

Winking World

The official journal of the English Tiddlywinks Association



Issue 87: 'No articles about drinking' Special

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This issue of Winking World was edited by Matt Fayers. Please send him any articles and pictures for the next issue, and he'll forward them to the next editor.

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Wanted

Have you had fun playing tiddlywinks? Have you seen other people having fun playing tiddlywinks? Have you had fun doing anything? Do you know or think anything which might be considered diverting or amusing by anyone? If your answer to any of these questions is 'yes', then Winking World would love to hear from you. There are no light-hearted articles in this issue at all, and we need some. We don't want potential newcomers to the game to think that we're the sort of dreary people whose reading matter consists entirely of tournament write-ups. Please, write something.



Editorial: whatever happened to the Time War?

Matt Fayers

Here's another WW for you. In a fit of enthusiasm, I've actually printed it myself. As suggested on the cover, there are no articles here (directly) about drinking. Please note that this doesn't represent a policy change; I'm still publishing everything I receive/write. As usual, I must offer my thanks to my key contributors (especially Andrew, whose escalating interest in photography is particularly helpful to me, and Alan, who keeps retaining the Jubilee Trophy).

Now to the main point of this editorial: what did happen to the Time War? This time last year, we were full of enthusiasm. We appointed a Time Lord, who compiled people's opinions of how to curb slow play. We conducted an experiment at the London Open, which produced a small but positive result. The ETwA Council had long discussions about the results of this and the way forward, and then several opinions were published in WW86. After that, nothing. Not a sausage. One of the more astute views expressed in WW86 was that we need to persist with the same experiment (or, failing that, a new experiment) at several tournaments, as well as during casual games. Since then, quite a few tournaments have passed by without further experimentation. I'm prepared to accept that the Singles should not be toyed with until we're more sure of ourselves, though some of the problems with proposed solutions to slow play become more acute in singles play, and experimentation will be needed eventually. The Singles plate was rightly left alone, since it featured newcomers to the game, and for the same reason we cannot criticise CUTwC for not trying something at the Cambridge Open. But the NHIP and the Fours were ripe for experimentation, and I would like to record my extreme disappointment that, having finally got round to trying to do something about a problem many of us have moaned about for years, ETwA then gave up. Naturally, as a Council member I must take some of the blame, but those attending and organising the tournaments in question are surely more culpable. And has anyone experimented further in casual games or local tournaments? I thought not. Shame on you, ETwA; don't complain to me about slow play in future.



NATwA Pairs

11th–12th November 2006, Washington

Matt Fayers

	Pair	Opponent										Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7				
1	Larry Kahn Max Lockwood	—	6	4½	5	6	5	5	5½	5½	7	49½
2	Matt Fayers Wenbo Dou	1	2½	—	2	4	6	7	6	6	7	41½
3	Rick Tucker Jon Lockwood	2	1	5	3	—	3	1½	4½	7	7	34
4	Bob Henninge Giled Kemperich	2	2	1	0	4	5½	—	3	6	6	29½
5	Dave Lockwood Ben Lockwood	1½	1	2½	4	—	1	7	17			
6	Alex Lockwood Keith Ingram	1½	1	0	1	6	—	6	15½			
7	Alex Hyder Andrew Hyder	0	0	0	1	0	1	—	2			

Having just missed the ETwA Singles for the first time in my career, I was smarting for some 'winks, so I flew down to Washington for the NATwA Pairs. As it turned out, I could have got a lift with Bob Henninge who drove there via Boston, but I'd already got my ticket by the time I discovered this. Considering that the drive took nine hours, I'm not sure I'm sorry. Larry and Cathy very kindly put me up. They even urged me to drink all their beer; life is tough.

Now, whom to partner? Initially, it looked as though Prabhas Pokharel and I would from an all-Boston pairing, but he pulled out. Then I had an offer, via Dave, from Alex Lockwood. Arriving at the tournament, it seemed that Alex was worried about letting me down and in any case couldn't play on the second day, so she disappointed me. With his older brother partnering Larry, Jon Lockwood was then keen to seize me as the next-best thing (according to the ratings, at least) in order to try to produce an upset. In the end, I left it to Dave to dictate, and I was landed with Wenbo Dou. I'd never encountered him before, but we played well together and I for one enjoyed it.

The tournament was held at the White Oak Sport & Health Club (in Maryland, rather than D.C.) thanks to the organisational capabilities of Dave, who is a member.

Unable to see a bar, I wondered whether we were in the right place. Clearly, American 'winks tournaments require English winkers to make some adjustments. At least there was free coffee, and a little experimentation showed that mixing just the right combination of coffee and the accompanying white powder meant that neither tasted too bad.

We were playing in a racquetball court; Dave was careful to ask us not to scrape the chairs across the floor. I was wearing black-soled shoes – isn't this supposed to be bad on indoor sport (and health) courts? No-one noticed, or perhaps they were too polite to mention it. In any case, the floor took a bit of a pounding when one of the tables collapsed (with a bit of help from someone trying to move it) shortly before the first round was about to begin.

Now, the format: there were seven pairs, and so it was decided to do an all-play-all on the first day, with the top four playing a more compact all-play-all on the second. Bob observed that there were five 'veterans' (including your reporter, who was actually rather closer in age to the youngsters playing than the oldsters; perhaps I just look old) competing for four spots in the final. Who would fail to make it? Thanks to Larry's bizarre format (which provided a smooth ride for the top seed (i.e. Larry) and rather a jumble for everyone else) Wenbo and I played our first game against Jon and Rick; this was the critical game for us, and we really could have done with an easier warm-up. It turned out that in a year of playing 'winks, Wenbo had somewhat neglected squopping, apparently not really fancying it. This is fine if you pot like Andy Purvis, but in fact Wenbo potted more like me, and so needed some more shots in his locker. We managed to pull two points out the game, and then had a bye, which enabled me to teach Wenbo the little I know about squopping. It worked – he didn't miss a squop for the rest of the tournament. Perhaps next year he can teach me how to squop.

Lunch was upon us, and a trip to SubWay. Having previously tried SubWay in England and found it to be SubStandard (the USP is that you see the sandwich made in front of you, choosing each ingredient from a huge range; the result is that it just takes longer to get a crap sandwich for which you pay a fortune), I was apprehensive, but in fact it wasn't so bad; the American policy of 'put enough meat in a sandwich and it can't be bad' stood me in good stead as I had a Foot-Long Mighty Italian Super-Meaty Meat Sub, or something. I ate this back at the Sport & Health Club, in the company of two film-makers from L.A. who were filming the tournament for a 'feature presentation'. Sensing that a NATwA tournament only tells half the story of 'winks, I furnished them with a copy of WW85 and urged them to come to a tournament in England; they seemed quite keen, the male half of the couple being half-English and familiar with Cambridge. Who knows what will happen?

Back at the tournament, it was becoming clearer which veteran wouldn't make the second day: Dave was partnering his youngest son Ben, whose attention span wasn't up to his father's high standards; as a result, Dave was getting increasingly agitated, and not playing well. Dave complained at being beaten by three of his kids in the tournament, but maybe four would be a more accurate figure. Father and son seemed to enjoy the tournament overall, though. Larry and Max were cruising, despite not converting many wins into 6-1s; Wenbo and I were forced into Plan 47 against them, and it really honestly looked like one that would have worked if Wenbo had got the pots. We were left jostling with Rick and Jon for second place, while Bob was serenely guiding Giled (who had been playing for only two weeks) into the final. The veteran-free pairings had more mixed fortunes: Alex and Keith were up and down, while the Hyders took something of a Hyding themselves.

Going into the last round, Dave and Ben needed seven to squeeze into the final, and it didn't happen. They almost got in via the back door when Giled was unsure whether he would be able to make it there on the second day. Complicated offers of lifts were made (by people keen for Dave not to qualify?) but eventually Giled's dad was talked into bringing him.

After an early dinner at California Tortilla, the ever winks-hungry Larry, Matt, Bob and Rick went back to Virginia and played some more winks during the evening. This clearly tired Matt out, as he slept like a baby until being woken at Larry at nine o'clock in the morning. Oops.

At the tournament, the four finalist pairs played their games, Matt having seized control of the format. Larry pretended for some time that the result wasn't a foregone conclusion, though a close result between the second- and third-seeded pairs in the first round effectively ruled them both out. Dave took the opportunity to talk more to the film-makers, and actually got them playing winks, together with Giled's dad, who had come along to find out what all the fuss was about. The game involving these four went into the World Ratings, which seems to me rather odd; Dave's aim of getting as many people into the Ratings as possible is laudable, but this is a rather artificial way to do it – this was in no sense a tournament game.

After the inevitable result and the trophy presentation, Matt, Larry and Bob went back for lunch. Bob then departed for Ohio, and Larry and Matt were left to contemplate the weather, which was too awful for any sight-seeing. In the end, they frittered away the afternoon watching Larry's old winks videos. Then Larry and Cathy took Matt to a blues dance. While Matt thoroughly enjoyed this, the details of his performance are probably best left unrecorded.



National Handicapped Individual Pairs

19th November 2006, Oxford

Alan Dean (with Bob Wilkinson)



Andrew Garrard

On Sunday November 19th, 2006, the novice-friendly NHIP tournament returned once again to the Mure Room in Oxford, a venue arranged for the convenience of the current Oxford players, but unfortunately none of them turned up. Sixteen others did, however, covering the full range of handicaps, from Patrick Barrie to complete beginner.

At the end, as I was leaving for home, it was suggested that I should report for the event for WW, and I somewhat reluctantly agreed, despite knowing nothing of others' games, and not remembering all that much of my own. Exceptions to this were the embarrassing ending of my singles game against Tim Hunt and David Bradley-Williams, in which I missed pots in each of the last three rounds to lose 3-4, and the game with Tim Hunt against Patrick Barrie and Patrick Driscoll in which Tim and I both played very poorly and never got a look in. The rest of my day was more successful: two excellent games with Richard Ackland, and the final round one with Liz Ackland, our 6-1 win over Bob Wilkinson and Patrick Barrie.

Ed Wynn took advantage of the rule allowing players to play as many or as few games as they wished, opting to play just one game, partnering myself to a

comprehensive 6–1 against Simon Gandy playing solo. But you have to play rather more games than that to be allowed to win and, of those who played sufficient games to qualify for places, Patrick Driscoll came out comfortably on top, to retain the title he won last year. He commented at the end that he had been very lucky with his partners. Possibly, but three of them were himself, and he did suffer one heavy loss when paired with Mia, one of the zero-handicap players.

Bob Wilkinson again turned up, following his brief appearance in the Singles Plate, which in turn was his fist 'winks for over thirty years. He and I were founder members of the Chadderton Grammar School club back in 1965, and we lost touch shortly after he finished his previous winking career after leaving Essex University, so it was really nice to see him again. I thought it would make a pleasant change to hear a report through the eyes of such a long-time absentee from the winks scene, so I later emailed him for his impressions of the day, and to ask how he re-established contact with Winks, and this was his response.

It was billed as the novice-friendly tournament and, viewing myself as a nervous and apprehensive novice, I was pleasantly surprised at how nice everyone was and seemingly happy to partner inferior players. I think my first game was partnering DBW who explained at the outset that he was breaking in a new squidger and I thought 'Is he making excuses to me already?'. I was also impressed with Andy Blackburn's mentoring of his partner – reminiscent of the days when I had infinite patience. [AJD: his partner was Tim Hunt, who was presumably the one who did the mentoring!]

Lunch puzzled me. Everyone else left before us, we had time to get a fairly leisurely meal, amble back and still be there before anyone else returned. I did not detect any evidence of serious imbibing having taken place; just what do they do in the pub?

The most memorable event of the afternoon was our game in the final round. Liz was a star! Considering that you had to show her how to hold a squidger for a number of shots, she got three or four (not just the odd fluke) crucial squops. It was great to meet Richard and Liz anyway, and another of those small world things that they got married just round the corner from where we used to play when you came round to our house.

Other observations – I really was surprised at how little the game had changed in the thirty years I'd been away. Richard must feel this even more than I. I was surprised that all the scoring was done manually. There must be an IT buff somewhere in the ranking. I expected to see a laptop into

which results were entered and an up-to-date scoreboard was displayed. The complex maths that seemed to go on at the end was amazing. I think it was Mia who said 'What is 0.7842 as a fraction?'. I thought she probably didn't want to hear 'seven thousand eight hundred and forty two ten thousandths'.

