



ACROSS THE NET

Melton Table Tennis

February 2017

NEW SEASON, STAR AWARDS, AND LET THEM EAT CAKE

In this edition, we review our Presentation night, look forward to the new season, find out who got the big awards, check out our new website, look at a possible future Olympic ummm... sport, and puzzle over why table tennis players eat cake in groups.

WE'RE BACK

Yes, another year has disappeared. Beware the mirror on the wall gets less friendly with passing time. But enough of my beauty tips. Let's brighten up and move on.

Welcome to all readers, both existing and new. Hopefully you will find information on these pages to keep you up to date with what's happening around the club, as well as in the wider table tennis community. Melton Table Tennis has earned a reputation as a friendly, inclusive club where all are welcome. We urge all members and friends to abide by the aims of the club and enjoy the facilities and atmosphere we provide.

The club has already had a couple of nights for practice and grading. The Selection committee is ready, and teams are being formulated. Our first night of competition will be on Thursday the 2nd of **February**. The Summer season will be a **10-week** season and should provide for some very even competition.

As with every year, *all* players at MTTA need to be registered with Table Tennis Victoria. You can register online at www.tabletennisvic.org.au/registration, or forms will be available from the club. Make sure you register on time.

PRESENTATION NIGHT

Our Presentation Night for 2016 was a roaring success. Held at **Q-Lounge**, the event saw **109** trophies being handed out to **57** deserving players. Again, our congratulations go our 2016 Club Champions, **Gavin Jackson**, **Wayne Atkins** and **Will Corluka**.

Our thanks also to **Wayne Atkins** for allowing us to use his sound system on the night. And, of course we must thank our special guest on the night, **Alois Rosario**. To have someone of his standing in table tennis at our club was an honour, and I'm sure all those who were present enjoyed the experience. Alois was very generous with his time and almost obtained "Rock Star" status with people wanting photo's with him at the end of the event. Let's hope the 2017 Presentation Night can meet the standard we've now set.



MTTA SAUSAGE SIZZLES

Since our last edition MTTA have been raising money and awareness of our club and our sport. On the **18th of December** we held a Sausage Sizzle at **Bunnings Warehouse** in Melton. Sales were brisk all day, and the interest generated by talking to customers and handing out flyers and business cards may well see extra people coming down to try our game.

On that day, Bunnings offered us the opportunity to hold another sausage sizzle on **New Year's Day**. A group of hardy and slightly hungover volunteers again managed to add funds to the coffers, but more importantly sparked the interest of several people who may add to our ever-growing numbers.

Our thanks go to the following people who volunteered their time and skills to make our club a better place to play; **Chris Blake, Dean Camilleri, Marc Camilleri, Matt Camilleri, Sharyn Ciberlin, Ahmet Halil, Larry Hallinan, Sarah Lappin, Glenn O'Dea, John Roberts, Annemarie Rothwell, Andy Stewart, Geof Walker.**

RIO TV AUDIENCE FIGURES RELEASED

A report commissioned by the *Association of Summer Olympic International Federations* have released the television audiences for the table tennis at the **Rio Olympic Games**, and the numbers are truly staggering.

The worldwide viewing audience for the table tennis events was **552,300,000**. *Five hundred and fifty-two million*. Obviously, **China** led the way with **372,000,000** followed by **Japan** with **27,800,000**. Surprisingly, the **U.S.A.** had **24,900,000**, host nation **Brazil** reached **23,100,000** and **India** had **22,000,000**. The figure for **Australia** was a very impressive **4,100,000**. The total for all European countries was **67,000,000**.

With multiple tables in action, the overall total of table tennis broadcast was **471.4 hours**. The predominant viewing age group was 30 – 49, with an almost equal split between men and women.

The figures are based on a viewer watching the sport for a minimum of **5** consecutive minutes. This was lucky, because with the coverage given by **Channel 7**, 5 consecutive minutes was about all we got.

MBE'S FOR ENGLISH PARALYMPIC CHAMPIONS

English Paralympic table tennis players **Will Bayley** (Class 7) and **Rob Davies** (Class 1) have both been awarded MBE's for their achievements of winning Gold medals at the Rio Paralympic Games.



Named in the New Year's Day honours list, Bayley said *"I'm so delighted to be given an MBE. It is a huge honour and means so much to me. I'm proud every day to represent Great Britain and I feel privileged to have been able to represent my country in three Paralympic Games already"*.

