



ACROSS THE NET

Melton Table Tennis

April 2018

Edition 44

SUMMER SEASON WRAP, CHARITY WINS, & COMM GAMES PREVIEW

In this edition, we congratulate the winners and runners-up from our first season, pat ourselves on the back for our charitable efforts, and look at the upcoming Commonwealth Games from some curious angles.

WINTER IS COMING

Yes, the **5th of April** sees the start of our Winter season. And if you weren't already aware of it, we will be taking a sojourn for a few weeks in the middle of it.

The first six weeks of the season will progress as normal. At that point the club will go into a 5-week hiatus while the hall is unavailable to us. We will resume on the **Thursday the 21st of June** with Round 7, and (hopefully) will continue as scheduled for the rest of the year.

The original schedule had us playing 3 weeks of practice prior to the Winter season, and 2 weeks towards the end, so this disruption can be absorbed into those weeks to ensure we still get a full season of play.

SUMMER SEASON COMES TO A CLOSE

And while the weather was cooling, the table tennis was hotting up with some great matches played in the Grand Finals of our Summer season.

Our congratulations go to the following players for a good start to the year :-

The **A1** Grand Final saw **Marc Camilleri, Chris Addis, and Larry Hallinan** defeating **Matthew Camilleri, Zain Ali Khan, and Milan Lukovic**.

In the **A2** Grand Final, it was **Andy Stewart, Matt Magro, and Connor Ziday** victorious over **George Katsipis, Dean Camilleri, and Jim Scott**.

B Grade had **Hayden Van Arkel, Chris Bustuttil and Brian Guy** taking the chocolates over **Steve Jaunkalns, Brian Barker and Annemarie Rothwell**.

The battle for honours in **C Grade** had **Jess O'Dea, Richard Dias and Lauren Minehan** overcoming **Christy Koppman, Ryan Dickie and Anna Jurkovic**.

Leading Players for the season were **Michael Louey** in **A1**, **Michel Kiki** in **A2**, **Steve Jaunkalns** in **B**, and **Dillon Ziday** in **C**.

ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL GOOD FRIDAY APPEAL

What a great night of fun we had. Attended by around 40 members, family and friends there was plenty of laughter echoing through the hall during the evening.

Alois Rosario was there, and his master-class on serving was appreciated by all who took part. For some of our newer members to have instructions from a world-class coach is something that will stand them in good stead for many years to come.

Our efforts to raise money for the Appeal was boosted by an incredibly generous donation from **PFEC Global**, a company run by our B Grade player, **Mohammed Shakeeb**. With his generosity, our total was pushed to just under **\$2,400**.

It just proves again that together we can do great things.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES ARE HERE

The **21st Commonwealth Games** are upon us, and for the fifth time they will be held in Australia. Following on from **Sydney in 1938, Perth in 1962, Brisbane in 1982, and Melbourne in 2006**, this year's event will be held on the **Gold Coast** from the **4th** to the **15th** of **April**.

And also for the fifth time, table tennis will be included in the Games. First included as an optional sport at the **2002 Manchester Commonwealth Games**, it has retained that status in **Melbourne (2006), Delhi (2010), and Glasgow (2014)**.

On the first 3 occasions it was played over 8 events; Men's Singles, Doubles and Teams, Women's Singles, Doubles and Teams, Mixed Doubles, plus Women's Elite Athletes with a Disability (Wheelchair) Singles. The Women's EAD Singles was dropped from the program at the 2014 Glasgow Games, but has been replaced by Para events for Class 6-10 Men's and Women's players at the Gold Coast Games.

Australia have performed well at the Commonwealth Games table tennis events, winning **6 Silver** and **4 Bronze** medals over the 4 Games held so far. But that's a far cry from **Singapore**. The Lion City has won **18 Gold, 13 Silver** and **13 Bronze** for a total of **44** medals of the **101** contested so far. That's **44%** of medals going to one country.

Singapore have been a force in table tennis at the Commonwealth Games, particularly the women. In the Women's Singles competition, Singapore have collected every medal except one. They have won all 4 Women's Teams events and 3 of the 4 Men's Teams Gold medals.

And which player has won the most medals at Commonwealth Games table tennis competitions? Well, obviously it's one of the Singaporean team, but which one? It's a fairly even spread. **28** players have picked up medals for Singapore, and **10** of them have only received a **Teams** medal. **13** players have won medals in the **Singles** competition.

Both **Yang Zi** and **Li Jiawei** have accumulated **9** medals from their Commonwealth Games efforts. Li collected **6** Gold and **3** Silver for her efforts in **2002**, **2006** and **2010**. She was not selected to play in 2014. Yang has picked up **5** Gold, **2** Silver, and **2** Bronze over the **2006**, **2010** and **2014** Games.

