

# BLACKMORE VALE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

Newsletter – February 2008

Dear B.V.T.T.L members,

Monthly committee meetings at the Saxon Inn continued with a session on 12<sup>th</sup> February, the second of the New Year. Appearing on the agenda was a long list of postponements, brought before the committee for adjudications in the absence of the matches having been played. The committee wishes to say it is disappointed in this return to former times, when many postponements were being presented for consideration. It is greatly hoped this constitutes only a temporary blip since the strong desire is for the fixtures to be played. No one wishes to have to adjudicate on such matters regularly, especially in view of the potential bad feeling it is likely to cause in some instances. Whilst the fixture season is drawing to a close, the committee would nonetheless make the following request: *Please will all teams make MAXIMUM efforts to play every fixture in future seasons. The postponement rules were established in order to avoid the controversy often associated with committee adjudications, therefore these rules are likely to be tightened up increasingly in the future and even more clinically implemented if postponements continue to be presented.*

**Child Okeford ‘C’ v Shaftesbury ‘A’.**

Shaftesbury ‘A’ receive 30 points to Child Okeford ‘C’'s 3 points.

**Chalke Valley ‘G’ v Chalke Valley ‘C’.**

Both teams are to receive 15 points.

**Chalke Valley ‘A’ v Child Okeford ‘A’.**

Child Okeford receive 15 points – Chalke Valley ‘A’ – zero points.

**Sturminster Newton v Shaftesbury ‘B’.**

This refers to the pre-Christmas fixture whereby the committee was awaiting the meeting of the two sides for the first time, in the second part of the season. The second half result is now known and this is therefore duplicated to comprise the earlier result also. Sturminster Newton receives 25 points and Shaftesbury ‘B’ – 17 points.

Several other issues on the list related to the team handicap event, but this falls outside committee's remit since Malcolm has a comprehensive system in place to account for un-played matches. The committee however again wishes to stress the following very keenly. *All team captains and organisers were sent information in advance, which specifically requested they contact Malcolm if their teams did not wish to participate in the team handicap tournament. NO TEAMS MADE ANY SUCH CONTACT, YET THREE HAVE DROPPED OUT AFTER THE EVENT HAS STARTED. Some of these have given reasons as to why they could not play the early fixture and then suggested the only fair thing to do is to discontinue thereafter.*

*Others have subsequently made it plain they have no real interest in this type of tournament. That's fine, but such a sentiment should be passed to Malcolm BEFORE he attends to the very hard work involved in drawing up the full table of fixtures. Withdrawing mid-tournament makes a real mock of all that is trying to be achieved. For next time please, kindly let Malcolm know of your proposed non-participation, in advance.*

**Tournaments:** The ladies' singles and mixed doubles events were held recently at the Child Okeford Village hall. Jessica Hadden won the singles with Nell Penney coming runner-up. Nell and Darren Flack took the mixed title with second spot going to Jessica and Simon Ible. Well done to them all.

The main annual tournament is nearly upon us. As ever, it will be held at the Sturminster Newton Leisure Centre, Honeymead Lane and will make use of the main hall there on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March, from 9.00 am until 4.00 pm. The event will comprise – Open Singles: Division 2 singles: Division 3 singles: and Handicap Singles, and entry forms have been sent to all team captains and organisers for distribution. (Child Okeford A, B and D players – see Gary or David [or the notice board] for entry forms). All those interested in entering this *all-day* tournament, please complete an entry form and return it to Steve Ible by 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Please note, the organisation of this event is considerably greater than the lesser ones generally held at Child Okeford, therefore your name will not be included in the draw if an entry form is not received by 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

**Historical Directory:** The committee would again appeal to anyone who has knowledge of the history of the B.V.T.T.L, its former members and club structure, to get in touch with any member of the committee with information that only long serving members would know. Gary Gray has already made inroads into this but feels sure there is more to be documented. Please do try to get in touch if you can help.

