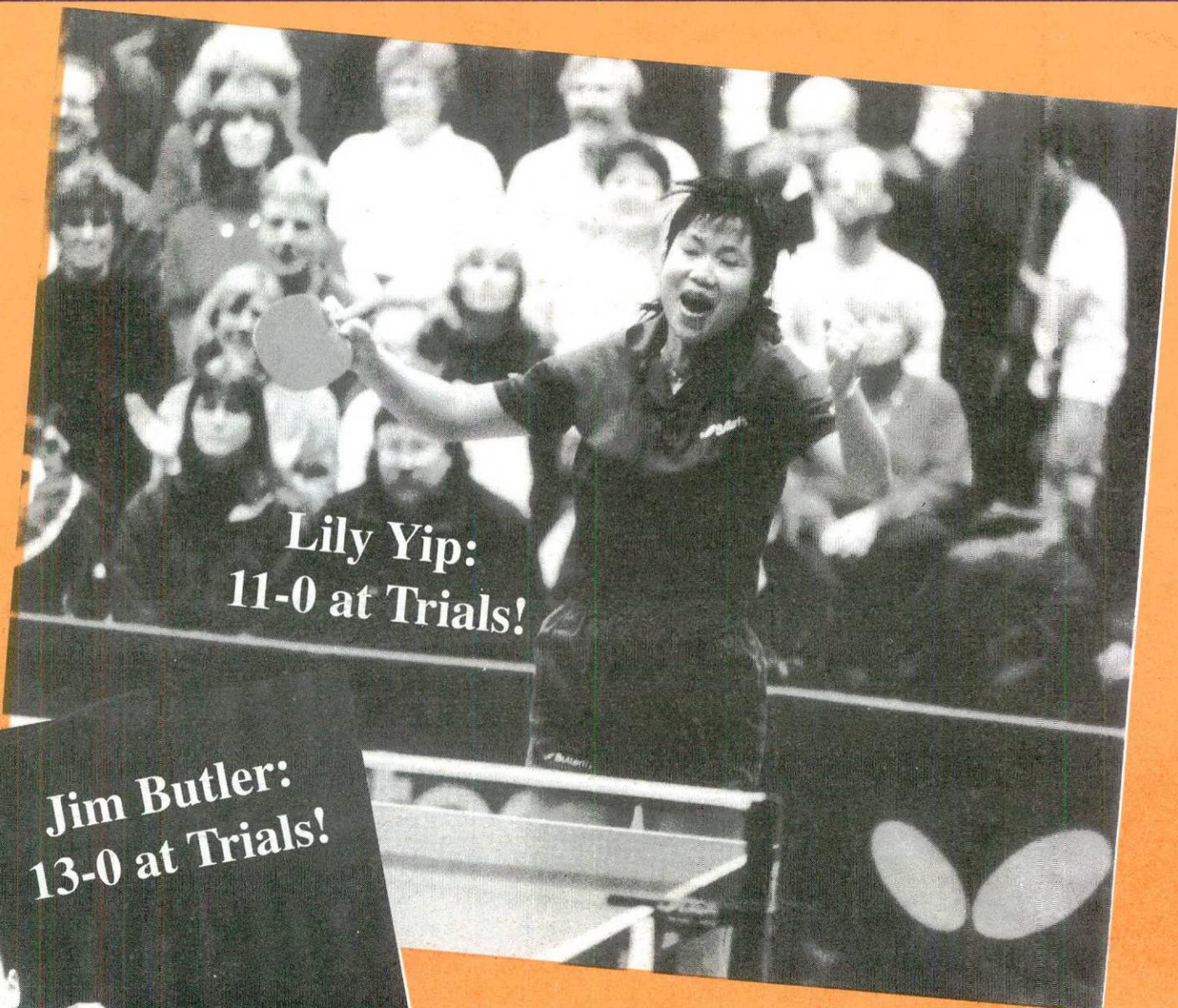


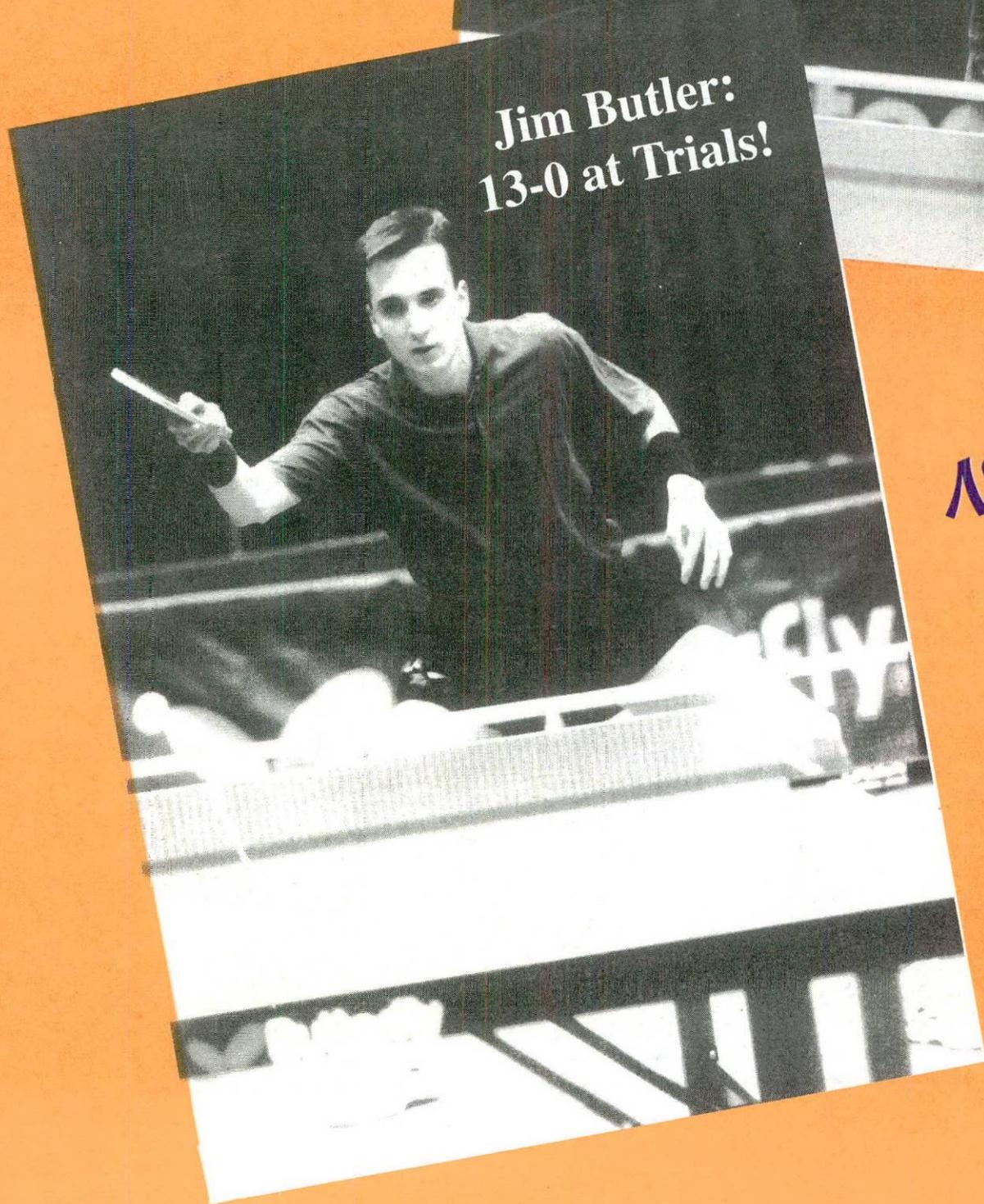
# Table Tennis World

## U.S. OLYMPIC TEAM

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Lily Yip:  
11-0 at Trials!



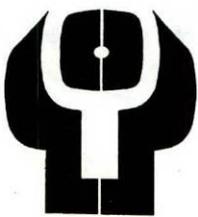
Jim Butler:  
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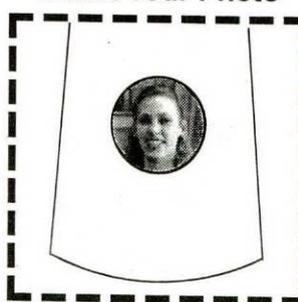
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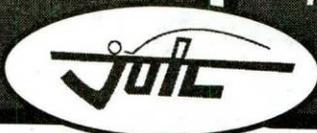


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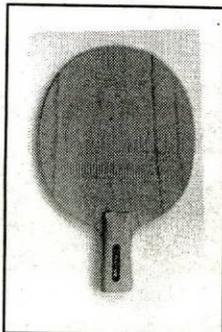
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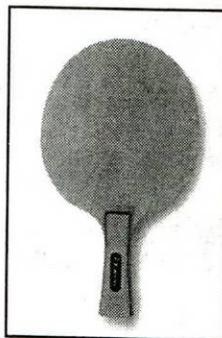
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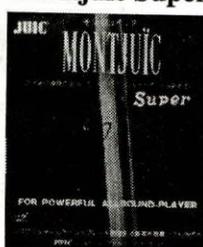
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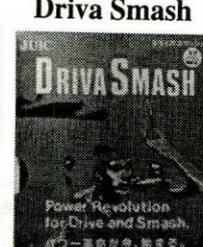
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# Table Tennis World

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All photos, graphics, and written contributions should be sent to Table Tennis World, 301 W. Edmonston Dr., Rockville, MD 20852, 301-838-8571 (ph), 301-838-8572 (Fax). The editor is not responsible for unsolicited letters, manuscripts, artwork, or photos, although every effort will be made to return such matter when accompanied by a self-addressed envelope. When possible, send written contributions on 3.5" computer disk, IBM or Macintosh.

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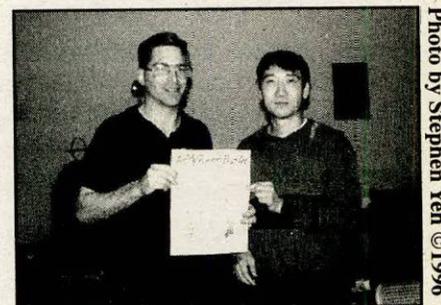
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by John Oros©1996



Top to Bottom:  
Georgia's Derek May: *Determination...*  
Florida's Keith Alban: *Blasting away...*  
Illinois's Atha Fong: *Concentration...*



U.S. #1 Cheng Yinghua joins the staff of **WORLD** with a regular coaching feature, published in both English and the original Chinese. (Editor Larry Hodges on left.)

Photo by Stephen Yeh ©1996

# EDITOR'S REPORT

by Larry Hodges

I would like to thank all you reading this for your support of **TABLE TENNIS WORLD**. Unlike issue #1, this issue is subscription-only. If you like it, show it to others (but not for too long!) and ask them to subscribe. Without your help in spreading the word mouth-to-mouth, it'll be hard for table tennis lovers to know what they're missing.



Take a good look at the author attributions for each article, the copyright notice for each photo, and all the names in the editorial box on the table of contents. These are the ones that make this magazine possible. Without them, doing this magazine would have been impossible. These are the real heroes of U.S. Table Tennis. A great thanks goes to them all.

The **TABLE TENNIS WORLD** Web Page is now ready. Many thanks go to Stephen Yeh and Huazhang Xu for their help in putting it together, as well as advice from Roy Seguire. The address is: <http://www.erols.com/ttworld>

Got a question about table tennis? A gripe? Words of wisdom? E-mail me at [ttworld@erols.com](mailto:ttworld@erols.com), or fax to 301-838-8572. I'm always looking for suggestions.

I've been asked many questions about various aspects of **WORLD**, which I'll answer here. If you have a question, send it in!

**Q.** Why don't I publish the ratings?

**A.** I offered to print the ratings to USATT at no charge, even though it would cost **WORLD** about \$200-300/issue extra in paper, printing and postage. This would have allowed everyone the opportunity to see their rating twice as often. However, USATT declined my offer. (See letter below—**WORLD** is mistakenly referred to as *Today*.)

**Q.** Why is **WORLD** the same format as *Today*?

**A.** By the process of elimination. If **WORLD** used more expensive paper than newsprint, the printing cost would roughly double. When circulation hits 3,000 or so (or if I find a rich sponsor), I'll go to high-quality paper. Until then, it has to be newsprint. Given that, the dimensions are the cheapest (because so many printers are set up for these dimensions). Plus, if **WORLD** went to a smaller size, then advertisers would want to pay less for a full-page ad, since they'd have less space—but most would stay with 1-page increments. Also, the advertisers are set up for this size. Lastly, I've seen newsprint magazines using smaller pages, and they don't look as professional.

**Q.** What did you think about the first issue of USATT's *Today*?

**A.** I'll let the membership judge that. However, there was one positive thing about it—the printing was inexpensive. At the USATT meeting on December 2, 1995, USATT Executive Director Paul Montville, President Terry Timmins, and Olympic Representative Sean O'Neill together made the presentation on moving the magazine to headquarters and replacing me. During this presentation, Montville claimed that the printing in Colorado was the cheapest we could find. However, knowing the printing business better (since it *is* my business), I was able to get the printing done for \$1,300 less per issue than Montville's bid, with the same specifications. My bid was rejected and the new editor is now in Colorado. However, they now print *Today* in Maryland, using the printer from my bid—the same one that prints **WORLD**! I've been debating whether to ask for a commission....

The strange thing is, in 1995 the editor of *Today* (myself) was in Maryland with the printing done in Colorado, and this was one of the reasons for the move. Now the editor's in Colorado while the printing is done in Maryland! Both *Today* and **WORLD** come off the same press, about a mile from the National Table Tennis Center in Rockville, Maryland.

**Q.** In the first issue of **WORLD**, I said "...until they take action to make themselves relevant, they [USATT] are largely irrelevant to the progress of the sport in this country." Why aren't they able to take action to make



themselves relevant?

**A.** It's pretty simple, but you have to attend a few board meetings to realize what's going on. It's personal biases and politics. Unfortunately, it's like that in every amateur sport, not just ours. I spent nearly five years working for USATT at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, headquarters for most of the Olympic sports in the U.S. (including table tennis), and they're all like that. The only sports that get ahead do so in spite of their governing bodies, usually through a professional players association. I recommend to interested readers a book called *In Spite of Us*, which chronicles the rise of cycling as a sport in this country, in spite of the problems with their board. (Sorry, I don't remember author's name—I contacted USA Cycling, but they didn't have the name either.) Table tennis isn't unique in this fashion.

I've been a pretty hard pusher for changes and improvements for the past ten years, and along the way I've ruffled many feathers the wrong way. You can figure out the rest. The same thing happens to others who have tried to change the sport—it happens every time, both in table tennis and other amateur sports. And if the pushers and shakers of the sport are always rejected, real improvement becomes impossible.

There are some well-meaning members of our board—two of whom are so disgusted with the current situation that they aren't running for re-election (Sheri Pittman and Barry Rodgers). In fact, deep down, all our board members are well-meaning. However, when it's time to vote, what's best for our sport isn't always their top priority. If we could wave a magic wand and get 7 of the 13 board members to always act 100% in the best interest of the sport, the sport would really improve. Of course, the magic wand could be the ballot box, but it doesn't always work that way—the pressures on a board member are tremendous, and many change once they're in office.

**Q.** Why do we need a new magazine?

**A.** Look through both magazines—one a product of a bureaucratic and centralized organization, the other a product of the free-enterprise system done out of a love for the sport—and compare. Which one would you rather curl up with for an hour?

Without **WORLD**, *Today* would be the only major outlet for information received by the membership about the USATT. But it is controlled by the USATT, which has a vested interest in keeping you—the voters—happy. Do you want your only source of news to be from the governing body?



January 19, 1996

Mr. Larry Hodges  
301 W. Edmonston Drive  
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Larry:

Thank you for your offer to publish USA Table Tennis ratings in *Table Tennis Today*. However, USA Table Tennis is not interested in utilizing this service.

All published ratings (including those posted in the REC.SPORT.TABLE-TENNIS user group on Internet) are the property of USA Table Tennis. Reproduction of this information without the express written consent of USA Table Tennis is prohibited. Copyright 1996. All rights reserved. This copyright includes the ratings which have been recently posted after the 1995 U. S. Open Teams and the 1995 USATT National Championships.

Please do not hesitate to let us know if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Margaret

Margaret Smith  
Operations Director

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Editor Larry Hodges was editor of *Table Tennis Today* from 1991-95, and is the author of the book *Table Tennis; Steps to Success*. He is the Director of the National Table Tennis Center, and a Certified National Coach. He has had over 300 articles on table tennis published in 27 different publications.



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## Corrections to Darko Rop Interview

by Editor Larry Hodges

Way back at the 1976 U.S. Open in Philadelphia, a timid young editor-to-be sat down at the bar of a restaurant and ordered lunch. A few minutes later, Yugoslavian Stars Dragutin Surbek and Milivoj Karakasevic sat down next to him, one on either side. What followed was 20 of the most nerve-racking minutes this editor-to-be ever faced—My God, the Gods of the Sport were sitting NEXT TO HIM!

Little did this editor-to-be know that almost exactly 20 years later, he'd be misspelling Karakasevic and other Yugoslavian names so badly that he'd have to write an article with corrections.

The Interview with Darko Rop in the previous issue of **TABLE TENNIS WORLD** (page 16-17) was well-received by nearly everyone, as Darko is one of the most interesting & colorful players on the circuit. However, a number of the names were mangled in the transcription from the tape recorder. **TABLE TENNIS WORLD** apologizes and takes responsibility for these errors, which came from not comparing transcribed article to original tape. In particular:

- On top left of page 16, first column (Darko's third answer), the big stars were Karakasevic & Kosanovich. Both were misspelled.
- On the lower left of page 16, first column, Komovich should have been Kalinic.
- On the top of page 16, second column, Luckovitz and Kamanich should have been Lupulesku and Kalinic.
- On the lower right of page 16, fourth column, Vladimir Jusic is not a sister of Jasna Lupulesku.
- On page 17, first column, near top, Nozakovic should be Novakovic, who is the sister of Jasna Lupulesku.
- On page 17, last column, Darko's friend was with the U.S. Team in China, not on it, and John O'Driscio should be John Andrescu.

### Dear Editor,

Here is a reply to a letter to the editor in your first issue:

Mr. Grady Gordon (of Waco, TX) made a good point about opponent's touching the playing surface of his racket while examining it. The pertinent ITTF rule is:

2.4.8 *At the start of a match and whenever he changes his racket during a match a player shall show his opponent and the umpire the racket he is about to use and shall allow them to examine it.*

The ITTF 1995 Handbook For Match Officials states:

7.3.1 *Players must show the racket they intend to use to the umpire, and to their opponents, before it is used.*

The umpire has to be allowed to touch the racket, so he can measure the rubber thickness.

The opponent is allowed to examine the racket visually, but this rule does not allow him to touch it. If you wish, you may allow him to rub a ball across the playing surface. But, if he wants to touch it and you don't want him to, just say no!

Malcolm R. Anderson

Bradford, MA

Ex-Chairman, USTTA Rules Committee

Ex-Secretary, ITTF Rules Committee

## 1997 World Maccabi Games

The 15th World Maccabi Games are scheduled for July 5-25th, 1997 in Israel. The games are open to all Jewish athletes and will include an open table tennis competition. At this point the U.S. team will include a three-man team. As chairperson for the U.S. table tennis team, I encourage anyone interested in participating in this event to drop me a note with name, address, phone number and current table tennis rating. Eligible team members will be chosen by the published ratings as of December, 1996. Having personally participated in the 1993 Maccabi Games, I assure you that these games represent a once in a lifetime opportunity. Please send information to:

Harvey M. Gutman, 5 Brookside Circle Marlboro, NJ 07746, 908-536-4149

## Minnesota Hall of Fame Banquet

The Minnesota Table Tennis Federation is proud to announce its Third Annual Hall of Fame Banquet this April 14, 1996 to be held at the Cherokee Sirloin Room, Eagan, MN. Tickets are \$20 per person and includes appetizers and a full dinner with a cash bar. This year's inductees are: "Tiny" Moss, Ed Kantar, George "Gus" Kennedy, and John Soderberg. Also, Harry and Shirley Lund are planning on attending. Lund was one of the very first inductees in the MTTF Table Tennis Hall of Fame.

Should anyone have any stories, pictures, items of interest or congratulatory letters, please mail them to the MTTF at 8659 West 134th Street, Apple Valley, MN 55124, or you can fax them to 612-431-3090. Better yet, come and share your stories in person.

The MTTF will be hosting a silent auction and raffle drawing prior to the banquet. We would love to have someone donate a table, robot or something of that nature to be used as our headlining item. Please contact Rex Harris at 612-431-2865 should you have any ideas.

## They Said It!



"Good news will come to you by mail." Editor's fortune in Fortune Cookie at Chinese restaurant on the night the first issue of **TABLE TENNIS WORLD** was mailed. Mail those subscriptions in!

"That was a special feeling, to be on that podium with those other great teams in the world, and to be looking down on Sweden and China! We finished higher than both of them!" Jim Butler, on the U.S.'s Final-Four finish at the World Team Cup (see interview in this issue).

"[The royal family] is playing Ping-Pong with me..." Princess Diana, about Queen Elizabeth and the British Palace during divorce negotiations. *Seattle News*, March 1, pg. A2, *Newsweek*, March 11, 1996, pg. 26, many other sources. First submitted by Tyra Parkins of Seattle.

"Look at those sideburns!" Jessica Shen, upon seeing Dell Sweeris in 1972 photo (with President Nixon & U.S. Team) in last issue of **TABLE TENNIS WORLD**.

"She's a lot cuter than you." Steve Thoren, referring to Table Tennis Today editor Tricia Downing and **TABLE TENNIS WORLD** Editor Larry Hodges, when comparing the two magazines.

"Is this where they're holding the flower show?" asked an elderly couple at the entrance to the Middletown February Open in Pennsylvania. "Yes, the gym is full of pansies this morning," immediately answered a junior lounging nearby. Contributed by John Vos

"I should have entered in the tournament. I have a nasty serve, and I think I'd have a good chance of winning the whole thing." A security guard at the Hilton Hotel during the 1995 U.S. Open in Anaheim. Contributed by Kevin Herms.

"It's great to beat Chi-Sun Chui in a thinking game of chess." Randy Cohen, after defeating Chi-Sun "Brain-Child" Chui in a stunning upset two days before the Olympic Trials.

"What was I thinking?" Todd Sweeris after his match with Sean O'Neill at the Olympic Trials, referring to one crazy, inside-out, off the bounce forehand counterloop winner from the backhand corner.

"I'm going to change my middle name to 'Kant'!" James Winn, director of the BTTA, who was getting very frustrated about a string of losses at the Bartlesville Table Tennis Club. Let's see...that would make his name—you work it out.

"How long will you be, Shonie?" asked Operations supervisor Chris Kalagher of Shonie Aki as he walked away from the Control Desk. Shonie slowly turned around and seriously said, "How long does it take to lose three straight?" Then he proceeded to his table and did just that! Contributed by Mary McIlwain

Roger: Doug, didn't you realize that that serve was topspin?

Doug: Yeah...

Roger: So why did you hit it off the end of the table?

Doug: Ohh...I was just checking to make sure....

The preceding conversation took place at the Bartlesville Table Tennis Club, home of more strange thoughts than anywhere else.

### Overheard at the Atlanta Cup Challenge

"I haven't gotten any exercise today." Derek May, after missing an on-the-run forehand loop and following through onto the floor. He did four pushups before getting up to continue play against Jim Butler.

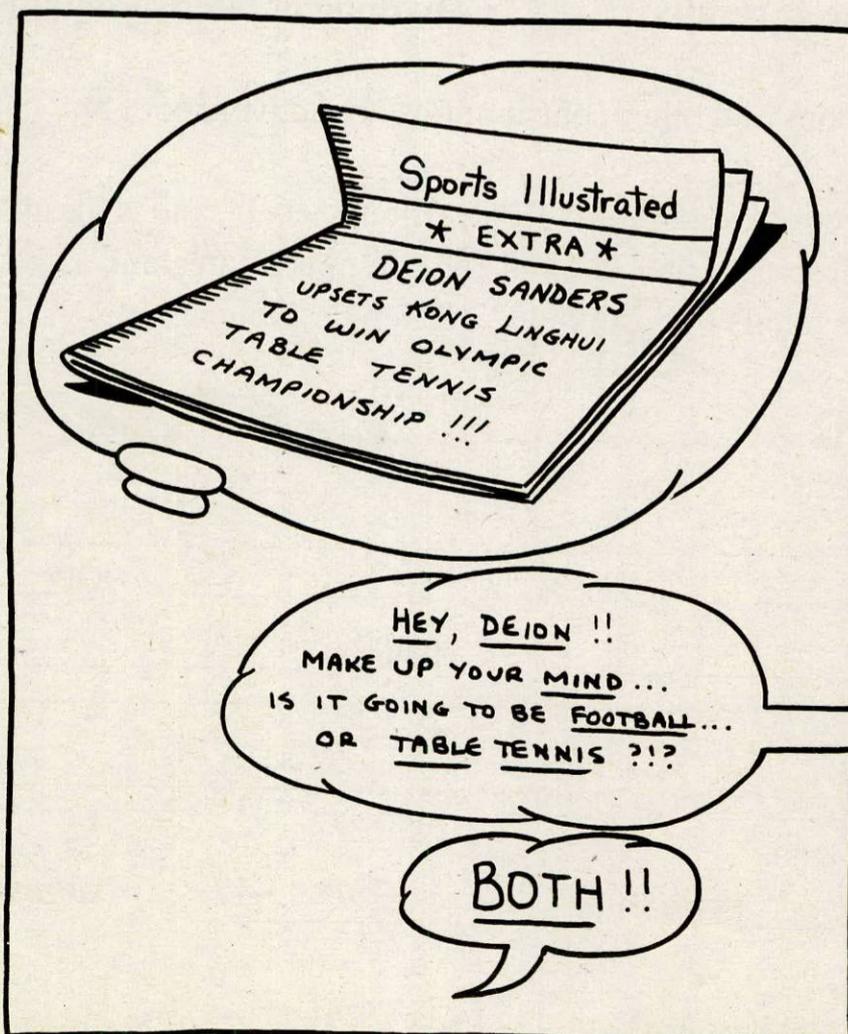
"The net is one inch higher on this side." Derek May, after losing another point to Jim Butler in what wasn't shaping up to be one of Derek's finer matches.

"Cheng is a machine. Jimmy, Sean and Derek should hold him down and take his batteries out." Michael Wetzel.

Heard anything interesting at the table tennis club recently? Send it to: **TABLE TENNIS WORLD**, 301 W. Edmonston Dr., Rockville, MD 20852, or fax to 301-838-8572, or email to ttworld@erols.com.

### Wanna Play a Match? You'd Better!

BEIJING (Reuter) - The local government in the Chinese capital executed eight people convicted of murder, robbery, armed robbery, assault and fraud, the official Beijing Evening News recently said. One of the condemned defendants hacked a restaurant manager to death with a sword last August 13 after the man had refused an offer to play table tennis, it said.



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## NOVICE NOTES

**Anti Spin** - A slow, non-sticky inverted surface, mostly defensive, which makes returning spin very easy, since the spin does not "grab" the surface. Only thing that grabs surface is frustrated and angry opponents.

**Block** - A shot where a drive is returned by holding the racket in its path and letting the ball rebound off it. If the ball is traveling very fast, and the racket is old & brittle, you might get a chip off the old block.

**Chop** - A defensive, backspin return of a drive, usually done from well away from the table. Taken to an extreme by Atlanta Braves fans.

**Fishing** - A soft, defensive topspin done from well away from the table. It's roughly half lob, half loop, 100% fun.

**High-toss serve** - A serve where the ball is thrown high into the air and struck after it drops. Could be responsible for UFO sightings.

**Inverted** - A racket surface where the pips are pointed inward, and the surface is smooth. This is the most popular surface, and enables a player to get maximum spin.

**ITTF** - International Table Tennis Federation, the international governing body for table tennis. Founded in 1926, with headquarters in England.

**Lob** - A high, defensive return of a smash, usually with topspin. Also what some players do to their rackets after losing.

**Long Pips** - A pips-out racket surface with very long, soft pips. Returns the ball with most of the spin from opponent's shot, causing great difficulty for beginning, intermediate and advanced players. Regular play against long pips can be used as evidence in a court of law as part of an insanity plea.

**Loop** - An aggressive, heavy topspin shot. It is credited with launching both the modern game of table tennis and the orthopedics industry.

**Push** - A slow backspin shot done against a backspin shot. Very popular in Washington D.C. and other large cities.

**QF** - Quarterfinals, the final eight players, a part of the draw that most of us will never reach.

**Ratings** - A numerical system used to classify player levels. The best players in the U.S. are about 2750, while a beginner usually starts out in the 300-800 range. Lowest rated "player" ever was 3-year-old Don Iguana in 1994, rated 24, whose results were sent in as part of a prank—Don was a real iguana!

**RR** - Round Robin. A tournament format where players are put into groups of three or more, and everyone plays everyone else in the group. To date, no fat orange-bellied birds have been known to participate.

**SF** - Semifinals, the final four, a part of the draw most of us will never reach.

**USATT** - USA Table Tennis, official governing body for table tennis in the U.S. Founded in 1933, with headquarters in Colorado Springs. Formerly known as USTTA, or U.S. Table Tennis Association.

## The Story of Reisman, Gunn & Green....

In the previous issue, Bob Green (in his "Did'ja Know?" column) told a story about Marty Reisman. Reisman took great offense at this. However, Green's story is documented by a written report by Team Captain Bill Gunn. Whether Gunn's report is accurate will probably never be known; however, Reisman's response to Green's column is printed below, as is an excerpt from Gunn's report to the USTTA Executive Committee, dated March 21, 1957, which supports Green's story. "If Reisman isn't satisfied with this, he should take it up with Gunn," Green said.

### Dear Editor:

Your January/February 1996 issue of *Table Tennis World* published false and misleading information about me in Bob Green's column, "Did'ja Know?"

The third paragraph begins by stating, "Marty Reisman got away with financial murder on one trip." Even if everything Green asserts elsewhere were true by what stretch of the imagination would that justify equating such behavior to a capital crime? In any event, Green's story about me is utterly false: it is outrageous fiction that has maligned and embarrassed me in the table tennis world as well as among my personal and business connections.

Green claims that players on the U.S. Team had to pay most of their own expenses for the four to six week trip surrounding the W.T.T.C. He asserts I jeopardized full U.S. participation in the W.T.T.C. one year because I showed up at Andrews AFB just two hours before flight time without money for the trip and thereby forced Team Captain, Bill Gunn, to finance my trip personally.

Such an incident would never have taken place because U.S. Team members of my era were never required to pay even one cent toward the expense of a trip to represent our country in the W.T.T.C. This was undisputedly the case on several occasions when the U.S. Military provided free transportation, lodging and meals for the U.S. Team in exchange for a series of exhibitions at overseas bases. When the U.S. Team had fulfilled its obligation to the Military, the tab for the rest of the trip was picked up by the host country during the U.S. Team's participation in the W.T.T.C. So wherein under these Military financially assisted circumstances can Green support his fiction that I was the recipient of a dedicated Team Captain's generosity who financed my trip to the Worlds?

During the years when commercial transportation was utilized to get the U.S. Team to the W.T.T.C., the host country, anxious for U.S. participation in the event, arranged a series of competitive matches for the U.S. Team prior to the Worlds, in order to defray the expense of getting the U.S. Team to the W.T.T.C. Again, even under these financially lean circumstances for the U.S.T.T.A., I repeat, the U.S. Team members of my era were never responsible for any of this expense.

So Bob Green's story about me and Bill Gunn is absolutely false; it never happened. I challenge both Bob Green

and *Table Tennis World* to prove otherwise. They cannot. A simple telephone call to any of the team members of those times would have confirmed the total falsity of Green's story. Instead, *Table Tennis World* gave free reign to Green to place me in a false and demeaning historical perspective.

Bob Green's article hardly heralds an auspicious beginning for *Table Tennis World*. Green's story about me is wrong and so easy to disprove that it could only have been published maliciously. I hold *Table Tennis World* and Bob Green responsible for his libelous statements.

I can offer no absolution, but basic human decency requires that *Table Tennis World* promptly and prominently publish to the entire readership of *Table Tennis World's* premier issue: 1) this letter in its entirety; 2) a full and unqualified retraction of Green's comment as they relate to me; and 3) apologies from both *Table Tennis World* and Bob Green.

Yours truly,  
Marty Reisman  
New York, NY

### Excerpt from Team Captain Bill Gunn's Report:

All players were warned to be prepared to finance themselves throughout the trip. Reisman appeared at Maguire Air Base one hour before flight time, with less than two dollars in his pocket, with less than two dollars in his pocket, to travel about six weeks and several thousand miles—too late, of course, to leave him behind. I have had to finance him from my personal pocket to the tune of \$250.00. Further, he is completely ignorant of any sense of responsibility to country or team, and has a complete lack of respect of authority! Several times I was on the point of removing him entirely from tournament, and only refrained because, by so doing, I would have caused others to suffer. There is no doubt that he should never again represent us in anything, and in fact should be suspended for life. He doesn't belong in our association!

U.S. Team Captain Bill Gunn  
March 21, 1957

## The Top Ten Reasons You Didn't See the Boos Brothers at the Olympic Trials

### "Courtesy of the Boos Brothers Corporate Headquarters in Topeka, Kansas"

- 1) If we won, they'd probably want us to train.
- 10) Saving ourselves for a big event.
- 9) Chiseling to our opponents' backhand *might* not have been enough.
- 8) Aahhhh, we've already played these guys.
- 7) We were told that Nike had already scheduled us for a European promotional tour for our new shoe the Nike Air Head.
- 6) Jim McQueen is campaigning for the Republican nomination and USATT VP—it's all just too much, just too much....
- 5) Two words—Not enough skill.
- 4) We believe chicks dig guys with low ratings.
- 3) Already been to Atlanta, what's the big fuss?
- 2) We don't want them to get used to our styles.
- 1) Olympics Shmolymphics, we only play in Detroit.

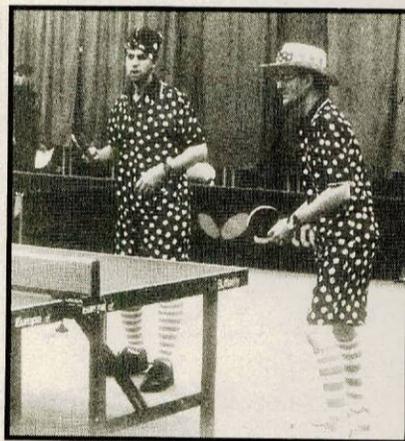


Photo by Bowie Martin Jr. ©1996



# POTOMAC SPRING OPEN



## TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENT

Saturday & Sunday, April 27 and 28, 1996

Sponsored by:

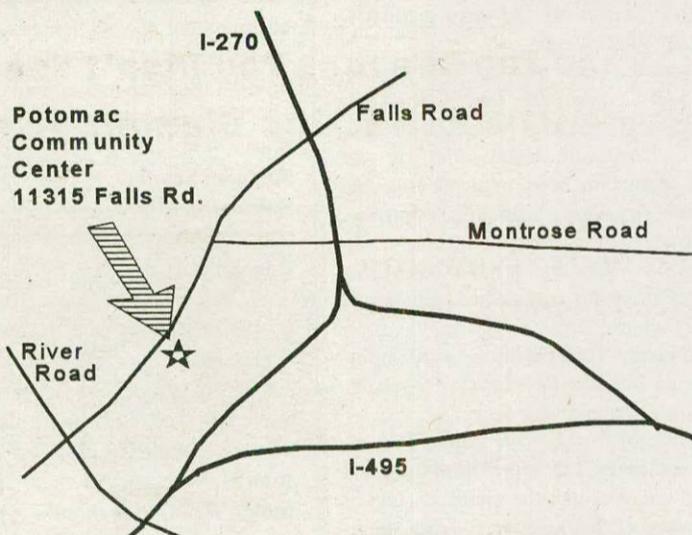
Potomac Country Table Tennis Club (PCTTC), Maryland  
Potomac Community Center (PCC)



| EVENT                 | FEES   | Starting Time | Prize: 1/2/3-4/5-8 |
|-----------------------|--------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1. Open Singles RR    | \$20** | Sat. 3:00 pm  | \$500/300/150/50   |
| 2. U-2500 RR          | 10     | Sat. 10:00 am | \$140/70           |
| 3. U-2250 RR          | 10     | Sat. 11:00 am | \$120/60           |
| 4. U-2100 RR          | 10     | Sat. 1:00 pm  | \$100/50           |
| 5. U-4200 Doubles SE  | 10ea   | Sat. 9:00 am  | \$120/60           |
| 6. Over-60 Esquire RR | 8      | Sat. 3:00 pm  | \$50/30            |
| 7. Novice RR          | 8*     | Sat. 9:30 am  | T/T                |
| 8. U-1950 RR          | 10     | Sun. 10:00 am | \$60/30            |
| 9. U-1800 RR          | 10     | Sun. 1:00 pm  | \$50/25            |
| 10. U-1650 RR         | 10     | Sun. 11:00 am | \$50/25            |
| 11. U-1500 RR         | 5      | Sun. 2:00 pm  | T/T                |
| 12. U-1300 RR         | 5      | Sun. 12:00 pm | T/T                |
| 13. U-1000 RR         | 5      | Sun. 9:30 am  | T/T                |
| 14. U-3600 Doubles SE | 5ea    | Sun. 9:00 am  | T/T                |

\*\* \$15 for players rated under 2100.

\* \$5 for juniors under 18. Novice players may enter one other event free of charge!



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Sanctioned by: USATT, Two-stars

Director: David Cheung, Tel: (301) 530-4057 Fax: (301) 530-4073

Referee: Carlos Ebron, Regional Umpire

Location: Potomac Community Center (PCC)  
11315 Falls Road, Potomac, MD 20854  
Tel: (301) 983-4471

### TOURNAMENT INFORMATION:

1. Entry deadline: April 25, 1996. Entries received after April 25 and entries not accompanied by payment are subject to \$5 processing fee.
2. Open singles, semis and finals are 3 out of 5. All other matches are 2 of 3 games. Winners (and perhaps runners-up) of each RR advance to single elimination draw. Non-rated players may enter any event but will not advance to SE draw in rated events. Doubles are single elimination.
3. 12 Butterfly tables, Butterfly 3-star balls (White). Only USATT-approved equipment will be used. All USATT regulations apply, including dress code.
4. Proof of USATT membership will be required. Membership may be purchased at the tournament: \$25 yearly (\$8 for Junior under 18, \$12 w/Today), \$60 for 3 years. First-time adult players may purchase a pass for \$6 (valid this tournament only).
5. Players must check in at least 20 min. before the starting time of their entered events.
6. Any player abusing equipment or harrasing tournament officials will be disqualified immediately. Anyone deliberately defaulting a match may, at the tournament officials discretion, be forfeited all prizes.
7. Latest ratings will be used. Events may be combined or canceled due to lack of entries.

### DIRECTIONS:

1. From North: Take Washington Capital Beltway 495 West, Exit 35 onto I-270 North, get off Montrose Rd. West (Exit 4B), tum left onto Falls Rd.(Rt.189) South to Potomac Community Center (on the left side).
2. From South: Take Washington Capital Beltway 495 North, take River Road West (exit 39A, towards Potomac), tum right onto Falls Rd. North to Potomac Community Center (on the right side).

ENTRY BLANK: Cut along the line and mail it together with the entry fees (payable to PCTTC) to:  
PCTTC, 9305 Parkhill Terr., Bethesda, MD 20814.

Please enter me in the events CIRCLED: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

|   |          |                     |
|---|----------|---------------------|
| Event Fees                                  | \$ _____ | USATT No. _____     |
| Rating Fee (\$3) and Registration Fee (\$3) | \$ 6     | USATT Rating _____  |
| USATT membership fee/tournament pass        | \$ _____ | USATT Expires _____ |
| Late/phone entry fee (\$5)                  | \$ _____ | Birth Date _____    |
| Total Fees Paid (to PCTTC)                  | \$ _____ | Home Club _____     |
| Name (please print) _____                   |          | Phone: (H) _____    |
| Address _____                               |          | (O) _____           |
| City, State, Zip _____                      |          | Partner: #5 _____   |
| Signature _____                             |          | #14 _____           |

By entering this tournament, I hereby release the sponsors, directors, and any individual or corporate body directly or remotely connected with this tournament from any and all actions, claims, and demands resulting from loss, damage, or injury sustained to persons or property.

**Bill Sharpe...Still Remembered.**

**Dear Editor:**

Tim Boggan's eloquent eulogy on Bill Sharpe makes it very clear that Bill took his priorities seriously. I have one example:

We both used to run and periodically we compared notes.

One day, when Bill asked his usual "How's the running?", I had to confess that there wasn't much of it. I'm doing a lot of traveling. I work all day, then hop a plane, don't get to the next motel till maybe 8 PM. So I can't run, as I still have to eat.

"You do?" asked Bill.

**Rufford Harrison**

**Washington, New Hampshire**

**Northeast Pioneers?**

**Dear Editor:**

Tyra Parkins is a lot younger than she thinks she is! Dr. Scott and Lou Bochenski have done a great deal for Northwest Table Tennis but the original pioneers they are not.

When I began playing and soon discovered the Portland TT Club, it had already been in existence for some years. That was in 1937 or 1938. I went back to New York as an art student in 1940 and later worked part-time at Mr. Lawrence's Broadway TT Club. That was the Sol Schiff, Lou Pagliaro and Dick Miles coming up era.

Pagliaro was barred from playing the pinball machines at the Club (it paid for high scores at that time) because he could run the score up endlessly. There was some impressive timing involved there!

Don Vaughn and Dick Jordan were two of several excellent players in Portland before the war. They helped Coach Mayo Rae Rolph, who became Oregon's first national level player. Mayo competed in the Women's Nationals and went to Japan as an alternate on the USA Women's Team in 1940. Oregon now has had three women rated near the top nationally: Mayo Rolph, Judy Bochenski and Simone Yang (a recent and great addition to Oregon table tennis).

Carl Cole was certainly the best player ever developed in Portland and in the pre-inverted hard rubber days, and absolutely dominated Northwest table tennis for 10 years or more.

Ron Carver has been the most consistent City and State champion of recent years and is apt to be Senior Champion the next decade.

Perhaps I should mention that Laszlo Bellak ran the Portland TT Club for a year or two in the late thirties. He could not make a living at it, of course, so he had to move on. He had come through Portland playing exhibition matches—I remember seeing him play Victor Barna—a thrill!

How old am I? Maybe seventy-six and still playing.

**Jack McLarty**

**Portland, Oregon**

**Table Tennis World, and the Table Tennis World in General...**

**Dear Editor,**

The new magazine looks great. One suggestion—how about publishing/mailling it so we receive it in the alternate month that we receive the USATT magazine. (So we have something to read each month.)

Keep up the good work.

**Dave Medley**

**Salina, Kansas**

**Editor's Note:** Several others have recommended this. However, what I'd like to do is time each issue as much as possible to come out right after a major tournament or other event so you'll get the news as fresh as possible.

**Dear Editor,**

Wanted to let you know how much my husband, Benny Hull, enjoyed your new publication. He was pleasantly surprised to read about the Dublin World's Veterans Championship he shared with George Rucker. He often speaks of this great event in his life and what a fine man George Rucker was.

Benny, unfortunately, has been ill. In May of 1995, he underwent lung surgery at Mass General and was hospitalized for 3 months. He is slowly recovering from this operation (he wasn't expected to survive) and has made quite a bit of progress.

Table Tennis, along with his family, has been his passion in life as any of his friends will attest to. The game helped him as a young boy overcome some of the ravages of polio and gave himself esteem in the one sport he could play and eventually hold state, national and world titles.

Best of luck with your new magazine!

**Ann Hull**

**Waltham, Massachusetts**

**Dear Editor,**

The present issue of *Table Tennis World* is impressive and I wish you well in the future.

I am a "senior citizen" who took up the game of table tennis five years ago and fell in love with it, and recommend it to all seniors who want to extend life. I am 75 and play at least twice a week with an opponent who is 78. We have two-hour battles which exhausts both of us but is super for conditioning. We obtain a heart rate of 140-150 and sustain that for several minutes during each game.

Not only is the workout aerobic, but also improves reaction time for driving, stamina for work, etc. I think it gives a boost to overall health both physically and mentally. I believe if all persons in the so-called "senior" age group played table tennis regularly, our medical bills would be reduced dramatically. I can envision a correlation between this reduction and reduced insurance costs.

Hope you can find some space to promote the senior game and its benefits.

**Harold Johnson**

**Wills Point, Texas**

**Dear Editor,**

Congratulations on the first issue of *Table Tennis World*, I don't have to tell you that publishing an independent table tennis magazine is a daunting task. (Tim Boggan can vouch for that.) However, if anybody can do it, you can.

I'm enclosing my check to cover a two year subscription, and I trust many others will do likewise to help you get started.

I believe that all USATT members are profoundly in your debt for your deep devotion to the game, the generous sharing of your many talents, and especially for the superb job you've done as editor/publisher for *Table Tennis Today* during the past four years.

Best Wishes for your continued success.

**Si Wasserman**

**Oceanside, California**

**Dear Editor,**

Congratulations for producing a SUPER first issue of TABLE TENNIS WORLD! You really deserve to be successful with this endeavor so, GO FOR IT! It was great to get all the TABLE TENNIS news from October 1995 through the great Arthur Gilbert Table Tennis Cup January 1996. Enclosed is a check for \$20.00 for 1996.

**Mary McIlwain**

**Alta Loma, California**

**Dear Editor,**

Enclosed is my two-year subscription to *Table Tennis World*. Best of luck in this new venture! I hope you attain your goals for this magazine in a reasonable time frame.

While speaking of goals, I read the article by Lim Ming Chui of particular interest, for there have been many such written by a variety of authors over past years. I hoped that Mr. Chui had found some new strategy for popularizing table tennis that past authors had failed to do. Unfortunately, he has not done so, in my opinion. Table tennis is a great sport, and I have played it seriously for over 40 years, although never rising above the 1700 rating level. However, I have played in several Nationals at the over 40 level and also played in many clubs throughout the country including the San Francisco area where I live, and also in such places as Los Angeles, San Diego, New York City, Detroit, Houston, Portland and Miami.

Again, I want to make it clear that table tennis is a lot of fun and a difficult sport to master. However, it is wishful thinking to believe that it can ever come close to the popularity of tennis or golf in our country. Therefore, why talk in such terms and set goals of popularity that can never be achieved? May I suggest that reasonable goals be set and then work towards these more limited goals and be happy when these limited goals are realized.

**Bob Stone**

**Kensington, California**

**Dear Editor,**

*Table Tennis World* arrived today—about 20 minutes ago.

You did a really truly great job as editor for USATT. Although Tim Boggan is a great guy and a friend of mine (and his sons, Scott & Eric, were friends with my son, Dave, when they were growing up), and although Tim writes brilliantly, I don't recall the issues being received in timely fashion—which yours always have. At any rate some of the prior editors had delivery or production problems.

Timeliness and promptness are important to persons who look forward to receiving printed materials.

Since you've been the Editor, I've enjoyed and loved and appreciated the great articles on coaching, the pictures—lots of them, and the fabulous covers—very imaginative and effective.

Best of luck to you, your staff and the publication. I like (and therefore I approve) the title—a reference to Rene DesCartes' famous line.

**Dave Dickson**

**Berwick, Pennsylvania**

**Dear Editor,**

Thanks for the TTW offer. I'll tell all my friends about TTW and try to get more subscribers for you. We need your input and magazine to educate the public and to get our sport in the media. I try to explain to people I meet the benefits our sport gives. I'm pushing 75—but I still have faster reflexes than some guys a lot younger than me. I'm hoping to play in the Over 80's someday, "God willing." I have some ideas on promoting our sport, but won't hold you up now with a long letter but hope to correspond later.

**Bill Happner**

**Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

**Dear Editor,**

Enclosed is my check for a one year's subscription of *Table Tennis World*. I appreciated your sending me the first edition to see what it would be like. It was an excellent issue. I liked the Year in Review columns, especially the one for the seniors. And I have always liked the articles on seniors, obituaries and historical articles. You and Tim both write excellent articles.

I don't know why there always seems to be controversy and problems in our national organization, no matter who is in. You know much more about this than I do. But it appears to me that what we need is a good strong executive director who knows table tennis, but has no conflicts of interest or special agendas, and gets along with everyone. He could then do fund raising as well as trying to unite us, and hopefully create a strong stable organization.

Anyway, keep up the good work and I look forward to reading your future editions.

**Grant Misbach**

**Provo, Utah**

**Dear Editor,**

I just went through the premiere issue of TTW. It is magnificent, better than the best of TTT for which you had done a superb job.

I especially liked the focus on instruction, which is the major reason many people subscribe to sports magazines. The profiles of prominent players are also attractive, as readers are ever curious about the lives and loves of the "rich and famous."

Let's cross our fingers that subscriptions roll in.

**Solomon Snyder**

**Baltimore, MD**

**Dear Editor,**

Love your new magazine, especially (a) the sci-fi story and (b) the sentiments expressed in Editor's Report. You are right, the USTTA/USATT has been atrophying for years. If change is to be made, we have to make it ourselves.

**John G. Vos**

**Indian Head, Maryland**

**Dear Editor,**

Good luck in your new venture. We do need a media outlet other than the company paper.

**Masaaki Tajima**

**San Francisco, California**

**Dear Editor,**

Great job on your first issue! Look forward to upcoming issues. Thanks for your dedication to Table Tennis!

