

Chapter Fourteen

SPORT

South African Table Tennis Board (S.A.T.T.B.)

THE SOUTH AFRICAN Table Tennis Board was formed in September 1948 at a conference attended by representatives of the Western Province Table Tennis Union, the Durban and District Table Tennis Union, and the Eastern Province Association.

In February 1950 the Budapest Congress of the ITTF decided to accept the Board into 'good standing', which meant that it could participate in all competitions and be represented at ITTF meetings, with or without a vote. Full membership was refused solely on the ground that the board did not include all or the majority of South African players. The ITTF rejected the S.A. Table Tennis Union's call for membership because of its exclusive white membership.

At the 1955 Congress of ITTF held at Utrecht, Holland, the Board was represented by the then Hon. Secretary, Mr R. Maurice. At about this time an Israeli team was invited by SATTU without prior approval of the Board or ITTF. This move caused the ITTF Congress of 1956 in Tokyo to recognise the Board as the sole authority for Table Tennis in South Africa and allowed the Board one vote at future meetings of the Federation. The white Union was thereafter deprived of 'corresponding status'.

March 1957 saw the historic participation of the Board team at the 24th world championships held at Stockholm, Sweden. The first-ever official South African team comprised C.M. Peer (Captain), A. Valjee, M.C.H. Moola, D. Groenewald and P.R. Mandan with C.M. Bassa as Manager and delegate to the ITTF Congress. The Board Team played friendly

matches in Denmark and participated in the English Open Championships.

Judge Amin Abou Heif, Vice-President for Africa of the ITTF, was the guest of honour at the 5th National Championships held in Cape Town where competitions were re-modelled to follow the world championship pattern. During his stay, Judge Abou Heif also presided over a joint meeting of the Board and the Union, held to seek some solution, but without any success.

At the 1959 Biennial General Meeting of the ITTF held in Dortmund, Germany, the Board was represented by Mr C.M. Bassa. Passports of members of the Board team were withdrawn by the government. Mr Bassa's passport was also withdrawn on his return. In the same year a tour of South Africa by an Egyptian team was cancelled because of the South African government's refusal to provide visas.

Relationships between the Board and the Union reached stalemate. All attempts by the Board to participate in World Championships were frustrated by the refusal of passports.

In 1961 Mr C.M. Bsaas, in absentia, was elected a member of the ITTF Advisory Committee at the Peking Congress. He was also elected Vice-President of the African Table Tennis Federation to which position he has been re-elected at every meeting of the Federation.

The SATTB was accepted as a full member of ITTF at the Stockholm Congress in 1967, thus crowning many years of dedicated effort to be recognised as a fully-fledged member of the world body, willing and able to organise table tennis for all South Africans without any restrictions of race, colour or creed.

The 10th National Championships were held in Cape Town in July 1968. In 1970 the 10th Inter-Provincial and S.A. Championships were held in Durban. Immediately following the tournament, a team was chosen to represent South Africa at the World Championships in Ngoya and the Commonwealth Games in Singapore. Once again the Board's attempt to send a national team overseas was frustrated by the government's refusal to provide passports.

The Champion of Champions Tournament was held in Cape Town in July 1971, and in 1972 the 12th Inter-Provincial and S.A. Championships were held at the same centre. From 9-11 August, 1973, the 9th S.A. Champion of Champions Tournament was held in Ladysmith, Natal.

At the moment SATTB is the only national sporting body in South Africa controlled by blacks, and which is a full member of an international sporting organisation (ITTF).

Affiliated to SATTB are the Transvaal Table Tennis Association, the Southern Natal Table Tennis Union, the Northern Natal Table Tennis Union, the Western Province Table Tennis Union, the Eastern Province

Table Tennis Union, the Northern District Table Tennis Union, and the Western Cape Federation.

Facilities

The Group Areas Act has created many difficulties as regards the availability of venues for matches. Many units have suffered setbacks through the enforced shifts of settled communities.

