



British Foosball Association

January Newsletter 2009

Team GB

The British Table Football Team

<http://national.britfoos.com>



World Cup Special



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World Cup Special: Joe Hamilton

Joe has been the stand out UK player of 2008. Here is his blog of how things are going:

With the World Cup not long away, members of the British team have been training hard and sharing practicing tips / strategies.

After drawing Russia, Hungary, and Algeria in our group, (with chances of later facing Switzerland and Germany) it is clear that we could possibly be playing on all 5 of the ITSF world cup tables. In light of this, we have been putting in the time on our 'away' tables, as well as suring up our game on our home table, Tornado.

In the south west, the practice schedule has looked something like:

Monday – Home practice

Tuesday – The crown pub, for tornado practice.

Wednesday – Home practice

Thursday – The Bush for tornado practice

Friday – Mase's house for Tornado / Roberto Sport

Saturday - Jon May's house for Tornado / Garlando / Bonzini practice

Sunday - Jon May's house for Tornado / Garlando / Bonzini practice

On a couple of occasions we have had 8 of the possible 10 men's team players at one practice session! This has been tremendously beneficial. It has given us insight into who plays well with who, and what players are currently hot on what tables. Most importantly we have developed a great team spirit and have great belief going into what is so far the greatest tournament the sport has had.

On a practice night at Jon's house, we play various games to keep it competitive and fun.

Top table:

Choose a table type as the top table and the aim is to win your way up the 2 other tables, up to the top table. The idea is to remain winning at the top table. This is a great way of us getting competitive practice on all of the tables, and having fun.

Singles Round robin:

Everyone play everyone on all the tables to determine an overall winner. A great way of finding out who's on form on each table!

DYPs:

Another great way to see how players gel with each other.



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Everyone has their own methods of practice, each method beneficial to various players in various ways. My personal practice regime concentrates mainly on the 5 bar. As this is where most games are won and lost in my opinion.

During practice I set myself a target of hitting a pass 50 times, and record how many attempts it takes me to complete the 50 passes.

Example: Fast stick wall pass. 50 / 78 attempted.

Once I have recorded this information for perhaps 10 or so passes, I then concentrate on the passes I struggled with. This will help me to have a well rounded 5 bar that is able to adapt in difficult situations. This is key to winning the battle of the 5 bar, as you need to keep posing problems for the opponent.

I have many more than 10 passes, but a basic practice schedule would be something like:

- Slow brush lane
- Slow brush wall
- Fast brush wall (Runner)
- Fast brush lane
- Tic tac stick pass to lane
- Tic tac stick pass to wall
- Tic tac bounce pass
- Hesitation wall pass
- Standard chip pass up
- Standard chip pass wall

That is a very basic version, but if practiced thoroughly will certainly benefit anyone.

Other things I practice are 2-5 passes, and snake shots. I do this in the same fashion. Record how many attempts it takes me to reach 50 of each pass / shot. Then re-do the passes / shots that are lower % in order to reassess what I'm doing wrong, and improve my consistency.

It has been a great month or so discussing all of the other nations and our strategies on how we will play them. Rob Atha has posted pages of info on the various other teams, players etc, and thanks to him there is no chance of us going into these matches ill-prepared.

With all of us now looking forward to what will be the greatest event in the history of the sport, I have nothing left to say other than –

GO TEAM GREAT BRITAIN!



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World Cup Special: Dave Ziemann

Dave Ziemann is the reigning Senior World Champion, and will defend his crown in Nantes. He is also a member of the UK World Cup team, with his multi-table expertise being crucial for both competitions. He is one of the most dedicated and forward looking of the UK players, seeking to prepare to the best of his ability.

The build up to Nantes has been frantic. The activity on the private Team GB forum on BritFoos has been intense, with over 525 posts to date. The intense solo and team practice sessions are not the only time-consuming items. I've also been in constant communication with the ITSF asking for clarification on a number of issues, and I've been working with Mayya to assist the women's team. Current issues with the ITSF include whether the Tornado table will be the traditional 3 figure goalie, or the new 1 figure goalie with conversion kit and ramps. As you can imagine, we are hoping for the former. Another question is the use of new balls. In the case of Garlando, the Speed Play ball, and in the case of Tornado, a completely new ball which few people have had a chance to try out.

