



## From Abe and Jodie, China

While out witnessing one night, we came upon a group of young people who were joking about a plane in the sky, saying, "It could be a UFO!"

As I stopped to listen to their conversation, one of them asked the others, "Who has seen a UFO?"

I couldn't help but enter into the conversation, and piped up from behind them, I have!" They all turned around in surprise, and barraged me with questions.

One person asked, "What kind of UFO did you see? Do you believe in God?" I told them that I do believe in God and that I believe UFOs are angels. (See ML 283-16-1854-42)



# 283:16; 1854:42.) It was a little hard trying to control the

whole witnessing situation I now found myself in. What had started out as a simple statement now led to a variety of topics, ranging

from angels to abortion. (Abortion was a difficult topic, and had me praying desperately that I would say the right thing, without causing any potential security breaches, or coming across with political overtones. I then made a swift sidestep to another topic, ha!)

These young people were so eager to know and learn about the Bible. It turned out that one of them was a Christian. He got turned on by my witness and is very interested in meeting again. I got his phone number and we have arranged to meet.

Pray for him and the many others who are searching for the truth!

MY LAST CHANCE?

From Tuchi (20)

I was fourteen when I met Gabe again. He was not much older than me, struggling with the difficulties of growing up like I was. From the beginning our friendship blossomed and our times together were fun and enjoyable.

What separated us, I still don't know, there were harsh words and tears. The image of his rain-soaked hair, mirrored by the tears slivering down his cheek, is seared on my heart and mind. I lacked the courage to make amends, and so we grew further apart. Inside I wanted to make things right, but I had no idea of how to remedy the situation. Everything was distant and too complex to salvage a friendship that I felt had died.

Years passed and I had not heard much of Gabe. Until word came late one April day in 1998: Gabe was in a coma due to a thirty-meter fall he had taken while mountain climbing. My heart momentarily stopped its rhythmic beat, I knew I would never see him again! Though we all prayed for his recovery and doctors did what they could, he died a few weeks later.

There were nights when I'd lie awake wishing I had resolved our differences and seen our friendship through, but it was all a thing of the past. I wondered if he had forgiven the hurt I had caused him, if he looked down from Heaven on my heart and understood the pain.

The year was nearing an end when I heard the answer to my request. It wasn't elaborate, but everything I needed to appease the regret I felt. I

was thinking of Gabe, when I heard a distinct voice in my head say: "I always considered you a friend!"

Tears filled my eyes. I knew this was his way of saying all was forgotten, and my heart was at peace.

Never again do I want to end a day without making things right. I may never have another chance to say "I love you," as was the case with Gabe. Today may be my only opportunity to show someone I care. I can only do that if I live each moment as if it is my last, and learn to treasure the love and friendships I am blessed to share.

## eature:

This section is a collection of personal accounts from some of the young people in WS on the topic of sports, competition, aggression and comparing in sports. Sports are a wonderful way to use up energy, and to enjoy each other's company, but sadly, sometimes they end in accidents, which could often have been prevented with a little more prayerfulness and care while playing.

We hope that these accounts and lessons learned will be a help, so you won't have to make the same mistakes some of us have.

is, and it's hard to have to watch them in pain, and know you were the cause. One time, after an accident on the playing field, I was getting quite frustrated with myself, and I asked the Lord what I could do, and why I was having such a problem getting the victory in

this area. He said that it wasn't enough for

> game, but I had to pray *during* the game as well. That was the hardest thing for me to imagine doing, as it seemed to me it would be "breaking the spirit of the game," but it was exactly what I needed to do. It's not

me to pray before a HAVE WAITED A MOMENT LONGER FOR MY COMPETITION FIX.

By Rusty (24)

Competitiveness is something that I was born with, and it has only increased with age. Being the best, or at least a worthy opponent, was the goal of playing sports for me. I would get a certain rush from making a point, completing the play, or simply stopping the other team from winning. While playing, nothing else mattered—my only focus was the win.

