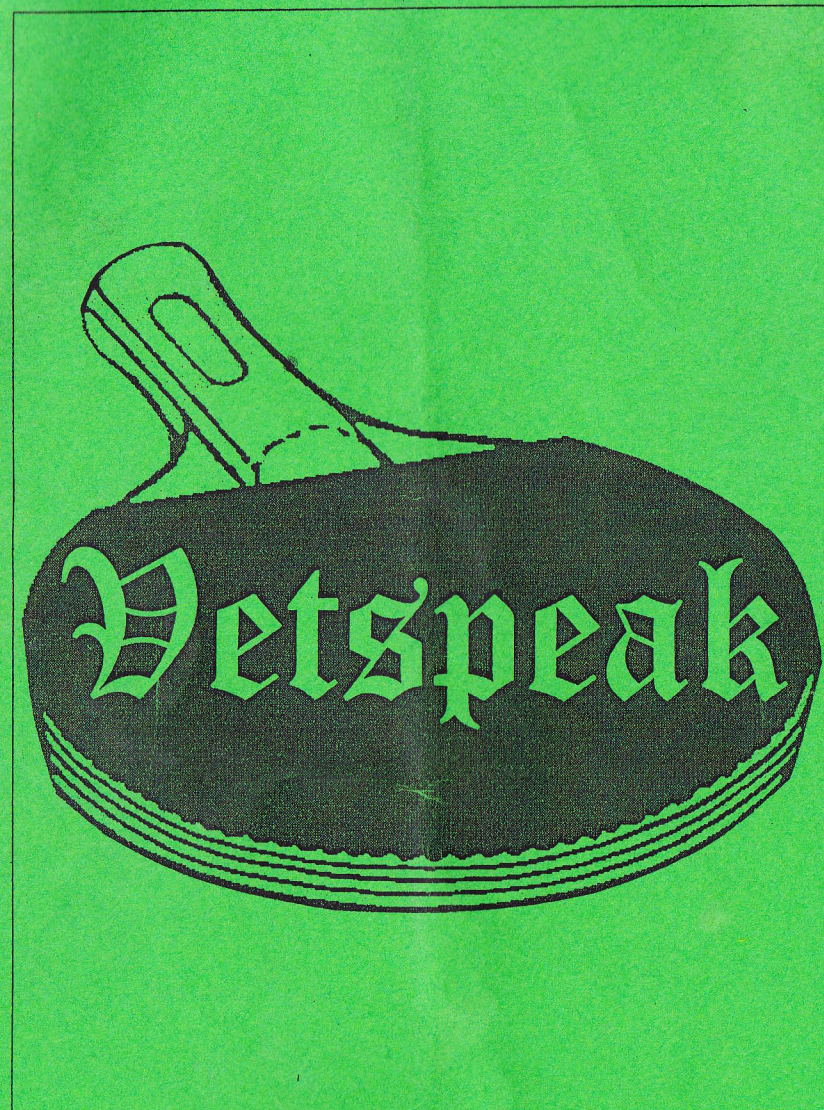


TTNZ VETERANS CALENDAR

May	6	Social Veterans Teams	North Harbour	
	7 8	Marlborough Open	Blenheim	1.5
	14	South Canterbury Open	Timaru	1.5
	14-21	Arafura Games	Darwin, Australia	
	21	Southland Open	Invercargill	1.5
	21-22	Wellington Autumn Open	Wellington	1
	28-29	North Harbour Open	North Harbour	1.5
June	4	Waikato Vets Teams	Hamilton	1
	5	Waikato Vets Individuals	Hamilton	1
	4 5	South Island Teams	Christchurch	1
	11 12	Nelson Open	Nelson	1.5
	16	Entries close North Island	Auckland	
	25	Hawke's Bay Open	Napier	1.5
July	1 2 3	Canterbury Open	Christchurch	1.5
	2 3	Waitemata Open	Henderson	1.5
	3	Wairarapa Open	Masterton	1.5
	15-17	North Island	Auckland	2
	21	Entries close South Island	Timaru	
August	6 7	Manawatu Open	Palmerston North	1.5
	13-14	Wellington Open	Wellington	1.5
	13-14	Northland Open	Whangarei	1.5
	19-21	South Island Teams	Timaru	2
	27-28	Waikato Open	Hamilton	1.5
Sept	1	Entries close Nationals	Christchurch	
	3	Golden Bay Open	Takaka	1
	3 4	Auckland Open	Auckland	1.5
	10 11	Lower NI Regional finals	Palmerston North	1
	17-18	Wellington Spring Open	Wellington	1
	30-	NZ Open starts	Christchurch	3
Oct	-8	NZ Open ends		
Nov	5	Waikato Spring Open	Hamilton	1

2006

Mar	15-26	Commonwealth Games	Melbourne	3
April	24-	World Champs start	Bremen, Germany	3
May	-1	World Champs end		
	15-20	World Veterans	Bremen, Germany	



A Newsletter for Table Tennis veterans, Masters, and social players, supported by the NZ Lotteries Grants Board

APRIL 2005

In Loving Memory



Russell Algie

16th February 1921 — 28th March 2005

RUSSELL ATTWOOD ALGIE - 1921-2005

Last final for one of NZ's greatest sportsmen and table tennis players

By Dennis Galvin

In 1939 a bespectacled teenager climbed the gangway of Steam Ship Mariposa to set off on an extraordinary table tennis journey in which he played tennis with Australian Davis Cupper Don Turnbull and met legendary cricketers Don Bradman and NZ-born Clarrie Grimmett. Russell even beat The Don in a game of snooker.

The 19-year-old Russell Algie was on the first tour ever by a New Zealand table tennis team and apart from mixing it with Australian Rules, cricket and tennis stars he was part of a group who had seven table tennis matches and won four.

He also won the City of Melbourne singles without dropping a game against the best Australia had to offer. Team-mate Ken Cantlay of Auckland won the City of Adelaide singles on that history-making tour.

One of the peculiarities of that tour was that it was in doubt early because of the worsening war status in Europe, but by September nothing was heard so the Mariposa set sail with the Kiwi team. The players did not find out until two days at sea that the British Government had declared war against Germany.

The 1940s became Russell Algie's era. He was practically invincible with his left-hand all round game. He was clinical in his tactics, made sure of his returns and used a deadly backhand wrist flick. He followed his 1939 national title with wins in 40, 45, 47, 49 and 51 before the mighty Bob Jackson began his reign.

Russell did not play in some years and there was no competition in the war years from 1941-44. There is no doubt that had Russell's career been continuous he would have carved out a record that would not have been touched even by the remarkable Jackson, Murray Dunn or Alan Tomlinson.

Russell's doubles titles were fairly light compared to other dominating figures, but he enjoyed competing with his brother Afton, with whom he won two national titles just before World War II as well as many provincial and tournament titles.

He also partnered Wellington's Audrey Hughes for a mixed title in 1949 and by then he was playing out of Auckland.

As a noted professional coach Russell took under his wing a young Auckland social player and in three years made her an extremely good player. They even teamed up in 52 and won the NZ mixed. That girl was Barbara Williams, and the success of that table tennis combination led to a 49 ½-year combination success as Mr and Mrs R A Algie.

And years later, as a member of the North Shore association and on the cusp of his 50th birthday, he won the NZ 45 men's singles, his swan song in a sport in which he held high all the requirements of a champion and all the attributes of a hellava nice guy.

The last time I spoke to Russell was at the Hall of Fame induction ceremony and although then not in the best of health he was more content to talk about his golf rather than his illness which finally claimed his life at the age of 84

He reached the professional-like 2 handicap with a compact and accurate game, and was regarded at the Pupuke Golf Club with the same awe as he was in table tennis.

He was always involved in some sporting endeavour and was with the well known sporting goods shop Wiseman's in Auckland before leaving to start up his own business, assisted by younger brother Stewart.. But first he announced that if he was going to see sporting goods to the public the public was entitled to a first class service, so he took time off to learn how to string tennis racquets and repair golf clubs, supported by Barbara who was carving out an extraordinary working life of her own. She had been working for a Government department in Auckland when she ran foul of her bosses and was sacked. She then became personal assistant to the British High Commissioner in Auckland. The office later became a Consulate and Barbara was awarded the MBE 'for 40 years' service to the British Consular-General's office, receiving her gong from the Queen on the 1970 Royal Visit.

There was hardly a thing that the Algies could not and did not do. They both loved the sea and sand so much they would house-sit in the Bay of Islands, where Russell could fish and tramp. Barbara is an accomplished artist, a published author of a fascinating book of poems about cats and a talented reader of her poems.

