



The Table Tennis Collector

75

February
2015



Art by Matthew Green

BBC and the arts community in England have demonstrated a great connection to social causes. Local artists recently prepared and exhibited 21 art bats at London's Beach Gallery. They were then auctioned to raise funds for BBC's Children in Need program. Bravo!

The Table Tennis Collector



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From the Editor

Dear Friends,
 Welcome to issue 75 of the Table Tennis Collector, 62 pages of Table Tennis history. Special thanks to all our contributors.

We are happy to welcome back **Steve Grant** (USA), who presents his research about the development of the sponge racket.

Great Shots shows some early inside views with a possible connection. Yao Zhenxu send photos of an exhibition at the recent World Junior Championships in Shanghai.

The prolific **Alan Duke** (ENG) presents another installment in his fascinating series on Intellectual Property, and an insight into Victor Barna becoming a British citizen. **Jorge Arango** (COL) offers another installment in his fine series on children's books.

Gerald Gurney recalls a reminiscence on Ron Crayden in his later years. Welcome back also to **Gunter Straub** (GER), who traces the introduction of the topspin loop.

Our **Philatelic Update** features a series of German blue meter postmarks, and an excellent article about JOOLA meters by **Hans-Peter Trautmann** (GER).

A surge of auction activity, with interesting rackets, sets and mementos that have survived over 110+ years., some at bargain prices! Three more volumes to report in the brilliant series of books by Dean Johnson & Tim Boggan.

Hope you enjoy the new issue. Feedback always welcomed.

Chuck



In issue 72 the pin from the 2016 Rio Olympic Games was shown. In the same format, here is the Rio 2016 pin for the Paralympics. No doubt there will be many more 2016 Olympic pins.

Great Shots: Historic Photographs

An Inside View



Recently I discovered an early photograph of an interior scene of Table Tennis. These are always delightful because they give us a rare glimpse inside a c.1902 home, as well as hair styles, clothing and décor. Compare the above photo with the image from an early glass plate negative below. Some of the figures bear a resemblance!



AGINCOURT Table Tennis Set



Pair of sponge rackets (no rubber) with thematic decals. Left, the Fleur de lis, representing France, right, a lion rampant, representing England. Made c.1950s

Much has been written about the Battle of Agincourt, which took place on 25 October 1415 during the so-called Hundred Years War between England and France, in present day Azincourt in northern France. This was a major victory for King Henry V (1387-1422), who subsequently married the French King's daughter. Henry's son became heir to the French throne.

It is well known that this battle was the central theme of Shakespeare's play, *Henry V*, in which there is a famous reference to Tennis. Legend has it that the French Dauphine sent King Henry

a crate ("tunne") of Tennis balls, suggesting he do battle on the tennis court and not the battlefield. This angered Henry, who inspired his troops and archers to victory.

With all this historical background, some of which may be fiction, it was a surprise to learn about the Agincourt Table Tennis set. The rackets have symbolic decals, and the surface is much like the thick sponge we know from the 1950s, only somewhat thinner.

Chuck



Besides the tennis reference in Shakespeare's *Henry V* play, King Henry V was also remembered by Feltham's, a maker of fine early English lawn tennis rackets. This is a very rare racket from c.1878; only 2 known examples have survived the ravages of time. Below Henry's name is the symbol for the Prince of Wales, with words Ich Dien (I serve).

The distinct offset lob in the racket head was popular in the late 1870s-early 1880s, after which the flat-top style was preferred. The lobbed head design still continues today in Real Tennis, from which Lawn Tennis was derived.

Cover Story

The Art of Table Tennis Rackets

An exhibition of Table Tennis rackets with art was held at the Beach London gallery in November, featuring 21 artists. The rackets were then auctioned to raise funds for BBC Children in Need. Congratulations to the organizers and the gallery - great concept, for a wonderful cause. The arts community always shows a special awareness and connection with social issues.

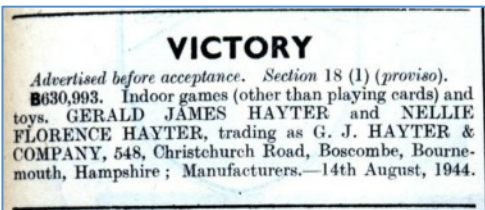




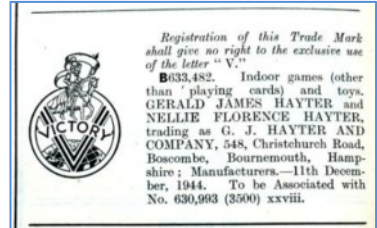
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY: UPDATES (Part 3)

by Alan Duke

① TRADE MARKS (see Note)

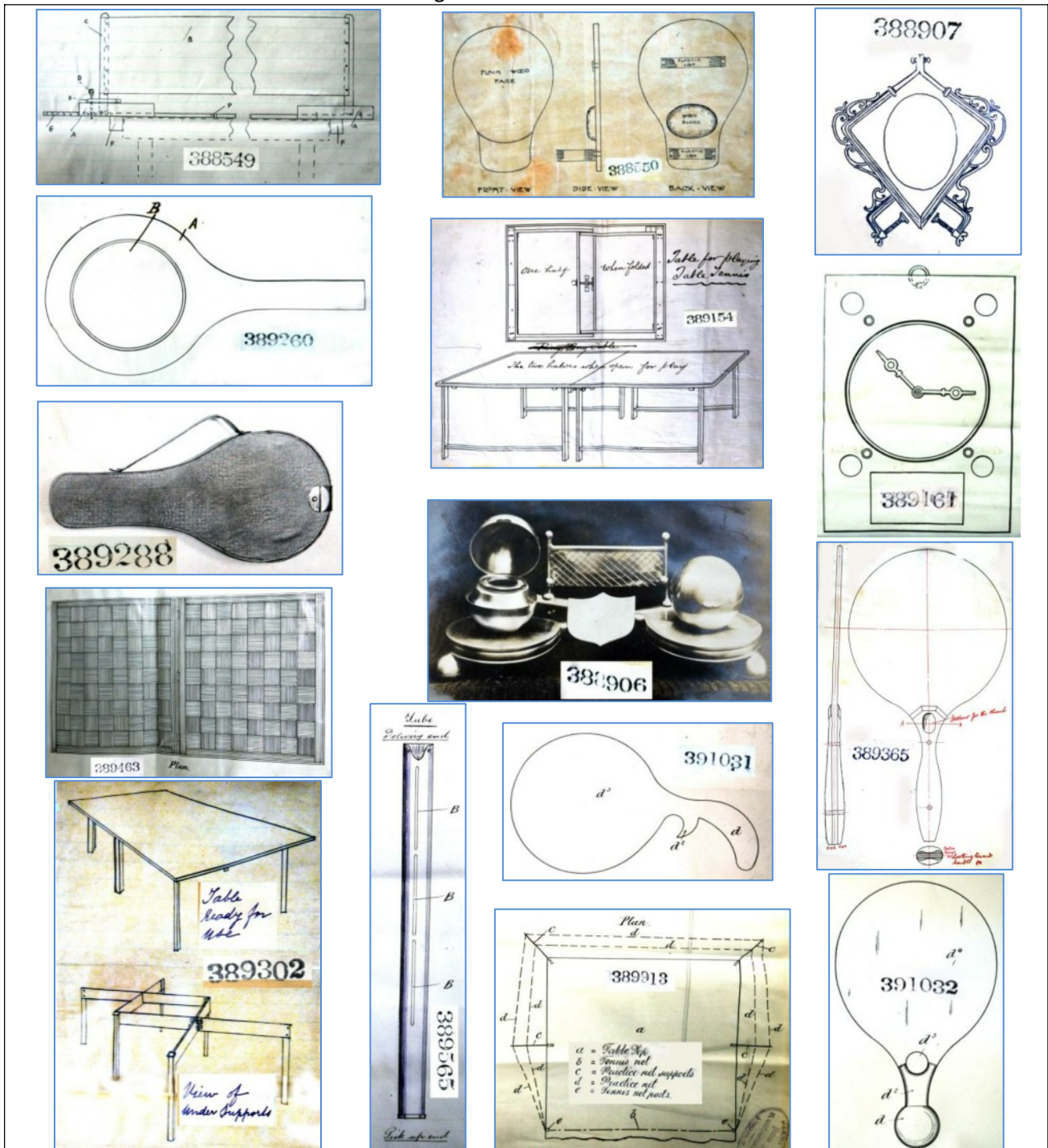


Two further additions to previous listings are shown. The ownership of both of these Trade Marks was subsequently taken over on 27th August 1947 by G J Hayter & Co Limited.

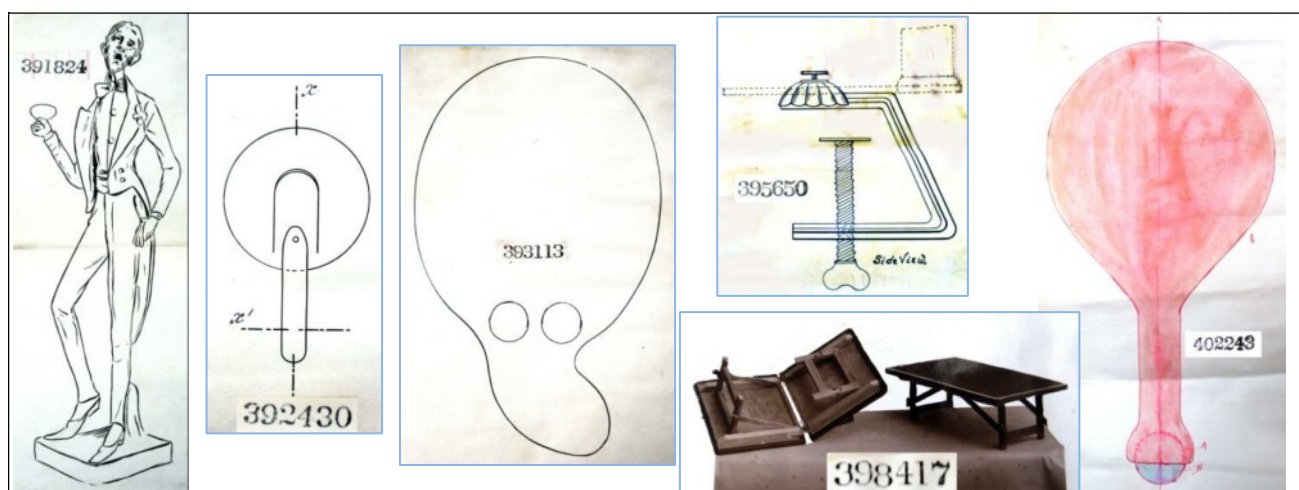


③ DESIGNS (continued)

Shown below are the remaining illustrations for items listed in the table in TTC 73.



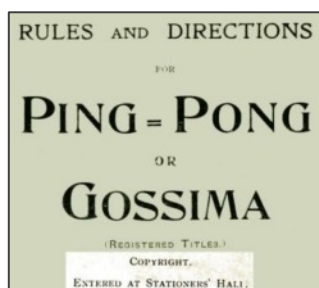
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY



④ COPYRIGHT

The illustration of a Curnock set in *TTC 72* (page 41) shows the terms “Copyright” and “Entered at Stationers’ Hall” on the label. A search produced the following details for this registration (note that the label below, submitted with the application, does not yet include the copyright and registration claim).

No.	Date of Entry	Title	Proprietor
21327	15.11.1901	Table Tennis Curnock's Registered Racquet 'Coronation' Set (Label)	William Anderton Curnock, London



Another publication from that year with similar copyright claims was “Rules and Directions for Ping-Pong or Gossima”, published by J Jaques & Son Ltd & Hamley Bros., around April 1901. Whilst these clearly claim copyright (to which they were of course entitled), neither I, nor previously Michael Thomson and his colleagues, have found any record of such a registration. The later Official Laws of the Ping-Pong Association (36419), published by Jaques on 21st December that year (a day or so after the formation of the PPA), is the first copyright application from Jaques, relating to ping-pong, that has been found. It is thus possible that the application for registration for copyright for the earlier Rules was never actually submitted to Stationers’ Hall.

With the introduction of the printing press and the subsequent mass production of literary works, the opportunity for piracy of such material increased substantially. From the 1560s a form of copyright could be secured by putting on record all publications not otherwise protected by royal privilege. The Stationers’ Register became the written record to which disputes regarding the ownership of copy could be referred. Succeeding copyright legislation confirmed Stationers’ Hall as the place where the right to copy should be entered, hence the term “Entered at Stationers’ Hall”. The Copyright Act 1911 abolished the need for such registration and in December 1923 the registers were closed. Stationers’ Hall copyright records from 1842 to 1924 are now deposited at the National Archives.

The process was never perfect. Throughout the period during which registration was required in order to establish copyright, there was widespread disregard of the procedure, partly because of the expense of the fees payable to the Stationers for registration, but also to evade the obligation to provide complimentary copies for the copyright libraries. This may explain why a Register entry has not been located for the Ping-Pong or Gossima Rules.

Copyright: Catalogue reference COPY3/73 for [Commercial Register](#) [NA].
Catalogue reference COPY1/981-987 ([Commercial](#)), COPY1/704-800 (Literary), and COPY1/455-457 (Photographs) for Application Forms, usually with an example [NA].

Note: The name ‘Victory’ is known to have been used by G J Hayter & Co on their products for many years before the Trade Mark Registration. It is hoped to be able to provide more information on this subject in a future article.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Now, as promised in *TTC 72*, the first of a few extracts from examples included with Copyright applications listed in that edition, this time featuring two of the very earliest versions of Rules for the new game (both from March 1901).

33529 'Ding Dong' (J R Mally & Co):

<h2>DING DONG,</h2> <p>THE FASHIONABLE TABLE TENNIS.</p> <hr/> <p>Ding Dong is eminently an Indoor Game, unequalled by any other for the amount of Sport, Amusement, and display of skill which it affords to both old and young.</p> <p>The several component parts of Ding Dong have been carefully thought out to make it suitable for play in a dining or other room on an ordinary Table, without any detriment to its surroundings.</p> <p>The Balls, though of proper dimensions and bouyancy, are yet made of such light material that no possible damage can be done.</p>	<h2>RULES.</h2> <hr/> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.—Ding Dong is played the same as Lawn Tennis.2.—There being no courts, the ball is in play when actually on the table.3.—The serving of the ball takes place at the ends of the table.4.—The player delivering the ball is called the server, the opponent the striker-out.5.—The position of the players is reversed at the end of each game.6.—One service only is allowed, which must be served over the net and strike the table.7.—The ball touching the net in passing over counts a let.8.—If the striker-out fails to return the service, the server scores a point. <p>Other Rules can be applied, same as in Lawn Tennis.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><small>J. R. M. & Co., London.</small></p>
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33689 'Ping Pong' (F W Foster):

<h2>RULES</h2> <p>OF THE GAME OF</p> <h1>PING ❁ PONG,</h1> <p><i>As used by the Leading Clubs.</i></p> <p>—</p> <p>By "EXPERT."</p> <p>—</p> <p>THIS GAME, now generally known as PING PONG, is for two players. The requisites for the game are a table (without cloth) and measuring from 5 feet to 10 feet in length and from 3 feet to 5 feet broad, a net stretched across the middle, lawn tennis fashion, varying in the proportion of $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch in height per foot length of table.</p> <p>No courts are marked.</p> <p>The racquets sold as No. 2 size have been found most convenient, with handles shortened to about 6 inches.</p> <p>The scoring is as in lawn tennis except for match play, when it is found much easier to handicap by points—viz., 20 points to the set, changing the service at every 5 points.</p> <p>White celluloid balls as specially made and sold for this game.</p>	<h2>RULES.</h2> <hr/> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.—Service shall be entirely underhand—viz., when the ball is struck <i>no</i> part of the racquet shall be above the wrist except the handle.2.—A player must always serve from <i>behind</i> the end of the table.3.—Lets, as in lawn tennis, do not score.4.—Faults are not allowed.5.—Volleying is not allowed.6.—Should the ball when in play strike any object outside the court or table other than the net or net posts before striking the table the point scores against the striker. <hr/> <h3>REMARKS.</h3> <p>An ideal table for the game would be one measuring 9 feet long by 5 feet wide without bevelled edges, of ordinary dining table height, stained a dull black, and with a narrow white line painted round so as to clearly define the edge.</p> <p>The net 6½ inches high, with a top binding of a different colour.</p> <p>Overhead lighting is the best.</p>
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Museum Exhibition at the 2014 World Junior Championships Shanghai, P.R. China

An exhibition was staged at the World Junior Championships in Shanghai, 30 November - 6 December 2014.