If you've seen the movie For Love of the Game, there's a scene where the pitcher shuts out all the noise of the crowd and just focuses on the person who is batting that's how I'd get. Nothing else mattered at that moment, and I didn't care who or what got in my way—I'd just go for it and pick up the pieces later.

Because of that, I caused a lot of accidents, and it was usually the other worst of it.

> muscles, I would maybe rest it for a day, but then I'd be right back in the fray. I was addicted. We used to joke at get-out time, "Okay, time to get our competition fix!" For me that wasn't a joke. It was such an addiction that unless I was a complete invalid, I'd still be out there playing.

> I think the first thing I ever had united prayer for in my life was against competitiveness. And it became a regular prayer request. You would think that I would've learned my lesson since then, and am now the living example of peace and love on the get-out field ... that would be a nice thought! The truth is, it's a daily struggle! It's

my "old man," and once I yield to it, it usually takes a brick wall to stop me.

When a person gets hurt in the game, you see how unimportant the score really That's not to say I don't get competitive any more, but now I have a Coach who is coaching me and giving me the signals during the game, rather than a chewing-out after!



easy, but with the Lord's help I

have been making progress.

guy who got the Even when I did get injured, or had sore DAD I'M JUST COMPETIN' TO SEE WHO'S GONNA KEEP AWAKE LONGEST

## \*\*GIVEMEACHANCE

All my life I've enjoyed playing sports immensely. I could never understand why some of the other girls wanted to play on the swings and slides, or walk. WALK?! I loved to be in on the 100-people soccer games on the dirt field, kickball on a grassy plain, or dodge ball on the gravel mound. You know what I'm talking about! Problem was, though I loved the games, the games didn't always love me, or rather my fellow team members didn't exactly take to my, er, lack of coordination.

Okay, so I'm not an athletic pro! I can say that now without a great feeling of desolation. I have finally learned to accept that maybe I wasn't born to pursue a career in the NBA, NFL, NHL, or anything remotely requiring coordination ... thus my current desk job.

In spite of my lacks in the sports department, I currently still enjoy a good game of soccer, or such, and though I may not be MVP (most valuable player) of the year, I'm still accepted in the games. However, I have learned to give a warning to my fellow players that though it may *look* like I'm going to kick the ball in one direction, it doesn't necessarily mean that that's where the ball will indeed end up going.

My objective: Kick forward right. Pass to Greg Goalmaker.

My action: Kick backwards left. Perfect pass to Oliver Opponent ... GOAL?

Amazingly, these days my fellow team members will look at me with smiles (albeit pitying ones) and say, "Hey, that's okay! It was a good try."

I can't say this was always my experience. I remember many a time in my younger years getting glaring looks after a less-than-helpful football move.

Play: I catch the football pass. I run the wrong direction with it. Wow, why is nobody trying to catch me? I must be incredibly fast today!

You get the picture, right? After completing an amazing maneuver such as the above, I was usually bombed with dirty looks, bad vibes, and painful comments such as, "What's wrong with you?"

I can't say I blame them, but the worst effect of my untalented attempts was not being given a second chance the next time around. Chances were that Quentin Quarterback never threw a pass to me again. That hurt, and the more I engaged in sports, the more I noticed that me, and all my athletically challenged buddies, were being less and less included in the games. The games turned into several one-man shows, with the rest of us looking on in boredom.

We were usually the very last ones to be picked for the team games, and often there was dialogue like, "Well who's going to take her?"

"You can take her. She won't make a big difference on either team."
Ouch!

Granted, not all of the great athletes of my Home were quite so insensitive. There



years of change from nine to thirteen. It's a time that most everyone is in desperate need of acceptance from their peers, and yet also a time that the "kids can be so cruel" saying rings loud and clear ... and far too often.