As soon as I heard about these new balls I obtained some samples. If this is the same Speed Play ball that has been available for a while, it is a very bad ball indeed! It is very hard and does not seem to get grippy at all. It also collects small chips which prevent it from rolling straight.

The new Tornado ball on the other hand is a good ball. This ball is a darker red colour, with more knap and slightly grippier. It plays pretty much the same, but you can now execute quite steep brushes even if you only catch the edge of the ball. Actually I quite like the new ball, although one can question the timing of such a change just before Nantes.

I find my practice time is spread widely across my tables. I have a Tornado, a Garlando and a Bonzini. In Nantes I'm going to focus on Tecball and Roberto. I have had some experience on these tables; I went to Tecball Worlds this year and I won the Senior Singles final last year playing Roberto. In fact I played better on Roberto than Tornado then!

My multi-table experience gained me a place on the team, and in particular my Bonzini experience. I'm looking forward to playing Bonzini, I feel right at home on that table, especially with those sweet Tornado handles I have.

I think I may have more to think about than some of the other team members. As well as playing for Team GB, I am also again contesting both the Senior Singles and the Senior Doubles titles. They are going to be much harder this year, not just because more countries are sending their champions, but also because many of those countries had logged sufficient ITSF licenses to send additional "Wildcard" players.



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There are 15 Senior Singles players from 10 countries playing on all 5 tables, and 12 Senior Doubles teams from 7 countries playing on 4 different tables (not Garlando).

In the Senior Doubles I'm playing with Tich Degun, and picking Tornado as our home table was a no-brainer. I'm very confident playing backs for Tich on Tornado, it feels great playing with him up front, and I know I just need to keep feeding him the ball! On Bonzini, Garlando and Roberto I have much more experience and will play fronts. On Tecball I'm not sure yet. We will have some very tough teams to face, especially the three German teams (who picked Tecball and Bonzini) and of course the Americans. But there's a lot of luck as well, it all depends who you get in the elimination stage!

In Senior Singles I also picked Tornado. It was a very close call. I made a formal analysis of my opponents and how I thought I would perform against each of them on each table type. The analysis indicated that Garlando would be my optimal pick. My guts said pick Bonzini (I beat the French player on it last year), my brain said pick Garlando and my heart said pick Tornado. Unfortunately it wasn't possible to include every player in this analysis. This was because players whose countries held their qualifying tournament late had not declared their table pick by the Nov 15th "deadline". This meant that players from Germany, Belgium and other countries were able to make their table picks in full knowledge of their opponents' picks.

I don't care! I am a strong singles player on any table and I'm going to be deploying a full range of weapons, on the 2 and 5 bars as well the 3! It's also important to remember something else - in the UK, everyone knows your weaknesses because we all play each other all of the time. But these players are not so familiar with our weaknesses. Especially in a short format, you can use this knowledge to your great advantage.

My practice routine focuses on consolidating my strengths. I practice a large variety of passes, and I practice pull and snake. On the 2 bar I practice key shots and 2-5 passing. The multi-table format also informs my routine. I know I will be playing non-Tornado players on Tornado, so I practice special stuff for those guys, e.g. fast wall passes, 5 bar hacks and tic-tac.

I'm now aware that I've spent quite enough time writing this. I'm off to practice some Garlando....only 6 days to go....

Good luck to Dave and the rest of the Brits. However, some of the decisions being made with respect to the introduction of different balls / tables at late notice are very, very surprising.

It would be a step in the right direction if the ITSF (including our own Boris Atha) were to address and respond to the concerns of these dedicated players – most of whom are funding their own trips to Nantes.



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BFA Newsletter Awards

The inaugural BFA Newsletter Awards celebrate all that is great and good in the foosball community. These prestigious (?) awards cannot be bought (??), and are awarded only to the truly deserving. (???) Awards are based around calendar year achievements during 2008, and the winners are revealed exclusively here.