With Russell, she started up a comedy-mime revue to entertain their golf club. It became so popular that the revue became a full-blown company of 25 with a stunning presentation and full professional-type costumes made by Barbara. Unbelievably the quiet table tennis achiever was showing another side to his character.....as a miming song and dance man.

He had to mime because he did not have a great singing talent," Barbara said almost apologetically, as if at last breaking the news to an unsuspecting world.

As a footnote to the versatility of the Algies, Russell won a citation in 1981 from his Cork Club for his light beer brew and Barbara has won several awards for her wines.

A remarkable sportsman, a remarkable man R A Algie's persona was summed up by his wife of almost half a century when referring to his attitude to life.

"He would tackle anything and enjoy success; he did not know a daffodil from a weed, but he studied and became a real green thumb."



Russell Algie and Barbara Williams (later Mrs Algie) winning the New Zealand Open mixed doubles championship in 1952.

After the test came a bagful of medals for the Kangaroo hoppers

The teams events at Whangarei gave the players a chance to get used to the hot conditions and that was greatly appreciated even by the Aussies (well, those outside Tasmania and Victoria, who loved to get warm for a change).

NSW which has won just about every Australian teams title in the past 10 years easily won the men's Over-40s, their closest match being against Victoria 3-2. But the Malcolm Darroch-led Canterbury was second after a fine 4-1 win against Victoria. An expected exciting clash between Paul Pinkewich and Darroch never eventuated when Malcolm was chopped off the table for only a handful of points.

Over-40

Men's A Grade: NSW 1, Canterbury 2, Victoria 3, North Harbour 4, Auckland 5, Wellington 6, South Australia 7.

Men's B Grade: Canterbury 1, Victoria 2, NSW 3, Northland 1 4, Northland 2 5, Waitemata 6

Women's A Grade: South Australia 1, NSW 2, North Harbour 3, Wellington 4, Waikato 5, Counties-Manukau 6, Victoria 7, Canterbury 8.

Over-50

Four in a row for Aust

NSW men won the Over-50 title in a canter, winning all their games 4-1 except in a strange reversal against Victoria's top team which only finished fourth. The depth of NSW in this age group has also been reflected in Australian championships in the past decade.

Australian teams had the division all to themselves with the first four places being filled by the green and golds.

Men's A grade: NSW 1, Victoria 2 2, Queensland 3, Victoria 1 4, Auckland 5, North Harbour 6, Victoria 3 7, Wellington Harbour 8.

Men's B grade: Northland 1, North Harbour 2, Canterbury 3, NSW 4, Waitemata 2 5, Manawatu 6, Waitemata 1 7.

Women's A grade: South Australia 1, North Harbour 1 2, Canterbury 3, Wellington 4, Waitemata 5, Manawatu 6, NSW 7, North Harbour 2 8.

Over-60

And another four in a row

Four Australian teams in the first four places again, and Waitemata for the second year in a row was the top-placed NZ team. Hawke's Bay, headed by the inform skyscraper Russell Clement, took the second division with an unbeaten five wins. North Harbour won the women's title.

Men's A grade: Queensland 1, Victoria 1 2, NSW 3, Victoria 2 4; Waitemata 5, North Harbour 6,

Men's B grade: Hawke's Bay 1, Manawatu 1 2, Manawatu 2 3, Waitemata 4, Auckland 5, Wellington 6.

Women's A grade: North Harbour 1, Manawatu 2, Southland 3, Waitemata 4.

Over-65

Inter-national co-operation

There was a real pot pourri of players in this division. Australians Case deBonds, Geoff Nesbitt and Tony Herbert and Kiwi Chip Eade were again the stars. Geoff lives on the border of NSW and Victoria and his long legs can straddle either state; Waitemata's Chip was "on loan" to Queensland for the silver. Merle Sneddon of Levin and Annice Robbottom of Wanganui gave Manawatu the top honours in the women.

Men's A grade: Victoria 1 1, Queensland 2, North Harbour 3, Manawatu 4, Canterbury 5, Victoria 2 6.

Men's B grade: NSW 1, Wellington 1 2, Wellington 2 3, Canterbury 4, Northland 5,

Women's A grade: Manawatu 1 1, Northland 2, NSW 3, Manawatu 2 4.

Hat-trick to Westies

The Waitemata pairing of Dennis Galvin and Bill Otene completed a hat-trick of teams titles in this age group, with Ron Trautvetter joining them for the past two years. Although in some rubbers in that time they have shared the singles it has been their unbeaten doubles run that has assured them gold each year.

Waitemata players also won silver in the men's and women's divisions.

Men's A grade: Waitemata 1, Tasmania 2, NSW 1 3, NSW 2 4, Wellington 2 5, Wellington 1 6, Northland 7, North Harbour 8.

Women's A grade: Manawatu 1, Waitemata 2, NSW 3, Northland 4.

Wrong shirt: A New Zealand official, referring to draft teams in the teams events, wants a change to the "Australian rule that only players selected for their state can play in their uniform". Oh, so why was Chip Eade of Waitemata getting all sweaty inside a Queensland shirt.....and he helped get them a medal.

Veterans enter the commercial world

It did not take Veterans Committee member Dennis Galvin of Waitemata too many strides to arrange the veterans first sponsor for the Australia v NZ tests at its national championships. He just went next door and had a chat with son, Ken, the managing director of three signs and sign installations companies in Henderson.

Ken offered to sponsor the Easter tests at Whangarei with his major company, NCI National Corporate Installations, with a complete set of new shirts for New Zealand, as well as participating certificates for both teams. There is an option for both parties for the 2006 tests at Invercargill, but the Southlanders may be arranging their own sponsors.

There was wide approval for the black and silver shirts with blue gold and white logos. And the players thought they were great because they get to keep them and are encouraged to wear them to spread the sponsor's name.

Other sponsors at Easter were Advance Whangarei, Oxford Sports Trust, Sport Northland, ASB Sport, Computerland, Mizone, U-Bix, RadioWorks, Baigents, Pacific Motor Group, Dudley & Dennis Signs, Whangarei Print, Kensington Fitness, Wynn Fraser Paints, Genesis Energy.

Women stay on top

New Zealand was saved from complete annihilation by the 60s and 70s women's teams in the NCI National Corporate Installations test series which started the 2005 New Zealand veterans table tennis championships at Whangarei at Easter.

Australia won the other six sections, the 40s men, 50s men and 70s men 5-0; the 50s women 4-1, the 40s women and 60s men 3-2. NZ won the 60 women's 3-2 and the 70s women 4-1.

Outstanding for NZ were Sabine Westenra (40 W), Alan Alabaster (60M) and Margaret McGregor (70W) who all won both their singles. Sabine, in the veterans for the first time despite her youthful looks, faced Kay Crowell, who one woman described as almost unbeatable in this age group.

Sabine, who had beaten Alice Abbas three straight, dropped the first to four points against Kay, then whacked her 4, 4 and 6. It was comprehensive and a wake-up call to the Oz girl who later in the tournament won the 40s singles title again.

Alan Alabaster sneaked home by advantage in the fourth against Werner Borkhardt then had a see-sawing five-game match against Ken Cole, on his 30-odd trip across the Tasman for this tournament.

Margaret McGregor, apart from a 15-13 marathon against Shirley Smith was never in trouble against the Australians, who later in the week bowed to Margaret again, in the individual events.

One staggering result was the complete whitewash of the 40 men's team who have been too strong in previous years. But this time Paul Pinkewich, one of the finest home-grown players Australia has produced, accompanied by his friend and business partner, Wane Heginbotham, were in the team. Paul who has played 287 games for Australia, was eligible for the 50s, but elected to play in the 40s team. He had a ball against our top man Malcolm Darroch conceding only 16 points, as Malcolm just could not penetrate the Pinkewich wall.

The only game won by NZ was in the doubles when Lyndon White and Malcolm evened the match before conceding the next two. There were

some scintillating rallies and close matches, but in most cases the last point went across the ditch.

Over 40 Men: Australia (Paul Pinkewich-Wayne Heginbotham) bt NZ (Malcolm Darroch-Lyndon White-David Scott) 5-0; **women:** Aust (Kay Crowell-Alice Abbas) bt NZ (Hilary Low, Sabine Westenra) 3-2.

Over 50. Men: Aust (Brian Berry-Mick Wright) bt NZ (Pat Low-Kevin Fogarty) 5-0; **women:** Aust (Lorraine Baker-Joylene Morgan) bt NZ (Val Beaver-Averil Roberts) 4-1.

