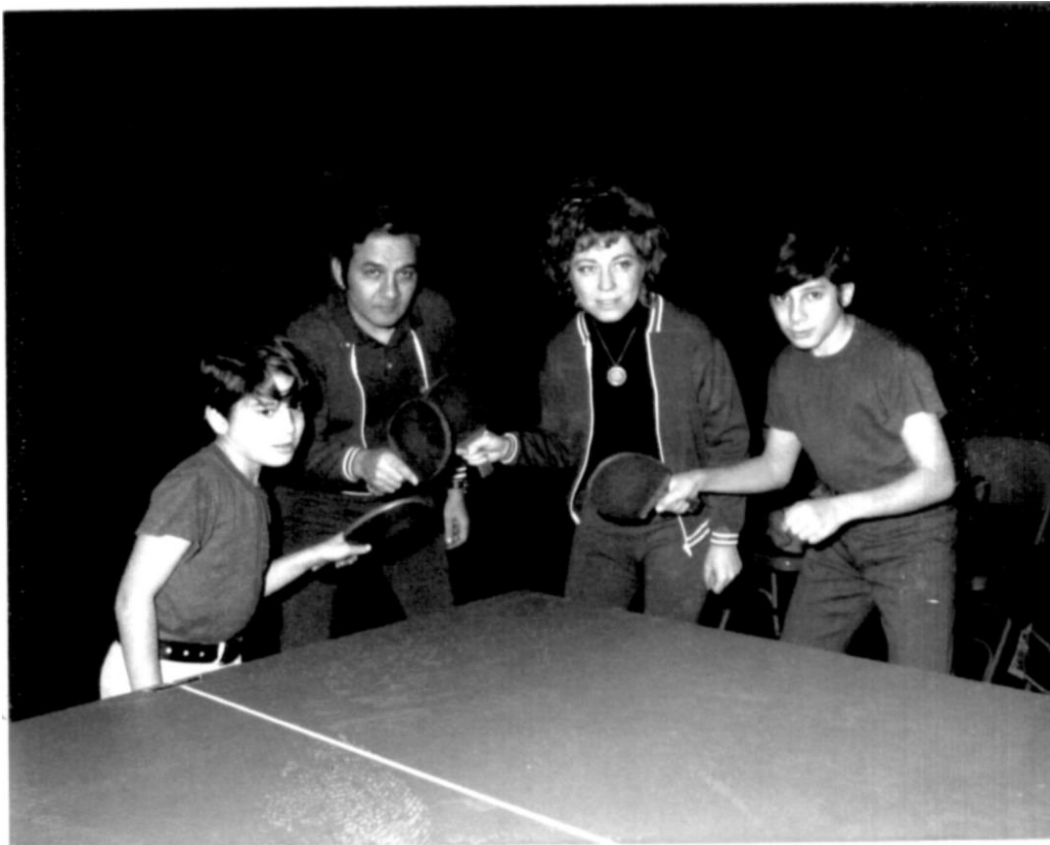


Family Pong

A Table Tennis History of the Zakarin Family
(1965 – 1983)



Narrated and Edited by Jeff “Yosi” Zakarin

FAMILY PONG

Contents

Copyright.....	4
Acknowledgements	5
Dedication.....	6
Foreword	7
A Guide to Reading this History	9
Chapter 1 - Beginnings.....	10
Chapter 2 - Evelyn's Story.....	12
Chapter 3 - Learning to Play	13
Chapter 4 - Consolation	15
Chapter 5 - Tiny Terror.....	18
Chapter 6 - House Guest.....	21
Chapter 7 - Errol and Jairie	23
Chapter 8 - Philadelphia Story.....	26
Chapter 9 - Atlanta.....	28
Chapter 10 - Doubles.....	31
Chapter 11 - Exposure	33
Chapter 12 - Summer of 1972.....	39
Chapter 13 - Executive Committee	41
Chapter 14 - World's, Part I.....	45
Chapter 15 - Baby Battle Royale.....	49
Chapter 16 - Junior Team.....	51
Chapter 17 - Chuck and Eric.....	55
Chapter 18 - The Margolins.....	59
Chapter 19 - Fighting Family	60
Chapter 20 - Family Honor.....	63
Chapter 21 - Money Time	65
Chapter 22 - Houston, We Have a Problem	67
Chapter 23 - Quebec.....	68
Chapter 24 - World Table Tennis	69
Chapter 25 - Swan Song, Part I.....	74
Chapter 26 - The Trophy, Part I.....	76
Chapter 27 - World's, Part II	77
Chapter 28 - Swan Song, Part II	79
Chapter 29 - Family Reunion	80
Chapter 30 - Comeback	81
Chapter 31 - The Trophy, Part II.....	83
Chapter 32 - The End.....	86
Afterword.....	88
Final Word - 2007	91

