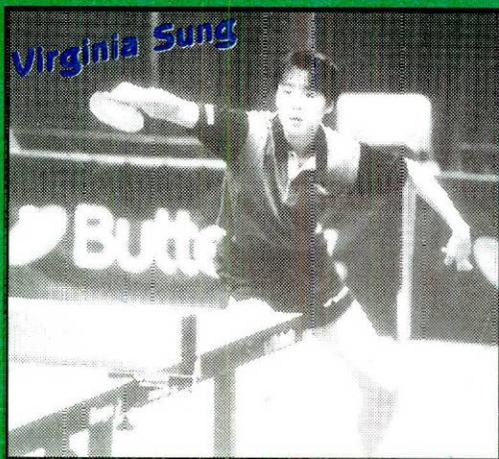
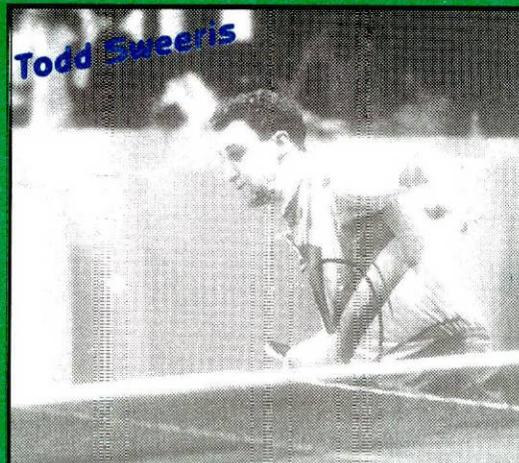


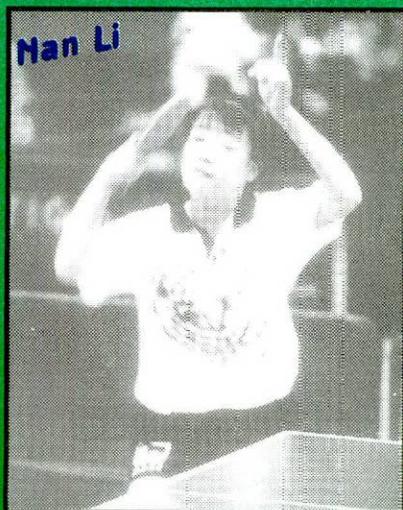
# Table Tennis World



Virginia Sung



Todd Sweetis

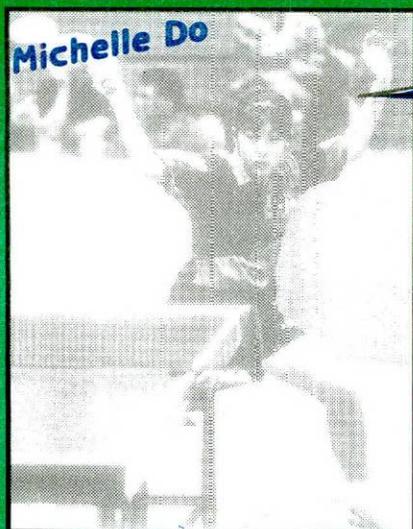


Nan Li

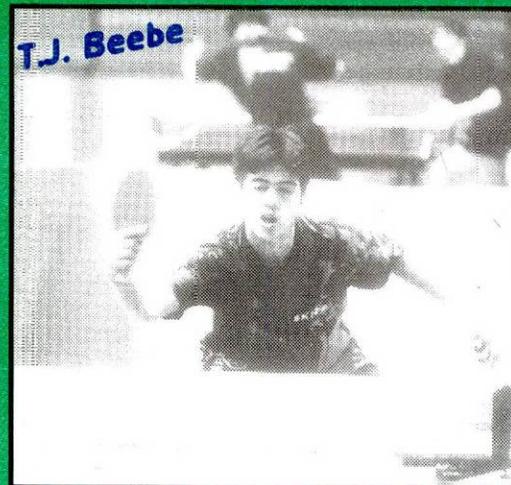


Da-Zhi Guo

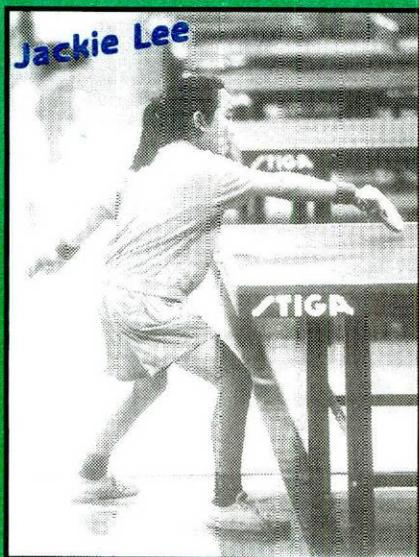
## 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL U S TABLE TENNIS YOUTH CUP



Michelle Do



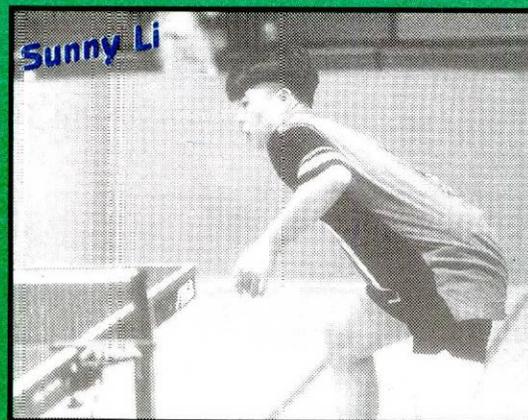
T.J. Beebe



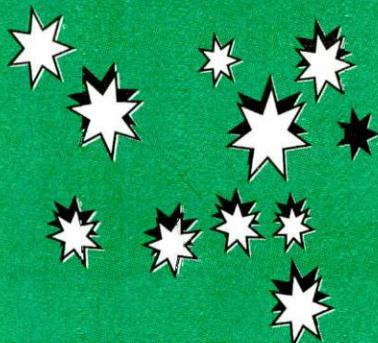
Jackie Lee



Auria Malek



Sunny Li



# Meeting at U.S. Open

- USATT's 1984 Budget: \$270,000
- USATT's 1996 Budget: \$900,000
- Are We Better Off?

## *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!*

# Table Tennis World

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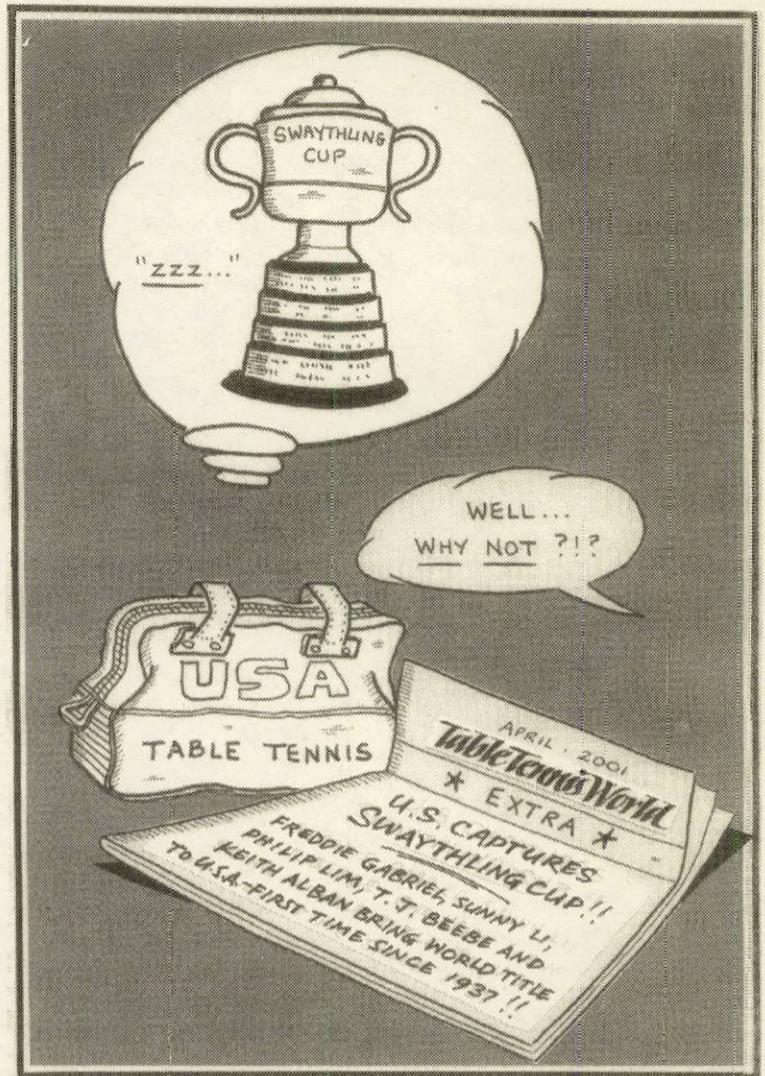
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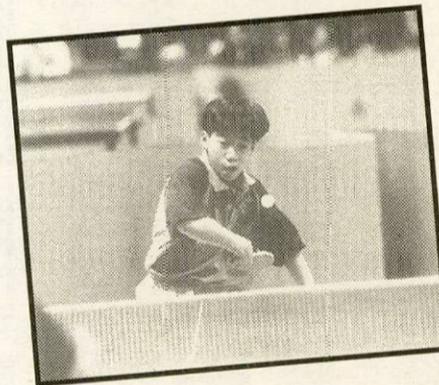
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Artwork by Steve Isaacson ©1996

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*Terrence Lee Backhand Loop*  
by Joe Holman ©1996



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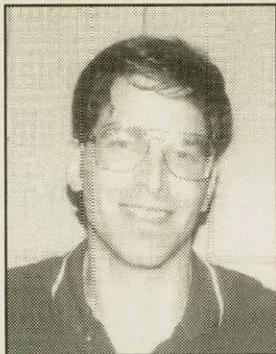
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## EDITOR'S REPORT



by Larry Hodges

Note to myself: never, never, NEVER! send out an issue just before April 15. The March/April issue of **WORLD** was mailed on April 2, bulk mail, but due to the huge volume of mail due to tax season, it took much longer than normal to reach everyone. Sorry about that!

**WORLD** is starting a new service. For \$12/year extra, you can receive **WORLD** 1st class (instead of bulk mail). Bulk mail takes 1-3 weeks (or months, around tax time...); 1st class will get to you in 1-3 days. Current subscribers: send \$12 extra per year (or \$2/issue for the rest of your subscription) for this special service.

Would you like to make money (\$\$\$) as a Certified Dealer for **TABLE TENNIS WORLD**? Dealers sell both subscriptions and advertising—and keep 15% of all money received! That's \$3 for every 1-year subscription sold! (\$5.25 for 2-year subscriptions.) If you sell a 1-page ad (\$180), you get \$27! Sound interesting? If so, contact the editor at 301 W. Edmonston Dr., Rockville, MD 20852, 301-838-8571 (ph), 301-838-8572 (fax), ttworld@erols.com (email), and I'll send you information.

**WORLD** mistakenly used photos of Sean O'Neill and Darko Rop from the U.S. Open Team Championships in Detroit in the two pages of "Scenes from the U.S. Olympic Trials" in the last issue (with photo of O'Neill wearing Butterfly when he is sponsored by Airedale Sports). Also, Freddie Gabriel & Terrence Lee defeated Philip Lim & Voltaire Trillo in the Open Doubles Final at the BTTC Chinese New Year Open.

**WORLD** and National Table Tennis Center would like to thank Tong Lee for donating a much-needed copy machine. Now, if we can only find a computer program that writes & edits articles....

For those of you who missed it last issue, **WORLD** is setting up a meeting at the U.S. Open. See inside cover of this issue for details. If you are serious about U.S. table tennis, you don't want to miss this meeting! The USATT budget has gone from \$270,000/year in 1985 (before Olympic money began coming in) to \$900,000/year in 1996. In 1984, members received ratings and a magazine *ten* times a year; in 1996, they receive ratings and a magazine *six* times a year. Where is the money going to? I'll have a copy of the USATT budget before the meeting so we, the members, can go over it.

Also, to those serious about promoting U.S. Table Tennis, see the articles by George Brathwaite ("We Shall Overcome") and Tong Lee ("The Youth Cup and U.S. Junior Table Tennis") in this issue. If you were to get 37,000 people together, how many do you think play table tennis? Quite a few. How many are USATT members? As George shows the arithmetic... one (1). Yet, about every third school in the U.S. has ping pong tables. People are not joining our association in droves! Why not? Perhaps George has an answer. If you're serious about Junior Development, Tong goes over the Youth Cup, Junior Training Programs, and how USATT should help.



## Table Tennis World Announcements & Specials

### Would You Like to Make Money (\$\$\$) as a Certified Dealer for **Table Tennis World** ?

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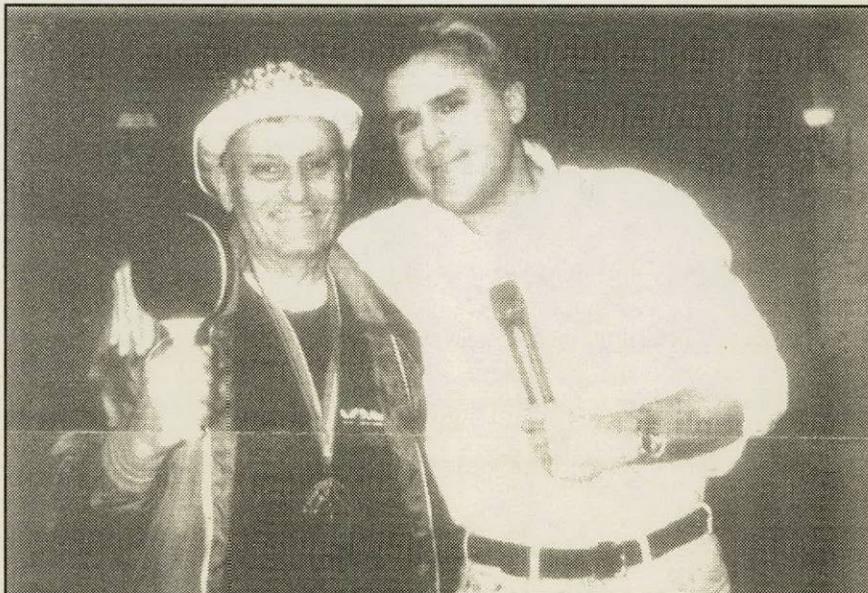
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**TABLE TENNIS WORLD** Photographer Ray Fields was called on the stage by Jay Leno of the Tonight Show to have his on picture taken. Ray is wearing a medal won by Bernie Bukiet, and holding a mini-paddle.

# Table Tennis World

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**TABLE TENNIS WORLD** is devoted to covering table tennis throughout the U.S. and the rest of the world. It includes lots of:

- Coaching articles
- Player profiles
- International news
- Tournament coverage & results
- Special interest feature articles
- Editorials & Letters to the editor
- In depth interviews
- Anything of interest to table tennis enthusiasts

Articles, letters, photos, cartoons and other contributions are actively sought.

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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# Did'ja Know?

by Bob Green

Danny Seemiller had the enviable record of the only U.S. male player to perform the "Hat Trick" for two years in a row with the same partners during a U.S. National Championship. In 1976 and 1977 he won Men's Singles, Men's Doubles with brother Rick, and Mixed Doubles with Insook Bhushan.

The World Championships, now held in huge stadiums with many thousands of spectators, has come a long way since the first Worlds held in London in 1927. This initial event was only represented by nine associations and held in a converted church.

In 1961 a top sports writer spotted the three-time Olympic Triple Jump Champion leaving the Penn Relays in a hurry. He asked Bill Sharpe "What's your hurry?", to which Sharpe replied, "I'm gonna be late for the City Table Tennis Championships—I'm in the Final."

Tennis Champ Bobby Riggs was also a former top California Table Tennis player. The most famous of the tennis set was, of course, Fred Perry who won the men's singles title in Table Tennis at the Worlds held in Budapest in 1929. He won from Hungarian Miklos Szabades in the final. A year later he won the Wimbledon Men's Lawn Tennis Title.

World Champion Ichiro Oigimura of Japan was asked about the world class playing ability of players who

passed thirty years of age. He said: "If I am still champion when I reach thirty, then there is something wrong with our youth."

Famous last words: Two-time World Champion Johnny Leach of England, when asked about the then-controversial sponge rubber bat coverings, said, "Sponge rubber will die a natural death. It only takes time for pimpled rubber bat players to adjust their timing and the sponge bat will fade."

A newspaper sports writer described George Hendry as a chubby likable youngster with a lot of talent after he won the U.S. Boys' Championship at the tender age of 14.

The Consumer Products Safety Commission in its May 1993 report said that 1455 people were sent to hospital emergency rooms in 1992 with injuries caused by playing Table Tennis.

Speaking of Umpires: Some players are of the opinion that they cannot count to twenty without removing their shoes. The few that can are known as National Umpires.

## Now Read This Really Fast!

It was reported that Sens. William B. Spong (Va.) and Hiram Fong (Hawaii) got their heads together to sponsor a bill recommending the mass ringing of church bells to hail the arrival in Hong Kong of the U.S. table tennis team after its tour of Communist China.

Unfortunately, the motion died, cheating Congress out of passing the Spong-Fong Hong Kong ping-pong ding-dong bell bill.

Ann Landers column on 4-7-96, first submitted by Tom Miller

## 3RD ANNUAL MINNESOTA HALL OF FAME BANQUET

On April 14, the Minnesota Table Tennis Federation held its 3rd annual MTTF Hall of Fame Banquet at the Cherokee Siroin Room in Eagan, Mn. Despite the spring snow storm, over 40 people attended and were entertained with many stories of the past and updates on the current issues. Todd Petersen and Greg Miller won a raffle drawing for two donated subscriptions to **TABLE TENNIS WORLD**.

Inducted into the Minnesota Hall of Fame were Eddie Kantar, Helene "Tiny" Moss (Eller), George "Gus" Kennedy, and John Soderberg.

**Eddie Kantar** was both a championships bridge player and table tennis player. He was a top table tennis player in Minnesota during the 1950's. He was written up in Sports Illustrated in 1971 as "World's Greatest Gamesman," which highlighted his skills in both table tennis and bridge. Kantar, a 2-time World Bridge Champion, is also being inducted into the U.S. Bridge Hall of Fame this year.

**Helene "Tiny" Moss** was Minnesota Women's Champion by the time she was 10, and dominated the women's game in Minnesota for years to come. She was ranked 5th in the U.S. in 1941-42. She won Mixed and Women's Doubles at the 1958 U.S. Open (with Sol Schiff and Susie Hoshi).

**George "Gus" Kennedy** was inducted for the many years of work and service for the sport, both in Minnesota and as a USATT official. Gus was USATT Executive Vice President for 16 years, from 1979-1995. His list of Minnesota, USATT and ITTF titles is extremely long.

**John Soderberg** was a star and one of the most popular players on the Minnesota table tennis scene in the 1970's and 1980's. He was 4-time Minnesota State Champion, and was ranked #1 in the U.S. among college players. He now resides in Paris, working for an international law firm.

## They Said It!



"Can you do something interesting with ping-pong balls?" David Letterman to Regis Philbin on the David Letterman Show, 3-22-96. The two had a ping pong ball fight.

"I'm getting too old for this!" 13-year-old Michael Wah at the U.S. Youth Cup Championships.

"A guy from West Virginia called me about two years ago (maybe more) and said he had a Wheaties box with my picture on it, and said he wanted to sell it. I thought, hey, this is a collector's item! He's going to ask at least \$1000. When he told me he wanted \$60, I liked the price, but was my ego shot down!" George Hendry, U.S. Over 70 Champion, former U.S. Junior Champion, who really was on the Wheaties box—see story in this issue.

"I need a gun!" Georgia State University's Robert Hyatt, at the U.S. National College Team finals against Montgomery College's Sean Lonergan, National Collegiate Champion. Lonergan won, 13 & 9, as did Montgomery College.

"For the third straight Olympics, this is the most sought-after ticket because of the sport's international popularity." *New York Times*, April 10, about table tennis.

"Bobby Holik, who centers the Devils' "Crash Line," missed a few games after twisting his ankle last week—playing ping-pong with teammate Brian Rolson." *Washington Post*, March 6, 1996, about New Jersey Devils' hockey team.

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](mailto:ttworld@erols.com), or call 301-838-8571.



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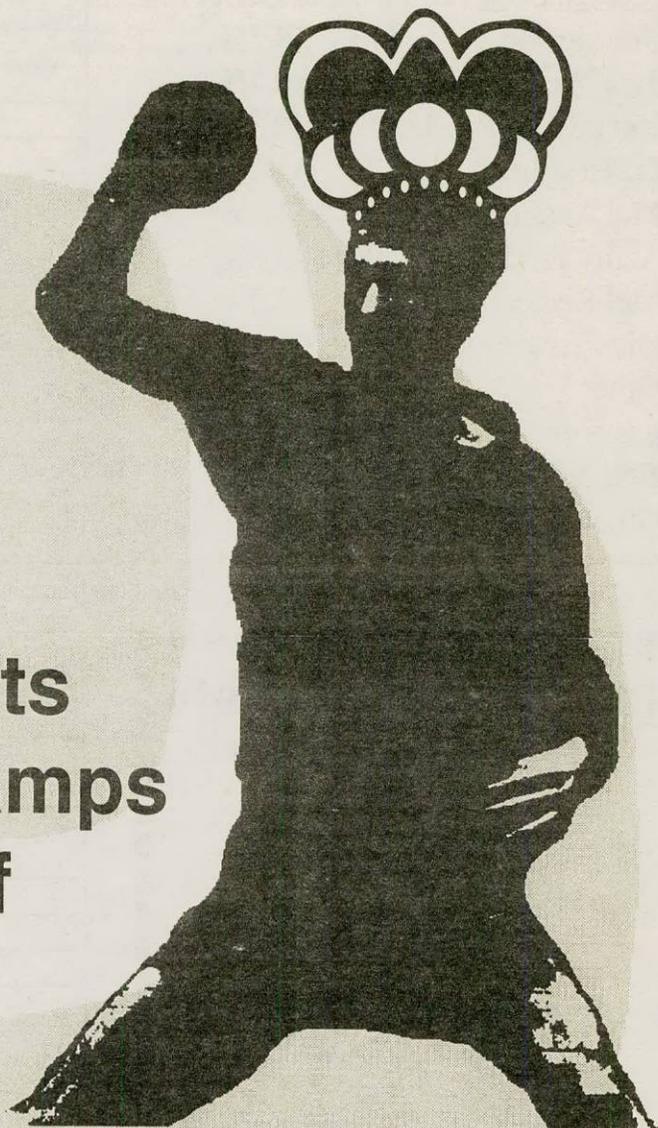
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# Results of USATT Election

1156 out of over 6000 eligible USATT voters sent in their ballots for the recent USATT election, counted on April 15. Running for the three Vice Presidential spots were eight candidates, including incumbent Shonie Aki. The other two incumbents, Sheri Pittman and Barry Rodgers, did not run for re-election. Running unopposed for Treasurer was Ben Nisbet. Percentages show the percent that voted for each candidate out of the 1156 ballots. All winning candidates take office on June 1, 1996, for three years. Next USATT election, for President, Executive Vice President, Vice President (one spot) and Secretary will be in 1998. State-by-state breakdown is given on right.

## Vice President (Top 3 Take Office)

1. Shonie Aki 679 58.7%
2. Jim McQueen 586 50.7%
3. Barney D. Reed 537 46.5%
4. Ed Hogshead 520 45.0%
5. Mal Anderson 417 36.1%
6. Azmy Ibrahim 391 33.8%
7. Mel Eisner 276 23.9%
8. Dick Evans 245 21.2%
9. Other 20 1.7%

## Treasurer

1. Ben Nisbet 1013 87.6%
2. Other 38 3.3%

# State-by-State Breakdown of USATT Election

State	Vice President									Treasurer	
	Aki	Anderson	Eisner	Evans	Hogshead	Ibrahim	McQueen	Reed	Other	Nisbet	Other
AL	4	1	1	2	1	2	4	0	0	4	0
AR	4	5	3	3	3	6	5	9	0	9	0
AZ	21	11	7	7	14	10	11	15	0	29	2
CA	207	49	42	30	74	155	76	54	3	176	6
CO	6	7	3	5	8	7	10	5	0	12	0
CT	2	5	6	1	4	2	8	6	0	10	0
DC	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	0
DE	2	2	0	0	1	1	2	3	4	2	2
FL	30	14	16	13	29	17	35	24	0	52	3
GA	14	8	7	6	12	5	23	7	1	18	2
HI	4	3	1	3	1	3	2	1	0	6	0
IA	6	1	1	0	6	0	3	2	0	5	0
IL	20	24	7	12	47	12	24	22	0	42	3
IN	19	6	6	9	21	16	15	16	0	27	1
KS	7	3	3	4	8	3	7	11	0	12	0
KY	7	3	1	2	4	2	3	10	0	11	0
LA	3	1	1	4	1	0	3	5	0	6	0
MA	10	17	8	7	10	2	7	13	0	22	1
MD	10	16	9	9	17	4	36	29	0	30	1
ME	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
MI	20	12	9	12	14	6	21	17	2	34	2
MN	7	4	2	0	9	5	6	9	0	10	1
MO	7	10	1	3	14	6	9	11	0	19	0
MS	2	0	1	1	3	1	1	1	0	3	0
MT	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
NC	11	10	3	5	2	8	32	9	1	17	0
ND	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
NE	2	1	4	1	6	0	0	3	1	4	2
NH	2	4	1	2	3	0	2	2	0	5	0
NJ	24	18	18	4	19	15	15	22	2	41	0
NM	5	6	3	1	2	0	5	6	0	5	1
NV	11	5	1	5	4	8	5	4	0	12	0
NY	33	31	35	11	36	15	42	37	0	71	0
OH	19	20	8	18	23	13	14	18	3	41	1
OK	1	4	7	1	5	2	7	7	0	6	4
OR	9	8	0	3	4	4	6	7	0	13	0
PA	27	33	20	15	40	9	41	75	2	81	4
RI	2	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	2	0
SC	11	5	2	2	6	3	15	4	0	16	0
SD	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
TN	5	3	0	0	3	4	8	5	0	9	0
TX	29	17	10	10	18	12	16	19	1	36	2
UT	4	2	0	2	2	2	2	1	0	5	0
VA	7	9	7	6	7	1	16	8	0	16	0
VT	3	1	0	0	2	1	0	2	0	2	0
WA	20	10	6	5	7	11	11	7	0	18	0
WI	5	6	4	5	12	1	6	7	0	16	0
WV	0	2	1	5	1	1	3	3	0	6	0
WY	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	3	0
Mixed States*	32	16	8	7	12	13	27	18	0	43	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1013</b>	<b>38</b>
	Aki	Anderson	Eisner	Evans	Hogshead	Ibrahim	McQueen	Reed	Other	Nisbet	Other

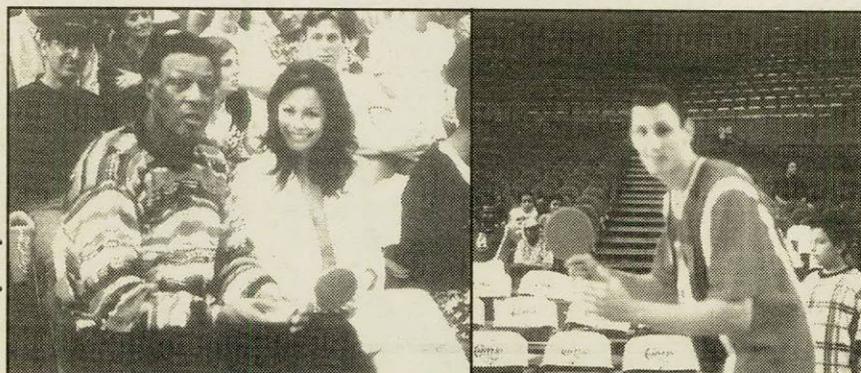
\*Ballots which were received too late to be categorized by state.

## Top Ten Things Said After Losing a Match to a Boos Brother

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

- 10) You know, no one's ever pushed my lobbs before.
- 9) In a basement, that guy is 2600.
- 8) ...and he holds a full-time job too?
- 7) Whatever happened to that "best man wins" cliché anyway?
- 6) I thought the rules were clear that men cannot play in tight speedos.
- 5) No.....no.....no way.....that can't be Dell Sweeris.
- 4) Does Madonna still date those guys?
- 3) Hey, which one's Belushi?
- 2) Aaaah, who needed those 50 rating points anyway.
- 1) Pleeeee, don't put this match in Table Tennis World magazine!

Photos by Ray Fields ©1996



At a recent L.A. Clippers Basketball game, Ray Fields snapped these pictures of Hall of Fame basketball player Elgin Baylor with wife & paddle (L); and NBA star and Slam-Dunk Champion Brent Barry, hamming it up (R).

**On Losing**  
by John Vos

Many articles have been published on strategies for winning at table tennis. As I have seen nothing in print on how to lose, let me be the first. I am not without credentials in this area; I have years of experience losing to players rated from 600 to nearly 2700.

First, do not lose sight of the fact that this is a game. You may play it for any of a number of reasons—health and fitness, exhilaration, or the social contact which is afforded by club play and tournaments—but it is still just a game. When egocentricity enters the picture, it is no longer a game, but rather an end unto itself. This seems to be more common among younger players who are being pushed by their parents (much as with Little League players).

I recall a tournament match several years ago in which I played a 12-year-old lad who should have, given the rating chart, beaten me. His father coached him before the match, between games, and—illegally—during the games themselves. It went to deuce in the third before I was fortunate enough to prevail. As I scored the 22-to-20-in-the-third victory, the lad began to cry and walked away from the table without shaking hands; rather, he went to his father looking for consolation, which he did not find. Instead, his father berated him for his style of play toward the end of the match. I imposed myself and forced a shaking of hands with this young fellow, who then left the playing area.

My point is that anyone can be a good and gracious winner. While everyone wants to win—that's the point of the game, for goodness sake—you should realize that every match will also have a loser. You are a better person if you can analyze how and why you lost, and perhaps improve your game by doing so. When you lose, do so gracefully, congratulate your opponent, keep a positive outlook, and get ready for your next match.

At the Nationals in 1992 I overheard a 2300+ player, who had just gone down to defeat, say something to his coach that stuck

with me to this day: "I figured out why that guy beat me. He's better than I am."

And remember . . . it's just a game.  
**John Vos, 203 Indian Head Avenue**  
**Indian Head, MD 20640**  
**1-800-848-4007 (w) • 301-753-6208 (h)**  
**us019699@interramp.com (e-mail)**

**Dear Editor,**

My son (Art) and I attended your training camp some two years ago, and we were impressed by your dedication to the great sport of table tennis. I do not know the exact reason why the USATT can't work with you to further the sport. It is truly unfortunate! Hope things can be patched up in the near future, for the sport needs dedicated people like you. My best wishes!

**Sincerely,**  
**Erh-Wen Hu**  
**Westfield, New Jersey**

**Dear Editor,**

Congratulations on two excellent issues of Table Tennis World. The magazine is truly professional with outstanding national and international news. Table Tennis players throughout the country would greatly benefit by subscribing to this outstanding magazine. Keep up the wonderful coverage.

**Sincerely,**  
**Stanley J. Robens**  
**Scottsdale, AZ**

**Dear Editor,**

I enjoyed your article on Tactics for the Slow of Feet (Jan/Feb issue). I hope few read it. You describe my strategy perfectly! If I can make you run, I don't have to. Good luck with your venture. What is this split in the USATT world all about? It will be interesting to see how some competition affects USATT. I always enjoy your photos and articles.

**Sincerely,**  
**George Stone**  
**Baldwin, NY**

**TABLE TENNIS WORLD** submitted an ad (and \$375 check) to run in *Table Tennis Today*, but the ad and check were returned by Executive Director Paul Montville. (See letter below.) No other ad has been turned down by USATT (a non-profit corporation) in known history. USATT is welcome to advertise in **WORLD**, as is anyone else who is trying to promote table tennis in the United States.