Over-60. Men: Aust (Ken Cole-Werner Borkholdt) bt NZ (Alan Alabaster-Jim Jarmin); **women:** Aust (Margaret Mulcahy-Amida-Croccolo) lost to NZ (Pauline Bennyworth-Merle Sneddon) 2-3.

Over-70. Men: Aust (Geoff Nesbitt-Tony Herbert) bt NZ (Bill Otene-Dennis Galvin) 5-0; **women:** Aust (Joyce Woodward-Shirley Smith) lost to NZ (Margaret McGregor-Annice Robottom) 2-1.

INDIVIDUALS

Over-75

The oldest and the best

Publicity was a bit scarce during the week, but the star of the Northland press was Elsie Spooner, the Wanganui octogenarian who plays out of the Manawatu association. She earned herself a photo and story covering half a page by winning the women's singles and mixed doubles among the over-75s in the individuals championships.

The diminutive Elsie has won more than a dozen veterans titles in the past 13 years beat her perennial Ozzie opponent Joyce Woodward in the singles then teamed up with Karl Pruess to beat Jim Craig and Woodward in the mixed. Pruess and Craig are also from across the ditch.

Men's singles: K Pruess (Aus) bt D Sherman (Tas) 8, 6, -6, -8, 8; R Lynch (NSW) bt J Craig (NSW) -10, 6, 9, -7, 10; Lynch bt Pruess 5, -8, 7, -8, 7.

Second div: R Anderson (C) bt W Dennis (WT) 7, 5, 8.

Men's doubles: Pruess-Sherman bt Craig-Lynch; bt Anderson-Dennis; Craig-Lynch bt Anderson-Dennis.

Women's singles: E Spooner (MN) bt J Woodward 10, -9, 12, 6

Mixed doubles: Pruess-Spooner bt Craig-Woodward 5, 3, 8.

James in Charge: Is there a better MC than James Morris? He should be paid to go to Invercargill next year. Better still he may be persuaded to play in more than "a couple of doubles"

Over-70

Dancing with Kiwis

Quickstep expert, English-born Queenslander Tony Herbert waltzed through the men's field with the big surprise being the defeat by Wellington and former Cantab Eddie Moore in the first round of the singles when he eliminated second seed Geoff Nesbitt of Victoria.

The doubles final was a repeat of the test when Nesbitt and Herbert beat Waitemata's Dennis Galvin and Bill Otene, whose team-mate Margaret McGregor won the women's singles.

Herbert was pipped for a treble by Nesbitt and Woodward in the mixed final. One of the biggest thrills at the championships was the appearance of Nellie Milich, Northland's popular daughter. Just a few months ago Nellie was in hospital and was so ill there appeared to be little chance of her playing again.

Men's singles: A Herbert (Q) bt G Hunter (NL) 4, 6, 4; D Galvin (WT) bt D Teasdale (NL) -9, 8, 2, 1; W Otene (WT) bt D Sherman (Tas) 9, 6, 6; E Moore (W) bt G Nesbitt (Vic) 5, -6, 9, -6, 7; Herbert bt Galvin 6, 5, 5; Otene bt Moore 10, 8, 8; Herbert bt Otene -8, 6, 6, 2.

Second division: M Allardyce (W) bt H McIlwrath (W) def, A Lopez (NSW) bt K Pruess (Vic) def, Allardyce bt T Shorter (NH) 6, 9, 4; Lopez bt R Menchi (W) 6, 5, 6; Lopez bt Allardyce -9, -8, 6, 8, 8.

Men's doubles: Allardyce-Moore bt Sherman-Pruess -6, 6, 9, 8; Craig-Lopez bt McIlwrath-Menchi 7, 8, 7; Galvin-Otene bt Hunter-Teasdale 5, 8, 6; Herbert-Nesbitt bt Allardyce-Moore 9, 1, 11; Galvin-Otene bt Craig-Lopez 7, 4, 2; Herbert-Nesbitt bt Galvin-Otene 7, 10, -8, 8.

Women's singles: A Croccolo (Vic) bt N Milich (NL) -6, 7, -6, 10, 11; J Woodward (Q) bt S Smith (NSW) 5, 8, 9; Croccolo bt A Robottom (MN) -4, 5, 7, -9, 6; M McGregor (WT) bt Woodward 8, 8, -8, 4; McGregor bt Croccolo 9, 7, 8.

Second division: B Tabb (C) bt B Meads (MN) 3, 2, 4; Tabb bt A Waye (Vic) 9, -9, 7, 10.

Women's doubles: Croccolo-Smith bt McGregor-Woodward 7, -7, 4, 6; Milich-Tabb bt Robottom-Waye 6, 8, 8; Milich-Tabb bt Croccolo-Smith -9, 11, 9, -8, 8.

Mixed doubles: Herbert-Robottom bt Teasdale-Milich 13, -8, 7, 6; Craig-Croccolo bt Lopez-Smith 8, -11, -7, 5, 6; Moore-McGregor bt Hunter-Waye 8, 7, 2; Nesbitt-Woodward bt T Shorter (NH)-Meads 9, 6, 8. Herbert-Robottom bt Craig Croccolo 7, 2, 6; Nesbitt-Woodward bt Moore-McGregor 7, 10, 8. Nesbitt-Woodward bt Herbert-Robottom.

Over 65

Chalk and Cheese lads

Two great mates from Australia, as different as chalk and cheese, Buster Reid and Case deBondt were into everything in the men's section, Case beat Buster in the singles final, Buster and Chris Sykes beat Case and Geoff Nesbitt in the doubles final and Case and Margaret Mulcahy won the mixed from the Waitemata pairing of Chip Eade and Margaret McGregor.

Buster, on his first visit to NZ, impressed with his free-flowing style differing in every aspect from fellow-Victorian Case. He has a free-flowing majestic style; Case is a dogged, determined character who bullies the ball around the table.

Buster was born in Sri Lanka and Case in Holland. Buster is cultured and multi-talented, being a surgeon, a composer, a concert pianist and a singer, assets that have yet to be discovered in the jovial hard-slogging Victorian man of the earth, who tells a raw joke with the best.

One of the more interesting singles was between Waitemata's Chip Eade and Manawatu's Jim Jarmin. Jim has been in such fine form that he had edged Chip out of the 60s test team. Since the teams were announced Chip has lifted his game, gone through the Waitemata summer unbeaten and performed exceptionally well in Auckland. In the first round crunch game he allowed Jim only 17 points in three games.

In an extraordinary repeat of their success last year against top seeds Ken Sands and Tony Herbert, Dennis Galvin and Bill Otene beat the same pair, this year seeded No 2, in one doubles quarter-final. The scores and the manner of the successive losses were almost identical. But for the umpteenth time in the past three years the Waitemata pair bowed out to deBondt and Nesbitt.

Margaret Mulcahy dominated the women's section winning all three titles and, for me, earned Player of the Tournament for also winning all three titles in the O60s division. In several games she was taken to the wire but was the best tight finisher in the stadium.

Men's singles: B Reid (Vic) bt D Glass (C) 4, 10, 3; G Nesbitt (Vic) bt F deBondt (Vic) 13, 6, 1; C Sykes (Aus) bt R Lake (Aus) 8, 2, 6; K Sands (NSW) bt B Gloistein (C) 4 4 3; C deBondt (Vic) bt C Tipper (C) 3, 5, -9, 7; A Alabaster (C) bt W Otene (WT) -9, 9, 6, 4; C Eade (WT) bt J Jarmin (MN) 3, 4, 10; A Herbert (Q) bt D Galvin (WT) 2, 7, 4; Reid bt Nesbitt -9, 3, 10, 2; Sykes bt Sands 10, -10, 6, -5, 9; C deBondt bt Alabaster 2, 7, 8; Eade bt Herbert 8, 3, 10. Reid bt Sykes 12, 7, 11; deBondt bt Eade 7, 7, 9; de Bondt bt Reid 10, -9, 9, 9.

Second division: H Mclwrath (W) bt R Heatley (NL) 3, 4, 6; R Clenet (HB) bt G Hunter (NL) 3, 9, -10, 5; R Ammundsen (W) bt J Williams (MN) 7, 7, 10; M Allardyce (W) bt D Teasdale def; E Moore (W) bt L McCallion (A) 10, 6, -9, -12, 9. Mclwrath bt R Menchi (W) 2, 2, 3; Ammundsen bt Clement 10, 4, -5, 8; T Cockfield (NH) bt Allardyce 7, 11, 7; A Lopez (NSW) bt Moore 7, 6, -4, 4. Ammundsen bt Mclwrath 5, 7, -7, 7; Cockfield bt Lopez 7, 11, 6. Cockfield bt Ammundsen -6, 8, 6, 6.