Davies was just as impressed. *"I feel absolutely ecstatic that I've been named in this year's honours list to receive an MBE. My face just lit up when I read the letter. I was just so overwhelmed and happy. I feel so privileged and proud and would just like to thank everybody who's been part of this amazing journey I've been on. I can't wait to make 2017 special!"*



ITTF STAR AWARDS 2016

At the end of each year, the ITTF hold a star-studded function to honour the best players of the year. It's like our presentation night, but with glitter. The 2016 awards ceremony was held in **Doha, Qatar** in December, and the winners were:-

Male Player of the Year: **Ma Long** (China)
Other nominees were **Fan Zhendong** (China), **Jun Mizutani** (Japan) and **Quadri Aruna** (Nigeria)

Female Player of the Year: **Ding Ning** (China)
Other nominees were **Miu Hirano** (Japan), **Mima Ito** (Japan) and **Kim Song-I** (DPR Korea)

Coach of the Year: **Liu Guoliang** (China)
Other nominees were **Patrick Chila** (France) and **Alan Cooke** (England)

Best Breakthrough Player: **Miu Hirano** (Japan)
Other nominees were **Tomokazu Harimoto** (Japan) and **Team England**

Male Para Player of the Year: **Laurens Devos** (Belgium) (Class 9)
Other nominees were **Feng Panteng** (China) (Class 3), and **Peter Rosenmeier** (Denmark) (Class 6)

Female Para Player of the Year: **Liu Jing** (China) (Class 1-2)
Other nominees were **Sandra Paovic** (Croatia) (Class 6) and **Xue Juan** (China) (Class 3)

The **Star Point Award** was won by Fan Zhendong (China) and **Simon Gauzy** (France) for their amazing 2-shot rally and their reactions to the rolling recovery played by Fan Zhendong.

But for me, the most deserving award on the night was the **Fair Play Award** given to **Rinad Fathy** of **Egypt**. In the Girl's Team Final of the African Junior & Cadet Championships, 15-year-old Fathy was playing in a singles match which was delicately poised at 2 games each.

Leading 12-11 in the fifth, Fathy was awarded the point to give her the win. She made it known that her opponent's shot had caught an edge which neither the umpire nor the assistant umpire had seen. Fathy lost that match, but her sporting spirit was rewarded when her team eventually won the championship for Egypt.

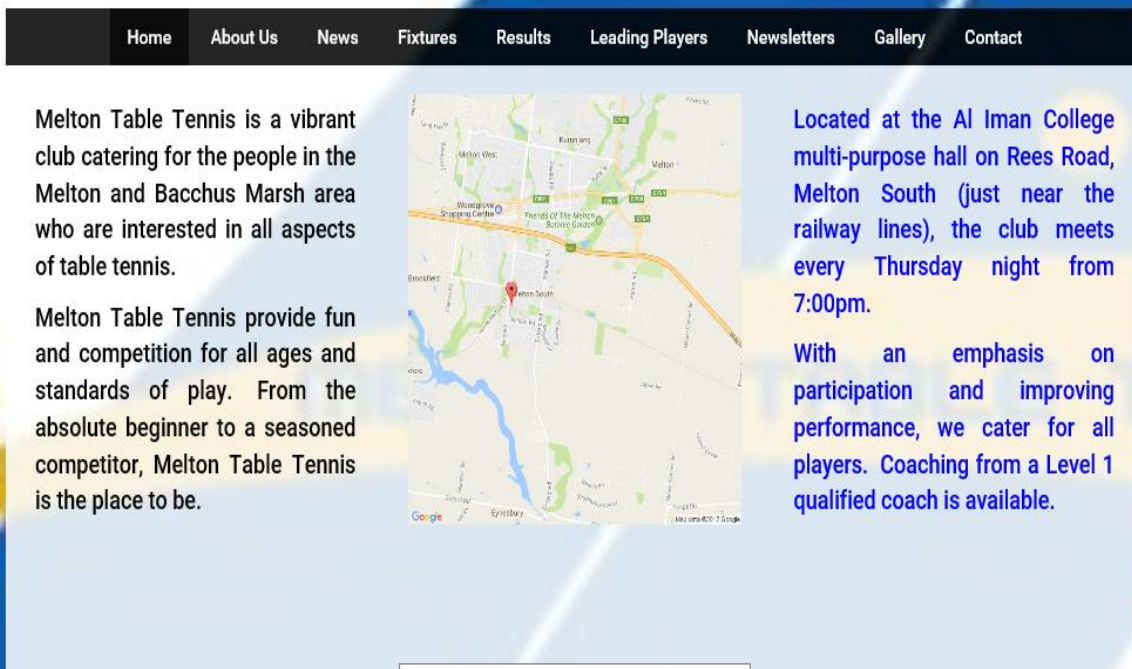
Although not given an award on the night, another Fair Play winner was **Tomas Polansky** of **Romania**. In a match at the World Junior Championships in Cape Town, South Africa, Polansky was trailing 2 games to 1, and leading 7-5 in the fourth. After a long rally, he was awarded the point to the cheers of his coach and teammates on the sidelines. However, Polansky advised the umpire that he had accidentally moved the table during the rally and that the point should be awarded to his opponent.

