



**Petanque  
New Zealand**

# PetanqueMag

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## EDITORIAL

### Things are a changing.

Many thanks Graeme Morris for editing the excellent Petanque magazines over the previous years. Your articles were interesting and quite diverse with lots of energy and thought going into their construction. You even managed a trip to Europe to research some weirdo Petanque type sports and pistes. Your photography expertise was much enjoyed. However last year other pressures came into your life and it was time to step down from your Editorship. You recommended that a new style Emag would suit the purposes better for our Petanque community with which the PNZ board agreed and put out the word for somebody/people to take it on.

After many dead ends and no takers. Stef and Neville Frost accompanied Colin and myself on a motorhome trip to the West Coast, dined and wine with us until one night of many wines it appears they had their new Editor and Reporting Team! When it was announced we had many messages of congratulations on our appointment but I'm really not sure that 'congratulations' is the correct word! Alan Carter from the Taieri Petanque club (Mosgiel, 10 minutes South of Dunedin, for you North Islanders), under gentle persuasion from Stef, agreed to master mind the publishing details. Good on you Alan.

The PetanqueEMAG will differ from the previous Petanque magazine in several ways. It will be published intermittently when enough information can be gathered. We want information to be up to date and meaningful when given to you. Unless it's topical it's unlikely to be published. PNZ have most info on the web or its already been on FB so it's not appropriate to republish material that's already old hat.

No pre-event notices, no ads, no lists of Petanque club addresses, no tournament results. We are hopeful that the next PetanqueEMAG will materialise ASAP after the Oceania Tournament. Petanquers are gathering in Christchurch from 23-30 October. Colin is the Chief Reporter/Photographer for the week, sticking his twitching nose and darting eyes into all corners to smell out a good yarn or interesting pics, both 'on and off the piste' so he's calling for all ferrets to keep him up to date. Anonymity of informants is assured!

Because we three live at the Southern End of NZ, articles may be weighted this way if info/ideas are not forthcoming from further north, so keep us informed.

We hope you enjoy the gentle mix of personal triumphs and mis-haps and a Club achievement.

See you on a piste somewhere soon.....*Marilyn*

## TO GHENT I WENT

### Anne Shields Perspective (abridged)

**THE EVENT.** World Championship 2017 – Trophy Henri Bernard 13-16 April 2017.

**THE VENUE.** Vlaanderen Ghent Belgium. This is a Multisport Stadium opened in 2000 with seating capacity for 5000.

**THE TERRAINS.** **fine** sand-coloured limestone bed of around 2 inches thick laid over the impact-absorbing material. There were 30 – 40 large terrains. The surface provided some very unpredictable high vertical bounces which resulted in divots exposing the material underneath. The terrains were some 20m from the closest spectator area. With the exception of the team coaches, (1 from each country) no one was allowed in the area surrounding the terrains while the games were in progress. Practice was not permitted while the games were still being contested.

**COMPETITION FORMAT.** Doubles Mixed – Bruno and Ann, Mens Doubles – Bruno and Stephane, Ladies Doubles – Claire and Ann, Mens Singles – Stephane, Ladies Singles – Claire. Games 1 hour and two ends. 5 rounds of Swiss, changed to 4.

**GETTING THERE.** Left Auckland 4.30pm 10 April 2017 arriving in Brussels 1.30pm 11 April in surprisingly good condition! The airport info desk directed me to the train ticket machines for a ticket to Gare du Nord Station however having once suffered a disaster requiring intervention of the Station Engineer in Barcelona I decided to obtain the ticket from the ticket office. My hotel was easy to find surrounded in cobblestones and not easy trolley-case pulling.

