

THE WINKING WORLD

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SPECIAL STRATEGIC ISSUE!

Here we are with another information-packed edition of Winking World, which was due to appear in January, but didn't, because errant contributors were still being rounded up, and by the time they had been, the power cuts had begun, and the Editor went into hibernation. The present issue is remarkable in that our beloved Secretary has bestirred himself so far as to commit his innermost tactical thoughts to manuscript, and these are reproduced inside. We hope this article will be of interest, particularly to inexperienced players, as it is believed that nobody has until now attempted to give a fairly detailed account of the principles and theories behind the various strategies commonly employed in tiddlywinks. Naturally we hope the article will provoke comment from winkers of all standards.

Astute readers will notice that the colour of our heading has changed since last time. This has no political significance, but rather the change has come about because it was felt that the familiar blue wink had enjoyed more than its fair share of the limelight over the past nine or so issues, and that the other colours of the winking spectrum deserved a turn. Further mind-splitting shades are being planned.

As feared, plans for an IFTWA Congress in Northern Ireland have had to be shelved for the time being, and at the time of writing it is not known whether a Congress has been arranged for this Spring or not. Anything that is fixed up, including arrangements for the final rounds of the Silver Wink and Singles tournaments, will be notified separately by the ETWA Secretary, who should be contacted for the latest information.

MORE ABOUT THAT NAME

by Brian Evans,
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These thoughts have been inspired by letters in WW about the potential growth of "winks" (with an optional "Tiddly"). Unfortunately I had nothing inspiring to say on the subject since my thoughts flew off at a tangent, desquopping two piles before rolling off the mat.

Changing the name of tiddlywinks might improve recruitment outside universities and schools, but I doubt it. (Beyond the ivory towers one still requires a degree in order to play, or so it seems). However I'm sure it would have an adverse effect on CUTwC and, I expect, other university clubs with a 3-4 year turnover of members.

I've just been through the traumatic experience of advertising winks at the University Societies' Fair. Bill Davy, our secretary, was the voice of sanity between "join the Trinity Foot Beagles" and "come Ten-Pin Bowling". About two thousand people walked past our stall without stopping, but most did at least look round on hearing "Tiddlywinks". A few did in fact rally to the call - or to Bill Davy. A cry of "winks" would not have summoned a pause. As for "grundling", or whatever Roger McGovern suggests, that would have sent a nervous freshman scurrying to seek solace with a beagle.

The truth is that all these ambushed at the Societies' Fair were attracted by the image of tiddlywinks. The name made us stand out from the other 180 or so societies. We then had to explain that there was more to the game than just potting winks, but at least we had their attention while we did so. Surely it's better to admit the origins of the game and stress its development, thus reducing the ridiculous aspect. If you try to explain "grundling" on a serious level it only requires one observant onlooker to say "but it's just tiddlywinks" and you've lost the respect (?) of your audience.

Let's be honest about the name and use it as the selling point that it is. Only the intrinsic merits of the game (or of the other players) will make a new player stay. Changing the official name, even to "Winks" will only reduce the chances of getting new members on to the mat where they can judge for themselves.

NORTHERN JUNIOR

After a lapse of one year the Northern Junior Tiddlywinks Championship was restarted this year.

Arrangements were rather hurried and all the entrants came from Greater Manchester. This was disappointing and highlights the need for less centralisation and better organisation at the regional level.

Out of the original 21 pairs that entered only 14 turned up but once started play was of a fairly high standard. Altrincham, as usual dominated the days play and could claim 3 of the 4 semi-finalists. Bolton and Gould, second favourites, beat Goodwin and Lewis, favourites, fairly easily in an all Altrincham final. Now Altrincham have won the championship for the last 8 occasions, and this shows their dominance in the area.

Wide coverage was given to the event in the regional press and broadcasting media.

The occasion was fairly encouraging as it showed that there is still interest in the sport but proper organisation is needed on a regional basis to exploit it.

