

THE WINKING WORLD

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Editorial :

A return to the game in England after two years abroad brings into sharper focus the lean period through which winks is passing at present. This 20th Anniversary Issue is the first edition of this broadsheet for 18 months, and if members have not had the pleasure of this organ thrust through letter boxes it is hardly surprising that enthusiasm is on the wane, because regularly receiving Winking World is one of the few material benefits of E.Tw.A.

A glance round the sober cabale at the E.Tw.A. Congress this year showed clearly that what the game is crying out for is a new generation of Young Turks to generate enthusiasm and to spread the word around the University and College circuits, where the present leadership only has minimal contact. Their message, and the message of those now playing must veer away from the professionalism that caused the disenchantment of my predecessor in this post.

Winks can be a serious game, and anyone present at, or playing in, a top class match know well the physical and mental effort required, and the level of concentration involved. But the reason why tiddlywinks has lasted these twenty years is not the presence of technically-brilliant superstars, but the long, and gratifyingly unending line of total lunatics who have thought nothing of writing treatises on the aerodynamic qualities of tiddlywinks, or driving three hundred miles to sleep in the back of a dormobile prior to a match. It is only insanity, and drink, that has kept winks alive. The moment players begin to take themselves seriously, then winking in general suffers. If we rejoice in our insanity then we have an appeal to even the most conservative of our fellows, because deep in the heart of every man there is a mental inmate struggling to get out.

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Is It Really Twenty Years ?

by Guy Consterdine.

January 1955 is remembered for Winston Churchill being Prime Minister and 'Typhoon' Tyson bowling out the Aussies. To the winking enthusiast, January 1955 is chiefly memorable for the birth of modern tiddlywinks because of the 16th of that month Cambridge University Tiddlywinks Club was formed. Bill Steen told me of the background to the club :

" R.C. Martin and I appreciated our chances of getting a Blue but felt that if only we could represent the University at some sport it might help in an interview some times in our lives. Such remarks as 'I play rugger. I have played for the University' would then be technically possible.

The idea of starting a new sport was the simplest way in, but what sport ? Surf bathing was too complicated to organise; tree felling had its complications in the fen land ; camel racing had an attraction, particularly if the course was from London to Brighton but the zoo does not like letting its camels out for this sort of thing. The like a thunderbolt both Martin and I realised it must be tiddlywinks, a game we had both enjoyed in our early life. "

The club adopted the rules of the game as set down by Marchant Games. They decided that each player should have four small and two large winks, and, at the second meeting, fixed the number in a University team at eight, because there were eight present at the time. In October 1955 the early classic on the game, and on the properties of winks, The Thesis, was published.

The following year saw Cu.Tw.C.'s opening match, against a team of Windmill Girls and Starlets assembled by Noel Whitcomb of the Daily Mirror. C.U.Tw.C. rather unchivalrously won 9-3. After this there was a lean period of little opposition, and few games were organised until the immortal match against the Goons in February 1958.

The Goons were the Royal Champions appointed by Prince Philip, and their match against C.U.Tw.C. brought tremendous publicity to the game. This assured a growing interest in the game, and later in that year Cambridge were able to go on a tour of the West Country. The game had spread from Cambridge to their rivals, Oxford, who were largely responsible for the introduction of the double-squop tactic, and then to other centres, Manchester, London (where I was a member), Bristol, and so on.

The last fifteen years have seen the growth of modern competitive tiddlywinks. In addition to the university trophy, The Silver Wink, and the All-England Challenge, the Marchant Trophy, we now have County Championships, and the National Singles and Doubles competitions. Winks has spread across the Atlantic, and 1972 saw the M.I.T. tour of England. Reporting winking events has been the Winking World, born in 1961 and nursed single-handed through its early years by Peter Downes. Winks has become more complex, and its tactics more intricate. Yet, at this stage, our twentieth anniversary, it is worth remembering the opinion of the founding fathers of the game, that winks was 'a game to be enjoyed', a game for fun and pleasure.

