



ACROSS THE NET

Melton Table Tennis

May 2017

Edition 34

SUMMER SEASON WRAPS UP, ULTIMATE FUN HAD BY ALL, REAL BEER PONG, AND MORE

In this edition we wrap up the Summer season, congratulate ourselves on having fun, praise a champion, talk about where you should go for a drink, and try to work out what 5 very different people have in common.

SUMMER SEASON ENDS

Our 10-week starter season has come to an end. Congratulations to the following players on a great start to the year.

The **A Grade** Grand Final saw **Matt Camilleri, John Roberts** and **Shannon Camilleri** triumph over **Chris Addis, Gavin Jackson** and **Ed Menegol**.

B Grade had **Michael Kiki, Will Corluka** and **Connor Ziday** taking the chocolates over **Jim Scott, Syed Ahmed** and **Brian Guy**.

The battle for honours in the **C Grade Handicap Competition** went to **Ross Lappin, Jason Craddock**, and **Angela Cricchiola** filling in for **Chris Ribbons** over **Christina Camilleri, Katia Corluka** and **Deb Schoen**.

Leading Player for **A Grade** was **Matt Camilleri**. **Michael Kiki** took out the **B Grade** Leading Player award. **Annemarie Rothwell** won the Leading Player for **C Grade**.

Our congratulations go to them all.

FUND-RAISING FUN AND CHRIS GETS HIS JUST REWARDS

On the 13th of April, in the short break before the finals, Melton Table Tennis became the centre of the universe for table tennis fun.

Table Tennis Victoria CEO, Dennis Makaling attended to present **Chris Addis** with his **Para Hall of Fame award**. When Dennis read out the list of titles won by Chris, the reason he got the award became obvious.

Dennis was very generous with his time and stayed at the club for most of the night displaying his considerable skill. The sight of Dennis and Chris having a hit together made me realise that it was possibly the first time that MTTA has had **2 Oceania Champions** on the same table at the same time.



Our experiment with **Ultimate Table Tennis** was an outrageous success, with many members saying that they would like to have more of this going on. And, rest assured, we will.



With 4 tables, an extended and higher net, together with a 55mm ball, everything is different. Double the length means you have to hit it harder, and double the width means you have more ground to cover. But that didn't stop players from enjoying themselves.

We also borrowed the game of "**War**" from **Coburg Table Tennis** and modified it for our own use. Players were pitted against others they wouldn't normally face and were asked to do things that they normally wouldn't do. The sight of right-handed pengrip player **Lawrence Wu** being forced to play left-handed using a shakehand grip was just one of the ridiculous tasks required. And **Shannon Camilleri** performed very well when forced to play sitting on a chair against **Chris Addis**.

The aim was to put people outside of their comfort-zone, and the response was laughter all around. The end result of the night was that the members who attended raised a magnificent total of **\$448** which was donated to the **Royal Children's Hospital Appeal**. This was a fantastic effort and our thanks go to those generous members.

We will be playing **Ultimate** and **War** again at our practice night on the **11th of May**. Be prepared to do the unexpected. Come along and join in the fun.

OCEANIA SUCCESS FOR AUSSIES

Australia has once again dominated at the **ITTF Oceania Cup** and **Oceania Para Championships** held recently in **Fiji**.

In the Oceania Cup events, it was Australia all the way with **David Powell** defeating fellow Aussie **Kane Townsend** in the Men's final. There was a similar result in the Women's, with **Jian Fang Lay** taking the title by defeating **Melissa Tapper**.

Melissa hit the top in the **Oceania Para Championships**, winning the *Class 10 Women's* title over teammate **Andrea McDonnell**. The Gold keep on coming with **Rebecca Julian** winning the *Class 6-8 Women's Singles*.

The Aussie chants keep on going with **Jessy Chen** winning the *Class 2-3 Men's* wheelchair event, and **Caleb Crowden** winning the *Class 4-5 Men's* wheelchair event. Caleb's match was enthralling to watch, with the final going the full 5 sets. In the last game, Caleb found himself behind **3-10**, with his opponent, **Jakoba Taberanibou** of Fiji needing only a single point to take the title. Drawing on all the will he had, Caleb battled on and finally won **13-11** to grab the Oceania Championship in his division.

In the *Class 9-10 Men's* singles, **Nathan Pellissier** beat off fellow Aussie **Barak Mizrahi** for the title, while it was Gold, Silver and Bronze to the Aussies in the *Men's Class 6-7* event with **Trevor Hirth** beating **Jake Ballestrino & Yasser Hussaini** for the Oceania title.

This was Australia's best result ever for the Para's at the Oceania Championships and we congratulate the team.

