



# **OCEANIA TABLE TENNIS FEDERATION**

A Continental Federation of the International Table Tennis Federation

## **1. FOUNDATION OF FEDERATION**

The area now forming the Oceania zone had been covered by the "Other Continental Zone" since 1949 when New Zealander Norm Ballinger was elected in 1949 as the ITTF Vice President of that zone,

The Oceania Table Tennis Federation (OTTF) was formed on the 1st June 1977. Negotiations or discussions commenced in Melbourne in January 1975 at the Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships. Foundation members of the OTTF were New Zealand, Australia, Guam, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, New Caledonia and Tahiti - a total of seven.

The Federation was recognized by the ITTF in December 1977 as the official body controlling continental activities in the Oceania Zone.

The main aims of the Federation were:

To conduct bi-annual Continental Championships in the even years

To represent the zone in a united and proper manner

To develop the sport in the zone

## **2. DEVELOPMENT**

Development has always been top priority to our executive and in the early years it was mainly through the Championships by staging of training camps in conjunction with the event.

With the introduction of table tennis in the Olympic program more funding has been available and we now have a very strong and structured development program.

The vision for the development plan was given by Ron Moule, a man described by Ken Wilkinson as "*a man of vision and ideas*" Ron's vision was underpinned by the strong involvement of schools and the education system. Key objectives of that were adopted by a General Meeting of the Oceania Federation at the World Championships in Chiba, Japan in May 1999 were:

1. A coordinated programme of international competition
2. A ranking system which would relate to standings of all international players in Oceania
3. To integrate a schools policy
4. To create unity with a coaching structure,
5. To provide umpiring procedures
6. To identify administration as the foundation on which all objectives will ultimately rest;
7. To ensure that adequate standards of equipment are available on each of the member countries, and;
8. To maximise and encourage promotional opportunities.

Ron Moule (AUS) and Peter Hirst (NZ) started the development work in the late 1980's and early 1990's, however in 1982 there was a Coaching Seminar organised by Eric Coster and assisted by James Morris after the Oceania Championships in Sydney. This was the first initiative by Ken Wilkinson and Keith Bowler to get the ball rolling

Two volunteer positions were created, one of a development officer to work in the area of coaching/structural development and the other to work on umpiring/technical official accreditation and development. Glenn Tepper (AUS) and Fran Keyhoe (AUS) were elected to these positions and their work was very effective.

In 1999 with the support of the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) and the Oceania National Olympic Committee a full time position of Development Officer was created. Glenn Tepper, who had previously been described by Ken Wilkinson as "*a likeable fellow, a player and coach of distinction with the ability to communicate*", was appointed. The results of Glenn's work have been outstanding. He has worked closely with the ITTF and the program has been used as a model for development in other continents. Subsequently Glenn was poached by the ITTF to head up their new Development Program and now enjoys the role of Executive Director Development Programs with the ITTF. He still takes an active interest in Oceania though and guides the efforts of subsequent and current Development Officers.

After many active years as an umpire and referee plus developing and training Oceania umpires, Fran Keyhoe unfortunately passed away rather suddenly and was replaced by Dave Delpratt from Australia as the Chairman of a new Umpires and Referees Committee.

The relationship of the Federation has grown from seven at foundation to the 22 countries that there are today mainly due to the efforts of the Development Officers and the vision of OTTF officials.

### **3. EVENTS IN THE ZONE**

The Oceania Championships have been conducted regularly since 1978. Details of these events are:

<b><u>YEAR</u></b>	<b><u>VENUE</u></b>	<b><u>MEN'S TEAM</u></b>	<b><u>WOMEN'S TEAM</u></b>	<b><u>MEN'S SINGLES</u></b>	<b><u>WOMEN'S SINGLES</u></b>
1978	Auckland (NZL)	Australia	New Zealand	Paul Pinkewich	Chris Little
1982	Sydney (AUS)	Australia	New Zealand	Paul Pinkewich	Chris Lee (nee/Little)
1986	Ballarat (AUS)	Australia	Australia	Tom Dannelsson	Kerri Tepper
1988	Noumea (NCL)	New Zealand	Australia	Barry Griffiths	Kerri Tepper
1990	Palmerston (NZL)	Australia	Australia	Peter Jackson	Li Chun Li
1993	Kilsyth (AUS)	New Zealand	Australia	Dennis Makaling	Kerri Tepper
1994	Papeete (TAH)	Australia	Australia	Paul Langley	Stella Zhou
1996	Auckland (NZL)	Australia	Australia	Peter Jackson	Li Chun Li
1998	Bendigo (AUS)	New Zealand	New Zealand	Mark Smythe	Li Chun Li
2000	Koumac (NCL)	Australia	Australia	Simon Gerada	Li Chun Li
2002	Suva (FIJI)	New Zealand	Australia	Russel Lavale	Jian Fang Lay
2004	Whangarei (NZ)	Australia	Australia	William Henzell	Miao Miao
2006	Geelong (AUS)	Australia	Australia	William Henzell	Karen Li
2008	Papeete (TAH)	Australia 2	Australia	Trent Carter	Miao Miao
2010	Auckland (NZ)	Australia	Australia	W Henzell	Karen Li

In 1998 the South Pacific Cup was introduced for Pacific Island countries only.