So my point in all of this is this: If you are one of the gifted few and have natural athletic abilities, take a moment to put yourself in the other person's shoes. It may be difficult to imagine, but try to think of yourself with their lacks in the sports department. Then try to imagine how you'd like to be treated, how you'd like to be given a second chance, how you'd like to be dealt with patiently, even when you do blow a point, or even a whole game.

Everyone has a talent for something. Maybe yours is sports and theirs is something of equal or greater value and importance.—And as much as it may be difficult for you to think so, a game is still just a game. Ideally, we should be playing for fun, fellowship, and exercise. Shock! Gasp! Winning isn't everything, and when the games are done. you won't be remembered for your power kick or lightning serve, you'll be remembered by your quality of character, and by the kind words you've spoken, and the loving consideration you've shown.



By Evye (21)



BROKEN

WAIT!!

## CRASH

I'm not really good at sports in general, but I am very competitive in other ways. I compare a lot, which can cause me to be competitive, because I start competing against people in an attempt to match up to or equal their abilities.

When I was eleven or twelve my family moved to a picturesque Home in the mountains. There was this guy there that I had a crush on, and I was trying to impress him in any way possible, but I couldn't seem to get his attention. One day, only days after I'd arrived, we were having get-out in the Home's parking area, which slanted downwards from the house.

The other girls were playing different games, and I knew I wasn't as good as they were at anything

they were playing. But to my happy surprise, because I'd been looking for a way to compete with them, I noticed this bicycle leaning against the house and I decided that I would just zoom around on it and hopefully look

like a real pro.—You know, long hair blowing in the wind and stuff, ha! On closer inspection of the bike, the only thing that seemed wrong with it was that it was too big for a little girl like me. But I hopped on anyway.

One of the girls came up to me and asked me, "Are you gonna ride that bike?"
"Yes, of course," I answered. "Why, did you want to, or

something?"

She said she couldn't ride the bike because it was too big for her. Aha! Now there was no turning back for me.

All set to go, I sat a tad straighter and prouder than a minute before. Here was my chance to prove to this guy that I was worthy of his attention. After all, the girl I thought he liked couldn't do what I was about to do.

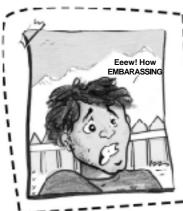
I put my foot on the pedal, and sure enough the guy I was trying

to impress noticed me on the bike. He yelled out something about it being broken. I couldn't exactly hear what he said, so, pretending that I didn't notice him, and after the initial effort struggling to keep my balance and get going, I took off and rode around as planned.

All went well, until I made a terrible mistake. Instead of just going back and forth I headed downwards.— Bad idea! Suddenly I realized that the bike's brakes were completely shot and I was heading for a beautiful, wooden fence that the Home's handyman had finished building only days earlier.

Sure enough, there was no time for me to stop myself, and I went crashing straight through the fence. Not only was I thoroughly embarrassed that day, but every day, for the rest of my time in that













Home, there was this ugly hole in the fence, a constant reminder to me that competitiveness doesn't pay, because the Lord wasn't going to let me get away with it, and it will show me up in some way or another.

## point of view

I consider myself more of a player-coach. I love to play. and I have fun and fellowship with the young people while playing sports. It is my opinion that it's almost impossible not to get competitive while playing sports. There has to be a certain amount of competition in order

to motivate people to get the exercise they need. So I would like to give this little tip as far as playing sports goes.

I have to admit that I am concerned about the score. I do try to get our team to win, and inside I have a competitive nature. But I would say that the key is—and I think that people who have played with me would testify to this fact—that during the game, you wouldn't really know I'm competitive. Because what others can see, and what comes out in my comments and actions, show that my main motivation for being out there is to have fun and to get exercise.

It's important to be a team player, to help your teammates score and participate, to have fun and give others a chance to excel, too. I think all those points are very important for the sake of maintaining unity and helping people have fun and enjoy themselves. It's like the verse that says, "He that hath no rule over his

very important in sports to have control over your own spirit—in your words, your actions, your reactions, and whatever other way is necessary—even if on the inside you may really want to win.

