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When I started playing in 1989 Brian was a stalwart of the Ryde club. He played that season in Div 4 with my brother Phil and Cedric Jones. As an older gent with a military bearing, us juniors were somewhat terrified of him, but he was a decent bloke, and always happy to knock with the kids. His daughter, Pauline, also played in this period, and was a well-renowned player. When Brian died, she decided to establish this tournament in his name and the format has remained the same.

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10.5 Playing clothing, other than shoes and socks, shall be mainly of a uniform colour other than white. Part or all of the shirt collar and/or sleeves and marking along the side seams of a garment may be of a contrasting colour other than white. However in the event that the home team has given prior notice of their intention to provide yellow or orange balls for use in a particular match the preceding part of this rule shall apply as if the word 'yellow' or 'orange' has been substituted for 'white'.

10.6 Any markings and trimmings on a playing garment and any objects such as jewellery worn must not be such as to distract an opponent.

Rules of the Isle of Wight Table Tennis Association

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2.6.1 Service shall start with the ball resting freely on the open palm of the server's stationary free hand.

2.6.2 The server shall then project the ball near vertically upwards, without imparting spin, so that it rises at least 16cm after leaving the palm of the free hand and then falls without touching anything before being struck.

2.6.3 As the ball is falling the server shall strike it so that it touches first his or her court and then touches directly the receiver's court; in doubles, the ball shall touch successively the right half court of server and receiver.

2.6.4 From the start of service until it is struck, the ball shall be above the level of the playing surface and behind the server's end line, and it shall not be hidden from the receiver by the server or his or her doubles partner or by anything they wear or carry.

2.6.5 As soon as the ball has been projected, the server's free arm and hand shall be removed from the space between the ball and the net; the space between the ball and the net is defined by the ball, the net and its indefinite upward extension.

Laws of Table Tennis (Table Tennis England)

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2 …Every person playing in the League must be affiliated as a Player Member of TTE. …

Rules of the Isle of Wight Table Tennis Association

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(All details correct as of 28 January 2024)

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ISLE OF WIGHT
John Prean

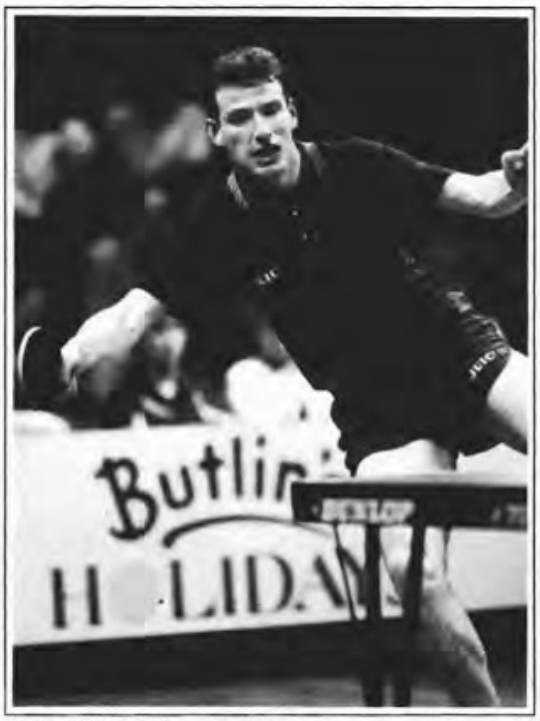
BOTH OUR JUNIORS and Cadets returned from the Hampshire Inter-Town weekends with excellent result. The Juniors (Alex Rorke, Greg Burns, Stuart Dover) chalked up a couple of 10-0 victories, Lorna Dutch contributing her usual two in the girls matches and the mixed doubles.

Lorna was again in action in the cadet matches in which the girls may play against boys. Here she won 5 out of 6 as did Danny Burns, another very bright prospect. Sonia Pointer won 3 out of 6. So our team was riding high with two girls in the side! Lorna remains unranked in the English cadet lists, even when these ARE published. This seems an extraordinary state of affairs. She has beaten ranked girls, but apparently in events not on the 'computer' but she has won 6 out of 6 in Hampshire's Junior County matches and the County Championships are on the 'computer' and pay large sums for that privilege. In Lorna's case they are paying for something they do not get. I shall not dwell on other grievances which players have aired to me with increasing regularity and which they find discouraging to a point where they go to fewer and fewer junior tournament. Here we have a highly promising young player who cannot get on the computer at all! I have noted the explanations in Mr Twiss' latest article (TTN Dec/Jan) but the reality is sobering and sad. It was certainly different in the previous scheme when each win in the County Championships was worth SOMETHING. I wish the theoreticians in the ivory towers would occasionally pause to think about the harm they are doing whilst they contemplate the mathematics and 'logic' of their actions.

