopston Institutes.

In Stockton<sup>4</sup> the first match of the season took place (8-a-side) in the Tees-Side Ping-Pong League, watched by "a fair gathering of spectators".

And a new league, the Horsham & District Ping Pong League<sup>5</sup>, was formed with 3 Clubs.

A Christmas gathering of St Paul's YMA, Shipley<sup>6</sup>, on Boxing Day included ping-pong. The Windhill Wesleyan Church Christmas festivities<sup>7</sup> also included ping-pong among the attractions, as did Bexhill's Marine Mansions Christmas festivities<sup>8</sup> on Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

At the James Calder Distillery dinner on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> December<sup>9</sup> "A rather novel feature introduced was a ping-pong tournament for money prizes, which proved very interesting".

In Mere, Wiltshire, a Congregational Chapel Social Evening<sup>10</sup> on the 28<sup>th</sup> included a ping-pong table amongst the attractions.

## EARLY NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Meanwhile a Freemason's tea and entertainment<sup>11</sup> at Weston on New Year's Eve included a cinematograph show with "ping-pong up-to-date".

In its Christmas Day edition, the *Greenock Times* reported: "*The Chilian Times* says that "ping-pong as an indoor amusement has firmly established itself as a favourite in many homes. It has also come to stay." "

**St. James's Gazette** **29 December 1903**

### PING-PONG: PASTIME POPULAR AS EVER.

Is ping-pong losing the pre-eminent position it occupied as *the* indoor game at the beginning of the year? Many periodicals have declared that "the pastime is lying in extremis, and their opinion has been confirmed by the testimony of provincial dealers. But there are apparently no grounds for their fears, and the inquiries of a "St. James's Gazette" representative elicited the information that ping-pong has taken a permanent place as the standard indoor amusement.

"We had a very large stock of bats in for the season, but by Christmas Eve we had sold them all, and received a fresh consignment, while grosses of balls were sold," said the manager for Messrs. Gamage, Limited. "There is certainly no decline. Of course the game went with an unparalleled rush at the outset, and nearly every family secured one, so that we do not expect such a sale for complete sets. Even so, the sale of ping-pong exceeds that of every other indoor game, and it is evident that it has taken its place as a national pastime, besides tiddly-winks, draughts, etc." .....

The same confidence in the permanent hold of ping-pong was expressed by Mr. Hamley's manager, who said they had had an excellent sale at the Noah's Ark and their other establishments.

On the same day, the *Hull Daily Mail* added "One of the largest firms in London who supply games declare that ping pong is as popular as ever in private parties."

## 1904

**Western Daily Press** **7 January 1904**

The first League match in connection with the Gloucestershire Ping-Pong Association, was played between St Michael's, Windmill Hill, and Bishopston, on Monday evening, at Bishopston, and resulted in a win for the latter by 10 games and 158 points [6-a-side].

**Daily Telegraph** **7 March 1904**

The Table Tennis Association's Open Tournament at the Crystal Palace was brought to a close on Saturday evening, when the prizes were distributed by Lord Rosmead. Mr. Percy Bromfield, of the Alexandra Palace Club, secured the gentlemen's championship, while Miss Taylor, of the Crystal Palace Club, was the successful competitor for the ladies' championship. Mr. G. Ross, of the Crystal Palace Club, won the gentlemen's handicap, and in the ladies' handicap the first prize was obtained by Mrs. Marvin, a competitor from the Isle of Wight, Mrs. McQue, of the Crystal Palace Club, gaining the second award. The final rounds were productive of several

spirited contests, the competitors being warmly applauded by a large number of spectators. [TTC 67/23]

23<sup>rd</sup> January: "A ping pong tournament and other games followed" an exhibition and musical programme held at the Technical Schools, Swindon, by the North Wilts Field and Camera Club. (*Swindon Advertiser*, 29 January 1904)

At the Toddington rectory fete on the afternoon of 25<sup>th</sup> August there were many games, including ping-pong<sup>12</sup>.

Thame Men's Club visited Haddenham WMI<sup>13</sup> to contest "in friendly rivalry" a variety of games, including ping-pong.

In Luton, King Street YMCA held ping-pong tournaments in November and December<sup>14</sup>, with prizes presented at the annual Christmas Party on 30<sup>th</sup> December. [The gramophone used at the party was on loan from Mr J J Payne of Luton - see later for his involvement in the revival of the PPA.]

**Surrey Mirror** **23 December 1904**

(By D S Hepburn)

Ring out wild bells across the snow  
The knell of games that have to go;  
Welcome to Bridge with joyous song,  
While groans pursue the doomed ping pong.

## 1905

10<sup>th</sup> March: Ping-pong games were played at the Swindon and North Wilts Technical School staff soiree. (*Swindon Advertiser*)

Tournaments were also held at St James's Square YMCA, Bristol<sup>15</sup>; St Peter's, Cricklewood<sup>16</sup>, on the afternoon of a tea; and a "well-contested" event was a feature of the social which followed prize-givings at St Stephen's Schools<sup>17</sup>, Twickenham.

At a garden fete at the Rectory, Princes Risborough<sup>18</sup>, ping-pong was well patronised; and was also included at a Garden Party at Norton House, Boston<sup>19</sup>.

"Numerous games, including ping-pong, were indulged in" at a League of Good Templars soiree, Highworth<sup>20</sup>, whilst a ping pong saloon was included amongst the amusements at a Sale of Work at Woolwich Garrison Lodge. (*Kentish Ind.*, 15 December)

There were advertisements around this time for 'Penny in the Slot Ping Pong Machines', which were actually nothing of the sort, instead involving releasing 3 balls and trying to manipulate them into a cup!

The *Northern Whig* of 8<sup>th</sup> July referred to a rumour "two or three years ago" of suggestions for introducing a ping-pong table to the House of Commons. "Nothing came of the rumour".

On 4<sup>th</sup> August the *Luton Times* reported that a couple of ping-pong tables may be added "out in the open" at Wardown Park if not too late in the season, reasoning "Anyway, why shouldn't our young people be able to have a game of table-tennis as well as lawn-tennis?".

Friendly matches continued to be arranged around the country e.g. a 6-a-side match between Henley YMCA and Mr Toovey's Reading team<sup>21</sup>; between Central YMCA and St Michael's in Bristol<sup>22</sup>; another in Cambridge, "a splendid contest" between Histon and the YMCA<sup>23</sup>; and St George's Institute v Dalton YMCA in Millom<sup>24</sup>.

At the Winchester Institute it was reported that "The once famous game of ping-pong has taken on a fresh lease of life at the Institute, the recreation committee having done all they could to revive interest in it. A ping-pong handicap played on the tournament system has recently taken place. 13 entered<sup>25</sup>."

## EARLY NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

### *London Evening News* 16 November 1905

The last actual craze in the form of a game was ping-pong. I never was able quite to understand why that game took such hold, and became for the time an essential of life, so much so that those who did not play were made to feel themselves socially quite unworthy of consideration. ... Well, ping-pong, with its array of balls, bats, and nets, with its special tables and elaborate equipment, has gone the way of all crazes. It was smothered by bridge.

### *Aberdeen Press* 23 December 1905

Experts tell us that the recent popularity of table tennis or ping-pong is far from being exhausted yet. These and other similar games figure conspicuously among the home amusements of holiday time.

### *Birmingham Daily Gazette* 26 December 1905

PING-PONG NOT DEAD. Ping-pong? Well, it has, of course, lost the hold it had a couple of years ago, but it has by no means died out, as many seem to think.

At a Social evening held on 28<sup>th</sup> December in Weston for members and friends of the Church of England Temperance Society, "A room was set aside for ping-pong, and a tournament was arranged. The large room being cleared, a number of round games were greatly enjoyed, light refreshments being passed round during the evening."<sup>26</sup>

## 1906

Selection of events providing ping-pong as an added attraction:

Ping-pong tournaments were provided at the Swindon Adult Club soiree and dance "for those who did not take part in the dance". (*Swindon Advertiser*, 16 March)

A tournament was also held at the South Ealing Bazaar and Summer Fete<sup>27</sup>. At an open-air Social<sup>28</sup> held in Toddington, ping-pong was included; and at a Fete<sup>29</sup> at Lullington Hall, Lullington "there were various games in the garden, including ping-pong". At the opening of the new Biggleswade Institute<sup>30</sup> it was promised that "Billiards, ping-pong, etc are to be provided".

### *Western Daily Press* 23 June 1906

Owing to the increasing popularity of this enjoyable winter pastime, it was suggested at the end of last season that a Table Tennis League should be formed this year, in order that contests may take place between the numerous clubs in Bristol and district, which it is thought will tend to make the game even more enjoyable than it is at the present time. A meeting was held last evening at the North Bristol Young Men's Institute, Picton Street. [Six clubs were represented, officers were elected and the league was unanimously formed.]

