



British Foosball Association

November / December
Newsletter 2007

DAVE ZIEMANN + TICH DEGUN ITSF WORLD CHAMPIONS



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View From The Chair – Boris Atha

WHAT A WONDERFUL PERFORMANCE

Britain has its first ITSF World Champions - Tich Degun and Dave Ziemann took the Senior Doubles title, with Dave Ziemann sweeping the board with the Senior Singles title. In Open Doubles, Jujhar Sohi and Rob Atha took 4th place, and John Shovelton reached the DYP final partnering Belgian veteran Jean-Pierre Pirlet. Congratulations to all - benchmarks have been set and reputations made which need to be lived up to. Those players who made the trip to St Vincent all appeared to have a good time, with plenty of sore heads in the morning. Sadly, after four years of ever-expanding success, this was the last time the spectacular setting of St Vincent is due to host the event. Roll on 2008.

The ITSF World Championships also hosted the General Assembly, where delegates from member federations meet to decide ITSF policy. The membership of ITSF has passed 50 national federations, and already the 2008 tour has over 30x tournaments sanctioned, with many more to follow. The German-manufactured Leonhart table was voted in as the second ITSF 'recognised' table along with the Czech-made Rosengart - these are sanctioned for tournaments up to Master Series status. In other developments, Rob Atha is a member of the ITSF Rules Commission, Rob Davey attended the officials clinic, and Boris Atha was appointed president of the ITSF Technical commission, responsible for encouraging developments in table design, and criteria for ITSF sanction for new and existing tables.

The UK has been awarded 3x ITSF Tournaments in 2008, starting with the Liverpool Open in January on Garlando, the Hereford Open in April on Tornado (Master Series), and the Multitable UK Open at Bolton. In addition, a table sponsorship deal has been agreed which provides 10x ITSF-approved Garlando Master Champion freeplay tables for use in tournaments over the next 2 years, and guaranteeing organisers a source of Garlando tables enabling more tournaments to be held.

The Tornado ranking list is due to undergo a total revamp to bring it in line with the Garlando and unofficial Bonzini rankings. The details are yet to be finalised but the aim is that these will be available before the first Tornado tournament of 2008.

Finally, the details of the club membership scheme have been agreed, and work is now underway to develop the infrastructure and logistics needed to make the scheme viable, before it is launched to the Britfoos world and the General Public. Hopefully this will see a huge expansion in membership and grass-roots involvement in the game.



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ITSF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

WORLD CHAMPIONS

The ITSF world championships were held in St. Vincent at the end of October – and what fantastic results the British team managed!

Star performers were Messrs Ziemann and Degun. Senior Doubles World Champions! Dave Ziemann doubled up, as he took the Senior Singles title as well. Just reward for one of the UK's most dedicated foosers. Tich Degun forced himself away from his favoured Tornado table - practice at the likes of Bar Kick paying off.

The great victories in the Senior Doubles lifted the British team to 3rd on the medal table – a position other sports can only dream of.

Rob Atha and Juj Sohi faced a tough semi-final against the unstoppable Frederic Collignon and Ismael Saban from Belgium, before finishing 4th in the Open Doubles competition. Atha must be disappointed with his 9th in the Open Singles – a sign of his consistently high performances on all tables over the last couple of years. Sohi's 17th in the same event was a creditable effort for the UK champion.

There were fine performances by the other Brits: Ramlee, Wong, Matharu and Walker flew the flag for the British women. John Shovelton managed a fantastic second in the DYP. Paddy Grover accompanied him through to the knockout stages in Open Doubles – a creditable achievement against fantastically strong opposition.

In the Junior competition James Oates represented Britain with pride – experience that will do wonders for his game in the future.



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ITSF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Double World Champion Dave Ziemann **with a unique and personal report of his** **triumph!**

Injury

A couple of months ago I sustained a shoulder injury by overpracticing the snake on Tornado. I thought I was better, went to the Floatel, and found I could not play. Injury is a strange thing; first it seems to resolve, then it moves around, then trivial things compound it, then it gets better, and then it comes back for no apparent reason.

With only a few weeks until Italy, I knew I had to be very careful. I had physio for remedial and started Pilates for strengthening. In order to prevent re-injury I did not practice Tornado snake shooting in the month before the tournament, only passing and hacking. Two weeks before I considered pulling out. To decide I played one evening of Bonzini at Bar Kick, shooting pull-shots all night. It was a great relief when I felt OK the next day, so I decided to go ahead.

In the tournament I did not risk shooting the snake on Tornado. Instead I shot a tic-tac-push-kick series on Tornado, a pull shot on Bonzini, and pull or snake on the lighter Italian tables. Even so, I was continually concerned that I might injure myself if I used full power.

