

GRAHAM TRIMMING

shares the best of his collection of boxed sets from around the turn of the century.

The collection has been amassed in the last five years, since being inspired by seeing Gerald's exhibition at the English Open Championships in January 1992. For the first eighteen months nothing was found, as Graham admits he was "looking in the wrong places".



The first and best ...

The best item in the collection was the first major acquisition. This Jaques Society set was discovered in Graham's first ever visit to the famous Portobello Road in early 1994. Beginner's luck! £180 was parted with for its ownership and an offer of £600 has since been turned away.



The Jaques Society set was advertised in the early Jaques booklets for sale at 21 shillings (£1.05). It features a polished mahogany box with brass fittings and an engraved metal plate "The Game of Ping Pong or Gossima". My set includes two green vellum battledores with beige leatherette finishing, a green close mesh net, turned wood posts on brass clamps and two very rare ball pickers. The battledores, posts and pickers are all stamped "Jaques Ping Pong". Unfortunately, no rules or balls have survived.

The French connection ...



This is a set manufactured by JFJ in Paris. Inside the blue cardboard box are two parchment battledores; two beautiful turned wood posts that screw into free-standing bases; a white close mesh net; and a box of unstamped balls. The rules are in French headed "Le Tennis-Table - Tennis de Salon dit Ping-Pong".

Indoors and out ... Talto Tennis



This is Talto Table Tennis, previously described in the *Collector* as being the only box known to picture play both in and out of doors. Inside the beautifully labelled card box are two parchment battledores; a white close mesh net; wooden posts on metal clamps; and unmarked balls. The manufacturer is F. P. & S. London while the rules are printed on semi-stiff card and are published by Faudel's London.

More from Jaques ...



This is the only set in the collection bought at auction (all the others are from shops, fairs or private purchases). This wooden box set has the usual "Ping Pong or Gossima" label on the box lid. Inside are two vellum battledores rimmed by brown leatherette with uncovered wood handles; brass extendible posts; green close mesh net; the *Standard* edition of *Rules and Directions*; and unstamped balls (three probably not originals).



This Jaques set is interesting for the inclusion of the ball tube (to hold 12 balls) and the Tournament Score Sheet which allows the results of a round robin of ten players to be entered. The sheet was designed by R.T. Watkins Williams and copyrighted at Stationers' Hall. The racquets are "combination", with red pimpled rubber on one side and a vellum like material on the other. The handles are bound in leatherette. Also included are brass extendible posts and a green close mesh net and the *Official Edition of the Revised Laws of Ping-Pong and the Rules of the Ping-Pong Association*.



The definitive early table tennis sets - Jaques' Ping-Pong or Gossima with the beautifully shaped vellum battledores, bound in maroon leatherette with exquisitely shaped maroon wooden handles. Pictured here are two variations of the theme. On the left is the No. 3 set as labelled on the box and stamped on the battledores. It features turned wood posts on brass clamps with a green close mesh net and balls stamped "Tema Ping Pong". The box is stiff card covered in brown material. The set on the right has a similar box, although slightly more robust, covered in dark blue material. The battledores are stamped "No. 5". The posts are brass on extendible clamps and support the familiar green close mesh net. The balls are Halex.



The Slazenger alternative ...

One of the main rivals to Jaques was Slazenger who marketed their version of the game under the title Whiff-Waff. This set was purchased recently from Gerald and features a card box covered with material with the rules of the game on the inside of the lid. The vellum battledores are stamped "The Chiswick" and have nice red wood handles. The posts are turned wood on a metal clamp while the net is a green close mesh, very similar to Jaques'.

Three strung racquet sets ...



A wooden box labelled "Tennis de Salon", presumably French. The stringing of my racquets is in less than good condition but the racquets were originally of good quality. The posts are wood on metal clamps and the net is made of brown wide mesh string, knotted at each intersection.



This is a more interesting set with a wooden box upon which is printed "Parlour or Table Tennis - No. 12 Department". The label print further reveals that it was made for the Army & Navy Co-operative Society, Ltd. at Westminster, London. The strung racquets are slimmer than most while the posts appear to be moulded and are attached to the table by separate metal clamps. The ball is covered in cloth.

The Cavendish Table Tennis set by F.H. Ayres.



The box is thick card covered in a blue material. The two balls in this set are also cloth covered while the beautiful wooden framed racquets are complimented with tapered handles. The wooden posts are stamped "F.H. Ayres London" and are again attached to the table by a separate metal clamp. The net is green close mesh. The wooden racquets pictured are, no doubt, later rogue additions.

Two other interesting sets ...



The maker of this set is not known although the label states that it is of British Manufacture. The net is purple and very close mesh. Two of the racquets pictured are rough and probably home made whereas the two in front are very interesting, being bevelled wood on one side and cork faced on the other. The fascinatingly styled posts are made entirely from wood. The ball is Halex No. 1.



Gamage's Pit-a-Pat Table Tennis sold only by A.W. Gamage Ltd., Holborn, London and their branches at Aldershot and Dublin. The card box lid carries the rules on the inside. The vellum battledores (the handles have been cut down) are stamped Gamage's Pit-a Pat as are all the balls. The green close mesh net is stamped A.W. Gamage Ltd. and is supported by wooden posts on a heavy metal clamp.