"A ping-pong tournament was a great attraction" at the Wesleyan Bazaar, Glastonbury<sup>31</sup>, whilst in Millom, billiard and ping-pong matches were played between the Liberal Club and St George's Institute<sup>32</sup>. And it was reported that St John's Athletic Club in Edgware Road, Hendon<sup>33</sup> was open from 7 to 10 on Tuesdays and Saturdays "when such games as ping-pong are played. The gift of a magnificent ping-pong table has

caused quite a rush for this ancient game. A tournament has taken place".

An enjoyable social was held at the British School Reading Room, Bratton<sup>34</sup>, where ping-pong was one of the amusements. A Christmas Eve social held in the Wesleyan Sunday School, Shipley<sup>35</sup>, attracted a large attendance; a ping-pong tournament was held. And at the annual dinner and social of Norwich pupil teachers<sup>36</sup>, held in the Technical Institute, "games of ping-pong were played in the charmingly decorated drawing-room".

31<sup>st</sup> December: At the Winchester Institute dance<sup>37</sup> for members and friends "The billiard and ping-pong rooms were largely patronised, as well as the refreshment room".

### *London Daily News* 22 November 1906

A letter from the hon. secretary informed readers that "Here in Plymouth we have a Ping Pong League called the 'Three Towns and District Ping Pong League'".

Around that time, The Three Laurels were a popular variety act, "playing ping-pong when the curtain rises"<sup>38</sup>, and "jumping, springing and turning somersaults on and from a ping-pong table with amazing agility and rapidity"<sup>39</sup>.

There was a report of a league match at Stonehouse between St George's Guild and St Augustine's (328-267)<sup>40</sup>. And in the Church Schools, Baildon<sup>41</sup>, a ping-pong match was played between teams representing the Idle Trinity Athletic Club and the Baildon Church Men's Club.

Results from the Second Division of the Three Towns and District Ping-Pong League were evidence of the continued popularity in the Plymouth area<sup>42</sup>.

As the year drew to a close, "another set of tournaments arranged by the committee of the Biggleswade Social Institute were concluded. Some good contests were witnessed in ping pong" (in which games were 60-up)<sup>43</sup>.

### *Birmingham Mail* 22 December 1906

One point has struck me very forcibly during my Christmas shopping, and that is the disappearance of ping-pong. A year or two ago the "table tennis" craze was at its height, an "association" had been formed, young gentlemen and young ladies were swaggering about claiming to be the "champions" of Birmingham, or the Black Country, or the Midlands, or all England, and tournaments were "all the go." ... But this winter no one mentions ping-pong. The shops are full of a score of new games, but one looks in vain for table tennis. I read all through the catalogue of one of the leading sports emporiums, and it was not once mentioned, and I discovered that it was actually a matter of some difficulty to purchase a ping-pong set.

## 1907

In January the new Social Club in Freckleton Street, Preston<sup>44</sup>, included a ping-pong gallery. And on the 8<sup>th</sup> a ping-pong tournament was held at Wymondham Church Club<sup>45</sup>.

Ping-pong was included at the Mayoral garden party, Islington<sup>46</sup> on 12<sup>th</sup> July, whilst the next day an advertisement for the Old Pier, Weston (admission 2d.) listed "Seaside Ping-Pong" among its attractions<sup>47</sup>.

On 17<sup>th</sup> July ping-pong was included at St Paul's Fete and

## EARLY NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Bazaar in Clarence Park, Weston<sup>48</sup>, and the following day “was another source of amusement at the annual picnic of the Grantham Early Closing Association in Syston Park”<sup>49</sup>.

There was a variety of games on 31<sup>st</sup> July, including ping-pong, at the annual garden party of the South Molton Wesleyan Men’s Bible Class<sup>50</sup>.

Among the many stalls at the Floral Bazaar held at the Mechanics Institute, Swindon, on 13<sup>th</sup> November was ping-pong, “which again promises to come to the front, and to even oust diabolio”. (*Swindon Advertiser*, 15 November)

Provision was made for ping-pong when the new Reading Rooms in Market Place, Fairford, opened in December<sup>51</sup>, and on the 18<sup>th</sup> a Social Evening held in Bradley Schoolroom was “crowded with persons intent on the games of ping pong, etc. provided for their amusement”<sup>52</sup>.

**Gloucestershire Echo**

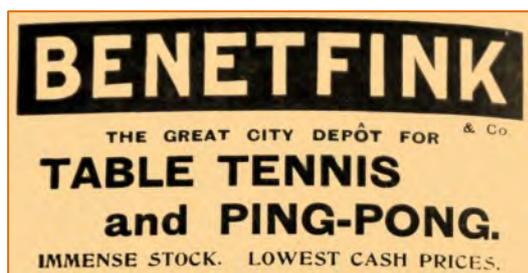
**10 August 1907**

### A LONDON FOUNDLING.

A romantic story, recalling, in some respects, the legend of Dick Whittington, was unfolded on Friday, concerning the founder of one of London’s great business emporiums. The incident arose at a “St. Benetfink luncheon,” served at the Holborn Restaurant, in connection with the public announcement of the amalgamation of two well-known London firms, Messrs. A. W. Gamage, Ltd., and Messrs. Benetfink.



Mr. A. W. Gamage, who presided, gave the history of Samuel Alexander Benetfink, who established the business of Messrs. Benetfink and Co., in 1844. It was an illustration of the possibilities of every child to achieve success in life, no matter how humble be its origin. Samuel Benetfink was a foundling who was discovered in 1816 upon the steps of the church of St. Benetfink, in Old Broad-street. His Christian names were probably derived from the good citizen who found the child. ....



[The firm of furnishing ironmongers that he founded in Cheapside] occupied the site of the residence, and probably the business, of John Gilpin, the famous London draper, immortalised by [William] Cowper in 1782. ... At the present time it was estimated that half a million people passed up and down Cheapside within the eight business hours of the day. It had always been a centre of the fight for trade between the East and the West of London. When Mr. Benetfink passed away in 1869 the business was carried on by Mr. George Evans for nearly a quarter of a century. ... Mr. Albert Evans, who succeeded to the business, took into partnership Mr. Ebenezer Skelt,

and under this regime the departments devoted to sports, athletics, outfitting, cycle and motor accessories, etc., had hugely developed. [For advertisement see *TTC 65/19*]

In its report of the event, the *Jersey Independent* of 17 August added to the last sentence above: “Under these heads the firm developed the sporting department, and created a sensation some years ago by purchasing 100,000 ping-pong sets to meet the prevailing craze”.

**Sports Argus**

**21 December 1907**

### Birmingham and Suburban Ping Pong League.

A list of match results was printed (team matches consisting of 12 individual matches), together with a reminder that entries for the League Individual Championships were due to close that day.

2<sup>nd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> November: “A most enjoyable evening ... and a large number of spectators” on the occasion of a 6-a-side match between Swindon Social Club and Chiseldon, with a return match the following week. (*Swindon Advertiser*, 8 November)

21<sup>st</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> December: Further matches for the Social Club, this time 12-a-side against St Johns Club. (*Swindon Adver.*, 6 Dec.)

**1908**

“Ping-pong and other games were indulged in” at the New Year’s Day party held in the British Schools, Fakenham, by the Primitive Wesleyan Church<sup>53</sup>.

“All kinds of amusement were provided, including ping pong” at the Garden Fete held on 7<sup>th</sup> July on the Morrison Vicarage Field. There was a “large attendance in beautiful weather”<sup>54</sup>.

Three days later at a Garden Party at Millfield, Buncrana, “Games were provided, including ping-pong”<sup>55</sup>.

Ping-Pong was still being advertised throughout July and August as an attraction on the Old Pier, Weston<sup>56</sup>.

October: A series of games, including ping-pong, were arranged between the Swindon Adult Schools’ Institute and St John’s Church YM Club<sup>56a</sup>.

**The Bystander**

**9 December 1908**

### Why Not Revive Ping-Pong?

At the risk of being laughed at for being out of date, I cannot help in the meantime putting in a word for ping-pong; for ping-pong was an excellent game for the home, but it was killed by being over-boomed, and by the fact that a certain number of players devoted themselves to it so assiduously and became so skilful that the ordinary mortal was driven out of court. I maintain, however, that this was a pure accident, and not an accident of so serious a nature as to render recovery impossible. At Christmas-time we can afford to be old-fashioned, and since there seems to be no startling novelty to arrest our attention, I recommend my readers to give ping-pong another chance. I feel sure that we shall derive any amount of amusement therefrom.

**Belfast News-Letter**

**18 December 1908**

Clearing Diabolio, and Ping-Pong Sets, half price.—The Athletic Stores, Bridge Street.