March 18, 1996

Larry Hodges  
Table Tennis World  
301 West Edmonston Drive  
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Larry

Enclosed is your cheque and ad copy from *Table Tennis World*. While I thank you for your interest in advertising in *Table Tennis Today*, I believe that running advertising for a competitor in our magazine to be inappropriate at this time. This refusal does not extend to camps, clinics, tournaments, etc., that you or the National Table Tennis Center may wish to run in the future.

Thank you once again for your interest in *Table Tennis Today*.

Best Regards,

Paul Montville  
Executive Director

cc: USATT Editorial Committee

**Dear Editor,**

I finally received my copy of the March/April issue today. Here are some thoughts.

*Table Tennis World* (TTW) is at the absolute minimum the second most important/popular/most-read table tennis magazine in the U.S. (Many may argue that it is better than *Table Tennis Today* (TTT) and is the most important magazine.) It has the support of an important and sizable section of the table tennis aficionados (players/coaches). This being the case, if USATT is serious in its claim that its main interest is the well-being of the sport, it should help TTW or at least not stand in its way. TTW is to TTT at least what *Newsweek* is to *Time* and deserves the right to do its job road-block-free. USATT should be more interested in promoting the sport than in protecting TTT from TTW.

Most importantly, TTW represents an important segment of the table tennis loving public in the U.S. and should be taken seriously by the USATT.

- USATT should help TTW get tickets to cover the Olympics;
- USATT should publish TTW's ads in *Table Tennis Today*;
- USATT should also let TTW publish ratings.

In other words, rather than looking at TTW as competition, USATT should look at TTW as another healthy voice speaking for the good of the sport.

Lest my motives be misunderstood, I am a beginning level player who loves the sport. I have no vested interests nor any connection whatsoever with TTW nor Larry Hodges

What I would like to read most in a magazine are:

- Instruction (coaching tips, training tips, etc.).

• Stories about top U.S. and International players (I have seen Ashu Jain in tournaments for a couple of years now; I have heard a lot about Chi-Sun Chui; I was very happy to know a little bit more about them as I read different articles). I like the International flavor in TTW. I would like to know more about Wang Tao, Deng Yaping, Ma Wenge, Kong Linghui, etc. Not the results of their local tournaments but human interest stories and how they train, how they are coached, etc.

- Results of tournaments.

I have mixed feelings about the details on what the USATT is doing wrong. I can understand Larry wanting to get things off his chest. Also, if these are not published in TTW, people like me will never know about them. However, I find these tiring to read. As for the details of the USATT meetings printed in TTT, I find these even more tiring.

My friends who are not USATT members sometimes ask to borrow copies of table tennis magazines. I always make sure that they return them because I save them. The only issue that I didn't care whether I got back or not is the first issue this year of TTT.

Let me end on a lighter note. There is a table tennis loving couple in Central Indiana, Mark Ben and Mari Weber. Mari once told me that while carrying her daughter (now about ten years old), she played table tennis one day before delivering, and then resumed playing about two weeks later. They have a table in their living room. Years later, the same daughter was surprised, when visiting a friend's home, that a table tennis table is not standard furniture!

**Sincerely,**  
**V.Chandrasekhar**  
**Kokomo, IN**

**TABLE TENNIS WORLD** inadvertently put the USATT logo in its internet website (<http://www.erols.com/ttworld>). We certainly didn't expect the following response! We had to call just to find out what the problem was, since the letter below doesn't specify. The logo was removed. Also, the letter below requests that we post a notice that **TABLE TENNIS WORLD** is not an official or approved publication of USA Table Tennis. It is so posted.



February 26, 1996

Larry Hodges  
Table Tennis World  
301 W. Edmonston Drive  
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Larry

It has come to my attention that you are using the USA Table Tennis logo in your advertising for Table Tennis World magazine. Your unauthorized use of our mark is an illegal infringement upon our rights as the owner of the mark. This letter will serve as formal notice to you to stop the use of the USA Table Tennis logo at once. Further use of our mark by you or Table Tennis World magazine will be subject to immediate legal action. In addition, we request that you post a notice that Table Tennis World is not an official or approved publication of USA Table Tennis.

Sincerely,

Paul Montville  
Executive Director

cc: USA Table Tennis Board of Directors  
Barton Enoch, Esq

# SHALL WE EVER OVERCOME?

by George Brathwaite, Member, United States Table Tennis Hall of Fame

There comes a time in one's life when one who cares has to abandon diplomacy out of necessity and take a stand in the interest of Human Rights. After decades of restrained emotions I can no longer endure, I have decided to yield to unrestrained impulses. One must stand by his or her convictions, and in my case, maybe at the expense of losing some old friends; but then again maybe establishing some new friends in the process.

What follows is my account after years of research and observation as to why this great sport of ours—presently ranked as the number two participation sport in the world—is in a state of dormancy in this, the richest country in the world, and will probably remain in this mode because of reasons known to only a relative few.

It is my obligation therefore to make an appeal to all members young and older to get involved and familiarize yourselves with the ongoing depressing politics (deception) and its continuity on the part of our Board of Directors (BOD) which simply result in a lack of forward movement in our sport.

Our BOD has adopted the slogan "We don't have any money." Usually a slogan can be defined as a catch phrase used to advertise and enhance a product... however, in this case it is used constantly to depress this wonderful product known the world over as "Table Tennis."

I had high hopes and aspirations until recently when I was appointed National Leagues Commissioner and asked to submit a budget to the BOD as a recommendation for the establishment of National Leagues. Almost immediately I established a Committee consisting of some of the most talented and knowledgeable individuals about leagues in the sport today, such as Christian Lillieros, Larry Thoman, Terri Weaver, Brian Lonergan, etc. All the major Table Tennis powers in the world today—China, Sweden, Germany, Belgium, France, Poland, Holland, Japan, England, Korea, etc.—have a National League System in which players could make a decent living after the years of hard work, sacrifice, dedication, and expense involved in aspiring to become the best at what they do. In the process, they provide entertainment for those who enjoy the sport as well as those who are less fortunate in their attempt to achieve the same goals. After several weeks of hard work and communication both by mail and by telephone between myself and my committee, a (Budget) Presentation which would certainly have launched a most valuable and needed program was submitted to the BOD.

Our Objective read as follows: "The United States of America National Table Tennis League (USANTTL) has been founded on the belief that it will have a direct influence on transforming Table Tennis into a highly regarded and ac-

cepted sport in the United States. It has been organized to increase participation and foster better relations among players by encouraging team spirit, pride and tradition. It is intended to serve as a program to generate publicity for the sport of Table Tennis and to attract prospective sponsors to support our efforts and activities."

This Presentation was first and last seen by the Budget Committee which consists of Terry Timmins, Sean O'Neill, Jimmy McClure and Ben Nisbet. The end result... Yes, you guessed it! ... "We don't have any money." Needless to say how bothered, bewildered and flabbergasted I was when I later discovered that my Presentation had not even been brought to the attention of the BOD! This Committee did not even extend the courtesy to inform me by mail about their decision so that I in turn could relay this most regrettable information to the USANTTL committee. I heard through the grapevine several weeks later.

Over the years, we have had people in all walks of life on our USATT Board of Directors: Professors, Doctors, Accountants, Statisticians etc. What therefore seems to be the problem? Why are the following words—Progress, Promotion, Programs, Development, and Growth—not in their Vocabulary? They are experts and have all the answers as to why a proposal would not work but never ever any input as to what would.

GROWTH is and always must be the primary objective of the USATT, and if we are to develop significantly, and to become a major Table Tennis

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**"...our annual budget is now in excess of \$900,000 (compared to \$270,000 in 1985, before Olympic money began to come in) but because of bad management... yes, you guessed it! ... 'We don't have any money.'"**

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power in the world, we have to reconstruct and function like all successful business enterprises. It is imperative.

Let me interject at this point that I too was a Vice President in 1988-90 during the Mel Eisner tenure. My aspirations and optimism for the future growth and development of Table Tennis was reaching the point of fanaticism. I was very proud to be elected to serve. However, I very quickly learned one of the most agonizing reasons why we never progressed significantly. Since my desire to see Table Tennis grow and become a major sport among others in the U.S. was so strong, I felt that I could not continue in this capacity with my hands tied, when so much was expected of me by those who voted for me. So, I gave up this position to run for the office of President against Danny Seemiller and Mel Eisner and unfortunately... lost!

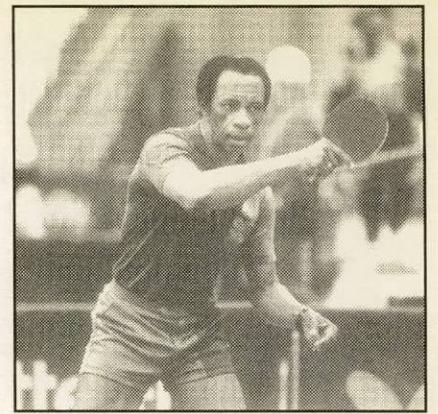
What I discovered along the way, however, was a seemingly simple yet deterring factor which resulted in effectively impeding progress: "The Agenda." Believe me when I say it plays as serious and important a role as ever before. Think about this for a moment ... An agenda is a schedule listing items to be deliberated at a meeting.

These items can determine whether we progress or become stagnant. We attended four meetings a year... we discussed an agenda made up by the President... the agenda had nothing to do with how Table Tennis can be developed meaningfully but rather everything to do with rules, amendments, by-laws and a host of other inconceivable items... so we got involved in constantly talking about what the President wanted to talk about... we always received the agenda about two days prior to a meeting... few Committees were ever established; and if they were they consisted of one person only who chaired two or three Committees and never bothered to recruit anyone else... few Committees ever reported to the Board... The President never delegated any responsibility to any member of the Board to study the various aspects of expanding the sport... no Committees ever studied programs.

The only way to get on the agenda, other than going through the president, is to get four Board Members to sign a letter requesting the item be put on the agenda. However, in most cases (including the League Proposal), it isn't discovered that the item is not on the agenda until it is too late—usually after the once-a-year budget meeting is over,

when it's too late for that year. And since most programs (including the League Program) are solicited by the President, it comes as a surprise and shock when the program is not on the agenda. The reality is that this simply doesn't happen—and so the agenda is made up solely by the president.

PROGRAMS are of vital importance because they are plans or procedures to be followed in order to achieve specific goals... There were no PROGRAMS, period! ... So we all returned home after each meeting and waited for the next one... three months later! ... Result... year after year nothing major, nothing significant was ever accomplished except rules and resolutions which after the books were closed, were never again heard of! This has been an ongoing process which still exists unto today!



Our BOD is considering having less meetings per year so as to save money? Now I ask you... is this the way our National Governing Body should be conducting its business? Less meetings mean less communication and less work. Less work means less achievements. Less achievements mean that we may need another Table Tennis Organization to boost and enhance our operations. At this point in time, we are really very dependent on Tournament Directors and individuals for taking the time and energy to keep the sport active—without them, we might not even have a sport. We need to channel monies into areas of significance. Our priorities are preposterously out of order. All successful institutions have meetings on a regular basis. Contact, Communication, Information and Programs are necessary components of the utmost importance.

How many articles have you seen in "USATT Today" or any other publication preceding it written by any elected official informing you about the implementation of any Programs and the procedures thereof? Ask members of the Board what specific approach he or she would take in order to produce significant growth and you will be shocked at the answer. One BOD member recently told me during a discussion that the main problem is the sport itself. "The sport is just not big enough," he said... to which I responded, that it was not the sport at all that's the problem, but rather it was the people running the sport. Now how could this individual make this sport grow when he thinks this way and is so limited. Most members of the Board have become complacent and non-productive either because of their inability to think and use their imagination to their full capacity, or because of the lack of good Leadership which simply does not motivate them, because they are simply not knowledgeable as to what progress really means, or because they had another reason in mind when they came on board in the first place; but most assuredly, after 63 years in circulation, this certainly is not where we belong.

Simply playing tournaments around the country is not what Table Tennis is all about. Internationally, there was a time when American supremacy prevailed... and for the longest time now, American supremacy has subsided because of our 'do little' approach and attitude. We have failed time and time again to capitalize on openings and opportunities to bring this sport to the attention of the American

people.

There was a time, of course, when it was acceptable for our Committee to say that there was very little they could do for members because the only sources of revenue were membership dues and sanction fees, but then came the Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 1984 and a surplus of the profits realized from the games was distributed to all associations throughout the United States. As a result the USATT inherited approximately 1.1 million dollars. Now we had money, but of course this is our security and foundation and is safely tucked away in a bank (understood). However, our annual budget is now in excess of \$900,000 (compared to \$270,000 in 1985, before Olympic money began to come in) but because of bad management... yes, you guessed it! ... "We don't have any money."

I am aware that there are dozens of members out there who share a genuine concern and who have great ideas for the future and success of our sport but we do have a problem and it begins with our selection system. We are constantly voting blindly based on campaign speeches that we read during election time. Our main problem is how to overcome this barrier so as to yield the best results and to produce a collective group of people dedicated and committed to developing the sport itself... especially in the leadership role... this is the

key position. The record speaks for itself. Our representatives usually lack the expertise of Marketing, Promoting and Publicizing this sport. We must improve our selection process by making an adjustment so that it becomes possible to have a Forum either at the U.S. Open or the U.S. Nationals or any another venue at which a selected panel of members could pose questions to candidates on matters pertaining to the future of Table Tennis. Because of the nature of our business, this direct interaction will afford us an opportunity to assess a candidate's awareness and ability to relate to the broad picture of being able to understand and further the development of this sport in all aspects as opposed to a candidate running only to function in the capacity for which he or she hopes to be elected.

It is important for candidates to debate points of interest and importance including:

(A) What areas of importance should the BOD be concentrating on so as to make a difference in our development process?

(B) Currently there are an overwhelming number of items already established and listed under "Revenues and Expenses." What are their thoughts on and how would they handle this?

(C) How would they resolve the Budget situation?

(D) Would we ever have money

and how would this occur?

(E) What really constitutes Junior Development?

(F) What guidelines would be followed to ensure the success and continuity of a Junior Development program?

(G) Would Committees ever be established to study Programs so that when "we do have money" these programs can be implemented?

(H) Are they in favor of our Athletes being able to make a comfortable living at this sport?

(I) How do they feel about a National Program such as the establishment of a "United States of America National Table Tennis League," consisting of various levels of play and the procedures thereof?

(J) Would members of our Organization be kept informed through our media about what progress has taken place as a direct result of the implementation of Programs?

(K) What steps can be taken to bring in Sponsors?

(L) The population in the United States is approximately 260,000,000 people and our USATT Membership is 7,000 which would indicate that there is one (1) member out of every 37,000 people!... What approach would they take to increase Membership?

Prospective officers must have a rounded knowledge of all aspects of development and what it entails. Estab-

lishing this system prior to elections will produce positive and meaningful guidelines that would help in our voting procedures and enable us to make the right choices as to who will serve in a productive way as a member of the Board of Directors. When we have individuals working in harmony and as a unified group, the quality of service will undoubtedly improve.

I know of many individuals out there who are working extremely hard to bring Table Tennis into their schools, communities and elsewhere to help make a difference; but their difference would not make a difference if it is impossible for them to communicate and coordinate their efforts with and have the support of the Board of Directors who have become aloof and nonchalant. Be aware of what's going on. Get involved. Familiarize yourself with the system. Know your Rights. Members are entitled to know and to be kept informed. Ask questions. This is not an Organization sworn to secrecy! The BOD has volunteered to serve you, your needs and to take this sport to levels far beyond our present status... for when the sport benefits we all benefit.

Because our resources are so vast and untapped, I felt compelled to share my experiences and thoughts with you in the hope that one day... "We shall overcome."

Let's keep in touch.

## UNITED STATES TABLE TENNIS

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SEE VIDEOS AND SLIDES OF THE GREATEST PLAYERS... EVER!!

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TICKETS MAY BE  
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# The Youth Cup and U.S. Junior Table Tennis

by Tong Lee

Tong Lee was on the Tournament Committee for the First Annual U.S. Table Tennis Youth Cup.

The First Annual U.S. Table Tennis Youth Cup, held at Chabot College in Hayward, CA, showcased most of America's top junior and youth players. The tournament also included trials to select the Boys' and Girls' Under 18 National Teams. Although the Youth Cup was primarily for junior players under 18 years of age, events for youth players under 23 were included to provide an opportunity for junior players to gain competitive experience and to improve their game by competing against and learning from better and older players. The rating constraints in the team events not only provided many teams a chance to win cash prizes, but also directed the older players to get to know, encourage, and teach the younger players. Of course, the older players, who have the best potential to represent the U.S. in world competitions in the near future, also had an opportunity to compete against other top players of their own age group. That so many top youth players, including 1996 Olympian Todd Sweeris, Sean Lonergan, Chi-Sun Chui, and Virginia Sung participated in the Youth Cup is a credit to their sense of responsibility and desire to contribute to the development of junior players.

It is noteworthy to point out that almost all of the premier junior (and youth) players are the products of junior development programs. A small number, such as Philip Lim, Michelle Do and Andrew Do, were coached individually by other coaches, but the Dos, too, are now part of the junior training program at Concord TTC. A junior development program exists when there is a place, a coach, and a class in which a group of juniors can receive instruction and training regularly. Coaches also work with elite junior players outside regular classes. The players benefit by being taught the complex strategies and technical skills required to play at an advanced level in a structured environment. By being in such an environment, they have the opportunity to train and play regularly with other talented players. Players in such group often encourage and motivate one another to excel as they strive to stay with or ahead of their teammates. Yet another often overlooked benefit is that players actually have fun training, sharing, and playing together. I have observed this to be true at the Concord TTC. There is little doubt that players in a junior program improve faster, become better players, have more fun, and stay with the game longer than if they have developed in relative isolation.

Junior programs have enabled the development of a new breed of players, some of whom have recently catapulted to national attention because of their high ratings and/or meteoric improvement in their game. Coach Bill Lui of Concord TTC recently remarked, "Just a few years ago, we did not know that our country's elite juniors could become so good that young, or improve that fast. Now we know." Junior programs have produced a just-turned 9-year-old 1583 player, a 12-year-old 2200 player, a 13-year-old 2273 player, and a 12-year-old 1900 player who did not know how to hold a racket properly just 19 months ago. For America to reclaim its past eminence as a world

table tennis power, we need to find many more such players and to provide the conditions for them to be nurtured and developed to their full potential. We have to change our old ways of thinking that American national and world-class players should be in their late twenties or thirties. Instead, we have to believe that a great country like ours, with its vast resources in people and the material things of life, can be capable of producing younger and better table tennis players to represent USA. Other countries have shown us so: Sweden produced a 17-year-old world champion in Stellan Bengtsson. China's Kong Linghui and Liu Guoliang were 20 and 19 when they played for the

elite juniors for a week's training at Colorado Springs, and the coaching tours by national coaches.

This First Annual U.S. Table Tennis Youth Cup marks a new beginning and a new hope for junior and youth players and for those who champion their cause for greater recognition and support. It commands the support of USATT Junior Committee, top USATT officials, sponsors, and many dedicated volunteers. USATT president Terry Timmins, in a letter addressed to the participants and parents, which was published in the tournament's program, declared, "We must work together to make this tournament a permanent part of the national circuit..." This

**"Just a few years ago, we did not know that our country's elite juniors could become so good that young, or improve that fast. Now we know."**

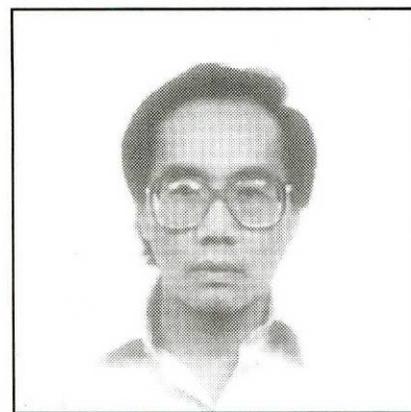
**-Bill Lui**

world singles championship last year. Korea's Kim Taek Soo is only 24 years old and started to play at 11, yet he has been representing his country since at least 1990. This means it took Kim only about 7 years to become a world-class player.

A junior training program by itself cannot assure the making of a top junior, let alone a world-class player. The player's inherent ability, work ethic, interest, and financial background are important. However, all things being equal, a junior program does play a vital role in helping a player reach his or her full potential, and do so more rapidly. One can judge its relevance and effectiveness by the players that it produces.

In spite of the importance of junior development programs, USATT has provided little support in this area. Perhaps a higher priority has been to invest in the past or the present, but not in the future. Perhaps few officials in USATT realized that nothing will popularize or energize our sport more than if and when America can produce a player able to advance to a medal round in the Olympics or in a World Championship. Perhaps they did not fully understand the potential of our juniors in the 90s. In 1995, USATT solicited applications for five Grass Roots Grant Awards of up to \$1,000 each. There were nine applications, but USATT decided to award only four, to Bartlesville TTC in Bartlesville, OK, Dynasty TTC in Houston, TX, Orange Coast TTC in Costa Mesa, CA, and Sunset TTC in San Francisco, although there were other junior programs just as deserving. A group of juniors did go to Taiwan for a youth tournament, but they were subsidized by Dr. Jiing Wang, not USATT. That's about it. For various reasons, USATT funds for junior players and programs are still not being made available at a level commensurate with their importance. Some low-budget, but worthwhile programs that used to exist have been scrapped or not administered properly to sustain the interest of players and coaches: the Residence Training Program, the program for selecting

large constituency, working in unity to promote junior development, and coupled with a USATT grant from the Junior Committee to subsidize the Youth Cup, portend better things to come for junior and youth table tennis. The tournament's 4-star rating and \$7,900 in prize money befit the great pool of table tennis talent in the tournament. There is justification to claim that this was the greatest concentration of junior and youth table tennis talent ever assembled in the U.S., the U.S. Open or the U.S. Nationals notwithstanding.



The members of the Tournament Committee worked hard to make this First Annual Youth Cup a success so that it will be the first of many to come. The organizers had set out to establish the standards for excellence in every aspect of the tournament—from the venue, playing conditions, prize money, and other organizational details to the printing of a tournament program as a challenge for future tournament committees in other venues to emulate or to surpass. The Committee wanted the Youth Cup to become a USATT event like the Open and the Nationals. Future plans include travel awards to subsidize needy top players who would otherwise be unable to participate. Inviting elite foreign players to see how our top juniors measure up against them is also a priority.

For the participants, the Tournament Committee hopes that they will realize that there are many USATT members who will fight for their interests. Hopefully, with the new-found recognition of their importance and with the experience gained from the tournament, they will be motivated to train harder to improve their game, not only for their own personal satisfaction, but for the good of the sport and for the glory of the country.

For parents of juniors and for those

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who support junior development, they must work together as a team. They should all become members of USATT and enfranchise themselves to participate in the USATT electoral process. Juniors can't vote, but parents and adults can—but only if they are members! Come to think of it, someone should start a parents' USATT membership drive! (How about it, Matt Beebe? *Editor's note--Matt's been trying!*). In this way, he or she can help not only the juniors, but also USATT. Only through working closely together and through networking can parents and their supporters form a large and unified constituency and generate a large block of votes to support candidates sympathetic to their cause. In this way, juniors, through their parents and supporters, deservedly, will have a more powerful voice in the administration and funding of programs for their development. I think it was Senator Robert Kennedy who said, "Some men see things as they are and say "Why?" I see things which are not, and say, "Why not?" The time has come for more parents and supporters of juniors to start asking, "Why not?" and to act accordingly.

For some USATT officials, perhaps it's time for them to ask, "What have I done for junior development and what more can I do?" That more things need to be done beyond continued funding for the Youth Cup was evident for those who attended the Youth Cup. We saw that America has a new crop of young (in their early teens) juniors who are probably comparable to the best players of other countries in their age group. There may be

others who did not participate in the tournament. In the past, we saw young American juniors gradually fall behind their peers from other countries as they grew from the early teens to the late teens and early twenties. Not that they were any less talented, but a significant contributing factor was that there were too few good juniors living in one location, training together, and being coached in a structured environment. We have to stop this

top young juniors have reached the 2200 to 2300 level primarily through junior programs and regular training with others at or above their skill level. Where do these players go from here? How can they go to the Second Annual Youth Cup as 2300 to 2400 players? For them to continue to improve, they must have the opportunity to train regularly with others at or above their present skill levels. For those living in areas where such training

of our investment! Top juniors should not have to pay to receive lessons from the national coach. If he will be working with national players, let the juniors join them. I do not mean that juniors will actually hit with national players. However, they can benefit from participating in the strategy and physical conditioning parts of the training with the adults. Even seeing the national players train will be beneficial. A popular school of thought says that even elite table tennis juniors will inevitably pause in their improvement or hit a barrier, so to speak, at some level. I believe that this thinking is outmoded. If a junior continues to participate in year-round training with players at or above their skill level, there is no reason for them not to keep on improving continuously to their full potential. Players experience their greatest rate of improvement in their teens rather than in their early twenties. Their ratings may stall for a short period after a large increase, but their skill level will quickly catch up to enable them to move on to the next level. Figure skating, like table tennis, is a highly-skilled sport. If you had watched Michelle Kwan skate just a couple of years ago, you would have seen clearly that she was not close to being in the same class as the top U.S. skaters then—Nancy Kerrigan or Tonya Harding. Now, she is a world champion at 15. I like to believe that our juniors can continue to improve like this. They need our help to make it possible for them to do so. We can do it only if we can change and USATT is committed to do more for junior development.

**"Juniors can't vote, but parents and adults can—but only if they are members! Come to think of it, someone should start a parents' USATT membership drive!" -Tong Lee**

trend. Unless something more is done in the next few years, we will inevitably lose most, if not all, of the current crop of highly talented young juniors as they are surpassed by foreign players.

What can USATT do to nurture this group of young juniors and those who come after them? I want to discuss what to me is one of the most important things it can do: The Youth Cup was important and beneficial to the junior players, especially the top players. It motivated them to train hard to prepare for it. It provided them with much competitive experience against their peers and more advanced players. Many participants won cash, had fun, and left with renewed dedication. Most of our

partners are not readily available, their progress from here on will be slower and eventually they will likely fall behind. This is where USATT can help. USATT can invite young promising juniors to summer camps for training under the national coach. I am not talking about a 1-week camp, but a 2- or 3 month camp. I am convinced that really talented juniors can improve by 100 or more rating points from such a camp. After a few of these camps, we will begin to see 2700 teen-aged players. This program may take a lot of administrative work, but will not cost big bucks. We have already paid for the services of a national coach—that's what is called a sunk cost. Let's make full use

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# Interview with

April 10, 1996  
by Larry Hodges

David Zhuang is a member of the U.S. Olympic Team. He has been the U.S. National Men's Singles Champion for the past two years (1994-95), National Mixed Doubles Champion for four straight years (1992-95) and was National Men's Doubles Champion three straight years (1992-94). He is 32 years old, and resides in North Brunswick, New Jersey, and plays at the New Jersey Table Tennis Club in Westfield. He recently became a U.S. Citizen.

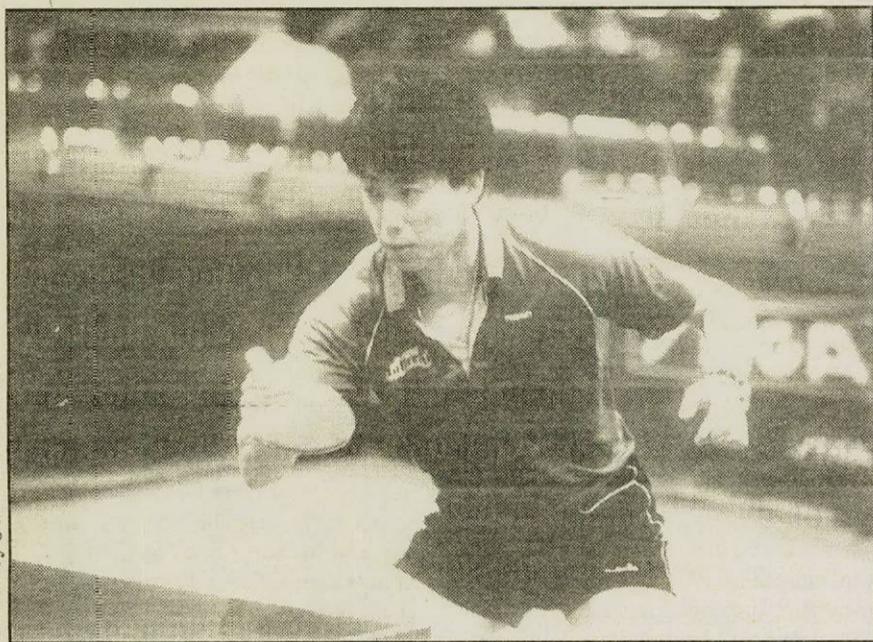


Photo by John Oros © 1996

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

**David:** My brother taught me how to play when I was 7 or 8 years old. I started training at my primary school. I played every tournament in the city.

**TTWORLD:** Were you serious right from the start, or did that come later?

**David:** That came later, when I was about 10 years old.

**TTWORLD:** How often did you train when you got serious?

**David:** Oh, every day.

**TTWORLD:** Who did you train with?

**David:** With about 20 or 30 other players, and the coach.

**TTWORLD:** Were the players grouped together by age or by level?

**David:** By level. We had three divisions. We played round robins, and the top 10 would be in the top group. If you finished at the bottom of your group, you went down; if you finished at the top of your group, you went up.

**TTWORLD:** Were all these players from one school?

**David:** No, several schools. They trained together.

**TTWORLD:** Tell us about your table tennis career in China.

**David:** I was two-time Champion of the Canton Province of China, in 1982 and 1986. They hold their championships every four years, so I won two in a row. Jiang Jialiang [1985 & 87 World Champion] was in my province. He played in 1982. I beat Johnny Huang in the semifinals one year.

I was a professional player in Canton, China, for 15 years. My results were pretty good, but I didn't get to play too much. During most of that time, I was waiting for my visa to come so I could come to the United States.

**TTWORLD:** How old were you when you became a professional player?

**David:** I became a professional player in 1975, when I was 12.

**TTWORLD:** You were a professional player when you were 12?!!

**David:** Yes.

**TTWORLD:** Wow!

**David:** I was on the same Province team as Jiang Jialiang. Johnny Huang was two years behind me.

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

**David:** Probably playing against foreign players in China. I was the number one player for the team against foreign players—I never lost to them.

**TTWORLD:** When did you play foreign players?

**David:** Not really in tournaments. Teams like the Japanese National Team would train in China, and we would play matches with them. Every year the Japanese National Team would come to China, and I never lost a match to them.

**TTWORLD:** Who is your best win ever?

**David:** Probably Desmond Douglas of England, just after he won the European Championships, in a tournament in Hong Kong. I've also beaten Johnny Huang in some major tournaments.

**TTWORLD:** Tell us about your career as a student in China.

**David:** I have a degree in physical education from Canton Sports College in China. I majored in table tennis.

**TTWORLD:** Did you study other sports?

**David:** Not really.

**TTWORLD:** What other sports do you like?

**David:** Basketball and soccer.

**TTWORLD:** How would you compare table tennis in China versus the U.S.? What were your first impressions of table tennis in the U.S.?

**David:** Big difference. Table tennis in China is very, very serious. It's very popular, the number one sport in China. So, when I was young, almost every kid had a racket with them. They can play table tennis anytime. So anyone who wanted to be a great player had to work hard. When I first came to this country, I played in Westfield for the first time. I said to myself, "Big Difference!"

**TTWORLD:** If you took all the best players in the U.S. and put them in one club, would that be like a typical Chinese club?

**David:** Yeah. But, I like to play here, because there is more freedom here. Here, everything goes by results, and you get what you are supposed to get. So that's good. When I was in China, I didn't get what I was supposed to get. I won the Province Championships, but they just wouldn't use me, wouldn't put me on the National Team. They knew I was going to leave China, because I was waiting for my visa.