Competitors

1. Goodwin and Lewis (A.G.S)	1	1		
4. Wills and Hodgkinson (A.G.S)	2	1		
5. Hudson and Claire (M.G.S)	4	5		
8. Shuttleworth and Braddock (A.G.S)	5			
9. Tomlinson and Ross (Sale Girls)	6	8		
10. Beaman and Ormiston (M.G.S)	8	10	11½ - 2½	
11. Gould and Bolton (A.G.S)	9	10		
12. Morley and Gradwell (R.H.S)	10			11
13. Marks and Sayville (A.G.S)	11	11		
16. Ashworth and Lumb (M.H.S)	12			16-5
17. Marchant and Fenner (A.G.S)	13			
18. Evans and Ulbrecht (A.G.S)	15			11
20. Shaw and Jones (Sale Girls)	16	17		
21. Bell and Chandler (M.G.S)	17	18	17½ - 3½	
	20	21		
	21			

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SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS - RESULTS SO FAR

<u>Preliminary Round</u>				<u>Totals</u>
Barry Savage v Alan Shearman	1-6	1-6		2-12
M. Pound v Terence Stamp	default			
Peter Hudson v P. Shearman	2-5	6-1	5-2	13-6
David Bearman v Alan Dean	4-3	2-5	1-6	7-14
Simon Caldwell v Ian Hopkins	1-6	1-6	5½-1½	7½-13½
Ian Alexander v Bob Wilkinson	2-5	6-1	0-7	8-13
Peter Bell v Howard Mendel	3-4	1-6	1-6	5-16
Stephen Chandler v Phil Tepper	default			
John Harman v Roger Kirby	5-2	6-1		11-3
Neil Carne v Keith Seaman	default			
Mick Wiseman v Jeremy Shepherd	6-1	6-1		12-2
<u>Round One</u>				
Alan Shearman v M. Pound	6-1	3-4	6-1	5-6
Peter Hudson v Alan Dean	1-6	0-7		1-13
Ian Hopkins v Bob Wilkinson	1-6	1-6		2-12
Howard Mendel v Phil Tepper	2-5	6-1	4-3	12-9
John Harman v Keith Seaman	1-6	1-6		2-12
S.J. Melton v David Rose	6-1	6-1		12-2
Steve Drain v Alan Cook	1-6	2-5		5-16
Dave Joughin v Nigel Knowles	default			
Linda Knighton v Idwal Jones	3-4	4-3	1-6	8-13
Phil Richards v Julius Mach	6-1	1-6	6-1	13-2
Mick Mooney v Colin Joseph	4-3	6-1	5-1	16-5
Steve Grant v Martin Newland	4-3	5-2	1-6	10-11
Hugh Goyder v Mick Still	4-3	5-2	1-6	10-11
Ian Bewick v Jon Mapley	3-4	1-6	4½-½	8½-12½
Dave Baker v Mick Wiseman	6-1	3-4	4½-2½	13½-7½
Ray Mears v Mike Grebenik				

<u>Round Two</u>					<u>Totals</u>
<u>Alan Dean</u>	v	Steve Drain	6-1	6-1	12-2
<u>Ray Mears</u>	v	Julius Mach	4½-2½	2-5	6-1
<u>Idwal Jones</u>	v	Hugh Goyder	6-1	6-1	12-2
<u>Alan Shearman</u>	v	Mick Mooney	4-3	3-4	6-1
<u>Ian Hopkins</u>	v	Nigel Knowles	4½-2½	1½-5½	3-4
<u>John Harman</u>	v	Phil Tepper			
<u>David Rose</u>	v	Mick Wiseman	6-1	6-1	12-2
<u>Jon Mapley</u>	v	Steve Grant			

Draw for Round Three

Ray Mears v Idwal Jones
Mick Mooney v David Rose
Mapley or Grant v Alan Dean
Nigel Knowles v Harman or Tepper

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COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

This seems to be something of a white elephant, as no news of the three outstanding matches has yet been received, and one can only presume that they have not yet been played. (These games were Kent v Hampshire, Essex v Berkshire, and Cambridgeshire v West Midlands, and anyone having information as to their whereabouts is asked to communicate with the ETWA secretary). Still, here, as promised in WW19, is a report on the Cheshire v Lancashire match.

On July 15th 1971, a Lancashire team containing several Prominent Persons who should be ashamed of themselves, travelled to Altrincham to be soundly thrashed by a Cheshire VI, which consisted of five Altrincham G.S. players and that well-known promising youngster, Jeremy Shepherd.

The Lancashire captain, Bob Wilkinson, accompanied the team in a non-playing capacity, having dropped himself after organising trials with other team members and finishing bottom.

