



British Foosball Association

August Newsletter 2007

Silver Medal for Team GB!

Garlando WCS squad in best British performance ever!

Roberto-Sport WCS Open Singles 2nd for Rob Atha

Dave Morgan Interviewed

UK Championships results and pictures

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© Boris Atha

Team GB – Boris Atha, Rob Atha, Tom Burdett, Joe Hamilton, Dan Kingston, Jon May, Andrei Russell-Gebbett, Louise Brice, Sarah Brice and Hannah Ramlee

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View From The Chair – Boris Atha

What a Month for UK Foosball!

The **UK Championships** were held at Pro-5 in Bristol from 6-8 July, the first multitable championships held to determine who represents the UK at the ITSF World Championships, and a time to settle arguments over who are the best all-round players. The tournament was a great success, and we are looking to find ways of making the 2008 UK Championships better still.

Seven UK Players made it to the **Roberto-Sport World Championships Series** tournament in Giubiasco, Switzerland, where the team faced a tough first round draw against the Czechs. Although Rob Atha won both his matches and debutant Anglo-Dutch player David Evans won his singles, all other matches were lost and we went down 5-3 in the first round. Notable results were the Brice sisters taking 7th place in Womens Doubles, beating the German Champion en-route, and Rob Atha's second place in Open Singles losing to Frederic Collignon – the final is pictured overleaf.

A strong team of British players made it to the **Garlando World Championships Series**, the undisputed highlight of which was reaching the finals of the Garlando Nations Cup, with wins against France (7-1), Belgium (5-4) and Switzerland (5-4) before going down to the unbeaten Austrian team 6-1 in the final. Star performances include Sarah Brice, who won two of her 3 singles matches on the way to the final, and taking women's world champion Verena Rohrer the full distance in the final before succumbing 9-7. Jon May was the difference against Belgium winning both his matches against legendary veteran and reigning ITSF doubles champion Ismael Saban, and Joe Hamilton in the deciding match against the Swiss, scoring 100% on his 3-bar to secure the final spot.

Notable performances include Rob Atha's second place in Open Doubles, 3rd in Open Singles (his 5th podium finish in a row at the Garlando Worlds), 2nd in Pro-Am with Joe Hamilton, and winner of 2-ball for the fourth time with Austria's Wolfgang Reszler. Tom Burdett took 4th place in Forward Shoot-Out, Jon May and Joe Hamilton took the Bronze medal in Rookie Doubles, and Hannah Ramlee was 13th in a strong Womens Singles field. Yours truly even took 9th in the DYP playing forward - and they say miracles never happen...



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View From The Chair – Boris Atha (cont)

The planning of the **UK Masters** at the Floatel on 7-9 September is well underway, again promising to be the Tornado highlight of the year. With ITSF Pro-Tour status it again looks like attracting a strong contingent of overseas players. Full details are due to be published shortly.

The new BFA Club Membership scheme is coming from August 2007 - with the intention of providing a better structure for grass roots foosball in the UK. Full details are being finalised and will appear in the next newsletter.

There will be an EGM held at the UK Masters in order to hold a bye-election for the vacant place on the BFA Committee. Provisional time is 6pm on Saturday 8th September.

There are still vacancies for the GB team at the **Tornado World Championships Series** tournament in Las Vegas from 26-30 September - particularly for women players. A full squad is 7 men and 3 women, of whom 6 men and 2 women compete in any one match. After the success of the Great Britain team at the Garlando Nations Cup, any team member will confirm that representing your country is one of the highlights of any foosballing career.



© Boris Atha



© Boris Atha



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2007 UK CHAMPIONSHIPS RESULTS