The exhibition included the ITTF Timeline History, historic photos, rackets ... and beautiful replicas of the 7 ITTF World Championship trophies.

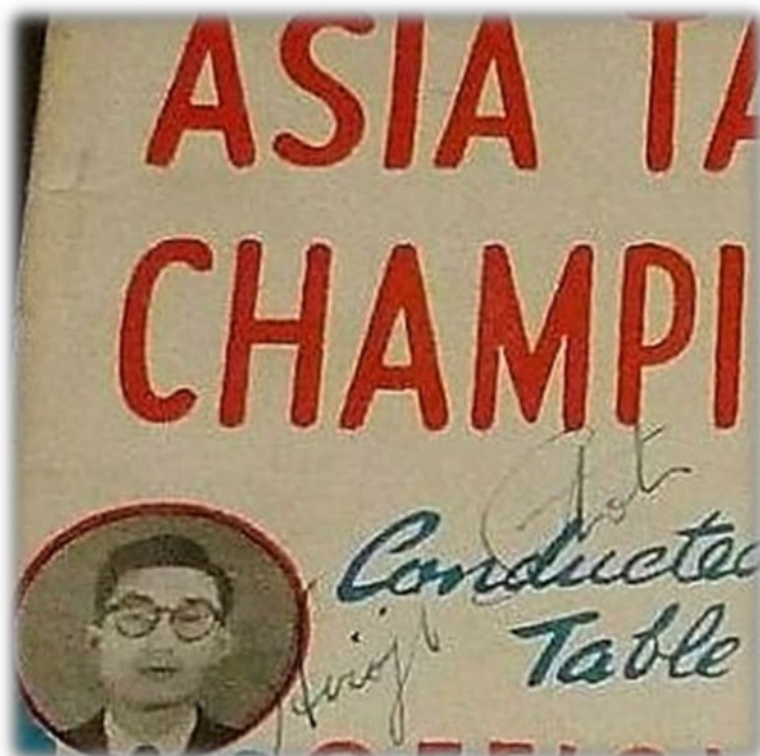
Special thanks to our friend Yao Zhenxu, who organized the exhibition and kindly sent these photographs. Thanks also to the ITTF Museum hosted by the Shanghai Administration of Sports, Mr Chen Yiping, and Mr Wang Fangjie.



The 1950s Arms Race

by Steve Grant (USA)

"What a mess!"---Victor Barna, 1956



Not long ago I acquired a 1952 program signed by Hiroji Satoh of Japan (pictured), and realized I knew little about the 1950s sponge- transition era. This fascinating chapter in our sport's history was nicely surveyed by David Hughes in the May 2014 edition of this publication. But I wanted to drill deeper, learn about all the trouble and turmoil and boiling emotions, and understand exactly how everything worked itself out.

This was an arms race---out of control. Weapons changed often. Opinions changed often, too. And then in 1959, a majority of member ITTF nations voted to forever ban sponge in any shape or form. Yes, all sponge, of any kind.

The final result shaped the sport's future.

Origins

Sponge certainly threw dynamite into the works. Credit or blame Mr. Satoh for that if you wish, but other players of other nations had been trying sponge for years. The time bomb had been ticking. Satoh's explosive win of the world singles championship in February 1952 fired the starting pistol for a race to create the most powerful or devious new racket, triggering seven acrimonious years of debate, rules proposals, votes, surveys, experiments, and weapon bans.

Satoh was not the first Japanese player to use sponge. In an April 1952 interview in *Table Tennis*, magazine of the English TTA, Satoh explained that, six months before the '52 Worlds, he was beaten by a sponge player named Asano. The 26-year-old Satoh, a player since age 14 (his early role model being national champion Takashi Kon), was so impressed that he quickly sought out the same racket supplier.

Unstated in the article is that this meant a 700-kilometer trip to Tokyo to meet inventor Rikizo Harada, who happened to be Asano's employer. Filling in the details for me recently was Harada's son Masaaki Harada, president of Armstrong Company, the Tokyo table tennis equipment firm started by his father in the 1940s.

Oddly enough, it all came about because of a shortage of billiard balls. Now age 74, Mr. Harada explained in a September 2014 interview in his office with my Tokyo contacts. Though Rikizo Harada (1900-1985) and Ping Pong shared a birth year, their paths would not cross until much later in the century. Rikizo's parents, of poor financial circumstances in the Tokyo suburb of Kawaguchi, placed him in a temple at age 10 to be trained as a monk. At 17, though, Rikizo left to seek an entertainment career. At 33, he abandoned that path and opened a pool hall. When the war cut off supplies in 1941, he converted the pool tables to table tennis. In 1944, he began making table tennis rackets and two years later formed Armstrong Company, borrowing the name by permission from the large American tire company that supplied its rubber. In January 1950 his rackets received official approval of the Japanese TTA.

That year, 1950, Mr. Harada (pictured) opened Tokyo Takkyu Kaikan (table tennis center) in Nishi-nippori, Tokyo, where all the top players soon practiced. Armstrong hired the aforementioned Hideo Asano, a recent graduate of Senshu University, who helped experiment with the new sponge racket that Harada patented in Japan in May 1951. Among advantages listed in his 1952 London patent were to avoid both "disagreeable noise" and "damage of the ball." Satoh said in that 1952 interview, "The very thin wood [1/8 inch] and the very thick sponge take the sting out of the most vicious shot and impart a terrific side-spin to the shot. Perhaps the complete silence disconcerts the opponent also." He added that the bat is far from invincible and that his teammate Norikazu Fujii can easily beat him.



Satoh had found sponsors to finance his trip to Bombay, the first time ever that the Japanese entered the world championships. Masaaki Harada also states that the company gave Satoh a farewell gift equivalent to present-day \$1,500, and a later gift for winning the championship. The company's sponge racket business soared as players strove to emulate the new champ. Satoh did some promotional work, visiting Japanese training camps when he could get away from the family watch shop in Aomori. From the countryside and not particularly articulate, Satoh might have become a full-time company employee if his sales skills had been better, says Mr. Harada. Still, Satoh seemingly retained some connection to the company even after his retirement from tournament table tennis in January 1954. Later that year, a U.S.T.T.A. official visited "the table tennis center of Mr. Harada, originator and manufacturer of the sponge rubber bat," where he played Satoh (*Table Tennis Topics*, April 1955).

Asano was only a reserve on the 1952 team and did not make the Bombay trip, though he later won the Japanese doubles title. He worked for Armstrong for several more years.

As mentioned, Rikizo Harada's name was on those patents. But then who was Yoshinori Harada? Two days after Satoh's big win, *The Straits Times* of Singapore said that "inventor Yoshinori Harada" had thereby become "the happiest man in Tokyo." Tim Boggan, in his 2003 Volume II of *History of U.S. Table Tennis*, also cited Yoshinori as the inventor. Masaaki Harada explains: His father Rikizo took the preferred additional name of Yoshinori because of his belief in onomancy, the power of a name to determine destiny. A good choice, it seems. Armstrong soon created the bats of two more world champions. (It also provided the tables for the '56 Worlds in Tokyo.)

Given that sponge preceded the patents, is it really possible to say who "invented" it? Editor Chuck Hoey tackled the question in Issue 46 of this publication, where he discussed a 1954 letter from the Jaques sporting goods firm. The letter recalled sponge rackets ordered by ITTF president Ivor Montagu, probably in the 1930s, and asked Montagu whether he originated the sponge idea. Chuck has been unable to find Montagu's reply. If his *reply* cannot be found, one can find his *answer* in *Table Tennis*, October 1961. There Montagu writes about P.E. Warden's sandwich bat of the early 1920s, pimped rubber over a thick layer of plush: "It was not sponge---that did not come until Messrs. Jaques sent me a sample to try in the 'thirties..." This brief sideways insertion into an obituary put the origination claim into public print. But were Jaques and Montagu both mistaken about the timing? The 1926 World Championships program said that Montagu "uses now a racket surfaced with springy aerated rubber that is taut like gut springing." London's *Daily Mirror*, April 17, 1954, stated, "A sponge bat was used in the first world championships in 1926 by Ivor Montagu..."

Early Reactions

Ban demands began immediately after Satoh's win. Losing finalist Jozsef Koczian of Hungary (pictured foreground, with teammate Ferenc Sido), said, "The ball's way was simply incalculable. I tried to play aggressively first, then changed to a defensive game, in vain."

The Hungarians, winners of the team event, submitted a ban resolution before they even left those Bombay championships, according to the *Singapore Free Press* on March 20, which quoted team head Istvan Krajcsovics: "It is very likely that [sponge] will be prohibited...as all nations were happy to join our request, except the Japanese, of course." But the minutes of the ITTF meeting of February 10, 1952, tell a very different story, only showing a "suggestion from Japan to limit to some extent the size, shape and weight of the racket." So, "it was decided to send a questionnaire to all associations on the proposal from Japan and obtain full information as to the type of rackets in use."

Montagu tried to calm the waters. "For heaven's sake don't let's be like those politicians of whom it is said that, when they lose, they change the rules." Thus did he conclude his 2,000-word essay dated March 15, 1952 in the May *Table Tennis*. He called



sponge a fair weapon that was beatable, contrary to the “agitation” that “derives from panic or sensationalism on the part of the ill-informed...To hear some people talk, one would suppose they did not remember that last year in Vienna [at the ‘51 Worlds] Fritsch of Austria, using sponge rubber, beat a succession of the world’s top players...One would also suppose that English fans had forgotten Charlie Dawes of Bristol, who, not long ago, beat three internationals in succession at the English



No. 750

The Hon. IVOR MONTAGU (I.T.T.F. President and E.T.T.A. Chairman) discusses the sponge-surfaced racket of World Champion Satoh with IVAN ANDREADIS, Czechoslovakia's stylish No. 1, at a recent meeting. Meanwhile, Richard Bergmann and Johnny Leach were actually in Japan establishing a convincing supremacy for "orthodox" styles. (12/7/52)

Championships, using only soft rubber.” Montagu wrote that he himself had used sponge for “over 20 years.” Also, “It is well to remember that so late as 1926 devotees of wood were demanding the banning of [pimpled rubber] on the ground that it ‘spoiled the game.’”

Table tennis businesses embraced the sponge opportunity. In the same May 1952 magazine, Alec Brook Ltd. headlined its ad with “1000 IN TWO WEEKS!”---“We sold over this number of SPONGE and CREPE bats in the first two weeks after announcing they were available.” The ad offered sponge bats at 10/- and crepe at 10/6d, without specifying how the surfaces differed. In October, after the summer off-season, J. Rose & Son were offering “thin sponge rubber” bats at 7/6d and “crepe rubber” bats at 8/-.

Yet in the next issue, there was nary a mention of sponge or crepe. Even Harry Venner’s article on choosing a bat discussed coverings only in regard to pimple size and depth. Perhaps the fad was over?

Meanwhile, the Hungarians were no longer singing the blues. Instead (Jan. ‘53), we hear jaunty rock ‘n’ roll from Elmer Gyetvai: “There is no need to ban sponge bats because players using rubber-covered bats can beat them

quite decisively, as Bergmann and Leach proved by their [1952 exhibition] victories in Japan. When the Japs see the superiority of the rubber, sponge will die a natural death as a bat covering and be found only in the bathroom.” Teammate Ferenc Sido harmonized that there was “no need to prohibit [sponge]; it will just vanish.” Hitting the high note weeks later, Sido won the world singles championship. The Japanese skipped that show because of its Communist venue, Romania, but would soon enough again grab center stage.

Minutes of the 1953 ITTF meeting show no mention of rackets. The 1954 meeting defeated Wales’ proposal to ban sponge and England’s proposal to study the question. Not long before, Montagu had polled top English players and published the results in *Table Tennis*. They generally agreed with his hands-off stance. For example, former world champ Johnny Leach believed sponge would “die a natural death” because “it is almost impossible to obtain sound ball control.”

“Familiarity breeds contempt,” wrote *Table Tennis* editor Leslie Woollard in 1954. “...Meet it, study it, beat it. Surely playing technique has not so generally deteriorated that we can no longer face those hoary Ancients---Sponge and Penholders?!!” (Interestingly, the greater East/West difference in 1952 had been the racket grip. The astounding success of the Japanese left Westerners pondering advantages of the penholder. Meanwhile, some Japanese had been so impressed with Westerners’ play that they formed a Shake Hand Grip Society.)

Still, some players instead figured if you can’t beat ‘em, join ‘em.

Going Over to the Dark Side

Most top USA players first saw sponge at the national team championships in late 1952, where “Sponge Man from Ohio,” Dr. Richard Puls, pulled off upsets. Shortly after, the Southern California TTA outlawed



sponge in tournament play. (For details, see the “Banned in Hollywood” subsection of Boggan’s Volume III, Chapter 3, *History of U.S. Table Tennis*.) The ban lasted only one season, although in 1955 some players split off into their own pimped-rubber competitions because they felt the sport had become “a duel of trickery and weapons rather than an enjoyable contest between skilled protagonists.” By early 1956, nearly all the top California players were using sponge, noted former world champ Richard Bergmann after playing in the U.S. Open. The leading American, Californian Erwin Klein, 17, said, “There are two kinds of players in the world today: sponge-users and those who lose.” Weeks later, he won the ’56 world mixed doubles crown with Leah Neuberger. That’s Klein pictured at left, three years earlier, picketing.

At the 1953 English Open, former Yugoslavian champion Max Marinko switched in the middle of the first game from sponge to “his outsize wooden bat,” but still lost 21-4 to a 47-year-old sponger (that’s what they called them), who also took the next two games. In Cuba, all the top players were using sponge by 1954. At the late-1954 Asian championships, two of the runner-up Singapore men’s team were spongers, though none of the winning Hong Kong team.