Men's doubles: Ammundsen-Clement bt Gloistein-Lopez 6, 11, -7, 10; C deBondt-Nesbitt bt McCallion-Williams 4, -9, 7, -6, 5; Alabaster-Tipper bt Mclwrath-Menchi 10, -9, 11, 3; Galvin-Otene bt Heatley-Lake 3, 11, 5; Herbert-Sands bt Allardyce-Moore -8, 4, 3, 4. Reid-Sykes bt Ammundsen-Clements 11, 5, 9; Eade-Jarmin bt Cockfield-F deBondt -10, 13, 7, 11; C deBondt-Nesbitt bt Alabaster-Tipper 8, 8, 7; Galvin-Otene bt Herbert-Sands 7, -12, -7, 8, 8. Reid-Sykes bt Eade-Jarmin 5, 3, 6; C deBondt-Nesbitt bt Galvin-Otene -9, 6, 7, 3. Reid-Sykes bt deBondt-Nesbitt 14, -7, 5, 7.

Women's singles: A Crococolo (NSW) bt A Wayne (Aus) 4, -11, -10, 6, 15; N Milich (NL) bt A Robottom 5, -6, 3, -7, 4. M Mulcahy (Aus) bt Crococolo 4, 3, 3; M Sneddon (MN) bt Milich 1, 14, 9. Mulcahy bt Sneddon 8, -7, 6, -5, 8.

Second division: B Tabb (C) bt V Eade (WT) 4, 8, 5; Tabb bt M Wisneth (MN) 6, 2, 1.

Women's doubles: Crococolo-Smith bt Wayne-Wisneth 6, 8, 3; Eade-McGregor bt Spooner-Woodward -7, 7, 9, -4, 3. Robottom-Sneddon bt Crococolo-Smith 5, 9, 5; Mulcahy-Tabb bt Eade-McGregor 5, -10, 4, -11, 7. Mulcahy-Tabb bt Robottom-Sneddon -7, 5, 8, -9, 11.

Mixed doubles: Gloistein-Tabb bt Lake-V Eade 3, 8, 9; Hunter-Milich bt Tipper-Wayne 9, 9, 10'. C deBondt-Mulcahy bt Gloistein-Tabb 10, 5, 6; Cockfield-Sneddon bt Lopez-Crococolo 5, 4, 9; C Eade-McGregor bt Sykes-Smith 9, -9, 8, 4; Herbert-Robottom bt Hunter-Milich 7, 9, -8, 7. DeBondt-Mulcahy bt Cockfield-Sneddon 4, -8, 8, 7; Eade-McGregor bt Herbert-Robottom 5, 6, 6. DeBondt-Mulcahy bt Eade-McGregor 12, 3, 9.

Over-60

Every title to Australians

It was just like the Australians playing the Black Caps. Everywhere you looked there was an Aussie whacking into the Kiwis. Every title was taken back across the ditch.

In the men's singles the eight seeds were all Australians and when it came down to the nitty-gritty seven of them made the last eight and only because four seeds played another seed in the first round.

In the first round of 16 there were nine Aussies and by the next round there were seven, then there were three with only Aucklander Jia Zhang facing the green and gold brick wall.

Outstanding in all rounds was Mick Wright who still looks about 15 years younger than 60. He thrashed the field to such a degree only Jim Jarmin of

Palmerston North took him to double figures in any one of the 12 games he played.

The women's division was equally a cake-walk for Australian Margaret Mulcahy, my pick as the Player of the Tournament. Both Wright and Mulcahy also won doubles gold and Mulcahy completed her double triple with a win in the mixed with Case de Bondt.

Men's singles: M Wright (Aust) bt J Jarmin (MN) 5, 5, 10; C Sykes (Aust) bt A Alabaster (C) 7, 9, -12, 12; B Reid (Aust) bt A Drury (Aust) 8, 4, 8; K Cole (Aust) bt M Ede (11, 7, 7; N H Lee (A) bt E Millard (MN) 1, 5, 8; J Zhang (A) bt C Eade (WT) 4, 7, -5, 6; C de Bondt (Aust) bt R Garrett (S) 9, 4, 7; W Borkhardt (Aust) bt F de Bondt (Aust) -9, 2, 2, 1. Wright bt Sykes 8,0,5; Cole bt Reid 10, 5, 5; Zhang Lee 4, 12, 7; Borkhardt bt C de Bondt -9, 9, 11, 6. Wright bt Cole 4, 9, 4; Borkhardt bt Zhang 10, -6, 10, 8. Wright bt Borkhardt 8, 3, 7.

Second division: R Clement (HB) bt L McCallion (A) -7, -10, 6, 9, 5; C Tipper (O) bt R Ammundsen (W) 6, 4, -6, 7; P Jones (MN) bt K Sands (Aust) def; J Te Pania (NH) bt R Inns (A) 1, 7, 8; B Gloistein (C) bt A Naysmith (W) 6, -9, -5, 9, 10; D Glass (C) bt R Heatley (NL) 5, 5, 6; T Cockfield (NH) bt R Lake (NL) 7, 9, 3. Clement bt R Dunn (NH) -9, 6, 8, 12; Tipper bt Jones 11, 8, 8; Te Pania bt Gloistein 5, 7, 7; Glass bt Cockfield 11, -8, -9, 9, 4. Tipper bt Clement 5, -10, 8, 13; Te Pania bt Glass 8, -10, 7, 12. Te Pania bt Tipper 8, 2, 4.

Men's doubles: Glass-Jarmin bt Dunn-Te Pania 8, 12, -9, 11; Eade -Garrett bt Jones-J R Williams (MN) 2, -10, 9, 6; Reid-Sykes bt Inns-McCallion 3, 5, 1; Cole-Sands bt Gloistein-Millard 5, 9, 4; C de Bondt-Lee bt Ammundsen-Naysmith 3, 8, 2; Cockfield-F de Bondt bt Alabaster-Tipper 4, 4, -8, -7, 11; Borkhardt-Drury bt Clement-Heatley 7, 5, 2. Cole-Wright bt Glass-Jarmin 5, 5, 6; Reid-Sykes bt Eade-Garrett 8, 9, 8; C de Bondt-Lee bt Cole-Sands -5, 8, 5, -6, 9; Borkhardt-Drury bt Cockfield-F de Bondt 7, 9, 2. Ede-Wright bt Reid-Sykes 10, 6, -6, 7; Borkhardt-Drury bt C de Bondt-Lee 2, 5, -8, 7. Ede-Wright bt Borkhardt-Drury 7, 5, 8.

Women's singles: P Bennyworth (WK) bt E Matthews (Aust) -9, -12, 9, 4, 9; D Te Pania (NH) bt H Paul (MN) -7, 5, 9, -9, 2. M Mulcahy (Aust) bt Bennyworth 3, 3, 9; M Sneddon (MN) bt Te Pania 4, 11, 9. Mulcahy bt Sneddon 6, 6, 7.

Second division: P Swale (S) bt M Wisneth (MN) 5, 6, 2.

Women's doubles: Benny-worth-Sneddon bt Matthews-Swale 5, -9, 4, 9; Mulcahy-Te Pania bt Paul-M Trenwith (WT) 6, 1, 9. Mulcahy-Te Pania bt Bennyworth-Sneddon 8, 3, -12, 11.

Mixed doubles: C de Bondt-Mulcahy bt Jones-Paul 6, 4, 2; Wright-Swale bt Eade-Trenwith 4, 3, 8; Alabaster-Sneddon bt Ede-Matthews 6, -8, 8, 5; Borkhardt-Bennyworth bt Te Pania-Te Pania 5, -4, 7, 8. C de Bondt-Mulcahy bt Wright-Swale -6, 7, 3, -8, 7; Alabaster-Sneddon bt Borkhardt-Bennyworth 4, -4, 4, -4, 9. C de Bondt-Mulcahy bt Alabaster-Sneddon -8, 7, 4, 7.

Over-50

Stroll in the park for Pinkewich

One would suppose that the national champion of Australia in the 40s and 50s age groups would be a shoe in for both titles, but a cruel twist of fate in the 40s left Paul Pinkewich with only the 50s singles title.

In the 50s division he did not drop a game and averaged only a five-point-a-game concession, brushing aside many of the best in Australia and New Zealand. The ever-so cool, splendidly coiffured Lorraine Baker who always looks as if she has just left Rodney Wayne's, was clinically perfect.