CHAMPIONSHIP SINGLES

1. Jujhar Sohi
2. Dave Ziemann
3. Alex SHovelton

CHAMPIONSHIP DOUBLES

1. Robert Atha + Jujhar Sohi
2. John Shovelton + Paddy Grover
3. Tom Burdett + Mike Amsden

WOMEN'S SINGLES

1. Caroline Wong
2. Sarah Brice
3. Mayya Racy

WOMEN'S DOUBLES

1. Mayya Racy + Hannah Ramlee
2. Caroline Wong + Donna Walker
3. Louise Brice + Sarah Brice

SENIOR SINGLES

1. Dave Ziemann
2. Chris Haddon
3. Brian Harms

SENIOR DOUBLES

1. Tich Degun + Dave Ziemann
2. Chris Haddon + Brian Harms
3. Stuart Cree + Frank Drayton

JUNIOR DOUBLES

1. James Oates + John Neale



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BRISTOL OPEN

RESULTS

SWISS OPEN SINGLES

Open

1. Robert Atha
2. Iain Boardman
3. Phil Williams

Semi-Pro

1. Jude Fitzgerald
2. Iain Boardman
3. Dave Morgan

Rookie

1. Sarah Brice
2. Andrew Nubbert
3. Simon Kim

OPEN DOUBLES

1. Iain Boardman + Raj Panesar
2. Rob Davey + Dave Bareham
3. Alex Shovelton + Joe Hamilton

SEMI-PRO SINGLES

1. Iain Boardman
2. Rob Davey
3. Dave Oates

SEMI-PRO DOUBLES

1. Rob Davey + Dave Oates
2. Stephen Lyall + Dan Kingston
3. Iain Boardman + Raj Panesar

ROOKIE DOUBLES

1. Sun-Ho Kim + Andrew Nubbert
2. Grzegorz Zakowski + Chaz Allen
3. Donna Walker + Sam Dawkins

DYP

1. Joe Hamilton + James Harrold
2. Dave Morgan + Jon May
3. John Shovelton + Mike Amsden



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UK CHAMPS + BRISTOL OPEN PICTURES

Championships Singles

Winner Juj Sohi with Dave Morgan



© Dave Ziemann

Championships Doubles

Winner Juj Sohi + Rob Atha with Dave



© Dave Ziemann

Dave Morgan congratulates 2nd place Championship Singles winner Dave Ziemann on qualifying for the World Championships in Italy

Dave Morgan congratulates 2nd place Championship Doubles pair John Shovelton and Paddy Grover on qualifying for the World Championships in Italy



© Dave Ziemann



© Dave Ziemann



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UK CHAMPS + BRISTOL OPEN PICTURES

Shovo congratulates Women's Singles Winner Caroline Wong and runner up Sarah Brice.



© Dave Ziemann

Bristol Open Doubles Winners Raj and Iain



© Dave Ziemann



© Dave Ziemann



© Dave Oates

PRO-5, Filton, Bristol was a fantastic venue for a top weekends foosing



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Roberto-Sport WCS

Andrei Russell-Gebbett ventured to Giabasco just to write this report:

Giubiasco, a gem set within the soaring mountains of Southern Switzerland, welcomed the stars of international foosball to the Roberto Sport World Championships.

The setting is bijou, select - and so is the tournament. With ITSF ranking points to haggle over, the most coruscating talents are sure to be on show. Foosball's very own Rudolph Valentino, Frederic Collignon, is first to grace the stage. Arriving with partner William Pappas on his arm, M.Collignon suggests in his very manner the distinguished charm and poise that imbues his play. Pappas, however, is a peacock: all Yankee bluster and wide-legged strut.

Here come the diamond geezers of British table-football. Our jewel in the crown, Robert Atha, leads his lesser lights into the arena, his light beige cargo pants and sailor shirt flirting shamelessly with the hard-faced ITSF dress code. Then Atha's bridesmaids: the sisters Brice, Sarah - summery, rustic, even - Louise, looking sharp, in charge and proud of it. On their tail is Chris Haddon, working-class boy made good, man-sized hands still slick with the grease of his daily grind. Next, David Evans, British reserve molten by the heat of the Amsterdam nightlife. And finally, Atha senior, topless, eyes glinting mischievously with the thought of the delights in store.

Indeed, enough with the fore-play, for the games are already in full swing: Marcus Stoiber shares lube with Laszlo Teke; Rocco Raven rubbers up while a bronzed Bentivoglio toys with his balls; Ruben Heinrich pumps his fist as Tim Ludwig slaps his bottom. Faces are contorted, muscles clenched; the air is suffused with sweat; the walls shake with yelps of pleasure and pain: this is table-football.

The hours pass and we come to see who is on top: captain Atha rises to second place in Open Singles, dominated by the Belgian Collignon. Andrei Russell-Gebbett and Boris Atha share 65th; Louise Brice lies together with David Evans and Chris Haddon in 97th. The Brices take =17th in a strong field in Women's Singles, whilst coming 7th in Women's Doubles.

In Open Doubles, Rob Atha joins Hungarian prospect Tamas Csige to finish 9th, with perennial also-rans Russell-Gebbett and Haddon bringing up the rear forty places behind. In the national tournament, Britain loses narrowly to the Czech Republic.

