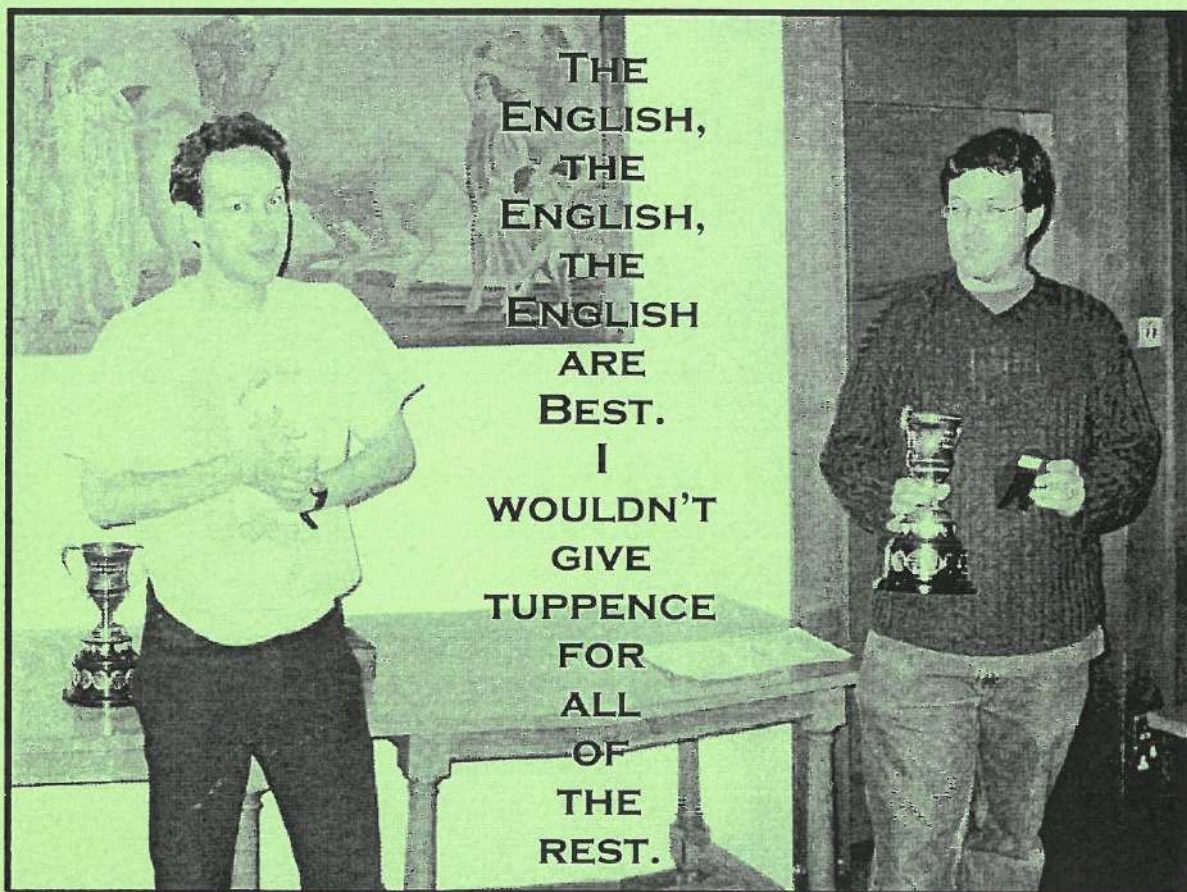


WINKING WORLD

79

AUTUMN 2002



**BEING A FAITHFUL* AND ACCURATE*
RECORD OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
ENGLISH TIDDLYWINKS ASSOCIATION
AND OF THE PERAMBULATIONS OF ITS
CORRESPONDING MEMBERS**

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WINKING WORLD is edited by Tim Hunt, 208F North Row, Milton Keynes, MK9 3LQ, email tim@timhunt.me.uk. Contributions for publication in the next issue of Winking World should reach the editor two weeks before the London Open. The finished article will be available at the London Open tournament.

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THE FRONT COVER celebrates the recent triple-triumph by top British winkers. On the left, Patrick Barrie, who recently won the World Singles, and the World pairs with the assistance of Ed Wynn. On the right, Matthew Rose, who won the English National Singles, the world's premiere open tiddlywinks tournament. The splendidly jingoistic sentiment running down the middle comes from "A Song of Patriotic Prejudice" by Flanders and Swan.

THE BACK COVER is another offering from the Charles Relle archive of bizarre imagery. It shows members of CUTwC in the mid sixties in the Jolly Waterman, where they used to meet. According to Charles, the people are, from the left: Peter Brown, Geoff Thomas (I think), cannot remember and not visible enough anyway, John Breeze, Charles Relle, Phil Barnard, Bob Race, Tony Cloke. Identifying the trophies is left as an exercise for the reader. Apparently a number of them now reside at the bottom of the Cam.

* Winking World is only as reliable as the befuddled memories of its contributors. It would be more accurate to say that this is the most faithful and accurate record of these events available.

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EDITORIAL

Tim Hunt

Well, another Winking World is almost complete, and I am feeling really quite happy because it is a case of five down, one to go. Yes! I will not stand for re-election at the next congress, so I only have to produce one more WW (probably shortly after the next congress) and then I am a free man. ETwA will be looking for a new editor for its organ.

Will it find one? surely it will. It could even be you. Parts of the job are interesting and creative, and the more routine bits do not take too long. Over the past five issues I have received a lot of support from many different people who wrote articles for me, and I would like to thank them all. Special mention has to be made of Patrick Barrie, Matt Fayers and Charles Relle who have been the most prolific, but more occasional pieces from less regular contributors are just as welcome, if not more so.



PAUL MOSS, HAVING JUST RECEIVED THE NATIONAL SINGLES PLATE TROPHY FROM PATRICK BARRIE

THE JUBILEE TROPHY

PLAYED IN TIM'S FLAT ON FRIDAY 16TH AUGUST 2002

Tim Hunt

Matt Fayers	6	3	6	7*	22
Tim Hunt	1	4	1	0*	6

Tim was horribly out of practice, and Matt was only a little bit out of practice. Perhaps more significantly, Matt is a good player. It was never going to be an easy match for me.

I had my chance in the first game. Matt stacked up three of his reds in his area. One of my bring-ins rolled, and landed on them. Following this serendipity, another red or two subbed into the pile, and suddenly Matt looked like he was in trouble. He did not panic, however, and kept plugging away and turned it around. At least I managed to win one game, but after that Matt finished me off most convincingly.

There must be someone out there who can beat him, but it certainly is not me.

THE JUBILEE TROPHY

PLAYED IN TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE ON 26TH AUGUST

Matt Fayers

Bouffant Boy	6	6	3	6	22
Bacony Jim	1	1	4	1	6

Having been saved from Wendens Ambo confusion by a meeting with his supervisor, Matt remained fresh enough to win on home turf (and, in particular, on his rather antique mat).

James Cullingham brought in very badly in the first two games, and despite Matt's general lack of ability to hold on to piles, suffered.

Later on, James seemed to have found some form, and in Game Four was looking like staying alive with an attainable deficit. But his curiosity got the better of him, and he felt compelled to continue his research into the science of implausible subs. Matt then potted and James didn't, which finished it off.

Such was the good nature of the encounter that four full-length games took about two and a half hours; slow and/or cantankerous players might take note.

THE LONDON OPEN

**PLAYED IN THE CROSSE KEYS, 9 GRACECHURCH STREET, LONDON,
ON SATURDAY 13TH JULY 2002**

Ed Wynn

In the absence of Charles to organise a London venue—and we should thank him once more for all his previous efforts—I set off on my bicycle to find one. (A venue, that is, not a Charles.) The Crosse Keys is large and high-windowed, originally a bank. It is in the City, so Saturday customers are certainly well provided with space. The managers agreed that we could quietly play tiddlywinks in between buying beer and food.

So there was the venue. The only objection came from Tim. Some of his Go-playing friends hire the function room every Saturday. He was fearful that they would realise that tiddlywinks is not the intense, sober game that he had described to them. Ho hum.

Everything went quite smoothly. The turnout was disappointingly low, though it was a pleasant surprise to see Paul Woodman and Pete Barton. There was some jiggery-pokery to fix the pairings. Geoff Thorpe was careful to check whether games partnering Paul or Pete would affect his rating—did that make them more or less attractive? It did not matter: they played in the first two rounds (Paul & Patrick Driscoll against Christine & Alan, then Paul & Pete against Tim & James), then left to find a pub showing cricket. Eight pairs was perfect for all-play-all, and Julian's scoresheet sprang into action.

Matthew and I sprang into action as well, playing well in bursts and squeezing points out in rounds. This is the mark of true veterans, I think. Going into the final game, we were more than seven points clear—and we needed to be, because Alan Dean blitzed. Christine and the other Alan had a good run; Christine's potting was held in reserve while Alan squopped fantastically.

Patrick Barrie & Charlie, the defending champions, stumbled only once or twice—for example, letting Matthew go for a daring pot-out. (A script-writer, Howard Overman, popped in to research his tiddlywinks movie. Patrick explained about playing the percentages.)

Stew was acting as Rupert's distracted partner rather than the squopping-game fanatic that makes him so dangerous; he was probably ranting about the apple crumbles. This meant that the only other pot-outs came from Patrick Driscoll. Or rather, from his opponents. Patrick was obviously feeling lonely and untactical; you could have accused him of not trying very hard, except that his tactics of "stuff it, I'll pot" succeeded in the end.