The Fair Play award is given by the *Swaythling Club International* to encourage fair play and sportsmanship, an act that may inspire others. The winner receives a **US\$1,500** scholarship cheque for career development donated by the International Table Tennis Federation.

WWW.MELTONTABLETENNIS.COM.AU

After a false start last year, our website has finally hit the ground running. www.meltontabletennis.com.au will provide club members with everything they need to know about the club, and will hopefully attract new players who didn't know of our existence before.

Melton Table Tennis Association



The screenshot shows the website's home page. At the top is a dark navigation bar with white text for the following menu items: Home, About Us, News, Fixtures, Results, Leading Players, Newsletters, Gallery, and Contact. Below the navigation bar, the page is divided into three columns. The left column contains two paragraphs of text. The middle column features a Google Maps image showing the club's location in Melton South, with a red pin and a red location label. The right column contains two paragraphs of text. The background of the page is a light blue and white abstract design.

Melton Table Tennis is a vibrant club catering for the people in the Melton and Bacchus Marsh area who are interested in all aspects of table tennis.

Melton Table Tennis provide fun and competition for all ages and standards of play. From the absolute beginner to a seasoned competitor, Melton Table Tennis is the place to be.



Located at the Al Iman College multi-purpose hall on Rees Road, Melton South (just near the railway lines), the club meets every Thursday night from 7:00pm.

With an emphasis on participation and improving performance, we cater for all players. Coaching from a Level 1 qualified coach is available.

The **Home** page (shown above) gives a brief description of our club and, more importantly, details of our location and times. The map links directly to Google Maps and is fully scalable, giving viewers a detailed guide to our venue.

About Us gives a very brief club history and further details of the facilities and the features of the club. It also shows a scrolling display of photo's to give visitors a brief idea of the range of ages and abilities within our group.

The **News** page will be updated on a regular basis with information of important events around the club. These will appear with the most recent news article at the top of the list.

The **Fixtures** page will show files containing details of teams and details of the fixture for the current season, including dates and other information. You can check this before you get to the venue to save the crush at the noticeboard.

The **Results** page will be updated weekly with the team ladder for each grade. This will be uploaded as soon as the results have been calculated and entered.

Leading Players will show the information on the players in each grade, and will also be updated weekly.

The **Newsletters** page will now be another way to access and read *Across The Net*. The past 10 editions will be available from this section.

The **Gallery** page will contain photo's taken around the club sorted into relative folders. For example, changing the Year to **2016** and selecting "Presentation Night" will give you access to the photo's taken at that event.

Contact will give you phone and email details for contacting people at the club. If you need to notify us of the need for a fill-in, or if you have any other query you can use the details on this page.

www.meltontabletennis.com.au will automatically re-configure itself to display correctly on your mobile device as well. You will be able to access all of these features from your tablet or smart phone as easily as you can from your PC.

Make us your homepage and keep up to date. Have a look and let us know what you think.

WALDNER GETS SWEDISH GONG

Table tennis legend **Jan-Ove Waldner** received the Sports Academy's Honorary Award for lifetime achievement at the Annual Swedish Sports Gala held during January. The prize is awarded for a lasting contribution that has enriched Swedish sports.