The single-elimination multi-table DYP

I played the DYP with trepidation. My plan was to take it easy, play backs, get some multi-table practice and not try too hard. My partner was Mary Moore, of IFP fame. Things started according to plan, with us going two games down on Garlando and Bonzini, to a very good Garlando player, who partnered Ola (Rob's girlfriend). But losing is very painful and we swapped and I started playing. We pulled it back from the brink to win 3-2. We got through another round in similar fashion before being knocked out. This was Mary's first time on these tables and I think she missed Tornado! She was such great fun to play with.

Belgian federation was paid to play Roberto Sport

I wondered why so many players had picked Roberto Sport as their home table. I was told (by a Belgian) that Collignon had brokered a deal with Roberto Sport, who paid the Belgian federation a large sum of money on the condition that the entire Belgian team chose to play on Roberto Sport. So if you wanted to play on the Belgian team you had to choose Roberto Sport as your home table.

Senior Singles Qualifiers

I got a shock when I saw my match sheet at 9am. All but one of my games was on Tornado. I was hoping to play against players whose preference wasn't Tornado.

My first game was against French player Claude Benizri on Bonzini. I ask him if he likes the new balls and he says yes he does. But in the game he seems to have some trouble with it sliding away. But so do I. Neither of us is used to it. My 5 is better than his, but he has a fast push-kick with a nice dink split option – he uses the button handles and can get a very quick shot with them. I shoot pulls, it's a close games but I beat him 7-6. Then it's Tornado and I beat him comfortably 7-3.



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The Japanese player is next, we both picked Tornado. His name is Hidero Ohtomo – he has worked in the UK and once went to play in Southall. I beat him 7-3 both games.

Then I have to play Jet on Tornado twice. First I have to clean the sweat off the table because he's just lost on the same table to the strong US player Mark Davis. I wonder if I can beat him without snaking. He scores OK on his 3 but I block his 5 well. I score from my 2 and my 5, plenty of my favourite set-piece hacks. On the 3 I get some tic-tac push-kicks and also shoot one snake when I needed a point badly. I beat him 7-5, 7-4 and I'm pleased with that.

The last pair of matches is a no show (presumably the missing Algerian), so I win those 7-2 by default. I win every game and this puts me top of the group ranking. The next best player is Jean-Pierre Pirlet, who lost 6-7 to the Mark Davis and 6-7 to Claude Benizri on Tornado.

As I discover later, Jean-Pierre turns out to be a much more formidable singles player than we were able to determine from his doubles performance with Shovo in the DYP.

Senior Singles Elimination

In the elimination round it's first to 5 best of 5. My top seeding gives me a first round bye. In the semis I play Claude again. We both know how important the coin toss is when each player is strong on his own table. He wins & he chooses to play Bonzo first.

Claude is playing a lot better now. He's scoring from his 3 and 2, but I fight and manage a narrow win. We play Tornado and I win there too. In the next game on Bonzini he fights hard and comes back strong to beat me. But I know I just have to win my Tornado game. I go 4-1 up and Claude admits defeat, scoring an intentional own-goal off his serve. I'm in the final.

Senior Singles Final

I was expecting an all Tornado final between me & Mark Davis. But no - I had to play Jean-Pierre Pirlet, the Belgian senior champ who beat Mark. It's in the pit and being filmed. The sad bit is that I play terribly. Jean-Pierre plays a lot like Boris; he shoots from wherever the ball is, he is deliberate and does not give up. He has very annoying shots from the back and a variety of deceptive 5-bar hacks. It's a painfully slow slopfest.

I win the toss and pick Tornado. I start well with a 5-bar hack of own. I hear Shovo laugh in the audience – I think he predicted my hack. Jean-Pierre is better than I thought. I've been warned about his hesitation pull kick on Tornado. He sets it up, gives the ball a little tap sideways & forwards and then launches into an impressively fast shot that goes very long. It's dangerous but not too reliable. He's a hustler and a fighter. I fall into a bit of a daze and he beats me on Tornado.



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I know I have to win on Roberto or I'm in trouble. I play a mixture of skank and snake and manage the win. The next 2 games go to home table pick, so we are 2-2. I take advice from my supporters. The last game starts on Roberto. I don't do anything great but manage to stay ahead, and I win before things get to 4-4. Winning is great, but I regret playing so badly on the DVD.

Later on Jean-Pierre suggests that he would have beaten me on Tecball, his personal preference, if he had been allowed to play it. I don't blame him for saying this, but it demonstrates how pernicious the Belgian deal is, reducing the effectiveness and confidence of one player, while diluting the victory of another.

Senior Doubles Qualifiers

I play backs for Tich on Tornado, and forward on all the other tables. First we play the French team on Tornado; we win 7-4 but clearly things don't go all our own way.

Then we play on Bonzini. I'm going to shoot pulls so I get a nice new ball to play with. But things start off rocky. It's early morning & I've had no Bonzo practice. I shoot four pulls without scoring. But Tich is patient and my 5 is better than Claude's, so I get more possession. Then I start scoring and Claude has trouble gripping the ball. We beat the French 7-4 on Bonzini. Then we play the Italian team and beat them 7-3 on Tornado. On Roberto Sport they play al volo style but we control the ball and beat them 7-3.