The award for [Player of the Year](#) would usually be a shoe in for Rob Atha, however this year for the first time there has been real competition. Having taken 2nd in OD at the Garlando Worlds, and placed fantastically well in other national and international competitions, the player of the year has to be [Joe Hamilton](#). Joe has taken his results to the next level this year, and his breakthrough is the strongest sign yet that there will be a UK team able to support Rob.

The award for [Best International Performance by a UK Player](#) is won this year by Joe and Rob for that awesome 2nd place.

The award for [Tournament of the Year](#) was hard fought, with many great contenders – including the Holywell events and the Liverpool, Oxford and Hereford Opens. However the tournament highlight was undoubtedly the [UK Tornado Championships](#), organised by Foos4fun – the venue was absolutely brilliant, and it is hoped that future competitions will be held here.

The award for the [Local Venue of the Year](#) is one that the Nuneaton regulars, the Bristol boys and the Manchester guys all have a claim to, However this is not an independent assessment of the relative merits, instead being all too subjective, and the award goes to [Bar Kick](#) in Shoreditch, London. The efforts made by JP Thompson to drive the interest with serious and beginner level competitions, coupled with its great atmosphere means that it is deservedly the winner

As far as the newsletter goes the award for [Newsletter Contribution of the Year](#) can only have one possible winner. Step forward Mr [Geoff Brice](#) of Hereford! The thought, detail and outright love for the game that was poured into every one of the 15000 plus words shows how much Geoff cares for the game.

It is disappointing that the initial enthusiasm for reinvigorating the grass roots game seems to have fallen down the agenda.

The award for [Britfoos Poster of the Year](#) is one that is very hard to call. To separate the wheat from the majority of chaff that bombards the forum is of course very difficult. However the poster who made the most effective posts over the year is as usual [Rob Atha](#). He rarely gets involved in posting the usual drivel that so pervades the forum, instead when he did post it was incisive and relevant – when he starts talking tactics (tic-tacs?) or strategy, all of us need to pay attention and learn.



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World Cup Special: Rob Davey Interview

Rob has been one of the stars of the last couple of years after a long absence from foosball. His performances have led to a deserved selection to the ITSF World Cup team. Rob is also one of the founders of Foos4Fun.

1. How did you first get started playing?

I was sixteen and walked into my local pub to see this new football game had arrived. I was a keen football player, reaching semi professional standard, and enjoyed anything to do with the game. I found myself playing most nights and somehow managed to win most of the games, even though I had no developed game. I think I just relied on my fast hand speed, quick hand/eye co-ordination and very fast reflexes.

It wasn't until we had a challenge evening, sponsored by the UK Operator Bristol Coin, that I saw how the game was really played for the first time. Doug Fury, who is a US Hall of Fame legend and a former Tournament Soccer Multiple World Champion gave me some simple tips that night and set me off on a path of passion. I wanted to be the best and beat everyone.

I won the 'pub night promotion' some months later and qualified to play in the 1978 Tournament Soccer UK Championships, held in Birmingham. We arrived by the coach load and the venue was spectacular, filled with 50 foosball tables. The prizes were all expenses paid trips to America that included spending money. I remember being so nervous and went two and out. I was devastated and felt like giving up immediately.

That UK Championship was won by two guys who became my great friends, taught me the basics, encouraged me to practice and kept a mouthy seventeen year old out of trouble – most of the time. So I owe a big thanks to Martyn Harris and Dave Oates.

2. I don't really have too much of an idea of what went on in the UK scene back in the day. What were the differences with today's scene? Any good stories?

Dan it was totally different back in the late seventies and early eighties. The game was certainly different in many ways. There was no stick passing, no hesitation wall or the runner pass and there was no snake shooting. But it was the level of interest and the aura around the top players that was crazy.

Don't forget there was no video gaming at that time, although it was just about to appear and as most people went to the pub then, the game quickly developed at a fever pitch. I could travel 15 minutes in a car from my home and get to about 25 venues with one or two tables in and a regular set of very keen players during that period. We had a weekend venue with as many as six tables and held weekly events for the top players.