## EARLY NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

1909

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> January a New Year's games tournament was held in Blantyre church hall by the Livingstone Memorial Recreation Club, bringing a large entry from far and near. Ping pong was included amongst the games, which continued until midnight on the Monday, with the semi-finals and finals still left for completion the following Monday!<sup>57</sup>

*Whitby Gazette*

**8 January 1909**

### PING-PONG

The game of ping-pong is still played at several Institutions on Tees-side, and at Ye Hilda Restaurant, Whitby, Mr. Joseph Bloor caters for those to whom "table tennis" was more than a passing craze. The skill of the Ye Hilda players was exemplified on New Year's Day, when a team journeyed to Middlesbrough and played a match with the Middlesbrough Young Men's Christian Association. Two rounds were played, the aggregate showing a victory for the Whitby players in each match; 166-101, 151-103.

*Dundee Evening Telegraph*

**12 January 1909**

I am asked by a reader if Ping Pong is likely to come into vogue again. He writes:—"I was at a country house the other evening, and in the course of conversation one of my hosts remarked that in hunting through the lumber room he had unearthed a complete set of Ping-Pong paraphernalia—net, racquets, and balls. 'Come on, let's have a game,' someone broke in. A moment's hesitation, then a scramble, and in a few minutes the staid and orderly dining-room was turned into an arena, the best tablecloth was jerked off and wrapped round the legs of chairs; cushions, firescreens, and any other available likely and suitable articles were placed so as to prevent the celluloids from getting lost in corners. An extra leaf was put into the dining table, the old post marks were looked for, and the net stretched across. Balls were laid before the fire to warm up; lamps were placed in the best positions for a good light, and all was ready. The click-clack of balls hitting racquet and table was soon heard; we were off. I must say some of us cut rather a sorry figure at the start, and our chief exercise was in getting up the balls and beginning again. But the enthusiasm was there, the game seemed to get a hold of us, and as the evening wore on, some of us were in part regaining our old form. It's a good game; the best indoor game I know. Will it revive?"

It was reported at the YMCA Annual Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January that "The indoor games (including ping-pong) are still very popular".<sup>58</sup>

The annual meeting of the Brighton Cyclist Club on 27<sup>th</sup> January heard that the social side of the club had been growing, with the billiard and ping-pong handicaps being "freely patronised, affording keen interest and much enjoyment".<sup>59</sup>

*Yorkshire Evening Post*

**10 April 1909**

Ping-pong has been revived at Loftus, near Whitby. A match took place the other evening between teams representing the late Loftus Ping-Pong Club and the Wesley Guild Institute. The Institute secured an easy

victory, as the visitors were completely out of practice, not having played for five years. There was a large attendance and much excitement.

On 17<sup>th</sup> April the newly formed Hastings YMCA branch, located in a compact building in Havelock Road, included on the second floor a concert hall, "used for ping-pong, a highly popular game with members of the Y.M.C.A. Daily the members sport themselves upon a full-sized table with a complete set of requisites. The science of the game has been fully developed at the Y.M.C.A., which can boast a very clever team." Monthly tournaments took place.<sup>60</sup>

In July it was reported that at the Mid-Surrey Golf Club "there is in full swing a caddies' club, in a large hall by the members' clubhouse, with a billiard-table, ping-pong tables, etc."<sup>61</sup>.

17<sup>th</sup> July: At Simla hill station, India, "long after their demise in England both ping pong and diabolo continued to hold sway".<sup>62</sup>

At a garden party of Sheffield Commercial Travellers on 17<sup>th</sup> July in the grounds of Holly Court, in warm sunny weather, "A ping pong table attracted scores of patrons".<sup>63</sup>

The Loughborough Church Institute garden fete on 22<sup>nd</sup> July included ping-pong among the amusements.<sup>64</sup>

One of the attractions advertised for the Morpeth Conservative Club Garden Party in the Grounds at Springhill on 12<sup>th</sup> August was a Ping-Pong Competition [won by Mr C Johnson].<sup>65</sup>

"A very pleasant social evening" was held by the YMCA on 8<sup>th</sup> December at the Mechanics Institute, Swindon, when "the usual games were indulged in", including shooting, ping pong, etc. (*Swindon Advertiser*, 17 December)

On Christmas Day, the Orange Hall, Cookstown, was open from 3pm for members and visiting friends. Large numbers enjoyed themselves at games including ping-pong.<sup>66</sup>

Entertainments on Christmas Day and Boxing Day at the Dufferin Memorial Hall, Bangor, included ping-pong; valuable prizes were offered for competitions.<sup>67</sup>

Regular reports were published of results and league tables in the two divisions (19 teams) of the Birmingham Ping-Pong Association.<sup>68</sup> For the new season a meeting was held to arrange fixtures for the Birmingham League.<sup>70</sup>

In Derby, St Luke's beat St Chad's 320-315 in a match which "took place on the St. Luke's table"<sup>69</sup>. And it was reported that a ping pong tournament had been in progress at the Coggeshall Church Men's Club "during the past week or so"<sup>71</sup>. In Swindon, a billiard, whist, and ping-pong match was played between Christ Church and St Marks (*Swindon Advertiser*, 19 November).

1910

In February the annual report of the Leominster YMCA stated that the Rooms had been more used than for some years previously, the ping-pong and semi-billiard and bagatelle tables being in frequent use.<sup>72</sup>

The Annual Soiree of the Royston Young Men's Christian Association to be held in the Town Hall on 7<sup>th</sup> April promised Hoop-la, Ping Pong and other amusements.<sup>73</sup>

At a social evening at the YMCA, Crane House, on 26<sup>th</sup> April "To revive pleasant memories of a past craze, a ping pong tournament was arranged, creating both fun and interest."<sup>74</sup>

In July, nearly a hundred boys from Bolton spent a happy time again at the YMCA Holiday Home and Camp, Bispham Lodge, Blackpool, where one day was reserved for sports, including ping pong.<sup>75</sup>

A Games Tournament on 26<sup>th</sup> July at Merevale College, Newport, included ping-pong.<sup>76</sup>

## EARLY NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

On 20<sup>th</sup> July, an "At Home" was held by the Erskine U.F. Church, Chirnside, where outside games included ping pong!<sup>77</sup>

In September, it was reported that the new social club at Amphill featured ping-pong among its attractions<sup>78</sup>.

*Burnley Gazette*

5 February 1910



On 16<sup>th</sup> February, St Paul's Church Club entertained St John's YM Club for an interesting games match (billiards, ping-pong and whist). (*Swindon Advertiser*, 25 February)

Regular reports continued for the Birmingham Ping-Pong League (2 divisions, 18 teams)<sup>79</sup>. An attempt was made to increase numbers for the following season<sup>80</sup>: "Arrangements are being made to increase the popularity of the Birmingham and Suburban Ping-Pong League and invite entries from any social clubs or institutions who are thinking of entering a team. Ping-pong is a splendid indoor game for the cold weather, and competition in league games promotes healthy rivalry. The cost of the game is very small, and it is undoubtedly a game of skill." Perhaps on this occasion the plea proved unsuccessful, as league tables continued to be published for two divisions (17 teams), plus the draw for a knockout competition<sup>81</sup>.

Meanwhile, further north, a league table (6 teams) was published for the Sunderland and District Ping-Pong League<sup>82</sup>.

### ② The first 'Revival'

1911

A Sale of Work was held on 19<sup>th</sup> January in their schoolroom by the Tewkesbury Wesleyans, at which "a ping-pong contest was arranged"<sup>83</sup>.

Ping-pong was also provided at St John's sale of work 26-27<sup>th</sup> May in the Parish Hall, Cambridge Gardens (North London).<sup>84</sup>

And on 25<sup>th</sup> July, a Garden fete held at the Normanton-on-Stour rectory included ping-pong among the amusements.<sup>85</sup>

A games tournament played at Limsfield Institute on 7<sup>th</sup> January against representatives from the Titsey Institute included ping-pong.<sup>86</sup>

On 14<sup>th</sup> January a ping-pong tournament took place at the YMCA in Barnstaple High Street.<sup>87</sup>

A ping-pong match was played at Exeter YMCA on 11<sup>th</sup> March against Sidmouth YMCA. The games, between teams of 8, "were keenly contested".<sup>88</sup>

On 26<sup>th</sup> April a social and dance was held at the Balfour Hall, Plymouth, for about 150 members and friends of the Three Towns and District Ping-Pong League. Shields and medals were awarded to the Div. One, Div. Two and KO Champ winners.<sup>89</sup>

*Manchester Courier*

28 June 1911

In all games there is a certain dignity if you only look for it carefully. And neither ping-pong nor lawn tennis is any exception to the rule ... in the table game it is the beauty of wrist play. Both are grand games, difficult to play well, but repaying in full anyone who takes them up seriously.

*Freeman's Journal*

12 September 1911

Manufacturers of games are getting large orders for ping-pong sets.