The Germans are a much better team, but we play really well. Peter Muller shoots very good snakes while his partner Josef Cornelius blocks and clears well. I score two good tic-tacs from the back & Tich is a machine up front. We beat them 7-3 and then 7-4 on Tornado, completing the quals without dropping a game. This gives us the top seeding, the reward for which is a bye in the first knock out round.

Senior Doubles semi-final nail-biter

In the semi-final we played Maurice Hauben (Fred's wife Ingrid's dad and Mr Eurosoccer) and Jean-Pierre Pirllet on Tornado and Roberto Sport. We lost the toss so of course they chose to start on Roberto. It turned into a grueling 5-setter, with games going with home table. Maurice has a really good front pin on Roberto. If you give him the tiniest pull side hole he will nail it. And he's good at working the ball to open the hole he wants. He scored 100% on us on that table. At one tense moment they took a time-out and he goes "63 years old!".

So we're even and the 5th game starts on Roberto. You play 2 balls on one table, and then 2 balls on the other. Things go ball for ball and we equalize at 4-4 on Tornado. So then it's on to Roberto, and we score to make it 5-4. I'm about to give them the ball to serve when someone in the audience who shall remain nameless (but thanks Iain!) reminds us that the rules require a table change on every ball when the score is 4-4. So we shift to Tornado where we have the advantage and Tich passes & scores to clinch the match.



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Senior Doubles Final

I was expecting to meet the Bonzini-picking US team Bruce Nardoci & Kathy Brainard in the final. It would have been fun. But they got KO'd by the German team, who were presumably also strong on Bonzini.

In the first game we played a blinder, we won 5-0. But they came back strongly to win the 2nd game. Since the quals they'd sorted out their tic-tac defence. But Tich was scoring well upfront. We replied by winning the 3rd and then claimed the title by winning the 5th. But it seemed at one point like the better Tich played the more determined I was to turn the ball over to Peter's 3 bar. It was one of those matches. Although I made some critical blocks, I again felt I'd played very poorly in the final, and on DVD.

On the Podium

It felt strange to be on the top of a big podium with the national anthem playing. My normal feeling of revulsion at anything vaguely nationalistic was layered with pride for the team and also the progress of the UK game. It was a shame that the 2nd place Belgian team was unable to be present on the podium. When it was Fred's turn to go up, they screwed up and played the Austrian national anthem by mistake. When he heard it, 3rd place Wolfgang Reszler tried to climb onto the top, Fred gave him a friendly kick and Ishmael killed himself laughing.

Balls, balls, balls

The Garlando ball, the Roberto Sport ball and the new Bonzini ball were all yellow plastic, but you could tell them apart as follows; the Garlando ball had the letter "B" imprinted on it (yes!), the Bonzini ball has "ITSF B" on it, and the Roberto Sport ball had nothing on it. What a great joy.

Who likes the New Bonzini Balls?

Why the new Bonzini ball was introduced at the World Championship rather than earlier in the year is beyond me. The new ball is yellow plastic, it starts off smooth and becomes mottled and more grippy with use. It is slightly heavier than the cork ball, so while it is very pull-shot friendly, it does not fly quite as well. Some people said they like it better, but most people I spoke to felt that the ball was not quite right yet.

Charlie Friessem

I just wanted to say something about Charlie (the "ITSF mouse" as he is known, for he collects ITSF points as a mouse collects cheese). Charlie played a blinder. In the qualifier round he beat Terry Moore on Tornado (true), and then Laszlo Teke on Garlando. Then in the elimination round he had to play Olivier Covos, the top French Bonzini player, on Bonzini. Predictably he lost the first game 0-5, but then proceeded to win the next 3 games, knocking Covos out of singles! His campaign was only halted by the amazing Tommy Adkisson.



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Tommy Adkisson

I suspect that Tommy had never touched the non-Tornado tables before. But being the player he is, he still managed to deliver a quality game on every table, for example beating top Luxembourg player Yannick Correia on his Tecball pick, and then knocking him out of singles in a bitter match. On Tornado he has a stunning 2-bar pull-kick and a fast & powerful pull shot. Only Fred could challenge Tommy, and he made him look like a novice, beating him 3 straight on Tornado & Roberto. Fred is a genius.

Jude FitzGerald

Special mention to Jude who seemed so happy at our win! There was no doubles team from Ireland, but Jude played in the singles. He had a very tough draw, having to play Rob Atha, Yannick Correia and Laszlo Teke. I'm sure he'll tell the story...