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At one venue we played winner stays on with two tables – and if you lost you would not play again for several hours! I still remember the stacks of coins on the table ends.

It is very difficult to describe unless you were there, but it is without doubt the closest any of us top players (at that time) will come to being superstars at anything. Tich and Bruce, Martyn and Dave, Myself, Joe 90, Kev Walker, Kev Ferris and Ramsey to name a few were in an elite group of players who were held in awe at that time. I have been told that people were terrified to play us and a little scared to talk to us because we were 'the best' – crazy huh! But that was what it was like during that period. If you were not there – you could never imagine how it was.

Stories – of course I have lots of stories lol.

I remember when we played at the 'Worlds' in the Raddison South Hotel in Minneapolis, USA. I think they made a mistake when they let me go wandering around this 5 star place with Bruce Jassal. We were really bad together, wherever we went. Let's just say the police were chasing around the hotel banging on doors and I also ended up putting my arm through a Fire Hydrant glass door – which was all Bruce's fault. The UK contingent then all decided to take me to the hospital for stitches.

I have such a funny story – something you would not see in any tournament now. It is connected to one of my greatest achievements below and we were playing in the 1980 UK Championships.

We were in the losers bracket, late into the night, after an awesome comeback trail, and were playing for fourth or better. It was sweatball and Kevin Ferris, my goalie, had just conceded a dubious technical foul called by the ref. The forward opponent shot a pull shot and he stepped up to take the winner, in front of a truly massive crowd. Imagine the scene.

The ref calls 'ok, let's play' and the player looks up at Ferris and says 'ready' – Ferris stares him down big time and then says out load - in front of the ref and the crowd – 'if you score this I am going to 'effing' punch your lights out' – honestly I cringed like mad.

Ferris blocked, passed to my three and I put it away and on we went. I laughed so much after but it was a truly dodgy 80's moment.

3. What were your biggest accomplishments?

Once I bought my own table and started to practice my game improved really fast. After picking myself up from the 78 disappointment I worked hard, listened to what I was being told and started to win all the novice and semi pro events.



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My rapid progress attracted the attention of Chris Bulley who was one of the best and smartest goalkeepers around at that time and we paired up. We took 3rd in our first Open Doubles event and then captured the 1979 UK Championship – one year after crashing out at Birmingham.

If you can imagine a foosball event at the 5 Star Belfry Hotel in Sutton Coalfield, venue of one of the greatest golfing events – the Ryder Cup, with all the glitz and glamour, and filled with 300 players and 80 tables – trophies about 2 feet high, cash and all expenses paid trips to America as prizes – then perhaps you can guess at the pressure we also played under. Chris Bulley and I destroyed everyone in our path and only lost one game in the whole event – in the Winners Final.

We won that match 3 – 1 and that was against Dave Oates and Medi Salehi. We then won the final 3 – 0 and the feeling of taking the title after just one year of serious hard work and practice was pretty amazing.

Within a few months we took a trip to Dublin to play in the Irish Championships and I paired with my great mate Martyn Harris. We took the Irish title beating some Belgium guys in the final.

Then came the 1980 UK Championships and I paired up with Kevin Ferris who was probably the best defender at that time. We had high hopes in Coventry especially as the Saturday saw us finish 3rd in the European Open Championship – losing the winners final to the Swiss champions and the losers final to a top Belgium pair. This was at the time when the front pin emerged from Europe and baffled us in the UK and the American players too.

So on the Sunday, with high hopes, we entered the UK Championship and lost our first round match to Ramsey and partner. Big crash..... Ferris just said 'ok, let's do it the long way!'

And so we started the longest comeback through the losers bracket and I have no idea how many games we played. With a field of 300ish players and into the losers at round 1 – surely someone can tell me how many games we had to play!!!!

Anyway so we got through the 4th place match mentioned above – won the losers final convincingly and then faced Ramsey again in the Final itself. This time it was only the winners qualifying for an all expenses trip to the worlds in Chicago for 10 days – so the pressure was on.