**Terry Drassal**

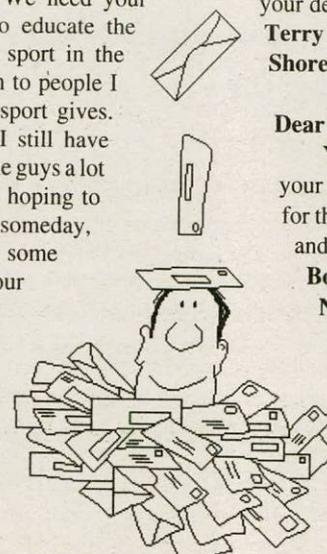
**Shoreview, Minnesota**

**Dear Editor,**

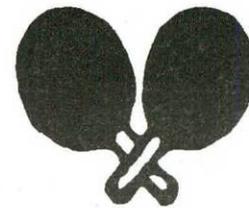
Your first issue was Great. I hope your effort leads to bigger and better for the game in the USA. Best of luck and lots of success.

**Bob Saperstein**

**Newtown, Pennsylvania**



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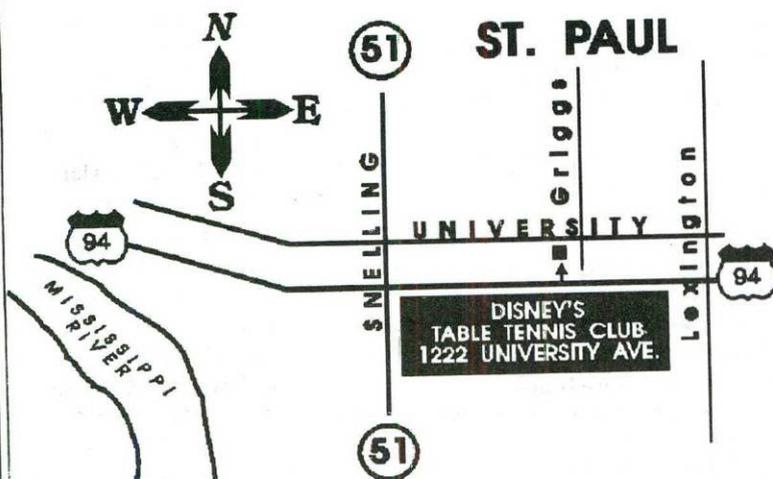
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# The U.S. Olympic Trials

## Men's Trials

Flint, Michigan

February 21-23, 1996

by Larry Hodges

The top 24 Olympic Eligible men were invited to the U.S. Olympic Trials in Flint, Michigan. However, some were not able to attend, and eventually 21 attended.

The format called for four preliminary groups (three of five, one of six), with the top three players advancing to a final round robin of twelve (with carry-over matches from the preliminaries). All matches were best three of five—leading to a grueling competition not only of table tennis skill but of physical fitness. All final 12 players played 13-14 best of five matches over three days.

### Preliminary Round Robins

#### Group D

Eleven of the top twelve players made the final 12. The only top seeded player not to advance was Sean Lonergan, seeded 5th. He was in the group of six players, and defeated Bernie Pietrak & Mike Veillette, as did Jim Butler, Chi-Sun Chui, and Derek May. However, up 2-0 in games, Lonergan lost in five to Chui, who blocked ball after ball to Lonergan's forehand. Lonergan couldn't seem to loop a winner—and the loss meant he'd have to beat either Derek May or Jim Butler to advance. (At 20-15 in the fifth against Chui, this writer/coach was red-carded and kicked out of the arena by umpire Ray Cavicchio for calling out, "C'mon, Sean, focus!" which he claimed was illegal coaching...) Lonergan was unable to win either of his final two matches, as he lost to May in four (losing the 3rd on an edge at 20-all, followed by a missed smash off a "chop-lob"), and 3-0 to Butler. A very disappointing finish for the hardest working player in the U.S., hands down. Advancing from the group were Jim Butler, 2-0; May, 1-1; and Chui, 0-2.

#### Group C

This group proved the most interesting of the groups. Fifth seed Stephen Yeh won the first game against Todd Sweeris and led much of the second game, but Sweeris came back to win easily and turn the group into a 4-man contest. Barney J. Reed and Sweeris both defeated David Fernandez in five; but Fernandez came back to defeat Sean O'Neill, also in five—coming back from down 19-16 in both the third and the fifth games to win (including a miracle lunging backhand sidespin-chop block from down 19-17 in the fifth to win a point). Sweeris & O'Neill both defeated Reed 3-0, setting up the final match of the group between Sweeris & O'Neill.

If Sweeris wins, then he advances with a 2-0 record; Fernandez advances with a 1-1 record; and O'Neill advances with an 0-2 record. If O'Neill wins, he advances with a 2-0 record; Sweeris advances with a 1-1 record; and Reed advances with an 0-2 record. So this match will decide whether Fernandez or Reed will advance, and will decide whether O'Neill advances with a 2-0 or 0-2 record—a big swing!

O'Neill leads 16-12 in the fifth—and only scores one more point as Sweeris goes on a forehand ripping barrage. "What was I thinking?" Sweeris said after the match, referring to one crazy, inside-out, off the bounce forehand counterloop winner from the backhand corner. Sweeris advanced, 2-0, Fernandez, 1-1, O'Neill 0-2.

#### Group B

Khoa Nguyen had no trouble in winning his group over Danny Seemiller, Brian Masters, Randy Cohen, and Randy Seemiller, with R. Seemiller the only one to get a game against him. Brian upset Danny 3-0—an omen of what was to come as Danny had what must have been the worst tournament of his life. Just before his match with Masters, Danny passed Masters in the hallway, with Masters on the way back to the hotel, thinking their match was later on. Danny reminded him of the match schedule, saving Masters a default—and leading to Danny's loss.

Both Danny & Masters defeated both Randys, so Nguyen advanced 2-0; Masters 1-1; Danny 0-2.

#### Group A

Eric Owens, seeded 8th, lost to former coach/practice partner & 9th seed Darko Rop. Both lost to David Zhuang. Zhuang did have a close call against Brian Pace (playing with pips on his backhand), who forced him to five games before going down. Owens & Rop also defeated Pace as well as Barry Dattel, who defeated Pace. Zhuang advanced with a 2-0 record; Rop, 1-1; and Owens, 0-2.

#### Final 12

Leading the pack at this point were Jim Butler, David Zhuang, Todd Sweeris & Khoa Nguyen, all with 2-0 records. At 1-1 were Derek May, Brian Masters, Darko Rop & David Fernandez. At 0-2 were Sean O'Neill, Dan Seemiller, Chi-Sun Chui, & Eric Owens. But there was a long way to go—nine more rounds, to be exact. Since the first two "rounds" have already been played (as carry-over matches from the preliminary round robins), we'll start off with Round III, the first round of the final group of twelve.

#### Round III

The higher rated player won five of six matches this round, four of them 3-0. Zhuang defeated Chui, 16, 19, 13; Nguyen defeated Fernandez, 17, 11, 14; Sweeris defeated Seemiller, 14, 7, 11; Butler defeated Owens, 18, 20, 14. Brian Masters won the first against Sean O'Neill before losing the next three, -17, 17, 17, 11. Derek May upset Darko Rop (as he had at the Nationals), 17, 14, -12, 16.

#### Round IV

Only two matches were straightforward this round as Zhuang defeated Fernandez, 10, 14, 15 and Nguyen defeated Chui, 15, 14, 12. Seemiller won his only game of this long, long final twelve for him—against Butler, before losing, 14, 14, -16, 18. Fireworks highlighted the rest of this round.

May and Masters battled and battled and battled, both being "grinders," with Masters finally winning out, -13, 21, 7, -12, 19. The match dropped May to 2-2, greatly hurting his Olympic chances.

Sweeris and Owens were 1-1 in games, with Sweeris leading 20-14 in the third. Owens scored 8 straight points to win, 22-20! A mirror of what had happened to Sweeris when he'd blown a plethora of

game & match points, costing him a spot on the Pan Am Team? Sweeris came back, winning the fourth, 21-13, and led 20-16 in the fifth—only to have Owens deuce it again! But, with help from a net ball, Sweeris pulled it out, 22-20.

O'Neill and Rop met in a "must-win" match, if they were to have a realistic chance of making the Olympic Team. They split the first two games, and O'Neill led 20-16 in the third—only to have Rop win, 23-21. In the fourth, Rop leads 16-11, 19-15, and 20-19 match point—but O'Neill comes back, 22-20. At 15-all in the fifth, O'Neill runs off the last six to win, 10, -19, -21, 20, 15.

#### Round V

Four matches were straightforward, as Zhuang defeated Seemiller, 11, 7, 18; Sweeris defeated Chui, 15, 16, 14; Butler defeated Fernandez, 8, 18, 12; and O'Neill defeated May, 13, 17, 15; Masters defeated Rop, -10, 19, 20, 14, to improve to 2-2, while Rop was now reeling at 1-3.

Nguyen had his first scare, as Owens forced him to five, -14, 16, 9, -19, 14. If—IF!!!—Owens had won this match and the match earlier against Sweeris, Owens would have made the Olympic Team (assuming no other changes). Instead, he now falls to 0-5. He would not lose another match.

#### Round VI

The four "straightforward" matches this round were Zhuang over Masters, 11, 12, 13; Sweeris over May, 19, -19, 18, 13; Butler over O'Neill, 16, 19, 11 (knocking O'Neill to 3-3 and almost out of the competition);

and Owens over Seemiller, 10, 13, 14. Fernandez defeated Chui in a grueling deuce-in-the-fifth, 22, -15, -14, 12, 21.

The big match this round was Rop's upset of Khoa Nguyen, 12, 16, -20, 18. Down 11-8 in the fourth, Rop had scored 8 in a row to lead 16-11, only to have Nguyen tie it up, 18-18. Rop scored the last three to stay in the competition—and gave the first crack to one of the "Big Four"—Nguyen, Zhuang, Butler & Sweeris.

#### Analysis

Zhuang, Butler and Sweeris lead with 6-0 records, followed by Nguyen, 5-1. With five rounds to go, O'Neill and Masters are still very much in the hunt at 3-3. Battling to stay alive are May, Rop & Fernandez, all 2-4. Hanging by a mathematical thread but not yet eliminated is Eric Owens, 1-5. No longer in the running are Seemiller & Chui, both 0-6.

#### Round VII

A relatively straightforward round, with all matches going as expected. Zhuang defeated O'Neill, 13, 11, 8; Nguyen defeated May, -19, 19, 19, 13, in a match that May led almost every game (with Nguyen coming back from down 17-13 in the third to win at 19); Sweeris defeated Rop, 15, 14, 16; Owens defeated Fernandez, 14, -18, 15, 18; Chui defeated an exhausted & dispirited Seemiller, 18, 18, 17; and Masters defaulted to Butler, due to leg injury.

#### Analysis

It is now past 10 PM on Thursday night, with one more day to go. At this stage, four players are clearly in the lead: Butler, Zhuang & Sweeris, all 7-0, and Nguyen, 6-1. With four rounds to go, however, both O'Neill (3-4) and Masters (3-4) still have a chance to make the third spot (assuming Masters overcomes his leg injuries, with a good night's sleep). Both would have to win their last four matches, while Nguyen lost all four of his. Nguyen's last four matches would be tough ones, however—Zhuang, Butler, Sweeris & O'Neill. Eliminated from the running this round were May, Owens and Fernandez, all 2-5, since each has lost to Nguyen, head-to-head. Darko Rop, 2-5, still has a mathematical long-shot, since he defeated Nguyen.

#### Round VIII

Bright and early at 9 AM, Zhuang defeated May, -12, 12, 4, 9; Butler defeated Rop, 14, 7, 10; Owens defeated Chui, 10, 10, 19; and Fernandez defeated Seemiller, 12, 15, 9.

After winning the first against Sweeris at 13 and losing the second at 10, Masters was reeling all over the place, due to his leg injury. He'd had a back operation recently, and had hurt the leg favoring it. The rest of this match Masters would have failed an alcohol test as he never took two steps without stumbling. Match to Sweeris, -13, 10, 8, 6.

With their wins, Zhuang, Butler and Sweeris have clinched at least a top-four finish. And the fourth place finisher does have a chance to make the Olympics, by defeating Canada in the doubles playoff at the North American Championships.

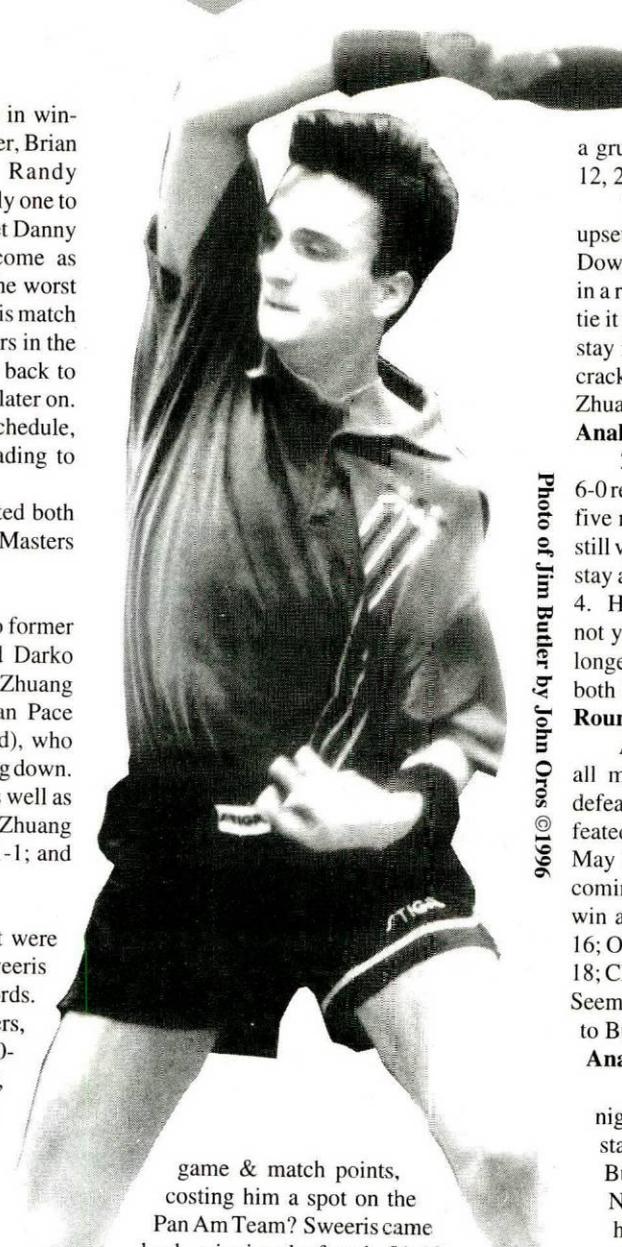


Photo of Jim Butler by John Oros © 1996



The injured Masters retired to the sidelines to watch O'Neill versus Nguyen.

At one game each, O'Neill led 19-16, but Nguyen scored four in a row to lead 20-19. O'Neill got a net winner—"God is on his side," said Masters. But Nguyen held on in the face of divine opposition, 23-21. O'Neill won the fourth to force a fifth game.

The match is an important one, because if O'Neill wins, O'Neill and Owens are still in the running to overtake Nguyen for the fourth spot.

Up 4-1 in the fifth, Nguyen's coach, Zhi-Yong Wang, is red-carded by Umpire Ray Cavicchio for apparently coaching during a match, although Wang and nearby spectators deny it. At 7-3 Nguyen, Wang is ordered by Cavicchio to leave the area! Nguyen seems distracted by this, and plays haphazard for a time as his lead turns into a 9-10 deficit. However, with a series of well-played shots (mostly to O'Neill's wide forehand), Nguyen runs away with the game and wins, -19, 14, 21,-16, 14.

**Analysis**

With Nguyen's win, the top four are now set, with Zhuang, Butler and Sweeris all 8-0, Nguyen 7-1. O'Neill, Masters, Owens and Fernandez are 3-5; May and Rop are 2-6; Chui is 1-7; Seemiller is 0-8.

**Round IX**

In the battle for position outside the top four, O'Neill defeats Seemiller, 11, 12, 13; Fernandez fights to the end in defeating Masters, 21, -13, 16, -18, 19; and Rop defeats Chui, 13, 9, 16. ("Put some prize money in 5 through 12," complained Chui.) May defaulted to Owens.

Butler & Zhuang squared off, knowing that the winner would clinch a position on the Olympic Team. They split the first two games, then Butler wins the third easily, 21-12. In the fourth, up 11-9, Butler pulls away to win 21-12, mostly by blocking and looping to Zhuang's wide forehand, often catching Zhuang off-balance or going the wrong way.

Sweeris and Nguyen had only played once in the past year, with Sweeris winning at the Allstar Semifinals at the Missouri Open last September. This time, Sweeris quickly won the first, 21-12. In the second, it was Nguyen leading 20-18—only to have

Sweeris backhand smash, and then serve a winner that Nguyen pushed into the net, deuce. Sweeris smashed Nguyen's loop, and then serve & looped a winner—and Sweeris was up 2-0 in what he later told me was the most important match of his life. Sweeris easily won the third and the match, 14, 20, 11, to improve to 9-0 and all but clinch an Olympic berth.

**Analysis**

Butler, with a 9-0 record, has almost clinched his Olympic spot. The only way he can not make it is if he loses his last two matches to Nguyen & Sweeris, Zhuang defeats Sweeris but loses to Nguyen, and Butler loses out in a 3-way tie for 2nd with Zhuang and Nguyen—one chance in 48 (assuming his 3-1 win over Nguyen neither helps nor hurts in the 3-way tie).

Zhuang (8-1) needs to win against either Sweeris or Nguyen in his final two matches to clinch a spot. Nguyen (7-2) is fighting for his life, needing to win against both Zhuang and Butler to have a chance of making the team.

For Sweeris (9-0) not to make it at this point (with his head-to-head win over Nguyen), he'd have to lose to both Butler & Zhuang, with the loss to Zhuang 3-0; and Nguyen would have to defeat both Butler & Zhuang, with the win over Zhuang 3-0; then he'd have to come out last in a 3-way tie between himself, Nguyen & Zhuang that would go to points. Ignoring the fact that Sweeris won by big scores over Nguyen, and assuming all games between the top four were even, there was still 1 chance in 768 of him not making the team! Enough to give him a nerve-racking afternoon as he waited for the night's final two rounds.

**Round X**

In the continuing battle for positioning, rating points and pride, Owens defeated O'Neill, 16, -16, -14, 16, 12; Masters defeated Chui, 17, -17, 14, 17; and Rop, after winning the first two easily (with a match point in the third), struggled before finally winning against Fernandez, 9, 10, -21, -17, 23. It was Fernandez's sixth 5-gamer (of which he won three). Seemiller defaulted to May.

Sweeris won the first game against Zhuang, 21-16, clinching his Olympic spot—and promptly went flat. Over the next three games, he'd serve and rip his vintage forehand only three times—a testament to exhaustion. Zhuang, however, had no mercy, as he better seemed to understand that they weren't really playing for the Olympic Team at this point, but for the singles spot—and Zhuang beat Sweeris in a straight-out, back-



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hand to backhand duel, -16, 12, 16, 13. Nguyen's last chance was quickly eliminated as Butler won three straight, 19, 19, 16. As it got close each game, Nguyen simply wouldn't take any shots, and he's a shot-maker. Butler also had the advantage of an edge at 20-19 to win the first game—and ended the last game with an edge at 20-16.

**Analysis**

With Nguyen (7-3) eliminated, it's now a battle for the singles spot. None of the three are safe; if Butler loses to Sweeris, and Zhuang defeats Nguyen, Butler, Sweeris & Zhuang are in a 3-way tie that would go to games or points. Sweeris is in the weakest position, however, as will be explained shortly.

**Round XI**

Fernandez continued to fight, defeating May, 15, 14,-16, 16; O'Neill defeats Chui, 17, 17, 15; Owens defeats Masters, 21, -17, 12, 20; and Rop defeats Seemiller by default.

It became obvious very quickly that Nguyen wasn't going to beat Zhuang, and he went down quickly, 14, 7, 16, before the final match between Sweeris and Butler could even be sent out.

**Final Analysis**

If Sweeris beats Butler 3-0, he finishes 1st, Zhuang 2nd, Butler 3rd; if Sweeris beats Butler 3-1, the three are in a 3-way tie that would go to points—but Sweeris has to outscore Butler by 16 points (his deficit against Zhuang) or he finishes 3rd. If Sweeris defeats Butler in five, there would be a 3-way tie going to games, with Butler 1st, Zhuang 2nd, Sweeris 3rd. If Butler wins, he's undefeated, and Butler is 1st, Zhuang 2nd, Sweeris 3rd.

**Round XI, Continued**

Up 8-7 in the first against Sweeris, Butler poured it on, and ran away with a 21-12 win. It's just about over for Sweeris—he'd have to outscore Butler by 25 points in winning the next three games to get one of the singles spots—the equivalent of winning at 13, 13 & 12! But he battles on, even after falling behind 0-4, 5-10 and 7-12 in the second. Sweeris scores six straight to go up 13-12, but Butler pulls to a 20-18 lead. Todd continues to fight, and deuces it! If he wins this game, all he has to do in the next two games is win by 23 points—say, 21-9, 21-10! But Butler scores the next two points, and the tournament is essentially over—Butler has clinched 1st place, Zhuang 2nd, Sweeris 3rd. Sweeris wins the third, but down 4-14 in the fourth, they play mostly exhibition the rest of the way. Butler finishes 11-0; Zhuang 10-1; Sweeris 9-2. Nguyen grabs the 4th spot at 7-4.

Eric Owens, with wins over O'Neill



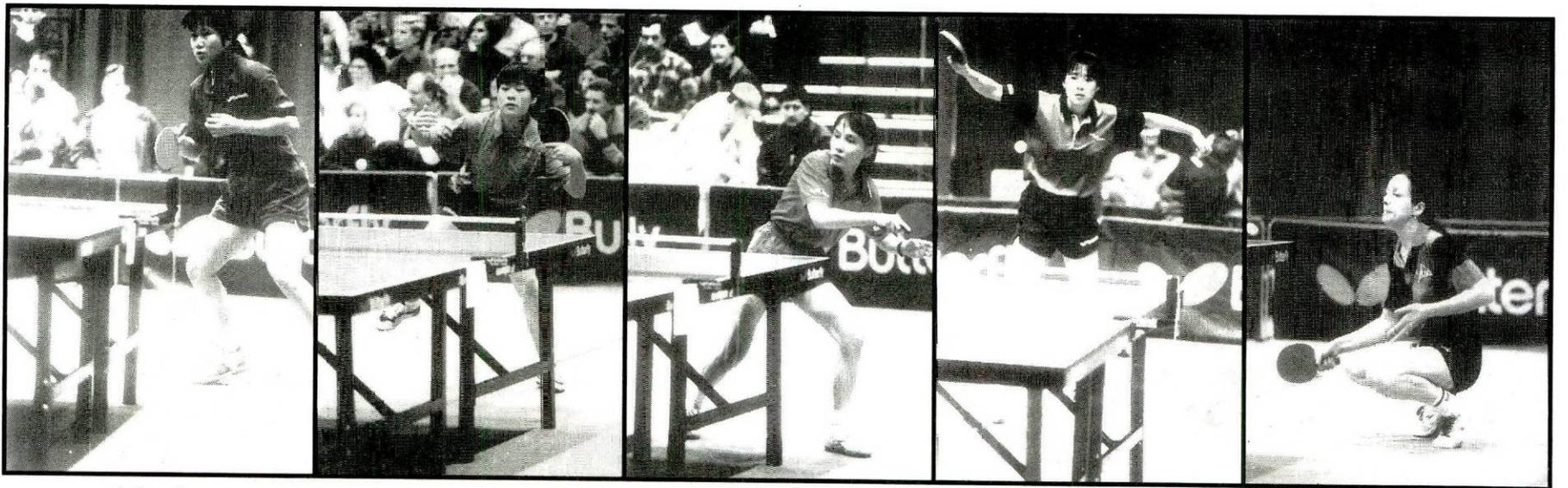
and Masters in the last two rounds, finishes 5th at 6-5. Talk about trying to come in the back door—Eric lost his first five matches, then won his last six! Sean O'Neill, Darko Rop and David Fernandez finish tied at 5-6, with identical 3-3 game records between the three of them. It went to points with O'Neill (202-183) coming in 6th; Rop (194-190) 7th; and Fernandez (180-203) 8th. Masters comes in 9th, 4-7. May is 10th, 3-8. Chui is 11th, 1-10. Seemiller comes in 12th, 0-11.

It's finally over—and our Men's Olympic Team is set. Congratulations to Jim Butler, David Zhuang and Todd Sweeris!



**Below is the round by round progression of the players in the Final 12 for men. The first two rounds are the carry-over matches from the Preliminaries**

| Player            | R1  | R2  | R3  | R4  | R5  | R6  | R7  | R8  | R9  | R10  | R11  |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|
| 1. Jim Butler     | 1-0 | 2-0 | 3-0 | 4-0 | 5-0 | 6-0 | 7-0 | 8-0 | 9-0 | 10-0 | 11-0 |
| 2. David Zhuang   | 1-0 | 2-0 | 3-0 | 4-0 | 5-0 | 6-0 | 7-0 | 8-0 | 8-1 | 9-1  | 10-1 |
| 3. Todd Sweeris   | 1-0 | 2-0 | 3-0 | 4-0 | 5-0 | 6-0 | 7-0 | 8-0 | 9-0 | 9-1  | 9-2  |
| 4. Khoa Nguyen    | 1-0 | 2-0 | 3-0 | 4-0 | 5-0 | 5-1 | 6-1 | 7-1 | 7-2 | 7-3  | 7-4  |
| 5. Eric Owens     | 0-1 | 0-2 | 0-3 | 0-4 | 0-5 | 1-5 | 2-5 | 3-5 | 4-5 | 5-5  | 6-5  |
| 6. Sean O'Neill   | 0-1 | 0-2 | 1-2 | 2-2 | 3-2 | 3-3 | 3-4 | 3-5 | 4-5 | 4-6  | 5-6  |
| 7. Darko Rop      | 1-0 | 1-1 | 1-2 | 1-3 | 1-4 | 2-4 | 2-5 | 2-6 | 3-6 | 4-6  | 5-6  |
| 8. Dave Fernandez | 1-0 | 1-1 | 1-2 | 1-3 | 1-4 | 2-4 | 2-5 | 3-5 | 4-5 | 4-6  | 5-6  |
| 9. Brian Masters  | 1-0 | 1-1 | 1-2 | 2-2 | 3-2 | 3-3 | 3-4 | 3-5 | 3-6 | 4-6  | 4-7  |
| 10. Derek May     | 1-0 | 1-1 | 2-1 | 2-2 | 2-3 | 2-4 | 2-5 | 2-6 | 2-7 | 3-7  | 3-8  |
| 11. Chi-Sun Chui  | 0-1 | 0-2 | 0-3 | 0-4 | 0-5 | 0-6 | 1-6 | 1-7 | 1-8 | 1-9  | 1-10 |
| 12. Dan Seemiller | 0-1 | 0-2 | 0-3 | 0-4 | 0-5 | 0-6 | 0-7 | 0-8 | 0-9 | 0-10 | 0-11 |



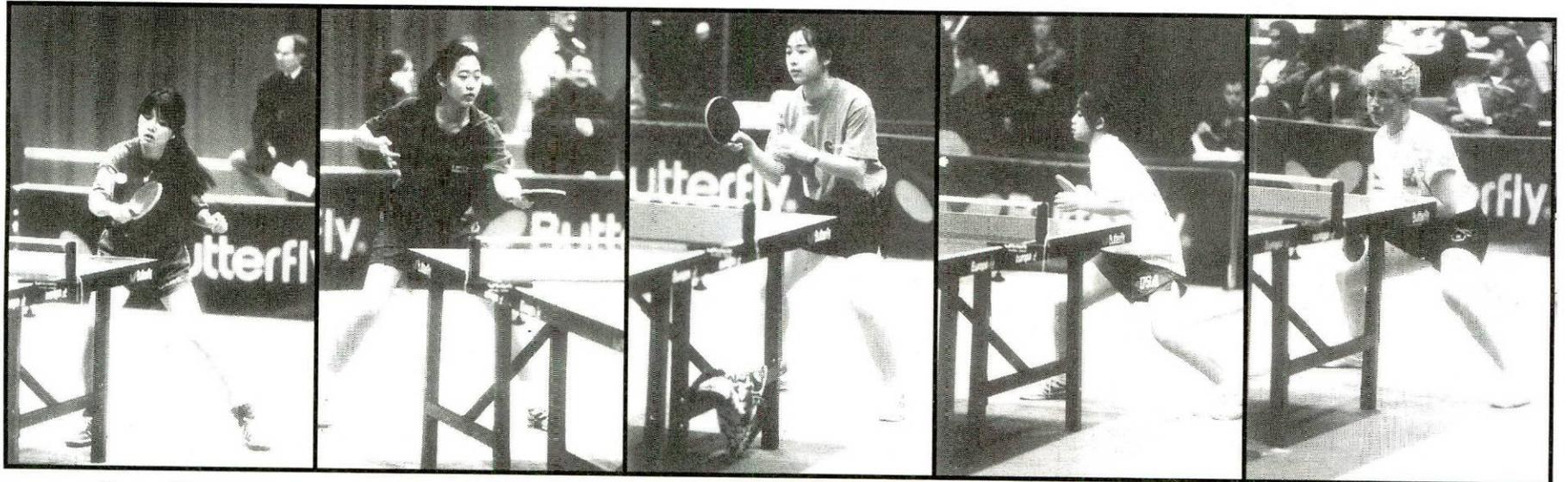
*Lily Yip*

*Amy Feng*

*Wei Wang*

*Virginia Sung*

*Ann Zakharyan*



*Jane Chui*

*Vivian Lee*

*Karen Chang*

*Jessica Shen*

*Toni Gresham*



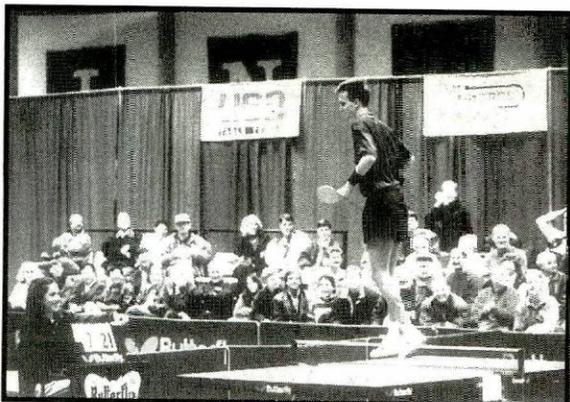
*Ann Alvarez*

*Peggy Rosen*

*Sean Loneragan*

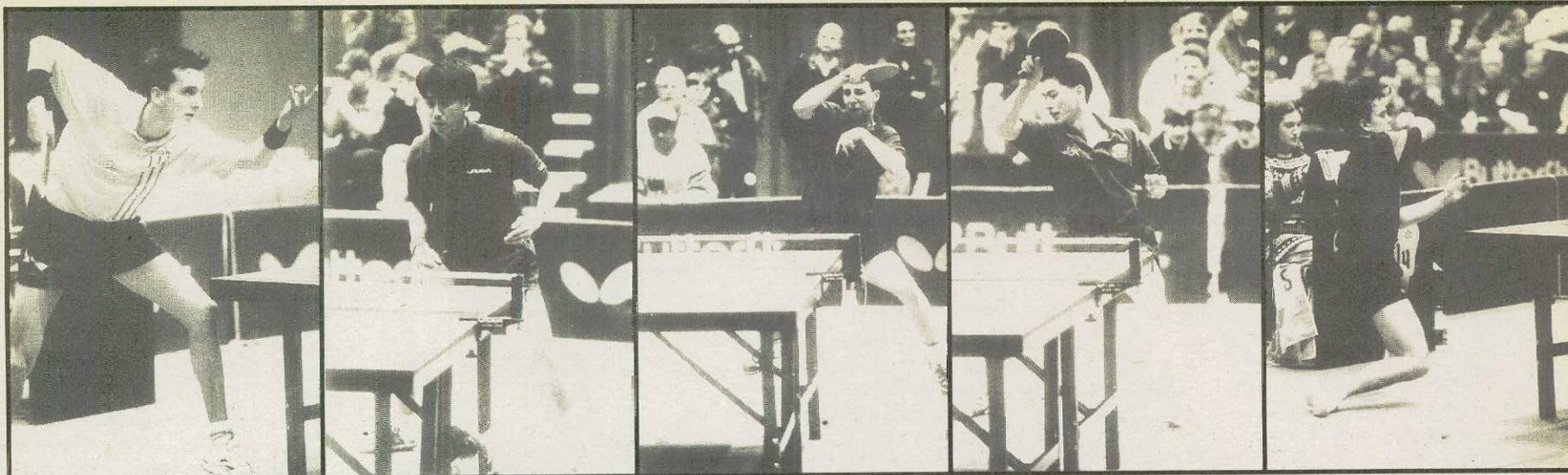
*Barney J. Reed*

*Barry Dattel*



L-R: Jim Butler jumps on table immediately after winning last match; the scene from above; the U.S. Olympic Team.





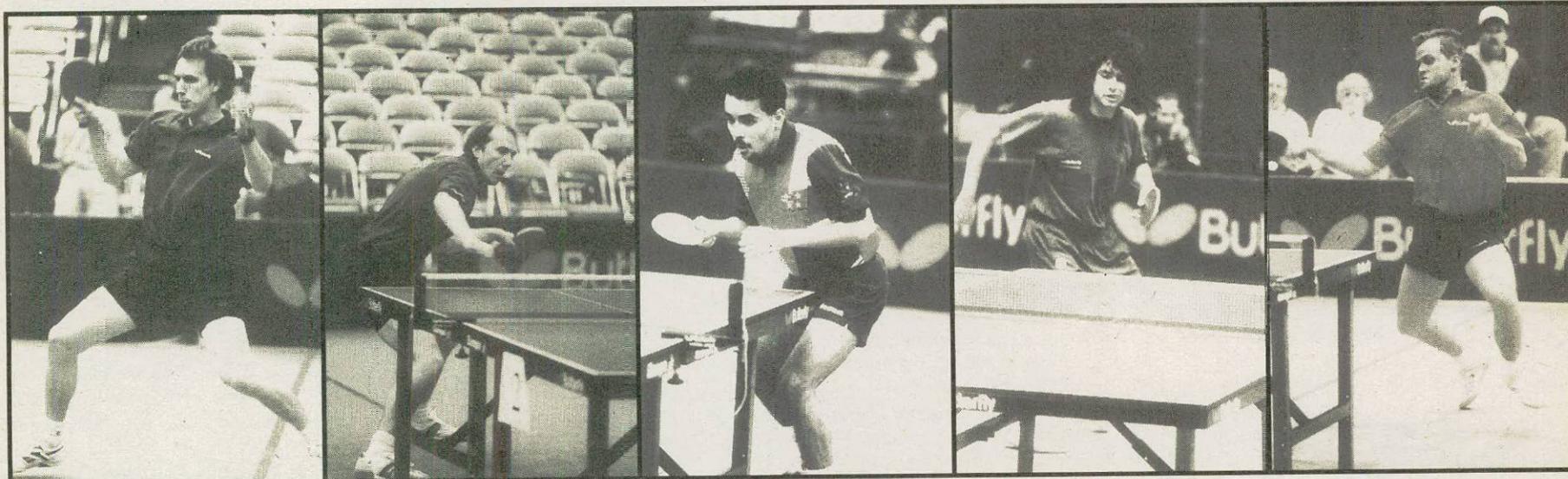
*Jim Butler*

*David Zhuang*

*Todd Sweeris*

*Khoa Nguyen*

*Eric Owens*



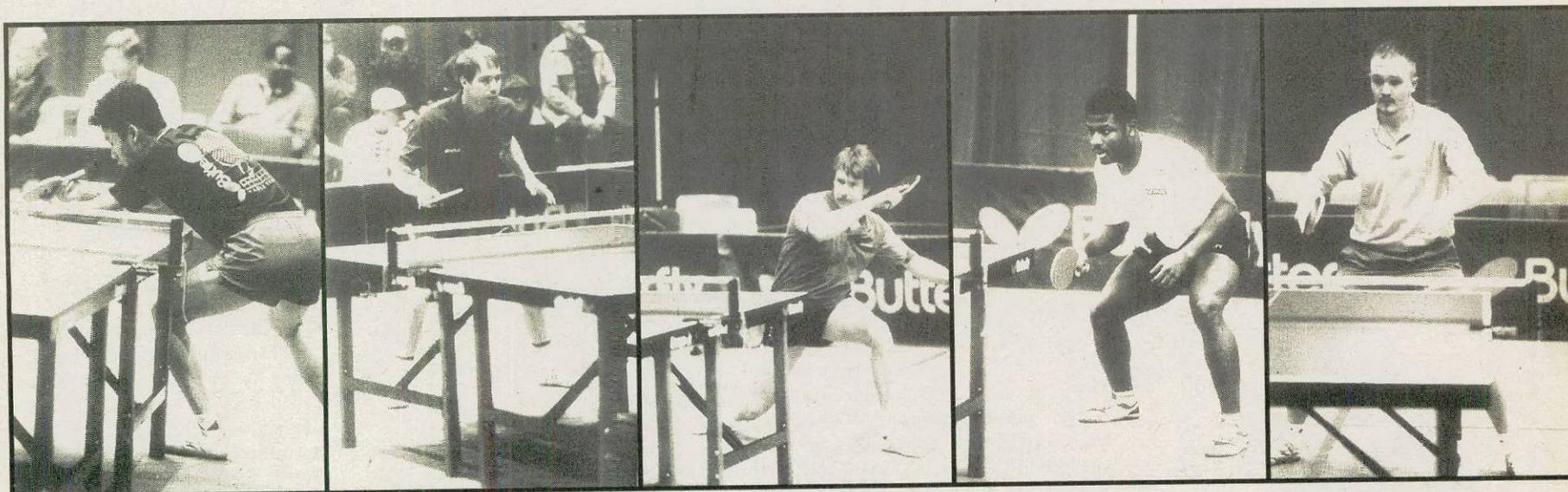
*Sean O'Neill*

*Darko Rop*

*Dave Fernandez*

*Brian Masters*

*Derek May*



*Chi-Sun Chui*

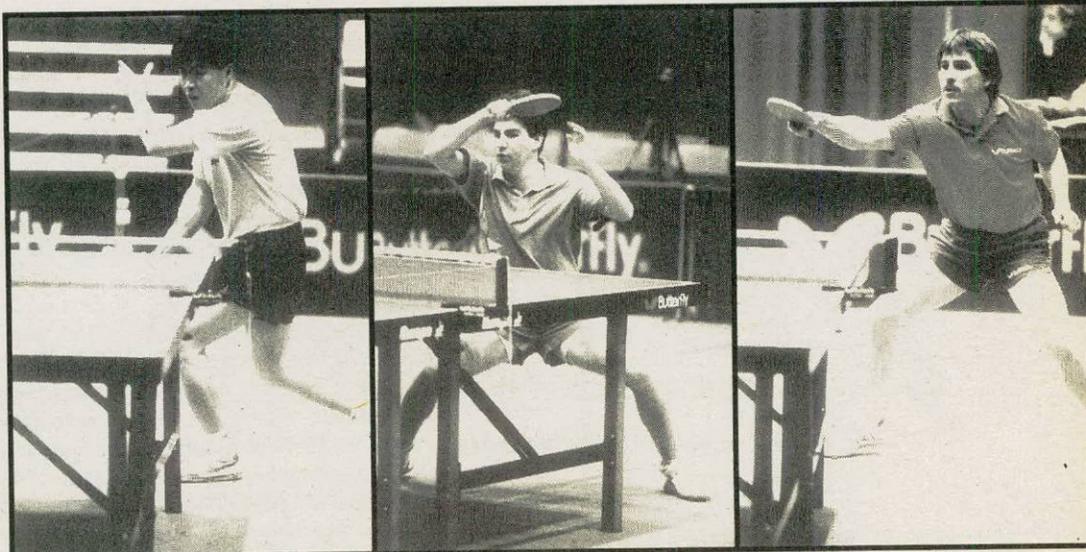
*Dan Seemiller*

*Mike Veillette*

*Brian Pace*

*Bernie Pietrak*

Scenes  
from  
the  
**U.S.  
Olympic  
Trials**  
by John Oros ©1996



*Stephen Yeh*

*Randy Cohen*

*Randy Seemiller*

# The U.S. Olympie Trials

## Women's Trials

Flint, Michigan

February 21-23, 1996

by Larry Hodges

The top 12 rated women in the U.S. (citizens only) were invited to the U.S. Olympics Trials in Flint, Michigan, February 21-23. The top two finishers would play singles at the Olympics. The third-place finisher would play doubles with the top finisher. The fourth place finisher would play doubles with the second place finisher in a playoff with Canada, with the winning team playing doubles together at the Olympics.

The main goal, then, was "Top Three!" Because those three would become instant Olympians.

To the players competing, all that mattered was the Olympics. However, the U.S. National Team was also settled here. Tawny Banh took one position at the Trials at the U.S. Nationals. (Players were only allowed to try out in one Trials; players who were not Olympic-eligible could only try out for the one position at the Trials at the Nationals, where Tawny had defeated Nan Li for the spot.)

A complete round robin of all 12 players would be played, with all 11 matches to be best 3 of 5. To match the upcoming Olympic Schedule, there was a morning session each day from 9 AM to 12:30 PM, and a night session from 7 PM to 10:30 PM.

### Round I

Round one opened with great anticipation, but closed with a whimper as all five matches were quick 3-0's for the higher rated player. Nearly every game was under 15. Amy Feng

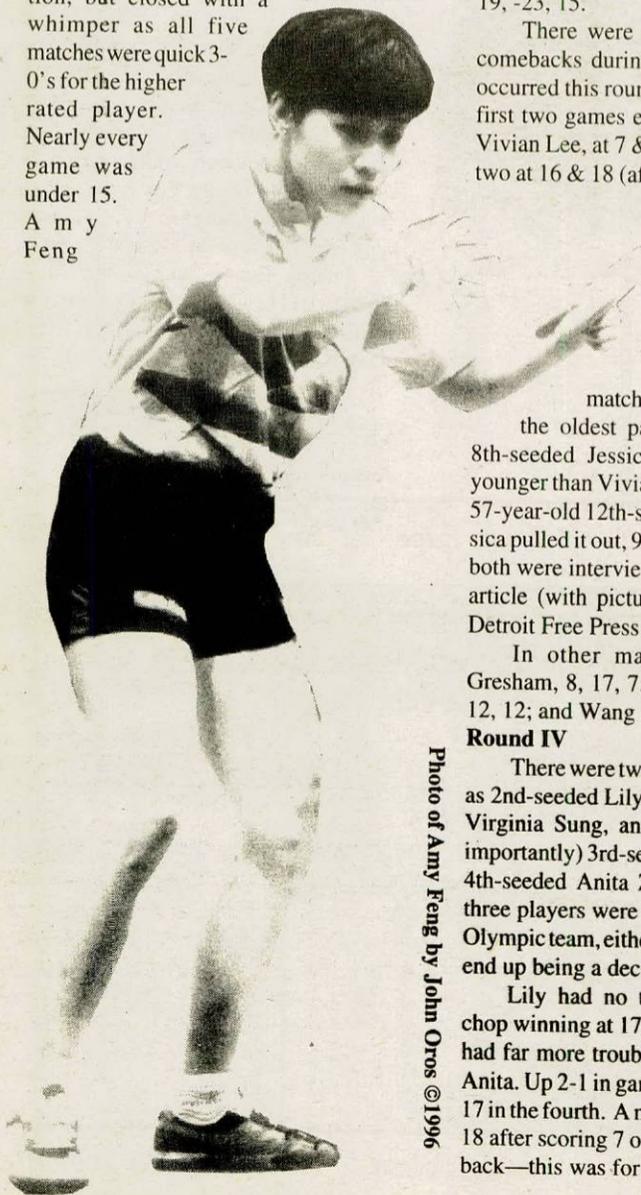


Photo of Amy Feng by John Oros ©1996



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defeated Ann Alvarez, 5, 11, 14; Lily Yip defeated Vivian Lee, 9, 15, 12; Wei Wang defeated Toni Gresham 10, 14, 7; Anita Zakharyan defeated Karen Chang 15, 13, 12; Virginia Sung defeated Jessica Shen, 9, 7, 5; and Jane Chui defeated Peggy Rosen, 13, 18, 13.

### Round II

There was one match of interest this round, when 7th seeded Chui upset 4th seeded Zakharyan in a match that would later come back to haunt Zakharyan. The quick-hitting Chui, with pips on her backhand and using a Deng Yaping-like forehand and grip (with index finger partly up on racket) hammered the corners in winning the match, 18, -18, 18, 14. In other matches, Feng defeated Lee, 14, 13, 11; Yip defeated Chang, 18, 4, 1 (!); Wang defeated Shen, 18, 9, 11; Sung defeated Rosen, 15, 12, 13; and Gresham defeated Alvarez, 19, 8, 11.

### Round III

Peggy Rosen, 0-2, defaulted out of the rest of the Trials due to illness.

Anita came out blazing against 5th seed Virginia Sung, ripping through Virginia's chopping game as if determined to make up for her loss in the previous round to Jane Chui. Anita won the first, 21-9, and pulled out the second, 21-19. Virginia battled off a couple of match points before pulling out the third, 25-23, but Anita pulled away at the end of the fourth to win the match, 9, 19, -23, 15.

There were a number of memorable comebacks during the trials, and the first occurred this round. Karen Chang won the first two games easily against 14-year-old Vivian Lee, at 7 & 12. Vivian won the next two at 16 & 18 (after being down 5-0 in the fourth). In the fifth, Karen took a 19-13 lead—but Vivian scored the last eight in a row to win the match, -7, -12, 16, 18, 19.

Also of interest was the match between the youngest and the oldest participants. 14-year-old 8th-seeded Jessica Shen (a few months younger than Vivian Lee) battled it out with 57-year-old 12th-seeded Ann Alvarez. Jessica pulled it out, 9, -19, 11, 16. Afterwards, both were interviewed by reporters, and an article (with pictures of both) was in the Detroit Free Press the following morning.

In other matches, Feng defeated Gresham, 8, 17, 7; Yip defeated Chui, 18, 12, 12; and Wang defeated Rosen, default.

### Round IV

There were two big matches this round, as 2nd-seeded Lily Yip took on 5th-seeded Virginia Sung, and (probably even more importantly) 3rd-seeded Wei Wang took on 4th-seeded Anita Zakharyan. Since only three players were guaranteed spots on the Olympic team, either of these matches could end up being a deciding match.

Lily had no trouble with Virginia's chop winning at 17, 16, 13. Wei, however, had far more trouble getting her way with Anita. Up 2-1 in games, Wei fell behind 13-17 in the fourth. A moment later, she led 20-18 after scoring 7 of 8 points. Anita fought back—this was for the Olympics, for gosh

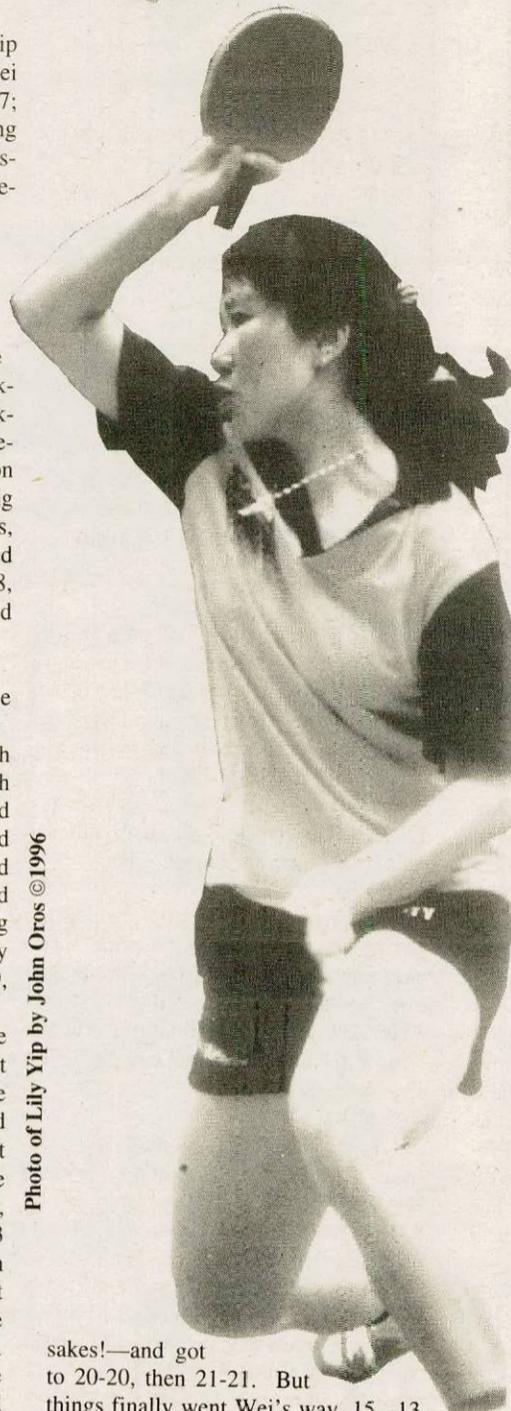


Photo of Lily Yip by John Oros ©1996

sakes!—and got to 20-20, then 21-21. But things finally went Wei's way, 15, -13, 17, 21.

Also of interest this round was Jane Chui's 5-game struggle with Vivian Lee. Leading 2-1 in games, Vivian made it to 19—all in the fourth before losing 18 in the fifth, 12, -16, -11, 19, 18.