Dodgy Tornado

Some of the bumpers on Tornado were slightly too thick, allowing the ball to pass between the wall and the puppet on the wall pass. I was told that some of the 3-bars penetrated the cabinet at a slight angle off the horizontal. This was blamed on a faulty machine tool in the new – Mexican – production plant. Dave Courington was showing off the new Tornado one-puppet goalie table, which has banked corners instead of the usual extra wingers.

Party Time

The ITSF laid on two player buffets with food, soft drinks and beer. There was evidently a large amount of Carlsberg sponsorship as their name was prominently displayed. There was also some entertainment from a professional singer who also announced the awards.

Medals & Trophies

The medals were very nice - heavy metal bronze, silver or gold discs inscribed with ITSF, year, event and place. Each "trophy" turned out to be a Grappa-filled glass "bell" with a miniature glass ship inside it, installed in a wooden frame so that it could swing. Lovely! This was multiply inappropriate, being handed out to junior players, Moslems and non-drinkers alike. Did anyone consider travelers? The stopper was dodgy so you could not risk packing it, and you couldn't take it in your hand luggage as it's a liquid! We drank one of my trophies at a celebratory night out, and the other I poured into a plastic bottle and gave to the InsideFoos crew to enjoy on their last night.

Try not to meet Fred

It's in principal possible to throw qualifier games in order to manipulate the outcome of the seeding in the subsequent elimination round. But of course this can backfire when more than team attempts the same trick. Rob & Juj ended up meeting Fred & Ismael in the semis, which was a round too early!



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Terry Moore

I enjoyed watching Rob & Juj play Terry Moore & Billy Pappas in the men's doubles 3rd/4th playoff. Terry never stops talking his foosball dialog, almost like doing a Jim Stevens on himself as he plays. He talked like Juj did not exist, referring to him as "he" all the time. Rob seemed to own Terry on the 5, but Billy knows Rob well and was blocking him. And Terry sure knows what he's doing on the 3. But Rob & Juj had chances and I reckon they could have won on a different day. Well played guys!

Don't drop your video camera

It's a JVC Everio hard-drive camcorder. And I did drop it, while it was turned on, onto the concrete floor. I wondered if the advertised anti-drop feature had worked – it's supposed to retract the read/write heads from the surface of the hard drive when it detects a zero-g condition. Well, it worked fine afterwards. I was impressed.

A great bunch of Brits

There were so many of us brits! There were 12 players; me & Tich, Rob & Juj, Shovo & Paddy, Caroline & Donna, Hannah & Pinday and James Oates & Jonathan Neale. Then there was Iain, Sam, Boris, Dave, Rob Davey & Dave Oates not to mention Donna's parents. Was huge.

Next Year

I understand that next year the ITSF World Championship won't be held in St Vincent, because Italy have completed their final secretariat year. I wonder where it will be...



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**DAVID MCKENNA
OF EXCEL**

Excel Leisure are importers of all Garlando's products, both coin operated and non-coin operated – including the World Championship Table and the popular G500 that the Shoveltons learned to play on. They also stock a wide range of spares, and have an excellent working relationship with the BFA. David McKenna has kindly agreed to answer some questions for us. Please check out their website at:

<http://www.garlando-tables.co.uk>



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How did you get started at Excel, and how did you get into the table football side of the business? Did you drift into it, or was it something you planned?

I personally have been with Excel for over 4 years however the company has been in existence 10 years and the owners of the company have been manufacturing pool tables for over 30 years. The owners were also involved in operating and distributing football tables prior to the formation of Excel. The coin-operated football table has been a mainstream product for the industry for many years and as soon as Excel started it had a deliberate objective to distribute the Garlando Coin-Op products.

What do you do in a standard day?

I purchase all the products for manufacture and distribution and handle the company logistics as well as managing the websites. We receive enquiries on a daily basis from operators for the commercial products and from retail customers who have visited our websites. Sales for coin-operated tables are regular, however home tables tend to be more seasonal with Christmas being the peak time for sales.

How much of Excel's business is Table Football, and how much is Pool etc?

Pool tables sales are the bigger percentage because our main customers are operators who supply pubs and clubs which have the room to operate the bigger pool tables. The earnings from pool tables are generally higher than those of football tables and so pool is still a bigger selling product for us although football table sales are on the increase.

How important was it to Excel to get rights to the homeplay tables, as previously you could only do deals with operators.

It was very important and we were delighted to be appointed distributors for the Garlando homeplay tables because we had already worked with Garlando for several years and so we were very familiar with the quality of their products and service and it is always our goal to work at the higher quality end of the market.



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**DAVID MCKENNA
OF EXCEL**

How are Excel planning on driving the sales commercially and to the homeplay market?

We know and already deal with the multi-national operators and small operators throughout the UK and Ireland and therefore our commercial sales are solid and growing through these companies.

Sales for the home-play tables are rising because of our increased website presence and also through our network of distributors which has increased considerably this year.



World Championship Table

© www.garlando-tables.co.uk

Are you a player yourself, and how regularly do you play if so.