I really enjoyed the day and remembered why I played the game so much in our early days. It was a clear-out of what was too much paperwork in my house that started it all off. I came across old Winking Worlds and a magazine that you'd written an article on the game for. This prompted me to try Tiddlywinks as a search and found ETwA still going. It was the World Ratings that made me wonder how I would fare now and the fact that you and Charles were still at it that made it a must-do. Plus I'd been kicking myself for not getting out enough at weekends!

Thanks for that, Bob, and I think you had better hand back in your 1 handicap: it will be needed for Liz next time.

It seemed that a good time was had by all. It would have been nice to have seen a few more novices taking part. Unless things improve in this direction over the next few years, our international supremacy will before long be threatened by the resurgence of American youth.

Player	Round							Hdp	Games	Actual		Adjusted	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			pts	ppg	pts	ppg
Ed Wynn	—	—	—	6 _b	—	—	—	6	1	6	6	5½	5½
Patrick Driscoll	6 _b	7	1	6 _a	7	6 _b	4 _a	5	7	37	5²⁄₇	34³⁄₄	4²⁷⁄₂₈
Stew Sage	1 _c	6	—	4	5½	6 _a	6 _b	5	6	28½	4³⁄₄	27¾	4⁵⁄₈
Charlie Oakley	—	—	—	—	—	—	4 _b	4	1	4	4	4¼	4¼
Liz Ackland	1 _a	4	—	—	—	—	6 _a	0	3	11	3²⁄₃	12½	4¹⁄₆
Alan Dean	6 _a	3	6	6 _b	3	1 _b	6 _a	6	7	31	4³⁄₇	28½	4¹⁄₁₄
Bob Wilkinson	3	7	4	7	6	1 _a	1 _a	1	7	29	4¹⁄₇	27½	3¹³⁄₁₄
Patrick Barrie	6 _c	4	4	7	1½	6 _b	1 _a	7	7	29½	4³⁄₁₄	26½	3¹¹⁄₁₄
Andy Blackburn	4	2	3	3	1½	6 _a	4 _b	0	7	23½	3⁵⁄₁₄	26¼	3¾
Richard Ackland	6 _a	0	6	0	5½	4	4 _a	2	7	25½	3⁹⁄₁₄	24¼	3¹³⁄₂₈
David Bradley-W.	3	2	—	1 _a	4	4	3 _a	3	6	17	2⁵⁄₆	20¼	3³⁄₈
Andrew Garrard	1 _b	1	3	1 _a	6	3	3 _a	5	7	18	2⁴⁄₇	20	2⁶⁄₇
Tim Hunt	4	5	—	0	4	1 _b	3 _b	5	6	17	2⁵⁄₆	16¼	2¹⁷⁄₂₄
Mia Balashova	1 _b	3	1	4	1	3	3 _b	0	7	16	2²⁄₇	17¾	2¹⁵⁄₂₈
Ben Fairbairn	1 _a	0	—	3	0	1 _a	1 _b	3	6	6	1	10¼	1¹⁷⁄₂₄
Simon Gandy	—	—	—	1 _b	1	—	—	5	2	2	1	2¾	1³⁄₈

TO to TO

Ben Fairbairn

At the 2006 ETwA Congress I was elected Tournament Organiser after Dr Fayers's departure to the States. This saw the first change of TO in many years. How smooth has this transition been?

It's been quite a year. The past twelve months have seen the first tournament in Southampton in fifteen years; the rise of YUTS and the demise of OUTS and a re-centring of Cambridge 'winks to Selwyn (and thus *several* trials of new venues). It has thus not been a particularly 'typical' year, making comparisons difficult. An added stumbling block is the fact that the venues for all the tournaments over the past year had essentially already been determined by the previous council, enabling me to focus on other aspects of the job. For these efforts I am enormously grateful.

As a tournament, the London Open was reasonably successful, with 'winks successfully being played and the new venue being trialled. The experimental rules change was not, however, especially effective. Alas the high hopes of a 'time war' appeared to end there, despite the Grand Rant surrounding it. Worse, the problems of having a TO based outside Cambridge did not bode well – returning to Brum I fell asleep on a train for the first time ever, arriving in Wolverhampton after the last train home had left – not a good sign of things to come.

Things worsened at the Singles – being sufficiently unpractised meant I failed to qualify for the second day (the first time the TO has failed to qualify in several years). This forced Patrick to seize ancient powers leaving me free to completely mess up the Plate. At least the experimental venue of the Selwyn Diamond proved to be alright. This is after I failed to bring many key printouts for the running of the day, placing unnecessary stain on Stew's Gutenberg printer.

With a new resolve to never repeat the horrors of the Singles, the NHIPper was organised with ruthless efficiency (Orange for a novice – Green for a narg!). I was the first to arrive, got the key for the room and successfully ran the draw. The tournament went off without a hitch. It is just a pity that the lack of Oxford players will probably force us to move the venue elsewhere.

With the Cambridge Open I very much took the view that it was a CUTwC tournament. Naturally I organised the draw before Andrew's inevitably late computer arrived, but beyond my token pair of morning games each day, I spend both afternoons in the Hat and Feathers. To see the extent to which this was actually a problem ask someone who was actually there! This is a poor showing, admittedly, and probably ought not to happen again. My opinion of the Chadwick Room is that it's a superb venue that should be used more often with good lighting and fewer squeaky floorboards than the Diamond.

The Teams of Four was a very different pot of winks with the experimental venue working well. At least it would have done if it hadn't been for all the students. The poor turnout didn't help, with a Wessex-stylee format being employed, highlighting a notable gap in the TO folder. I really must get round to organising that thing at some point (cf. CUTwC's 'resources for tournament organisers').

An overall assessment of the past year's tournament organising: *could do better!* Apart from changing the batteries in one torch at the Teams of Four, I have essentially neglected the equipment, and have shown little awareness of formats etc. I have, however, successfully attended all major national tournaments, despite living in the hosting town for none of them (hmmm... perhaps I should change that?) and I certainly haven't led to the complete collapse of ETwA – yet.



Somerset 'European Championship' Invitation

1st–5th January 2007, Norfolk

Matt Fayers

	Player	Partner											Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
1	Matt Fayers	7	6	4	1	7	4	6	5	6	4	1	51
2	Nick Inglis	6	5	4	7	6	1	4	5	3	3	6	50
3	Ed Wynn	4	4	2	6	6	5	4	3	6	1	6	47
4	Patrick Driscoll	1	7	6	1	6	2	2	4	6	5	5	45
5	Stew Sage	7	6	6	6	2	6	1	3	1	3	2 ¹ / ₃	43 ¹ / ₃
6	Chris Abram	4	1	5	2	6	6	1	1	4 ² / ₃	1	2	33 ² / ₃
7	Tim Hunt	6	4	4	2	1	1	6	1	2	5	1	33
8	Alan Harper	5	5	3	4	3	1	1	2	1	5	3	33
9	Andrew Garrard	6	3	6	6	1	4 ² / ₃	2	1	2	0	1	32 ² / ₃
10	Paul Moss	4	3	1	5	3	1	5	5	0	3	0	30
11	Dave Beckett	1	6	6	5	2 ¹ / ₃	2	1	3	1	0	0	27 ¹ / ₃

Yet again, the magnificent efforts of Stew Sage enabled the Somerset Invitation to be held in Bylaugh Hall. And again, I'm the only person who can be bothered to write it up. This was the twentieth Somerset, and to mark the event there was a lot of media



Andrew Garrard

CUTwC still looks to Stew for answers.

presence; this was perhaps heightened by the misapprehension (which we didn't try very hard to correct) that the tournament was actually the European Championship.

I didn't arrive until the Tuesday evening, by which time I had already been nominated as the public face of 'winks. The beer was back on form this year, and the Tuesday evening session of the 'Hidden Agenda' drinking game set us up well for the next day's excitement. Someone (probably Timmy) cooked a very nice chilli, too.

When I finally got up on the Wednesday morning, the media were present in full force. There was a camera crew from Look East, a reporter and photographer from the Eastern Daily Press, and a representative of Radio Norfolk. The camera crew seemed keen to focus on a game involving Stew and me, so such a game was identified in the draw and (after Dave and I had been photographed at length in front of the impressive bit of Bylaugh – the photographer was disappointed that we couldn't pot winks off gravel) the tournament began with Round 8. As ever, the televising of 'winks meant that the lighting was unusually good, but this didn't help Dave and me as we succumbed to the great experience of Stew and Nick. Nick went on to lead for most of the tournament.

The camera crew took their leave after the first round, and after the second round, as lunchtime was just beginning, a chorus of the Tiddlywinks Anthem was sung for Radio Norfolk. No reports have yet been heard of whether this was broadcast.

Lunchtime was fairly uneventful, and the afternoon's winks also, except that I

ducked out mid-way through to be interviewed live (yes, live!) on Radio Essex. The disc jockey for this fine purveyor of local news, views and entertainment was also under the impression that this was the European Championship, and asked which countries the players had come from. 'Er, well Nick's Scottish' was the best I could offer.

The winks ended just in time for Look East (for those who don't live in East Anglia: this is a regional news magazine shown after the early evening national news on BBC1; between 6.30 and 7.00 on weekdays, while you're being told about the robberies and muggings at your local Tesco, those lucky East Anglians are hearing about how many cakes the Great Yarmouth chapter of the Women's Institute have made this week). Before the tiddlywinks report was shown, a warning was given about the adult language it contained. This turned out to consist of me exclaiming 'Sod it!' after missing a straightforward shot. What a rude man I am.

On Thursday morning, several copies of the Eastern Daily Press were bought; for some reason the photos of Dave had been deemed unsuitable, and I was the page three boy. The reporter had cleverly spotted the tournament's focus on beer, quoting Stew as saying 'we certainly encourage it'.

The rest of the tournament passed fairly uneventfully. Certainly no anecdotes relating to particular games have reached this reporter's ear. Nick was in the lead after every round except the last, when I, partnering myself against Andrew and Paul (and therefore in the last game to finish, by a comfortable margin) was helpfully informed that Nick had only managed one point in his game and that a 7-0 win would give me the tournament. A 6-1 would have tied it, but I was eager for the first ever outright hat-trick in this tournament (a hat-trick including joint wins having previously been achieved by Geoff Myers) and was able to pot out and take the glory.

After tea and cake, the evening's drinking began in earnest. We managed to finish the beer, but there was plenty of wine to keep us going. I stayed up until 3 a.m. playing a new version of Nurdle-Boondock-Category with Ed, Andrew and Dave. In this, the category could change each round, but was not specified. Each person playing on a 9 had to name an element of a consistent category, and after the game had broken down the last 9-player was challenged to name the category. It took some genius from Dave, given the items 'dog', 'cat' and 'ferret', to improvise the category 'things that are too small'.

We got up all too soon after this, cleared up and went home.



MIT IAP Tournament

13th–14th January 2007, Cambridge

Rick Tucker



Joe Sachs

The MIT Tiddlywinks Association hosted its first tournament in a quarter of a century in Cambridge. The new Cambridge... despite Matt Fayers's taunt at the outset as being from the 'real' Cambridge... there very well may be another Cambridge somewhere in the midst of England.

This tournament, held during MIT's Independent Activities Period (IAP) between semesters, was accompanied by walk-in training sessions in MIT's room 4-145 prior to the weekend tournament. MIT's media moguls supported the return of winks to MIT by highlighting the MITTwA tournament on MIT's public web page and using the dashing strobe winks photo by Robert Oschorn (now of Cornell). Media reps were on hand from National Public Radio affiliate WBUR and from MIT's student newspaper, The Tech. A story appeared in advance in MIT's official news organ, Tech Talk, with the new strobe photo plus archival photos of MIT's long-haired winkers from 1972 as they returned triumphantly after MIT's tiddlywinks invasion of England.



Rick Tucker

The 2006 re-founder of MITTwA, Yan Wang (MIT Class of 2009), along with Greg Durrett (MIT Class of 2010) and Matt Fayers (of ETwA, now an MIT mathematics researcher, on transatlantic assignment from the UK) have been instrumental in revitalising winks at MIT.

At the outset on the first day, all winkers present introduced themselves, many with a short blurb about how they became engaged in winks. Then Joe Sachs asked for a moment of silence in memory of Owen Knox, a MITTwA winker starting in 1972, who died in July 2006 after a lightning strike while he was boating in Germany.

The tournament format was reportedly a 'Swiss pairs', though some were surprised at around noon on Sunday when the tournament was declared to be over. The tournament was structured to encourage substantial interplay mixing novice and veteran winkers, specifically to promote the revival of winks at MIT. The novice MIT winkers participating were Rocio Cifrian and James Lee. First-time tournament winkers included those two and also Jared Frankston and Jeremy Sachs, both child prodigies of old-time winkers. Father and son Steve and Ari Umans were also first time winkers; Steve was an MIT student at Burton House in the late 1960s (though he didn't wink at that time) and showed all present his 'Cambridge Blue' winks set from those times.