In Brazil, where nearly all the top players were penholders by early 1953, and which had its own Japanese table tennis club, sponge quickly became rather popular. When the penholder sponge brothers Severo met in the final of the Rio Open, their long, dull waiting game (“It is difficult to attack with that surface”--- *Table Tennis*, Dec. ’53) demonstrated a potential drawback of sponge. After a similar lengthy finals match at the 1956 Australian championships, one observer said, “One can see why the movement overseas to ban sponge is gaining support.” For many players, sponge worked best as a

counter-hitting tool, and that's why two spongers might engage in pushing marathons waiting for the opponent to hit first.

Yet in the right hands, sponge could be a very efficient attacking weapon. Yugoslavia's star Zarko Dolinar (right), another penholder, used a "massive" sponge bat in his hard-hitting win over Bergmann in the French Open quarterfinal in January 1953, won the English Open in 1955 and had great success at the world championships in 1954 and '55. It was another sponge player who won the 1954 world singles championship, Japanese attacker Ichiro Ogimura, but only after he switched while there from thick sponge to thin 2mm for improved control. The losing finalist, fellow sponger Tage Flisberg of Sweden, said later, "I have always been called an attacking player...that is a reason I like sponge. You MUST be a good attacker to win with it..." But one writer said it was the worst men's singles final he had ever seen, too many kill shots, "devoid of rallies." Too much offense or too much defense---sponge match-ups could go to either extreme!



Photo: Zarko Dolinar "ITTF 1926-2001 Table Tennis Legends"

Flisberg, 36, had revitalized his game with sponge. Here's a rough partial translation of this cartoon, from a few months before he made the '54 finals: "The '52 world title was won by a second-level Japanese named Satoh --- using sponge. One naturally wondered how a top player would fare with sponge. Indeed---it turns out that Tage Flisberg is beating the likes of Bergmann and Leach match after match."



Sponge variations seemed limitless. At that 1954 Worlds, "Some players had inset panels of finer sponge in the middle of coarse sponge," reported an Australian newspaper. "It gave a different kind of spin to the ball, depending on what part of the bat came into contact." One Japanese sponge was borrowed from another arms race: It was a closed-cell type mainly used to seal tanks of fighter planes, according to the Butterfly Company website. Perhaps that inspired Harada's Armstrong Co. to name its sponge bat "New Arms"? (See its 1953 ad pictured in the previous issue of this publication, page 17.)

Hungary yet again changed its tune. They "decided to experiment with sponge bats," said an article in the *Times of India*, "and a Hungarian sports goods factory has, after long months of research, produced a sponge

rubber bat based on specifications brought back by the Hungarian team from Wembley [the '54 Worlds]."

Down in New Zealand, the first sponger seems to have been Stan Stewart, who made his own heavy sponge racket in the 1930s. In 1954, NZ had its first sponger singles champ, Bob Jackson, who had brought back several sponge bats from the '54 Worlds. Jackson's "tools of the trade included a bat with soft foam, another 'waffle-patterned' to counter chop, and a harder, flat surfaced sponge bat to deal with the faster ball. He...was soon manufacturing sponge bats himself and advising and supplying other people." More from the NZTTA archives: In 1955 Jackson was "simply unbeatable...He played mostly with thick grey Dolinar sponge on the forehand, which he had modified himself for extra fire power, and thinner, harder black sponge on the backhand (industrial material...known as the 'black stuff')." Also: "By 1955 supplies of sponge bats of varying material, thicknesses and speed were available in NZ shops...Everyone seemed to want one, especially the struggling club player...Higher level players were in less of a hurry. Some were excited by it; others hesitant...The bat was, in general, harder to control..." In 1956 Jackson won the Australian championship---"The thick sponge on his forehand was cut from a bath mat, with holes punched for extra spin." Back home in the NZ national championships, all the 1956 title winners were spongers. By 1957, most of the country's top players used sponge, though more on the men's side than on the women's.



Most of the million regular Japanese players were abandoning pimped rubber. More accurately, many were either turning the pimped rubber upside down (inverted) or combining it with sponge (sandwich). Up until just a few years earlier, Japanese players had primarily used plain wood or cork, so they were not much wedded to "orthodox" pimped rubber and were somewhat accustomed to change. Surveys there (apparently conducted by Butterfly) in late 1954 and again a year later showed what the club player in Japan was using:

	1954	1955
Pimped Rubber	45%	40%
Sponge	26%	20%
Inverted rubber	21%	15%
Sandwich, other	8%	25%

So 1955 was the year that sandwich was the big new thing in Japan. Not by chance, it was also the year Toshiaki Tanaka won the world singles crown with a "fancy sponge-rubber-sandwich arrangement" to

make “the hardest drive we have seen,” wrote English coach Jack Carrington in *Table Tennis*. (Both Ogimura and Tanaka got their championship bats from Armstrong, says Masaaki Harada.) Tanaka, 20, beat sponge players in the semi-final and final. He “appeared to have an intense dislike of the ball, prodding it distastefully a few times before getting really annoyed at its continual appearance” and dispatching it. In the prior month’s *Table Tennis*, a writer said Tanaka won his national championship using inverted, called “back-sided” or “soft” rubber, “said to be most effective in the service.” Three months before that, Johnny Leach wrote that Tanaka’s “new bat consists of a thin layer of sponge over the top of ordinary pimped-rubber. [Inverted-inverted? Perhaps something got turned around in the translation.]. So it looks as though there will soon be a new talking point to add fire to the ‘ban sponge’ critics. However, once again, the new material, which I have already seen, is too heavy to be of use to the orthodox player.”

A USA player/coach liked the pimped rubber over sponge sandwich: “This type curbs most of the ‘crazy’ spin of sponge, and provides considerably more control. It also reacts more like a ‘regular’ bat, especially in the middle or pushing game...” Sido instead saw the glass half-empty, saying sandwich “is neither fish nor fowl...The speed of the sponge is lessened. And the sponge portion [reduces] the accuracy and control of the rubber.” But Leach wrote a December 1956 *Table Tennis* article that took a very positive, prophetic view of sandwich. “Through this new bat we could see, in time, the return of good, all-round table tennis...What’s more, the sponge bat, as we know it, could become extinct within two seasons.” (Less prophetic was his closing sentence: “The hard rubber-surfaced bat will never die out, because it is indispensable while learning ball control and basic strokes.”) This ad chanced to appear in the same issue:

THE BAT OF THE FUTURE
ANSWER TO ALL SPONGE
ANTIDOTE TO SPIN
IDEAL CHRISTMAS GIFT **!!!**

THE JOHNNY LEACH
“TWO - IN - ONE”
SANDWICH BAT

Made from a special imported sponge and pimped
rubber which gives

SPEED — SPIN — CONTROL

LIGHT IN WEIGHT, MADE IN RED
BLUE, GREEN and BROWN COLOURS
EVERY BAT HAS THE FAMOUS
'JOHNNY LEACH' GRIP AND WILL
NOW BE USED BY THIS WELL-
KNOWN PLAYER

THE BAT FOR WHICH NO
ADJUSTMENT OF STROKES OR
TIMING IS NECESSARY

S. W. HANCOCK Ltd.
119 The Chase, Clapham, London, S.W.4

PRICE

15/-

EACH

At the 1956 English Open, only one sponger made the men’s semis (none made the women’s). That was Hungarian Elmer Gyetvai, who used inverted rubber over sponge. Yes, the same Mr. Gyetvai who had said sponge would be found only in the bathroom. “He is to my mind the hardest hitter in the world,”

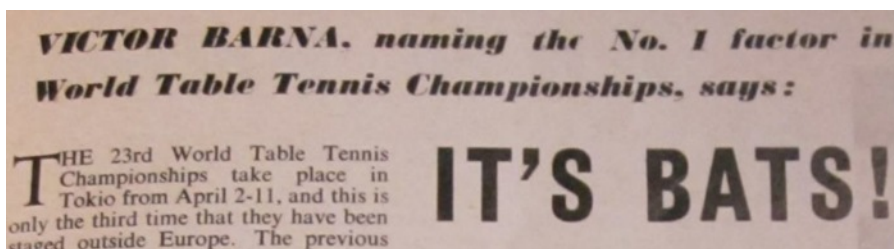
wrote Leach. At the three main 1956 Australian State Championships, one finalist used Japanese soft rubber, another used a Tanaka-type sandwich, and a third used black sponge. Hungarian Zoltan Berczik won the 1956 Yugoslavian title with a “funny” sponge bat, at one point in the final leading the Czech star Ivan Andreadis 12-0. Excepting Andreadis, age 32, the entire Czech men’s team was using sponge by 1956, and even he finally switched two years later.

“An Evil Not to be Endured”

Many holdouts remained, primarily in the West. At the 1955 ITTF meeting, a sponge ban proposal (this time by Belgium) was again defeated, but a proposal to study the question passed. The 1956 meeting saw a similar outcome.

In a December 1955 article in *Table Tennis*, Aubrey Simons claimed that the majority of players who had tried sponge had switched back to pimples rubber, sponge being too difficult to control. Only 8% of English grass-roots players were using sponge in the 1955-56 season, according to a county-level statistician. An English observer in May 1956 wrote, “...The more promising of our younger players are ignoring the trend to change over to the sponge bat...”

In New Zealand: “There were players whose game fell apart completely with sponge...About one-third of Wellington’s A Grade began the season with sponge but more than half had switched back to pimples by season’s end...And there was the question of advising new players. Should they start with sponge and risk having to learn all over again with pimples if sponge goes out of favour or is banned?” From early 1956 Romania: “Authorities are staging an all-out campaign to encourage the use of [pimpled] rubber. Big help for them is [that] star Toma Reiter is to discard the sponge he adopted...” Meanwhile, in their book *‘The Twins’ on Table Tennis*, world doubles champions Diane and Rosalind Rowe of England called for a ban on sponge. A mid-1956 survey showed that half of USA players wanted to ban sponge, and half did not.



“The whole situation is ridiculous,” wrote former world champ Barna in *World Sports* magazine shortly before the 1956 Worlds, arguing that a new rule was needed. “What a state of

affairs! What a mess!” Match outcomes depended upon the properties of one surface versus another; the beloved sport had devolved into a rock-paper-scissors game. “Rubber apparently does not like sponge,” wrote Barna, “sponge does not like ‘back-sided’ [inverted] rubber; and ‘back-sided’ rubber just hates ordinary rubber.” Even worse, as Barna explained in another article, “every type of sponge behaves differently. For example, the thin sponge used by the Japanese is nothing like the thick type manufactured in Sweden.”

Barna believed that, even if sponge was not banned, pimped rubber “will prove the most reliable in the long run. It can handle every type of shot and can produce the most important stroke---the chop,” whereas “sponge cannot take spin.”

Englishman Sam Kirkwood in April 1956 wrote that a ban was unnecessary: “Time, and the right players, will prove beyond all question that rubber is far superior to sponge... Sponge destroys that supremely vital asset of a champion player---perfect ball control. With a sponge bat, one can score an impossible kill and just as easily fluff the easiest of sitters...Even the finest sponge exponent is to some degree at the mercy of his racket...It must be obvious to everyone that the future rests on Players, not regulations, so let’s cut out the interminable nattering and apply our energies to playing genuine table tennis. Or is that asking too much of the chiseling brigade whose stone walls have been blown to bits by hitters and find a useful ‘bogey’ to blame in sponge?...The Orientals would have achieved their world success had they used vellum, pig-iron or wood....”---*Table Tennis*, April 1956.

Yet Sam changed his tune just months later: “...Sponge must be outlawed---NOW---before it is too late. We have had four years to make up our minds about sponge (and crepe, ‘sandwiches,’ leather, etc., etc.), and it has been proved that the game will be all the better without it.” He argued that sponge had robbed the game of excitement, tactics, footwork, beauty and thus popularity.

“I personally think sponge is an evil not to be endured,” wrote English coach Carrington in late 1956. He noted the difficulty of teaching the game given “the flood of experimental surfaces appearing almost daily.” At a tournament he entered, Carrington carried a bag of different rackets to the table and then chose his weapon based upon what his opponent was using. Gloucestershire County decided to lead England in standardization in late 1956, allowing only pimped rubber players on the county team, because otherwise “instead of producing a champion player....the tendency is to produce a champion racket.”

Ogimura and Tanaka (pictured together) led continued Japanese domination in '56 and '57. Both Barna and Bergmann attributed that success not to sponge or to the penholder grip (which they actually considered a handicap), but to physical fitness and strategy. The Asian TT Federation urged all its members to “vehemently oppose” all attempt to ban sponge, saying “as long as a table tennis racket is not standardized, any move to ban only sponge is based more on prejudice than meeting facts.” They would not oppose standardization on one surface, say pimped rubber, “but as long as faces like wood, sandpaper, vellum, magic rubber, soft rubber and sponge are in common use, to particularise sponge as the only menace to table tennis was rather curious and amazing.”



Disarmament

Novices and even regular club-level players were finding the great variety of bat coverings frustrating and complex, hurting the sport's popularity. Moreover, the disagreements, even hostility, were damaging the international unity of the table tennis world. By 1957 most member nations agreed that some kind of rule change was necessary---Montagu had shifted to this view too---but should the "standardisation" be by thickness only or by both thickness and material? Still more study and trials ensued. Among top players, sponge and sandwich were becoming as widespread in Europe as in Asia. Yet England, where the stars all used sponge, chose to ban it in a 1957-58 trial, renewed in 1958-59, as did several other European countries, thus handicapping themselves in international competitions. USA and Canada each banned sponge for the 1958-59 season.

Acknowledgments to Wepsport, Hungary



Sido: Látni sem bírom!...

SIDO: "I can't stand the sight of it!"

Hungary was still against sponge/special rubbers even though a majority of its top players had switched to them. In late 1958 we hear from Sido again: "It can safely be said that sponge ruined me, wiped me off, and if it is not banned [at the next ITTF meeting] I shall finish with the game." He said that even though he had beaten each of the Japanese "kings of sponge," the victories "ruined my nerves and that's [too high a price]." The cartoon at left is from four years earlier.

In the summer of 1958, Montagu sent a 24-page letter to all member nations detailing his thoughts on why standardisation was finally necessary, his own preference

being pimped rubber, no sponge. He asked for responses preparatory to a vote. Responses showed 27 in favor of standardisation, 5 against, but many silent. Two-thirds of the favorable responses wanted the standardisation to be pimped rubber.

If you look at the agenda for the 1926 founding general meeting of the ITTF that is viewable on the ITTF Museum website, you'll see the proposed rule that racquets "may be any material, size, shape or weight." On the prior page, proposed Article 16 of the constitution states that any rule change "can only be made unanimously." But "unanimously" is crossed out; handwritten over it is "3/4."

At the 1959 general meeting, an early tally showed 32 countries in favor of standardisation and 13 against. A vote on whether the standardisation should be only pimped rubber showed 25 countries for and 18 against, short of the 75% agreement needed. For example, China, Czechoslovakia and New Zealand favored standardisation, but not if sponge were excluded. Compromise pointed to sandwich. Some members wanted the reverse-rubber (inverted) outer sandwich covering to be excluded, but that had insufficient support. That left the question of thickness. Japan was against standardisation but, if inevitable, wanted unrestricted thickness or a maximum set at 6mm or even 8mm "to allow room for experiment," even though most of its own players used sub-4mm sandwich.

The compromise that passed (36 countries for, 10 against) said the wood blade could be covered by “either (a) plain ordinary, pimpled rubber, with pimples outward, of a total thickness of not more than 2mm; or (b) ‘sandwich’, consisting of a layer of cellular rubber surfaced by plain ordinary pimpled rubber ---turned inwards or outwards---in which case the total thickness of covering of either side shall not be more than 4mm.” Pimple density must be between 10 and 50 per square cm.