All that remained was the traditional game of "where next?". For some, it was 40-part harmony; for others, Pimm's and curry; for Stew and Rupert, an early train home and (presumably) some cocoa.

Pos	Players	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
1	Matthew Rose & Ed Wynn		1*	5*	5	5½	6	6	7*	35½
2	Andrew Garrard & Alan Dean	6*		4	3	2	4½	6	6	31½
3	Patrick Barrie & Charlie Oakley	2*	3		3	4	6	6	6*	30
4	Christine Barrie & Alan Harper	2	4	4		5	1	6	6*	28
5	Geoff Thorpe & Chris Abram	1½	5	3	2		5	5½	1*	23
6	Tim Hunt & James Cullingham	1	2½	1	6	2		4	6*	22½
7	Rupert Thompson & Stew Sage	1	1	1	1	1½	3		5*	13½
8	Patrick Driscoll et al.	0*	1	1*	1*	6*	1*	2*		12

PATRICK BARRIE IS A NARG

Tim Hunt

But then you already knew that. In this case, proof comes in the form of a paper recently accepted for publication by the Journal of Applied Statistics, entitled “A new sports ratings system: the tiddlywinks world ratings”.

Yes, here we have sixteen pages of Patrick’s finest ranting, all about how the ratings work, and the statistical justification of the system.

Can you contain your excitement? Are you worried that your newsagent does stock the J. of App. Stat.? Well, fear not. You too can bask in the brilliance of Patrick’s words by getting the paper from <http://www.cheng.cam.ac.uk/~pjb10/winks/ratings/article.pdf>.

SING-A-LONG-A-GARRARD

Andrew Garrard

I have often complained that, although I can get squops (sometimes), I have never got the hang of landing in the right place to do what I want next. As a dedicated player, I should therefore spend many hours practising until I get it right. Instead, I wrote a song.

With a nod to Afroman, and a wink to NATwA...

It's like, I'm getting too old for this game.
Pour another pint, yea

I was gonna clear the mat, until I got high
I could've run six from where they sat, but then I got high
And now I'm all squopped up, and I know why
'Cause I got high, 'cause I got high, 'cause I got high

I was gonna Bristol onto his last, but then I got high
Round four squop-up, and I could've passed, but then I got high
Now I'm nurdled, and following in, and I know why
'Cause I got high, 'cause I got high, 'cause I got high

I was lining up to go to the pub, but then I got high
Tried to squop me, managed to sub, but then I got high
Now my pint is beyond hope, and I know why
'Cause I got high, 'cause I got high, 'cause I got high

I was gonna chip my sixth wink free, but then I got high
Would've been glad to pay my tournament fee, but then I got high
Now he's taken the whole pile, and I know why
'Cause I got high, 'cause I got high, 'cause I got high

I was going for a knock-off and squop, but I was high
Thought it couldn't sail right over the top, but I was high
And now he's got a bridge, and I know why,
'Cause I got high, 'cause I got high, 'cause I got high

I was gonna dock him off the mat, until I got high
I was gonna gamble he couldn't pot that, but then I got high
Now he's potting 'cause I went off instead, and I know why
'Cause I got high, 'cause I got high, 'cause I got high

I was gonna pot out with blue, but then I got high
I was gonna lunch my last red too, but then I got high
Now they've both rolled off, and I know why
'Cause I got high, 'cause I got high, 'cause I got high

I messed up the entire game, because I got high

My world rating will never be the same, because I got high
And now I'm in the Plate, and I know why
'Cause I got high, 'cause I got high, 'cause I got high

I can't stop playing this way, because I'm high
I'm throwing the game away, because I'm high
And if I don't get one tiddly, I know why
'Cause I got high, 'cause I got high, 'cause I got high

SPOT THE BALL—ANSWER

Ed Wynn

This will mean nothing to you unless you look back to WW78.



THE WESSEX TROPHY

PLAYED IN THE KING'S ARMS, KIDLINGTON ON SATURDAY 17TH AND SUNDAY 18TH AUGUST 2002

Ed Wynn

In the torrid atmosphere of the pub annexe, a mighty battle was fought between the humans and the comestibles. Three firkins stood in the corner; the humans gulped with fear, then gulped in anger. The foodstuffs counter-attacked, but they weren't tough enough to survive. Alan Dean's meal deserted, but was eventually hunted down and wiped out. In the evening, curries mounted a raid on the humans' base, in revenge for casualties from a search-and-destroy patrol on the High Street. A few pots of mango chutney and minty yoghurt were taken prisoner and questioned the following morning.

On Sunday, the foodstuffs took time to build up a two-phase offensive. Some humans dropped out and many were slowed down, but the food was massacred. It had done its kamikaze work, however; the beer was eventually victorious. The humans disbanded in disarray.

In between all that nonsense, we played winks. The format had been tweaked: the lowest-ranked three players were team captains; they took turns selecting team-mates. (They were obviously well-informed, because Patrick Barrie was by no means the first chosen.) The teams of four or five players fielded two or three 'pairs' each round; where possible, singles were merged inter-racially. Each round, teams claimed their two best results.

Team A had a glyph (representing either a beetroot or a defecating butterfly) but no name; they had a bad first round, winning just three points. In the second round, The Untouchables managed less (fewer!). Team Ferret got twelve points in each of the first four rounds; their worst round was their last, with five points, but it was all over by then. The final scores were F 139, A 119½ and U 103.

As far as I noticed, the winks was of a decent standard, although sometimes slow and argumentative, until the heat brought on winks fatigue. (Fatigue was evident: Alan Dean drove most of his way home before turning back to collect his bicycle.) Alan Harper played well and yet won few points. Stew Sage belied his team-captain status. (Or should that be 'bellied?') R.T. Ficial often does well in this kind of tournament—but not this one, despite partnering Matt Fayers six times. Only 13% of R.T. Ficial's games were pot-outs (compared to 26% elsewhere), and all those were the opposition's doing.

A good weekend: the format worked (well done Matt) and the venue was as good as ever (thanks Tim and Jerry). But next time, less beer or more people, please.

IT WAS YOU, WASN'T IT?

Patrick Barrie reports that the DVLA recently sold the number plate W 1 NKS for £13,000. Now, the market for such a number plate is really quite small. So which one of us has more money than sense? Go on, admit it.

Team	Player	P.P.G.	Team Score
[Glyph]	Tim Hunt	4.46	119½
	Ed Wynn	4.00	
	Tim Batham	3.88	
	Tim Jeffreys	3.82	
	Christine Barrie	2.82	
	Alan Harper	1.36	
Ferret	Matt Fayers	4.50	139
	Charles Relle	4.35	
	James Cullingham	4.29	
	Stew Sage	4.18	
	Andrew Garrard	3.85	
Untouchables	Alan Dean	3.57	103
	Jon Mapley	3.50	
	Patrick Barrie	3.32	
	Paul Moss	2.93	
	Cyril Edwards	2.41	
	R.T. Ficial	2.87	

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Charles Relle

One outstanding feature of the 2002 National Singles Tournament was the quality of the winks and mats. I noticed that all the winks were of a consistent size, shape and thickness, which is not easy to achieve, as many of the greens and a few of the reds are smaller than the rest. This was important, as it made the tournament fairer, and took away any contentiousness about choice of colours.

The mats seemed also to be very consistent from one to another. This certainly made the tournament easier to play. Even with the new movements, it is better if the mats are consistent.

I discovered during the tournament that the organiser had in fact sorted all the winks to give us winks of even and high quality. This must have been a tedious task, and I at least wish to thank him publicly for the work he did and the thought that went into it.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Relle

CUT-OUT-AND-KEEP GUIDE TO DRINKING GAMES— ANGLE DANGLE

Matt Fayers

Actually this is more of a discussion of the game than a guide to how to play it, and is in particular a response to Nick's fairly forceful rant of last evening.

Angle Dangle is another 'team' game (I must be getting very sociable in my old age). Someone is chosen (or, more usually volunteers) to start (call them the Starter), and must choose a category, for example, cheeses. They then starts the game by saying "Angle dangle, flob-a-lob, and away we go", at which point he slaps the table with both hands, and begins to beat out a rhythm, which the other players should do as well. The rhythm is in 4/4 time, at roughly 100 beats per minute, and is maintained by slapping the table, clapping, and clicking the fingers of one hand and then the other. The starter then says the following words, speaking each line on a pair of clicks: "give me", "names of", "cheeses" (or whatever), "starting with", "Wensleydale" (or whatever). After this, each player in turn (in clockwise order) must name an element of the category, speaking on the clicks. This continues until someone fails to name something, or names something which has already been said, at which point that player drinks a fine (a finger), and someone starts the game anew. If the game breaks down early, and the new Starter wishes to continue with the same category, he says "more of the same" instead of the category name, and "continuing with" instead of "starting with".

This is essentially it, except that two types of challenge can occur. Careful steps have been taken recently to distinguish between the Challenge, and the Kunst-Wet, and this can only be a good thing. I will explain the Kunst-Wet first (although not why it is called this). If a player names something which is not an element of the chosen category, any other player may cry "Kunst-Wet", the game breaks down, and the miscreant drinks a fine. Of course, the Kunst-Wet may be unjustified (and a vote may be called on whether this is so), in which case the person who Kunst-Wetted drinks. The Kunst-Wet must be called before the next person plays. Ed Wynn suggests a variation in which a mistake need not be Kunst-Wetted immediately, but may only be Kunst-Wetted by the player whose turn it is. If the Kunst-Wet is upheld, then all the players who continued playing after the mistake should drink. This seems like an excuse for unbridled drinking, and I could not possibly endorse it.