**TTWORLD:** What year did you come to the U.S.?

**David:** 1990.

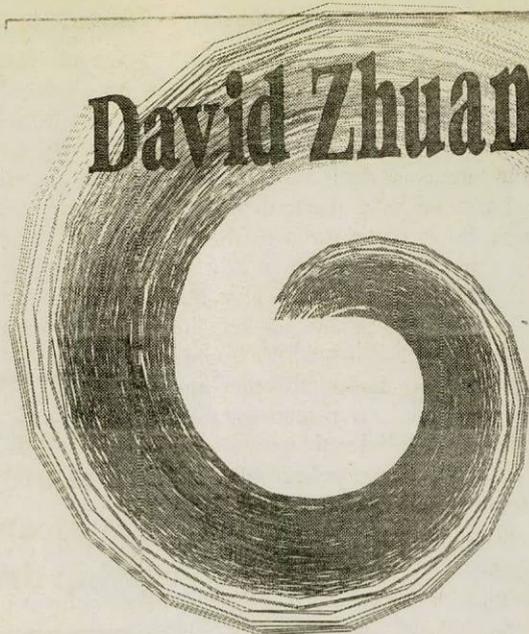
**TTWORLD:** What year did you apply for a visa to come to the U.S. from China?

**David:** 1980.

**TTWORLD:** So it took 10 years to come here?

**David:** Yes.

# David Zhuang



**TTWORLD:** Wow! I don't think most people know it takes that long.

**David:** Oh, yeah. Right now, even longer. It's very tough. I was thinking about quitting table tennis, because a lot of things happened. But I love this sport, so I kept playing, right up until now. Now I feel I have more fun.

**TTWORLD:** That's interesting. So, in China, you won the province championships twice in a row, but they wouldn't put you on the National Team. Now here, in the U.S., after winning two straight National Men's Singles Titles in a row, you still haven't been invited to any of the Sears Invitationals, the Beverly Hills Gilbert Cup, and didn't get a single vote from the USATT Board of Directors for Player of the Year.

**David:** Yes, that's true. Hopefully that will all change—hopefully, I'll be invited this year.

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

**David:** I will try my best. I will go for a medal for U.S. Table Tennis. Maybe someone will remember me, and I'll get more votes! I really got zero votes this year?

**TTWORLD:** Yes—Khoa Nguyen got 7, Jim Butler 5, Cheng Yinghua 2, and Todd Sweeris 1. Voting was done by the Board of Directors, the two U.S. National Coaches, and the Team Manager. Maybe if you won a medal at the Olympics, you'll get a few votes!

**David:** Maybe, but I really don't care about this. (Laughter)

**TTWORLD:** How would you describe your playing style?

**David:** Penhold quick attack, with pips.

**TTWORLD:** How do you train now, and how often?

**David:** About two or three times a week. My wife, Joannie, gives me a lot of multi-ball. Sometimes I practice with Anini Lawson.

**TTWORLD:** Do you have any hobbies outside table tennis?

**David:** I love all sports. I like to watch basketball especially. Also tennis.

**TTWORLD:** Tell us about your family.

**David:** My parents live nearby. I live with my wife, Joannie Fu, who's right here.

**TTWORLD:** Joannie, tell us about your career.

**Joannie:** I almost beat Larry Hodges in Pennsylvania last year, but I let it get away!

**TTWORLD:** Haven't you two won a number of titles together?

**Joannie:** David and I are the defending New Jersey Mixed Doubles Champions. I've participated in the U.S. Olympic Sports Festival seven times.

**TTWORLD:** Tell us about David, Joannie.

**Joannie:** Every since I met David, I've improved. David switched me from inverted to pips out. It took me a while to get used to it. I enjoy the new style, and I enjoy watching David play. I consider this the highlight of my career, being side by side with David, helping him train, being on the sidelines when he plays matches. So, it's not so much my own personal achievement that I'm after, but it's a pride and honor to work with him.



**With Wife/Coach Joannie Fu, herself a 7-time U.S. Olympic Festival player.**

**TTWORLD:** I see that he is your coach, and you are his coach.

**Joannie:** Yes, we're a team, partners for everything. I think that's the best way to accomplish anything in life.

**TTWORLD:** Where did you two meet?

**Joannie:** At the Westfield club.

**TTWORLD:** So table tennis brought you two together.

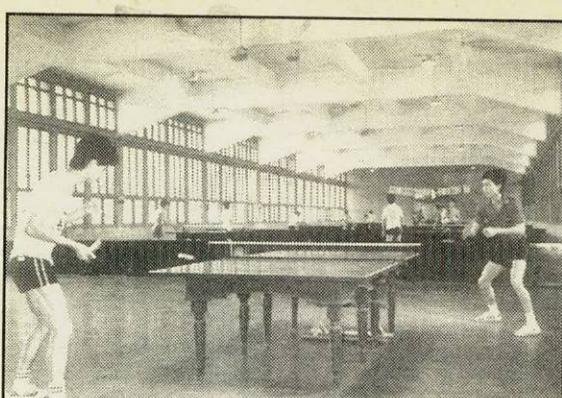
**David:** Yes.

**TTWORLD:** How did you find the Westfield Club when you first came to the U.S.?

**David:** I found out about it at a Chinese Church. They told me about Westfield, and took me to the club. This was three months after I had come to the U.S. I didn't play for those three months.

**TTWORLD:** When you went to the Westfield Club for the first time, did they know you were coming, and who you were?

**David:** No. The first person I played was Chris Lehman.



**David practicing with Guang-Dong Province teammate & World Champion Jiang Jialiang in 1988.**

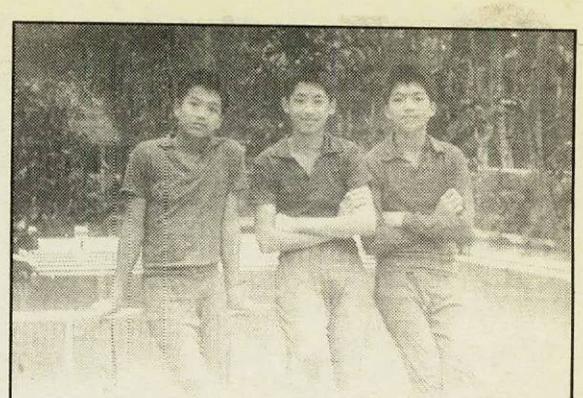
I played a game with him. I didn't try 100%—when I found I had no trouble winning, I didn't go all-out—I didn't want to make him feel bad. That's the Chinese way.

Then I played Barry Dattel. After I beat him, everybody asked him how good I was, and he said about 2300. I didn't know what 2300 meant! I asked my friend, "What are you guys talking about? What does 2300 mean?" He said it meant I was a good player, but not at the top.

I played my first tournament in Maryland, in 1990, either the Maryland Open or the Easterns. I beat John Onifade in the semifinals 2-0. I lost to Huazhang Xu in the finals. My first tournament match was against Dexter St. Louis, who was shot and killed a few years later in a taxi. He almost beat me!

**TTWORLD:** Did you know all these Chinese players in the U.S. when you were in China? Cheng Yinghua, Huazhang Xu, Jack Huang, Gao Jun?

**David:** Oh, yeah! Of course! I played Xu in China in the National Tournament. I won that time. But Xu was impressive. He plays better in the U.S. than in China. He is a very smart player. He was very good in school, too.



**Guang-Dong Province teammates and junior stars in 1975, L-R: 12-year-olds Lwou Yung Chiang, Zhuang Yong-Xiang (David), and soon-to-be 2-time World Men's Singles Champion Jiang Jialiang.**

**TTWORLD:** Anything else you'd like to add?

**David:** I like your magazine! You are doing a great job.

**TTWORLD:** Thank you! What do you think would make table tennis bigger in the U.S.?

**David:** Table tennis is a very interesting game. But right now, I have the chance to watch a basketball game. I can't do that with table tennis. I think we need to really push for TV coverage. That would help a lot.

**Joannie:** I think before you get to the TV coverage of our sport we have to increase the understanding of our sport. Even if we had TV coverage, we aren't going to get that many people to watch it, and then nobody will want to cover it any more. So the root of the problem is to make the American public more appreciative of the sport, and recognize it as a sport. I think these are all areas we can promote.

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JIM BUTLER (USA) - JAN OVE WALDNER (SWE) (GAME 3)  
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  
SEMI FINAL: KIM TAEK SOO (KOR) - JEAN-MICHEL SAIVE (BEL)  
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# INTERVIEWING THE World Champions

by Liu Yi

## World Men's Champion Kong Linghui

## World Women's Champion Deng Yaping

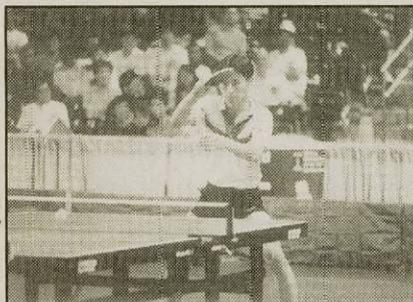


Photo by John Oros ©1996

At the 43rd World Table Tennis Championship held in Tianjin last May, the Chinese Team made a clean sweep of all seven titles. Kong Linghui, a handsome boy who had just turned 20, became a bright star after winning Men's Singles and Men's Team, and second place in Mixed Doubles with Deng Yaping.

**TTWORLD:** When and why did you learn to play table tennis?

**Kong:** My father is a table tennis coach and he took me to the training hall when I was very young. I started to play at the age of six, and at that time, I thought table tennis was very, very interesting. In other words, I played just for fun.

**TTWORLD:** As a young world champion, you are getting more and more popular now. Do you think that life changes after you become famous? How do you feel when strangers recognize you on the street and ask for your autograph?

**Kong:** I feel good when recognized by people on the street and, of course, one enjoys a sense of satisfaction when respected and loved by others. I am very happy with my life right now, though there have not been many changes [since winning the titles].

**TTWORLD:** Could you comment on your performance in winning at least five international open championships and two world titles since 1993? What is your next goal in table tennis?

**Kong:** I owe my success to good luck. Chinese men do not have technical supremacy over European players. There is no easy win in current world title tournaments. However, I wish to win a gold medal in the Atlanta Olympic games. Becoming an Olympic champion is my next goal.

**TTWORLD:** What do you do in your spare time?

**Kong:** As a player, I have to spend a lot of time and energy on table tennis. In my spare time, I rest in my room, watching videotapes and chatting with friends. I do not really like outdoor activities.



Photo by John Oros ©1996

Deng Yaping is probably the most famous Chinese sportswoman. Having won two Olympic gold medals and more than a hundred world and national titles, she has maintained her World No. 1 ranking since 1991, when the International Table Tennis Federation started computer rankings. Her name was included in Top 10 Athletes of China for the years 1991, 1992, 1993, and 1995, which speaks well for her popularity in China.

**TTWORLD:** Many people are deeply impressed by your aggressiveness when you play. How have you managed to keep such a fighting spirit throughout all these years?

**Deng:** When I was a junior player, several coaches turned me down because I was too short. Because of this, my way to becoming a world champion was not smooth at all. For this reason, I cherish every opportunity and always do my best whenever I play. For me, to play is to win and my goal is to be Number one. With this in mind, I must be at my best for every match. I must follow a well-known Chinese saying, "Don't be dizzy with success, nor discouraged by defeat."

**TTWORLD:** As we know, most of your time is spent on training and tournaments. Do you sometimes feel regret for being a player, who has to leave home regularly and has little chance to do anything else?

**Deng:** I think one who does something he/she really loves to do is the happiest person in the world. I am happy to be a player as I love this sport so much. Besides, table tennis made me more mature, for I have to travel a lot and experience unspeakable pressure and difficulty. My only regret is not having enough time to study and read books. I hope I can go to a university someday.

**TTWORLD:** What do you like besides table tennis?

**Deng:** I have to arrange my other activities around the central task, which is table tennis training and competition. Normally, I relax on weekends because I think doing something else helps me to practice harder. I love to go fishing, bowling and disco, but never tennis, which I think is harmful to my table tennis training. A player must know how to protect herself.

**TTWORLD:** You won two Olympic golds in Barcelona. Do you think that honor is different from other world titles? What do you think of the upcoming Atlanta Olymp-

pic games?

**Deng:** Olympic Games are the most significant and exciting sports meet in the world because it is held every four years and it is for many sports events. Today, it is not easy for one player to keep a leading position in the world over 10 years. That is to say, very few table tennis players are lucky enough to attend three consecutive Olympic Games. To me that is also why an Olympic gold is "heavier" than other medals. Apart from this, attending Olympic Games with other ace Chinese players make you have a stronger sense of pride.

You know there are millions of Chinese at home watching you, expecting you to win a gold medal for the motherland, and that really is exciting. I will do my best to win at the Atlanta Olympic Games.

**TTWORLD:** What are you planning to do after finishing your career as a player?

**Deng:** As I mentioned, I hope I can study at a good university. Frankly speaking, I have not yet made a specific plan of what to do in the future. But I am sure that it must have something to do with table tennis for I love it so much.

## TABLE TENNIS WORLD Mini-Profile

<b>Name:</b>	Sean Lonergan
<b>Age/DOB:</b>	20/5-5-75
<b>Livelihood:</b>	Student & Coach
<b>Current Home:</b>	Rockville, Md.
<b>Highest Rating Ever:</b>	2589
<b>Equipment:</b>	Butterfly Keyshot, Butterfly Ekrips 2.1 mm
<b>Style of Play:</b>	Control player with strong backhand
<b>Recent Achievements:</b>	1995 U.S. National Collegiate Champion; U.S. National Under 22 Champion; Quarterfinals, Men's Singles, U.S. Nationals; Member of 1996 U.S. National Collegiate Team Champions (Montgomery College)
<b>Career Highlights:</b>	Beating Dan Seemiller from down 2-0, 20-17 match point at 1995 Nationals; beating Jim Butler from down 17-12 in 5th at 1994 Nationals.
<b>Ultimate Goal in Table Tennis:</b>	Olympian & National Champion.
<b>Nickname:</b>	Casper
<b>Favorite Sport(s) Besides Pong:</b>	Basketball & tennis
<b>Hobbies:</b>	Listening to music, reading, running
<b>Favorite Opponent:</b>	Masamichi Kubo
<b>Favorite Psychological Tactic:</b>	Positive self-talk
<b>Best Doubles Partner:</b>	Brian Pace
<b>Most Memorable Comeback:</b>	Winning from down 17-12 in fifth at 1994 Nationals against Jim Butler.
<b>Player I Most Admire:</b>	Cheng Yinghua
<b>Most Feared Opponent:</b>	Foreign players, because I don't have experience against them.
<b>Strongest Part of My Game:</b>	Backhand
<b>Wildest Game I've Been In:</b>	1995 Nationals against Dan Seemiller—kept blowing leads, kept coming back, finally won.
<b>Wildest Shot I've Ever Seen:</b>	Backhand chop around the net from off the table with no bounce, by Barney J. Reed, during warm-up
<b>Favorite Tournament:</b>	U.S. Nationals
<b>Ping Pong Peeve:</b>	Not enough large tournaments, low prize money

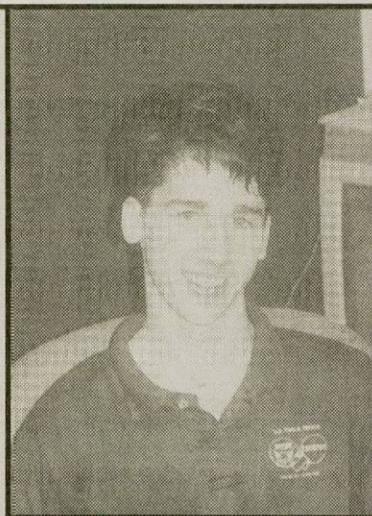


Photo by Larry Hodges ©1996

# The Todd Sweeris Story

The University of Maryland Junior long has played table tennis in the shadow of his more famous parents. Now, with a berth on the U.S. Olympic Team, he's establishing a reputation of his own.

by Don Markus, Baltimore Sun

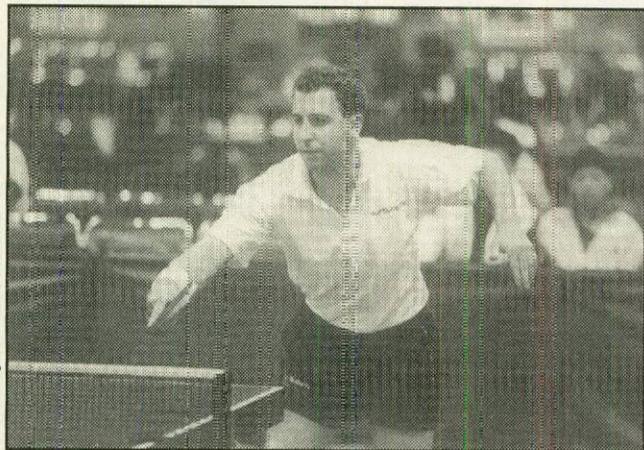


Photo by John Oros ©1996

Todd Sweeris knows what the offspring of famous athletes go through growing up, what it might have been like for Grant Hill or even Ken Griffey Jr. In a way, Hill and Griffey probably had it easier.

They only had one parent's legacy to follow. Sweeris had two.

"It was great having parents like that," Sweeris said recently. "By the same token, whenever I would go to tournaments, people would ask me how my parents were doing, why they weren't still playing. That kind of psychologically wears you down. I don't want to be better than my parents were, but I don't want people telling me I'm not as good as they were."

Dell and Connie Sweeris were considered among the top men's and women's table tennis players in the country during the 1970s. They shared more than two dozen national championships, including four mixed doubles titles. Both are in the sport's hall of fame.

But because table tennis didn't become an Olympic sport until 1988, neither Dell nor Connie Sweeris was able to do what the youngest of their two children recently did: make the U.S. Olympic team. It was a dream that had its roots in the kitchen of the Sweeris home in Grand Rapids, Mich.

"I had a little paddle, and we had a refrigerator that was on one of those hard linoleum floors," recalled Todd Sweeris, 22. "I used to hit the ball against the refrigerator for hours."

Said Connie Sweeris, who retired from competition after Todd was born in 1973: "He always liked anything that involved a bat and ball. He was a pretty good baseball player. He won a tennis medal when he was 7. But he always seemed to want to go back to table tennis."

These days, Sweeris isn't practicing his backspin serves and topspin forehands off the refrigerator. When he's not attending classes at the University of Maryland, where he's a junior accounting major, he's usually here at the National Table Tennis Center.

The proximity of the center to the College Park campus, as well as the coaching he receives from Cheng Yinghua, played heavily into Sweeris' decision to attend Maryland. As a member of the national junior team, he drove with a friend to Augusta, Ga., a hotbed for table tennis and home to several world-ranked players.

"After we were in Augusta, we decided to drive up to Maryland," said Sweeris, the 1990 national junior champion. "I never left."

Said Cheng, who played for 10 years for the Chinese national team and is still ranked 33rd in the world: "Right now, he's playing very well. He almost beats me."

Another of the attractions to Maryland was that Sweeris could become anonymous again. While the basketball team was going to the Sweet 16 in two straight NCAA tournaments before this spring's early exit, Sweeris and his club teammates were leading the Terrapins to three straight national championships.

The only recognition the team received was because one its members, Andre Scott, is a paraplegic. Scott recently made the U.S. Paralympic team. Few of Sweeris' fellow students said anything when he returned from making the Olympic team in early March.

"I really don't want people to know," said Sweeris. "But I'd like my professors to know (why he was missing class)."

It was Sweeris' second try at qualifying for the Olympic team.

In 1992, he finished eighth, but had beaten some highly ranked players along the way. He figured that he'd get another chance in 2000, "but this is the one I wanted to go to," he said. "I don't think you can have a better experience than to compete in the Olympics in the host country."

Sweeris said he hopes to use the experience in Atlanta this summer as a springboard to play professionally after graduation, either in Japan or Sweden, where players get their expenses picked up by teams and some make more than six figures in salary, endorsements and tournament winnings.

"Some guys are paid \$200,000 to \$300,000 a year; there are even a few millionaires," said Sweeris. "I think I could make between \$15,000 and \$20,000 over expenses. I never thought I'd be interested in that. But by graduating in 1998, I could play couple of years over there and then get ready for 2000."

Eventually, Sweeris will have to do what his parents did—go on with the rest of his life. He might even follow in his father's footsteps again: Dell, who played into the early 1980s, is a certified public accountant outside of Grand Rapids. His son's performance at the Olympic trials in Flint, Mich., was a homecoming of sorts. After winning his first 11 matches and sewing up his place on the team with a win over No. 2 Khoa Nguyen, third-ranked Sweeris said he had trouble getting focused for his final two matches against fourth-ranked Butler and top-ranked David Zhuang. "I went

completely flat," said Sweeris. "For me to play well, I've got to keep up my edge. You only peak one or two times a year. I definitely peaked for the Olympic trials."

Said his coach, Cheng: "Everyday, he works very hard. And he thinks. Sometimes, you tell players one day, they forget the next. Todd remembers everything. He asks a lot of questions."

There is one question Sweeris doesn't ask. But plenty of people who knew his parents and saw him play will tell him anyway. Such is life as a legacy.

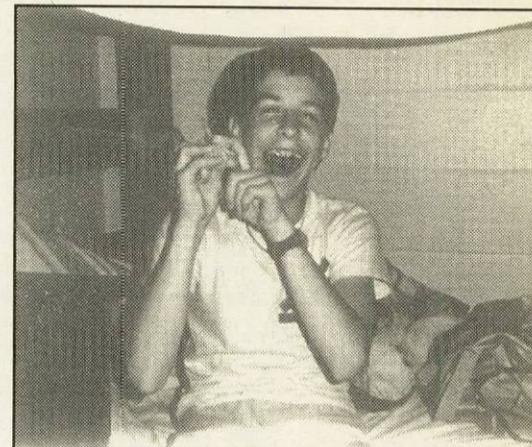


Photo by Larry Hodges ©1996

Todd at 13--already a resident at the Olympic Training Center.

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# ATTACK OF THE

# KILLER CADETS

by Larry Hodges

Rarely, if ever, has the U.S. had so many promising players in the 14 & under age group for boys. Most generations do not have a single player that young rated over 2200. This time we have (gulp) *Five!*

The five are: T.J. Beebe (14), Philip Lim (14), Sunny Li (13), Freddie Gabriel (13), and Keith Alban (12). They rank 1-5 in Under 16—ahead of all 15-year-olds.

This lineup may be the only lineup this year that could possibly match up with the Chicago Bulls—all five list basketball as a favorite pastime. But rather than batting averages, these kids have ratings—ratings that put many of us to shame. Ratings (as of April 6) of 2255 (Sunny), 2239 (T.J.), 2236 (Philip), 2236 (Freddie) and 2191 (Keith). (Keith may be under 2200 now, but he's been rated as high as 2286!) The ratings are so close, the five are basically dead even. (Just missing the cut for this article, but sure to get coverage in upcoming issues, was California's Peter Zajac, 14, who finished second at the U.S. Junior National Team Trials, despite going in with a rating of 2049—the 14th seed!)

So now, in alphabetical order, let's meet the 2200+ Cadet Kids!

(Next issue: *The Cadet Girls!*)



## Keith Alban

Age/DOB: 12, 12/10/83

Hometown: PARKLAND, FL.

Sponsor: T.G. ENTERPRISES

Equipment: SKITT CARBO-TECH  
BLADE, 2.1 COPPA SPONGE

Major Titles: 1996 U.S. Youth Cup Under 14 Boys' Finalist... 1995 U.S. Open Under 12, 14 & 16 Boys' Singles Champion... 1995 Detroit Open American Allstar Under 16 Singles Champion... 1994 U.S. National Under 12 Boys' Singles, Under 14 Doubles & Team Champion... 1994 U.S. National Under 14 Boys' Runner-up... 1994 U.S. Junior Olympic Under 12 Boys' Champion... 1994 U.S. Open Under 12 Boys' Singles Champion... 1993 U.S. National Under 10 Boys' Singles Champion... #3 in U.S. in Boys' Under 14.



Photo by John Oros © 1996

The "youngster" among the cadets, Keith's the quietest of the lot. He just isn't much of a talker, and he especially doesn't like talking about himself. An admirable quality, but as Coach Marty Prager said, it makes him one of the toughest of interviews—almost as tough as facing his two-sided barrage of loops and smashes.

Keith caused a sensation at the 1995 U.S. Open by sweeping the Boys' Under 12, Under 14 and Under 16 events! If that's been done before, it was a long time ago in a U.S. Open far, far away.

Keith was born in 1983 in Yorktown Heights, New York. However, his talent wasn't recognized in time, and no attempt was made to recruit him to stay before he moved to Florida in 1985 when he was 18 months old.

In 1992, when eight and a half years old, Keith went to a summer camp where table tennis was one of the activities. Shortly afterwards, he saw an article in the newspaper about local junior star Anthony Torino, and his family contacted Calvin McLeod (father of Casey McLeod), who introduced Keith to his coach, Marty Prager. One year later, at the 1993 U.S. Junior Nationals, Keith was U.S. Under 10 Boys' Champion, one month after making the finals of Under 10 Boys' at the U.S. Open.

It didn't just happen on its own. Keith plays nearly seven days a week—rarely taking days off. Three times a week, he goes to the local club and trains with Coach Prager and then plays matches with club players. The other four days a week, he practices with Torino, does multi-ball with Coach Terese Terranova, and practices with a robot.

When not playing table tennis, Keith likes to play basketball, invite friends over, or watch Seinfeld on TV. He's in the sixth grade, and his favorite class (other than basketball at PE) is "getting out!"

Keith's playing style is 2-winged attack, mostly looping the forehand while looping or hitting the backhand. According to Coach Prager, Keith is currently changing his game from a "little boys' game" to a "man's game." This mostly means he's learning to play with more power from both sides, and learning to return serves short to stop opponents from looping.

## T.J. Beebe

Age/DOB: 14, 12/18/81

Hometown: ATLANTA, GA.

Sponsor: T.G. ENTERPRISES

Equipment: SKITT CARBO-TECH  
BLADE, 2.1 COPPA SPONGE

Major Titles: 1996 U.S. Youth Cup Under 16 Boys' Champion... 1995 U.S. Under 16 Boys' Singles Champion... 1995 Junior Olympic Under 14 Boys' Singles Champion... 1995 Boys' Under 14 Singles Runner-up... 1995 Louisiana Open American Allstar Under 16 Champion... 1994 U.S. National Primary School Boys' Champion... 1994 U.S. National Junior High School Doubles Champion... 1994 U.S. National Under 14 Doubles & Team Champion, Under 14 Singles Runner-up... 1994 U.S. Open Under 14 Boys' Singles Champion... #2 in U.S. in Boys' Under 16.

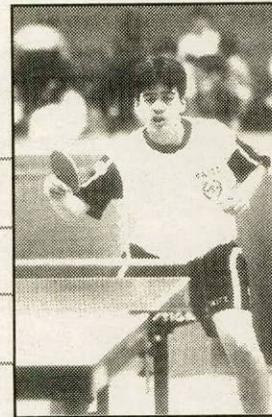


Photo by Joe Holman © 1996

Quiz question: what does T.J. really stand for? Few know the answer. For the record, it's not "Tiberius Johannson," as rumored by one clown at the U.S. Youth Cup Championships. It's for—no, you'll just have to wait until the end of the T.J. section for this breaking news!

T.J. was born in 1981 in Joliet, Illinois, but moved to Florida in 1990, when he was 9. When he was 10, saw Anthony Torino and Mike Lioy and others training with Marty Prager, and joined in. Soon, he was taking lessons from Prager three times a week, and moving up the ranking list rapidly. Style-wise, T.J.'s a two-winged attacker, with a loop from both sides. T.J.'s sister, Jacqui, 11, also played for a while, but stopped.

In 1994, his dad got a job in Atlanta, Georgia, and so the family moved there. T.J. now receives coaching from Michael Hyatt, and practices with Hyatt's brother, Robert and others.

T.J. reached the finals of both Under 14 and Under 16 Boys' at the Junior Nationals in 1995, playing Sunny Li in both finals and splitting, with T.J. winning the Under 16's. T.J. also won Junior Olympic Under 14 Boys' Singles that year. This year, he won Under 18 Boys' at the Atlanta Cup Challenge in February, and won Under 16 Boys' at the U.S. Youth Cup in California in April. He has numerous other titles in both singles and doubles, including coming in 4th at the U.S. National Junior Team Trials at the U.S. Youth Cup—for under 18.

When not playing table tennis, T.J. likes basketball, collecting baseball cards, and rap. He also is a fan (from his Illinois days) of the Chicago Bulls, White Sox and Bears. In school, his favorite classes are science and Spanish.

Recently, T.J. was featured on TV in Japan. A top Japanese girl, Fukuhara Ia, came to Atlanta and the two did an exhibition, which was televised in Japan. T.J. was also featured recently on Campus Life, a TV Program for students from junior high school through college. T.J. has done 14 exhibitions recently for schools and the Olympics.

T.J. will be a volunteer at the Atlanta Olympics, working as a table tennis statistician. The playing site for the Olympics is about 20 minutes from his home in Atlanta.

T.J. is the only top junior player, in fact the only top player, period, to have his own home page on the internet. The site was set up by his father, Matthew, as a way to attract sponsors. The website is:

<http://www.pccnet.com/tjbeebe/tjhomepg.htm>

As to the initials "T.J.," they stand for Thomas John—but it really should have been "Tiberius Johannson"...

## Freddie Gabriel

Age/DOB: 13, 8/3/82

Hometown: RICHMOND, CA.

Sponsor: AIREDALE SPORTS

Equipment: POLARIS BLADE, 2.0 APEX LIGHTSPEED SPONGE

Major Titles: 1995 U.S. Junior High School Doubles Champion... 1995 Pacific Rim Under 15 Champion... 1995 Schildkrot Under 17 Champion... 1994 U.S. National Primary School Boys' Runner-up... #2 in U.S. in Boys' Under 14.

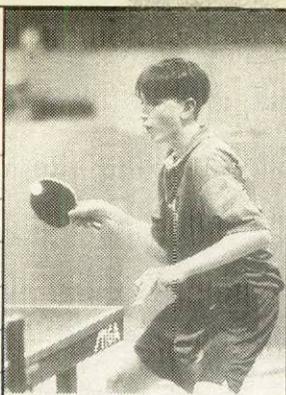


Photo by Joe Holman © 1996

For someone as crazy about table tennis as Freddie, he sure spends a lot of time away from the table. Off the table, to be more exact, but in the playing court—lobbing, fishing back balls from all parts, counterlooping. It's called "topspin touch." Freddie's got loads of it.

The new kid on the block, Freddie caught up to his competition just in the past six months or so—and achieved the rare feat of being ranked #1 in the U.S. in both Under 14 and Under 16 Boys' in a recent U.S. rating list.

When Freddie was nine and a half, he started playing his father in the garage. From there, he went on to be a regular at four clubs in the Bay area: Concord, Berkeley, Hercules and Millitas. He plays nearly every day with practice partners Peter Zajac & Terrence Lee, and with his coach, Bill Lui. Witnesses say that he plays nearly seven hours a day! Freddie admits that's a bit exaggerated—but admits, "It's close."

Freddie's big breakthrough came at the 1995 U.S. Nationals, where he won Under 2000, Under 2100, made the semifinals of Under 2200, the quarterfinals of Under 2300, and won Junior High School Doubles (with Terrence Lee). He came out of the tournament with a rating of 2273, which made #1 in both Under 14 and Under 16 Boys!

When not playing table tennis (and that isn't often), Freddie likes basketball. He also has a dog, Cumba, an Akita.

His goals are pretty straightforward: first, U.S. National Champion; then, World Champion. He's well on his way.

## Sunny Li

Age/DOB: 13, 7/24/82

Hometown: POTOMAC, MD.