Resettlement in new areas has meant the loss of venues available in previous areas and a lack of new venues in undeveloped areas usually without community halls or recreational facilities where matches can be held. Since the Board is 'a non-racial body, 'mixed' meetings means application of 'racial' restrictions, which has also placed the Board in some difficulty and embarrassment.

Sponsorship

According to Mr C.M. Bassa, 'SATTB has no policy on sponsorship. This will be decided upon at the next AGM to be held in 1974. Generally members feel that sponsorship is the life-blood of any sport and that SATTB should seek sponsors'. Its finances are derived mainly from takings at matches, affiliation fees and donations.

Reference: SATTB Souvenir Brochure: July 1972.

South African Amateur Swimming Federation

The South African Amateur Swimming Federation has from its birth in April 1966 seen a gradual growth in membership. It now has 4 069 members (1 324 in Natal, 992 in the Western Cape, 873 in the Eastern Cape, 602 in Griqualand West and 278 in the Transvaal). These figures do not include its associate members, the S.A. Senior Schools' Sports Association and the S.A. Primary Schools' Sports Association.

Although membership may not be as high as it should be, the growth is encouraging, when one takes into account that the Federation is only seven years old, and that only a few pools are available.

Standard of Swimmers

In the short time that swimming pools have been available to blacks in this country, there has been rapid progress. At the beginning of this year, Terry Gulliver, an Australian professional coach engaged by the Federation, said, after a coaching session at the Balkumar Pool, in Asherville, 'These six swimmers performed as well as any similar white squad. There is great untapped potential here' (*Natal Mercury* 12/1/73).

Affiliations

At the Biennial General Meeting in 1970, a suggestion to apply for direct membership to the world swimming body, FINA, was rejected because there was a white South African body (SAASU) recognised by FINA. Negotiations were initiated with SAASU. The Federation requested SAASU to ensure that future teams should be selected on merit. The first meeting between the Federation and SASU in July 1971 was successful. But the SAASU President later broke his verbal contract by stating 'that the teams would be selected on merit but within the framework of government policy'.

The SAASF then suggested terms for negotiation with the SAASU in September 1971, including the formation of a national controlling body, affiliated to FINA, with equal representation of SAASF and SAASU, and with common trials before national teams were chosen. SAASU rejected these terms and presented counterproposals, including the establishment of a joint liaison committee, which would select national teams 'purely on merit', but which would be chaired by the chairman of SAASU.

The SAASF, in its turn, made counter-proposals. The Federation also felt that the chairman should be elected either by popular vote or by an agreed basis of alternation until the need for the two bodies ceased. SAASU replied that they were the controlling body affiliated to the international body for all branches of swimming, and called upon the Federation to affiliate to them.

The SAASF Biennial General Meeting held in January 1973 found that affiliation to SAASU was unacceptable and remained fixed in their policy that they wanted only one controlling body in the country with mixed swimming at all levels.

The SAASF received an invitation to send competitors to the South African Games, but turned it down because it is against their principles to participate in any competition which discriminates against anyone on the basis of race, colour or creed.

South African Amateur Swimming Association

This Association was formed in February 1973 under the presidency of Mr Reggie Baynes, who is also the President of the S.A. Coloured Football Association. SAASA was accepted as a member of SAASU. The SAASF does not recognise this body as it feels that the Association is not representative of all black swimmers. Its activities seem to be centred around one pool in the Transvaal.

Facilities

Facilities for black swimmers are far from satisfactory. A survey by the

Federation showed, for example, that in Griqualand West, two pools serve a black population of over 80 000 while the 30 000 whites have 4 pools, while in Durban, Natal, 185 000 whites have 9 pools built by the local municipality, while 221 403 Indians have only 2 pools. Throughout the country, there are sixteen Olympic-sized pools for whites and none for blacks.

The Federation also wrote to 341 Municipalities requesting details on facilities available. Only 114 replied, and the replies showed a total of 120 pools for whites, 21 for Africans, 18 for Coloureds and three for Indians.