In other matches, Feng defeated Karen Chang, 10, 8, 18; Shen defeated Gresham, -21, 19, 16, 8; and Alvarez defeated Rosen, default.

### Round V

The big match this round was between the 2nd & 3rd seeds, Lily Yip & Wei Wang. Both players were at their absolute best, with the rallies among the fastest and most furious you'll see on the American continent—and that includes the men's game. Both play a fast, close-to-the-table game (Lily a pips-out penholder, Wei a shakehander with pips on the backhand), and both tried to outdo the other in terms of sheer speed. One spectator said, "I watched a few of their rallies, and wanted to sprint to the barriers to lob." After losing the first at 16, Lily won the next three in very close battles to win the match, -16, 18, 19, 19. There wasn't a slow point in the match.

Also of note this round was red-hot Vivian Lee's match with Virginia Sung. Nope, Vivian didn't win a game, but after losing the first at 17, Vivian led 18-12 the next two games, but lost the match, 17, 19, 21. The match also had the funniest moment that nobody saw. Vivian looped a high, spinny loop that seemed to arc off the end. Virginia leaned down to catch the ball, which hit the table, and bounced straight and cleanly into Virginia's forehead!

In other matches, Feng defeated Shen, 9, 7, 8; Chui defeated Chang, 11, 11, 15; Zakharyan defeated Alvarez, 8, 11, 13; and Gresham defeated Rosen, default.

### Round VI

Round seven was a slow round, with the higher rated player steamrolling 3-0 in all but one match. #1 seed Amy Feng did face a scare from #7 Jane Chui, however. Amy was cruising through the first game, leading 11-4, when she was suddenly torpedoed as Jane scored 13 of the next 15 to go up 17-13! Jane won the first, 21-15, and went up 7-4 in the second game. However, it was all Amy from here on, as Amy won the match, -17, 11, 15, 17.

In other matches, Yip defeated Alvarez, 3, 6, 8; Wang defeated Lee, 8, 8, 5; Zakharyan defeated Gresham, 10, 12, 11; Sung defeated Chang, 7, 16, 17; and Shen defeated Rosen, default.

### Round VII

Another uneventful round, as all but one match was an easy 3-0, most under 10. Only Ann Alvarez was able to win a game in losing to Vivian Lee, 14, 12, -18, 12. In other matches, Feng defeated Rosen, default; Yip defeated Gresham, 6, 9, 9; Wang defeated Chang, 9, 13, 10; Zakharyan defeated Shen, 11, 15, 13; and Sung defeated Chui, 9, 11, 15.

### Analysis

After seven rounds, six players are still in the running for the Olympic Team (top 3): Amy Feng and Lily Yip are 7-0; Wei Wang is 6-1; Anita Zakharyan & Virginia Sung are 5-2; and Jane Chui is 4-3. Not yet mathematically eliminated, but hanging by mathematical threads, are Jessica Shen at 3-4; and Vivian Lee & Toni Gresham at 2-5. Karen Chang, Ann Alvarez and (should she suddenly appear) Peggy Rosen are now eliminated.

### Round VIII

Two matches were of interest this round, Amy Feng vs. Virginia Sung, and Wei Wang vs. Jane Chui. Amy's match was of interest simply because again, she lost a game. This just didn't seem to be the same over-powering Amy Feng that normally rolled over the opposition—in fact, Amy would lose games each of the top seven seeds (excluding herself and the defaulting Peggy Rosen). This Amy Feng continued to win, however, this time 14, 10, -21, 12.

Wei's match with Jane was of interest not only because it went four, but because it would later make a huge difference in the final standings—in fact, if Jane had won, she'd have made the Olympic Team instead of Wei. However, once again Wei had her way, 11, 11, -16, 13.

In other matches, Yip defeated Shen, 6,

12, 12; Zakharyan defeated Rosen, default; Chang defeated Alvarez, 14, 18, 20; and Lee defeated Gresham, 13, 17, 13.

**Analysis**

Mathematically eliminated this round (by their losses or other players' wins) are Jessica Shen & Vivian Lee, 3-5; and Toni Gresham, 2-6. Still in the running are Amy Feng & Lily Yip, 8-0; Wei Wang, 7-1; Anita Zakharyan, 6-2; Virginia Sung, 5-3; and by a mathematical thread, Jane Chui, 4-4.

**Round IX**

Again, there were two matches of interest this round. Amy Feng continued to lose games, defeating Anita Zakharyan at 18, 9, -21, 12. The win clinched one of the three Olympics spots for Amy. With Anita's loss, and Lily Yip's default win over Peggy Rosen, Lily is also assured a top-3 finish.

The BIG match this round, however, was Wei Wang vs. Virginia Sung. Virginia had defeated Wei in the U.S. Team Trials for the 1995 Worlds, knocking Wei off the team. Since Virginia had lost to Anita Zakharyan, she'd need to defeat Wei here to force a 3-way tie for third—assuming Amy Feng & Lily Yip came in 1st & 2nd, as it appeared they would.

In the first game, Wei led 20-18, but Virginia won four straight points, the last on a net-dribbler, to win 22-20. However, Wei quickly tied it up, winning the second 21-17. The match was turning into a long battle, with each rally going on and on as Wei would vary from soft looping and pushing with occasional smashes against Virginia's chop.

In the third game, Wei led 5-0 and 13-6, but began to get careless, and Virginia tied it up, 15-all. Wei began to play very passive, and now the rallies went on even longer. Up 16-15, they had the point of the match—featuring two counter-smashes by Virginia—but Wei won the point to lead 17-15. At 17-16, expedite was called, changing the match entirely. Both began to play very aggressively when serving. Wei led 19-16, but Virginia tied it up, 19-all. Wei went for it with a serve and the hardest loop she'd tried—a clean winner, 20-19. And now, as if remembering Virginia getting a net-dribbler to win the first game, Wei matched it with her own net-dribbler to win, 21-19. The fourth, still played under expedite, was all Wei as she won the match, -20, 17, 19, 14. The match clinched a top-3 finish for Wei.

In other matches, Chui defeated Alvarez, 19, 19, 10; Lee defeated Shen, 13, 14, 14; and Chang defeated Gresham, 9, 9, 14.

**Analysis**

The top three spots on the Olympic Team were decided this round as Amy Feng & Lily Yip, 9-0, and Wei Wang, 8-1, all clinched the top three spots. At this stage, Anita Zakharyan could at most force a 2-way tie with Wei Wang for 3rd, where she would lose out due to her head-to-head loss to Wei. So from here on, Feng, Yip & Wang would be playing for positioning. There would also be a battle for the fourth spot, who would play with the number two finisher against Canada for a doubles spot—but with Lijuan Geng playing for Canada, this didn't look too promising.

In the running for the 4th spot are Anita Zakharyan, 6-3; and Virginia Sung & Jane Chui, 5-4.

**Round X**

Two big matches were played this round: Amy Feng vs. Wei Wang, and Lily Yip vs. Anita Zakharyan. After losing the first game at 19, Feng breezed past Wang, -19, 13, 14, 10. This knocked Wang out of the running for the top two positions, putting her in the third position, as a doubles player.

Yip also breezed past Zakharyan, 14, 17, 16, hurting Zakharyan's chances for the fourth position.

**Travel Pains**

by Larry Hodges

Athlete Jessica Shen, Coach Cheng Yinghua and Editor/Coach Larry Hodges traveled together to the Olympic Trials in Flint, Michigan. What follows is a log of our journey. Please don't ask us, "How was your trip?"!!! Read on, and you'll see why....

**7:55 AM:** Left house.

**8:10 AM:** Arrived at Jessica's house.

**8:20 AM:** Left for airport.

**9:05 AM:** Arrived National Airport for 10:15 AM U.S. Air flight.

**10:10 AM:** Our flight is canceled due to fog. Rescheduled for 3:59 PM.

**Next 5.5 hours:** Wrote coaching article, read book, discussed table tennis strategy with Jessica & Cheng, died of boredom.

**3:30 PM:** Flight Attendant arrives for flight, starts doing seat assignments.

**3:35 PM:** Continental jet skids on runway. Ends up partly off runway, with

landing gear stuck in mud, blocking main runway. Our jet is circling airport, unable to land.

**4:00 PM:** Jessica is scheduled to practice in Flint, 600 miles away.

**4:05 PM:** Our flight is cancelled. Our jet leaves for another airport before it runs out of fuel. Another jet leaves Pittsburgh, bound for National Airport to replace cancelled flight.

**4:10 PM:** Airport is closed, due to jet blocking main runway. Jet coming from Pittsburgh returns to Pittsburgh. Travelers are asked (on loudspeaker) to please reschedule travel plans for tomorrow.

**4:15 PM:** After explaining numerous times that Jessica is taking part in Olympic Trials the following morning and so must travel tonight, an attendant takes charge of our case. BWI Airport in Baltimore is also closed (due to fog) so only one of three local airports is open. Complete chaos reigns.

**4:20 PM:** Rescheduled on another flight at 6:25 PM from Dulles Airport, about 30 miles away. Baggage Claim is noti-

fied to locate our bags.

**4:30 PM:** Arrive at U.S. Air Baggage Claim to recover our bags. Handler goes in back room to try to find them. We need to catch 5:00 PM shuttle to Dulles Airport.

**4:55 PM:** Handler returns with bags. We sprint to shuttle.

**5:00 PM:** Shuttle is full. They won't let us on.

**5:01 PM:** Catch taxi to Dulles Airport.

**5:45 PM:** Arrive Dulles Airport. Taxi fare is \$48 plus tip.

**6:25 PM:** Flight leaves for Pittsburgh, where we will transfer to flight for Flint, Michigan.

**9:00 PM:** Jessica is scheduled for second practice in Flint, Michigan

**10:20 PM:** Arrive in Flint, Michigan

**10:45 PM:** Arrive at Hotel

**10:50 PM:** Discover we're at wrong hotel

**11:05 PM:** Arrive at correct hotel.

**12:00 Mid:** Go to bed

**12:10 AM:** Can't sleep, end up reading all night.

Karen Chang, up 19-11 and 20-15 in the fifth on Jessica Shen, barely held on to win, 17, -15, -12, 20, 19. With her upcoming default from Peggy Rosen in the final round, Karen ended her tournament with four straight wins to pull to 4-7 after an 0-7 start.

In other matches, Sung defeated Alvarez, 12, 23, 17; Lee defeated Rosen, default; and Chui defeated Gresham, 19, 16, 19.

**Analysis**

The battle for the fourth position is getting hot, with Anita Zakharyan, Virginia Sung & Jane Chui all 6-4, and Vivian Lee, 5-5, still a long shot if she defeats Anita Zakharyan in the final round, while Sung & Chui lose to Toni Gresham & Jessica Shen, respectively.

**Round XI**

In matches for positioning, Wang defeated Alvarez, 4, 5, 2; Zakharyan defeated Lee, 10, 12, 14; Sung defeated Gresham, 14, 8, 18; Chang defeated Rosen, default; and Chui defeated Shen, 16, 13, -13, 16.

Lee didn't beat Zakharyan, and Sung & Chui both won as well, so the fourth position became a three-way tie, with Zakharyan, Sung & Chui all at 7-4. However, among the three tied, Sung was 4-3 in games, Zakharyan 4-4, and Chui 3-4. So Sung grabbed the fourth position, to play doubles with the number two finisher—the loser between Amy Feng & Lily Yip.

Big favorite Amy, after leading 14-6 in the first game, held on to a 17-16 lead to win the first 21-18. In the sec-



Photo of Wei Wang by John Oros ©1996

ond, Amy led 14-11—but only scored two more points as Lily won 21-16! In the third, Lily gradually pulled away to a 21-17 win. In the fourth, Lily went up 13-8, but Amy pulled to 16-

15. Amy cranked off a powerful forehand loop—only to watch as Lily smashes it! 17-15 Lily. Down 16-19, Amy serves, and scores two in a row, 18-19. Lily drops Amy's next serve short over the net, and Amy reaches in, and flips it off the end, 18-20. Lily drives Amy's next serve off the end, but at 19-20, Lily blocks one, two, three loops, and Amy loops off. Match and first position to Lily Yip, -18, 16, 17, 19.

With her rating over 2500 since November, along with this win, Lily's no longer a big underdog against Amy.

**Analysis**  
This means that Yip and Wei Wang will be playing doubles together at the Olympics. Feng will team up with Virginia Sung against Canada for a possible North American doubles position. The official U.S. Olympic Team is Lily Yip, Amy Feng and Wei Wang (with Sung an addition if she and Feng win the playoff against Canada).

Joining Tawny Banh on the National Team would be Lily Yip, Amy Feng & Wei Wang. Congratulations to our U.S. Olympic & National Team!



**Below is the round by round progression of the players in the Final 12 for women.**

|                           |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |      |      |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|
| <b>1. Lily Yip</b>        | 1-0 | 2-0 | 3-0 | 4-0 | 5-0 | 6-0 | 7-0 | 8-0 | 9-0 | 10-0 | 11-0 |
| <b>2. Amy Feng</b>        | 1-0 | 2-0 | 3-0 | 4-0 | 5-0 | 6-0 | 7-0 | 8-0 | 9-0 | 10-0 | 10-1 |
| <b>3. Wei Wang</b>        | 1-0 | 2-0 | 3-0 | 4-0 | 4-1 | 5-1 | 6-1 | 7-1 | 8-1 | 8-2  | 9-2  |
| <b>4. Virginia Sung</b>   | 1-0 | 2-1 | 2-1 | 2-2 | 3-2 | 4-2 | 5-2 | 5-3 | 5-4 | 6-4  | 7-4  |
| <b>5. Anita Zakharyan</b> | 1-0 | 1-1 | 2-1 | 2-2 | 3-2 | 4-2 | 5-2 | 6-2 | 6-3 | 6-4  | 7-4  |
| <b>6. Jane Chui</b>       | 1-0 | 2-0 | 2-1 | 3-1 | 4-1 | 4-2 | 4-3 | 4-4 | 5-4 | 6-4  | 7-4  |
| <b>7. Vivian Lee</b>      | 0-1 | 0-2 | 1-2 | 1-3 | 1-4 | 1-5 | 2-5 | 3-5 | 4-5 | 5-5  | 5-6  |
| <b>8. Karen Chang</b>     | 0-1 | 0-2 | 0-3 | 0-4 | 0-5 | 0-6 | 0-7 | 1-7 | 2-7 | 3-7  | 4-7  |
| <b>9. Jessica Shen</b>    | 0-1 | 0-2 | 1-2 | 2-2 | 2-3 | 3-3 | 3-4 | 3-5 | 3-6 | 3-7  | 3-8  |
| <b>10. Toni Gresham</b>   | 0-1 | 1-1 | 1-2 | 1-3 | 2-3 | 2-4 | 2-5 | 2-6 | 2-7 | 2-8  | 2-9  |
| <b>11. Ann Alvarez</b>    | 0-1 | 0-2 | 0-3 | 1-3 | 1-4 | 1-5 | 1-6 | 1-7 | 1-8 | 1-9  | 1-10 |
| <b>12. Peggy Rosen*</b>   | 0-1 | 0-2 | 0-3 | 0-4 | 0-5 | 0-6 | 0-7 | 0-8 | 0-9 | 0-10 | 0-11 |

\*defaulted out after 2nd round

# MEET THE

# OLYMPIANS

★ Name: **JIM BUTLER**

★ Rank: #1 at Olympic Trials; #4 in U.S. Olympic-Eligible Ratings; #79 in World Rankings

★ Cereal: Granola with strawberries & cream

★ Olympic Trials Record: 13-0

★ Age: 25

★ Residence: Augusta, Georgia

★ Playing Style: All-around aggressive game centered around strong backhand hit, deceptive serves, strong blocking and overall consistency. Shakehands grip with inverted sponge.

★ Career Highlights: 1990, 1992 & 1993 U.S. Men's Singles National Champion... Member of 1992 & 1996 U.S. Olympic Team... 1985 & 1991 U.S. Men's Singles Finalist... Member of U.S. National Team, 1989-present... Member of 1991 & 1995 Pan Am Team... 1995 Pan Am Games Men's Singles Bronze Medalist, Men's Team Silver Medalist... 1995 Detroit Open Men's Singles Champion... 1994 U.S. Olympic Festival Men's Singles Champion... 1995 U.S. Open Men's Singles Semifinalist... 1995 U.S. Nationals Men's Singles Semifinalist... 1995 North American Men's Singles Semifinalist... 1995 World Team Cup Semifinalist... Defeated then-World #1 Jan-Ove Waldner in tournament in Sweden, 1994.

★ Background: Nicknamed "Slim Jim"... Enjoys basketball & tennis, anything outdoors... Older brother Scott was member of 1987 Pan Am Team... Originally from Iowa City, Iowa... Spent much of the past three years training in Sweden... Full-time professional player... One of the tallest players in U.S. at 6'4".



★ Name: **DAVID ZHUANG**

★ Rank: #2 at Olympic Trials; #1 in U.S. Olympic-Eligible Ratings; #155 in World Rankings

★ Cereal: Raisin Bran

★ Olympic Trials Record: 12-1

★ Age: 32

★ Residence: North Brunswick, New Jersey

★ Playing Style: Quick, close-to-the-table pips-out penholder with controlling backhand sidespin block, aggressive forehand hitting, and good serves. Sometimes flips his paddle and uses the inverted surface on other side to serve or loop.

★ Career Highlights: 1994 & 1995 U.S. Men's Singles National Champion... 1992, 1993, 1994 & 1995 U.S. Mixed Doubles National Champion... 1992, 1993 & 1994 U.S. Men's Doubles National Champion... 1995 U.S. Open Allstar Men's Singles Champion... 1995 Missouri Open Men's Singles Champion... 1995 Sun TV Open Allstar Men's Singles Champion... Member of U.S. National Team, 1994-present... Achieved rating of 2734 in November, 1995, highest ever by U.S. Olympic Eligible Player.

★ Background: Emigrated to U.S. in 1990... Became U.S. Citizen early in 1996... Originally from Guangdong, China... Enjoys listening to music... Likes all sports, especially basketball, soccer, billiards and snooker... Has degree in physical education from the Canton Sports College in China... Works full-time as computer technician.



★ Name: **TODD SWEERIS**

★ Rank: #3 at Olympic Trials; #3 in U.S. Olympic-Eligible Ratings; #373 in World Rankings

★ Cereal: Cinnamon Quaker Oatmeal Squares

★ Olympic Trials Record: 11-2

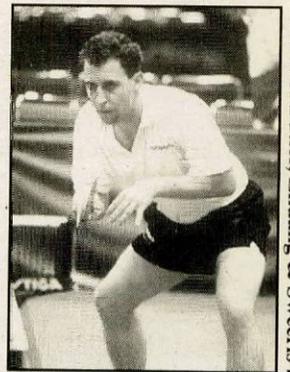
★ Age: 22

★ Residence: Rockville, Maryland

★ Playing Style: Aggressive shakehand looper on forehand with strong pips-out backhand hitting and very aggressive return of serve, fast footwork.

★ Career Highlights: 1995 U.S. Olympic Festival Men's Singles & Team Champion... 1995 Missouri Open Allstar Men's Singles Champion... 1994 U.S. Under 22 Men's Singles Champion... 1994 U.S. Open Under 22 Men's Singles Champion... 1993 U.S. World Team Member... 1994 & 1995 U.S. Open Team Champion... 1995 U.S. Club Champion... 1993, 1994 & 1995 U.S. Collegiate Team Champion... MVP at 1994 U.S. College Team Championships... Rated #1 in U.S. among Olympic Eligible Players with rating of 2706 after 1995 U.S. Open Teams Championships.

★ Background: Originally from Grand Rapids, Michigan... Member of USATT's Resident Training Program at Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, 1986-91... Accounting Major at University of Maryland... Loves Cinnabons... Parents are both members of USATT Hall of Fame.



Photos of Butler, Zhuang & Sweeris by John Oros © 1996

## Men's Olympic Trials Results

|                | Zhuang            | Nguyen            | Sweeris           | Butler   | May                  | O'Neill               | Masters               | Rop                   | Owens                 | Seemiller         | Fernandez             | Chui                  | Record | Placement |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------|-----------|
| David Zhuang   |                   | W<br>14,7,16      | W<br>-16,12,16,13 | L<br>1-3 | W<br>-12,12,4,9      | W<br>13,11,8          | W<br>11,12,13         | W<br>12,11,-18,20     | W<br>16,11,19         | W<br>11,7,18      | W<br>10,14,15         | W<br>16,19,13         | 10-1   | 2         |
| Khoa Nguyen    | L<br>0-3          |                   | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3 | W<br>-19,19,19,13    | W<br>-19,14,21,-16,14 | W<br>15,15,14         | L<br>1-3              | W<br>-14,16,9,-19,14  | W<br>18,10,11     | W<br>17,11,14         | W<br>15,14,12         | 7-4    | 4         |
| Todd Sweeris   | L<br>1-3          | W<br>14,20,11     |                   | L<br>1-3 | W<br>19,-19,18,13    | W<br>16,-16,20,-19,17 | W<br>-13,10,8,6       | W<br>15,14,16         | W<br>-18,11,-20,13,20 | W<br>14,7,11      | W<br>16,13,-10,-20,15 | W<br>15,16,14         | 9-2    | 3         |
| Jim Butler     | W<br>-14,18,12,12 | W<br>19,19,16     | W<br>12,20,-15,7  |          | W<br>8,11,11         | W<br>16,19,11         | Def                   | W<br>14,7,10          | W<br>18,20,14         | W<br>14,14,-16,18 | W<br>8,18,12          | W<br>16,17,14         | 11-0   | 1         |
| Derek May      | L<br>1-3          | L<br>1-3          | L<br>1-3          | L<br>0-3 |                      | L<br>0-3              | L<br>2-3              | W<br>17,14,-12,16     | L<br>Def              | W<br>Def          | L<br>1-3              | W<br>13,16,15         | 3-8    | 10        |
| Sean O'Neill   | L<br>0-3          | L<br>2-3          | L<br>2-3          | L<br>0-3 | W<br>13,17,15        |                       | W<br>-17,17,17,11     | W<br>10,-19,-21,20,15 | L<br>2-3              | W<br>11,12,13     | L<br>2-3              | W<br>17,17,15         | 5-6    | 6         |
| Brian Masters  | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | L<br>1-3          | L<br>Def | W<br>-13,21,7,-12,19 | L<br>1-3              |                       | W<br>-10,19,20,14     | L<br>1-3              | W<br>19,15,17     | L<br>2-3              | W<br>17,-17,14,17     | 4-7    | 9         |
| Darko Rop      | L<br>1-3          | W<br>12,16,-20,18 | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3 | L<br>1-3             | L<br>2-3              | L<br>1-3              |                       | W<br>16,20,23         | W<br>Def          | W<br>9,10,-21,-17,23  | W<br>13,9,16          | 5-6    | 7         |
| Eric Owens     | L<br>0-3          | L<br>2-3          | L<br>2-3          | L<br>0-3 | W<br>Def             | W<br>16,-16,-14,16,12 | W<br>21,-17,12,20     | L<br>0-3              |                       | W<br>10,13,14     | W<br>14,-18,15,18     | W<br>10,10,19         | 6-5    | 5         |
| Dan Seemiller  | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | L<br>1-3 | L<br>Def             | L<br>0-3              | L<br>0-3              | L<br>Def              | L<br>0-3              |                   | L<br>0-3              | L<br>0-3              | 0-11   | 12        |
| Dave Fernandez | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | L<br>2-3          | L<br>0-3 | W<br>15,14,-16,16    | W<br>18,-12,19,-19,19 | W<br>21,-13,16,-18,19 | L<br>2-3              | L<br>1-3              | W<br>12,15,9      |                       | W<br>22,-15,-14,12,21 | 5-6    | 8         |
| Chi-Sun Chui   | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3 | L<br>0-3             | L<br>1-3              | L<br>1-3              | L<br>0-3              | L<br>0-3              | W<br>18,18,17     | L<br>2-3              |                       | 1-10   | 11        |

★ Name: **LILY YIP**

★ Rank: #1 at Olympic Trials; #2 in U.S. Olympic-Eligible Ratings; #91 in World Rankings

★ Cereal: Honeynut Cheerios

★ Olympic Trials Record: 11-0

★ Age: 32

★ Current Residence: Metuchen, New Jersey

★ Playing Style: Very aggressive close-to-the-table pips-out penholder with quick backhand block and all-out forehand hitting game.

★ Career Highlights: 1992 & 1996 U.S. Olympic Team Member... 1995 Pan Am Games Women's Singles & Team Silver Medalist... 1991 Pan Am Games Women's Singles Silver Medalist, Women's Doubles & Teams Gold Medalist... Member of 1991 & 1995 Pan Am Team... 1992, 1993, 1994 & 1995 U.S. Women's Singles National Finalist... 1992, 1993, 1994 & 1995 U.S. Women's Doubles National Champion... 1995 U.S. Open Women's Singles Quarterfinalist & Allstar Women's Singles Finalist... 1995 North American Women's Singles Semifinalist... 1995 Missouri Open Allstar Women's Singles Finalist... 1995 Pacific Rim Open Allstar Women's Singles Finalist... 1995 St. Joseph Valley Allstar Women's Singles Finalist... Finished 1st at 1992 U.S. Olympic Team Trials... 1982 Guangdong, China Women's Singles Champion... 1985 & 1982 Chinese Nationals Women's Singles Top Ten... 1980 International Triangle Open, Hong Kong, Women's Singles Champion.

★ Background: Emigrated to U.S. in 1987... Became U.S. Citizen in 1991... 1987 Graduate with Coaching Degree of Physical Education College in Canton, China... Coaches at New Jersey Table Tennis Club... Enjoys traveling and working with computers.



★ Name: **AMY FENG**

★ Rank: #2 at Olympic Trials; #1 in U.S. Olympic-Eligible Ratings; #48 in World Rankings

★ Cereal: Cheerios

★ Olympic Trials Record: 10-1

★ Age: 26

★ Current Residence: Augusta, Georgia

★ Playing Style: All-around aggressive game with looping forehand and looping & hitting backhand, tricky serves. Shakehands grip with inverted sponge.

★ Career Highlights: 1992, 1993, 1994 & 1995 U.S. Women's Singles & Mixed Doubles National Champion... 1993 & 1994 U.S. Women's Doubles Champion... 1994 U.S. Open Women's Singles Finalist... 1995 U.S. Olympic Festival Women's Singles, Doubles & Mixed Doubles Champion... 1995 Louisiana Open Women's Singles & Allstar Women's Singles Champion... 1995 U.S. Open Allstar Women's Singles Champion... 1995 North American Women's Singles Finalist... 1995 St. Joseph Valley Allstar Women's Singles Champion... 1995 National Club Allstar Women's Singles Champion... 1995 Detroit Open Allstar Women's Singles Champion... 1995 Pacific Rim Allstar Women's Singles Champion.

★ Background: Emigrated to U.S. in 1992... Became U.S. Citizen early in 1996... Originally from Beijing, China... Enjoys tennis, traveling and shopping.



★ Name: **WEI WANG**

★ Rank: #3 at Olympic Trials; #3 in U.S. Olympic-Eligible Ratings; #110 in World Rankings

★ Cereal: Corn Flakes

★ Olympic Trials Record: 9-2

★ Age: 35

★ Current Residence: Pasadena, California

★ Playing Style: Close-to-the-table quick & aggressive hitter from both sides with pips-out backhand and consistent forehand loop.

★ Career Highlights: 1990 U.S. Women's Singles National Champion... 1991 U.S. Women's Singles Finalist... 1995 Pan Am Games Women's Doubles & Team Silver Medalist, Women's Singles Quarterfinalist... Member of 1995 Pan Am Team... 1995 U.S. Women's Singles Semifinalist... 1995 English Open Women's Doubles Finalist... U.S. National Team Member, 1991-94, 1996... 1988 North American Women's Singles Champion... 1989 North American Allstar Women's Singles Champion... 1992 & 1995 U.S. Women's Doubles National Champion... 1995 Chinese New Year Women's Singles Champion... Finished 5th at 1979 Chinese Nationals.

★ Background: Emigrated to U.S. in 1986... U.S. Citizen in 1992... Graduated from Beijing University in 1986... Enjoys listening to music and studying foreign culture... Her Aunt, Wang Jien, finished 3rd in Women's Singles at 1961 World Championships... At 92 pounds, easily the best adult player in U.S., pound for pound... Full-time Table Tennis Coach.



Photos of Yip, Feng & Wang by John Oros ©1996

*Women's Olympic Trials Results*

|                 | Feng              | Yip      | Wang              | Zakharyan         | Sung              | Rosen         | Chui              | Shen                  | Chang         | Gresham          | Lee                   | Alvarez           | Record | Placement |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------|-----------|
| Amy Feng        |                   | L<br>1-3 | W<br>-19,13,14,10 | W<br>18,9,-21,10  | W<br>14,10,-21,12 | W<br>Def      | W<br>-17,11,15,17 | W<br>9,7,8            | W<br>10,8,18  | W<br>8,17,7      | W<br>14,13,11         | W<br>5,11,14      | 10-1   | 2         |
| Lily Yip        | W<br>-18,16,17,19 |          | W<br>-16,18,19,19 | W<br>14,17,16     | W<br>17,16,13     | W<br>Def      | W<br>18,12,12     | W<br>6,12,12          | W<br>18,4,1   | W<br>6,9,9       | W<br>9,15,12          | W<br>3,6,8        | 11-0   | 1         |
| Wei Wang        | L<br>1-3          | L<br>1-3 |                   | W<br>15,-13,17,21 | W<br>-20,17,19,14 | W<br>Def      | W<br>11,11,-16,13 | W<br>18,9,11          | W<br>9,13,10  | W<br>10,14,7     | W<br>8,8,5            | W<br>4,5,2        | 9-2    | 3         |
| Anita Zakharyan | L<br>1-3          | L<br>0-3 | L<br>1-3          |                   | W<br>9,19,-23,15  | W<br>Def      | L<br>1-3          | W<br>11,15,13         | W<br>15,13,12 | W<br>10,12,11    | W<br>10,12,14         | W<br>8,11,13      | 7-4    | 5         |
| Virginia Sung   | L<br>1-3          | L<br>0-3 | L<br>1-3          | L<br>1-3          |                   | W<br>15,12,13 | W<br>9,11,15      | W<br>9,7,5            | W<br>7,16,17  | W<br>14,8,18     | W<br>17,19,21         | W<br>12,23,17     | 7-4    | 4         |
| Peggy Rosen     | L<br>Def          | L<br>Def | L<br>Def          | L<br>Def          | L<br>0-3          |               | L<br>0-3          | L<br>Def              | L<br>Def      | L<br>Def         | L<br>Def              | L<br>Def          | 0-11   | 12        |
| Jane Chui       | L<br>1-3          | L<br>0-3 | L<br>1-3          | W<br>18,-18,18,14 | L<br>0-3          | W<br>13,18,13 |                   | W<br>16,13,-13,16     | W<br>11,11,15 | W<br>19,16,19    | W<br>12,-16,-11,19,18 | W<br>19,19,10     | 7-4    | 6         |
| Jessica Shen    | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3 | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | W<br>Def      | L<br>1-3          |                       | L<br>2-3      | W<br>-21,19,16,8 | L<br>0-3              | W<br>9,-19,11,18  | 3-8    | 9         |
| Karen Chang     | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3 | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | W<br>Def      | L<br>0-3          | W<br>17,-15,-12,28,19 |               | W<br>9,9,14      | L<br>2-3              | W<br>14,18,20     | 4-7    | 8         |
| Toni Gresham    | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3 | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | W<br>Def      | L<br>0-3          | L<br>1-3              | L<br>0-3      |                  | L<br>0-3              | W<br>19,8,11      | 2-9    | 10        |
| Vivian Lee      | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3 | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | W<br>Def      | L<br>2-3          | W<br>13,14,14         | W<br>16,18,19 | W<br>13,17,13    |                       | W<br>14,12,-18,12 | 5-6    | 7         |
| Ann Alvarez     | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3 | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | L<br>0-3          | W<br>Def      | L<br>0-3          | L<br>1-3              | L<br>0-3      | L<br>0-3         | L<br>1-3              |                   | 1-10   | 11        |

# Jim Butler

March 3, 1996



Jim & family, L-R: Andrea, Richard, Jim, Scott and Sue.

Photo by Houshang Bozorgzadeh © 1996

**3-Time U.S. Men's Singles Champion  
1992 & 1996 U.S. Olympic Team  
13-0 at 1996 Olympic Trials**

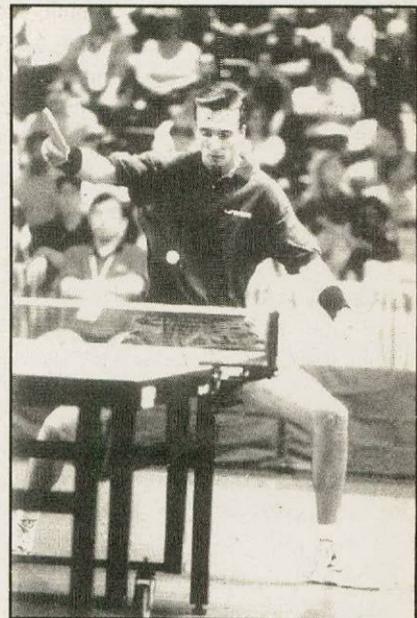


Photo by John Oros © 1996

**TTW:** How did you get started in table tennis?

**Jim:** I started in my basement, just like any other player in an American family. My dad and brother played, so I played. I started when I was 5.

**TTW:** Describe your playing style.

**Jim:** That's a tough question! How would you describe my playing style?

**TTW:** All-around game with an emphasis on backhand hit and serves?

**Jim:** That sounds right. I'd say I'm an offensive all-around player.

**TTW:** Are there any new parts of your game that you're working on?

**Jim:** Let's see, do I want to tell everyone what I'm working on? I'm working on my overall consistency.

**TTW:** How best could you improve your game?

**Jim:** My consistency.

**TTW:** How much do you normally train?

**Jim:** In Falkenburg, I'm normally doing 25-30 hours a week on the table. I also do physical training.

**TTW:** Recently, you had some physical problems. Tell us about them.

**Jim:** That happened the beginning of October. I was training quite a bit, and I was just coming off the summer where we played a lot of competitions, so I was a little bit fatigued, but I was playing so well that I felt good and I was happy to practice, and I was training a lot. On my last practice the week before my break I felt a strange pop in my back when I was practicing, and I ended up pulling a muscle in my upper back, right side, and it took a long time for it to heal because I kept trying to come back after a few weeks and it would make it worse every time I tried

to play a little. Actually, one time I tried coming back too soon, and I ended up hurting it for a longer period.

**TTW:** How did you train for the Olympic Trials?

**Jim:** I went to Sweden for three weeks after the Beverly Hills tournament and that was very beneficial for me. I trained hard there for three weeks. I hadn't been playing a lot before that. After this back

**“That was a special feeling, to be on that podium with those other great teams in the world, and to be looking down on Sweden and China! We finished higher than both of them!”**

thing, I went into Detroit [U.S. Open Teams] without any practice and to the Nationals with just a few days practice. Each time I played, I got physically weaker from the injury. Every time I played I would be so sore for a few days. So after Beverly Hills, going to Sweden for three weeks helped because I was healthy again and able to train for longer periods of time. I went to Falkenburg. It was good to play that high-level competition again. I even got to play a tournament in Finland. That helped me coming back. Playing over in Europe really sharpens my game up.

**TTW:** You went 13-0 at the Olympic Trials, with all 13 matches best of five. How did you prepare for such an ordeal, physically and mentally?

**Jim:** Well, the hardest part for me this time was preparing for it mentally. Physically I wasn't in that great shape at the Trials, but I was fortunate to only lose three games. What that did was save me a lot of energy throughout the Trials, while everyone else was struggling a little

bit more and going a lot of games. It was Khoa, Todd, David and I from the start to the end, and when I saw them playing that many games, that kind of helped me mentally. I wasn't feeling physically that confident, but I knew they must be tiring themselves. I trained a lot until about ten days before the Trials, and then I didn't play much. I tried to run as much as I could, but I didn't really get that much running in. Sweden is, like, zero degrees, and I also got a cold for about a week, which slowed me down. Mentally, it was very difficult, because there was a lot riding on this one. It kind of took a special importance because the Olympics are right here in Georgia and ever since 1993 I've been getting a lot of press, especially local press in Augusta and the state of Georgia, and that kind of helped build the pressure, because they're always talking the Olympics this and that, and so mentally it was difficult for me. And when I qualified, it was a different feeling then I normally have, it just felt like relief.

**TTW:** What would you say has been the high point of your career so far?

**Jim:** Definitely the World Cup Team

Bronze medal. That was a special feeling, to be on that podium with those other great teams in the world, and to be looking down on Sweden and China! We finished higher than both of them!

Another great thing about that is that I really enjoy playing with Cheng and David. They're really both great team players and nice individuals, and we had a lot of fun playing together. Let me tell you a story that hasn't been written about yet. We're 16-3 when the three of us played together! We've only lost to Sweden, who we played well against, Croatia, and Korea. We lost to Korea 3-1, Sweden 3-1, and Croatia 3-0 at the Worlds. Other than that, we've been beating everyone! At the Worlds, people were treating us like we played bad, but we finished 10-1. At the Worlds, when we came back, I felt like everyone thought that the team was a failure, that we didn't do well, and we were dwelling on all the internal problems that were going on. But we finished 10-1, and had a really hard draw. We had to play Croatia to advance. Cheng went from 45

to 34 at the Worlds. I went from 125 to 100, and David went way up. Individually, Cheng and I made the final 64. We only lost one team match, and we were killing everyone else! It was amazing that everyone was talking like we hadn't done well. It was extra satisfying to go to the World Team Cup and kind of wipe the bad memory that everyone had. These guys, Cheng and David, were taking a lot of heat because they had become eligible for the Team before they became citizens. I felt good for them to go on to the World Cup, and give it everything they had.

**TTW:** Over the past year, you've had great results internationally, at the Worlds, the U.S. Open, and at the World Team Cup. Your international results seem better than your national results. Is there a reason for that?

**Jim:** Yeh, they've been way better. I can honestly say when I play either nationally or internationally, I want to win every time, I don't like to lose no matter whether it's a small U.S. tournament or a big international one. I made a commitment to try and raise my level internationally because, for a while there, I was winning a lot of U.S. titles, and I was doing well in the U.S. But for me, international play really charges me up, it really fires me up. I have a higher intensity out there when I play internationally.

**TTW:** It's sort of like Eric Boggan, who reached top 20 in the world, and stayed in the top 30 for a long time, but lost at the U.S. Nationals so many times.

**Jim:** Yes. Also, I think when you start doing well internationally, it makes you a target nationally. Also, the competition got better. A lot of guys were just hungry, and they were outplaying me for a while.

That helped me. It forces me to raise my level to beat them. I mean, Todd's improved a lot, Khoa has too, David's playing at a real high level now on a consistent basis.

**TTW:** You've trained extensively in Sweden. Tell us about that.

**Jim:** I can say that I'd like to spend more time in the U.S., and play more in the U.S. I don't see myself going to Europe this next season.

**TTW:** What was it like training with 1971 World Champion Stellan Bengtsson?

**Jim:** It was a great opportunity for me. He's a disciplinarian, and he really taught me discipline. He runs a tight and intense practice session. That really helped me out for a while. I think that was most useful for me in my first three years when I went to Sweden, when I was so hungry to practice and improve. That really started my jump as an athlete. That's kind of what shaped me. It does get harder when you get older.

**TTW:** Do you know anything about the Club of Table Tennis Professionals, the European Professional Table Tennis Players Union? Is there any chance the U.S. will be a part of that any time soon?

**Jim:** Yes. In fact, I was talking to Jorgen Persson, former president of the thing. They would love for us to join them. All we have to do is establish a Player's Union in the U.S., and talk with them. It's been difficult for us players to organize it because of all the tournaments and training, we just haven't had the time to get it off the ground.

**TTW:** What are your goals at the upcoming Olympics?

**Jim:** My goal is to improve on my 1992 performance, where I had a 2-1 record. I'm shooting to make it out of my group. It's not easy! In 1992, we started off with groups of four, with only one advancing. So you have to beat out someone in the top 16 in the world! The number two guy isn't a slouch either.

**TTW:** How long do you think you'll play table tennis?

**Jim:** I think I'll continue to play as long as my body is healthy because I still have a big love for the game.

**TTW:** Any suggestions on how to make table tennis a bigger sport in the U.S.?

**Jim:** Oh, boy... I would just say one thing: infrastructure. We wouldn't have the facilities to accommodate if there were a big craze and people wanted to play.

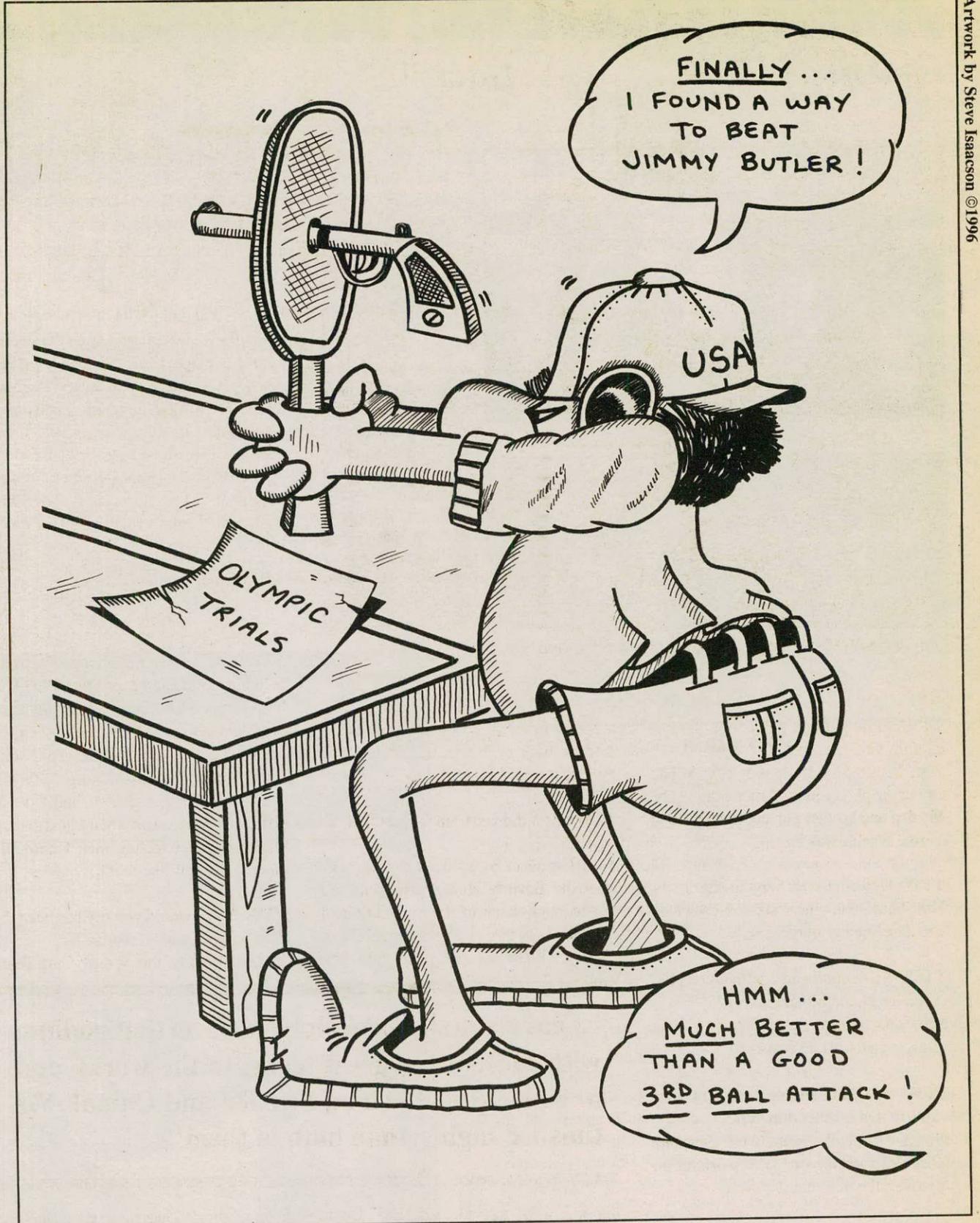
**TTW:** Isn't that what Walt Gomes keeps saying—"A place to Play"?

**Jim:** Yeah, a place to play is big.

**TTW:** What do you do outside table tennis?

**Jim:** I like to play other sports, like basketball and some tennis. I like doing outdoor things. It's real nice weather down here in Augusta.

**TTW:** Your brother, Scott, was a member of the 1987 Pan Am Team, but isn't very active any more. What's he doing these



days?

**Jim:** He just accepted a position at Wachovia Bank, I don't know what his title is. He works full time. And he loves tennis.

**TTW:** Tell us about the rest of your family.

**Jim:** I have three sisters. Amy is involved with opera. Ann is married and goes to college, a music major at Augusta College. Andrea played table tennis for a little while. She's graduating from a school in Alabama. My dad is the assistant competition manager for the Olympics. He's really enjoying that. My mother is involved with real estate, and she's working hard.

**TTW:** Any advice to new players?

**Jim:** Keep it fun, and be creative in practice. Move around when you practice. What I mean by that is don't get stale in one training environment.

**TTW:** Thank you, Jim.

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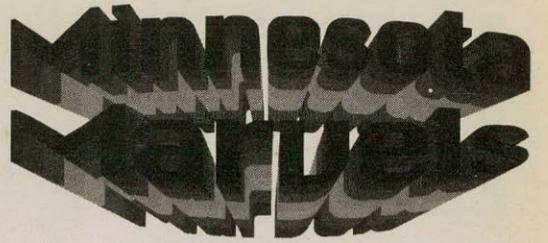
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# JUNIOR TABLE TENNIS DEVELOPMENT IN MINNESOTA

by John Robb



Disney's



Duluth

Photo by Greg Kelly © 1996

(15), Dillan Search-Wells (11), Johanna Zabawa (10), James Bischoff (12), Reggie Cameron (15), Andrew Mack (15), Ashlie Miller (13), Javon McGee (14), Laila Akhter (12), Tanya Akhter (9), Jason Bartels (13), and Eric Davidson (12).

The coaching has been focused around the kids' learning, having fun, and developing new friends. Much of the time is spent with skill development. Many of the children are now able to practice their basic strokes with good consistency. The enthusiasm is rising and many of the kids from all over the state will be representing Minnesota at the Junior Olympics, including the following:

**Under 18 Boys** - John Wiita (Duluth), Reggie Cameron (St. Paul) and Brian Leonard (St. Paul)

**Under 16 Boys** - Eric Green (Duluth), Matt Potter (Duluth), Tom Neuman (St. Paul)

**Under 14 Boys** - Cory Eider (Duluth), Kris Sabas (St. Paul), John Grindeland (Moorhead)

**Under 12 Boys** - Neil Miller (St. Paul)

**Under 16 Girls** - Tresa Lamphir (Duluth), Leah

Wrazidlo (Duluth)

**Under 14 Girls** - Lydia Brekke (St. Paul), Ashlie Miller (St. Paul)

**Under 12 Girls** - Tony Parzych (Duluth), Allie Reynolds (St. Paul), Ashley Little (St. Paul)

**Under 10 Girls** - Meranda Brekke (St. Paul)

All this development and activity demonstrate that with a lot of planned effort, Junior Programs do work. Minnesota will soon become very well represented at local and national tournaments. Veteran table tennis players believe that table tennis in Minnesota is now entering into a new era and will soon be recognized as a program which can be looked to and followed by anyone wishing to begin their own Junior Program.

If one had looked for Junior Table Tennis in Minnesota five years ago, one would have been hard pressed to find anything. Jon Kaminsky and Jackie Witz were the only two junior players to come out of Minnesota since the Brandon Olson era. Since that time, programs have developed incrementally all over the state. Duluth was one of the first programs to get off the ground. With city funding, table tennis is run through its Parks and Recreation Program and with the Valley Youth Center. Winona continues with their Junior Development Program and now that Disney's Table Tennis Center in St. Paul is relocated, more than 50 children have begun playing within the last year. The wheel has started to turn in a positive direction.

Table tennis in Duluth has been the forerunner of Junior Table Tennis in Minnesota. Much of the organization and implementation of its program has rested on the shoulders of Sonny Helbacka, Gary Hendrickson, and Angelo Simone. Their hard work and dedication has turned a grass roots program into a success, with around 100 kids playing at three different locations on a weekly basis. One of their protégés, 12-year-old Cory Eider, is considered the best table tennis player to ever come out of Duluth. Currently, Cory is rated 1947, with his best win against a 2111 player. This year Cory was named Athlete of the Year for the Star of the North State Games, and he will soon be featured on a Midwest Sports Channel television program. Aside from Cory, there are also a number of other juniors that are continuing to improve. Frank Allen (14), Eric Green (14), John Wiita (15), and Aron Pederson (12) are all rated between 1300 and 1600 and continue to challenge some of the state's most seasoned veterans. Leah Wrazidlo and Tresa Lamphier are relatively new players that are also developing very quickly. Coach Gary Hendrickson is also helping promote table tennis at the Courage Center in Duluth. All in all, the table tennis programs in Duluth are very well established and will only continue to grow and produce high-level junior players.

