



# ~ Chec Toe ~



Welcome to the International Body Of Chec Toe, an organisation dedicated to the pursuit of making Chec Toe a recognised sport. Chec Toe is a 4x4 Chess variant played with a six sided die, incorporating uniquely designed features, such as Checkering, Cross Positioning and Wizardry. IBOCT was founded by Simon Jepps in 2021 and he is the inventor of the game.

*The next evolution of Chess is not the evolution of new pieces. It is not even the evolution of a singular piece. Nor will it be the evolution of sixty four squares unto a hundred squares, or more.*

*Aye, now behold the spirit of new squares and pieces, yet as if created only from the magic of the player's own hands.*

*For the evolution of Chess is in all purest truth, thine own revolution of adventure, thine own embracing of mindful spirit and ultimately, thine own pursuit of shared happiness.*

*Behold here the magical pastime of Chec Toe, which amidst its seeming simplicity and minimalism of play, brings a myriad of new tactics, a sorcery of kind and a labyrinth of wonder unto a once ancient battle.*

*Aye, for Chec Toe is the new art of war.*



## Of The Beginning

Chec Toe is a completely different type of Chess Variant to anything you may have found published before.

In fact, it may surprise you to know, that this game is actually itself a variant of a variant of another completely different game altogether.

It all began many, many years ago when I became intrigued by a small and quirky Chess teaching aid, called 'Tic Tac Chec'.

This little item was just a 4x4 Chess board with four pieces, which was designed to help young children understand the basic concept of Chess piece movement.

Indeed it was and still is a useful teaching aid, yet it was and still is also another kind of Chess variant.

The game of 'Tic Tac Chec', invented by Donald Green ©1995, is quite simply a variation of Tic Tac Toe, but with Chess pieces. Indeed at first glance it sounds quite interesting and yes, it is.

However the reason for my own intervention here in creating a much more advanced variation of Tic Tac Chec, is because in all honesty the original game is not anywhere near the level of intellectual recreation a skilled Chess Player would adore.

Aye, the game of Tic Tac Chec is truly a wonderful curiosity for the person who likes quick and snappy little games, or who wants to teach children the basic concepts of Chess piece movement.



Diagram 1

In this diagram the game is still of the beginning, yet already some interesting scenarios are in play.





Yet whilst again, it was Tic Tac Chec which truly enchanted me with its cute minimalism, it was nevertheless and for the most part, little more than a toy.

My lifetime mission has been an ongoing pursuit to create an equally entertaining and relatively intelligent variation of Chess.

Chec Toe is at last, the love of my life.

Aye, it is of course a much simpler game than Chess, but almighty to behold in the hands of a true master. For this game I am about to teach you, will continue to call to you from the sacred ether of the cosmos, even after you have gone.

Chec Toe seduces all who play it. This game is the divine marriage between the classical music of Chess and the philosophical simplicity of selflessness.

Chec Toe is more than a sport. Chec Toe is the undying of friends.

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## The Great Rules Of Chec Toe

Chec Toe is also played on a 4x4 checkered board. However the game of Chec Toe is actually a tardis of design, appearing immensely smaller and restricted than it is actually beheld to be, once two masters enter its arena.

This is because Chec Toe features various new concepts, including 'cross positioning', 'checkering', 'chance' and 'wizardry', all of which will be clearly described shortly.

Each Player has four pieces:

- 1 Pawn
- 1 Knight
- 1 Bishop
- 1 Rook



Diagram 2  
In this diagram both players have equal chances. White, with Nxb1, Bb2 & Pb4. Black, with Na1, Ba2 & Rxa4.

*ONE regular six sided 'Die' is required to play Chec Toe.*

### The Six Fundamentals

The general theme of both Chec Toe and Tic Tac Chec is the same, in that whilst trying to create a line of four pieces, when a piece is captured it does not remain off the board, but is returned to the Opponent who may 'drop' it back onto any square of the board in a following turn.