**Presentation evening:** As ever, the committee would greatly value your views about the presentation evening – i.e. venue: type of eats: entertainment etc. Last year saw a significant increase in numbers over previous years and it is hoped the same or greater will be achieved again this year. But no one will ever get to know the views of others on the subject if nobody bothers to discuss it. If you thought last year's venue (the Shaftesbury Masonic Lodge) was unsatisfactory or that Malcolm's quiz was rubbish, then contact any member of the committee to say so. They will then ensure that Nell Penney is posted on the door so that you don't get in. Seriously, your feedback would be hugely appreciated.

**Summer League:** As the main playing season draws quickly to a close, there remains the rest of the team handicap event to complete, followed by a few months of 'throttling back' before the new season commences again in the Autumn. However, we still have the summer league to look forward to which ran very well last year in both the Child Okeford and Broad Chalke centres. Child Okeford anticipates commencing its summer league on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, whilst Malcolm will announce arrangements for the Broad Chalke contingent in due course.

**Weymouth V Blackmore Vale:** For the past two years, twenty players from each camp have assembled a 'battalion' to do battle with each other – the first victory going to Weymouth and the second to Blackmore Vale. This year, the event is due to be held in 'enemy' territory so Blackmore Vale will have to summon its reserves in order to spring into the lead. How many years have Oxford and Cambridge been competing in the boat race .... we've got a little way to go I suspect. It is hoped this engaging event will take place near the end of March or else early in April. Whilst the March Newsletter *will* record the exact date (if it turns out to be in April) such a notification is not likely to appear much in advance, so most of the arrangements will be made as a result of personal contact.

### Sec's Sagacity

In 1952, he appeared on the scene as an unranked, red-haired, freckle-faced, fun-loving kid from California who forced one Dave Krizman (U.S boys' number 1) into a tenacious 5 game final. At 14, he became the best player in California using either the traditional hardbat or the 'new' sponge rubber type, at will. By the age of 16, he really came of age, winning the Canadian International at Toronto, defeating John Somael, Bernie Bukiet, and Sol Schiff – the U.S's 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> ranked players. He also won the juniors', the mens' doubles and the mixed doubles .... everything. His name was **Erwin Klein** and he became a legend in American table tennis circles winning the U.S mens' singles title no less than four times.

In 1955, Klein won the English Open Doubles title with Bukiet and in '56 he overcame the great Richard Bergmann. In the same year he won the world mixed doubles championship with Leah Neuberger and at the Tokyo Worlds in the team event, he beat two-time world champion, Johnny Leach and the Czech Ladislav Stipek. Erwin was said to have been a sweet gentle man with a wonderful sense of humour – a real gentleman and true sportsman. In 1992, the U.S table tennis historian Tim Boggan received an unexpected telephone call from Bobby Gusikoff, who in the throes of uncontrollable tears and spasmed speech, gasped out that his long-time friend Erwin Klein has just been shot to death in Los Angeles – killed in an argument on September 30<sup>th</sup> by a business partner who then fatally turned the gun on himself. A great tragedy and a very great loss to the U.S table tennis fraternity.

The President of the English Table Tennis Association is none other than the great Johnny Leach who was twice world mens' singles champion – 1949 and 1951. Born in Romford in Essex in 1922, Johnny is now 86 years old, having retired from the job of England's non-playing captain and team manager as long ago as 1970. During 12 years as an England International (1947 - 1959) Johnny represented his country 152 times.

Who returned home a national hero after a world championship final, never to be seen on the stage of world table tennis again? Well, it was our old friend once again – Mr Hiroji Satoh of Japan. We have twice looked at the exploits of Satoh and his mystical one-sided sponge rubber bat, which it seems he wielded so well to win the mens' world singles title in Bombay in 1952. What is perhaps not so well known is that he

subsequently allowed his name to be used in an advertising campaign and was promptly banned from playing altogether. Such an indulgence was strictly forbidden by the Japanese at that time.