At Disney's Table Tennis Center in St. Paul, the Junior Program is finally beginning to take off. About a year and a half ago, the club moved into a new location and families are now finding the new center a great place to bring their children. Three different coaching clinics are run weekly for the juniors, including the Sunday Kid's Day. With more and more kids playing more often, many of the children are developing quickly. Coaches Mitch Seidenfeld, John Robb, and Truc Phuong Tran have been working hard to develop a core group of junior players. Kris Sabas (11), who started playing much more seriously over the last year, is now advancing toward the 1600 mark, even taking a token game from Cory at the last major tournament. With other kids seeing that it is possible to start defeating adults (especially their dads), many children are starting to practice much more seriously. Included in this group are Lydia Brekke (11), Meranda Brekke (8), Nick Reynolds (11), Allie Reynolds (9), Travis Bigelow (11), Ashley Little (10), Justin Freihoff (10), Saeed Ackter (16), Brian Leonard

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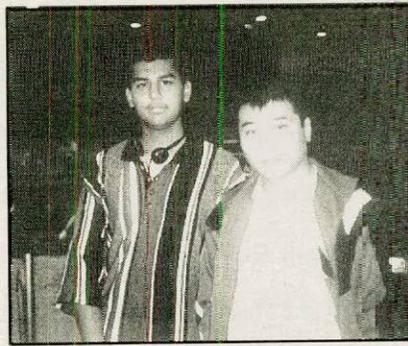
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# THE JAIN BROTHERS OF THE WILD, WILD, WILD WEST(FIELD)

by Rhoda Samkoff



Ashu Jain gets around a lot. Here he is with Jan-Ove Waldner on the left, with Wang Tao on the right. Sorry, no pictures of the camera-shy Deepak.

New Jersey is often the butt of jokes about smog, traffic, and landfills. People also kid us about our regional slang and the fact that we sit in the marshlands, on our side of the Lincoln Tunnel. We're just a cranberry in the shadow of the Big Apple.

What's also distressing is that people cut through New Jersey to get to other places they'd rather be, like Disneyworld, which is enough to give this tiny piece of valuable property an identity crisis.

We do have some really big stuff here, though. There's Princeton. And Bruce Springsteen. George Washington really did sleep here. (The Devils Hockey Team still does.) You know that tomato in your salad? It could very well have had its roots in New Jersey soil. Also, just ask any teenager who goes "down the shore" every summer who owns the Atlantic Ocean!

And if we ever get tired of being Easterners, we can check out the Prime Meridian, which puts us WEST of lots of the rest of the world.

Yes, we're west all right. We have Deepak Jain and his sidekick Ashu, a couple of paddle-packin' teenagers who are growin' like cactus and will soon be as big and as strong as grown men.

"I'm working out, now," Ashu will tell you. He's former U.S. #1 under 16.

"The Kids" practice at the New Jersey Table Tennis Club in Westfield where they're coached by Boris Rabinovich. Their quick-draw speed and accuracy has paid off; the brothers are currently rated in the 2200's.

At the January tournament at Westfield, Ashu went up against George Brathwaite and Lim Ming Chui. When the smoke cleared, there was Ashu, proud as a prairie-pigeon, jubilant and slapping hands all around.

Ashu says he'll never forget that day in Pittsburgh, either. He played 25 matches in one day, won 2 events and came in second in another. He roped in \$250 in prize money and 150 rating points. Not bad for a 16-year old cowpoke!

Deepak and Ashu will fight to the finish to defend their turf, but off the court they are just a couple of good ol' boys, doing their homework and playing chess. At home the brothers help with the family business; creating fancy artificial flower

arrangements) watching basketball (Chicago Bulls, especially), or enjoying music. Deepak, 17, is college-bound, considering engineering schools. Ashu, 16, is a junior who also excels in math. He, too, is planning to attend college and to continue with table tennis.

But even when they're in a mellow mood, you always know they're around. Once in a while there's a whoop-and-holler over a well-executed checkmate or awesome shot, either theirs or somebody else's.

Like most teenagers they need space. Ashu has a tendency to run down the length of the club and leap over the bags, chairs, and legs on his way to the telephone or soda machine. Sometimes he tries to slam dunk the ceiling.

Another characteristic common to table tennis players in general, and specific to adolescents is a good appetite.

Ashu & Deepak Jain

These two will eat 'most any kind of grub available; Chinese food, pizza, or Ashu's favorite, Indian food.

Although these fellas are at home on the New Jersey range, the brothers originally are not from around these parts.

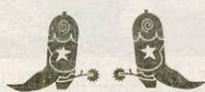
They came here from India on July 4th, 1990. After a brief introduction to table tennis, they didn't play for one and a half years after their arrival. Then they discovered Westfield.

"My first rating was 1100," Ashu remembers. Grinning, he add, "Now I use Sriver FX both sides, heavily glued. I have a secret technique for gluing," he says, but he won't reveal it.

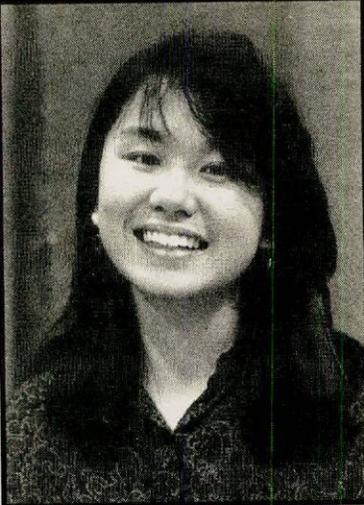
Like tumbleweed, the Jain Brothers follow the tournament trail from place to place; Atlanta, Detroit, Las Vegas, Pittsburgh, Palm Bay, New York, Canada, even Taiwan...

"I want to go to Sweden or France—and to meet Gatién, my favorite player," says Ashu.

Well, folks, there you have it. As they blaze new trails with their dueling paddles, somewhere-sometime-somebody will ask, "Who were those kids?" And the answer will come thundering from the cavern of the New Jersey side of the Lincoln Tunnel, "Those kids? Why, they're the JAIN BROTHERS!"



## TABLE TENNIS WORLD Mini-Profile

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Name:</b>  | Jane Chui  |  |
| <b>Date:</b>  | February 25, 1996  |  |
| <b>Livelihood:</b>                                  | Student  |  |
| <b>Current Home:</b>                                | Bedford, MA  |  |
| <b>Highest Rating Ever:</b>                         | 2263   |  |
| <b>Equipment:</b>                                   | Butterfly  |  |
| <b>Style of Play:</b>                               | Shakehand hitter, pips on backhand                                       |  |
| <b>Recent Achievements:</b>                         | 1994 & 1995 National Collegiate Women's Singles Champion                 |  |
| <b>Career Highlights:</b>                           | Top 10 Women for 10 years  |  |
| <b>Ultimate Goal in Table Tennis:</b>               | To beat Everybody!   |  |
| <b>Nickname:</b>                                    | Jane Chui. People call me Jane Chui                                      |  |
| <b>Personal Slogan:</b>                             | "You Bum!" (To brother Chi-Sun)  |  |
| <b>Favorite Sport(s) Besides Pong:</b>              | Basketball   |  |
| <b>Hobbies:</b>                                     | Dancing, Shopping, Talking   |  |
| <b>Favorite Opponent:</b>                           | Sean Lonergan 'cause I beat him the last time we played (4 years ago...) |  |
| <b>Favorite Psychological Tactic:</b>               | Smiling  |  |
| <b>Best Doubles Partner:</b>                        | Gia Hue Co   |  |
| <b>Most Irrational Table Tennis Fear:</b>           | Opponents who smile back at me   |  |
| <b>Most Memorable Comeback:</b>                     | Wouldn't know—too many times   |  |
| <b>Player I Most Admire:</b>                        | Kong Ling-Hui  |  |
| <b>Most Feared Opponent:</b>                        | Deng Yaping  |  |
| <b>Strongest Part of My Game:</b>                   | My personality   |  |
| <b>Favorite Tournament:</b>                         | U.S. Nationals in Las Vegas  |  |
| <b>Ping Pong Peeve:</b>                             | Close matches  |  |
| <b>I Spend My Prize Money On:</b>                   | Clothes  |  |
| <b>Idea of Table Tennis Paradise:</b>               | No entry fees for me!  |  |
| <b>Best Advice to New Players:</b>                  | Don't get involved!  |  |
| <b>If I Could Change One Thing About the Sport:</b> | I would get all the \$   |  |
| <b>I Plan to Play Until:</b>                        | Gia Hue Co beats me  |  |
| <b>Other Comments:</b>                              | I ♥ TT   |  |

# TABLE TENNIS WORLD

## Mini-Profile

**Name:** Philip Lim

**Date:** 3/16/96

**Age:** 14

**Livelihood:** Student

**Current Home:** Oakland, California

**Highest Rating Ever:** 2200+ (unpublished...)

**Equipment:** Schildkrot C-Max Racket, 1.8mm TSP Spinpips

**Style of Play:** Penhold close to the table fast attacker

**Recent Achievements:** 1995 U.S. Junior High School Boys' Singles Champion, 1995 Tet Invitational Under 18 Champion, 1995 Pacific Rim Under 18 Champion & Under 16 Runner-up, 1996 Schildkrot Open Under 18 and Under 2400 Champion.

**Personal Slogan:** "I..t..s.. o..k..a..y.." (Said slowly, adopted from Norman Yeh)

**Favorite Sport(s) Besides Pong:** Tennis, basketball, football

**Hobbies:** Hanging out with friends, playing table tennis and other sports, and hooping on Shashin Shodhan (which means killing him in B-ball), playing cards, etc...



**Favorite Opponent:** Maryland Juniors!!! (East-West rivalry). All juniors at Larry Hodges' Club!!!

**Favorite Psychological Tactic:** Don't eat eggs before a tournament, because in China eggs = zero.

**Best Doubles Partner:** Shashin Shodhan and Vineet Agarwal

**Most Irrational Table Tennis Fear:** Losing to Jessica Shen

**Ping Ping Peeve:** Losing. Also, Sore losers--like Larry Hodges!

**Ultimate Goal in Table Tennis:** To get to the Olympics *Hey!!! -Larry*

**Player I Most Admire:** Liu Guoliang

**Most Feared Opponent:** David Zhuang

**Favorite Tournament:** Youth Cup (because West Coast players will win everything!)

**I Spend My Prize Money On:** Shoes, clothes, CD's, and more tournaments

**Idea of Table Tennis Paradise:** If the United States could train juniors like other foreign countries

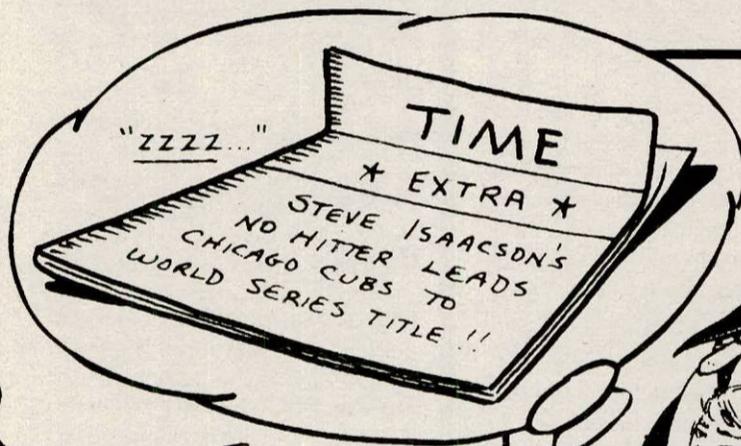
**Best Advice to New Players:** You better switch to penhold (if you were playing shakehands) and keep practicing!

**If I Could Change One Thing About the Sport:** I would want every tournament to have higher junior prize money (instead of trophies)

**I Plan to Play Until:** I lose to Scott Wong

**Other Comments:** *Go California Juniors!*  
(He had more to say, but it was censored—he made fun of the Editor!)

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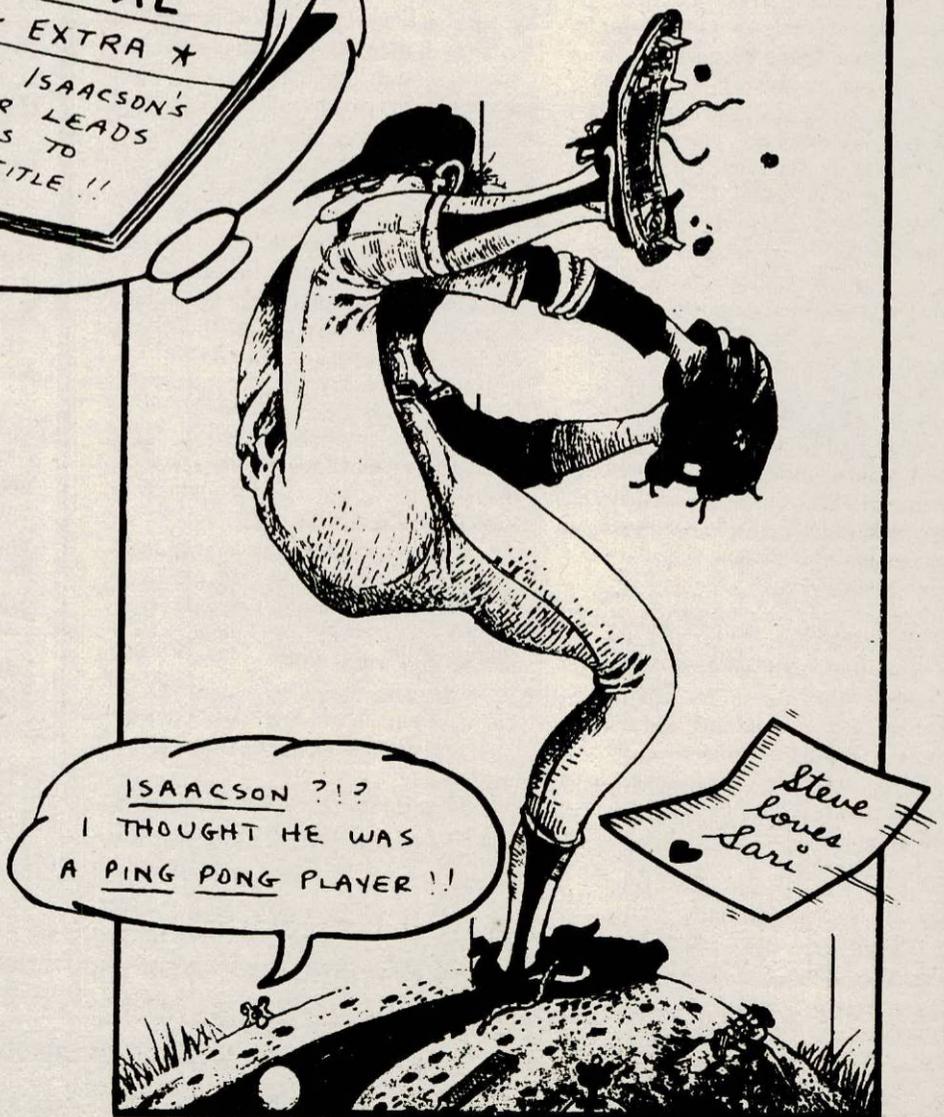
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# The Six-Step Training Process

by Larry Hodges, USATT Certified National Coach

Developing your table tennis game is a steady progression from the simple to the more complex. Many players, however, get stuck at the beginning stage, and never move on toward developing the more advanced parts of their game. It's a common syndrome—players spending year after year trying to completely perfect their most basic shots, and refusing to learn anything more advanced until the basic shots are (in their mind) perfected—and so they never improve as fast as they should. It's sort of like a sprinter spending all his time trying to perfect his walk while his rivals are practicing sprinting. Guess who improves faster?

Decide for yourself where you fit in the following six steps, and work your way toward the final step. It's not an exact thing—even when you are doing drills from Step Six, you should still be doing some of the drills from all five earlier steps.

Although most of the drills given below are simple rallying-type drills, as you get more advanced, you should begin many drills with serve & receive techniques to simulate game situations. For example, rather than have your partner serve a simple topspin serve to start a drill, have him serve deep backspin, you loop, partner blocks, and drill continues. Or partner serves short, you flip the short ball, and continue drill. Or partner serves backspin, you push, partner attacks, you counter-attack, and drill continues.

In all drills below, whenever your forehand or backhand is mentioned, that means either a drive or a loop—you decide. If you're a beginner, mostly drive. As your loop becomes more advanced, use the loop more often. However, make sure you can do each drill competently with a drive before doing it with a loop. I'd recommend using your forehand loop in as many of the drills as possible as soon as possible. Depending on your style and level of play, you may also use the backhand loop in many of the drills.

## Step 1: Stroke & Stroke

Before you learn to run, you have to learn how to walk. In table tennis, that means you have to learn the strokes before you can use them in more advanced drills. In practice, this means (assuming all players are right-handed—left-handers make adjustment):

- Forehand to Forehand Cross-Court
- Backhand to Backhand Cross-Court
- Forehand to Backhand Down-the-Line

A common mistake is to over-practice the strokes by doing simple forehand to forehand, backhand to backhand, etc., over and over, session after session, sometimes for years. You have to start out this way, but don't spend too much time each session on this. Once you can hit 20 in a row, you can start doing drills from Step 2. However, you do need to make the strokes automatic—which means you should start most sessions with the basic forehand to forehand or backhand to backhand for 5-10 minutes until you can consistently get 20-100 in row. As the shots become more instinctive, spend less and less time doing forehand to forehand, etc. Think of this as a simple warm-up, and do no more than 2-5 minutes each session as you warm up each shot. Use the more advanced drills to fully warm up your shots.

## Step 2: Move & Stroke

Now it's time to add footwork to your strokes. You have to learn to move to the ball.

- One-One Footwork. Partner alternates hitting one ball to your wide forehand, one ball to your middle forehand. You move

back and forth, hitting all forehands and returning each ball to the same spot for your opponent, either his backhand or forehand.

- One-One Forehand Footwork from Backhand Corner. Partner alternates hitting one ball to your backhand, one ball to the middle of the table. You return each with your forehand, moving side to side

- One-One Backhand Footwork. Partner alternates hitting one ball to your wide backhand, one to your middle backhand. You move side to side, returning each ball with your backhand.

## Step 3: Different Strokes

Now it's time to combine your forehand and backhand strokes. Here are some drills you can do:

- Forehand-Backhand Alternating. Partner alternates hitting one ball to your backhand, one to your forehand. You alternate hitting backhand and forehand, returning each ball to the same spot (either partner's forehand or backhand).

- Two-One Drill (Falkenburg Drill). Partner hits two balls to your backhand, one ball to your forehand, then repeats sequence. You return the first ball with your backhand, step around your backhand corner and return the second ball with your forehand, then move to your wide forehand and return the third ball with your forehand.

- Cross-Court/Down-the-Line. Partner hits every ball down-the-line, while you hit every ball cross-court. Ball will travel in a figure eight. Next, you hit down the line, partner hits cross-court.

## Step 4: Choose & Stroke

Now it's time to add some randomness to your drills. This is the step that many players never get to as they spend eternity trying to develop the perfect forehand. The key thing in this step is to keep it a simple choice between only two possibilities.

Here is the key drill:

- Random side-to-side. Partner hits ball either to middle forehand or middle backhand. You return with either forehand or backhand, depending on where ball is going. Keep the footwork and stroking practice here to a minimum—the key thing to work on here is making the choice between forehand and backhand, and smoothly executing the stroke. Try not to over-anticipate. You shouldn't be moving in one direction, and then have to change directions. Make sure your first move is in the correct direction.

## Step 5: Choose & Move

Now it's time to combine decision-making, stroking and footwork.

Don't just use the drills given below—make up your own! There are an infinite number of potential drills.

- Random Forehands. Partner hits the ball randomly all over your forehand side. Your move to each ball and return with a forehand.

- Random Backhands. Partner hits the ball randomly all over your backhand side. Your move to each ball and return with a backhand.

- Backhand-Random Forehand. Partner hits one ball to wide backhand, one ball to either middle of table or wide forehand. You alternate hitting backhand from backhand corner, and forehand either from middle or wide forehand, depending on where partner hit the ball.

- Random Deep Serves. Partner serves either deep to your forehand, or deep to your

# The Mental Advantage

Jim Annesi, Ph.D.



**Question:** I think about my table tennis play very often during each day. Is there any way I can use this to help my play?

**Dr. Annesi:** Definitely yes. The mental skill of imagery is not unlike daydreaming; but, with a very directed purpose in mind. Elite athletes in most sports use imagery, but its use is especially widespread in fine motor skill sports such as archery, golf and tennis. The skill of imagery involves picturing yourself, preferably from an internal (inside your own body) perspective, accurately performing various table tennis tasks. Your ability to relax and attend to details in your "image" is quite important. Sensing, for example, your feelings, the sounds, and physical textures surrounding yourself in the scenes pictured in your mind, increases the usefulness that imagery will hold for you.

Studies testing imagery's effectiveness have proven it to be not only an invaluable tool for an athlete to have, but, to be useful in many diverse ways. For example, research has shown imagery to greatly increase the benefits of actual practice when learning or changing a specific skill. It has often been suggested that for any successful skill performance to take place, it needs to first be adequately visualized by the performer. Given this, I have often suggested that players place imagery, directed at successfully executing the very next point, into every between-point "ritual."

Although sport scientists are not clear on whether imagery serves to train correct nerve sequencing by firing in the same way as if the skill was done physically, or is useful by serving as a correct "pattern" in the mind which can effectively direct the body, it is clear that it

.....  
*Dr. Jim Annesi is a sport psychology/performance enhancement consultant in private practice. He may be contacted at: The Club at Woodbridge, 585 Main Street, Woodbridge, NJ 07095, 908-634-5000.*

## Transform your Table Tennis Thoughts Into the Versatile Skill of Mental Imagery

works. Below are some of the many ways in which using imagery will benefit you in your table tennis quests.

**1. Learning a New Skill.** As a new stroke or tactic is being "shaped," key words should be used to trigger an image of a correct response. Using videotape also helps in developing mental images when you are learning something new.

**2. Developing Strategy.** Table tennis presents players with many options for typical situations. Imaging correct strategic choices prepares you to respond with your best game plan, automatically.

**3. Practicing Skills.** You should use imagery to perform each table tennis skill, repeatedly, in your mind.

**4. Changing a Skill.** Imagery aids in the correction process by countering a negative performance. This is accomplished by substituting a correct performance in your mind.

**5. Increasing Perception.** By effectively using imagery, you can become aware of important details from previous play.

**6. Controlling Anxiety.** Imagery can control processes such as heart rate, respiration, and blood pressure. These skills can be used for stress management during play.

**7. Encourage Persistence.** Imagery allows you to compare where you are now to where you can be in the future, in terms of your table tennis game. This increases motivation and the will to persist.

**8. Practicing Psychological Skills.** Many skills such as concentration, positive self-talk, and self-confidence may be rehearsed under imaged, game-like situations.

**9. Recovering From Injury.** Imagery can be used to speed up healing, manage pain, and keep physical skills from deteriorating through lack of use.

Spend the time needed to perfect the many uses of this important skill. As you systematically place imagery, and the other mental skills that we will speak about in the future, into your repertoire, your table tennis time will take on new challenges and increased successes.

Send questions to: Dr. Annesi, The Club at Woodbridge, 585 Main Street, Woodbridge, NJ 07095.

backhand. Depending on your playing style and foot speed, you can attack either with forehand or backhand, and continue with any drill sequence, or attack all serves with forehand, and continue with any drill sequence.

- Alternate Two-One. Same as the Two-One (Falkenburg) given in Step 3, except after hitting second ball to backhand, partner has option of either hitting to wide forehand (as in normal two-one) or hitting third ball to your backhand, and then going to your wide forehand. If partner hits third ball to your backhand, you return with your backhand—smoothly, without starting to move to your

wide forehand.

## Step 6: Whole Table

Now it's time to pull out all the stops and most of the rules and play almost like you were in a match.

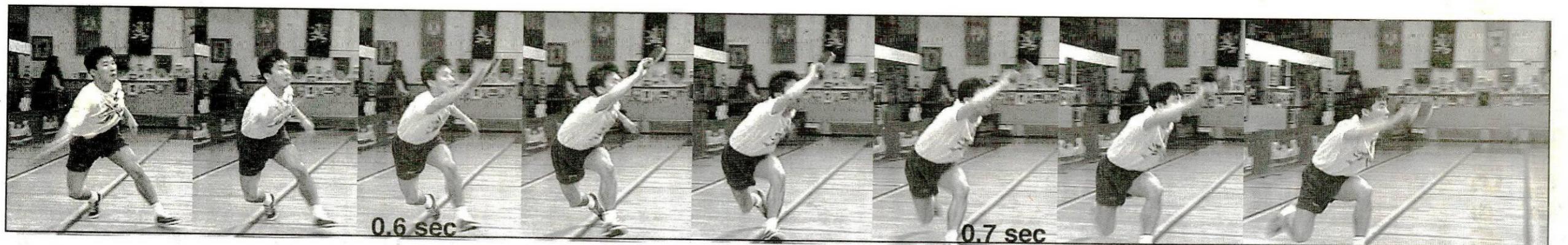
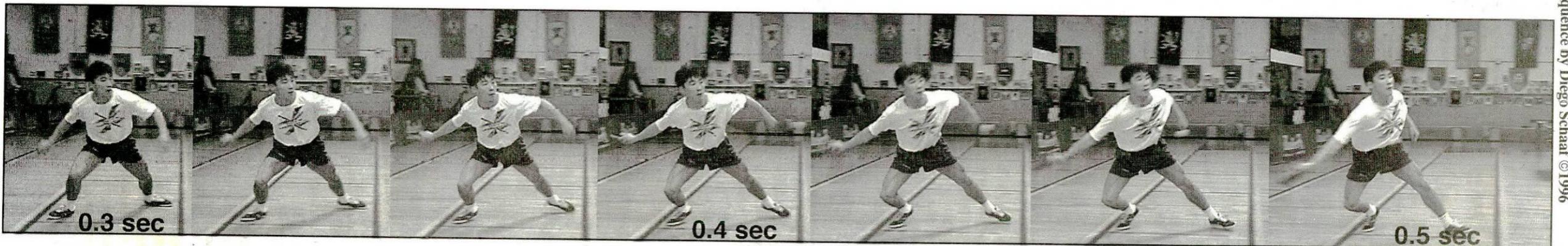
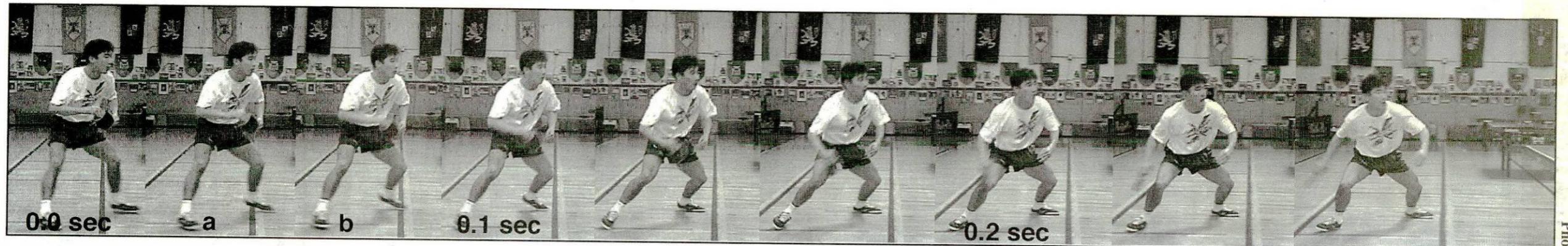
- Whole Table Random. Partner hits balls to all parts of table, randomly. You return with forehand or backhand.

- Serve & Attack. You serve backspin, partner pushes anywhere on table. You attack (mostly by looping), either with all forehand, or with forehand or backhand, depending on your playing style and footspeed.

# The Footwork of KIM TAEK SOO

**1992 Olympic Bronze Medalist, Men's Singles**

by Wei Wang, USATT Certified National Coach...1990 National Champion



**The Man with the Hardest Forehand in Table Tennis**  
by Wei Wang

In previous articles, we have analyzed shakehand players only, because that is the style played by the vast majority of players in the United States. But there are certain portions of a penhold player's game that are extremely useful for any player in this sport. The most obvious one is footwork. Due to the limitations on a penholder's backhand, he usually has to develop extremely efficient and precise footwork in order to cover the table with reasonable authority. The danger in playing against penholders lies in their well-developed ability to turn. (Here on the West Coast we call "turning" what East Coast players call stepping around the backhand—that is using the forehand to play a ball aimed at the backhand side of the table.) A player who is used to playing shakehand opponents only can frequently be surprised at how quickly penholders can move sideways around their backhand corner and attack strongly, both cross-court or down-the-line.

Of course, that leaves the obvious penholder's problem unresolved: After the penholder turns, the table is wide open—nobody in sight. If we can block that attack shot wide into the forehand it should be like stealing candy from a baby—right? Well, not so fast. First of all, a good penholder will turn so wide that it will allow him to place the shot anywhere on the table. Even with great anticipation it is not easy to comfortably get that ball. But even if we do get it, we have to deal with the penholder's second great weapon: His cross-step power shot from the forehand. And there is no one in this sport that does that better than Kim Taek Soo of Korea.

Kim's footwork is not only flaw-

less, but so extremely dynamic and powerful that it is hard to copy unless one has similarly well-developed legs. His huge, well-defined thighs seem to have both the muscles needed for quick acceleration and the more static, sheer strength muscles needed to keep his body firmly balanced only inches from the floor. The success of his footwork comes from the combination of these abilities: He can get to a spot extremely quickly, and maintain solid balance in order to make a powerful shot. After a match Cheng Yinghua played against him at the World Team Cup in Atlanta, Cheng came to me and said: "I can't believe this guy. Usually, I can get a loose ball from pretty much anybody after having blocked two or three of their shots. Not with him. He's always there, in perfect balance, ready to fire another one at me."

Recently, Kim played at the Gilbert Cup tournament in Beverly Hills. In preparation for that, the players came to our club in Culver City for their practice sessions. During that time, we shot this footage. When we picked Kim up from the airport, one of his first questions was about the practice schedule. He had just recovered from a muscle injury in his buttocks and wanted to get in as much training time as possible before the tournament. Watching him work out made it clear why this man can fly: He works unbelievably hard. No short cuts. Every shot is fully executed, every ball is chased with the same fervor, and no effort is spared. This is one of the reasons why Kim has been in the top ranks of his country since his high school days. Extraordinary talent and an impeccable work ethic is a hard combination to beat.

In this training session he was practicing with Jim Butler. The picture series picks up where Kim served to Jim, prepared to turn and noticed that Jim punched the ball deep into his fore-

hand—the typical set up for the Korean's power cross-step.

At 0.0 sec, he assesses the situation, identifies that Jim will not play the ball too wide into his backhand—the only spot where turning is not a good option for Kim, and starts turning by stepping to his left with his left foot. If he were to continue turning, he would pull his right foot over to where his left foot is at 0.1 a, and he would step out farther with his left foot. But at about 0.1b, he realizes that the ball is coming to his wide forehand. He stops his right foot, starts pushing off with his left leg in the direction of the intended contact point. At 0.3 sec, his momentum is already fully directed to his right, and his center of gravity has passed the support point of his right foot, so he can now continue to push off for a major thrust with his right leg. Note that his arm swings back very far. A common mistake is to reach straight for the ball with the racket. If you do that, you'll notice that getting there is not enough—there has to be a lot of forward momentum to drive the ball. If you reach for the ball, the best you can do is block it weakly and you'll probably be dead on your opponent's next shot. By drawing back his arm Kim not only "charges the spring" for the powerful uncoiling motion that occurs between 0.4 and 0.6, but the reverse thrust of his arm helps propel his upper body into the direction of the ball. As soon as he has fully started pushing off with his right leg (0.4 sec), he no longer is concerned with the next step. There is now enough momentum to carry him to the ball. He almost glides through the air toward the contact point. Now he starts swinging his racket around and forward. Contact occurs just after 0.5 a (the ball is visible at his belt line) and the large follow through assures that the shot will be strong enough. Only now does his left foot hit the ground (0.7sec), and

his leg catches his full weight. He must stop his momentum as quickly as possible in order to regain his balance for the next shot.

Initially, the most surprising feature of the cross-step is that contact occurs when both feet are almost off the ground. One might think that this would result in a loss of power, since there is no stability to hold the body. But on closer review it becomes apparent that the whole explosive motion is optimized to drive the body and the racket into the ball

with maximum force.

This is not Kim's most powerful shot. That distinction undoubtedly goes to his turn/cross court shot. But it is exactly because his cross-step shot is so good that he can turn so fearlessly and lay everything into his turn shot—always confident, that if the ball is not exactly where he expected it, he can still get to it and cause some damage. Operating on such a cushion of comfort, Kim is bound to put fear into the eyes of his opponents for a long time to come.

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# The Playing Style of Cheng Yinghua

by Larry Hodges, USATT Certified Coach

Cheng, at age 37, has been the dominant player in the U.S. since 1988. He does this despite the fact that he's no longer the fastest nor the most powerful. His game is based on a complicated mix of spin, consistency, quickness, and experience.

Cheng brings with him to the table the following ammunition:

- The most consistent backhand loop in the U.S.:
- An extremely consistent blocking game;
- An extremely consistent backhand counterdrive;
- An extremely consistent forehand loop;
- Unerring and consistent ball control;
- Extremely consistent return of serve;
- A ferocious forehand flip, especially off the serve.

You may note the repetitive use of the word "consistent." Cheng is in both Webster's and Oxford's as the definition.

He really has three distinct playing styles: Cheng the two-winged looper, Cheng the forehand attacker, and Cheng the blocker.

In most matches, Cheng plays a consistent blocking game, intermixed with loops. He doesn't waste energy running around looping unless you force him. To force him, all you have to do is play 2650 or better.

Getting past Cheng's block is almost impossible. Loop, loop kill, smash—he seems to block everything at will. He also changes his blocks constantly, throwing off his opponent. Watch closely, and you'll

see that many of his blocks are actually "mini-loops," as he spins the ball off the bounce with a very short, quick motion.

Once you've let him know that you're not about to be blocked down (read: you're on the U.S. Team, minimally), then you're going to face one of the other facets Cheng likes to keep in reserve. Against some players, he'll start ripping forehand after forehand. Because of his great ball control and serves that allow no good returns, he seems to be able to set up his forehand any time he wants. He wins the serve/receive battle against nearly everyone, and *Boom!* It's another forehand winner. (That's *Boom!*, as opposed to his younger, stronger opponents, who go *BOOM!*)

However, it's his two-winged looping game that Cheng is best known for. In this mode, he'll serve and backhand loop over and over, challenging you to go to his forehand, or face a non-stop barrage of backhand loops. If his opponent is serving, he'll either backhand spin the serve, or backhand loop out of the rally. No other U.S. player (and very few in the world) can stand back and spin from both sides over and over the way Cheng does. With all the speed, spin, changes of speed & spin, changes of direction & depth, and outright deception in the modern game, few can dominate by backhand looping over and over against every ball—but it's the hallmark of Cheng's game. How many opponents have battled to the end of a game with Cheng, only to be blown away by a back-

hand loop bombardment? It's not a matter of blocking the loop; it's a matter of blocking it over and over and over and... you get the idea.

Cheng serves are not scary—few top players have trouble returning them. There's just one problem: there's almost no way to return his serve without giving him the attack. No other U.S. player can force a third-ball loop the way Cheng can.

Add to this mix the most ferocious forehand flip in the U.S. (except possibly for protege Todd Sweeris), a will to win, fearlessness that comes from the fact that he's not afraid to lose (ten seconds after his worse losses, he's laughing and joking around), and you've got something scary. Add the experience born of eleven years on the Chinese National Team and nine years as a full-time coach—and you've got something dynamic.

Here's an example on how Cheng varies his game for different opponents. Huazhang Xu, another former Chinese Team Member now living in Maryland, gave Cheng a series of close matches a few years ago, and even beat him in one tournament. When Cheng blocked, Xu looped successfully. When Cheng backhand looped, Xu counterlooped successfully. So Cheng went to an all-out forehand attack, and hasn't been challenged since. Another example is against Sean O'Neill, who has a devastating forehand loop. Cheng simply backhand loops or quick blocks over and over to Sean's backhand, keeping

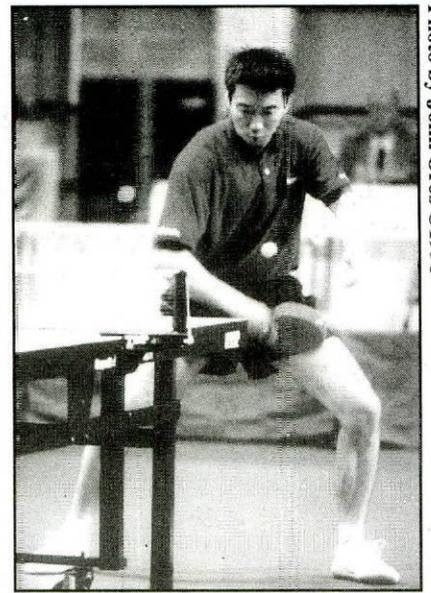


Photo by John Oros © 1996

him pinned down, never giving O'Neill a good chance to rip a forehand. If O'Neill tries to play a forehand from the backhand corner, Cheng simply plays one ball to O'Neill's forehand, then comes back to the backhand.

So how do you beat Cheng in a match? Let's look at how 1993 World Champion Jean-Philippe Gatien did it at last year's World Team Cup. Cheng had beaten Gatien just one year before (while Gatien was World Champion) at the World Team Cup by with a 2-winged looping & quick-blocking barrage. This time around, Gatien simply went on a forehand looping rampage, and loop killed Cheng's backhand loops, blocks, and everything else. If you can do that—**TABLE TENNIS WORLD** will be writing you up in this column pretty soon.

*Next Issue: U.S. Champion David Zhuang*

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KIM TAEK SOO (KOR) - PHILIPPE SAIVE (BEL)  
ANDRZEJ GRUBBA (POL) - JEAN-MICHEL SAIVE (BEL)

### VIDEO B

COLLAGE OF EXHIBITION POINTS - MISCELLANEOUS PLAYERS  
QUARTER FINAL: ZORAN PRIMORAC (CRO) - PHILIPPE SAIVE (BEL)  
QUARTER FINAL: JAN OVE WALDNER (SWE) - JEAN-MICHEL SAIVE (BEL)  
SEMI FINAL: ANDRZEJ GRUBBA (POL) - ZORAN PRIMORAC (CRO)

### VIDEO C

QUARTER FINAL: PATRICK CHILA (FRA) - A. GRUBBA (POL) GAME 4 & 5  
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# The Backhand and Table Tennis Sense



by Cheng Yinghua, #1 Rated in U.S. since 1988  
National Table Tennis Center Head Coach  
Edited and translated by Marianne Yeh  
Chinese word processing by Dandan Gao

## In English And the Original Chinese!

### 淺談反手和反手拉球

大家知道，打乒乓球不僅要正手，而且要反手，還要發球、搓球、拉球、扣殺，缺少哪一點都不能成為真正的乒乓球優秀選手。但是，大部分人都只重視正手的訓練。正手練好了是直接得分的武器，當然是很重要的。但是，這裡我想談談反手的重要性。

#### 1. 打乒乓球的“意識”問題。

從多年的教練工作中，我深深地體會到了“意識”的重要性。我打球最強調的就是“意識”，不管是正手還是反手，訓練還是比賽，“意識”都是最重要的。所謂“意識”，就是人們通常說的“動腦筋”。在訓練比賽中注意培養“意識”，會起到事半功倍的效果，否則就會事倍功半。比方說，教練讓你練發側上旋球，你就應該體會到教練的意識，想一想練發側上旋球有哪些用處，在發球之後應該做哪些準備，等等。如果球員不去體會教練的意圖，只是簡單地按照教練的說法練發側上旋球，那麼日復一日，進步不會很大，將來也會缺乏打球的自信心。我認為，只要重視培養“意識”，球員的進步一定會很大。

#### 2. 反手撥球和反手拉球的結合。

我認為，在訓練反手拉球以前應當首先訓練反手撥球。因為反手拉球的難度比較大，節奏很難掌握。應當首先訓練反手撥球，掌握擊球的時間和對球的旋轉的判斷，對來球有一個很好的認識。然後再逐步進入反手拉球的訓練，控制球速和旋轉，使反手拉球成為今後比賽得分的有力助手。

#### 3. 如何訓練。

剛開始的時候，可以在近台撥兩板，然後移動腳步下來拉兩板。這主要是加強球員對速度和旋轉的認識，懂得撥球和拉球的不同之處。

在反覆上一步的訓練之後，球員的動作和技術已經非常自然，這時可以加強一些拉球的訓練。反手拉球最重要的是腳和腰的配合。在拉每一個球的時候，首先是動腳，然後再轉動腰和手。手腕主要是用來磨擦球和控制球，力量和旋轉是從腳和腰來。拉球之後要動腳，這主要是拉球的連續性。肩、手臂和手腕要放鬆。動作的大小因人而易，只要還原快、自然就可以了。

球員在訓練反手拉球時一定要注意以下幾點：

- 1) 腳、腰、和手的動作要協調一致；
- 2) 身體要充分放鬆；
- 3) 接觸球的時間一定要短，以免失去對球的控制；
- 4) 整個動作要乾淨，儘量避免多餘的動作，使正常的旋轉和爆發力受到影響，這樣才能保證拉球有力而旋轉，為得分創造機會。

「完」

March/April 1996

To become a top table tennis player, one not only has to master the forehand and backhand, but also has to demonstrate good skills in serving, pushing, looping, smashing, etc. However, most players pay most of their attention to forehand training. Of course, the forehand is very important because it is the weapon that directly wins points. But I would like to talk a little about the importance of the backhand, and about table tennis "sense."

#### 1. The Idea of "Table Tennis Sense."

I have realized the importance of "sense" from years of coaching. I want to emphasize this sense here. Whether it is the forehand or backhand, training or competing, sense is always the most important element. What I mean by sense is what people usually refer to as "thinking." The habit of thinking will allow a player to progress much faster. As we Chinese put it, it will let you gain twice from half the effort. For instance, if the coach asks you to serve a sidespin/topspin serve, you shouldn't just serve a side/top serve. Instead, try to realize the coach's intention, try to think about the usage of this side/top serve, and try to prepare yourself after you serve the ball. If you don't think about all of this and just practice according to what the coach tells you to do, you won't progress as fast, and you will probably lose confidence when you play real matches. I think to cultivate the habit of "sense" and "thinking" will ensure fast progress for a player.

#### 2. The Combination of Backhand and Backhand Loop.

I think one should practice normal backhands before going to the backhand loop, because it is very difficult to learn the timing of the backhand loop. The player should first practice regular backhands to better judge the timing and spin of the ball.

When the player better understands the incoming ball, he/she is ready to start practicing the backhand loop. The player should be able to control the various speeds and spins on the incoming ball before he/she practices the backhand loop.

#### 3. How to practice.

In the beginning, a player should hit two backhands close to the table, then move back and loop two backhands. The main purpose of this drill is to teach the player judgment on the ball's speed and spin, and to better understand the different feel between backhand and backhand loop. After repeating the above drill, and after the player's movements have become natural, it is time for some serious training in backhand looping.

The most important element in the backhand loop is the correct timing of the movement of the waist and the feet. When backhand looping, the first step is to move the feet. Next comes the movement of the waist and hand. The wrist should be used at contact mostly to control the ball; most of the power and spin comes from the feet and the waist. After looping, the player must continue to move the feet. This is because the player must keep a continuous flow of momentum when he/she loops. The extent of the movement differs according to different players, as long as the player is able to return to natural position quickly and naturally. The shoulder, arm and wrist must be relaxed throughout the stroke.

The player must pay attention to the following points when practicing the backhand loop:

- 1) The movement of the feet, waist and hand must be synchronized;
- 2) The whole body must be relaxed;
- 3) Contact with the ball should be short and quick to maintain control of the ball;
- 4) The entire movement must be kept clean; try to avoid excess movements which might hamper the spin and the power of the shot.



Photo by John Oros © 1996



Photo by John Oros © 1996

Cheng teaches "sense" to students such as U.S. Olympic Team Member Todd Sweeris (L) and U.S. Under 22 & Collegiate Men's Singles Champion Sean Lonergan (R)

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# COUNTERLOOPING

by Todd Sweeris, 1996 U.S. Olympic Team Member,  
and Larry Hodges, USATT Certified National Coach

Photo by Michael Wetzel © 1996

Table tennis is supposed to be fun. And nothing (except perhaps lobbing) is as fun as counterlooping. There is something magical about throwing yourself into the ball from off the table and arcing the ball back on the table with topspin. If you haven't counterlooped, you've missed out on quite a lot—but you have a lot to look forward to.

Unlike lobbing, however, counterlooping is an important part of most top player's games, and if you're a serious player, you need to learn how to do it.

It is assumed that the reader has a decent forehand loop, with relatively good technique. (Beginners—a loop is an aggressive topspin shot; to counterloop is to loop your opponent's loop.) If not, get a coach and practice! This article is not about looping technique. It is about using your looping technique to loop your opponent's loop right back at him.

**• Equipment:** The sponge on your racket is very important for counterlooping. You'll need a grippy inverted surface. The sponge itself can be either hard or soft. If it's hard, you'll have to generate more force to sink the ball into the sponge. If the sponge is soft, I'd recommend using speed glue.

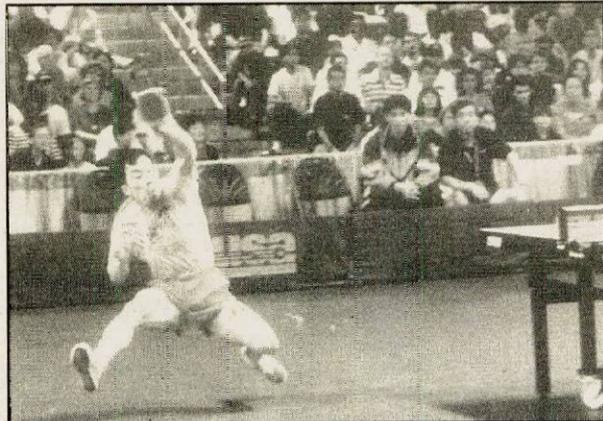
**• The Four Types of Counterloops**

1. **Defensive:** This is done from well off the table against a very strong loop. Contact is very late, on the ball's descent, at about knee level. It is a slow but spinny shot, often arcing several feet over the net.

2. **Consistent:** This is the most common counterloop. Contact is after the top of the bounce, but before the ball drops below table level. The purpose is to be consistent, yet aggressive, putting pressure on your opponent.

3. **Aggressive:** This is when you have time to wind up and put full power into your counterloop and go for a winner. Contact should be as close as possible to the top of the bounce.

4. **Off-the-Bounce:** This is the most aggressive counterloop of all. Contact is before the ball reaches the top of the bounce, often just after the ball bounces on the table. It's a very tricky shot that takes a lot of timing and anticipation, but almost always wins the point outright.



Korea's Yoo Nam Kyu, 1988 Olympic Gold Medalist in Men's Singles, demonstrates your "basic" counterloop....

**• When to Counterloop**

Counterlooping is normally a very physical shot, so the question of when to use it depends on your physical agility, how strong your loop is (in terms of both consistency and power), and your playing style. If looping is your strength, then incorporate counterlooping into your game as much as possible. If looping is not a strength—well, it's still a fun shot, but it'll take some time before the shot becomes a consistent point-winner.

Even if you normally play a close to the table blocking game, having a good counterloop gives you the ability to counter-attack consistently against a weak loop, rather than continue blocking or go for an erratic smash.

**• The Secret to Counterlooping**

*Stroke forward, not up!*

Those four words sum up 90% of the problems players have with counterlooping. Because so many players learn to loop against backspin first, they learn to stroke upward—and the habit carries over into counterlooping, with disastrous results. Technically speaking, you will stroke slightly up on most counterloops, but the primary direction is forward.

Specifically, when counterlooping, you want to contact the top of the ball, a little toward the back, driving mostly forward. You should also contact the ball a little on the far side of the ball from you, hooking it and putting some sidespin on the ball—it's a more natural

stroke.

You will have to learn to adjust your stroke path depending on your distance from the table, the speed & spin of the incoming ball, and how hard you plan to counterloop. You will have to contact the ball more on top and stroke more forward: if you move closer to the table; if the incoming ball has more speed or spin; or if you are going for a more powerful counterloop.

You will contact the ball a little more toward the back and stroke a little bit more upward: if you move away from the table; if the incoming ball has less speed or spin; or if you are going for a softer loop.

It's best to contact the ball a little on the outside of the ball, i.e. the far side of the ball from you, giving your loop some sidespin. This is both more natural (since arm is already sloping downward from the shoulder, you'd almost have to raise the racket tip up to avoid sidespin) and allows you to contact the ball without meeting the incoming topspin head-on.

One thing to watch out for is a soft loop that drops in front of you. To counterloop this ball, you'll have to get closer to the table. If it's too late for that, then loop the ball almost on the very top of the ball, even though this contradicts the previous paragraph. The reason is that the ball's trajectory

is downward, and when it hits your racket, the ball's topspin will make the ball jump upward. Also, there is a tendency to lift against a ball that is dropping in front of you. Resist this urge at all costs!

**• Overpower the incoming spin**

With all the spin on the incoming ball, you will have to overpower it to replace it with your own spin. This is not as hard as it seems as the ball's rotation automatically changes when the spin hits your inverted surface. Some players get in the habit of just getting their racket on the ball, and guiding the ball back. This leads to a weak, defensive loop. Don't wimp out—use your own force to overpower that incoming ball and add your own spin.

**• Off-the-Bounce Counterloops**

To loop off the bounce, you will have to be very close to the table, and either react very quickly as your opponent loops to you, or anticipate his shot. You should only loop off the bounce when you expect a relatively weak loop.

The secret to looping off the bounce is a short swing, a racket held relatively high, and contact almost on the very top of the ball. Overpower the incoming spin—don't baby it. Watch your opponent pick up the ball from the barriers.