Seven Singaporean players have collected medals in Singles, Doubles, Mixed Doubles and Teams in the same Games, but the best of these is definitely **Zhang Xueling**, who pocketed **4** Gold medals in **2006**.

While Australia's achievements have not been so grand, we have competed well against some heavy hitters from the Commonwealth. **Manchester** saw Australia take 4 medals, with **Brett Clarke & Jian Fang Lay** getting a Silver in the Mixed Doubles, as did the Women's Team of **Cho Yuen-Wern, Jian Fang Lay, Miao Miao, Peri Campbell-Innes** and **Tammy Gough**. Bronze medals went to the Women's Doubles pair of Jian Fang Lay and Miao Miao, and to **Joy Boyd** in the Women's EAD Wheelchair event.

In **Melbourne**, Australia took 3 medals, with **William Henzell** taking the Men's Singles Silver, and the Women's Team of **Miao Miao, Stephanie Sang** and **Jian Fang Lay** again taking the second place on the podium. **Jian Fang Lay** and **Miao Miao** again paired up for another Bronze in the Women's Doubles.

Interestingly, the Round of 16 Men's Singles match won by **William Henzell** saw him progress over 11-time Victorian Open winner, **Simon Gerada** who had chosen to represent Malta at the Games.

Only 1 Silver medal came Australia's way from the **Delhi** Games in 2010, and that went to **Catherine Morrow** in the Women's Wheelchair Open Singles (Class 1-5).

And it wasn't much better at the 2014 **Glasgow** Games with 1 Silver to the ever-reliable Women's Double partnership of **Jian Fang Lay** and **Miao Miao**, and a Bronze medal to the Women's Team of **Miao Miao, Shirley Dederko, Jian Fang Lay, Melissa Tapper & Ziyu Zhang**.



This year the Women's Teams and Individual players will be **Jian Fang Lay** (VIC), **Melissa Tapper** (VIC)(pictured left), **Tracy Feng** (NSW), **Miao Miao** (VIC), **Michelle Bromley** (NSW), with **Melissa Tapper** joining **Andrea McDonnell** (QLD) in the Women's Class 6 – 10 Singles. Jian and Miao will both be representing Australia at their fifth Commonwealth Games.

The Men's Teams and Individual players will be **Heming Hu** (VIC)(pictured right), **David Powell** (VIC), **Chris Yan** (NSW), **Trent Carter** (VIC), and **Kane Townsend** (QLD), with **Barak Mizrachi** (VIC) playing in the newly added Men's Class 6 – 10 Singles for Para athletes.



We wish all of them the best of luck.

Table Tennis will feature on every day from the **5th** to the **15th** of **April**, with the Women's Team medal games on **Sunday the 8th**, the Men's Team medal games on **Monday the 9th**, Women's Doubles on **Friday the 13th**, Women's Singles, Men's Doubles, Women's Para Singles and Men's Para Singles all on **Saturday the 14th**, and on **Sunday the 15th**, the Mixed Doubles and Men's Singles medal games.

WHO'S GOING TO BE THERE?

35 countries will be competing in table tennis on the Gold Coast. Alphabetically, they go from Australia to **Zambia**. Only 2 of them will have 12 players listed for competition; Australia and **India**, while **South Africa**, **The Bahamas** and Zambia will only have 1 competitor each.

But there's a noticeable absence from table tennis at these Commonwealth Games, and it's for a reason which seems a little strange. **New Zealand** are not sending any players to compete in table tennis to the Gold Coast. It seems that their governing body won't send a team unless that team has a reasonable chance of winning a medal. If that is true, it seems counter-productive. If the New Zealand players don't get the chance to compete at these events, how do they expect to improve?

And there are a lot worse than New Zealand who will be attending. Based on the ITTF World Team Rankings, New Zealand rank **58th** in the Men's Team Rankings. Well below them are **The Seychelles** who are ranked **117th**, and **Belize** who are ranked **119th**. In the Women's Team Rankings, New Zealand comes in at **61st**, well ahead of **Saint Kitts And Nevis**, ranked **107th**, and **Belize**, ranked **115th**.

Individually, the highest ranked Men's player at the tournament will be **Gao Ning** from **Singapore** who is ranked **33rd** in the world. Next best is **Paul Drinkhall** from **England** with a ranking of **46**. **David Powell** is Australia's highest ranked Men's player at **110th** in the world.

The Women are higher up the rankings list. **Feng Tianwei** from **Singapore** is ranked **4th** in the world, and **Mo Zhang** from **Canada** is ranked **25**. The top Aussie woman is **Jian Fang Lay** at **60th**.

And it could be a commentator's nightmare if the Mixed Doubles matches feature **India** against **Sri Lanka**. Imagine calling a match between **Pooja Sahasrabudhe** and **Sathiyam Gwanasekaran** playing against **Buwaneka Jayasingha Mudiyansele** and **Erandi Warusawithana**.