Outstanding junior of about 40 years ago, and a member of a fine table tennis family, Colleen O'Carroll, now Mrs Aitchison, played in this division, but later said she would have to think hard about continuing. Meantime it is back to bowls.

Men's singles: C Sim (Aust) bt N H Lee (A) 8, 9, 4; I Talbot (W) bt S Craw (C) 7, 11, 4. P Pinkewich (Aust) bt Sim 6, 2, 5; A Drury (Aust) bt P Low (A) 9, 10, 6; M Ede (Aust) bt D Scott (NH) 9, 6, -4, 11; M Wright (Aust) bt K Cole (Aust) 5, 5, 4; T Samuelsson (Aust) bt W Borkhardt -8, 8, -10, 5, 5; M Solomons (Aust) bt J Zhang (A) 6, -3, 5, -10, 5; W Weinstock (A) bt K Fogarty (NH) def; B Berry (Aust) bt Talbot 7, 8, 11. Pinkewich bt Drury 6, 8, 6; Wright bt Ede -9, 13, 6, 9; Samuelsson bt Solomons 10, 10, 9; Berry bt Weinstock 5, 2, -8, 5. Pinkewich bt Wright 4, 6, -3, 5; Berry bt Samuelsson 10, 8, 6. Pinkewich bt Berry 6, 7, 7.

Second division: P Johnston bt S Bruton (Aust) 7, 11, 4. J Te Pania (NH) bt H Haika (NL) 6, 6, 11; B Baker (NH) bt P Jones (MN) 6, 4, 11; S Chen (Aust) bt A Naysmith (W) 6, 7, -11, 5; B Davies (NL) bt A Moore (C) -7, 9, 9, 8; E Neal (A) br R Inns (A) 2, 6, 10; M Dobson (Aust) bt M O'Grady (S) 5, 6, 7; G Jones (NL) bt R Leong (WT) 6, 9, -7, -8, 10; K Pun (Aust) bt Johnston 5, 6, 9; Te Pania bt Baker -9, 9, 9, 6; Davies bt Chen 7, 8, -5, 9; Neal bt Dobson def; Pun bt G Jones 3, 1, 4. Te Pania bt Davies -10, -8, 8, 8, 9; Pun bt Neal 5, 4, 5. Pun bt Te Pania 4, 4, -10, 3.

Men's doubles: B Baker-Leong bt Bruton-Chen 7, -9, -6, 4, 7; G Jones J Morris (NL) bt Millard-Naysmith 6, 8, 3. Berry-Samuelsson bt Lee-Neal 5, 7, 8; Craw-I Talbot bt B Baker-Leong 3, 7, 9; Garrett-Weinstock bt Haika-P Jones 5, 6, 3; Borkhardt-Drury bt Dunn-Te Pania 10, 4, 7; Pinkewich-Solomons bt Inns-Moore 3, 5, 7; Low-Sims bt G Jones-Morris -6, 9, 8, 8; Ede-Wright bt Johnston-O'Grady 8, 0, 2. Berry-Samuelsson bt Craw-Talbot 9, -9, 2, 7; Borkhardt-Drury bt Garrett-Weinstock 7, 4, 11; Pinkewich-Solomons bt Pun-Scott 11, 7, -7, 7; Ede-Wright bt Low-Sims -8, 7, 4, 3. Berry-Samuelsson bt Drury-Borkhardt 6, 11, 6; Ede-Wright bt Pinkewich-Solomons 8, 7, -10, 8. Berry-Samuelsson bt Ede-Wright -8, 0, 5, 5.

Women's singles: K O'Loughlin (Aust) bt J Murray (NH) 8, 8, 11; P Bennyworth (WK) bt S Chen (C) 10, 10, -7, -9, 8; L Baker (Aust) bt O'Loughlin 6, 8, 2; L Barker (C) bt A Roberts -9, 19, -3, 6, 5; A Abbas (Aust) bt J Morgan (Aust) 7, 4, 10; V Beaver (NH) bt Bennyworth 3, 4, 8. Baker bt Barker 5, 7, 4; Abbas bt Beaver 5, -7, 10, 4. Baker bt Abbas 9, -8, 6, 6.

Second division: C Aitchison (NL) bt P Swale (S) 7, 6, 8; O Burnett (W) bt V Mayclair (NH) -4, 8, 9, -10, 7; V Scarr (MN) bt V Waters (NH) 9, 2, 10. Aitchison bt T Sulimova (WT) -6, 9, 11, 10; Scarr bt Burnett 8, 3, 10. Scarr bt Aitchison -8, 5, 8, -7, 7.

Women's doubles: Burnett-Sulimova bt H Paul (MN)-V Waters (NH) 5, 7, -8, 7. Abbas-Baker bt Mayckair-Te Pania 6,5, 8; Bennyworth-Chen bt Sulimova-Burnett 9, 7, -11, -9, 9; Baker-Roberts bt Scarr-Swale 6, 7, 4; S Lynch (Aust)-O'Loughlin bt Murray-Beaver -2, 11, 7, -6, 9. Abbas-Baker bt Bennyworth-Chen 8, 8, -11, 4; Barker-Roberts bt Lynch-O'Loughlin 1, 6, 8. Abbas-Baker bt Barker-Roberts 6, 4, 8.

Mixed doubles: Te Pania-Te Pania bt Moore-Swale 9, -7, 11, 4; Neal-O'Loughlin bt Johnston-Waters 11, 9, 11. Pinkewich-Baker bt Scott-Sulimova 2, 8, 8; Sim-Mayclair bt Craw-Bennyworth 8, 6, 8; Low-Murray bt Dobson-Paul 5, 4, -4, 9; Ede-Roberts bt Te Pania-Te Pania 7, 6, 10; Samuelsson-Morgan bt Dunn-Scarr 1, 6, 8; Cole-Barker bt Morris-Aitchison -9, -10, 9, 7, 9; Neal-O'Loughlin bt Solomons-Chen 8, -7, 9, -7, 9; Wright-Beaver bt I Talbot-Burnett 5, 7, 6. Pinkewich-Baker bt Sim-Mayclair -7, 4, 2, 6; Ede-Roberts by Low-Murray 3, 8, 12;

Samuelsson-Morgan bt Cole-Barker 7, -5, 1, 6; Wright-Beaver Neal-O'Loughlin 8, 7, 2. Pinkewich-Baker bt Ede-Roberts 3, 6, 8; Wright-Beaver bt Samuelsson-Morgan 1, 7, 8. Wright-Beaver bt Pinkewich-Baker -8, -11, 8, 11, 8.

Over-40

Paul's candle blows out

Going into this division there was only one name bandied as a winner of all the men's titles.....Paul Pinkewich. But he finished without a gold.....just three bronzes.

When Paul was beaten in the singles by possibly the one person in the field who knew his game so well, his business partner and fellow New South Welshman, Wayne Heginbotham, Malcolm Darroch must have been rubbing his hands with glee. Malcolm had been swamped by Paul in the test and must have had doubts that he could overcome the Sydney-sider's impeccable defence.

In the final Malcolm was in commanding form against Wayne with his foot-speed and reflex hitting. It was no race.

Paul and Kay Crowell were top seeds in the singles but Crowell's only "failure" was a bronze with Paul in the mixed. Kay got through the singles and women's doubles with gold, but at times she seemed to struggle which she attributed to the opposition getting better.

Men's singles: I Talbot (W) bt S Brailsford (NT) -8, -2, 6, 9, 9; D Patel (W) bt D Lowe (Aust) 8, 6, 9; S Craw (C) bt K Fogarty (NH) 5, 9, 9; P Low (A) bt J Weinland (NL) 4, 8, 6; W Weinstock (A) bt K Pun (Aust) 9, 9, 9; D Baker (NH) bt H Redmond (C) 16, 10, 3. M R Darroch (C) bt Talbot 4, 8, 9; H Tran (Aust) bt C Talbot (W) 4, 8, 7; S Gao (Aust) bt Patel 8, 9, 8; B Berry (Aust) bt Craw 13, 12, 6; W Heginbotham (Aust) bt Low -11, 5, 5, 6; T Samuelsson (Aust) bt Weinstock 7, 7, 5; L White (C) bt M Solomons (Aust) 6, 7, 8; P Pinkewich (Aust) bt Baker 6, 1, 0. Darroch bt Tran 2, -8, 3, 7; Gao bt Berry -9, 4, 3, 4; Heginbotham bt Samuelsson 6, 2, 5; Pinkewich bt White 1, 6, 6. Darroch bt Gao -5, 5, 10, 12; Heginbotham bt Pinkewich 7, 9, 5. Darroch bt Heginbotham 8, 8, 3.

