



British Foosball Association

April Newsletter 2007

Hereford Open, 20th-22nd April 2007

This month sees the first Hereford Open organised by Ben "Mase" Mason. In a new twist to the tournament scene there will be a Skills Demonstration and Masterclass on the Friday evening (20th April, 4:00pm), followed by an under 18s singles competition. The tournament also offers a mix of ranking points dependant singles events, designed to give true beginners/newcomers to the organised foosball scene a chance to do well, novice and pro-am events, and of course the flagship Open Events.

Foos4Fun are kindly supplying 7 top quality Tornado tables for this tournament. Cheap accommodation is available nearby, and food and drink will be available on site, or if preferred can be brought into the venue from outside.

The full details and tournament program can be found on www.britfoos.com. If you have any queries concerning events or eligibility drop an e-mail to mase@britfoos.com, or post on the Britfoos discussion forum, where one of the friendly pros will try and help answer your questions. Please pre-register online, as this greatly speeds up organisation on the day.

Forthcoming Tournaments

20-22 April: Hereford Open (Tornado, including BFA EGM)

4-6 May: Warwick Open (Garlando, ITSF Master Series)

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Chairman's Report - March/April 2007

Boris Atha updates us on the BFA activities

There will be an EGM of the BFA at 6pm on Saturday 21st April, at the Hereford Tornado Tournament. This follows the resignation of Jude Fitzgerald from the post of vice-chair, and is a chance to ratify some constitutional changes necessary.

Before I start, I hope I speak for all BFA members in thanking Dan Gallon for putting this newsletter together as editor. It is a long time since the BFA published a newsletter (2001) and even longer since one was published regularly (1999). I'd like to add a vote of thanks to Jude Fitzgerald for the enthusiasm and professionalism he has brought to his roles on the committee over the past 2 years.

On 6-8 July there will be the Multitable UK Championships for UK players only held at Pro-5 in Brislington, Bristol. Full details will be announced shortly, but it will involve competitions in singles and doubles at Open, Women's and Senior (50+) levels, with a final qualifier in OS, OD and WS. Tables available will include at least Tornado, Garlando and Bonzini with players picking a 'home' table and playing each opponent 'home' and 'away' with a tie-breaker match played on both tables under ITSF rules.

Constitutional changes introduced at the AGM required the new committee to develop and ratify policy documents – 7 out of 8 of these have now been ratified with only membership fees and benefits unresolved. These will be published as a schedule very shortly, and may be reviewed from time to time.

Again following the AGM, different classes of membership have been introduced. Basic membership is broadly equivalent to the free membership which has existed from the outset, and is aimed at inactive (non-tournament) players. Provisional membership is for people who play maybe the odd tournament and involves a £1 levy on entry fees, giving player registration but no voting rights. Full members have voting rights at general meetings, other rights include eligibility to stand for elected posts or represent the UK in overseas competitions and compete in the UK Championships, further benefits such as discounts on tables and spares are under negotiation. In addition we are now working towards developing club membership for league teams, and corporate membership for industry partners.



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Priorities for the coming year are:

-Youth & Grass Roots Development – a new commission has been established to improve participation in competitive foosball in schools, colleges, universities etc leading to an official UK Junior championship, and encouraging greater participation at grass roots level, eventually expanding the BFA League to a genuinely regional structure. This will involve publication of a new revised rule-sheet compatible with the new universal ITSF rules of play.

-Referees – A referees commission has been established with a view to developing training and accreditation procedures for referees to qualify at national and international levels.

-- Development of a robust disciplinary policy and procedures, updating the BFA Code of Conduct, and establishing a disciplinary commission to resolve disputes and deal with instances of serious misconduct.

- Official Recognition – Many sister federations benefit from foosball being recognised as a sport in their country, leaving them eligible for support in the form of public venues and funding streams. Steps are underway (not least the reorganisations outlined above) to meet the stricter criteria for recognition as a sport in the UK.