PING PONG VS TABLE TENNIS

A few years ago, I wrote an article bemoaning the fact that people saw a difference between ping pong and table tennis. As I stated then "*Ping Pong*" was a brand name for a package of bats, balls, and a net originally manufactured around 1902. The brand was eventually bought by **Parker Bros** in America where they vigorously enforced their copyright ownership of the name. Although the "Ping Pong" brand was dropped in the 1920's, for some reason the name stuck, particularly in the U.S.

I have always preferred the official designation of **Table Tennis**, and almost every association and club uses that name. Some people saw the distinction as being that table tennis is the sport, while ping pong is a game played in a garage or games room. As far as I'm concerned, table tennis played in a garage is not "ping pong"; it is "table tennis" being played in a garage.

But it seems now that I need to slightly modify my opinion and recognise the existence of Ping Pong as a sport. Now in its fifth year, the **World Championship of Ping Pong** is a variation on the traditional game which is broadcast on sports channels around the world. Using the old-fashioned sandpaper bats, the championships feature 32 players, most of whom are sandpaper bat specialists.

Matches are best of 3, with games played to 15. If the game goes to 14-all, the next point wins. During the match, each player can call for a "*Double-point*" play. **Cue the flashing lights and loud music**. They change to a different coloured ball so there can be no mistake that something special is about to happen. If the player who called for the "double-point" wins, he gets 2 points. If the opponent wins, the crowd is disappointed and play continues as normal.

Apart from that, it's table tennis. Very cleverly marketed and packaged table tennis, but table tennis nevertheless. Will it catch on? Well, it's been going for years already and you only ever see it on TV, so I don't really think so.

But if you hear someone say they play ping pong, check their bat. If it doesn't have sandpaper on it, they play table tennis.

#PINGPONG BEATING #TABLETENNIS

The ITTF website has proven that, even in the world of table tennis, there are slow news days. The proof of that was evident recently when they published an article discussing the relative merits of using **#pingpong** or **#tabletennis** on social media.

To be perfectly frank, this is an issue so underwhelming that even I had never considered it. But apparently, this problem actually exists for the type of person who needs to be surgically removed from their devices to perform other functions in life.

It seems that #pingpong has appeared **547,352** times in the period under investigation, while #tabletennis has only appeared **271,163** times. The author of the article (unnamed, and probably for good reason) tries to raise the point that linguistically "*ping pong*" is easier to say than "*table tennis*". I could put up the argument that "*drowning*" is easier to say than "*synchronised swimming*", but I doubt it would hold water.

So the next time you're posting to social media about our game, for the sake of clarity please read the article at the top of this page before deciding on which hashtag to use.

Or, better still, forget the hashtag and just talk to people.

BEER PONG FOR REAL

Most of us love table tennis. Some of us like a drink (*you know who you are. Don't make me name names*). So how would you like to combine both activities in a single venue? Or for that matter, multiple venues. Some pubs and clubs around Melbourne are starting to realise that, instead of a pool table, patrons are being drawn in by a table tennis table.

Unfortunately there's none over our side of the city that I know of yet, but it's only a matter of time before the trend heads our way.

In Collingwood, The **Fox Hotel** serves up great food, craft beers, spectacular wall-art, and a table tennis room. Yep, a separate *room* with a table tennis table, seating for spectators, and the all-important ledges for holding your pint in during points.



Collingwood also has the **Foresters Hall**. With a table tennis table right in the middle surrounded by pool tables, watching the footy on the huge screen, eating freshly made pizza served until 2am, and sinking a few craft beers it's a fun place to spend an evening... and a morning.

Francesca's Bar in Northcote (*Fran's* to the locals) serves up great food, live music, Friday night specials, craft beers (again with the craft beer?!?!?) and a table tennis table.

In Smith Street, Fitzroy you will find **Mr. Wow's Emporium**, and... wow. Have you ever been in a pub, sipping on a craft beer or cocktail, and playing indoor bocce? All of that with pool tables and a dedicated table tennis room, it's a fun way to spend an afternoon.



When was the last time you were in the International Departures area at an airport and thought, "*I could really go a quick game of table tennis about now.*"? Next time you get that feeling at **Melbourne International** airport at Tullamarine, just look for **Little Ludlow**. A bar with food, beer, and a little white bouncing ball before your flight. What a way to relax.



And if your flight takes you to **Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco, New York, Philadelphia, Austin or Toronto** make sure you stop at a **Spin** bar. Owned and operated by Hollywood star **Susan Sarandon** (seen below on the right),

these venues have high quality equipment and great lighting. They also have excellent food and drink menu's at prices equivalent to the quality of the venue. And don't forget to take your credit cards. Hiring a table will set you back up to **US\$50** per hour. But what an experience.



CAN YOU GUESS THIS ONE ?

What do **Wang Nan, Guo Yue, Ding Ning, Seiji Ono** and **Stellan Bengtsson** have in common?

It's not their **gender**. Wang Nan, Guo Yue and Ding Ning are females, while Ono and Bengtsson are males. And the three girls are all **Chinese** while Ono is **Japanese** and Bengtsson is **Swedish**, so it's not their **nationality**.