Angelica Rozeanu (1921 – 2006) was the most successful female table tennis player in the history of the sport, winning the women's world singles title six years in succession. This feat, which she achieved between 1950 and 1955, has not been equalled. She is also the last non-Asian woman to win the title - for the past 50 years the event has been the private fiefdom of the Chinese, the Japanese and the Koreans. In all, Angelica Rozeanu won a total of 17 world titles, including the world women's doubles title three times (1953-55) and the world mixed doubles titles three times (1951-53).

Her artistry was revealed less in the power of her shots than in her exceptional footwork and ball control. She knew instinctively when to attack and when to defend, exhibiting an unnerving patience during even the longest of points. Angelica Rozeanu was born in Bucharest, the capital of Romania, on October 15 1921 into a Jewish family. She began playing table tennis at the age of nine and won her first title in competitive play three years later. When only 15 she won the Romanian national women's championship. She was to remain her country's women's champion for the next 21 years (1936-57).

In 1937 she took part in her first world championships, finishing third in the mixed doubles with Geza Eros, of Hungary. The following year she won her first major international competition at the Hungarian Open; and in 1939 she came second at the world championships in the women's doubles (with Sari Szasz-Kolozsvary) while helping Romania to take the bronze medal in the team event. The Second World War disrupted the international game, but she returned to competition with a more attacking style, a tactic which paid off when she took her first world singles title in 1950. In doing so, she became the first Romanian woman to win a world championship in any sport. Angelica Rozeanu won the world doubles title in 1953 with Giselle Farkas of Hungary, and in 1954 and 1955 with Ella Zeller of Romania; her mixed doubles titles were won with Bohumil Vana of Czechoslovakia (1951) and with Ferenc Sido of Hungary (1952 and 1953).

In 1954 she was appointed a Merited Master of Sport, Romania's highest sporting distinction. From 1950 to 1960 she served as president of the Romanian Table Tennis Commission. In 1960 Angelica Rozeanu moved to Israel, where she continued to play professionally. In 1961 she won the Maccabiah Games Table Tennis Championship. But she kept in close touch with her native country, and last visited Romania in 2005. Angelica Rozeanu, who was married with one daughter, died at Haifa, Israel, on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2006.

**So you think you know the game!**

**Table Tennis Quiz**

- 1 When a table tennis ball is dropped from a height of 30 cms onto the playing surface of the table, it should yield a uniform bounce of:-
  - a) 16 cms
  - b) 21 cms
  - c) 23 cms
  - d) 26 cms.
- 2 Besides the great Zhuang Zedong, who is the only other Chinese player to have won the world championship three times?
  - a) Liu Guoliang
  - b) Wang Liqin
  - c) Ma Lin
  - d) Kong Linghui.
- 3 Other than at the request of the players, when does the Expedite System kick in?
  - a) After 5 minutes
  - b) After 10 minutes
  - c) After 15 minutes
  - d) After 20 minutes.
- 4 A table tennis racquet:-
  - a) Cannot exceed 65 cms in diameter
  - b) Cannot exceed 75 cms in diameter
  - c) Cannot exceed 85 cms in diameter
  - d) Can be any size.
- 5 What is the origin of the word 'Let'?
  - a) It came from a sports-person who once said, 'Let the ball go'
  - b) It means 'Let us replay the point'
  - c) An old word for 'obstruction'
  - d) It's a 1920s invented word that came from nowhere in particular to request that a point be replayed.
- 6 In the 1952 world championships, Michel Lansky was not as concerned as some others about the opponent that faced him with a foam sponge racquet, because:-
  - a) He had played against sponge many times before
  - b) He himself had begun using aerated foam
  - c) He was profoundly deaf and therefore didn't worry about the lack of notable sound from the sponge racquet
  - d) He had struck a behind-the-scenes deal with his opponent to lose the match.
- 7 How much should a table tennis ball weigh?
  - a) 2 grams
  - b) 2.2 grams
  - c) 2.4 grams
  - d) 2.7 grams.