"A Ping-Pong League has been formed in Coventry. Mr G E Stevens, Y.M.C.A., is the hon. sec. pro tem."<sup>90</sup>

It was reported that the Birmingham Ping-Pong Association was preparing for the new season.<sup>91</sup>

On 11<sup>th</sup> October the second annual meeting of the Sunderland and District Ping-Pong League was held, with the radius extended to six miles. The secretary was Andrew Donaldson, whose team Southwick Trinity were champions the previous season.<sup>92</sup>

The Three Towns and District PPL reported a newly-formed junior section.<sup>93</sup> Whilst in Oxfordshire it was noted that ping-pong was "much played".<sup>94</sup>

*London Daily News*

12 September 1911

There has been some question among sports manufacturers about the revival of ping-pong, and the sound of the ping—or is it the pong?—has been heard in several suburban homes.

*The Standard, London*

14 September 1911

### FASHIONS IN GAMES.

#### THE PASSING OF ROLLER SKATES AND PING-PONG.

... The decline in roller-skating for the present synchronises with the threatened revival of that much criticised pastime of ping-pong. A few years ago it seemed that the whole world was busy chasing little white balls over a low net stretched across a flat table. Wherever you went there was ping-pong. It was played alike in the mansion of the wealthy, in the Bayswater villa, in the palatial hotel, and the suburban inn. It became more than a craze—it became a positive nuisance. It crept into our national jokes and added to our idiom language. "Do you ping?" asked Angelina in the pauses of the valse. "I-aw, I-have ponged a little," replied Fitznoodle, of the Guards. Society verse-writers revelled in "pong" as a rhyme to "song," while "ping" constantly did similar duty to "wing."

Then, all of a sudden, ping-pong ceased to be. It did not even linger in its departure. It just left off and disappeared. Ruin faced more than one manufacturer of ping-pong balls and bats and tables, rash enough to suppose that the vogue would be permanent; the dust of a store-attic received the once prized implements of the discarded game. ...

A manufacturer of roller skates [explained] "As for ping-pong, that cannot be regarded otherwise as a come-and-go craze. It came and went out, principally, I believe, because nobody had invented a means of picking up the balls without continuous bending of the back—a most wearisome proceeding. If, as there is reason to believe, ping-pong is to be revived, it will soon go out again—for the very same back-bending reason."

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### *The Standard, London* 16 September 1911

“Who invents the new games? Oh, I don’t know,” the manager [of a large store] continued, replying to our representative’s question. “Every kind of person, I should say. I have bought games, either the idea or the model, from a bishop’s wife, a naval officer, several clergymen, a well-known fashionable woman of title, a pawnbroker’s assistant, a bathchairman, and a county council school teacher. Payments vary. Sometimes, but rarely, it is an agreed sum down—anything from a guinea to a hundred guineas. Generally it is a small amount of money to cover cost of model-making, and a 10 per cent. royalty on sales. ...

#### Revival of Ping-Pong.

“I noticed in the columns of *The Standard* a day or two ago a statement to the effect that ping-pong lost its popularity largely on account of the fatiguing back-bending involved in picking up balls as they fell from the table or were missed by the bats of the players. We have a sort of claw arrangement which can be fixed on a walking stick and the balls easily retrieved without any stooping. I think this device will help much towards the revival of ping-pong, which, I may tell you, has never quite died out in the London suburbs. The fact that sets of ping-pong have been ordered for two of the royal residences may mean a lot towards another innings for what is really a most entertaining and healthful pastime for a winter’s evening.”

### *Birmingham Mail* 11 October 1911

A letter from a group of nine “fairly good players” requested an opportunity to meet other players in the Smethwick area, to test “their slight abilities at this highly interesting and skilful pastime”.

### *Coventry Herald* 29 December 1911

Ping-pong seems to have come to life again. The local league is going well, and apart from the league a number of competitions are being played with great success.

1912

### *Pall Mall Gazette* 12 January 1912

It is said that Ping-pong has returned, and that a single firm of manufacturers is selling 1,200 balls and 100 bats a day.

### *Shields Daily News* 18 January 1912

Remove the ornaments from your dining room, cover up the mirrors, take away the chairs, for soon the celluloid sphere will be soaring across the table as of old. ... Ping-Pong is coming in again!

### *London Daily News* 24 January 1912

#### PING PONG.

#### Revival of Once Popular Game.

Some months ago, when rinking seemed on the down grade as a winter amusement, it was suggested in “The Daily News” that ping pong might be revived. Before

Christmas the revival began, and it is now beyond doubt that it will be a general one, and that the game may return to its old popularity. The familiar sound has been heard in Bloomsbury and in Hampstead, and ping pong parties have already been formed.

Mr. Jaques, of the well-known firm of game manufacturers in Hatton Garden, told a “Daily News” representative yesterday that every year since its death he had expected a revival of the game, and now it had come.

“Curiously, it came in the North,” he said, “and our first large orders were from Aberdeen and Hartlepool. Then it worked down into the Midlands, and now, if I may judge from the orders from Gamage’s and other firms, it has come to London.”

Mr. Jaques showed his order-book for the past week, and it was remarkable to find that large orders were entered from Jamaica, Russia, Rhodesia, India, and many other countries and Colonies. “I think,” he said, “that the world needs something like ping pong just now. It has got nervous and irritable over bridge, and requires amusement.”

[*Country Life* (17<sup>th</sup> February) also reported the game’s revival at Hamley Brothers (*TTH 89, pages 11-12*).]

### *Northern Daily Mail* 26 January 1912

**PING PONG AGAIN POPULAR.**  
 COMPLETE SETS, 3/6, 5/-, 7/6, 10/6,  
 AND UPWARDS.  
 UP-TO-DATE SELECTION OF BATS AND ACCESSORIES.  
**SAGE, 6, LYNN-STREET,**  
 STATIONER, BAG FACTOR, AND FANCY DEALER.

### *Northern Whig* 31 January 1912

Ping-pong is reviving. Some people are puzzling to know why its glory ever faded, but they have doubtless forgotten what a strong counter-attraction was provided half a dozen years ago in the sensational exhibitions of a Radical Government. These have begun to pall, hence the change. This, however, is not an explanation everywhere accepted. It is held in certain very trustworthy quarters that diabolo pushed out ping-pong and left no substitute, while yet another explanation is that ping-pong languished when it came to be called table tennis. That was not homely enough. It was too la-di-da. The name took all joy out of the game, besides it brought with it certain absurd rules, which also helped to spoil sport. The old name appears once more. It recalls happy memories, and there is a rush to buy the little balls, the little rackets, and the little nets.

### *Yorkshire Telegraph (Sheffield)* 2 February 1912

**57, FARGATE, at WILSON'S.**  
**PING-PONG.**  
**THE GREAT REVIVAL**  
 of the  
**GREATEST INDOOR GAME.**  
**SETS from 2/6 upwards.**

The current league table for Sunderland showed still just six teams.<sup>99</sup> On 23<sup>rd</sup> February, an American tournament was concluded in Enon Schoolroom, Monkwearmouth, before a

## EARLY NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

large attendance; Andrew Donaldson won for the 3<sup>rd</sup> successive year since its inauguration in 1909-10.<sup>100</sup>

In March, it was announced that there would be a ping-pong tournament each evening in the Gallery of the Westover Palace Rink & Tea House.<sup>95</sup>

And in April, after its tragic sinking, it was noted that "There were ping-pong tables on the ill-fated Titanic."<sup>96</sup>

Final Sunderland league table, with YMCA as winners.<sup>101</sup>  
The final match was played in the Three Towns League.<sup>102</sup>

The Wigtoft Church Sunday School teachers and choir were entertained at the Vicarage on 16<sup>th</sup> August, where various games, including ping pong, were provided. "All without exception entered heartily into the games... Tea was served on the lawn."<sup>97</sup>

In October it was reported that at the Westover Palace Rink "Ping pong tables will be open to the public in the North Gallery at 3d. each per half hour".<sup>98</sup>

"A Ping-Pong Championship is to be held at the Victoria Rooms in January." [Bristol]<sup>103</sup>

"We hear that some of the London [football] clubs are thinking of joining a Ping-pong association next season."<sup>104</sup>

*Belfast News-Letter*

**30 November 1912**

**PRELIMINARY NOTICE.**  
**A GRAND**  
**PING PONG TOURNAMENT**  
(For which Valuable Prizes have been offered)  
WILL TAKE PLACE  
IN EXHIBITION HALL,  
On SATURDAY, 28th December, 1912.

*Belfast News-Letter*

**21 December 1912**

A ping pong tournament in aid of May Street Church Organ Fund will take place in the Exhibition Hall, Botanic Gardens, on the 28th inst., the events including ladies' singles and doubles, mixed doubles, and gentlemen's singles and doubles. Valuable prizes will be offered, and entrance forms, admission tickets, and all accessories may be obtained from the Athletic Stores, Bridge Street, or from the honorary secretaries. ... A select orchestra will provide music in the afternoon and evening, and luncheons and teas can be had.

