

# Vote Larry Hodges *for the* USATT Board

For 38 years I've watched as USATT floundered along with misguided and short-term thinking. Our membership of about 8000 is a round-off error compared to other sports and table tennis overseas - and we accept this as the norm. As a member of the USATT Board I will do whatever is necessary to change this thinking. Below are five issues I will focus on. (For more info on these and other issues, or to contact me, visit [www.TableTennisCoaching.com](http://www.TableTennisCoaching.com) and click on "USATT Election," or see my daily blog.)



## 1. Create a Nationwide System of Regional Team Leagues

=>**The Goal:** Dramatically increase USATT membership.

We need to create a prototype regional team league that can spread nationwide, region by region. Right now anyone wanting to create such a league has to start from scratch. We need to study how the German leagues (600,000 paid members) and others were created and grew, and how other sports in the U.S. developed in this way, such as tennis (700,000 members) and bowling (over two million). Then design and create a USA league system for table tennis.

## 2. Create State and Regional Associations

=>**The Goal:** Dramatically increase membership by organizing on the local level.

The country is too big to have it all run by one centralized group. Model this on tennis or the regional systems in Europe. These State or Regional Associations would focus on developing clubs, leagues, tournaments, coaching, and junior programs in their region. We start by recruiting USA state directors.

## 3. Create a USATT Coaching Academy to Recruit and Train Professional Coaches

=>**The Goal:** Large numbers of coaches, training centers, and junior & adult programs.

This leads to large numbers of juniors and adult players. The Academy would expand on the current ITTF Program. Since the coaches pay for their training (as they do in the ITTF program and in other sports), the system pays for itself. *We need to recruit and train professional coaches.*

More Training Centers => More Junior Programs => More Players and Higher Level of Play

## 4. Turn U.S. Open and Nationals into Premier Events

=>**The Goal:** Attract players, spectators, TV, and sponsors to our sport.

We need to find permanent homes for the Open and Nationals, and let the local TT community develop and market them into big properties, like tennis and other sports did with their major events.

## 5. Create a Professional Players Association and Professionalize the Sport

=>**The Goal:** For top USA players to make a living playing professionally.

We need to bring in an entrepreneurial leader to create an independent USA Professional TT Players Association. He would focus on creating a professional circuit, and bring in sponsorship money for each event to turn table tennis into a money and TV sport. He'd be paid primarily via commissions, with a fund-raising drive to the membership to fund it at the start. This could grow out of the current NA Tour. A model is tennis, where there is a partnership between USTA and the ATP (the professional group).

## Here is a short rundown of my table tennis background. I hope I can count on your vote!

- ✚ Member of the USATT Hall of Fame (for my coaching, writing, editing, and promoting)
- ✚ Co-Founder and full-time coach at the Maryland Table Tennis Center
- ✚ USATT Certified National Coach and ITTF Certified Level 2 Coach
- ✚ Former Coach of USA National Junior Team at tournaments in USA, Taiwan, Canada & Mexico
- ✚ Editor of USATT Magazine for 12 years. (Content-oriented, on time, increased advertising by a factor of six.)
- ✚ Six books, over 1300 published articles, and nearly 1000 blog entries on table tennis
- ✚ Director of over 120 USATT tournaments and a USATT Certified Umpire
- ✚ Former Chair of the USATT Coaching and Club Committees
- ✚ 2002 USATT Developmental Coach of the Year
- ✚ 2007 USATT President's Award for Service to Table Tennis
- ✚ 2013 USATT Doc Councilman Science Coaching Award for Table Tennis, USOC Finalist
- ✚ Creator, head coach, and daily blogger at [www.TableTennisCoaching.com](http://www.TableTennisCoaching.com)