Let's see Bruce McAvaney tackle that one.

But it was good to see the official Commonwealth Games website promoting the sport with a marvellous photo of a player hitting an attacking forehand. It's a pity that the player was wearing a Chinese shirt. Perhaps the person putting the website together didn't realise that China is not in the Commonwealth.



THE FULL LIST

For the record, the full list of countries competing in table tennis at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games is; **Australia** (12 players), **Barbados** (4), **Belize** (3), **Canada** (8), **England** (11), **Fiji** (5), **Ghana** (6), **Guyana** (6), **India** (12), **Jamaica** (2), **Kenya** (2), **Kiribati** (3), **Malaysia** (8), **Mauritius** (6), **Nigeria** (7), **Northern Ireland** (4), **Pakistan** (4), **Papua New Guinea** (2), **Saint Kitts And Nevis** (2), **Scotland** (3), **Seychelles** (2), **Sierra Leone** (2), **Singapore** (10), **Solomon Islands** (2), **South Africa** (1), **Sri Lanka** (6), **St. Vincent And The Grenadines** (3), **The Bahamas** (1), **Trinidad And Tobago** (4), **Tuvalu** (3), **Uganda** (2), **Tanzania** (4), **Vanuatu** (5), **Wales** (4), and **Zambia** (1).

But no New Zealand.

WHERE IT'S AT

Most of us know where the table tennis events for the Commonwealth Games are being held, even if the suburb of **Oxenford** doesn't immediately sound familiar.

Village-Roadshow Studios are located right next door to **Warner Bros. Movie World** on the Gold Coast. Operating since 1991, this facility consists of **9** sound stages, **10** production areas, and everything else you would need to make a decent home movie on your smart phone.

It has been responsible for the production of such memorable entertainment as ***Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers: The Movie*** (1995), ***Crocodile Dundee in Los Angeles*** (2001), ***Scooby-Doo*** (2002), ***Ghost Ship*** (2002), ***House of Wax*** (2005), ***The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*** (2010), ***San Andreas*** (2015), ***Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales*** (2017), ***Thor: Ragnarok*** (2017), ***Aquaman*** (2018), and many others.

Ironically, during the filming of **House of Wax** in **2004**, a fire destroyed one of the sound stages. *House of Wax? Creepy movie? Fire?* Imagine a Vincent Price voice-over and we can move on.

During the Commonwealth Games, 2 sound stages are being given over to **table tennis, squash** and **boxing**. With a combined seating capacity of over **5,000**, and tickets starting at only **\$10**, there should be plenty of people watching the best the Commonwealth has to offer.

And if there's a break in the games, you could always pop in to Movie World for a while.

APRIL TOURNAMENTS

Internationally, there are a couple of big ones in April. As discussed earlier, the Commonwealth Games will be on from the 4th to the **15th of April**, which is great news if you are going to attend. Unfortunately, if you're not attending you should be prepared for the fact that the event is being covered by **Channel 7**. Based on their coverage of the **Rio Olympics** and, more recently the **Winter Olympics**, we'll be lucky to see any sport at all, let alone table tennis.

At the end of the month, the **ITTF World Teams Championships** will be held in **Halmsted, Sweden**. Running from the **29th of April** to the **6th of May**, we can be guaranteed excellent coverage, both live streaming and replays, on the **ITTV** website.

Locally, the **1st of April** sees the running of the **Mornington Senior Open**, unless this is just an April Fool's Day joke.

The **14th** and **15th** will be a big weekend for **Geelong**, with the **Senior & Junior Opens** on Saturday, and the **Veterans Open** on Sunday.

A great Saturday of table tennis to end the month will be the **Victorian Open Senior & Para Championships**. Held at **MSAC** on the **28th**, this will be the final chance to impress before the Senior State Team is selected, so competition should be fierce.

ON THE WEB

I recently read an interesting article on a site I hadn't visited before. www.tabletennisspot.com is another of those sites offering tips, reviews, and a section on the rules of the game. Unfortunately for this site, this is where it completely falls in a hole.

While the featured article on being a "defender" and not a "retriever" was interesting and relevant, their interpretation of the rules was bordering on laughable.

For example, they state that "paddles" must be a standard size, weight and shape. As we have discussed many times, bats can be any size, shape or weight, provided they carry the correct ITTF identification on the rubbers.

They also state that while professional games are best of 7 played up to 11, "normal" games are 5 serves each and played up to 21. They also make the point that when one player reaches 20, the serve goes to his opponent, regardless of the score. Ummm... No. And they also make the point that table tennis rules are a guide only and that "nothing is set in stone".

Like much else on the internet, you need to sort the good from the bad.

What's your favourite table tennis site on the web? Let us know so we can share it with other members.

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