When you look around at the different ones you play sports with, you'll find the ones you enjoy playing with the most are the ones that are good, enjoy it, but are not competitive. It doesn't mean that they aren't striving to win, but on the outward appearance they're not making it so known that it's their main goal or prime requisite for playing sports.

So I would just like to share that as a little tip from a coach. God bless you. I love you.

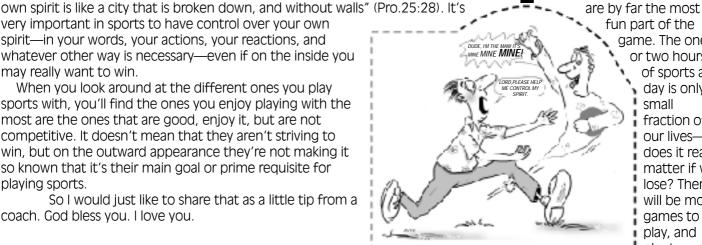
score. But numerous injuries have taught me that what Dad said years ago is really true about the person being more important than the

Another thing I've found helpful is to ask for just a few words from the Lord before going for get-out. One day when I did this, the Lord told me not to play too hard, but to take it easy and slow. I felt fine, so I wondered about this until I found myself heading for a collision with two other guys! Thankfully, because of what the Lord had told me earlier, I wasn't going as fast as I normally would have been, and as a result I only slightly bruised my shoulder instead of what could have easily been a fall resulting in a broken collar bone. Boy. was I thankful!

All in all, I'd say sports are fun, but above all, the people involved in the sport

> game. The one or two hours of sports a day is only a small fraction of our lives does it really matter if we lose? There will be more games to play, and

plenty more times to win, but an injured player may never be able to play again.



By Keith (24)

One of my teen snepnerus once told me that if you wanted to see a person's true nature, get them out for some sort of active to see a person's true nature, get them out for some sort of active sport. I've found that to be true—the soccer field, volleyball court or any sporting event can bring out my deepest, darkest nature.

I often fall into the mode of "score at all costs," and it's usually at that time that I end up having an accident. Not too long ago I prayed about it and the Lord showed me that there's a difference between playing hard and negative competition. The key for me was to keep the other players in mind when playing sports. No matter how hard I'm playing, keeping others safe and helping them avoid injury is more important than winning. But the moment that slips from mind and my focus turns to the ball, and *only* the ball, that becomes the wrong form of competition.

It's a challenge and a rush to get the ball past someone, or around them, and



## EXTREMES+PRIDE=imjur

"To the death" was my favorite saying when it came to a game of soccer, baseball, touchdown, volleyball, or any sport for that matter. By the age of twelve, sports had become the essence of my existence, or so I liked to believe. Winning was my only objective as soon as the games would begin. Injuries were the last thing to keep me from a win, and even when my legs were a display of every color combination, and I would habitually limp off the field once the game was done, there was nothing to stop me from being out there for the next game. Oddly enough, though you'd think it from my many accidents, in general I'm not a clumsy

It was no small boost to my ego, as I got more skilled in sports, that I became one of the first people chosen by the team captains for group games, even though I

was a girl. I knew I was competitive, but I figured that was what kept a game exciting, and even what *made* a game. I didn't get / the point when aggression and competitiveness became the topic of my Word assignments and frequent corrections.

Sports were the first thing I felt I achieved in. Being shy by nature, it was hard to step out and do anything that I was not completely confident in, and that's what I loved about sports—I knew what I was doing and how to play a game. So I gave it my all.

I never thought of accidents as a reason to quit sports, or even to mellow my fervor. To me they were my "wounds of war." I hated letting on that I was hurt, and mostly, I disliked sympathy, I thought it implied I was a wuss, or would I lead to me sitting out the next game. Accidents were just a part of my existence. I surmised. And as I got older. the injuries maintained a steady increase as well—sprained ankles, chipped and

playing. I find it best to just call the game quits for myself. Otherwise, without a doubt, I'll end up having an accident or hurting someone. Fortunately, for the most part I normally do myself in rather than someone else, but it's still no excuse to get out of hand, and become overly competitive or aggressive.

