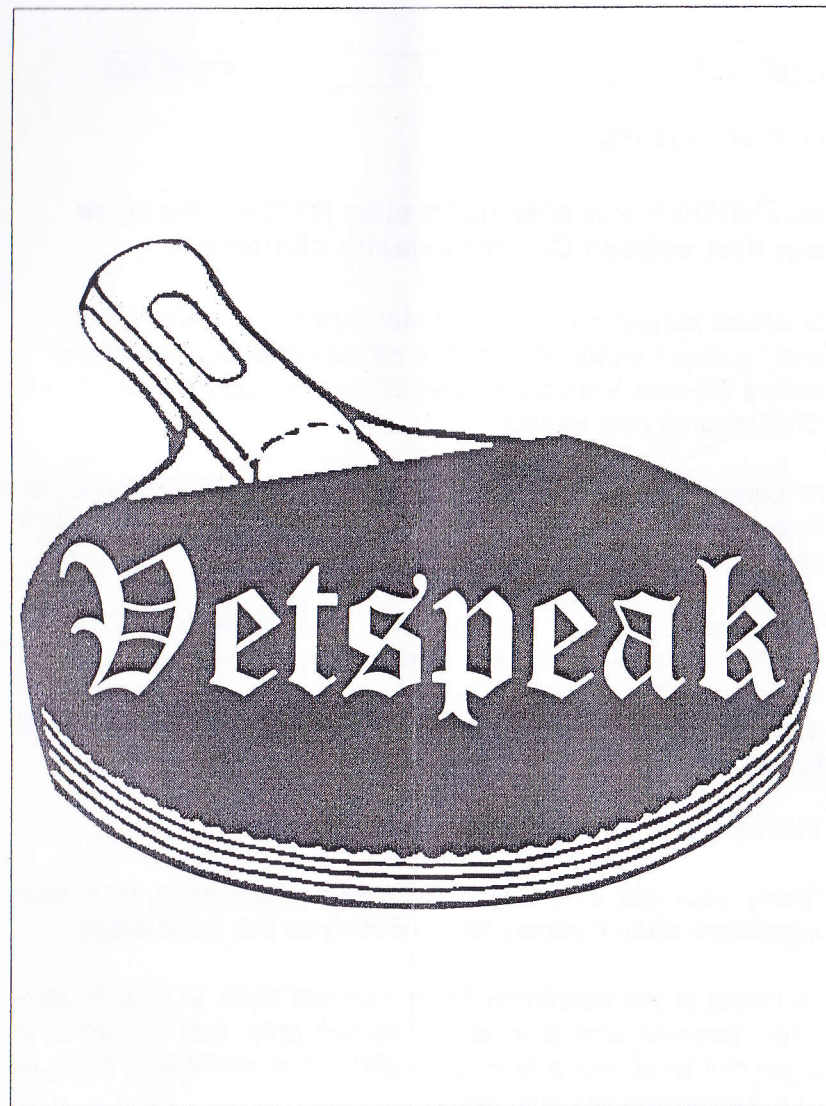




LI CHUNLI, the Commonwealth champion at 40 and still climbing the world rankings.



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

Hi there oldies,

ALTHOUGH she may not realise it I think we have our first veteran Commonwealth champion.

Li Chunli played in the Manchester Games as a 40 year-old and I guess it would frighten the hell out of quite a few if she enters the next Vets champs which, by the way, are in Christchurch next Easter.

In case you have not seen a copy of the ITTF magazine, Table Tennis Illustrated there is a superb picture of Li Chunli on the front cover.

The shot epitomises the guts and determination of Chunli. I had a message from an Australian who was amazed at Chunli's ability to pump herself up to incredible heights. If there is a lesson to be learned from her success it was "total focus".

The Illustrated said:

"Forty year old Li Chunli proved that experience is a vital ingredient when it comes to competing on the world stage.

"A player in the traditional Asian penhold style, Li Chunli uses short pimples one side of the racket only, fast footwork, a powerful forehand and a quite distinctive backhand drive to out-manoeuvre her opponents.

"In the final she never let Li Jia Wei, an adversary twenty years her junior, settle and with a never-ending tirade of attacking strokes emerged as the women's champion.

"The victory no doubt more than compensated for defeat in the doubles events at the hands of Li Jia Wei.

"In the women's doubles final, with sister Karen Li, the duo lost to Li Jia Wei and Jing Jun Hong in four games and in the mixed with Peter Jackson, Duan Yong Jun partnered Li Jia Wei to victory."