Second division: C Mainland (Aust) bt P Johnston (NH) -9, 5, -13, 5, 6; G Davey (C) bt A Moore (C) 7, 4, 8; M Nichol (WK) bt S Bruton (Aust) 6, 11, 7; J Tang (A) bt M O'Grady (S) 8, 2, 5; R Leong (WT) bt P Newman (NL) -8, 7, 10, 8. Mainland bt B Zutic (NH) def; Davey bt A Smith (NL) 9, -2, 5, 5; Tang bt Nichol 2, 4, 5; E Neal (A) bt Leong 9, 2, 12. Davey bt Mainland 6, 4, -11, -8, 8; Tang bt Neal 1, 5, 3. Tang bt Davey 8, 8, 6.

Men's doubles: Berry-Heginbotham bt Brailsford-Patel 6, -10, 7, 6; D Scott (NH)-Tang bt Nichol-Mainland 4, 10, 6; Solomons-Weinstock bt Johnston-O'Grady 8, 7, 7; Gao-Samuelsson bt Davey-Redmond 4, 6, 7; Darroch-White bt Bruton-Neal 5, 6, 6; Baker-B Zutic (NH) bt Lowe-C Sim (Aust) 9, 9, 7; C Talbot-I Talbot bt R Gilbert-A Moore (C) 2, 4, -10, 9; Pinkewich-Tran bt Newman-Smith 1, 1, 7. Berry-Heginbotham bt Scott-Tang 12, 3, 9; Gao-Samuelsson bt Solomons-Weinstock 11, 5, -5, 10; Darroch-White bt Baker-Zutic 2, 12, 7; Pinkewich-Tran bt C

and I Talbot 8, 10, 9. Gao-Samuelsson bt Berry-Heginbotham 3, 7, 7; Darroch-White bt Pinkewich-Tran 12, 7, -5, 8. Gao-Samuelsson bt Darroch-White 11, 12, -7, 10.

Women's singles: K Crowell (Aust) bt H Low (C-M) -3, -8, 6, 8, 7; L Baker (Aust) bt S Westenra (W) 6, -8, 9, 8; A Abbas (Aust) bt J Morgan (Aust) 7, 5, 4; W Deng (Aust) bt L Bellamy (WK) 6, 3, 6. Crowell bt Baker 5, 6, 2; Deng bt Abbas 5, -5, -10, 7, 9. Crowell bt Deng 12, 7, -7, 3.

Second division: V Ho (Aust) bt T Sulimova (WT) 7, -7, 4, 1; V Waters (NH) bt O Burnett (W) -9, -7, 9, 2, 12; V Scarr (MN) bt C Moore (C) 8, 3, 3; S Chen (C) bt F Ho (Aust) 5, -13, 7, 3. V Ho bt Waters 9, 18, -6, 7; Chen bt Scarr 9, 3, -2, 8. Chen bt V Ho 4, 7, 9.

Women's doubles: Deng-Morgan bt Burnett-Sulimova 7, 4, 9. Baker-Crowell bt Chen-Scarr 7, 10, 5; Deng-Morgan bt J Murray (NH)-Barker 4, -8, 7, -7, 5; Bellamy-Low bt V Ho-Moore 4, 4, 1; A Roberts (W)-Westenra bt F Ho-Mayclair 4, 6, 7. Baker-Crowell bt Deng-Morgan 10, 9, -4, -9, 5; Bellamy-Low bt Roberts-Westenra -2, 7, 9, 11. Baker-Crowell bt Bellamy-Low 6, 2, -5, -9, 3.

Mixed doubles: Mainland-Scarr bt A and C Moore 5, 4, 2. Pinkewich-Crowell bt Davey-Chen 1, 1, 2; Tran-Morgan bt Scott-Sulimova 2, 9, 8; Gao-Westenra bt Johnston-Waters 7, 6, 2; Darroch-Roberts bt Sim-V Ho 3, 7, 9; D Lowe-L Baker bt Nichol-Bellamy 1, 5, 7; C Talbot-Burnett bt Mainland-Scarr 7, 5, 11; Heginbotham-Abbas bt D Baker-Mayclair 6, 7, 6. Pinkewich-Crowell bt Tran-Morgan 14, 3, -7, 4; Gao-Westenra bt P and H Low 4, 5, 2; Darroch-Roberts bt D Lowe-L Baker 7, 4, 9; Heginbotham-Abbas bt C Talbot-Burnett 4, 1, 2. Gao-Westenra bt Pinkewich-Crowell 11, 8, 6; Heginbotham-Abbas bt Darroch-Roberts 7, -10, 8, 10. Heginbotham-Abbas bt Gao-Westenra 9, -8, 5, -9, 5.

Hold the champs, I'm on my way

Just a month ago I received a lovely letter from TTNZ board member and High Performance manager, John Singleton, expressing the board's desire to do as much as possible for veterans table tennis.

I wonder how serious this was when board deputy chairman and Auckland president Bob Inns sent a message from Auckland to the Easter championships in Whangarei asking if they could delay his first team match until he arrived late.

His reason?: He had to play an interclub match in Auckland first.

Should be an interesting conversation between the board's two high-powered leaders in this day and age of the development of table tennis.

Flying Squad: Some think the Waitemata ancients are heavy-footed, they think they are fleet-footed.....the cops took the former view. Not 200 metres from the Whangarei Stadium on their way home the Westies were picked up by a couple of laser gun-toting cops doing their thing for the national economy, And despite some pathetic whining and whinging, they copped an extra \$120 on to their Easter Weekend exes. Another Westie, just a few minutes behind was about to pass a car in front, saw the cops and throttled back. They caught the guy in front, though. Where is Constable Wayne Gear when you need him.

Like an oven: The heat outside the stadium at Whangarei was near the 30s every day, so you can imagine the heat inside. It was too much for one person who was taken to hospital by ambulance, with dehydration. A player was also helped outside by her opponents and had to default the rest of her singles

2005 Merit List

Over-40

Men: Malcolm Darroch (C) 1, Wayne Heginbotham (NSW) 2, Paul Pinkewich (NSW) 3, Stephen Gao (Q) 4, Hein Tran (NSW) 5, Brian Berry (Vic) 6, Lyndon White (C) 7, Chris Talbot (W) 8, Harry Redmond (C) 9, Thomas Samuelsson (Q) 10.

Women: Kay Crowell (SA) 1, Wei Deng (NSW) 2, Lorraine Baker (SA) 3, Hilary Low (CM) 4, Alice Abbas (SA) 5, Sabine Westera (W) 6, Lynnette Bellamy (WK) 7, Joylene Morgan (NSW) 8, Val Beaver (NH) 9, Pauline Bennyworth (WK) 10.

Over-50

Men: Pinkewich 1, Berry 2, Samuelsson 3, Patrick Low (A) 4, Mick Wright (Vic) 5, Michael Ede (Vic) 6, Allen Drury (Q) 7, Werner Borkhardt (Q) 8, Ken Cole (NSW) 9, Martin Solomons (Vic) 10.

Women: Baker 1, Abbas 2, Beaver 3, Lynley Barker (C) 4, Averil Roberts (W) 5, Tanya Sulimova (WT) 6, Jill Murray (NH) 7, Kaye O'Loughlin (NSW) 8, Val Scarr (MN) 9, Sandra Lynch (NSW).

Over-60

Men: Wright 1, Borkhardt 2, Cole 3, Ede 4, Jia Zhang (A) 5, Christopher Sykes (Vic) 6, Case de Bondt (Vic) 7, Nam Hang Lee (A) 8, Chip Eade (WT) 9, Buddy Reid (Vic) 10.

Women: Margaret Mulcahy (Vic) 1, Merle Sneddon (MN) 2, Diane Té Pania (NH) 3, Pauline Bennyworth (WK) 4, Heather Paul (MN) 5, Patricia Swale (S) 6, Elaine Matthews (SA) 7, Marlene Wisneth (MN) 8, Merle Trenwith (WT) 9, Val Eade (WT) 10.

Over-65

Men: Case de Bondt 1, Eade 2, Reid 3, Sykes 4, Tony Herbert (Q) 5, Alan Alabaster (C) 6, Geoff Nesbitt (Vic) 7, Jim Jarmin (MN) 8, Ken Sands (NSW) 9, Denver Glass (C) 10.

Women: Mulcahy 1, Sneddon 2, Annice Robottom (MN) 3, Nellie Milich (NL) 4, Elsie Spooner (MN) 5, Shirley Smith (NSW) 6, Joyce Woodward (Q) 7, Amida Croccolo (NSW) 8, Wisneth 9, Alice Wayne (SA) 10.