“Japan in particular was aghast,” according to the NZTTA website, “claiming the decision set the sport back ten years in their country.” That may be an overstatement, since some of its stars were already using thinner sandwich. New Zealand voted yes to the compromise, but Barbara Packwood (left) wrote in that country’s *Table Tennis Review*, “Sponge has been buried---dishonourably---beneath layers of pimpled rubber. What an inglorious death for a medium that has brought so much interest, excitement and speculation to tournaments in recent years!...For the sake of what is virtually a trade compromise between the English and Japanese manufacturers, table tennis has been put on the chopping block. One should be thankful that Japanese vested interests are as powerful as Halex and Dunlop, or we would be reduced to just the English products...How enfeebled and spineless can we get...?... Felt sponge (even under rubber), as used by many top-flight Japanese, is out, as is uncovered sponge (used widely in Asia), and Ogimura’s bat is too thick. With the ban has also gone our last chance of any leap up the international ladder. Black sponge was peculiar to N.Z....We were on our way up at last...”

In the USA, a 1961 petition signed by over 100 Ohioans asked the USTTA to ban sponge in any form. So there remained unhappy players on both sides of the issue. But that’s the nature of compromise. The disarmament treaty worked, though weapons such as anti-spin, long pips and speed glue presented new challenges in the decades ahead.

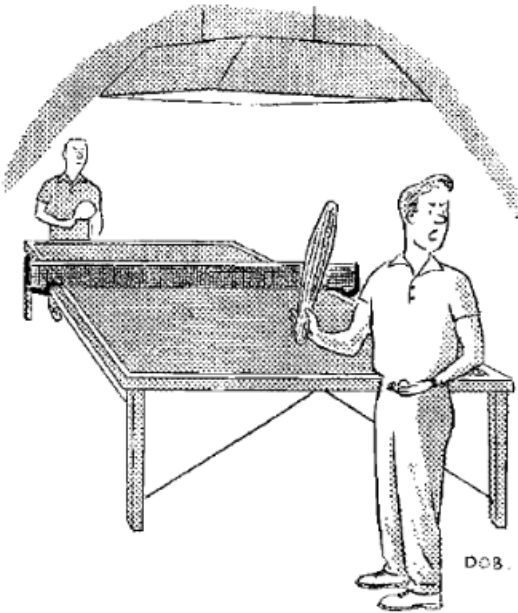
Hiroji Satoh (pictured in his moment of glory) died in 2000 at age 75. The sponge controversy outlived him, at least for a few players, including one of his 1952 victims: “The whole emphasis on the game today, with sponge rackets, is to interfere with the senses of the player...The game is full of deceit, deception and fraud, and that’s where the game stinks, and until they eliminate that, you don’t have a sport.”---Marty Reisman, 2006, *Ping Pong Hustler* short film.



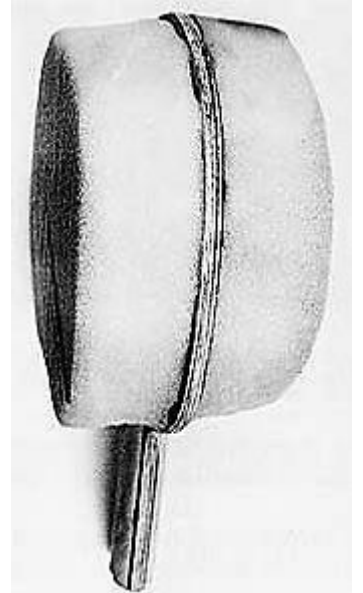
Thank you to Bruce Kelly and Mikako Kelly of Tokyo for their interview of Mr. Harada on September 21, 2014 and follow-up correspondence. Mr. Harada and his brother Noriaki Harada, former president of Armstrong, kindly provided the portrait of their father. Thank you also to Robin Radford (NZ) and the NZTTA and to Wesley Maness (USA).

---Steve Grant is the author of *Ping Pong Fever, the Madness That Swept 1902 America* (2012).

No Longer Legal



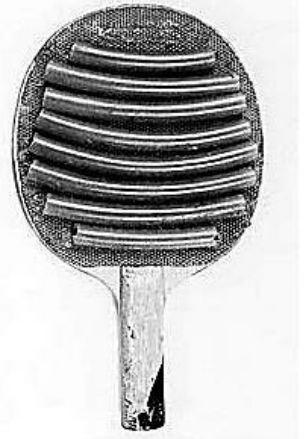
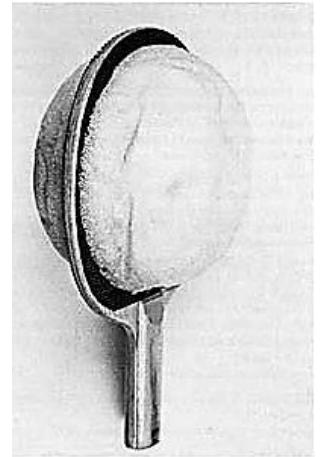
The loofah was entirely legal prior to the 1959 rule change. So, too, would have been the other bats pictured on this and the next page, excepting any that were too white or too shiny. They were created by artists of the 1960s Fluxus movement. ---Steve G.



*“Why shouldn't I use a loofah?
He's using a sponge.”*



“Soft Ping-Pong Paddle”, 1964, George Maciunas, Harvard Art Museums



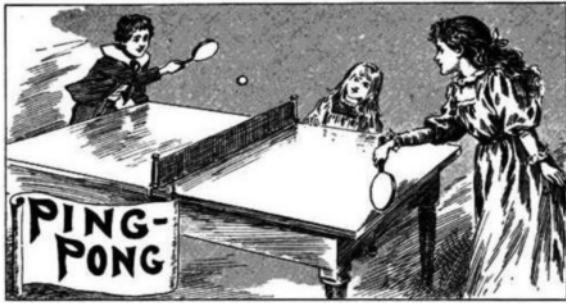
CIRCA 1902 CHILDREN'S BOOKS (Part II)

By Jorge Arango

In TTC 74 it was presented the first part of this article about circa 1902 children's books with table tennis/ping pong articles and illustrations. This time I continue, with Part II:

4- THE ROSEBUD ANNUAL, 1903 Pages

190 and 191.



Words by R. L. Stevens. Music by E. C. Stevens.

1. On a win-ter's night, With the doors shut tight, And a ro-sy light, It is
 2. Tho' our pres-ent way Sends the ball as-tray, Yet we hope to play ve-ry
 3. We must first pre-pare With the ut-most care, Move a-way each chair, Till the
 4. our de-light A wee net to rear, With the oth-er gear On the ta-ble clear, Lessons
 5. room is bare, Now here comes a ball! It may chance to fall! On the man-tel tall, Or all
 6. with some day! So we prac-tise still, With a right good will; And we'll do so till We can
 7. dis-ap-pear! Then a game of song, For weak or strong, A mer-ry, mer-ry game of
 8. down the wall, Or a-against the gong, Hit short or long, The ball will fly a- bout in
 9. play with skill, We will not play wrong! All games a- mong The ve-ry at-ent game is
 10. Ping - Pong! "Ping-Pong, Ping-Pong, Pong-a - Ping! That's what the lit-tle white
 11. balls do sing. Up! and o-ver! round and a-long: "Ping-Pong, Ping-Pong, Ping-Pong, Ping-Pong,
 12. Ping-Pong."

Chorus:

The Rosebud Annual, 1903 was described in the first part of this article, but this sheet music was left for this one.

The letter is the following:

Ping-Pong

On a win-ter's night,
 With the doors shut tight,
 And a ro-sy light,
 It is our de-light
 A wee net to rear,
 With the oth-er gear

On the ta-ble clear.

Lessons dis-ap-pear! Then
 a game of song, For weak
 or strong,

A mer-ry, mer-ry game of Ping-Pong! "Ping-
 Pong, Ping-Pong, Pong-a-Ping!

That's what the lit-tle white balls do sing. Up!
 and o-ver! round and a-long:

"Ping-Pong, Ping-Pong, Ping-Pong, Ping-Pong,
 Ping-Pong."

We must first pre-pare With
 the ut-most care, Move a-
 way each chair, Till the
 room is bare. Now here
 comes a ball! It may chance
 to fall

On the man-tel tall,
 Or all down the wall,
 Or a-against the gong, Hit
 short or long,

The ball will fly a-bout in Ping-Pong! "Ping-
 Pong, Ping-Pong, Pong-a-Ping!

That's what the lit-tle white balls do sing.
 Up! and o-ver! round and a-long: "Ping-
 Pong, Ping-Pong, Ping-Pong, Ping-Pong,
 Ping-Pong."

Tho' our pres-ent way
 Sends the ball as-tray,
 Yet we hope to play ve-ry well, some day; So
 we prac-tise still,
 With a right good will:
 And we'll do so till

We can play with skill. We
will not play wrong! All
games a-mong
The ve-ry ni-cest game is Ping-Pong!
“Ping-Pong, Ping-Pong, Pong-a-Ping!

That’s what the lit-tle white balls do sing.
Up! and o-ver! round and a-long:
“Ping-Pong, Ping-Pong, Ping-Pong, Ping-
Pong, Ping-Pong.”

6- TOPSY IN TOYLAND, 1905? By

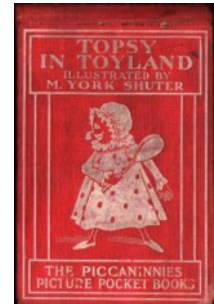
MATTHEWS, Ernest

Publisher Sands & Co., London Illustrated

by SHUTER, M. York

Small book 10.6 cm h. x 6.8 cm w. Hard cover

96 Pages. Not dated (it contains a hand-writing annotation: Nov 1905)



A little six-year-old girl returned home from a toy shop and fell slept in the omnibus, dreaming with a doll’s house. She met Golliwog in front of the house, and after some talk, he invited her to enter.

...

“May I ask,” said Golliwog, “if you want to see my wife? Because she has a ping-pong party in the back garden, and you had better walk right through. You’ll find some tea on the lawn — these teas are too slow for me, I’m off,” he concluded grandly.

As soon as he had gone Topsy entered the hall and walked through into a garden beyond. There she saw a lawn of the greenest grass she had ever seen, and there were such stiff- looking trees growing in the garden too.

On the lawn was a ping-pong net, and such a strange party were playing. There was a funny old woman with a black face and a white nose



that looked just like the bowl of a clay pipe, then there were three other players

One looked like a rag doll, one like a wooden doll, and one like a wax doll. They all stopped playing, and the funny old black woman came up to Topsy. “Come to

your aunt Sally,” she said invitingly. Topsy went towards her, “Do you ping?” she asked.

“No,” said Topsy.

“Nor pong either?”

“No,” said Topsy, “but I should like to.”

“That’s right,” said Aunt Sally, “you shall, my dear. Would you rather ping or pong?”

“I don’t mind much,” said Topsy.

“If you ping you play one side, and if you pong, you play the other side,” explained Aunt Sally.

“I should like to be on your side,” said Topsy.

“That’s right,” said Aunt Sally, who seemed very pleased. “Now all you have to do is to put your racquet in front of my nose when you see a ball coming, if you don’t my nose will be broken.”

“Oh! That’s dreadful,” cried Topsy, “what would you do?”

“Don’t you mind about that,” said Aunt Sally, “if my nose is broken I’ve got hundreds and hundreds more at home; why I have had as many as twenty noses broken in in a single day.”

“My husband, Mr. Golliwog, only allows m e to have six noses a

day now, he says he can’t afford more. I’ve broken four already so we must be care as I don’t want to go without a nose till tomorrow; I’ some flowers I particularly want to smell.”



Topsy was very nervous, and it was not long before a ball hit Aunt Sally on the nose and broke it to atoms. "Lost," said Aunt Sally, quite coolly taking another nose out of her pocket and fixing it in its

place. "Now to tea, girls."

All the dolls made a rush for the tea table. ...

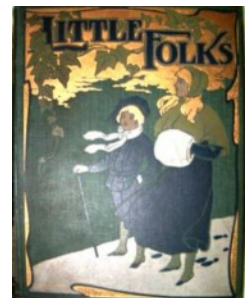


The strange thing is the last illustration: is a mixture of ping-pong and lawn tennis!

7- **LITTLE FOLKS 1902 (Vols. 55 and 56)** Published, Cassell and Company Limited, London 960 Pages. 24.6 cm h. x 19.3 cm w. Hard cover

Page 52 (Vol. 56)

AFTER THE BALL, by E. M. W.



This sort of thing quite knocks me up,"
Complained the ping-pong ball,
As now on this side, now on that,
The rackets made him fall.

"Ping," went the bat just then, and ere
The answering "pong" replied,
That silly little headstrong ball
Jumped o'er the table's side.

"To keep me on the go like this is
really most unfair;
No wonder that when chance permits I
hide behind a chair.

But what a fatal jump was that! For,
blinded by his ire,
He fell by accident right in
The middle of the fire.

"But now I know what I will do,
To try and spoil their play.
Next time they hit, I won't go straight,
But bound another way."

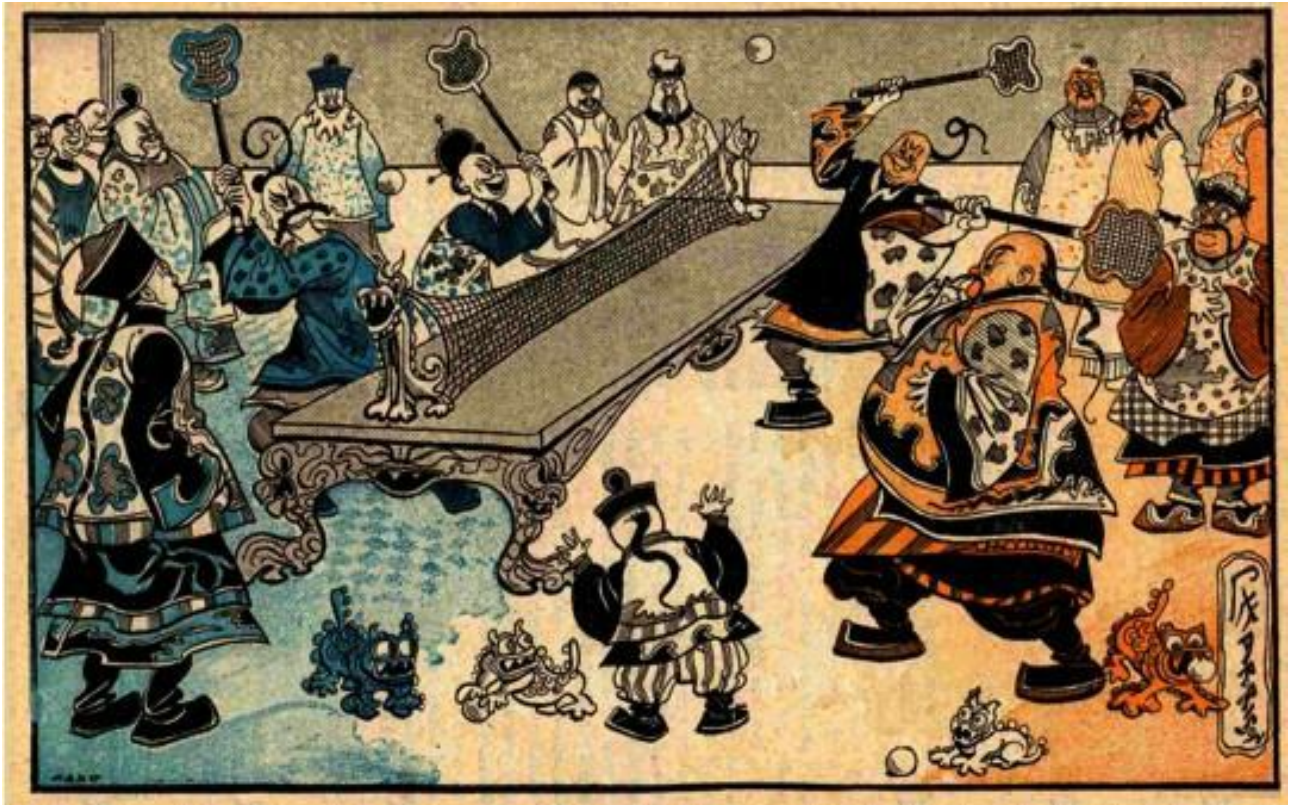
And when some to the rescue ran They
found, I grieve to say,
The heat had been too much for him —
He'd frizzled quite away!