We were 2 – 0 down and 4-2 down in the third with Ramsey having a pull kick at the title when things just turned around. I was having trouble scoring as the defender was just thrashing his men everywhere with no thought. As in the first round match, he now continued his ploy in the final. Anyway I got the ball on the three and called a time out. Pete Ochman (Joe 90) took me to one side and said 'ignore the defence, just pick a hole and hit it' – I scored, my confidence came back and the holes got bigger and bigger.



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It felt like the comeback of the century. We didn't lose a game after that through both dips and took the title in front of a massive crowd – it was awesome!!

More recently I have finished in three Open Doubles finals and one Open Singles final and have shot up the rankings in only two and a half years of playing (I started playing again in May 2006) and of course have found myself a member of the GB Team playing in the World Cup in Nantes this January. I am really looking forward to the World Cup, as I am really proud to represent my country and nation.

4. Why did you give up for a while?

Unfortunately for us all at that time, Tournament Soccer in the US crashed as a business and the tables and tournaments vanished. So I went back to playing football, got married and had children and basically forgot all about foosball. I had no idea Tich kept things going in the London area.

5. And what persuaded you back?

Good question Dan.

I was sat at home on a lazy Sunday, playing on the laptop when I suddenly had a flashback to the days of foosball. I thought to myself, 'there is a lot of information on the internet about everything – I wonder if there is anything about foosball in the old days? And in particular, I wondered if anyone had written anything about me?

I didn't find anything about myself but I read all this stuff about foosball today. About some Belgium guy being World Champion and some youngster from Manchester being one of the best in the world – and of course I noticed the Dave Oates name.

After an exchange of emails I was invited to the Bush and that was in May 2006. So that was about a 26 year gap I think.

After playing for a few weeks I caught the bug again, bought a table and got practising.

6. I remember playing you at Warwick back in '06' and you had a very under-developed snake – something you had decided you needed to learn to compete nowadays, despite the fact that you hadn't used it before.

Yeah I remember that match bitch! You had to go to the back and fluke some crappy pull shots to win lol! Seriously though I only learnt to snake (badly) the night before – and that was one of my first times on a Garlando – ever!



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But you have a point and I have my opinion on the snake shot. Firstly I have a question that is important for all players starting out in foosball.

If you can't shoot a shot well enough to understand what goes through your head while executing that shot – how can you really know how to defend it?

Foosball is not just about passing, scoring or blocking. It is as much a mental game as it is a physical one – in fact the higher you reach in the skill levels of foosball the more importance is placed on the head game.

So I knew that understanding how to shoot the snake and what to look for (in terms of holes in the defence) was key to me also blocking the shot. I encourage all beginners to learn the snake so that you can also learn how to block it. I'm not saying you should adopt the snake as your tournament shot – just learn the thinking behind it.

In terms of competing the most important rod is the five-bar and not what shot you shoot. The five-bar has and always will be the key to winning consistently.

When choosing a shot for tournament play you need to consider the factor of consistency. The pull shot, front pin and the snake all have the same consistency because the ball is always in front of the goal.

Way back in the past and my first time in the US, I found it a little boring as almost everyone shot pull shot – now at least you have a balance of pull shot and snake shot.

If I had a choice of shot to play I would select a front pin (only if I could push it like Fred) and then pull shot (which I love) and finally snake as my dominant tournament shot.

a) What did you think when you first came across the snake? What do you think about the points raised by Geoff Brice in the August newsletter?

When I first came across the snake it reminded me of the first time the front pin emerged from Europe. After shooting what you could call traditional shots, pull shot, push shot, pull kick, push kick and back pin – the front pin gave a feeling of panic as not only was it alien but I think as the ball is closer to you (as a defender) it appeared easier for the attacker to score. That was my first memory of the front pin and maybe others feel the same about the snake shot.

My first experience of the snake was on my first visit to the Bush and I played against Mike Amsden and Dave Bareham. Their snake shots are rubbish anyway so I didn't think much of it.



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I was intrigued by the shot and could see immediately how potent it probably was as a tournament shot.

I think Geoff Brice has his own opinions on the snake shot, as do many others. Some of you may think I was out-of-hand with my comments in the following discussion after the August Newsletter, especially as it seemed to upset Geoff but it was just my own opinion. Geoff and I sat down together at the UK Tornado Championships in Bristol recently and had a great conversation about foosball and the future.