So, with the tournament over, there were few glittering prizes to be had by the Brits - all the more reason to get De Beers in.



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Dave Morgan

As interviewed by Dan Gallon

How did you get started playing?

I first touched a tournament table when I was 11, we had a freeplay Garlando in school and we played alot for a couple of years. I then took it back up again in the 6th form on the same free-play table but we started developing a more tactical game (pushes, pulls, slow tap bangs and plenty of hacking!), we used to joke that if there was a county table football team we would be on it. We had no idea there was UK scene at all. I started playing properly when I got to Oxford Uni, You (Dan Gallon) setup the league the same term I arrive and there were a group of 5 guys who had been playing in college for a few years and there was room for one more. Thus the powerhouse of table football that was Christ Church was born, possibly the worst performing 1st division team of all time! I went for the uni team in my second year and played my first tournament soon after, the Oxford Open which was the one and only annual Garlando tournament of the year at the time. I was pretty much hooked after that.

What's your favourite moment in OUTFC table football? And on the national/international scene?

Its hard to pick favourite moments, I played every college league match (except one) for 8 years! Winning the Cuppers plate the night before my 1st year exams was great and coming back from 1-0 4-0 against Trinity's Andy Husdan in Cuppers was particularly satisfying (this was before anyone in Oxford had even seen a snake!).

On the National scene I think beating Rob and Dave P in the OD Winners Semi at the Bush Open I with John Worthington. We were both rookies at the time with no 5-bar, just some cracking skanks, hacks and inside out snakes. I think John cracked one of my ribs when he bear hugged me afterwards. My other highlight was playing my first ever tournament match on Tornado, I turned up for Open singles to find out I had been drawn against Frederic Collignon, I enjoyed all 10 minutes of being totally trashed.

John Shovelton getting to the Grand Final of the 2005 rookies singles was also a great moment. Chocoschtick!

And your worst moment? Was it by any chance having Worthington yelling at you on sweat ball against me and Rich T? Or maybe it was losing to me at the Worlds? Or maybe it was one of Christchurch's many relegations?

It was worth losing to you at the Worlds just to see you slow-hack to pieces the very talented Austrian guy you played next round! Also officially, Christ Church were never relegated, we were promoted by virtue of a team not finishing matches, we avoided relegation the year after with Wolfson being denied entry (a chapter in the infamous Marsh/Gallon scandal) and we avoided relegation the year after that on goal difference.

I think the sweat ball incident you mention at Oxford Open was probably the worst, being screamed at whilst trying to mop up a Morgan Whiff was pretty off-putting.



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Dave Morgan

Aspirations for this year?

My main aspiration is to buy a new table get back into practice. My extended thesis write-up meant I haven't had much time to commit to foos, especially given how firmly I'm pinned under the thumb! I think after 7 years of tournament play I should really have a consistent 3-bar shot by now, so I'll probably put some time into that.

Funniest moment in foosball?

So many to choose from but it was probably watching Worthington's first ever tournament singles match on Tornado against Jamal. Somehow he skanked the first game and a fuming Jamal removed his grips and threw them onto the table to signal he wanted to change sides. John pulled his grip off and the spinning man kicked Jamal's grips into the goal and inside the table, infuriating him even more. The sight of John and I wetting ourselves didn't calm him down and he destroyed John with some vicious front pins with a healthy amount of post-shot jarring afterwards.

Toughest Opponent?

I think the only UK person I still feel like I don't have even have a hope against is Rob Atha, even the dirty shots misfire when I'm playing him. I've always found Juj Sohi hard to play against too, he seems impervious to being brought down to my level of play and never seems to get stressed out.

Do you think that Oxford will ever achieve it's dominance of the University scene that it had in your day? And has Oxford really gone backwards, or have other places just got a lot better?

Oxford probably is in a bit of a trough at the moment, with another large batch of veterans finishing up simultaneously, but it's a cyclic system so I think it will pick up. I think Oxford has the potential be the best again but it will never dominate as the other University's are starting to develop their own systems for producing seasoned players. One problem is that there has been a massive decline in the "college bar culture" which meant that people used to head for the college bar for a pint or two and some games at 10pm every evening. Now the nightlife has got cheaper and better in Oxford and people are all heading out by 10pm leaving the college bars pretty much dead. It's pretty depressing playing a college match in an empty bar when there used to be crowds of people watching. I still think the college system can be great for getting rookies tournament ready but we need to get a good strong central system like Warwick's going as well.