After mutterings from the visitors about the state of the mats (ancient, thin and dead) and size of the tables (really not big enough) the match got under way. Cheshire trailed 10-11 after the first round, but carried all before them in the next, which they won 16½-4½, this including a pot-out for 5-2 against Alan Dean and Phil Tepper, which is tantamount to insulting behaviour. The third round games were pretty evenly contested, but Cheshire again took the laurels, and the match 41-22.

<u>CHESHIRE</u>				<u>LANCASHIRE</u>	
Goodwin and Lewis	1,5,6	12	Alan and Phil	6,2,1½	9½
Bolton and Gould	5,5,4	14	Nigel and Dan	2,2,1½	5½
Shepherd and Atkinson	5½,5½,4	15	Paul and Nic	1,3,3	7
		<u>41</u>			<u>22</u>

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INTERNATIONAL MATCHES PLAYED AT CONGRESS 1971

England v Ireland (challenge for the Guinness Trophy). Played at UMIST on April 3rd.

England

1. N.G.Shepherd, J.D.Shepherd	6	6	6	6	24
2. A.Dean, M.Still	5	3	4	6	18
3. P.Richards, B.Wells	6	1	6	3	16
4. C.Goodwin, G.Lewis	4	6	6	5	21

Ireland

1. G.McNaughton, G.Ennis	1	2	1	3	7
2. D.Boyd, M.Haughey	1	4	6	1	12
3. R.Montgomery, M.O'Shea	1	3	1	1	6
4. J.Cooke, J.Drever	1	1	4	2	8

England won by 79 to 33.

Wales v Ireland (friendly match). Played at UMIST on April 4th 1971.

<u>Wales</u>				<u>Total</u>	
1. A.Toynton, B.Hughes	1	5	5½	1	12½
2. Paul Thompson, D.Purslow	1	5	5	1	12
3. N.Hall, G.Berwick	5½	1	4	6	16½
4. Phil Thompson, D.Garrington	1	1	1	3	6
<u>Ireland</u>				<u>Total</u>	
1. R.Montgomery, S.Jefferis	6	6	1½	6	19½
2. J.Cooke, D.Boyd	2	2	6	6	16
3. G.McNaughton, J.Drever	1½	2	3	6	12½
4. M.Haughey, M.O'Shea	6	6	1	4	17

Ireland won by 65 to 47.

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Wales v England (challenge for the Guinness Trophy)

Played at Aberystwyth University on May 22nd 1971.

The match statistics can give no hint at the drama surrounding this encounter, which was that we were nearly obliged to defend the Trophy with only five players!

As the contingent of Messrs. Harman (+ fiancée), Stamp and Tepper left Manchester in the latter's car at the hour of ten that Saturday morning, little did they realise what fate had in store for them. Yet five hours later, as they staggered into Machynlleth with a burnt-out clutch, they could only surmise as to the cause of their misfortune. Bad luck? Or sabotage at the hands of Welsh extremists? We shall never know. Minutes later, as Mr. Jones (garage prop., opp. rwy. stn.) surveyed the damage and slowly shook his head, the company's prospects (and those of Mr. Tepper with regard to his bank manager) blackened further. Spare clutch plates could not be delivered until the following Monday, whereupon the quartet waved their thumbs forlornly at the passing cars. Was it mere coincidence that none of the drivers which passed that way felt disposed to stop, or did the truth, again, lie deeper? A last hope remained for the little band, who were by now seeing their chances of arriving in time for the squidge-off plummeting. They found an ancient bus, about to leave for Aberystwyth, and thankfully climbed aboard. With agonising slowness, the old vehicle rolled up and down the 18 miles of green countryside and rustic villages that led to Aber. Our heroes were diverted somewhat on this journey by the attentions of an elderly local, who, when he was not pinching the bottoms of sundry Welsh maidens on the bus, was interested to learn that the trophy (yes, the Guinness Trophy itself was in peril at this time) was awarded for the sport of tiddlywinks, which he said he used, as a lad, to play. He then launched into a lengthy narrative on his draughts-playing exploits. At last the university buildings loomed ahead, and the pilgrims rushed up to the winking rooms, fearful that they would find a depleted England struggling manfully against an inspired foe....

In actual fact, a squidger had not yet been raised in anger, and the late-comers found that they were just in time for coffee and biscuits then being consumed by the multitude. There followed a match, but after the tale of high adventure just described, details would be anticlimactic. (Actually of course they wouldn't, but nobody can remember them).