**• Study the Stars**

There's no better way to learn a technique than by seeing it done. Get a tape or watch almost any top player with inverted sponge. Some recommended international players to watch include Zoran Primorac, Jean-Michel Saive, Jean-Philippe Gatien, Ma Wenge, Kong Linghui, Yoo Nam Kyu, Kim Taek Soo, or Jan-Ove Waldner. In the U.S., watch Khoa Nguyen, Jim Butler, Cheng Yinghua, or co-writer Todd Sweeris. Or to see some really physical counterlooping, watch some of the up-and-coming youth players in the U.S., who make up what has to be the strongest crop of counterloopers in years—Eric Owens, Barney J. Reed, Dave Fernandez, Randy Cohen, Razvan Cretu, Shashin Shodhan, and Sean Lonergan.

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## The Key to Quality Loops:

### A Well-Controlled Swing

by Xiong Zhichao

Many students of the looping game fail to produce strong loops no matter how hard they speed up the swing. What accounts for this failure?

There are many ways of increasing the spin on a loop. According to my own experience, in order to produce a high-quality loop characterized by high speed and heavy spin, the most important thing is to have control of the forward swing of the racket. Generally speaking, the faster the swing, the more spin and speed on the loop. But this is not always true. We know that we have to graze the ball to produce heavy topspin. If we graze it too finely, we can hardly produce a strong spin even if we apply a very strong force. This is because the ball is not given enough friction and it will just slide on the racket's surface without producing much spin.

The following are three experiments that will illustrate this.

**Experiment 1:** Put a slip of paper on a table with a ping pong ball on one end. The other end of the paper should hang over the side of the table. Using a ruler or similar object, strike down hard on the overhanging part of the paper so that the slip of paper quickly slides off, leaving the ball unmoved on the table.

**Experiment 2:** The same as in experiment 1, except that this time pull the paper off with your hand instead of striking it with a ruler. Since you won't be able to pull it off as fast as by striking with a ruler, the paper displaces the ball a little and gives it a slight spin.

**Experiment 3:** The same as experiment 2, except that this time, pull the paper off a little bit slower so that the ball starts to spin. As the ball starts to spin, accelerate your pull so that the spin becomes stronger than it was in experiment 2.

Experiments 1 & 2 show what happens when you graze the ball too finely when trying to produce a powerful loop with great force—the ball just slides on the racket surface instead of being given enough friction to produce a stronger spin. The paper (in table tennis, the racket) moved so fast that the ball was not able to sink in enough to get friction.

Experiment 3 showed that accelerating the racket throughout contact is vital to increasing the spin on the shot.

From the above experiments, we can see that the quality of a loop depends not only on the sheer speed of the racket, but also on controlling it. Many outstanding players, including Waldner, Gaten and Saive, do not fully accelerate the racket until the moment of impact. That way, they are able to produce loops with terrific spin.

To control the speed of the racket, a looping player must fully relax his arm before hitting the ball. Only at the impact should he suddenly contract his arm muscles to produce an explosive force. He should see that he has grazed the ball properly with his racket (thus creating enough friction at contact) before bring the racket to maximum speed.

## New ITTF President's Plans

by Su Pixian

This was what Xu Yinsheng, the newly elected president of the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) told this reporter when I interviewed him shortly after his return from the ITTF Executive Committee meeting in Cyprus at the end of last year.

"In a big family such as the ITTF," said Xu, "We have a lot of friends and enthusiastic supporters with rich experience. We should mobilize them to do their bit for the promotion of table tennis and make it an even more prosperous sport than it is today throughout the world." This could be said to be the guideline of his work during his term of office in the following one and a half years.

He spoke highly of the Chinese Table Tennis Association which, in his words, had given him great support and help during the years when he worked in coordination with ITTF Headquarters.

He paid tribute to the two former ITTF presidents, Ichiro Ogimura and Lollo Hamarlund, who both recently died of illnesses. The loss had to some degree affected the day-to-day work of the ITTF. "At present," he said, "it is important for all members of the ITTF to strengthen their unity, bring their initiative into full play, and work together to further promote and develop the sport the world over." He said that the Cyprus Executive Committee meeting was a success. The participants from across the world took the interests of the whole into account, worked in cooperation for a common goal, and reached agreement on a number of important issues through democratic consultations. The directors of all the working committees, all experienced experts, displayed high efficiency in their work.

Referring to the amendments to the ITTF's rules and regulations and other reforms, he praised the work the ITTF had done in the past few years. This included shortening the men's team event competition from nine matches to the present five, and brightening the color of the equipment and the players' uniforms, which he said had all been well received by the coaches, players and spectators. He stressed that the ITTF would adopt a prudent policy in introducing reforms, adding that any new changes would first be tried out for a period before putting them into effect.

"In this respect," Xu explained, "the most important thing is for ITTF leaders, coaches and players to reach a common understanding. One of the questions that concerns ITTF officials most is how to make table tennis competitions interesting to watch, thereby attracting more spectators and sponsors. For the coaches and players, the primary concern is developing at a fast pace. With more and more tricky serves and the increase in the speed of the players, points are often won with only a few strokes exchanged between the players. Without thrilling rallies, the spectators might lose interest in the game. If this should happen, it would be hard to find sponsors, and TV stations would be unwilling to broadcast the matches. The loss of a market would mean economic losses for all concerned."

As for the ITTF's work in 1996, Xu said that the primary task was to ensure the success of the table tennis competition at the Olympic Games in Atlanta, and do a good job in a number of other important competitions so as to draw more attention to the sport.

In addition, the ITTF will introduce



ITTF & Chinese TTA  
President Xu Yingsheng

Photo courtesy of China Sports ©1996

restriction on a players' participation, it will give ace players around the world more opportunities to display their talent and superb skills.

The ITTF calls on the well-off national table tennis associations to help the needy ones by providing them with funds, equipment and coaches, just as the Chinese Table Tennis Association has done over the years.

Speaking about the Atlanta Olympics, Xu was happy to note that tickets for the Table Tennis competition had been sold out. Besides the original four events (men's and women's singles & doubles), the ITTF tried to add men's and women's team events to the Olympics, but failed to get the International Olympic Committee's approval on this. The request to add mixed doubles might be approved, as was the case with the badminton competition in the Olympics.

"Through common efforts by experts and enthusiasts," Xu stressed, "table tennis will become one of the most favored sports in the world." The new ITTF leader has great confidence in the future of table tennis, to which he has devoted the greater part of his life and energy.

two new events, namely the First World Cup Women's Singles, scheduled for September, and the Finals of the International Grand Prix toward the end of the year. In the case of the latter, there will be four events: men's and women's singles & doubles. Players will be selected using the ITTF's latest ranking. The prize money offered will be a record \$200,000 in U.S. dollars.

According to Xu, the ITTF has plans to establish a club system, with players representing their respective clubs. As such a system imposes few re-

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March 8, 1996

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# Tim Boggan

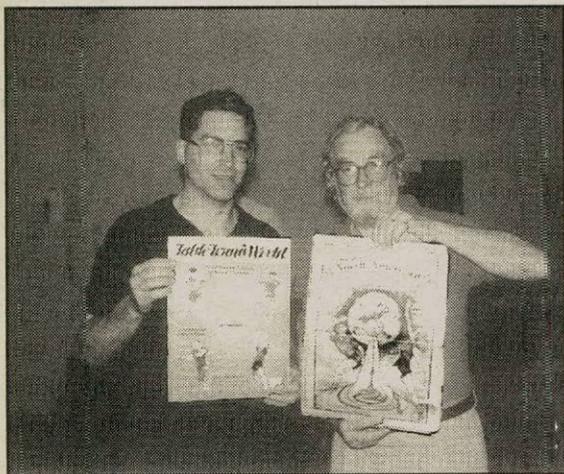


Photo by Stephen Yeh © 1996

**Tim (R) with premier issue of "Timmy's North American Table Tennis," Tim's magazine from 1983. Editor Larry Hodges (L) holds up premier issue of *Table Tennis World*, February, 1996.**

**TTW:** Gee, Tim, we've seen your table tennis resume, and figure you use posterboard for your business cards! How'd you get into table tennis originally?

**Tim:** In the 1930's, growing up in Dayton, Ohio, I began playing with my father on a makeshift, soon-to-be slightly warped table-top placed over our basement pool table. As I said in my book *Winning Table Tennis* (1976), "I loved the lights over the table and the indefinable darkness around it, the green and white colors that seemed so clear and beautiful to me, the sound of the racket in the silence steadily hitting the ball." I think my boyhood play in that basement was as much an aesthetic as competitive experience.

In 1940 I won a tournament at my grade school on an improvised table the nuns made atop some student desks. I still have the small cup I was awarded (minus the arms) that, many years ago when I smoked some, I used as an ashtray.

When I was in the 8th grade, to my amazement I won an all-City Catholic Youth Organization tournament. I don't know how all those hard hitters, so impressive to me when I first entered the playing hall, lost, but I remember how in the final I relentlessly out-pushed my final opponent.

In high school I played only once in a tournament—in a City Novice event. Was I really a "Novice"? I asked the organizers. They assured me I was. I had my doubts, but not for long: I lost in an early round.

Then, quite accidentally, I discovered the USATT tournament world from a fellow student at the University of Dayton. In January, 1950, I attended my first out-of-town tournament—the St. Joe Valley in South Bend, Indiana. I lost my first match 27-25 in the 5th to a better player who was also a very hot-tempered one. When he tried to psych me a little, I responded in kind—the towel, the handkerchief, the shoelaces. We must have been ridiculous. Finally, the legendary John Varga himself came out to our table to no nonsense umpire—very fairly I remember. At the age of 19 then, I started to play in earnest.

**TTW:** So you became a regular tournament-goer. What playing accomplishments over the years are you most proud of?

**Tim:** In the beginning I had only a stay-at-the-table push/block defense. Then, in 1951, in a tournament in Cincinnati, I quite insensitively began mimicking my weaker opponent's eccentric forehand, and to my astonishment found I could keep snap-hitting in balls for winners. Wow, I thought, that was fun! Taking the offense was fun!

For four more seasons, I played with great fervor. At the University of Dayton, where for years I was a perpetual "student" (who would ever think I'd become a professor?), many a day I'd cut all my classes and teach beginners cum novices to block-return the steady forehands I'd roll ever harder at them. And since I'd heard that 10-times U.S. Champion Dick Miles used to practice his close-to-the-body windmill forehand with a handkerchief under his armpit, I did that too.

My advance in that clubless town was steady but slow. Dayton City Novice Champ, Dayton City Champ, Ohio State Champ, U.S. Intercollegiate Singles and Doubles Champ, U.S. #10, U.S.

#7, Member of the U.S. Team in the U.S. vs. Canada matches at the CNE in Toronto (the night before, I'd been throw-up sick, was still sick, played anyway, tried hard, lost every match). During the 1954-55 season (when I was an Ohio TTA V.P. under President Otto Ek) I had my best losses: to Bernie Bukiet in the final of the Illinois Open in Chicago; to Bukiet in the semi's of the St. Joe in South Bend; to Johnny Somael in the semi's of the Michigan Open at Pontiac; to Bukiet again in the final of the Western Open at Milwaukee; and to Erwin Klein in the 8th's of the National's at Rochester, N.Y. The best doubles I ever played was in the following '55-'56 season, my last before I retired (I thought then forever): Steve Isaacson and I for a short time dominated the major Midwest tournaments, won 4 out of 5 finals....

Ten years later, I'd gotten a life—a job, wife, home, family—and at first hesitantly then with a passionate rush returned to the game. For the next five years, age 35 through 39, I was ranked anywhere from U.S. #12 to #20. And now I began to write more and more for our national publication, *Topics*.

In 1971, at the Nagoya World Championships, before our "Ping-Pong Diplomacy" trip into China, I entered the (Over 40) Jubilee Cup event. I remember my friend Miles talking to 3-time World runner-up, Poland's Alex Ehrlich, about my upcoming 1st-round

1930's



1932, age 2.

match with Hungary's Ferenc Sido, 1953 World Champion, 1959 World runner-up, and the Defending Jubilee Cup Champion. Dick was telling Alex I really played pretty well (two seasons earlier I'd beaten both U.S. #4 Danny Pecora when he was defending his CNE Championship and U.S. #3 Dell Sweeris at a tournament in Hempstead, Long Island). Alex, understandably, quite dismissed me and any chance I might have against Sido. But once out there at the table, after I'd hit in that first fast, flat forehand, I could see right away in Sido's face that he wasn't prepared to play me and was fearful. I beat him two straight, after which the poor guy cut short his stay and ignominiously left for home, while I eventually lost in the final to former Czech World Doubles Champion Ladislav Stipek.

Ah, glory days. Everyone, regardless of his/her ability, has a story or two to tell. Of course we've got to move along with this interview, but I can't resist

mentioning that once, long ago, at a Detroit U.S. Open Team Championship, I was down 1-0 and 20-11 match point when suddenly a player/official I didn't like came over. Because he had a pleasant, expectant look on his face as he sat down to watch, he seemed to me like a vulture suddenly alighting there ready to feast on my remains. Absurd, huh? But, seeing him there, I vowed to fight ferociously before losing that last point. Only, miraculously, I didn't lose! Took 11 straight to win that game, and of course the next.

**"If you want your sons (or daughters) to be Champions, as I always did, don't kill their interest in the Sport. They have to have fun...."**

**TTW:** A fantastic comeback like that you'd of course remember forever. Have you, at age 65, any recent playing accomplishments?

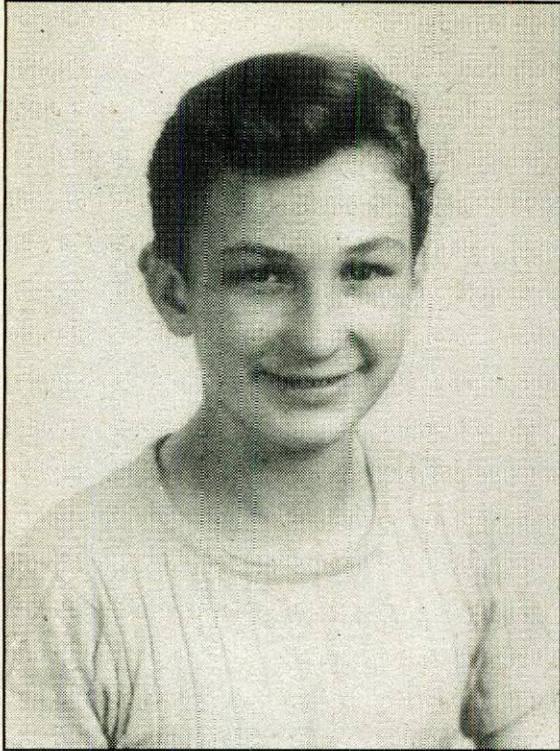
**Tim:** ...Uh, my last U.S. Championship win was in 1993 at the U.S. Open in Indianapolis. The Over

'60's over George Hendry who, 75 years young, at our last U.S. Closed in Vegas beat me two straight.

**TTW:** Enough then about your play. How about your sons? Both of them were U.S. Men's Singles Champions. Keeping in mind there are several more questions I want to ask you, tell us a little something about Scott and Eric.

**Tim:** Oh, sure... I remember in 1972 in the Tim Boggan Open in Miami (yes, that was the actual name of the tournament), I watched Scott, just turned 11, win a match from down 19-11 in the deciding game by

## 1940's



1942, age 12.

playing non-stop aggressively. I didn't dare root for him aloud on that occasion, for he'd already started his 10-point string and I feared to break the magic spell. Eric, meanwhile, still 8, had gone out to the table to play a middle-aged man who was dressed impeccably—had on what appeared to be a brand new sweatsuit, color-coordinated playing outfit, and spotless sneakers—and who out of his shiny sports bag had brought forth his expensive racket sheathed in a case. Eyeing all this from a seat just outside the court was the man's wife. I still wonder what she thought when Eric beat him very badly. At that time Norizaku Fujii, 1952 World Men's Doubles Champion, was based in Miami, and I asked him which of my boys showed the most promise. He watched each of them play for a few minutes, then to my surprise—since Scott had that beautiful covering forehand and Eric, blocking, jabbing, that eccentric grip—he said Eric....

At the 1975 Houston U.S. Open, in the Parent-Child event, a Championship I really wanted to win, Scott and I were down match point in an early round to a team we figured to beat. I told Scott to just block the ball back, and I'd hit in the boy's return for a winner. Scott dutifully blocked back the father's serve, but I guess, being directed and not free, he tightened a bit, and the ball hung on the net then dropped back onto our side. As, losers, we turned to each other to shake hands, Scott, not in anger but in anguish, said, "Whad'ja tell me to do that for?" Why do fathers sometimes say what they say? Imagine, more than 20 years later, I still have pangs of regret over that directive....

In 1981, at Las Vegas, when Scott and Eric played in the final for the National Championship and they were at deuce in the 4th and then on into the 5th, I couldn't make up my mind who I wanted to see win. On the one hand, since Eric had already won the Championship in '78, I thought it right that Scott, who'd been 2-0 down to Lim Ming Chui in the 8th's before beating Danny Seemiller and D-J Lee, should win. On the other hand, I greatly admired Eric's recovery from match-point down in the 4th and his stubborn, if often exasperating integrity—his through the years refusal to be intimidated by his older brother, his selfish fidelity to self. Anyway, when Scott won, 18 in the 5th, I burst into tears and didn't settle down for quite a while. Perhaps neither of them cared themselves as much as I did about each winning the U.S. Championship?

Scott and Eric, en route to becoming professional players, both had some very painful times in the 4-5

March/April 1996

years they lived abroad, especially in the beginning. But maybe it was all worth it. The final verdict isn't in yet, perhaps never will be. I'm sure now, though, they must have very mixed feelings about how I directly or indirectly influenced them to spend their youth....But, well, for those 20 years, as my meticulously kept scrapbooks attest (will they ever look through them, read what's there to read?) we did do something together.

**TTW:** Any advice for other parents with kids who play table tennis?

**Tim:** Oh, I've advice, but what it's worth is another matter. But, o.k., consider this. If you want your children to do their best, you too must do your best. (And my wife Sally and I did.) If you want your sons (or daughters) to be Champions, as I always did, don't kill their interest in the Sport. They have to have fun—away from the table—especially with other kids. And yet they've got to be out there at the table to the exclusion of much else. Ideally they should be on a first-name basis with, and should practice against Champions, young and old, who'll indulge them and encourage them to have the idea that they too can be Champions. They need to have a very high opinion of themselves. Regardless of how seriously they practice, they must play in lots of tournaments, against every conceivable style, and ideally must play every point to the best of their ability. Intensity is very, very important.

Here, in the Jan., 1938 English TTA magazine Table Tennis is ITTF founder Ivor Montagu trying to define "Sport":

"Not merely a game, nor yet solely a pure physical exercise. Rather a momentary, if make believe, exaltation of effort."

In other words, Reality will sooner or later bring you back to necessary everyday pursuits, will it? But, for the moment, the spirit calls for an acceleration, an exhilaration that strains to satisfy the Imagination.

**TTW:** That last line sounds more than a little "bookish," Tim. But of course you did write a book, didn't you?

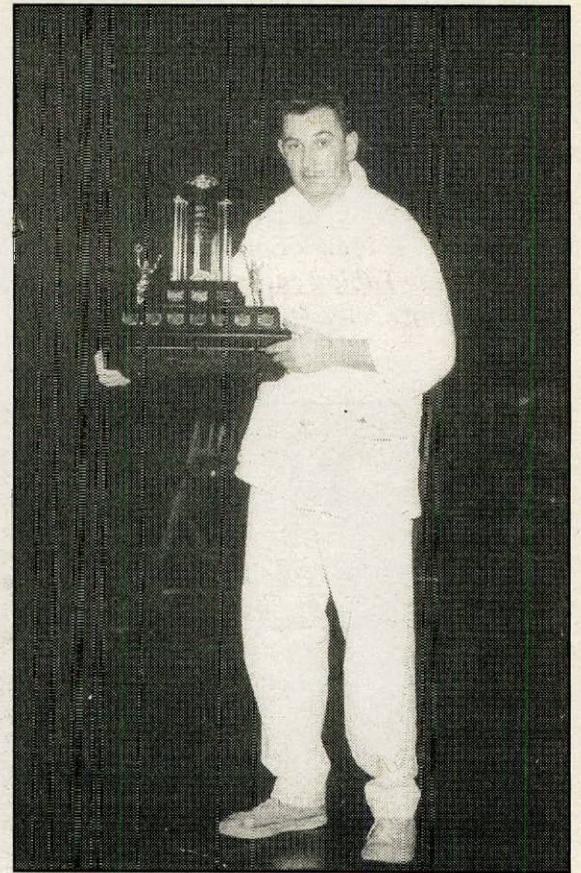
**Tim:** Yes, but there are no lines quite like that in it. Winning Table Tennis was part of a Sports Series

## 1960's



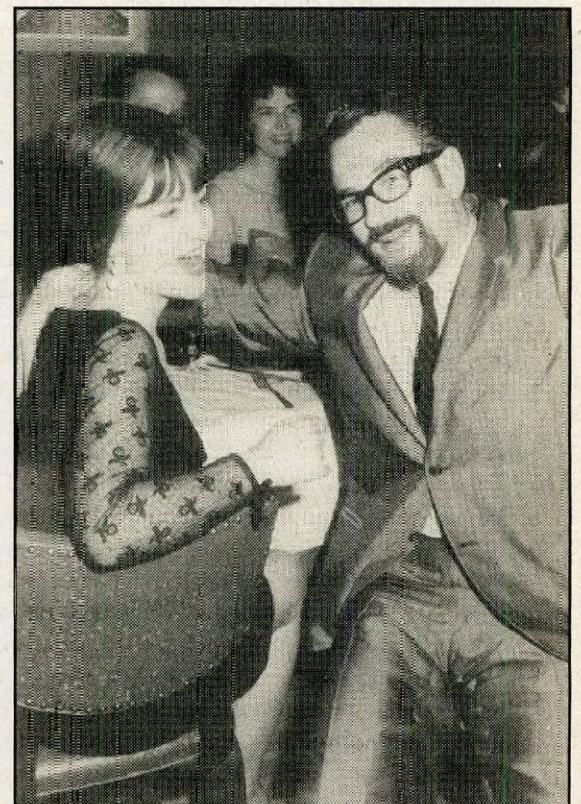
1966 (age 36), member of U.S. Open Team Champions from New York (with Dick Miles, Jack Howard & Fred Berchin).

## 1950's



1953, age 23, Central Canadian Open Champion (1952 & 1953).

(compare Pete Rose's Winning Baseball), and after I accepted the advance and spent it, I damn well had to write the book. But I couldn't get started. I couldn't write without being honest and write out of my own experience, but that meant I had to focus on my own somewhat eccentric game, as well as use whatever appealed to me from what others had written. Further, since my chief concern was not to be boring, I wanted to include as much anecdotal material as possible. It took me three months to find the right voice, without which I couldn't proceed. Finally I got started with what became "Chapter Five—Serve and Receive."



Having a good time with wife Sally, 1966.



Photo by Barry Margolius © 1996

**1978 U.S. Open Team Champions, L-R:  
Eric Boggan, Roger Sverdlik, David Philip, Scott Boggan, Tim Boggan**

And thereafter I finished the whole book inside of a month. Fortunately I had a very sympathetic editor who liked the way I wrote and scarcely touched my original manuscript.

**TTW:** With the decades-long perspective you have, can you comment briefly on any combined past/present/future aspect of the Sport? If your thought is somewhat controversial, so much the better.

**Tim:** Well, it's quite clear that the quality of play among, say, the top 200 male players in the U.S. in the last 25 years has continually improved, and that the still too few showcase tournaments for them have also gotten better. That's of course encouraging. But I must say too often some very good workers fall out of favor with one administration or another, or become themselves disgusted with some administration or other, and the Sport suffers. I well understand that those making policy want people around them whom they feel they can team with. But surely some flexibility, some lines of communication and cooperation can be extended to those who've served well in the past so that they might in some capacity continue to serve.

More broadly speaking, I think what's most needed in Table Tennis right now, particularly in the U.S., is audience involvement. "Table Tennis is a participation sport, not a spectator sport"—how often have I heard that. But—and this is a thought particularly for those interested in inter-city/inter-state professional league competition—why not encourage the spectators to be the participants too—as in so many other successful sports?

Again and again in tournaments today, certainly more so than in the late '60's and early '70's, say, it's obvious that a great many spectators don't care who wins any given match and so they applaud only when spectacular shots or, after a while, the most spectacular shots entertain them. Of course today's super-fast, have-to-attack game is error prone, and one hardly wants to applaud a player who's quickly given a point he's not worked for. But, as Miles has said for maybe 50 years, the court is generally much too big, and the audience is too far away from the action. Spectators need to be boxing-ring or little theater-like up close to better share the drama.

To me it's just absurd that sideline coaches and fellow teammates can't yell out instructions to the

players or lustily root for them, especially in a televised one table Arena setting. You're afraid of chaos? The threat can be monitored because the inherent structure of play provides a saving contrapuntal effect. Nothing's worse than a passive audience. To make an analogy: over the years, as Editor of *Topics*, I received a great many photos of players—but photographer after photographer never realized that I couldn't use his/her picture because the uncroppable background showed very few or even obviously disinterested spec-

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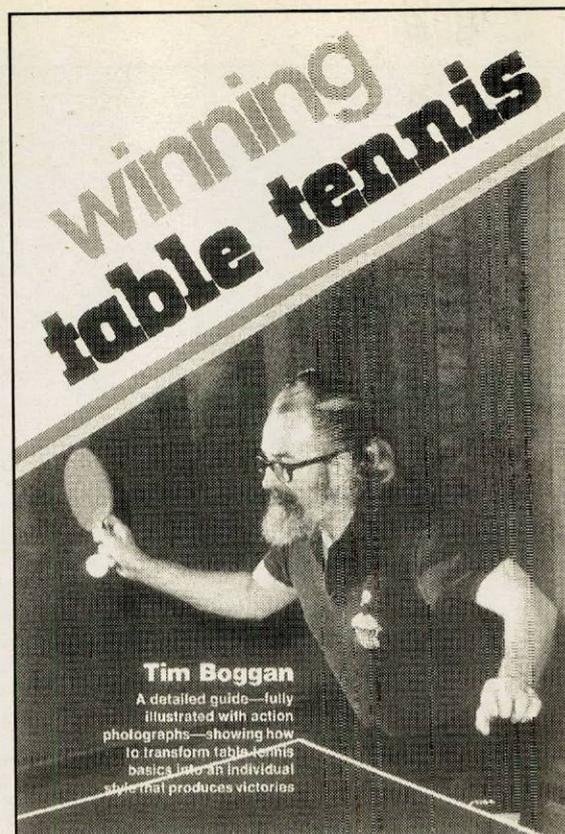
**“Without pointing a finger at any particular administration in the 30 years that I've been writing table tennis articles, I think it's almost a given that a free press is not much liked by the resident officers in power.”**

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tators. Such a photo, totally undramatic—like too many embarrassing exhibitions by well-meaning novices—can only do more harm than good.

**TTW:** You were Editor of *Topics* (now called *Today*) not once but twice. Want to say anything about that?

**Tim:** Being the Editor and principal writer of the paper for maybe 100 issues (particularly in those days of typewriter Wite-Out) was herculean work but great fun—serious pleasure. I printed anything and everything from anyone I thought responsible. And I actively solicited material from all over the country. It was, if not a family paper, an in-group table tennis community paper, where the community was the multicultural world, with all its possibilities. I wanted subjective points of view, the more varied the better. I wanted a particular eye/I, an individual voice. I thought if everyone was free to say what he wanted about any topic, the many subjective responses would provide a basis for objectivity, and the truth, though it might take time, would out. I preferred writing that showed involvement, that combined reason and emotion—as the



**Tim's 1976 book**

best writing does. But I see now that in my zeal for the written word I stressed too much copy and not enough photos.

**TTW:** The USATT fired you as Editor not once but twice—isn't that right?

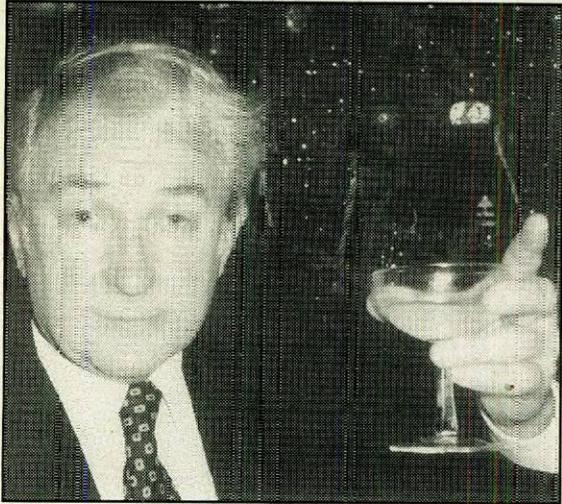
**Tim:** In 1983, after 13 years of very conscientious but sometimes very controversial service, I was fired as Editor in a very secretive, underhanded way...which, though I was very angry over all the cowardly deception, would not do anyone any good (least of all mellow me) were I to recount the details again here. I fought back as best I could by starting a new and well received magazine (for which I'd built up in one season well over 900 paid subscribers, the great majority of whom were regular tournament-goers who knew me and trusted me), and then by running successfully for the USATT Presidency.

Without pointing a finger at any particular administration in the 30 years that I've been writing table tennis articles, I think it's almost a given that a free press is not much liked by the resident officers in power. And with some good reason, for in such a democratic press not all is gospel, though some people are apt to think so. Also, what one says at any one moment shouldn't really be held as his/her definitive word forever or perhaps even for a short time. There's always dirty linen and very likely much more of it when it's never aired in public. Readers of all persuasions realize people not only have differences of opinion but make errors. Mistakes are not so hard to forgive, particularly when acknowledged. But who wants their elected officials to practice secrecy, for secrecy breeds corruption.

Later, in 1990-91, another administration hired me back, this time as Co-Editor (and principal writer) with Scott Baake. With both of us the paper was a labor of love, and we worked well together. But we were not cost-cutting conscious and we needed to be better budgeted and have our budget enforced by some caring liaison E.C. member. That didn't happen. But though I was very disappointed on being fired, especially after we turned out a really fine issue on the '91 Chiba City, Japan World's, I wasn't angry.

**TTW:** You speak of being USATT President. You were elected to that office three times?

1980's



Christmas 1986, minus beard.

**Tim:** Yes. My first term contribution (and here I was helped by a number of my co-workers and supporters) was (1) to provide the early and mid-1970's impetus for foreign competition to come to this country and (2) to work at increasing the prize money in tournaments for the top players—those players who generally speaking have worked the hardest and whom the others, and certainly the “outsiders,” if we're to have a Sport, must be entertained by. Later, I strongly encouraged my own sons and others to live abroad so as to seriously become part of the table tennis world that we'd so long been isolated from.

During my very abbreviated second term as President, I continued to work as a full-time professor, to write for and edit the paper (a 40-hour a week job itself in those days), and to champion my sons to tournaments on weekends...until my wife, Sally, who for months and months had been acting as an unpaid USATT Secretary, was very near a breakdown (I'd come home on a weekend or even a weekday to find she'd left me maybe a dozen notes, some of them detailing at length what the caller had wanted). Spontaneously I resigned both the Presidency and the Editorship, and after Sally and I both cried for two weeks, we reached a compromise where I continued on as Editor of the paper...and then, because I deeply cared about the players, I did fund-raising for them and Captained them to the '75 Calcutta World's.

Ten years later, during my third Presidency, I kept trying as hard as I could to ignite someone, anyone, on or off my E.C., to help me make something happen in the Sport. I remember Jimmy McClure saying as we were about to go to a Meeting I'd called, “We don't know what we're doing.” He was right, but I for one didn't know what else to do but struggle. I didn't want to be merely a hold-the-line, caretaker President. But we had no money unless we touched some of the \$1,300,000 principal that I'd from the beginning agreed should be in a Foundation set up by Jimmy to safeguard it. So without money there was a kind of what's the use attitude and little enthusiasm.

When I was defeated for reelection by someone I was sure wouldn't struggle as I did to try to make something happen I was disgusted with table tennis and some of the people in it and left the scene—again I thought forever. But two and a half years later I was back, and since then I've found maybe half-a dozen different ways of continuing to make a contribution, all the while, for better or worse, reinforcing my seemingly inseparable identity with the Sport.

**TTW:** So that brings us up to the mid-'90's. I know that now you're on the ITTF Executive Board as Vice-President for North America. What exactly is expected of you?

**Tim:** In a manner of speaking, I'm paid to attend

1990's

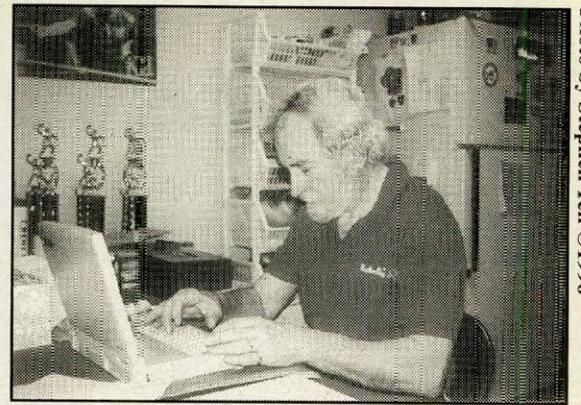


With former U.S. stars Dick Miles (10-time U.S. Men's Singles Champion, center) and Doug Cartland (many-time U.S. Team Member, right) at the U.S. Nationals in Las Vegas, December, 1995.

meetings, to understand what the discussions are about, to talk if I have something to say, to take (if only for my own satisfaction) careful notes, and to write (when such are needed) occasional Reports. (Right now I'm writing my annual Report to the ITTF on what's been going on this past year in North America.) What am I paid? Well, a vanity payment of course, and for a few days I dine well and see a little something more of the world. So far the meetings have always been in places that door-to-door involve long, wearying hours of solitary travel—to Japan, China, Taiwan, Cyprus, and, this May, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It's a very good idea for the ITTF to have varied geographical representation in its inner circles though, for then disparate voices can be heard. The Federation really is democratic, and I can be heard. Take as an example that which I'm most pleased about. The Ogimura administration, Ogimura himself really, was very much against any umpire at any world title competition being more than 60 years old. But, speaking on behalf of the USATT, I argued against this ITTF Handbook Directive and I was listened to, and with indispensable help from my colleagues I was able to get the Directive rescinded. So I'm sure any number of our USATT Match Officials appreciated me representing them.

**TTW:** So this work forces you to keep aware of what's currently happening at the same time that you're preoccupied with the past as USATT Historian. How are you coming along with your History of U.S. Table Tennis?

**Tim:** I'm one-month close to finishing the first draft of the first volume (1928-39). But though I've still more interviews to do, I've by now a very solid base of 400 or more pages as to what in general actually happened during those years—with every single fact or opinion in the book documented. I try to be as careful as I can because I know how easy it is to make errors. I see them in my own writings and in the writings of others, and untruths always bother me. Since perhaps my biggest problem is that I'm compulsively thorough—everyone and everything seems of some importance to me—I keep a line attributed to Voltaire in front of me, a perpetual bookmark as it were: “One should always aim at being interesting rather than exact.” I have to keep reminding myself that I don't want to be so scholarly as to be unreadable. Another big problem I have is to find the right tone. Because I've written different chapters at different times, I don't always like the voice I hear. Even some of my most recent lines are dreadfully stiff. Of course I've no assurance that anyone will ever read this multi-volume work, I've no prospects for a publisher. Perhaps, though, since Table



Hard at work during tournament, February, 1996.

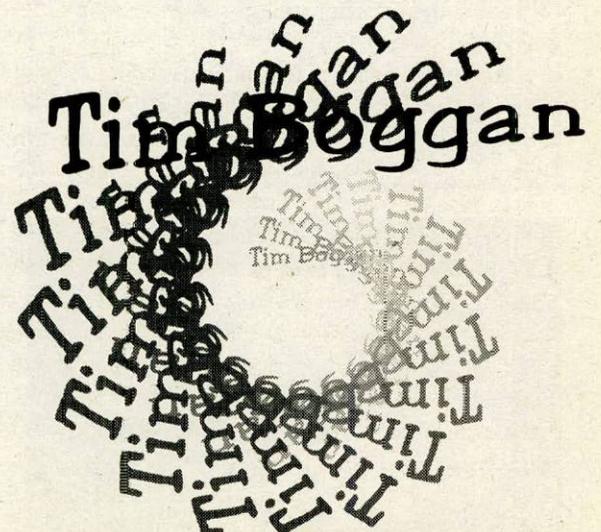
Tennis is an Olympic sport, libraries might want it. It's not important that I write for any hypothetical reader; there's no profit for me in that. The “right” reader, whoever that might be, will share enough of my individual voice to make his/her reading worthwhile. Anyway, as soon as I get this first volume in shape I'm going on with the second one (1940-52). I expect it to be much easier to write than the first.

There are a couple of other aspects to my role as Historian. I find myself writing more and more obituaries—which are making me more and more aware of my own mortality. Also, as I'm the USATT Hall of Fame Board Member who is best equipped to do research on various candidates for the Hall, I prepare articles, photo posterboards, and slide-show presentations on the inductees. Increasingly, too, I'm getting more and more calls from both USATT members and outsiders for information on past players. But all of this is o.k. with me, I like the work.

**TTW:** Tim, we both know this interview has got to come to an end, so one last question. In this issue you have a “Tournament of the Month” write-up. Would you comment just a little on that?

**Tim:** I thought readers might be interested in my write-up of this “Holiday” Open that occurred 25 years ago. Like anyone else with my varied background I've run tournaments—from a Dayton City Championship back in the '50's to an every-table-barriered -off classy Kiamesha Lake, N.Y. Concord Resort Hotel Championship in the '80's. But this New York City one was so uniquely personal that I'd certainly want to include it in any compilation I'd ever put together called “The Best of Boggan.”

What mixed feelings I've often had in my 40-years-involvement with the USATT. How many times have I thought, “How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable/Seem to me all the uses [ways] of the [table tennis] world.” But such moods pass. And now again I feel that what I do—even this Interview, for which I thank you, Larry—is valuable.



# World Renowned Racket Sports Collection Announces Takeover Opportunity

The Racket Sports Heritage Collection, one of the world's finest and most extensive collections of racket sports antiquities and related art, has announced plans for a takeover opportunity. According to the collection's agent, Roy Seguire, the owners are seeking corporate or private sponsors who can acquire the collection and provide for its future.

The collection traces the early years and evolution of Lawn Tennis, Badminton and Table Tennis through

hundreds of original rackets of amazing variety, along with a handsome and diverse selection of rare fine art, stained glass, porcelains, prints and engravings, early books, medals, games, antiques advertising and memorabilia. With its unprecedented breadth, depth and historical texture, the collection has attracted international recognition and accolades from the Smithsonian, the Olympics President, Wimbledon, sports journals and magazines, and even Royalty.

**TABLE TENNIS WORLD** presents an overview of the collection's extraordinary section on Table Tennis in a two-part series of sample photographs. Additional details are available on the Internet World Wide Web at this location: <http://www.clark.net/pub/rackets>; by e-mail: [rs@clark.net](mailto:rs@clark.net); or by phone: 703-689-0064.

Photos are copyrighted ©1996 by the Racket Sports Heritage Collection.

1-2 The first game called "Table Tennis" was actually a board & dice game made in 1884 by J.H. Singer. When Lawn Tennis became very popular in the late 1870's & 1880's, game makers were quick to realize the potential of parlor versions. Most of these were short lived and now quite rare, including card games, board games, Tiddley-Winks variations, games with rackets & balloons & others. The only survivor was Table Tennis, which blossomed into an international craze at the turn of the century after the advent of the celluloid ball.

3-4. Boxed set of "Gossima" made in 1891 by Jaques & Sons, London. Includes a 10" high net and sheepskin vellum battledores with elongated handles, and used a 2" diameter stuffed ball with webbing. Because the ball had a poor bounce, this early attempt at an action version of Lawn Tennis on the table was unsuccessful. The game became dormant until about 1900, when it was re-introduced as "Gossima or Ping Pong" with a celluloid ball. Shortly afterward the name was changed to "Ping-Pong or Gossima" and then just "Ping-Pong." Because the name was trademarked, competitors made similar sets with various names, including "Pom-Pom," "Whiff Waff," "Parlour Tennis," "Royal Game," "Pim-Pam," and of course, "Table Tennis."

5. Superb boxed set with very rare clothed covered celluloid balls & drum style vellum battledores. The early sets are highly prized for their fine illustrations.

6. Another beautiful boxed set, made by J.G. Spear in Bavaria, circa 1902. Note that women are shown in active play, and were usually wearing elaborate formal gowns on most of the early sets.

7-8. Two beautiful early boxed sets by Spalding, circa 1902-04.

9. "The Royal Game or Table Tennis" made by Milton Bradley in 1902; parchment battledores.

10. Another set with handsome boxlid lithograph, made in 1902 by Horsman of New York.

11. Rare boxed set featuring small strung rackets in a compartmented fine wood box, by George Bussey, circa 1902.

12. Box set of "Whiff Waff" with vellum battledores.

13. Boxed set of "Parlour Tennis," with white handled vellum battledores.

14. Boxed set of "Pom-Pom" or Table Tennis, made by Wright-Ditson, famous Lawn Tennis manufacturers. This set includes very rare cane rackets with a single sheet of vellum embedded in the racket head.

15-16. Two more early boxed sets with fine illustrations & battledores with elongated handles. Such rackets were borrowed from the much older game of "Battledore & Shuttlecock," the predecessor of Badminton, played free form without a net.

17. Very rare experimental variation: Table Tennis with cloth pouches attached to the net, made in 1904 by Horsman, another short-lived game.

18. Lovely work of art, this charming lithograph was used on boxed sets of "Tennis de Salon" in France. High quality art-style picture postcards and note cards are currently available with this image (see e-mail address below for details).

19. Elegant and very rare set of porcelain trophies made by Royal Bayreuth, apparently for an early USA tournament prize.

20. Superb early wood bat with original pen & ink sketch of the famed Gibson Girl.

21. Early Table Tennis rackets: (L-R): Pair, cork faced; single sheet vellum; pair, "ooze" leather.

22. Early Table Tennis bats (L-R): pebbled rubber face, aluminum, carved fretwork, etched aluminum, cross-hatched scored leather face.

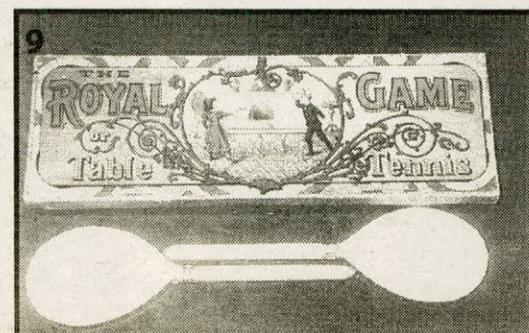
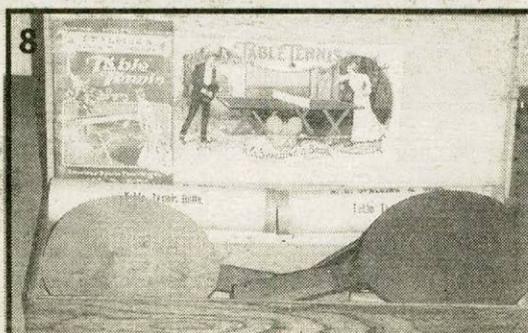
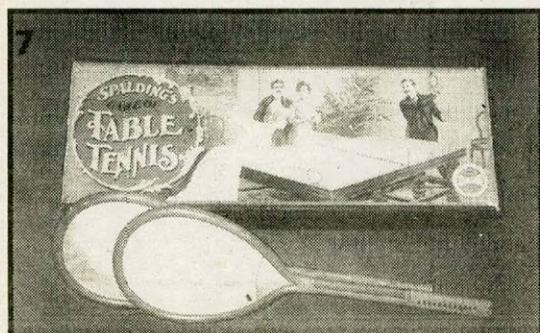
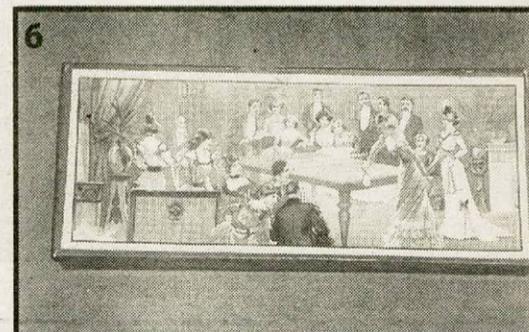
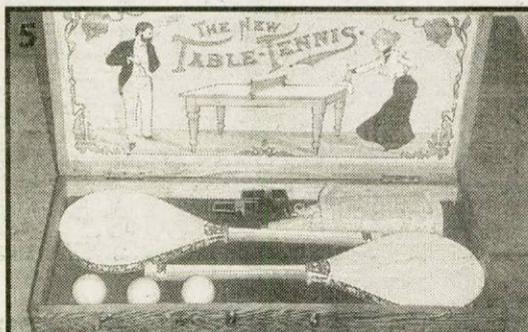
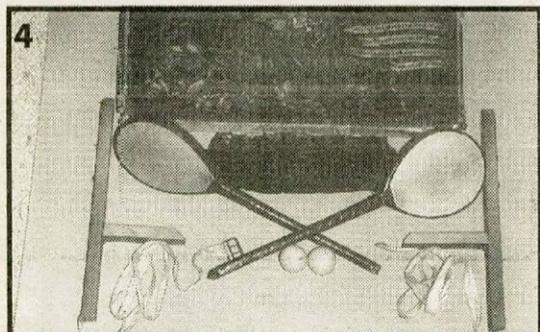
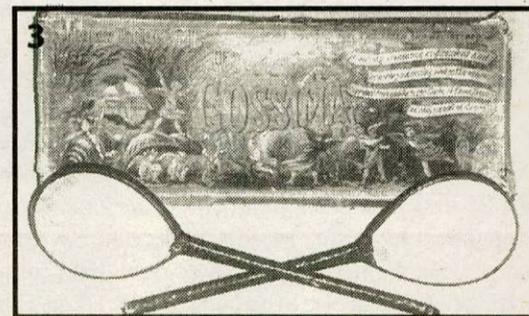
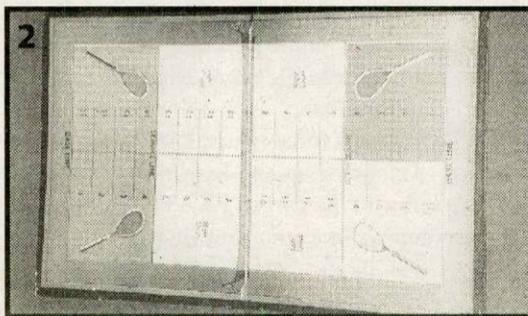
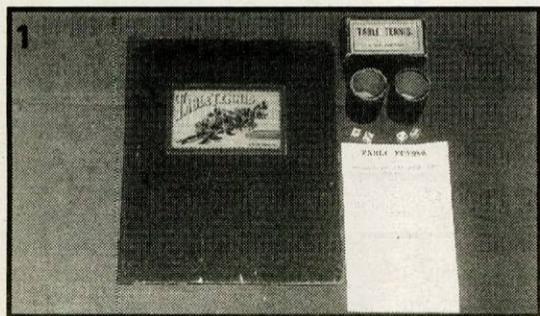
23. Very rare strung rackets used for Table Tennis. These miniature Lawn Tennis rackets were found to be unsuitable and were quickly abandoned in favor of the vellum drum-style battledores or wood bats.