Sponsorship

The Federation has suffered greatly because of lack of funds. While the white body (SAASU) has received assistance from business houses and from government sponsorship, SAASF has received none. In fact, approaches to the S.A. Sugar Association, the S.A. Milk Board, Coca-Cola Bottling Company, Bata Shoe Company, Oudemester Cellars, Shell S.A., Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company, B.P. Southern African, Clover Dairies, and the United Tobacco Company, for sponsorship of the 1970 tournament were turned down.

Intimidation

Over the past few years, officials of the Federation have been intimidated on many occasions. The President, Mr Morgan Naidoo, received several visits from the Special Branch. On one occasion the Federation constitution, names and addresses of office-bearers and their occupations were requested. On another occasion Mr Naidoo was threatened with a banning order. In June 1972 he lost his job as a salesman with a liquor firm, Distillers Corporation (*Leader*, 23/6/72). In July 1973 he was refused his passport with no reasons given by the Minister of Interior. Mr Naidoo has subsequently been banned under the Suppression of Communism Act.

Application to FINA for Membership

After the refusal of SAASU to accept the Federation's proposal, it found itself communicating directly with the world body (FINA). A FINA commission visited South Africa in March 1973. The Commission was met by members of the Federation, who handed over to them copies of the constitutions of their affiliate units, annual reports, gala programmes and other available literature and a copy of a memorandum to be presented to the fourteen-man FINA Bureau at a meeting held in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, during August.

In discussions with the Commission, SAASF stated emphatically that if any of its affiliates practised discrimination on the grounds of race or

colour, they would be instantly expelled, and repeated that whites were free to join, even if this move might invite prosecution from the government.

Southern African Lawn Tennis Union

The membership of the non-racial SALTU has increased since 1972. New affiliated groups are the Bloemfontein Tennis Union (which means that the Union's activities are now extended to the Orange Free State) and the Little Namaqualand Tennis Union. Associate membership has been granted to the South African Senior Schools' Sports Association and the South African Primary Schools' Sports Association.

Application was made to the South Coast District Indian Football Association for a grant to finance coaching sessions organised for 1973. Coaching clinics have been a regular feature of the Union ever since the passing of a resolution in 1971 to further tennis-playing among junior players. These have been held in various centres throughout the country under the effective tutelage of the Organiser, Mr David Samaai. Plans to send a squad overseas during 1973 faced the problem of lack of funds, and attempts to obtain sponsorship were unsuccessful. (The cost for each tour is generally estimated at R5 000).

Despite the lack of finances, the usual provincial tournaments were held. The Inter-Provincial Tournament took place over the Easter period in Port Elizabeth, and the National Championships in December in Cape Town.

SALTU once again attempted to gain membership of the International Lawn Tennis Federation. In effect, this consistent annual application is a repudiation of the legitimacy of the decision to allow the white South African Lawn Tennis Union to represent South African tennis players and organisations in the ILTF.

The reasons for SALTU's decision not to be 'subservient' in any way and to gain recognition as the legitimate South African representative in the international body are set out clearly in a memorandum of 3 October 1972 submitted to the Secretary-General of the UN. It claims that the white SALTU 'promotes and fosters the game among whites only'—which racist practice is against the regulations of the ILTF.

In 1964 when white SALTU learnt that the non-racial Union had applied for affiliation to the ILTF, it offered the Union associate membership at a meeting held at Ellis Park, Johannesburg. This offer was rejected on the grounds that 'it merely provided for an outward show of unity' while denying blacks all the rights and privileges of full membership.

At this juncture the largely African tennis body SANLTU withdrew 'surprisingly' from the non-racial Union and accepted associate membership of the white body.

Regarding the now jeopardised position of white SALTU in the ILTF

and the stalemate between both the black and white unions, Dr P. da Silva Costa was sent to South Africa to seek some sort of solution. His solution of associate membership for the non-racial Union to white SALTU was rejected outright. The white body 'stood on the brink of expulsion' from the ILTF.

However, SANLTU 'came to its rescue' by sending out an appeal to the world body and its affiliates not to suspend the white Union as this would 'cause suffering' to its alleged 20 000 membership.