Page 95 (Vol. 55)

THE GAME OF PINGI-PONGI.

(Recently introduced into China.) By

C. Harrison



The above illustration was presented in TTC 59

Page 266 (Vol. 56):

PING-PONG IN DICHIEDOM

Mr. Avis: Yes, they used to call it Toadstool-tennis, before these snails were invented.

By T. Felix Leigh



Page 390 (Vol. 56):

PAGES FOR VERY LITTLE FOLKS. **WHY THE GAME ENDED.**

WHEN Pus-sy's out the mice will play,
We've known for ve-ry long;
But 'twas not till the oth-er day
That they took up ping-pong.

Net, balls and rack-ets, all com-plete, They
got with play-ers four;
And two sage um-pires most dis-creet To
judge and keep the score.

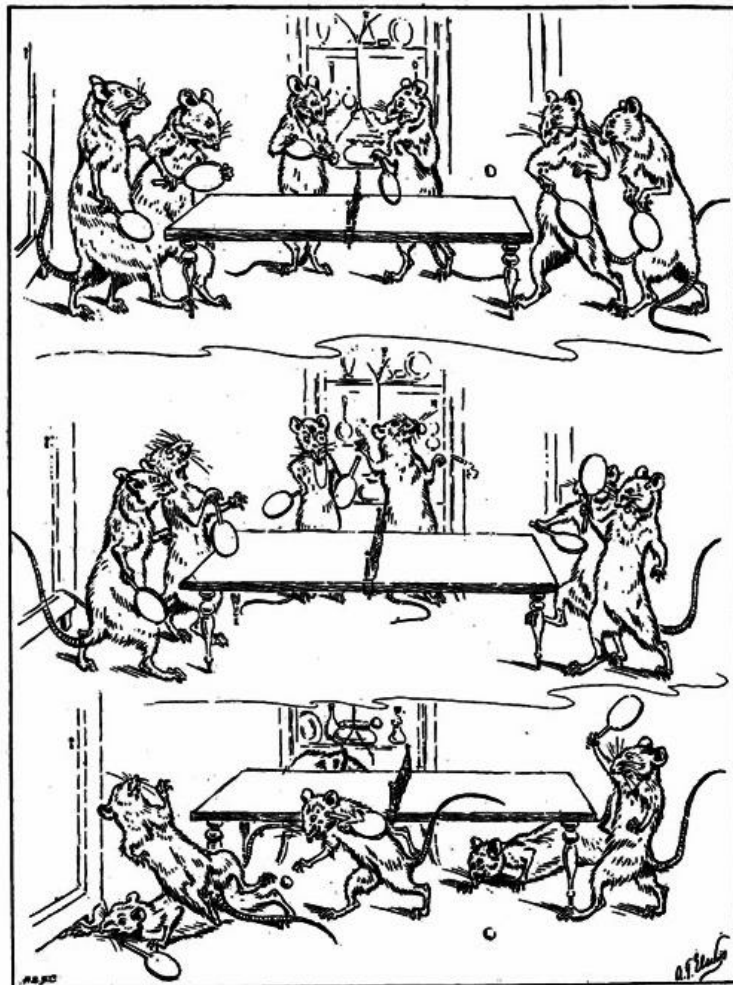
So spleen-did was the toast-ed cheese That
was the vic-tors' prize,
Some mice who look-ed at it 'gan sneeze,
While some 'gan rub their eyes.

At first the game was rath-er slow,' For
both sides play-ed with care; But soon
the balls be-gan to go Here, there, and
ev-er-y-where.

One caught an um-pire on the nose, He
cri-ed, "Mind what you're at!" When sud-
den-ly a form up-rose— Their en-e-my
the cat!

No more they thought of nets and balls; Or
car-ed who lost or won;
Each hur-ri-ed off 1with shrieks and squalls,
That game was nev-er done.

F. M. H.



WHY THE GAME ENDED.

To be continued

Sutton Scene turns the spotlight on a resident who made his name in international table tennis, competing for more than 50 years, and has dedicated his long life to the sport

International superstar

For many people a competitive game of table tennis is a fond memory of family life but few gain the success achieved by Sutton's own international table tennis ace, Ron Crayden.

He settled in Sutton with his wife and two children in 1959, liking the community life to be found in Grennell Road. But the budding superstar was to go far beyond the borough border. Ron gained worldwide recognition for his exceptional service to table tennis, and competed for more than 50 years at county, national and international level.

How did this interest start? The former England captain remembers enjoying a 'knock about game' with his brother, Les, at home on the kitchen table. He joined a Brixton club when he left school at 16, and went on to win 20 South London championships.

The modest 84-year-old said: "This does tend to get you noticed and my table tennis career took off from there."

During the war Ron met another world champion player, Johnny Leach – both were in the RAF based in Northern Ireland – and another future international player and coach,

Jack Carrington. After the war the three friends played together at international tournaments.

Ron became an area rep with a local lock and safe company. Luckily his boss was sympathetic to his sport. There was many a weekend when Ron was jetting off to Sweden, or heading off to play in a British tournament.

He served England and the Surrey Table Tennis Association in many ways, from player, to coach, captain, chairman and president.

In 1961 he took the first English Table Tennis Team to China and represented his country for 22 years, as both player and captain. He led England a remarkable 225 times – more than any other person – including major championships in Australia, Egypt, India, Japan, New Zealand, North Korea and Russia.

And it is thanks to Ron's efforts that Surrey is now one of the foremost table tennis counties in England. He has not missed a single season and was awarded life membership for his commitment to the county. The champ is also a life member of the International Table Tennis Federation.

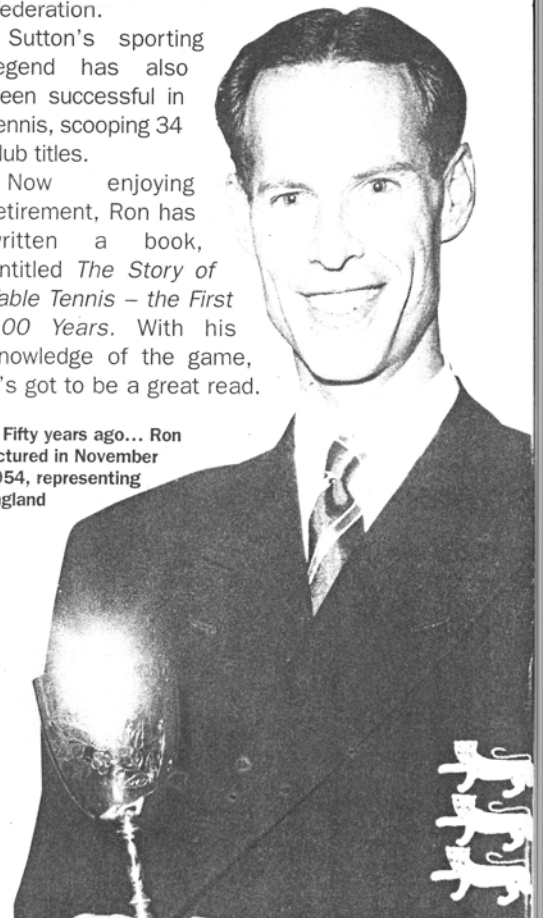
Sutton's sporting legend has also been successful in tennis, scooping 34 club titles.

Now enjoying retirement, Ron has written a book, entitled *The Story of Table Tennis – the First 100 Years*. With his knowledge of the game, it's got to be a great read.

● Fifty years ago... Ron pictured in November 1954, representing England

A little-known piece on the late Ron Crayden in his later years. Sent by Gerald Gurney.

● Ron Crayden, now a sprightly 84 year-old, with some of his trophies and mementoes from a lifetime of involvement in international table tennis



VIKTOR BARNA (Part 1)

by Alan Duke

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION

I, the undersigned, to whom the following particulars relate, hereby apply to the Secretary of State for the grant of a Certificate of Naturalization.

If, at any time before a certificate is issued to me, the accuracy of any of the following particulars is affected by an alteration in circumstances, I undertake to inform the Secretary of State in writing forthwith.

Date: 26.1.1945 Signature of Applicant: G. P. Barna

There were many, many highlights in the life of Viktor Barna (Victor in the anglicised version), but one of which he was particularly proud was his naturalization¹ as a British citizen. Much planning and thought would have gone into this, but it all really began with his completion of the Application Form (FORM A) on Friday 26th January 1945 (Home Office Application No. B.13352).

All the details presented in the main part of this article were found in two files² held in The National Archives. One of these contained a copy of his Naturalization Certificate, and the other a file of papers covering the application process (originally designated to remain Closed for 100 years, until 2048, but fortunately declared Open following a Freedom of Information request). These documents are of interest as they provide not only much first-hand biographical information, but also many other insights into Victor Barna's character.

Residence in the United Kingdom within the last 8 years:

Dates	Address	Duration
23.4 - 4.8.1939	Shelbourne Hotel, 16, Bedford Way, W.	4 months
4.8 - 16.8.1939	33, Hornton Street, London W.8 [flattlets]	1 month
14.2 - 30.5.1940	Strand Palace Hotel, London W	3 months
30.5 - 15.10.1940	57, Troy Court, Kensington W.8 [Tel: WESTern 7420]	5 months
15.10.40 - 1.5.44	127, Wellington Road, Rhyl, N Wales	3 years, 7 months
1.5 - 15.10.1944	88, Cavendish Road, Clapham, SW12	5 months
15.10.1944 to date	28, Elm Park Court, Pinner (Middx) [Tel: Pinner 2341]	4 months

Total residence in UK: Over 5 years.



1) The Application

Details provided by Barna in his Application Form:

Name: **Gyözö Viktor Barna** [In a second, otherwise identical, hand-written copy marked 'Duplicate', was added (**Née Braun**) – more of this later!]

Address: **28 Elm Park Court, Pinner, Middx.**

Occupation: **Material controller.**

Place of business: **Swanser & Son Ltd, 152 Green Lanes, N.13³**

Born: **24.8.1911 at 47, Rakoczi ut⁴, Budapest, Hungary.**

Nationality at birth: **Hungarian.**

Father's name: **Richard Braun (Hungarian),
now living at 64, Rakoczi ut, Budapest.**

Mother's name:

Cecillia Braun (née Pollak) (Hungarian), now dead.

Marital status: **Married.**

The image shows the original application form with handwritten details. It includes the name 'VIKTOR BARNA', date '26.1.1945', and various personal details such as 'My present private address is: 28 Elm Park Court, Pinner, (Middx)'. It also lists residence history in the UK and other countries.

Name change: **My original name was altered in 1929 to "Barna" and I have since that date been commonly known by that name.**

Foreign countries visited during his residence period:

**United States of America
16.8.1939 to 14.2.1940.**

Married: **At Holborn Registry Office, London, on 27.4.1939⁵, to Susanne Arany (Hungarian)⁶**

Children: **None.**



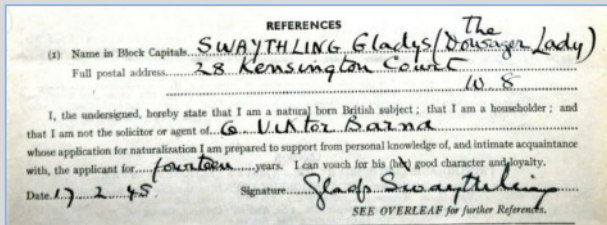
VIKTOR BARNA

References (and length of acquaintanceship)		
Date	Name and address	Years
17.2.45	The Dowager Lady Gladys Swaythling ⁷ 28 Kensington Court, W8	14
1.3.45	Horatio Nelson Smith Eastfield, Colne, Lancs.	10
5.3.45	Major A Pritchard ⁸ 373 Regents Park Road, N3	12
14.3.45	Ellis Smith JP M.P. 61 Grasmere Crescent, Eccles, Manchester	4

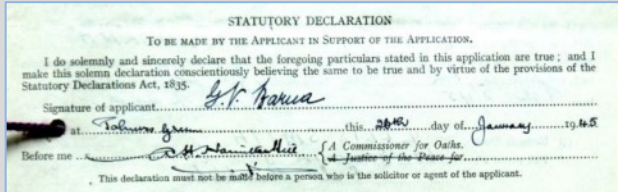


On 16th March, a letter of support for the application was written by S F Rous CBE, Deputy Chairman of the Sports Committee of The Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross & St. John Fund*. He stated:

“Mr. Barna has been known to me for six years, during which time he has worked for the Red Cross & St. John Fund and other charitable organizations. His conduct at all times has shown him to be, in my opinion, a fit person to become a naturalised subject.”



The required Statutory Declaration was made by Barna at Palmers Green (near his place of work) on 26th January:

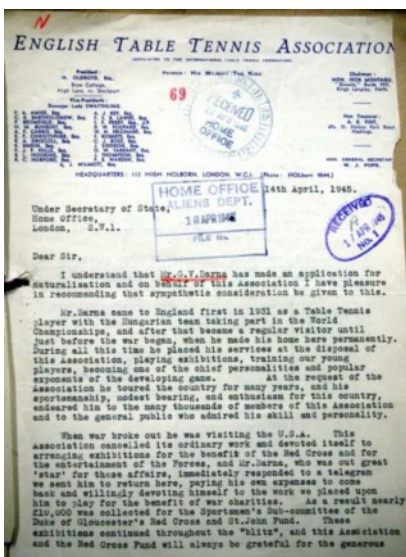


* This was the name of the campaign to raise funds for the work of the Joint War Organisation of the British Red Cross and Order of St John in the Second World War. By 1943, through the efforts of sportsmen and women all over the country, £100,000 had already been raised. With the support of many sporting organisations, by the end of the war, almost three million pounds had been collected.

Further support came on 14th April from W J Pope, Hon. Gen. Secretary of the English Table Tennis Association. His glowing tribute is worth reproducing in full:

“I understand that Mr. G. V. Barna has made an application for naturalisation and on behalf of this Association I have pleasure in recommending that sympathetic consideration be given to this.