<u>Wales</u>				<u>Total</u>	
1. A.Toynton, D.Binding	1	1	1	2	5
2. N.Hall, G.Berwick	1	2	1½	1	5½
3. Paul Thompson, D.Purslow	3	5	1	4	13
4. Phil Thompson, D.Garrington	2	0	0	1	3
<u>England</u>				<u>Total</u>	
1. A.Cook, M.D.K.Halsey	6	6	4	5	21
2. J.Harman, T.Stamp	6	5	2	7	20
3. P.I.Tepper, A.J.Dean	6	5½	6	7	24½
4. J.Meshier, J.Mapley	5	6	3	6	20

England won by 85½ to 26½.

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All contributions for WW21 should reach the editor before the end of the coming September.

(i) We must first stress the importance of the area of the pot in the close vicinity of the pot. ~~Whichever strategy we employ, it is important to bring~~ our winks into this area early in the game. If we allow our opponents to occupy the area around the pot unhindered, then they will be able to pot out very quickly thus scoring at least 5 of the 7 points from the game. Also, if after the enemy have been allowed to get a large number of free winks close to the pot, we decide to attack them (i.e. approach with the intention of squopping), we will find ourselves in a different kind of trouble. A pair which is forced to attack a cluster of free enemy winks usually does very badly out of it. (Note the distinction between 'free' and 'unsquopped'; 'free' means not squopping as well as not squopped).

(ii) Before proceeding to a discussion of the different strategies we must first say a little about attacking and defending, as applied to squop piles. The reason for attacking a free wink is quite simple, namely to squop it, or threaten to squop it. However, when we are dealing with squop piles (and they can be quite large and complicated), the reasons for attack can be many and varied. To give only two examples, we may attack a pile to free one or more of our own winks which are squopped in it, or we may squop the controlling wink (unsquopped wink on top of the pile; there may be more than one) to prevent it being used by the enemy to desquop in a way favourable to them.

The most common way of attacking a simple squop pile (i.e. just one wink on top of another) is to play a wink close to the enemy controlling wink, but not so close that a 'bridge' is possible. At a later stage this wink will be played on to the controlling wink of the pile, and later still it will be used to chip free the friendly wink from the bottom of the pile, in one or more further turns. It is possible to defend against this type of attack by placing, near to the squop pile, a free wink, which may be used to squop any enemy wink which comes too close.

(iii) As a general rule, we should not pot any of our own winks during the first fifteen or so minutes of the game (assuming a 20 minute time limit) unless we intend to try to pot out as soon as possible. If, on the contrary, we adopt a strategy in which we freely mix potting and squopping with the same colour, we will soon find ourselves in trouble against opposition of any degree of competence, in a way we now describe.

Let us suppose, for example, that we have potted two or three of the winks of one colour, and that the others are involved in squop piles, so that they are not immediately available for potting. We will now find ourselves in the position where we do not have enough winks free to attack enemy-controlled squop piles, and to defend the squop piles that we control ourselves. Further, every wink that we have in the pot is one less that the enemy needs to squop (or can be squopped by), and so the enemy are in the happy position of having enough free winks for both attack and defence. Thus the enemy can now make a series of attacks on our undefended piles, freeing their own squopped winks as they go. We are helpless to do anything about this, unless we attack with some of our winks which were previously controlling piles, and this means releasing more enemy winks, and so often makes things worse.

We may sometimes be able to ease the situation by potting enemy winks from the piles we control, thus gaining free winks without giving any more to our opponents (remember that, when playing a wink, we are allowed to touch also any wink which was directly below the wink first played, so, provided the shot is short and continuous, there is no reason why we should not gently brush the edge of the wink we are playing, and place the brunt of the shot on a different wink). However, more often than not, we will find ourselves squopped up (i.e. all our winks, of both colours, which are not potted are squopped). Then, our opponents use their free turns to rearrange their winks into a position where one of their colours is doing all, or most, of the squopping, and then they pot out with the other colour.

If they find they have insufficient free turns for these manoeuvres they may, at the same time as they release one of our winks, send it over a far boundary, and then, when it returns, use one of their winks to squop it again, thus securing another set of free turns. Alternatively, if they are reasonably proficient stroke players they may, in potting out, pot some of their winks directly from the top of squop piles.