In 1970, Basil Reay, Secretary of ILTF, offered 'federal membership' to the non-racial Union, which was rejected on the grounds that it was as limiting as associate membership. During the same year too, South Africa was expelled from the Davis Cup Competition after Arthur Ashe was refused a visa to enter this country.

In an obvious attempt to safeguard its threatened position in the international tennis forum, white SALTU with Mr Alf Chalmers (then the President) and Mr Benjamin Franklin at the head carried out what is described by the non-racial union as 'a bizarre and prodigious measure' to present its 'version of the true position' in this country. Black and white players as well as spectators at the Federation Cup tourney in Ellis Park, Johannesburg, were filmed for the benefit of the seven-man committee of ILTF. The 'superficiality' of this measure was pointed out to the world body in a letter dated 29 March 1972 by the non-racial Union.

Application for membership to the ILTF was made once again in July 1972. To support its objection against the inclusion of white SALTU in ILTF the non-racial Union denied that the white body had in fact selected a team on merit for the 1972 Womens' Federation Cup held in South Africa. It alleged that a 'secret trial' was held 'somewhere in the Republic' after which an all-white women's contingent emerged.

Moreover, the two Coloured players who participated in the South African Open in Johannesburg were members of the Union on a federal basis—this meaning that each race group plays with and against each other. Only during certain events are they allowed to play against whites.

This situation was decried by a black member of white SALTU, Conrad Johnson in November 1973. He stated that blacks could never make any real impact by being given a 'once-a-year only' chance against top competition.

On 19 July 1972 the non-racial Union expressed its dismay to the world body, at the readmission of white SALTU to the Davis Cup.

The Davis Cup team was chosen without any 'multi-national' trials between black and white players being staged. Five national selectors were sent to the SANLTU trials in Bellville, Cape Town, to observe the black players James Letuka and Conrad Johnson. These players were rejected on the grounds of form alone, which decision was apparently 'acceptable' to

SANLTU. If this is evidence of the promised 'properly constituted trials' it is no wonder that they were evaluated as 'farcical' by Conrad Johnson.

Unlike its white counterpart, the non-racial Union still receives no subsidy from the government or financial assistance from commerce, notwithstanding the tremendous 'consumer value' of black people.

The Union's income is derived mainly from entry fees, donations, grants, advertisements, a few sponsors, sale of dance tickets and brochures, and so on. Most of these funds are usually expended on the holding of scheduled tournaments.

The following firms were approached to help sponsor the National Championships: Rothmans, UTC, Goldtop, S.A. Sugar Association, Stellenbosch Wineries, BP and Castle Breweries. Most firms replied that their sports sponsorship budgets for the year were full.

The Union has strongly recommended that applications to these firms should be made immediately again, the general intention being to test and clarify their policies on sponsorship of non-racial sport.

Suitable venues for holding the annual tournaments are still difficult to obtain. In 1973, as there was an insufficient number of courts at one venue, play for the championships had to be divided between the Howard College and Tills Crescent tennis-courts in Durban.

Messages to the non-racial Union on the occasion of its 11th National Championships and fifth Biennial General Meeting on January 1973 reflect the escalating antagonism towards racist sport in this country. It is to the credit of the non-racial Union that, in its field, it has played a prominent role in fostering an awareness, both overseas and locally, of the conditions faced by black sports bodies, black sportsmen and women, in South Africa.

A letter to the Union from the American Committee on Africa is only one example of the large amount of correspondence bearing testimony to the hard work done by the Union. It states: 'It is a challenge to us to deepen our efforts for racial justice to know that you continue to practise the principle of non-racial sport under conditions of greatest difficulty'.

Another letter from Norman Middleton, Chairman of the South African Soccer Federation reads: 'White sports administrators in this country have done everything possible to undermine the unity and solidarity of all black codes of sports by the policy of divide and rule. Superficial links on the so-called national level have been formed with all racial bodies, the main purpose being that of keeping white sports organisations in international favour'.