Mr. Barna came to England first in 1931 as a Table Tennis player with the Hungarian team taking part in the World Championships, and after that became a regular visitor until just before the war began, when he made his home here permanently. During all this time he placed his services at the disposal of this Association, playing exhibitions, training our young players, becoming one of the chief personalities and popular exponents of the developing game. At the request of the Association he toured the country for many years, and his sportsmanship, modest bearing, and enthusiasm for this country, endeared him to the many thousands of members of this Association and to the general public who admired his skill and personality.



When war broke out he was visiting the U.S.A. This Association cancelled its ordinary work and devoted itself to arranging exhibitions for the benefit of the Red Cross and for the entertainment of the Forces, and Mr. Barna, who was our great 'star' for these affairs, immediately responded to a telegram we sent him to return here, paying his own expenses to come back and willingly devoting himself to the work we placed upon him to play for the benefit of war charities. As a result nearly £10,000 was collected for the Sportsmen's Sub-committee of the Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross and St. John Fund⁹. These exhibitions continued throughout the "blitz", and this Association and the Red Cross Fund will always be grateful for the generous and untiring efforts he made to fulfil the programme we had arranged.

VIKTOR BARNA

Mr. Barna has been with us so long and has so endeared himself to our members, that we have long looked upon him as 'one of us'. There is no doubt of his love of England and the English people and of his attitude to the enemies of this country. For many years before the war he privately and publicly expressed his love for England and his desire to become a British subject. We think he would be a very desirable national and should be most proud if he were adopted as a citizen of this country.

He is admired and respected in every country where he has played Table Tennis, and his devotion to our interests has been a source of gratification to us because of his standing in the International game.

This Association will be very pleased to forward his application in any way possible and to certify to his high character and to the sincerity of his devotion to this country."

Unfortunately, at that time it was the policy to 'postpone and lay by' most applications, except for "those most exceptional cases" where the grant of naturalization was "not merely desirable but needed at once in the national interest to meet immediate officially-established requirements connected with the war effort". This was outlined in a reply sent by the Nationality Division to the ETTA on 3rd May:

While appreciating the considerations outlined in your letter which will be on record in this Department the Secretary of State regrets that on the information before him he is unable to regard Mr. Barna's case as one with which he can proceed most exceptionally during the continuance of the present policy of suspension of naturalization.

2) Priority request

Barna's next step in the process was to complete and send Naturalization Form Q, which he did on 2nd April 1946. This form (in triplicate!) was required to support a claim for priority consideration of his naturalization application. Once again, it contains much interesting information:

Private address: **28 Elm Park Court, Pinner, Middlesex.**
 Business Address: **1 Laurence Pountney Hill, London, E.C.4.**
 Business: **Export of Sports articles, under the international trade name of 'BARNA'.**
 Experience: **Before coming to Britain was table tennis World champion and marketed table tennis balls, bats, etc., under my own name. Production was in France, U.S.A. & Britain.**
 Qualifications: **Commercial High School, Budapest.**
Recognised as a world authority on table tennis styles and equipment. Champion of the world on fifteen occasions.
 War work relevant to claim: **Raised over £15,000 for the Red X by exhibition games (Red X Sports Committee).**
Regularly played exhibitions for troops in camps. Also worked in munition factory.
 Details of export trade: **Turnover in 1938, Approx. £50,000.**
Dec.45, Jan. and Feb.46, £1600 (Barna Balls.)
Now have orders for £8000 from Scandinavia and U.S.A.
 Requirement to travel on business: **Yes, especially in connection with table tennis championships, in various countries to re-establish old business connections and acquire new ones.**
 Reasons for priority: **1. To enable me to develop a large export from this country of my speciality lines.**
2. I came to this country in 1940 from U.S.A. to help Britain both in production and by troop entertainment.
3. I volunteered to War Office to join the special parachute troops for operation in Hungary.
4. I was engaged in munition production.

NATURALIZATION
 Naturalization Form Q

Standard in support of a claim for priority of consideration for an application for naturalization submitted by an alien engaged in one of the professions, or in business on his own account, or who is otherwise self-employed, and who considers that he has made during the war, or is now in a position to make, a substantial contribution to the interests of the country.

Name: **BARNA, Victor Oszk**

34. (Thirty Four)

4. Home Office Ref. No. (if known)

5. Number of Police Registration Certificate: **131945**

6. Private Address: **28 Elm Park Court, Pinner, Middlesex.**

7. Business Address: **1 Laurence Pountney Hill, London, E.C.4.**

8. Name of Applicant's Employment or Business: **Export of Sports articles... under the international trade name of 'BARNA'.**

9. Details of any industrial, commercial or professional experience before coming to this country: **Before coming to Britain was table tennis World champion and marketed table tennis balls, bats, etc., under my own name. Production was in France, U.S.A. & Britain.**

10. Details of any special or technical knowledge and particulars of connected technical or academic qualifications: **Commercial High School, Budapest.**
Recognised as a world authority on table tennis styles and equipment. Champion of the world on fifteen occasions.



11. Name of Government Department mainly interested in the applicant's work: **Board of Trade.**

12. Where the applicant's claim to priority is based on his contribution to the national effort, that benefit should be given of the type of war work on which the applicant was engaged, together with the name of the Government Department interested: **Raised over £1,000 for the Red X by exhibition games (Red X Sports Committee). Regularly played exhibitions for troops in camps. Also worked in munition factory.**

13. If the applicant's company or firm is engaged in export trade, please state: **the approximate value of the export trade and the proportion which exports bear to total turnover. (Figures should be given, if possible, for 1938 and for the last year completed ending year)**
Turnover in 1938, Approx. £50,000.
Dec.45, Jan and Feb.46, £1600 (Barna Balls.)

14. Whether plans have been made to develop exports and if so, to what extent: **Now have orders for £8000 from Scandinavia and U.S.A.**

15. Whether the applicant is required to travel outside the United Kingdom on behalf of the firm and if so, where and how often: **Yes, especially in connection with table tennis championships, in various countries to re-establish old business connections and acquire new ones.**

16. Please state briefly the reasons why you consider that your application for naturalization is deserving of priority on the strength of the contribution which you have made to the national effort or are making to the welfare of the country: **To enable me to develop a large export from this country of my speciality lines, I came to this country in 1940 from U.S.A. to help Britain both in production and by troop entertainment. I volunteered to War Office to join the special parachute troops for operation in Hungary. I was engaged in munition production.**

I hereby certify that the above particulars are correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and that I have already submitted an application for naturalization on the grounds hereon to the Home Office.

Signature of applicant: **Victor Barna**

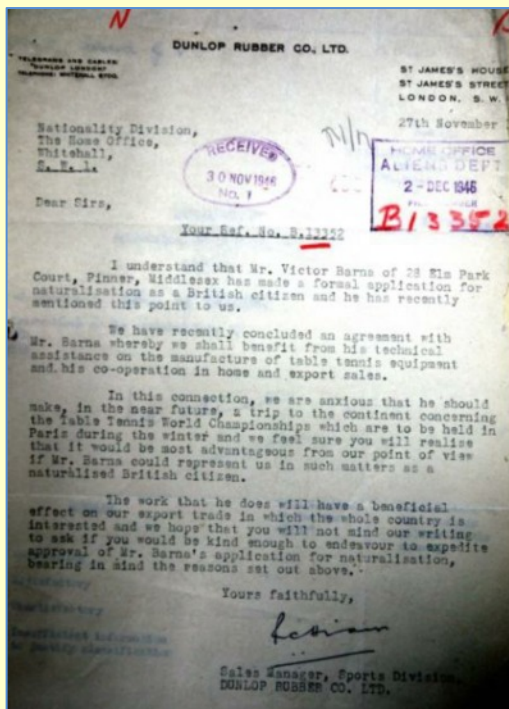
Date: **April 2nd, 1946.**

VIKTOR BARNA

This was then forwarded to various Government Departments for comments, with the first (dated 4th July) being "...his work for the Red Cross and the Forces during the war merits some measure of priority."

The Sales Manager of the Sports Division of the Dunlop Rubber Co., Ltd. wrote a letter of support on 27th November:

"We have recently concluded an agreement with Mr. Barna whereby we shall benefit from his technical assistance on the manufacture of table tennis equipment and his co-operation in home and export sales.



In this connection, we are anxious that he should make, in the near future, a trip to the continent concerning the Table Tennis World Championships which are to be held in Paris during the winter and we feel sure you will realise that it would be most advantageous from our point of view if Mr. Barna could represent us in such matters as a naturalised British citizen.

The work that he does will have a beneficial effect on our export trade in which the whole country is interested and we hope that you will not mind our writing to ask if you would be kind enough to endeavour to expedite approval of Mr. Barna's application for naturalisation, bearing in mind the reasons set out above."

This didn't have quite the desired effect on one department, which on 6th December added the comment: "We have already granted quite a large measure of priority and I doubt whether we should stretch it still further and take the case up now."

A reply from the Nationality Division was sent to Dunlop on 14th December:

"... Mr. Barna submitted a claim to priority of consideration of his application and after careful consideration in consultation with other appropriate Departments, it was decided to give his case a measure of priority. Mr. Barna was informed to this effect on the 11th July and was further advised that due to the very large number of stronger claims it would be some months before his turn could be reached.

Careful consideration has been given to your representations but the Secretary of State regrets that he would not be justified in taking up Mr. Barna's case at once and so delaying applicants whose claims to priority are regarded as stronger."

Notes

1. Naturalization is a legal process granting aliens full citizens' rights. Applicants must be 18 or over, of sound mind and good character, with sufficient knowledge of the language and of life in the UK. They must have lived in the UK for a minimum of 5 years, and intend to stay.
2. HO 405/2990 (Application); HO 334/185/29839 (Cert.)
3. The trade of Swanser & Son Ltd was listed in 1941 as 'Art Metal Workers'.
4. A busy east-west main road, east of the Danube.
5. A connection with an earlier article on the Barna Trade Mark is that Philip Reid, in his book *Victor Barna*, reports that afterwards a small reception was held at the home of a friend, A E Walsh.
6. Recorded under her given name, Zsuzsanne (b. c1918)
7. Ivor Montagu's mother.
8. Arthur Pritchard was a Director at Walter Briggs Ltd from 17.7.1925 to 13.3.1939. By 1947 he was a Director at Sports Machines Limited, Precision Engineers ('sole patentees and manufacturers of the Briggs racket stringing and drilling machine'), based at 373 Regents Park Road, the address supplied in the reference.
9. The funds raised helped provide comforts for the wounded, parcels for prisoners of war, and countless other services that the Red Cross and St John gave to all who suffered as a result of war. The Red Cross was able to supply prisoners of war with equipment for many games, the standard sports case including "two table-tennis nets and posts; eight bats and two dozen balls".
Ref: British Red Cross\Museum and Archives Information sheets\
Fundraising\Sports Committee WWII.doc

In the beginning there might have even been some kind of loop ...

by Gunter Straub (GER)

The word “top-spin” as a term to denote a certain direction of rotation had already found its way into the world of table tennis when this pastime transformed to a competitive sport for the first time [27]. The word topspin to label a particular technique or attacking stroke („topspin drive“, „topspin attack“) was used quite early, too, namely throughout the first half of the last century [12, 20]. The development of the modern topspin shot called “loop”, using sticky pips-in rubbers and performing a distinct upward arm movement with a tangential ball-racket contact, is repeatedly attributed to players from Japan [15, 16, 26]. Nakanishi was supposed to be the first Japanese athlete mastering this innovation in 1959 in order to intensify spin [22, 28]. A competition tour which led a Hungarian-Yugoslavian squad through Japan in the summer of 1960 is seen as the initial experience in table tennis history because, at the bottom line, the first encounter with the “loop drive” was an unpleasant surprise for the players from Europe [6].

Source: Uzorinac 2001



Joshinaru Nakanishi, the Japanese table tennis player who invented the top-spin



Stan Jacobson

... re-discovered the loop for the British

However, prior to the Japanese, there were several players who indeed tried to maximize the topspin of a table tennis ball. Perhaps, first and foremost Englishman Stanley Jacobson has to be mentioned here: His excessive “super topspin” helped him to reach the national rankings towards the beginning of the 1960s [7, 17, 19]. In honouring this, an article in the official magazine of the English Table Tennis Association was headed “Has Jacobson Started Something?” [18]. From the perspective of former ITTF President Ivor Montagu [22, 23] even the play of Adrian Haydon (England), men’s singles bronze medalist of the 1929 and 1933 world championships, incorporated this idea of full-blooded driving while jumping, later known as looping.

Actually, the word “loop” was already in use more than a decade prior to the historical journey to the Far East: The “looped topspin” was a signature feature of Richard Bergmann (Austria/England) who held the world’s singles title four times between 1937 and 1950. His looped-topspin was a slow spinny stroke hitting the ball in its descending phase [2]. According to his contemporary Johnny Leach [20] Bergmann “gets right unde[r]neath the ball and actually cuddles it to his bat until he is over the top of the ball.” (p. 62)

Source: Carrington (1948a)

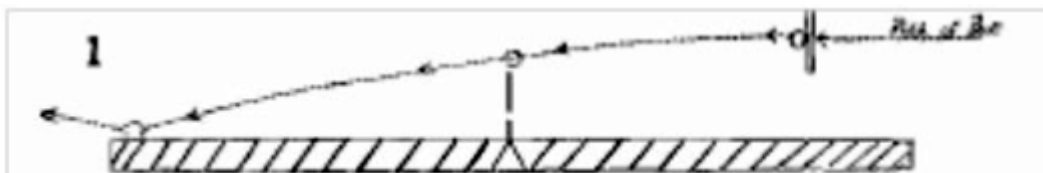


Richard Bergmann drops his bat to make his “looped-topspin” from position B2

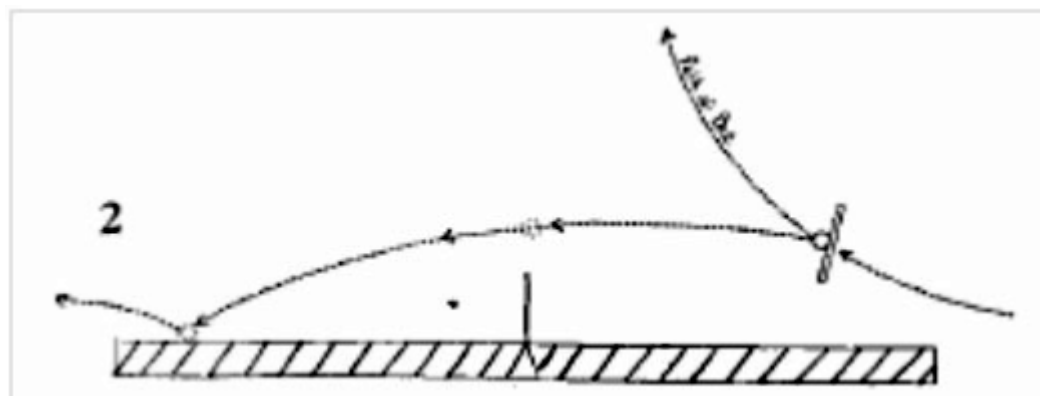
Besides, players from the United States of America originated an exaggerated topspin shot striking the ball in its rising phase [3]. For long periods in table tennis history a ball's topspin could be part of a stroke with a distinct defensive character. Topspin shots could be played with a high curve and slow speed [4, 5, 10, 11, 25]. Montagu [22] mentioned that "lob-topsin" was part of a strategy used by Alfred Liebster (Austria) who won three medals at the 1928 world championships.