24. Rare woodburned "pyrographic" bats for Table Tennis.

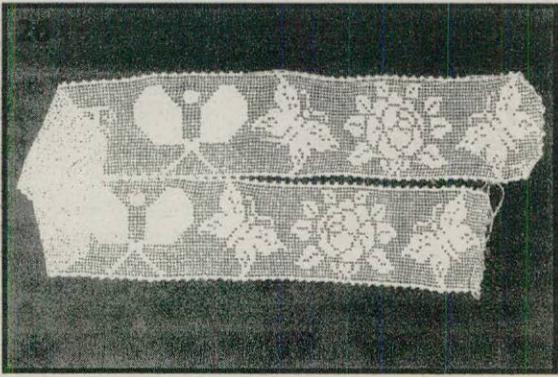
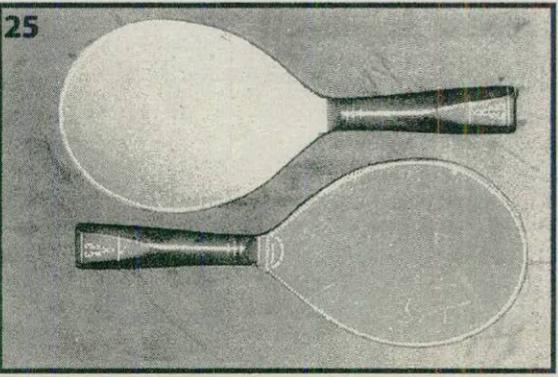
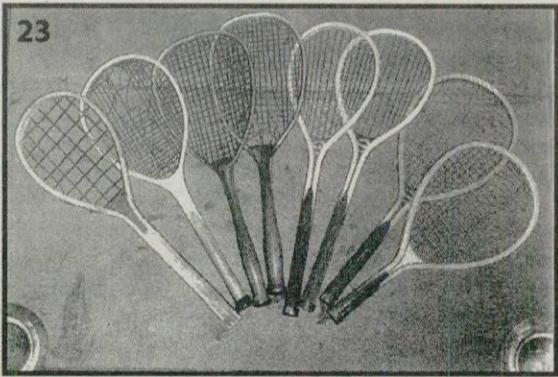
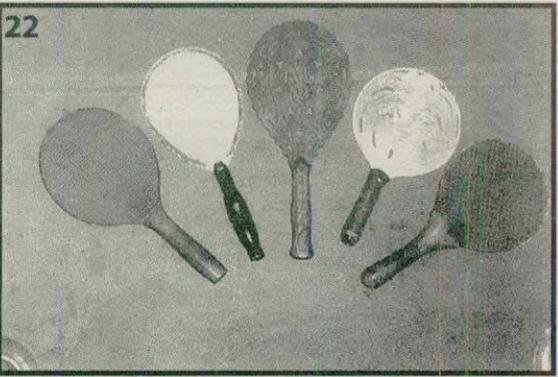
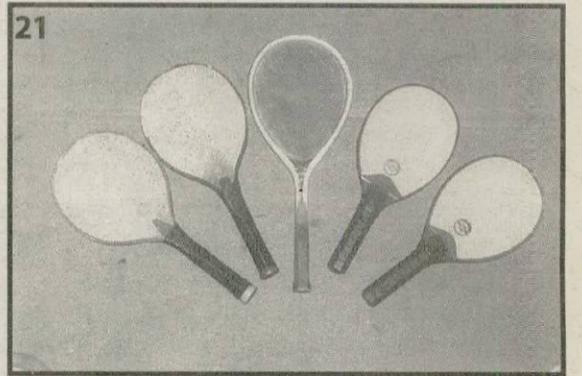
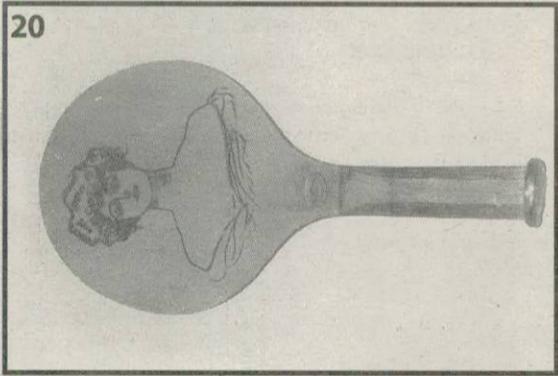
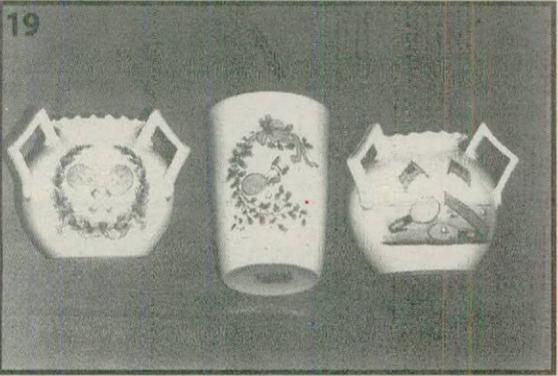
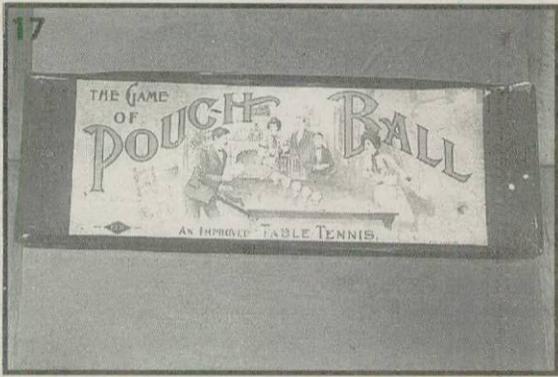
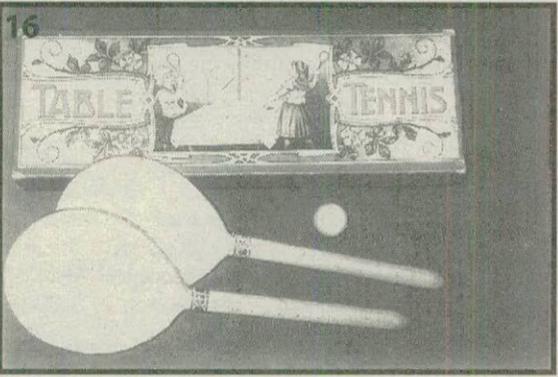
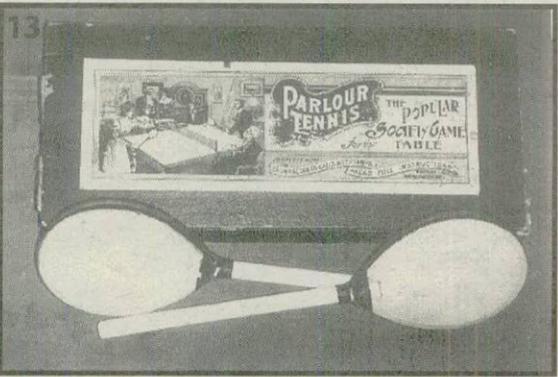
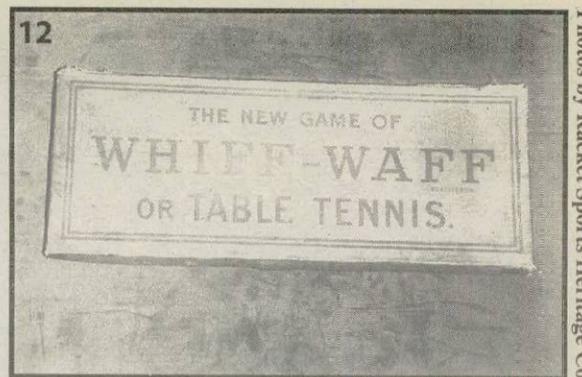
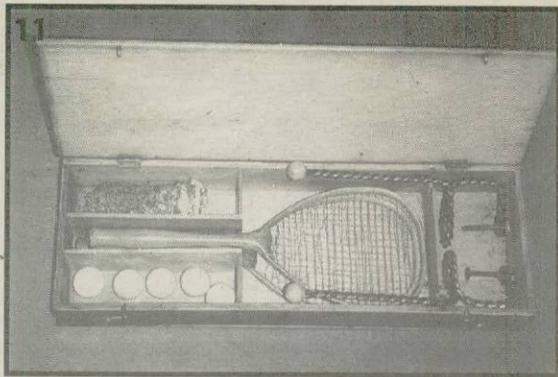
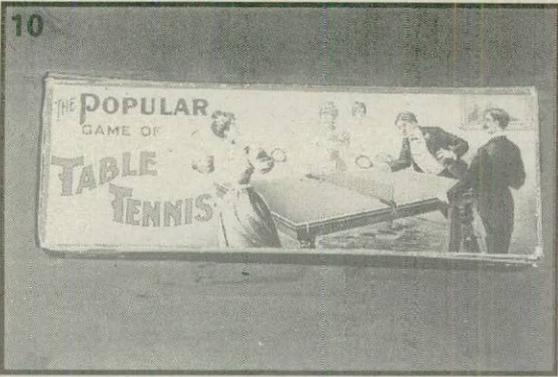
25. Superb pair of leather covered wood bats, by McLoughlin Brothers of New York.

26. Hand crocheted net for Ping-Pong/Table Tennis. Note the butterfly decoration!

27. Pair of Nixon-Mao bats from the Ping-Pong Diplomacy excursion.



Photos by Racket Sports Heritage Collection © 1996



# 1996 EUROPEAN CUP OF CHAMPIONS

by Gaëtan Frenoy

**Editor's Note:** In the 3-man format used here, each player plays two of the three players on the other team (six matches). There is also a doubles match between the best doubles pair from each team, so it's a best of seven.

The two teams played a team match on February 16, in Paris; a second team match on February 23, in Charleroi, Belgium; and a third match, also in Charleroi (since the Belgium team had a better record in the first two matches), on March 7.

The two teams in the final are Levallois UTT (France) and La Villette Charleroi (Belgium). Both teams included one player recruited from the rest of Europe. The Levallois team was made up of Jean-Philippe Gatien (World #9), Christophe Legout (#48) & Patrick Chila (#22), all of France, plus Peter Karlsson (#14) of Sweden. La Villette is made up of Jean-Michel Saive (#3) & Thierry Cabrera (#61) of Belgium, plus Zoran Primorac (#12) of Croatia.

Hope you enjoy the writings of this somewhat partisan but very talented Belgium writer!

## First Meeting Paris, France February 16, 1996

A coca-cola in my right hand, a T-shirt of Jean-Michel Saive on my shoulders, 150 other Belgian supporters behind me, more than 3000 French fans screaming against us, a superb Joola table, six of the best European players—everything was perfect for this great final. And it was a great final, with lots of suspense and an unbelievable finish. Almost all the points were extraordinary!!!!

Everything began well for us (La Villette), with Zouki (Zoran Primorac) taking the first set of the evening against an out-served Gatien, 22-20. The next two games were won easily by Gatien, who played at his best level, while Zoran's attack disappeared. Match #1 to Gatien and Levallois, -20, 14, 16.

No problem for Jean-Michel Saive, who has recently played very well, and "easily" beat (everything is relative, of course...) Christophe Legout at 17 & 18, and tied it up, 1-1.

The first turn-around of the evening!!!! Thierry Cabrera played very well at the beginning of his match with Peter Karlsson, who seemed to be elsewhere... but it was only an impression as Peter began to come back. Thierry, irritated by some points he lost, threw his paddle on the table and was yellow carded! Bothered by this, he lost the first game, 22-20. He concentrated better in the second set, winning 21-14. The last set wasn't so easy as he lost to the Swede, 21-16, giving Levallois a 2-1 lead.

Lots of Belgian supporters were too confident about the doubles... but after Saive/Primorac won the first game, 22-20, the second was easier as they defeated Gatien/Karlsson to win the match, 20 & 13, and tie things up again, 2-2.

The next match, Gatien vs. Saive, is a "classic" match, since the two men (both with World #1 Rankings in the past two years) have played more than 40 matches against each other. But the last time Gatien beat Saive was one year ago, and we all feared that that would continue.

After an excellent start by Gatien, Saive sprinted at the finish and beat the Frenchman very closely in the first game, 21-19. Gatien led 18-16, but lost four in a row to fall behind 18-20—all unbelievable points!

In game #2, the World #3 Saive ac-

## The Winning La Villette Team, from the top: Ace Jean-Michel Saive, Thierry Cabrera, Zoran Primorac.

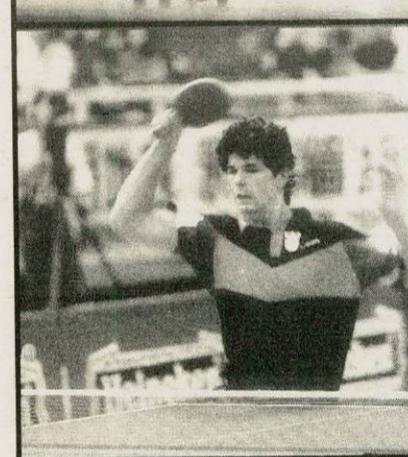


Photo by Mal Anderson © 1996

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Care of China Sports © 1996

celerated the pace of the match and Gatien couldn't keep it up as Saive took the second game as well, 21-13, to put La Villette up 3-2.

The beginning of the sixth match was an "execution" of Karlsson by La Villette's Primorac, with Zouki winning 21-6!!! At this point, we all saw our craziest dream come true: we'd beat the French 4-2, giving us a chance to win the Cup in the second team tie in one week! But Karlsson didn't agree!!! He tied it up 1-1 in the second, winning 21-15.

In the third set, Zouki concentrated better and played almost as well as he had in the first set as he took a 14-8 lead for La Villette. Most of the people were ready to

go home—it was over! La Villette had one hand on the cup... nothing could stop them... nothing?! Not exactly One person could still do something... and he did!!!!!! Karlsson played the last points of this horrible game (for the Belgians) very well, while Primorac was falling... falling... and falling more. Almost paralyzed, he couldn't do anything to stop the Swede. From up 14-8, he was suddenly down 20-17 match point!!!!!! Match to Karlsson, -6, 15, 18... and Levallois has tied it up, 3-3.

For the second year in a row, the first team match came down to the seventh match between Legout and Cabrera. Last year, Legout beat Cabs (Cabrera) 21-19 in the third set. But the 22-year-old Frenchman (Legout) has made a lot of progress while the 31-year-old Belgian has been falling in the world rankings. A very bad start by Cabrera gave Legout the first game, 21-14. Cabs, who must calm down (remember his yellow card) could not shout as he likes to do and had lots of difficulty playing his best.

However, he played a very good second game, and wins 21-14, forcing the third! It was now almost 1:00 AM!!! The suspense was awful!!

During all the last set, Legout took a 2-point lead early, and held it all the way. Match to Legout and Levallois, 14, -14, 18 at 1:30 AM, and the first Team Tie goes to Levallois, 4-3.

Too bad for us...I personally think that the Gods of Ping wouldn't give us the victory. However, all is not lost! We lost ALL our matches by 2-1, while we (um, Jean-Mi) won ALL our matches by 2-0!!! Next week, we only have to win by 4-3 to force the third team match.

Consequently, I say to all the supporters of Levallois: "We'll have our revenge...."

### Results of Meeting #1

Gatien d. Primorac, -20,14,16 (Levallois leads 1-0)

Saive d. Legout, 17,18 (La Villette ties it up, 1-1)

Karlsson d. Cabrera, 20,-14,16 (Levallois leads 2-1)

Saive/Primorac d. Gatien/Karlsson, 20,13 (La Villette ties it up, 2-2)

Saive d. Gatien, 19,12 (La Villette leads, 3-2)

Karlsson d. Primorac, -6,15,18 (Levallois ties it up, 3-3)

Legout d. Cabrera, 14,-14,18 (Levallois wins, 4-3)

## Second Meeting Charleroi, Belgium February 23, 1996

Belgium stayed with the same players for the second meeting. France, however, replaced Christophe Legout with Patrick Chila in one of the singles spots, to go along with Gatien and Karlsson. This was interesting, because it was Legout who had clinched their win in Paris one week before! France also replaced their losing doubles team in the first match (Gatien/Karlsson) with their Olympic pair,

## The Levallois Team, from the top: Ace Jean-Philippe Gatien, Patrick Chila, Christophe Legout, Peter Karlsson.

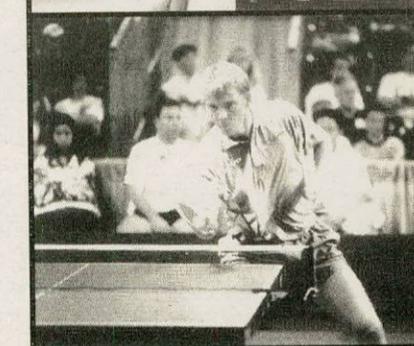
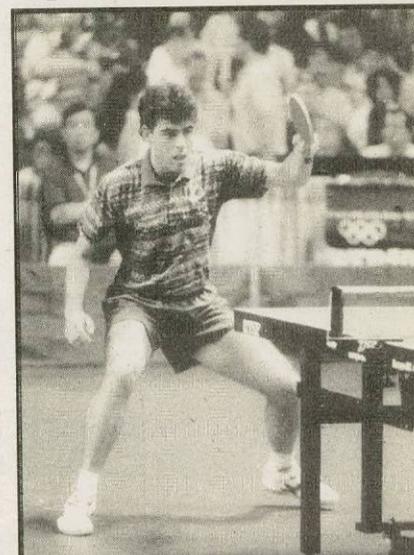


Photo by John Oros © 1996

Chila/Legout.

After losing the first round of this great final, the Belgian players were criticized for their lack of cohesion and their inability to play "as a team" rather than as three individuals. These criticisms were difficult to support but they stimulated the players and gave them one more reason to beat Levallois.

The first two matches are usually easy matches for the two leaders. They only serve to warm up the hall and the players before the real thing starts at 1-1. For every general rule, there's always an exception, isn't there?

After a weak start (10-10), Saive accelerated and won the first set without too many problems, 21-16. Chila, after an injury at the European Top Twelve at the beginning of February, was a little "short"

of what it took to beat a #3 who plays his level. However, after a very good start (16-8), Saive seemed to lose concentration, and Chila came back to 16-13! But our number one found his concentration again and won the game, 21-15.

At this point in the match, we were SURE that the third Match would take place, and it would take place in Belgium. The confidence of the blue and white (La Villette) was rising while the red and black (Levallois) was shaken for the first time!

The second match was obviously THE turnaround of this second round. Before this match, Gatien had beaten Cabrera nine times in a row, dating back to 1991, when Cabrera last won. But every time, Gatien had difficulties with Cabs' excellent backhand. This was confirmed early in the first game when Gatien seemed a little stressed, and his great forehand topspin was erratic. But he found it enough to lead 15-11. We thought that the set was nearly over, but Cabrera, strangely calm, came back slowly (16-14) and finally took the lead, 18-17, with his own serve coming up! Cabs went up 20-18, but Gatien isn't the #9 by chance as he deuced it, and also got a game point. Always very calm, Cabrera won the next 3 points, giving the first set to La Villette!

The second game was very strange. Until 14-11 for Cabrera, the server had scored 4 and lost 1 on every service series. That meant, with Cabrera serving first, he led most of the time: 4-1, 5-5, 9-6, 10-10 and 14-11! At this point, Cabs made a kind of "break": 16-14, with his own 5 services to follow. Gatien tied it up, 16-all, then 17-all. Now came the unbelievable part—at 19-18 for Cabrera, Gatien completely missed an easy ball, and Cabs had TWO MATCH POINTS!!!!!! Until now, nobody really believed it could happen. One ball was enough for Cabrera, giving La Villette a 2-0 lead!

The next match was between a Swede playing for a French team and a Croatian playing for a Belgian team!?! It is the "European Cup"?!? Last week, this match was the turn-around of the evening, with Primorac leading 14-8 in the third before he lost. This time, Zouki wanted his revenge. But Karlsson doesn't agree... and played very well (much better than in Paris), and he led all of the first game in winning, 21-16. Zouki wasn't playing bad, but Peter controlled the match and we thought he'd win in 2 sets. At 11-15 for Karlsson/Levallois, Primorac attacked more and more while Karlsson made some errors. Primorac tied it up, 16-all, then went up 20-17, 21-18. For the first time, we saw Primorac who really wanted to win, who shouted when he won a point, who raised his fist... In a word, we saw a winner!!!!

The scheme of the third set was almost the same, Karlsson led while Zouki wasn't playing bad: 1-3, 3-6, 8-11, 11-13. Then, Karlsson started to hesitate and miss "easy" balls. That was the moment for Zouki, who accelerated the pace and led for the first time at 16-14. Could he hold this level to the end? One week ago, he couldn't... but this time, even when the Swede went up 18-19, Primorac never thought that he could lose this match and finally he played three magnificent points

# \$100,000 QATAR OPEN

February 26-29, 1996

With this victory, Jean-Michel Saive will surely re-take first place in the next world rankings. Nine months before he'd lost it at the Tianjin World Championships after a 16-month tenure. Congratulations Jean-Mi !!

### Final

Jean-Michel Saive d. Andrzej Grubba, -10, 11, 15, 9.

The forever young Polish player (38-years) took the first set very easily in 7 minutes! He knew that he must finish the match quickly...

But Saive decided to change tactics when he began the second set. That was a good choice. When he lost the second set, Grubba knew that it was over for him... and it was!!

At 19-9 in the last set for the Belgian champion, the players played some exhibition points for the crowd. When he scored the 21st point in the third set, Saive couldn't hold back his tears... he knew that he would be the next world number one !!!!

### Semifinals

Jean-Michel Saive (BEL) d. Jörg Rosskopf (GER), 17, 9, -15, 11.

Andrzej Grubba (POL) d. Zoran Primorac (CRO), 13, 17, 23.

The last four... all European players?!? Where are the Chinese??? After two 'big' wins, Zouki (Zoran) surprisingly lost against the forever leader of the Polish team... unbelievable!

### Quarterfinals

Jean-Michel Saive d. Ma Wenge (CHN), -18, 17, 16, 16.

Andrzej Grubba d. Ding Song (CHN), 19, 19, -15, 14.



Jean-Michel Saive

by Gaëtan Frenoy

Zoran Primorac d. Peter Karlsson (SWE), 10, -18, 12, 15.

Jörg Rosskopf d. Wang Tao (CHN), 15, 14, -17, 10.

Jörg Rosskopf eliminated the #2 Chinese, Wang Tao, the 'veteran' Grubba eliminated the defensive Chinese, Ding Song, while Jean-Michel Saive beat the fourth top Chinese player, Ma Wenge. It looks like Europe has beaten China in this tournament. Zoran Primorac showed his win over Peter Karlsson of one week before was no fluke.

### Eighths

Jean-Michel Saive d. Erik Lindh (SWE), 19, 20, -20, 19.

Andrzej Grubba d. Dmitrij Mazunov (RUS), -13, 13, 18, 16.

Zoran Primorac d. Kong Linghui (CHN), 12, 14, -20, 13.

Jörg Rosskopf d. Jorgen Persson (SWE), -21, 11, 20, 13.

Peter Karlsson d. Christophe Legout (FRA), 13, 13, 16.

Ding Song d. Kostadin Lengerov (AUT), 12, 10, 13.

Ma Wenge d. Patrick Chila (FRA), 19, 15, 14.

Wang Tao d. Koji Matsushita (JPN), 13, 10, 9.

THE big surprise of the tournament, the elimination of the current number one: Kong Linghui. Jean-Michel Saive came close to a defeat against Erik Lindh. Much more difficult than his win in the Top Twelve of Charleroi one month ago. Interesting note: throughout the tournament, none of the matches went five.

at the end to win, 19 in the third—giving La Villette a 3-0 lead!

The French doubles team of Chila/Legout didn't have much of a chance against Saive/Primorac. This was confirmed by the first set... a very easy 21-10 for La Villette, who needed only one more game to force the third match here in Charleroi! We say that it isn't always good to win the first set too easily... The players lost their concentration and after leading 13-11 in the second, lost it, 17-21.

Here is a serious reminder for the third round of the final: "Never think that a match is done."

In the third set, they played as in the first one and led 18-7... But once more, the Frenchmen wouldn't resign. They scored 4 points in a row to make it 18-11. Then came one last crisis of the evening: after an extraordinary point (once more...) won by Chila/Legout, Zouki fell on the ground and stayed there!!! A cramp forced him to call the physiotherapist for a quick massage. After one never-ending minute... he got up to finish the set! But he was still disturbed by his small injury... and the Belgian pair lost 5 more points before concluding the game by a suddenly rather close 21-16!

What an unbelievable end: 4-0 for La Villette!!! The gambler who bet on this score has won a lot of money this night.

One victory for Levallois. One for La

Villette. All these great players will come back here in Charleroi for the final round! Hope I'll see you there!

### Results of Meeting #2

Saive d. Chila, 16, 15 (La Villette leads 1-0)

Cabrera d. Gatien, 21, 18 (La Villette leads 2-0)

Primorac d. Karlsson, -16,18,19 (La Villette leads 3-0)

Saive/Primorac d. Chila/Legout, 10,-17,16 (La Villette wins, 4-0!)

### Third Meeting Charleroi, Belgium March 7, 1996

I was unable to attend the final meeting between the two teams. However, this is what I was able to piece together.

The Belgians won the cup for the second time in their history. Saive defeated Legout, then Gatien executed Cabrera, tying things up 1-1. Primorac

won 24 & 20 against Karlsson!!!!!! La Villette now leads 2-1. Saive and Primorac easily won the doubles against the French team, Chila & Legout, giving La Villette a 3-1 lead.

We thought that Saive would now win the cup for La Villette by winning his match against Gatien...! BUT Gatien didn't agree and won easily, 15 & 14, Saive's first loss in the European Cup of Champions Final. However, La Villette was still up 3-2.

Primorac had to play Legout... a player that he didn't play well against at all!!! However, he played very well in the first set and for most of the second, as Zouki went up 15-7 in the second.

It was almost done ... BUT Zouki began to play worse and worse... and the Frenchman came back to tie it up, 17-17!!!! Unbelievable! Finally, at 19-all, the Croatian playing for Belgium came through, winning 21-19. *La Villette is the new European Cup winner!!!!*

### Previous European Cup of Champions Winners

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| 90 - 91 | Borussia Düsseldorf (GER) d. Levallois U.T.T. (FRA)      |
| 91 - 92 | Borussia Düsseldorf (GER) d. Saarbrücken (GER)           |
| 92 - 93 | Borussia Düsseldorf (GER) d. La Villette Charleroi (BEL) |
| 93 - 94 | La Villette Charleroi (BEL) d. Borussia Düsseldorf (GER) |
| 94 - 95 | Levallois U.T.T. (FRA) d. La Villette Charleroi (BEL)    |
| 95 - 96 | La Villette Charleroi (BEL) d. Levallois U.T.T. (FRA)    |

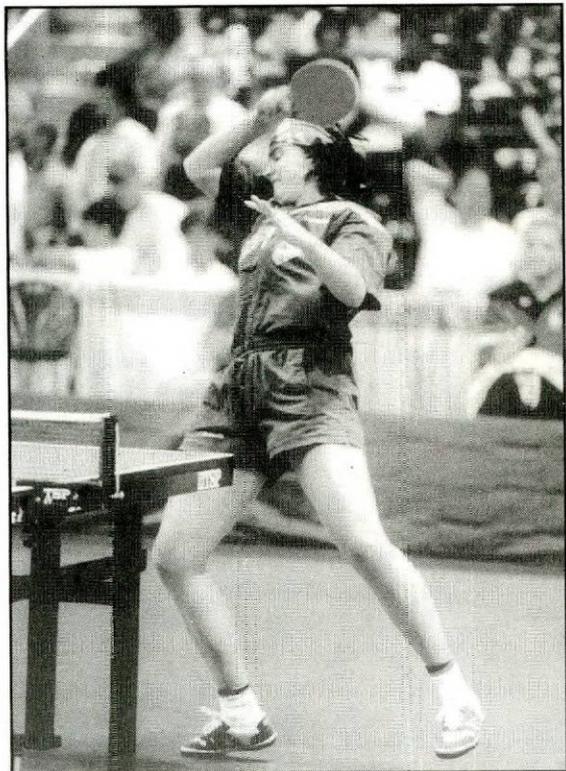


Photo by John Oros © 1996

Sweden's Jan-Ove Waldner (right) won the Europe Top Twelve Men over Belgium's Jean-Michel Saive. Hungary's Csilla Batorfi (above) made it to the finals before losing to Ni Xia Lian of Luxembourg.

## EUROPE TOP TWELVE WOMEN

**Women's Singles—Final:** Ni Xia Lian (LUX) d. Csilla Batorfi (HUN), 12,12,11; **SF:** Ni d. Nicole Struse (GER), 18,-16,12,-18,14; Batorfi d. Bettine Vriesekoop (NED), 13,14,11.

### Preliminaries

#### Group A

1. Csilla Batorfi (HUN), 4-1 (d. Ciosu, -19,12,21,17; d. Struse, 19,-12,-12,12,17; d. Wang, 13,10,10; d. Palina, 11,15,14);
2. Nicole Struse (GER), 4-1 (d. Arisi, 11,18,20; d. Palina, -17,-10,19,16,14; d. Ciosu, -17,17,14,11; d. Wang, 17,-20,12,11);
3. Emilia Ciosu (ROM), 2-3 (d. Palina, -20,16,13,-20,12; d. Arisi, 19,15,15);
4. Irina Palina (RUS), 2-3 (d. Wang, 18,14,15; d. Arisi, 17,14,17);
5. Alessia Arisi (ITA), 2-3 (d. Wang, -16,8,-19,12,11; d. Batorfi, 19,16,16);
6. Wang-Drechou Xiaoming (FRA), 1-4 (d. Ciosu, 22,17,-13,14).

#### Group B

1. Ni Xia Lian (LUX), 4-1 (d. Vriesekoop, 9,-10,16,12; d. Timina, 9,13,16; d. Schopp, 17,-19,21,-16,16; d. Toth, 14,15,10);
2. Bettine Vriesekoop (NED), 4-1 (d. Schopp, 19,-20,19,-11,13; d. Toth, 14,-17,23,-17,19; d. Svensson, -14,20,15,16; d. Timina, -17,-13,12,12,11);
3. Jie Schopp (GER), 3-2 (d. Svensson, 12,11,14; d. Timina, -17,10,14,-14,15; d. Toth, -20,19,12,12);
4. Asa Svensson (SWE), 2-3 (d. Toth, 11,16,15; d. Ni, -17,17,-10,11,18);
5. Krisztina Toth (HUN), 1-4 (d. Timina, -22,17,19,17);
6. Elena Timina (RUS), 1-4 (d. Svensson, 15,-18,-12,19,14).

### Final European Women's Standings:

- |                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Ni Xia Lian (LUX)          | 7-8. Irina Palina (RUS)     |
| 2. Csilla Batorfi (HUN)       | 7-8. Asa Svensson (SWE)     |
| 3-4. Bettine Vriesekoop (NED) | 9-10. Alessia Arisi (ITA)   |
| 3-4. Nicole Struse (GER)      | 9-10. Elena Timina (RUS)    |
| 5-6. Emilia Ciosu (RUS)       | 11-12. Wang Xiaoming (FRA)  |
| 5-6. Jie Schopp (GER)         | 11-12. Krisztina Toth (HUN) |



Photo by Michael Wetzel © 1996

(Left) European Nations Cup Champions France: Christophe Legout, Jean-Philippe Gatien, Patrick Chila & Damien Eloi.

## EUROPEAN NATIONS CUP

Bayreuth, Germany

January 19-21, 1996

**Final: France d. Germany 3-1:** Jorg Rosskopf (GER) d. Patrick Chila (FRA), -2,19,18 (!); Jean-Philippe Gatien (FRA) d. Peter Franz (GER), 12,17; Gatien/Damien Eloi (FRA) d. Rosskopf/Steffen Fetzner (GER), 19,11; Gatien (FRA) d. Rosskopf (GER), 13,20.

**SF: France d. Sweden 3-1:** Peter Karlsson (SWE) d. Patrick Chila (FRA), 8,19; Jean-Philippe Gatien (FRA) d. Jan-Ove Waldner (SWE), 19,16; Gatien/Damien Eloi (FRA) d. Peter Karlsson/Thomas von Scheele (SWE), -17,10,20; Gatien (FRA) d. Karlsson (SWE), -16,18,17.

**SF: Germany d. Yugoslavia 3-0:** Jorg Rosskopf (GER) d. Slobadan Grujic (YUG), 12,-17,14; Peter Franz (GER) d. Aleksandar Karakasevic, -17,16,11; Rosskopf/Grujic d. Franz/Karakasevic, n.s.

## EUROPEAN LADIES TEAM CUP

**Final: Germany d. Russia 3-0:** Nicole Struse (GER) d. Elena Timina (RUS), -17,12,15; Jie Schopp (GER) d. Irina Palina (RUS), 19,16; Elke Schall/Struse (GER) d. Palina/Timina (RUS), 21,19.

**SF: Germany d. Sweden 3-0:** Olga Nemes (GER) d. Pernilla Pettersson (SWE), -19,15,16; Nicole Struse (GER) d. Asa Svensson, 11,-16,15; Schall/Struse (GER) d. Pettersson/Svensson, 14,18.

**SF: Russia d. Netherlands 3-0:** Elena Timina (RUS) d. Gerdie Keen (NED), 19,-17,18; Irina (RUS) d. Emily Noor (NED), 9,19; Timina/Palina d. Mirjam Hooman/Noor (NED), 14,16.

## JAPAN TOP TWELVE

Tokyo, Japan

January 20, 1996

**Men's Singles—Final:** Sei Ito d. Koji Matsushita, 15,14,20; **SF:** Ito d. Kiyonobu Iwasaki, -19,15,16; Matsushita d. Tuneyasu Yamamoto, -17,-22,15,11,12.

**Women's Singles—Final:** Chire Koyama d. Taeko Todo, 15,19,17; **SF:** Koyama d. Rika Sato, -13,13,-20,8,15; Todo d. Ai Sakata, 23,12,-17,14.

## DUTCH OPEN

February, 1996

**Men's Singles—Final:** Trinko Keen d. Chen Sung, 16,19,-20,-20,13; **SF:** Keen d. Merijn de Bruin, 16,18,17; Sung d. Johah Kahn, 14,8,16; **QF:** Keen d. Michel de Boer, 14,17,15; Bruin d. Stanley Verbeek, 15,15,16; Kahn d. Ronald Vijverberg, 17,-12,12,15; Sung d. Danny Heister, 19,12,15.

**Women's Singles—Final:** Gerdie Keen d. Mirjam Hooman, -20,13,12,19; **SF:** Keen d. Emily Noor, 17,14,17; Hooman d. Bettine Vriesekoop, 16,17,-16,-19,19; **QF:** Vriesekoop d. Diana Bakker, 16,12,17; Hooman d. Suzan Derkx, 9,13,16; Keen d. Vanja Santic, 16,12,16; Noor d. Brenda Vonk, 13,15,16.

## BELGIAN MEN'S NATIONALS

Hasselt, Belgium

March 2, 1996

by Gaëtan Frenoy

It's the 9th Belgian Men's Singles title of the about-to-become world number one again Jean-Michel Saive. His trainer (Mr. Wang) advised him against playing in this tournament, since he had nothing to gain and everything to lose. But Jean-Mi hasn't missed a Belgian championship since 1982!!! He MUST be there. Moreover, Hasselt is where his girlfriend (Els Billen) was born, and she asked him to be there.

**Final:** Jean-Michel Saive d. Huang Jian Guo, 18,16,15; **SF:** Saive d. Davy Van Vinckeroye, 9,11,22; Huang d. Kevin Vissers, 10,12,17; **QF:** Saive d. Olivier Dupuis, 7,13,-18,13; Huang d. Tibor Hettman, -16,16,12,16; Vinckeroye d. Sébastien Massart, 12,-17,-7,21,19; Vissers d. Marc Closset, 14,-17,11,-19,15.

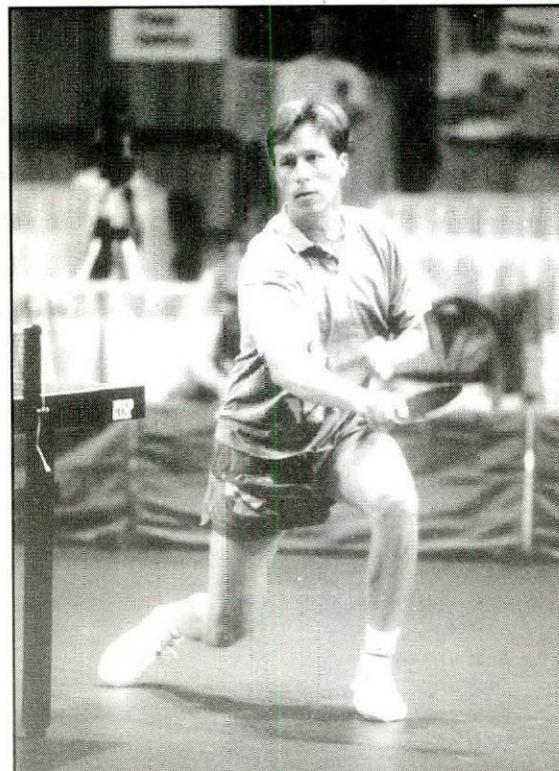


Photo by John Oros © 1996

## EUROPE TOP TWELVE MEN

Brussels, Belgium

February 2-4, 1996

**Men's Singles—Final:** Jan-Ove Waldner (SWE) d. Jean-Michel Saive (BEL), -19,9,15,15; **SF:** Waldner d. Jean-Philippe Gatien (FRA), 15,20,12; Saive d. Yang Min (ITA), 14,17,13.

### Preliminaries

#### Group A

1. Jean-Michel Saive (BEL), 5-0 (d. Lindh, 20,12,9; d. Samsonov, 10,16,-11,-19,19; d. Gatien, 17,19,-15,19; d. Eloi, 13,-13,11,12; d. Creanga, 15,21,12);
2. Jean-Philippe Gatien (FRA), 4-1 (d. Samsonov, def.; d. Creanga, -14,8,23,5; d. Lindh, 13,-19,21,-18,11; d. Eloi, -17,-16,7,16,21);
3. Vladimir Samsonov (BLR), 3-2 (d. Eloi, 19,18,11; d. Creanga, 11,-21,10,-11,15; d. Lindh, 18,-21,19,20);
4. Damien Eloi (FRA), 2-3 (d. Creanga, 17,18,24; d. Lindh, 17,18,-16,-16,14);
5. Calin Creanga (GRE), 1-4 (d. Lindh, -16,14,19,18);
6. Erik Lindh (SWE), 0-5.

#### Group B

1. Jan-Ove Waldner (SWE), 4-1 (d. Chila, def.; d. Rosskopf, 17,13,17; d. Yang, 18,17,20; d. Primorac, -8,-13,16,17,16);
2. Yang Min (ITA), 3-2 (d. Keen, 17,12,-17,21; d. Chila, 16,15,-16,12; d. Rosskopf, 14,16,-17,15);
3. Jorg Rosskopf (GER), 3-2 (d. Primorac, 19,-10,19,-21,19; d. Chila, 15,20,11; d. Keen, -16,16,18,9);
4. Zoran Primorac (CRO), 2-3 (d. Yang, 19,15,-19,13; d. Keen, -18,12,20,8);
5. Trinko Keen (NED), 2-3 (d. Chila, 16,15,-16,12; d. Waldner, 12,15,-19,21);
6. Patrick Chila (FRA), 1-4 (d. Primorac, 17,15,-19,14).

### Final European Men's Standings:

- |                               |                            |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Jan-Ove Waldner (SWE)      | 7-8. Damien Eloi (FRA)     |
| 2. Jean-Michel Saive (BEL)    | 7-8. Zoran Primorac (CRO)  |
| 3-4. Jean-Philip Gatien (FRA) | 9-10. Trinko Keen (NED)    |
| 3-4. Yang Min (ITA)           | 9-10. Calin Creanga (GRE)  |
| 5-6. Vladimir Samsonov (BLR)  | 11-12. Patrick Chila (FRA) |
| 5-6. Jörg Rosskopf (GER)      | 11-12. Erik Lindh (SWE)    |

# ITTF Rankings

February, 1996



## WOMEN

|     |      |                       |     |
|-----|------|-----------------------|-----|
| 1   | 1870 | DENG Yaping           | CHN |
| 2   | 1740 | QIAO Hong             | CHN |
| 3   | 1646 | CHEN Jing             | TPE |
| 4   | 1632 | LIU Wei               | CHN |
| 5   | 1594 | WANG Nan              | CHN |
| 6   | 1587 | GENG Lijuan           | CAN |
| 7   | 1578 | YANG Ying             | CHN |
| 8   | 1577 | LI Ju                 | CHN |
| 9   | 1574 | CHAI Po Wa            | HKG |
| 10  | 1569 | KOYAMA Chire          | JPN |
| 11  | 1560 | WANG Chen             | CHN |
| 12  | 1527 | CHEN Zihe             | CHN |
| 13  | 1519 | QIAO Yunping          | CHN |
| 14  | 1515 | JING Jun Hong         | SIN |
| 15  | 1508 | STRUSE Nicole         | GER |
| 16  | 1498 | VRIESEKOOP Bettine    | NED |
| 17  | 1493 | SCHOPP Jie            | GER |
| 18  | 1476 | BATORFI Csilla        | HUN |
| 19  | 1475 | PARK HaeJung          | KOR |
| 20  | 1467 | WU Na                 | CHN |
| 21  | 1466 | BADESCU Otilia        | ROM |
| 22  | 1451 | WANG Hui              | CHN |
| 23  | 1446 | NI Xia Liang          | LUX |
| 24  | 1444 | CHAN Tan Lui          | HKG |
| 25  | 1439 | TANG Fei Ming         | TPE |
| 26  | 1429 | CIOSU Emilia          | ROM |
| 27  | 1414 | ABBATE-BULATOVA       | ITA |
| 28  | 1411 | SVENSSON Asa          | SEW |
| 29  | 1409 | TU Yong               | SUI |
| 30  | 1405 | TODO Tacko            | JPN |
| 30  | 1405 | PARK Kyung Ae         | KOR |
| 32  | 1396 | ZHANG Ling            | CHN |
| 33  | 1392 | KAIZU Fumiyo          | JPN |
| 33  | 1392 | RYU Ji Hye            | KOR |
| 35  | 1388 | XU Jing               | TPE |
| 35  | 1388 | KIM Moo Kyo           | KOR |
| 37  | 1381 | SVENSSON Marie        | SWE |
| 38  | 1380 | SATO Rika             | JPN |
| 39  | 1376 | TIMINA Elena          | RUS |
| 40  | 1372 | PALINA Irina          | RUS |
| 41  | 1366 | TOTH Krisztina        | HUN |
| 42  | 1363 | HOUMAN Mirjam         | NED |
| 43  | 1348 | LI Hong               | CHN |
| 43  | 1348 | WANG-DRECHOU Xiaoming | FRA |
| 45  | 1346 | NEMES Olga            | GER |
| 46  | 1341 | ARISI Alessia         | ITA |
| 47  | 1334 | KIM Boon Sik          | KOR |
| 48  | 1332 | FENG Amy              | USA |
| 49  | 1326 | ZHU Fang              | CHN |
| 49  | 1326 | LAY Jian Fang         | AUS |
| 91  | 1129 | YIP Lily              | USA |
| 110 | 1086 | WANG Wei              | USA |
| 177 | 933  | GEE Diana             | USA |
| 205 | 893  | BANH Tawny            | USA |
| 241 | 839  | SUNG Virginia         | USA |

## MEN

|     |      |                      |     |
|-----|------|----------------------|-----|
| 1   | 1664 | KONG Linghui         | CHN |
| 2   | 1661 | WANG Tao             | CHN |
| 3   | 1644 | SAIVE Jean-Michel    | BEL |
| 4   | 1638 | WALDNER Jan-Ove      | SWE |
| 5   | 1606 | LIU Guoliang         | CHN |
| 6   | 1597 | KIM Taek Soo         | KOR |
| 7   | 1595 | MA Wenge             | CHN |
| 8   | 1591 | ROSSKOPF Jorg        | GER |
| 9   | 1582 | GATLEN Jean-Philippe | FRA |
| 10  | 1575 | SAMSONOV Vladimir    | BLR |
| 11  | 1559 | DING Song            | CHN |
| 12  | 1550 | PRIMORAC Zoran       | CRO |
| 13  | 1507 | HUANG Johnny         | CAN |
| 14  | 1503 | KARLSSON Peter       | SWE |
| 15  | 1486 | YOO Nam Kyu          | KOR |
| 16  | 1472 | PERSSON Jorgen       | SWE |
| 17  | 1423 | WANG Yonggang        | CHN |
| 18  | 1422 | GRUBBA Andrzej       | POL |
| 19  | 1421 | YANG Min             | ITA |
| 20  | 1414 | CHEN Xinhua          | ENG |
| 20  | 1414 | LU Lin               | CHN |
| 22  | 1409 | CHILA Patrick        | FRA |
| 23  | 1382 | CREANGA Calin        | GRE |
| 24  | 1370 | KEEN Trinko          | NED |
| 25  | 1367 | LINDH Erik           | SWE |
| 26  | 1365 | ELOI Damien          | FRA |
| 27  | 1351 | MAZUNOV Dmitrij      | RUS |
| 28  | 1345 | SAIVE Philippe       | BEL |
| 29  | 1344 | SCHLAGER Werner      | AUT |
| 30  | 1342 | APPELGREN Mikael     | SWE |
| 31  | 1339 | LIN Zhigang          | CHN |
| 31  | 1339 | SHIBUTANI Hiroshi    | JPN |
| 33  | 1338 | KORBEL Petr          | CZE |
| 34  | 1337 | PREAN Carl           | ENG |
| 35  | 1336 | FRANZ Peter          | GER |
| 35  | 1336 | XIONG Ke             | CHN |
| 37  | 1335 | WANG Hao             | CHN |
| 38  | 1334 | MATSUSHITA Koji      | JPN |
| 39  | 1331 | LUPULESKU Ilija      | YUG |
| 40  | 1322 | SYED Matthew         | ENG |
| 41  | 1321 | DING Yi              | AUT |
| 42  | 1319 | CHENG Yinghua        | USA |
| 43  | 1312 | BLASZCZYK Lucjan     | POL |
| 44  | 1302 | CHAN Kong Wah        | HKG |
| 45  | 1295 | FETZNER Steffen      | GER |
| 46  | 1286 | FEN Zhe              | CHN |
| 47  | 1285 | YAN Sen              | CHN |
| 48  | 1270 | LEGOUT Chrisophe     | FRA |
| 49  | 1263 | PODPLINKA Andras     | BEL |
| 50  | 1260 | CHIANG Peng-Lung     | TPE |
| 79  | 1178 | BUTLER Jim           | USA |
| 145 | 992  | O'NEILL Sean         | USA |
| 155 | 968  | ZHUANG David         | USA |
| 183 | 916  | NGUYEN Khoa          | USA |
| 241 | 837  | SEEMILLER Dan        | USA |
| 242 | 836  | MASTERS Brian        | USA |
| 269 | 811  | ROP Darko            | USA |
| 290 | 786  | MAY Derek            | USA |
| 302 | 772  | OWENS Eric           | USA |
| 319 | 755  | REED Barney          | USA |
| 330 | 742  | CHUI Chi-Sun         | USA |
| 373 | 679  | SWEERIS Todd         | USA |

## 1996 International Calendar

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| March 29-31      | North American Championships, Edmonton, Canada    |
| April 5-8        | English Open, Kettering, England                  |
| April 27 - May 7 | European Championships, Bratislava, Slovakia      |
| May 24-26        | China Grand Prix, Xi'an, China                    |
| May 30 - Apr. 2  | Hong Kong Open                                    |
| June 6-9         | Japan Open, Kitaku-shu, Japan                     |
| June 13-16       | Brazil Open, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil               |
| June 24-29       | World Veterans Championships, Lillehammer, Norway |
| July 3-7         | U.S. Open, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA          |
| July 5-14        | European Youth Championships, Frydek-Mistek, CZE  |
| July 7-14        | South American Championships, Willemstad, Curacao |
| July 20 - Aug. 4 | Olympic Games, Atlanta, Georgia, USA              |
| August 22-25     | Australian Open, Brisbane, Australia              |
| September 15-21  | World University Games, Geelong, Australia        |
| September 28-30  | World Cup Women, Hong Kong                        |
| September 6-8    | European Masters Cup, Aalen, Germany              |
| October 17-20    | World Cup Men, Nimes, France                      |
| Oct. 31 - Nov. 3 | Italian Open, Bolzano, Italy                      |
| November 14-17   | Yugoslavian Open, Belgrade, Yugoslavia            |
| November 21-24   | French Open, Villeurbanne, France                 |
| Nov. 27 - Dec. 1 | Swedish Open, TBA                                 |
| December 5-8     | Finland Open, TBA                                 |
| December 12-15   | ITTF Pro-Tour Final, Tianjin, China               |

## Countries That Have Won the Most Titles at the World Championships

by Zi-Wei Yang

|                        |    |   |    |
|------------------------|----|---|----|
| <u>Men's Team</u>      |    | <u>Mixed Doubles</u>  |    |
| Hungary                | 12 | Hungary <sup>5</sup>  | 17 |
| China                  | 11 | China   | 10 |
| Japan                  | 7  | Japan   | 7  |
| <u>Men's Singles</u>   |    | <u>Total Titles</u>   |    |
| China                  | 10 | Hungary   | 73 |
| Hungary                | 10 | China   | 71 |
| Japan                  | 9  | Japan   | 47 |
| <u>Men's Doubles</u>   |    | <u>Swedish Titles</u>   |    |
| Hungary <sup>1</sup>   | 13 | Men's Team  | 4  |
| China                  | 7  | Men's Singles   | 3  |
| Czechoslovak           | 6  | Men's Doubles   | 4  |
| <u>Women's Team</u>    |    | <u>USA Titles</u>   |    |
| China                  | 11 | Men's Team  | 1  |
| Japan                  | 8  | Men's Doubles   | 3  |
| Romania                | 5  | Women's Team  | 2  |
|                        |    | Women's Singles   | 1  |
|                        |    | Mixed Doubles   | 2  |
| <u>Women's Singles</u> |    | <sup>1</sup> paired with Great Britain once                                   |    |
| China                  | 11 | <sup>2</sup> paired with North Korea once                                     |    |
| Hungary                | 10 | <sup>3</sup> paired with Austria twice, Romania once, Scotland once           |    |
| Japan                  | 7  | <sup>4</sup> paired with Hungary once, Japan once                             |    |
| <u>Women's Doubles</u> |    | <sup>5</sup> paired with Romania twice, Great Britain once, Czechoslovak once |    |
| China <sup>2</sup>     | 11 |   |    |
| Hungary <sup>3</sup>   | 11 |   |    |
| Romania <sup>4</sup>   | 6  |   |    |

## The All Time Number One Men

Source: La Derniere Heure Les Sports

Here's the list of all the players who have reached #1 in the world ranking list, and how many months they held the position (From 1967 through February, 1996)

| Name                       | #Months | Name                           | #Months |
|----------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Jan-Ove Waldner (SWE)   | 49      | 10. Jean-Michel Saive (BEL)    | 16      |
| 2. Jiang Jialiang (CHN)    | 47      | 11. Liang Geliang (CHN)        | 13      |
| 3. Guo Yuehua (CHN)        | 43      | 12. Jorgen Persson (SWE)       | 12      |
| 4. Stellan Bengtsson (SWE) | 30      | 13. Cai Zhenhua (CHN)          | 11      |
| 5. Seiji Ono (JPN)         | 23      | 14. Nobuhiko Hasegawa (JPN)    | 10      |
| 5. Shigeo Itoh (JPN)       | 23      | 15. Wang Tao (CHN)             | 3       |
| 5. Istvan Jonyer (HUN)     | 23      | 15. Kong Linghui (CHN)         | 3       |
| 8. Mitsuru Kohno (JPN)     | 20      | 17. Jean-Philippe Gatien (FRA) | 2       |
| 9. Hsi Ent-ing (CHN)       | 19      |                                |         |

# Atlanta Cup

Sportlife Athletic Complex  
Atlanta, Georgia  
February 10-11, 1996  
by Larry Hodges



# Challenge

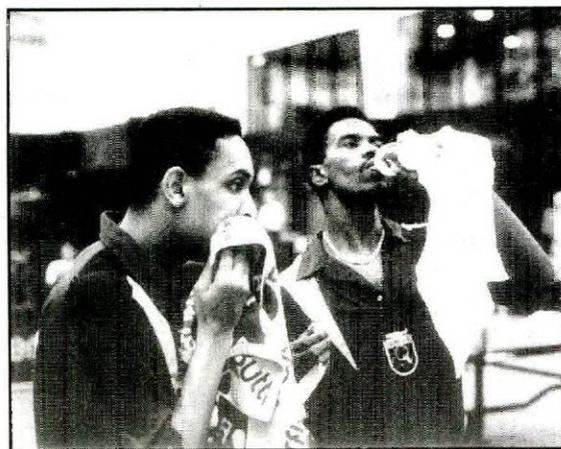


Photo by Michael Wetzel © 1996

Hy & Hy (Tournament Director Michael Hyatt & Stephen Hylton) said bye-bye to most of the competition in reaching the finals of Men's Teams. Hylton was the hot man, defeating both Derek May & Amy Feng in the semifinals.