Booked in and then off for a walk. The botanical gardens were lovely and tulips were out. Next day by train to Ghent. Platform was changed and I could not get to the new one in time to get on the train. Was better prepared for the next one, positioned myself near the lift so I could get down and up again if the platform was changed again. Another platform change but I was ready for it this time. Blundered onto the train (up two very high steps) into first class. I wasn't there for long and had to trundle down two carriages with case. Found a seat eventually next to six jolly senior citizens with a pug dog asleep in a bag! Off train at St Pieters Station in Ghent and took a taxi to the B & B and met my host Sabine. While I was having tea and getting changed into my uniform Sabine biked off and got me a 10 trip bus pass saying that the No 6 bus would take me near the stadium with a walk of 1.5km. Off I went in my very smart uniform on the No 6 bus, asking the driver to tell me where the stadium bus stop was. He laughed & said you will know – I don't go any further! He flagged down a bus going in the opposite direction, consulted with the driver, waved me over and I was delivered to the front gate of the stadium! I followed the arrow to 'REGISTRATION AND COMPETITORS ONLY' where I met Claire, Brian and Bruno

– absolutely perfect timing. I was raced over to the registration table and immediately an ID bracelet was attached to my wrist. What about practice? – no they said no ones allowed near the terrains they are still being prepared but Brian took me upstairs for a look. Our boules details such as make and identifying numbers had previously been sent through to the Federation. The Federation was very strict in this area. If your boules were not listed as acceptable then you could not play with them.

**COMPETITION DAY 1** Thursday 13 April. Awake all night! Sleeping pill did not work. Horrors! Looked in mirror and saw a startled panda. Breakfast 5.30am. Made sandwiches from the delicious spread of breads, meats, cheese, etc and some hazelnut Belgian chocolate. Enough to keep body and soul together. Off to stadium at 7.08am No 6 bus. Met the others, chose a place to attach the NZ flag and sit when we weren't playing. The NZ uniforms looked very smart and many asked to have a photo taken with us & their teams. Practice was allowed for 1/2hr, but with 52 teams trying to assess the terrains simultaneously, it was taking your life in your hands. The whistle blew and Bruno (shooter) and I (pointer) were straight into our first game of Mixed Dbls against Bulgaria – and we won, what a thrill. Just so happy to be here and playing. A huge electronic scoreboard recorded the countries and the scores. This was really useful as if a score was wrongly recorded it could be checked immediately with the desk. Next game Ladies Dbls with Claire (shooter) me pointer. Played Belgium and lost 6-13, Ukraine lost 0-13, then Russia lost 5-13. All very hard games. Played pretty well. The opponents were all very, very good. The Ukraine girls were very young and played brilliantly. Did not like being fanned but could do little about it! Fantastic, absolutely magic, having a wonderful time.

Dinner at 7.15pm. Meals were served in the complex next door about 400m away. Back to the stadium in plenty of time for Doubles Mixed with Bruno at 9.30pm. This was our last game, played Slovakia and L 5-10. In our two previous games we played Tunisia (doubles mixed championship winners) lost 6-13. Great game, very hard fought and I was happy with play. You can always do better you think but in that level of competition I thought we did well. We finished around 11.30pm and the president of the French Federation very kindly gave me a lift back to the B & B.

**COMPETITION DAY 2** Friday 14 April. Off on No 6 bus. Trod on a handbag-sized dog, not on a lead. He made a hell of a noise and leaped off the bus and ran under it. Sounds of horror from those on the bus. Dashed with the owner down the bus steps. He finally came out, grabbed and put on his lead. (He should have been on it in the first place). I was very relieved.

First game 10.00am, Dbls Mixed with Bruno. Played Germany who came third in the championship, we lost 5-13. They were magnificent players, he pointed like a dream. The girl did the shooting, rare in Doubles. The German coach was very kind and friendly, often speaking to me and asking how we were going. Then sadly it was our last game, Ladies Doubles with Claire. We played a tough Slovakian team and won 10-9. I was in heaven. What a great finish. Enjoyed a red wine.

**QUARTER FINALS** Saturday 15 April. The promise of another great day albeit as a spectator. I visited the town centre to see what was on offer. Then a blunder. Found myself right by the No 6 bus stop and decided after checking direction to go to the stadium for a coffee, lunch then watch the games. Entirely forgot I'd intended to don my uniform for the parade. Major blunder. Had to take part minus uniform, but I was wearing mostly black, so hide behind Stephane in the photo. Mental note to self to wear uniform at all times, with the possible exception of being in bed.