Sponsor: T.G. ENTERPRISES

Equipment: PETER FRANZ BLADE, 2.0 DONIC VARIO SPONGE



Photo by Joe Holman © 1996

Major Titles: 1996 Youth Cup Under 14 Boys' Champion... 1995 U.S. Under 14 Boys' Singles Champion... 1995 U.S. Under 16 Boys' Singles Runner-up... 1994 U.S. Under 14 Boys' Singles Champion... 1994 U.S. Under 16 Boys' Singles Runner-up... 1994 U.S. Junior Olympic Under 14 Boys' Singles Champion... 1993 Under 14 Boys' Singles & Doubles, Under 12 Singles Champion... #1 in U.S. in Boys' Under 14 & 16.

The "Grand Old Man" of the cadets (even though he's only 13), with enough titles and awards to fill the shelves at the Library of Congress, Sunny's won his age group at the Junior Nationals every year since winning the Under 10's at the Junior Nationals in '91. He followed that by winning the Under 12's in '92; the Under 12's and Under 14's in '93; the Under 14's in '94; and the Under 14's still again in '95. (He also made the finals of Under 16 in both 1994 & 1995.) He'll miss being eligible for a run at a 4th consecutive Under 14 singles title this year by about ten days. Sunny's the biggest of the cadets, a husky 5'9".

Sunny was born in Fairfax, Virginia, in 1982. His family later moved to Potomac, Maryland, where he began playing table tennis when he was 8. His coach for the first two years was Zhi-Yong Wang (now living in California). His coach since 1992 has been Jack Huang. Huang also coaches Sunny's older brother, Andy, who made it to the finals of Under 16 Boys at the recent U.S. Youth Cup.

Sunny practices four times a week, twice with Coach Huang, and twice in Huang's group sessions on Fridays and Sundays at the National Table Tennis Center (NTTC). He also plays in the NTTC league. Style-wise, he's a two-winged attacker, with very strong serves and a powerful backhand smash.

When not playing table tennis, Sunny likes basketball and football. He hopes to be a doctor someday, although he confesses to not liking school. He has a number of pets, including a cat (Chi-Chi); a dog (Minaka, an Akita); 2 gerbils, and a Japanese Fighting Fish. He had several lizards, but they grew too large and he had to give them away. He also has a habit of constantly cracking his knuckles, and he worries that he's going to damage his fingers.

## Philip Lim

Age/DOB: 14, 6/26/81

Hometown: OAKLAND, CA.

Sponsor: SCHILDKROT

Equipment: C-MAX BLADE, 1.8 MM SPIN PIPS SPONGE

Major Titles: 1995 U.S. Junior High School Boys' Singles Champion... 1995 Vietnamese New Year Under 18 Boys' Champion... 1995 Pacific Rim American Allstar Boys' Singles Runner-up... Finished 3rd at 1996 U.S. Junior (U18) Team Trials... 1993 U.S. Open Under 12 & 14 Boys' Champion... 1993 National Primary School Boys' Singles Champion... #3 in U.S. in Boys' Under 16.

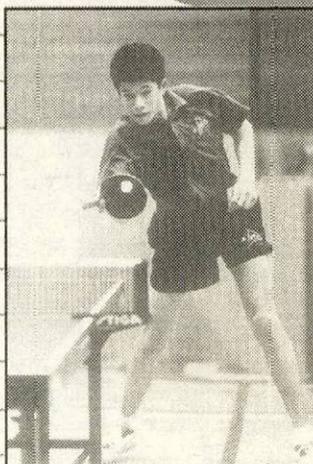


Photo by Joe Holman © 1996

Philip's the type of kid who probably dips girl's pigtails in ink... or an editor's notes in a coke (*don't even think about it, Phil!*). Nobody and nothing is safe in an interview with him—with friend and practice partner Shashin Shodhan probably getting the worst of it. Philip's a teaser, who'll someday use that creativeness in some field of study... unless he goes too far with someone! Let's hope not! (Note to Shashin: I'm going to print the embarrassing picture Philip gave me of you sleeping with your mouth wide open unless you send the money *right away!* Tell Philip he'll get his cut.)

Philip was born in Daly City, California, in 1981. He was started in table tennis when he was five by his dad, Lum Ding. Lum, Philip explained, is the Cantonese version of Lim, which is the Mandarin Chinese version, so Philip's Lim = his father's Lum (with the last name given first in his father's case, as is the Chinese custom).

Philip's parents met in Hong Kong, where Philip's future mom, Elizabeth Kanwit, was teaching English while Lum Ding was a Tai-Chi instructor. They soon emigrated to the U.S., where they now reside in Oakland. Soon, Father/Coach Lum Ding was teaching Philip the pips-out penhold style of table tennis. Philip's game has developed into a vintage quick-backhand block/all-out forehand smashing game.

Philip, who has trained in both Sweden and Taiwan, won the U.S. National Junior High School Boys' Singles Championships in December. He finished 3rd at the U.S. National Junior Team Trials at the U.S. Youth Cup Championships—for under 18!

Philip practices six times a week, mostly with Shashin. When he's not at the ping pong table, he likes basketball and tennis, and follows the San Francisco 49ers (especially Jerry Rice), the Golden State Warriors, the Oakland A's, and the San Francisco Giants. In school, Philip is good at math, but admits he falls asleep in history, which he dislikes. When asked about hobbies, he says, "My hobby is table tennis!"



# The Young GEORGE HENDRY

by Tim Boggan, USATT Historian

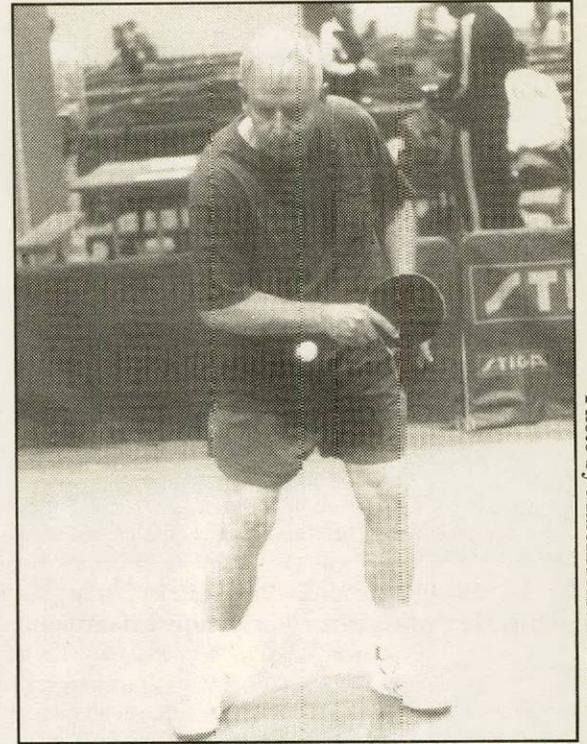


Photo by Mal Anderson © 1996

Left: George Hendry on boat going to or from 1938 Worlds. Middle: George in "Celebrity" shot while on tour with Coleman Clark. Right: Recent photo as U.S. (and formerly World) Over 70 Champion.

More than 40 years ago, at about the same time that Japan's Hiroji Satoh was astonishing everyone by winning the World Championship with his strange sponge racket, George Hendry married Marilyn Schuessler and soon thereafter gave up playing table tennis to establish his own accounting practice. Then, after an absence of more than a quarter of a century, in 1979, the year our USATT Hall of Fame inductees began to be honored, he returned to play in his first modern-day U.S. Championship.

Since then, George, who'll be 76 years young at summer's end, has won not only the World Over 70 Men's Singles Championship, but 35 U. S. National Championships, or, on the average, two a year, every year, for the past 17 years.

Not a bad record, eh?

But in this article I want to tell you about some of the 17 years when George was a good player.

\*\*\*\*\*

The St. Louis Y—that's where, in the early '30's he started, and where, from the beginning, he played not, as you might expect, with a sandpaper but a hard rubber racket, and where he was helped by the well-known table tennis/tennis player/coach Bill Price, soon to be, and for years afterwards, one of his most tenacious rivals.

Among the first wave of St. Louis inter-city players George knew who came to the Feb., '34 Championships at the Hotel Morrison in Chicago were the former lawn tennis champ, later a reporter covering the "Gas-House Gang" for the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, W. Vernon Tietjin (TEACH-in), and the promising Ernie Trobaugh (TRO-baw), Jr. Tietjin was a good knuckleball server—that is, he shot the ball out from his fingers, snapped forcefully from his thumb like a marble, and, because of the angle at which he held the bat and the direction in which he shot the ball, he produced some quite unpredictable serves. His teammate Trobaugh included in his varied repertoire a serve that anticipated, in miniature, the high-toss perfected by the Chinese decades later: he took the ball with the tip of his thumb and first two fingers, squeezed so that the ball shot upward to some controlled height, then, watching it drop, he struck it however he wanted to, and off it went, hopping like a Mexican jumping bean. Some fun for young George back home to watch these guys, huh? But George himself never tried to learn these serves that sometimes would fool self as well as others, for the USTTA (though not the ITTF) quickly banned the knuckleball serves and, though permitting the player to throw (not rub or deform) the ball into the racket,

gradually diminished the effectiveness of and indeed interest in serves that would set up the point or even win it outright.

Moreover, since George, under Price's tutelage, was primarily a defender, he wasn't looking to initiate any serve and follow play. Understandably, while others invariably talked about 5-time World Champion Victor Barna's great backhand, it was his defense that George was always much impressed by. For George, as perhaps the earliest table tennis picture of him ever taken might backhand-chop-at-the-ready bear witness to, the archetypal player was never the slashing hitter. It was more the fellow that said, "You can't get through me."

In Jan., 1935, when Hendry was 14, the Barna-Glancz "Circus" had a Tour stop in St. Louis, and, though it was 14-year-old Robert "Buddy" Blattner who got to play and defeat Barna's 1933 World Champion Doubles partner, Sandor Glancz, 21-19 (in a typical exhibition game?), George, too, had a vested interest in the Hungarians coming—as witness the all-dressed-up picture in which, flanked by these World Champions, he looked very, very serious indeed. As well he should, for at the Apr., '35 Chicago National's he would be the best Champion he could—and just like Barna and Glancz would soon accept the offer of an endorsement. "Children will eat their whole wheat enthusiastically in the form of WHEATIES" the cereal box with George's picture on it would read. And this child, this Champion ("Wheaties scores the biggest with me"), was a natural for any flour named Gold Medal.

On reporting "Hendry Wins Boys' Title," *Topics*, using a questionable metaphor, getting the ages of at least some of the participants wrong, and seeming to praise the loser at the expense of the winner, had this to say:

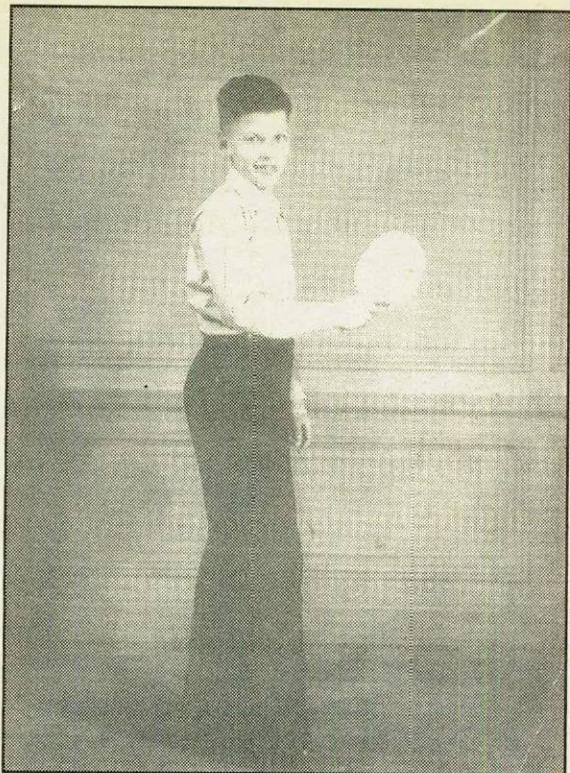
*"Stocky little George Hendry (St. Louis) plowed through Don MacCrossen (Milwaukee) 21-17, 21-11, 17-21, 21-17 to win the first national boys' [Under 15] title as the crowd yelled its approval. True to human nature, it favored the smaller lad over the taller Don, whose flashy hard drives off the corners indicate he will be a tough customer in men's singles in a year or so.... Entries: 37, all under 14 years."*

Maybe eating (it seemed forever, said George) all those boxes and boxes of Wheaties (and banking the \$25?) allowed the "stocky" Hendry to slim down, look even younger, for his "Breakfast of Champions" cover picture? But, as the reference on the ad to "Men's Western Table Tennis Champion 1936" suggests, George is

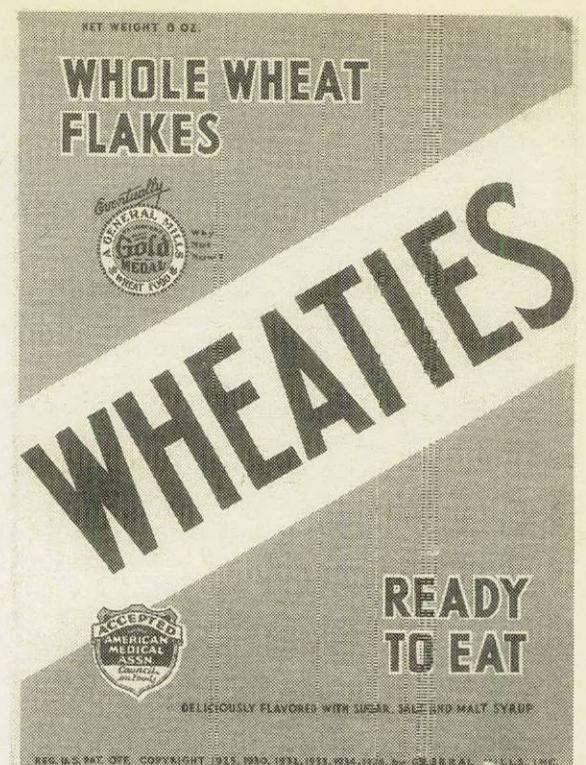
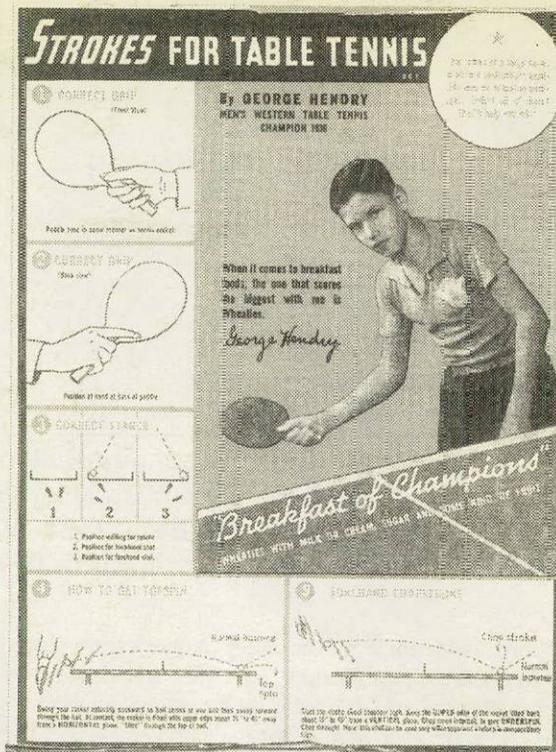
coming of age.

In that '35 U.S. Open, the first one to bring together all the Champions of both the old Parker Brothers' American Ping-Pong Association (APPA) and the new USTTA, Hendry, for whatever reason—Boys weren't expected to play?—didn't compete in the Men's along with his vaunted St. Louis contemporaries—U.S. #4 Mark Schlude (SCHLOO-dee), U.S. #5 Richard Tindall, U.S. #6 Blattner, U.S. #8 Price and U.S. #9 Jack Nix). So, not having lost a match, he must have been feeling pretty good. But though George doesn't know it yet, these National's are indirectly going to cause him grief. Why? Because when first the Men's semi's between Abe Berenbaum and Jimmy McClure, and then the Men's final between Berenbaum and Schlude, turned into endless push-push-push "agonizing and disgraceful matches"—matches that finally ended at 2:30 Monday morning and drew from the audience that remained not just applause but boos—USTTA officials began to feel they had to do something to prevent these "chiseling" or "pooping" matches from ruining the game. Hence the eventual move (beginning with the '36-'37 season) not only to enforce the Expedite Rule but to lower the net from 6 and 3/4 inches to 6 inches, which of course, to the detriment of defenders, would increase the force and effectiveness of the attackers. George, though he could pick-hit, would need time to adjust.

Back in the summer of '34, Blattner, Price, and another of the St. Louis players Destiny had clustered together for greatness, Garrett Nash, had all taken a vacation from the 8-table St. Louis Club Blattner's father managed (\$1.25 a month allowed you unlimited playing time) and had come to Cleveland, Ohio for the Great Lakes Open—a very unusual and very windy tournament, for it was held outside on 40-50 tables set up at the Euclid Beach Amusement Park. This '35 summer, however, none of his budding rivals, only the youthful Hendry, came East—to a Chautauqua, N.Y. tournament sponsored by the U.S.'s greatest popularizer of both the sport and the game, Coleman Clark, whose father used to be on the Chautauqua staff. This was an historic tournament, for it marked the USTTA's initial nation-wide rigid enforcement of the so-called "bat rule" that would not be rescinded for almost 60 years. George lost in the Men's final here to 1933 APPA Champion Jimmy Jacobson, but showed—and this is 6 years before they'd go out on Tour together—that he could team up o.k. with Clark, for they won the doubles over Jacobson and Sid Biddell, soon-to-be not only Capt. of our Team to the '36 World's but the



Left: George in photo that appeared in May, 1935 *Table Tennis Topics*. Center & Right: George on back cover of Wheaties box in 1936 as a very youthful looking Men's Western Table Tennis Champion.



momentary USTTA President. Good results, good connections here for a 14-year-old far from home.

With the coming of fall and a new season, the first St. Louis Membership tourney was held, and would you be surprised to learn it was won by Hendry? Seventeen-year-old Don Hendry, George's brother. He could play some too.

At the Jan., '36 Chicago Inter-cities, George, just turned 15, barely got to play, but he was the honored 4th man on the powerhouse St. Louis team of Tindall (13-2), Blattner (9-4), and Price (4-4). Many of the spectators hoped that young Hendry would get to play the 16-year-old, 5' 1" New York Boy's Club star Lou Pagliaro, but that didn't happen as St. Louis finished second to New York when Sol Schiff climactically won all 3—beat Price, 16 in the 3rd, Blattner, 19 in the 3rd, and Tindall, 22 in the 3rd.

While Blattner and Tindall were at the '36 Prague World's (this is the one where Bud and Jimmy McClure, on their way to winning the first of their World Doubles Championships, are down 2-1 and 19-11 in the 4th in the semi's to the Hungarians Tibor Hazi and Ferenc Soos), Hendry reached what he'd later call a turning point in his table tennis career. After beating two good Chicago players, Herb Aronson (often he had two hands on the racket) and Defending Champ Mort Ladin, he upset "his tutor, top-seeded Bill Price, -19, 15, -18, 16, 18," to win the Mar. Western Open in St. Louis.

Thus, while still 15, he was ranked #7 in the country.

But now came a new season, the lowered net, and George's period of adjustment. It was the USTTA Ranking Committee's practice to rely heavily on the results of the Inter-cities for picking the 4-man U.S. Men's Team to the World's. (In fact, if you didn't play in the Inter-cities, you couldn't even be considered for the Team.) So by the time these matches were to be played at the Lake Shore Athletic Club in Chicago at the beginning of Jan., the 16-year-old Hendry was in contention—along with '35 U.S. Champion and '36 runner-up to Barna Abe Berenbaum; the World Champions McClure and Blattner; and the '36 American Zone winner over Tindall and McClure, Sol Schiff. (As it would turn out, Sol, having won a free trip to the World's in this tournament, as well as the '36 title "U.S. Champion," couldn't go to Baden-near-Vienna because he was last-minute suspended—technically for contracting with Parker Brothers "to receive royalties on a racket without permission," but more to vindicate USTTA President Carl Zeisberg's obsessive attack on Parker Brothers' "p. p.," as he called it.) With Tindall retired and enrolled at West Point (in Feb., '45 he'd be killed in action in Italy), only U.S. #5 Price and U.S. #6 Pagliaro would appear to be the others standing in Hendry's way. And floater-defender Price, at an equal disadvantage with Hendry now that the low net was in use, had recently lost to him, and Pagliaro was not on the N.Y.

Team. Moreover, though recently Hendry had lost in three St. Louis tournaments to U.S. #3 Blattner, he knew his game well ("You had to play Buddy's far forehand first, then go to his backhand") and only the week before had had three match points on him.

So what happened? Did George make the 4-man U.S. World Team?

One thing that the officials, if not all the players, agreed on was the improvement in play provided by the lower 6-inch net. No longer could Schiff, for instance, perennially complain that on these slow Becker tables in Chicago the hitter was at a disadvantage. This year powerful attacks were commonplace. No "pooping" now. "Never before have such interesting and exciting matches been seen in America," said Tournament Chair and USTTA 1st Vice-President Dougall Kittermaster.

Schiff was 10-1, McClure and Blattner, 9-2—good enough here, coupled with their marvelous past play, to assure their place on the Team.

But, surprise, N.Y. slugger Bernie Grimes (where'd he come from? he wasn't even ranked last year) posted a perfect 12-0 record. Still, since no assurance had been given anyone that even a perfect record here would automatically put one on the Team, and since Grimes hadn't really compiled much of a record last year or this (in the N.Y. Metro, he'd lost to Schiff, 3-0, in the semi's), he'd have to prove himself through another full season of play before representing the U.S. in the '38 World's at Wembley.

Abe Berenbaum, the other favorite to make the Team, had come into these Inter-cities as the winner of the very strong N.Y. Metro Open. Not only had Abe beaten Sol in the final, -22, 16, -17, 18, 14, after being

down 2-1 and 17-13 in the 4th, he'd also scored an even gutsier -17, -18, 7, 17, 21 victory over Pagliaro in the semi's. So from this and many another Championship everyone admired his fight. And now here, especially, his sportsmanship. Officials were impressed that defender Abe "would not resort to pushing while losing to McClure"—and, though Kansas City's erratic V. Lee Webb (4-10) blasted him off the table, they were also impressed that, "courageously playing while ill" (he compiled only a 3-3 record), he "stuck out the last two points of his match" with Chicago's Jerry Lavan (luh-VAN). After which, he immediately "collapsed on the floor at the players' exit," then "was carried to his room,

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where Dr. F. Stanley Morest found him suffering from a cold, temperature elevation, and lack of rest. Not until assured a place on the team would he consent to remain in bed."

So, Schiff, McClure, Blattner, and Berenbaum—that was our '37 Team.

And Hendry? He wasn't at all happy with that low net. Who, with his talent, would be, for he'd had a very mediocre 9-6 record (not much better than Price's 4-3). Perhaps, faced with a divide that threatened to separate his winning defense from the Championships he wanted, table tennis was not really the sport for him? After all, he played basketball and soccer, and many of his classmates at Beaumont High wouldn't be at all surprised sooner or later this summer to find out that he was also the St. Louis Municipal Junior Tennis Champion. (George had come to tennis after he'd gotten good at table tennis and felt that the spin in tennis was nothing compared to what he'd seen in table tennis.)

Entries in the '37 National's, held in early April at the Grand Ballroom of the Mosque Theatre in Newark, N.J., had two outstanding foreign entries—1936 Czech World Champion Standa Kolar and the 3-time Hungarian World runner-up Laszlo "Laci" Bellak. The ITTF called this Open our "International National Championships," so we were supposed to use their 6 and 3/4 inch net, were we? Well, we didn't. And nobody seemed to much care—including Hendry. For by now, having learned he couldn't just float the ball back, he'd acquired a heavy chop, a close-to-the-table defense, and, keeping the ball down, he'd given the eventual winner Bellak, the "Clown Prince of Table Tennis," a few not so comical moments in losing to him in the 8th's, deuce in the 4th.

Losing in the 8th's, too, was Blattner, upset—very upset—by Pagliaro. Two months earlier Bud had again won the World Doubles title with McClure, and had also had his moments in both the Team's and the Singles, beating some good players, including Bellak.

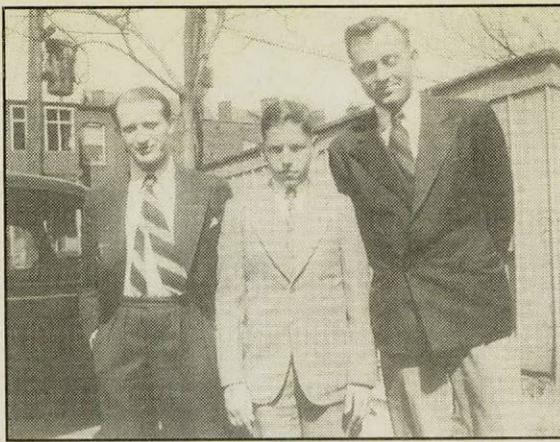
"Blattner's forehand was the best I've ever seen," said Hendry, reminiscing. But because it wasn't good enough to win these National's, Blattner would begin to lose interest in table tennis and concentrate on becoming a professional baseball player (by 1941 he'd moved up from the Columbus and Sacramento teams to join the Cardinals, then later the Giants, and afterwards turned to announcing games).

At the '37 Inter-cities, St. Louis was represented by U.S. #8 Hendry, U.S. #12 Nash, U.S. #24 Don Hendry, U.S. #31 Edwin Woody, and unranked John McCloskey (Price, exhibition ballet-master extraordinaire, was out on Tour with Coleman Clark). The whole St. Louis team had to be psyched by their hometown, climactic positioning in the draw. They played the last of their so far undefeated ties (cheered on no doubt by the Hendry twin sisters, Margaret and Melba) against Defending Champion and heavy favorite New York.

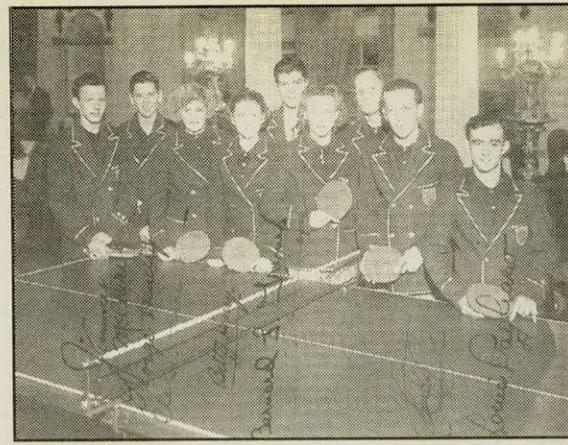
Both Hendry and Nash, who'd earlier taken turns beating one another in St. Louis tournaments, came into this final tie against New York with 11-0 records, and so both were in contention for the Outstanding Player Award. In the first match, Hendry and, as one fellow put it, his "curiously surviving push game in this age of hitters," caused a sensation by beating U.S. #6 Pagliaro, 15 and 14. "Paggy tried, but couldn't get through me," George would say later. However, as it happened, that was the only win for St. Louis, for Johnny Abrahams (where'd he come from? he wasn't ranked last season) downed both Nash and Woody in straight games, Paggy took out Nash in 3, and U.S. #1 Schiff, though having no trouble with Woody, reflected that young Hendry "in appearance and style of play" was so much like the current World Champion Richard Bergmann, that Sol just did 19 in the 3rd set by him.

Never mind, 13-0 or 12-1, 17-year-old Hendry's record was tops and deservedly earned him the Outstanding Player Award and a place on the U.S. World Team. USTTA Ranking Chair Reginald Hammond noted Hendry's poise and spoke highly of his game:

"George, while still not as aggressive as some of the others, showed that he can and does put the ball away for sure winners when the chance comes and that in the process of building up for that last blast, he does not waste points in errors or ill-advised kills." He goes on to say that both Hendry and Pagliaro, who, along with McClure,



**Left: A very serious looking George (in middle) posing in 1935 with 5-time World Men's Singles Champion Victor Barna (L) and Barna's World Men's Doubles Champion partner, Sandor Glancz (R). Right: 1938 World Team (L-R): Jimmy McClure, George Hendry, Clara Harrison, Betty Henry, Bernie Grimes, Mildred Shipman, Captain Morris Bassford, Lou Pagliaro.**



Schiff, and Grimes, will be one of George's teammates at the '38 Wembley World's, have the "sound game and absolute courage required for international play."

In early Swaythling Club matches at the 8,000-seat, beautifully tiered-round Albert Hall, Hendry held his own in our 5-2 win over Poland, losing only to 1936 and '37 World runner-up Alex Ehrlich. Then, in an important match against Austria, which we would lose 5-3, Hendry fell victim, as did Schiff and McClure, to the very experienced Alfred Liebster (playing in his 11th straight World's). George did, however, have a marvelous chance for a glorious upset against the Defending World Champion Bergmann, only to lose the opportunity, 8, -19, -7.

Surprise, though. England, whom we'd beaten 5-1, upset Austria 5-4. According to today's tie-breaker rules, based on the percentage of matches won and lost among the contending teams, the U.S. (8-6) would have finished ahead of Austria (9-8) and England (6-9) and advanced out of their Group to the final (where they might have successfully defended their historically unique 1937 Championship). However, since there were no tie-breaker rules in effect in 1938, there had to be an additional round-robin play-off among the three top finishers to determine a Group finalist.

In the play-off, England, with 5-1 losses to the U.S. and Austria, was not a factor. However, the tie did give Hendry the chance to play London's East End eccentric lefty, Ernie Bublely, one of the countless individual internationalists of that era, who in the first tie with the U.S. had 19, 20 beaten McClure. Back when he began to play in earnest, Ernie was a stage violinist and now wore a glove on his playing hand to protect his fingers and/or to give him a better "feel." England's great player Adrian Haydon acknowledged Bublely's lack of fluid strokes, his "rather ugly style," but correctly affirmed it's the player's record that counts. Another commentator put Bublely's game into better perspective when he spoke of his "fine half-volley defence, an extremely heavy forehand chop, and a most effective backhand flick."

Though in this second U.S. vs. England tie, Bublely got the better of Pagliaro, 26-24 in the 3rd, he probably found Hendry's close-to-the-table defense too uncomfortably a mirror of his own and irritably accused George of using the now ITTF-banned fingerspins against him. Although some elaborate service wind-ups of the time still allowed players to use fingerspins without detection, George did not take kindly to being unjustly accused. But as "the two captains agreed that Hendry had broken no rule," play proceeded without further incident."

George did not play in the decisive tie against Austria, which the U.S., in failing to win six out of seven 19 or deuce games, again lost 5-3. Perhaps, too, the fact that the English spectators were not on our side played a part in our loss. They cheered Bergmann (now living in London) and his unchanging, inscrutable expression. As *Topics* reported, they frowned on our verbal involvement of "Attaboy!"... "Hot diggety!"...and "Jumping Jehosephat!" Such exclamations most of the 5,000 watching found unsporting, abhorrent. But Eric Filby of the English Team in a later article for *Topics* attributed the English success to the cues they took from the Americans: "...bridge table etiquette and respectful silence was all right in its place," he said, "but nervous and tense

point-gettings calls for an occasional out-let of feelings and a few timely exhortations from the gallery."

In the Men's Singles, Hendry opened with an 18, 21, 17 win over Erno Foldi of the winning Swaythling Cup Hungarian Team. Then he gave up 62 points, but nary a game, in stroking out a 12, 31, 19 win over England's Stan Proffitt—the second game being perhaps the more remarkable for not exceeding the ITTF 20-minutes-a-game Time Limit Rule ("Stop!" the umpire would say—and whoever was ahead would be the winner). Astonishingly, even after this match, neither Hendry nor his Team Captain and future USTTA President Morris Bassford ("He was a nice guy," said George, "but he didn't know much about table tennis") were aware of this Time Limit Rule.

