



Vanishing point: Leon The Magician makes table disappear

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Many players might claim to have a 'magic' shot in their lockers to win a difficult rally. But not many can resort to making the table disappear before their opponent's eyes.

Yet that is what Urban TTC player and coach Leon Thomson – alias Leon The Magician – does in this video.

Setting up the illusion, which was performed at Barnet TTC, has been on the 21-year-old's mind for some years, but he says being at the World Championships in Dusseldorf in May – where he met the England squad – inspired him to work out how it could be done.

He said:

Ever since I've been playing table tennis, which is about 10 years, I've always wanted to make a table disappear and, knowing I'm a magician, a lot of people in the sport have said it to me as well.

I thought it would be a fun idea and something that would generate interest in table tennis and magic.

Although I've been thinking about it for 10 years, I was sitting at the World Championships in Dusseldorf a few weeks ago and I realised how I could actually do it.

Leon came to table tennis as a way of taking a break from planning magic tricks and shows, but soon found it actually helped with that process.

He said:

It's quite nerve-wracking doing the shows and it's constantly on my mind. Playing table tennis takes my mind off the stresses and worries – otherwise I'd end up going crazy!

It's mainly the reason I started playing and the more I played, the more it came into my life. Now it seems I'm a full-time coach as well as a full-time magician – it's a dream.

I quite often find if I'm struggling with something and I play table tennis for a while, it's all clear afterwards what I need to do.

Of course, magicians never reveal the secrets behind their tricks, but that doesn't stop people asking 'how did you do that?'

His answer ("I did it very well!") sheds no further light on the matter, but what is certain is that more table tennis tricks are in the pipeline.

Leon added:

Now people are asking me if I can make the ball disappear in mid-rally and people are coming up to me with ideas for tricks.

Making a troublesome opponent vanish into thin air is probably a stretch, but Leon is ready to keep fooling table tennis players and the public alike with his illusions.

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