Even though they may be well on top at this stage of the game, it would be unwise of our opponents to start potting until they were in a position to pot

out, unless time was short (see (iv)) because if they did, they would lose most of the free turns which they would have earned by squopping us up again. Also, they will reduce the number of free winks which they outnumber us, and thus much of their advantage.

(iv) We observed, in (iii) above, that we should not pot early in the game, unless with the intention of potting out. However, later in the game, when we are close to, or in, rounds (i.e. the five rounds at the end) the situation is somewhat different. At this stage of the game, the number of turns available for attacking piles is strictly limited (and note, for example, that the method of attack given at the end of (ii) took three turns to free one wink and squop one enemy wink). Thus, we see, there is not enough time available for many of the manoeuvres of the type described in (iii) to be carried out, and so a deficiency of free winks is not so serious.

Ideally, we should pot all our free winks in the last round of the game, together with any other winks we wish to pot (usually from off winks which will not get another turn, and so cannot be potted after they have been freed). In practice, of course, we cannot be sure of potting a wink first time every time, even if it is in a good position near the pot, particularly if we are under match pressure. Also, if we did leave all the potting until the last round, then failure to pot the first wink we attempt would be fatal; there would be no extra shot, and no further turn, to try again. It is thus quite usual to start potting in, or even before the last five rounds, despite the fact we may have little or no chance of potting out. How early we should start potting depends on a number of factors, not the least of which are the distances of our winks from the pot, and our potting ability.

(v) We have seen why it is dangerous to pot early in the game, unless we are aiming for a quick pot out. However, we must not make the mistake of thinking that, similarly, we should not squop early in the game, with one of our colours, unless we intend to use that colour mainly for squopping, for the rest of the game. This difference is due to the fact that a wink which is squopping may be potted at a later stage of the game, whereas a wink which has been potted must remain in the pot for the rest of the game.

For example, if we are trying to pot out, and we have two winks (of the colour which is doing the potting) close together, and if an enemy wink is played near to them, it would often be safer to squop the enemy wink. We could then pot the free wink, and later the one which is squopping the enemy. Alternatively we may, if the opposing potter is looking dangerous for example, try to save a turn by potting the two winks directly, but, if we miss the pot with the first one, the other will get squopped. It is, as in all other tiddlywinks decisions, a question of weighing up the consequences of failure and the probability of success.

(vi) Having dismissed as inferior all strategies in which one player divides his time between potting and squopping, early in the game, there remain to discuss the strategies in which both, one or neither of a pair try to pot winks from the outset. These strategies are given the names double-pot, pot-squop and double-squop respectively.

In a moment we shall look at the basic ideas behind these three strategies, but first we must point out that a pair need not necessarily decide which strategy it is going to use, before the start of the game. Indeed, it is more usual to wait to see how accurately they, and their opponents, bring out their first few winks, before a pair commit themselves to a particular strategy. Remember that a player is not committed to potting until he has at least one wink in the pot (the number depends on how well the pair is doing with the squopping), and he is not committed to squopping until he has one or two of his winks squopped (depending on how easy they are to free, by attacking the controlling winks).

(vii) Double-pot. If we win the game by potting out, then so much the better, as we get the transferred point and so score at least five points. If we go straight for the pot with both our colours, then, to prevent us from potting out, the opposition must squop at least one wink of each colour. Also, if they fail to do this, and we pot out, then we are already well on the way to securing second place as well, and so winning 7-0.

In practice, if we employ this strategy, we usually find that, whilst we are bringing our winks out and potting them, our opponents just keep bringing out all their winks as quickly as possible, and spreading them out in the area around the pot. By the time we have each potted about three winks (if we have not been

squopped already) we find that there is hardly any point on the mat which is within safe potting distance, and not also within safe squopping distance of an enemy wink. More often than not, we get at least one of our colours squopped quite early in the game, because it landed too close to an enemy wink; bringing winks out from the base line into a small area surrounded by enemy winks is always dangerous, when a slight bounce or roll can mean the difference between life and death.

We could, to lessen the chance of getting squopped immediately, try to pot from greater distances, but, unless we are exceptionally good at potting, we are almost sure to fail in at least one attempt at the pot, so landing amongst the waiting enemy winks.

Added to all this, is the fact that our opponents could try slightly longer squops than they normally would, safe in the knowledge that, even if they missed, we could not afford to squop them; a shot played with confidence is usually more effective than a similar shot, played whilst worrying about the consequences of failure. One thing, however, which our opponents should not do, is start panicking as soon as we start potting, and so attempt ridiculously long squops in order to catch one of each of our colours as soon as possible. The long shots would invariably fail, and these wasted turns would leave us with the wide open spaces which we need, to bring our other winks out safely near the pot.