In the latest world rankings Li Chunli took a mighty hunk out of the list after her Manchester success. She rose from No 50 to No 39, whereas Li Jia Wei was ranked No 9.

Li Chunli's extraordinary feat at Manchester was achieved by beating the entire Singapore team which easily won the teams event.

Chunli beat Zhang Xue Ling 8, 5, -11, 8, 9; beat Jing Jun Hong 4, -7, 5, 7, 8, then beat Li Jia Wei 6, 9, -5, 5, 8.

Zhang Xue Ling is at 64, and Jing Jun Hong is at 15.

Jing Jun Hong, the 34-year-old Sportswoman of the Year in Singapore in 1996, 1997, 2000, learned her table tennis in China and now plays in Holland.

Li Chunli has been honing her game in the Japanese league and has had some extraordinary results against the world's top men who also play the league.

She won Commonwealth gold for her singles, silver with Karen Li in the women's doubles and bronze for the women's teams event and the mixed doubles with Peter Jackson to make her the most successful medal winner for New Zealand at Manchester.

The women's teams event went to Singapore from Australia with Canada and New Zealand third.

From the quarters, of the women's doubles Li Chunli and Karen Li beat May Cho and Tammy Gough of Australia 7, -13, 5, 2; beat Tan Paey Fern and Zhang Xue Ling of Singapore 7, 9, 15 and in the final lost to Li Jia Wei and Jing Jun Hoong 3, 7, -10, 4.

From the quarters of the mixed doubles Jackson and Chunli beat Ryan Jenkins and Beth Daunton of Wales 9, 4, -11, -6, 5 and lost to Dun Yong Jun and Li Jia Wei 9, 11, 7.

In the men's doubles quarterfinals eventual winners Andrew Baggaley and Gareth Herbert of England beat Peter Jackson and Aaron Li 8, 10, 8.

Wheelchair medallist

Table tennis was in the Commonwealth Games at Manchester for the first time, and as a consequence wheelchair table tennis was also a first, and the inclusion of wheelchair table tennis medals in the grand overall total was also a first.

In the first issue of Vetspeak we featured an article about former Australia representative Joy Brown of NSW now being confined to a wheelchair. Joy, a 63-year-old grandmother and the oldest competitor at the Games, played in the wheelchair singles and won a bronze medal. The winner was Sue Gilroy of England who won all her matches in straight games.

Lone Star

Val Roberts is having it tough in Wellington/Hutt Valley tournaments. Apparently there is such a lack of opposition that if she wants to play in veterans tournaments she has to play against the men.

Val has done so much for table tennis down Capital City way that she deserves a bit better than that. Both Hutt Valley and Wellington have produced some pretty handy players in the past surely some of them have now reached veterans stage. Where are they? Have they been approached?

Age Divisions

It seems strange that there is no uniformity for the ages divisions in veterans events at provincial, even national tournaments.

Any province can put on a tournament with their own ideas of the ages divisions.

Most look on the over-40s as the start of the veterans, but the onslaught of young players in open grades led to an over-35 group. There was a stage when most of the players, particularly the women, were also in the over-35 category.

For the national-type championships the over 40, 50 and 60 divisions were established, except for the national vets which have introduced five-yearly gaps, up to and including over-70s.

Masters Games table tennis follow few normal rules in dress, administration or age divisions because of the social aspect of the Games. It is intended as a fun time.

Provincial tournaments also take a more liberal view of age divisions, one even mixing men and women in age groups where there is a paucity of entrants.

It has been said that many players will not attend tournaments where they have to concede 10 years in a division. That is a lot of years in veterans speak. It also could be the reason why numbers are dropping at tournaments yet increasing at social events.

The strange part of table tennis administration is that lip service is paid to veterans yet take away the veterans and the game would collapse.

Perhaps the national administration would consider a veterans representative on the board, or attached to the board. That means a person elected by the veterans for the board. It could be stated that one person entitled to play in veterans events is already on the existing board. That is not quite a veterans representative.

Or perhaps, like Australia and many other nations, there should be a New Zealand Veterans Table Tennis Association set up as an autonomous body, similar to the Manawatu vets being separate from the Manawatu association.

Defections at NI

Are we really organising our tournaments to get the best out of the entries, and to attract more entries?

At the North Island championships at Auckland this year there were a number of defaults and there were insufficient entries in some divisions.

SPECIAL LATE-EDITION RESULTS FROM NZ CHAMPS
THANKS TO LINDSAY BEER, SOUTHLAND SECRETARY.