A predilection of things to come was evident at the Saturday Chinese appetiser chow-down at Royal East on Main Street: a preview of the reality comedy show *The Lockwoods*, featuring banter between son Jonathan and father Dave. If only we had more Lockwoods to continue the scheme!

In any case, on Sunday around noon a 'winner' was declared: Dave Lockwood 'won' the tournament with a record of 7–2 and a $4^{17/27}$ ppg. Ferd (MIT Class of 1968), the original founder of MITTwA in 1966, played the first day and went 4–2 for a $4^{1/3}$ ppg to gain second place in the tournament.

Highlights of the tournament included Matt Fayers achieving nine different game scores in the nine games played, scoring $2^{1/3}$, 5, 7, 6, 2, $4^{2/3}$, $5^{1/2}$, 1, and $4^{1/2}$, in that (dis)order. Sunshine would be beaming at this notable accomplishment.

Matt asked Rick to write this article, though remembering things is not Rick's forte (which quite likely is why Matt asked Rick to write this article). Fortunately, Rick has a distinct recollection of the last game. Curiously enough, Matt Fayers (once and still ETwA but also now MITTwA) and Yan Wang (once Ithaca High School, now MITTwA) were matched to play as partners against Collin Reed (Montgomery Blair High School) and Rick Tucker (once MITTwA, now a free agent). Question 1: Who concocted such a pairing? Well then, indeed. After a bit, all winks had been brought in, and none had been squopped. Just a couple of winks (Rick's and Collin's) were over a foot away from the cup. No one had squopping in mind. The tension was ever so evident. When would potting begin? Matt started with his blue. One in. Another. A third. Just three more to go. A fourth and a fifth go in, splendidly and with considerable ease under the aegis of Matt's steady squidger.

'Fuck it!' exclaims Matt. You did not need to be there to discern the meaning of this. 'Who said fuck?' someone says. The sixth blue sails over the pot and then back onto the mat. There are still no squops in this game. But not for long. Green takes blue. Though red engages effectively, green and yellow follow the prime directive: free no blues. This scheme and strategy continues until time expires and rounds ensue. The bottom line: Matt and Yan take the game with a $4^{1/2}$ (instead of a 7 or 6) and Collin and Rick are happy with a $2^{1/2}$. And of course, Matt completes his nine-game streak of all-different scores.

It was a tournament littered with fractional scores – nine fractional scores (all possible ones) out of thirty-one overall tournament games, with only one 7 and only three pot-outs.

It was not a tournament for which a winner was really required. To most attending, it was all-in-all a tournament focused on revitalising the famed MITTwA, and, of course, a splendid time was guaranteed for all.



Whose squidge-off is it anyway?

A barely anonymous moaning curmudgeon

Editor's note: as this was going to press, I discovered that essentially the same sentiments had been expressed (more succinctly and amusingly) by Ed Wynn in a letter in WW63. That's research for you, and I'm afraid you still get this version.

One of the oldest and least-discussed items on the excellent web resource 'Problems with the rules of tiddlywinks' is Problem 23. This was one of the original problems on Tim Hunt's early version of this web site, and reads as follows.

23. Do we want a note about the Cambridge convention for squidge-off order?

In which order should players squidge off? There seem to be two conventions: the Cambridge convention says that yellow, blue, green and red squidge off in order, while the American convention says that someone (arbitrary) squidges off, then one of his opponents, then the partner of whichever player is closer. This doesn't seem to cause any contention in practice.

With tiddlywinks being a pretty good-natured sort of a game, issues such as the order in which players squidge off shouldn't cause disgruntlement, and indeed the last sentence of Problem 23 rather defies players to kick up a fuss – it could be paraphrased as 'only a very up-tight, pedantic, quarrelsome winker with nothing better to do would care about this'. Happily, the 'winks community is blessed with individuals fitting most descriptions, and I'd like here and now to admit that squidge-off order nags at me a little bit. Now, we all know the potential marginal benefits of squidging off after other players – chiefly, if someone playing before you pots their wink, then you know that you need to pot yours, and have the opportunity to change the way you play your squidge-off shot. However, the instances where two or more winks are potted during the squidge-off are so rare that, indeed, we really shouldn't care. And actually, I don't. What I care about is other people caring so much, and waiting for their opponents to squidge off before them. This particularly came to annoy me in a game at the recent MIT IAP tournament: I squidged off first, then one of my opponents. Before my partner had squidged off, he (as tournament organiser) was called away from the game. My other opponent (who will remain nameless, because he's generally a nice guy and not the only offender in this respect) waited for my partner to come back and squidge off before him. In fact, his partner was nearer the pot, so (according to the alleged American convention, which seems to have become unconventional) he should have squidged off next. It turned out that

he was of the firm view that colours should squidge off in clockwise order; sticking to this in the face of common sense wasted time and gained him no advantage.

So what am I proposing? While legislation (imposing either the Cambridge convention or the American convention) would obviate dispute, it wouldn't necessarily solve time-wasting problems like that mentioned above. I would suggest instead that we're all sensible enough to sort this out without changing the rules. Put simply, I would suggest that everyone adopt the policy (which many of us already implement, and which applies elsewhere in tiddlywinks):

Get on with it.

This means: once you're ready, don't wait for other people to squidge off, unless they're already lining up their shot. By all means use one of the conventions to resolve cases where people are ready at the same time. (Incidentally, the following convention is surely fairer than either the Cambridge or the American: one player (arbitrarily chosen) squidges off, then both his opponents (in an arbitrary order), then his partner.) Perhaps if this attitude became widespread it would cause gamesmanship where players spend time sorting out their squidgers, moving chairs and picking their noses to ensure that their opponents are 'ready' first; but I don't think this would be any worse than the waiting that happens now.

There's another issue which nags in a similar way (perhaps I'm not temperamentally suited to tiddlywinks, after all), and that's the assignment of colours and corners. People care to some extent about these things: they may subscribe to Dominant Corner Theory, or they may have a superstitious like or dislike of a particular colour, or (in a pairs game) they may want to choose their colour once they've seen which colour each of their opponents has, and thereby determine the order of play (which can be significant, especially when each pair consists of an expert and a novice). It's this last issue which causes the kind of behaviour which annoys me. Most of the time, we assign colours and corners completely randomly (subject to the right people partnering each other!), and this is well and good. Alternatively, colours and corners may be dictated by the tournament organiser, according to a prescription encoded in the format, intended to ensure fairness overall. This is well and good, too. What irks me is when a player, having been assigned a colour, decides to swap colours with his partner, thereby wasting time and undermining the process. Because this is just swapping between partners, it's viewed as rather nit-picking for the opponents to object. But I do object to my opponents' getting a completely free choice of the order of play in this way. Of course, I can claim the right to swap with my partner as well, which will just change the order of play back again. But this shouldn't be necessary; no swapping should have happened in the first place. Just don't do it. If you have a

strong preference for a particular colour, then ask your opponents nicely if they will let you have your choice, perhaps allowing them the choice of corners or the order of play in return. But once a colour and a corner have been assigned to you and you don't have a *good reason* for not playing that colour and corner (and I struggle to think of anything other than colour-blindness that qualifies), then play that colour and corner. This can be viewed as part of a policy which I like to adopt (and which applies elsewhere):

Get on with it.

I hope that I've got across my central message – I don't really care about squidge-off order or the assignment of colours and corners, but I care very much about other players causing hassle, wasting time and annoying their opponents because they care about these things. For me, tiddlywinks is not that sort of game. The large majority of winkers don't cause problems like this. But there are winkers who seem to have the attitude 'I play to win; why shouldn't I do everything I can to maximize my advantage?', and to these players I say 'f**k off and play Bridge instead'.

Finally, let me tell me about a policy I have (in life, as well as in 'winks), which I feel would make the game more enjoyable if adopted by all:

Get on with it.



Cambridge Open

27th–28th January 2007, Cambridge

Richard Ackland

The problem with writing up a tournament is that the writer knows only the games he has played – and in any case forgets most of those, save perhaps the scenes of extraordinary triumph (rare) or of abject defeat (less rare). This account is therefore bound to become somewhat egocentric. But since that has applied to all previous tournament correspondents I make no apology for regaling you, dear reader, with an account of my own exploits.

What may be novel is that instead of being written up by a seasoned and expert participant, this time the editor has lighted upon a novice. And yes, despite having commenced my winks career long before any other player I've yet come across (I started competitively in 1958) I think my long absence from the mat entitles me to

the status of novice. And should anybody raise an eyebrow or two at that, then they have only to play with or against me to discover the validity of the claim.

Since my return to the game a couple of years ago, I've noticed that many customs and conventions have become so cherished as to become traditions. I intend identifying the evidence of these with a 'Trn' throughout this account.

Anyway, Liz and I found our way to the new venue of Selwyn College in good time on Saturday 27th January. Realising that it was no good arriving early (Tr1) we sat in the car until about five minutes prior to the advertised squidge-off time. We then ventured out to find the Chadwick Room, following Patrick's comprehensive directions (Tr2), but nonetheless deemed it wise to seek the additional help of the porter.

Nobody in sight (Tr3).

As we were considering a return to the warmth of the car, we caught sight of some other almost early arrivals, Charles (Tr4), Alan (Tr5) and Bob, who were heading for the wrong venue. Showing off our superior local knowledge, we returned to the Chadwick Room (well, outside it) and, supplemented by John and Alasdair, formed a chilly knot (Tr6).

The arrival of a gaggle of Gamesons transformed the knot into a veritable crowd, of such proportions that the porter took pity on us and produced a key.

We entered the playing arena and found it to be light, spacious and amply provided with suitable tables (though some foresaw that their height, on the low side, might produce back problems later in the day). The only complaint was the colour of the carpet, which was designed to cause grief and despondency to anybody playing red who had the misfortune to go off. Predictably in the games I played a huge majority of all winks leaving the table were red.

We then awaited the arrival of the mats (Tr7) and of the tournament organiser (Tr8). The arrival of Stew produced not just the mats but a much-needed reassurance that we might safely ignore the threatening notices regarding clamping which adorned the parking area.

At this point, an admonishment to the tournament organiser. He should note that it's very irritating for tournament journalists that he should have allowed in so many players with the initials AG.

Numbers were now swelling with considerable help from Ed Wynn who had apparently acted as chauffeur for DBW (now there's a set of initials with which we journalistic hacks can cope) and his considerable entourage, made up I believe of members of YUTS, though I never was able to verify that since the draw never produced any of them as my partners or opponents.

Anyway, we were sufficiently numerous to require six tables, a record in my limited

experience, and in the absence of AG (Garrard) (Tr9) and his lorry-load of equipment, Ben got the tournament going with a paper draw.

Things started as they were destined to go on. In the first round Jonathan and I were drawn against the combined might of Charles and AG (Grant). This very swiftly ended in an ignominious 0–7. If that weren't bad enough, the very prompt end of the match meant that Charles and I paid the penalty for loafing by having the King's Shilling pressed upon us so that we might act as unpaid labour in the business of unloading AG's (Garrard) pantechicon, which had just arrived in time for round two (Tr10).

In the meantime Liz, despite the handicap of partnering one of the less experienced players, a certain Patrick Barrie, had nonetheless carried the day, 6–1, against Bob and Edd.

Despite the sophisticated use of the newly arrived computer, the draw for the second round was no more reassuring than for the first – Liz and I were drawn together against Ed and Edd – a 1–6 result! But I was glad to meet Ed, since it was with him, in his role as secretary, that I had first corresponded in furtherance of my resolve to return to the mat.

Lunch was then taken. Other than learning subsequently from Bob of the generous portions served at the Hat & Feathers I can give no proper account of lunchtime activity since Liz and I were unsociable enough to take ourselves off to the Eagle (Tr11), our excuses being

- (a) that it's the only pub we know in Cambridge, and
- (b) that being centrally located it gave Liz a suitable launch-pad for her afternoon sightseeing, she having generously decided to give the lesser players a chance by playing just the two morning rounds.

The afternoon play, for me at any rate, plumbed the depths of despair and rarely reached mediocrity – apart that is from the last round, of which more later. The entertainment was mostly provided by PatrickB's soliloquies (Tr12) and by Charles's tutorials (Tr13), the latter directed mostly at the YUTS representatives. The effectiveness of these tutorials is open to interpretation. On the one hand it has to be said that none of his pupils showed up for the Sunday play; on the other, and at the expense of giving away the final page whodunnit, we have to acknowledge that Charles ran away with the tournament (Tr14).