One young player who has managed to get 'on the computer' is Greg Burns - at No. 221 in the Junior Boys! He is a lot better than that

this season as well as offering coaching and encouragement to the young. A special word of thanks to the guiding spirit of the club; Bill and Joan Rossi and Gordon Burns who have moved mountains and the best is probably still ahead.

they were, but I feel that they soon will be as a number of excellent young players are coming through the divisions. The Vics Club runs 11 teams



Butlins Holidays winner Carl Prean

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ISLE OF WIGHT
John Prean

ISLAND PLAYERS ARE again crossing the Solent in great numbers. Our A team, playing in the Southern Regional League have won 3 and lost 4 and so may survive in the Premier Section to which last year's form may not have entitled them! If so, it will be an excellent effort. Congratulations to the reconstituted team of Roger Hookey, Chris Angus and Regina Stevens. Regina, a girl among men, is a very good player who would be a lot higher than her national ranking of No. 16 or so which I noted not long ago, if she played regularly. As a full time teacher, she cannot find that time, not least because she also coaches 10 to 11 hours per week. Her ranking was based, I believe, on some successful British Women's League weekends. Now she seems to have been dropped from the list, perhaps because of limited activity, which elsewhere has been known to lead to higher rankings.

One of our players who has at last made the national cadet ranking list is Lorna Dutch. She appeared in the December list at No. 18 and not having played since, at any rate in ranking events, naturally advanced to No. 17. She was luckier in that respect than Regina. Congratulations to Lorna. It must have seemed as hard to get on the list as it was to win all those matches.

Our juniors and cadets were unbeaten in the Hampshire Inter-town weekends, whilst our Veterans have won 3 and lost 2 in the Veteran's section (Division 1). Alan Hulbert, Joe Daly (who certainly has a busy programme) and Pete Urry (with a hard bat) seem to be getting better as they get older. If they can market the formula, they may make a fortune. Our B team in the Southern Regional League are being fielded for the experience, so far mainly that of losing, but we hope that some strong oaks will emerge in time from the acorns that are being sown.

I refereed our annual Top 10 tournament where I thought standards were better than for some years. It was a very good evening and every seat was occupied. Roger Hookey proved a worthy winner, beating Angus 20 and 24 in an exciting final. He had his work cut out beating Regina in the semi final which went to three, as did the other semi in which Angus beat Mike Turner 19 in the third. We invited our two top juniors Alex Rorke and Greg Burns and they were not disgraced at No. 8 and 9 and neither were Martin Mitchell (at No. 5) and Urry and Daly in the next places. If we could have play like that every week, it would produce great benefits. The idea is on the table.

Joan Rossi won the "service to Sport" award at the IW Sports and Recreation Council "Sports Personality of the Year" presentations. It was a well deserved honour for Joan as well as the sport she has served for 45 years. Always first with the news, this column has often featured Joan and Bill Rossi's quite outstanding service to the Island sport!

Quite a few of us travelled to Milton Keynes to see the long awaited 'head to head' between our player Carl Prean and Chen Xinhua staged, we were told, to decide who was the best player in England. We remained for the England-France international. The Isle of Wight player duly won in two straight games in a fascinating contest of defence vs attack, after which he duly remained in the No. 2 spot! The reason seemed to be that the ranking committee has allocated a derisory points to this contest, which was sponsored (Butlins) and televised (BBC2 Friday Sport). The weighting (multiple) was 1.5, ie the same as accorded to, say, a Junior 2 Star and the VETTS Regional tournaments.

Carl was philosophical on the topic, having seen himself relegated to the No. 2 spot the previous season on the basis of 47 wins and 23 defeats compared with his rival's 33 wins and 22 defeats. "It was" he said "no surprise".