The second kind of challenge is the Challenge. Before the category has gone all the way round for the first time, a player (traditionally only the player whose turn it is, but these days, seemingly anyone) may call "Challenge", defying the Starter to complete the round, that is, to name an element of the category, speaking on the clicks, for everyone yet to play, and one more for himself. If he fails to do this (and he usually does), he drinks, while if he succeeds, the challenger drinks a fine.

Now I come to the source of Nick's rant: is challenging a bad thing? Certainly it is very difficult to succeed in naming enough things in time when challenged, but the existence

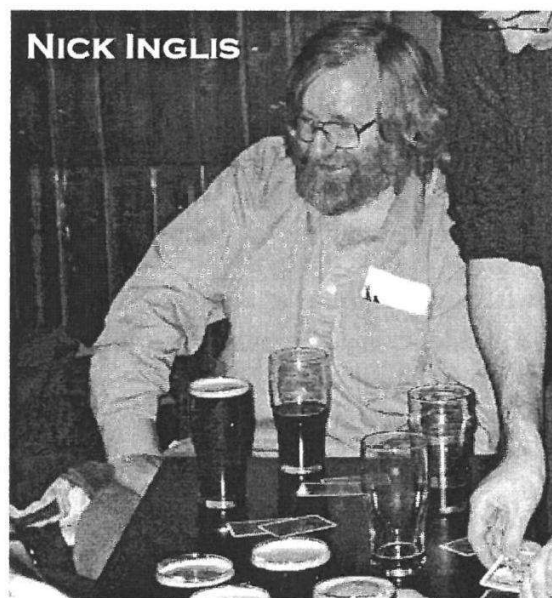
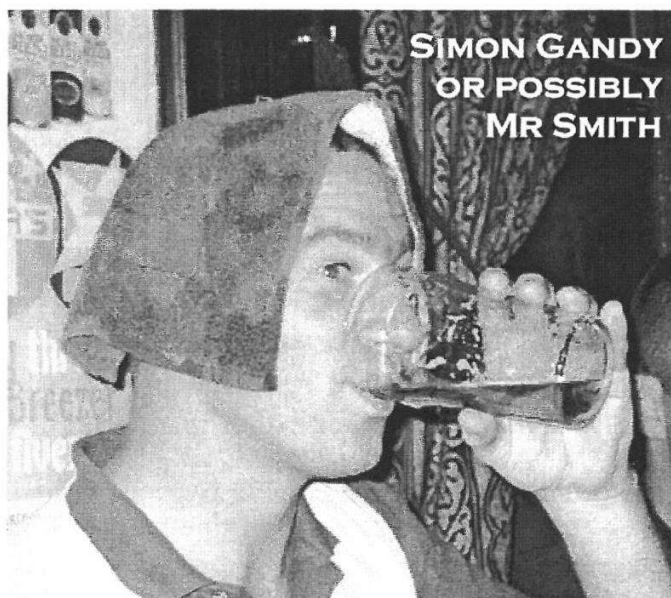
of the Challenge rule is essential in order to prevent impossibly difficult categories being named. But we should not use the Challenge too freely; here are some thoughts on how to wield this rather blunt instrument. It seems to me that there are four reasons why you might call "Challenge":

- A) it is your go, and you cannot think of an element of the category;
- B) you do not think it is possible to complete the circle, that is, there just are not enough things in the category for everybody to name one;
- C) you think the Starter would fail if challenged;
- D) you are just bloody-minded (like those people who refuse to join in games of Thumbsmaster).

Note that A and B are independent. B seems to be a very good reason for challenging, although if B holds and A does not, then why not just sit tight and leave the challenge for someone who is in more difficulty? This would have the advantage of making the challenge a little easier for the starter when it does happen (although, contrary to Nick's opinion, Starters are sometimes successful when challenged). A (without B) is a decent reason to challenge (in my view, but, as far as I can tell, not in Nick's): I do not want the spoil the game for everyone else, but if someone names a ludicrous category such as, say, "American senators", then I am not going to bow out gracefully and drink a fine when, to be honest, it is not me who is spoiling the game. C is probably a bad reason to challenge, and this is perhaps the real thing that annoys Nick. However, I do not think it happens very often. D is a very bad reason to challenge, but then, if we did not want to associate with bloody-minded people, we would not play winks.

To sum up, the Challenge is an important part of the game, but should never be used if people are playing the game for fun. Categories should be general, and should go round at least once easily; the Challenge is merely a threat to maintain this state of affairs.

What is the Fayers Convention, then? Simple: a pint fine for an unsuccessful Challenge.



THE EDGE OF THE MAT—A RANT

Charles Relle

Julian Wiseman's letter on page 25 of WW78 revives a discussion that has been with us for some time, but does not deserve the disparaging treatment of it in the editorial on page 2. The wording of the editorial also implies, wrongly I hope, that the rules subcommittee are prejudiced against certain proposed rule changes simply on the ground that they have been made before.

Proposals similar to Julian's have been discussed by myself in WW46 page 16, Larry Kahn in WW47 page 31, myself again in WW48 page 22 (only one sentence in an article devoted to other rules matters), Rob Cartwright in WW49 page 56 and myself again in WW50 page 7. There is some discussion in Jon Mapley's article on page 14. The starting pages for articles are given. More recently there were articles by myself and Richard Moore in WW59, pages 10 and 11, and a reference by Geoff Thorpe in WW68, the pages of which are not numbered. The article begins on the ninth page. Some readers may not be familiar with these articles, as WW46 appeared in September 1985, and WW is produced roughly twice a year.

Suppose we are playing Blue. Do we need a penalty for putting A) Blue off the mat B) Red off the mat C) Green or Yellow off the mat?

At the moment we have a penalty for A, but not B or C. Why should putting one colour off the mat attract a penalty, but not the other three? Is it more reprehensible to put a wink off the mat accidentally, Blue (or very occasionally Red) in this example, or deliberately (Green or Yellow)?

My answer to the first question is that there is no reason except tradition, and that the tradition grew up before such shots as the boondock were even envisaged. Now that the boondock is part of the game, its implications should be considered. It may be amusing to send an opponent's wink as far away as possible, even out of the door, but it requires greater skill to send it a long distance but still on the mat. This is a good reason for making the penalty for sending any wink off the same. It also makes the game more consistent.

My answer to the second question follows from the first: it is equally reprehensible to send any wink off the mat.

Given that it is reprehensible to send any wink off the mat, what is the appropriate penalty? Julian Wiseman's suggestion has been proposed before: Larry Kahn refers to it in WW47, and correctly attributes it to Joe Sachs. I think it is the right solution. The present penalty is inconsistent in its severity as well as its application, because it is much more severe towards the end of a game. A penalty involving distance rather than tempo would be much more consistent.

I agree with Julian in supporting the loss of a shot for sending more than one wink off the mat. This must nearly always involve a violence not appropriate to the game.

WORLD SINGLES 55

PLAYED IN QUEENS' COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE ON SUNDAY 6TH
OCTOBER 2002

Matt Fayers

Patrick Barrie	3	6	2*	2*	6*	6	25
Ed Wynn	4	1	5*	5*	1*	1	17

A fun match was watched by a reasonable crowd; Ed, paranoid as ever about his squopping, went for the pot whenever possible. Unfortunately, his potting was not as good as it had been in practice, and Patrick came through.

GAME 1

A squopping developed fairly early on, and after a good pile break Ed seemed to have the upper hand. Patrick nibbled away, though, and mid-way through rounds was looking like getting five-ish. Ed potted superbly with yellow in round 5 to clinch it. [3–4]

GAME 2

Ed pots three blues and misses, whereupon Patrick pots four greens and misses near a big red. Unfortunately Ed (as he keeps telling us) can't squop. "This is why I'm going for squopping games. No not them, the other ones." However, he does get a good squop with blue on the green, and seems to be holding things down nicely, until he contrives to throw the pile away. Patrick uses yellow to put green safe, and then Ed plays the shot of the match—a squop over the pot. Unfortunately, Patrick pots lots of yellows, and Ed misses the pot-off with blue. [9–5]

GAME 3

Red (Patrick) has a reasonable pot-out threat, so Ed subs a green and a yellow under the same red to discourage him. Alas, too many greens and yellows go under the red to be tenable, so Patrick goes for the pot, bringing the sixth red from the edge to a moderately safe position. Ed gets a very nice chip of green on red, defends with green and pots with yellow, including a self-lunch and a swig of beer before potting the sixth. [11–10]

GAME 4

The standard of play is slipping. After a couple of false starts, Red (Ed) pots five and brings in. Yellow tries potting, but not well enough, and red pots out. [13–15]

GAME 5

This time Patrick pots five and brings in with red, right next to a green. Fortunately he has a blue on hand to grab the green. [19–16]

GAME 6

Ed is dragged kicking and screaming into a squopping game, and looks to have decent chances for much of it. But in rounds he plays a few bad shots (including missed pots), and lets Patrick get 6. [25–17]

THE BRISTOL SHOT

A SECOND LOOK

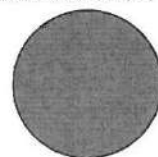
Charles Relle

Consider the position in Diagram A2:

You are looking at small winks. You probably think of this as a typical Bristol position, and so it is. You would have no hesitation in going for the shot.