*Belfast News-Letter*

**30 December 1912**

A very successful ping-pong tournament was held on Saturday afternoon and evening in the Exhibition Hall, and a most enjoyable time was spent by both players and spectators. [There were almost 300 entries (119 in the gents' singles alone).] A number of tables had been arranged along the centre of the hall, while in an adjoining room there were tables for practising upon. In her opening address, the Lady Mayoress "believed that the tournament would be one of the first large ping-pong tournaments held in Belfast since about ten years ago".

**1913**

On 25<sup>th</sup> January, a Ping-Pong Tournament was held at Manor Street, Cliftonville (with about 150 entrants).<sup>105</sup>

Histon Institute Billiard and Ping-Pong Clubs were at home on 3<sup>rd</sup> February in friendly encounters with the Y.M.C.A.<sup>106</sup>

St Simon's Church Sale of Work on 7-8<sup>th</sup> February at Magdalene Hall, Shaftesbury Sq, Belfast, included Ping Pong.<sup>107</sup>

On 15<sup>th</sup> February, a Grand Ping Pong Tournament was held in Rosemary Hall, Elmwood Avenue, Belfast.<sup>108</sup>

There was much news involving Sunderland players:

In February, 'The champion' Andrew Donaldson played games against each of the Southwick Congers team (40-up), giving each 20 points start. He won all 9 games. On another occasion he played games against the Rest of Southwick Trinity (his team), this time giving each 24 points start. He won 6 out of 7, the loss being 38-40 to W Holland.<sup>114</sup>

7<sup>th</sup> February: ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIP.

The first match for the above championship was played at Wednesbury between T. Hollingsworth of that town, and A. Donaldson, the Sunderland champion, the home player winning fairly easily by 31 points [100-up]. An article in the local paper prefaced its report of the match with the observation "A revival in the once universally popular game of ping-pong is apparent in the Midlands".<sup>115</sup> [TTC 67/25]

17<sup>th</sup> February: Y.M.C.A. were the winners of the 7-team Sunderland League.<sup>116</sup>

28<sup>th</sup> February: The Champions were defeated by a Rest of League team (including A Donaldson and R Rutter) 217-250.<sup>117</sup>

6<sup>th</sup> March: The Final of the North of England Championship was played in All Saints' Schoolroom, with A Donaldson defeating R Rutter 200-130.<sup>118</sup> He was scheduled to defend it in West Hartlepool on 25<sup>th</sup> April against Lancelot Young, champion of West Hartlepool for the last 4 years with just one defeat (by Donaldson).<sup>119</sup>

11<sup>th</sup> March: A 2-a-side England v Scotland match was arranged, involving Sunderland players R Rutter and W Francis v A Donaldson and R Neill; attempts were also being made to arrange a Sunderland v South Shields match.<sup>120</sup>

*Belfast News-Letter*

**22 March 1913**

**PING-PONG TOURNAMENT**  
(AMERICAN SYSTEM),  
GAME, 10 UP,  
CONTINUOUS PLAY. WINS COUNT.  
IN ROSEMARY HALL, ELMWOOD  
AVENUE, on SATURDAY, 5th April, at  
2-30 and 5-30. Ladies' and Gentlemen's Singles,  
Mixed Doubles and Special, Mixed singles for  
Boys and Girls under 14 years. Is each person  
each event. Entries at Athletic Stores. 7464

1<sup>st</sup> March: St Simon's Church Ping-Pong Tournament at Magdalene Hall, Belfast at 3pm, Singles and Doubles.<sup>109</sup>

On 6-7<sup>th</sup> March, separate Ping-Pong tournaments were held each day at the Protestant Hall, Antrim, the second including "Two Confined (12 mile radius) Events".<sup>110</sup>

The Carnival at the Kursaal, Bognor, on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, included a gentlemen's ping pong competition.<sup>111</sup>

*Belfast News-Letter*

**3 April 1913**

**PING PONG.**  
ALL THIS YEAR'S PRIZE WINNERS HAVE  
ENTERED FOR TOURNAMENT  
IN ROSEMARY HALL,  
ON SATURDAY.

[Although entries were still being accepted, perhaps this was aimed more at spectators than extra entrants?]

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A Ping-Pong Tournament was held at Clarence Place Hall, Belfast, on 19<sup>th</sup> April.<sup>121</sup>

There were 134 entries in a ping-pong tournament commenced in Portrush on 12<sup>th</sup> May. Not all events were completed owing to "the want of time and the number of entries" [and were finally completed on 20 May].<sup>122</sup>

On 23<sup>rd</sup> August, the Wolverton Industrial & Provident Society children's gala included ping-pong amongst amusements.<sup>112</sup>

30<sup>th</sup> December: Gentlemen's and Ladies' Singles, and Mixed Doubles, with two prizes for each event, at:



There were "close upon a hundred entries", ensuring a "successful ping-pong tournament".<sup>113</sup>

In August, a meeting at the YMCA of representatives from 6 Exeter Clubs unanimously decided to form a League, the first meeting to be held on 11<sup>th</sup> September.<sup>123</sup>

On 16<sup>th</sup> September, a letter to the paper from the Secretary of a Ping-pong Club enquired whether there was any interest in the formation of a Ping-pong League in Belfast.<sup>124</sup>

18<sup>th</sup> October: The English Ping-Pong Union Individual Championship match, between Thomas Hollingsworth, of Wednesbury, the present champion, and Andrew Donaldson, played in St. Columba's Hall [Sunderland], provided a most brilliant exhibition of the game between two players quite worthy of doing honour to the title, and resulted in a victory for the title holder by 200 points to 138.<sup>125</sup> [TTH 80/23]

2<sup>nd</sup> December: Sunderland League tables now show 13 teams in two divisions.<sup>126</sup>

Ping-Pong Tournament (Under Handicap) organised by the Cliftonville Cricket and Lawn Tennis Club at the Cliftonville Presbyterian Church Lecture Hall, on 6<sup>th</sup> December.<sup>127</sup>

Also on 6<sup>th</sup> December, Andrew Donaldson retained his North of England title in a match against Lancelot Young played at West Hartlepool YMCA [*I suspect postponed from above*].<sup>128</sup>

### *Sheffield Evening Telegraph* 22 December 1913

As far as we remember, only one really good game has been invented within fairly recent years, and that is ping-pong, which ought not to have been allowed to fall into decay.

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# Ivor Montagu, Table Tennis and Apartheid South Africa

by Stuart Sweeney (ENG)

## Introduction

Sport is closely linked to the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, with the primary focus on the cricket and rugby tours both to and from South Africa from 1970 to the end of apartheid in the early 1990s. However, it was the International Table Tennis Federation that was the pathfinder for opposition to apartheid through sport, from as early as 1948. I believe these events deserve to be known more widely, so in this article I shall review: the historical development of the ITTF's policies to the two South African Table Tennis associations, one segregated and the other unsegregated; the impact of these actions; make comparisons with other sports and close with some personal thoughts.

Apartheid, the legal structure based on white supremacy in South Africa, was formally established in 1948 after the election of D. F. Malan's National Party. However, discriminatory legislation existed beforehand including a 'whites only' qualification for parliamentary candidates and deep social segregation in sport and elsewhere.



Ivor Montagu, ITTF President

The key figure in our sport's opposition to discrimination in South Africa and elsewhere was Ivor Montagu – a name well known to anyone with an

interest in Table Tennis history. Born in 1904 to a wealthy banking family, he was a notable figure in the early days of the film industry and a key left-wing journalist and author. He was also a propagandist and for a period a spy for the Soviet Union. His achievements in Table Tennis are remarkable: a key figure in the rejuvenation of the sport in England, leading to his setting up the English Table Tennis Association in 1921 and the codification of the rules. He was also a prime mover in the establishment of the ITTF in 1926, where he was the first chairman and then president from 1927 to 1966.

## The ITTF and Table Tennis in South Africa

The ITTF Constitution was originally written by Ivor Montagu in 1926. Then in 1936.1 he submitted a revised version which was duly approved, including for the first time a statement that Table Tennis associations applying for ITTF membership must be: '...conducting the sport territory in such a way as to enable participation in it of citizens irrespective of colour, race or creed...' I am not aware of any other sport at that time including such an anti-discrimination clause, although today, the majority do.