In the 16th's, Hendry again gave Bergmann more than a few uneasy moments before losing 16, -22, -17, -12. According to news reports, Hendry in the 1st simply outplayed Bergmann "at his own tireless game." Reportedly Bergmann had already played some taxing team matches and so repeatedly he "was forced to cool his eyes with a glass of water." Perhaps it was while Bergmann, with a lead, was making one of these periodic stops that George was suddenly made aware of the Time Limit Rule? Anyway, more tired than tireless this particular evening Richard might have been, for by the time the Bergmann-Hendry match got underway, it was so late the spectators had been cleared out of the Hall. Hendry, up 1-0, might have won the 24-22 second game as well, the reports went on to say, but he "began overdriving the table and missing easy points." Had George known about the Time Limit Rule would he have done that—tried to hit through the world's best defense?

I like to think, "Why not?"

In the English Open at Blackpool that followed, the ebullient American players—McClure and Schiff especially, for they'd just beaten Barna and Bellak to win the World Doubles Championship—again made their presence felt. Schiff beat Bergmann before losing, like Pagliaro and McClure, to Bellak. And Hendry...Hendry had an incredible match with the eventual winner Barna, holder of 23 World Championships, losing, OHHH, 28-26 in the 5th. "I was running everything down," George said years later. "Oh, yeah, Barna really ran me. But so what? I was only 17." Schiff has remarked on how well Victor carried himself, how no one ever said anything bad about him—but Sol personally felt Barna was a little standoffish. Hendry, too, found Victor a proud, aloof person. After this incredible 5-game match—the two games Barna lost were the only ones he'd lose in the whole tournament—he hadn't a word to say to George. Had he forgotten how many miles and months ago they'd had a picture taken together?

Just as Schiff on his return from the World's won the Eastern's (in a very controversial expedite match with Philadelphia's Izzy Bellis), so Hendry on his return won the Western's—took the attack away from" a much improved Garrett Nash in a 5-game -17, -18, 6, 21, 11 thriller (after which Garrett "outslugged" George to win the Lake Cities Open).

At the '38 Mar. National's, held at the Hotel Broadwood in Philadelphia, Hendry pick-hit through the resolute defender ("wouldn't hit a ball") Bellis in straight

games. "Bellis was a real con artist," said George. "One time before we were to play he stole my racket and sold it. But I found the guy he sold it to and got it back." But then, in a semi's match George really wanted to win, he lost in 5 to Schiff. One gets a clue as to what this match might have been like from what Sol would say in his (or maybe I should say Doug Cartland's) book Table Tennis Comes of Age (1939):

*"Hendry gives you a ball that looks easy to hit. But try and kill it! It keeps coming back, back from one side, back from the other, from twenty, thirty feet away, until finally in disgust you either miss an easy drive or take a desperate and rarely successful chance.... [Hendry] fools the attacker time and time again by clever wristwork. Particularly on his forehand, Hendry varies the spin so well that on one shot you have a skidding, breaking ball that scarcely rises from the table and on another shot you have a normally bouncing ball with very little spin."*

But in this 20, -19, -15, 12, 13 semi's match, George didn't fool Sol enough—though he might have won the match three straight. Up 20-18 in the 1st, he missed a game-point kill—and as he said, "It shook me up." Of all the matches George has played, this is the one he most regrets. For, had he beaten Sol, he thinks he might have held off the attack of the repeat winner Bellak in the final—they'd played for shillings in England and he'd done alright—and so would have won the National Men's Singles Championship. But it was not to be. In 1938 he had to settle for being ranked U.S. #2 behind Schiff.

Since the USTTA would not be sending a Team to the 1939 Cairo World's, and in fact had scheduled our National's at the same time, the Inter-cities, where our Team had been traditionally picked, apparently became of so relatively little importance that no hospitality to the competing teams was being offered by the host city Philadelphia. So of course the St. Louis players didn't enter. (Hendry had just won the Missouri State over Nash, 7, 9, 6! in the semi's and Price in 5 in the final.) However, Sandor Glancz and USTTA officials promoted an all-expenses-paid East-West Match in early Mar. at the New York City Hippodrome in which the East (Schiff, Grimes and Bellis) beat the West (McClure, Hendry, and Nash) 5-4. George, described earlier in Topics as "the steadiest and most reliable player in the country," had come to New York only a few days after he'd lost the Missouri Valley to Price 24-22 in the 5th (stopping momentarily in the last game to repair his accidentally damaged bat). At the Hippodrome, a week before the National's, he was beaten by all three West players.

Nevertheless, at Toledo he did not do badly. As 7th seed in the Singles, he drew the #2 foreign seed, the visiting 2-time World semifinalist Hazi, in the 8th's and, caught by surprise by Tibor's first-time-difficult-to-play-against angled-off shots, lost to him in 4. But in the doubles, in the 1/4's, George and Bill Price, mixing the spin well on their returns, upset World Champions McClure and Schiff before eventually losing in the final to the foreign team of Bellak and Hazi. Thus George at least achieved a U.S. #1 ranking in doubles.

\*\*\*\*\*

So, o.k., I've shown you here that the young Hendry, competing against the best players in his era, could win a few matches long before he turned 60. At this point of course he's still 17, still ranked among the Top 8 in the U.S. as he has been for the last four years, and much awaits him.

He'll join his brother at the Culver-Stockton Military School in nearby Canton, Mo.—will receive a full scholarship in return for playing exhibitions with Don at halftimes of basketball games and at various community affairs. He'll break two bones in his right hand in a college kid's football scrimmage, have one appendectomy, and win two U. S. Intercollegiate Singles titles.

He'll lose to Bellak in the 8th's of the 1940 National's and begin to see his game start to slip—though losses to future Hall of Famers Eddie Pinner and Bill Holzrichter won't set him brooding, at

least not for long, not if he's going to stay in school.

But then comes an opportunity he can't pass up. From June, '41 until he returns to Culver in Jan., '42 for the winter semester, he'll be touring with Coleman Clark. They'll be booked big time—Chicago, Pittsburgh, Montreal. In New York, they'll play the Roxy Theatre and Radio City Music Hall. Along the way they'll share celebrity billing with renowned band leaders Benny Goodman, Jimmy Dorsey, and Cab Calloway. And it'll all be great fun, so long as George remembers not to play anything to Cokey's backhand or chop that first ball.

In June of 1942 George is drafted.... But by Nov., '46 is back, taking classes at Washington University with his brother, and of course playing in a St. Louis tournament. He's now 26. His one married sister, Melba Hendry McClain, is his winning Mixed Doubles partner; the

other, Margaret Hendry Weidner, has rather recently given birth to a baby daughter. George begins to play doubles with another Don—a junior player named Don Schuessler. By the '50 National's he'll not only be playing Men's Doubles with Don, he'll be playing Mixed with Don's sister Marilyn.

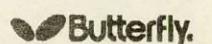
Expected and unexpected events, wins and losses, will continue to occupy Hendry's life, but I can't presume to go into them here. The window I've opened to his past begins to darken. In the fading light, his youthful table tennis life seems almost gone. My still searching eye makes out George's last late 20's hurrah—his 25-23 in the 5th loss in the Western's to 1944 U.S. Champion Johnny Somael, his 15 in the 5th loss in the National's to 1947 U.S. World Team Member Schiff. I think, how important is it that in the 1949-50 season, his presumed best from '46 to '52, he's ranked U.S. #6?

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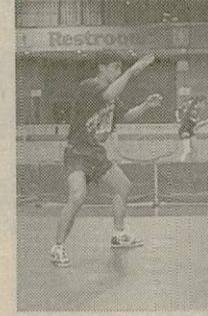
TABLE TENNIS WORLD 61

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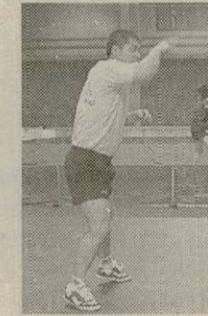
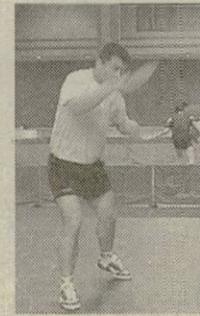
JEAN PHILIPPE GATIÉN (FRA) (MIRROR IMAGE)



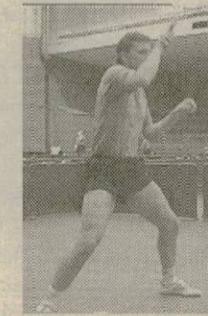
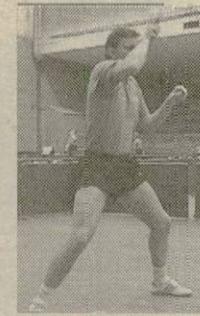
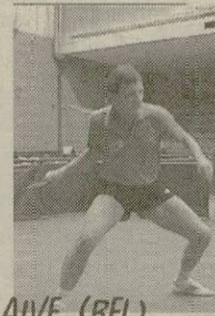
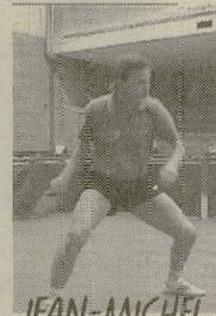
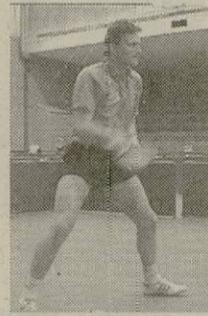
KONG LINGHUI (CHN)



ZORAN PRIMORAC (CRO)



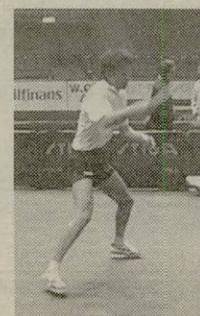
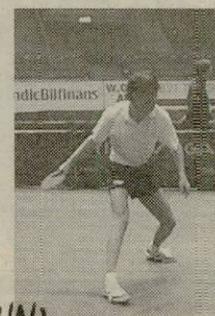
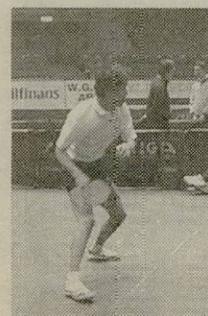
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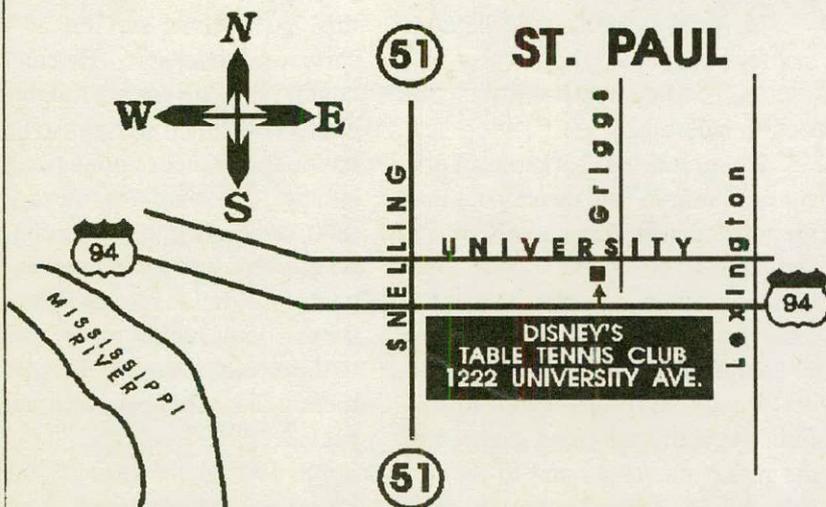
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# The Forehand Pendulum Serve of Todd Sweeris

by Larry Hodges

*U.S. Olympic Team Member*



Todd Sweeris photo sequence by Stephen Yeh ©1996

The forehand “pendulum” serve is the most popular and probably the most effective serve in table tennis. Todd Sweeris, one of the best practitioners of the serve in the U.S., demonstrates the serve in the sequence shown.

The most important thing to note is that the serve motion is the same every time, regardless of the type of spin being given to the ball. It is where in the service motion that the ball is contacted that decides whether the ball will have topspin, sidespin, backspin, some variation of these spins, or no-spin. (which, if it looks like it has spin, is just as effective as a spin serve).

1. Ready position for the serve. Todd serves from the backhand corner so that he is in better position to follow the serve up with his forehand. Although his left (serving) hand is slightly cupped, legally it should be flat.

2. In this sequence, Todd pulls his racket back before tossing the ball upwards. For a very high toss, he would toss the ball up first; for a low

toss, his racket moves first.  
3. Toss has begun. Todd is not looking at the ball; he is looking upward, where he will catch sight of the ball again, rather than trying to follow it on its way up, an unnecessary movement. Also, you can see clearly here his grip for the serve, with index finger extended over the racket’s surface.

4. The toss continues.  
5. Toss is medium high, perhaps two feet over Todd’s head. As the ball is going up, he rotates his body backward, and pulls his racket back.

6. Just before contact. Todd’s Racket is parallel to the ground, wrist cocked backward, racket tip pointing backward. The ball is falling into a “circle” made up of Todd’s arms and shoulders.

7. Contact—but you can’t see it. Todd hides contact with his arm and body. Contact is made very close to his body. Legally, the following rules are important to know and follow, but a good server must push the rules to the limit. **Rule 7.5:** “When the ball is struck in service, it shall be... not farther back than the part of the server’s body, other than his arm, leg or head, whichever is farthest from the net.” **Rule 7.6:** “It is the responsibility of

the player to serve so that the umpire or assistant umpire can see that he complies with the requirements for a good serve.”

7a. Todd demonstrates the contact for backspin.

7b. Todd demonstrates the contact for sidespin.

When serving backspin, Todd contacts as in 7a, and then rotates into the position in 7b after contact. When serving sidespin, Todd’s racket goes into the position in 7a, then rotates the racket to the position in 7b, where contact is made. In going from 7a to 7b, the racket tip drops downward, his right elbow lifts up a few inches, and the racket moves around to the left side of the ball, near the bottom. The motion is the same whether Todd is serving backspin or sidespin; only the contact point is different.

A split second before contact, Todd snaps his wrist, snapping the racket into the ball for maximum spin. At contact, he grazes the ball. For backspin, he grazes the bottom of the ball, and goes forward and slightly sideways (a backspin serve usually has a light sidespin as well). For sidespin, he also grazes the bottom of the ball, toward the left side, with the racket moving mostly sideways.

Todd can also serve a no-spin serve that looks like backspin—opponents pop it up, thinking it has backspin. He has two ways of doing this, both times serving as if the serve were backspin. He can either contact the ball more straight-on at contact, hitting it lightly, so the ball has no spin (since opponent can’t see this); or he can graze the ball lightly, on the very base of his racket. This part of the racket moves slower than the rest of the racket, since it is closer to the axis of rotation (the wrist), so there will be less backspin than expected.

8. Just after contact. Todd has rotated around and raised his left arm to allow the ball a “passageway” toward the receiver—otherwise, the ball would hit him in the stomach! The racket has followed through toward his stomach. His wrist has fully snapped inward. Contact point is about six inches above table level.

9. Follow through. Wrist and racket have snapped back away from Todd’s stomach. The added motion adds some deception to the serve. He will now follow through into a ready position for the following shot, most likely a forehand loop.

## HIGH-LEVEL TRAINING

by Todd Sweeris

Member, U.S. Olympic Team

It all starts with practice! Practice is the most important element in improving your game. Most people have only a few hours a week to practice, so it is important that those few hours be well spent. In this article I would like to give a few helpful tips which will help make sure you get the most out of your practice time.

### Goal Setting

Setting goals before each practice is very helpful. It helps to challenge you and give you something to shoot for during a tiring and sometimes monotonous footwork drill. A sample footwork goal is: "I will do 30 in a row, one backhand, one forehand." Goals can also help your concentration during practice by setting a mental drill. A sample concentration drill is: "I will completely focus on the present during this 7-minute drill." When setting concentration drills give yourself a grade afterwards and try to improve it the next time out. I know many of the top players, including myself and Sean O'Neill, use goals every day during practice.

### Practice weaknesses as well as strengths

It is very easy to only practice the things you are already good at, but it is important to improve weaknesses as well. I would suggest analyzing your game, listing your strengths and weaknesses. I find it helpful to practice my weaknesses after tournaments, and as the next tournament approaches to start practicing my strengths. Tournaments are good indicators of what you need to improve, so after every tournament re-analyze your game to see what needs improvement.

### Types of Drills

When choosing the various drills you are going to practice that day make sure to keep in mind what you want to improve. The drill should be challenging, but not impossible for you. When I practice I usually have a couple of footwork drills along with a serve & attack drill and a receive drill. This combination of drills allows for practicing all of the necessary elements needed during a match. It is also important to note that doing many different drills helps keep practice more interesting. I have about 12-15 different drills I use during a given week of training.

### Practicing before Tournaments

When practicing before tournaments it is important to realize that you want to be 100% physically at the tournament, so make sure to allow your body time to recover. The week before a tournament, practices should involve more serve & attack and receive drills as well as control drills like blocking or pushing. Practice time should probably decrease also so you are rested for the tournament. I find it helpful for my confidence to increase my service practice as the tournament approaches because I need to know that I have control of my serves.

Practice hard and good luck!

## THE FIVE C'S:

Consistency, Control, Confidence, Concentration, Courage

(Part one of a five part series)

by Gary Elwell

USATT Certified Coach

The following series is a discussion of what I feel are the five most important elements in table tennis. Each represents a fundamental performance enhancing aspect of the sport. When adequate attention is paid to each, they will increase your chances of playing to your potential. Because of their non-technical characteristics, you can use them in other areas of life too. The five C's also relate to the improvement of the skills themselves. This can be realized by understanding and applying their basic concepts to your practice sessions. The positive effects they have on you and your game are equal to the amount of emphasis you place on them and their significance.

**Consistency** - The *ultimate challenge* in table tennis.

For me the most troublesome opponent is one that's steady and stable in their physical play as well as their mental attitude. This player and playing attitude doesn't give away free points with easy errors or high risk gambles. They force you to win points either with a great shot or by out-playing them with good positioning, etc. This alone is not so bad. But add the fact that you'll get very few freebies from this type of player and you're facing the *ultimate challenge*. Now you're dealing with having to be consistent in addition to making great shots or in some other way outplaying them. If you gamble for great shots, you need to keep percentages well above fifty per cent. If you opt to out-play them with good positioning, etc., you'll need to be at least as consistent as they are in your play. Of course, the ideal strategy is a combination of these two tactics. This allows you to switch back and forth as the situations demand, as opportunities arise, and as you feel the need to change the pace. Either way, you'll be put to the consistency test.

As you can see, you will improve your consistency by playing against steady players. So, do yourself and your game a favor by competing with the ones that don't miss much. If the person is at a lower playing level than you, simply challenge them at what they're best at doing. This way you retain a sense of balance and both of you will benefit.

A consistent mental attitude is a slightly different story. Everyone knows some player that "chokes" under pressure at deuce in the third or when they get a lead late in the game. Then there's the player that will "blow up" after the second or third net or edge ball or after missing a few easy set-ups. It's easier to play someone that you realize has exceeded their "breaking point." They concede the mental battle to you, making the physical battle that much easier. Sometimes these breakdowns are a healthy outlet for the anger or fear and often fuel a better focus on the forthcoming points. But, more often than not, I see it as emotional inter-

## The Mental Advantage

Jim Annesi, Ph.D.



### Control Over Negative Thoughts During Play

situation occurs again.

If your intruding thoughts raise your anxiety level, chances are that increased worry will develop. A non-productive spiral may occur that soon will limit your ability to cope with the negative thoughts. In this case, use some calming, relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing and "turning off" tightness in affected muscles. Also, try to loosen your rigid/narrow focus. Relax your eyes and bring your attention "down" between points and games.

When panic enters into the picture, try to reduce what seems to be an overwhelming task into smaller, but important, undertakings. Set manageable goals within the match that will revive your orientation for success. Focus, for example, on reducing errors, or returning serve with enough direction that your opponent's advantage will be neutralized.

Control over negative, intruding thoughts are a challenge to most players. Remember, chances are that your opponents, also, will be attempting to cope with them. As with most parts of the game of table tennis, a good deal of time and effort is required to overcome challenges that will make you a better player. Use the training record below to work out solutions for negative thoughts that are common to you. As you gain control over these self-defeating thoughts, your enjoyment will increase and results will rapidly improve.

**Q:** I am a 15-year-old player who competes in the Under 1800 division. Last year I improved my rating about 200 points. I try to prepare myself both physically and mentally for each match the best that I can. I try to relax myself, and usually feel good when I begin a match. However, during matches, negative thoughts enter into my mind—ones that question my ability, or tell me how bad it will be if I lose. Can you help?

**Dr. Annesi:** These types of unwanted self-statements are not uncommon. The key is to develop methods which will, quickly and efficiently, cope with these intruding thoughts. To turn a negative thought into positive action, do not just dismiss the thought or try to "block" it. Rather, use it to trigger an adaptive or corrective action. If your thoughts reflect panic because of your inability to counter an opponent's weapon, you should immediately remind yourself to, for instance, adjust your backswing, or possibly be alert for that particular shot when a similar

#### Common negative thoughts that happen during matches

#### In the future, what to do when these thoughts occur


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*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.*

ference and inevitable loss of focus.

However, the person that never budgets mentally is a worthy challenge. This consistent mental attitude forces you to adopt a similar approach or else face losing ground on the all-important psychological battlefield. To do so takes determination and will power, which comes with practice. You can practice

mental toughness by observing your favorite "fighters" in action and then emulating them while competing with your peers. As you improve this subtle skill, you'll fair much better in competition.

Whether it's physical play or a mental attitude, the importance of Consistency is easily realized when you face the *ultimate challenge*.

# The Playing Style of DAVID ZHUANG

National Men's Singles Champion • U.S. Olympic Team Member  
by Larry Hodges

There aren't that many pips-out penholders in the U.S. In fact, of the 23 men in the U.S. rated over 2480, only one—David Zhuang—plays this style. So on the men's side, David is practically the definition of the style in the U.S. He's also a member of the U.S. Olympic Team, and the 1994 & 95 U.S. National Men's Singles Champion. So let's examine his playing style—perhaps we'll find out what it takes to beat him?

Although David is very aggressive with his forehand, smashing every chance, it is his backhand block that is his biggest strength. "The Great Wall of Zhuang" is the best way of describing it—*everything* comes back!

David's best game is pinning an opponent on the wide backhand corner, and blocking there over and over until the opponent either misses, or makes a weak return that David can smash.

The backhand blocks are not only quick and consistent, they are hard to attack as well. David doesn't just block the ball back—he comes across the ball (his racket going from his right to left), giving the ball a touch of sidespin (or even backspin, if he chops down on contact). His blocks can come out with backspin, with sidespin, or simply "dead," with no spin; they can bounce short on the table, jump out at you, or anywhere in between; and they always are placed either at wide angles (especially into the backhand), or hard at the elbow (the switch-over spot for shakehands players).

When David gives you a well-angled block into the wide backhand, you have several options. You can return it with your backhand aggressively, and make too many mistakes, while simply getting another block to the wide backhand if you make the shot. You can return it with your backhand passively and consistently, and watch as David steps around and smashes a forehand. You can step around your backhand corner and attack with your forehand, and watch him block a winner to your wide forehand—assuming you make the forehand against his varied blocks! There aren't that many options. You can try chopping, lobbing, etc., but these aren't particularly successful tactics either against a forehand hitting pips-out penholder.

One reason David has such a good backhand block is he uses a "backhand" penhold grip. This means the left side of the racket is rotated slightly forward, strengthening the backhand block, but weakening the forehand somewhat. David already has the best forehand smash in U.S. Table Tennis, but it'd be even better if he rotated the racket out of the backhand grip.

As to that forehand—we've already gone over what happens if you make a weak return against his backhand block. David's serve and return of serve also sets up his forehand smash. Many think David has the best serves in the U.S.,

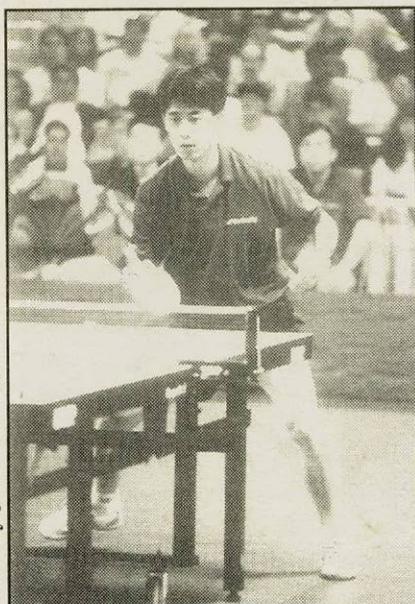


Photo by John Oros © 1996

even though he usually serves with pips, which give less spin than inverted. I'd hate to see the serve with inverted—with pips, it's already awfully spinny!

Unfortunately, David does serve with inverted sometimes—he has a sheet on the back of his blade, and when the score is close, he'll serve with it as a variation. **UGGHHH!**

David favors a forehand high-toss serve, with all spins, speeds, depths, and directions. Altogether, he has... countless variations. And he follows most of these serves with a forehand smash, unless you attack the serve. His toss often goes all the way to the ceiling.

Because he has such a good block, David often serves long, challenging opponents to loop. He scores many points outright this way as opponents make mistakes, but it means he often serve & blocks, rather than serve & smash.

When returning serves, David either is very aggressive with his forehand, or uses touch to either drop the ball short over the net, or quick-push to wide angles. He'll step around to hit or pips-out loop most deep serves to the backhand, and either flip or quick-push short serves. All of these receives will set up his forehand smash, unless the opponent plays very aggressively, forcing David to block—but making many mistakes in the process.

David will also flip his racket during a point sometimes, and loop with the inverted side. Even if the loop is not strong, the surprise factor is enough to force a weak return, which he'll smash—after quickly flipping back to the pips-out side of his racket.

Opponents have one final thing to contend with when playing David. At key points during a match, after winning a big point, David will chill an opponent's blood with a blood-curdling scream of triumph. Few players withstand this, just another part of the mental game of table tennis. David is mentally one of the toughest players in the U.S.

So what does it take to beat David Zhuang? Hit the ball very, very hard—and don't miss!

# Weight Training and Table Tennis

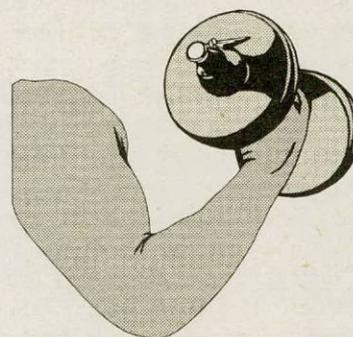
by Brian Pace

While coaching full-time in New Orleans, I realized that adding strength and endurance training to table tennis training will greatly help your table tennis game. Cross-training is very important for up-and-coming table tennis players.

A total body weight routine will make you a better player, because good technique requires strength not only from your waist and lower body, but also from your shoulders, chest, upper arms and lower back. To hit all these areas, I advise players to take up a program that strengthens each opposing muscle group, throughout the body. An excellent weight routine would include:

- Bench presses for the chest, followed by lat pulldowns for the upper back;
- Squats or leg extensions for the front of the legs, followed by hamstrings curls for the back of the legs;
- Bicep curls offset with tricep presses;
- Military presses and dips for the front of the shoulders and chest, then overhand pullups for the back of the shoulders.

People who weight train subscribe to a program called "periodized training," which is really fitness-guru talk for easing into a weight program. The idea is to build a base muscular fitness and endurance, then add a period of maximized strength and size gain. Next, you can settle into a more manageable maintenance program. This is designed to accommodate any lifestyle with table tennis, but you have to stay faithful. It takes just three months, but it will make you stronger than you ever thought possible. Here are the steps:



1) Transition (at least two weeks) For this early phase, lift weights three times a week. For each exercise, use weight that you can lift and lower 12-20 times. Each group of 12-20 repetitions is one set. You're looking to do a total of three sets of each exercise. In this phase, you need to use very light weights. Don't push yourself; what you're after is getting your muscles used to exercise. You're building a little strength, but technique is more important at this point. Take a one minute break between sets and two minute break between exercises.

2) Foundation (third week) Continue with your three-day-a-week schedule, but with just a few variations: first, you want to increase the weight so that you can lift it only 8-12 times, and do three to five sets of each exercise. At the end of each set, the isolated muscle will be near exhaustion—the muscle should

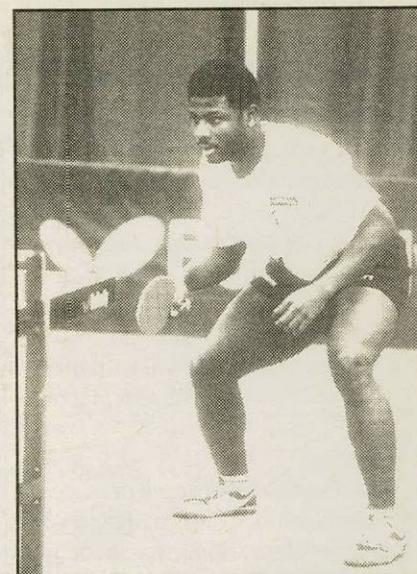


Photo by John Oros © 1996

shudder, but not fail.

3) Strength (fourth week) Here's where you'll start noticing some major growth. Again, you're adding more weight, until you can lift the weights only four to six times. Do four to seven sets of each exercise.

It's a good idea to have a spotter for this to help you squeeze out the last repetitions of every set. The strength building comes from the muscle going past exhaustion. If you do this phase correctly, increases are fast and significant.

4) Power (fifth week) For blast-off force, this training period is a must. First, you want to cut back to two days a week in the gym. But during those two days, you're going to be working hard. The plan is to do three to six sets, with 6-15 repetitions in each one. (You might have to cut back the amount of weight you are lifting to do this many reps).

The real trick isn't how many you do; it's in how you do them. Do them faster than normal. Your explosive power will really jump up. This is important for table tennis players when you look at technique. You will be more explosive from the start of the stroke to the point of contact.

5) Maintenance (as long as you like) By this time, if you have stuck with the program, you have seen dramatic results. What's even better, to stay in the remarkable shape that you're now in, all you need to do is get to the gym once or twice a week. Use medium weights and keep your number of reps and sets low. I know this might seem a little much, but the muscles are remarkably intelligent and can adjust. If you do start up a weight training program, stay with it for at least six weeks so you can see the results—then decide if it's worth it.

If you have any questions or comments, please write me at:

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USATT Certified Coach

# The Forehand Loop

by Jack Huang

Chinese National Team, 1976-83; U.S. #1 Player, 1990;

USATT Certified International Coach;

Co-Head Coach, National Table Tennis Center

Edited, Translated and Chinese World Processing by Marianne Yeh

## In English And the Original Chinese!

談談正手弧圈球

近幾年來，世界乒乓球技術正朝着技術全面、特長突出的方向發展，而正手弧圈球又成爲運動員在比賽中的主要攻擊手段和得分武器。打出強有力的正手弧圈球是取得比賽勝利、提高競技水平的一個十分重要的因素。下面我就談一談有關正手弧圈球的幾個問題。

### 1. 高吊弧圈與前沖弧圈的區別和運用：

正手弧圈球大致分爲高吊弧圈、前沖弧圈、和側旋弧圈三種。人們通常運用的是高吊和前沖這兩種。高吊弧圈球的特點主要是旋轉強，但是速度比較慢，弧線比較高。高吊弧圈球的擊球時間應當在球下降的中後期，擊球的中部，向上的力量多一些。高吊弧圈球的主要用途有兩點：一是對付弧線很低而旋轉很強的下旋球，二是在走動中位置不好時作爲過渡，以避免不必要的失誤，等待和把握下一板的機會，同時破壞對方的防守節奏。與高吊弧圈球相反，前沖弧圈球的特點主要是速度快，但是旋轉並不是很強，弧線也比較低。前沖弧圈球的擊球時間應當在球下降的前期，擊球的中上部，向前的力量多一些。前沖弧圈球的用途也有兩點：一是對付一般的下旋球，二是在走動中位置比較好時作爲直接的得分手段，或者爲下一板創造良好的進攻機會。

### 2. 正手弧圈球的主要技術要領：

- 1) 要摩擦球：這是拉好弧圈球的一個十分重要的因素。摩擦主要來自手腕的運用，依靠手腕的配合來完成。
- 2) 動作要舒展、放鬆、協調一致，要蹲腳、轉腰、交換重心，整個動作要一氣呵成。
- 3) 要有爆發力，把全身的力量用在擊球的一瞬間。爆發力主要來源於前臂和手腕的收縮。
- 4) 兩腳的站位距離應該比肩稍寬，右手握拍者左腳稍在前，右腳稍在後，以利於轉腰。
- 5) 要注意兩脚步伐的移動：在拉球時只有處在合適的位置才能比較好地完成整個拉球動作。

### 3. 開始學習正手弧圈球時的訓練方法：

我認爲，在練習正手拉弧圈球之前，應當先具備正手攻球的基礎。在學習時應當遵循從慢到快、從易到難、循序漸進的原則。所以，應當首先從高吊弧圈球學起。開始時，不管是單方給球、另一方站在固定的問題一板一板地拉，還是兩個人對練，都應該遵循固定的線路，以求穩健和摩擦。這樣做的目的主要是學習和體會正確的動作，增加對球的感覺。經過反覆訓練，掌握了拉高吊弧圈球的正確動作，再學習拉前沖弧圈球就不會太難了。

有一點必須特別強調的是，學習拉弧圈球一定要注意基本動作的正確性，以利於今後競技水平的提高。否則，一旦錯誤的動作形成，今後再改就很難了。

「完」

May/June 1996



Coach Jack Huang (R) with student Sunny Li, U.S. National & Youth Cup Under 14 Boys' Singles Champion.

