



# **ACROSS THE NET**

## **Melton Table Tennis**

May 2018

Edition 45

### **OUR BREAK, COMM GAMES, MUSEUMS, VETS, AND ATTACK ATTACK ATTACK**

In this edition, talk about what's happening with our hiatus, review the table tennis at the Commonwealth Games, look at the new ITTF Museum, preview the World Veterans Championships, and tell you why attack is the best form of... ummm... attack.

### **WE'RE OFF ON A BREAK**

As you are no doubt aware, our playing venue will be unavailable to us for a few weeks during May and June. This was not planned by us, but it is unavoidable.

After Round 6 of our Winter season on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May, the club will be closed until the **21<sup>st</sup> of June** when we will continue with the rest of the season.

For those of you who want to keep their eye in, our friends at **Sunshine Table Tennis** will be running practice nights on Thursdays from 7:30–10:30, and will welcome MTTA members to join them. It will only set you back **\$5** for the night, so you should consider going over and having a hit there.

### **I'M OFF ON A BREAK**

For the first time since I've been running *Across The Net*, I'm taking a break from it. Due to an overseas trip, I won't be producing a newsletter next month, so read this one very slowly. Yes, we're going to the U.S. for a few weeks and, if things go well, we'll be coming back again.

But it's all for you, dear readers. While I'm away, I'll be doing some research into table tennis in America and, hopefully speaking to some people involved in it over there. There should be some interesting tales to tell when I get back.

### **GRAHAM HUGGETT WINS AT GEELONG**

Our congratulations go to **Graham Huggett** who has come home with the chocolates from the **Geelong Open Veterans** tournament held during April. Graham took out the **Division 5 Singles** in his first attempt at the big event in Sleepy Hollow.

It's good to see MTTA members spreading their wings, and Graham joins the likes of the Camilleri boys who recently played at the Croydon Open staring down Commonwealth Games representatives **David Powell** and **Barak Mizrachi**.

## **COMMONWEALTH GAMES WRAP**

The Commonwealth Games have been run and won, and despite all the controversy surrounding the closing ceremony, the table tennis events went off without a hitch... apparently.

I say "apparently" because it was being covered by **Channel 7** and, as such we didn't see much of it unless you subscribed to their Premium app. And it wasn't streamed on the ITTF channel either. However, results were leaked out through a dedicated network of spies wearing dark coats and sunglasses.

And for the first time at the Commonwealth Games, **Singapore** didn't win the **Women's Team** event. The powerhouse nation was beaten 3-1 by **India** in the final. **Australia** were beaten 3-1 by **England** for the Bronze medal.

**India** have been pushing higher up the rankings recently, and this was backed up by the fact that their **Men's Team** also took out the gold medal, beating **Nigeria** 3-0 in the final.

**Singapore** did take the **Mixed Doubles** Gold, with **Gao Ning** and **Yu Mengyu** beating **Liam Pitchford** and **Tin-Tin Ho** from **England** 3-0, but again **India** featured by taking the Bronze.

In the **Men's Doubles**, it was the **English** team of **Paul Drinkhall** & **Liam Pitchford** winning Gold over the **Indian** partnership of **Sharath Achanta** & **Sathiyam Gnanasekaran**, with their Indian teammates **Harmeet Desai** and **Sanil Shankar Shetty** taking the Bronze.

The **Women's Doubles** went to **Feng Tianwei** & **Yu Mengyu** of **Singapore** over **Manika Batra** & **Mouma Das** of **India**, with **Ho Ying** & **Karen Lyne** of **Malaysia** taking the Bronze.

**Men's Singles** Gold was won by **Gao Ning** from **Singapore** over **Quadri Aruna** from **Nigeria** 4-2. The Bronze went to **Aharath Achanta** from **India**.

The **Women's Singles** was won by **Manika Batra** from **India** who defeated **Yu Mengyu** of **Singapore** in straight sets. **Feng Tianwei** of **Singapore** won Bronze over **Mo Zhang** from **Canada** 4-2. Unexpected, since Batra has a world ranking of **58**, Yu is ranked at **50**, and Feng is the world number **4**. The changing of the guard, or just a blip on the radar? We'll have to wait and see.



**Men's TT6-10 Singles** Gold went to **Ross Wilson** from **England** who beat his teammate **Kim Daybell** 3-1. Bronze went to **Joshua Stacey** of **Wales**.

**Women's TT6-10 Singles** Gold was won by **Melissa Tapper** from **Australia** who beat **Felicity Obazuye** from **Nigeria**, with **Andrea McDonnell** from **Australia** taking the Bronze.

With so many medals going the way of the contingent from India, the Movie World Studios were more **Bollywood** than **Hollywood**. Our congratulations go to all competitors on a marvellous event... apparently.

## **IITF MUSEUM OPENS**

Looking like a modern art gallery, the new **International Table Tennis Federation Museum** has opened in **Shanghai, China**, together with the **China Table Tennis Museum**.