In 1971 Ivor Montagu wrote a two-part article, published in the English Table Tennis Association magazine, *Table Tennis News*, entitled 'Table Tennis and South Africa,' in an attempt to correct some misunderstandings reported in the press. As part of the background to the situation in the late 1940s, he recounts the problems that arose for the ITTF concerning Germany in the 1930s when Jewish players were excluded first from selection and then from all play by the German Table Tennis Association. The matter came up at an ITTF AGM, but Montagu was told beforehand by one delegate that a number of central European associations had directed their representatives to support the German view in all matters, '...even if it should be a proposal to make the ball square.' As a result, a watered-down resolution was passed which the Germans, '... foresaw that it would be easy to ignore.' 2

Montagu continued that in 1947 the mood was very different, 'The vote was overwhelming for making all-inclusiveness without discrimination an explicit condition of association membership.' In South Africa there were two associations: the multi-racial South African Table Tennis Board (SATTB) and the whites only South African Table Tennis Union (SATTU). Montagu opined that the latter was the larger and probably had a higher standard of play, but the whites only rule was clearly in breach of the ITTF Constitution.



Montagu received at Cairo airport

Montagu describes a visit in 1948 by a representative of SATTU seeking ITTF membership, which would open the door to official tours and participation in ITTF events. Montagu remembers the crucial question posed by a member of the ITTF Committee, 'What proportion of the population do your players represent?' The SATTU representative listed the population of South Africa with 1.5 million Europeans and 11.5 million non-Europeans, adding, 'That is why we have to keep separate or we should be swamped.' The ITTF questioner was flabbergasted and exclaimed, '...you have the impertinence to come here expecting us to recognise you as "South Africa" when you represent such a tiny minority!' The SATTU application was unanimously rejected.

In 1950, the ITTF received applications from the non-racial SATTB and again from the whites only SATTU. In line with its Constitution, the ITTF AGM, 'Agreed the SATTB eligible and the SATTU not eligible. Agreed to accept into "good standing" the SATTB.'<sup>3</sup> However, they did also recommend that the two South African bodies discuss working together with a view to '...eventual joint representation in international matters...' In addition, SATTU members were allowed to play with ITTF players by consent of

SATTB or could appeal to the ITTF Advisory Committee if SATTB approval was '...unreasonably withheld.'

The SATTB good standing was renewed in 1951.<sup>4</sup> In 1952 the Board applied for full membership which was not granted but the AGM again confirmed their good standing status. The membership application of SATTU was again rejected, but showing concern for the state of affairs, the ITTF set up a Committee to, '...continue negotiations with a view to aiding solution to of the position in South African Table Tennis.'<sup>5</sup> However, perhaps inevitably given the apartheid system, the two associations did not reach an accommodation until the end of apartheid in the 1990s.

At the 1953 AGM, the ITTF Committee set up the previous year, reported that while conversations had taken place between the Committee, the Board and the Union, that nothing had occurred to change the present positions of the two organisations, which were confirmed by the AGM. It was agreed that the Committee should continue its work.<sup>6</sup> However, these attempts at conciliation did not bear fruit.

**HERE THEY ARE—SOUTH AFRICA'S  
FIRST NON-EUROPEAN SPRINGBOKS,**



A breakthrough for the SATTB occurred in 1957 when for the first and last time before the 1990s, they were able to send a men's team to the World Table Tennis Championships in Stockholm, Sweden.<sup>7</sup> Five players and a manager took part: Mr Bassa, the manager and the team (men only) was Cassim Peer (captain), Ashwin Valjee, PR Maistry, Dennis Groenewald and Pappa Mullah. According to the *New Age* newspaper, '...it was not easy for them to participate in an international

competition,'<sup>8</sup> and they failed to win any matches against much stronger opposition.<sup>9</sup> According to the *New Age* newspaper, the team did not receive the blessings of the South African government and it would have been almost a mission impossible to get them passports as a team.

After the 1957 Worlds, Montagu sent a warm letter to the Board, 'It was a happy occasion that enabled ... the players of other lands for the first time to meet a team from the Board ...'<sup>10</sup> He concludes with the moving message, 'We look forward, as no doubt do yourselves, to the time when circumstances permit all the Table Tennis enthusiasts of South Africa, regardless of colour, race or creed, to come together round our sporting table.'

### **Impact of the ITTF decisions concerning Table Tennis in South Africa**

Although the Board was the only non-racial association to achieve international recognition in the 1950s, a number of non-white sports associations had also approached international bodies. The South African Government took action and the Minister of the Interior, Dr. T. E. Donges, announced on June 27, 1956, to the effect that Non-European sporting activities, '... must accord with the policy of 'separate development'. Whites and non-whites should organise their sporting activities separately...' Further, he continued, 'It would not support non-white sporting activities designed to force the country to abandon its traditional racial divisions by any process of squeezing white South Africans out of international competitions. Dr. Donges concluded by announcing that no travel facilities would be granted to people guilty of such subversive intentions.'<sup>11</sup> Thus, after 1957, never again in the apartheid era could the Board compete in ITTF events.

Dennis Brutos, long-term campaigner for non-discriminatory sport in South Africa and victim of Government oppression wrote, '...some sharp clashes have taken place in various branches of sport. The most notable, since it resulted in a victory for the non-White body—on the grounds that its constitution is open to all South Africans—was that in Table Tennis.' He continued mistakenly that in 1956 the SATTB was recognised and the SATTU banned by the ITTF, whereas, as shown above, the SATTU was never recognised and the SATTB was

accepted in 1950.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, Brutos had shown that Table Tennis was a valued example of non-racial sport.

In her 1971 report to the UN Unit on Apartheid, Mary Corrigan wrote: 'In 1956, the first victory against apartheid sport was won in the field of table tennis. The International Table Tennis Federation removed the all-white South African Table Tennis Union from membership and recognised the non-racial South African Table Tennis Board as the sole controlling body in South Africa. [...] this decision encouraged other sports organisations to take similar initiatives.'<sup>13</sup> As with Brutos, the crucial date was 1950, not 1956 and the Union was not removed – it was never accepted. However, it is noteworthy that Corrigan believed the Board's success encouraged other sports.



Albert Luthuli, ANC President

The Board's success was also appreciated by Albert Luthuli, President of the foremost anti-apartheid organisation, the African National Congress (ANC). In 1956 he addressed the Natal Branch of the ANC, saying, 'When a people come to the realisation of their plight and begin to fight back unitedly there is surely room for jubilation and optimism. The fight equally is being fought on every front. The fight has been won by the S. A. Table Tennis Association [Board], which has gained international recognition.'<sup>14</sup>

As described above, there was a dialogue throughout this period between SATTB and SATTU. The latter had no choice if they wanted to invite foreign teams, they had to do so through the Board. The ITTF Museum has copies of letters from around 1960, which illustrate the frustration of both parties and it must have irked the Union that alone among South African sports, they were in a subservient position to an unsegregated organisation.

## Apartheid and other sports

Having discussed the history of Table Tennis and apartheid in some detail, for comparison I shall provide a brief overview of the situation in some other sports.

The International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) adopted an anti-discriminatory clause for the first time in 1962, 'to prevent racial, religious or political discrimination or distinction among players whether their Status be amateur, non-amateur or professional.'<sup>15</sup> Corrigan describes that FIFA's policies regarding South Africa oscillated in the early 1960s. <sup>16</sup>

As early as the mid-1950s, the non-racial South African Soccer Association had pointed out to FIFA that it had more than twice the membership of the whites only body, the Football Association of South Africa (FASA). However, because FASA had a large number of friends in FIFA, it was only in 1961 that FASA was suspended. Sir Stanley Rous of England, President of FIFA, led a mission to South Africa and then recommended the reinstatement of FASA which took place in 1963. However, opposition from African and Asian associations resulted in the reimposition of the suspension at the FIFA Tokyo congress in 1964. Rous continued to try to reinstate FASA which led to his defeat in the 1974 FIFA Presidential election.<sup>17</sup>

Corrigan points out that in many sports, '...senior officials of international bodies worked desperately to maintain the status quo and retain all-white bodies as full members.' For the Olympics, the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SAN-ROC) was set up in 1963 and achieved success the same year at the International Olympic Committee (IOC) meeting in Baden-Baden. Corrigan writes: '... senior officials of the IOC were strongly committed to keeping white South Africa in the Olympic Games despite open violation of the Olympic Charter. South Africa enjoyed extensive support among representatives of most Western countries. It was only by the coordination of the efforts of the Afro-Asian representatives, supported by the Socialist countries and one or two officials from Western Europe, that apartheid sport was excluded from the [1964] Olympic Games.' South Africa was again excluded in 1968 and in 1970, the white South African Olympic Games Association was expelled from the Olympic movement.

The 1970 South African cricket tour of England was cancelled by the MCC, but only after strong pressure from the UK Government and in the same year the International Cricket Conference imposed a moratorium on all tours to and from the apartheid state, but from time to time, so-called 'rebel tours' did take place in South Africa.<sup>18</sup>

South Africa remained a member of the International Rugby Board throughout the apartheid era. The last South African tour was to New Zealand as late as 1981 and several official international tours to South Africa continued in the 1980s.