- 8 Who was known as the chiseller king?
- Dick Miles
  - Alex Ehrlich
  - Ferenc Sido
  - Richard Bergmann
- 9 What should the outside limits of the net posts be, beyond the white sideline?
- 14 cms
  - 15.25 cms
  - 16.50 cms
  - 17 cms
- 10 Player 'A' plays to player 'C' who plays to player 'B' who in turn plays to player 'D'. This is repeated whereupon player 'A' detects a breeze from the East, so suggests leaning acutely to the West to execute the shot. Player 'C' has the sun in his eyes from the North, therefore knows he should duck smartly to the South at the instant of *his* shot. Player 'B' hears the village bell from the West, so recommends an erring to the East to take *his* shot. Player 'D' gets a strong whiff of the local sewerage works in the South, whereupon he'd advise listing prominently to the North to compensate at the moment of *his* shot. The sortie is then interrupted. But who gets to take the very next shot?
- Player 'C'
  - Player 'B'
  - Player 'D'
  - Player 'A'

Answers at the end:

### *Slippery Chipper*

*Christmas has come and gone, the goose did yield its fat,  
So David spread some, hot and slick, upon his vintage bat.  
He tossed the ball and played a serve, a searing slimy slice  
That smacked the Chairman in the eye and decked him in a trice.*

*'I say old boy, what rotten form, a cad and bounder's trick,  
Someone pass the Optrex please, and rule book – bloomin' quick.  
Now just look 'ere, in black and white it's regulation thirty,  
"No VCs henceforth allowed...that's deemed as tactics dirty."*

*One wouldn't moan, outcry, exclaim, no gripe would pass my lips  
But flipping heck, the suspect Trex contained his fish and chips  
I'm showing you the ol' red card, the match you hereby forfeit,  
For such a plainly devious ploy, so clear a case of surfeit.*

*And furthermore, my final word – I'm writing to the Chairman,  
To place a ban of forty years upon this spurious Daemon.  
But just a mo', the Chairman's **me**, t'was **my** own eyeball smote,  
I'll raise the ban to forty three ... and use my casting vote.'*

## **Improve your attack**

Players with attacking styles often reach a plateau at a fairly advanced level where they may have most of the strokes but little success against stronger players. From this point on, further advancement tends to depend on three areas in which higher rated players tend to shine.

- 1 Better touch shots: Higher ability players achieve more consistent and tighter serves, returns, short pushes, flips, blocks and counters. As required, these shots go lower over the net and to exactly the places they should (e.g. short or deep) more regularly than lower-rated players can deliver. Such care with the touch game makes it much more difficult for their opponents to attack.
- 2 Better attack: Higher-rated players tend to have at least one attacking shot (like a forehand loop) that is more forceful and more reliable than a lower-rated player's comparable strokes. Note, however, that 'forceful' and 'reliable' are both critical parts of the equation. It is better to have a single winning stroke that always goes in, rather than several that might miss at the critical time.
- 3 Better footwork: No doubt about it, higher-rated players move better, and are also more willing to move in a point rather than stay in one place, or hug the table. Better movement also lets you take your best attacking shot more often.

To break through the plateau, work on each of these areas – tight touch, a reliable winning shot, and industrial-strength footwork. Even small strides in all three areas can make a meaningful difference in your playing level.

### **Answers to table tennis quiz.**

- |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|
| 1: C | 4: D | 7: D |
| 2: B | 5: C | 8: B |
| 3: B | 6: C | 9: B |
- 10: None of the given options. (Answer: Bob Hope [Painless Peter Potter] - "The Paleface" – Universal Pictures: 1948. You didn't think the quiz would remain serious right to the end, did you?)

## **David Hughes**

With the final hurdles in sight, the spoils to the victors and good grace to the runners-up and all other competitors. It is very much hoped that everyone has enjoyed the season immensely and that all those intending to participate will similarly enjoy the summer league.

## **The Committee**