Reference:	SALTU's Report	5/1/73
	Secretary's Report	5/1/73
	<i>Sunday Times</i>	18/11/73
	<i>Star</i>	2/10/73

The South African Cricket Board of Control

SACBOC is one of three national Cricket bodies in South Africa. With its non-racial policy it is open to all South Africans. The other two bodies are the white South African Cricket Association and the Africans-only South African African Cricket Board.

The SACBOC policy has its roots in the old 'Barnato Group' of cricketers who used to compete at provincial level for the Barnato Memorial Trophy, which was presented to the Griqualand West Coloured Cricket Union by De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd. in 1897. Since then tournaments were held to compete for the trophy, and unity of all races was achieved in cricket. However, in 1926, a break-away group formed the S.A. Independant Cricket Board. A complete break-down of the previous unity occurred when divergent opinions among the administrators led to an abrupt end of activities in 1932, and the formation of the S.A. Bantu Cricket Board in the same year and the subsequent formation of the S.A. Indian C.U. in 1940. (Information from 1969 S.A. Cricket Almanack of SACBOC).

The temporary friction was, however, healed, and the pioneering body was revived. In June 1946 administrators of the respective national bodies met in Johannesburg, after long negotiations, to form SACBOC. The affiliates were the S.A. Indian C.U., the SAACB, S.A. Coloured C. Board, and later the S.A. Malay C.B.

From 1947 the Board of Control started functioning, with tournaments being held. The affiliates' previous racial character was still maintained, and they were playing in a manner which would today be regarded as 'multi-national'; until December 1958 when the Board met at a memorable session in Cape Town and agreed by an overwhleming majority to outlaw the 'multi-national' character of the Board. The various units thereupon affiliated directly at provincial level with tournaments staged bi-ennially. The SACB refused to join the board in this way, and therefore remained an isolated African body.

The present affiliates of SACBOC are the Western Province Cricket Board, the Transvaal Cricket Federation, the Eastern Province Cricket Association, the Natal Cricket Board of Control, the South Western Districts Cricket Board and the Griqualand West Cricket Board.

SACBOC has been regarded by some observers as the main stumbling block to SACA's recognition in international sport. The main reason for this feeling has been that the Board of Control refuses to bow to any persuasive negotiations at promoting government sports policy. government sports policy.

In April 1972 the SACA called a 'summit' meeting of all three national cricket bodies, 'to discuss the sports policy of the Republic'. But SACBOC,

which agreed to attend the meeting, urged that the theme be 'To consider the promotion of cricket under the prevailing sports policy'.

Mr Jack Cheetham, the then president of the SACA, explained that his body saw the illogicality of the sports policy, in that there could be no multi-racial or non-racial matches at school, club and provincial level, but that players should represent 'nations'. But he maintained that his belief was that the present situation could still be exploited to the fullest, by forming a Cricket Association of S.A. which he said, would be representative of all national bodies in this country.

Mr Cheetham advocated the formation of a 'multi-national' body. Mr Hassan Howa, SACBOCA president, replied that his board could not understand the term multi-national when it only applied to people who were not white, grouped apart into 'nations' called Indian, Coloured, Malay, Zulu, Fingo etc., while whites are not grouped into 'nations' of English, Dutch, Scots, Irish. Mr Howa went on to call on the whites to change the sports policy as they had the vote.

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The secretary-general of the African Board, Mr Mlonzi, said that his board would choose to follow Cheetham rather than Howa, 'because of what they have done for the African people'.

It was then pointed out that to join the kind of association that SACA was proposing, SACBOC would have to sacrifice its principle of non-racial cricket, because it would be regarded as a coloured group. This would be a major loss for them.

At this stage, both Mr Cheetham and Mr Howa saw no need for the SACBOC delegation to remain in the meeting. (Minutes of the meeting of National Bodies controlling Cricket in South Africa, held at Jan Smuts Holiday Inn, Johannesburg, on 30 April, 1972). It was later heard that SACA and SAACB had decided to form a National Cricket Council, whose function, it was said, would be to offer good facilities such as grants and coaching to member bodies.