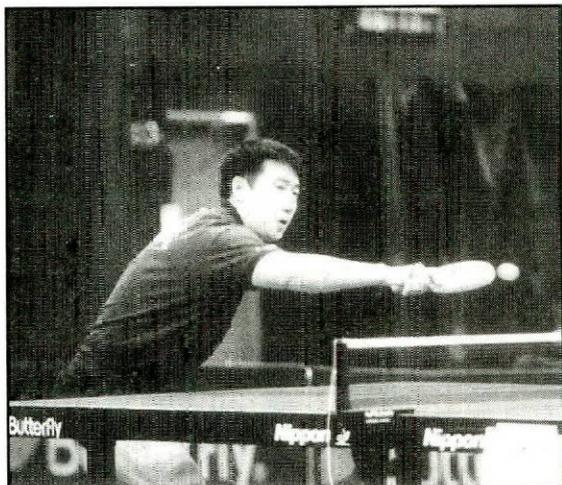


Photo by Michael Wetzel © 1996

Men's Singles & Team Champion Cheng Yinghua.

The first Atlanta Cup Challenge was put together, promoted and run, all in the course of just a few weeks. The format was a team tournament combined with Men's, Women's and Junior Singles, plus Men's & Women's Doubles, with no rating events. However, with the short notice and high entry fees (to help pay for the \$9,650 in prize money advertised) turnout was low.

Only 14 teams entered, five from Puerto Rico, eight from the U.S., and one U.S./Jamaica team (Stephen Hylton of Jamaica and Tournament Director Michael Hyatt, formerly of Jamaica, played as the Atlanta I team.). Originally, teams advertised as competing included China, Japan, Canada, England, Brazil, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Guyana, Barbados, Puerto Rico, Trinidad & Tobago, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Venezuela and Chile. England's Matthew Syed & Alan Cooke were supposed to play, but canceled out a few days in advance because Syed was competing in the Olympic Doubles Trials in Europe. Brazil apparently entered, but didn't show. The other teams seemed to have expressed interest, but never entered. The top four teams and the eventual final four teams (including Atlanta/Jamaica) were all USA teams.

## Teams

Cheng Yinghua and Jim Butler (USA I) romped through the competition, never losing a match as they won six straight 3-0's against, in order, Nashville (the Sourinthones brothers), Puerto Rico Women, Puerto Rico II, Puerto Rico I, USA II, and Atlanta.

In the semifinals, they defeated USA II, Sean O'Neill & Eric Owens. In match #1, against Sean O'Neill, Cheng won the first at 18, and led 11-5 in the second. A moment later, he was down 12-15! However, Cheng pulled it out to win the match, 18 & 19. In match #2, Butler defeated Owens at 16 & 15. In the second game, Owens led 10-5, then it was 10-all, then 20-14 Jim. Cheng & Jim easily won the doubles, 11 & 6.

Atlanta (Hylton & Hyatt) reached the final with the loss of only one match, when Hyatt lost 19 in the third to Augusta II's Amy Feng in the semifinals. However, after losing the first game against Derek May, Hylton powered his team the rest of the way, defeating May (-16,8,16) and Feng (13,12), and combined with Hyatt to defeat May/Feng in doubles two straight.

If Derek May & Amy Feng were Augusta II, where was Augusta I, Razvan Cretu & (temporarily borrowed from California) Chi-Sun Chui? Due to their placement in the preliminary round robins, Augusta I played Augusta II in the quarterfinals. It started off with Amy defeating Chi-Sun, 15 & 19; Augusta I struck back with Razvan defeating Derek May, 15 & 22. Augusta II went

up 2-1 when Cretu/Chui won the doubles over Feng/May, 20,18. Then, in a match that I was told Razvan couldn't possibly lose, he lost to Amy, 15 & 15, to set up the final match between long-time rivals Chi-Sun Chui & Derek May. Chi-Sun pulled out the second game at deuce, but couldn't pull out the third as Derek won, 18,-20,17, to advance Augusta II ahead of Augusta I.

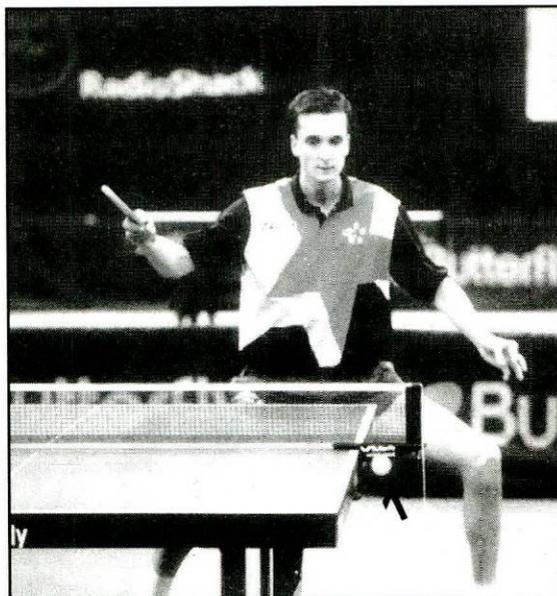


Photo by Michael Wetzel © 1996

Men's Singles Finalist & Men's Team Champion Jim Butler—but this backhand loop went slightly wide.

In the Final, Butler started off by winning the first against a mostly-at-the-barriers topspinning Michael Hyatt, 21-8. At some point, Butler cut his finger, and between games, tried to stop the bleeding with a Kleenex. At 10-all in the second game, the umpire called a let and had the referee give the still-bleeding Butler a band-aid. Butler went on to win the match, 8 & 17.

Cheng, down 10-12 in the first game against Hylton, won the next 11 in a row to win 21-12. In the second, at 17-all, he scored the last four in a row to win the match, 12 & 17. Cheng/Butler sealed their victory by winning the doubles at 17 & 17 to become the first Atlanta Challenge Team Champions.

## Men's Singles

Cheng found the path somewhat guarded in his walk to the finals. Down 11-15 in the first game against Eric Owens in the 8ths, Cheng scored 10 straight. In the quarters, Steve Hylton led 14-10, but Cheng came back to win at 19. In the second, Cheng led all the way, although a Hylton comeback pulled him to 18. In the semifinals, he faced Razvan Cretu, he of the "Should-I-blast-it-by-you-with-my-forehand-or-my-backhand?" style of play. Razvan had blasted from both sides (but especially with his backhand loop—My God!) against Sean O'Neill in the quarters, winning at 14 & 16. Razvan gave Cheng a second-game scare, deucing the game after being down 20-17, but could do no more as Cheng advanced to the Final, 10, 21, 15.

Meanwhile, Jim Butler was walking his own line to

the finals. He lost a game to Michael Hyatt in the quarters (with Michael pretty much camped out at the barriers), but won, 10, -15, 15. In the semis, Jim faced practice partner Derek May. Derek had faced George Cooper in the quarterfinals—care of a default by no-show Hugo Hoyama of Brazil. But Derek didn't have a good time this round, losing to Butler at 15, 11, 12.

Derek's recently gone to short pips on his backhand, rather than long pips—he's a chopper with an aggressive attack. "I may lose to more weak players this way," he said, "but I'll beat more strong players." In his first big tournament with short pips, the U.S. Nationals, Derek had made the semifinals, but he didn't have such luck today. At one point, Derek chopped back a long series of Butler loops. Butler pushed, and Derek went for a running forehand loop, and followed-through onto the floor. The loop missed, and Derek did four pushups before getting up. "I haven't gotten any exercise today," said Derek as he lost another point. "I might as well get my exercise." Later, he made the discovery that "The net is one inch higher on this side." Derek's a colorful player, and **WORLD** could write about him forever.

In the final, Jim won the first game at 18. However, from there on, Cheng began to dominate and he pulled away to win the last two games easily as he won the final, -18, 18, 16, 14. "Cheng is a machine," said Michael Wetzel during the final. "Jimmy, Sean and Derek should hold him down and take his batteries out." Interesting



Photo by Chip Patton © 1996

Chopper Derek May didn't have a good tournament, but he had all the best lines as he ranged over the countryside.

note about this match was the recurring series of forehand-to-forehand off-the-bounce counterloops the two kept doing—almost challenging each other to see who could keep it up. The two were closely matched in this, but Cheng's ability to take control of a point and almost always get the first good shot in, as well as a super-consistent backhand counter, won him the match. In the final point of the match, they played an exhibition point, with Jim *jumping on the table* to smash a Cheng lob!

## Women's Singles

From the start, it was a foregone conclusion that Amy Feng would win women's singles. The other contenders in the 6-player field were a pair of Puerto

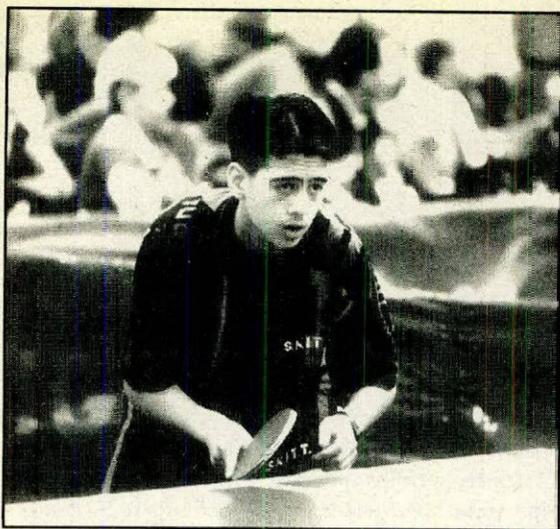


Photo by John Oros ©1996

**Under 18 Champion T.J. Beebe of Atlanta defeated Idi Lewis of Guyana in the Final.**

Rican women, Enerys Garcia and Glenda Reyes, and California's Anita Zakharyan. As expected, Amy and Anita reached the final without losing a game. In the final, it was all-Amy, 12 & 15.

#### Junior Singles

The first hint that this event wouldn't be a cake-walk for top-seeded T.J. Beebe was when Idi Lewis of Guyana defeated 2nd-seeded Jay Sourinthone in the quarterfinals, -17, 13, 10. Idi had lost the first game, but his attack had really been on the last two games! However, before T.J. would have to deal with Idi, he'd have to deal with Puerto Rican challenger Rene Santiago in the semifinals, who looked all of... 22? in this under 18 event. After losing the first game at 15, T.J. pulled out a pair of 19 games, -15, 19, 19, to reach the final.

Idi, who a few days later would be living in Maryland and training with Cheng Yinghua, had no trouble with Puerto Rico's Luis Garcia in the semifinals, 16 & 16, and so faced T.J. in the final. It was a heck of a battle, this final, as both players seemed equally athletic and well-trained

technically. T.J. pulled out the victory, 12, -18, 16.

#### Open Doubles

With no prize money advertised, few of the top players entered this event. Hyatt teamed up with Hyrjalta Coronado to win, -21, 14, 19, over Rene Santiago/Enerys Garcia.

#### Overview

At the end, when it was time to give out prize money, the simple reality, according to Director Michael Hyatt, was that there wasn't enough money from entry fees to cover the prize money, and so the prize money was lowered approximately 40% in each event. This did not sit well with the prize money winners. Players were, in various degrees, shocked, angry, sarcastic or simply disbelieving that the prize money was not as advertised, and many angry "consultations" with Hyatt were held. However, nothing could be done, so the players ended up accepting what checks they could.

Despite the financial problems, many thanks go to the tournament staff of Hyatt, Aly Salaam, Michael Smith, Matthew Beebe and Mark Abrams, and to the sponsors, Butterfly, Sportslife, HyFli Promotions, www.pccnet.com, Radio Shack, AT&T, and Crystal Springs.

Rene Santiago of Puerto Rico was named MVP for his overall record in the Junior, Team and Open Doubles events.

#### Results:

**Team Final: USA I d. Atlanta, 3-0:** Jim Butler (USA) d. Michael Hyatt (ATL), 8,17; Cheng Yinghua (USA) d. Stephen Hylton (ATL), 13,17; Cheng/Butler (USA) d. Hyatt/Hylton (ATL), 17,17.

**Semifinal #1: USA I d. USA II, 3-0:** Cheng Yinghua (USA I) d. Sean O'Neill (USA II), 18,19; Jim Butler (USA I) d. Eric Owens (USA II), 16,15; Cheng/Butler (USA I) d. O'Neill/Owens (USA II), 11,6;

**Semifinal #2: Atlanta I d. Augusta II, 3-1:** Amy Feng (AUG) d. Michael Hyatt (ATL), 19 in 3rd; Stephen Hylton (ATL) d. Derek May (AUG), -16,8,16; Hyatt/Hylton (ATL) d. May/Feng (AUG), 2-0; Stephen Hylton (ATL) d. Amy Feng (AUG), 13,12.

**Quarterfinals:** Augusta II d. Augusta I, 3-2; USA I d. Puerto Rico I, 3-0; USA II d. Atlanta II, 3-0; Atlanta I d. Puerto Rico II, 3-0.

#### Preliminary Team Round Robins

**Group 1:** 1st: USA I, 3-0 (d. Puerto Rico II, 3-0; d. Puerto Rico Women, 3-0; d. Nashville, 3-0); 2nd: Puerto Rico II, 2-1 (d. Puerto Rico Women, 3-0; d. Nashville, 3-2); 3rd: Puerto Rico Women, 1-2 (d. Nashville, 3-1); 4th: Nashville, 0-3.

**Group 2:** 1st: Augusta I, 3-0 (d. Brazil I, def; d. Atlanta II, 3-0; d. Puerto Rico Juniors I, 3-0); 2nd: Atlanta II, 2-1 (d. Brazil I, def; d. Puerto Rico Juniors I, 3-0); 3rd: Puerto Rico Juniors I, 1-2 (d. Brazil I, def.); 4th: Brazil I, 0-3 (no-show).

**Group 3:** 1st: USA II, 3-0 (d. Augusta II, 3-1; d. Atlanta III, 3-0; d. Puerto Rico Juniors II, 3-0); 2nd: Augusta II, 2-1 (d. Atlanta III, 3-0; d. Puerto Rico Juniors II, 3-0); 3rd: Puerto Rico Juniors II, 1-2 (d. Atlanta III, 3-1) 4th: Atlanta III, 0-3.

**Group 4:** 1st: Atlanta I, 3-0 (d. Puerto Rico I, 3-0; d. USA Women, 3-0; d. Brazil II, def); 2nd: Puerto Rico I, 2-1 (d. USA Women, 3-2; d. Brazil II, def); 3rd: USA Women, 1-2 (d. Brazil II, def); 4th: Brazil II, 0-3 (no-show).

**Men's Singles—Final:** Cheng Yinghua d. Jim Butler, -18,18,16,14; **SF:** Cheng d. Razvan Cretu, 10,21,15; Butler d. Derek May, 15,11,12; **QF:** Cheng d. Stephen Hylton, 19,18; Razvan Cretu d. Sean O'Neill, 14,16; Derek May d. George Cooper, 11,6; Butler d. Michael Hyatt, 10,-19,15; **8ths:** Cheng d. Eric Owens, 15,13; Hylton d. Chi-Sun Chui, 13,17; O'Neill d. Thomas Nunes, 10,9; Cretu d. Claudio Kano, def; Cooper d. Hugo Hoyama, def.; May d. Hector Collazo, 14,19; Hyatt d. Juan Rebelles, 16,12; Butler d. T.J. Beebe, 6,19.

**Women's Singles—Final:** Amy Feng d. Anita Zakharyan, 12,15; **SF:** Feng d. Enerys Garcia, 9,6; Zakharyan d. Gledna Reyes, 16,14.

**Open Doubles—Final:** Michael Hyatt/Hyrjalta Coronado d. Rene Santiago/Enerys Garcia (PUR), -21,14,19; **SF:** Hyatt/Coronado d. Genda Reyes/Juan Rebelles (PUR), 10,15; Santiago/Garcia d. George Cooper/Morris, 15,14.

**Junior Singles—Final:** T.J. Beebe d. Idi Lewis (GUY), 12-18,16; **SF:** Beebe d. Rene Santiago (PUR), -15,19,19; Lewis d. Luis Garcia (PUR), 16,16; **QF:** Beebe d. Enerys Garcia (PUR), 18,13; Santiago d. Roberto Soto (PUR), 9,20; L. Garcia d. Karlis Robles (PUR), 17,-12,15; Lewis d. Jay Sourinthone, -17,13,10.

## Around the USA

### NTTC January Open

National Table Tennis Center  
Rockville, Maryland  
January 22-23, 1996  
by Larry Hodges



With two feet of snow on the ground, the turnout was rather weak, and led to the cancellation of several events. Tacky Santilices, a former 2350 player who once beat Hank Teekaveerakit when Hank was on the U.S. Team, is back in action, but got "Chenged" in the semifinals. Jack Huang fought off a monstrous challenge in the semifinals before defeating Sean Lonergan in five. The NTTC coaches, Cheng & Jack, split the prize and went off to the back room to coach while the rest of us fought our way home through the snow.

**Open Singles—Final:** Cheng Yinghua & Jack Huang split prize.; **SF:** Cheng d. Tacky Santilices, 6,9,6; Huang d. Sean Lonergan, -25,16,15,-15,15.

**U2150—Final:** Medhat Lamfon d. Vivian Lee, 12,17; **SF:** Lamfon d. David Cheung, 5,8; Lee d. Pat Lui, 17,17.

**U2000—Final:** Pat Lui d. Gerald Reid, 8,-15,17; **SF:** Lui d. Mario Maier, 18,19; Reid d. Terry Lonergan, 16,18.

**U1850:** Lewis Bragg d. Carlos Ebron, -19,6,18.

**U1650:** Herb Wilson d. Roy Emmons, 10,19.

**U1450:** Lindo Suon d. Steve Latourette, 16,10.

**U1250:** Rich Stenzel d. Steve Latourette, 16,19.

**U1050:** Chet Lord d. Hue Ly, -15,17,14.

### NTTC February Open

National Table Tennis Center  
Rockville, Maryland  
February 17-18, 1996  
by Larry Hodges



Cheng & Jack had no problems in reaching the final without losing a game, helped by the absence of Todd Sweeris & Sean Lonergan, who'd left early for the Olympic Trials. Also about to leave for the Olympic Trials was Vivian Lee, but it was older brother Richard who was the star here, winning both the Under 2450 and Under 2300 in a pair of all-junior 3-game struggles with Sunny Li.

15 members of the Kips Bay Boys & Girls Club came down from New York, adding spice to the tournament. They also took part in the Saturday night junior camp at the NTTC, taught by Cheng & Jack, and (because there were so many this time) myself, Gary Elwell & Richard Lee.

Watch out, World, 12-year-old Caroline Oppenheimer's had her breakthrough tournament! She's moving up!

**Open Singles—Final:** Cheng Yinghua & Jack Huang split prize.; **SF:** Cheng d. Tacky Santilices, 13,10,7; Huang d. Masamichi Kubo, 26,15,13.

**U2450—Final:** Richard Lee d. Sunny Li, -19,14,19.

**U2300—Final:** Richard Lee d. Sunny Li, -22,9,13; **SF:** Lee d. Morris Jackson, 13,13; Li d. Changping Duan, 17,15.

**U2150—Final:** Medhat Lamfon d. Xiaolei Hu, -21,16,16; **SF:** Lamfon d. David Cheung, 16,17; Hu d. Changping Duan, n.s.

**U2000—Final:** Gerald Reid d. Terry Lonergan, 9,-19,14; **SF:** Reid d. Patrick Lui, 16,18; Lonergan d. Herb Horton, 17,14.

**U1850:** Rolando Guidote d. Mike Master, 18,-25,17.

**U1650:** Donald Lee d. Tom Golab, -19,15,14.

**U1450:** Steve Latourette d. Lindo Suon, 19,-13,17.

**U1250:** Geoff Fosdic d. Lindo Suon, 19,16.

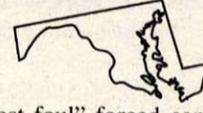
**U1050:** Kyle Suggs d. Dave Ravel, 15,17.

**Over 40:** Changping Duan d. Xiaoying Liu, 10,11.

**Under 14:** Caroline Oppenheimer d. Victor Banjo, 17,19.

### Maryland March Circuit

Columbia, Maryland  
March 2-3, 1996  
by John Vos



After "weather most foul" forced cancellation of nearly all events in the January and February Circuits, local players—probably from forced inactivity—turned out in droves for the March 2nd-3rd Circuit. Over 60 players battled through 11 events at the new playing site at 7175 Oakland Mills Road in Columbia. Special thanks to Mike Branch for all the work he did to bring the new site up to standards!

**Open Singles:** 1. Nazruddin Asgarali; 2. David Yao; 3. Steve Cuthbertson; 4. Carlos Ebron.

**U2100:** 1. David Yao; 2. Gary Elwell; 3. Pat Lui; 4. Merr Trumbore.

**U1900:** 1. Leo Saubier; 2. Kevin Giles; 3. Carlos Ebron; 4. Donnie Lee.

**U1700:** 1. Tom Golab; 2. Dennis Taylor; 3. Terry Bell; 4. Roy Emmons.

**U1500 Final RR:** 1. Jason Wu, 5-1; 2. Tom Helmke, 3-2; 3. Ann Fenstermacher, 3-2; 4. Chris Puls, 3-2; 5. Alex Roesell, 1-4; Michael Fan, 1-4.

**U1300 Final RR:** 1. Tom Helmke, 3-0; 2. Ann Fenstermacher, 2-1; 3. Alex Roesell, 1-2; 4. G. Krishnan, 0-3.

**U1100 Final RR:** 1. Bob Powley, 3-1; 2. Katherine Wu, 3-1; 3. Jay Finkel, 2-2; 4. Ron Linkous, 2-2; 5. Michael Harris, 0-4.

**Novice Final RR:** 1. Jonathan Powley, 3-0; 2. Ron Linkous, 1-2; 3. Erik Larrison, 1-2; 4. Doug Edwards, 1-2.

**Seniors Over 40:** 1. Marvin Plevinsky; 2. Pat Lui; 3. Carlos Ebron; 4. Merr Trumbore.

**U2700 Doubles:** Dan Cravens/Ann Fenstermacher d. Warren Wetzler/Janice Stahl, 18, 13.

**Handicap:** Mike Branch d. John Vos, n.s.

# Tournament of the Month: New York City Holiday Open

by Tim Boggan

NEW YORK CITY. The Summer Holiday Open. You notice right away the seductive "Holiday" aspect of the thing? And, yes, rooms (\$24-a-night-for-two) were reserved, or, since no one wanted them, nearly reserved, by the sponsor at a leading downtown hotel. Perhaps a swim before and after play? It'd been a nice idea. A Platonic ideal, in fact, in this smog-high corrupt world of reality.

As for the requisite tournament sanction—if not, first, the permeate-the-East entry blank—what about that? Well, the USTTA says (and you can see why) that the sanction ought to be applied for two months in advance, but, gee, it's summer—nothing's going on, it won't make any difference—and, besides, even if we were an affiliated club, which of course we're not (costs somebody \$10), we'd take a chance, run the tournament, sanction or no—I mean, what could happen to us?

But we want to do it right. So two weeks before the tournament's to begin, we make up and begin handing out entry blanks while we try to get hold of the Regional Director—and, failing that, at least get to someone who knows him, warning that someone while we're at it that there's another someone here in New York City who wants to punch that Regional Director in the nose if he ever sets foot in our Club, which, needless to say, he won't.

So our belated \$35 check takes care of the sanction—though we don't intend to play with approved balls, and certainly we've little or no use for a Tournament Referee, even were such a person to be around for the first day of the tournament.

## Rough It A Little

We're not picky here in the City. We live and let live—most of the time. You know, change clothes by Table 1 (careful about the dust though). The girls—women—they're not jocks; more often than not they knock before they go into the broken-locked tournament john. What's the long time saying, "When in Rome do as Romans do"? Makes sense. Not of course for Rome anymore, but for us, We table tennis players survive. The Club is our camp-out home. We expect to rough it a little.

Others, however, tournament veterans maybe but still strangers to this unwritten law, are not quite used to it. Fortunately, though, we're not holding our holiday tournament in the 4-table Club proper, but in the spacious 5-table Gym downstairs. Or so I thought...until I got there ready to run the beginning matches Saturday afternoon.

Yes, I was at the very whirlpool center of it all. I was getting free entries and so were my two boys—and, believe it or not, it would have cost us \$37.50 to enter the events we wanted to. So, I figured, be practical. Besides, like Dave Cox, who runs those marvelous tournaments on the Island, I really like making up draws, finding out who the players are, getting all the matches played somehow—I really like organizing. And here, certainly, in my spare time, was something that needed to be organized.

For, as it turned out, we could not, suddenly, have the Gym downstairs. It was one of those things we just hadn't checked on. The owner was, gee, gosh-darned mad

at us. And no wonder. The last tournament we ran here was chaotic. People wanted to eat, drink, talk, smoke—wanted, in short, to be at a sporting event. So by early morning, when the matches had finally ended, the Gym was littered. And, lo and behold, by late evening the Gym was still littered—or at least that's what the owner had thought. He vowed secretly not to let it happen again.

But, all right, that was last time. Perhaps now if our sponsor took him out to one of the bars, as the old crow flies only a very hard-hit forehand away, perhaps then some spirit of camaraderie might be restored?...Forget it, it was not worth trying.

So, what am I to do? Something or nothing? Clearly we will play the scheduled A's and B's, the A-B Consolations, and the A Doubles all in the 4-table Club proper. I start the matches where I can, at 5:30, half an hour before they're expected to go off.

## Sun Goes Down

Night comes on. As the sun goes down, it gets hotter. Outsiders who've been playing basketball in the downstairs Gym and patrons who've been working out at the Health Club next door peek in. Is this the steam room?

There are over 40 players in the A's, over 40 in the B's. Soon it is too hot for some. They would like to play and leave. When might they play their next match?

I answer the phone. It rings a lot—as if each time some urgent message was trying to get through to someone. "Boggan, New York Table Tennis....Boggan, New York Table Tennis."

"Is it too late to enter?" asks a voice.

"Of course not," I say. "Come on down."

I keep getting up from the desk, make sure that, say, Mr. Factor knows Mr. Chen, make sure that they realize they're next on Table 2 (which is marked Table 6). Mr. Silverstein, say, thinks it would be nice if I put him against, say, Mr. Monet whom he thinks he might beat. I agree that, yes, things could be nicer. I strip to the waist, conscious that I've low-slung pants on and that the USTTA Vice-President's jockey shorts are showing to men and women come to watch whom I've never seen before.

It's time for Mr. Maldonado's match. But Mr. Maldonado is not to be seen. "He may not come," says his friend. But Bill Marlens walks in, and, having found out there's a tournament, becomes Mr. Maldonado.

"What's the default procedure?" someone asks. I maneuver round him.

"No, no draw sheets are posted." We have no draw sheets. Only my scribbled on slips of paper. Occasionally, quick guzzling a coke, I take Roman liberties. An 8ths player ("I'll play anybody but him") gets into another 8ths. Two players facing one another in the 16th's are from the same Club? Right—transferred out one of you goes.

"Boggan, New York Table Tennis....No, he's not here; he must have stepped out for some air."

## Downhill Racer

Seven hours later, the A's and the B's

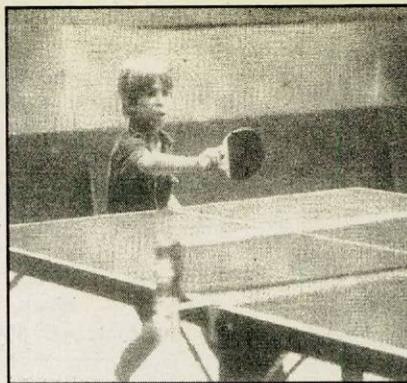


Photo by Bill Marlens © 1996

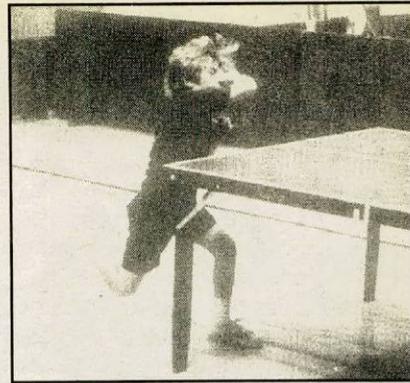


Photo by Rufford Harrison © 1996

Two rising young juniors playing in the Holiday Open were 7-year-old Eric Boggan (L) and 9-year-old Scott Boggan (R). Both hope to someday be National Champion, and with hard work and desire, perhaps they will (although Eric's going to have to do something about that windshield-wiper grip if he wants to be good).

are played out to the quarters, those in the Consolation have been properly consoled, and I have played a successful doubles match with my son, Scott, who earlier I had sent chaperoned by an older boy out to the Great White Way, to the movie "Downhill Racer," about a ski champion.

"Juniors and the rest of the matches begin tomorrow promptly at 9:30 a.m."

Senior Henry Deutsch says he's going to call me in the morning. If we don't get the Gym he's not coming back. "Right, Henry," I say, and wish him goodnight....

Sunday morning it's as if Fate's against us. My boys and I take the hour's ride from suburbia in a driving rainstorm. And, having arrived in Manhattan, so intent am I in thinking how we'll have to all dash from the car through the rain I hurry and lock the doors (this is N.Y., I don't forget that), and leave my keys in the ignition. Dangling keys, dangling man? C'mon, c'mon, Tim, you and the boys are here to have holiday fun, chin up.

The sponsor has given me the keys to the Club—that's the important thing—and I have only to open the door to (the phone's already ringing) another, better day of... "New York Table Tennis."

Soon the Van Gors, the Sterns, the Zakarins, the Grahams, the Houses, the Blejers, the Wolfs have joined my sons and me. It's very much a family outing. Sort of an indoor rainy picnic—coffee, orange juice, danish.

I pair the little ones with the little ones; the better players with those, like themselves, who have chances to win trophies. It is, so to speak, a modified 13-15-17 round robin—with only the logic of a desperate man to keep it all in two-hour balance.

## Has Given It Up

Little 8-year-old Paul Gvildys plays very well. From time to time he is sternly coached (in Latvian?) by his father. "Aren't you playing any more, Pranas?" I ask him, remembering his anguished face of 15-20 years ago. No, he has given it up—no reason exactly.

My 9-year-old son Scott is losing to Timmy House. His father, a professor, sits watching (he and I are something of alter egos: both Ohioans, we knew one another years ago—but Bob no longer plays in tournaments). Scott is cursing after every point. It does not look good. It does not look good to me. And though I too well understand it, I don't like it. After the match Scott and I seek the privacy of the john. Its urinals don't always work but there are disinfectants. "People don't like it!" I tell him. "Especially from a kid!" He already knows, at 9, everything I'm telling him. Why then does he do it?

The Zakarins, were it just for themselves, would not have come. It's for their boys—that's why they're here. There are

values to be had in the basements and sub-basements of the world.

Eric, my other son, just turned 7, is playing an older boy. Eric's winning—and is therefore asked to begin serving properly. I, watching, have always been leery of rules. I look on them as a necessary evil, a means to an end, to try to keep society intact. Life is like writing: you can't teach it, make it come alive, just by prescription, through grammar.

At home, I'd just gotten Eric out to the table, always hoped he'd have fun—well, serious fun. I'd never wanted to kill it for him. Now the ball is wobbling round his small outstretched hand. And suddenly it's as if, there in that basement, he feels all the storied weight of the world above. Having lost, he comes off the table, shaking, crying. But he has rallied from 15-20 match point down to 18-20. He has not despaired. While I, watching, think of the pelican who, legend has it, loved its young so dearly that, pecking away at its breast, it nourished them with its own blood.

Another father, Mr. Stern—he did not play in the tournament either—tries to let his boy go his own way. And Mike, his 10-year-old, does devil-may-care do that beautifully—gives a game to my son Scott so he'll get his head together and make the match more 19-all-in-the-3rd interesting.

But when his boy plays the much more difficult to beat Jeff Zakarin, Mr. Stern applauds point after point in encouragement—much as I with my clenched fist do with Scott or Eric. And not only is Jeff bothered, but his younger brother Chuck, age 8, on hearing that Jeff lost, is himself upset, crying. And it's this pain that somehow is a value?

## Be Responsible

Mr. Van Gor, another father, is making a very strong point to his son who has entered a doubles event on his own. "Don't you ever do that to me again!" he says.

And I'm saying, "Well, it's really more my fault than his. I sort of pushed him into it."

And Mr. Van Gor is saying, "He's old enough to take the responsibility. Don't you teach your children that?"

And I'm thinking, No, I don't teach them that—or my students either. Or, rather, I've never said in my life, "Don't you ever do that to me again!" For if they did, I wouldn't know how or why to carry out my darkest threat. And yet Mr. Van Gor is surely right—one ought to learn to be responsible.

Time goes by. The young people will gradually be replaced by grown-ups. Surprise! The sponsor arrives, says we've permission to use the Gym downstairs! Henry Deutsch, who of course has decided to appear anyway—come right down to it, he'd rather play than not—is only a little

pleased. He suspicions correctly that it'll be a long day. "C'mon, Henry," I say, "everything will be all right now."

Only there is no loudspeaker between floors; just me, trying to get two rooms of players together for back-up matches, and yelling not 10 feet away from Table 1. The barriers? In the Gym, there aren't any between tables. And there's no way to get to Table 5 but to play "Red Light, Green Light" past tables 1-2-3-and 4.

Perhaps you can imagine how people are talking. Are complaining—though it's probably the best run tournament they've had in New York for years, at least from the point of view of getting so many matches on and off the tables. "SILENCE!" roars Rory Brassington, who, leading the Canadian Champion Larry Lee 2 games to 1, is on his way to losing in the 5th. The very foundations of the place ought to shake—but not the people, they're unmoved.

#### Confusion

Mr. Bricenzo, the former Ecuadorian Champ, is puzzled by it all. It's as if he's never seen anything like it in the Americas. He doesn't even understand what the events are. Or, supposing he loses, what are the rules here?...He's where? Out on Table 4 playing in the final of the A's against Curtis McNear! ..."No, no, NO, Mr. Bricenzo!" I

rush up past three tables ("Let!...Let!...Let!"). "Mr. Bricenzo, you got beat in the semi's! Mr. Rao...HERE, MR. RAO!...Mr. Rao plays Mr. McNear."

Mr. McNear doesn't care who he plays. So long as there's an umpire he likes, or at least doesn't dislike—not, though, that he needs or even wants an umpire, he's always managed pretty well on court by himself. Cyril Lederman's list of qualified umpires—you can use that, read that in the john; Curtis wants to see the fellow face to face, then we'll see what happens.

But come what may, as the nervous hours pass there in the increasingly suffocating upstairs Club and player after player wants his match called in the downstairs Gyn, the contests continue. And, though threatened, Civilization will eventually prevail. Players yell at spectators ("LEO!") and spectators yell back. But, inexorably, guided by the Master Director's hand, now awake over a desk set up in the Gym, the tournament wobbles on.

What, I wonder, did N.Y. veteran Pauline Somael and her little Rice Chex girl who dropped by think of it all? The names of the women players—they were all unfamiliar to Pauline, but then it'd been quite a while since she represented the U.S. at the World's. The Sport had been pretty

terrible in the U.S. in the '50's. Was it getting any better?

And always now there were those who came to me wanting to know when they could play so they could leave. And those, too, who (liking what they saw?) wanted to join the USTTA, and did I have change for a twenty?

#### Children's Play

As again night is coming on, I am talking to Mr. Van Gor. He wants to know where his children are supposed to play. The Junior Doubles are still going on. They've been held back for a while, but now they really must be played. "Send the kids upstairs!" shouts somebody next to me. To that hothouse, I think. "No, I can't do that!" I shout back. And just then I hear someone out there on the floor yelling at me.

"Shut the duck up!" Was that what he said to me? Whatever it was I didn't like the sound of it. "Shut the duck up!" And, as I'm looking into Mr. Van Gor's eyes I wasn't about to take that quack connotation. I wasn't serenely floating on stream, and I wasn't a quack. And so rising up and addressing whoever it was out there screaming for silence, I shouted at the top of my voice, "Oh, goshdarnit! Oh, goshdarnit! This player wants quiet! This player wants

quiet!" And having gotten that poison out of my system I resumed talking quite reasonably to a maybe beginning to understand it all Mr. Van Gor.

Anyway, all the things one sets out to do come to some kind of end, and I heard that the tournament was over with around 10 p.m.—which here in the City must set some kind of record. No, it wasn't a give-up on my part. It was simply that, after a time, that tournament didn't need me and I didn't need it.

I left early, around 7:30 that evening. Yes, my wife came in all the way from Long Island and opened up that hot car I'd trapped myself with. Understandably she was a little out of sorts. I'd not exactly pleaded my cause a right. I'd imposed on her and was not even gracious. "Tim was mean to me," she confided to Bernie, and Bukiet, smiling, as if he'd seen me sharp before, said to her, "You come home with me."

So, with the holiday weekend over, I went with my family back to settled suburbia. Four forty-five, that's when I was getting up. After all, like most everyone else, I had work I had to do. And this morning I was to try to teach people how to understand Hamlet.

(Table Tennis Topics, Sept.-Oct., 1970)

## BTTTC Chinese New Year Open



Berkeley, California  
February 17-18, 1996

**Open Singles—Final RR:** 1st: Voltaire Trillo, 2-0 (d. Gabriel, -9,12,14; d. Chen, -17,17,19); 2nd: Freddie Gabriel, 1-1 (d. Ling Chen, 7,15); 3rd: Ling Chen, 0-2.

**Open Doubles:** Philip Lim/Voltaire Trillo d. Freddie Gabriel/Terrence Lee, n.s.

**U2350—Final:** Philip Lim d. Freddie Gabriel, n.s.; **SF:** Gabriel d. Voltaire Trillo, n.s.; Lim d. Tuan Le, 14,18.

**U2150—Final:** Thinh Mac d. Masaaki Tajima, 10,19; **SF:** Mac d. Terrence Lee, 19,17; Tajima d. Vineet Agarwal, n.s.

**U1950:** Gregory Reznikov d. Alex Zelenkovski, 15,18.

**U1750:** Alex Zelenkovski d. Sam Lam, 13,-16,16.

**U1550:** Joe Ching d. Basilio Bayquen, 11,15.

**U1350:** Mitsuru Kudo d. Clayton Akazawa, 18,18.

**U1150:** Ian Parris-Salbd. Herbert Rossman, 14,15.

**U950:** Richard Ricker d. Allan Rudesill, 5,-19,14.

**Under 18—Final:** Philip Lim d. Freddie Gabriel, n.s.; **SF:** Lim d. Michelle Do, 19,8; Gabriel d. Andrew Do, -12,15,17.

**Over 50: 1st:** Kent Leung, 3-0; **2nd:** Gregory Reznikov, 2-1; **3rd:** Shonie Aki, 1-2; **4th:** James Ritz, 0-3.

**Junior Teams: 1st:** Philip Lim/Vineet Agarwal; **2nd:** Freddie Gabriel/Terrence Lee; **3rd:** Michelle Do/Andrew Do; **4th:** David Rudesill/Alex Zelenkovski.

**Junior Doubles:** Philip Lim/Vineet Agarwal d. Michelle Do/Andrew Do, 17,-16,9.

**Under 3800 Doubles:** Michelle Do/Terrence Lee d. Jim Langley/David Rudesill, -16,19,20.

**Under 2800 Doubles:** Sam Roberson/Ian Parris-Salbd. Sam Lam/Lynn Sun, -15,14,21.

## Around the USA

### San Diego Open

January 19-21, 1996

**Open—Final:** Da-Zhi Guo d. Chaiyaphoon Choptaeng, 12,20,17; **SF:** Guo d. Suguru Araki, 11,7,12; Choptaeng d. Tuan Le, 9,17,16.

**Open Doubles:** Da-Zhi Guo/Zhao Hong d. Choptaeng/Mintsiveris, 18,11.

**Women's Singles:** Zhao Hong d. Priscilla Umel, 11,11.

**Under 18—Final:** Daniel Amador d. Luis Enrique De Hoyos, 16,10; **SF:** Amador d. Chris Malek, 9,15; Hoyos d. David Umel Jr., 11,-19,16.

**Over 40—Final:** Nick Mintsiveris d. Bill Ukatayasukul, -20,14,18; **SF:** Mintsiveris d. Mike Perez, 19,15; Ukatayasukul d. Suguru Araki, def.

**Over 50—Final:** Louis Kerekes d. Ragnar Fahlstrom, 18,10; **SF:** Kerekes d. Corazon Valenzuela, 7,11; Fahlstrom d. Samuel



Photo by Mai Anderson ©1996

#### San Diego Open Singles Champion Da-Zhi Guo

Matossian, 9,23.

**Over 60—Final:** Ragnar Fahlstrom d. Louis Kerekes, 18,13; **SF:** Kerekes d. George Law, 12,19; Fahlstrom d. Cornelius Smyth, 14,17.

**Over 70:** Cornelius Smyth d. Fred Borges, 14,10.

**U2250—Final:** Tuan Le d. Rudy Miranda, -19,13,15; **SF:** Le d. Ernest DeLos Reyes, 6,-19,12; Miranda d. Bill Ukatayasukul, -22,15,15.

### Arizona Open

Tempe, Arizona  
February 17-18, 1996  
by Bill Gilbert

This is one of the BIG ones for Table Tennis here in Arizona. The OPEN. With many of the 100-plus players drawn from states bordering Arizona, we experience great talent, lots of enthusiasm, and outstanding competition. This year, we saw friends from as far away as Atlanta, Chicago, Denver and Seattle. Escorted by the venerable Harold Kopper & "Butterfly," the largest troop came from Southern California and more than a few went home with well-earned trophies. It was a special pleasure to have Paul and Deborah Campbell of Parker, Arizona, return with their three youngsters to play in everything they could. As tournament director, coordinating about

450 entries across 22 events, I note that 40 players entered the Open Singles round robin event, our largest turnout ever at ASU!

Open Singles was won by local favorite, Marek Zochowski, -15,16,17, over Frank Remenyi of West Hills, California. Frank beat top seed Mike Perez, 19,13, in the semi's while Marek took out Ragnar Fahlstrom 11,18 in the other semis. Women's Singles was won by Nadine Groenig, defeating Tanja Daniels 18,13. Huping Larsen placed third. Matt Winkler won the Junior U-15, over John Campbell, 11,15. Matt was also runner-up in U1150 and U1000 Singles.

In Open Doubles, Arizona's ever-the-team to beat, Rob Trudell and Marek Zochowski, took home the big trophies after beating Chris Castro and Bert Mennesson of Tucson two straight. Arizona's special event, Jr-Parent Doubles, was won by Frank and

Laszlo Remenyi, squeaking by Harley Davis and stepdad Rob Trudell, 2-1.

In other highlights, Ragnar Fahlstrom of La Mesa, CA, won both the Esquire and Senior Esquire Singles, and with his Scandinavian guest, Ralf Eklov, won both the Senior and Esquire Doubles. Oddly, the 2800 Doubles Finals looked like Mixed Doubles with Loretta Hostettler and Scott Williams winning 2-1 over Deborah Campbell and Dave Kendall. Mixed Doubles was won by Nadine and Dave Rubin, who paired up and entered at the last minute. Dave beat PTTC treasurer, Jim Tarkowski, to take the U1900 trophy. Veteran favorite Don Larson came back to beat Ed Stein, -10,17,17 for the 70+ trophy. Don will lead Arizona Table Tennis finalists, with Tybie Sommer, into the 1997 U.S. Senior Olympics to be staged in Tucson. Go, Don!

# Around the USA

## Rensselaer Open

February 10-11, 1996  
Troy, New York  
by Robert Thew



Sixty-five players participated in the 1996 Rensselaer Open held in Troy, New York on February 10-11. This year's tournament was generously sponsored by Sunmark Business Products, Inc. which donated Stiga Nets and Europa Barriers. Players came from all over New England, with Suguru Araki and Kazuyuki Yokoyama from Hofstra University having perhaps the longest drive—nearly five hours. The trip was worth it, however; Suguru won the Under 2100 event and Kazuyuki won the Open Singles.

The Open Singles had held no surprises until the finals, with the top seeds advancing from their round robin groups and the higher rated players winning each quarter and semifinal match. The first game of the finals between top-ranked Abass Ekun and Kazuyuki was won by Abass, as he held Kazuyuki to nine points. Kazuyuki, a 2400+ level chopper, fought back in the second, using his strong loop attack more often to win the second game 21-12. Abass clearly lost patience with Kazuyuki's chopping game and began to attack too early, driving Kazuyuki's first heavy chop into the net again and again. Kazuyuki held Abass to four points in the third game and won the fourth game 21-13.

The rated events were extremely competitive, with

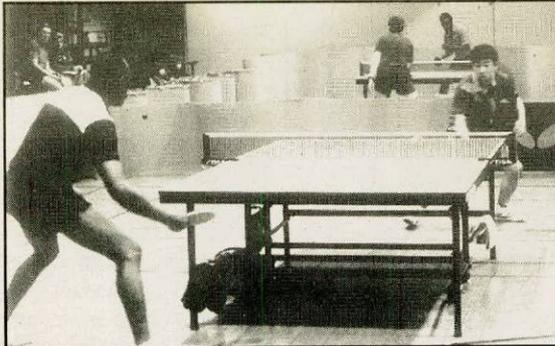


Photo by Robert Thew © 1996

Chopper/looper Kazuyuki Yokoyama (R) defeated Abass Ekun (L) in Rensselaer Open Final.

several events—such as the Under 1900, 2100, 1400—filled to nearly capacity. Although less people played in this tournament than last year's, the events had more entries, as many people entered four, five and even six events in one day. No one at the tournament managed to win more than one event, however; first place prizes were given to fifteen different players.

Lim Ming Chui—last year's winner of the Senior event—continued his dominance of this event, defeating the Under 1700 winner Neal Fox, 10, 7. He was happy to see that three times as many players had entered in this event this year than last year, since the prize was a percentage of the entry fees.

The club members would like to thank all the players who drove so far to attend this tournament, making it our first profitable tournament in years. If you have access to the World Wide Web, check out our club's homepage at [http://www.rpi.edu/dept/union/tabletennis/public\\_html/tclub.html](http://www.rpi.edu/dept/union/tabletennis/public_html/tclub.html) for results, ratings changes, and plenty of pictures from this and other tournaments.

**Open Singles—Final:** Kazuyuki Yokoyama d. Abass Ekun, -9, 12, 4, 13; **SF:** Ekun d. Nikola Kasic, 12, 21; Yokoyama d. Lim Ming Chui, 14, 12; **QF:** L-M Chui d. Donald Hayes, 20, 15; Kasic d. Jane Chui, 12, 21.

**Under 2300—Final RR:** Nikola Kasic d. Jane Chui, 13, 15; Kasic d. Neil Ackerman 16, 17; Ackerman d. Chui 19, 15.

**Under 2100—Final:** Suguru Araki d. O. J. Magnus, 16, 13; **SF:** Magnus d. Donald Hayes, 14, 18; Araki, d. Alex Krasnoschchok, 18, 12.

**Under 1900—Final:** O. J. Magnus d. Danya Budiman, 19, 14; **SF:** Magnus d. Kim Nguyen 11, 17; Budiman d. Bud, Alex 21, -8, 21.

**Under 1700—Final:** James Fox d. Alexander Zhuravlev, 18, 14; **SF:** Fox d. Jimmy Chou, 17, 6; Zhuravlev d. Jamie Sierra, 17, -17, 16.

**Over 40—Final:** Lim Ming Chui d. James Fox, 10, 7; **SF:** Chui d. Harry Hawk, 10, 16; Fox d. Suguru Araki, def.

**Open Doubles—Final:** Spall/Seaman d. Budiman/Hulihan, 16, -15, 10; **SF:** Spall/Seaman d. Hawk/Stafford 19, 10; Budiman/Hulihan d. Mok/Nguyen 10, 15.