No, I never get the time I am afraid.

Do you find that customers in general are happier to get the pinny, rounded men on tables than they were getting the traditional block feet?

You cannot please all the people all the time, but because the players generally prefer pinny feet, we have gone down that road and now all the tables we import have pinny feet. So far we have had little adverse reaction. We will still supply players with blocky feet by request, but obviously these are subject to a lead time.

What do you think of the recent changes Garlando have made to the World Championship tables - particularly the posts?

I think the changes are positive.

And, do you think it is in Garlando's best interests to keep changing their flagship table on what seems an annual basis? (I know I am betraying my own personal feelings here, but it does make it more difficult to practice on the tables used at international tournaments if they are different every year)

Garlando are always listening to the players and are always trying to produce the perfect playing conditions. I think the tables has been evolving over the years from player input at tournaments. If the BFA players are happy with the latest table they should give Excel the feedback and we will pass it on to Garlando.



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**DAVID MCKENNA
OF EXCEL**

What changes would you like to see Garlando make?

We are quite happy with the Garlando product range which provides something for everyone.

What are your views on the BFA? What do we do well?

The BFA is in our view a good organisation that works hard to promote and harness the interests of table football.

What do we do badly?

Badly is a strong word, but like a lot of associations lots of good ideas do not get off the ground because of lack of funding.

What would you like to see us do?

Keep working hard to recruit new members.

Thanks a lot for the time and effort involved in answering these questions – it is much appreciated!



G500 Table



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Holywell Open 2007
Results 3rd-4th November

Open Singles

1. Andrew Nubbert
2. John Blanchard
3. Mike Amsden

Women's Singles

1. Sarah Brice
2. Jody Walding
3. Victoria Naylor

No-Pro Doubles

1. Zico Yung & Graeme Addison
2. Martyn Harris & Phil Williams
3. Jee Ha Kim & Rob Davey

Open Doubles

1. Tom Burdett & Steve Lyall
2. Mike Amsden & Rob Davey
3. Dave Carter & John Worthington

Novice Doubles

1. Jan Goncar & Jiri Nepustil
2. Liam Donovan & Saadat Iftikhar
3. Peter Hedges & Christopher Chan





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HOLYWELL OPEN

Our intrepid reporter Tom Burdett took a break from corrupting the minds of the next generation to report on the debut event at Britain's newest foosball haunt.

The 1st Holywell Open turned out to be one of those rare gems in the foosing calendar. It was hastily thrown together in only two weeks in a desperate attempt to fill the large void in British Garlando tournaments. The tournament organisers had low expectations before the tournament and any resemblance of competitive foos would have sufficed. What followed was an astonishing, titillating and captivating set of events that left the majority of foosers astonished and dumbfounded.

The people's foosser of the tournament award, if it existed, would belong unquestionably to one man and one man alone. With some of the top names missing from the list of entrees it was clear that Open Singles was anyone's for the taking, but who have predicted Andrew Nubbett would pull one out of the proverbial bag and be crowned as champion. His first notable win was against SPMA Rob Davey in a close fought match with Nubbett winning on sweatball much to Rob Davey's embarrassment. His next victim was an on form Dave Carter who completed his foosing comeback with an impressive 5th place in OS. Nubbett's array of dinks, pinwrenchs, pull kicks and pull shots proved too much for Dave "Family issues" Carter and he was dispatched 7-6, 7-6. Nubbett, having now reached the winners final, must have been as cocky as Shovie on prozac, and with only Mike Amsden in his way from taking king seat, thoughts of winning OS must have crept into his mind. He spanked Mike 7-5, 7-2 and was on the verge of taking one of the most unexpected Open event titles since Iain Boardman and Raj Panesar won OD at Bristol. The grand final was a close fought match against John Blanchard. John, needing to double dip, won the first match 7-4, 7-6 to take it to the decider. By this stage there was a huge crowd of people watching and some were worried that Nubbett's lack of "big game experience" might get the better of him. Those doubters were proven wrong when Nubbett took the first game 7-5 finding himself in a commanding position. In the second game Nubbett had shots on the 3-bar to win but it turned out he had "the bottle of a can" and John came back to take it on sweat ball. The final leg saw Nubbett reach 6 goals first. Like the second set Nubbett had many shots to win on the 3-bar and it took 7 attempts until finally a push pinwrench slid through John's defence. The crowd, consisting of many Warwickites and Nubbett sympathisers, went crazy and there was a cheer louder than any other I have ever heard in my foosing career. Congratulations Nubbett! A special mention should go to Sarah Brice who came 9th, one of the highest placing in OS an English female has seen for some time.