But back to the play: I started at the receiving end of another rout, playing singles against Charles and Ian. So by this stage I'd scored 2 points from 3 matches. That was followed by a dubious 4–3 victory in partnership with Bob against AG (Game-son), who, with admirable aplomb, had surprised us with an early pot-out attempt, following which we were forever chasing both the game and Andrew's remaining

wink. An unmemorable win with AG (Garrard) against DBW was followed by my badly letting down Chris against Patrick and Fran.

But in the last round, there was redemption. Bookies for miles around must have been bankrupted by the defeat, 6–1, of Geoff and Bob, at the unlikely hands of AG (Gameson) and me. A fine way to end the day and to make the journey back to Croydon more endurable.

On the Sunday, Liz decided not to play, so I made the journey back to Selwyn alone, buoyed up by the memory of the final round triumph on Saturday and convinced that Day 2 couldn't possibly be as bleak as Day 1.

The usual suspects made up the waiting knot/crowd (Tr15) at about the scheduled start of play, and again we were rescued by the porter, who this time needed considerable ingenuity to overcome the curious locking-up methods applied by Alan the previous evening. We therefore entered the stadium by a circuitous route.

I noticed that the participant numbers had dropped since Saturday. It appears that the previous evening there had been some kind of dinner/function involving twenty-three individuals. I was privileged during a break in the morning play to have obtained an exclusive one-to-one interview with one of the survivors of this ordeal. He was less than coherent and, interspersed between his constant references to the 'hair of the dog' (Tr16), he spoke of EU wine-lakes at his end of the table. I deduced that somehow or other there was a link between the mysterious events of the previous evening and the sparse attendance on Sunday morning. In the interests of confidentiality and journalistic integrity, protection of sources and all that, I'm of course not at liberty to reveal that my informant was PatrickD.

Having no spouse to take me off to the Eagle I contrived to tag along with one of the lunchtime parties. I thought Alan would be a good bet since he was the keeper of the arena key. And I had remembered that Bob had spoken well of the grub at the Hat & Feathers. So off we set. Unfortunately we were in the fell presence of AG (Garrard) who confidently persuaded us that Stew's brewing advice (Tr17) was that the beer at the Red Bull was more 'interesting' and that in any case this was to be the venue for 'drinking games' (Tr18). Dutifully we followed him. On arrival, having first negotiated our way around a pavement littered with DBWs (notably not present for the a.m. play), we were then informed that the Red Bull was merely a preliminary and that the real fun was to had at the Hat & Feathers.

But by this time we were ensconced and reluctant to move. And although we had no clear idea as to the nature of a 'drinking game', we intuitively and silently concluded that perhaps it involved alcohol. Since between the three of us we had to face moderate, substantial and very substantial journeys home later on, this had little appeal and so we spurned the general exodus, ordered some food, and settled down

stolidly with our pints of orange juice and lemonade.

The return to Selwyn was eventful. The weather being pleasant we concluded that a longish dose of fresh air would be ideal for dissipating any over-indulgence of the orange juice prior to the afternoon's play. We decided to go the 'long way round'. Perversely we were soon seduced by what presented itself as a potential short-cut; very soon we were quite lost somewhere in the grounds of a college we couldn't identify and, feeling much as Theseus must have done, feared the imminent arrival of the minotaur disguised as a college porter. Tiptoeing through the porter's domain, we eventually emerged unscathed onto the public highway. Being first ones back (Tr19) we decided to play a 'friendly' game. Inevitably, since it wasn't going to count, this was the occasion for my best winks of the weekend. Playing singles against Bob and Alan I was defeated 4-3, having held them off until the very last moment.

The afternoon started with another rout, inflicted upon me, playing singles, by Jonathan and Bob. Thereafter, the draw favoured me with august partnership company, but I contrived to ensure that it was not plain sailing for any of them. To begin with, playing with AG (Garrard) against AG (Gameson), AG (Garrard) decided to indulge in some intellectual winks, which involved contriving a situation which would enable me to pot out. He had clearly forgotten my ranking. However when the penny finally dropped he changed tack and with breathtaking strategic agility put into place Plan B by which rôles were to be reversed so that he became the potter. Alas, he was too late, but redemption was his as he retrieved what was now an apparently lost cause by some remarkable late potting. 5-2 to us.

My next partner was John playing against Bob and Mia. In this match my standard of play reached its absolute nadir, but due to John's fortitude in the face of partner ineptitude there occurred an unparalleled travesty of justice as we won 6-1, the final tiddly position being 4-4-3-3.

My final match was as partner to PatrickB against Ian and Mia. Patrick was, as ever, unfailing in his cheerful optimism and in his characteristic courtesy towards, and encouragement of, his less gifted partners (Tr20), and we proceeded to a 6-1 win.

In all this there is just one game not involving me on which I can report. It's as well neither the Time Lord nor the WW editor were present, since the only opportunity there is to observe another game is if it is interminably long. And such was the case with Ian's game against PatrickB and Alan. Ian agonised eternally over each shot, but I intend no criticism here – against that kind of opposition, who could blame him! He eventually lost 2½-4½.

So, another tournament was over and all that remained was to present the trophy to Charles (Tr21). But the trophy was not to be found (Tr22). Blame and odium was immediately attached to last year's winner, the Time Lord. But this was too hasty a

judgement. At risk of compromising the eventual publication of this contribution to WW, I have to reveal that last year's winner was . . . the WW editor! [*Don't blame me; I haven't seen the trophy for years. See the photograph on page 16 of WW85 – Ed.*]

Anyway, congratulations to Charles for winning, to AG (Garrard) for his mastery of draws and scores, and to Stew, who might just be forgiven for his lamentable failure to fulfil a firm e-mail order for mats in view of his noble and self-sacrificing gesture in changing employers with the sole objective of ensuring we all have a satisfactory venue for this and future tournaments.

All in all, a lot of fun.

Player	Round													Games	Points	p.p.g.
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
Charles Relle	7 _a	3	6 _a	6	5 ¹ / ₂	5	6 _b	6 _b	1 _a	6 _b	6 _a	6 _a	6 _c	13	69 ¹ / ₂	5 ⁹ / ₂₆
Alasdair Grant	7 _a	6 _c	4	1	1 _b	7	7	6 _a	6 _c	—	—	—	—	9	45	5
Patrick Barrie	6 _a	6 _c	—	5 _a	5	6 _b	1 _b	5	6 _a	6 _b	4 ¹ / ₂	3	6 _b	12	59 ¹ / ₂	4 ²³ / ₂₄
Alan Dean	1 _b	6 _b	3	2 _b	6 _b	7	6 _a	6 _c	5 ¹ / ₂	4	4 ¹ / ₂	4	6 _a	13	61	4 ⁹ / ₁₃
Andrew Garrard	—	4	6 _c	5 _a	6 _a	2	6 _a	2	6 _c	—	5	1 _a	6 _c	11	49	4 ⁵ / ₁₁
Patrick Driscoll	—	5	6 _b	5 _b	6 _c	2	—	—	1 ¹ / ₂	—	—	—	—	6	25 ¹ / ₂	4 ¹ / ₄
Chris Abram	7 _b	3	—	5 _b	—	1 _b	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	16	4
John Haslegrave	3 _a	2	6 _b	5 ¹ / ₂	1 ¹ / ₂	6 _a	0	5	—	1 _b	6 _b	6 _b	1 _a	12	43	3 ⁷ / ₁₂
David Bradley–W.	0 _b	6 _b	—	5 ¹ / ₂	1 _a	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	17 ¹ / ₂	3 ¹ / ₂
Ed Wynn	4 _a	6 _a	—	2 _b	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	4	14	3 ¹ / ₂
Chloe Weiss	1 _b	5 ¹ / ₂	4	6	1 _c	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	17 ¹ / ₂	3 ¹ / ₂
Liz Ackland	6 _a	1 _a	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	7	3 ¹ / ₂
Edd McMillan	1 _a	6 _a	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	7	3 ¹ / ₂
Bob Wilkinson	1 _a	4	1 _c	4	5 ¹ / ₂	6 _a	1 _c	1 _c	1 ¹ / ₂	6 _a	6 _a	1 _b	6 _a	13	44	3 ⁵ / ₁₃
Richard Ackland	0 _a	1 _a	1 _a	4	6 _a	1 _b	6 _c	6 _b	1 _c	1 _a	5	6 _b	6 _b	13	44	3 ⁵ / ₁₃
Stew Sage	3 _b	1 _c	—	—	—	—	—	—	5 ¹ / ₂	—	—	—	—	3	9 ¹ / ₂	3 ¹ / ₆
Fran Kelly	—	—	—	1 ¹ / ₂	1 _b	6 _b	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	8 ¹ / ₂	2 ⁵ / ₆
Cassia Pennington	4 _a	1 ¹ / ₂	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	5 ¹ / ₂	2 ³ / ₄
Ian Gameson	6 _b	2	6 _a	2 _a	1 _c	1 _a	1 _a	6 _c	1 _c	3	2 ¹ / ₂	3	1 _b	13	35 ¹ / ₂	2 ¹⁹ / ₂₆
Geoff Thorpe	—	—	—	—	—	—	1 _c	—	6 _b	—	1 _a	—	—	3	8	2 ² / ₃
Andrew Gameson	0 _b	5	1 _b	3	5	0	6 _c	6 _a	1 _b	3	2	1 _a	1 _a	13	34	2 ⁸ / ₁₃
Andy Blackburn	4 _b	1 _c	1 _c	2 _a	2	0	—	—	—	—	6 _b	6 _a	1 _c	9	23	2 ⁵ / ₉
Ben Fairbairn	6 _b	1 _b	—	—	—	—	—	1 _b	1 _b	—	—	—	—	4	9	2 ¹ / ₄
Alice Blogg	3 _a	1 _b	3	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	10	2
Jonathan Gameson	0 _a	1 ¹ / ₂	1 _b	1 ¹ / ₂	6 _c	1 _a	0	1 _a	1 _a	6 _a	1 _b	4	1 _c	13	25	1 ¹² / ₁₃

The rules of tiddlywinks – the current state of play

Matt Fayers

The excellent web site ‘Problems with the rules of tiddlywinks’ gives a comprehensive list of technical points on which the rules of tiddlywinks fall short – obscure situations not covered by the rules, rules which people don’t like, and rules which are open to interpretation. Unfortunately, as people have pointed out, the majority of this site covers imagined situations which simply wouldn’t occur in a real game – for example, a very tall pile of winks partially supported by the rim of the pot. The purpose of this article is to give a short digest of issues which do crop up now and again in games. Several of these arise when people don’t know or understand the rules. This article was written in consultation with the Rules Sub-Committee, though I should point out that the opinions expressed are my own; including the comments and discussion that have come from the RSC about this would begin to make this article as unwieldy as the ‘Problems’ web site. The point of this article is that it could be used as a starting point for a more energetic future Rules Sub-Committee eager to make changes; in practice, though, the rules seem to be currently pretty good. The points below are really things to be tidied up when a rules meeting is being held for more serious reasons.

Before listing current wrinkles, let’s look at things which have been ironed out in recent years.

The great re-write

A complete re-writing of the rules was proposed by Tim Hunt several years ago, and finally happened more recently, thanks to the hard work of Patrick Barrie. I think we’d all agree that this has been a resounding success; no flaws have come to light, and some tricky situations have been made clearer. It would be interesting to hear views on the comprehensibility of the new-look rules from people new to the game.

Winks coming to rest on unsupported mat

Some time ago, a problem was addressed about winks coming to rest very near the edge of the mat. It used to be that such winks were not regarded as having gone off the mat, but this left winks in positions where they were awkward to play. The solution adopted was the rule that any wink coming to rest even partly on unsupported mat was deemed to be off the table. As soon as this change was made, Larry Kahn predicted that it would cause arguments and be changed again very soon. It hasn’t, but why? Are the majority of winkers aware of the rule? I occasionally see behaviour

which contravenes the rules; in particular, winks that haven't gone off being moved manually to a position where they're easier to play (i.e. the position they would have been moved to if they had been deemed off the table). Do we need a change, or a clarification, or both? Is an argument in a big tournament game waiting to happen? I sense a fairly general feeling that we want to keep the rules (and implementation of them) as simple as possible while not having winks that are awkward to play because of the edge of the table. Probably codifying (some people's) current practice of moving awkward winks in without deeming them to have gone off would be the most popular option.