1974 E.Tw.A. Annual General Meeting.

This year's treat for pedantic b ores and girl guide leaders was held in the cold cupboard that passes for the front room of our beloved Chairman's house, in Heaviley breathing, near Stockport. The main business of the meeting was, yet again, to examine the new rules of Tiddlywinks. The contest was between Bungey Wells, Alias Lord Squidgery, President of the High Court of Appeal (although he's never done a nything to me), who had drawn up the rules and had the good sense to be absent from the meeting, and the razor-sharp minds of the Etwa intelligensia, eager to prove that the new rules did not allow for such common eventualities as earthquake, pestilence, the Spanish Inquisition, or a plague of elves using winks mats as anal cleansers. Your own correspondent having missed out on rounds 1 & 2, which were held in 1972 & 3, settled down in a sleeping position for this fascinating battle of wits, and found solace in a couple of bottles of Guinness. A brief, horrified glance at the new rules convinced me that Bungey had won, game, set and match. I couldn't understand a word, although such words as 'pot' and 'squidger' did occasionally appear in unfamiliar sentences. Bungey's typewriter seemed to lack a comma, so the sentences were of indecipherable length. In spite of the Chairman's ruling that legalese does not admit the existence of a comma, I remained convinced that lawyers are illiterate. In fact, as the whole discussion seemed to centre between various computer operatives I concluded that the whole debate was being conducted in Fortran. However, it seems as though some conclusion was reached, as I was recorded as an 'aye' every so often, although I believe that they assumed my raising my hand to leave the room was a considered vote. As far as I understand matters, the new rules are the same as the old rules, except that we can now play the game as we have always played it secure in the knowledge that we can challenge anyone else's interpretation if we can afford the barristers' fees. However, as I read below, copies of the new rules are to be sent to members, and any queries should be sent to Alan Shearman, God rot his soul. He was as bemused as the rest of us, but beneath that Robert Redford moustache he kept up an earnest facade that impressed me greatly. Here, courtesy of Nigel, is a report on the rule changes. If anyone disagrees, then for Gawd's sake keep quiet!

The rules

The involved story of the rewriting of the rules continues - the discussion this year again causing hard thinking and amusement.

To record all the discussions at present would be of little value. However, a final draft of the Etwa proposals should soon be available. This will be a rewritten version of the draft expertly and thoughtfully produced by Bungey Wells after last year's A.G.M. decisions. The rules are not intended to be easily readable, but rather to be a definitive document. A simpler version will be made available for beginners.

At present there is no I.F.Tw.A., and until agreement with the Americans is obtained the Etwa committee is the governing body for rules in this country, following the guidelines of the A.G.M..

Until the new rules are published the recommendations of the 1973 and 1974 A.G.M.'s will only be implemented where they clarify, without changing, the old rules. There is one exception to this as Rule 9(c) is misworded according to accepted practice.

This rule concerns winks desquopped at the ned of free turns and should be altered to read to the effect that

"When a wink or winks is/are desquopped during free turns or immediately at the end of free turns the next opponent in order of rotation who has had a wink freed must be allowed a turn."

Other business.

The reports of the Secretary and Chairman were both brief, and dealt with the sad situation facing winks in this country, with few clubs and even fewer subscriptions. Alan reported that the equipment situation had improved with the discovery of a new supplier for mats, but the pots situation was still giving cause for concern as we were down to our last 500.

Nigel Knowles appointed himself to continue as Chairman for 1974-5. This rather undemocratic move was to forestall an election against his cat, which was also proposed, and which, in all probability, would have won paws down. Alan Dean resigned from the post of Secretary, and then read out Jon Mapley's resignation from the post of Treasurer, due to pressure of work. Alan proposed the creation of a new post of Equipments Officer, and was then promptly elected to it (that'll learn 'im; Ed.) as well as to the position of Treasurer. Alan Shearman was coaxed into being Etwa Secretary, providing a welcome link with the University scene. Geoff Pupell offered to help Alan with publicity. Geoff Cornell assumed the mantle of Elijah as Winking World Editor.

The meeting noted with sadness the death of Mr. H. Rudd, who was the supplier of equipment at Marchant Games for many years prior to his retirement, when, in appreciation of his services to Tiddlywinks, he was made an honorary Vice-President of ETWA.