Open doubles was, like OS, anyone's for the taking. With no team ever winning OD in a previous tournament there was great excitement over who might take their first OD victory. It turned out to be a battle between two teams, 3rd seeds Rob Davey and Mike Amsden looking to take their first Open Garlando titles. 1st seeds Tom Burdett and Steve Lyall were out to stop them, and potentially take their first Open title, Steve in his first final, Tom in his 7th. Tom and Steve had a fairly comfortable route to the final without dropping a set. They defeated tournament Veterans Dave Carter and John Worthington in the semi-final of the winner's bracket. John and Dave were playing well and defeated Nubbett and Simon Yeung in the losers to go on and eventually take a commendable 3rd place.



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Holywell Open

(report continued)

The other winner's semi-final saw Davey and Amsden (Damsel) defeat Amateurs Gerald Tan and Chris Lyall. In the winner's final Tom and Steve demolished team Damsel in two sets but this was no indication of the nature of the grand final. Team Damsel beat John and Dave in the losers final to earn a rematch against Tom and Steve to take the title. In the first set Tom and Steve took a 6-2 lead but let things slip and Damsel pulled it back to sweatball. Sweatball, living up to its name, could have been won by either team but eventually Tom and Steve took it to take the first leg. In the second Tom and Steve went 6-3, only for Damsel to once again bring things back to sweatball.

Tom had 3 opportunities to win it but bottled each one and thoughts of another 2nd place in an Open event were starting to creep in. Sweatball once again lived up to its name. After some scrapping on the 5-bar the ball found its way to Steve's 2-bar, which had been on fire in the winner's bracket final, and Tom was hoping for a repeat of Steve's 2-bar heroics. Tom was, however, severely disappointed to see Steve fluff it into his own goal and the match went to the wire. The third leg went very much like the first and second. Tom and Steve went 6-3 up, but once again Damsel clawed it back to sweatball, Mike nailing a snake at 6-5 at the same time as Nubbert scored the winning goal in the OS final. This time Tom managed to spank a push snake past Rob's flailing defence to take his and Steve's first OD title and another loud cheer from the Warwickite audience.

No-pro doubles was a closely fought affair and when number 1 seeds and hot favourites Jee-ha "free food" Kim and Rob Davey were knocked out nobody knew what was going to happen. The final saw Oxford's Graeme Addison and Zico Yung take on the Southampton/Bristol collaboration of Phil Williams and Martyn Harris. Congratulations to Zico "filth" Yung and Graeme for winning the hard fought final.

Novice Doubles saw a few Oxford teams showing the potential for an Oxford comeback into the foosing world. Liam Donovan and Sadaat Iftikhar were the leaders of the Oxford n00bs taking a well deserved 2nd place. 1st place went to Czech born Oxford residents Jiri Nepustil and Jan Goncar who also did well to come 5th in No-Pro doubles.

Last but not least was Woman's singles, which was a hard fought close competition seeing Keele's Sarah Brice take on Holywell's (ex-Chetwynd's) finest. Sarah was knocked into the loser's bracket early on and it looked like Holywell's top three Jodie Walding, Victoria Naylor and Alina Iwan were set to take the podium positions. However, Sarah found another gear and stormed the loser's bracket to double dip Jodie in the final to take top spot (apparently her first WS title but I am not convinced). It is great to see the female game growing and becoming more competitive.

A huge thank you has to go to pub owner Bill for allowing us to use his pub as a venue, and for setting up the best foos friendly lighting system I have ever seen. May this be the first tournament of many! Another thank you goes to the Holywell crew for their help in setting up tables and contributing to the success of this fantastic tournament.



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Holywell Open Pictures



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Bank Shield 2008

Dave Oates writes:

I am pleased to announce the 2008 Bank BYP schedule. In order to encourage attendance and reward those who are supporting the venue ,encourage rookies etc I have come up with a different angle for next year.

Every time you attend a Bank BYP you will be given a numbered ticket. At the end of the season at the last event we will be making a draw and all the tickets given out will be placed in a hat (or something similar!) and the winner and their nominated partner will get a free trip (flights and accomodation paid) to a good quality Foosball event in Europe in 2009. The more times you turn up for the event the more tickets you will have and hence increase your chance of being drawn out. **This means even if you are a rookie you could win a free trip to a great foosball event in 2009 and see what they are like.** Having come back from St Vincent I can safely say very enjoyable! Attending all 6 BYP's gives you 6 tickets in the hat and a correspondingly increased chance of an enjoyable foosin trip. If you win of course you still get your name on the Shield ,the cash etc. The dates are as follows and as usual practice starts from 12.30 , registration from 13.30 and kick off from 14.00. Good food and drink available as usual from the downstairs bar.

Also don't forget its world cup groups to start so lots of games even if you get beaten a lot and if you want a one day event then this is one which starts and finishes at a reasonable time! If you want two days stay over and go out with the Bristol Foosers and play at the Bush Sunday!

Sat Feb 2nd 2008
Sat July 19th

Sat April 12th
Sat Sept 13th

Sat June 7th
Sat Nov 8th -(including the draw at the end).