The counting of free turns

'Why did they change the bloody rules?' ranted Jon Mapley at the ETwA Singles a few years ago. What had happened was that he had failed to free by virtue of confusion over the counting of free turns. But since then, we seem to have got used to the new method of counting; people have even stopped talking about free turns 'in new money'. Many players will give the number of free turns as, for example 'three plus one', to clarify that they are using the 'new' counting system (and to save themselves some tiresome arithmetic). It's here to stay, it's more logical, and we love it.

Now here are some current *genuine* (but minor) problems with the rules of tiddly-winks.

Illegal click shots

Rule 13.7 says '... the movement of the squidger must be quick and continuous until contact between squidger and winks ceases'. This means (in my view, though I've learned from discussion with the Rules Sub-Committee that others don't see the situation as quite so clear-cut) that if you play a click shot, you cannot remain resting on the wink you've 'clicked' onto; you must pick the squidger up quickly. There are a few people who seem to be unaware of this rule, and therefore find click shots easier to play than the rest of us (I judge the difference in difficulty to be something like the difference between an 'air' pot and a 'rest-on' pot). Let's

- (a) all make sure our click shots are legal,
- (b) politely tell people off for playing illegal click shots (I find that doing this immediately after the game minimises the potential for rancour), and
- (c) explain in more detail in the rules the implications of Rule 13.7 for click shots.

Games of two versus one

Games of two players against one commonly occur in tournaments. And there's nothing wrong with them; although it might be felt that the player playing singles has a better chance to develop a rhythm and a feel for the mat, he does have the disadvantage of having only one player's strategic thoughts. In any case, any imbalance is surely better than turning away a player when an odd number of people turn up for a tournament. But the rules don't cater at all for games of two versus one. In particular, it's not clear what time limit should be used for these games. Historically a limit of twenty-five minutes has been used, but more recently the more logical (but more awkward) twenty-two and a half has been preferred. It's felt by some members of the Rules Sub-Committee (well, by me at least) that this really ought to be codified in the rules.

Playing out of turn

Some people seem to be unaware of the options the opponents have when a shot is played out of turn (i.e. by the wrong player, or with the wrong colour, or both); some even move the winks back as soon as the offence has been pointed out, not giving the opponents the chance to accept the shot. This is a shame, because Rule 28.3 is clear on this point; it even tells you how to count rounds when a foul shot is accepted. Do we just leave people who don't know the rules to suffer, or should we be doing more to ensure that all players know the rules?

Implicit passes

We used to allow 'implicit' passes; if blue was due to play and green couldn't play, then red could just play and blue would be deemed to have passed without having said so. Nowadays, this situation would be regarded as red's playing out of turn, which affords the opponents several options. Jon and Nick complained about this a couple of years ago, but the present situation is surely better – there are risks of inadvertent failure to free with implicit passes. And is it really so difficult to say 'pass'?



Fire, air, water and mud – the National Teams of Four(ish)

3rd–4th March 2007, Southampton

Andrew Garrard

Ben Fairbairn			Patrick Barrie
Charles Relle	82	86	Geoff Thorpe
Alan Dean			Richard Ackland
Bob Wilkinson			Andrew Garrard

Saturday started uneventfully, except that for once I had reasonable expectations of arriving at a tiddlywinks tournament on time. The tournament was supposed to start at 10:30, and my sat nav was reporting that I'd be there at 10:15. This was true right up until just before 10:15, at which point it chose a diversion that differed from the printed directions, and I stopped the car to check where I was. Which was when the smoke started coming out from under the bonnet and it got a bit hard to see out of the windows.

Fortunately, I'd parked somewhere sensible to check directions, and was able to open the bonnet and watch the oil sitting on my engine cover smoke for a while without obvious signs of catching fire – it was at this point that Ben 'phoned to ask whether I was expecting to be there, and I had to answer 'probably'. The smoke had stopped by around half past, so I decided that being stranded at the end of a 'winks tournament was better than being stranded at the start of one, and resumed my journey to the University. This was when 'plenty of parking' turned out to be a little complicated – worrying that the engine is going to catch fire at any moment is not conducive to driving around car parks to read the small print about whether parking restrictions apply only on Mondays to Fridays (the signs outside the car parks seemed quite adamant that I was going to get clamped, although I may not have been giving them my full attention), so I found a steep hill near the University to park at the bottom of and up which to carry all my camera kit. Which was nice.

I stumbled in to the tournament, well into the first round, and between being somewhat distracted by the state of my car, being somewhat out of breath from the journey, being somewhat out of practice, and a lot of incompetence, I helped Richard to a very convincing second half of a 0*–7* against Charles and Bob, which at least meant that I'd not held up the tournament unduly. As I mentioned to Charles, he and I both deserved our points for our respective performances (with no offence to our partners).

At this point, I had a moment to register who was actually present – and, having fully registered that we were only eight, understood why I'd been phoned with such urgency, for a nominally 'drop in, drop out' tournament. At least with my

	Patrick Barrie Geoff Thorpe	Andrew Garrard Richard Ackland	Patrick Barrie Andrew Garrard	Geoff Thorpe Richard Ackland	Patrick Barrie Richard Ackland	Geoff Thorpe Andrew Garrard	Total
Ben Fairbairn Charles Relle			3 4	3 4	3 4	2 5	17
Alan Dean Bob Wilkinson			6 1	1 6	4 3	6 1	11
Ben Fairbairn Bob Wilkinson	6 1	4 3			6 1	6 1	6
Charles Relle Alan Dean	1½ 5½	1 6			1 6	1 6	23½
Ben Fairbairn Alan Dean	6 1	3 4	7 0	4½ 2½			7½
Charles Relle Bob Wilkinson	4 3	0 7	6 1	1 6			17
Total	17½	8	22	9½	14	15	

attendance a full Teams of Four was possible. Although the attendance was low – with, disappointingly, only Patrick present from Cambridge, CUTwC apparently being victim to a local beer festival – it's nice to be the second youngest attendee at a tournament occasionally. The A0 poster advertising the tournament was especially impressive, although since the student bartenders claimed not to have noticed it, perhaps tiddlywinks really is an activity that's invisible to the general populace.

Even having had a chance to catch my breath, the second game of the day showed little improvement in my abilities. Richard and I held Alan and Ben (who was either – as claimed – exhausted, or very drunk, and not at his best) to a 4–3, but not with any show of competence on my part.

We'd been warned of an impending influx of students wanting to watch some men kick an artificial pig's bladder around a patch of grass, so we moved our tables to a position that was carefully chosen so as not to be in the way, but still to be visible to any students who wished to show an interest. The actual effect was mostly to limit



Andrew Garrard

Charles wows the crowd.

the amount of light available and leave us playing on a slope (although not quite so extreme as that found in Kidlington), but at least we didn't get any complaints.

In the next game, I managed to hold Patrick down to a 3, with Ben repeating his performance against me in the previous round, this time partnered by Charles. I'd had an attempt at potting while Patrick committed himself to squops, but had been sufficiently incompetent at it that we ended up poorly positioned in a squopping game instead. At this point, a reporter from the Southampton Echo arrived, and looked bemused at how convoluted the game was – well into rounds there was a lot of counting of winks between each shot, and my attempts to give him some background were turning into the increasing realisation that he'd not picked an exciting game to observe – but perhaps my recollection is coloured by playing badly and losing. We gave him a few staged photos, and I took the opportunity to wave my own camera around, hopefully out of shot.

After this game we decided that some lunch was in order. Charles led the way, with Alan, Geoff, Ben and myself following to 'the pub that we usually go to', where 'usually' turned out to mean 'twenty years ago, but it looked open when I drove past'. The first pub that we passed seemed just as full of football fanatics as the student bar

that we'd left; the second looked more promising, but we followed Charles's lead up until the moment when Ben pointed out that the 'traditional' pub had a beer crisis, with no real ale. Charles complained about how nice the place had used to be, loudly, and we left to head back to pub number two. This, whilst not entirely homely, turned out to be somewhat better than expected – there was somewhere to hide from the football, at least some of the beer was apparently palatable, and we settled in to play a few hands of Yogi's Whist (with Alan doing spectator and beer running duties). The food arrived promptly, and in commendable quantities; we decided to head back sooner than planned, rather than dithering, although some amusement was provided by the inflatable sheep vending machine in the toilets.

After lunch the caffeine had apparently had enough of an effect on my performance that I managed not to drag Patrick down, and we managed a 6–1 against Alan and Bob – although again I don't feel that I was terribly responsible for it. A second reporter for the same newspaper turned up, this time with a video camera, which caused me at least some confusion; it turned out that he was trying to produce a feature for the newspaper's web site¹. In retrospect, my attempts to give him some background information whilst, as I thought, waiting for someone to be free to talk probably had the effect of ruining some of his establishing shots, but the piece seems to have worked okay.

Although the students had mostly cleared out after the football finished, the corridor was becoming an awkward place in which to play, in part due to the accompaniment of rehearsals for (I hope) an amateur performance of *The Pirates of Penzance*. Tempting though it was, given the title of this article, to set it to the Elements in honour of their efforts, I'm afraid you get the prose version. We moved back round to the main part of the bar to take advantage of the available space and – once the blinds that had been closed for the football were reopened – the additional light.

We finished the day with Bob's team slightly in the lead, 44–40 – better than I felt I deserved for my day's activities.

Charles was kind enough to give me a lift to my car, which I then drove to a more sensible parking spot before joining Ben in *The Stile* while Charles and Alan arranged their accommodation. I had time to give Ben a large fine in one hand of the Lisa Bendall Game before Charles, and then Alan, turned up. Having acquired drinks, Charles then complained loudly about the smoke level while a woman sat behind us with a cigarette, and we decided to go elsewhere for supper. It became evident that a long session of violent drinking games wasn't going to happen; Orange's 'find my nearest' service came into play (after my phone had been freed up from an attempt to work out a better way for Ben to get home the next day, slightly hampered by a

¹<http://www.dailyecho.co.uk/video/video/index.var.3024.0.0.php>

missing stylus) and a nearby curry house was identified. At first it appeared to be alarmingly empty, but we'd soon set the trend and the place filled up. Although nothing desperately hot was on the menu, and I wasn't tempted by the calamari, they provided a good if slightly unusual degree of refuelling.

I drove home for the night (as, I believe, did Richard), with only a small amount of additional smoke from the engine, and took the opportunity to observe the lunar eclipse, which began while I was driving back to Bracknell. The fact that my pictures are a bit blurry might be blamed on the same issues that I had with my telescope – it was cold out, and it misted up, which explained why I was having quite so much trouble with the focus.

Speaking of the Focus, Steph was kind enough to lend me her car for the next day. This turned out to be just as well, because the clear night had turned into typhoon conditions, and the stability control in her car informed me several times that aquaplaning at ninety miles an hour might prove awkward.

The weather also had a detrimental effect on the illumination, at least until the bar staff turned up in the afternoon and could turn some lights on for us; fortunately years of playing in the Erasmus Room has trained me to play black and black against black and mat-coloured. I was deeply regretting not bringing the high speed black and white film that I'd taken to the last tournament (the Cambridge Open, which was brightly lit), and missed the opportunity for some really gritty action shots; I don't think I'll be having any photography exhibitions yet. I'd also left behind the lens that would have given a better shot of the big poster, which meant that I was lying on the floor with a tripod, muttering while people were trying to play. At least I'd got all my squidgers.

The second day started far more promisingly for me, with few enough missed attempts at the pot (although more than there should have been) that Patrick contrived to rescue my squopped winks – Alan did some hero squopping – and work a 7*-0*; I still didn't make it look very convincing, but Patrick deserves his efforts. I've still not been involved in a SEPTIC pot-out, though. Geoff and Richard fared less well, going down 6-1.

Geoff then partnered me to a 6-1 against Alan and Bob, in which I felt I was playing reasonably well (give or take a couple of bizarre misses). Some Southampton students turned up and expressed confusion at the appeal of flicking winks into the pot; Alan's protestation that there were no winks in the pot after twenty minutes was his argument that there was more to winks than that, although I pointed out that we hadn't really proved that we weren't just very bad at potting. Patrick and Richard were taken down by Charles and Ben 3-4, which continued to show how tight the tournament was.

After lunch, the bar staff appeared and turned on some lights, which was welcome, and the football, which wasn't. Fortunately we talked them into keeping the volume low until some locals turned up.

The next game should have been a convincing win to Geoff and myself, but it slipped away after a couple of spectacularly unlucky misses by Geoff – not that I'd been free of those myself over the weekend. We still had a chance of a win until Ben's pot attempt missed next to the pot, on top of my most pottable remaining wink. This made it a 5–2 loss, and I thanked Geoff as a third opponent in the game.