Whilst our game Chec Toe is played in a very similar way to Tic Tac Chec, there are SIX fundamental new laws:

- ONLY the piece shown on the die may be dropped or moved. Values '1,2,3,4' represent 'P,N,B,R'.
- A declared 'Toe' ONLY stands as victory if the Opponent cannot capture next move.
- Pawns move ONE square orthogonally in ANY direction, BUT capture ONE square diagonally TOWARDS the Opponent.
- A value of '5' allows ANY piece to be moved or dropped, BUT ONLY if MOVED like a WIZARD.
- A value of '6' is void and REQUIRES a re-roll, BUT if SIX is rolled AGAIN, then ANY piece may be moved or dropped.
- Players MAY Re-Roll at ANY time, BUT unless dropped, the next piece given MUST move WITHOUT CAPTURE like a CHECKER.

The two terms 'Chec' and 'Toe' are defined thus:

**CHEC:** To capture a piece from your Opponent's Toe, thus deeming it void. Play continues until victorious Toe.

**TOE:** To position your four pieces in a straight line, horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Game ends if the Opponent cannot capture.



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## How To Play

The entire board is empty at the beginning of play.

All pieces move exactly the same as they do in Classical Chess, except the Pawns, which move ONE square orthogonally in ANY direction, BUT capture ONE square diagonally TOWARDS the Opponent.

The first Player, usually White, rolls the Die and places the allocated piece onto the board. Values '1,2,3,4' represent 'P,N,B,R'.

If the value is '5' then ANY piece may be dropped anywhere AND also if the value '6' is rolled TWICE in a row. These values also permit ANY piece to move, but these values will be covered in more detail shortly.

The second Player then does the same, placing the allocated piece onto the board.

Once both players have dropped their first piece, the game properly begins. Now whence the Die is rolled, the allocated pieces may either move and capture, or be dropped freshly onto the board.

- Dropped pieces MAY NOT CAPTURE until their turn to move. When a player drops a piece it is merely entered into play. Thus pieces may only be dropped to vacant squares.
  - Dropped pieces count as a complete turn.

Here now, once both players have dropped their first piece onto the board, the Wizard and the Checker both enter play.

The value of '5' is the 'Wizard'. It allows ANY piece to be moved or dropped, BUT ONLY if MOVED like a WIZARD.

The 'Checker' enters play through a Re-Roll. Players MAY Re-Roll at ANY time, BUT unless dropped, the next piece given MUST move WITHOUT CAPTURE like a CHECKER.

Both the Wizard and the Checker will be described in more detail shortly.

Since at the start there were no pieces on the board, a value of '5' or a 'Re-Roll', would only mean a player could only drop. However, whence the first pieces are actually on the board, thence pieces can move like a Wizard whenever the value '5' is given, or like a Checker upon a Re-Roll of '1-4'.

The value of '6' allows ANY piece to be moved or dropped, BUT MUST in their OWN NATURAL WAY and ONLY if rolled TWICE.

The value of '6' is actually void whence first rolled and REQUIRES a re-roll. However if SIX is rolled AGAIN, then ANY piece, PNB or R, may be moved or dropped.

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### Re-Rolls & Checkers

- Players MAY Re-Roll at ANY time, BUT unless dropped, the next piece given (1-4) MUST move WITHOUT CAPTURE like a CHECKER.
  - If the values of '5' or '6' is next given, play continues NORMALLY in accordance with these outcomes instead, allowing pieces to capture.
- The Checker piece in Chec Toe MUST move TWO squares WITHOUT CAPTURING and MUST JUMP the NEAREST square, in ANY direction.

In actuality there is above 60% chance that due to the Checker Re-Roll permission and since the values '5' and '6' allow ANY piece to move, that basically ANY value rolled will be at least of some benefit to your position.

However it is always possible of course that one either may not be able to move at all with the given value or that one will merely be tactically unsatisfied with the outcome.

It is extremely rare that a Player will be absolutely UNABLE to move, yet, if this scenario arises one may, if must, forfeit their turn.

Thus refreshingly crafted herewith, the Re-Roll permission leviates such a dead end scenario, not only returning momentum to the game, but igniting the ancient spirit of the much adored Checker and with it the undying fire of competition.



