

# Gateball Travels

**By Jack and Audrey Weller**

Thanks to Mr Keith McLeod we were able to contact two people who were able to assist us to play gateball on our recent trip to Singapore and Hong Kong. Mr Wong Kwai Wah from the Singapore Gateball Association arranged a series of gateball games whilst we on holidays there.

Mr Wong, himself, was unable to play as he was working.

Nevertheless with Mr Ng as the translator, we had a great deal of fun.

Our hosts were an interesting group of retired gentlemen but deadly when playing the game.

The court was between two rows of high-rise apartments, encircled with a concrete wall at seating height and perfectly positioned to prevent the balls being sparked out for more than

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**Mr Ng and grandchild**



a yard. It was evident from the lights that there were night games as well.

A unique scoreboard topped it off. It was made of a series of brass hinges four across and five down. When the hinges are closed the board is one colour. After a ball has passed through a gate, the hinge is opened showing the appropriate colour and number. These players seem to play every day and they are very good. A few days later we met with the lovely Mr and Madam Wong who were both teachers. They came after

school, joined us for a meal which included lots of talking to be continued when we return next year.

Prior to our arrival in Hong Kong, we had been in contact with Mr Lai Huck Son who went to a lot of trouble to organize a day playing gateball with us. Meeting us in the hotel, he initiated us in the process of catching the MTR and then onto a bus for the gateball courts.

There were two very nice courts- one with broad leaf grass and the other with artificial grass, which was excellent to play on,

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**Jack receiving Hong Kong banner with group of players**



even in the rain. No score board here because everyone kept the results on their timer attached to their wrist. Their tactics were interesting to note. Ignoring the passing of a ball through the gates, they preferred to set up “double touches” first. They were very successful at that.

There was quite a number of players wanting to be involved so we had to change around for each game, take many photos with everyone’s camera, say “hello” to all the sightseers over the fence, meet the next group and play the next game. We exchanged gifts, had a meal at the end of the day and then Mr Lai insisted on seeing us back to the hotel.



**Mr & Mrs Lai with Mr & Mrs Weller**

Overall we were made very welcome in both countries and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

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**Mr Tong - head coach and referee**