- Senior Players – ITSF has encouraged federations to organise competitions for senior players (over 50 years) and introduced a senior World Championship this year. Dave Ziemann has offered to coordinate efforts in the UK. There will be (open-entry) Senior singles and doubles at the UK Championships in July, and hopefully at all ITSF competitions in the UK from the UK Masters onwards.

BFA EGM – 6pm, 21/04/07 at the Hereford Tournament

The agenda for the EGM is:

- 1 - Constitutional Amendments (4 separate votes)**
- 2 - Ratification of Women's Officer & Webmaster (subject to item 1 of agenda)**
- 3 - Election of Committee Member(s) (subject to item 1 of agenda)**

For more information for those wishing to stand for the BFA Committee to fill the vacancy left by Jude Fitzgerald, please contact BFA Chair, Boris Atha, chair@britfoos.com



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Tom Burdett

Tom has burst on to the foos scene in the last couple of years. Acknowledged as the best player produced by Warwickfoos, Tom has turned in some great performances, and was particularly strong at the Southern England Open, where he placed well in all events, including a fantastic 2nd and 3rd in the Open Singles and Doubles.

What's your favourite moment in foosball?

Once, when i was playing in my local bar, these kids were watching me play and they asked for my autograph. They thought table football was as popular as real football and, because they thought I was amazing, they assumed i must be really famous like David Beckham.

And your worst moment?

Getting punched in the crotch by Dave Morgan.

Aspirations for this year?

Win my first ever Open event at a national tournament.

Funniest moment in foosball?

At the 2006 Garlando worlds there were only 5 players from England. That meant all 5 of us played for England in the team event. We had no idea about this until we got there so were completely unprepared. After watching a few teams go on stage for their national anthem, all smartly dressed in their squad uniforms, it was our turn. Basically, there was a moment when 4 jokers and Rob Atha were on stage, representing our country, singing "God save the Queen" dressed scruffily and not having had a shower for 3 or 4 days as we were sleeping in a nearby field. I've never laughed so much or been in a more surreal moment.

Toughest Opponent (not including Rob Atha!)

It has to be Joe Hamilton. He has been my arch-rival in foos since we both started playing at around the same time. We have had a similar number of wins and losses against each other and whenever we play its always a really tough, hard fought match. Shame he has silly hair.

Where do you rate UK foos on the International scene?

Other than Rob we don't really have any players who are big on the international scene. I think the UK foos scene is getting better but we still have some way to go until we can compete with the very best.

Any pre-tournament rituals?

I often get drunk the night before. Although, I'm not sure this really helps!



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The Bank

The Bank in Keynsham, Bristol is now home to 2 Foos4Fun Tornado tables in a dedicated Foos room. The Opening DYP on Friday the 9th of March was won by Martyn Harris and Dave Bareham who double dipped Mike Amsden and John "webmaster" Shovelton. Photos of the night are included below. Thanks to Dave Oates for the pictures.





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THE BANK SHIELD EVENT A REGULAR B.Y.P. FOOSBALL TOURNAMENT

Dave Oates, of Foos4Fun, is organising a series of events at The Bank, as he details below:

I am pleased to announce there will be a bring your partner (BYP) regular event upstairs at the Bank Tavern Foosbar in Keynsham to be held on Saturdays on the following dates:

Sat March 31 st	Sat September 1st
Sat May 19 th	Sat October 13 th
Sat July 21 st	Sat December 1 st

Practice will commence at 12.00 and registration start at 12.30pm closing at 1.30pm when the draw will be made ready for starting the event at 2.00pm. The event will be played on two Tornado tables with Group stages of maximum of 7 teams on each. The top two teams on each table will go through to a DE finals playoff. Format will be first to 9 goals.

Players should pre-register by stating their intention to come on www.britfoos.com this thread for the next event which will give them priority if numbers exceed 28 players. The organisers reserve the right to cancel with one weeks notice if less than 12 players preregister at that point.

Entry fees will be £5 per pro/semi pro player and £3 for beginners and rookies. The decision on who is in what category will be made by the event organisers and is final.

The event will be 100% payout of entry fees payable as follows:

1st	50%
2nd	30%
3rd	20%

The winning team will have their names engraved on the BANK SHIELD which will be on display in the Venue . Any team obtaining 3 wins in a year will get further recognition.