The ITTF Museum, originally housed at the ITTF Headquarters in **Lausanne, Switzerland**, was opened by ITTF President **Thomas Weikert** together with a swag of table tennis royalty. The museum will be home to over **8,000** table tennis exhibits detailing the past century of development in the sport and showcases exclusive exhibits such as the first pair of table tennis rackets and items from past Champions, including a shirt from **Deng Yaping** and sneakers from **Zhang Jike**.



Upon the opening of the museum, Thomas Weikert said *“I truly wish the museum could be a new window for promoting table tennis culture and inheriting table tennis spirit. China has made great contributions to our sport, hence we decided to move our ITTF Museum from Lausanne to Shanghai, where we believe it will bring more opportunities and benefits in showcasing our sport.”*



ITTF Museum curator **Chuck Hoey** stated, *“The exhibits are designed to a high standard, enhanced by modern museum technology. I am personally very happy that the museum is here in Shanghai, where many more millions will be able to enjoy the history of our great sport. As Honorary Curator I continue to search for special historical treasures from around the world to further enhance this spectacular museum.”*

The Museum features several sections across four floors, including exhibitions galleries, Hall of Fame, a 3D movie theatre as well as a multimedia interactive zone where visitors can play against World Champions using VR technology in the museum. Talks with World Champions, table tennis experts and table tennis stars will also be held at the museum from time to time.



So the next time you’re planning a holiday in Shanghai, make sure to put this on your travel list.

## **THERE WAS MOVEMENT AT THE STATION**

At the **1959** World Championships in **Dortmund, Germany**, Japanese champion **Ichiro Ogimura** was accused of moving the table during a particularly vigorous point and had the point awarded against him. Ogi was furious that he had been accused of cheating and refused to carry on with the game until a chalk line was drawn around the feet of the table so that there would be evidence of any more alleged movement.

No further table motion was detected.

### **ITTF AUSTRALIAN OPEN WORLD TOUR EVENT**

Fascinating news from the ITTF. The **Australian Open World Tour Platinum** event is to be held at **Geelong** in July. Yes, as reported in *Across The Net* in March, the ITTF website has finally caught up and announced that the event is on.

But what I didn't know is that the event has been locked in to be held in Geelong for the **next 3 years**. This is fantastic news for table tennis fans in Australia, and in particular the more than **4,000** registered players in our state. As yet, there are no details of which players will be in attendance, but as this is a Platinum event, we are guaranteed to have many of the best in the world playing right in front of us.

Tickets will be offered to Table Tennis Victoria members prior to going on sale to the general public, and we will notify all MTTA members by the usual methods as soon as we have more details.

### **ITTF WORLD VETERAN'S CHAMPIONSHIPS**

If you haven't entered yourself into the **2018 World Veteran's Championships**, you're too late. The entries have closed, the entry list has been published, and it make for interesting reading.



To be held during July at **the Las Vegas Convention Centre**, the championships has drawn an amazing **4,165** entries, with representatives from **92** countries in attendance. That's a great number in a great space. The LVCC has a massive **190,000 square metres** of open floor space. If you're having trouble comprehending that, think of it as **435** times the size of our playing hall. That's big. So big in fact, that it's the largest single-level convention centre in the world.

With competitors from all corners of the globe ranging from 40 years old and, in some cases approaching 100, there will be many battling for glory. More importantly, they'll be having fun and staying active

Of the **92** countries being represented, **14** countries will be represented by only **1** player attending, **31** others will have less than **10**. But there are some big numbers from other countries. Obviously, the **USA** being the host nation has the most entries with **660**, but would you have guessed that **Germany** has the next most entries with **523**? This is well ahead of **China (340)**, **Japan (257)**, **India (256)**, and **France (244)**.

**Australia** has **105** entries and will have players in almost every division from **Over 40** to **Over 90**. Every competitor from Australia has entered for both Singles and Doubles in their age group. Our oldest competitor will be **Karl Preuss** from **NSW** who will be one of **10** players competing in the **Men's Over 90's**. Karl will be competing against **Si Wasserman** from the **USA**. Si will be competing in the Over 90's Singles and Doubles, and at 96 years of age is the oldest person competing and will still be hard to beat.

I can't help but feel both excited and sorry for **Yaeko Chiba** from **Japan** who has entered for both the **Women's Over 90's** Singles and Doubles. When entries closed, she was the only Over 90's female on the entry list.

### **THIRD-BALL ATTACK**

And we all know what that is, don't we? You serve. Your opponent returns. You hit a winner. Sounds simple, doesn't it? But it relies on a serve which leaves your opponent no chance of attacking and forces them to play a shot that you can attack and put away. So, have you been practicing your serves lately?

Is the third-ball attack important? It's not just important; it's critical. The longer a rally lasts, the more chance that you may make a mistake or that your opponent may hit a winner of their own.

When you watch only the highlights of a top-line match, you generally see the long rallies, with both players back from the table going forehand loop to forehand loop. But when you watch the whole match, there are many points decided within just a few shots, and these make up the majority of the match.

On the Commonwealth Games results page, detailed statistics were shown of the average length of rallies in every game, and the statistics prove the point. In the Preliminary Teams matches, the average length of a rally was **4.08** shots. That's all. Just 4 shots on average. And when you think that there were some rallies that went to 10 or 15 shots, there were many that finished in less than 4 shots.