DIAGRAM A2

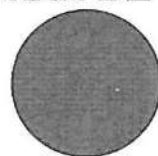


But what about the position B2?

Most people would be doubtful about playing a Bristol shot to cover blue and red with yellow. Nevertheless, it is possible. How do you play it? Put your squidger over the middle of the Blue wink, and draw it backwards to the point of intersection of the blue and the yellow. Point the squidger at the top edge of the red. This shot is quite hard to accomplish. The maximum distance is about two lengths of a small wink. Start by putting the winks closer together, and make sure the yellow is not actually in front of blue, for then you are more likely to spill the blue. The result for which you are aiming is shown in Diagram C2.

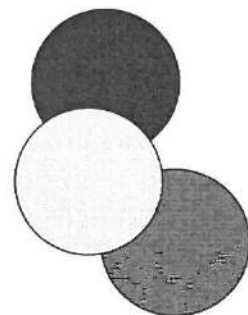


DIAGRAM B2



Remember that in all Bristol shots, you do not have to pile the winks in a great stack. Many Bristol shots are possible only if you aim to cover part of the target wink. For this reason they are very delicate; you have a small area for which to aim, and the potential for going wrong is considerable. However, this is part of the charm of the shot. If your opponents do not expect you to play it, they can be caught out. If they do, they may be more wary of you, to your advantage.

DIAGRAM C2

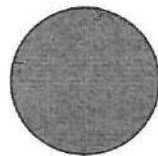


Look back at Diagrams A2 and B2. If both these positions are possible Bristol shots, it follows that positions in between can be played in the same way.

Here is another position. Again, put your squidger over the middle of blue, and pull it back to the back edge of blue. Imagine the red wink as a clock face. Point your squidger towards 2:30 on red. Once again, two lengths is a reasonable distance, but practise on shorter distances to start with. As with all shots, confidence counts for a great deal, so begin with shots you are sure you can do. When you can do these shots, start again with large on large winks. You will find them easier, and the distances you can accomplish greater. Experiment with squidger angle, and see what goes best.



DIAGRAM D2



Now look at this position. Set it up so that yellow is just resting on the mat behind blue:

Would you care to attempt this as a Bristol? I would not. The yellow will either come off blue altogether, or, if it carries blue a little way, butt against red. Now turn the yellow-blue through 90 degrees to get this:

You would probably be doubtful about this shot too. But in fact it is possible to squop the red without coming off the blue. It is a shot of great delicacy. Put your squidger just higher than the middle of yellow, towards one o'clock, angling it towards that point. Draw it back towards 7:30 on blue. You cannot make this shot go more than a small wink's length, and you are aiming to squop the red at about 7:30. You need practice to get the right pressure. This is an extreme Bristol.

If you can do the shot in F2, you are ready to attempt shots like this:

Again, the yellow is just resting on the mat. Put the squidger at two o'clock on yellow, pointing it at the top of red, about 10:30. Slide the squidger off yellow at about eight o'clock on blue. Once again, this is a hard shot; you will need practice, and, as suggested in my last article, the squidger position, in this and other shots, may be different for you.

Many angled Bristol shots depend on how much purchase you can get on the lower wink. Look at Diagram H2.

Now the yellow is on the blue but not on the mat. To play this, you can point the squidger straight at the target wink, and slide it back over the blue at 9 o'clock.

From this account, you can work out how to play Bristol shots at other angles. Most considerations apply to both small on small and large on large positions.

My last article finished with a discussion of large on small positions, so let us look at some more of these.

You have to imagine that the large blue is on top of the small yellow. Point your squidger at the target wink, and pull it back over the lower wink at 9 o'clock. You will find that Bristols like these will go a surprising distance.

DIAGRAM E2



DIAGRAM F2

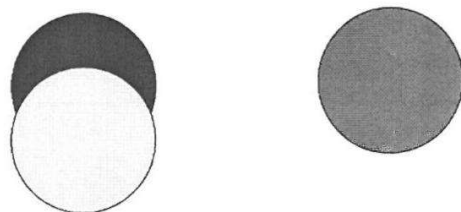


DIAGRAM G2

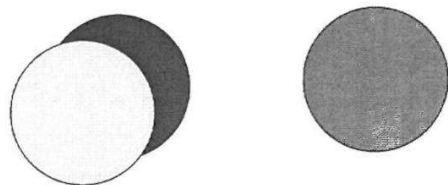
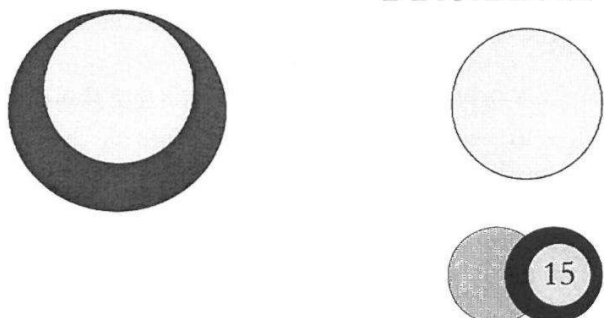


DIAGRAM H2



DIAGRAM I2



One more position that looks surprising is this. Again, suppose that blue is on yellow.

Put you squidger on the point of intersection of the blue and yellow pointing at the target wink. Draw it straight back, and you should achieve the shot.

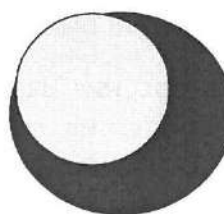
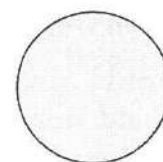


DIAGRAM J2



There may be more two-wink Bristol positions to explore, but playing them will follow the principles laid down in these articles. Get out some squidgers and try!

WORLD PAIRS 24

PLAYED IN THE ANGEVIN ROOM, QUEENS' COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE ON THURSDAY 24TH OCTOBER 2002

Patrick Barrie

Patrick Barrie Ed Wynn	4	4	1*	6	6	3	2½	26½
Larry Kahn Matt Fayers	3	3	6*	1	1	4	4½	22½

This, as the name suggests, was the 24th World Pairs contest. Larry Kahn had played in fourteen previous matches in the series, Patrick Barrie in seven, Ed Wynn in three and Matt Fayers in none. Add those numbers together, and you get 24. Spooky.

The match did not start until 6 pm in order to allow interviews and filming by Trans-World Sport on behalf of Reuters. These were shown on BBC 1's children's Newsround programme on the Monday. The local newspaper cameraman spent most of his time photographing Patrick Driscoll who had kindly agreed to umpire the first two games.

GAME 1

Patrick & Ed were behind for most of the game. Ed potted three blues in round four in an attempt to get something out of it. Surprisingly, both Larry and Matt failed to pot the two winks that they needed to win, so Patrick & Ed escaped with a 4–3 win. [4–3]

GAME 2

This was close throughout, and again came down to whom would pot best in rounds. This time, it was Patrick's two green pots to end round five that won the game 4–3. [8–6]

GAME 3

Patrick potted five winks, but missed the difficult pot-off and got squopped. Ed hassled well, and the result was in question all the way until round five... when Larry potted his sixth wink. [9–12]

GAME 4

Another close game, but Patrick & Ed had a slight edge at the start of rounds. After a long delay, Matt chose a tricky pile-break at one end of the main pile. It did not work out as anticipated, and three rounds later Patrick & Ed had achieved a squop-up. [15–13]

GAME 5

Gradually Patrick & Ed built a healthy advantage. Larry did manage to break a pile late on to give him hope of points, but solid potting by both Patrick and Ed gave them a 6–1 score line. [21–14]

GAME 6

Patrick & Ed had a slight edge until rounds began. At that point, Matt & Larry chose to play some very aggressive shots—they worked. Knowing the match situation, Patrick & Ed chose to play for 3 points, but this was at the risk of Matt achieving a difficult pot-out. He potted very well until he missed the sixth wink from flat on the mat with the last shot of round five. [24–18]

GAME 7

Having reached 24 points in the match, Patrick & Ed could afford to play for the single point that would retain them the title. Matt & Larry never looked like getting six of their winks free, and that was that. [26½–22½]

The match ended at quarter past midnight, and was described by the Cambridge Evening News as “gruelling”. Larry decided that the key difference between the players was that the champions both potted well (with the exception of game three), while the challengers missed important pots at crucial times.

WORLD SINGLES 56

PLAYED IN THE CASTLE INN, CAMBRIDGE ON FRIDAY 25TH OCTOBER 2002

Not Nick Inglis

Patrick Barrie	7*	4	6	1	4½	6	28½
Dave Lockwood	0*	3	1	6	2½	1	13½

Nick did not actually say “no” when I asked him to write up World Singles 56, but he did warn me that he would probably not get around to it. So you will have to survive with just the scores.

If you really want a blow-by-blow description of exactly what happened, well, just make something up. String together words like “squop”, “pot” and “failed”, and it will be just like every other tournament write-up.