Especially in the modern game, a strong forehand loop is crucial in winning matches. I would like to go over some of the techniques and the training of the forehand loop.

### 1. Slow loop vs. Fast Loop:

Forehand loops include both slow, arcing loops; fast, driving loops; and sidespin loops. Most players use either slow or fast loops.

Slow loops have very strong topspin; however, the speed of the ball is relatively slow, and the ball travels in a higher arc. When slow looping, the contact point should be the center of the back of the ball as the ball drops, and the force should be upward. Players should use the slow loop under two circumstances: when the opponent's ball comes low and with strong backspin; and when the player is in an awkward position. The slow loop can be used as a transitional shot toward a better attacking shot on the next shot, and to break the rhythm of an opponent's defense.

Fast loops are much faster than slow loops, but do not have as much spin. The arc of the ball is very low. To fast loop, the contact point should be more on top of the ball, just after the ball has reached the top of the bounce. The force of the stroke should be forward. There are two circumstances when a player should fast loop: when an opponent's ball has regular backspin (not too heavy), and when the player is in good position and sees a chance to win the point directly.

### 2. Important Looping Techniques:

- a. **Contact:** At contact, wrist snaps.
- b. **Be relaxed and coordinated:** Bend the knees, turn the waist, and shift the body weight from back foot to front foot. The entire movement should flow smoothly.
- c. **Be forceful:** Use the strength of the entire body when hitting the ball. Much of the force comes from the contraction of the forearm and the wrist.
- d. **Foot placement:** The feet should be a little wider than shoulder length apart. For right-handed players, the left foot should be slightly in front, the right foot slightly back. This makes it easier to turn the waist.
- e. **Foot movement:** Pay attention to the movement of the feet. A player can hit a good forehand loop only when in good position.

### 3. Training Methods for Beginners:

I think players should learn the basics of forehand drives before practicing forehand loops. Players should learn to forehand loop step by step. It's best to learn to slow loop first. At first, a player should do rote drills, either with a partner or with a coach feeding multi-ball, to improve steadiness and the contact. This is to make sure the player learns the stroke properly, and to develop a feel for the ball. From this type of repetitious practice, a player should master the slow loop. Then it's time to learn to fast loop.

The most important thing to remember is that it is extremely important to develop correct strokes from the start. When incorrect strokes are developed, it is very difficult to correct them later on.

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Hayward, California

by Larry Hodges

April 6-8, 1996

What a great idea! To actually support junior & youth development by giving out prize money to the very ones who have to spend a fortune in coaching, training & tournament fees, if they want to become top players. Why hadn't we done this before?

Of course, it had been done once before, at the \$7,000 Janlibo Junior Nationals in 1993—but USATT had voted to take it away from Janlibo and recombine the Junior Nationals with the Junior Olympics. But here we were again, this time with \$7,900 in prize money—as Tim Boggan would say, "Bravo!"

62 youth players (all under 23, average age about 14) converged on the 16 tables set up at Chabot College near Oakland, California, for the first U.S. Youth Cup Championships. The level of play was very strong, with the average rating 1870. The events to be held were Under 23, 18, 16, 14 & 12, for both men/boys and women/girls. There were also two team events. And, there were the U.S. National Junior Team Trials for both boys and girls under 18.

The tournament committee of Dr. Jiing Wang, Shonie Aki, James Therriault (who was unable to attend), Matt Beebe, Alex Li, Lum Ding, and Tong Lee worked hard to put together the tournament, including a nicely done program. Umpires were Azmy Ibrahim, Bob Partridge, Tom Miller, Terry Timmins, and Y.C. Lee. Sorry if anyone was missed!

The list of sponsors is long, but here goes: USATT Junior Committee, Chabot College, Schildkrot, Armstrong, Paddle Palace, Stiga, Berkeley TTC, SAC-REC TTC, Concord TTC, San Francisco TTC, Palo Alto TTC, Sunset TTC, New Jersey TTC, National Table Tennis Center, Amerex Instruments, Table Tennis World, Parents of Juniors, Alex Li, Martha Werie, Valva Realty Co., Cecil P. Reeves. Thanks to all!

## Day 1 (Saturday)

There were three team events scheduled, along with the Under 12's for boys and girls. However, due to a small number of entries, the U3600 Team (2-player) event was combined with the U4200 (2-player) Women's Team event, and men/boys were allowed to enter, as long as their rating was under 4200. There were a number of complaints, but the entry form did allow for combining events if there were few entries. However, women/girls who wanted an event for themselves were disappointed, as were the suddenly non-competitive 3600 teams. The other event was Under 23/Under 6750 Men's Teams.

### Under 23 Teams

The Under 6750 Men's Team (3-person) offered a total of \$1620 in prize money (1st \$600, 2nd \$420, 3-4 \$300). Nine teams were entered, placed in round robin groups of four and five, with the top two from each group to advance to the semifinals. Each team not only had to be rated under 6750, but could only have one player rated over 2250.

All team matches were best of five, with the top two players on each team playing the top two players on the other team, and the number three players from each team playing each other one match. This is the same format as used at the World Championships. Since the #2 player had to be under 2250, in most ties, the #1 player on each team had easy wins over the #2 on the other side, making the team match more or less a best of three. However, as you will see, this was not always the case, as one U.S. Olympian was to learn.

### Preliminaries

#### Group A

The first big shock in this event came in the tie between the seemingly favored Maryland team of Todd Sweeris, Richard Lee, and Michael Wah versus the

California/Georgia team of Courtney Roberts, T.J. Beebe and Philip Tamburovic. After all, Todd was rated 2683, way ahead of the rest of the competition, and so should win two; while Richard Lee, the highest rated player under 2250 at 2241, should win one. Even better for their team was the fact that Richard's real rating coming into the tournament, after the cutoff for the tournament, was 2349.

However, throw the ratings out; Olympian Todd Sweeris, leading 17-12 in the third, suffered his worst loss in over five years in losing that third game at 18 to Courtney Roberts, rated 2270. Suddenly, the tie was a battle!

Said Courtney of the match, "Todd made many mistakes with his forehand. Also, I would play to his forehand, then come back to his backhand, and he played it soft, so I could attack." Formerly from Jamaica, Courtney now lives in Los Angeles.

Richard won the must-win match against T.J. Beebe, and the tie went to the fifth match—a long countering/blocking/looping duel between Richard and Courtney, with Courtney pulling it out, 17, -17, 17.

But one loss wouldn't knock them out—however, against the more balanced "California All-Stars," they lost their second, and were knocked out of the competition. Todd won his two this time, but Richard wasn't able to win against Shashin Shodhan, and lost in the fifth match against Jimmy Guan, -19, 14, 18. Michael Wah was unable to save them, losing to California's "third," pips-out penholder Philip Lim. "I'm getting too old for this!" 13-year-old Michael said shortly afterwards.

The California All-Stars cruised along, winning 3-1 against the Giant-Killer Courtney team, with Shashin winning both his matches (against T.J. & Tamburovic), and Philip Lim defeating T.J. for the third win (while

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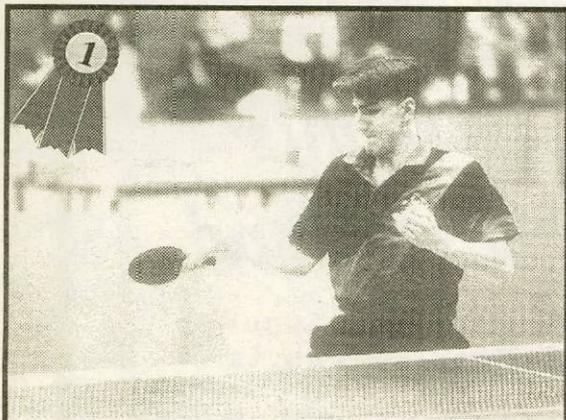


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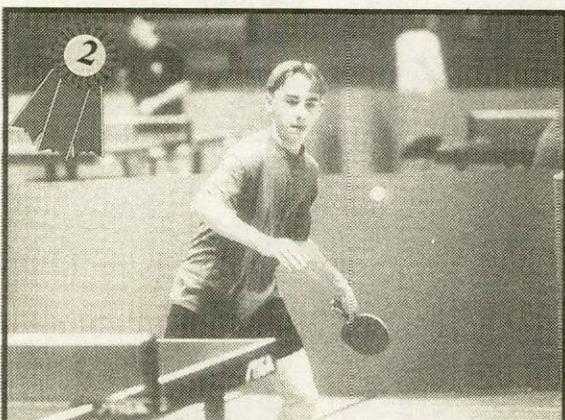


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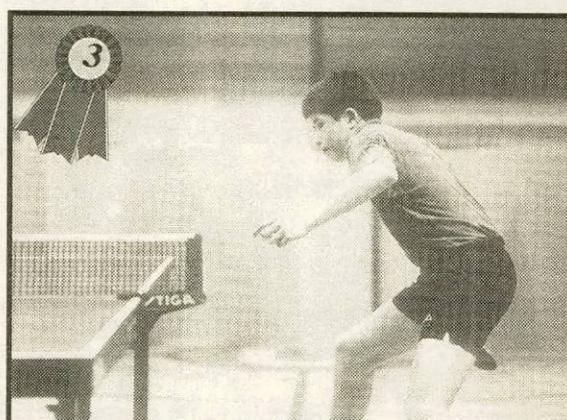


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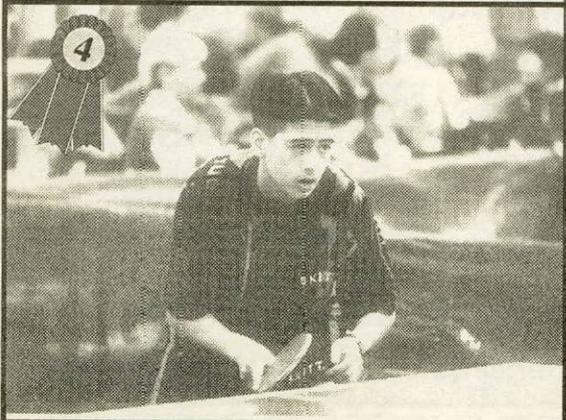


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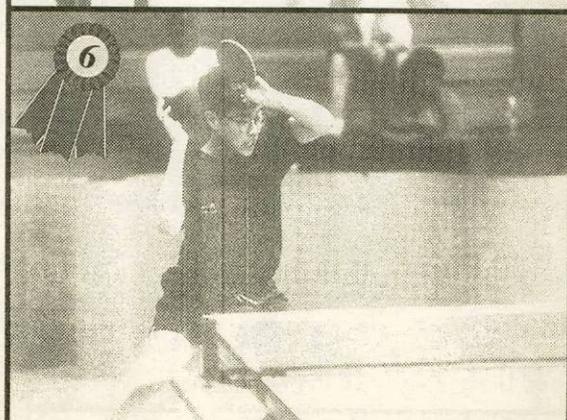


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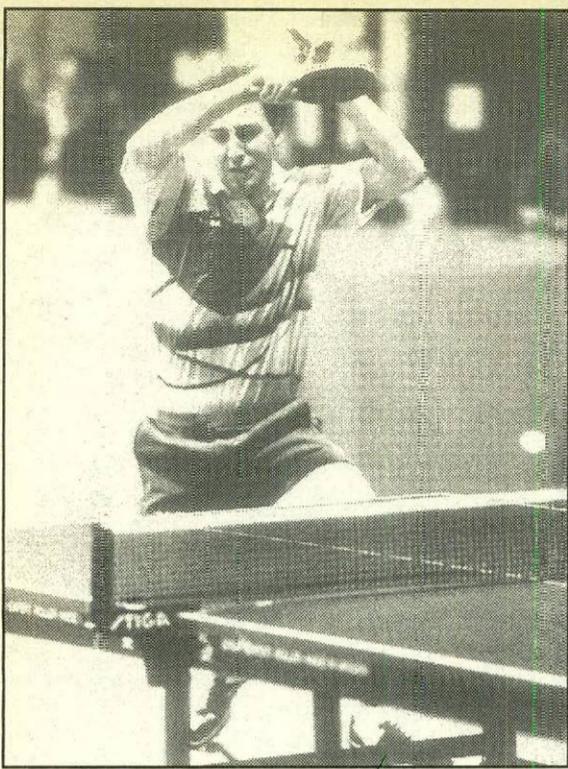


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**Under 23 Men's Champion Todd Sweeris**

Courtney defeated Jimmy to stop a shutout). California also defeated the California/Maryland team of Chi-Sun Chui, Andy Li and Vineet Agarwal, with Chi-Sun winning both his matches (against Shashin and Jimmy), but California Allstars winning the other three. Shashin, Philip & Jimmy advanced in first place with a 3-0 record.

The other three teams all finished with 1-2 records—a 3-way tie. However, the team of Chi-Sun Chui, Andy Li & Vineet Agarwal came out in second (5-4), and advanced, based on individual match record, care of their 3-1 win over fourth place finishers Courtney Roberts, T.J. Beebe & Philip Tamburovic (4-5), with Todd Sweeris, Richard Lee & Michael Wah in third (5-5).

**Group B**

Right from the start, the team of Da-Zhi Guo, Edward Chang & Frank Remenyi and the Maryland team of Sean Lonergan, Sunny Li & Michael Squires pulled away, with each winning their first three ties. The team of Norman Yeh, Jeff Hsin & Mitsuro Kubo lost their first two (to Da-Zhi Guo & Sean Lonergan's teams), but then won the next two, and were ready to step in if either team faltered—neither did, so they settled for third (2-2). The team of Freddie Gabriel, Peter Zajac & Andrew Do came in fourth (1-3); the Florida team of Keith Alban, Anthony

Torino & Geoff Aiken came in fifth (0-4).

The match for first place came down to the fourth match between the two aces, 2583-rated Sean Lonergan and 2452-rated Da-Zhi Guo. However, this was not to be Sean's tournament, and Guo won 2-0 to clinch the top spot for his team.

**Semifinals**

Norman Yeh's team was mistakenly sent out to play in the semifinals—and Norman even managed a win over Philip Lim before the mistake was realized, the correct teams sent out. Poor Norman—his win over Philip didn't count, and later they'd play twice, with Philip winning both times!

In the first semifinal, Da-Zhi Guo again starred, starting his team off with a win over 2470-rated Chi-Sun Chui, and adding another over Vineet Agarwal in the deciding fifth match. Edward Chang's win over Andy Li was the other win for their team, while Vineet and Chi-Sun won their team's two matches, against Frank Remenyi and Edward Chang, respectively. Scores for this tie (except for Vineet's -10, 16, 14 win over Frank) were lost to posterity.

In the other semifinal, the first four matches went as expected, with Shashin Shodhan and Jimmy Guan winning matches for their team against Sunny Li and Michael Squires, respectively, while Sean Lonergan won his two matches against Shashin & Philip Lim. The match came down to the fifth match between Sunny Li and Philip Lim. With the home crowd cheering him on, Philip turned on the forehand hitting and ran the match out at 13 & 16

**Final**

Philip Lim opened the all-California final team match by throwing a scare into Da-Zhi Guo's team by winning the second game against him, 21-14. However, Guo turned it on from there on, winning the match at 13, -14, 8 to give his team a 1-0 lead.

Match #2 was an easy win for Shashin Shodhan, 15 & 16, over Edward Chang, to tie things up, 1-1.

Match #3 was a tight battle, but again went as expected, with Jimmy Guan winning against Frank Remenyi, 17 & 21, and going up 2-1.

Match #4 was seemingly the big match, between Shashin & Guo. However, Guo was still hot from his last game against Philip Lim, and won at 15 & 16, tying it up at 2-2.

The final match was also a quick one, as Philip turned on the speed and forehand smash to win at 11 & 14 over Edward. So the Under 23 Team Champions are Shashin Shodhan, Philip Lim & Jimmy Guan.

**Under 4200 Teams**

The 4200 Teams (2-person) offered a total of \$880 in prize money (1st \$400, 2nd \$280, 3-4 \$200). After the

3600 team were added, there were a total of nine teams entered, placed in two groups of four and five. All ties were best of five, with both players playing both players on the other team, plus a doubles match—the old Corbillon style.

**Preliminaries**

**Group A**

The top-seeded team of New York's Virginia Sung & California's Sally Dahlin romped through their division, winning their three ties 3-0, 3-0 and 3-1, with Vivian Lee's 8 & 9 win over Sally their only loss. Marylanders Vivian & Jessica Shen romped to second place, winning their other two ties 3-0. (Although it was incorrectly marked on the draw sheet that the tie was 3-2). In third place was the team of Inga Viktorova & Alec Zelenkovsky. In fourth was the team of Stacey Lee & Patricia Hocke.

**Group B**

The top-seeded team in the division of Bogdan Kucherenko & Terrence Lee romped through the division, winning their ties 3-0, 3-1, 3-0 and 3-0. Their only loss was Jack Wah's win over Terrence Lee. There were many grumbles about this team—the entry form had a 4200 Women's event, and a 3600 event for anyone—and these two were not eligible for either.

Coming in second was the team of sisters, Wan-Ling & Jeannie Cheng. Their big win was over the higher rated team of Nan Li & Michelle Do. When Nan & Michelle won the doubles deuce in the third (-12, 15, 23) to go up 2-1, it looked over. In match #4, Nan (2321) would face Wan-Ling Cheng (1999)—a 322 rating point advantage. In the fifth match, if it got there, Michelle (1868) would face Jeannie Cheng (1582), a 276 rating point advantage. All Nan or Michelle had to do was win one of these matches—but they could do neither! Wan-Ling started things off by upsetting Nan (scores lost to posterity). Jeannie followed by upsetting Michelle at -20, 12, 13. Unbelievable—two consecutive "50-point" upsets! So the Chengs advanced in second place, while Nan & Michelle were eliminated.

**Semifinals**

Bogdan started things off for his team by defeating Jessica Shen at 12 & 16. Vivian Lee tied it up by defeating Terrence Lee, 15 & 15. The all-important doubles would probably decide things—but Bogdan was just too dominant as he & Terrence won easily, 13 & 13. Vivian almost turned things around for her team, winning the first game against Bogdan at 19, but Bogdan won the next two at 13 & 16 win the team match.

In the other semifinal, Virginia Sung easily won her two matches against the Chengs, and although Wan-Ling won 9 & 9 against Sally Dahlin, the doubles were decisive. The Chengs won the first at 19, but Sung/Dahlin

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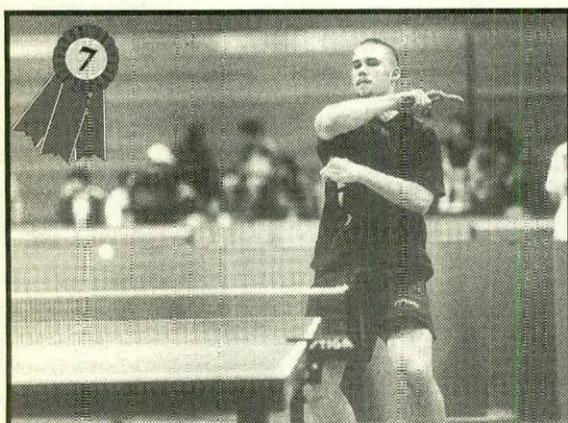


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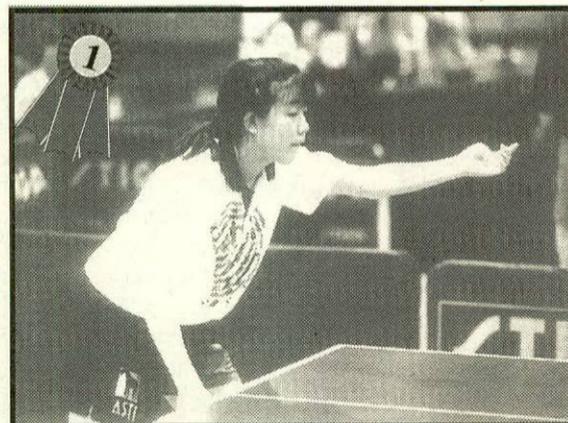


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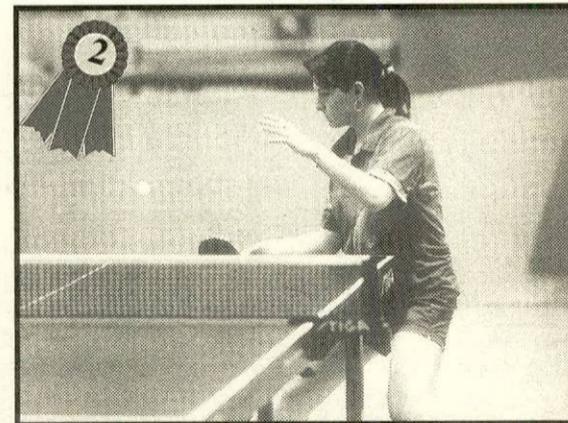


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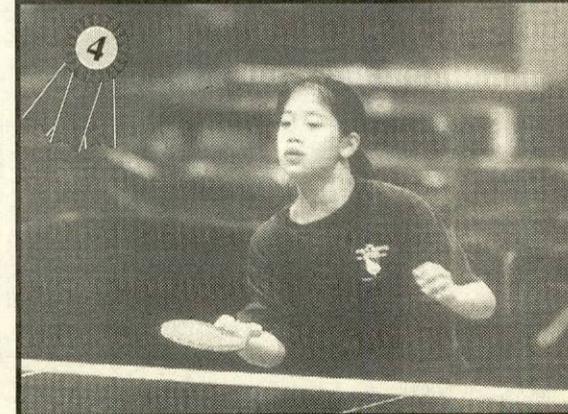
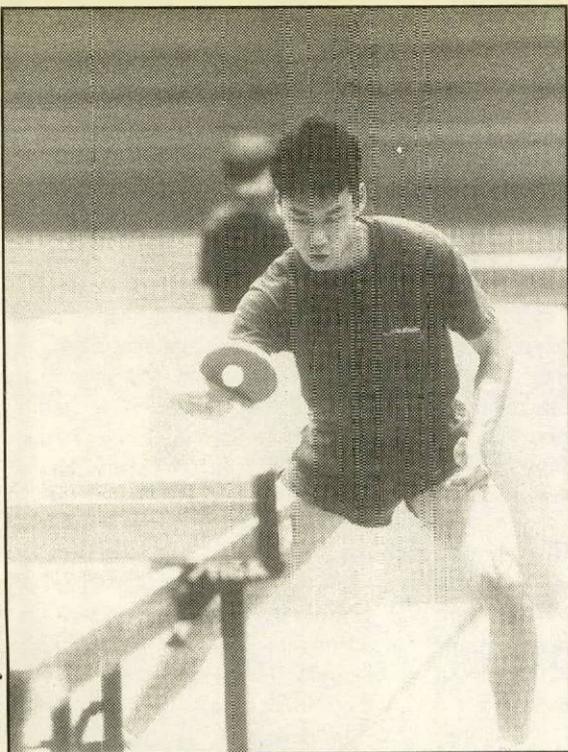


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**Under 23 Men's Runner-up Chi-Sun Chui**

won the next two at 16 & 16 to advance to the final.

#### **Final**

And so the "U4200 Women's Final" would have only one women's team, with Bogdan Kucherenko & Terrence Lee the other team—in other words, no women's event.

Bogdan started things off by defeating Sally at 6 & 7 to give his team a 1-0 lead.

12-year-old Terrence, rated 1891, almost broke things open by winning the first game against 2265-rated Virginia—and then took a 9-6 lead in the second! However, Virginia tightened up her chopping game against the smooth-looping Lee, and won the last two games relatively easily to tie things up.

When Bogdan & Terrence won the doubles at 10 & 19, they were heavily favored to win the event. However....

How could the powerful Bogdan lose to chopper Virginia Sung? Virginia pulled out the first game at 19, but Bogdan won the second at 18. In the third, Virginia simply chopped everything back, and Bogdan made mistake after mistake as Virginia won at 11, tying things up 2-2 and forcing the fifth and final match, between Terrence & Sally.

Sally, however, was ready for this one, winning at 16 & 11 to clinch the match for herself and Virginia Sung, the Under 4200 Team Champions here.

#### **Under 12's**

Three girls were entered in Under 12 Girls, with Jackie Lee coming in first, Tiffany Eng second, and Allison Seibel third. Five players were entered in Under 12 Boys, with Auria Malek going 4-0 in the round robin, Allan Rudesill second (3-1), and Vincent Cheng third (2-2). This was primarily a California event, with only Allison Seibel of Louisiana coming from out of state.

#### **Day 2 (Sunday)**

Four events would be held on Sunday: Under 23 Men, Under 23 Women, and the U.S. Team Trials for Under 18 Boys and Under 18 Girls. All four events were run using a double round robin format—which caused great difficulties for many players competing in two events. Many players ended up playing 15 matches in one day, way more than can be played effectively. Toward the end of the day, many of the matches were very poorly played, and some were barely contested—the players were simply too tired, and by late afternoon, every other match seemed to be an upset.

#### **Under 23 Men**

The event started off with 25 players divided into 8 groups, with the top two advancing. In every group the top two seeds came in first and second, in order, so we will start our coverage in the second round robin.

Total prize money in this event was \$1900 (1st: \$500; 2nd: \$400; 3-4: \$300; 5-8: \$100).

#### **Second Round Robins**

Posted on the wall before the preliminaries began were the second round robin groups, showing where the first and second place finishers in each preliminary group would advance to. As soon as the preliminary groups were finished, many of the players worked out who they would be playing. So when the second round robin matches were called, they were in for a surprise—none of the groups matched what had been posted! Referee Azmy Ibrahim, not realizing that the second groups were already "posted," used a different system for grouping the players, causing many complaints. The players were called for their matches before the new round robins were posted, so no one could point out the discrepancy until it was too late and matches were already playing.

#### **Group A**

Top-seeded Todd Sweeris romped through his group, including an 8 & 10 win over Courtney Roberts, who'd upset him earlier in the team event. Courtney came in second by defeating both Sunny Li and T.J. Beebe, both in three games. T.J. defeated Sunny for 3rd, but only the top two advanced.

#### **Group B**

Second-seeded Sean Lonergan won his group easily as well. Freddie Gabriel defeated both Bogdan Kucherenko and Keith Alban to come in second, while Bogdan defeated Keith for 3rd.

#### **Group C**

Third-seeded Chi-Sun Chui won his group with a 3-0 record, but he had three-game struggles with a pair of pips-out penholders—Norman Yeh and Philip Lim—curious, since both his dad and brother are (were) pips-out penholders, so presumably he is used to the style. (Even his sister has pips on her backhand!)

Philip Lim upset Norman Yeh in three for the second spot and advanced, while Norman defeated Anthony Torino for third.

#### **Group D**

Da-Zhi Guo won all three, including a 3-gamer with Shashin, while Shashin won his two other matches 2-0 to come in second and advance. Richard Lee revenged his earlier loss in the teams against Jimmy Guan for third.

#### **Quarterfinals**

All four quarterfinal matches were relatively quick 2-0's. Todd Sweeris defeated Philip Lim at 15 & 12; Da-Zhi Guo defeated Freddie Gabriel at 11 & 9; Chi-Sun Chui defeated Courtney Roberts at 14 & 17; and Sean Lonergan defeated Shashin Shodhan at 18 & 14.

#### **Semifinals**

Da-Zhi Guo came out swinging at everything against Todd Sweeris. Perhaps he felt he needed to, with Todd on the Olympic team and all. However, Todd's earlier loss had been to the ever-consistent Courtney Roberts—and Todd is trained to play power players. After Da-Zhi goes up 8-2 in the first, Todd ties it up 11-all, goes up 18-13, 20-15, and finally wins at 18. He wins the next two easily and the match, 18, 9, 10.

Sean Lonergan came out for his match with a gleam in his eye—he'd been up 2-0 on Chi-Sun Chui one month before at the U.S. Olympic Trials, with the winner of the match to advance to the final round robin of 12. However, Chi-Sun had come back to win in five, turning Sean into a spectator for the rest of the Trials.

Sean came out swinging—counterlooping everything Chi-Sun could offer as he won the first two games (again) at 13 & 17. In the third, Sean was up match point at 21-20, but Chi-Sun pulled that game out, 23-21. Now, just like at the Olympic Trials match, Sean's seemed to be losing power as the match went on—he's doing most of the work this match, while Chi-Sun's playing consistent mostly in the middle of the table, picking his shots. Chi-Sun wins the fourth at 11, and Sean's in danger of losing another 5-gamer from up 2-0. Chi-Sun's found a strategy of opening the rally with a soft backhand loop to Sean's forehand or middle, which Sean keeps trying (mostly unsuccessfully) to counterloop. (In the first two games, he'd made this shot.)

Chi-Sun pulls away early, leading 10-6, 13-7. Sean pulls within one point, 16-15, but then falters. Chi-Sun soon leads 20-16, and completes the comeback at 17. Match to Chi-Sun, -13, -17, 21, 11, 17.

#### **Final**

Just before the final, Todd was eating Power Bars, Chi-Sun raw carrots. You figure it out.

—In 1990, Chi-Sun and Todd played in the Under-18 Boys' Final at the Junior Nationals. At the time, by their own estimate, they'd played each other in tournaments over 100 times—and Todd hadn't won a game. Todd won the match and the Championship. Although Todd will probably never catch up from that deficit, it's been mostly all-Todd since that match (with the Pan Am Trials in 1995 a notable exception, where Todd had to defeat Chi-Sun 3-1 to make team—and Todd won in five, so Chi-Sun made the team instead.)

This match was no exception. You couldn't see that in the first game, however, as the two battled dead even most of the way. Finally, Todd pulled away to take a 17-13 lead—but Chi-Sun tied it up, 18-all. Todd lead 20-19, then it was Chi-Sun, 21-20, then Todd, 22-21, then Chi-Sun, 23-22. Finally, up 24-23, Todd pulled the first game out—and pretty much ran out the rest of the match. Championship to Todd Sweeris, 23, 15, 14.

#### **Under 23 Women**

The event was also run double round robin format, with 12 player placed in three groups for the Preliminaries. The top two players in each group came in 1-2, in order, so we will start our coverage with the second round robins, two groups of three.

Total prize money in this event was \$700 (1st: \$300; 2nd: \$200; 3-4: \$100).

#### **Second Round Robins**

##### **Group A**

Nan Li won both her matches 2-0, over Inga Viktorova and Sally Dahlin, to advance in first place. Inga defeated Sally 2-0 to advance in second.

##### **Group B**

Virginia Sun won her group easily as well, defeating Vivian Lee and Jessica Shen, both 2-0. Jessica defeated Vivian 2-1 to advance in second.