THREE WAYS OF ATTACKING A MEDIUM LENGTH DEFENSIVE RETURN

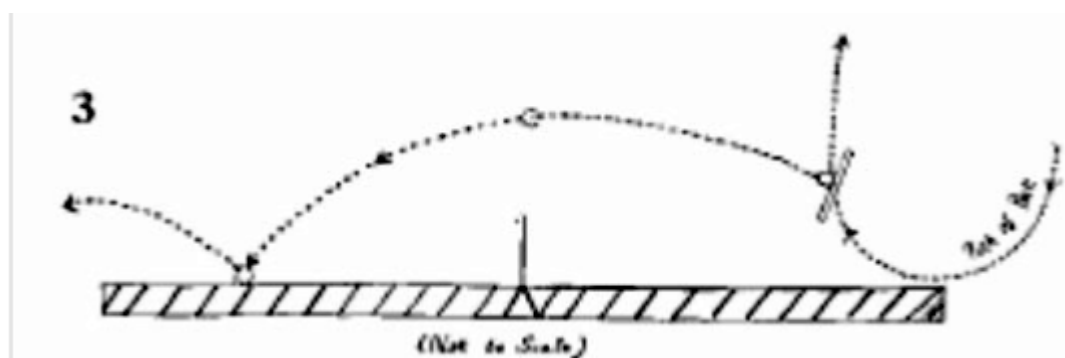
(Carrington, 1948b, p. 12)



1. -- FLAT HIT. Very little spin imparted. Ball taken at top of bounce. Very narrow margin of error at net and at baseline.



2. -- TYPICAL "ENGLISH" DRIVE OF SAME BALL. Fairly strong top-spin combined with a certain amount of flat-hit ("through" the ball). Ball again taken at top of bounce. Rather better margin for error at both net and baseline.



3. -- AMERICAN "ALL-OUT" TOP-SPIN HIT OF SAME BALL. As much top-spin as the arm can possibly impart by sharp vertical whip. Ball taken BEFORE reaching top of bounce, therefore little need for conscious forward hit "through" the ball – the rebound of the rising ball, added to the tremendous "glancing" blow of the upward-moving bat, gives the necessary forward speed.

Starting with the (re-)discovery of the loop around the year 1960, however, topspin started to revolutionize the game: The serve more and more was meant to prepare looping, and smashing was seen as a kind of natural way to complete a rally [8]. Thus, the averaged rallies in table tennis became shorter. At an early stage, it was discussed how desirable loop play was in regard to the future of the game [8]. Mainly, it was a threat for defensive players [21], but on the other hand, there were the opinions that looping alone is not sufficient to become a champion or should be used rather selectively [1, 13, 24]. Pushed on by a young generation of Yugoslavian and Hungarian world-class players, the loop drive became a mainstream technique throughout the 1970s and gradually differentiated [14, 15, 26]. The sidespin-loop, however, already existed in the first half of the 1960s [1, 9, 13].

References:

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- [28] Uzorinac, Z. (2001). ITTF 1926-2001 Table Tennis Legends. Zagreb: Skaner.

The ETTA magazine „Table Tennis“ and „Table Tennis News“ are available online at http://tabletennisengland.co.uk/etta_website/magazine-archive/

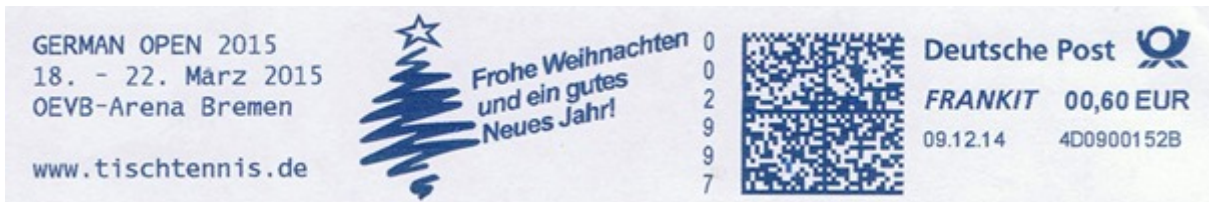


Philatelic Update

This chapter of our Philatelic Update focuses on metermarks from Germany, including new issues, and an historical overview by master philatelist Hans-Peter Trautmann of metermarks used by the Joola Table Tennis company.



Blue meters Olympic Sportart theme, used by the DTTB. The top 2 examples with error: 'olympische' not spelled correctly



DTTB bluemeter with holiday greetings. Date: 9 Dec 2014 Count 2997



User: Tischtennis Marketing GmbH City: Karben Date: 11 Nov 2014



User: DTTB City: Frankfurt Date: 25 Nov 2014 Count number 2780

Special thanks to Hans-Peter Trautmann, Winfried Engelbrecht and Tang Ganxian for their helpful reports of philatelic items.



Red meter mark from the World Junior Championships, Shanghai 30.11 - 7.12.2014



Impressive postcard showing World Veterans medals won by Reiko Miyagawa (JPN), including: 1982 50WS Gold, 1992 60WD Silver, 1994 60WD Bronze, 2002 70WD Bronze, 2012 80WD Silver, 80WS Bronze, 2014 80WD Silver. This special card shows not only achievement, but a great love for our sport. Congratulations Reiko !!



Reiko's fine book, *Stamps - Connecting the Table Tennis World*.



Reiko Miyagawa, a beautiful lady with a big heart for Table Tennis.

The JOOLA Table Tennis Factory in Germany

Their history and postage metermarks

by Hans-Peter Trautmann

The first table tennis table with the trade-mark JOOLA was constructed in 1953 in the sport-shop JOoss in the city LAndau/Germany. In 1973 JOOLA developed rackets and offered their collection of sport clothes. Through the expansion with table tennis tables, balls, rackets, clothes and shoes, a new factory was erected in Siebeldingen/Germany in the year 1973. JOOLA is the official supplier of many table tennis events like Olympic Games, World Championships, World Cups Men and Women, European Championships and Asian Championships. JOOLA used red metermarks and blue metermarks with table tennis motif for their postage.

I start my report with public relation, followed by event metermarks.

A) Public relations

KAUFEN SIE QUALITÄT-KAUFEN SIE
ORIGINAL
JOOLA
QUALITÄTS-TISCHTENNIS-TISCHE



City: 674 Landau
Date: 1969
Buy quality - buy
Original JOOLA
Quality Table Tennis Tables



City: 6741 Siebeldingen
Date: 1976
JOOLA

JOOLA
table tennis
Offizieller Ausrüster
des Deutschen
Tischtennis-Bundes



City: 6741 Siebeldingen
Date: 1981
JOOLA table tennis
Official Supplier of the
German Table Tennis League



City: 6741 Siebeldingen
Date: 1986
Ident-Nr. F 19 8348
JOOLA table tennis



City: 6741 Siebeldingen
Date: 1987
Ident-Nr. F 19 8348
JOOLA



City: 76833 Siebeldingen
Date: 1995
Ident-Nr. F 18 1060
JOOLA



City: 76833 Siebeldingen
Date: 2002
Ident-Nr. F 743041
Champions Table and more



City: Siebeldingen
Date: 2014
Ident-Nr. 2D021EE4E1
JOOLA
for the Champion in you !

B) Events:



City: 6741 Siebeldingen
Date: 1989
Ident-Nr. F 19 8348
JOOLA Official Supplier
40. World Table Tennis
Championships 1989



City: 6741 Siebeldingen
Date: 1992
Ident-Nr. F 19 8348 (also: F 18 1060)
JOOLA Official Supplier
European Table Tennis
Championships 10.-20.4.1992



City: 6741 Siebeldingen
Date: 1992
Ident-Nr. F 19 8348
Jörg Roskopf
European Champion
with JOOLA



City: 67833 Siebeldingen
Date: 1992
Ident-Nr. F 19 8348
Jörg Roskopf
European Champion
with JOOLA



City: 67833 Siebeldingen
Date: 1996
Ident-Nr. F 19 8348
JOOLA Official Supplier
Olympic Games Atlanta 1996



City: 67833 Siebeldingen
Date: 1999
Ident-Nr. F 18 1060
JOOLA Official Supplier
Olympic Games Atlanta 1996



City: 76833 Siebeldingen
Date: 1999
Ident-Nr. F 19 8348
JOOLA Official Supplier
European Table Tennis
Championships Bremen



City: 67833 Siebeldingen
Date: 1996
Ident-Nr. F 18 1060
JOOLA Official Supplier
Olympic Games Sydney 2000



City: 67833 Siebeldingen
Date: 2004
Ident-Nr. F 743041
ITTF World Cup
JOOLA Official Equipment



City: 67833 Siebeldingen
Date: 2004
Ident-Nr. F 743041
Athens 2004
JOOLA Official Supplier



City: 67833 Siebeldingen
Date: 2005
Ident-Nr. ?
World Junior Table Tennis
Championships
JOOLA Official Equipment

Auction Action



Quite a good variety of items went up for bids, including rackets, balls, sets, cards, pins ... most at reasonable prices, but as always, some surprises.



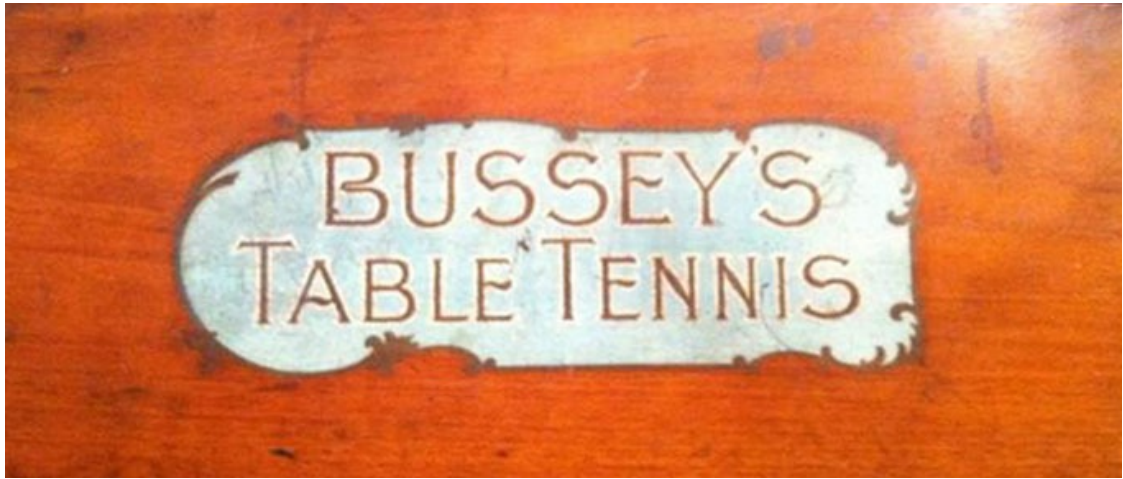
Prague 1936 World Championships pin \$52. Others asked \$180, \$125 & \$99



Two mesh balls with box attracted strong interest, selling at £31 But see the set below!



Set by Marks Bros (USA) with 4 hardbats and 4 mesh ribbed balls with box. A great bargain at \$5 !



Set in fine wood box, by Geo. Bussey (ENG) \$365. The component parts do not look original - the drum rackets are not Bussey models, and the net posts are usually the twisted metal (wrought iron) style. C.1902



Another early Bussey Table Tennis set, with pair of wood rackets with stylized grips. £28 The black areas on the racket look like pads to protect the table from the netposts.



Two pair of drum rackets, reasonable price at £49

Ping Pong or Gossima set by Jaques-Hamley, with pair of vellum drum rackets & rules booklet, c.1902. £112.



This pig-skin leather stitched ball sold for £24 as 'perhaps Ping Pong'. Be careful on items like this. While the size may be similar, these balls are very heavy and were used for the game of Fives, sometimes called hand tennis, played in 3 or 4 wall courts, usually with gloves. There are many regional varieties of this game.



1973 AAA pin, scarce variety. \$35



Another vintage photo, only \$3. The dining table has been adapted for Table Tennis.



Pair of early rackets with leather face and leather wrapped elongated grips, by Clapshaw & Cleave (ENG). Bargain at £5



A surprise to see these Westminster rackets with elongated handles. A highly competitive auction ended at a strong \$225



Pair of vellum drum rackets, reasonably priced at £48



Pair of combination rackets with rubber/cork, squared handles. Originally listed at \$130, then \$110, then \$99, \$89 and \$79



Pyrographic wood-burned bats have become quite scarce, often selling for high prices. But occasionally one pops up on ebay as a "Buy it Now" with a low price. This example, reminiscent of the artist Louis Wain and his numerous cats illustrations, sold quickly for a Buy it Now price of only \$95.



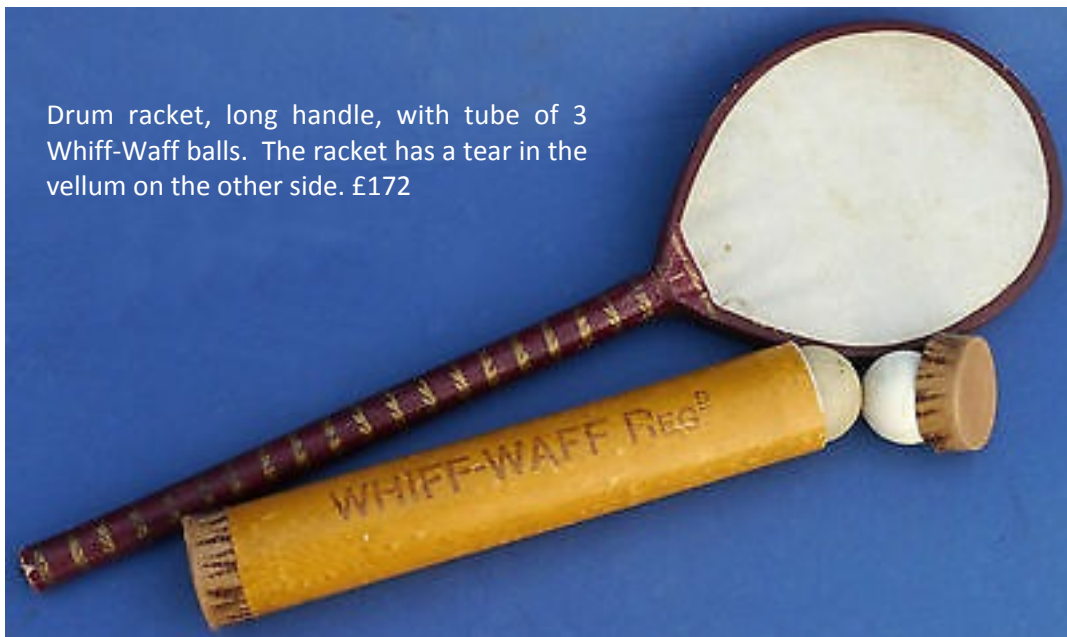
Boxed set by Chad Valley (ENG) with pair of drum rackets and tube of balls. £237



Drum racket, 43 cm (17 in) £30



Group of 4 wood bats with bulbous handles, described as Edwardian, but they have a distinctly new & home made look.