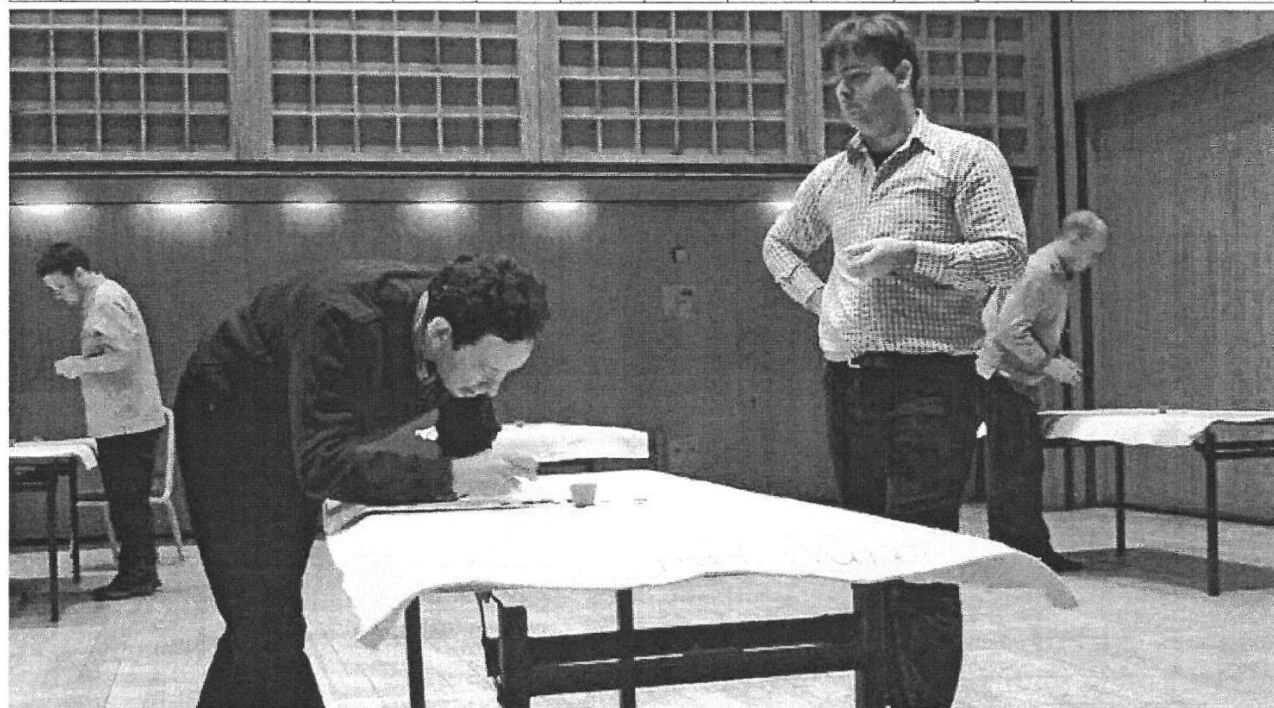
THE ENGLISH NATIONAL SINGLES—QUALIFYING

PLAYED IN THE FITZPATRICK HALL, QUEENS' COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
ON SATURDAY 26TH OCTOBER 2002

Tim Hunt

THE "WHAT ARE THE LEAGUES CALLED" LEAGUE

	Player	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	Tot	P.G.G.	Pos
A	Patrick Barrie		1½	6	2*	2	4	5	6	6	32½	4½/16	7
B	Matthew Rose	5½		7*	5	6	5	5	6	5	44½	5⁹/₁₆	1
C	Simon Gandy	1	0*		6	6	6	7*	7*	7*	40	5	4
D	Charles Relle	5*	2	1		4	3	3	3	6	27	3¾	10
E	Alan Dean	5	1	1	3		3	6	4	6	29	3⅝	9
F	Nick Inglis	3	2	1	4	4		4	1½	4	23½	2¹⁵/₁₆	13
G	Phil Scarrott	2	2	0*	4	1	3		1	4⅔	17⅔	2⁵/₂₄	16
H	Chris Abram	1	1	0*	4	3	5½	6		1*	21½	2¹¹/₁₆	14
I	Paul Moss	1	2	0*	1	1	3	2⅓	6*		16⅓	2¹/₂₄	17



THE "HAVE YOU GIVEN THE LEAGUES SILLY NAMES YET" LEAGUE

	Player	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	Tot	P.P.G.	Pos
A	Larry Kahn		6*	6	1	2	4	6*	6	6	6	43	47/9	5
B	Dave Lockwood	1*		5	5	5	5	6	7*	5½	6	45½	51/18	3
C	Ed Wynn	1	2		1	3	6	6	4	7*	6	36	4	8
D	Jon Mapley	6	2	6		1½	4	1½	6	7*	4½	38½	45/18	6
E	Matt Fayers	5	2	4	5½		7*	6	6	6	6	47½	55/18	2
F	Tim Hunt	3	2	1	3	0*		4	6	4	6	29	32/9	11
G	James Cullingham	1*	1	1	5½	1	3		6	1	7*	26½	217/18	12
H	Andrew Garrard	1	0	3	1	1	1	1		4	6*	18	2	18
I	Stew Sage	1	1½	0*	0*	1	3	6	3		6*	21½	27/18	15
J	Alan Harper	1	1	1	2½	1	1	0*	1*	1*		9½	11/18	19



THE ENGLISH NATIONAL SINGLES—FINAL

**PLAYED IN THE ARMITAGE ROOM, QUEENS' COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
ON SUNDAY 27TH OCTOBER 2002**

Matthew Rose

After an extra hour to recover, the dozen lucky survivors gradually arrived. There had been a lot of wind this morning, despite a number of the finalists turning down the delights of the Koh-i-noor the previous night, and reports were that Alan Dean's chauffeur drove like the wind as well. Apparently if they had travelled at that speed in their recent travels they would have walked across the former Soviet Union rather than just Northern England in thirteen days.

The survivors generally included an even handed group, although one must remark how desperately unlucky Dr Inglis was. Whilst one would not wish to labour the point, it must be gutting to be forced to do group theory for a day rather than play winks. Well perhaps not but let's not minimize criticism of whoever broke with tradition.

The top half excluded Patrick who had perhaps some winks fatigue, but he observed the format may mean it would not matter that much. The early stages were very even as the use of the JDAW optimising format meant it was not a top v bottom bunny bashing fest. It was odd to find that people were playing those in the same half as themselves, and seemed to be playing on mats very close to each other much of the time. We must note that the clever layout of the tables placing the plate tables in the middle as the focal point of the room added something—a room of two halves.

Early on Jon Mapley seemed to be setting off like a train (probably the only one that did operate that day) with success against Dave, and was the only person to win his first three games. Everyone seemed capable of beating everyone else, with James and Timmy perhaps struggling a touch, but not being outclassed at all.

After a very short lunch as usual (perhaps that is unfair but it had to be said regardless), then there started to be some divide, with Matthew, Jon and Larry getting some minor advantage, but Charles had beaten Larry, Dave, Matt and Simon in an impressive run, and Patrick as usual not far off the pace.

There seemed to be a number of games where piles were blown in rounds causing carnage—Alan and Dave started rounds with a large number of flat winks, and Patrick and Matthew also had 21 flat winks at the start of round 2 after most had been in one pile for the prior few minutes.

Matthew was leading after six rounds, but Jon pegged him back a little to remain in touch, although Matthew then went clear with a 7 against Simon. Dave had lost 7–0 to Matt Fayers, who now emerged as a serious contender. In round nine Larry squopped up Matthew and this evened matters up significantly as Patrick again moved closer.

Elsewhere Timmy had recorded wins to leave a gap between him and James at the foot.

In round ten Matthew failed to squop Dave's sixth wink many times and Larry beat Patrick in a very tight game to take the lead. Ed beat Jon, and Simon beat Matt to demonstrate the strength in depth of this final and damage their chances as well.

Round eleven started with Larry two points ahead of Matthew, with Patrick a further 1½ points behind, and Matt not out of it completely if he could get a big win.

Matt started well against Matthew, although Matt had to try to pot out when his winks fell free but he only potted two. Matthew eventually squopped up and got a 6, which secured Top Brit. To some mild surprise Dr Inglis then observed that "it could be better than that" when seeing that Jon had squopped up Larry to leave Matthew as the first new winner since 1320 or at least 1993. Patrick's win against Ed edged him up to second ahead of Larry, with another fine overall performance from Matt leaving him fifth, behind Jon who had been there or thereabouts much of the day. Dave ended a disappointing sixth having lost too many games in the middle of the day.

Well done to James for recording a win in the last game and to the tournament organizer for the illumination aids that were available—this is even-handed after all!

The trophy presentation led to some mild confusion as there was no space for the 2001 or 2002 winners' names! In the meantime, the record in this fine organ will have to do.

Player		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	Tot	Pos
A	Matthew Rose		6	2*	7*	1	3	3	6*	6	6*	6	6	52	1
B	Matt Fayers	1		7*	2	1	6*	4½	3	6	2	5	6	43½	5
C	Dave Lockwood	5*	0*		5	6	1	1	6	4	1	6	6	41	6
D	Simon Gandy	0*	5	2		3	1	5	5	0	2	5	5½	33½	8
E	Larry Kahn	6	6	1	4		1	5	6	5	2*	7*	6	49	3
F	Jon Mapley	4	1*	6	6	6		2	1	2	6	6	6	46	4
G	Patrick Barrie	4	2½	6	2	2	5		5	6	6	6	5	49½	2
H	Ed Wynn	1*	4	1	2	1	6	2		5*	2*	2*	7*	33	9=
I	Alan Dean	1	1	3	7*	2	5	1	2*		5*	0*	6	33	9=
J	Charles Relle	1*	5	6	5	5*	1	1	5*	2*		3	6	40	7
K	Tim Hunt	1	2	1	2	0*	1	1	5*	7*	4		1½	25½	11
L	James Cullingham	1	1	1	1½	1	1	2	0*	1	1	5½		16	12

THE ENGLISH NATIONAL SINGLES—PLATE

**PLAYED IN THE ARMITAGE ROOM, QUEENS' COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
ON SUNDAY 27TH OCTOBER 2002**

It is really rather embarrassing, I often have to struggle to get any write-up at all for some tournaments, and then, for this one, suddenly two arrive in my inbox.