Into the final round, I partnered Richard against Alan and Charles. I'd expected us to go down quickly, but we actually held our own for quite a long time – Charles, by his own admission, was having an off game – until Alan turned it around. Their 6–1 was unsurprising, but at least we made a fight of it. Fortunately, Patrick and Geoff did similar damage to Ben and Bob.

The last game, with the bar quite full again, saw Richard and me opposing Ben and Bob, with Charles and Alan against Patrick and Geoff, with a seven-point margin to our team at the start of the round. Patrick appeared part way through the game to inform us that we needed two and a half to win the tournament. Fortunately, I thought, we were looking good for more than that, since Ben, at least, seemed to be suffering from winks fatigue. Bob squopped very well, but was never asked to pot. I'd carefully arranged for Richard to have as many turns as possible in which to pot out, but realised too late that his potting was off in that game. Fortunately, Ben missed a pot in five, and Richard potted a wink to end the game; that gave us the 4–3, but without the last couple of shots going the way they did it could easily have been a 5–2 loss, and the tournament would have gone to the opposing team. Richard was showing signs of distress at Tottenham having conceded two goals to West Ham around the time of our final game, and I was hoping that the tournament win would console him – although I gather that Tottenham actually won the game 4–3, so our result should actually have been taken as a good omen.

Patrick expressed his disappointment at his team's going from the runner-up position at the end of the first day to second-from-last at the end of the tournament, and CJ was (partly) handed over to Richard as possibly the heaviest stand-in trophy ever.

My thanks to all the attendees for what, in spite of things going so badly for me on the first day, turned out to be a most enjoyable tournament – and my sympathy to anyone else who went aquaplaning around the flooded toilets. I doubt we'll have drummed up any interest in Southampton, but at least it makes a change.



Jubilee Trophy Report

9th, 10th & 17th March 2007, Maidstone/Sandy

Alan Dean

Alan Dean	5	6	2	1	6	1	1	3	6	2	6	2	3	6	5	5½	60½
Charles Relle	2	1	5	6	1	6	6	4	1	5	1	5	4	1	2	1½	51½

In order to gain match-fitness for their World Pairs challenge on 18 March, Alan Dean and Charles Relle played another 17-game Jubilee Trophy match the day before, and during the previous weekend. Following the previous 60–59 win for Alan, this was another very close match, in which the lead changed hands five times. Alan was ultimately successful in defending the title, winning 60½–51½ with a game to spare, although it seemed until late in Game 16 that Charles would take it 6–1, which would have made the scores level with one game to go.

The first eleven games were played at Charles's house in Maidstone. The weather was glorious, and the play was interrupted for several hours whilst the contestants joined the Maidstone Ramblers for a most enjoyable Sunday morning hike. Alan returned home on the Sunday evening having just regained the lead at 39–38.

The following Saturday, and the day before the World Pairs challenge, this match resumed at Alan's house, in Sandy. Following a practice session the previous evening, which Alan won 11–10, he won the morning session by the same margin, to increase his lead to 2 points.

No spectators or umpire were present. Charles was happy to let Alan make the close squop calls, the majority of which, as it happened, went in Charles's favour.

There were just two pot-outs, both by Charles. The first was early in Game 4, where he potted six in a row, including one off the edge of a pile. The other was late in Game 12, and helped Charles regain the lead for the second time. Alan got very close to a pot-out in Game 10. After potting five he brought his last wink in to what he considered to be a very safe place, a few inches from the pot, very close to one of his other colour and about eighteen inches from the nearest enemy (small) wink. Charles got this doubleton squop, but was unable to convert it into a big win, and managed to win 5–2 only because Alan missed a three-inch squop in the final shot of the game.

Both players had a little trouble with blue/green discrimination during the Maidstone games, played in the basement, where the light quality was less than perfect. In Game 2, after Alan had brought in extremely well and almost squopped Charles up, he failed to spot a dislodged green on a large pile, and had to do most of the work

a second time to regain the 6–1. A couple of games later Charles brought a green in from the baseline because he failed to spot he had a couple of free ones close to the action.

Once the match was over the players spent the evening playing some more practice games, with honours coming out about even.

Generally the quality of play was high. Charles was playing at the level that saw him as the top player in the two previous tournaments, and Alan was at least matching him. Usually when Charles loses a game he puts it down to his own mistakes, but in this match he more often attributed it to Alan's skill. Certainly, this provided both players with excellent preparation for the World Pairs match which followed. It's just fortunate for Larry and Matt that Charles will be in France for a week before the next World Pairs, so another similarly timed pre-WP Jubilee marathon will not be possible.

Boring statistic: in 39 Jubilee games against Charles this century Alan's average ppg is $3^{41/8}$ (compared with about $1^{1/2}$ last century).



World Pairs 32

18th March 2007, Silwood Park

Andrew Garrard, with help from Patrick Barrie

Patrick Barrie & Andy Purvis	2	$2^{1/2}$	3	5	3	3	6	1	$25^{1/2}$
Charles Relle & Alan Dean	5	$4^{1/2}$	4	2	4	4	1	6	$30^{1/2}$

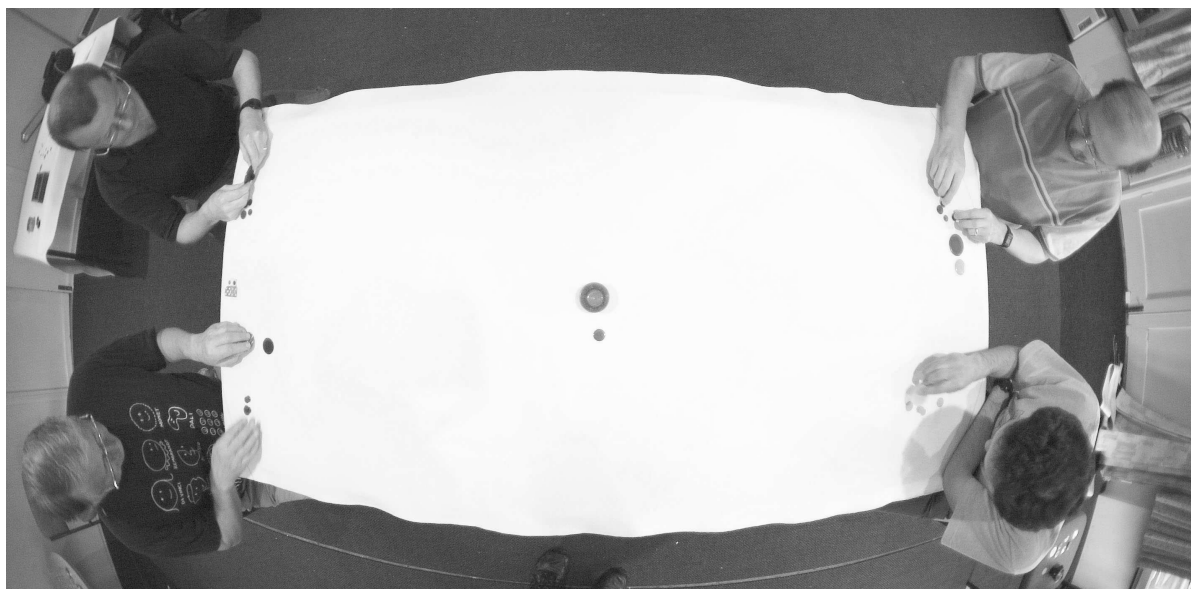
Charles and Alan had warmed up for this match with a Jubilee game (which Alan won narrowly). Patrick warmed up with a Relle tournament. Andy may therefore be forgiven for being slightly more rusty than the others.

Game 1.

A good bring-in by Alan forced Patrick and Andy to play the game in enemy territory; they didn't squop well enough for this to work, and the 5–2 scoreline was an accurate reflection of the play.

Game 2.

Patrick and Andy squopped poorly and soon fell behind. Patrick got a good Bristol to gain a quadruplet to keep them in the game. However, Charles and Alan always looked likely to get first place, and duly potted well in rounds to get $4^{1/2}$ – $2^{1/2}$.



Andrew Garrard

Game 3.

This time Patrick and Andy played well. They made a lovely pile with most of the enemy winks in it, and Andy got a lovely long squop high onto the pile from distance to keep it. However, Charles had a narrow edge at one end of the pile. He was hesitant about blowing it up, as that end didn't have many of their winks in, but he'd run out of other winks and had no choice. The pile break worked superbly – all their winks came out, and (to Patrick and Andy's horror) three of the enemy winks stayed under. Having been well on top, Patrick and Andy were now behind, and were happy to limit the damage. 4–3 to Charles and Alan.

Game 4.

Andy threatened to pot out, but they squopped one of him. Once Patrick squopped this pile, Andy potted his five nicely; Patrick freed his sixth to a position where a squop was very unlikely, and Andy completed the pot-out, lining up for the sixth just as I walked in the door.

Game 5.

Andy won the squidge-off. Charles and Alan brought in several winks near enough to Patrick and Andy that their tempo was constrained squopping them. Piles gradually built up, with Andy bringing in onto the pile from the baseline, and Charles getting baseline knock-offs. Patrick and Alan traded shots on a large pile, leading Andy to quip: 'It's fair to say that we've defended this pile so badly, we're now attacking it.' Andy did then get on the pile. Patrick brought his last wink in from the edge, and subbed under yellow.

Charles was to play blue as time expired; Alan discussed aiming for a 3, ahead of yellow; Charles duly knocked a yellow off a red/blue bridge. Red ran at the pot, and brought in, but left a tripleton, which Andy duly got to end Round 2. Charles attempted a huge Lennon, sending the yellow off and hitting the yellow on the tripleton from several inches away, but failing to move it. Green threw at the pot and missed the first to a long range; Alan tried to pot from fourteen inches and missed onto a blue that was in control of a moderately large pile. Andy accepted that he couldn't catch red, and snooved himself more bristollable. Green went in off the front rim, and then potted a second more convincingly. Left with the choice of a four-inch squop for a possible $4\frac{2}{3}$ versus a twelve-inch pot, the squop was attempted, but missed, and Alan took the offered wink.

Yellow missed the pot to end, with 4–3 to Charles and Alan. If the first few games were half as well-fought as this, the first I'd seen, the players have my sympathy – I'd have succumbed to winks fatigue games ago.

Game 6.

Charles, playing green, won the squidge-off. Andy (blue) looked threatening, and Alan tried to stop him by diving into his area. Andy was on himself by this point, and wasn't tempted by the pot-off because of the possibility of nurdling, so he took Alan instead. Charles subbed into a pile – as Alan said, 'It was a great shot, Charles, it just went wrong.' A pile built up, notable for Andy's twelve-inch squop onto it and Charles's landing near enough to have a wink slide down and cover him. Charles meanwhile took out a red attacker with a three-inch diagonal bristol that even he looked unsure about.

At the start of rounds, a red attempt to chip out blues slid off the yellows that were sandwiched, and under the pile. Yellow took some blues. Blue took the opportunity to dock yellow off reds, one of which was re-taken by green to end Round 1. Red tried for the pot, but Gooded the pile in front (not hard enough to free the other red) and missed. Yellow tried to control blue, but missed, letting blue sink two winks before trying a Lennon onto yellow/green bridge – but only taking the green. Charles potted a distant green, then three from about five inches. Red potted off a nearby yellow, then firmed up; blue missed a distant green, which Charles potted to give another 4–3.

Game 7.

Alan won the squidge-off with red. Because of the game situation, Patrick (yellow) had to go for a pot-out even though two winks were quite distant; he got the easy ones, but missed the further ones. While the opposition were chasing, Andy boondocked a red to make Alan's potting harder. One got squopped, then Andy got a knock-off – but himself stayed on it, tenuously. This was a horrible shot for their opponents; any

shot at it was likely to free Patrick, but not going for it would let Andy do so. Charles managed to squop the yellow and knock the green off, but Andy was able to play a Good shot and free the yellow. Yellow potted his wink nearest the pot, then missed with the sixth, rebounding to so near the edge that an umpire decision was needed to determine whether he'd gone off. He hadn't, and was able to bring in to a gap near the pot. After both opponents missed, yellow potted out, and Patrick went for a walk with CJ.

The race for the pot could determine the match either way. Blue brought in; Andy potted two, then hit the far rim. Alan ran six, at reasonable distance. Charles had several distant winks at the 1'-2' range; the closest two winks went in. Andy bounced off the near rim. Charles again got the nearer two, then scrunged his penultimate wink from around fourteen inches. Andy got the rest, giving the first ever 24¹/₂-24¹/₂ scoreline, causing several people to make phone calls to explain that they'd be later than planned.

Game 8.