The match itself received tiny, almost apologetic space in this journal - about 5% of that given to the 'glue' stories. Perhaps as well. Imagine a boxing match in which the loser rises from the canvas to be proclaimed the No. 1. It can only happed in table tennis! A well wisher sent me a cartoon in which a kindly official tells Chen: "All you have to do is lose and you will retain your No. 1 spot. Go to it!"

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ISLE OF WIGHT
John Prean

OUR CADETS FINISHED joint second in the Hampshire Inter-Town which must be seen as an excellent result. Our players are all under 13 and we have two girls playing against Boys. Congratulations to Danny Burns, Lorna Dutch and Sonia Pointer. Lorna reached the last 8 of the Essex Junior Select, thoroughly justifying her national ranking of No. 16. Next season may produce a real break-through. If so, it will be achieved against greater odds than those which confronted previous ranked juniors Derek Grant and Carl Prean. Our ranking system remains a positive incentive NOT to play and particularly to pick and choose one's matches. This is not a minority view any longer.

Carl Prean won the national title in Kings Lynn, sponsored by Uncle Ben's Rice, which was always my favoured brand. I was generally impressed with the event, the arena and, above all, the solid spectator support. Great credit also to the local volunteers and excellent umpiring. The absence of 'glue' seemed to produce longer rallies and more interesting contests. It certainly enabled Matthew Syed to return even more 'impossible' balls than usual. His retrieving reminded one of Takashima and even Bergmann. He proved a tough opponent for Carl to penetrate and score of 3-0 did not do justice to an incredible match. Many rallies had the crowd gasping with astonishment and pleasure. However, that was 'only' the semi final. In the final Carl met the ageless Des Douglas, at 37 seeming as fast as ever. Our man won, but only after 5 pulsating games which again had the full house on the edge of the seats. A change of tactics at 1-2 seemed to turn the tide.

Earlier Carl had beaten Stuart Palmer, the only British player to have beaten Des this season, in quite a hard match. What a talented player Palmer is! I recall him as a good junior, but he probably slipped through the net at the time. If he had played full-time, he would have gone a very long way. Carl's reward for that one? Zero ranking points!

After 5 wins and the National Title Carl gained 20 ranking points and that for the biggest domestic event of the season or, if you like, he increased his total by less than 1%! If he had lost to Palmer (no disgrace) he would have lost 50 points. If he had lost to Skylet Andrew (as have many very good players) he would have lost 30 points. It puts into perspective why players have voted with their feet and are not going to tournaments and why tournaments are going out of business.

It is a conversation we often have at local level and all too often the decision is NOT to go. Our costs begin with close to £40 for crossing the Solent strip of a few miles. This and the ranking system present irresistible reasons to stay at home! All over the country there are young players who should be attracted into the national arena and the precise opposite is happening. It is later than we think, perhaps already too late to bring about the urgent change that is needed.

FEE REDUCTION COULD DECIMATE ETTA

THE end of February is a time when proposals for changes to our Association rules must be submitted. The Deputy Chairman, the Treasurer and myself are very concerned at the receipt of rule amendments from the Isle of Wight County, Nottinghamshire County and Bristol and D.TTA which, if passed, could decimate the activities of the ETTA.

These rules changes are proposed for consideration at our AGM in June. If one or other of these proposals were passed, it would reduce the affiliation fee income from our members between 20 and 50%

We are regarded by the Sports Council as a good, progressive association, but if our membership approved the Isle of Wight, Nottinghamshire or Bristol proposals, they could immediatel withdraw their support. I ask those responsible for these rule amendments to think again and urge our member leagues and counties who carry the votes at the AGM to reject these proposals.

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ISLE OF WIGHT
John Prean

OUR JUNIORS WON their section of the Hampshire Inter-Town League, a notable achievement and the first time ever. We had not managed this in the days when Carl Prean was a junior!

Great credit to our team of Lorna Dutch, Alex Rorke and Stuart Dover, but particularly Greg Burns, who went through both weekends unbeaten, the only player (among the boys) who managed this. On the way he had notable wins vs David Dobson (Southampton) and Gareth Scadden (Gosport and Fareham), ranked No. 3 and 4 in the county. Lorna confirmed her county No. 1 junior spot by winning her 4 matches. Alex won 6 out of 8 over the campaign and Stuart 5 out of 8. Our doubles play could have been better, especially in the mixed with Lorna in the side. This is something that will need a lot of work, if the title is to be retained next season.