#### **Semifinals**

Nan Li defeated Jessica in an all-out counter-hitting duel, 13, 18, 12. The two would play each other a quadrillion times this tournament, with Nan winning each time, although Jessica would force her to go three twice (in best of threes).

On the other side, Virginia won the first two games against Inga at 17 & 16. After Inga rampaged through her in the third at 11, Virginia won the fourth easily at 13.

#### **Final**

As good as she is against topspin players, Nan is not so good against backspin. Virginia won easily, at 12, 4 & 15.

#### **Under 18 Boys' National Team Trials**

Many of the players in the team trials (and all of the contenders) had already played 6-7 matches in the Under 23 event, and were getting tired—and now they were faced with another double round robin event! To win this event, they'd need to play 8 more matches! Whew!

The top four players would (tentatively) be going to Europe for a Junior tournament in Finland. The top eight (if still under 18) would be going to Taiwan for the King Kar Youth Cup City Championships, and play on the U.S. Junior Teams at the U.S. Open.

#### **Preliminaries**

23 players were put into 6 preliminary groups. However, at the last minute, it was discovered that 2172-rated Jimmy Guan had been left out of the draw. He was seeded 9th, and using the "snake" format used for the draws, should have been placed in group 4 as the second seed, with the second seeds in groups 3 and 4 knocked up one group, and the second seed in group 2 (Andrew Do, rated 2071) moved into group 1. However, Referee Ibrahim (pressed for time?) simply "put" Guan into group 1, with Norman Yeh, Andy Li and Geoff Aiken. Suddenly, this group was far, far stronger than any other group! Andy would then get knocked out of the competition by Guan, and with it his chance of making the U.S. Junior Team.

The only upset in the preliminaries was Peter Zajac's win over practice partner Freddie Gabriel, knocking Freddie out of the competition and advancing Peter into the second round robins groups.

#### **Second Round Robins**

2239-rated T.J. Beebe was mistakenly placed in Group C with Richard Lee & Sunny Li, and 2071-rated Andrew Do placed in Group A, with Norman Yeh and Philip Lim. T.J. and Andrew should have been reversed, since the snake method for draws was being used, based on results in preliminaries. (The only other option was

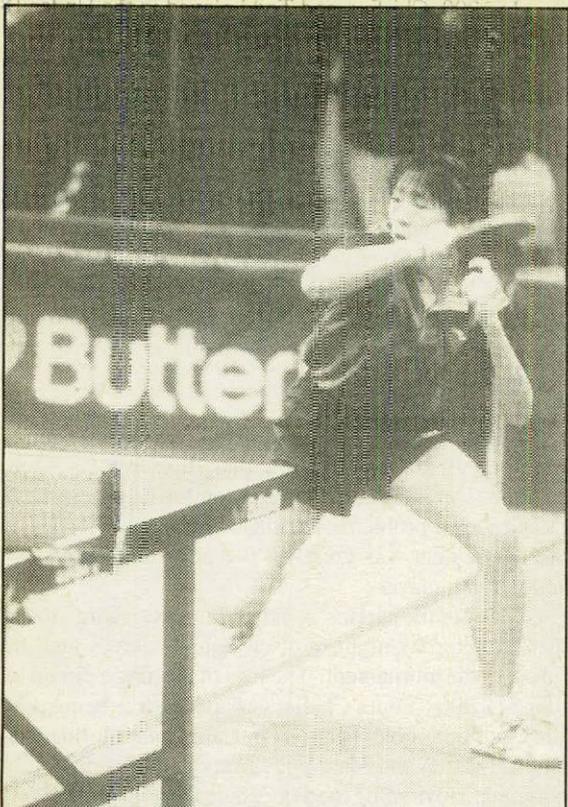


Photo by John Oros © 1996

**Under 23 Women's Champion Virginia Sung**

flipping, which was not being done, and they were not separated for geographical reasons.) Again, it was discovered too late. Again, the mistake would be costly, this time to Lee & Li.

**Group A**

Philip Lim upset Norman Yeh 2-1 to win this group. Both advanced with wins over Andrew Do (in the spot T.J. Beebe was supposed to take). Afterwards, Norman Yeh, exhausted and knowing he would be turning 18 soon and be ineligible for the team, defaulted out afterwards.

**Group B**

Peter Zajac continued his sudden prosperity by defeating Bogdan Kucherenko and Edward Chang to advance in first place. Bogdan defeated Edward to advance in second.

**Group C**

Here was the group that would shortly cause protests. T.J. Beebe defeated both his rivals from Maryland, Richard Lee & Sunny Li, to advance in first place. Richard defeated Sunny for second to advance. So Sunny was knocked off the U.S. team by 2239 T.J., when he should have been playing 2071 Andrew. Richard Lee, as he would later find out, should he have defeated Andrew, would have gotten the next-round default from Norman Yeh, and so clinch a top-four position—and the (tentative) trip to Europe. Instead, he finished 6th, and so will not make the trip.

**Group D**

Keith Alban defeated practice partner Anthony Torino 2-1 to advance in first place, with both defeating Jimmy Guan, 2-0.

**Quarterfinals**

Norman Yeh had left long ago, and so defaulted to T.J. Beebe, as mentioned above. Philip Lim defeated Richard Lee, 18 & 18, knocking Richard into the 5-8 positions. Bogdan Kucherenko defeated Keith Alban, 15 & 25. Peter Zajac advanced with a default from Anthony Torino—and another controversy.

Torino's Coach, Marty Prager, said that he had been told there was no difference between the top four and bottom four positions, that all eight would be going to Europe, Taiwan, or both. Since Torino (like everyone else) was exhausted, he defaulted—and later found out that the winner of that match might be going to Europe!

**Semifinals**

At this point, only the fittest were left. A fit Bogdan Kucherenko powered his way past Philip Lim; a fit Peter Zajac pulled off still another upset, defeating T.J. Beebe to advance to the final.

**Final**

Peter had defeated Bogdan earlier, in the second round robin. However, Bogdan was now in high gear, looping winners off everything. Match to Bogdan

Kucherenko, 16 & 15.

**3-4 Playoff:** Philip Lim defeated T.J. Beebe, 16, -18, 9.

**5-6 Playoff:** Since Norman Yeh and Anthony Torino had defaulted out, Richard Lee and Keith Alban played off for the 5-6 position. At first, the two were going to double-default due to exhaustion, but an order of finish was needed, and since neither wanted to default and come in 6th, they played off, with Keith winning, 19 & 15.

**7-8 Playoff:** Since Norman Yeh had defaulted out earlier, Anthony Torino won by default.

**Under 18 Girls' National Team Trials**

Ten players were placed in two groups of five, with the top two advancing to a final round robin of four. The final team would consist of four players, all of whom would be going to Europe and/or Taiwan, and playing on U.S. Open Junior Teams.

**Group A**

There were no upsets in this group, with Nan Li defeating Jessica Shen 2-1 for first place with a 4-0 record, to Jessica's 3-1. Both won their other three matches 2-0. Coming in 3rd was Stacy Lee (2-2); 4th Margaret Lu (1-3); and 5th, Mary Lee (0-4).

**Group B**

The only upset here was Vivian Lee's upset of top-seed Inga Viktorova to advance in first place at 4-0. Inga came in second, 3-1. Third went to Michelle Do, 2-2; 4th to Jackie Lee, 1-3, and 5th to Shelly Lee, 0-4.

**Final Round Robin**

Although Nan Li had already defeated Jessica Shen, and Vivian Lee had already defeated Inga Viktorova, there were no carry-over matches, and so they had to replay these matches.

Nan Li won all three matches, with only Vivian pushing her to three games. This time around, Inga defeated Vivian to come in second, Vivian fourth. Jessica came in fourth after losing 3-gamers to both Vivian and Inga.

**Day 3 (Monday)**

Today's events would include Boys' and Girls' Under 18, 16, and 14. Both the Under 18 Boys' and Girls' events were run double round robin—and some players would end up playing as many as 14 matches this day. The two events were not supposed to have been run double round robin, but there was a mix-up, and it was too late to change it after the players were sent out for the second round robins—exhausted, but still trying to win!

**Under 18 Boys**

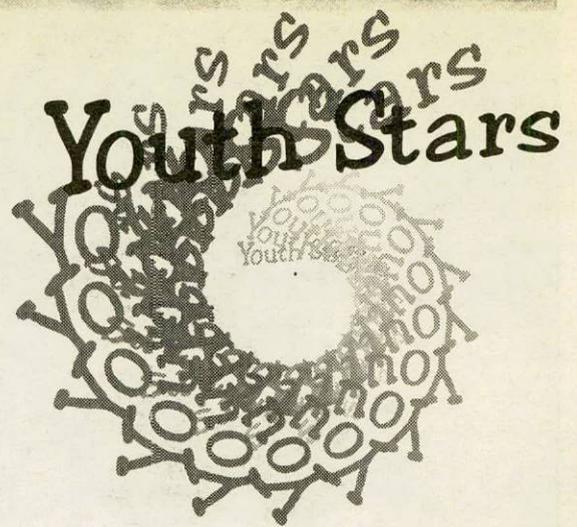
The only upset in the preliminaries was Andy Li's win over Anthony Torino, knocking Anthony out of the event and advancing Andy to the second round. The top two seeds advanced in the other six groups in order of seeding, except for Group 6, where 7th-seeded Philip Lim "upset" 6th seeded T.J. Beebe, with both still advancing.

**Second Round Robins**

Twelve players made it to this round, in four groups of three. There were no upsets in any of the four groups, with the higher rated player winning all twelve matches played. (Since the players were seeded in the groups based on their results in the preliminary round robin, the "top seeded" player did not necessarily win—the higher rated players did)

**Quarterfinals**

There were no upsets this round. Richard Lee defeated T.J. Beebe, -18, 11, 17; Norman Yeh withstood a match point to win against Freddie Gabriel, -15, 15, 20; Shashin Shodhan also withstood a match point before he defeated Bogdan Kucherenko, -17, 23, 19; and Sunny Li defaulted to top-seeded Da-Zhi Guo to save himself for his other matches



in Under 14 and Under 16.

**Semifinals**

Richard Lee and Da-Zhi Guo battled dead even for two straight games—most present didn't realize that Richard, listed as 2251, was really rated 2349, and so not THAT far behind the 2452-rated Da-Zhi. However, at the end of each game, Da-Zhi pulled it out, winning at 18 & 17.

In the other semifinals, Norman Yeh had to "come back" just to get 12 points in the first game as Shashin totally dominated the first game. However, something happened after that—pips-out penholder Norman began pounding more winners and blocking better, Shashin wasn't looping as many winners, and Norman won the match, -12, 18, 18.

**Final**

Would Norman make a match of it, or would Da-Zhi simply run away with the final? After all, Da-Zhi is from China, and so is very used to the pips-out penhold game. However, Norman not only stayed with him in the first, losing at 18, but he pulled out the second at 19! However, Da-Zhi ran away with the third to win the match and the title, 18, -19, 12.

**Under 16 Boys**

The only upset in the round robin phase was Peter Zajac's win over Philip Lim. Both advanced, but Zajac would now have a better draw.

**Quarterfinals**

T.J. was fretting that he had lost to Philip Lim three times. Someone told him to stop playing ball after ball to Lim's backhand, play more to the forehand, then *come back* to the backhand—and it worked! T.J. advanced, 11 & 13.

7th seeded Andy Li continued his run for the finals here, defeating Peter Zajac, 19 & 15. Sunny Li defeated power-house looper Terrence Lee, 14 & 15, and Freddie Gabriel won over Keith Alban, 11 & 18.

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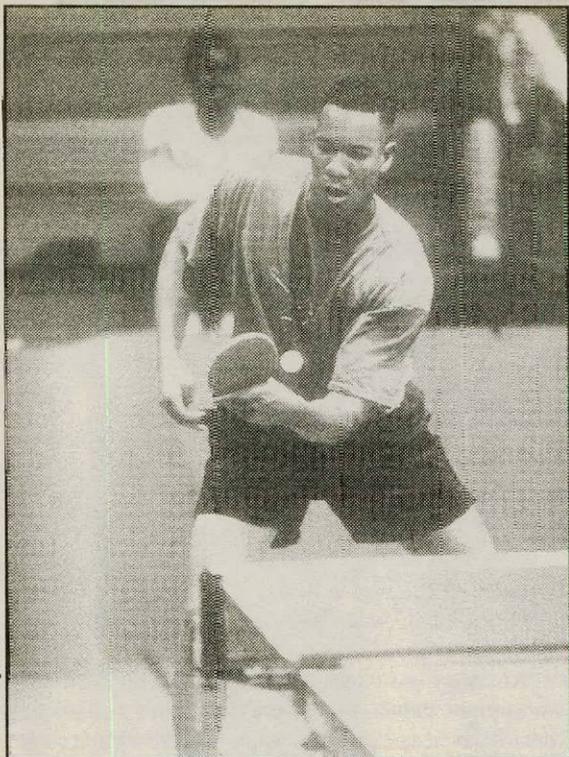
  

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**Courtney Roberts pulled off the upset of the tournament, defeating Todd Sweeris in the team competition.**

### Semifinals

2236-rated Freddie Gabriel had defeated 2049-rated Andy Li in the round robin phase 2-0, and faced him again here in the semifinals. This time, he had more trouble with Andy's serve and sheer power (when Andy gets hold of the ball... the ball goes...). Match to Andy, 18, -15, 16.

The hopes of some of an all-Li final were TJ'ed by T.J. Beebe, who defeated Sunny in the other semifinal, 11 & 18.

### Final

Andy's hard, quick backhand (with pips), serves & forehand looping power kept him in the match against the higher rated (2239) T.J. Andy battled to the end, but T.J.'s two-winged attack was just too strong in the big points. Match and Under 16 crown to T.J. Beebe, 18 & 19.

### Under 14 Boys

The only upset in the round robin phase was a minor one, with Keith Alban (2191) defeating Freddie Gabriel (2236) for first place in their group, with both advancing. On the other side, Sunny Li was undefeated, with Terrence Lee coming in second.

### Semifinals

Keith Alban won relatively easily against Terrence Lee, although some of Terrence's shots were eye-openers (especially the backhand loops—even the misses were nice-looking!). On the other side, Sunny Li was running away with the third game against Freddie Gabriel—but Freddie kept coming back, back, and almost pulled it out—but Sunny won, -14, 17, 19.

### Final

Sunny's serves, backhand power, and angled-off loops were too much this time for Keith Alban, as Sunny won, 16 & 13.

### Under 18 Girls

The only upset in the preliminaries was Jessica Shen's (2026) win over Inga Viktorova (2215). Both advanced to the second round robins, as did Nan Li & Stacy Lee from Group 1 and Vivian Lee & Michelle Do from Group 3.

### Second Round Robins

There were no upsets this round, as Nan defeated Inga in Group A, and Vivian defeated Jessica in Group B.

### Semifinals

After winning the first against Jessica at 13, Nan found herself in a real battle as Jessica, playing more aggressively than she had this tournament, won the second at 12. The third went to 15-16, Nan leading, before Nan pulled away to win at 16.

On the other half, 2044-rated Vivian upset Inga to advance to the final, 16 & 16.

### Final

Left-handed Vivian battled most of the way, hitting backhand winners with her pips to Nan's wide forehand, but Nan (who has medium pips on her backhand) pulled out each game at the end. Championships to Nan, 17 & 15.

### Under 16 Girls

There were no upsets in the preliminaries.

### Semifinals

A very tired Nan Li and Jessica Shen faced off again, five minutes after their Under 18 semifinal battle. This time, Jessica swatted balls all over the court in "Let's get this over" mode. Match to Nan, 6 & 8.

On the other side, 1844-rated Michelle shell-shocked Vivian in the first game, 21-11! Michelle, when her forehand & backhand counterhitting and smashing is on, can be scary. However, Vivian's two-winged hitting was the equal of Michelle's in the next two games, and was more consistent. Match to Vivian, -11, 12, 16.

### Final

Exhausted, tired, wanting to go home and not want-

ing to play each other for something like the 80th time this day, Nan Li and Vivian Lee split the prize money.

### Under 14 Girls

There were no upsets in the round robin phase.

### Semifinals

Michelle Do clobbered winner after winner from both sides against Jackie Lee, winning at 12 & 17. On the other side, Jeannie Cheng defeated Jennifer Lee, with scores lost to posterity.

### Final

Michelle continued to rocket off-the-bounce counterhits all over the court in winning at 16 & 17 over Jeannie.

### Aftermath

I figure the 62 players left behind about 300 pounds from energy burned off in the marathon formats—perhaps they were scheduled to play a few too many matches? Despite some problems, the kids loved it, and the idea of the tournament was great—it'll really support our up-and-coming players.

Many of the parents, coaches, juniors and organizers met on Saturday night to discuss junior issues and the future of the tournament. The idea of running a circuit of four \$10,000 "Youth Challenges" per year is being pursued, with possible locations in California, Florida, Atlanta, Houston and Maryland. Maryland has tentatively committed to running the next Youth Cup, in April, 1997, at the National Table Tennis Center.

## Results

**Under 23 Teams—Final:** Team "A" (Shashin Shodhan, Philip Lim, Jimmy Guan) d. Team "C" (Da-Zhi Guo, Edward Chang, Frank Remenyi), 3-2; Guo (C) d. Lim (A), 13,-14,8; Shodhan (C) d. Chang (A), 15,16; Guan (A) d. Remenyi (C), 17,21; Guo (C) d. Shodhan (A), 15,16; Lim (A) d. Chang (C), 11,14.

**Semifinal #1:** Team "A" d. Team "B" (Sean Lonergan, Sunny Li, Michael Squires), 3-2; Shodhan (A) d. Li (B), 16,13; Lonergan (B) d. Lim (A); Guan (A) d. Squires (B), 10,14; Lonergan (B) d. Shodhan (A), 18,18; Lim (A) d. Li (B), 13,16.

**Semifinal #2:** Team "C" d. Team "E" (Chi-Sun Chui, Andy Li, Vineet Agarwal), 3-2; Guo (C) d. Chui (E) 2-0 (n.s.); Agarwal (E) d. Remenyi (C), -10,16,14; Chang (C) d. Li (E), 2-0 (n.s.); Chui (E) d. Remenyi (C), 2-0 (n.s.); Guo (C) d. Agarwal (E), 2-0 (n.s.).

### Preliminary RR's:

**Group 1: 1st:** Team "A" (Shashin Shodhan, Philip Lim, Jimmy Guan), 3-0; **2nd:** Team "E" (Chi-Sun Chui, Andy Li, Vineet Agarwal), 1-2; **3rd:** Team "D" (Todd Sweeris, Richard Lee, Michael Wah), 1-2; **4th:** Team "H" (Courtney Roberts, T.J. Beebe, Philip Tamburovic), 1-2.

**Group 2: 1st:** Team "C" (Da-Zhi Guo, Edward Chang, Frank Remenyi), 4-0; **2nd:** Team "B" (Sean Lonergan, Sunny Li, Michael Squires), 3-1; **3rd:** Team "J" (Norman Yeh, Jeff Hsin, Mitsuro Kubo), 2-2; **4th:** Team "F" (Freddie Gabriel, Peter Zajac, Andrew Do), 1-3; **5th:** Team "G" (Keith Alban, Anthony Torino, Geoff Aiken), 0-4.

**Under 4200 Teams—Final:** Team "A" (Virginia Sung, Sally Dahlin) d. Team "B" (Bogdan Kucherenko, Terrence Lee), 3-2; Kucherenko (B) d. Dahlin (A), 6,7; Sung (A) d. Lee (B), 2-1 (n.s.); Kucherenko/Lee (B) d. Sung/Dahlin (A), 10,19; Sung (A) d. Kucherenko (B), 19,-18,11; Dahlin (A) d. Lee (B), 16,11.

**Semifinal #1:** Team "A" d. Team "F" (Wan-Ling Cheng, Jeanie Cheng), 3-1; Sung (A) d. J. Cheng, 10,10; W-L Cheng (F) d. Dahlin (A), 9,9; Sung/Dahlin (A) d. Cheng/Cheng (F), -19,16,16; Sung (A) d. W-L Cheng (F), 18,8.

**Semifinal #2:** Team "B" d. Team "D" (Vivian Lee, Jessica Shen), 3-1; Kucherenko (B) d. Shen (D), 12,16; V. Lee (D) d. T. Lee (B), 15,15; Kucherenko/T. Lee (B) d. V. Lee/Shen (D), 13,13; Kucherenko (B) d. V. Lee (D), -19,13,16.

### Preliminary RR's:

**Group 1: 1st:** Team A (Virginia Sung, Sally Dahlin), 3-0; **2nd:** Team "D" (Vivian Lee, Jessica Shen), 2-1; **3rd:** Team "E" (Inga Viktorova, Alec Zelenkovsky), 1-2; **4th:** Team "H" (Stacey Lee, Patricia Hocke), 0-3.

**Group 2: 1st:** Team "B" (Bogdan Kucherenko, Terrence Lee), 4-0; **2nd:** Team "F" (Wal-Ling Cheng, Jeanie Cheng), 3-1; **3rd:** Team "J" (David Rudesill, Jonathan Lee), 1-3; **4th:** Team "G" (Jack Wah, Margaret Lu), 1-3; **5th:** Team "C" (Nan Li, Michelle Do), 1-3.

**Under 23 Men—Final:** Todd Sweeris d. Chi-Sun Chui, 23,15,14; **SF:** Sweeris d. Da-Zhi Guo, 18,9,10; Chui d. Sean Lonergan, -13,-17,21,11,17; **QF:** Sweeris d. Philip Lim, 15,12; Guo d. Freddie Gabriel, 11,9; Chui d. Courtney Roberts, 14,17; Lonergan d. Shashin Shodhan, 18,14.

**Under 18 Boys—Final:** Da-Zhi Guo d. Norman Yeh, 18,-19,12; **SF:** Guo d. Richard Lee, 18,17; Yeh d. Shashin Shodhan, -12,18,18; **QF:** Guo d. Sunny Li, def.; Lee d. T.J. Beebe, -18,11,17; Yeh d. Freddie Gabriel, -15,15,20; Shodhan d. Bogdan Kucherenko, -17,23,19.

**Under 16 Boys—Final:** T.J. Beebe d. Andy Li, 18,19; **SF:** Beebe d. Sunny Li, 11,18; A. Li d. Freddie Gabriel, 18,-15,16; **QF:** Beebe d. Philip Lim, 11,13; S. Li d. Terrence Lee, 14,15; A. Li d. Peter Zajac, 19,15; Gabriel d. Keith Alban, 11,18.

**Under 14 Boys—Final:** Sunny Li d. Keith Alban, 16,13; **SF:** Alban d. Terrence Lee, 15,10; Li d. Freddie Gabriel, -14,17,19.

**Under 12 Boys RR: 1st:** Auria Malek, 4-0; **2nd:** Allan Rudesill, 3-1; **3rd:** Vincent Cheng, 2-2; **4th:** Simon Chung, 1-3; **5th:** Danny Bruno, 0-4.

**Under 23 Women—Final:** Virginia Sung d. Nan Li, 12,4,15; **SF:** Sung d. Inga Viktorova, 17,16,-11,13; Li d. Jessica Shen, 13,18,12.

**Under 18 Girls—Final:** Nan Li d. Vivian Lee, 17,15; **SF:** Li d. Jessica Shen, 13,-12,16; Lee d. Inga Viktorova, 16,16.

**Under 16 Girls—Final:** Nan Li & Vivian Lee split money; **SF:** Li d. Jessica Shen, 6,8; Lee d. Michelle Do, -11,12,16.

**Under 14 Girls—Final:** Michelle Do d. Jeanie Cheng, 16,17; **SF:** Do d. Jackie Lee, 12,17; Cheng d. Jenifer Lee, n.s.

**Under 12 Girls RR: 1st:** Jackie Lee, 2-0; **2nd:** Tiffany Eng, 1-1; **3rd:** Allison Seibel, 0-2.

### U.S. Junior National Team Trials

#### Under 18 Boys:

1. Bogdan Kucherenko
2. Peter Zajac
3. Philip Lim
4. T.J. Beebe
5. Keith Alban
6. Richard Lee
7. Anthony Torino
8. Norman Yeh

#### Under 18 Girls:

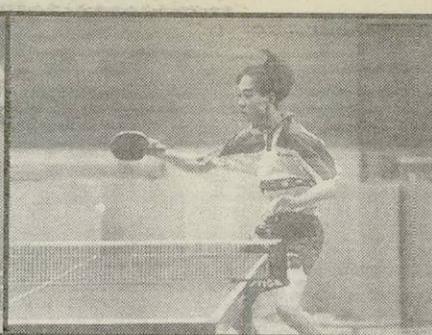
1. Nan Li
2. Inga Viktorova
3. Vivian Lee
4. Jessica Shen



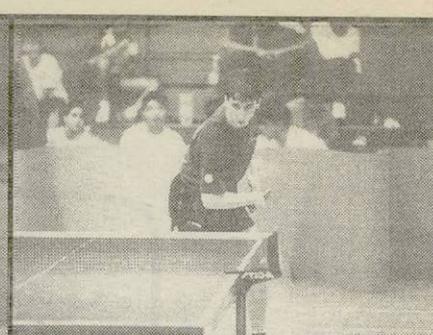
*Todd Sweeris*



*Bogdan Kucherenko*



*Da-Zhi Guo*



*Sean Loneragan*



*Richard Lee*



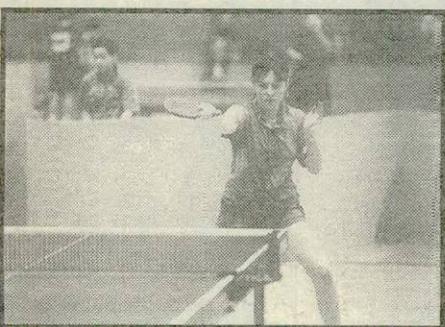
*Peter Zajac*



*Freddie Gabriel*



*Andrew Do*



*Inga Viktorova*



*Michelle Do*



*Anthony Torino*



*Terrence Lee*



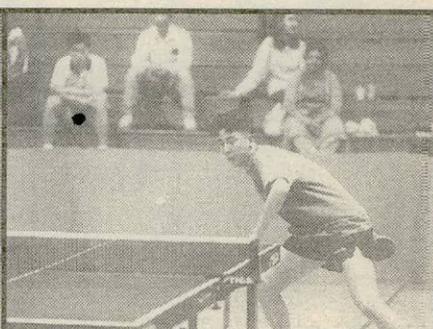
*Shashin Shodhan*



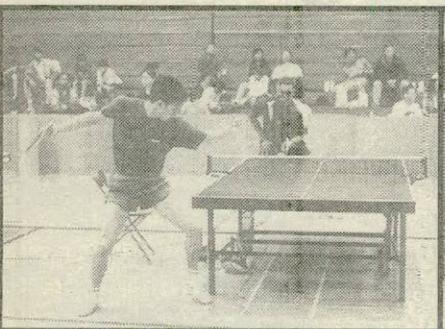
*Sunny Li*



*Philip Lim*



*Eddie Chang*



*Chi-Sun Chui serves to  
Courtney Roberts*



*Bogdan Kucherenko &  
Terrence Lee*



*Virginia Sung & Sally Dahlin*



*Jessica Shen & Vivian Lee*

Scenes

from

the

**U.S. Youth Cup**

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# NATIONAL COLLEGE TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Princeton, New Jersey

March 30-31, 1996

by Larry Hodges

13 teams from 11 colleges made their way to Princeton to take part in the 25th National Collegiate Team Championships. The format was best of seven with four players per team. The top two players on each team played the top two players on the other team; the #3 player played the opposing #3; the #4 played the opposing #4; and the #3 and #4 players played a doubles match against the opposing #3 and #4 players.

Traveling the farthest was Georgia State University from Atlanta, who came by van with a 6-person contingent: Robert Hyatt, Mark Dubin, Yogesh Sapre, Boris Gorinshteyn, Raj Gopal and Melvin Denham. The trip was not in vain—they were undefeated for six team ties as they marched to the finals against Montgomery College.

Montgomery College had made the finals the year before, losing to practice partners University of Maryland in an all-Maryland final. This year, however, University of Maryland, which had won for three straight years, was unable to field a team—its players were either at the North American Championships (held the same weekend), or simply too busy to attend.

Montgomery College faced severe handicaps, however—they only had 3 players, Sean Lonergan, Masamichi Kubo and Andy Tan. Sean & Kubo, however, were the top two players in the competition by several hundred rating points, so even though they had to default two matches in each tie, they could still win by sweeping the top four matches, with Andy along to provide insurance wins.

## Saturday: Preliminaries

A modified round robin format was used in the preliminaries, with a group of 6 and a group of 7. Each team played four team ties. There were no surprises here, as the top four seeded teams—Montgomery College, Georgia State University, University of Pennsylvania and New York University—were all undefeated against all other teams. Montgomery College won their group by defeating University of Pennsylvania, 4-2, while Georgia State defeated New York, 4-1, to win their group.

## Sunday: Single Elimination

Montgomery College, Georgia State and University of Pennsylvania all received byes. There were no surprises as Cooper Union defeated Carnegie Mellon, 4-2; Harvard defeated arch-rival Princeton, 4-1; and Howard University defeated University of Pennsylvania III, 4-0. Stonybrook and Boston University did not show the second day, defaulting to University of Pennsylvania II and New York University, respectively.

The quarterfinals were also very straightforward, with the closest tie being Montgomery College's 4-2 win over Cooper Union—with both losses being the defaults care of the missing third person. Georgia State University defeated University of Pennsylvania II 4-0; University of Pennsylvania defeated Howard University 4-1; and New York University defeated Harvard, 4-1.

## Semifinals

New York University took a quick 2-0 lead on Montgomery College, with Eugene Shtutin defeating Andy Tan at 19 & 17 and Sergei Menkin getting the first of Montgomery's two forced defaults. With Eugene's win over Andy, all New York had to do was pull off one win against Sean Lonergan or Masamichi Kubo—and that would be up to New York's ace, Yefim Pavlotskiy. Sean had no trouble with Yefim; however, Yefim quickly showed his match with Kubo was a match. Leading late into both games, Yefim had a chance—but both times, Kubo turned up the attack, ripping a series of winners to pull out both games at 18 & 18 to put Montgomery into the final.

On the other half, Georgia State came in with more firepower than University of Pennsylvania, with aces Mark Dubin and Robert Hyatt evenly matched up against Pennsylvania's ace David Rosenzweig, with Georgia State's Yogesh Sapre easily the strongest #3 of any team in the competition. For Pennsylvania to win, they'd need two wins from Rosenzweig, a win in the doubles, and a win from either #3 Christian Ko or #4 Ravi Ponamgi. Ponamgi quickly put Pennsylvania in the lead with a 9 & 16 win over Boris Gorinshteyn. Yogesh Sapre tied it up with a 19 & 15 win over Ko. The BIG match between Rosenzweig and Mark Dubin came up next. It was an exciting battle, with Dubin's consistent attack against Rosenzweig's counterlooping—but Dubin pulled it out, 23, -19, 18, giving Georgia the win.