Following the event the tables will then be open play with winner stays on twice. Food will be available at the Bank during lunchtime and the Bank stays open for drinks and Foos until late.

Dates have been picked not to conflict with major Tournaments as much as possible but to provide an ideal competitive but fun warm up for these.



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Below is an article originally written by *Mauricio Bernal*, published in *El Periódico de Catalunya*. The article was translated by *Dave Ziemann* and posted on the Britfoos forum. Many thanks to both author and translator:

Passed away, Alejandro Finisterre Poet and Inventor of Table Football

The Galician writer devised the game in 1936, after being wounded in a pro-Franco bombing. Publisher and journalist, he was also one of the first aerial pirates in history.

Not exactly considered a sport of the masses --nor even in the strictest sense a sport at all--, you won't get a multitude prepared to observe a minute's silence, nor will you see hanging tributes of pictures of the dead, or hear homages by government officials, or discourses delivered in his honour.

In fact, the news has barely noticed his passing. The inventor of table football has died, and it is unlikely that you'll find tributes to the father of the game even in the bars and dives, perhaps because no-one stops to think that someone invented it, or because it's just one of those things that must necessarily exist in the world.

Alejandro Finisterre died on Friday in Zamora at 87 years of age, but instead of writing that the inventor of table football had just died, the local dailies emphasised the death of the writer Alejandro Finisterre, the poet Alejandro Finisterre, or the executor of León Felipe. In some cases, the subject was dismissed as a "biographical curiosity".

Backpacking Galician, writer, editor and journalist, Finisterre gave life to his most famous invention when he was just 17 years old: fame pursued him for the rest of his life despite it quickly becoming clear that it was not his calling to be an inventor, and in many interviews and articles he admitted to being spoken of as "Finisterre, famous despite himself for having invented table football".

There is also a nice article referring to Finisterre written by Simon Hattenstone, worth checking out on The Guardian's blog pages. It was written on 28th February, and it is entitled "Two teams, eight revolving sticks, one lifelong passion". The address is:

http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/sport/2007/02/28/two_teams_eight_revolving_stic.html



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The Rules of Foosball – Volume 1

Produced and Directed by *Brad Laurine*, Written and Introduced by *Adrian Zamora*
Reviewed by *Dave Ziemann*

I was looking forward to the arrival of this DVD as soon as I'd ordered it from eBay, where it was advertised in what turned out to be a limited listing. The DVD is produced and directed by Brad Laurine and written and introduced by top referee Adrian Zamora. The music was made by Sergei Aragones.

It's well-produced and follows the traditional format, being segmented into chapters, and including the now mandatory chapter of out-takes. The chapter headings are Basic Rules, Competition, Ball off Table, Spinning, Passing and Times, General Rules, Leagues & Games, Ads & Credits, and Out Takes.

Each chapter broadly covers one area. Adrian introduces a rule and it is demonstrated on the table using live actors (who are of course foosers), and also with clear and simple graphic animation. Repetition is used very effectively to make the point.

For example, a player is shown putting the ball back into play after a time-out on the 2-bar. You see the player pass the ball to another figure, wait one second and then shoot. This is legal and the point is reinforced with Adrian's voice and the word "Legal" flashes green on the screen. Then we see the same thing again, only this time the player does not wait a second before shooting. Adrian explains that this is illegal, and the word flashes red on our screens. To help with the demonstrations Adrian has Dan Tyvoll, pro-master Kin Lo, Beth Zamora and a number of others.

Although this is not clearly stated, the rules being taught are the ITSF rules, which apply to all table types. A link to the rules on the ITSF website <http://www.table-soccer.org/rules/> is given. The demonstrations and animation use Tornado tables exclusively. There are also a number of welcome scenes of live foos action from major US tournaments, with clips of top players.

The ITSF 5-bar kick-off is clearly shown and explained. It is described as an easy and official way to start the game. The "ready protocol" is very well covered. It's a surprise therefore when the section on the serve inexplicably starts with confusing footage the ball being served through the serving hole.