Once one of each colour of our winks has been safely squopped (i.e. squopped and safely defended), the rest is just formality; first the excesses of free winks are used to squop any of our winks which may remain (unless we 'run away', in which case we are ignored), and then the squop piles are adjusted so that all six of the enemy winks of one colour are ready for potting.

If a pair set out to play double-pot, they could, after one of their colours has been squopped, revert to pot-squop, but it is usually too late by that stage (see (iii)).

Not surprisingly, double-pot is almost never seen in serious play; many players would even consider it an insult if it was used against them. A pair which wants the excitement and danger of playing for a quick pot-out, and hence the bonus point, can use the much safer, more refined, and widely accepted strategy of pot-squop, which we consider next.

(viii) Pot-squop. The idea of this strategy is that one player (the 'potter') tries to pot out as quickly as possible, and his partner (the 'squopper') does everything he can to assist his partner to pot out before the opposition do.

The potter usually brings his winks out from the base line as quickly as possible, and pots any which become threatened by enemy winks. He may, of course, just have one wink in play at any one time, by bringing a wink out and potting it before bringing out the next one (working on the assumption that the fewer winks in play, the less likely it is that one of them will get squopped). On the other hand, there is a lot to be said for bringing winks out from the base line as early as possible, before too many enemy winks get around the pot. The biggest single cause of winks being squopped by the enemy in the early stages of the game, is inaccurate placing of winks too near enemy winks, in the long shot from the base line; and the earlier the winks are brought out, the fewer enemy winks there will be to avoid. Of course, when a player has reached the stage of proficiency where he can bring a wink out, and pot it next shot, almost every time, then, with his extra shots, he will still be bringing his winks out as quickly as he would if he just brought one out each turn, without potting.

An advantage of bringing most of the winks out before starting to pot, is that the option of playing double-squop is preserved a little longer. However, the opposition would be very foolish if they allowed one player to get too many winks in close potting positions, without trying to squop at least one of them, so the decision to play pot-squop usually has to be made quite early in the game.

Potting winks from the base line would seem to be an answer to most things, but it is found in practice that even the best players would rarely be able to do this more often than once or twice from six attempts. When we consider that a fair proportion of winks squidged into the pot from the base line bounce out again, and that a wink which just fails to go into the pot usually ends up off the mat, particularly if it lands on the rim of the pot, we realise that base-potting is a very hazardous occupation.

The squopper, in the pot-squop partnership, first brings out his winks near the pot, to defend an area for his partner to bring his winks in more safely, and also to prevent the opposition from getting into a good potting position. Note that in these activities, the squopper attempts to remove the disadvantages of the double-pot strategy which we mentioned in (vii).

If one of the potter's winks does get captured, as it usually does, the

squopper must rush to its aid, and try to release it before the enemy get the chance to bring in sufficient defence. Even though the potter may still have other free winks, it is usually inadvisable, if he has potted a few already, for him to go to release his captured winks himself. Unless the squopper is almost squopped up, or the potter is already close to the spot where his wink has been squopped and there is no defending wink nearby, it is usually better to keep clear. If he can get five winks in the pot he is much more likely to give the opposition problems (they must get at least five of one colour in the pot for first place) than if he makes a futile attempt at saving his squopped wink, and in the process gets another squopped. It is not possible to give a general rule on this point; a number of factors have to be taken into account, the most important one being the estimated probability of the squopper being able to hold the opposition sufficiently in check to prevent their getting a better score than the potter, in the time available.

If the potter does eventually succeed in potting out, the squopper usually has all six winks spread out over a wide area of the mat, and so requires no small degree of potting ability himself, if he is to get a good placing in the potting competition which follows the pot-out. Because of the number of different skills required of a squopper in a pot-squop partnership it is more usual for the stronger player to take on the role of squopper, unless he is a really exceptional potter.