Kadia Keller-Rice Brings Back Memories at NZ Champs

Tauranga's Kadia Keller-Rice who represented New Zealand at the 1981 world championships in Novi Sad, Yugoslavia, added to her list of credits with another national title at Invercargill.

A dazzling attacker 21 years ago Kadia, who confesses to being a part-time table tennis player because of her tennis coaching commitments, won the Over-35 women's singles at the New Zealand Open championships at Invercargill on October 5.

Most of her opponents would have barely reached their teens when she first played for New Zealand as one of the most exciting youngsters in an era of top young players.

Coming south from a tiny Waikato farming township was no hindrance to Pauline Bennyworth who has had a couple of happy tournaments lately. She won four titles, the Over-55 women's singles and the mixed with perennial winner Keith Armstrong, the over-45 women's doubles with Canterbury Open multiple winner Raina McKechnie and the mixed with the consistent Steve Crow, also of Canterbury.

The Over-55 men's singles went to the national veterans Over-60 champion Chip Ede from Waitemata and the famous Fogarty flag was kept flying by John in the Over-45 men's singles.

INVERCARGILL LICENSING TRUST N.Z. CHAMPS

B GRADE MEN'S SINGLES
OVER 55 MEN'S SINGLES
OVER 55 WOMEN'S SINGLES
OVER 55 MEN'S DOUBLES

OVER 55 WOMEN'S DOUBLES

OVER 55 MIXED DOUBLES

OVER 45 MEN'S SINGLES
OVER 45 WOMEN'S SINGLES
OVER 45 MEN'S DOUBLES

OVER 45 WOMEN'S DOUBLES

OVER 45 MIXED DOUBLES

OVER 35 MEN'S SINGLES
OVER 35 WOMEN'S SINGLES
OVER 35 MEN'S DOUBLES

OVER 35 WOMEN'S DOUBLES

OVER 35 MIXED DOUBLES

TEAMS

MEN'S A GRADE
MEN'S B GRADE
MEN'S C GRADE
MEN'S OVER 45
MEN'S OVER 55
WOMEN'S A GRADE
WOMEN'S OVER 45/55

Alan Pedley (MN)
Chip Eade (WT)
Pauline Bennyworth(WK)
Alan Alabaster(C)/Colin
Tipper(O)
Ngairé Garrett(S)/Pat
Swale(S)
Keith Armstrong (C)
/Pauline Bennyworth (WK)

John Fogarty(O)
Yi Wen Sun(N)
John Fogarty(O)/Bryan
McConnochie(W)
Pauline Bennyworth (WK)
/Raina McKechnie(C)
Stephen Crow(C)/Pauline
Bennyworth(WK)

Malcolm Darroch(C)
Kadia Keller-Rice (BOP)
Malcolm Darroch(C)/Alan
Pedley(MN)
Sabine Westenra(W)
/Raewyn Young(W)
David Scott(NH)/Raewyn
Young(W)

CANTERBURY
WELLINGTON 2
OTAGO 2
CANTERBURY 1
CANTERBURY
CANTERBURY 1
SOUTHLAND

We can rely on the over-50 women's section being dominated by six national champions, so if they are the only entrants two at least will feature in the division for first round losers. The number of times we have seen multi-national champions in the divisions (or plates) seems to be just a set-up for another section.

The hierarchy should also look at the strange grade sections. At the NI champs at Auckland Event 62 was a B grade women's second division (for B grade women who could not pass the first round). Three of the four semi-finalists were many times national champions!!

In the final of the C grade women's second division the winner was a former NZ representative and titleholder of not so long ago.

It will take a brighter spark than I to work out a system where the graded players are those who would have no chance whatsoever of getting to open class semis, but perhaps a fairer and more enticing system would attract more players to enter tournaments.

Most players would probably be happy to, say, enter the women's B or C grade, knowing that they would be playing a top player in the first round, but able to enjoy a second division game against someone their own standard, not a current national champion.

Germany supports vets

The Donic man from the south, Joachim Kusche tells Vetspeak that in the recent German veterans championships there were 418 qualifiers from district

and regional championships all over Germany. There were 30 events and 30 tables were used. There were no teams events.

The runner-up in the over-75 women's singles was 83. She complained at the championships that she always has to play much younger players unless she goes to the international tournaments.

In the same age division the doubles winners totalled 163 years.

Thanks for the info, Joachim. We could do with more. In this issue you will see Joachim's advertisement and we like to see vets support the ones who support us.

