



British Foosball Association

September Newsletter 2007

UK MASTERS ANNOUNCED

Last Ever Floatel Tournament

Donna Walker Interviewed



© Dave Ziemann

Donna Walker
- pictured with
Caroline Wong
at the recent UK
Championships.

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UK MASTERS

The **UK MASTERS** 2007 Tornado Foosball Tournament will be held on Friday 7th to Sunday 9th September 2007. This is the last tournament ever to be held at the Floatel as it is being demolished. There will be 100% payout in all events.

The Floatel
London Road
Northwich
Cheshire
CW9 5HZ
Tel: 01606 44443

Schedule

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-------|---|
| Friday 7 th September | 20:30 | Goalie Wars |
| Saturday 8 th September | 10:00 | Doors Open, Registration begins for all Events |
| | 11:00 | Rookie Singles |
| | 12:00 | Open Singles |
| | 13:00 | Semi-Pro Singles |
| | 18:00 | Women's Singles |
| | 20:00 | Open Doubles |
| Sunday 9 th September | 10:00 | Doors Open, Continuation of Events, Registration open |
| | 11:00 | Semi-Pro Doubles* |
| | 12:00 | Rookie Doubles |
| | 14:00 | Master's Doubles* – Pro/Pro Master players only |
| | 14:00 | Mixed Doubles* |
| | 16:30 | Women's Doubles |
| | 18:00 | Sunday DYP (only those no longer in events can enter) |

*Players may enter one of SP, Masters or Mixed Doubles

Entry Fees

Goalie War £5 per player

Sunday DYP £5 per player

Other Events: PM £25 per event, Pro £15, SP £10, Rookie £5, Unranked £3

Registration fee of £5 per day per player will apply

Reduced room rate accommodation is available, Double Room £30 pppn B&B, Single Room £40 pppn

Usual small print applies (check out <http://www.britfoos.com/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=5471>)



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Donna Walker

Donna started off playing in Edinburgh, but has since become a regular at London's Bar Kick. She recently qualified for the World Championships in Italy, coming second in Women's Doubles with Caroline Wong at the UK Championships

How did you get started playing?

Back in our third year of university at Edinburgh, I bought my boyfriend, Sam, a table for his 21st birthday, despite the fact we had never really played before. I honestly thought the novelty would quickly wear off - little did I know that we would still be playing on that same flimsy table 6 years on! For years though, all of us who lived in our student flat thought we must be amazing at table football, as we only ever played each other - it was only when we first started attending weekly tournaments at our local pub, that I realised how much we still had to learn.

Do you go to BK for the babyfoot or for the atmosphere or is it a combination of both?

Definitely both – as my work is so close to Bar Kick I usually find myself in there at least a couple of times a week, though I don't always play when I'm there as I'm often meeting non-table footballing friends. It's one of the friendliest and most chilled out drinking spots in Shoreditch – whether you play table football or not.

What's your favourite moment in foosball?

Any game where Sam and I manage to win against people who are clearly leagues above us - it's so nice to play with someone who knows my game so well, and who respects and values my rather unconventional style – one of speed and enthusiasm over any kind of technical skill. We started playing together and both enjoy the game so much, and despite our lack of experience, when things are going our way, it feels like we could beat anyone.

And your worst moment?

That would have to be the time that our local table football pub in Edinburgh organised a tournament where the prize was to win a table - and we entered, and told all our university friends in the architecture department, that if we won, we would donate the table to our common room. During the tournament, we had a huge crowd of architecture students come down to cheer us on – it felt like the entire pub was filled with our supporters. We got to the final no problems, where we met our friend Rob, who had hooked up with a professional player from Hungary, who we had never seen play before. He was the most psychotic player I have ever seen - and couldn't handle the fact that the whole crowd was on our side. The atmosphere was amazing, and everyone was cheering us on massively - every time we scored, the crowd went crazy - and every time the Hungarian scored - there was a deathly silence, followed by the Hungarian jumping up and down, pointing at the crowd and shouting 'F**K YOU!! F**K YOU ALL!!!'. It was hilarious. It was one of the most intense games I've ever played, and seemed to go on forever, and we were so gutted when we lost the final on a sweat ball. We really felt like we'd let everyone down. The Hungarian then disappeared back to Hungary, taking the table with him. Definitely our worst loss.



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Donna Walker

(continued)

What are your aspirations for this year?

I'm really looking forward to playing in Italy with Caroline, though I'm sure the competition will be tough. Having only been to a handful of tournaments in this country, I'd definitely like to attend more - it's nice to get to know everybody on the scene, and to put faces to names. Everybody is really friendly and there's always a good atmosphere. Sam and I have managed to walk away with a trophy or medal at each tournament we've been to so far (though only in the rookie games) - so it would be nice if we could continue that. Playing against top players is already starting to improve my game, and I'd hope that in a year's time, I might even be able to control the ball!

Who's your toughest opponent?