Diagram 3

In this diagram Black's Bishop is suffering attack from a fast forming White Toe, which if White must abort, will certainly be slain. Black next rolls a '1' which would allow Pb4<sub>v</sub>, almost making the Toe. However Black needs instead to try and attack the White Toe without sacrificing his own. Black cannot save the Bishop easily and so re-rolls for any better hand. Luckily the die grants a '2' and so here, as a Checker, Black plays Nc4<sup>^</sup>, salvaging a possible Wizard capture doubled with a Rook capture if White plays Pa4<sup>°</sup>, and furthermore, recalibrating his own Toe for the opposite a1-d4 diagonal.



Diagram 4

The Checker piece in Chec Toe moves TWO squares WITHOUT CAPTURING in ANY direction and MUST JUMP the NEAREST square. The Checker enters play through a Re-Roll. Players MAY Re-Roll at ANY time, BUT unless dropped, the next piece given MUST move WITHOUT CAPTURING like a CHECKER.







- A value of '6' is void and REQUIRES a re-roll, BUT if SIX is rolled AGAIN, then ANY piece may be moved or dropped.
  - » If the value of '6' is rolled THRICE in a row, then ALL OPPONENT PIECES ARE REMOVED from the board! «
  - However, should the THIRD roll FAIL to produce a '6' thence play MUST resume in accordance with the NEW given value.

The special rule assigned to the value of '6' is carefully designed to allow freedom of choice, but without making such freedom common play.

Whilst of course it feels a natural belonging that such free choice of pieces should be an option of the game, it is likewise the very competing nature of Chec Toe itself to submit unto the die and challenge thine player's fate.

Thus the law of the '6' Re-Roll firmly strikes an equal balance between these two competing concepts.

Here then, the value of '6' brings a thunderstorm unto the game, whereby thine intelligence is forced to summon its own judgement unto the ghost of Chec Toe.

And ultimately, in the instance that one MUST deliver Chec next move, the given value of '6' truly declares Chec Toe the omnipowerful guardian of fate.

Herewith it is possible to roll FOUR times in any turn, but only IF:

- The first roll is Re-Rolled, equalling TWO rolls, but this SECOND Re-Roll gives a '6', thus a REQUIRED Re-Roll, whereby this THIRD roll giving '6' AGAIN and thus a FOURTH Re-Roll.

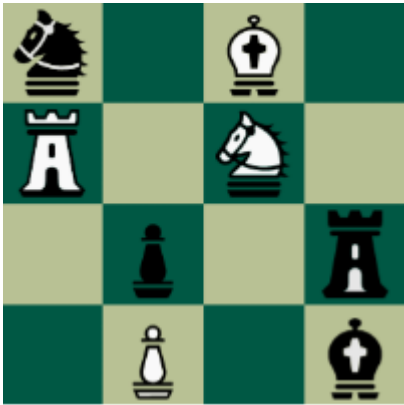


Diagram 5

In this diagram White has just rolled a '4', allowing capture with Rxa4. Yet doing so would disrupt White's forming Toe, since then both the Knight & Bishop would clash on a2. By chance White re-rolls a '1' and plays Pb3^! Now Immediately, a new Toe forms on the 3rd rank, just awaiting Bd3.

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## Pawns

The Chec Toe Pawn is a 360° adaptation of the Chess Pawn.

- Pawns move ONE square orthogonally in ANY direction, BUT capture ONE square diagonally TOWARDS the Opponent.

Whence a value of '5' is rolled, the Pawn, or indeed any piece, may move and capture ONLY like a Wizard.

Thus whilst the Wizard '5' value grants incredible scope to the Pawn, it MAY NOT move orthogonally unless a '1' is rolled, or a '6' is rolled twice.

If a player Re-Rolls and the value given is '1', thence the Pawn may move WITHOUT CAPTURING like a CHECKER.

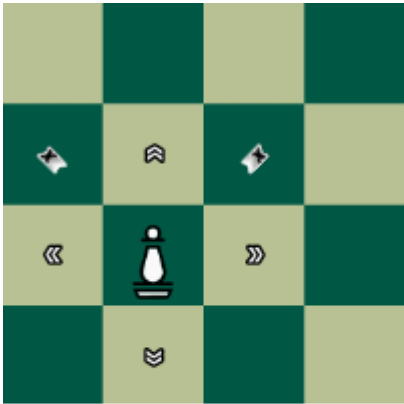


Diagram 6

Pawns in Chec Toe move ONE square orthogonally in ANY direction, BUT capture ONE square diagonally TOWARDS the Opponent.