Drum racket, long handle, with tube of 3 Whiff-Waff balls. The racket has a tear in the vellum on the other side. £172



Fine early Spalding set with beautiful color litho, in wood box \$306



£12



£23



£20, reduced to £12



£23, reduced to £13



£20, reduced to £12



£23



Coleman Clark racket, \$43



Butterfly mini-bats
5 in. (12.7cm) \$29



Stylish large medal from France, 9cm diameter. £28

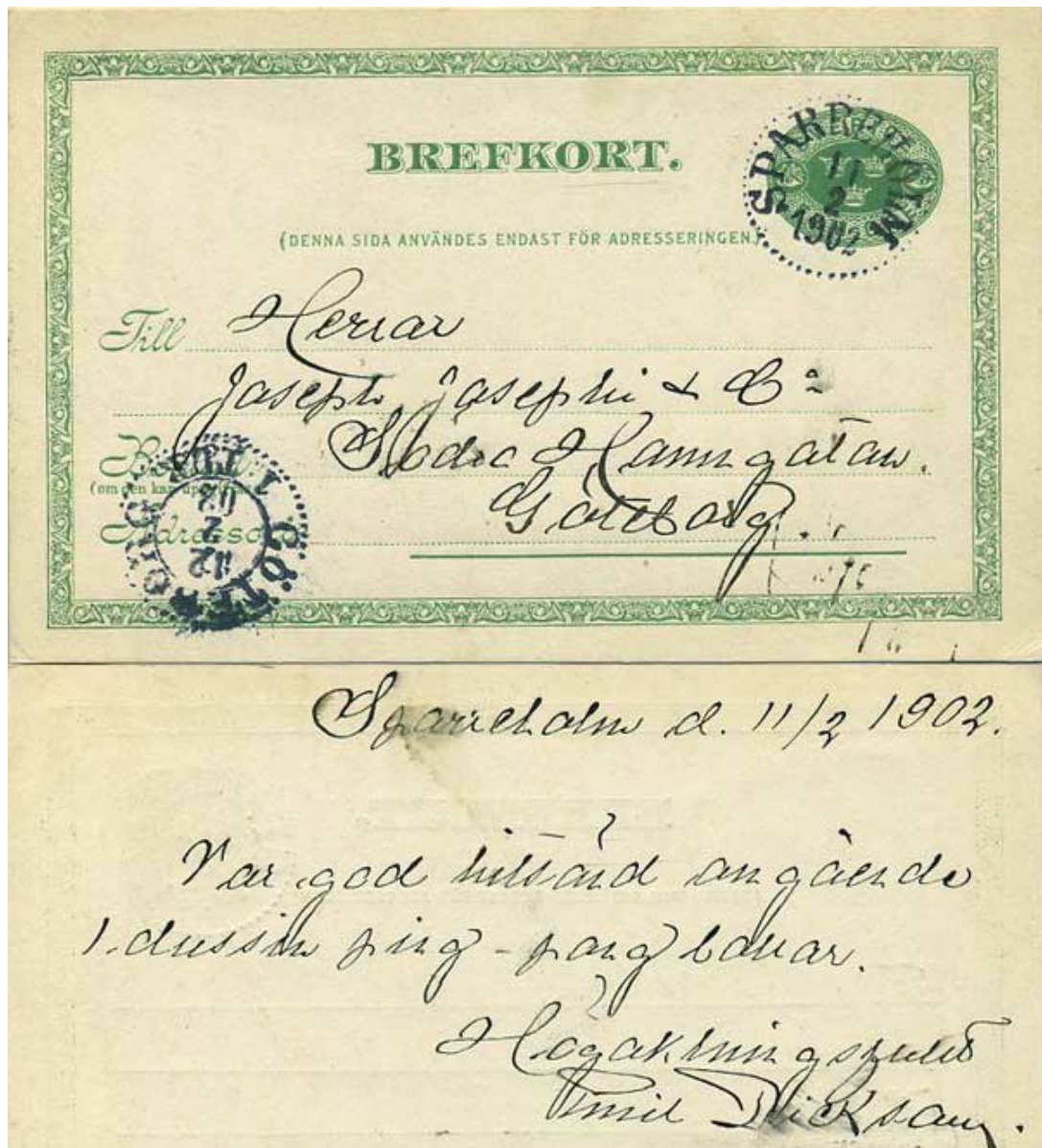


Porcelain figurine by Hollohaza. (Hungary) 19.5cm (7.7in) \$65



Richard Bergman 'Personal' model racket by Slazenger, in mint condition with original box. What a find! Several styles of Bergmann rackets are known: 1. With picture decal 2. Personal model with white oval at throat 3. This racket, with long triangle logo 4. The Dobbykraft model. Probably there are other models. In such superb condition this racket attracted great interest and sold for a strong price of £435

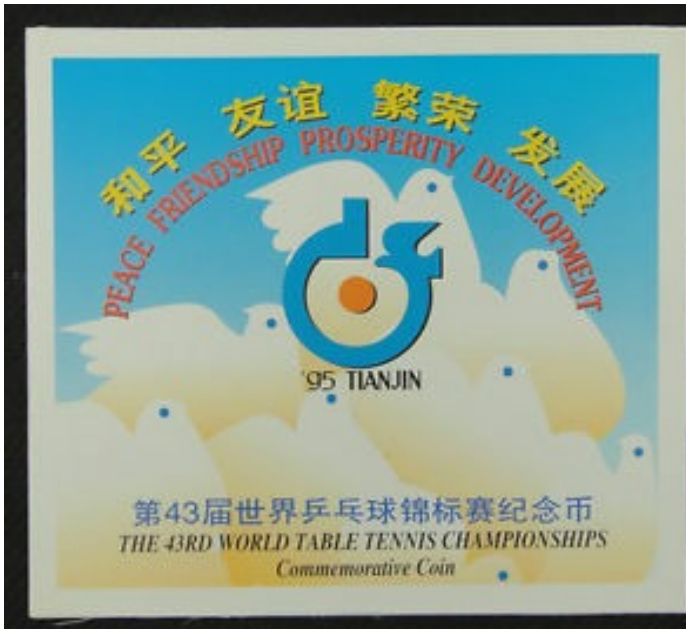
Postcard Page



Here is something that I've not seen before: a Swedish postcard from 1902, ordering a dozen ping pong balls. Sold for a strong \$130



Open air Table Tennis at Saint-Valery-en-Caux, Stade Valeriquais \$10



Tianjin 1995
Coin card £8



Large mechanical valentine with moving ball. \$5 Happy Valentine's Day!



Pair of Slazenger 'Square Face' hardbats £50



Flat-top hard rubber racket £23



Pair of Slazenger Eclipse rackets, leather wrapped grips. Offered at £75



This Spalding Square Face racket with stylized grip, rubber quite distressed, sold for a surprising £75



Butterfly Desmond Douglas Pro FL racket, signed £31. A picture decal model sold for £30



Butterfly Tamasu racket, £36. The handle looks altered by a previous owner, in the style of the Ehrlich model with slant cut grip and perforations.



\$89



Above: Silver medal by the Swiss master Huguenin. 4cm \$52 Below, another example, with date 1929



Chinese porcelain figurines. Seller accepted an unspecified amount under his Buy it Now price of \$450



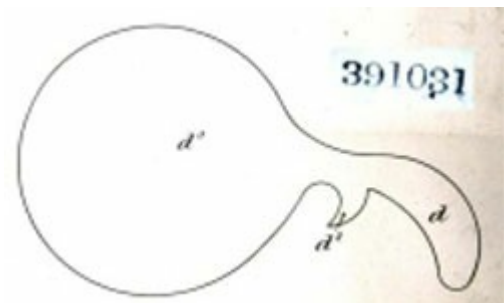
Pair of the unusual Broadman glove style rackets, in specially fitted case, \$107



Team Captain badge from 1967 World Championships in Stockholm. \$80



Two versions of the pistol grip racket: left \$20, right: Sanwei model, \$45. Actually the pistol grip style appeared in the early days - see the EXTENDA model, below left, and 2 other designs shown in Alan Duke's pages.





Fine pin with an excellent sense of motion, from a 1944 event in Tatranska Lomnica, Slovakia. \$50



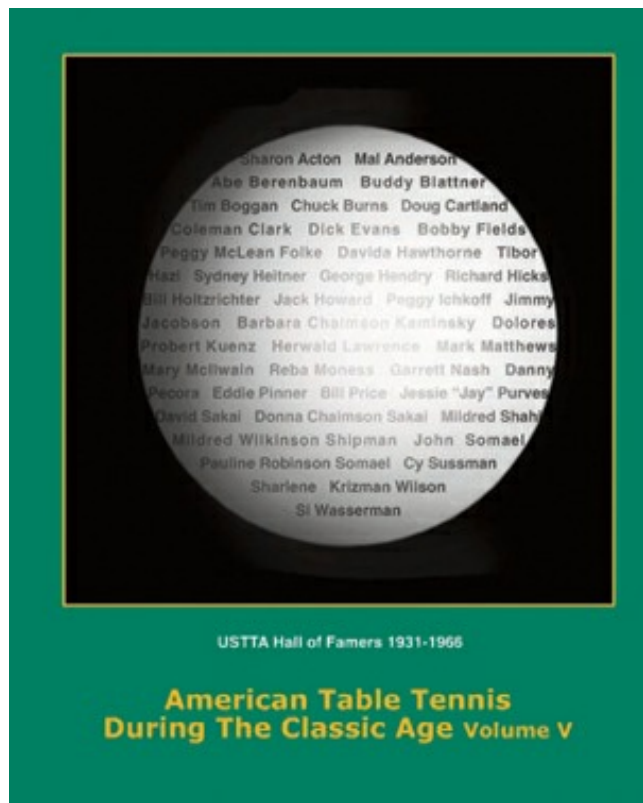
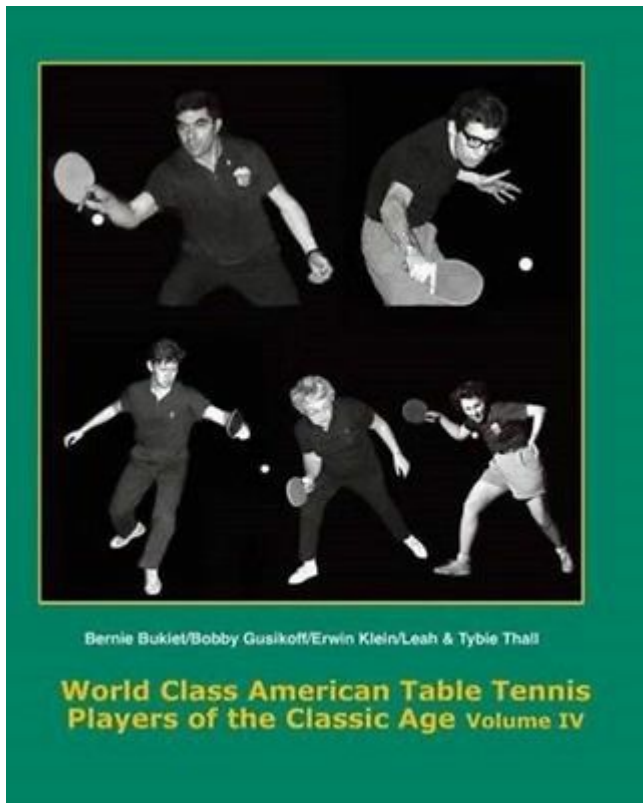
Mercury \$15



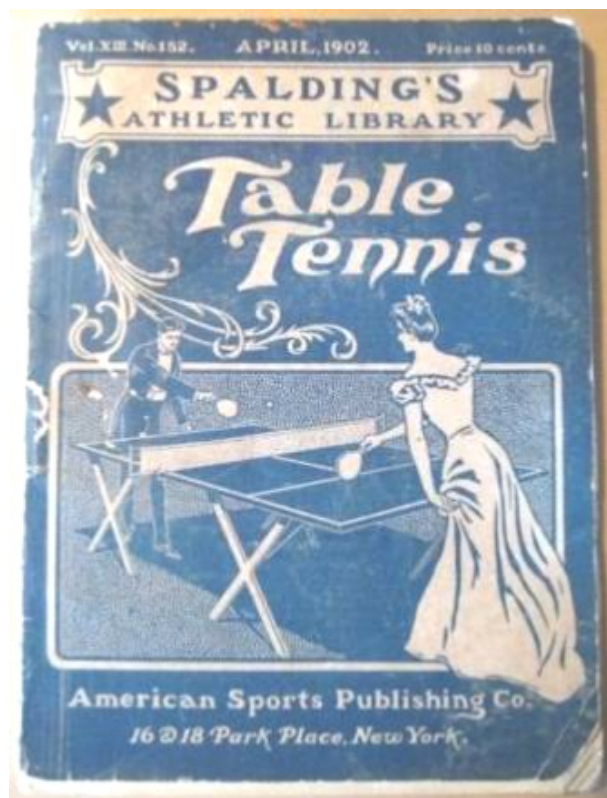
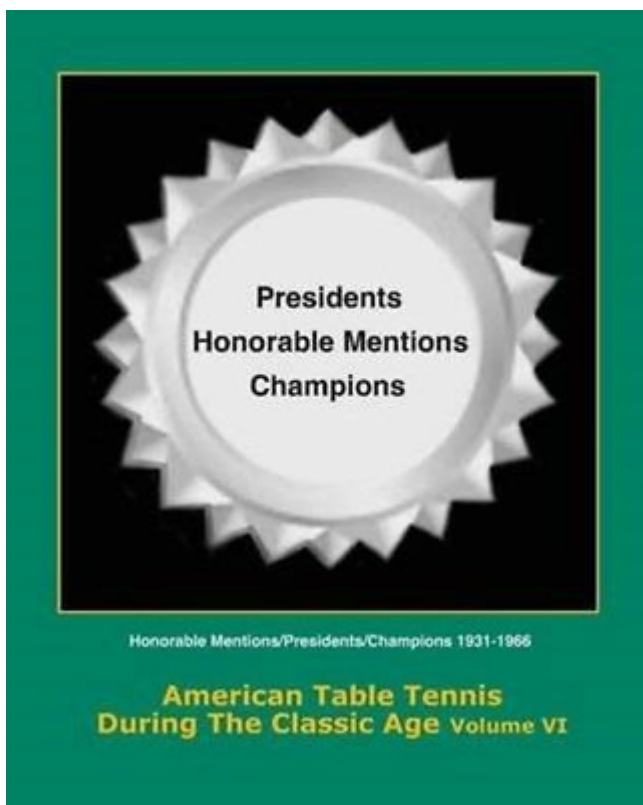
\$19



\$50



Three more volumes by the great team of historians Dean Johnson and Tim Boggan in their brilliant series on American star players of the Classical Age. Again I want to take this opportunity to encourage readers from other countries having a long Table Tennis heritage to embark upon a similar project. It is vital to preserve the history and the legacies of your players.



The Spalding Athletic Library April 1902 edition, Table Tennis. Many photos of early Spalding equipment. \$15

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Anton Zwiebel In Memoriam



The 2015 QOROS World Championships will be held in Suzhou, China, 26 April - 3 May. Five World titles will be contested, represented by the 5 trophies (L-R): The St. Bride Vase for Men's Singles; the G. Geist Prize for the Women's Singles; the Iran Cup for Men's Doubles; the W.J. Pope Trophy for Women's Doubles; and the Heydusek Prize for Mixed Doubles. Special thanks to the sponsors, organizers, volunteers, and good luck to all the competitors - play with heart!