In Tennis, the South African Davis Cup team was banned in 1970, reinstated in 1973 and then banned again in 1979, having won the event in 1974.<sup>19</sup>

## Conclusion

### CHERYL ROBERTS



During the transition period away from Apartheid, 1990-1993, South Africa sent a team to the 1992 Summer Olympics which included two Table Tennis players, Cheryl Roberts and Louis Botha, the first opportunity for international representation for the sport for 35 years. The two players were granted wild cards by the ITTF and the Unified SATTB took a policy decision that all teams would be selected on a 50/50 basis. Cheryl Roberts was thus from the former SATTB while Louis Botha was from SATTU. The selection of all future teams in the immediate future reflected teams of national unity. In an interview for *Speak* magazine, Roberts described how she started with Tennis, but turned to Table Tennis in a neighbour's garage when she was turned away from a 'whites only' Tennis club.<sup>20</sup>

The SATTB and the SATTU signed a declaration of intent on the 21 July 1991 to unite the two bodies into one controlling body for Table Tennis in South Africa. The Unification of the SATTB and the SATTU was facilitated by Mr Hans Gisecke (ITTF Honorary Treasurer), George Segun (ATTF President) and Mr Fikrou Kidane (Special advisor to the IOC on African Affairs). As at April 2020, the South African women's team is ranked 45th by the ITTF and men's team 57th.

While the actions of the ITTF and Ivor Montagu did not spark an immediate transformation in South Africa, they did put down a marker that was recognised by various groups in the country and around the world. The IOC recognised the ITTF's programme of 'Ping Pong Diplomacy' and invited the SATTB to accompany ITTF President Mr Ochiro Ogimura to address the IOC's Centennial Olympic Congress in Paris in 1994. The theme was: 'Olympic Movement and International Understanding'.<sup>21</sup> Montagu died in 1984 but it is clear that he would have been delighted by the changes that took place in South Africa less than ten years later.

To end on a personal note, I take some pride that the most significant sport in my life, Table Tennis, led the way in determining that apartheid was unacceptable. Several years ago, I visited the museum on Robben Island, the prison off Cape Town used to imprison and isolate Nelson Mandela and other leaders of the African National Congress. In the cells, former prisoners have written their memories of their harsh detention illustrated with personal objects. The most striking for me was an inmate's account of an overseas charity providing a Table Tennis table, equipment and a book on how to play. Many prisoners worked hard on their game in their free time and our sport proved an important source of respite. In pride of place in the inmate's cell was his hand-crafted certificate as runner-up in the prison tournament.

### Acknowledgements

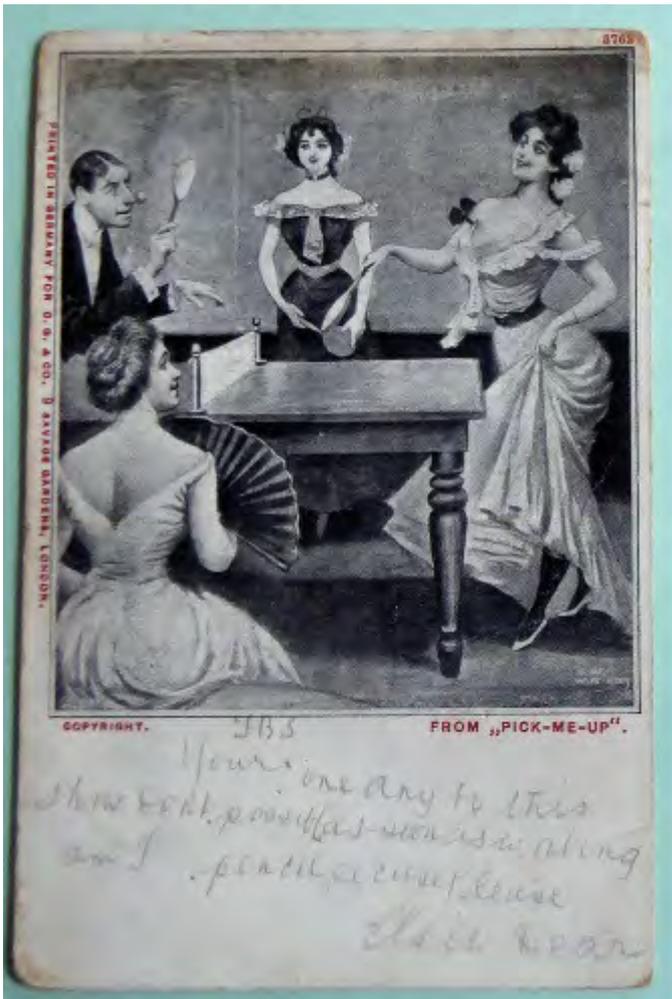
I am grateful to Chuck Hoey, ITTF Honorary Curator & Historian and Russell Campbell, Adjunct Professor, Victoria University of Wellington, for providing research materials and welcome encouragement. Maggie Foyer, Open University Associate Lecturer, provided valuable support by proofreading and

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Cards from Martin Holland (ENG)



Gunther Angenendt Medals



1930-31 English Championships medal  
Ladies Doubles Runner-up Dora Emdin

Berlin 1934 Mixed Doubles 1<sup>st</sup> pl  
Won by Krebsbach & Jones



1934 German Championship  
Astrid Krebsbach

Medal from French Open, 1933-34  
Astrid Krebsbach



1939 World Championship medal



1936 English Open medal Women's Doubles  
Winners: Dora Emdin/Astrid Krebsbach



1936 world Silver medalist team, Roumania



*Pentru cea mai frumoasă, amănunțită din viață,  
în semn de adăncă recunoștință față de  
Milada și Ing. Leon David  
D. Moraviciu*



English Open 1938 medal  
Women's Doubles Semi-Finalist  
Blackbourne/Steventon



English Open 1939 medal  
Women's Singles Runner up  
Dora Emdin



# Philatelic Update



Malinska, Croatia  
20.03.2020  
10 years of the club  
Malinska-Dubasnica



Postcard celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of Zarko Dolinar



Reiko Miyagawa (JPN) kindly sends this card from the 2020 World Stamp Festival.

Fabio sends this 1927 postally sent cover with very rare label applied to the reverse side. The bottom text says "Simple life makes your family happy" See page 7.





## Auction Action - Trends



Set of 4 long handle cane rackets with single vellum , early Wright & Ditson set, wood box, tennis style netposts. \$826



French 'Ping Pong' set in wood box, pair of strung rackets with concave throats, folding free-standing net, sliding box lid, rules. Sold for a very modest 251 Euros.



The Royal Game or Table Tennis, by Milton Bradley. Nice boxlid illustration, but this example has low end plain wood bats. \$95



Pair of Tucker TTT bats with wide mesh net & wood ball box. The logo reads: Tucker Company, Urbana, Ohio, Trade mark TTT. \$81



3 long handle vellum battledores, 2 with vellum/strung sides. 400 British Pounds



Pair of Ayres strung rackets, concave throat, leather butt cap, strings in some distress but can be improved with some repairs. 260 British Pounds





McLoughlin Bros. New York with black box, pair of medium handle drum rackets trimmed in leather paper. \$70



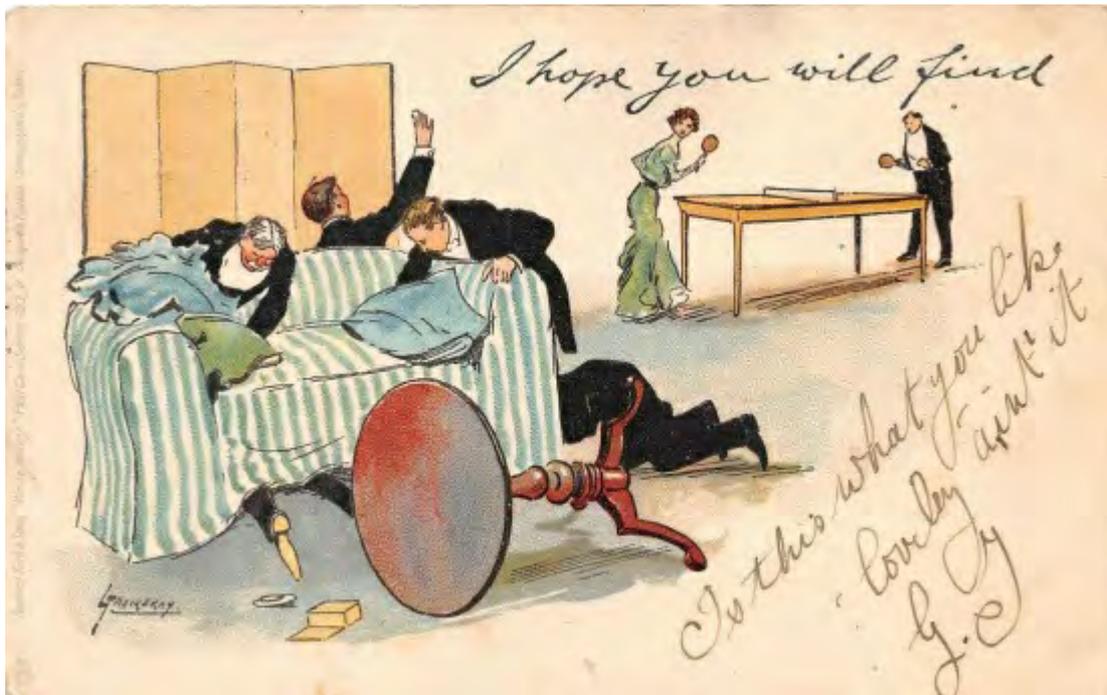
Spalding set in wood box showing trestle style table & men in suits playing, with original tube of 6 balls, pair of thick handle lacquered wood bats \$182