»» *The new Pawn, Checker and Wizard movement rules are designed to not only augment the dimensional strategy of the game, but to specifically broaden the influential scope of the Pawn, an otherwise neglected piece and thus bring some well sought tactical magic into play.*

*The regular Pawn from Tic Tac Chec presented an irritation, in that since it could barely traverse the board it would always become obvious to each Opponent what the only possible winning combinations would be for the other Player. This is because any combination must employ the Pawn and since the Pawn could hardly move, the only winning combinations were always visible.*

*Furthermore, the regular Pawn from Tic Tac Chec not only finds itself restricted to a singular file unless captured, but harbours a very confusing law of movement upon reaching the far rank. The new Pawn of Chec Toe is herewith enshrined with a beautifully magical philosophy of play.*

Now behold, the WIZARD...

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## Wizardry

Whilst the Wizard piece is not actually amongst a player's inventory, the Wizard's spirit occupies the board.

The Wizard piece was originally invented in 1992 by Daniel MacDonald, for his game Omega Chess, another popular Chess variant.





- The Wizard moves like an elongated Knight, 3,1 as opposed to 2,1, and ONE square diagonally, in any direction.
  - Whence a value of '5' is rolled, this allows ANY piece to be moved or dropped, BUT ONLY if moved like a WIZARD.

However REMEMBER, whilst the Wizard '5' value grants surprise additional options to ALL pieces, PIECES MAY NOT move in their NATURAL manner unless their individual values are rolled, or a '6' is rolled twice.

For example, a White Pawn residing on b2 may thence move like a Wizard to a1, a3, c1 or c3. However it MAY NOT move orthogonally as is its natural way.

Similarly, a Black Rook residing on c4 may thence move like a Wizard to b3, d3, b1 or d1. However it MAY NOT move orthogonally as is its natural way.

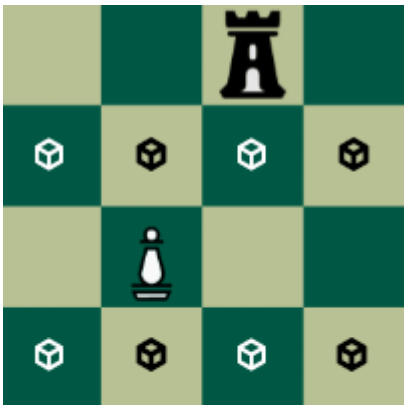


Diagram 7  
The Wizard moves like an elongated Knight, 3,1 as opposed to 2,1, and ONE square diagonally, In any direction. Whence a value of '5' is rolled, this allows ANY piece to move or drop, BUT ONLY if moved like a WIZARD.

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## Tactics Of Chec Toe

At the very beginning I vaguely mentioned something called 'Cross Positioning'. This is a core fundamental but somewhat advanced Chec Toe strategy. Cross Positioning is the practise of actively preparing, analysing and cross referencing each position in tandem with the overlaid participation of both the Checker and the Wizard. Cross Positioning allows you to effectively play a completely different game to that which your Opponent is playing.



Diagram 8  
In this diagram Black has been truly deceived by White's mastery of Cross positioning. White again rolls a '5' allowing Na1°, completing the Toe. Incredibly, Black absolutely MUST also roll a '5' next move, or none of his pieces can capture. Yet oh, alas for Black, as he TWICE rolls a '2' !

Any absence of "choice" then, is mostly an illusion. Remember that each turn you have the choice of playing the Checker and, whilst a mostly restricted piece, it is wildly different to the native character of any regular piece you were first offered. Thus, the Checker is actually extremely useful for escaping a claustrophobic scenario and indeed, covert Cross Positioning against your opponent.