For me this will remain an area in my life that I'll have to

ABSOLUTELY! BE THERE IN A SEC

TO THE

DEATH!

be aware of. Knowing that I am prone to be competitive forces me to tread carefully. That doesn't mean I don't over-step the bounds—I often do-but when I

do, I usually have the consequences to pay for in the form of an accident.

And I guess that's the can be enjoyed with a good amount of sportsmanship. It's

conclusion I've reached: Sports not wrong to want to excel in



broken teeth, gashes, broken bones, bruised body and face, and the list went on. I couldn't imagine any other way to release my energy than to engage in sport.

But loving the thrill of extremes has its downside, I found.—Often leading me to an "adventure" that would result in injury. It didn't happen every time, but it seemed somewhere I overlooked a clause, or instruction the Lord gave me, that read, "Be careful, wise and prayerful at all times. Pray before doing something regretful." But I didn't get the point.

Slowly, and through numerous accidents, I've realized where this careless attitude is leading, and if I don't start changing my reckless behavior I will have worse consequences to pay. For example, at the beginning of this year, I had an accident while playing soccer which landed me on crutches and banned me from all running and sports for seven weeks. It started in an attempt to prove to someone that I wasn't as bad at soccer as his disapproving look seemed to say when my shot on the goal missed. In competitiveness I got aggressive and ended up with a hairline fracture and a swollen, horribly bruised and discolored leg.

Being on crutches gave me time to think over my past years of injury, competition and aggression. Someone once asked me what was the difference between competitiveness and aggressiveness, and it got me thinking. I had always classified myself as competitive, and perhaps, I used to be aggressive, but I was certain I had left all that behind, yet my mind kept churning. Then why do I always end up hurt? Whose fault was it?

A little competition adds to a game and makes it fun, but when it starts to become an obsession to win, or makes me aggressive with other players, then something is wrong. And when I find myself tapering on the edge of frustration while I'm sports, as long as it doesn't hurt others or yourself. And it's important to be careful and prayerful, as it's so easy to hurt yourself when exerting your body in this way.

I try to remember the saying that I never quite got the point of before: It's just a game!





I've never considered myself very competitive in sports. Part of the reason for this was that I never had much opportunity to play a lot of team sports when I was younger, and as I've gotten older, there hasn't been a lot of time for it either. Of course, I was a career combo-capture-the-flag player in my day, so I'm not saying I never had any get-out. But I never had much of a chance to practice or excel in games that required a bit more skill and practice.

But it was this same lack of skill and experience that made me more, rather than less, competitive when I did'try to compete in such games—for what I might define as an innate sports-inferiority-complex. I'd tell myself I was such an inexperienced player that, in order to be able to get anywhere on the court, I had to be just a little more aggressive and pushy. It's not because I wanted to be competitive, or even because I was so passionate about the sport, but simply because I wanted the encouragement of at least getting a ball in the hoop or scoring a goal every now and then.—And I couldn't do that by just playing passively.

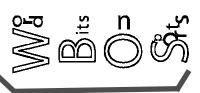
So that's when I discovered that I actually did carry a little besetting sin by the name of competitiveness.—That plain old desire to win and prove myself, even at the expense of others. The problem is, if you don't keep it in check, people *can* get hurt. And more than once I have been the cause of other people's injuries, which is not a nice feeling to carry with you, especially when you see that person still limping a week later.

Of course, like all coins, there are two sides to competitiveness, and a little competitiveness, in moderation and with the proper balance, can add to the game. But the key is definitely *moderation*. One thing that does help me personally to tone down my aggressiveness and pushiness, is to become a little more practiced in whatever sport I'm playing, and mostly to be mindful of those I'm playing with. Whether we win or lose doesn't really matter as much as whether we have fun, and have gotten some good, vigorous exercise.