Postcard, undivided back, from the Premier series of 6 cards with Shakespeare quotes. Posted in 10.1902. The sender writes that the men are doing all the work. \$10.50



Beautiful rare postcard, JW Spear Series of Parlour Games, JWS & S. 74 GBP



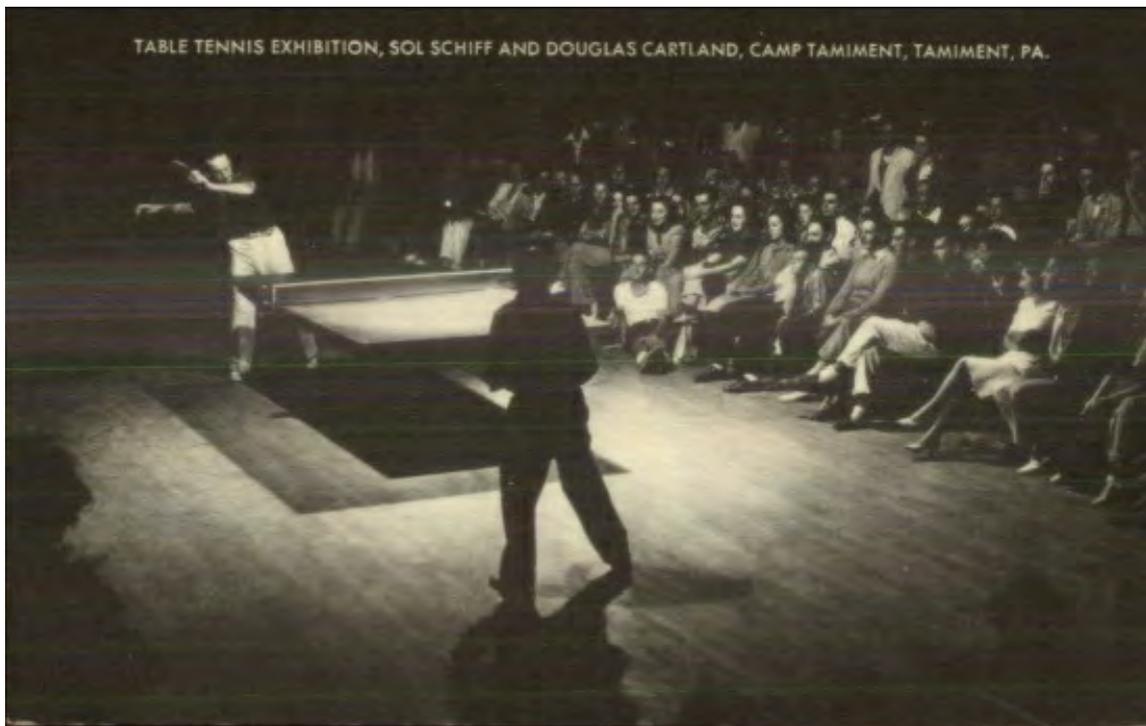
1902 Postcard, Tuck 'Write Away' Series 623.V from set of 6 \$8.84 Art by Lance Thackeray. Prices seem to vary widely on the early Tuck Ping Pong postcards, so be patient and watch for a bargain.



Hand-painted postcard, an unusual prize for a Ping Pong tournament, probably at a Ping Pong party. The note says "Presented to Mrs Spearman" and 'Have another!' so perhaps she was a frequent winner. 4.80 GBP



World Club Championships, Women's Doubles. 5GBP



Real photo postcard showing an exhibition match between Sol Schiff and Doug Cartland at Camp Tamiment, PA. Table Tennis was a popular activity at Camp Tamiment, as shown by several recreational scenes on postcards. \$20



Bergmann 'Personal' bat by Slazenger 103 GBP



Pair of bats with Fred Perry logo.



Large and heavy belt buckle, US Table Tennis Association. Perhaps a prize or USTTA VIP gift. \$20



8 novelty rackets with highly unusual shapes from a 1930s set of 'Krazy Table Tennis'. Sold for only \$10. Not often found as a complete set. The net was also 'krazy' shape.



Left: Stiga 'Blue Master' thick waffle sponge \$202



Stiga Alser A \$110.50 'Champion of Europe'



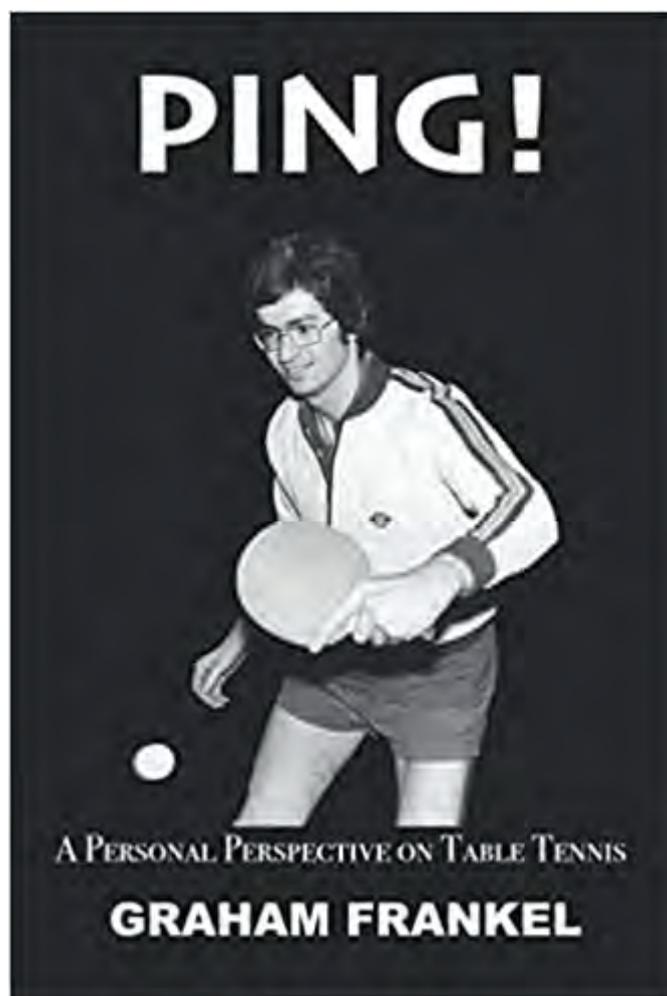
Stiga Ehrlich, perforated slant-cut grip \$224



Butterfly Swedish Style racket, with perforated slant-cut grip. \$89



Nittaku Resoud in custom case. The wood is Swiss spruce from the Resoud forest. Quite an optimistic, if not breathtaking price of \$9000 on ebay!! What is it about this bat that makes it worth that kind of price? Will all my smashes and chops score points?



New book by Graham Frankel (ENG). Recall that Graham meticulously scanned all the English TT magazines and made them available online, a valuable research tool:

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/our-sport/news/archives/table-tennis-news-archive/>

This book is available on Amazon. Here is the description:

“Table tennis, the sport that almost everybody has played at one time or another, has a unique position among all other popular world sports. The evolution of table tennis at a competition level has been dominated by changes in equipment. This fascinating story is punctuated by moments of drama where unknown players have burst onto the international scene upsetting established champions and setting the sport into a new direction. These pivotal changes sparked bitter conflicts – sometimes drawn out over decades - between the authorities, players, and those with commercial interests in creating new products. Set against the historical background, Ping! is also a very personal story, charting the experiences of how a young boy whose humiliating failures in other sports led to a lifetime commitment to table tennis.”

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**Anton Zwiebel** In Memoriam

# Olympic Pins Update Tokyo, Japan



Will the 2020 Games be held? There are no further postponement dates allowed by the IOC. Let's hope that a vaccine will help to stage the Games. More pin varieties are surfacing, including sponsor pins, 2 coins, and a box of 6 DHS balls, also several Coca Cola pins. But be careful, some of the prices are very high. Be patient and wait for the prices to come down to normal.