Have fun and if you are a Bank Virgin time to think about changing that. Great practice for bigger tournies too!

SHORTS

Tom Burdett and Steve Lyall were the winners of the inaugural Holywell event on the evening of the 20th October. They took the victory convincingly despite a number of close 5-4 victories, winning all the 8 matches they played. 4 teams finished with the same record of 5 wins and 3 defeats.

Joe Hamilton and Dave Bareham won the October Bank BYP competition. They beat Rob Davey and Mike Amsden in the final. They also were victorious in the November Bush BYP, beating Martyn Harris and Chris Bulley in the final. The final Bank BYP of this yar is held on Saturday 1st December and The final Bush BYP of the year will be on Thursday 6th December.



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Manchester Tornado Open 2007

Open Singles

1. Rob Atha
2. Tom Burdett
3. John Shovelton

Women's Doubles

1. Donna Walker & Caroline Wong
2. Cai-Mee Khoo & Ee Lin Loy

Open Doubles

1. Rob Atha & Artur Chojecki
2. Mike Amsden & Rob Davey
3. Tom Burdett & John Shovelton

Women's Singles

1. Sarah Brice
2. Ee Lin Loy
3. Louise Brice

Semi-Pro Singles

1. Tom Burdett
2. Rob Davey
3. Steve Lyall

Semi-Pro Doubles

1. Tom Burdett & Rob Davey
2. Vincent Rankin & Peter Morris
3. Les Jones & Stuart Cree

Rookie Doubles

1. Zhern Chong & Kok Chan
2. Shaffiq Haniff & Tomaz Purgal
3. Brian Connor & Dave Taylor

Rookie Singles

1. Shaffiq Haniff
2. Zhern Chong
3. Craig Fothergill

DYP

1. Tom Burdett & Mike Amsden
2. Dave Morgan & Artur Chojecki
3. Adam Bushell & Rob Davey



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JEE HA KIM

Jee Ha is the shining light of the Oxford table football scene. He is on a mission to restore Oxford to the top of the University tree!

How did you get started playing?

I remember the very first time I touched a foosball table – it was a free-play FAS aboard the deck of a cruise ship in the Mediterranean. This was during a school trip in October 2000 and the game was heavily popular amongst us Year 9s. The trick to winning (we thought) was who could spin the fastest until this old guy started kicking ass with controlled, accurate straights using his wrist power. Me and a few others made a note and tried to copy that.

But we still couldn't beat the spin. Then there was a long gap and I actually started playing properly when I came across a Coperto Garlando in the sixth-form block at King Edwards VI Camp Hill School in September 2003. I contributed a LOT of 20p coins back then.

What's your favourite moment in foosball?

That's easy – it's when I execute a perfect slingshot from the back with the ball going smoothly into the goal! Everybody is absolutely amazed. I never get tired of that reaction.

And your worst moment?

I shudder to tell – riding Zico's car, having been forced into the boot by numerous Oxford big-lads, going there AND back from Warwick Open '07. My neck hurt.

But in terms of worst moments during foosball, none, because it's all fun!

What are your aspirations for this year?

Well this year, as the President of the Oxford University Table Football Club (OUTFC), I am looking forward to do my best in promoting and providing a great table football scene in Oxford. The OUTFC Committee has worked very hard over the past month to present a much improved Oxford league (called the Oxfoos League) and University Cuppers tournaments. Hopefully our efforts will bear fruit – in fact at this year's Oxford University Freshers' Fair, we were able to attain an all time record of 300 signups for the Club (much congratulations to Bernhard Elsner & Yi Rae Lee for their century)! In addition we are hoping to get the Oxford Open running again, probably sometime in March 2008, so watch out!

On a personal level, it is (already) my final year as an undergraduate and I should be focusing on my studies hard, definitely (or maybe) above foosball. But you'll still see me around at tournaments – so Lil' Brice, your nemesis will still come to haunt you! My other major aspiration: to get my slingshot as consistent and boring as the Warwick brush-snake play, if not more.

How much do you practice both by yourself, and with others?

When I first purchased my own Garlando, I used to practice a lot by myself, maybe at least 3 hours a day. But I quickly hit a limit where I just won't improve anymore by practicing on my own – all consistent passes or shots would break down as soon as I face an opposition. So these days I am more looking to play and learn with advanced players during Uni sessions once a week, than self-practice.





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JEE HA KIM (continued)



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Who are the next stars from Oxford that we should keep an eye on in the future?

There are so many up and coming players at Oxford! Within the last couple of years there's been a complete turnover of players and a new generation has settled here. So many players are worth mentioning, but will restrict myself to those I feel are the top three. If you want a complete list, please check our 'Player Profiles' page on <http://www.oxfoos.co.uk/>.