(ix) Double-squop. When playing pot-squop there is still the danger, although to a much lesser extent than in double-pot, of being caught with a few winks of one colour in the pot and one or more of the same colour safely captured. Against good opponents, and provided the time limit is not too near, this almost invariably leads to defeat, by methods similar to those described for dealing with double-pot. A great advantage of the double-squop strategy is that it reduces the chance of our opponents catching us in the unfortunate position just described. Notice we said 'reduces' and not 'removes' because it is still possible that our opponents will pot some of our winks for us. In double-squop both partners first try to bring out their winks into good close potting positions (even though they may have no intention of trying to pot them), and they also, whenever a reasonable chance comes along, try to squop enemy winks. They are particularly keen to get one of the opposing potter's winks if the enemy employ pot-squop strategy.

There is no reason why there should necessarily be any winks potted at all, despite the fact that the game revolves around the threat to do so. Quite often games are played in which the winning side does not pot a single wink - four free winks at the end of the game give a better placing than one in the pot and the rest squopped. In most games, however, it is usual for some winks to be potted near the end, particularly in the last few rounds. Free winks are potted if possible, because they are doing less good outside the pot, but also winks from the top of piles may be potted, either because the winks thus freed are not in positions to play very helpful shots, or because a few more points are needed desperately by a particular colour.

When both pairs in a match employ the double-squop strategy, the game usually becomes very complicated as a number of squop piles of different sizes start to be built up. Here the game can be seen at its most subtle and brilliant best. The number of different skills required of the players is at a maximum; apart from simple squops, pile-splitting, pile-jumping, bombing and delicate adjusting shots are just a few of those required. Also, of course, potting winks from the top of piles, which is often necessary in the closing stages, is much more difficult than potting off the mat.

Some players consider that the double-squop strategy is a negative approach to the game (perhaps because their pot-squop has been defeated by it so often) but those players clearly cannot appreciate the finer points of the game. It is true that the International Rules still start with the statement, "The aim of the game is to flick the winks into the pot." which was written before double-squop strategy was fully developed. We can see how ridiculous that is now, when it is possible to win without potting a single wink!

When double-squop is employed by both sides in a match it becomes impossible to generalise what will happen, unlike in pot-squop where the general plan of campaign is fairly simple. The game depends much more on a sound tactical knowledge. Space does not permit the writer to delve into the tactics of the game here, but he hopes to write a long article on the subject at a later date.

We shall close by dispelling one common belief about the double-squop strategy. It is thought by many people that it is impossible to win 7-0 by playing double-squop strategy, because it is necessary to pot out to get the transferred point. However, if a pair playing double-squop are quite a bit stronger than their opponents, they will find that they are able to 'squop them up' (i.e. squop all

their winks) and then join some of the piles together and arrange for all the winks of one colour to be free for potting. Of course, if you pot out from this position, one of the opponents will usually have all six winks in close potting positions which means, between good players, that they should all go in next turn for second place. To prevent this, one should only pot five winks of one colour and then, with the other colour, send an opposing wink to a far corner of the mat. The colour of wink thus dealt with should be that which will play immediately after the player who is about to pot out. This usually gives the potter's partner the extra turn needed to pot all his winks for 7-0.

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MARCHANT TROPHY - SOUTHAMPTON (Holders) v OXFORD

by Mick Mooney
(captain, S.U.W.C)

or How to lock a gift horse in the mouth.

On Sunday the 6th of November there was gathered together in Southampton University Union one of our strongest ever winks teams. They were to play Oxford, the Marchant Trophy challengers. All weekend someone had been trying to phone one of our players (a certain A.J. Dean) but unfortunately his mouthpiece had mysteriously disappeared, thus preventing his replying. As the appointed time approached, the tension mounted, a reporter arrived. As the appointed time slowly receded into the past we came to the conclusion that the opposition weren't coming:...

4 weeks later.... When A.J. Dean (what! him again) published the draw for the next round of the national singles, it was discovered that two Soton players were drawn against two Oxford players. It was decided to go to Oxford and play our singles and also a full match if possible. A certain person, who shall remain nameless thought it would be a good idea if we made it a Marchant Trophy match, at this our vice-captain, Keef, promptly decided not to play.

Thus on the morning of Sunday December the 5th, having reassembled the trophy, we left for Oxford. The two singles matches resulted in one player from each club proceeding to the next round and then came the match. The holders fielding a weakened team on the opposition's home ground narrowly won the 1st round 15-13. In the second round as Southampton gradually found top form Oxford slipped to a 19-9 defeat. The 5 mathematicians in our team then put their heads together and after much calculation deduced that we needed $22\frac{1}{2}$ points to win in 3 rounds, we thus decided to win all our 3rd round games 6-1. Unfortunately one pair found this too much for them and lost 4-3 thus we were left on 55 points, pairs 1 and 4 having contributed 35 of these. On hearing this our pair one gave up in disgust and lost 6-1. Alan Dean and partner however won 6-1 to atone for their previous 3-4 and with the other two games the last round was drawn 14 all giving the holders victory by 26 points.