I understand how he feels and I can see that, especially young women, who are playing for fun at their sixth form, and are getting smashed by snake shooters are leaving the game – that is Geoff's customers to his business and he has a right to be concerned. We talked about a solution to that problem and had a few good laughs also. I like Geoff a lot as he is a nice guy.

My personal opinion on the snake shot is that it is good for the game. It is relatively easy to learn the mechanics of the shot and therefore almost anyone can be potent as a shooter to a degree. In the days when there was no snake it was only the best players who really could compete.

If you took our current crop of players and put them in an environment with no snake – do you think the same results would appear (I'm not talking about a one-off no-snake event)?

One or two would survive I think but some would struggle a fair bit. Take Tom Burdett for instance – a decent(ish) five bar and a poo snake gets him to a lot of finals because he is a really lucky player. Without his angled snake and only his girls wrist he would be useless. Jon May would not survive either – but would probably break more rods though through frustration.

So the snake is good all round I think.

b) How difficult was it learn – how long before you thought it was a good enough shot for tournament play, having started to learn from scratch?

The execution of the shot was not difficult for me to learn – but once I decided to adopt it as my tournament shot the learning process began.

As with any shot you first learn the mechanics, which I found easy enough. Then you have to learn to see the holes in different types of defences, which takes a little longer. And then finally you have to perform both those things under tournament pressure, which is an ongoing process.

When I first came back and played for a few weeks I decided that I wanted to play what you could call a traditional game – in other words shoot a traditional shot.



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I tried to shoot my old Tournament Soccer shot – the Push Kick, but that didn't work very well on the Tornado table, so I chose the Pull Shot. I practiced very hard at home and developed a really good pull shot.

The one thing about the Pull Shot is that it's not body friendly. At 47 my shoulder took a battering at every event and after returning from the Worlds in Las Vegas in 2006 I over practiced during the next few months and ruined my arm. That was the end of my pull shot - And when I made the decision to adopt the snake as my tournament shot.

My first event using the snake was at the first Hereford Open organised by Mase in early 2007 and I was very successful with the shot scoring freely on everyone I beat in the singles. I was especially pleased in the final as I almost double dipped an in-form Juj and had a lot of success with my new snake shot.

c) Why did you learn it? Seriously! You have very good other shots, why didn't you try to develop one of these as your tournament shots?

Adding from my comments above one shot I have found recently is my old Push Kick. I had always messed around playing it as my game improved but never seriously. I used to use the push kick to 'warm up' my shoulder before an event.

At the Bolton event and playing with Shovo, I started off 'warming up' and the longs just left Shovo and I – opened mouthed. It was like – where the hell did that come from? I guess it developed through me playing around with the shot and then boom – there it was.

I had a lot of success with it at that event drilling all the top players and we were unlucky not to finish higher than we did. Still for those of you who have seen the shot – it is nowhere near as fast as it used to be when I was a teenager.

The problem with the push kick and pull kick is that the ball has to travel such a long distance that you lose some consistency – of course this is balanced in a way when you can hit the short and long 'dinks' and a middle but my experience has shown me that when you are just not quite on your game, when your rhythm is a fraction out, that is when the shot is not as effective and the better players can see your weakness.

However, the shot works very well for me on Roberto Sport and Bonzini and should work really well on Tecball in the World Cup as Tecball players are a copy of Tournament Soccer players. It does not work for me on Garlando and I have to stick with the snake.

So to answer your question Dan it comes back to consistency and staying power during a tournament. Still if I can get that push-pin – who knows ☺



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8. How did Foos4Fun come about? Did you approach Dave Oates, or the other way around?

Foos4Fun was initially Dave's idea and dream. Once I reappeared on the foosball scene and we got chatting about the past and the future he shared that dream with me. We discovered that we both wanted the same thing, which was to have the generations of today, experience what we had back in the days of huge foosball events and the rewards that went with it. That is when he asked if I was interested in being a part of forming this company.

As we were great friends and shared a passion the answer was easy really – and so Foos4Fun was born.