1974 Manchester Open Championships.

Seven and a half pairs entered the possibly fourth Manchester Open. The small entry was perhaps due to it being the weekend of the end of the University term, with prospective entrants more eager to be reunited in the bosom of their family or girlfriend than to play winks. However, it is an old saying that 'all good things come in small sizes', and the assembled bevy of winkers set to with a will to prove the ancient adage wrong. Both Alan and Julius opted to play with their respective fiancées, as was only proper, and fair for the rest of us. In fact the bottom four places in the tournament were taken by either mixed pairs, or by Mark, who was playing with himself, thus proving that nudge, nudge, affects wink, wink. Say no more. Mark had no points deducted for playing solo as it was felt that he had enough of a disadvantage in partnering himself, and he proved the point (or lack of them) by losing the first game 7-0 to Geoff and Mick.

At the end of the first session of play Mick and Geoff were half a point ahead of Keith and Steve, the match between them having been close and inconclusive. Alan and Jeremy were in third place, with the other pairs languishing. However, on the second day the scenario changed. Nigel and Pam decided to put aside their Bridge differences and win a few games, and Alan and Geoff had a fine session, gaining 17 points in their three games. It was noticeable that the games involving the Oxford pair were sparse affairs, with few squabbles developing, but their very success suggests a useful approach to counter 'total winks'. Alan and Jeremy copied the divine example and took Sunday as a day of rest, and would have dropped further behind had not the Good Lord produced a miracle to reward their obedience in their last match against Julius and Claire. In the last round Julius opted for

a 4-3 defeat by freeing Jeremy's last big wink, and sending it some two feet away from the pot. With his customary earnest deliberation Jeremy aimed for the pot, miscued completely, and the wink flopped forward about a foot, barely an inch above the surface of the mat. However the wink landed on its edge, reared like a dustbin lid on a windy day, and tumbled gratefully into the pot. Jeremy and Alan went on to win 6 - 1. Keith and Steve lacked Jeremy's luck, and defeats at the hands of the Oxford contingent put paid to their chances. Meanwhile Geoff and Mick soldiered on, consistent if nothing else (modesty forbids etc.). The trophy, a silver salvia, was presented amid a chorus of yawns and shout of 'three no trumps', and, being unable to drink from the trophy, the winners departed for London in Keith's car on what became a rather lengthy journey because, appropriately enough considering his performance in the competition, his battery ran down.

Results:

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	Tot.	Pos.
Keith Seaman. (London)										
Steve Welch	1.	-	6	5	6	3	6	2	2	30 2
Alan Dean (Soton)										
Barbie Hollom	2.	1	-	1	5	1	1	1	4	14 7
Julius Mach (London)										
Claire Bowen (Soton)	3.	2	6	-	1	1	1	2	1	14 7
Nigel Knowles (M/C)										
Pam Knowles (M/C)	4.	1	2	6	-	3½	3	6	6	27½ 5
Mick Mooney (London)										
Geoff Cornell (MTU)	5.	4	6	6	3½	-	4½	5	7	36 1
Alan Bolton (Newestl)										
Jeremy Shepherd (London)	6.	1	6	6	4	2½	-	3½	6	29 3
Alan Shearman (Oxon)										
Geoff Puplett	7.	5	6	5	1	2	3½	-	6	28½ 4
Mark Stepaniak (Oxon)										
	8.	5	3	6	1	0	1	1	-	17 6

1973-74 National Pairs Championship.

The response was good this year with 29 pairs competing. The pairs were organised into 8 groups, each with a seed pair. After playing the the original groups, which were on a fairly local scale, there was considerable difficulty in arranging the games. Four people have to be persuaded to converge on the same point at the same time - which was particularly difficult when one of our competitors (Geoff Rawlings) decided to move to South Africa!

At present there are five pairs left in the competition:

Mick Mooney & Dave Richards (London / Soton)

OR

Alan Bolton & Simon Gould (Newcastle / Altrincham)

V Nigel and Pam Knowles (Manchester)

Jeremy Shepherd & Alan Dean
(London / Soton)

V

Jon Mapley & Harvey Orrock
(Old Bancroftonians)

Hopefully the competition will be finished about the end of January. A full report will be given in the next edition of "Winking World"

1973 - 74 National Singles Competition.