Probably Caroline - her style of play is the complete opposite of mine, so it always makes for an interesting game. She's been great in teaching me some of the basics - and I'd never defended before hooking up with her, so it's been a good way of learning a whole different side of the game which should hopefully improve my singles game.

How do you find playing a game dominated by men? [Any examples of prejudice that may have put you off, or examples of where everyone is nicer to you than they may otherwise have been]

I don't think any of the girls who play would deny that it can be extremely satisfying taking the boys by surprise, as when you first step up to the table, they often expect so little from your game just because you're a girl. I've often had men chivalrously insist that I start with the ball, who then immediately regretted it when the game began. I sometimes find playing against the other girls at the tournaments much harder, because it's difficult to get your aggression levels up when all the girls are so nice.



Donna plays Caroline at the recent UK championships.



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Donna Walker

(continued)

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

I'd organise a tournament where nobody was allowed to stop the ball – I'm sure I'd storm it!

Have you got plans to become a multi-table tournament regular? (I notice you have pre-registered for the UK Masters on Tornado tables) And how do you find the different table types?

Having a game that relies almost entirely on speed and reactions seems to be translating OK onto any type of table, though it does require an enormous amount of energy, which gets quickly sapped when you're playing against the top players. I think playing on all the different tables at this early stage in my game will help me in the future – and as my skills hopefully develop with experience, I think I'll gain more from a varied table experience, rather than just specialising in one type.

Any pre-tournament rituals?

None as yet, though in Edinburgh I used to swear a gin or two helped get me fired up before our weekly pub tournaments!



Donna and Sam take 3rd place in Rookie Doubles at the Bristol Open, with Foos4Fun's Rob Davey doing the honours.



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Upcoming Events

The big one event this month is the **UK Masters** on 7th-9th September, to be held at the Floatel in Northwich. Full details are given elsewhere.

The regular **Bank Shield** will be held on the 1st September, entry fees will be £5 for pro/semi-pro players and £3 for beginners and rookies. A good payout to third of 50%, 30% and 20% means everybody has a chance to take home a prize.

Further ahead, there are still plans to organise a Antony Kay / Foos4Fun organised event at **Riley's Pool Club**, Manchester City Centre (next to the Moon Under Water, in Deansgate). This will be an 8-10 table tournament, held on 17th-18th November.

The final ITSF WCS event is the **Tornado World Championships** in Las Vegas in September, from the 26th to the 30th. The standard of foosball promises to be absolutely outstanding, and there are already a number of top UK players making the trip. Confirmed so far are UK Captain Rob Atha, Rob Davey, Joe Hamilton, Martyn Harris, Mark Williams, Matt Cotterill, Sarah Brice and Louise Brice. After the outstanding performances of the UK team at the Garlando WCS (taking a fabulous 2nd place) hopes are high that the UK can be competitive against the cream of the World's Tornado players. Thanks to those nice guys at Valley Brunswick, Foos4Fun have managed to negotiate free hotel and entry packages for GB team members. This is a fantastic gesture, and hopefully will spur the team onto some amazing successes.

2007-8 ITSF Sanctioned Tournaments

In 2007-2008 the BFA can submit one tournament for sanction as Master Series and two for Pro-Tour status. Rather than make an arbitrary decision the BFA have decided to give all organisers a fair chance to get ITSF sanction – which gives added prestige and normally results in a good turnout of overseas players. The sanction fees are paid by the BFA. To be considered for ITSF status, all organisers must submit details with confirmed dates and venues by 30th September.

Criteria will include type and number of tables, events to be held (OS, OD, WS WD mandatory, JS/JD and SS/SD optional but will be taken into account, e.g. to decide between Pro and Master tour allocation), estimated prize fund, entry fees and packages, availability/ cost of accommodation, public transport links, Bank Holiday Weekends/ clashes with other ITSF events, availability of pit area, press coverage, sponsorship etc.

One criterion (!) should be that at least one event must be on Tornado, and one on Garlando. Once the criteria have been finalised, points will be allocated for each, with the top total getting Master Series, and the next a Pro Tour, with the highest points total for the other table getting a Pro Tour. Decision will be made by the 8th October, and submitted to the ITSF for ratification immediately after.



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Shorts

The regular Chetwynd mini tournament was held on Friday 17th August. In a closely fought encounter the eventual winners were Paddy Dunleavy and Victoria Naylor (pictured left) who won in a playoff over Alina Iwen and Brendan Darragh. (pictured right)



© Paddy Dunleavy



© Paddy Dunleavy

Over at the Bush in Bristol, there was a good turnout considering the holiday season was intervening. When venue rep Martyn Harris can't make it, you can be sure he is on a different continent! Rob Davey and Mike Amsden came through to take victory from Alex Shovelton and Joe Hamilton in the final, with a 9-7 victory.

Next month's BYP competition at the Bush will take place on Thursday 6th September, and will be an ideal UK Masters warm-up competition.

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Edited by Dan Gallon

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