We had our share of luck since Gosport lacked their two top players on the second weekend. A draw, duly achieved, against Southampton was therefore enough to clinch the title. That match was as close as 5-5's unusually are with Gregs win v David Dobson the highlight. The latter is a good defender who is capable of changing his game to attack if the need arises.

I did make the trip this time and so witnessed a heartening display and returned to duties as a cornerman, a role I had filled so often before. It recalled many happy memories and some when the result was not quite as good as this one!

Sandown clinched our First Division title with great ease and, to be frank, collectively the best players (Roger Hookey, Mike Turner and Ian Urry). It is a well balanced lineup and Rookey and Turner are virtually unbeatable in the doubles when a win is needed. It looks as if two teams of Newport Vics will gain promotion. If so, youngsters like Stuart Dover and Danny Burns (13) will figure in the top section. Whether Lorna Dutch (unbeatable in Division 4) should make the big step into the Premier section is the subject of conflicting advice and much debate just now.

The Knowles Cup (our annual handicap team event) was also won by Sandown, defeating the 4th division team which includes Lorna and her father Les 6-3. Only hectic activity in the 'transfer market' by another club can challenge Sandown's superiority next time round. No signs of this have been reported.

The Island title was won by Chris Angus v Roger Hookey in the usual close match, which reversed the result of our 'Top 10'. The veteran Angus continues to enjoy an Indian Summer.

I report with great sadness the death of Vivienne Cherriman, many times Island ladies champion, but also once English Ladies Veterans Champion. "Cherry" seemed indestructible and led life to the full. In recent years she won numerous swimming world titles in the 80-84 age group. She played excellent hockey when in her sixties and once swan the Solent when in her late fifties. At a time others thought of retirement she began and passed her barrister's exams! I recall the day she finally lost the Island ladies title. The finals were played on two tables and four other matches were completed on the other table whilst she and Kathy Pierce battled it out. Cherry did not give up her title without a fight! At the age of 71 she made a 'come back' in our 4th division and one of her opponents was 8 year old Carl Prean. We wondered whether the age difference might be a national record. I recall the occasion when Cherry, then in her fifties, was called on for First Division duties. Her opponents, three young men regarded as future stars, were delighted to see her. As they calculated their likely totals, I heard them say "... we shall all beat the old girl... that will give us three ..." At the end of the evening "the old girl" had beaten all three of them and three promising careers had received an unexpected setback and three bruised egos may never have been the same again. A tremendous character has passed from the scene.

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ISLAND GAMES by Dave Williams

A triumph for table tennis

THE day after the official opening by H.R.H. Princess Anne, the table tennis team event began at 0930 on the Sunday morning. Her Royal Highness was introduced to the table tennis co-ordinator for the games, retiring I.W.T.T.A. chairman Alan Hulbert.

Sponsored by Ransome Sports and the Island Association, and in an excellent venue, Warner's Harcourt Sands at Ryde, the visiting islands' teams were very well looked after as were the team of umpires.

As well as assisting with the whole running of the events, Brian Lamerton had gathered the team of excellent arbitrators, who not only were top notch, but with just the right amount of humour.

There were three lady umpires, Doris Moors, Brenda Bubb of the Isle of Man, and Mrs. Connie Moran, who shared duties with her husband Bill. Also controlling games with skill were Messrs. Randall, Groom, Howes, Strode and Kelly.

Leading the team of Island backroom staff, Alan Hulbert delegated the jobs to be carried out, and the superb organisation was a credit to Heather Wykes, Secretary, her husband John, Pete Urry who managed the Island players, and Sue Mitchell who was the organiser's girl 'Friday', and not least, Warner's hard-working staff.