The atmosphere in the stadium is building with supporters and teams showing signs of nervousness which had not been present in the lead up games. If you left seat finding too late there was no room and you had to move too far away to get a good view. Had dinner and back to the bus stop. Bus 8.04 did not arrive. Bus 8.34 driver was very agitated. She eventually said get on but we are going nowhere, there is an incident. After half an hour she announced we could go but not the usual route. She would put me off the bus as close to my destination as she could. She said it could be a bomb scare. Got through the centre of town and her ph went and she said she'd been given the all clear. I was relieved as I did not know my way around Ghent, particularly at night.

**SEMI FINALS & FINALS** Sunday 16 April. Bus at 7.50am – disaster, put off outside hospital with driver explaining its Sunday and I only go this far. Absolute panic! Nothing around, no taxis. Set off and got horribly lost. Eventually found myself on the opposite side of the canal and walked an extra 2k around to get to the stadium side. Fortunately I flagged down a runner who was able to direct me. On arrival the first final was half-way through. I thanked my lucky stars it did not happen on my playing day. However I enjoyed the play. Absolutely marvellous. After each final they had a medal ceremony with speeches, anthems – it was fantastic. The Dbls Mixed, the final match on the programme and I watched it with the president of the Flemish Federation. He gave me a very nice badge and a black coche. During subsequent conversation he said they were surprised Australia had not put in a team. I had to say they missed a great event. What a wonderful day – and wait there's more. The dinner was from 9pm – 1.00am. It was held at a venue over the other side of Ghent. I changed clothes at the Bradburn's hotel and then we went off to the bar for a kir royale to celebrate a very successful and enjoyable tournament. Drinks were served and then we went in for a lovely dinner with top desserts.

The next day it was off to the station for the start of the next adventure, 4 days in Bruges, followed by 3 weeks in Portugal.

My thanks to PNZ, APA, Herne Bay Petanque, to my playing partners Claire and Bruno, to Stephane and Brian our other team members and to Steph's friends and Bruno's brother for being part of my day in the sun.

**OBSERVATIONS**– Umpires 2 men, 1 woman. Lenient the first two days. Boules left on terrains, players being timed & observed but not spoken to, low key. However

very strict about practise if games were still in progress. Players on neighbouring terrains removed immediately. Things changed with the semis and finals and things tightened up with often two umpires measuring together. The Spanish coach ran onto the terrain and embraced her player when he scored Spain's only point. The spectators roared with glee but she was carded by a very angry umpire!

Players behaviour was generally excellent. There was no fuss and it was QUIET! The standard was the highest I have seen. A pointed boule, depending on its resting position, was either shot or outpointed. You were in no doubt that you would be playing the next boule. Every boule counted. Also the games were very attacking. There was no protecting a head if a handy lead was achieved. Every head was played to either enhance the score or to attack. I came away believing I need to revise my thinking and play more aggressively. The atmosphere was thrilling, happy and positive – I felt the Kiwis were well received.

The spectators applauded every good shot. I had one great shot against the German team and was astonished to hear a roar from the crowd! Just amazing – they were watching us! (Of course they were watching Germany).

Organisation was good with the exception of the change in number of games. Stadium facilities were excellent with good lighting.

The huge scoreboard was a boon. If a score was wrong it was apparent. We had two wrong recordings which had to be fixed

Could we have done better? Of course. Maybe a short meeting with suggestions of how to proceed and general discussion may have been helpful. BUT we did good!

### **FUTURE GOALS** for Ann Shields

Keep calm and play as well as you can

Be positive and dispel any negativity – support your team mates

Play more aggressively when appropriate

Treat opponents with respect. Do not allow any team personal dislikes of opponents to arise as this can lead to loss of concentration – you are there to play and win not to try and become their personal friends – any ensuing friendships are a bonus

Ensure your practice and fitness regimes and preparation are at a level which will enable you to play your best.