It might be unfair to reveal my personal irritation with the phrases "2-man rod" and "5-man rod". The terms are used inconsistently, and we often hear "2-rod" and "5-rod" without any loss of clarity. In the section on dead ball, we are given a clear graphical exposition of when a ball is out of reach, and how the ball is restarted when a ball is dead. Unfortunately in one of the demonstrations the player does not wait one second on the restart, but this is not picked up. (*continued on next page*)



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The expositions covering ball off table are excellent. Animation is used to ensure there is no doubt about whether or not a ball is off table. If it hits the side rail and bounces back in, then it's a live ball. If rolls along the top of the side rail and drops back in, it's off table. An amusing ball-on-a-stick prop is also used to explain this and other rules.

The distraction rule is well covered, and demonstrations are shown of "bad boy" fooser Dan Tyvoll being called for spinning the rod in frustration, talking to the opponent and talking to his partner, during play.

This is clearly a DVD aimed at a rookie player who wants to learn the fundamental rules of competitive foosball. It is not an in-depth coverage of the rules, either from the perspective of a referee, or from the perspective of a player who is expecting to be refereed.

Some examples are required. There's a good explanation and demonstration of what it means to "reset" a player. We can see the ball shaking on the 3-bar as the defender is too aggressive. Although we then see Adrian calling two resets and then a technical foul, the rule is not explained. There is no explanation of how many "reset" calls are allowed or when a "reset" warning becomes a reset violation. What is a technical foul? This is not explained. We're told that jarring, sliding or lifting of the table is not allowed. I really wanted to see an in-depth treatment of the jarring rule. I would like to see a demonstration of a play which is clearly a jar, another case which is ambiguous, and finally a play which is not quite a jar, with an explanation in each case of why. Most UK players have limited experience of being judged by top referees, and are not always aware of the boundary between a legal play and an offence. We are told that the play is illegal, but the penalty is not stated. There is no treatment or mention of the adjustment rule.

In summary, this is an excellent DVD for introducing players to the basic rules, and I recommend it - I think everyone can learn something from this DVD, but it does not offer a complete coverage of the ITSF rules. As this is Volume 1, there is of course an implication that there will be a Volume 2, but it's not clear what it would contain. I hope that it will be a much deeper coverage of the rules.

Rule Quiz #1 - How Many Time-Outs?

What is the maximum number of time-outs that can occur in a best-of-3 match, when the match is played according to the following rules? Do not include medical or official time-outs.

- 1) Garlando
- 2) Tornado
- 3) ITSF

E-mail answers to dan@britfoos.com. Answer will be given in the next issue. The winner will be drawn at random from correct answers and will receive free entry to Open Events at the Warwick tournament. (Worth up to £26!) Answers must be received by April 23rd.



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Upcoming Events

The next event is the **Hereford Open** (see the first page for details).

May 4th-6th sees the return of the **Warwick Open**. One of the flagship tournaments of the year, and always the best organised, this year the tournament has been awarded ITSF Master Series status. This means that the tournament will attract top players from Europe, and possibly even further. There will be novice and semi-pro events, as well as very high quality Open Events. The event promises to be the biggest and best held in the UK this year, with 20 tables and a whole load of different events.

The Friday night sees a Super Melee event, with Open Singles and Open Doubles starting on the Saturday. Women's Singles and Doubles will be held in the early evening. Novice Doubles will also be held on this day, along with a Junior Doubles competition. (Only those born on or after 01/01/89 are eligible for Junior Doubles.) On the Sunday the Open finals will be played, and the rank specific singles and doubles competitions will be held. Players will be limited to entering one ranking category for these Sunday events,

The full press release for the Warwick Open is presented on the next page.

The **Oxford Open** will return on 16th and 17th June. This is the UK's longest running tournament, held since 2000.

On 6-8 July there will be the Multitable **UK Championships** for UK players only held at Pro-5 in Brislington, Bristol. More details are in the Chairman's announcement elsewhere in this newsletter.