Actually, from the stressed-out haze that is my recollection of the final, I do remember mentioning it to both Paul and Ben but I was not sure that I had got a clear promise of a write-up from either of them.

Fortunately, both accounts are amusing in their own way, so I feel no compunction in including them both. Consider it, if you like, an experiment to see how consistent these tournament write-ups are.

Pos	Player	Games	Adjusted Total	Adjusted P.P.G.	Unadjusted P.P.G.
1	Paul Moss	6	$29\frac{3}{8}$	$4\frac{43}{48}$	$5\frac{1}{6}$
2	Keith Seaman	4	$17\frac{1}{2}$	$4\frac{3}{8}$	$4\frac{7}{8}$
3	Christine Barrie	6	$26\frac{1}{8}$	$4\frac{7}{48}$	$5\frac{1}{12}$
4	Phil Scarrott	6	$23\frac{1}{2}$	$3\frac{11}{12}$	$4\frac{2}{3}$
5	Ben Fairbairn	5	19	$3\frac{4}{5}$	$3\frac{4}{5}$
6	Andrew Garrard	4	$13\frac{1}{8}$	$3\frac{9}{32}$	$3\frac{5}{8}$
	Hane Maung	2	$6\frac{3}{8}$	$3\frac{3}{16}$	3
	Alan Harper	3	$9\frac{1}{2}$	$3\frac{1}{6}$	$2\frac{5}{6}$
7	Poppy Aldam	5	$14\frac{7}{8}$	$2\frac{39}{40}$	$1\frac{2}{5}$
	Emma Drysdale	2	$4\frac{5}{8}$	$2\frac{5}{16}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
8	Stew Sage	5	$8\frac{5}{8}$	$1\frac{29}{40}$	$2\frac{1}{5}$
	Chris Abram	1	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	0

Paul Moss

I do not remember “winner writes it up” being a condition of entry to the prestigious National Singles Plate competition, but it is a difficult argument to resist in the immediate post-victory smug-fest. I did demand a recount, and the score calculations have been thoroughly audited, but I still won, so here I am.

I remember very little of the qualifying stages of the Plate on Saturday, except that my otherwise excellent form was tarnished by my pot-out against SLU (I know he would want me to mention it). Nevertheless, I qualified comfortably for the real competition on Sunday, once again avoiding the ignominy of having to play in the “Singles Final”. I noticed that those who failed to make it through to the final of the Plate were up bright and early on Sunday, and were already getting in some much-needed practice when the Plate finalists arrived in the Armitage Room.

At this stage, I suppose I am meant to bring my photographic memory of winks games to bear and give you a blow-by-blow account of the contests. Back in the real universe, of course, I recall only a few vague details and have no more than the score-sheets for the games I was not in. Happily, that has never stopped anybody before, so...

ROUND 1

Not a novice-friendly round, I am afraid. Phil & Ben (flob-a-lob...?) took 7 from Hane & Emma. Christine instructed me to pot out against Poppy, but I missed so many times that (a) Poppy was in danger of beating me to it, and (b) Christine started potting as well. However, I eventually got there and Christine followed for the 7.

ROUND 2

Ben claimed to have something other than winks to do, and left, but Stew arrived instead, and partnered Hane to a 6*-1*. Stew did not pot out, surely? I partnered Poppy against Phil & Christine. We got a 3 before the handicap adjustment, mostly thanks to Poppy potting from all over the place.

ROUND 3

Hane & Emma left, hopefully not scarred for life by the experience, but the arrivals of Andrew and Keith, and the return of Ben gave us an ideal eight players. I partnered Andrew against Phil & Poppy, and we took 5 from a squopping game, the details of which escape me. Would you believe there was a pot-out in Stew's game?

ROUND 4

Alan and SLU joined us to take us to the heady heights of three games in this round. Christine did her bit to encourage Ben by taking 7 from their singles game. Keith & I had a comfortable 6-1 against Poppy & Alan, and it seems there was a pot-out in Stew's game for a change.

ROUND 5

SLU left, leaving three games of three players. I remember nothing of my game against Christine & Ben. Goodness me, someone potted out in Stew's game. No-one did in the other game. Look, there is probably a scores table around here somewhere if you are that interested.

ROUND 6

Now I do recall something of this game. I am sure Stew & Phil had the upper hand against Ben & myself, and then we turned it around at the last minute for a 5-2. We must have played some good shots. Or they played some bad ones. Or something. I held up rounds unconscionably whilst I tried to work out how many points I needed to win the day, but this was an opportunity to win my first silverware for 15 years (CUTwC Novices' Trophy and downhill ever since).

Many thanks to Christine for breaking with tradition by organising the competition but not winning it.

THE ENGLISH NATIONAL SINGLES—PLATE

Ban Fairbairn

The risk-taking, preceded by cries of “Oh sod it, its only the plate,” leads to games of sexy winks, such is the inspirational nature of the event. It was a blustery occasion, with tales of Christine being knocked of her bicycle, and tree branches lining the roads. A windy backdrop to the days events (and not in the curried sense of the word). The traditional system of handicaps and points transfers naturally brought about the continual fiddling with eighths (and yes, $\frac{4}{8}$ is equal to $\frac{1}{2}$!), an integral part of the day’s banter.

The first round saw a high concentration of youngsters playing, but an unfortunate draw meant that they were entirely unsupported, and the expected crushing pot-outs ensued.

Round two was probably a little better, but I would not know. Early that afternoon I was helping to feed the homeless with tea and sandwiches instead.

The traditional lunch break in the Mill saw the arrival of a (predictably) late Andrew Garrard due to a flat tyre and a flattened garden fence. There was also a Great Dalmuti induction session for the novices.

The (supposedly) 2:30 restart saw the arrival of Alan Harper, rapidly followed by SLU and consequently of the plate itself. A rapid pot out in one game and the co-incidence of Paul and Phil in the other naturally led to some to return to the Mill for a ‘quick half’.

Following a crushing 7*-0* defeat, SLU ‘retired’, forcing the tournament into a death number situation for the next round. Another unfortunate twist of randomness saw myself opposing Christine on the newly invoked matt of Mr Garrard, ending, not surprisingly, in another pot-out.

The fifth round saw a complete cock-up in the draw with Christine and myself partnering again for the second time in the tournament. C’est la vie.

The final round saw Trinity mathmos coming into their own, with a game held up for 10 minutes in round five while Paul calculated everybody’s handicap and thus probable final scores, in order to conclude that saying “pass” was, in fact, his best course of action.

I do not know what the final scores were or if there was a winner, but does that matter?

JUSTIFYING THE SINGLES QUALIFICATION—A RANT

Matt Fayers

This year the qualifying leagues in the singles were of different sizes (nine and ten players), the first time this has happened while I have been Tournament Organiser. I have always had it in mind that if this happened I would go slightly against the grain in deciding the qualifying criterion, and invite the players with the twelve highest P.P.G.s to play

in the final, irrespective of how many of these were from each league. This caused some consternation, and so I probably ought to give a bit of justification.

The basic reason is to make it fairer on the people in the larger leagues (or league, in this case). This is difficult to justify without writing several pages of pseudo-mathematics, so you will have to make do with the following example: imagine that all the players are of equal ability. If we then decide that the top six players from each league will qualify, then a player in the large league will qualify with probability $\frac{3}{5}$, while a player in the small league will qualify with probability $\frac{2}{3}$. What these probabilities are under the “top twelve P.P.G.s” system depends on the exact distribution of possible scores in a game, but (I believe—exercise for the interested reader) whatever this distribution is, the probabilities are closer together.

That was perhaps a bit feeble, so I will tell you the other reason why my system is better. The fundamental problem with the all-play-all system is that we have scoresheets lying around for everyone to see, and so, as the tournament progresses, people have a better idea of what scores they need in order to win/qualify, or whether it is completely hopeless. This is why Julian’s computers spend so much time trying to optimise the all-play-all draws (by making important games happen late—the vagueness of this statement is what makes Julian spend so much time concocting algorithms to achieve this optimisation).

The gravest consequence of this is that a game in the last round can be completely irrelevant to one player (who already knows whether he has qualified or not) and of vital importance to the other. My system of qualification makes the number of points needed to qualify less clear-cut, with the result that all players in the last round will be trying to get as many points as possible, rather than either twiddling their thumbs or aiming for a specific score; so (I hope) the games in the last round(s) will be fairer. In short, the all-play-all is bad because players know too much, and I am trying to tell them less.

This reasoning, of course, applies to the situation where the leagues are of equal sizes, but I have not tried to impose it in that case because I could not bear the ranting.

Nick’s reasoning for having the top six players qualifying from each league was that the lowest-seeded player (who is in the large league, because of the way these things are arranged, and I know that (in order to annoy Dave) we do not do it like that, but in fact we do now) might be a real bunny, and inflate the P.P.G.s of the other players in that league.

Of course, there is an immediate counter-argument to this: the highest seed might be much better than everyone else, and deflate the P.P.G.s of everyone else in the large league. But I take Nick’s point; in fact in winks (and probably in most competitions) players are more spread out at the bottom than at the top, and so this might have some effect. But I do not think it is as crucial as the things I have outlined above.