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Dave Morgan

What are your long term plans to keep involved in table football?

I think I'll just continue to show up to tournaments, buy a table and practice just enough so that I'm not totally thrashed! I find myself going to tournaments more for the social side so I'll definitely make weekend tourneys a priority. The National league has been pretty fun so far too, again we're doing it for the social side and booking a hotel when we visiting places so we can go out after the match.

You are quite keen on getting involved in organising table football, what motivates you to do this?

I think some people just get a kick out of organising things, you get a good feeling when the final table has been packed away and everything has gone to plan. Also watching the scene grow and tournaments improve in quality is a big motivator. Being a power hungry control-freak also helps too!

You've spent a lot of time trying to avoid becoming a 1-Dimensional snake clone. Do you think it is really possible to be a top tournament player without resorting to the lowest common denominator style of play? For example Shovo started off with a number of different very good shots, but seems to have settled into a brush pass snake mode as being the only percentage way to do well.

I think it's really hard nowadays to maintain consistency with anything but the brush-pass/snake. It's certainly the most transferable combination between different table types and even between tables of the same type but of differing quality. However I think there is room in the game for more variety. I'd like to see some more focus on rollerball (1,2 and even 4 ball!) at tournaments, I think the style is more accessible game for a newcomer than the typical one most of us choose to play during a tournament.

If you were chair of the BFA for the day, what one change would you make and why?

I'd set a mandatory finishing time of 9pm for tournaments so that people can relax and have fun at the end of a tiring day's foos.

And finally, any pre-tournament rituals?

Waking up with a massive hangover and very little sleep seems to be something I end up doing before every tournament. I also have a pair of lucky underpants

Cheers for the time, Dave!



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Garlando WCS

SELECTED RESULTS

Nations Cup	2 nd UK
Open Singles	3 rd Rob Atha 33 rd Jon May / Oli Deakin
Open Doubles	2 nd Rob Atha + <i>Billy Pappas</i> 17 th Joe Hamilton + <i>Charly Frießem</i> 33 rd <i>Andreas Tkautz</i> + David Evans
Semi-Pro Singles	33 rd Andrei Russell-Gebbett
Semi-Pro Doubles	25 th <i>Patrick Meijers</i> + David Evans
Rookie Singles	25 th Dan Kingston
	33 rd Tom Burdett
Rookie Doubles	3 rd Joe Hamilton + Jon May 17 th Tom Burdett + <i>Elisabeth Potocnik</i>
Women's Singles	13 th Hannah Ramlee 25 th Sarah Brice
Pro-Am	2 nd Rob Atha + Joe Hamilton 17 th <i>Wolfgang Reszler</i> + Jon May
2-Ball Rollerball	1 st Rob Atha + <i>Wolfgang Reszler</i> 17 th Dan Kingston + Tom Burdett
Mixed Doubles	13 th Rob Atha + <i>Lisa Schermann</i>
Women's Doubles	25 th Sarah Brice + Louise Brice 25 th <i>Galina Dorofeeva</i> + Hannah Ramlee
Goalie War	33 rd Rob Atha
Forward Shoot Out	4 th Tom Burdett 25 th Dan Kingston 25 th Jon May
Wednesday DYP	9 th Boris Atha + <i>Thomas Kunst</i> 17 th Sarah Brice + <i>Oliver Vilim</i> 25 th <i>Mucki Fidan</i> + Oli Deakin 33 rd <i>Daniel Morgenthaler</i> + Luke Ashley



© Boris Atha



© Boris Atha



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Garlando WCS

Andrei Russell-Gebbett was our man at the event.

Performances shone as brightly as the sun over Tulln, as the United Kingdom Garlando team left their Austrian campaign sporting World Championship silver medals. Having brushed aside France in the first round – the UK's first ever win in the Nations' Cup – Belgium, and the formidable threat of Frederic Collignon, lay in wait in a mouth-watering second round tie.

Collignon immediately bolstered his status as the globe's pre-eminent fooser, overcoming the UK captain, Rob Atha, with a typically accomplished display of precision pin shooting. It was not the most auspicious of starts but - testament to Blighty's growing confidence - hopes for success were not allowed to evaporate.