As for me, I think I'll stick to shooting from the three-point line.

'Are you a good sport?" (ML 179A, Vol. 2)
'Play It Safe!" (ML 2082, Vol. 16)
'The World Cup and Sports" (IN "World Cur-

"The Love Game"



"Winning isn't that important! Winning one point certainly isn't that important. It would be better to lose the game and save the person than to try to win the game and hurt the person! Amen? So please try to be more prayerful and more careful, more considerate, more thoughtful of other people, and put first things first. And the most important thing is not to hurt anybody—

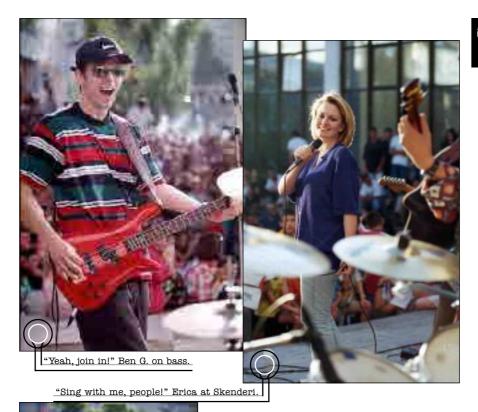
"Do your best to make it impossible for accidents to happen!"

"It's better to miss the shot and lose the point than to hurt somebody! Let's not take any chances."

(Excerpts from "Play it Safe!" ML 2082)



not win the game!"



**Story** • As the first hint of spring melted the frozen winter, thousands of young people began filling the streets of Kosovo again.—And the desire to reach them was ignited. • • •

"You gotta feel the rhythm." –Teen David.



"Play your guitar, David!"



"Peeking from behind, huh?" Tim on drums.

"I sing my song for you..." —Albanian Peter

• • • Band members of Silk 'n' Steel—David, Ben G., Jason and Tim A. joined us from the Studio Home in Budapest.

Several Albanian nationals joined us from Albania, as well as David, Tim and Perla from Houston, Texas. Their Home sent six containers of humanitarian aid for Kosovo that arrived while the concerts were underway.



"I'm in the spotlight, what a rush!"



"It's got to be just right." Tim setting up for the show at Skenderi.





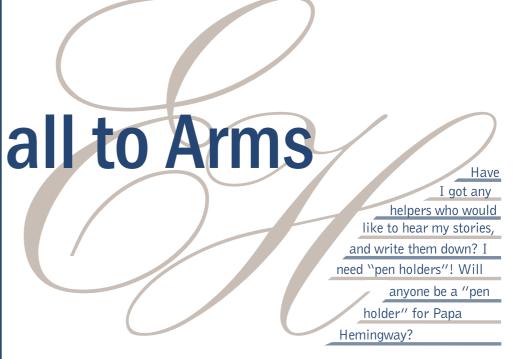
(Hemingway, Ernest Miller, American novelist, born July 21, 1899. Nobel prizewinning author. Married four times, with several sons and a daughter. Legendary, macho Hemingway was a world traveler with a passion for game hunting, and was also attributed with being a braggart, boozer and bully. Thirty-eight years ago he took his life with one of his guns. An "undiscovered" Hemingway novel has appeared, to be published by his three sons, and is a "factional" account of a safari in Africa made by Hemingway and his wife, Mary, in 1953.)

Early the next morning, I woke before daybreak with an urgency to pray for Ernest Hemingway again. I didn't know what to pray for, but as I began praying the Spirit took over and I prayed very specific requests for him that amazed me.

Different things happened throughout the following week that kept bringing his name to my attention. Finally, early one morning I awoke feeling Ernest wanted to speak. I was beginning to feel on a more personal level with Ernest. I asked him how he was feeling, if there was anything he wanted me to pray for, and what did he want to do, etc. He said he wanted to serve Jesus by serving the Family.