The event is held in conjunction with the Oceania Championships and winners are:

<b><u>YEAR</u></b>	<b><u>VENUE</u></b>	<b><u>MEN'S TEAM</u></b>	<b><u>WOMEN'S TEAM</u></b>
1998	Bendigo (AUS)	New Caledonia	New Caledonia
2000	Koumac (NCL)	New Caledonia	New Caledonia
2002	Suva (FIJI)	Fiji & Tahiti	Fiji & Tahiti
2004	Whangarei (NZ)	Tahiti Nui	Vanuatu
2006	Geelong (AUS)	Fiji	Vanuatu
2008	Papeete (TAH)	Fiji	Fiji
2010	Auckland (NZ)	Fiji	Vanuatu

With the introduction of Table Tennis in the Olympic Games Oceania has received a quota under the ITTF qualification procedures.

All the qualification tournaments that have been held have been keenly contested and attracted much attention. This has been one of the side benefits of Olympic participation.

#### **4. PROMINENT OCEANIA PLAYERS**

Significant players in the Zone earlier than 1997 include:

##### **Christine Lee (nee Little) (AUS/NZ)**

Christine, a player with a unique bustling style, won the first title representing Australia and the second as a New Zealander after migrating following her marriage to Richard Lee of New Zealand.

##### **Kerri Tepper (AUS)**

Known internationally as the 'Golden Kangaroo' she won three, Oceania titles, numerous Australian titles and competed in the Seoul and Barcelona Olympic Games.

##### **Li Chun Li (NZ)**

A champion on 4 occasions. She combines strength with speed and is like an express train on the court. She competed at the Barcelona, Atlanta and Sydney Olympic Games.

##### **Paul Pinkewich (AUS)**

Paul won the first two singles titles, numerous Australian titles and one New Zealand title. He is Australia's most capped player and his almost impenetrable defensive style contributed to his success worldwide.

##### **Barry Griffiths (NZ)**

Whilst Barry only won one Oceania singles title with his strong drive attack style he stood tall in the zone for over a decade. He competed in the Seoul Olympic Games.

##### **Peter Jackson (NZ)**

Peter has won 2 singles titles with his left hand over the table attacking style. He has been the model of consistency and is an ideal role model for young players. He competed in the Seoul, Barcelona and Sydney Olympics but was denied the opportunity after qualifying for Atlanta because of an elitist medal seeking policy of the New Zealand Olympic Committee,

#### **5. FEDERATION OFFICERS**

The two pillars of OTTF were the driving force behind its formation. They are Ken Wilkinson, OBE (Dcd) and Keith Bowler, OAM. These two were awarded Personal Honorary Membership of the ITTF and OTTF for their contributors to the sport.

##### **Key Officers have been: -**

##### **Ken Wilkinson OBE (Dcd), New Zealand.**

President 1978 - 1993 and is regarded as the founding father and a great leader. His work for the ITTF was also invaluable.

##### **Keith Bowler, OAM (Australia)**

Executive Director 1978 - 1990 worked hand in hand with Ken Wilkinson. Keith is a great administrator who has worked tirelessly and efficiently and has not sought profile and personal recognition. His work and advice has been greatly appreciated.

##### **Geoff Rau, (New Zealand)**

President from 1993 to 1996 is regarded as one of the "new" boys. Geoff is a man of vision and is extremely fair minded.

##### **Philip Males (Australia)**

Executive Director 1993 - to date has worked consistently and diligently in much the same manner as Keith Bowler. Phil is also a long term member of the ITTF Rules Committee. He umpired at the Seoul Olympic Games and was Oceania's representative on the jury of the Barcelona Olympic Games. Deputy Referee in Atlanta and Referee at the Sydney Games.

**Neil Harwood (Australia)**

President 1996 - 2005 and was regarded as the other "new" boy. Neil managed Australian teams for over a decade and was also Delegate to the International Federation for Australia. He was the Competition Manager for Table Tennis at the Sydney Olympic Games. In 2005 Neil was elected to the ITTF Executive Committee as Director Finance a position he continues to enjoy to date.

**Patrick Gillmann (New Caledonia)**

President 2005 - to date

In his term as President Patrick has increased the profile of Oceania within the International Table Tennis family and was instrumental in negotiating a deal with TMS International, the marketing arm of ITTF. This will see sponsorship and funding of OTTF events and related ITTF events in the Oceania region and hence the partnership of ITTF-Oceania was born.