The experiment of a new format for the National Singles meant many more games being played this year - but it also brought a corresponding difficulty in keeping track of them! The idea of the new Singles was to form small groups of 3 or 4 players who would play an all-play-all tournament, with the winner going through to the final stages. This meant more games for everyone, although it had its drawbacks - particularly that people who had lost 1 or 2 games and had no chance of winning the group could still influence who was the winner - perhaps simply by being apathetic.

The response to the scheme was good, and sixteen groups were possible. In each group there was a 'seed', decided on by the ETWA Committee. The seeds were :

Hugh Goyder :	Mick Still	Alan Boulton	Jeremy Shepherd
Idwal Jones	Jon Mapley	Harvey Orrock	Mick Wiseman
Alan Dean	John Mesher	Dennis Opposs	Mick Mooney
Pam Knowles	Keith Seaman	Paul Light	Nigel Knowles.

Space does not permit the giving of all the results of games in the groups, even where they are known. However the groups NOT won by the seeds were :

Idwal Jones : won by Julius Mach (a late entry)
Mick Still : won by Alan Shearman
Mick Mooney : the group dissolved and nothing more was heard.
Jon Mapley : Steve Drain - a strange group this with each of Jon, Steve D and Steve Grant winning one very decisive match. The two Steves edged Jon out by one point, and decided the final result by the toss of a coin!
Harvey Orrock: Won by Ray Mears.

From here on the tournament became a knock-out, the second round being

<u>Hugh Goyder</u>	v	<u>Julius Mach</u>
<u>Alan Dean</u>	v	<u>Pam Knowles</u>
<u>Nigel Knowles</u>	v	<u>Alan Bolton</u>
<u>Alan Shearman</u>	v	<u>Ray Mears</u>
<u>Paul Light</u>	v	<u>Dennis Opposs</u>
<u>Steve Drain</u>	v	<u>Jeremy Shepherd</u>
<u>John Mesher</u>	v	<u>Mick Wiseman</u>
<u>Keith Seaman</u>	v	the non-existent winner of Mick Mooney's / group

The winners are shown underlined. The round included a repeat of last year's final, with the same result, when Alan beat Pam. Nothing was heard from the Cambridge group, Paul v Dennis, or from Mick v John.

We were therefore left with six players, all of whom attended the ETWA Congress in Manchester in December. To settle the issue without much more loss of time it was decided to draw two groups of three, again on an all-play-all basis, to determine the finalists. This eliminated the vexed question of byes at such a late stage. The groups drawn were :

A) (1) Alan Dean (2) Julius Mach (3) Jeremy Shepherd
B) (1) Nigel Knowles (2) Keith Seaman (3) Alan Shearman

and the all-important order of play was 1v2, 2v3, 3v1.

<u>Group A.</u>	Alan v Julius	6-1, 1-6, 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$:	12 $\frac{1}{2}$ - 8 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Jeremy v Julius	6-1, 4-3, 6-1	:	16 - 5

This meant that Alan knew he had to beat Jeremy 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ - 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ to go through. After two games Alan was leading 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$, 5-2, and so needed 2 points from the last game. At the start of rounds Alan was clearly leading, and was moving towards a 5-2 victory. At this point the game was temporarily adjourned for lunch, and, choosing her moment with care (everyone else had their mouths full of pizza) a certain person disrupted the position irrevocably (I won't mention who it was or she won't be worth living with!). Despite Alan's willingness to replay the game, Jeremy very gallantly insisted on giving Alan the match.

Group B.

In the opening, tense game, Keith beat Nigel 5-2, 1-6, 5-2 : 11 - 10. (Ed: Nigel won't say this, but it was a match of very high skill and tremendous concentration. I got exhausted just watching!). The next game to play was a win, 6-1, 6-1, 5-2 for Keith over Alan, thus putting the pressure on Nigel who had to win 18 - 3 over Alan to even tie for first place. Nigel won the first two 6-1. Going into rounds in the final game Nigel had control, but Alan potted his 3 free blues. In the attempt to match this feat, requiring potting and freeing, Nigel rather lost count of rounds and ran out of time. This left Keith as the winner of Group B.

Nigel Knowles.

The final.

