

**Centenary Paper
For Discussion
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It has been determined that the centenary of Table Tennis England/ETTA will take place during the 2021/22 season. Colin Clemett has gratefully put together the attached potted history that allows us to determine the relevant date (Appendix 1).

At its Board meeting in September the Board will approve the creation of a Working Group and the terms of reference. It is therefore a great opportunity for National Council to help input to the process at an early stage.

The principle aims of the centenary celebrations will be twofold:

- (1) To celebrate and preserve the history of both the Association and the sport of table tennis in England.
- (2) To engage a new generation and promote the future

The outline plan that I will be putting to the Board includes the following initial thoughts. However we are still at 'blank piece of paper' stage so all ideas welcome.

- (a) A 'coffee table' book, largely pictorial, to celebrate the 100 years. Work is starting on the planning for this. It will also be an opportunity to bolster the archives by asking for donations of memorabilia and do more work digitizing the archives to preserve the history.
- (b) A gala dinner
- (c) A fundraising campaign with the funds raised being reinvested back into table tennis in the form of centrally awarded grants or match funding to help clubs, leagues, community groups etc.

It is hoped that counties, clubs and leagues will also find ways to embrace and celebrate the centenary in ways that work for them but we would be interested in ideas in this regard.

Please put your thinking caps on and help input with ideas so that these can be added into the Board and the Working Group. We will also be looking for volunteers to assist in the planning and delivery of much of the activity.

The ITTF will be celebrating its centenary in 2026 and we are currently in discussions about London playing a key role in the celebrations given this is where the ITTF was founded. Hopefully our own centenary can be the beginning of a 5 year plan to celebrate and promote table tennis as sport for all for life!



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ETTA CENTENARY

I believe the centenary should be based on the earliest date from which a national Association has been in continual operation. The formation of the ETTA in 1927 saw a change in name and in Constitution, but most of the activities of the earlier Ping Pong Association/Table Tennis Association continued without interruption, with many of the same officials. This was no different in principle to the adoption of a new Constitution in 1964 or the adoption of a new name and Constitution in 2013, and in no case was there any discontinuity. The only question to be settled is the exact year in which the Association was established.

The Secretary's report to the All-England Ping-Pong Association AGM held on 28 April 1922 says:

The fact that we did not form the Association until November of last year, when in the ordinary course of events the season would be well advanced, would have been a splendid excuse to put forward for having an unsuccessful season - but I think you will agree that the reverse has been the case. We had a terribly hard task to get the ball rolling, but when it started there was no mistaking the grip that the game holds on those who take it up. The Team Championship did its part in bringing the game before the public, and with splendid help from a portion of the press we can point to the game being played all over the country.

Thus the first season was 1921/22, and this is confirmed by the Financial Report presented to the 1922 AGM, which is headed: *Receipts and Payments Account from 7th November, 1921 to 20th April, 1922.* I believe, therefore, that the foundation date was 7 November 1921, so that the centenary will be in 2021.

ETTA Handbook 1931-32

In 1921-22, the Ping Pong Association was resuscitated by Messrs. P Bromfield and JJ Payne, who were very quickly joined by Hon. Ivor Montagu and Mr AF Carris. The National Championships were run that season, and entries received from all parts of the country. Difficulties soon arose, however, not only in regard to the title, when it was discovered that Ping Pong was a registered trade name, but through the Association being unrepresentative of the provincial centres. The old Ping Pong Association therefore dissolved and re-formed under the title of "The Table Tennis Association". At the Annual Meeting in 1925, an emergency committee, with Mr Montagu as President and Mr WJ Pope as Hon. Secretary, were authorised to re-draft the constitution. In 1926, the revised regulations were circularised in the provinces, and arrangements were made to call a National Delegate Conference. This was held in London, on April 24th 1927, and the new constitution, which confirmed the provisional appointments and provided for the new title "The English Table Tennis Association", was adopted.