I am not going to say any more than this, except that I stand by my policy, and if I find myself organising the singles again and the leagues are of unequal sizes, this system will be used.

LEARNING FROM YOUR ELDERS AND BETTERS

Andrew Garrard

I have been playing a lot of friendly (no, really) games against Charles Relle recently. While it would be nice if I could say his experience has improved my game, it does not seem to be showing in national tournaments; nonetheless, I do feel being soundly thrashed on a weekly basis (nearly 6–1 on average) has taught me a few things. While I am sure I have improved at least a bit since I first played the game, the number of people I can expect to beat at a given tournament has remained strangely constant, so my findings must still be relevant to some of you.

Incidentally, I trust Charles will take my making an example of his mannerisms in this article in the intended manner; they are not criticisms, and I would not want anyone to think they are.

IT'S ONLY A GAME

No matter how frustrating events are, winks is a game played mostly for personal satisfaction. You will never make a fortune, and the best you can hope for is the respect or derision of a vanishingly small number of people, all of whom are trying to ensure you do less well than they do at each tournament. A lot of experienced winkers nonetheless rant loudly at everything which goes even slightly wrong. CUTwC pub crawl motto aside, we are here to enjoy ourselves. I maintain that the oft-foretold death of English winks will be by coronary, not the liver failure it deserves.

THERE IS NOT ALWAYS ANYTHING YOU CAN DO

You can expect to miss a few shots. Sometimes your opponent will play a game where they miss, essentially, nothing—or at least nothing important. When this happens, unless their strategy is particularly appalling, you are probably going to lose. Charles often plays perfectly (on his own mat) against me at least until the game is well in his favour; I have learnt not to get dispirited. Occasionally I do the same to him, and his agitation causes him more damage than any of my shots. I can take satisfaction in the average level of my play, no matter how well the opponent plays.

ON BANKING A WIN

Swings and roundabouts. Players predating a certain vintage seem to be less prone to potting out than more modern players. I claim that, in addition to being a probabilistic function based on distance (involving concentric rings of equal probability), the ebb and flow of a game is a limited random walk. No matter how good the better player, if he never pots out then the novice will eventually get his winks free. I am not advocating plan 47, but I do think that some players should take the secure pot-out when it is presented. On the other hand, when it is an insecure pot-out, I like to see a better opponent trying it—I much prefer my chances when my opponent has run out of winks (and I have been trying to lunch Charles's winks when I get the chance, to see whether it helps)—but there's a big difference between that and trying to sit on a squop-up with all

your winks of one colour free for twenty minutes. Conversely, everyone knows that a good strategy when playing a better player is to try to pot-out before they can squop you, but I have been avoiding that in friendly games on grounds of tedium.

SMALL VICTORIES

If you are playing someone who is better than you, there is a lot of satisfaction to be had from the game regardless of the result. I have no disappointment about Larry Kahn getting a 6-1 off me in the Singles—I would expect him to beat me. I still managed to play some good shots, and I cannot be disappointed at the few shots which let me down. I am irritated that Dave Lockwood got 7 points off me, but because I played poorly rather than because of the result per se. I take great satisfaction from being more of an irritant than a threat.

KNOWING YOUR OPPONENT

Everyone knows Charles can Bristol—enough of this has rubbed off on me that I managed to surprise a few people at the Singles with Bristols that they did not see were there (ahem). What I learnt the hard way was that he can pot off piles that I would never imagine trying to pot off. The small nudges of piles to millimetrically cover a nearby wink, the kind of shot which I find very easy, does not come into his game; he will Bristol six inches over a pile to get an attacking wink (and get it), where I would slide the pile around to get the same effect. I once used to assume everyone could get every shot they might try; I played the hard shot to which I could not see a counter, rather than the easy shot which would work—rather than relying on your opponent missing a shot (rarely good practice) I needed to learn that no-one was perfect and that if I compensated step by step, everyone will go wrong eventually. Knowing different players makes it easier to know how paranoid to be. Learning to play unusual shots yourself is one thing—I will never be as good at Bristolling (sideways) as Charles is—but just knowing the shot is coming can help a lot.

FATE HATES TIDDLYWINKS

I used to find that I threw games away because I tried to play a complicated shot, and it would go wrong in a way that was both utterly catastrophic and totally unexpected. I was assured that the trick was to play easy shots, so that this does not happen. I have since been playing easy shots, which do not go wrong as often, but when they do go wrong, they do so in a way which was both utterly catastrophic and totally unexpected. Mysteriously this will always happen in such a way as to tie up nearly all the winks of one player, except when the position seems totally secure for one side, at which point Fate will be fickle and switch so as to undo all the previous hard work one player has done. I have found that a knowing, ironic laugh is a better response than screaming and banging ones head on the table—it also disturbs piles less. I recommend sympathy to the opponent who has just thrown away a commanding lead, because fortunes will probably reverse. These things happen, and if I lose a game because of an unexpected piece of bad luck, I do not let it get to me—nor do I take much satisfaction from a game unluckily thrown away by an opponent.

BAD DAYS

Everyone has a day when no shots work. If the easy shots are going wrong and I do not even think it is luck that is frowning on me, it can be depressing. Why not pretend you are a novice, and think how pleased you are at the few shots which go well? Then push for a long lunchtime and hope it wears off.

STRATEGY BREAKS

There are players of the game who have a greater grasp of strategy than I suspect I ever will. Nick Inglis and Alan Dean are particularly known for applying intellect to the game. I have a theory that there are times where they will know what I should do next, and they will be planning for it. They may even know what I might, in my incompetence, do instead. So I have been trying to master the art of the bizarre strategy—playing the strangest shot that would be useful, just to keep people on their toes. It is worked wonders against Charles (who is now paranoid, because I have accused him of poor strategy in the past), and I am sure it is worth a try against others.

WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT, REALLY, WHEN YOU COME DOWN TO IT?

Almost nobody would turn up to a winks tournament if they did not enjoy chatting with people. Winks is a social sport. So, while being careful not to distract people (Charles's "Shhh" being able to distract me across a whole room on occasion) before they play a shot, I maintain that playing winks in stony silence is inappropriate—except, perhaps, for the occasional final where an obsession with results takes over the concept of fun. Even if the game is all that is discussed—the beautiful intended outcome of the shot which went horribly wrong, just so your opponent does not think you are more insane than you really are, for example—I am there to socialize. As I said at the start, winks is only a game. A good game, but not one which will make me drive across the country on its own. If it was, I would have finished writing a computer version by now. So let us enjoy ourselves, agree to differ from time to time (accepting that viewpoints vary), and try to get along. Maybe we would have more players—you never know.

THE NATWA SINGLES

PLAYED AT ITHACA HIGH SCHOOL ON SATURDAY 9TH AND SUNDAY 10TH NOVEMBER 2002

Larry Kahn

Actually, the reason we had to move this from the summer until November is more interesting than the tournament. We were all set to go at Ithaca High School last August, and then less than one week before the match Severin notified me that the school does not open during the summer on weekends. You would think that after teaching there for 25 years he might have known that. Anyway, after a quick round of emails and phone calls, we sorted it out with no great harm to anyone, and ended up playing it two weeks after the ETwA singles, again at the high school.

A nice turnout, a total of fifteen people including seven high-schoolers. Given a choice of a separate B division or getting rabbit-bashed, the high school was more than willing to get stomped in order to play against the big boys and gain some experience. The format was two divisions of eight, the top four from each division to make the first cut finals and then cross over to play the other top four to finish a round robin of eight. The seven “relevant” scores for each player then determine the final round of four, who do a mini round robin for a total of ten games that “count”.

The first round saw perhaps the biggest upset in singles history when Jon (Lockwood) whipped his daddy 6*-1* in an uncontrolled, run-six blitz. Apparently the last three were from 8 inches or more, and then Jon potted two almost totally nuddled with the second colour to get the 6. No telling what Dave would have done to the poor kid if Jon had qualified and the score counted, but it was a sure bet to be thrown out so Dave was happy (except for the blown rating points). Aaron then followed suit, beating Bob and Mac in consecutive games, with scores of 4 and 5.

There were a ton of pot-out games (which ought to make Patrick happy), as the high school kids have not learned much strategy yet, but they can really pot. Vanya, in particular, was excellent, and he made the round of 8 with a 3 off of Ferd and then 3 pot-outs for 20 points. The other seven making the final round were as expected: Larry, Dave, Bob, Ferd, Severin, Mac, and Aaron.

Larry was in top form, winning his first eleven games for a total of 70 points. Apparently all the practice in England two weeks before did him some good. This gave him an insurmountable lead (despite ten-year-old evidence to the contrary) of thirteen points with two rounds to go, at which point he coasted to the finish line with a 1 against Dave and a 5 against Bob. This allowed Dave to overtake Bob for second, with Severin always destined for fourth.

Dave unveiled a new (well not really) approach, which he fittingly calls the moron strategy. As in “more on”, that is, getting right on top of the wink when you are squopping it so it is hard to attack. In single squop games this can make big difference. I am sure you will hear plenty about this at next years ETwA singles.

All in all, a good weekend that will hopefully keep up the interest at the high school. Once they learn some strategy (even Severin’s dubious input would help), they could be dangerous.