TEAM EVENT POSITIONS

		P	W	L	F	A
1	GOTLAND	8	8	0	32	1
2	JERSEY	8	7	1	28	12
3	I.O.M.	8	5	3	22	20
4	FAROES	8	5	3	24	17
5	GREENLAND	8	4	4	23	21
6	I.O.W.	8	3	5	21	26
7	SAAREMAA	8	3	5	16	25
8	P.E.I.	8	1	7	13	21
9	SHETLAND	8	0	8	6	32

ISLE OF WIGHT

John Prean

The highlights of the summer were produced by the Inter Island Games, a mini-Olympics for small islands from all over the world. Twenty nine such islands entered, but only nine in the table tennis event. These were the hosts, the Isle of Wight, Jersey, Isle of Man, Prince Edward Island (Canada), Saaremaa (Estonia), Greenland, Shetlands, Faroes and Gotland (Sweden) who carried all before them, as they had on the previous four occasions the Games had been staged. But this time not quite, as our Regina Stevens won the ladies' singles and she and Amanda won the bronze in the ladies' doubles. The Swedes finished first, second and third in the mens, second and third in the womens and won the three doubles events as well as the team event. The latter was played by mixed teams in the old European League format which I did not find entirely enthralling, still less that we finished sixth out of nine, though Roger Hookey played well, losing only three games. Regina was also unbeaten in this, but no trees were uprooted in our doubles play or second singles.

There was some controversy as to whether Carl Prean should be selected in which I did not join. It proved an academic problem in the end, as he had his hand in plaster after an operation on his wrist. We wish him a speedy and complete recovery. He would undoubtedly have played if invited and fit. I cannot comment on the matter, but to leave out ones banker and a player born on the Island does not seem to me good sense unless one sees losing a way of life and popularity.

Anyway, we had a few entertaining days. The standard of play was remarkably high and it was a geography lesson as well as one learned of new places. The standard of umpiring was even higher, as some of our top people were invited. We are very grateful for their contribution.

Next time, in Gibraltar (1995) I hope to see rather more imaginative scheduling and a greater effort to attract spectators. I understand that this time TV coverage by Meridian and Channel TV was quite good, but naturally the cameras followed the medals of home players and we did not win enough of these, to some extend a self-inflicted state of affairs.

Lorna Dutch could not play as she appeared for England schoolgirls after a 500 mile trip to Perth. She did not lose any team matches, but lost in the U14 Individual to the eventual winner, snatching defeat from the jaws of victory which seemed certain when leading by several points in the third. She did win a 2 Star Cadet event at Grove, which advanced her another place in the rankings after gaining the princely total of six ranking points. I understand the system is about to undergo drastic change and that three points will be awarded just for turning up regardless of whether any of the first matches are won. A very strange state of affairs. One had read earlier that the previous system was a way of "buying" points!

Whatever the wisdom of this, it will hardly favour our players who begin their journeys with a £40 ferry crossing or others in far-flung fringe areas which need help most. One can only express further disappointment and concern.

Congratulations to Greg Burns and Lorna (again) who headed the Hampshire Inter-Town Junior Averages, both unbeaten.

ISLE OF WIGHT

John Prean

Our membership figures are up again, though by only one team this time. We have been able to defy national trends for some years now. This time the new rule concerning rubber colours has not helped and a number of 'Old Barna Bats' players are reported to have called it a day, but they were not the only ones. I did not enjoy having to explain all this to our members, particularly as I had voted against such pointless change in our National Council.

I have found the local scene generally more fun than the national one. During the summer I was elected Chairman of the County. There is much to be done. I see the elimination of our deficit as a priority. We cannot go on losing a few hundred pounds a year indefinitely, laudable though much of the expenditure has been. We desperately need more and better premises in which to play, if the sport is to survive, let alone grow. Two promising projects are in the pipeline. One is a major one, in partnership with a football club, which will need a lot of work and money to bring it to fruition. If we succeed, it will transform Island table tennis.

Our Juniors travelled to Southampton for the Hampshire trials and surprised us and probably themselves with their excellent results. Lorna Dutch (the County No. 1 Junior Girl) and Sonia Pointer retained their county team places in the 1st and 2nd teams respectively. Greg Burns won the No. 1 place in the trials. Not without anxiety when he lost an early match, but otherwise played extremely well. Nic Hutchings proved the surprise package, capturing the No. 3 spot and coming literally from 'nowhere'. He played very well and showed a good match temperament. Danny Burns (13) was very unlucky to finish 7th and so just missed a place in the 2nd team and the experience and pleasure this would *have brought. His time will obviously* come. Our summer coaching sessions thus paid off very well. It was fun to be involved in this way again. Even as his father I must pay tribute to Carl Prean who was tremendous in these sessions whilst recovering from his wrist operation which ruined his World Championships and summer training. However, England's loss was our gain, as his coaching was invaluable here. Carl has now returned to his Bundesliga Club and his recovery looked near-complete.