Cross Positioning is actually a VITAL tool during the penultimate stage of your enemy's Toe. You absolutely MUST have at least TWO capturing possibilities available to you should your Opponent make Toe next move, else your chances of survival are grave. Diagram 3 is an excellent example of how Cross Positioning can more than double your chances of survival at the very last second.

Whilst dropping in Chec Toe is only permitted through the luck of a dice roll, the chance of being able to drop EVERY turn is actually AT LEAST 50%, so worry not thine plans of battle.

Try not to overcrowd the board. Whilst having all four pieces out in play is useful to control, capture and combine, dropping fewer pieces creates more space and thus brings the power of maneuverability.

Avoid capturing if unnecessary. A piece on the board often has fewer square options to move to than a piece which can simply be dropped.

Dominate the center of the board as much as possible since this region is where most action takes place.

Avoid same coloured Bishops. Whilst dropping Bishops onto same coloured squares such as your Opponent's might increase chances of capture, it likewise reduces maneuverability about the board.

You are going to lose pieces, it is inevitable. The purposeful strategy of the game is to manipulate how both sides circulate their pieces onto and off the board, until eventually a clever twist in the logic allows you a winning combination.

Thus if you are going to sacrifice a piece, try not to make it a Rook, for they are by far the most powerful piece on the board, subtly controlling the very mechanics of how all the other pieces interact.

Likewise, the Pawn may appear somewhat weakest, but the Pawn is nevertheless purely a Wizard in waiting, and so actually, the Pawn is often equally as dangerous as any other piece, including the Rook.

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## Notation & Correspondence





## Notation

The Chec Toe board, just like the Chess board is algebraic, whereby the files are labelled **a-d** and the ranks **1-4**.

When we move a piece we write its initial letter followed by the square coordinates of its destination.

The initial letters of pieces is as follows:

- P** = Pawn
- N** = Knight
- B** = Bishop
- R** = Rook

We still use "N" instead of "K" for 'Knight' because it is simply a historical and phonetic attribution, but since there is no King in Chec Toe, Players can use "K" if they really desire.

However confusion can arise between how or whether a piece has been dropped, or merely moved. For this reason we use the 'down arrowhead' symbol (▼) to indicate a 'drop', the 'up arrowhead' symbol (▲) to indicate the 'Checker' and the 'degree' symbol (°) to indicate 'wizardry'.

The 'Checker' enters play through a Re-Roll. Players MAY Re-Roll at ANY time, BUT unless dropped, the next piece given MUST move WITHOUT CAPTURE like a CHECKER. To notate the Checker we use the 'up arrowhead' symbol (▲) to indicate the 'jumping of the Checker'.

The 'Wizard' enters play through a value of '5'. Whence a value of '5' is rolled ANY PIECE may move BUT ONLY like a Wizard. To notate the Wizard we use the 'degree' symbol (°) to indicate 'wizardry'. This labelling clarifies the move and prevents misunderstanding the position.

For example:

- a Rook moving into a4 would be written **Ra4**.
- a Rook being dropped onto a4 would be written **Ra4▼**.
- a Rook moving as Checker into a4 would be written **Ra4▲**.
- a Rook moving as Wizard into a4 would be written **Ra4°**.

A capture is notated with an "x", such as **NxB**.

Unlike in Chess where a Pawn is merely notated by square coordinates alone, in Chec Toe we also write the initial letter of the Pawn.

If a value of '6' is rolled THREE times in a row, thus REMOVING ALL OPPONENT PIECES from the board, this is declared an 'Apocalypse' and is notated, "**666**".

If a player CANNOT or DOES NOT wish to MOVE, thence the turn is merely notated with a long blank line as, "\_\_\_\_\_".

## Correspondence

Chess has been played by correspondence for thousands of years. In fact it has even been known to be played via carrier pigeon.

Chec Toe of course features dice and so it is not really possible to play by correspondence.

Yet one of the most interesting aspects of Chec Toe is how the length of any game is just like a piece of string. Even a game played between two masters can last a mere five minutes or go on and on for days.

In this respect it would be nice to be able to play via correspondence without the need for a computer web program, so designed to simulate the randomization of dice.

It is somewhat possible to play naturally by letter, providing you have a reliable witness to your Opponent's move.