Further ahead, plans are already being made for the **UK Masters** to be held on Tornado as usual. The Floatel, Northwich is to be the venue once again, and a fantastic weekends foos is expected on the 7th-9th September (Subject to confirmation).

On the International scene, Caroline Wong (one of the Bar Kick regulars) is coordinating a trip to the **Bonzini World Championships**, to be held on the 17th to the 20th of May. Check out the International Events section of the Britfoos forum or contact "Poach" on the forum for more information.



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Warwick Open Press Release

For table football players, the most important weekend in the year is approaching: this year's Warwick Open, hosted by the University Of Warwick Table Football Society, is taking place on the weekend of May 4-6. The tournament, held in the Rootes Social Building on the Warwick University campus, is set to be the largest Warwick Open to date, and probably the biggest table football (or "foosball" as it is commonly called by players) tournament in the United Kingdom this year.

The Warwick Open, now in its third year, quickly established itself as a highly prestigious event: it began in 2005, attracting well over a hundred table footballers from around the country, and built on this last year with an even more successful tournament. This year, the Open is expanding once again: more than a hundred and fifty players are expected to attend, playing over eleven separate events on at least seventeen high-standard Garlando foosball tables.

The most significant change from last year's Open is that the tournament is expanding from a one-day to a two-day tournament: whereas last year the events all took place over one day, this year the open and women's competitions will take place on Saturday 5th May followed by the amateur, semi-pro and master's events on Sunday 6th. This change allows the tournament to have more events and, in turn, a higher prize fund: total prizes are expected to be over £3000.

What's more, the Warwick Open has this year received sanctioning from the International Table Soccer Federation and now forms part of the worldwide ITSF Master Series. This is official recognition that the Open is one of the world's premier table football tournaments; furthermore, it means that some of the world's best table football players will be competing, travelling from all over Europe and even as far as the United States.

Not only will the Open be attended by elite players, it has also been specially designed to appeal to foosball novices: there is no table fee for first-time tournament goers, and an additional event exclusively for novices ensures that they will get plenty of competitive games. In short, the Warwick Open aims to be the complete tournament, suiting both beginners and experts.

Foosball is a fast-growing sport in the United Kingdom, and Warwick University is at the forefront of that growth: the table football society was founded by students in 2004 and won an award for "best new society" the following year. The Open is the highlight of the society's year, and the society are certain that this year's tournament will exceed the already very high standards set by previous Warwick Opens.

Full details of the tournament can be found at www.warwickfoos.co.uk/open



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Shorts

The Cambridge University Intercollegiate Leagues recently finished, and there was an upset when a combined Queens' and Trinity team played superbly to defeat the reigning champions King's in the Final. A team of Mark Pinder, Stuart Kent, Toby Wood and Tim Landy were level with the King's team - Chris Roberts, Vincent Tang, Ben Williamson, and Jon May - after the doubles matches, but the Queens/Trinity team scored an impressive 4-0 whitewash in Singles to take the title!

In Oxford, The Temple Bar (containing assorted ex-university players and Oxford locals) cruised to the title, under the captaincy of Dave Carter, ahead of a combined St. Anne's and Somerville team led by University Secretary Jee-ha Kim.

The latest Warwick Doubles Series (held on March 8th) was again won by Tom Burdett and Dan Kingston, from Steve "Mr Angry" Lyall and James Harold.

There is a new tournament quality Tornado at Riley's Snooker Club, Deansgate, Manchester. With space for 12 tables this will hopefully be a top tournament venue of the future.

The player of the year rankings have been updated to show the slight changes in criteria being used. See the Britfoos site for full details.

Player of the Year Update

Open Doubles - top 5

1 Rob Atha	175
2 Alex Shovelton	171
3 Jujhar Sohi	158
4 Joe Hamilton	152
5 Dave Bareham	150

Open Singles - top 5

1 Jujhar Sohi	215
2 Alex Shovelton	173
3 Tom Burdett	164
4 Dave Ziemann	159
5 Jon May	157

Women's Singles – top 5

1 Hannah Ramlee	115
2 Sarah Brice	55
3 Cath Brown	41
4 Caroline Wong	35
5 Louise Brice	23

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