Cambridge powerhouse Jon May ably stepped into the breach, giving an even more bullish performance than usual. Facing the wily Ismael Saban, May stubbornly carved out a victory where a gutsy loss would have drawn no flak. They have a word for this quality, one that may not be lingua franca in the hallowed halls of the King's College but doubtless suffuses the smoky air of the public houses which lie in its shadows: balls. And Jon May has them in abundance.

It was then the turn of another illustrious institution to stamp its crest on Belgian hearts: with wandering hands clamped firmly to sweat-stained rods, Warwick's best, Tom Burdett, dispatched his adversary, Erwin Metten, with no little skill. It was the icing on a successful tournament cake for Burdett: his 3 bar shooting had earlier raised eyebrows taking him to 4th in Forward Shoot-Out.

Only one step away from the Final, it was Switzerland that stood in our heroes' path – would swelling British hearts be pricked by Giles Perrin's carefully placed pin-shots? Indeed, deflation seemed imminent as Perrin dragged Atha over the coals in a heated singles rubber [surely Atha would *inflate* if dragged over hot coals? Ed]. Yet Atha would not wilt and – O Captain, My Captain! – the UK captain grabbed the tail end of the tie to swing things round, giving his charges a match-winning boost.

And so, the British did battle with the reigning World Champions, Austria, in the Nations Cup Final. Atha did his duty, taking down the nervous Wolfgang Reisler in the opening exchanges of fire. Where our captain had led, we were to follow, blindly pouring out of the trenches. At first there was a strange calm: May and Suvajac stood toe to toe, circling each other, so close as to see the whites in each others' eyes. There were shots, and May fell. Brice blindsided Rorher only to be overcome at close range. Then the remaining brave foos-soldiers fell in no-man's land: Burdett and Ramlee got bogged down; Brice Louise was picked off; Kingston tanked. The dust had long cleared when Hamilton and Russell-Gebbett were found.

Suvajac, Rieger, Skok...the victors' scroll tells all that is good in the game of table soccer. Yet the roll call of the vanquished: Atha, Atha, Brice, Brice, Burdett, Hamilton, Kingston, May, Ramlee, Russell-Gebbett boasts all that is good in Britain – courage, determination and the triumph of the human spirit.



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Upcoming Events

+ Shorts

The **UK Masters** will be held on Tornado as usual at The Floatel, Northwich and is in the diary for the 7th-9th September, organised by Eddie Edwards. This is always one of the most fun events on the UK circuit, with Alex Shovelton keen to strum his guitar for everyone. Friday sees Goalie Wars, Saturday Open, SP, Rookie and Women's Singles take place, with OD starting. Doubles competitions, including Master's Doubles will take place on the Sunday. Full details to follow next month!

There are plans for a Foos4Fun supported Tornado tournament in Manchester, at Rileys Pool Club on November 17th and 18th.

The final ITSF WCS event is the **Tornado World Championships** in Las Vegas in September, from the 26th to the 30th. Again a number of UK foosers are expected to combine a fantastic week away at the unique cultural phenomenon that could only be found in the USA, while still finding time to play top quality foosball against the World's highest standard of players.

There is already the nucleus of a good team for this event, with a number of UK players confirmed, including top WCS contender and UK No.1 Rob Atha, boy wonder Joe Hamilton and veterans Rob Davey and Martyn Harris. **However, there is currently a severe shortage of ladies.** This will put the UK team at a big disadvantage, making victory unlikely against any of the World Class teams. After the stellar performance gaining a second place at the Garlando WCS event, there is a real momentum behind the UK team. If you think you are eligible to compete in Las Vegas, please contact BFA chair Boris Atha to discuss eligibility.

Alex Shovelton and Jon May won the July Bush BYP from Mike Amsden and Tom Burdett, double dipping the only team unbeaten through the group stages of a very strong UK Championship warm-up field.

Rob Davey and Alex Shovelton took the 3rd Bank BYP beating Dave Bareham and Grzegorz Zakowski in the final, with John Shovelton and Dave Oates finishing 3rd. The next Bank Shield will be held on Saturday September 1st. A strong turnout is expected, as *Foos4Fun* inform us there will be fantastic prizes for the next competition. Turnout will be limited to 14-16 teams, so keep an eye on Britfoos for more details.

To include articles or feature an event in this Newsletter, please contact newsletter@britfoos.com. To advertise in the BFA Newsletter, please contact commercial@britfoos.com.

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