**Under 1550—Final:** Will Stafford d. Brian Roughan, -16, 12, 15; **SF:** Stafford d. Werner Schmidl, 10, -21, 18; Roughan d. Gregory Edgar, 17, 10.

**Under 1400—Final:** Gregory Edgar d. Werner Schmidl, 9, 17; **SF:** Edgar d. Brian Roughan, -17, 22, 20; Schmidl d. Juan Roig, 14, 19.

**Under 1250—Final RR:** Khamron Mekchay d. Hoichi Chang, 16, -21, 19; Mekchay d. Kevin Ko, -14, 14, 17; Chang d. Ko 16, -23, 17.

**Under 1100—Final:** Robert Thew d. Hoichi Chang, 19, -18, 13.

**Unrated—Final RR:** Rick Bolduc d. Hank Wang 8, 11; Bolduc d. Ara Shahinian, 10, 14; Shahinian d. Wang 19, 19.

**Under 18—Final:** Hank Wang d. Paul Reilly, 11, 14.

## Orlando Winter Open

Orlando, Florida  
February 3-4, 1996

**Open—Final:** Brian Pace d. Ariel Montalvo; **SF:** Pace d. Anthony Torino; Montalvo d. William Maisonet.

**Elite Singles—Final:** William Maisonet d. Lynwood Smith; **SF:** Maisonet d. Patrick Anderson; Smith d. Alan Millet.

**Class A—Final:** Tommy Jenkins d. Michael McFarland; **SF:** Jenkins d. Lenny Chew; McFarland d. Larry Hensley.

**Class B—Final:** Delroy Thompson d. June Meimban; **SF:** Thompson d. Steve Pratt; Meimban d. Danuta Andrzejewska.

**Class C—Final:** Ray Look d. Steve Pratt; **SF:** Look d. Richard Moreau; Pratt d. Robert Juneau.

**Class D—Final:** George Fong d. Edward Harley; **SF:** Fong d. Robert Juneau; Harley d. Danh Tran.

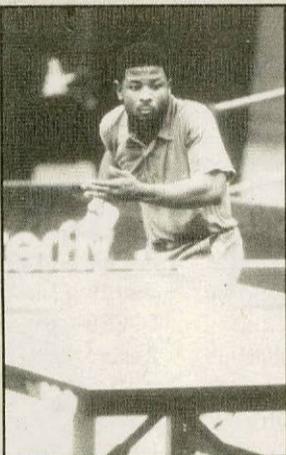
**Class E—Final:** Robert Juneau d. Xiang Dong Wei; **SF:** Juneau d. Corey Alston; Wei d. Suzanna Sanders.

**Over 40—Final:** Alan Millett d. Lynwood Smith; **SF:** Millet d. Fred Halbig; Smith d. Steve Federico.

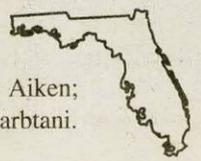
**Over 50—Final:** Bard Brenner d. Steve Rigo; **SF:** Brenner d. Lynwood Smith; Rigo d. Fred Halbig.

**Novice Singles—Final:** Corey Alston d. Ricky Millet; **SF:** Alston d. Joseph Cincotta; Millett d. Ken Rottman.

**Under 17—Final:** 1st: George Aiken; 2nd: Shan Parbtani; 3rd: Anil Parbtani.



Orlando Open Winner  
Brian Pace



## New Jersey January Open

Westfield, New Jersey  
January 20-21, 1996

by Larry Hodges

With U.S. National Champion David Zhuang winning every tournament in New Jersey, month after month after month after... (that could go on for quite some time), a group got together and decided to raise the prize money for one tournament, giving away \$750 for first place, which would attract more competition for David. (Second place: \$300; 3-4: \$125; 5-8: \$50)

Problem was, David went to China before the tournament to train for the Olympic Trials in late February....

However, the extra prize money drew Cheng Yinghua & Todd Sweeris, who were the top two rated players in the U.S. at the time at 2737 & 2706, hot off winning the U.S. Open Team Championships (with Huazhang Xu) a couple of months before. Also present were U.S. #6 Sean Lonergan (2589) and U.S. #3 Woman (#2 Olympic Eligible), Lily Yip (2542). 115 players came to see the fireworks.

Massachusetts's Lim Ming Chui pulled off the tournament's main upset, knocking New Jersey's Barry Dattel out of the open.

New York's Abass Ekun, seeded 5th, drew top seeded Cheng in the quarters, a costly 3-0 maneuver. Sweeris, Lonergan & O'Neill also won their matches 3-0, over Anini Lawson, Lily Yip & Lim Ming Chui, to advance the three Marylanders and a Virginian (O'Neill) into the semifinals.

Cheng was able to serve & loop every time, and so had an easy 12, 11, 12 win over O'Neill in the semifinals. After splitting the first two games, Sweeris won the last two against practice partner Sean Lonergan, 17, -11, 18, 15, only to face his coach, Cheng, in the final.

The final seemed half real, half exhibition, and half "Do we have to play this?" as neither Cheng nor Sweeris seemed particularly up for playing against an opponent whom they saw across the table every day at practice. With that many "halves," however, there was still some remarkable play, especially since the two are so used to each other's games. Match to Cheng, 17, 15, 8.

Hui Yuan Liu won the 2400's over Ashu Jain, with its increased prize money (1st: \$200; 2nd: \$100; 3-4: \$50). Liu defeated newcomer Paul David, a chopper, in one semifinals, while Jain defeated Lim Ming Chui in the other.



**Open Singles—Final:** Cheng Yinghua d. Todd Sweeris, 17,15,8; **SF:** Cheng d. Sean O'Neill, 12,11,12; Sweeris d. Sean Lonergan, 17,-11,18,15; **QF:** Cheng d. Abass Ekun, 9,11,14; O'Neill d. Lim Ming Chui, 12,13,10; Lonergan d. Lily Yip, 12,20,19; Sweeris d. Anini Lawson, 17,15,14.

**Women's Singles:** 1st: Lily Yip (3-0); 2nd Llosa Milagros (2-1); 3rd Wan Yee Cheung (1-2); 4th Rhoda Samkoff (0-3).

**U2400—Final:** Hui Yuan Liu d. Ashu Jain, n.s.; **SF:** Liu d. Paul David, n.s.; Jain d. Lim Ming Chui, n.s.

**U2150—Final:** Alan Fendrick d. John Andrade, 17,18; **SF:** Fendrick d. Dave Fulcomer, 15,15; Andrade d. Yuri Nazarov, 12,14.

**U1900:** Yuri Nazarov d. O.J. Magnus, 13,-15,20.

**U1750:** Denzil Kendall d. Peter Caesar, 15,13.

**U1550:** Ron Heilmann d. Roman Tinyszyn, -21,19,22.

**U1400:** George Yao d. Jonathan Galea, 12,8.

**U1200:** Natalya Kaler d. Jeffrey Ruff, 17,12.

**Over 40—Final:** Hui Yuan Liu d. George Brathwaite, -15,14,16; **SF:** Liu d. Lim Ming Chui, 14,10; Brathwaite d. Parviz Mojaverian, -23,19,11.

**Over 40/U1750:** Cyril Thomas d. Sam Joyner, -13,18,14.

**Under 18:** Jonelle Holder d. Katuwan Thomason, -16,18,13.

**Under 14:** Lawrence Shieh d. Oleg Bisker, 15,17.

**3200 Doubles:** A. Luethi/E. Bar d. P. Caesar/G. Yao, 13,18.

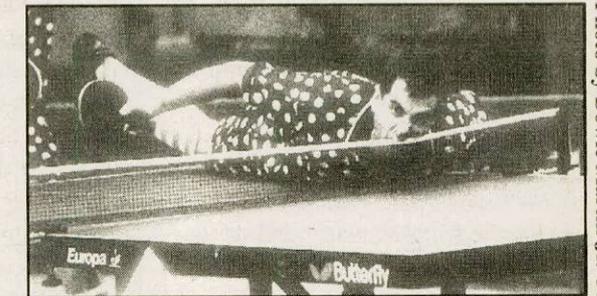


Photo by Bowie Martin Jr. © 1996

This species of vermin, commonly called a Boos Brother, is more correctly called an Alan Fendrick, or ALF for short. It can be found in damp, dark places as well as 2150 and 2050 Finals, which it won at both the New Jersey January and February Opens, respectively. It ranges throughout the northeast region, subsisting on a simple diet of nets & Andrades and wearing funny clothes.

## New Jersey February Open

Westfield, New Jersey  
February 10-11, 1996

by Tim Boggan

He is the National Champion—twice over. But, even stretching it, who'd try to sling the cross-culture sobriquet "Goliath" on this handsome fellow? "David" we call him, and yet in this Westfield Club's February Open final it's David he also fought.

Fought himself?

Well, yes, in a manner of speaking, for David Zhuang had just returned from a month's hard practice in Canton with his former teammates—government-supported professional players all—and now he had quickly to reacclimate himself. Had to weather subtle or not so subtle changes in ball and table conditions so as to keep all the giant confidence he'd need for the Olympic Trials little more than a week away. Were David to have a home-court loss here, likely it would intensify, at the worst possible time, whatever doubt and confusion he, like any pressure-proofed but still human athlete, might be subject to.

Young David Fernandez, whose aim, sweep, and snap hurtled forth many a killer point today, had likewise been abroad—training in Sweden at Stellan Bengtsson's Falkenberg Club and practicing with ("These world-class players have such good serves") Erik Lindh, Steffen Fetzner, and Peter Nilsson. This David, too, was our National Champion, Junior-size, and as his game was steadily growing in stature, so too were his Olympic hopes. In the whirl of his imagination it didn't matter who he was playing, he'd rise unintimidated to the attack.

David—David Zhuang—won this day's final fight, 20, -20, 19, 18, with an unyielding fast-hands onslaught. But the David opposing him—David Fernandez—also stayed strong at the table, often scoring by sending side-top bounding balls from his backhand middle into David's vulnerable wide forehand. "Fernandez has greatly improved since last year," said one knowledgeable observer. "He's more consistent, has more poise. He's almost there."

It was helpful for Zhuang to have this tough match—especially since his belief in himself, his game, had not been tested earlier. Fourteen players had advanced out of 7 round robins into single elimination play—with the two top-rated Davids being given byes and seeded into opposite sides of the draw. The question then became, Who would be drawn to likely face Zhuang in the semi's—Abass Ekun, the #3-rated player and the resident professional at the Westside Club in New York City ("You want to know if I have regular customers? Well, in New York, if a coach doesn't have them, he'd better forget about coaching and find something else to do") or Barry Dattel, the #4-rated player and the perennial President of the Westfield Club? This



New Jersey continues to be David Zhuang's personal playground as he won again, although Dave Fernandez (R) gave him a 20, -20, 13, 18 battle.

question, at least from Abass's point of view, was complicated by Barry's early round robin loss to still another David—Paul David, the #2 player on the Guyanese National Team who was now working the daytime Desk at the NYC Westside Club. With impressive wide-angle forehands and powerful counter-loops Paul had defeated Deepak Jain to win the U-2250's here. If he took Dattel's #4-seeded spot by virtue of beating him in the round robin (out of which not one but two advanced), shouldn't Abass, since he had a much higher rating and would in fact be the #3 seed, shouldn't he, rather than David, be positioned in the half opposite Zhuang?...

While that question is being back-room discussed and resolved in the presence of witnesses, I'll take a moment to comment on Paul's win over Barry. David, who has two coaching certificates to his credit, was himself coached in this match by Ronald Joseph, and it was quite obvious that Dattel did not appreciate Joseph taking the lead in a very voluble, non-stop show of support for his friend.

Did those rooting for David not have enough confidence in him to let him fight his own battles? Did they, and David, too, need to be so distracting point after point? Barry's view was buttressed by his late appeal to those so enthusiastically cheering to please cool it.

Having myself screamed at Joseph at a recent Westside tournament for unrelievedly whooping it up, I know something of how not only Barry but many another player feels when he loses focus. But though it's a rough world out there and no doubt some supporters root wildly to deliberately distract, I don't think Joseph is at all mean-spirited. He just likes to be in on the action, wants as I do for coaches and spectators to respond dramatically to the play while not unfairly forcing a cessation of it.

...There's agreement then?

Chris Lehman, the Tournament Referee, who was sporting a "Showboat" cap to, voila, cap and uncap the return of his frizzy locks ("When I cut my hair my



rating started to go down"), and Larry Bavly, the Tournament Director, who, sitting out with a pulled calf muscle, didn't have to worry about which seed he'd have to play, both agreed with the rather recently decided on Westfield flip policy that paired Abass in the quarter's with #1 seed Cheng Yinghua at the last Westfield tournament (\$50 prize money for the quarter's, \$125 for the semi's). So, tough luck, Abass, it's you, #3, and Zhuang, #1, on the one side, Fernandez, David, and Dattel on the other.

Dattel, because of his early loss to David, had to play Fernandez in the quarter's and ("I just don't have any feel today, I don't know why") lost three straight. David, before losing to Fernandez in the semi's, downed Columbian Orlando Casas, who in the 8th's had eliminated Anini Lawson, one of Westfield's best.

Abass simmered through a match with David Rosenzweig, then brought his feelings to a boiling point with a 21, 15, -18, 19 win over Parviz Mojaverian. After which he more than vocally protested the ruling against him, he just defaulted out of the semi's. Abass might not have been in the best of moods this weekend. He'd hustled off to the Troy, N.Y. tournament the day before and was upset in the final by (where did this guy come from?) an "unknown" Japanese chopper. (Kazuyuki Yokoyama, now at Hofstra University in New York.)

So with Abass's default that left Zhuang with only his straight-game quarter's match against Shao Yu as warm-up practice for Fernandez. Of course the 24-year-old Shao who, along with his aunt, Shao Peizhen, coaches Jennifer Johnson and other Champions who'll be representing the U.S. at the Paralympics in Atlanta this August, is now retired. Yup, went to college, studied foreign trade, and now wants to make his mark in the import-export world. Retired? At 24? He's already had a career? Uh-huh. Ever since he learned to play on those miniature tables. Yes, long ago it seems, he was a professional player. Represented Shanghai. One of his teammates? Ding

Song. Perhaps you've heard of him?

In the 8th's Shao had beaten 25-year-old "Ping-Pong Diplomat" George Brathwaite who, earlier, in scouting him, had said, "This guy's good." In the Senior's, though, "The Chief" was too steady for 46-year-old Parviz Mojaverian who in the Open was to play so well against Abass. "George is very strong mentally," said Parviz shaking his head in that mournful, worrying way of his, as if George had concocted a mix to his game that Parviz, with all his Johnson & Johnson experience, just couldn't pharmaceutical out.

One last note. Umpire Ray Cavicchio asked me to please mention that 2050-winner Alan Fendrick cleverly wore ear-plugs in his final against John Andrade, since before the match John had bel-lowed the announcement that he's not getting more quiet [sic] but is not getting less quiet either.

**Open Singles—Final:** David Zhuang d. David Fernandez, 20, -20, 13, 18. **SF:** Zhuang d. Abass Ekun, def.; Fernandez d. Paul David, 4, 13, 13. **QF:** Zhuang d. Shao Yu, 9, 16, 18; Ekun d. Parviz Mojaverian, 21, 15, -18, 19; Fernandez d. Barry Dattel, 17, 12, 14; David d. Orlando Casas, 14, 18, 15. **8ths:** Zhuang d. Bye; Shao d. George Brathwaite, 19, 17; Ekun d. David Rosenzweig, 18, 14; Mojaverian d. Ben Nisbet, 17, 17; David d. Patrick Muallem, -11, 15, 17; Casas d. Anini Lawson, 19, 15; Dattel d. O.J. Magnus, 19, 7; Fernandez d. Bye.

**U2250—Final:** Paul David d. Deepak Jain, 8, 13. **SF:** David d. Orlando Casas, 10, 15; Jain d. Eyal Adini, -18, 22, 21.

**U2050—Final:** Alan Fendrick d. John Andrade, 9, -12, 12. **SF:** Fendrick d. Robert Saperstein, 14, 15; Andrade d. Tim Boggan, -11, 11, 13.

**U1850—Final:** Brian McKnight d. Roger Semple, -22, 18, 13. **SF:** McKnight d. Denzil Kendall, 14, 24; Semple d. David Schwartz, 19, 15.

**U1650—Final:** Wang Peng d. Hsu Fei-Hsing, -19, 12, 13.

**U1450—Final:** Dan Goldschmidt d. Lawrence Shieh, -14, 19, 12. **SF:** Goldschmidt d. Arvo Hytinen, 8, 10; Shieh d. Larry Wong, 14, 15.

**U1300—Final:** Mark Malench d. Lawrence Shieh, 12, -15, 13. **SF:** Malench d. Robert Chironna, 18, 10; Shieh d. Joe Meschino, 13, 19.

**U1100—Final:** Jason Haft d. Robert Chironna, -18, 18, 16. **SF:** Haft d. Angel Chang, 19, 17; Chironna d. George Mendez, -12, 13, 8.

**U950.1:** Jeffrey Fang, 3-0. **2:** Albert Luk, 2-1. **3:** Stephen Fang, 1-2. **4:** Eric Babcock, 0-3.

**Over 40—Final:** George Brathwaite d. Parviz Mojaverian, 17, 17. **SF:** Brathwaite d. Robert Saperstein, 17, 17; Mojaverian d. Tim Boggan, 12, 8.

**Over 40/U1650—Final:** Cyril Thomas d. Hsu Fei-hsing, -17, 8, 21.

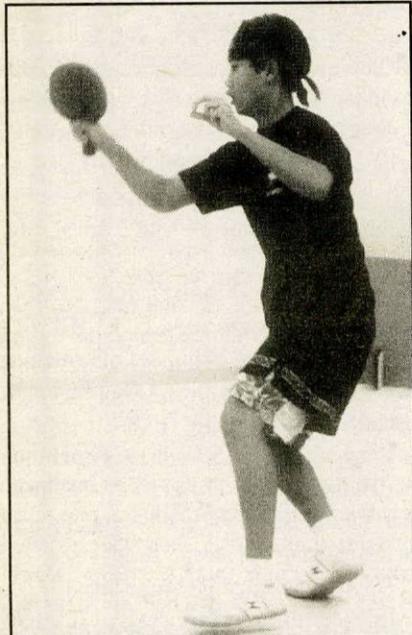
**Under 18/U1800:** 1. Jason Haft, 3-0. **2:** Jeffrey Fang, 2-1. **3:** Stephen Fang, 1-2. **4:** Eric Babcock, 0-3.

**U-3000 Doubles:** D. Rockir/A. Chang d. H. Teitelbaum/C. Mallow, 17, 17.

# Around the USA

## Huntsville Winter Open

Huntsville, Alabama  
February 17, 1996  
by Michael Wetzel



Huntsville Open Champion  
Jay Sourinthone.

It was the young and energetic winning out against experience in the finals of the Huntsville Winter Open.

Sixteen-year-old Jay Sourinthone, the Tennessee State Champion, used some deceptive serves to get past former 16-time Alabama champion Don Gaither 19, -17, 17 for the championship. Jay fell behind 15-10 in the third game before scoring 11 of the final 13 points for the title.

Jay was the only Sourinthone of the four brothers to advance to the semifinals of the championship division. Chip Patton of Madison, AL defeated Lock and Noi Sourinthone, and Terry Hamilton of Birmingham ousted Saymek Sourinthone to finish in a tie for third.

Doubles action saw Jay take home another crown. He teamed with practice partner Shaun Stallings of Nashville to beat Saymek and Lock Sourinthone in the finals 19, -19, 14.

The winners edged past Michael Wetzel of Decatur, AL and Patton-17, 17, 13 in the semis while Lock and Saymek were taking out younger brother Noi, 10 and 55-year-old Gaither 14, 15.

Ed Watts of Huntsville went undefeated to claim the Class A title. Justin Davis of Decatur, AL was second.

Class B saw Nashville's Thip Vong take first place with Jason Denton of Caddo, AL second.

Gary Wood of Oneonta, AL walked through the Class C competition undefeated. Bob Countess of Athens, AL was second.

David Wilder served as the tournament director. Helping him were Walt Chenault, Watts, Patton and Wetzel.

## Salina Open

Salina, Kansas  
March 2, 1996



The tournament brought contestants from California, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Kansas City and other cities within Kansas. It was sponsored by the Salina Recreation Department and the Salina Table Tennis Club and conducted in the Salina Recreation Gymnasium. For information on Kansas Table Tennis or the Kansas Senior Olympics contact Cliff Metzger (913)823-6844, 2026 Roach Street, Salina, Kansas 67401.

**Open Championship Singles:** 1st: Paul Oliver; 2nd: Yi Liu.

**Championship Doubles:** 1st: Bill Ryan/Scott Miller; 2nd: Greg Nicholson/Roy Scoggan.

**Class A Singles:** 1st: Joshua Bartel; 2nd: Paul Olivier.

**Class B Singles:** 1st: David Stucker; 2nd: Donald Bassett.

**Class C Singles:** 1st: Jim Williams; 2nd: Craig Coulter.

**Class D Singles:** 1st: David Whitted; 2nd: Phil Deschner.

**Class E Singles:** 1st: Terry McCue; 2nd: Doug Stafford.

**Class F Singles:** 1st: Thad Crane; 2nd: Greg Nicholson.

**Under 1400 Singles:** 1st: Kelly Finney; 2nd: Tom Will.

**Recreation Singles:** 1st: Steve Schrag; 2nd: Steve Hodges.

**Class A Doubles:** 1st: John Potochnik/Craig Coulter; 2nd: Sheldon Muninger/Dave Whitted.

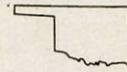
**Class B Doubles:** 1st: Steve Schrag/Scott Miller; 2nd: Greg Nicholson/Roy Scoggan.

**Hard Bat Singles:** 1st: Carl Miller; 2nd: Charles Rucker.

Photo by Chip Patton © 1996

## Bartlesville Winter Open

Bartlesville, Oklahoma  
January 19-20, 1996



**Open Singles--Final:** Yumiko Payton d. Christian Lillieros; 19,19,18; **SF:** Payton d. Aaron Struth; -15,18,-19,18,5; Lillieros d. Reed Kyker; 17,12,12; **QF:** Payton-by; Struth d. Paul Olivier; 18,19; Kyker d. Nicky Agimudie; 19,19; Lillieros d. Robert McKinney; 14,8.

**U2000--Final:** Nicky Agimudie d. Paul Olivier; 14,-22,23; **SF:** Agimudie d. Robert McKinney; 17,6; Olivier d. Jim Meredith; 9,11.

**U1750 Final RR:** 1st Wallace Collins, 1-1 (d. Bob Kyker; 18,17); 2nd Bob Kyker, 1-1 (d. Rick Downey; 17,19); 3rd Rick Downey, 1-1 (d. Wallace Collins; -13,22,21).

**U1500--Final:** Les Ruthven d. Phil Deschner, 10,13.

**U1250 Final RR:** 1st David Edwards, 2-0 (d. Jacob Hendrickson; 24,17; d. Roland Harrison; 7,17); 2nd Roland Harrison, 1-1 (d. Jacob Hendrickson; 8,-19,10); 3rd Jacob Hendrickson, 0-2.

**U1000 RR--Final:** Kyle Persaud d. Jacob Hendrickson; 8,7; **SF:** Persaud d. David Edwards; 18,17; Hendrickson d. Julie Edwards; 18,5.

**U3600 Doubles:** Nicky Agimudie/Michael Grismore d. Robert McKinney/Ryan McQuillen.

## Colorado New Year Open

Colorado Springs, Colorado  
January 27, 1996



**Open Singles:** 1. Eric Benton; 2. Roger Kuseski.

**RR Doubles:** 1. Kevin Young/Dave Taylor; 2. Roger Kuseski/Tim St. Germin.

**U2000 RR:** 1. Tim St. Germain; 2. Eric Benton.

**U1800 RR:** 1. Seung Kim; 2. Jonah Brown-Joel.

**U1600 RR:** 1. Eric Knab; 2. Todd Springer.

**U1300 RR:** 1. Dave Miescke; 2. Gokal Shah.

**U1000 RR:** 1. Neal Miller; 2. Bill Kressner.

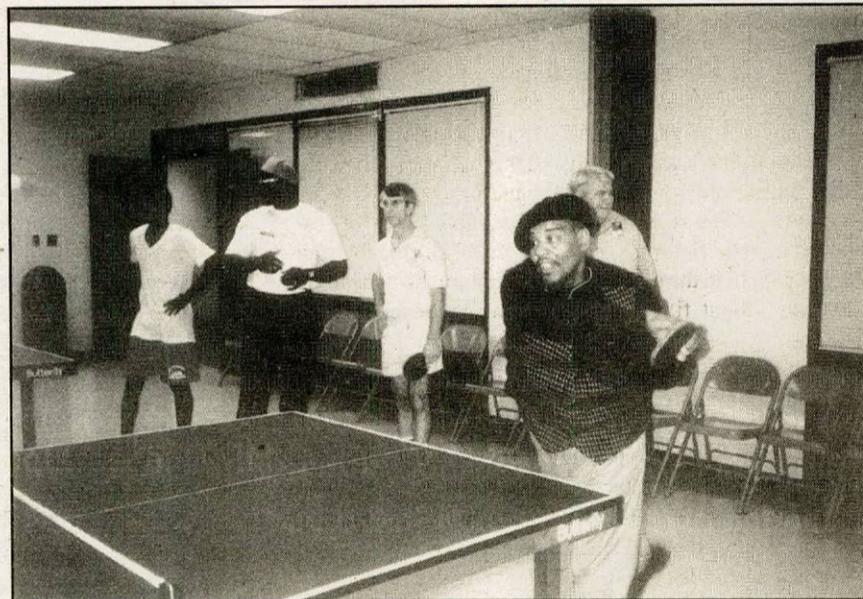


Photo by Michael Wetzel © 1996

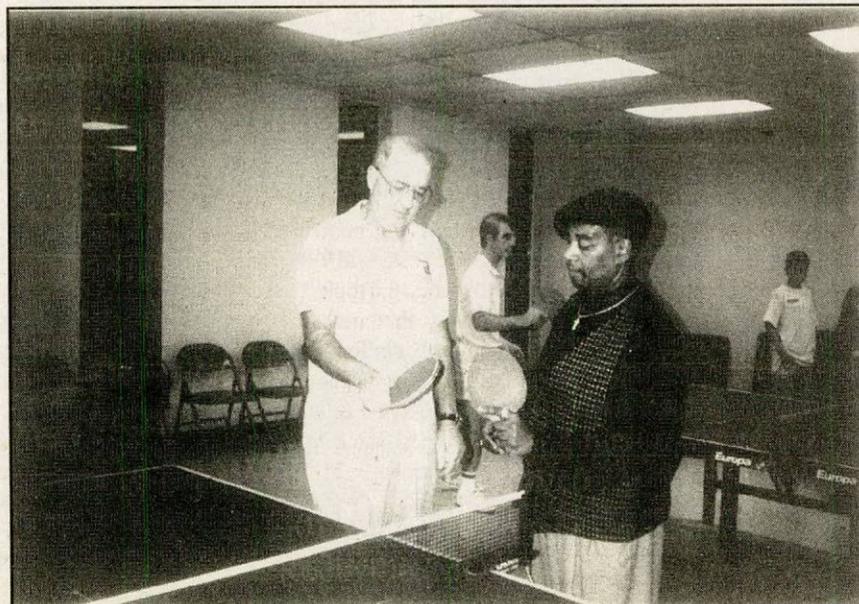


Photo by Michael Wetzel © 1996

That's actor Fred Berry above smacking in a shot in Decatur Alabama. He's better known as "Rerun" from the 1970's TV sitcom "What's Happening!" Left, Don Gaither gives Berry a few pointers.

# Czech Open Championships for the Physically Disabled

Czech Republic

December 6-9, 1996

by Ron Schull

Our team consisted of three individuals from very different backgrounds. Josh Bartle is a country boy straight from the Kansas wheat fields. I am a small-town boy who lives in a suburb of a big cow town in Ohio. Tahl Leibovitz is a slice of the "Big Apple." I thought things were bigger and better in Texas, but it seems that I've been living under a rock for my first 51 years!

I arrived at JFK Airport a little earlier, and told the attendant at the Czech Air counter that I was representing the U.S. standing disabled team in the Czech Republic, so he told me to go to the V.I.P. lounge to wait for my flight to Prague. To say that it was plush is a gross understatement. The lounge had anything you wanted to eat, a complimentary bar... oh, do this to me after I've played my matches!! They even had a full-blown shower with complimentary linen.

The three of us met at the gate and boarded the Czech Air flight to the Czech Republic. Seven hours and a day later we arrived in a very wintery Prague. With a walking disability, I wasn't exactly thrilled. When we got to the baggage claim area, there was one less piece of luggage than we started with...and yes it was lucky me! We had set aside the day to sightsee, and a very pleasant young man gave us a three-hour excursion through the streets of Prague. On our way to the central part of the city, we nearly took a broadside from a car bolting from a side street. We must have slipped into a time warp to avoid that collision... it was just that close! Our tour guide works seven days a week, and has a wife who is a school teacher to make ends meet for them and their two children. If Americans had the work ethic as the Czech people have as a whole, our society would not have the myriad of problems from which we suffer. After seeing the older parts of Prague with its stone architecture, winding cobblestone streets and beautiful cathedrals, we ate in one of the better restaurants in the city. It was not time for them to be open, but they made an exception for us. After a tasty meal, topped off with a couple of mugs of dark Czech beer and the purchase of a souvenir beer mug, we finished our tour, and waited in a very cold Prague airport for our flight to Ostrava. The steel benches would give the most seasoned traveler flat spots on his posterior. During the wait for our flight in the terminal the snowstorm became more intense. About fifteen minutes after the wings of the turboprop plane were de-iced, we began our take-off. It took an eternity before the plane became airborne... plenty of time for numerous dark thoughts to creep into one's mind!

After a very smooth flight topped with a tall can of complimentary and very good Czech beer, we met the chairman of the Czech Open 95 organizing committee, Jiri (pronounced Yiri) Danek. I do not have enough good words to describe this wonderful man with a personality and wit that made one feel instantly at ease. About thirty of us from many parts of the world journeyed by bus to the tournament hotel, Hotel Impuls. By American standards it was what Jiri described as, "not quite a four-star hotel," but it was clean, comfortable and adequate.... Tom Bodett, eat your heart out!

By the time that we had gotten up the next morning, we had missed our bus to the playing site, and almost missed our breakfast...but good ole Jiri to the rescue. He took the three of us to the bank, and watched over us like a mother hen to make sure that we were treated fairly. We were dressed in our very attractive uniforms that Jennifer Johnson, President of the American Wheelchair Table Tennis Association, had ordered for us. An older Czech man patted me on the back and exclaimed, "USA, USA!!", then reached out his hand for a handshake. I love the Czech people! Jiri took us to the playing site, a recreation hall with 18 total tables each set up in two gymnasiums on different levels. After a short practice session, we renewed our bodies at the Hotel Impuls for the rigors of competition.

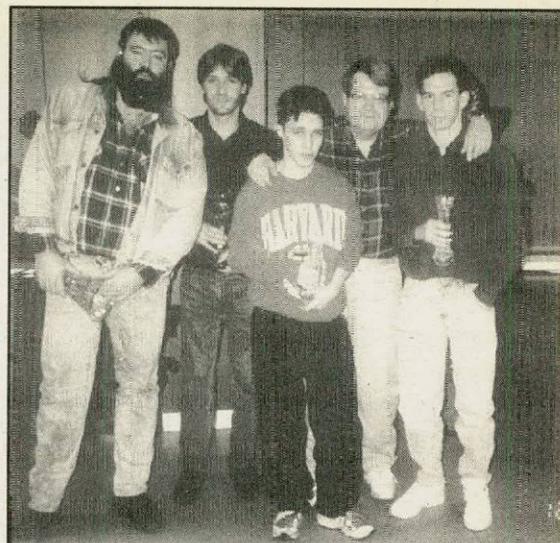
We learned quickly how punctual the Czech people are. If the bus is scheduled to leave at a certain time, it is a real good idea to be there a few minutes early! The tournament was run in the same businesslike fashion. The umpires were all dressed in dark blue suits with ties that often had a paddle or other table tennis symbols on them. When it was time to play, you had better be there... and they didn't tolerate temper tantrums. First you get a yellow card, then a red card. I didn't see any examples of the unthinkable... because the players knew what would come next!

The teams were in two categories, according to disability: classes 6 to 8, and 9 & 10. We were in the 6 to 8 category. The format was best two out of three matches, with the first two being singles, and a doubles match if necessary. There were four groups of four teams, with two from each group advancing to the single-elimination draw. USA used all three players in the first two ties (team matches) against Denmark and Slovakia. We won them 2-1, with Tahl Leibovitz winning both of his singles matches, and Ron Schull losing both of his. Tahl and Josh Bartel won both doubles. I sat out the rest of the ties. All of the rest of the teams were playing their best two players. I was the lowest-rated player, plus the piece of luggage that was lost/stolen had my back medicine, and my court shoes, which were three times lighter than the street shoes I was forced to use. The other factor was there was no rating system for the players to enable the captain to evaluate the risks of substitutions. There was a world ranking list, but that did not include enough of the contestants to make sound decisions.

The quarterfinals saw the USA defeat Sweden I by a now-familiar 2-1 score.

The stage was now set for our semifinal against Czech Republic I. We got a taste of what it is like to be the visiting team against a very enthusiastic home-town crowd. Tahl Leibovitz played first. Tahl's serve and end the point quickly style is nerve-wracking to watch. His serves are truly dreadful, and he follows up many of his returns with slashing ace forehand kills. His backhand kills and loops also command respect. After splitting the first two games, Tahl quieted the crowd with superheated serves and blistering loop-kills, winning a convincing 21-12. Josh Bartle played a courageous match against Soukup, displaying much-improved serves and forehand loops (the result of much coaching by Christian Lillieroos), but lost a tense 20, 18 thriller. At one match apiece, the tension was incredible. Every point that the USA scored was like a walk through a funeral parlor, and every point that the Czech Republic scored was an explosion of cheering. The Tahl and Josh lost the first at 18, but were up a commanding 18-11 in the second, when the wheels came off. A bizarre combination of errors combined with crowd pressure, and we had lost that surreal game and match.... and tie, 22-20!

France had lost a similar match to Taiwan in the other semis. Taiwan brought an impressive contingent of players and coaches numbering about twenty. The playoff for third and fourth still had meaning (prizes for third, and nothing for fourth), but you would not have guessed it by the demeanor of the contestants. They all looked like they had been beaten by baseball bats. Tahl lost the first against Messi at 19. Messi had good serves, a strong forehand loop, and a rocket backhand kill. Tahl sucked up the pain from the previous tie, and took charge of the next two games at 16 and 16. Josh Bartel had been beating himself for not regluing his bat before the semifinal until the playoff with France began. Josh gave a spirited effort, but lost to a stronger Schaller, 15 & 15. Tahl and Josh played a hot and cold doubles match...first game to the USA at 13. France regrouped for a 21-17 second game. Tahl heated up his serves, and Josh's reglued rubber heated up with some forehand kills for clean winners... match and third place to the USA, 21-12!



At the tournament party afterwards. The two on the left are from other countries. The three on the right are (L-R) Tahl Leibovitz, Ron Schull and Josh Bartle.

The Czech Republic I team won over the Taiwan contingent two straight to capture the title.

Tahl Leibovitz was the fabric that held the team together. He went through the entire team competition without losing a singles match, and the pressure that he applied in doubles with serves and kill shots kept our opponents constantly uncomfortable.

The Men's Singles Class 6 & 7 was a very bright spot for USA. Three round-robin groups produced six players in a single elimination draw. Tahl Leibovitz played the second most amazing athlete in the Czech Open, Kersten, of the Netherlands. You might think that he would fall over when he walks back to pick up a ball. He leans hard on one crutch at the table, but his blocks and volleys are solid as a rock! Tahl pulls out a 19 & 19 win to advance to the draw. Josh Bartle played the most amazing athlete in the games, Rheiner Schmidt of Germany. He has one good leg, one artificial leg and no arms. Rheiner attaches a paddle with a two-foot handle with two Velcro straps... with his teeth! Bartel and Schmidt played a grueling three game set, with Rheiner coming out on top -13, 12, 17...but both advanced to the draw. They met again in the semis, with the results the opposite. Tahl Leibovitz was pared with Zeev Glickman from Israel, the world #1 player in Class 7 in the semis. Zeev came down with the flu, and withdrew. Tahl took Josh in the all-USA final in straight games. Congratulations guys!

Saturday morning it didn't take a physician to tell that Tahl had the flu. His sights were set on the Men's Singles title, but he ran out of gas in the eighths against a very strong Schaller from France, 13 & 16.

The awards banquet was just as classy as the rest of the tournament. We had a multi-course banquet with complementary wine. The awards were beautiful Bohemia 24% lead crystal vases of various sizes and shapes, all hand-cut! Besides the two vases apiece for Josh and Tahl, Josh got an additional vase for the one who came from the farthest to play in the Czech Open. I was happy for my one vase, and the privilege of playing with these quality young men.

We received first-class treatment on the way home. Ours was the maiden flight of the Air Ostrava plane from Ostrava to Prague, complete with complementary gingerbread Christmas cookies. On our flight from Prague to New York, First-Class was in row 22. When the Czech Air attendants learned that the Czech Republic won the tournament, and we were third, with the beautiful Bohemia crystal as proof, the service in first class took a hit!

The three of us went our separate ways from JFK Airport, with fond memories of the Czech Republic and the wonderful Czech people!

Many thanks to the very personable Jennifer Johnson for tirelessly making all of the arrangements for our very successful trip. Another thank you goes to Jitka Slegrova, who went to the wall to try to recover my piece of luggage. Jiri Danek and his very capable and pleasant staff made a supreme effort to tend to our every need. Two young ladies even went out in the snow and filled the ice bag for my injured shoulder. These loving people redefine the concept of hospitality.

# TABLE TENNIS WORLD

by Jamey Hall

**Editor's Note:** If you're a recent subscriber to **TABLE TENNIS WORLD** who desperately wants to read the preceding chapter of *The Death of the Tiger* from the previous issue, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the editor.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Game

Despite the revolutionary (and evolutionary) leaps Earth was to undergo because of table tennis, the galaxy's new #1 sport, the game itself had remained remarkably unchanged. Ironically, it was the game's very introduction to the new alien races of the intergalactic community that had saved it from changing. Through the years the International Table Tennis Federation, table tennis' governing body on Earth, had tried tinkering with the game under various guises, sometimes disastrously, in the hopes of increasing the sport's popularity. But the alien races were charmed with the game just the way it was, so the ITTF, ever fearful of offending them, had the good sense to leave well enough alone.

The few changes the game had undergone largely concerned peripheral elements. The ball, for example, had now been impregnated with an unstable luminescent compound which, when reacting with air friction, caused it to give off a neon colored tracer effect of various hues, making the ball look like a tiny comet zooming around the table. The effect was nothing less than spectacular on television, not only giving a 4th of July fireworks feel to each point, but also enabling the viewer to follow the ball more easily, and to better understand its spin and trajectory.

Another improvement made possible by alien technologies was a system of absolute surety on linesman calls via the implementation of tiny sensors hidden throughout the table and net. These sensors were linked to a main computer which ruled instantly and inarguably on edges, nets, let serves, etc. This information, along with the score, the game count, the current server, and number of serves left in the series, was then relayed to large score screens located throughout the



arena, while hand-held viewers gave the individual spectator the additional menu options of instant replay, player/planet profiles, and vital statistics.

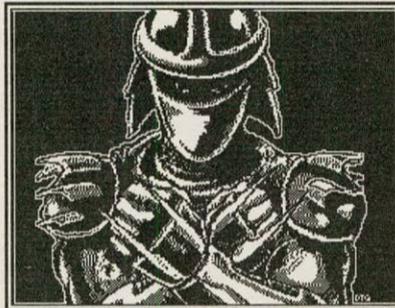
All enforcement of rules and regulations was turned over to the stone-souled Malcolms, members of a humorless legalistic society. Though at first indifferent to the game itself, the Malcolms were absolutely fascinated with the service rules, and set up rigorous schools on their home planet to produce the most competent umpires in the universe, always in high demand. Everything about the Malcolms, including their physical appearance, lent a sense of grave importance to the proceedings. The grim, 7-foot tall Malcolms stood ram-rod straight, with icy blue skin, fiery red eyes, and great bushy eyebrows.

Grand tufts of snow-white hair swept up from their long foreheads in a continuation of a widow's peak hairline that eventually culminated into two hornlike projections, a sort of satanic bouffant. The Malcolms presided over the matches by panel, and often utilized monitors with slow-motion replay in making their decisions. They were swift, unbiased, and utterly passionless in rendering their judgments. The rule-worshipping Malcolms brooked no shenanigans, and were just as likely to a fault a top player at the end of a heavily spectated, critical match as they were a lesser player in a low profile situation. The Malcolms weren't exactly universally loved, but they were universally respected; and in 50 years of umpiring, there was no instance of a Malcolm ruling ever being overturned.

The playing court that the Malcolms held sway over was now cordoned off in an entirely different fashion. There were no longer conventional barriers, but a dynamic electro-stasis field, to keep the balls in check. This invisible barrier was essentially a movable force field which was screen-specific to the ball, allowing the players to pass through unmolested. Manned by the younger Malcolms, the energy walls could be moved out to give the players 50 or more feet of room for high-flying smash-and-lob retrieval play, or to within a few feet of the table to return an errant ball quickly, as the case may require, like a remote-controlled phantom ball boy. These screens also enabled the Malcolms to keep the playing areas within absolutely wind-free,

with perfectly uniform temperature, humidity, and barometric pressure. Lastly, but not least importantly, the electro-stasis barrier set a decibel ceiling on spectator noise allowed to reach the players so that, while the players could still benefit emotionally from crowd participation, they would not be unduly disturbed by it. It was found before the advent of the screens that some races could be absolutely deafening in the support of their players; and, in the case of the Thalaxzzzes, downright painful. Many races, humans among them, simply could not physically tolerate the shrill screeching and squeaking of the insectoid Thalaxzzzes. And so not only were the spectators barriered off from the players, they were also screened off from each other. The compartmentalization of the different races into their special sections made for an interesting study in the various displays of fan appreciation, which were often as entertaining as the matches themselves.

As mentioned before, the Thalaxzzzes' incessant cacophony of buzzing, clicking, and hissing noises made their section sound something like a tropical rain forest gone mad. The empathic and telepathic Shamarians sang and chanted in beautiful harmonies, often doing free-flowing choreographed dances to urge their players on. The blocky, male-dominated Gronks grunted loudly when they were pleased with a point, a kind of extended guttural "harrumphing" that made them sound more like an angry lynch mob than



spectators at a sporting event. The lusty Cabbrierians, a shamanistic warrior race rather like the medieval Celts on Earth, had a rollicking, drunken, scandalously good time. Often singing, and always drinking, the robust Cabbrierians roared their approval or groaned their disapproval with each shot, and were the most expressive of all the races. Their infectious "joi de vivre" and irrepressible good humor also made them a favorite among all the players and fans.

The Zisters and the No-Names were among the strangest fans to observe, the No-Names by virtue of the often odd timing of their humming and bell-stick shaking, say, in the middle of a point or when their player missed a shot. "But it was the right shot" they would answer complacently when queried about this baffling behavior. The mystical, octopoid Zisters, with their six tentacled arms and massive heads, waved and snaked their unjointed limbs hypnotically while emitting a wailing tremolo tone which sounded like the vibrato note from a cheap electric organ; and, like the No-Names, were also likely to let loose at very odd times.

The bug-eyed, hyperactive Pingian fans were at least as much fun to watch as their players. The diminutive, frenetically high-strung Pingians could not sit still, if they sat at all, and would be constantly chattering, shrieking, and



seething until they worked themselves into such a frenzy that their section was the absolute picture of bedlam. It was not uncommon for a Pingian on the front row to somehow twist and claw and boil his way to the back row, then end up back on the opposite side in the front row with no idea how he had gotten there, or even that he had moved at all.

There was also an open area where fans of all races could sit (with the exception of the Thalaxzzzes and the Pingians) and enjoy the matches together. This section did much to promote interplanetary harmony, and was generally frequented by the more gregarious, outgoing races such as the Shamarians, the Doaks, the Cabrerrians, and the Terrans, with the No-Names occasionally wandering in and out.

Though the many races from across the galaxy competed more or less harmoniously with each other at the Pan-Galactic Games, there were several species that the Overseer Committee would refuse entry to. These races loved the sport as much as any of the others, but had too much difficulty adapting to the interspecies setting. Many, like the drooling, fat-lipped Grobos or the constantly shedding Mastodykes, were custodially challenged. Others, from very wet, very dry, or very dark planets, could not adjust to the particular environmental conditions imposed on them. Still others had their own unique cultural drawbacks, such as the lethally poisonous Viperians, who had persisted with the singularly nasty habit of biting and killing their vanquished opponents. Clearly not all races were cut out to compete at the Pan-Galactic Championships. And this is what worried the Overseers foremost on the eve of the 10th championship: What about the mysterious new races (the "Outsiders," as they had come to be called) that were thought to be on their way? No one, not even the far-ranging Taxons, had ever even heard of these Outsiders, let alone seen them. How could the Overseers know if they should be allowed to compete? After all, these were the hallowed Pan-Galactic Championships. Certain standards had to be met. What if the Outsiders didn't meet these standards? And worse yet, what if they didn't take kindly to a rejection? Everyone was anxious, and more than a little apprehensive about the coming encounter. The Overseers finally decided all they could do was await the coming of the Outsiders, and withhold their determination until then.

(Continued next issue)





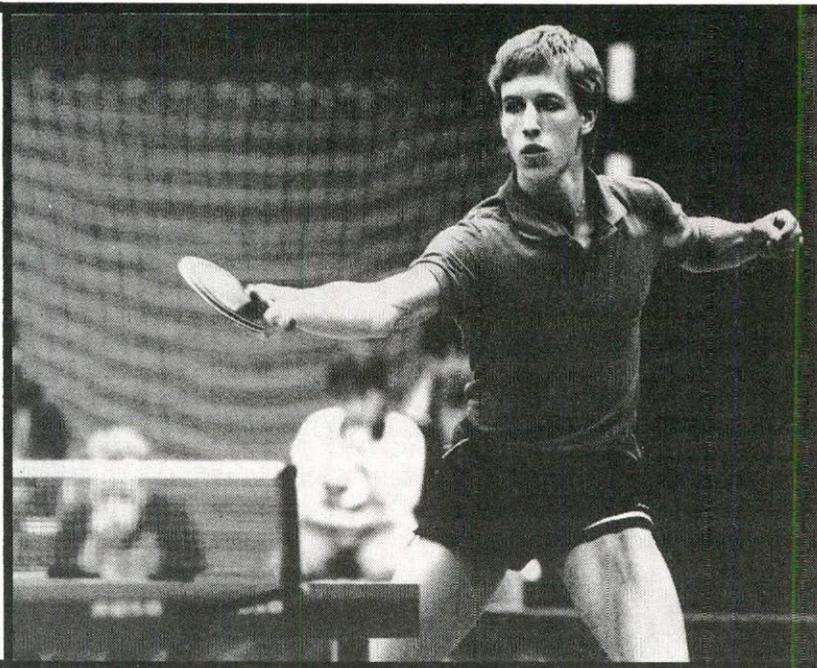
*Lightspeed - The Rubber of Champions*  
*Present & Future*



## Sean O'Neill On Lightspeed SP

" Yasaka Mark V, Friendship 729, Butterfly Sriver, Double Happiness PF4 and Juic 999 all claim to be power-punchers. I should know - I tried them all. The problem with these sheets is you always give up spin for speed or visa versa. Luckily, Airedale Sports & Technology came up with a solution - Lightspeed SP. It combines the devastating spin of Chinese style rubber with the forceful speed of their Japanese counterparts. As a power player you should have every tool at your disposal, that means rotation and acceleration. If your game depends on intense loops and potent smashes give it a try. I did and it's staying on my racket."

Sean O'Neill - 5-X US and 1990 North American  
Champion



### Sean Plays With Lightspeed SP 2.2 Both Sides

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**Terrence Lee:** 1995 Boys U13 Sgls & U16 Dbls US Nationals Champion  
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**Andrew Rushton:** Member Of the English Cadet Boys (under 14) National Team  
Andrew plays with an ASTI Polaris blade with Lightspeed Regular 2.0 rubber.

**Diana Rainer:** 1995 Canadian Winter Games Girls U14, 94 U12 National Champion  
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# Meeting at U.S. Open

- Would you like to see Table Tennis expand in the U.S.?
- Are you tired of a USATT that does little to make our sport grow?
- Would you like to make things happen?

## *It's Time to Take Control of Our Sport!*

**Who:** Anyone who would like to join us in expanding our sport.

**What:** A program to force the USATT leadership to address the many concerns of the membership and to fulfill campaign promises.

**When:** At U.S. Open, Friday, July 5, 8:00 PM

**Where:** At the **TABLE TENNIS WORLD** booth

**Why:** If you have to ask--don't come!

**How:** During the meeting, we will:

- I. Decide by majority vote what the main issues and problems are;
- II. Decide how USATT should address these issues and problems;
- III. Communicate our conclusions to the USATT Leadership;
- IV. Arrange to meet one year later at 1997 U.S. Open. If at that time the consensus is that USATT has not responded satisfactorily, then we will:
  - Recruit a full slate of candidates for the 1998 USATT elections;
  - Support and campaign for these candidates;
  - Replace the current leadership with officers who will do the job.

*Have a Question? Suggestion? Idea?*

Call Larry Hodges at **TABLE TENNIS WORLD**, 301-838-8571

*See you at the Open!*