There are not sufficient words to describe the wonderful time I had in Belgium.

Ann Shields 7 June 2017

# FALL & RISE OF CHRISTCHURCH PETANQUE CLUB

**By Diane Finlay**

**It was February 2010 when earthquakes hit Christchurch city and life in the city changed for many.**

Christchurch Petanque was at the time the largest Petanque Club in New Zealand with players playing both socially and competitively and enjoying petanque camaraderie with their fellow members. Sadly the earthquake tragedy greatly affected our Club as although we retained the playing area, the pavilion was damaged and eventually demolished. This left the Club in limbo, no toilets and no facilities apart from a power pole

This sorry state was the status quo for several years with the Club searching for a way to rebuild on the existing site. A number of options were considered and the final outcome was that the Club entered discussions with CCC to move to the former United Bowls site and share the existing pavilion with High School Old Boys Rugby Club. It was decided that a sports “hub” be formed incorporating Petanque, Rugby and Croquet and thus was born the North Hagley Community Sports & Recreation Charitable Trust. Lease negotiations with the Council were protracted and finally after a Public Hearing of objections, the Council granted a lease to the Trust.

The contract for the construction and redevelopment of the area was let and work commenced. Initial works were fraught with undocumented cables, water and drainage pipe problems. Then came the winter rains and further delays due to flooding and copious amounts of mud. Finally the weather cooperated and the terrain was finished, landscaping trees and plants planted and grass resown.

Christchurch is hosting the prestigious Oceania 2017 International event in late October and this has taken an enormous amount of planning and preparation and is the start of the “rise” to have a vibrant competitive Club once again.

Diane Finlay



# PETANQUE CHAOS in LAOS

By MARILYN BUNCE

Hurrah we were a team! Anne Shields, Claire Bradburn and myself were off to the Asian Championships to be held in Vientiane, Laos. How exciting was that? Four weeks of planning pre or post tours and checking on each other's training etc and then the time arrived. Colin (team coach and pet water-boy) and myself were the first to leave on Saturday 23 September to enjoy an 8 day Laos tour before the Tournament on Wednesday 4th October. Claire was doing something similar leaving on Wednesday 27th and Anne was arriving prior to the tournament and doing her tourist thing afterwards.

Waiting in the Queenstown Airport boarding lounge for our flight to Auckland and next morning flying to Bangkok was an exciting time for us. Just as I was going to turn my ph off, I got a call from a rather frantic Stef Frost. "Where are you", she asks? " Just about to get on the plane for Auckland", was the excited reply. "Do I have dreadful news for you", she said. "The tournament has been cancelled!"

"But it can't be", I breathed out. "I'm afraid it can be and it definitely is," said Stef in a very sorry way. I was dumbstruck. She hurriedly explained that problems between the two opposing administration factions in Asia had a large disagreement, the President resigned and the Asian Championships were cancelled! Just two weeks before the tournament! Incredible! What to do now? Well we had to quickly get thru those gates before the plane flew off without us.

Neither of us could believe the cancellation but decided to continue with our boat trip down the Mekong, and to bring forward our homeward flight dates. In Auckland Airport, while Colin collected the bags I phoned the emergency ticketing people and explained our situation. How wonderful was this woman dealing with such a numbed and lost client! Twenty minutes later she had it all sorted with new dates of departure from Laos back to Queenstown, with largely inflated costs of course which are normal when changing flights. We thoroughly enjoyed our 8 day Laos Tour thru this very friendly and interesting country, returning home without being able to reminisce on any Asian Petanque Championships.

Getting in touch with the other two on our return, I found them still as stunned as I was and still finding it hard to believe that an International tournament with a twenty year history could be cancelled with only 2 weeks notice. I feel sorry for Stef Frost for being the bearer of such news and thank PNZ for their understanding and helpfulness they have shown in aiding our Travel Insurance process.

The PetanqueMAG team have enjoyed (and learned heaps) bringing this to you.  
Praise accepted.....complaints ignored.