I was curious and asked him how he wanted to serve the Family. He answered, "By painting pictures with my words!" Wow! As I sat down to work on some other writing one evening, Ernest was there again, asking if he could give his message now! Here it is:

(Ernest Hemingway speaking:) He's got me in the nursery. He thought it would be good therapy for me to put me in the nursery telling exciting and edifying



## From DanielTaxi-driver,Australia

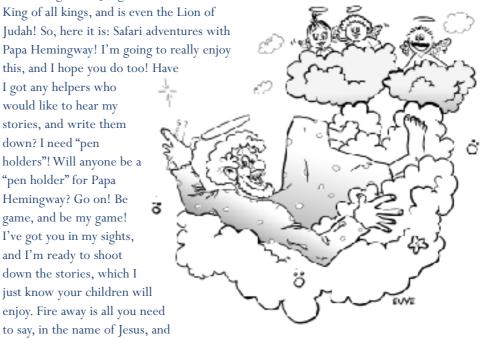
I knew very little about Ernest Hemingway, except that he was a famous writer who shot himself, and that Margot Hemingway, the tall model, was his daughter. That was the limit of my knowledge concerning this Nobel prizewinning author. Recently I overheard a portion of a TV program about him. So I prayed for him. The next day I was in a café when I got a strong check to pick up a magazine. I opened it straight to a story about him.

children's stories. I can use all my safari adventures and blend them into edifying and acceptable stories that mommies would tell their little children. None of that gun and shooting stuff.—Adventure stories for little children! Stories of the animal kingdom, all the wonderful things animals get up to.

I am a new creature myself now, thanks to the King of the Jungle, because He is the King of all kings, and is even the Lion of Judah! So, here it is: Safari adventures with Papa Hemingway! I'm going to really enjoy this, and I hope you do too! Have

I got any helpers who would like to hear my stories, and write them down? I need "pen holders"! Will anyone be a "pen holder" for Papa Hemingway? Go on! Be game, and be my game! I've got you in my sights, and I'm ready to shoot down the stories, which I just know your children will enjoy. Fire away is all you need I'll let go with the buckshot of Heaven! (End of message.)

(FZ: Come on, folks, and give it a try! Your little brothers and sisters love the Heaven's Library stories, and need lots more of them! You can help feed, teach and inspire them by getting fresh, new, exciting stories to contribute to the mag!)

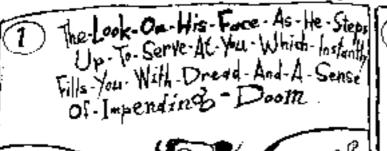


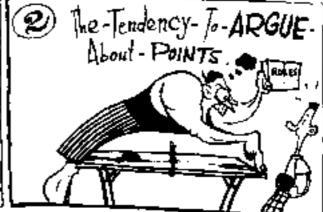


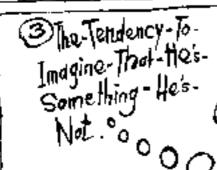
• How To Recognise It.

How To Kid Yourself That You pon't Have It BIGTIME When We fell Know That You Bo

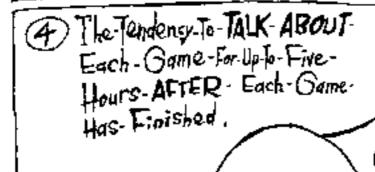
To Fully crisp the Concept of competitive ness, let's observe Senior Took Conan during a typical game of Ping Ping Ping, Can you spot the Subtle-yet-Tell-Tale Signs such as...







THE CROWD IS GOING



THAT COOL BACKSDIN LOB/
TRIPLE HEIMLICH-MANOEUVRI SMASH

Note to the studies Reader: If you have displayed one or more of their Tell-Tale Signs, symptoms during Your Get-Out Times, it's Not too LATE to get HELD!

ASK for prayer. & Lighten Up. & and Learn To ENJOY Ping-Pang.