FAMILY PONG

Family Pong

A Table Tennis History of the Zakarin Family
(1965 – 1983)



Narrated and Edited by Jeff “Yosi” Zakarin

Copyright

Family Pong: A Table Tennis History of the Zakarin Family (1965 – 1983)

Copyright © Jeff "Yosi" Zakarin, 2001, 2007. All rights reserved.

Inquiries:

Jeff "Yosi" Zakarin

Telephone: +972-54-9256752

Email: yzakarin@yahoo.com

Acknowledgements

To my father-in-law, Gerard Kreisberg, whose family history, set against the background of World War II and the Holocaust, inspired me to tell my own story.

To my brother, Chuck Zakarin, for his endearing support for this work.

To my parents, Evelyn and Mort Zakarin, for their contribution of stories as well as materials from the family archive, which they thoughtfully stored in their home for 25 years or so.

And, finally, to my loving wife, Racheli Kreisberg Zakarin, who encouraged me to start (and to finish!) this project.

Dedication

Family Pong is dedicated to you, our children. I hope you will enjoy reading this document. If you find it worthy, I will be most pleased if you would pass it on to your own children someday.

FAMILY PONG

Foreword

“The family that plays together stays together.”

- *A well-known proverb*

“The family that plays together keeps on playing.”

- *Zakarin's Corollary*

Shortly after we married, my wife Racheli and I were discussing the possibility of joining some kind of community – a group of like-minded people bonded by their involvement in a shared experience. Racheli remembered the closeness of the tiny Jewish community in her childhood hometown of Utrecht, Holland – a closeness that was missing from her life at present. I, on the other hand, was skeptical. I had never belonged to a community, and didn't see any advantage to being involved in one.

The truth was that I had simply forgotten. I *had* belonged to a community, along with my parents, Evelyn and Mort, and my brother, Chuck, as a young ping-pong player in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The people we met, at table tennis clubs and during 10-20 weekends a year on the tournament circuit, became our best friends, an extended family that was in reality closer to us than our real extended family.

Even though none of the Zakarins ever achieved true greatness as players, I believe that we were rather unique – **a ping-pong family** in which *all* the family members were active players. Having one's family around had several advantages. For one, involved parents could gently bring a discouraged child back to the game following a brush with disappointment. The table tennis scene was filled with talented young players who, lacking parental support, left the game following a major setback. Moreover, an active parent could immediately jump in and fight for the rights of his child when he or she was being treated unfairly.

But still, why compile a family history such as this? In April of the year 2000, I took possession of the family ping-pong archives, from my parents, who had stored them for so many years. The archives included newspaper clippings, photos, as well as the huge stack of *Table Tennis Topics*, the official publication of the United States Table Tennis Association, in which we were mentioned hundreds of times. Going over the materials, and having been overcome by a wave of nostalgia, I realized that there was a story to be told, a slice of family history that, if presented properly, could prove interesting reading for future generations of Zakarins in the years to come. I only hope that the results will meet the expectations.

FAMILY PONG

With love,
Jeff “Yosi” Zakarin
February 2001



**Family Pong poses for the camera in 1971.
From left to right: Chuck, Mort, Evelyn, and Jeff Zakarin.**

A Guide to Reading this History

The narration is provided by yours truly.

Contributions by Evelyn, Mort, and Chuck Zakarin are noted as such.

Many of the inserted texts and pictures were originally published in *Table Tennis Topics*, the official magazine of the United States Table Tennis Association. A word of thanks is due here to the longtime editor of *Topics*, J. R. “Tim” Boggan, professor of English, and ping-pong storyteller.

Although I tried sincerely to refrain from using abbreviations and acronyms, it proved occasionally unavoidable. Here is a list of terms and their meanings to aid the reader:

USTTA	United States Table Tennis Association (today USA Table Tennis)
<i>Topics</i>	<i>Table Tennis Topics</i> , the official publication of the USTTA
E. C.	Executive Committee, the governing body of the USTTA
LITTA	Long Island Table Tennis Association
World’s	The World Table Tennis Championships, then held every two years
National’s	The U.S. Open Table Tennis Championships, which until 1976 were also regarded as the National Championships