Firstly, Graeme Addison, the OUTFC Secretary. He was ranked an Amateur after his triumph in Novice Doubles and 4th in Amateur Doubles (with Michael Hart) at the Warwick Open '07. He is in the same year as me, but he had never played table football before coming to University! Thereby he demonstrated an 'inexplicable learning curve' to attain such level of skill that in my view leaves him totally under-ranked. He is going to dominate the Amateur events in the next Garlando tournament. You just watch.

Secondly, as you all probably know, Mark Nubbert, the Nubbert's brother – he claims he is the 'Nub' of all time and incidentally he is the OUTFC Webmaster. He shocked the UK foosball community by knocking out Joe Hamilton and Dan Kingston (then Pros, but currently ranked Pro-Masters) in Open Singles at Warwick '07, one of the largest Garlando tournaments in the UK! After just two tournaments he is already a Semi-Pro and climbing fast. Enough said.

Lastly, I would like to mention the OUTFC Women's Captain, Frances Pope. She can hit the ball THE hardest out of all players at Oxford, no joke. She was the first woman ever to win the OUTFC Freshers Doubles Title (with Dan Taylor) and she was clearly marked out as a player with great potential. She has great strength and accuracy – though at the moment lacks set shots. But hopefully she will learn them soon and follow the paths of say, Sarah Brice.

What have you got planned for Oxford this year to try and increase the playing standard (and the general popularity)?

We have decided to hold more regular events and socials than ever held previously, and each event seeks to provide the *most suitable atmosphere for its target group*. The 8pm Thursday DYP at St. Catherine's College is a fun/social session primarily for the less experienced players to come and enjoy themselves, having a pint of beer whilst developing their interest/skills in table football. The Uni sessions and trials at Somerville College are competitive training grounds for experienced players wanting a good practice, improve their game or prove their worth for the Uni team. What I have been trying also to do in these sessions is to invite some of the top UK players over as our special guests. Previously we have had (to mention a few) John Shovelton, Andrei R-G and Grzegorz Zakowski visit and play.



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JEE HA KIM (continued)

Next, there are the Women's sessions, which are currently under development by the Women's Captain.

The big one is the Oxford Open which we are trying to organize for March 2008. Hopefully we'll have a higher turnout from Oxford itself because it is far away from the exam-period!

But we welcome all players within and outside Oxford for all events above – so come, come, come!

What changes have been made this year to the Oxford league, and why have you made them?

There are 2 important changes that were made to the Oxfoos League this year. Firstly the rules of play – our rules used to resemble the traditional Garlando rules, however in the light of the new ITSF rules we decided to implement some changes. If I put it shortly, the new Oxfoos rules are ITSF rules minus some bits. The key difference is that the Oxfoos rules still maintain that you cannot score straight off the 'put-in' – so the likes of Shovo have expressed their love for it, whereas the likes of Zico have expressed their disappointment. The reason for this is that we'd like to encourage people (especially beginners) to learn to pass more from their 5-bar to 3-bar – a part of increasing the playing standard.

Secondly the match format – it used to be that a team would comprise of 6 players, playing 3 doubles and 6 singles games. Each pair or player would be ranked according to their ability and would play against the corresponding opposition. We have now reduced the team size down to 4, there being 4 doubles games (each pair plays every other) and 4 singles games (again ranked).

The reason for this is that since the Gallon revival of 1998 many of the veterans have left the University (because there was nothing more to do after a PhD). Since then there has been a sharp decline in number of keen players in Oxford and it was increasingly difficult for full teams to be put out every week. To accommodate this, the team size was reduced this has been a great success – more teams have entered the League and team captains are relieved that they can now get a full team out every week.



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JEE HA KIM (CONTINUED)

Have you got any pre-match/tournament rituals?

Not that I am aware of. Although I find some fast, fun knock-about before starting any events is very helpful to calm your nerves and get your stiff muscles working again. In another words, a warm-up, just like any other sport is recommended. On that note, I have tried playing some very fast and rigorous pieces on the piano before going to a tournament to stretch my fingers. Unfortunately I have no idea whether this really helps.

And finally, is it true Alex Millington taught you everything you know?

Well, I do hear a lot of his 'expert' commentary beside the table whenever he is around. He reads Classics at Oxford and unsurprisingly remembers an awful lot of foosball history and detailed match accounts (though one would be highly suspicious that he interprets them in his favour), which are sometimes quite interesting to hear. He particularly likes to point out what you have done wrong and offer advice on how to do them correctly, and I myself have been in wealthy receipt of his teachings. So yes, he has 'taught' me a lot. Helpful? No. Annoying? Yes.

Thanks though, Millypappaz – to me you are one of the most memorable characters Oxford has ever produced and it's great having you onboard. Now go and learn to use your midfield properly ;)

Thanks Jee Ha. The Oxfoos website is:

<http://www.oxfoos.co.uk>

This has been recently redesigned, and is well worth a look, with the discussion forum at: <http://www.oxfoos.co.uk/phpBB3/> more popular than ever before.

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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