<u>Southampton</u>		<u>Total</u>
1. Dave Baker, Julius Mach	6,6,6,1	19
2. Alan Dean, Ed Chivers	2,5,3,6	16
3. Hugh Goyder, Neville Martin	1,3,6,1	11
4. Mick Mooney, Steve Welch	6,5,6,6	23
<u>Oxford</u>		
1. Idwal Jones, Cyril Edwards	1,2,4,6	13
2. Alan Shearman, Robert Noble	5,4,1,1	11
3. John Mackenzie, Doris Nicholson	6,2,1,6	15
4. Geoff Sears, Stephen Melton	1,1,1,1	4

Final Score - 69 - 43.

P.S. Any Oxford player finding a red filed down squidger, could they please return it to S.U.W.C?

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

We are writing to complain most strongly about the new 'low' achieved by WW 19 as regards its moral tone.

On page 10 of that issue there appears as obscene a letter as you could wish (?) to see. Signed by someone called Mikis von Quesh it is full of double entendres, some so subtle that it needed a mind as devious as Rog Kirby's to explain them to us.

Judging by the name, it is possible that Mr. (Herr? Monsieur? Senor?) von Quesh does not come from these islands and unfamiliarity with the English language could be the explanation. Should that be so then we apologise to him. However, we suspect that the truth lies a little deeper and that this name could be a pseudonym for someone (or some people) well known to us all. In that case we feel that an apology should surely be forthcoming in the next issue.

Our second point concerns the cartoon on page 8. There is a time and a place for everything (or almost everything) and we believe that 'the naughty bits of a lady' should find no place in such a journal as WW. It seems to us that this is one further step in the commercialisation of Tiddlywinks which can only do harm to our noble game - a look at other sports which have suffered similarly will surely prove our point. Indeed the day Alan Dean opens his first boutique we shall both immediately resign our membership.

Yours etc.,

M.J. WISEMAN

M.J. STILL

* It is not the policy of WW to censor any correspondence unless it is abusive towards the Editor.

Regarding the cartoon, WW regrets any offence caused to readers, and includes nothing of similar pictorial dubiety in its current issue. It was in fact at the instigation of certain ETWA members (not all of whom were clad in greasy raincoats and battered trilbys) that the cartoon found its way into WW19. It would seem that a difference of opinion exists among members on this question, and readers' opinions would be welcomed.

The above correspondents are unlikely to be impressed by the following letter.

Dear Sir,

I have been following the debate surrounding Miss Jones' bent frustrations with interest, as, no doubt, have many whose games have been ruined through the tools of the trade being warped. The Political Journal 'Nomos' Vol. IX. has partly dealt with this problem, concluding that the twisted wink is symptomatic of the discrimination which minor sports have to face:

"Nevertheless, the ability or knack to produce a perfect tiddlywink is not of a high order of social importance"

and I am glad to pass this information on to your readers in the hope that it will be as useless to them as most of my speeches.

Yours faithfully,

Rt. Hon. Robert Carr-Torse M.P., C.U.E.O.B.E.
Westminster.

P.S. Edward and I enjoy a game on our mat.

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ETWA SECTION

We welcome a new Life Member - Ray Mears, of 52 Morland Road, Aldershot, Hants.
Rosie Wain is now living at Staple Farm, Hastingleigh, Ashford, Kent.

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BITSNPIECES

London League has been restarted by Southampton University; Rog Kirby organising 8 teams ----- Jan display has ordered the England ties and these should be received any time now ----- IRTWINK No. 2 came out last June, printed bilingually in English and Gaelic, price 3p from Martin O'Shea, 51F Downshire Ave., Lurgan, Co. Armagh ----- Cambridge still a power? They won friendlies against Essex 65-47, Oxford 62-50 and UCL 60-52, plus Varsity Match v Oxford and Silver Wink v Westfield 93 $\frac{1}{2}$ -18 $\frac{1}{2}$, but lost to UCL in the Silver Wink