Waldner's international career spanned three decades, winning Olympic gold in Barcelona in 1992, six World Championship gold medals and completing 212 months unbroken in the Top Ten of the Men's World Rankings; more than any other player in the history of the sport.

Television host **Kristin Kaspersen** spoke warmly when announcing the award winner. *"I think I can speak for all of us when I say thank you for all the marvellous moments, and thanks for all the entertainment you gave us during your 45 years as a table tennis player."*

Presenting the award was **Jean-Phillipe Gatien**, Waldner's opponent in the finals of the Barcelona Olympics, and fellow national teammate **Mikael Appelgren**. *"I think you are the best athlete this country has seen."* said Appelgren.



Waldner was humbled by the award as he reflected upon his career. *"It is a great honour for me to receive this award. I want to thank my parents for having supported me in both good times and bad, and my brother who meant a lot to me. Without their help I would not have been here today".*

RAIN RAIN GO AWAY

One of the most unusual incidents in table tennis occurred at the **1975** World Championships in **Calcutta, India**, when play was delayed due to rain. The roof of the stadium leaked and one of the courts was flooded. Records don't show if the **Duckworth-Lewis method** was used to recalculate the required score.

CHEERLEADING OLYMPIC-BOUND?

Did you hear that Cheerleading is being considered as an Olympic sport?

Give me a “W”. Give me a “T”. Give me an “F”. Yep, you read it right. ***What Tremendous Fun***. At least I *think* that’s what it stands for.

But seriously. Cheerleading? I mean, I thought they were stretching the bounds when they suggested surfing, but *Cheerleading?!?* And they don’t even cheer while they’re doing it.

For those of you not familiar with the activity, think of synchronized swimming without the water.

It’s certainly physical. With a combination of dance and gymnastics, a workout is guaranteed, but its claim of being a sport is still in question. While the athletic talents of participants is never in question, critics of its inclusion say that the scoring is based on human judgement rather than an objective or goal, in the same fashion as ballroom dancing and surfing. The same can be said, however, of gymnastics, diving, figure-skating, and other Olympic activities.

Even in legal terms its status is not clearly defined. A 2009 verdict in the state of Wisconsin declared cheerleading a “full-contact” sport, which meant that participants and organisers could not be sued for accidental injury. 18 months later, the U.S. federal court declared that, because of a lack of program development and organisation, it was ***not*** a sport.

Lack of organisation? It seems to be the most over-organised activity going around. In the U.S., competitions are organised and run by **Americheer**, the **International Cheer Union**, the **International Federation of Cheerleading**, the **National Cheerleading Association**, the **United Spirit Association**, and the **Universal Cheerleaders Association**.

The American medical journal ***Pediatrics*** revealed that the number of cheerleaders suffering broken bones, concussions and serious sprains increased by over **100%** between 1990 and 2002, and that in 2001 alone there were **over 25,000** hospital visits for cheerleading accidents with shoulder, ankle, head and neck injuries.

In the United States high school system, cheerleaders make up **3%** of the female athletes, but account for **65%** of all catastrophic injuries.

According to the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare*, the serious injury rate in table tennis is **less than 6 per 100,000 participants**.

So... Give me a “T”. Give me an “A”. Give me a “B”. Give me an..... ah, forget it.
Let’s just go and play.



A PARADOX TO START THE YEAR

Ever heard of the Birthday Paradox? It's a mathematical Probability problem, and a very interesting one at that. It tries to answer the question, "How many people do you need in a group to ensure that at least 2 share the same birthday?"

Well that's easy. There are 365 days in a year, so you would need 366 people, right?

What if I told you that if you had a group of **100** people, the odds of having 2 with the same birthday is **99.99997%**? Or better still, if I said that with a group of just **50** people, there was a **97%** chance?

Can we prove this? Well, our club is a group of around these numbers, and lo and behold, it works. On the 4th of February **Craig Archman** and **Lawrence Wu** share the same birthday. To add to the complexity, they were born on the same day in the same year. My theory is that they were twins separated at birth. What do you think?

But can we take this paradox further? You betcha. Let's take the top 50 Men and top 50 Women table tennis players. We'll look at them separately to ensure we've got 2 groups of 50, rather than 1 group of 100.

Do we have players sharing a birthday? Yes, we do. And typical of table tennis players, they don't do things by half.