Age? No. Wang is **38**, Guo is **28**, Ding is **26**, Ono **60**, and Bengtsson is **64**, so they have nothing is common there.

Titles? Well we're getting closer.

Wang Nan has **3** Singles, **5** Doubles and **2** Mixed Doubles Gold medals in World Championships, **1** Olympic Singles Gold medal, **2** Olympic Doubles Gold medals, and **1** Olympic Teams Gold medal.

Guo Yue has **1** Singles, **3** Doubles, and **1** Mixed Doubles World Championship Gold medals.

Ding Ning so far has **2** World Championship Singles Gold medals, **2** Olympic Singles Gold & **1** Silver medals, and **2** Olympic Teams Gold medals.

Seiji Ono has **1** World Championship Singles Gold Medal.

Stellan Bengtsson has **1** World Championship Singles and **1** World Championship Doubles Gold medals.

But many others can lay claim to World Championship and Olympic success as well. So what makes this group of players different?

From the **53** table tennis individual world championships held to date, this group of 5 are the only left-handers to capture a World Singles Gold medal. That means that **8** titles out of **106** (53 male & 53 female) have been won by left-handers. This is little less than average when you consider that left-handers are about **10%** of the population. But it gets more interesting.

Stellan Bengtsson was the first left-handed world champion in **1971**. Ono won his in **1979**. In more recent years, the girls have taken over with Wang Nan winning in **1999, 2001 & 2003**, Guo Yue in **2007**, and Ding Ning in **2011** and **2015**. So, **six** of the eight Singles World Championships won by left-handers were in the past 18 years. As the Individual World Championships are held every second year, this means that *left-handers have won 6 of the last 9 Female Singles World Championships*.

And the future? Well, in the Men's World Rankings **16** of the **top 50** are left-handed, as are **12** of the **top 50** in the **Under 21 Men's** and **17** of the **top 50** in the **Under 18 Boys**. In the Women's rankings the left handers hold **13** of the **top 50** spots in the seniors, **7** of the **top 50** in the **Under21's**, and **6** of the **Top 50** in the **Under 18's**.

Like I've said before, **LEFTIES RULE !!!**

GRAND PRIX TABLE TENNIS

It's surprising how many people are interested in table tennis. And not just those involved in the sport at club level. There are many celebrities from the world of entertainment and sport who don't mind a backhand lob from time to time.

In the last edition I spoke about the enthusiasm that the guys from **Masterchef** have for the game, and in an article above I mentioned Hollywood superstar **Susan Sarandon** and her chain of table tennis themed nightclubs. And now we can add some more to the growing list, this time from the world of motor racing.



Prior to the **Chinese Grand Prix** in early April, some of the drivers showed their talents with a table tennis bat and were treated to a friendly hit with 3-time Singles World Champion, **Wang Liqin**.

Shown left are 2 of the combatants; **Red Bull** driver **Daniel Ricciardo**, demonstrating a very nice shakehand grip, and **Williams** driver **Felipe Massa**, trying to look impressive with a penhold grip. The report didn't state the final scores, but my money is on Wang.

MAY TOURNAMENTS

There are a couple of big ones this month. From the **13th** to the **20th**, the **World Para Teams Championships** are being played in **Bratislava, Slovakia**. Australia will be there, represented by **Sam Von Einem, Rory Carroll, Barak Mizrachi, Nathan Pellissier & Trevor Hirth**. We will update you with the results in the next edition.

And the biggest of them all is on at the end of the month. The **World Individual Championships** will be held in **Dusseldorf, Germany** starting on the **29th of May** and running through to the **5th of June**. All major matches will be streamed live on the ITTV webpage. Just go to www.ITTV.com to watch live or select from a list of games to replay.

Locally, the **Victorian Open Junior Championships** will be on at MSAC on **Saturday the 6th**. The best juniors in Victoria will be in action and will be well worth watching.

On **Saturday the 20th**, MSAC will be hosting the **Victorian Closed Senior Championships**. In an incredible piece of bad scheduling, the **Victorian Closed Para Championships** will be held at MSAC on the same day, exactly clashing with the World Para Teams being held half a world away. As **4** of the **5** players competing at the Para World Teams Championships are from Victoria, this will lessen the quality of the field for the local tournament, but should provide an opportunity for lesser known players to stand up and shine.

Sunday the 21st will see a convoy of walking frames and mobility scooters trekking up the Western Highway for the **Ballarat Veteran Open**.

The Sunbury Junior and Veterans Championships which were due to be held on the **27th** and **28th** have been cancelled.

ON THE WEB

The website of our national controlling body, Table Tennis Australia has been given an update. www.tabletennis.org.au has been re-designed with a much cleaner look and is easier to navigate. Most of the features of the old site are still there, but the overall look and feel is fresher and more vibrant.

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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