Table Tennis - The Early Years - Gerald Gurney

The initiative was taken by a former Secretary of the defunct PPA, JJ Payne, in Luton and by Ivor Montagu at Cambridge University. They were supported by two enthusiasts, Austin Carris and Percy Bromfield. In the spring of 1922 these enthusiasts, and many others, met at Luton and re-formed the Ping Pong Association. The Laws as published in the new Handbook were accepted as authoritative not only in Great Britain but, in due course of time, around the world. Clubs sprang up all over the country and everything went well until the committee approved a tournament without specifying equipment by Jaques, who had published the Handbook and supported it with five full pages of advertisements. Jaques, with the law entirely on their side, prepared, with a number of proxy votes, to outvote the committee on this issue. But the latter felt that they must preserve their independence and promptly, under the chairmanship of Ivor Montagu, dissolved the PPA, moved into the next room and re-formed themselves as the Table Tennis Association.

The Youngest Son - IGS Montagu

I became Chairman of the national Association before my eighteenth birthday, and it happened like this. "Ping Pong" had been virtually dead for nearly twenty years and the motive force in its revival was a short

but active wealthy business man, A F Carris, who had come to London with big ideas to put table tennis on the map. He found two survivors of the old days, Percival Bromfield, the last English champion before the game had folded (in 1904), and J J Payne, the last Secretary of the old Association. These welcomed me on the committee, I suppose because they saw in this contact a symbol of the extension of the revival to renowned Oxbridge. They had already staged their first championship, at the National Sporting Club.

All went swimmingly until our committee, endorsing applications to hold tournaments, approved one that was to be held *without* specifying equipment manufactured by Jaques. Unknown to us, the name 'Ping Pong' was the registered property of the London firm of John Jaques & Son; it had passed into common speech without realisation of its legal status as monopoly property. Crisis: our committee felt the game could never develop unless independent, yet there could be no doubt of the legal rights of Jaques. An emergency meeting was called. Jaques' manager, a member of the committee, had equipped himself with countless proxies, gathered at high speed from all the towns where dealers sold his firm's equipment. No-one wanted to bell the cat and I - possibly as youngest - was made the fall guy. I was voted into the chair, ruled all the proxies out of order, accepted a motion to dissolve the "Ping Pong Association", and led a move into the next room of everyone but Jaques' manager, where we reformed ourselves, with identical rules, into the 'Table Tennis Association'. I record this incident to show that the name was altered simply because 'Table Tennis' happened to be earlier, unregistered, and hence free of legal restriction.

Timetable 1921-27

07.11.21	Revival of PPA (PPA 1922 Annual Report & Accounts)
24?.02.22	Meeting at Slater's Restaurant (adopted as HQ for PPA)
21-22.04.22	English Championships, Selfridges (Programme, PPA Annual Report 1922, Daily Express)
28.04.22	PPA GM at George Hotel (PPA Annual Report 1922)
02.11.22	PPA becomes TTA - at George Hotel, Strand - Chairman Bromfield, Secretary OV Forbes
29.11.22	TTA Meeting
19.12.22	TTA GM at the Portman Rooms, Baker Street
10.01.23	TTA Meeting
26.01.23	TTA Meeting
02.02.23	TTA Meeting
09.02.23	TTA meeting
16.02.23	TTA Meeting
05-07.04.23	English Championships, Stadium Club
14.09.23	Delegate Conference
09.11.23	National Conference
16.11.23	TTA AGM (see report of 9.11.23 National Conference)
11-12.04.24	English Championships, Stadium Club
???.?.25	TTA Annual Meeting authorises drafting of new Constitution by Provisional Committee with IGSM as President/Chairman, WJP as Secretary
24-25.04.25	English Championships, Stadium Club
16-17.04.26	English Championships, Yarborough Hotel, Grimsby
20.08.26	Bromfield, President of TTA, hands over to IGSM as new President (WJ Pope article in 1938 English Open programme, quoting letter)
06-12.12.26	World Championships, Memorial Hall
22-23.04.27	English Championships, Memorial Hall
24.04.27	TTA becomes ETTA, Indian Students Hostel, Gower Street