In the Men's, January 16th sees **Paul Drinkhall** from England (ranked 40th) sharing his birthday with **Robert Gardos** from Austria (ranked 43rd). Korean teammates **Jeung Youngsik** (10th) and **Joo Saehyuk** (15th) share a birthday on January 20th, and **Wong Chun-Ting** (7th) from Hong Kong and **Matias Karlsson** (29th) from Sweden both celebrate on the 7th of September. Wong and Karlsson were both born in 1991 as well.

So that's 3 pairs of players sharing the same birthday. Wow. Can any group beat that? Interestingly enough, yes they can.

Amongst the top 50 Women players, **Georgina Pota** (34th) from Hungary and **Daniela Dodean** (44th) from Romania share a birthday on the 13th of January. On the 15th of February, **Cheng I-Ching** (6th) from Chinese Taipei and **Yang Haeun** (26th) from Korea get to blow out the candles together.

On the 14th of April Japanese teammates **Miu Hirano** (9th) and **Miyu Kato** (32nd) share the day, and on the very next day **Elizabeta Samara** (20th) from Romania and **Choi Hyojoo** (37th) from Korea share their birthday. Rounding out the extreme coincidences, on the 31st of August **Feng Tianwei** (5th) from Singapore and **Polina Mikhailova** (42nd) from Russia share the same birthday.

5 pairs from the top 50 women.

So we already know that the 97% chance of having 2 people out of 50 sharing their birthday has been blown apart, but it gets even stranger when you combine the Men and Women into a group of 100.

As well as the pairings listed above, we need to add **Yang Xiaoxin** (45th) from Monaco and **Xu Xin** (3rd) from China sharing the day on the 8th of January, **Liu Jia** (17th) from Austria and **Zhang Jike** (4th) from China sharing on the 16th of February, and **Vladimir Samsonov** (8th) from Belarus and **Sakura Mori** (37th) from Japan sharing on the 17th of April.

In a final bizarre twist, **Bojan Tokic** (43rd) from Slovakia was born on the 13th of January; the same day as Georgina Pota and Daniela Dodean as mentioned above.

So, the odds told us that there was a **99.9997%** chance of having 2 out of 100 people sharing the same birthday. But what are the odds of having *10 groups of 2* and a group of 3 sharing birthdays? Four supercomputers have been fried trying to calculate this.

As with so many other things, table tennis players have excelled. And this time no training was needed.

CHINESE-AUSTRIAN, CHINESE-GERMAN, CHINESE-TURKISH, CHINESE-.....

When looking at the list of the top 50 players in the Men's and Women's rankings, an interesting fact popped up. There are **5** men representing **China** in the top 50, and **4** women representing China in their top 50.

Dig a little deeper and you discover that of that group of 100 players, **29** of them were born in China. **20** of these have left their homeland and now play for their adopted countries.

FEBRUARY TOURNAMENTS

February is book-ended with tournaments. The big one at the start of the month is the **Australian Para Championships** which are being held at **Mornington** from the **3rd** to the **7th** of February. This is a **national championship** and will see the best para players from around the country competing, including Rio Silver medallist **Sam Von Einem**.

Of more interest to us, **Will Corluka** will be competing at his first national championship. Get along and show some support for our club-mate.

At the other end of the month, Saturday the **25th** sees the running of the **Victorian Closed Veterans Championship** at **MSAC**, and the following day the same venue will hold the **Victorian Closed Junior Championship**.

ON THE WEB

Have you visited the **ITTF** website lately? It's been re-written and is very different. It's still the same location, www.ittf.com but the clunky feel of the old site has been replaced with a slick new look. News items which used to be hard to find and even harder to read on the old site are now front and centre in a much clearer format. And articles from development and para have now been included into the main body of articles.

The **ITTV** streaming service has been relocated to this page as well. Although it works well for viewing on PC's, I have heard reports of problems when viewing using Playstation systems. Thankfully, the old page still exists and the Playstation viewer works well through that.

Also better viewed through the old page is the details for player rankings and history. Hopefully this will be improved in the near future. Despite these minor drawbacks, www.ittf.com is still well worth a regular visit.

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

Are you a member of our facebook page? Search for **Melton Table Tennis** on Facebook and join in our conversations. Don't forget, you can find our web page at www.meltontabletennis.com.au Make us your home page.

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.

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