Roger Hookey played very well in the Hampshire senior trials and looks set for a place in the second team. The last Islander to enjoy this honour was the legendary Jim Daly, though Carl Prean did play in the 1st team at the age of 12!

I hope that we shall soon have our own centre where regular practice sessions will take place, covering both excellence and the rest, including beginners. If so, our advance may continue in future years. Watch this space!

FRESH from an amazing comeback victory over Stefan Fetzner in Germany, Carl Prean, lifted himself into his professional top gear to play a vital part in a 3-2 England victory in front of the BBC Grandstand cameras at the Rothwell Sports Centre, Leeds on October 1.

With the match poised at 2-2, serious table tennis of the highest order likely to be seen in Europe entered the arena with the showdown between Carl Prean and Philippe Saive. Unwavering professionalism in approach and technical superiority just managed to win the day for the man from the Isle of Wight.

He seemed to be just below his best with his attacking strikes, gallantly fighting hard to stop the young Belgian 19,23 a superb climax to the match that sent the fans home happy.

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ISLE OF WIGHT

John Prean

AN often expressed view about the deterioration in playing standards, particularly in our First Division, is likely to be heard less frequently this season. Younger players have invaded the premier section with some success. Greg Burns, Alex Rorke and Nic Hutchings have all won their first nine matches and Danny Burns, in his last cadet season, has won eight out of nine I also note a hatrick by Lorna Dutch against Wroxall 'A', not bad for a cadet girl! There is now every encouragement for older players to work harder on their game if they want to maintain their winning ways.

I do not think that our young lions will shake Sandwon's superiority, anyway not yet. The title will again go to South Wight. Sandown have merged with Shanklin and found a new home in Newchurch, at the attractive local sports centre. The new club should begin to grow again. I recall the days when the two ran a dozen or more teams between them. Now they are down to three, but the recovery has begun. For Sandown Roger Hookey is almost unbeatable.

He, and all the youngsters I mentioned earlier, were part of our summer coaching sessions and most of the 'pupils' made remarkable progress. It will be harder to maintain in view of the space famine from which we suffer. I can think of no hall with four tables where our practice sessions could have continued and so something that was an enormous success has ended till next summer. We saw the real problems of English table tennis, as it exists in so many fringe areas.

I saw it was my first priority to find space in which table tennis, as we know it, can be played. I have three thick files to show for my efforts, but so far little else. Even I was amazed at the bureaucracy that exists, the devotion to red tape in organisations in theory devoted to sport and leisure. I found a splendid room in a sports centre which had gone bankrupt, which has not been used for many years. One local authority is eager and willing to let the room to us. Another is putting every obstacle our way in the shape of quite ludicrous paper work as part of the price for a reduction in the rates. As these were fixed at £2,000 p.a., a substantial discount is needed. We first started talking in August. Such are the realities of sport in many parts of the country.

Our team in the Southern Regional League has won its first two matches - on target to return to the Premier Section. The team in the Ladies' League must give cause for concern, since the top ladies do not appear interested or available. I hope the obvious conclusion at the end of the season may yet be avoided. In the Hampshire Inter-Town Mixed League our team defeated Bournemouth 10-2. I have seen stronger Bournemouth team indeed played against them many times, but it was good to see Taffy Davies back on the Island, where once he was in our top half dozen and, of course, Cyril Bush, a remarkable player in both unorthodoxy and skill and always an ornament to the game. A good debut for Alex Rorke and Lorna Dutch, who played well, but Roger Hookey and Mike Turner were our stars despite losing the doubles, which I thought were our 'banker'.

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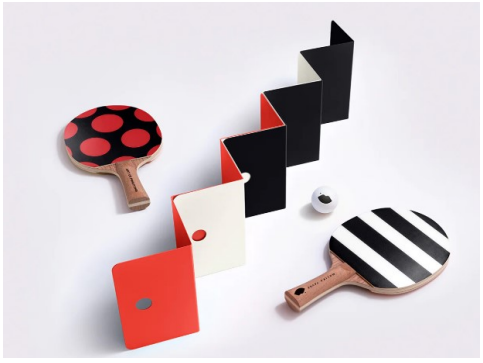

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