

***‘Table Tennis Triples’ Book Foreword***  
***by A. Sharara, President, International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF),***  
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It is rare to find those that are ready to challenge traditions and lead our imagination towards the unusual. If it were not for English aristocrats seeking shelter from the rain, taking a tennis game indoor and improvising rackets (cigar boxes), balls (Champagne corks) and nets (books) on a dining room table, our beloved sport of Table Tennis (Ping Pong, Flim-Flam or Gossima) would not have seen the light.

It is extremely refreshing to read a book that presents to us a new vision of our sport - a variation on a common and traditional theme. Singles in table tennis are the marquis events of any major international championship. Doubles are a traditional event as well, and give us a glimpse of what a team could be. But it is not really a team event. This brings us to the "traditional" team events with a myriad of playing systems over the years. In fact, what we have is an accumulation of single matches within a team structure, but it is not really a playing team in the pure sense of the word.

The author, Mr. Guenter Arndt opens our minds towards a new form of play. TRIPLES. This ingenious playing method actually combines all the current forms of traditional table tennis playing systems into one exciting package. We have three players as in the current team matches; we have players playing side by side as in the current doubles; and we have a head-to-head confrontation as is the tradition in singles. The author proposes a dynamic and exciting new way to enjoy our sport. With a slight modification in equipment, but maintaining all the basic elements of our sport, a new way to play is born.

I have visions of six kids, three aside, crowding the playing area in a flurry of activity. I have visions of older men and women playing mixed Triples with an elegant footwork shuffle. I have visions of parents and their kids playing family against family in a friendly challenge. Any proposal that increases the options to play table tennis is always welcome. In this case, the ITTF and its President welcome with open arms a new, creative and innovative method that stimulates us to pick up our racket and TRIPLE our fun. Welcome to creativity, welcome to innovation and welcome to a new great way to enjoy our sport.

On behalf of the ITTF, I congratulate the author, Mr. Guenter Arndt, for his courage in challenging the establishment and for his love of our sport, which has inspired him to present to us an exciting new chapter for our sport.

Adham Sharara  
ITTF President