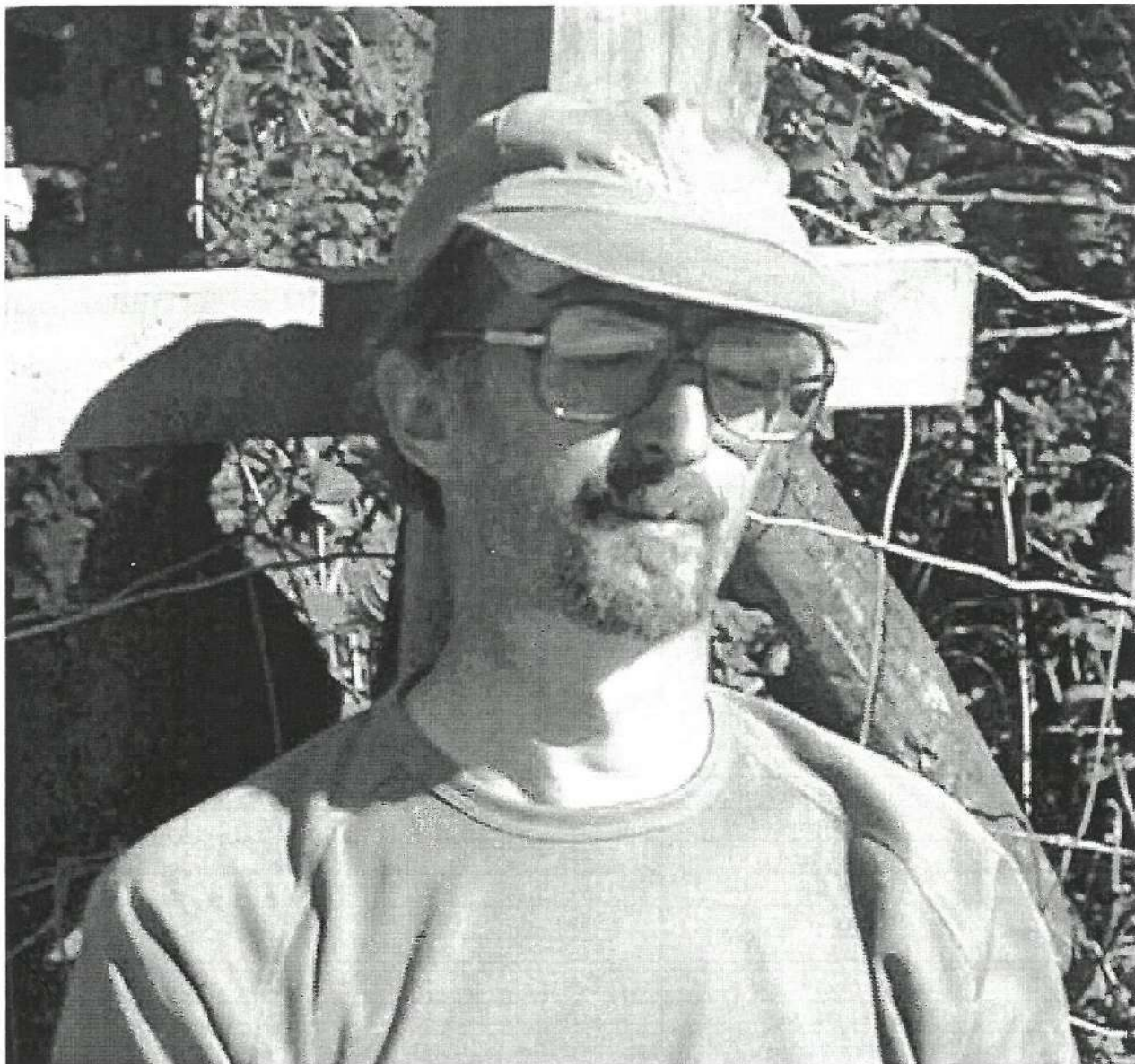
Pos	Player	Games Counted	Total
1	Larry Kahn	10	55
2	Dave Lockwood	10	48
3	Bob Henninge	10	41½
4	Severin Drix	10	26½
5=	Ferd	7	21
5=	Aaron	7	21
7	Mac McAvoy	7	15
8	Vanya Temnykh	7	10

THE WORLD RATINGS—POST NATWA SINGLES

The Algorithm

Position	Player	Rating	Rating reliability factor	Games in the last year	P.P.G. in the last year
1	Larry Kahn	2433	100	64	4.852
2	Matthew Rose	2366	100	58	4.672
3	Patrick Barrie	2344	100	110	4.195
4	Dave Lockwood	2304	100	57	4.237
5	Geoff Myers	2297	97	25	4.46
6	Jon Mapley	2241	100	25	4.08
7	Matt Fayers	2223	100	89	4.129
8	Simon Gandy	2208	100	39	3.897
9	Bob Henninge	2205	99	24	4.479
10	Richard Moore	2181	55	1	6
11	Ed Wynn	2176	100	92	3.953
12	Charles Relle	2175	100	77	3.87
13	Alan Dean	2112	100	85	3.771
14	Ferd	2076	97	22	4.636
15	Severin Drix	2064	100	34	3.559
16	Tim Hunt	2059	100	73	3.37
17	Nick Inglis	2004	100	38	3.386
18	Andrew Dominey	1989	78	4	3.625
19	Geoff Thorpe	1964	100	51	3.686
20	Joe Sachs	1947	89	12	3.292
21	Phil Scarrott	1945	100	27	3.025
22	Rupert Thompson	1925	100	8	2.188
23	James Cullingham	1924	100	85	3.094
24	Mac McAvoy	1890	97	22	4.318
25	Christine Barrie	1890	100	71	3.817
26	Tim Jeffreys	1876	95	26	3.173
27	Andrew Garrard	1875	100	74	3.173
28	Chris Abram	1861	100	51	3.549
29	Keith Seaman	1852	74	4	4.875
30	Stew Sage	1812	100	72	3.104
31	Paul Moss	1806	100	60	3.072
32	Aaron	1804	85	13	3.577
33	Charlie Oakley	1800	93	23	3.587
34	Patrick Driscoll	1777	100	46	2.696
35	Kilian Anheuser	1729	80	12	3.125
36	Vanya Temnykh	1726	81	16	3.063
37	Jordan Usner	1720	64	8	3
38	Julian Drix	1695	79	2	3.5
39	Chris Hanbit	1674	28	5	4.1
40	Pat Mulcahy	1661	34	3	5
41	Tim Batham	1650	74	4	3.875
42	Marg Small	1636	78	11	4.909
43	Cyril Edwards	1634	95	28	2.339
44	Stu Collins	1625	59	6	2.5
45	Paul Woodman	1603	77	2	1

Position	Player	Rating	Rating reliability factor	Games in the last year	P.P.G. in the last year
46	Prabhas Pokharel	1601	83	24	3.396
47	Alan Harper	1599	100	74	2.75
48	Anthony Horton	1599	94	11	3.591
49	Max Lockwood	1570	91	27	2.963
50	Ben Fairbairn	1556	73	31	2.71
51	Anton Kriksunov	1545	3	2	5.5
52	Eric Trautmann	1538	40	5	3.6
53	Claude Rosen	1526	35	6	3.417
54	Pete Barton	1516	47	1	1
55	Simon Braidman	1509	65	3	1.333
56	Chris Tadros	1507	37	7	2.643
57	Abigail Hancocks	1500	52	11	3.182
58	MP Rouse	1495	62	8	2.438
59	Rob Payne	1491	55	14	2.893
60	Daniel Sachs	1475	58	14	2.5
61	Paul Goodman	1473	46	7	2.857
62	Chris Jones	1460	42	11	2.864
63	Jon Lockwood	1451	70	24	2.979
64	Robert Ochshorn	1451	64	14	2.25
65	Jacob Usner	1450	35	4	1.75
66	Matt Adams	1450	44	13	2.41
67	Matt Moorhouse	1449	41	5	2.5
68	Peter Sherman	1449	52	6	2.5
69	Cem Unsal	1446	5	2	3
70	Yan Fay	1441	5	2	3.5
71	Moses Wilks	1440	17	5	1.4
72	Louise Murphy	1439	12	2	2.5
73	Andy Westwood	1436	12	2	3
74	Hane Maung	1428	19	2	3
75	Andrew Walpole	1419	41	6	3.333
76	Jared Rowley	1417	13	2	2.5
77	Mike Tilton	1411	59	13	2.731
78	Sally Close	1407	17	4	2.25
79	Matthew Wachs	1405	28	4	2.875
80	Rami Hussein	1402	8	2	2.25
81	Alex Lockwood	1398	45	10	3
82	Ann Carter	1391	28	4	1.75
83	Navindu Katugampola	1389	1	1	2
84	Kevin Jaw	1386	20	1	0
85	Grace Zheng	1379	14	6	1.667
86	Matt Harper	1373	33	9	2.278
87	Poppy Aldam	1367	39	5	1.4
88	Emma Drysdale	1363	22	2	0.5
89	Fran Lowe	1362	10	2	1
90	Mark Cichra	1357	12	4	0.75
91	Ben Rockey-Harris	1355	13	1	0
92	Andrea Gorman	1353	24	4	1.5
93	Bryan Ellerbock	1341	51	7	0.571



Alan Dean and I did the coast to coast walk recently. We played a game of winks at every venue, 14 games in all, one for each day of the journey, plus one at the start.

I submit the photograph above for the WW picture competition (no matter if it is no longer running), to be entitled “Alan Dean contemplates his next shot”—Charles Relle.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Tim Hunt

Matt Fayers is now a fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge.

Ed Wynn is now living in Stew’s flat in Cambridge, which he shares with SLU.

Simon Gandy married Helen over the summer. I heartily approve of a wedding where both the bride and groom funnel a pint of beer.

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