The final was played in January at Imperial College, London, in front of some London winkers, a few amused Dutchmen, an amazed Japanese gentleman, and a photographer from the 'Sunday Mirror' sent in the ever-fruitless search for nude dolly winkers. Both contestants had been playing 'Go', which may have accounted for the lack of concentration, which meant that the game did not live up to its promise. The opening game, perhaps the best of three, saw some tight squabbles developing. Keith had the better of the exchanges, being more consistent with his long-range shots. The second game was poor for both players : during the course of the game Keith managed to send off two of his red winks, and yet Alan was so far below form that he was unable to capitalise on this. At the end of two games Keith was leading 9 1/6 to 4 5/6 and so Alan was still in with a chance if a 6-1 victory came his way. It should have done, because he encircled the pot with his winks whilst Keith still had some at the baseline. The attempted pot-out failed, as did a repeat attempt a few turns later, and Keith swept up the remaining enemy winks and won 5-2. Alan muttered darkly into his beard (?) that he should have won, but the general consensus of the remaining spectator was that Keith should have won in two games. At long last the ownership of the Singles Trophy leaves Alan, and has been won by Keith in the best way, by beating the previous holder in the final.

Score : Keith Seaman beat Alan Dean 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 $\frac{1}{2}$, 4 $\frac{2}{3}$ -2 $\frac{1}{3}$, 5-2 = 14 - 6 (put in the sixths yourself. Ed).

Warmest congratulations to Keith.

1973 Kaaga Open Championships.

It has long been held that the playing of winks on the equator was impossible. The effects of humidity and perspiration on squidgers is a noted phenomenon on both sides of the Atlantic. Scientists, observing the fact that winks in the northern hemisphere enter the pot clockwise, as opposed to an anticlockwise spiral in the southern hemisphere, expressed the view that exactly on the equator the winks would bounce straight out. Nevertheless, during the months of an English Autumn in 1973 the first Tiddlywinks competition on the continent of Africa was held on the Equator, at Meru, in Kenya. For this competition perhaps the most international (and certainly the most naive) entry in the history of winks assembled to determine the all-Africa champions. The surface was a mutually-agreed strip of carpet felt, purchased from an astonished Indian trader in Nairobi, and the set was courtesy of Marchant Games. Having just one set meant that the opportunities for practice were limited, which suited the organiser down to the ground as, at the outset, he alone knew how to play. However, many players developed disturbing application and skill, and the final result was not the foregone conclusion it was meant to be.

The opening rounds saw the elimination of the high altitude competitors, two pairs living above 9,000 feet on the slopes of Mount Kenya. The organiser breathed a sigh of relief, as, had they stayed in the competition, the coming rains would have cut off any communication with them. The Asian pairing coped well with the effect of the high altitude on the flight of the winks, and the premature fading of the hurricane lamp, which meant that the final rounds had to be completed by torchlight. This pair, Dayanand Henry and his wife, Mary, representing Hyderabad Winks Club, fought their way through to the semi-final by a mixture of sound potting and oriental psychology. However, in the semifinal they were outplayed by a late Anglo-American entry, Mike and Lora. In the other half of the draw, the Australian soon bowed out, as did other Europeans, and the dangerous All-African pairing of Jacoba Kaburu and Ferrard Mwiti. The mixed pairing of Geoff Cornell (Quesh) and Fredrick Mugambi (Rwanyange) emerged as the other finalists. In the final Geoff and Fredrick moved steadily ahead, in spite of the opposition's very obvious tactic of aiming to eliminate Geoff from the game, and emerged worthy winners.

News has recently been received that the 1974 Kaaga Open Championships were being held in the months of November and December 1974. No doubt we will hear, and publish, the result when the drums beat loud enough.

The State of Dwinks Today by Mick Still.

The second¹ in an occasional series of in-depth analyses on the state of our art (and artists).

Recent issues of WW have carried treatises by Dean² and Mapley³ on their techniques for playing the game. To continue the series our new editor asked me, as a world authority, to contribute some ideas on what has made me click (slosh) on and around the country's winks mats during the last 7 years.

- 1 : Article by R.Kirby. WW 22
- 2 : Encyclopedia by A.Dean. WW 20.
- 3.: Brief discourse by J.Mapley. WW 23.