Over-70

Men: Herbert 1, Nesbitt 2, Bill Otene (WT) 3, Eddie Moore (W) 4, Arthur Lopez (NSW) 5, Dennis Galvin (WT) 6, Mervyn Allardyce (W) 7, Ron Menchi (W) 8, Hugh McIlwraith (W) 9, Dave Sherman (Tas) 10.

Women: Margaret McGregor (WT) 1, Robottom 2, Croccolo 3, Woodward 4, Spooner 5, Wayne 6, Barbara Tabb (C) 7, Smith 8, Milich 9, Betty Meads (MN) 10.

Over-75

Men: Ron Lynch (NSW) 1, Karl Pruess (NSW) 2, Jim Craig (NSW) 3, Dave Sherman (Tas) 4, Ron Anderson (Cant) 5, Bill Dennis (WT) 6.

Women: Spooner 1, Woodward 2.

“My Lips Are Sealed” on either side of Merit Lists

The new word this issue is “dichotomy” and that accurately describes The Merit List, or at least some players’ reactions.

Some say it causes more nuisance than it’s worth, others say it is just a bit of fun and should be accepted as that; the Merit List is an assessment of the top 10 players in specified age groups. It is an assessment by your peers.....never a conclusive exercise.

For years the popular Ron Menchi churned them out and the announcements was a fun part of the social. About four years ago it stopped. This year the Veterans Committee decided to revive it under a different system. Ten people were gathered to assist in the assessments, none of whom, we are assured, was playing in the same age group as the players being assessed.

Like any good clandestine operations the assessors’ names are in a file marked Top Secret. Supposedly only the organiser, VC chairman Ron Garrett, knows the full list. As a committeeman I don’t and I’m afraid I can’t tell you any more about the Merit List system, because, in line with a plea by Ron, and in agreement with MI5, CIA and the FBI, I cannot divulge something of which I haven’t the slightest idea.

Of course that is not how most committees work, but hopefully TTNZ’s new administrative regime will involve itself in a complete make-over.

Cases that annoy those on the Merit List are: One player who won only three singles in the teams, did not qualify for the main draws of two age groups and was eliminated in the first round of their second division matches was ranked No 6 in NZ.

In another two players who did not qualify for their main draws and who lost to a player in the teams event were placed above that player in the Merit List. One explanation was that it is quite often that a player will lose to a player of lesser ability thereby earning demerit points.

But in some teams events there were some weird results.....only after the rubber had been won. More credence was given to losses when there was no pressure than wins under pressure. One such pressure win gave that person’s team the gold, but the loser got the merit points.

This has been completely dismissed but if an assessor has a preconceived opinion of a player the assessment is obviously going to come into consideration, consciously or not....it is a human trait.

The veterans is a fun event, everyone enjoys it, pity that the return of the Merit List should bring back the same discomfort of about four years ago which led to its demise. For everyone who thinks it is great there will be someone who treats it with disdain, ridicule or derision.....or just could not care less.

Oooooops: A prominent NZ player caused a ripple of giggles with his assessment of the rules. A ball from the opposition in a doubles match went over to his forehand, he took a one-eyed swipe, the ball hit him in the thumb and slewed high and wide into the next court. "I should have a let," he said. "The ball has sweat on it."

The oldest: Octogenarian Elsie Spooner of Wanganui was the oldest competitor at Whangarei, but it was interesting to check among the many former titleholders who had held their medal the longest. Colleen Aitchison (O'Carroll) won in 1966, James Morris in 68, but the ever-smiling Merle Sneddon (Rolston) was a winner in 1954.

Sounds like there should be a reunion.....

We Want Your Subs, Now. It costs only \$3 a year

YOUR RESULTS, YOUR TOURNAMENT DATES, YOUR STORIES, YOUR LETTERS, YOUR COMMENTS TO.....

Dennis Galvin,
PO Box 21-386,
Henderson,
WAITAKERE CITY.

Phone: (09) 835-0993
E-mail: dennisgalvin@clear.net.nz

For just \$3 a year you can go on to our subscription list..



NEW ZEALAND

Lottery Grants Board

TE PUNA TAHUA

Correspondance to: The Secretary

New Zealand Lottery Grants Board

C/- Department Internal Affairs

PO Box 805, Wellington

Phone (04) 495 7200 Freephone 0800 824 824

Fax (04) 495 7225

OUR THANKS FOR THE LOTTERIES BOARD'S FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE PRODUCTION OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

Latte time with multi-talented new CEO and Amanda

The new Chief Executive Officer of Table Tennis New Zealand is a man of many talents, and all those talents will come in handy as we move into 2005 and beyond.

Mike Loftus, 35, is Auckland-born and educated at Mt Albert Grammar with a Kiwi pedigree going back almost 150 years on his mother's side. His dad is a newcomer from Scotland.....just 45 years ago.

After college Mike preferred a discerning peep at the world rather than an educational glare which is all the more remarkable that when he finally did decide to do something he collected degrees, certificates and honours like Val Beaver collects national medals. He established his future with a Certificate in Supervisory Management at Unitec in Auckland, now AUT. In 1998 he had a super pass from his Master of Business Administration degree at Waikato University; then started mixing it with the best in business and sports management.

He had a business stint in Australia which means he can't be all that bad, and, importantly, some of his contacts with the Oz sponsorship consulting agency Brand Advantage were Qantas, National Bank of Australia and Australia Post.

Even better, he is ex-Sparc, and an Information Systems expert as well as being a top dog in sponsorship, marketing, management and planning.

One would think that with all that intellect he would have been a table tennis whiz, but his main claim to fame in our sport was being runner-up in a soccer club's junior table tennis competition when he was 12. Heaven forgive him, he was a rumpus room TT tiger.

Mike and his partner Amanda live in Parnell which is about as far apart you can get from the climes of Mt Albert, and it is from there that he will use as his business office. Whether he has discussed it with Amanda or not he has declared 360a Parnell Rd as an open house to ping pongers. His phone number is 09-359-9125.

It will be interesting to see how things go with the CEO work bench in Auckland and the HQ still in Wellington. But Mike maintains that Wellington

and Averil will still solve the day to day administrative problems, although he will also be able to field some calls.

Mike says his position in table tennis is to act as the facilitation point for raising the Profile, Proficiencies, Performance and Participation of the sport. Yeah, the four Ps should do it, Mike.

If everything goes according to plan we will owe a lot to board chairman Graeme Muller, who obviously was the driving force to get Mike's position funded and then to persuade Mike to leave his Wonderland of International Business Management for li'l ole ping pong.

The big gap in table tennis administration has always been funding and even to make an effort to plug this gap is a plus.

No sport can exist or grow without funds and we have been lucky in the past few years that we have been able to get along "with a little bit of help from our friends".....at Sparc.

Table tennis' future plans can be vastly expanded so we can only hope that Mike Loftus will be able to use his experience, his contacts and his business acumen to keep those plans expanding.

So if you are in Auckland drop in to 360a Parnell Rd for chats with Mike and maybe latte and bagels with Amanda.



Sandra Mitchell, the bubbly Southlander who died earlier this year. She will be sadly missed.

Full support: Not the largest association in NZ, Waitemata sent 15 of their 21 tournament players to Whangarei and brought back 17 medals. Players who stayed the full five days paid only \$5 a night accommodation and their teams events were paid by the association. For some who were there for fewer than five days it was free. Surprising what a weekly chook raffle will bring in. Chief fundraiser for the past few years has been Ron Trautvetter.

Programme: One of the essentials for the veterans programme, or any programme for that matter, is the inclusion of teams players' names, otherwise credit to Northland for a fine production.

A Ping Pong Pope?

During the arrangements for Pope John Paul to be buried and a new pope selected it was announced in Wellington that Archbishop Emeritus, Cardinal Tom Williams was on his way to Rome as one of the 117 cardinals from around the world who would be voting for a new papal head.

It was mentioned that Cardinal Williams was also eligible to be the pope, although that seemed an unlikely sequence to events at the Vatican.

I then wondered if those unlikely circumstances had become a reality would Cardinal Tom have been the first table tennis champion to become a pope. Even now he may have been the first national champion to have a hand in a papal vote.

Cardinal Tom Williams was the son of Tommy, who was regarded by many to be the father of table tennis in New Zealand, despite his iron hand in demanding what he regarded as a proper (strict) code of dress which set back the women in the sport for many years.