Patrick and Andy (who won the squidge-off with red) looked strong in the first half. Alan had lots of free yellows, and Patrick and Charles decided to be aggressive so as to avoid the danger of only getting three points. The game was very even up until rounds, with Patrick and Andy slightly behind; most notable was a shot by Alan which fired a nurdled wink five inches sideways, freeing a small yellow and green and taking two reds – he requested that I make special note for Winking World that this started out nurdled. As time expired, it was looking like a race between yellow and blue for the win. Charles Bristolled onto a red; Andy squopped a little yellow threatening a blue from about twenty inches, ending Round 0. Alan splurged three winks towards a red on a yellow; of the winks in motion, the yellow and green ended close, and the red rolled distant. Blue potted, but then bounced off next to green, who squopped him. Red hassled yellow, but missed; yellow and green missed their pots.

Red, ending Round 3, missed a big yellow from four inches, which Alan then potted (followed by another wink). Andy had a plan to free many reds; Charles distracted him by freeing one himself, leaving a red at 2' from the pot and a yellow at eighteen inches. Red missed a flat yellow from one and a half inches, leaving a red/blue bridge which Alan duly got. Blue couldn't play, and Charles potted a near wink, followed by one from twelve inches (bouncing off the far rim several inches into the air before landing in the pot). Andy, ending, tried in desperation to find a way of potting off a pile while knocking winks free with the wink he was on, but missed the pot (and the knock-off) to leave Alan and Charles with a 6-1 win, and the title for the first time.

Conclusion

Although all the players, at one point or another, seemed unhappy with their performance, I can only report as an unbiased spectator that the standard of play was impressively high (obviously my standards are somewhat lower than those of the competitors, but even allowing for that), and that the games I saw were well-fought and highly tactical, and interesting to watch. Andy once more seems keen to give up the game (although he says he'll defend his World Singles when necessary), but – although showing a few signs of rust – I hope his performance in this match doesn't influence him unduly towards that decision. Although both Andy and Patrick missed shots, it was definitely the case that Charles and Alan won the game with strong play, rather than the holders throwing the match away. It's good to hear Charles reach the end of an event without claiming that he's too old to play tiddlywinks for once, even if he did miss his train.



Jubilee Trophy Report: Alan Dean takes them on two at a time

14th April 2007, Sandy

Alan Dean

Player	Round						Play-off	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Alan Dean	6	2	6	1	6	6	6	33
Andrew Garrard	1	2	1	6	6	1	1	18
Tim Hunt	6	5	1	1	1	1	—	15

After a Jubilee match with the wrong number of winks, this one was played with the wrong number of players. Alan Dean, keen for match practice approaching the World and National Pairs weekend, invited Tim Hunt and Andrew Garrard to play Jubilee matches. Maybe it was a bit cocky to arrange Jubilee matches more than one at a time, but both opponents were also keen for the practice, and unlikely to be unduly put out by arriving second to find that the trophy had moved on. Tim agreed to play on Sunday April 15th. Then Andrew suggested the 14th, so Alan agreed to that too. Next, Andrew called to say he was unlikely to be able to make that weekend. Then Tim asked if he could switch to the Saturday, as another commitment had just moved in the opposite direction. Then Andrew said he could make the Saturday after all, so Alan invited them both to a three-cornered match. Six rounds of one versus two games were to be followed by one further game between the two top scorers, with

all the games counting, and the highest scorer to walk off with the Jubilee Trophy (nominally, as no-one seems to know where the actual trophy is – Alan did not receive it when he last won it, so if you are still sitting on it please get in touch).

To decide the pairing for the first game Alan put a wink of each colour into the pot, and Tim picked one out. As Alan was doing the same Tim declared that this was not a fair system, because Alan was now twice as likely not to play with Tim as with him. Alan tried to explain that this method was perfectly fair, but Andrew sided with Tim, and so instead Tim proposed that the players should be represented by coins of different denominations, and all three would be tossed together until there were exactly two heads or two tails. Soon after this was done, Tim realised that Alan had been correct, and Andrew eventually agreed.

The match finally got under way at about 1:45, after Tim and Alan had a couple of practice games (6–1, 1–6), then lunch, whilst awaiting Andrew's arrival. The results were as follows, a definite victory for singles play over pairs. Only two games were won by pairs, and just two lost by Alan, one partnering Andrew and one with Tim. Alan had an unassailable 27–17–15 lead before he played the final singles game against Andrew.

A few notes on the games:

Game 1: Andrew tried for an early pot-out and squopped his penultimate potting wink with his other colour. He squopped rather better than he potted, but once his pot-out had been stopped there was ample time for his opponents to inflict a pot-out against him.

Game 2: A squopping game, in which Tim played very well, Andrew quite well, and Alan rather poorly.

Game 3: Alan played much better in this game and, aided by poor approach shots by Andrew, won the game comfortably. Andrew was in serious trouble at this point, trailing 4–12–14.

Game 4: Andrew made it a three-horse race again with this big singles win. He was well ahead with five minutes to go. Alan and Tim recovered only to lose all the gained ground when Alan failed to pot in both rounds 4 and 5. Scores now Alan 15, Tim 13, Andrew 10.

Game 5: Tim, playing solo, found that little went his way. Both his opponents played well, with Alan getting a number of important pile jump squops.

Game 6: Andrew, partnering Tim, tried for an early pot out, but Alan prevented that and went on to win 6–1.

Game 7: Not strictly necessary from the competition point of view, but played anyway, and Alan won convincingly.

Time limits of 22½ minutes were used in all the three-player games. There was just one brief stoppage for a squop decision. Play was generally fairly brisk. Alan won all but one of the squidge-offs. After the match Barbie provided an excellent meal, which was much appreciated by all. Andrew returned with Andy Purvis's winks and squidgers, to re-unite them with their owner. They had been left on the back seat of Alan's car after the World Pairs match (Alan gave Andy a five-minute ride home) and discovered by Alan more than two weeks later, but possibly before Andy had noticed they were missing.

The Jubilee waiting list is now empty again so any new challenges will be welcomed.



Umpiring for the blind, drunk, and blind drunk

Andrew Garrard

Although the average level of experience among the active winking community is steadily increasing, there is still a lot of variation in umpiring practices. It's not for me to argue whether one approach is superior to others, but my own means of decision-making have raised some eyebrows in the past as being unusual. I'll describe the process through which I go when making an umpiring decision here, in the hope that it may make umpiring more consistent. Ideally, it might also reduce the number of times an independent umpire needs to be called, since (as I argued in WW86) I believe that umpiring is a significant contributor to overrunning games. My apologies to those who find this article obvious; if I felt that would be everyone, I wouldn't have written it.

I'm restricting myself to (by far) the most common umpiring decision of whether one wink is squopping another. Shot judging, distance from the pot and 'has this wink gone off?' (as I had to adjudicate in WP32) are left as an exercise for the reader.

Rule 1: Treat it like a mat

Winks games in circumstances under which an umpire is required tend to consist of delicate piles. The three easiest ways to change a game in this state are

- (a) to shake the table,
- (b) to shake the mat, and
- (c) to kick the table.

The first is simply avoided: never, ever, rest on a table during an umpiring decision, even if everything looks stable. Many tables in use at winks tournaments aren't very solid, and can shift even when the umpire rests on gently. This is less of an issue for players, where the status quo is clear, but umpires are called specifically when this is not the case.

The second problem is distinguished by the fact that some tables at winks tournaments are made of varnished wood; a mat which makes contact with a player as he walks around the table is more likely to follow the player than stay still; this is especially embarrassing when it's the umpire who's circumnavigating the mat. Resting a finger, gently (see the first issue), on the corner of the mat that you're walking past solves this in two ways: Firstly, that the friction between the mat and table is increased at the point where it's most likely to try to move (and the finger also holds the mat still directly). Secondly, that walking into a mat tends to happen when not paying attention to the exact position of its edges; it's much harder to lose track of how close you are to the mat when you have a hand on it.

Kicking the table is a harder problem to solve, but fortunately many tables have recessed legs. Resting a finger on the corner of the mat makes it easy to 'lean in' to the table while walking around the corner, even if no weight is being applied. It's much more likely that the table will be kicked if the person passing it has to stop, or navigate past another obstacle – one reason why I believe that those who use a chair for bring-ins should make a point of moving it out of the way between each shot, not just after the sixth wink is brought in.

Rule 2: Look both ways

This rule always used to be drummed into novices: just because the relationship between two winks is completely obvious from one side of the table doesn't mean it's obvious from the other (often it's equally obvious, but different). The issue here is that it's quite hard to judge from above when one's head is precisely vertically above a point on the table. I tend to make a point of finding the view point at which my decision would change (see below), then holding my finger where my eye is, and moving my head to the side to see the relationship between my finger and the winks. It's surprising how much leeway there can be in 'looking straight down' without checking from another position. Given that experienced winkers have felt the need to call an umpire in the first place, the onus is on the umpire to see why a decision that seems obvious wasn't deemed to be so by the players.

Rule 3: Fiat lux

Pretty much everyone is now aware that decisions are much clearer with more illumination. However, it's also possible to make a bad decision look definitive by mis-using the light. When there's bright sunlight nearby, the edge of a dark wink can be hard to make out against shadow. Shining a light at the wrong angle – especially 'straight down', if it's *not* actually straight down – can alter a decision radically.

My approach is to try to find an angle at which the light will pass between the winks, and an angle at which to hold my head such that I can see the light. An alternative for most circumstances is to shine a light from the side of the pile, along the mat, and under the curvature of the winks – although this can be interrupted by fluff and hairs. Most people have a similar approach, although I've seen the 'straight above' pose attempted too.

Note that more light generally leads to more resolution in the human visual system, and that it also causes the iris to contract, which gives a greater depth of field in the view – this even compensates slightly for eye defects, which is why opticians turn the lights off during an exam. It's biology and physics, not psychology – more light is useful even when your eyes are young and fresh. My eyes work badly in low light (blame botched laser surgery), so this goes doubly for me.

Rule 4: Touchy feely

It's much easier to determine whether two winks are touching than whether one is above the other. If they're in contact, you can deduce a lot about them from their positions. If there's a gap, you can tell a lot from whether you can see down it. Whether two winks are touching tells you what to look for, so it's important to determine it accurately.

Rule 5: Mind the gap

I'll take the case where two winks aren't touching first. When I've decided that there's no contact (I can get light to the mat, or underlying winks, down a line between the winks, and I can see that line), this means that there's a range of angles in which I can see the gap. The trick is to find the edge of one of those angles, and then work out where one's head is relative to the winks (see Figure 1). As I point out in Rule 2, it's very hard to tell this position when your head is part of it, so positioning a finger at the deduced edge of the angle is useful. I've not been aware of other people doing this, so maybe I'm missing something.

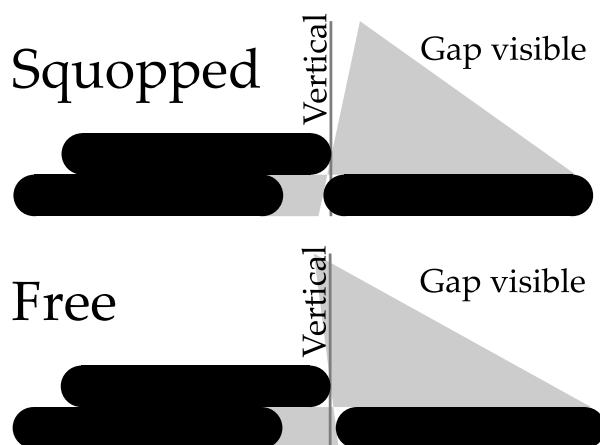


Figure 1: Regions from which the gap between winks can be seen

Rule 6: Tangential issues

If the winks *are* touching, the approach has to be different – because winks are curved, the amount of overlap as the angle of view changes is tiny, so it's impractical to look for it directly (unless it's really obvious, in which case you can castigate the people who called you to umpire).

At this point, it's helpful to look carefully at the edges of some winks. Other than that they're not as consistent as you'd think, we learn that they form one of three shapes: toroidal, rounded cylindrical, and asymmetrical (see Figure 2). Fortunately, most winks are in the first two categories; I treat asymmetrical winks as aberrations unless I can clearly see that the wink I'm umpiring is in that category.