In January 1973 the SACBOC president made a call for another 'summit', to be held on 25 March in Cape Town under a neutral man, but the SACA insisted on having Mr B. Wallace, its president, as chairman. Mr Howa called the meeting because he was impressed by Mr Wallace who had stated that he wanted to see a South African team selected non-rationally on merit.

At the meeting it was agreed that a special committee be appointed to draw up a blueprint for a workable solution to the problem of merit selection. The committee was given a time limit of two months.

The committee met on 12 and 13 May at Newlands, to table in draft form the thinking of each of the bodies concerned, as to the terms of an

acceptable joint blueprint. A full report of this meeting was read by Mr Boon Wallace at another meeting of all the cricket bodies, held on 27 May at Jan Smuts Holiday Inn in Johannesburg. The report stated that all three bodies were fundamentally agreed on the basic goals they were seeking to achieve, which were (extract from the report to the Boards of the three National Cricket Bodies):

- (i) merit selection at national level; that is to say, the selection of team composed of the best players regardless of race or colour, to play for S.A. abroad and in this country;
- (ii) merit selection at provincial level, as well as;
- (iii) merit selection at schools level to apply to a representative South African Schools team.

'In short', the report went on, 'we want cricket to be played in this country in such a way that equal opportunities are enjoyed by all cricketers irrespective of race or colour'. Also, all members of the committee had agreed that they must implement this policy within the framework of government policy; but there were two issues on which agreement was not reached, which were (extract from the report):

- (i) whether we should immediately press for the establishment of one integrated national body to control cricket in the Republic or whether for the time being we should work through the Cricket Council of S.A. and retain the three national bodies; and secondly
- (ii) whether we should immediately institute first league competition between the senior league club teams presently established among our respective racial groups.

SACBOC had suggested that the existing clubs, composed as they are of various racial groups, should play against each other at senior club level on a home and away basis, this being an ideal way of preparing players for provincial and international cricket. To this suggestion the SACA point of view was voiced by Mr Wallace when he said that there were difficulties in trying to achieve that aspect overnight. He explained them as (extract from the report):

- (a) the conditions under which these club matches would be played could be far from ideal. Even if lawful, the artificiality of playing cricket without spectators on private grounds, and without that camaraderie basic to cricket, could do more harm than good to inter-personal relations between the groups, and in fact damage the game;
- (b) the actual facilities provided might in certain areas seriously discourage participation by cricketers. I have in mind, for example,

the physical difficulties of alternating regularly between turf and gravel wickets;

- (c) there might also be difficulty in determining standards of play which will ensure effective and interesting competition.

Having pointed out these as the difficulties, Mr Wallace positively suggested that the Coloured, African, and white teams should play against each other at top level. Out of these 'trials', two teams could be selected on merit, to play against each other, and from these teams, a South African team would be chosen. This would be the principle for provincial and schools teams, on a multi-national basis, through the Cricket Council of S.A.

Mr Mlonzi of SAACB supported the SACA stand that at this stage the government policy of multi-national sport was still the best.

After this meeting the National Board of SACBOC withdrew from any further talks, and allowed provincial bodies to continue on their own if they wished to, but Transvaal, Natal and the Western Province requested that the privilege be withdrawn from the provinces (*Cape Times* 2/6/73).

This breakdown in communications led to Mr Hassan Howa applying for a passport to go overseas and canvass support from delegates of the International Cricket Conference, so he could get admitted as an observer to the ICC meeting in London. At the meeting he wanted to place on the agenda for 1974, 'South Africa's admission as a member of the ICC' (*Eastern Province Herald* 14/7/73). He emphasised that he was not going to ask for membership for SACBOC of which he was president, but for membership for South Africa. The South African government refused him a passport. He commented, 'It is all a great pity that I am being forbidden to go overseas. I am afraid that the unspoken word will harm South African cricket more and put it back much further than it already is. And here I refer to white South African cricket'. Mr Billy Griffiths, secretary of the ICC, would have arranged for him to see delegates of other countries.

The SACBOC then decided to send memoranda to ICC delegates, which comprised minutes of the past three joint meetings with the SACA executive (*Cape Times* 17/7/73).