This average figure went up slightly once the competition got down to the best players, but even taking only the quarter-finals, semi-finals, and finals matches of the Men's and Women's Singles, the average number of shots only goes up to **5.25**.

The next time you're watching a game at club level, try counting a few points and you'll see that the majority of rallies finish pretty quickly. You need to be on the winning side of these rallies. Want to know how to do it? Ask an expert. I'm not a coach. I'm just telling you that you need to add the third-ball attack to your arsenal.

### **MAY \ JUNE TOURNAMENTS**

Internationally, May is pretty quiet with only the **ITTF Oceania Cup** scheduled to be played on the **18<sup>th</sup>** and **19<sup>th</sup>** of **May** in **Port Vila, Vanuatu**.

Nationally, from the **4<sup>th</sup>** to the **8<sup>th</sup>** of **May**, **Canberra** will host the **National Para Championships**. There is always a large contingent from Victoria at the Para's so we will report on their successes after the event.

Locally, **Bendigo** hold their Senior and Junior Open on **Saturday** the **19<sup>th</sup>**, followed by the **Veterans Open** on **Sunday** the **20<sup>th</sup>**.

June sees the **Oceania Junior Championships** being played on the **Cook Islands** on the **1<sup>st</sup>** and **2<sup>nd</sup>**, followed almost immediately by the **ITTF World Junior Circuit** event at the same venue from the **4<sup>th</sup>** to the **9<sup>th</sup>**. **Las Vegas** is the place to be from the **18<sup>th</sup>** to the **24<sup>th</sup>**, when what will seem to be a convention of mobility scooter users actually turns out to be the **World Veterans Championships**.

It's busy locally with the **Victorian Metropolitan Championships** being held at **Croydon** on the **9<sup>th</sup>** and the **10<sup>th</sup>**. On the same weekend, **Bendigo** will host a **Teams Championship** for country associations from the **9<sup>th</sup>** to the **11<sup>th</sup>**.

At **MSAC**, on **Saturday** the **23<sup>rd</sup>** will be the **Victorian Closed Junior Championships**, followed the next day by the **Ballarat Veterans Open**, obviously in Ballarat.

## THE THINGS YOU SAY

I read and saved this article a while ago, however I neglected to note who the author was. I have a feeling it was American coach **Samson Dubina**, so I'll give him credit for it.

After attending many table tennis tournaments, you will learn to properly interpret what is said after matches. For example,

If someone says... "I lost in the fifth"

He means... "I lost badly in the fifth." (If it was close, he would have told you the score)

If someone says... "I just couldn't win the close games."

He means... "I lost 3-0."

If someone says... "I just couldn't return his serves."

He means... "I lost 3-0 and wasn't close in any of the games."

If someone says... "I'm just working on things this tournament."

He means... "I'm having a terrible tournament and I need an excuse."

If someone says... "The umpire was too controlling and messed me up."

He means... "I was serving illegally and the umpire was doing his job."

If someone says... "It was so hard to play because Bob was yelling too loudly on the next table."

He means... "I wasn't able to keep my focus, lost the match, and I'm blaming my loss on Bob."

If someone says... "I'm glad that there are more important things in life than winning table tennis matches."

He means... "I just had a huge loss, however I'm keeping my perspective and I'm not going to let it bother me."

If someone says... "I'm holding my own."

He means... "I haven't had any good wins worth mentioning."

If someone says... "I had a good start, now I just can't mess this up."

He means... "I had some good wins. Now I'm so worried about my precious rating that I will be nervous in the next matches."



## **ON THE WEB**

I've said it before, and I'll say it again. Coaches know best. Even if you don't get private coaching from an expert, it doesn't mean that you shouldn't take advantage of the wisdom they provide.

Two of my favourites are [www.pingskills.com](http://www.pingskills.com) and [www.tabletenniscoaching.com/blog](http://www.tabletenniscoaching.com/blog).

Pingskills is run by **Alois Rosario** and **Jeff Plumb**. Anyone who was lucky enough to be involved in the serving masterclass given by Alois at our recent fund-raiser should by now be following this up with regular visits to the Pingskills website. If you're not, why not?

**Larry Hodges** is a **USATT Hall of Fame** inductee, and they don't give those out for nothing. An author of both table tennis books and science fiction novels, a committee-member of the USATT, daily blogger, and coach at the **Maryland Table Tennis Club**, Larry certainly has enough to fill his time, and his daily blogs give an interesting perspective of the trials and tribulations of a table tennis coach.

*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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## **YOUR FEEDBACK**

This is *your* club and *your* opinions are valid and valued. If you have any comments to make on the contents of this newsletter, or if you have any suggestions or information for future editions please let us know.

To contact Melton Table Tennis, email [meltontabletennis@gmail.com](mailto:meltontabletennis@gmail.com)

To contact Glenn O'Dea, email [glenn.odea@bigpond.com](mailto:glenn.odea@bigpond.com)

To contact Matt Camilleri, email [matthewpcamilleri@hotmail.com](mailto:matthewpcamilleri@hotmail.com)

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