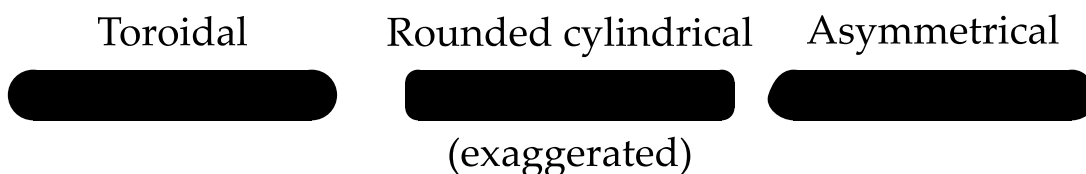


Figure 2: Shapes of winks (in profile, obviously)

First, let's consider the case where two winks are on the same level (see Figure 3); this is the easier situation to adjudicate. Regardless of whether the winks are toroidal or rounded cylindrical, if the two winks are flat next to each other, the tangent is at 90° to their flat surfaces. If the winks are flat (on the mat or on another wink), this

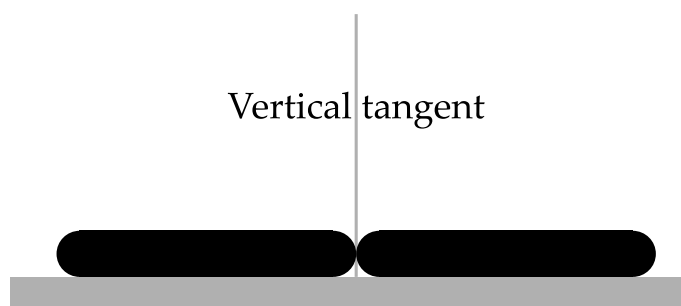


Figure 3: Adjacent flat winks, and their common tangent

means that they must be side by side; if the winks are on a slope (see Figure 4), the higher wink must be squopping the lower one – albeit by such a small amount that it's likely to be impossible to see the overlap. If one of the winks is asymmetrical then this can no longer be guaranteed, but unless I can see otherwise then I tend to err on the side of making the decision that would be right if the equipment weren't defective.



Figure 4: Adjacent winks on a slope, and their tangent

The second case, where the two winks aren't on the same level, is more complex. In this case, it matters whether the winks are toroidal or have cylindrical sides, and exactly where the point of contact is. It is not necessary for a wink to be supported by another in order for it to be higher – typically fluff on the mat is a far greater factor than the friction from an infinitesimal overlap. The important issue is to tell whether the point of contact is on a curve or a vertical surface – see Figure 5. Again, if one of the winks is clearly asymmetrical then all bets are off. Generally if people have seen me umpiring with my head at the level of the mat, this is what I'm trying to decide.

There is a third, rarer, case, where neither wink is lying flat (they are out of plane).



Figure 5: Shapes of adjacent winks at different heights

This actually simplifies matters, because if the curvature of the winks is identical they can only be side by side if they are at exactly the same height. If the curvature is different, it's a question of trying to find a level. Fortunately, following the curvature of the winks with the eye is easier than looking for an overlap. See Figure 6.

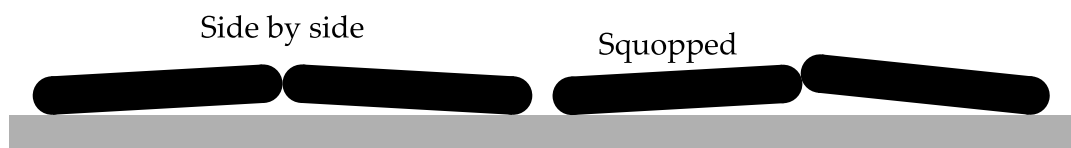


Figure 6: Self-supporting winks

Rule 7: The bleeding edge

A number of innovations have appeared in the umpiring process in recent years, and some may come in the near future. I hope these will make umpiring more consistent, if not necessarily easier.

The first is the use of LED torches to replace incandescent ones. Incandescent bulbs have the disadvantage of providing an uneven light, whereas LEDs are effectively small area light sources. This makes it easier to illuminate winks through a gap, and look for the lit bit of mat; it also reduces the effect of glare from the shiny surface of a wink for a given level of light. LED lights are also often smaller, which makes it easier to position them near to the winks. The benefit is minor, but can be argued for; one downside is that the colour temperature of the LEDs is often far higher than the ambient illumination (they look 'blue'), and that this effect can be a little off-putting when mixed with other light sources. Those prone to experimentation should note: laser pointers are *not* helpful alternatives; the level of illumination is too high, reflections are distracting, the interference patterns provide anything but an

even light source, it's helpful to have a white light source (a laser is pretty much the exact opposite), and the area illuminated is usually small.

Magnifying glasses and otoscopes (the latter having the benefit of an integrated light source) have appeared at some recent winks tournaments. I've not had direct experience of them, and would be wary that they could reduce the mobility of the head upon which I rely when making an umpiring decision; it's also much more likely that the umpire will inadvertently hit the table or winks when his view is obstructed by such a device. However, it's clear that such implements should make it easier to see fine detail of the winks, and some players seem keen on them; I plan to experiment in the future.

The hardest part of an umpiring decision is often working out exactly where one's head is relative to the winks. As such, there's an argument for some form of plumb line arrangement to show 'straight down'. Some day I'll try to engineer such a mechanism, if someone doesn't get there first.

An issue partly solved by the otoscope solution is that, ideally, the source of illumination for the umpire should allow light to pass through the same gap between winks for which the umpire is looking. Usually there is a plane shared by the eye, the light, and the gap between the winks, so it's not too hard to achieve this with an independent light source. However, it would be simpler if the light could come from the same direction as the viewer – something that could potentially be achieved with a half mirror. The situation would be even clearer if the light emanated from the mat, rather than needing to reflect off – but light bright enough to show through a winks mat (brightly enough to be useful) is likely to be a fire hazard. Perhaps future winks mats can be engineered with some integrated doping which could be induced to produce illumination? I look forward to phosphor-soaked mats at a future tournament.



World (economy) ratings

The algorithm/Matt Fayers

Player	Rating	Past year games	Past year points	Player	Rating	Past year games	Past year points
1 Ed Wynn	2016	12	43	33 Alan Harper	1936	10	40
2 Tim Hunt	2020	18	61 ¹ / ₂	34 Simon Gandy	1923	2	2
3 Sunshine	1815	8	35	35 Chris Abram	1921	21	67 ¹ / ₂
4 Yan Wang	1790	22	64	36 Ian Gameson	1839	13	35 ¹ / ₂
5 MP Rouse	1754	10	46 ¹ / ₂	37 Serita Rana	1693	6	34
6 Liz Ford	1372	4	4	38 Collin Reed	1565	20	67 ² / ₃
7 Alan Dean	2199	90	372 ¹ / ₂	39 Chloe Weiss	1514	5	17 ¹ / ₂
8 Stew Sage	1941	47	159 ¹ / ₃	40 Kevin Ruano	1475	2	8
9 Paul Moss	1907	33	104	41 Nik Bamford	1461	4	13 ¹ / ₂
10 Joe Sachs	1743	6	24 ¹ / ₃	42 Liz Ackland	1453	11	27 ¹ / ₂
11 Wenbo Dou	1638	28	113 ² / ₃	43 Sarah Quinn	1440	3	3
12 Joe Davis	1632	22	72 ¹ / ₂	44 Alice Blogg	1428	5	10
13 Matt Sola	1567	4	10	45 Henry Scher	1428	4	6 ¹ / ₂
14 Toby Wood	1504	4	17	46 Kim Ferrett	1395	2	2
15 Andy Leed	1465	4	13 ¹ / ₂	47 Sam Chenkin	1373	1	4
16 Josh Katz	1453	16	44 ¹ / ₂	48 Eddie Hyder	1372	1	1
17 Ari Umans	1368	1	2 ¹ / ₂	49 Steve Umans	1358	1	0
18 James Lee	1358	1	1	50 Matthew Rose	2311	20	91
19 Larry Kahn	2476	52	268	51 Bob Henninge	2197	28	104 ¹ / ₂
20 Jon Mapley	2123	14	49	52 Severin Drix	2079	14	55
21 Bill Renke	1847	3	13	53 Geoff Thorpe	1926	27	82
22 Sahil Shah	1657	9	31	54 Tim Schiller	1877	10	39 ¹ / ₂
23 Rich Davis	1621	5	16 ¹ / ₂	55 Greg Durrett	1708	23	75 ¹ / ₂
24 Gred Gross	1618	5	20	56 Keith Seaman	1705	2	8
25 Fran Kelly	1491	3	8 ¹ / ₂	57 Dave Beckett	1693	26	81 ¹ / ₂
26 Chris Hook	1445	4	5 ¹ / ₂	58 Jon Lockwood	1676	61	205 ¹ / ₆
27 Alex Hyder	1344	7	5	59 Max Lockwood	1662	35	135 ¹ / ₂
28 Andy Purvis	2437	47	198 ¹ / ₂	60 Chris Beyers	1654	7	27
29 Matt Fayers	2327	41	178 ¹ / ₂	61 Kurt Hendrix	1645	22	70 ¹ / ₂
30 Nick Inglis	2168	6	36 ¹ / ₂	62 Keith Ingram	1582	6	15 ¹ / ₂
31 Ferd Wulkan	2105	34	137 ¹ / ₆	63 Phil Freeman	1531	15	47 ¹ / ₂
32 Rick Tucker	2035	43	175 ¹ / ₃	64 Dave Barbano	1524	7	20 ¹ / ₂

Player		Rating	Past year games	Past year points	Player		Rating	Past year games	Past year points
65	Joe Sarnelle	1508	7	18	97	Andy Blackburn	1578	18	58 ¹ / ₂
66	Carl Chenkin	1474	2	6	98	Nicola Golding	1531	4	9
67	Jill Barbano	1470	2	9	99	Andrew Gameson	1447	13	34
68	Edd McMillan	1455	2	7	100	Jason Portillo	1420	2	6
69	Jeremy Sachs	1437	3	5 ¹ / ₂	101	Moises Umanzor	1408	1	6
70	Sarah Knight	1430	11	25 ¹ / ₂	102	Shana Bricklin	1387	1	2 ¹ / ₂
71	Laura Clarke	1412	9	24 ¹ / ₂	103	Vered Federman	1382	1	5
72	Fred Shapiro	1408	3	5 ¹ / ₂	104	Juli Gittelman	1355	1	1
73	Jake Halpert	1405	6	14	105	Rupert Thompson	1796	23	72
74	Ben Lockwood	1402	17	42 ¹ / ₂	106	John Haslegrave	1730	12	43
75	Mary Travers	1400	4	9	107	Scott Zuccarino	1704	7	28
76	Luis Umanzor	1390	1	4	108	Miriam Nussbaum	1695	6	27
77	Mihir Narain	1387	2	1 ¹ / ₂	109	Richard Ackland	1487	44	139 ¹ / ₂
78	Bonnie Allen	1375	1	1	110	Jared Frankston	1474	2	6
79	Andrew Hyder	1344	7	5	111	Giled Kemperich	1468	9	29 ¹ / ₂
80	Charles Relle	2293	75	322	112	Carolyn Hoffman	1414	1	5 ¹ / ₂
81	Dave Lockwood	2261	82	336 ¹ / ₆	113	Richard Stables	1395	1	2
82	Vanya Temnykh	1737	4	12 ¹ / ₂	114	Richard Hussong	1375	1	1
83	Stephanie Chu	1720	17	69	115	Heather Golding	1356	4	4
84	Bob Wilkinson	1605	34	114	116	Patrick Driscoll	2047	51	196 ¹ / ₂
85	Alex Lockwood	1545	6	15 ¹ / ₂	117	Prabhas Pokharel	1689	7	23 ¹ / ₂
86	Ben Fairbairn	1539	49	107 ¹ / ₂	118	Rachel Gittelman	1451	4	14
87	Caitlin Allen	1404	1	6	119	Jonathan Gameson	1395	13	25
88	Kristen Tauer	1378	9	12	120	Alejandro Newell	1360	3	1
89	Rocio Cifrian	1369	16	39 ¹ / ₂	121	Sam Hoffstaetler	1356	9	8
90	Steve Krasner	1358	2	2	122	Charles Frankston	2056	11	47 ¹ / ₂
91	Mia Balashova	1337	13	22	123	Bill Gammerdinger	1567	8	21
92	Patrick Barrie	2279	88	367 ¹ / ₆	124	Shaagnik Mukherji	1464	4	7 ¹ / ₂
93	Alasdair Grant	2031	9	45	125	Cassia Pennington	1409	2	5 ¹ / ₂
94	Arye Gittelman	2012	6	15 ¹ / ₂	126	Lucinda O'Donovan	1376	4	5 ¹ / ₂
95	Andrew Garrard	1906	61	205	127	Henrique Kemperich	1395	1	2
96	Charlie Oakley	1804	5	17 ¹ / ₂	128	David Bradley-W.	1635	42	128

The ETwA Council 2006–7

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