9. What plans have Foos4Fun got for the next year – both at the high level (e.g. any tournaments, and at the grass-roots level (siteing tables, organising beat the expert challenges, youth competitions etc)?

By the time everyone reads this we at Foos4Fun will have sat down with our shareholders and discussed the strategy for 2009. I can say we need to shift our focus somewhat and concentrate on the grassroots of the game.

More tables in more venues will be our strategy for 2009 and beginner's events also. We will not be concentrating on any main events next year but are considering renting our Tornado tables to promoters who can meet our criteria.

I think it is time we in the UK got together and made a real effort to do something about the level of interest in foosball. I'm not the only one fed up with all the talkers on Britfoos. What we need are some movers and shakers to step up and join us in an attempt to put foos back up there – only time will tell.

10. You're selected for the UK team at the ITSF World Cup in Nantes in January: What does that mean to you?

Dan, let me tell you my friend – to represent your country in anything is one of the proudest things anyone can do. The ITSF World Cup of Foosball is the largest event in the calendar year and I just know it will be amazing.

I experienced that feeling in Las Vegas when we went to the Tornado Worlds in 2007 and felt the pride when I played with that Union Jack on the back of my shirt. We had the 'dream draw' against the Americans and although I narrowly lost to Billy Pappas (7-5) and then again narrowly lost by the same score in the doubles (with Cotty) against Billy and the reigning World Doubles Champion – Tracy McMillan, the feelings of pride and the experience of playing in front of a huge audience in



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the 'pits' was unbeatable and something to be cherished.

I can't wait to pull on that GB Team shirt and kick some Euro ass!

11. And how do you fancy our chances? (Note the patriotic use of "our". If we go out in the group stages I'll be as fickle as a Sun journalist, superimposing turnips on the players heads, and calling for resignations.)

This world cup will see the strongest GB team that has ever been assembled and we have some really great foosers on all the different tables.

I think it is important that we play our best Tornado players in the Group stages to ensure maximum points and rely a little on Rob Atha's superior quality on the other tables to get us through. Once in the knockouts we will need to rely on the team's ability to cross table play – but we have some good guys so this should be no problem for us.

I fancy us to top our group and face probably Switzerland in the first round of the knockout stages. They have selected Roberto Sport as their table so we should do well against them and win of course. We then have to face the German's who are a strong team, however they are not unbeatable – so long as we hold up well under pressure I think we could nick this one and move on to the semi.

Here we will face someone such as Canada or the Czech Republic who we can beat and get to the final. Who can we expect to join us in the battle for the World crown?

USA, France or Austria would be my guess – and at the point it doesn't matter who we face – it will all be down to the nerves!

12. What are your aspirations for 2009?

During 2009 I will be looking to place highly in the coming Tornado events with a win in Open Doubles and Open Singles my highest targets.

Of course to qualify for the UK Multi-table event and really try to win either the doubles or singles which will qualify me as the UK Representative for the World Championships 2010.

I also need to address my weakness, which is my Garlando play. As I don't get to practice on Garlando until an event itself, and yet have had a few chances to finish in the final stages (which is a good sign for my overall game) then I need to arrange and plan to improve my control by more exposure to the table – maybe a table purchase is the answer.



January Newsletter 2009

World Cup Special: Rob Davey Interview

I may go to the Tornado Worlds in Dallas during 2009 and if I do then I will be looking to do really well this time.

13. And finally any pre-tournament rituals?

I always use my imagination during the build-up to a tournament. I spend some time imagining winning individual matches – even the DYP! I imagine making passes and blocking with a good 5 bar 'D' and scoring winning goals also.

As with most sports – if you cannot see it with your mind, it probably won't happen.

Happy New Year everyone!!!

Thanks Rob, what a great interview!

I am sure that all the UK table football community will be following the developments for the UK (and the Irish of course as well) in the World Cup!

InsideFoos will once again be providing coverage of the World Cup. Check out:

<http://www.netfoos.tv>

for all the latest coverage, and follow the National Team Website for all the latest UK updates, including blogs and news updates.

<http://national.britfoos.com/>

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