Canterbury Open

Over-40. Men's singles: Bill Stewart beat Peter de Boer 7, 10, -7, -4, 6; women's singles: Raina McKechnie beat Seng Chen -6, 7, -9, 7, 5; men's doubles: Peter de Boer and Bill Stewart beat Dave Samson and Stuart Wallace 4, 5, -8, 10; mixed doubles: Alan Alabaster and Sherry Chang beat Stuart Wallace and Raina McKechnie: -5, 8, 10, -8, 12.

Over- 50. Men's singles: Alan Alabaster beat Glen Haszard 9, 6, 6; women's singles: Raina McKechnie beat Sherry Chang 8, 7, 6; men's doubles: Neville Duggan and Sam Wong beat Steve Craw and Denver Glass 8, -10, 5, 4; mixed doubles: Alan Alabaster and Raina McKechnie beat Steve Craw and Sherry Chang 7, 14, -6, 8.

Over-60. Men's singles: Colin Tipper beat Alan Alabaster 7, -4, 7, -5, 10; women's singles: Valda Smith beat Alison Williamson 7, 3, 6; men's doubles: Colin Tipper and Alan Alabaster beat Harry Taylor and Eddie Moore 9, 9, 11; women's doubles: Lyndsay van Hout and

Joan Prisk beat Alison Williamson and Valda Smith 5, 7, 6; mixed doubles: Keith Armstrong and Valda Smith beat Eddie Moore and Joan Prisk 9, 7, -1, -6, 8.

North Harbour Open

Over-45. Men's singles: William Weinstock beat Dave Scott 7, 3, 8; women's singles: Val Beaver beat Christine Cunningham 4, 7, 7; men's doubles: William Weinstock and Allen Smith beat Brent Davies and Grant Jones 9, -7, 4, -4, 10; women's doubles: Val Beaver and Jill Murray beat Velma Mayclair and Trish Meyer 7, 8, 6; mixed doubles: Dave Scott and Pauline Bennyworth beat Robert Dunn and Christine Cunningham -7, 7, 8, 2; men's plate: Geoff Hill beat Grant Jones 9, 8, -9, -8, 11; women's plate: Trish Meyer beat Pauline Bennyworth -4, 10, 13, -5, 6.

Over-55. Men's singles: William Weinstock beat Nam Hang Lee 9, 8, -9, 9; women's singles: Pauline Bennyworth beat Trish Meyer-10, 7, 12, -9, 8; men's doubles: Robert Dunn and John Cunningham beat Mike Fox and Nam Hang Lee 8, 7, 9; women's doubles: Christine Cunningham and Pauline Bennyworth beat Nellie Milich and Dian Te Pania 4, 2, 4; mixed doubles: Dave Scott and Pauline Bennyworth beat Robert Dunn and Christine Cunningham -7, 7, 8, 2; men's plate Terry Cockfield beat Warwick Barnfather 5, -11, 5, 6; women's plate: Christine Cunningham bt Mary Niu 8, 4, 5,;

Wellington/Hutt Valley Open

Over 40. Singles: Lindsay Ward; doubles: Lindsay Ward and Nha Nguyen.

Over 50. Singles: Bruce Connolly; doubles: Bryan McConnochie and Richard Ammundsen.

Over-60. Singles: Nha Nguyen; doubles: John Lawton and Richard Ammundsen

COMING EVENTS WITH VETS DIVISIONS

2002

October 5 - 13: World Masters Games at Melbourne
 October 14 - 20: Australian Veterans Championships
 December 5: Entries close for Summer Nationals

2003

January 11-15: Summer Nationals at Christchurch
 February 1 - 9: NZ Masters Games at Wanganui
 March 20: Entries close for NZ Veterans
 April 18 - 21: NZ Veterans at Christchurch
 May 22: Entries close for SI championships
 June 5: Entries close for NI championships
 June 20-22: SI Championships at Christchurch
 July 8-9: NI Championships at North Harbour
 August 21: Entries close NZ Championships
 Sept 25 - Oct 4: NZ Championships at Lower Hutt



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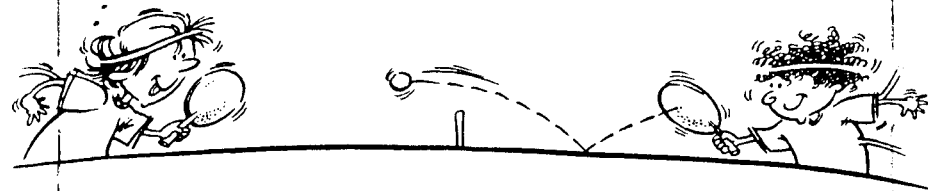


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