Wellington's beautiful, curvy 18-year-old Beverley Jepson defied old Tommy by wearing short shorts in the Wellington championships in 1953 and he told her she would not be able to play in the national championships the next week while he was in charge. She defied Tommy who then found an apparent small irregularity in her entry form and she never played in the nationals. Beverley had the last laugh giving table tennis the greatest publicity boost ever with her photo winning the Pin-up of the Month in Sports Digest.....but the authoritarian Tommy would not give in to the fact that his actions had reversed the publicity he had intended. Old Tommy must have been seething when England's Rowe twins toured later the same year.....in the briefest of briefs. If Tommy could only see how the present day beauties dressed he would do the proverbial 360degrees from six feet under.

But getting back to Cardinal Tom.....well he won the NZ under-16 singles in 1949, the first year this age group had a title.

He has been considerable more mellow than his single-minded dad and no doubt has applied many of the disciplines, principles and attitude he learned in table tennis matches to enrich a life that has reached illustrious heights as the country's No 1 Catholic and only Cardinal.

New direction for Wairarapa

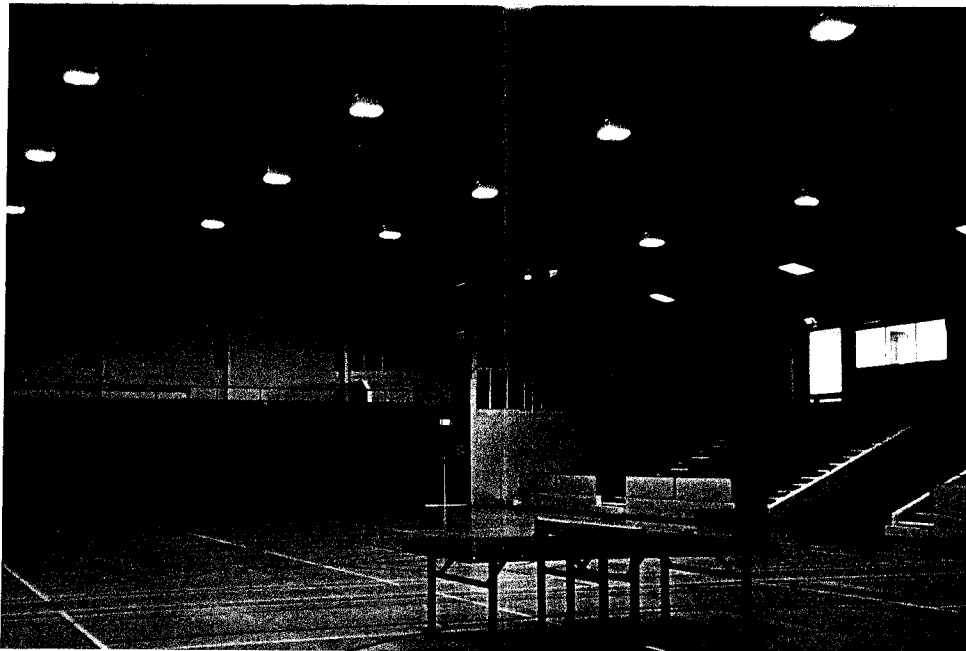
It hasn't taken long for a previously-troubled Table Tennis Wairarapa to turn around the sport.....first a new committee and now a new playing venue.

To lift the image and promote the sport the new committee has slung its tables on their backs and trudged from the Clareville Stadium across town to set up business in the Genesis Energy Recreation Centre in Masterton.

This centre is at the northern end of Masterton beside the refurbished swimming complex opposite Queen Elizabeth Park, and one of the big supporters is the Wairarapa Building Society.

Already TTW has organised a busy 2005 with WSB-sponsored club and schools competitions, a representative match against Wellington, the popular Wairarapa Open and an exhibition night.

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE



The picture is the interior of the new stadium which can hold 16 tables, representing a great chance to hold fairly big tournaments.

A new face in a crowded room

There was a lot of talk among the 40s and 50s girls at Whangarei about a new face and a table tennis style of hitting the ball early that reminded us oldies of the Europeans of quite a few years ago.

Tanya Sulimova of Waitemata was having her first table tennis nationals after making her NZ debut at the Wanganui Masters Games in February.

She started table tennis as a pre-teen in Ukraine and made the Ukraine team as a teams player but not in the individuals. She gave it up in her late teens, married, had two sons and did not play table tennis again for about 25 years.

No 2 son, Andrew, had come to New Zealand in 2001 with his wife Olena and daughters Natasha and Dasha and set up an auto electrician business in Kelston.

Tanya came out from Ukraine to visit, liked the place and when she went back to Odessa she made two important decisions. First, after 23 years divorced she married her friend of 15 years, Vladymyr Solovyov and second, they came to settle in New Zealand.

While in Odessa she went to a sports shop and grabbed a bat from a assorted sports bin for \$10 but when she started competition play here it was found that the rubber was illegal. She had some fine wins in Wanganui, the only singles loss being to Averil Roberts, taking two gold, two silver and a bronze.

On her return to Waitemata she changed her bat with the same insouciant manner as her Odessa lucky dip. The change did not slow her one bit, despite her newly acquired need for a rubber with "more bounce". She is No 3 now at Waitemata, behind top men Chip Eade and Junior Tavai, and ahead of their top women Martina Bohm and Barbara Jackson.

Whangarei was a jolt for Tanya.....facing the best in Australasia but she impressed someone enough to finish No 6 on the Merit List, after being relegated to the second division of the 50s singles then striking Mrs C Aitchison, better known as one of the royal family of Northland table tennis, the O'Carrolls, Colleen

Tanya mainly struggled against the hard hitters like Averil, Colleen and Waikato's Lynnette Bellamy, but she is a learner and she remembers each defeat as just another step forward.ed. She is a fast mover and has quick forehand and backhand roll returns over the table with strong drives from each side.

Once she gets a bat sorted she will concentrate on two goals.....she wants to be a champion and she wants to speak English. The first is driven by a typical East European determination. The latter goal has improved considerably, although she still smiles and gives a polite "I not understand" to anyone who gabbles away to her. She has an electronic language converter and enlists the aid of grand-daughters Natasha and Dasha.

While in Whangarei Tanya received some great news. Dasha had won a regional under 10 tennis tournament in Auckland.

Tanya's elder son, Maxim, lives in the United States where he is a IT software programmer.

She is now awaiting her papers for residency approved, then she hopes to be able to work. She is an excellent photographer.

Tanya also knows her way around the dance floor with Ukraine-like moves which put us Kiwi zombies to shame..

She said: "We learn to dance from a very early age."

We said: "Wow, look at Tanya go"

One of the big hurdles facing Tanya is age.....not hers, because she looks 20 years younger than her 56 (in July), but the age of the other top players.

She is the same age as Averil and in the same age bracket as a large group of top players; in fact the Over-50s has the greatest depth of any group in NZ.

That will not be daunting for Tanya, rather an incentive, and Will also sharpen the opposition when they come up against this delightful young grandmum.

Tanya Sulimova



Oz veterans on in Darwin

The big Oz experience is all on for September 17 at Darwin.....now that's a village not many people would visit for a week, especially when there is table tennis every day.

The Northern Territory TTA sent me a letter stating the Oz veterans champs are on from September 17 to 17, but we will forgive themthey are only Orstraylyuns. We have been told it is 17 to 24. If you remember the last vets.....there is a new airport resort just 1km away from the playing venue, with an extraordinarily priced accommodation menu, from \$149 to \$207 a day, with each suite or bungalow having its own spa baths, and a pool bar ... the Marrara Stadium is the same,

There is other accommodation available, of course, but you will still need shorts, bikinis and sun lotion. You can cook in Darwin in September as well as you can in Whangarei in March.

If you are interested contact Alan Bruhn at loual@ozemail.com.au, or I am sure that perennial traveller Averil Roberts at TTNZ will be able to help.

Southland is a change of pace

You have been warned....when you were shedding the sweat and weight in Whangarei at Easter when the outside temperatures were close to 30 and the inside readings were about 130, did you spare a thought for the 2005 venue.

The days it was nearly 30 in Whangarei it was 8deg in Invercargill and two days after the champs Invercargill lost its 8deg heat wave and went down to 1deg.....yep 1deg. As next year's Easter is a couple of weeks later (April 13 to 17) and if temps follow 2005, bikinis, shorts and sun lotion can be safely left at home.

Table tennis rules may have to be altered so players can play in anoraks, ugg boots, gloves and beanies. Bill Otene wore his beanie to keep his head warm in 27deg in Whangarei.....he will need a blow torch in his shorts in Invercargill.

A word from Ron Garrett accommodation will be scarce as there will be a school reunion next Easter, soooooooooo BOOK NOW..