It has been said that winks today is dying. I believe the opposite is true - winks is not ailing enough. What has happened to the youth of today? Have their increased wealth and car ownership prevented visiting teams from staggering late into the arena, muttering slurred apologies and smelling strongly of mints? When was the last time you (or your opponent) had to rush suddenly from the squop-field, saying, among other things, something about adding on time? Does the shout of 'Time, Gentlemen' after 20 minutes no longer cast panic before you realise where you are? Why do matches begin before 3-10 p.m., or, even worse, why are they played in the evening? When was the last time that your transport rang to the unanimous croak of 'pub'?

The advantages of a hydraulic lunch (with white bread of course) before a match are obvious. I shall list a few. If you are a player who feels tension in a big game, you need something to steady your nerves. I am not suggesting that a couple of toddies will stop your hand shaking when approaching a delicate shot. What I do find is that they stop the relative movement by starting the rest of your body rocking. Furthermore, consider how much easier it is to squop an opponent's wink if your dilated pupils see it 10% per pint larger. Alternatively, what a choice of winks you have at your disposal - at least twice the usual number. During the match your swaggering self-confidence is bound to unsettle your opponent. Tactically, of course, the imagination is greatly enhanced, your play becomes far less inhibited - altogether more fluid.

As a start, to show that ETwa is trying to help, I have a suggestion for the Equipment Secretary. Personalised winks have been discussed before - but never on a regional basis. What Londoner could resist a set with Barrel-shaped Reds, or Triangular Blues, or Shield-shaped Greens? The Cambridge club might like Kings painted on their Green(e)s.

Where are they now Interlude: It is a welcome sign that older players are trying to establish lost contact. Dave Charrington has written to ask about his old Cambridge team-mate Phil Tippler. Any news?

Geordies are bound to want their blue winks star-shaped, and their yellows darkened to amber. Scots will want sets with four different Tartans.

We could liven up the competitive scene by following Fremlins example, starting some new competitions, or renaming the old - all sponsored, naturally. What about renaming the Hampshire Open the Whitbread Trophy, a new contest for maturing players (the White Shield) or an Irish Championship (the Dublin Harp).

Players must come to realise again the necessity of alcoholic preparation, of sustenance during the match (or as the French put it "a la piste"), and, as we know, Man thirsts after winks. Those eager to change the image of the game should note that it always will be tiddly winks.

Mr. John Young wishes to apologise to the author of the above for the thudding temples without whose help the article would have been much more easily written, and Messrs. Fuller, Smith & Turner wish to apologise to the editor, via the author, for providing so many distractions, without which it would have been finished much earlier.

The Marchant Trophy.

At present the Marchant Trophy is held by Cambridge. After Quesh disbanded itself Cambridge and Oxford, the next two challengers met in the Semi-Final of the Silver Wink (which Cambridge also now hold) and this match was also considered for the Marchant Trophy. Further challengers are, in order : Southampton, Lady Margaret College Cambridge, Fitzwilliam College Cambridge, and an Il Khartoum Road All-Stars team. Further enquiries as to the challenge should be addressed to the E.Tw.A. Secretary.

1975 National Singles.

Entries to Nigel Knowles as soon as possible : definitely by Feb. 14th. 25p per player. Regional, all-play-all groups with a seeded player.

1975 National Pairs.

Entries to Nigel with the same deadline. 40p per pair. Partners will be found if requested. Played as a knock-out, early rounds regionally drawn.

For Nigel's address, see Page One.

It is hoped that the Finals will be played at the 1975 National Congress. It is hoped that this will be held at Brunel University, West London, and the provisional date is November 22- 23 1975.

1975 Hampshire Open.

To be held at Southampton University on the 2nd of March. Further details from Alan Dean (see Page One for Alan's NEW address).

Miss Dolly Winkers wishes it to be known that she has never appeared nude.

The editor wishes to thank the author of the long article on squopping, but he did not include it in this edition as he felt the subject had been adequately covered.

WW 25 will emerge sometime around the Summer. All pieces of wit and slander are acceptable. Anything reasonable will be printed because it will mean that much less work for the Editor.