In this scenario, your reliable witness would observe the rolling of the die on your behalf and sign the letter, or convey confirmation to you.



Diagram 9

In this diagram White is finding strong opposition preventing completion of his Toe on the 1st rank. This is because Black has all the while been playing in Cross position and, should he roll a '5' next move, will play Nxb3°.





# How To Get A Chec Toe Set

As mentioned earlier, Chec Toe is an evolution of the game Tic Tac Chec, invented by [Donald Green ©1995](#).

Of course it is possible to merely utilise the sixteen central squares of a Classic Chess board, or if you like, take a saw to one.

Sentimentally, chalk has always been one of my most favourite instruments and for spiritual benefit I firmly believe all children should be educated with chalkboards. Thus, a bag of eight pieces, a die and a piece of chalk are truly all one needs to play Chec Toe.



However if you would actually like to purchase an actual purpose made "Chec Toe" set, all you have to do is find one of many 'Tic Tac Chec' sets currently being sold worldwide.

Here are two links to some retailer pages for Tic Tac Chec.

- [Tic Tac Chec ~ Amazon](#)
- [Tic Tac Chec ~ eBay](#)

There are also some older versions of the game floating around on eBay, these being merely a 16 square board without piece slots, in a different, but interesting design. Have a search...!

The authentic modern Tic Tac Chec game set is an adorable little gem, made completely of real wood and features a delightful book-like design to the board.

The set also comes complete with a lovely zip-up canvas case.

Please give Donald Green some due respect, obviously not for Chec Toe since it is really my own creation, but for the fabulous work he has done in getting 'Tic Tac Chec' onto the market.

For without Tic Tac Chec, there may not have become Chec Toe.

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## Thine Victorious Toe

Chec Toe is truly a miracle of the minimalist strategy game.

If not only for the mystical anomalies discovered between players and their choices, but for the unpredictable mortality of their pieces and their plans.

It is true, one can challenge the Ether to a game of Chec Toe... and in my experience, there is more to the Die than meets the eye...

Furthermore, the game of Chec Toe will forever continue to appeal due to its surprising longevity and charming hospitality each time it is played.

Unlike its predecessor Tic Tac Chec which provided quick and snappy five minute battles over an Espresso, this new evolution of the game will truly astound you with its deeply engrossing labyrinth of strategies, sans time and space.



Whilst likewise games can be very quick, ending rapidly from terrible chance or mere Opponent mistake, on the other hand they can carry on almost forever.

As mentioned earlier, even a game played between two masters can last a mere five minutes or go on and on for days, each player battling it out against what almost seems like an interdimensional dialogue between dragons, God and fate.

Chec Toe then is thus a miracle to behold, for EVEN though there are MANY different tactics to WIN, many of which often psychological, games can and will continue for hours, days, weeks or even years on end...!

This fundamental diamond character of the game is what makes Chec Toe not only unpredicable but extremely addictive. For even if it took you all day and a night to beat your Opponent, the mere fact that it could easily have only taken you 10 minutes has you yearning, hook, line and sinker, for another hard round.

Thus it could be said that the game of Chec Toe is known to last anywhere between five minutes and fifty million years.

In this respect I regard a game of Chec Toe as like a philosophy of selflessness and even a pilgrimage of





truth. A journey of understanding unto how life may be here for now but may last for only so long and how life after death art thence a desired fruit only yet to complete our understanding.

A Player of Chec Toe is thus a pilgrim on a journey of discovery, to learn to accept one's mortality and to tame the longing for absolute knowledge.

Got a pen...?

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### Featured Comment



Simon Jepps

16 days ago edited

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Many thanks and peaceful tidings, S. E. Jepps.

^ | v

1 Comment

Chec Toe

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Simon Jepps

16 days ago edited

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Welcome to Chec Toe! Please feel welcomed to this community and if you like, feel free to participate in discussions about this amazing new game. Ask any questions you might have and I or a fellow Wizard will be more than happy to assist you. Please share this page with your friends and help to grow the success of Chec Toe as an international sport.

Many thanks and peaceful tidings, S. E. Jepps.

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