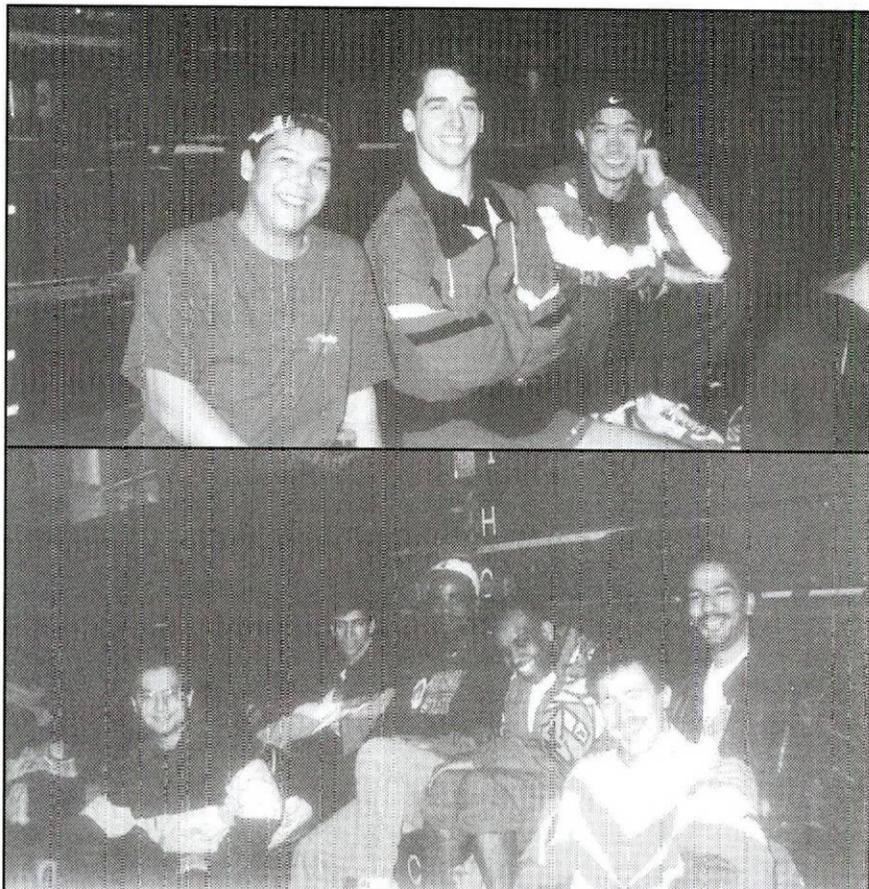
## Final

Montgomery College hoped to send Andy Tan up against Georgia's #4, Boris Gorinshteyn. Instead, Andy faced #3, Yogesh Sapre, and went down 11 & 12 in the first match of the team match. With the two defaults, Georgia State was now up 3-0—and the pressure on Montgomery was on!

Georgia's Dubin & Hyatt had all the spirit needed to win, but Montgomery's Lonergan & Kubo had all the loops. In the end, Montgomery's top two swept all four matches to keep the National Championship Cup in Maryland. Dubin made it to 15-all against Kubo, but lost that game at 16. He lead the second, 15-13—but Kubo scored the last 8 in a row to win, 16 & 15. Against Lonergan, Dubin made it to 16-all in the first game—but lost 5 in a row.

Against Kubo, Hyatt could only raise his hands beseechingly and say, "I need a gun!" Kubo was red hot against Hyatt, as was Lonergan.

Great thanks go to Julie Lu for taking over the reins of the tournament with Andre Liu's "retirement," and to Liu for the many years he put in running the tournament. Also a thanks to Referee Chris Lehman, whose impeccable judgment for the second year in a row helped make the tournament a great success. Also congratulations to MVP Sean Lonergan, who just eked out the title over fellow-undefeated teammate Masamichi Kubo.



**Top: National Champions Montgomery College (L-R): Andy Tan, Sean Lonergan, Masamichi Kubo.**

**Middle: Finalists Georgia State University (L-R): Boris Gorinshteyn, Yogesh Sapre, Melvin Denham, Robert Hyatt, Mark Dubin, Raj Gopal.**

**Right: Tournament Directors Julie Lu & Tim Negron and Referee Chris Lehman carrying tables up stairway.**



## Final: Results

### Montgomery College d.

### Georgia State University, 4-3:

- Yogesh Sapre (GSU) d. Andy Tan (MC), 11,12;*
- Boris Gorinshteyn (GSU) wins by default;*
- Sean Lonergan (MC) d. Robert Hyatt (GSU), 13,9;*
- Masamichi Kubo (MC) d. Mark Dubin (GSU), 16,15;*
- Yogesh Sapre/Boris Gorinshteyn (GSU) wins doubles by default;*
- Sean Lonergan (MC) d. Mark Dubin (GSU), 16,7;*
- Masamichi Kubo (MC) d. Robert Hyatt (GSU), 15,13.*

### Semifinals:

#### Georgia State University d. University of Pennsylvania, 4-1:

- Ravi Ponamgi (Penn) d. Boris Gorinshteyn (GSU), 9,16;*
- Yogesh Sapre (GSU) d. Christian Co, 19,15 (Penn);*
- Mark Dubin (GSU) d. Dave Rosenzweig (Penn), 23,-19,18;*
- Robert Hyatt (GSU) d. Raymond Tong (Penn), 11,12;*
- Gorinshteyn/Sapre (GSU) d. Ko/Ponamgi (Penn), -16,14,18.*

#### Montgomery College d. New York University, 4-3:

- Serge Menkin (NYU) wins by default;*
- Eugene Shtutin (NYU) d. Andy Tan (MC), 19,17;*
- Masamichi Kubo (MC) d. Alex Apter (NYU), 8,8;*
- Sean Lonergan (MC) d. Yefim Pavlotskiy (NYU), 7,10;*
- Shtutin/Menkin (NYU) wins doubles by default;*
- Masamichi Kubo (MC) d. Yefim Pavlotskiy (NYU), 18,18;*
- Sean Lonergan (MC) d. Alex Apter (NYU), 10,15.*

### Quarterfinals:

- Montgomery College d. Cooper Union, 4-2;*
- New York University d. Harvard University, 4-1;*
- University of Pennsylvania d. Howard University, 4-1;*
- Georgia State University d. University of Pennsylvania II, 4-0;*

### Eighths:

- Montgomery College, University of Pennsylvania, Georgia State University receive byes based on preliminary play;*
- Cooper Union d. Carnegie Mellon, 4-2;*
- Harvard University d. Princeton University, 4-1;*
- Howard University d. University of Pennsylvania III, 4-0;*
- University of Pennsylvania II d. Stonybrook, default.*

Photos by Larry Hodges © 1996

## \$2700 TWIN CITIES SPRING OPEN

Disney's TTC  
Minneapolis, Minnesota  
March 30-31, 1996  
by John Robb



Not heard much about Minnesota Table Tennis on the national level? Things are changing. The Twin Cities Spring Open held at Benilde-St. Margaret High School in Minneapolis was the largest and most competitive tournament held in Minnesota in well over two decades. A high number of entrants, nearly 20 tables and \$2700 in prize money set the stage for a highly entertaining tournament which culminated in a spellbinding 5 game match between Brandon Olson, a former World Team Member, and Todd Peterson, a player who has competed in the Pan-Am Games.

The stands filled up for the 8:00 Final between Todd and Brandon. While waiting for the final to begin, the two of them put on a 20-minute exhibition warm-up which was fun for everyone to watch. Then, Rick Brekke, the owner of Disney's Table Tennis Center, gave the tournament acknowledgments and announced the onset of the Final. The lights seemed to dim as everyone then began to gaze intently upon the match.

During the first game, it was evident that both Todd and Brandon were just beginning to warm up. Todd played well and held on to win the game 21-16. In the second and third games, Todd continued to play well but Brandon began to regain much of his brilliant form and won the games 22-20 and 21-19. In the fourth game, Brandon developed an early lead, but Todd made a relentless comeback, eventually winning the game 25-23. The tensions were high at the beginning of the fifth game, and for a short while, Brandon struggled and Todd attacked consistently, gaining a 7-3 lead. From that point on, until the end of the match, Todd maintained a 3-5 point lead and in the final points, Todd kill-looped every ball, eventually wearing down Brandon's defense and won the game 21-17, giving him a well deserved ovation and the Championship, not to mention the \$500 first prize.

The tournament also had many other important results. Truc Phuong Tran won the Women's Title, defeating Lia Myhre in the Final. The Under 4000 Doubles was won by Brandon Olson and Kris

Sabas, a quickly developing junior, who defeated Dien Nguyen and Reggie Samuel in the Final. In Open Singles, Mitch Seidenfeld, the World Disabled Champion and Paralympic Gold Medalist, and Dien Nguyen made it to the semifinals, with Mitch losing to Brandon and Dien losing to Todd. The Junior Open was won by Cory Eider, who defeated Eric Green. The top Girls' finisher was Tammy Mack, who defeated Lydia Brekke in the finals of the Under 16 Girls. Michael Liu, a 9-year-old from Iowa, defeated an experienced chopper, Kurt Fechter, in the final of Under 1700. And to make the list intact, Duc Luu defeated Gus Kennedy in the final of Over 40 Seniors.

A special thanks to tournament director Steve Steblay, who efficiently coordinated and ran a well-organized tournament, and to Disney's Table Tennis Center, Cheapo Records, Mike's Pro Shop, and the Minnesota Table Tennis Federation for sponsoring what turned into an excellent tournament.

**Open Singles:** Todd Peterson d. Brandon Olson.

**Women's Open:** Truc Phuong Tran d. Lia Myhre.

**U2300 Singles:** Thor Truelson d. Dien Nguyen

**U1900 Singles:** Yi Liu d. Scott Baker.

**U1700 Singles:** Michael Liu d. Kurt Fechter.

**U1500 Singles:** Eric Green d. Marty Offergeld.

**U1200 Singles:** Kurt Fechter d. Kevin Buckley.

**U1000 Singles:** Brian Hopkins d. Saeed Akhter.

**U700 Singles:** James D'Angelo d. Chris Willis.

**U4000 Doubles:** Brandon Olson/Kris Sabas d. Dien Nguyen/Reggie Samuel.

**Seniors Over 40:** Duc Luu d. Gus Kennedy.

**Seniors Over 50:** Paul Pearson d. Marty Offergeld.

**Seniors U1600:** Marty Offergeld d. Joe Sabas.

**Junior Under 18:** Cory Eider d. Eric Green.

**U18 Boys:** Michael Liu d. John Wiita.

**U16 Boys:** Eric Green d. Matt Potter.

**U14 Boys:** Cory Eider d. Kris Sabas.

**U12 Boys:** Michael Liu d. Josh Bergen.

**U16 Girls:** Tammy Mack d. Lydia Brekke.

**U14 Girls:** Lydia Brekke d. Ashlie Miller.

**U12 Girls:** Meranda Brekke d. Penny Reinhold.

**Over 50 Esquires:** Ragner Fahlstrom d. Bob Leatherwood, 18,13.

**Over 60 Sr. Esquires:** Ragner Fahlstrom d. Ed Abrams, 12,13.

**Over 70 Veterans:** Don Larson d. Ed Stein, -10,17,17.

**Parent-Junior Doubles:** Frank/Laszlo Remenyi d. Rob Trudell/Harley Davis, 2-1.

**Senior Doubles:** Ragner Fahlstrom/Ralf Eklov d. Jay Jett/Jim Tarkowski, 2-0.

**Esquire Doubles:** Ragner Fahlstrom/Ralf Eklov d. Bob Leatherwood/Bill Baker, 2-0.

**Senior Esquires Doubles:** R.Fahlstrom/Stan Wishnioski d. Bernhard Scheile/Don Larson, 2-0.

**U2800 Doubles:** Scott Williams/Lori Hostettler d. Dave Kendall/Deb Campbell, 2-0.

**U3500 Doubles:** Bertraud Mennesson/Tristan Guillot d. Alex Lai/Mankit Ma, 2-0.

**Mixed Doubles:** Rob Trudell/Marek Zochowski d. Chris Castro/Bertraud Mennesson, 2-0.

**Over 40 Srs:** Chris Castro d. Ralf Eklov, -19,16,19.

## ARIZONA OPEN

February 17-18, 1996

**Open Singles—Final:** Marek Zochowski d. Frank Remenyi, -15,16,17.

**Women's Singles—Final:** Nadine Groening d. Tanja Daniels, 18,3.

**U1900:** Dave Rubin d. Jim Tarkowski, 15,-17,11.

**U1750:** Jay Jett d. Jeff Gadwell, 15,10.

**U1600:** Jerry Whelpley d. Stan Wishnioski, 11,12.

**U1450:** Jim MacFarlane d. Jim Buckner, 11,17.

**U1300:** David Brandenburg d. Roger Dax, 16,-19,16.

**U1150:** Deborah Campbell d. Matt Winkler, 19,12.

**U1000:** Randy Rainbolt d. Matt Winkler, 20,18.

**Under 15:** Matt Winkler d. John Campbell, 11,14.

**Over 40 Srs:** Chris Castro d. Ralf Eklov, -19,16,19.



## NTTC MARCH OPEN

National Table Tennis Center  
Rockville, Maryland  
March 16-17, 1996



**Open Singles—Final:** Cheng Yinghua d. Todd Sweeris, 12,12; **SF:** Cheng d. Richard Lee, 6,8,10; Sweeris d. Jack Huang, def.; **QF:** Cheng d. Jonny Hauge, 10,10,8; Lee d. Sean Lonergan, 19,11,-18,17; Huang d. Sunny Li, def.; Sweeris d. Larry Bavly, 12,16,15.

**U2450:** Sunny Li d. Richard Lee, 15,15.

**U2300:** Sunny Li & Richard Lee split.

**U2150:** David Yao & Gary Elwell split.

**U1900:** Patrick Lui & John Dang split.

**U1850:** Rick Claraval d. James Hullahen, -17,17,17.

**U1650:** David Stucker d. Thomas Golab, 15,-16,19.

**U1450:** Jon Hiratsuka d. Rich Stenzel, 16,9.

**U1250:** Lindo Suon d. James Malacane, 14,20.

**U1000:** Wen-Che Cheng d. Jes Shank, 18,20.

**Unrated Novice:** Robe Trevillian d. Joe Adams, -19,15,18.

**Over 40:** Terry Lonergan d. Gary Elwell, 18,-12,11.

## NTTC APRIL OPEN

National Table Tennis Center  
Rockville, Maryland  
April 13-14, 1996



**Open Singles—Final:** Todd Sweeris d. Cheng Yinghua, 19,ret. (injury); **SF:** Cheng d. Barney J. Reed, 19,13,14; Sweeris d. Jack Huang, def.; **QF:** Cheng d. Nazruddin Azgarali, 7,8,9; Reed d. Sean Lonergan, 19,16,-23,14; Huang d. Abass Ekun, 17,15,-19,-15,11; Sweeris d. Stephen Yeh, 11,16,13.

**U2350—Final:** Nazruddin Asgarali d. Idi Lewis, 22,19; **SF:** Asgarali d. John Salas, 14,10; Lewis d. Larry Hodges, 12,-12,17.

**U2200—Final:** Idi Lewis d. Medhat Lamfon, -18,11,14; **SF:** Lewis d. Morris Jackson, 18,15; Lamfon d. Gary Elwell, 17,18.

**U2050—Final:** Gerald Reid & Clyde Triumph split prize; **SF:** Reid d. Patrick Lui, 19,21; Triumph d. Terry Longeran, 16,12.

**U1900:** John Anderson d. Lewis Bragg, -18,12,15.

**U1850:** Luis Canedo d. Enrique Torrez, -10,19,13.

**U1650:** Herb Wilson & Steve Latourette split prize.

**U1450:** Steve Latourette d. Jon Hiratsuka, 17,13.

**U1250:** Chris Farley d. V.R. Aker, 7,-15,19

**U1000:** Dan Gibson d. Steve Gibson, 19,17.

**Over 40:** Gary Elwell d. Patrick Lui, 11,21.

**Over 40/U1650:** Herb Wilson d. Steve Gibson, 8,5.

## MCALESTER OPEN TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
March 30, 1996



**Class A:** 1st Place (\$330): Team RAM, Dallas, TX (Torsten Pawloski, Roberto Byles, Bobby Cornett); **2nd Place** (\$165): Santa Fe Table Tennis Club, Oklahoma City, OK (Christian Lillieroos, Rong Lillieroos, Yumiko Payton, Ralf Schlosser, Brian Thomas);

**Class B:** 1st Place (free dinner at Pete's Place): Arkansas Independent Table Tennis Association (Andy Bloxom, Paul Hadfield, Jim Meredith, Vic Meredith); **2nd Place:** Oklahoma/Texas Alliance (Heather Wang, James Winn, Zack Fuquay)

**Class C:** 1st Place (free dinner at Pete's Place): Wichita Table Tennis Assoc. (Diana Hogue, Stan Stoodley, Les Ruthven); **2nd Place:** The Gump Brothers, Tulsa, OK (Bob Kyker, Ed Deza, Jim Turner).

## ACUI NATIONAL TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Atlanta, Georgia  
April 26-27, 1996



**Men's Singles**

1. Srinivasan Ramanathan, Pennsylvania State University

2. Medhat Lamfon, George Mason University

3. David Rosenzweig, University of Pennsylvania

**Women's Singles**

1. Jane Chui, University of Massachusetts-Amherst

2. Carla Medeiros, Wichita State University

3. Truc Bi Tran, Concordia College

**Men's Doubles**

1. Rovert Hyatt/Mark Dubin, Georgia State University

2. Srinivasan Ramanathan/Medhat Lamfon, Pennsylvania State University/George Mason University

3. Yamil Rivera/Kon Onuka, University of Puerto Rico/University of South Alabama

**Women's Doubles**

1. Carla Medeiros/Holly Che, Wichita State University/Webster University

2. Young Xu/Xiaogian Chai, Purdue University/University of Illinois-Urbana

3. Alison Garten/Maxine Linthicum, East Carolina University, Johnson C. Smith University

**Mixed Doubles**

1. Jane Chui/Eugene Shuster, University of Massachusetts-Amherst/Massachusetts Institute of Technology

2. Carla Medeiros/Joshua Bartel, Wichita State University/Kansas State University

3. Thuytien Nguyen/Sailendra Nemana, California Polytechnic-San Luis Obispo/University of California-San Diego

**Under 2200:** 1st: Medhat Lamfon, George Mason University; 2nd: Lin Chao Ting, Purdue University

**Under 1900:** 1st: Mokarram Ahmed, Fashion Institute of Technology; 2nd: Khanh Nguyen, California State University-Long Beach

**Under 1600:** 1st: Jason Orme, Kansas State University; 2nd: Meng Yang, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

## COLORADO SPRINGS OPEN

March 30, 1996



**Open Singles:** 1st: Roger Kuseski; 2nd: Tim St. Germain.

**Open Doubles:** 1st: Roger Kuseski/Tim St. Germain; 2nd: Ralph Stadlerman/Jim Roecker.

**U2000:** 1st: Tim St. Germain; 2nd: Eric Benton.

**U1850:** 1st Seung Kim; 2nd: Jonah Brown-Joel.

**U1400:** 1st: David Schelly; 2nd: Darren O'Donnell.

**U1000:** 1st: David Dunbar; 2nd: Mike Tarter.

## MARYLAND CLOSED

Columbia, Maryland  
March 31, 1996



**Open Singles—Final:** Nazruddin Asgarali d. Pat Lui, 9,6; **SF:** Lui d. Mark Davis, 14,16; Asgarali d. Yvonne Kronlage, 9,9.

**Over 60:** Tom Golab d. Yvonne Kronlage, 19,-11,17.

**Over 50:** Yvonne Kronlage d. Irving Goldstein, n.s.

**Over 40:** Pat Lui d. Mark Davis, 13,16.

**Doubles:** Tom Golab/H.Liu d. Dan Cra-vens/Carlos Ebron, n.s.

# INTERNATIONAL

## North American Championships

Edmonton, Canada March 30-31, 1996

by Larry Hodges & Todd Sweeris

It was a disappointing weekend for USA fans, but a great one for the Canadians, who swept all the major titles—but not without a fight.

The winners of the North American Singles Championships (both Men's and Women's) would represent North America at the World Singles Cup later this year—a big money event, where each player makes several thousand dollars just by showing up.

The winners of the Olympic Doubles Playoff between Canada and USA would represent their country at the Olympics as doubles players. This was especially important to USA players Khoa Nguyen and Virginia Sung. Both had finished 4th at the U.S. Olympic Trials, with the top three making the team. However, they could still make the Olympics in doubles if they could win. As decided beforehand, the 4th and 2nd place finishers at the U.S. Olympic Trials teamed up against the Canadians. Khoa was teamed with David Zhuang; Virginia with Amy Feng.

### Men's Olympic Doubles Playoff

On the Men's Doubles Playoff, USA won the first, 23-21, against the Canadian pair, Johnny Huang (World #13) and Joe Ng (many-times Canadian National Champion). Todd Sweeris said, "I saw in Khoa's face that he thought he could win." In this game, Huang had hit to Nguyen, and it was thought that that would be USA's weakest rotation—and since they won with that rotation, they should win the second game with the "easier" rotation.

However, it didn't work out that way. Canada dominated the second game, as Zhuang couldn't do anything effective with Huang's shots, and Nguyen kept getting caught too far off the table. Game two to Canada, 21-10.

Game Three was nick and tuck all the way, with great points after deuce—pretty much a mirror image of game one. Again, USA won to take a 2-1 lead.

Game Four was a mirror image of the second game, with Canada winning 21-14.

In Game Five, USA led 16-14, and had the momentum. Both USA players were playing very well. Suddenly, a weak ball was hit to Nguyen's backhand—and he froze, and didn't take it with his forehand as he usually did, instead mis-hitting an easy backhand. It was still 16-15 USA, but that one mistake seemed to leave Nguyen nervous while giving the Canadian's confidence. Canada dominated the rest of the way, winning the 5-game match at -21, 10, -23, 14, 18. So, sadly, Khoa Nguyen did not make the Olympics this time around.

### Women's Olympic Doubles Playoff

Canada's Barbara Chiu didn't play well this match, while the USA players (Amy Feng & Virginia Sung) played their level. However, Canada's Lijuan

Geng, World #6, was able to raise her level when it was needed.

USA won the first game, 21-18, and led 20-19 in the second. However, Canada pulled out that game—stopping a 3-0 USA sweep since they won the third, 22-20. Obviously, the teams were very evenly matched.

USA led 15-13 in the fourth game, and it looked like they could do it. However, from here on, Geng took over. USA only scored one more point this game, and lost the fifth at 15. Match to Canada, -18, 20, -20, 16, 15. So, once again sadly for USA, Virginia Sung did not make the Olympics this time around.

### North American Men's Singles Championships

In the quarterfinals, Canada's Xavier Therien upset many-times Canadian Champion Joe Ng in the only upset this round.

In the semifinals, USA's Cheng Yinghua defeated Xavier, 13, 24, 8. On the other side, Canada's Johnny Huang, world #13, defeated USA's David Zhuang, 10, 16, 16.

In the final, Cheng seemed faster and more powerful than he had in years, at least for the first two games. Playing very aggressively, he won the first two at 19 & 17.

However, in the third, Cheng began to tire, and began to play soft, pushing nearly every one of Huang's serves back long, never attacking the serve. Huang won the next two games at 18 & 16.

In the 5th, Cheng came out aggressively, and took a 7-4 lead. However, disaster then struck. It started with Cheng missing an easy backhand loop, the type he never misses. Huang then popped up two weak serves, both short to Cheng's forehand—and Cheng flip-killed both into the net! 7-all. From there on, Cheng didn't seem to have the same confidence. "If Cheng had made either flip, he might have won," said USA Coach Li Zhenshi. However, it was not to be. Match to North American Champion Johnny Huang over Cheng Yinghua for the second straight year, -19, -17, 18, 16, 14.

### North American Women's Singles Championships

It seemed almost pre-ordained that the top two seeds, Canada's Lijuan Geng and USA's Amy Feng, would meet in the final, as they had last year. And meet they did. Equally pre-ordained, unfortunately for USA, was that Geng would win again, as her world ranking as well as her past record against Feng (undefeated) indicated. Geng won the first two at 10 & 17. Feng de-railed the Geng Express in the 3rd at 14, but Geng's backhand pips-out blocking and forehand hitting were just too much for lefty looper Feng. Match and North American Championship for third straight year to Lijuan Geng, 10, 17, -14, 14.

**Men's Singles—Final:** Johnny Huang (CAN) d. Cheng Yinghua (USA), -19, -17, 18, 16, 14; **SF:** Huang d. David Zhuang (USA), 10, 16, 16; Cheng d. Xavier Therien (CAN), 13, 24, 8; **QF:** Huang d. Eric Owens (USA), 15, 18, 17; Cheng d. Todd Sweeris (USA), def.; Zhuang d. Hai Tao Geng (CAN), 11, 15, -15, 19; Xavier d. Joe Ng (CAN), 21, 23, 18;

**Women's Singles—Final:** Lijuan Geng (CAN) d. Amy Feng (USA), 10, 17, -14, 14; **SF:** Geng d. Lily Yip (USA), 11, 17, 19; Feng d. Barbara Chiu (CAN), 18, 12, 20; **QF:** Geng d. Chris Ngo (CAN), 7, 4, 5; Yip d. Nan Li (USA), 15, 11, -21, 9; Chiu d. Virginia Sung (USA), 8, 17, -20, 14; Feng d. Wei Wang (USA), def.

### Olympic Doubles Playoff

**Women:** Canada (Lijuan Geng/Barbara Chiu) d. USA (Amy Feng/Virginia Sung), -18, 20, -20, -16, 15.  
**Men:** Canada (Johnny Huang/Joe Ng) d. USA (David Zhuang/Khoa Nguyen), -21, 10, -23, 14, 18.

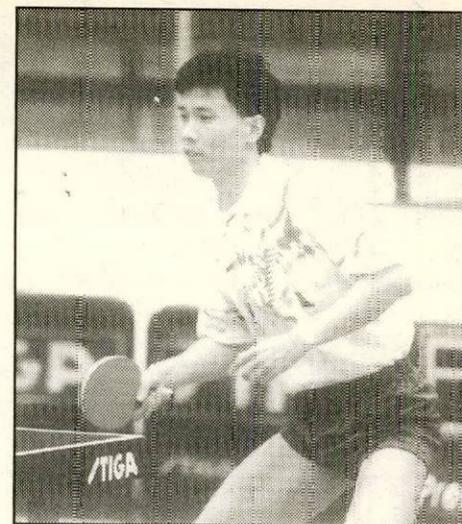


Photo by John Oros © 1996

North American Champion  
Johnny Huang

## ITTF WORLD RANKINGS

March 26, 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	1510	STRUSE Nicole	GER
16	1498	VRIESEKOP Bettine	NED
17	1492	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	1445	CHAN Tan Lui	HKG
25	1440	TANG Fei Ming	TPE
26	1430	CIOSU Emilia	ROM
27	1419	ABBATE-BULATOVA Fliura	ITA
28	1413	SVENSSON Asa	SEW
29	1409	TU Yong	SUI
30	1405	TODO Tacko	JPN
30	1405	PARK Kyung Ae	KOR
32	1396	ZHANG Ling	CHN
32	1396	RYU Ji Hye	KOR
34	1392	KAIZU Fumiyo	JPN
35	1388	XU Jing	TPE
35	1388	KIM Moo Kyo	KOR
37	1381	SVENSSON Marie	SWE
38	1376	TIMINA Elena	RUS
39	1372	PALINA Irina	RUS
40	1364	TOTH Krisztina	HUN
41	1363	HOOMAN Mirjam	NED
42	1361	NEMES Olga	GER
43	1360	SATO Rika	JPN
44	1349	WANG-DRECHOU Xiaoming	FRA
45	1348	LI Hong	CHN
46	1338	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	1130	YIP Lily	USA
112	1086	WANG Wei	USA
212	893	BANH Tawny	USA
248	839	SUNG Virginia	USA

### MEN

1	1680	SAIVE Jean-Michel	BEL
2	1662	KONG Linghui	CHN
3	1658	WANG Tao	CHN
4	1642	WALDNER Jan-Ove	SWE
5	1621	ROSSKOPF Jorg	GER
6	1594	MA Wenge	CHN
7	1590	LIU Guoliang	CHN
8	1576	KIM Taek Soo	KOR
9	1575	SAMSONOV Vladimir	BLR
10	1557	GATIEN Jean-Philippe	FRA
11	1552	DING Song	CHN
12	1548	PRIMORAC Zoran	CRO
13	1507	HUANG Johnny	CAN
14	1503	KARLSSON Peter	SWE
15	1474	YOO Nam Kyu	KOR
15	1474	PERSSON Jorgen	SWE
17	1467	GRUBBA Andrzej	POL
18	1424	YANG Min	ITA
19	1423	WANG Yonggang	CHN
20	1415	CHEN Xinhua	ENG
21	1404	CHILA Patrick	FRA
22	1394	LU Lin	CHN
23	1380	KREANGA Kalinikos	GRE
23	1380	LINDH Erik	SWE
25	1371	ELOI Damien	FRA
26	1369	KEEN Trinko	NED
27	1367	MAZUNOV Dmitrij	RUS
28	1358	MATSUSHITA Koji	JPN
29	1353	SCHLAGER Werner	AUT
30	1343	SAIVE Philippe	BEL
30	1343	SHIBUTANI Hiroshi	JPN
32	1342	APPELGREN Mikael	SWE
33	1341	KORBEL Petr	CZE
34	1339	LIN Zhigang	CHN
34	1339	FRANZ Peter	GER
36	1337	PREAN Carl	ENG
37	1336	XIONG Ke	CHN
38	1335	WANG Hao	CHN
39	1331	LUPULESKU Ilija	YUG
40	1328	SYED Matthew	ENG
41	1322	FEN Zhe	CHN
42	1321	DING Yi	AUT
43	1319	CHENG Yinghua	USA
44	1316	BLASZCZYK Lucjan	POL
45	1302	CHAN Kong Wah	HKG
46	1290	LEGOUT Christophe	FRA
47	1287	FETZNER Steffen	GER
48	1285	YAN Sen	CHN
49	1260	CHIANG Peng-Lung	TPE
50	1259	PODPINKA Andras	BEL
50	1259	HEISTER Danny	NED
81	1178	BUTLER Jim	USA
154	968	ZHUANG David	USA
183	916	NGUYEN Khoa	USA
238	837	SEEMILLER Dan	USA
239	836	MASTERS Brian	USA
266	811	ROP Darko	USA
286	786	MAY Derek	USA
297	772	OWENS Eric	USA
316	755	REED Barney	USA
366	679	SWEERIS Todd	USA

Courtesy Belgian Web Page

### Russia TTF President Dies in Car Accident

**TABLE TENNIS WORLD** is sad to announce the death of Vladimir Volkov, president of the Russia Table Tennis Federation, from a car accident. **WORLD** offers condolences to his family and the Russian TTF.

Vice President Alexander Marusich takes over as the new RTTF President. The new Vice President is Faruk Hashimov.

### The Belgian Situation

by Gaetan Frenoy

*Editor's note—here in the U.S., we often complain about the problems faced by USA Table Tennis in promoting and developing our sport. Well, we're not alone!*

This year, "La Villette Charleroi" is once more the Belgian Club Champion. It's the 17th time that the club won this title. The players this year were Jean-Michel Saive, Zoran Primorac & Thierry Cabrera.

As you can see, all three club players are professional players, and top professionals in the case of Saive and Primorac. This team has already won the prestigious "European Cup of Champions" twice, and they reached the final two other times. We can surely say that it's one of the best teams in the world.

Now, let's examine the team that was ranked number two this season, "Borina J.B.B.Q." It's not even well-known! Their players were Martin Bratanov, Sebastien Massart & Michael Utila. If you have heard of them, either you're from Belgium, or a friend of theirs. (Bratanov, the best of the three, was ranked #221 in February.)

I think the situation is serious here in Belgium. We have one of the best players in the world, one of the best teams, but...

But after that, it's a huge vacuum! I don't want to underestimate the performances of the other players—especially "Borina," which has beaten "La Villette" when Saive and Primorac didn't play. I only want to show that the Belgian players, after the top few, aren't international level.

Why? It's obviously a question of money. Even Philippe Saive, the Belgian number two, could not find a Belgian club with enough sponsors to give him good training. He instead played in Sweden, and now in Germany.

What are the prospects for the next season? It's too soon to say. The only certainty we have is that we will lose the best player. Jean-Michel Saive could not resist the call of Bundesliga (the German League), where a lot of top-professionals play for good money. He will play for "Bad-Honnef" next season, while his brother will play for "Borussia Dortmund."

He will be replaced by Ma Wenge of China. "La Villette" has also contracted the Greek (Hungarian-native) Calin Creanga. Can you imagine that on the best team in your country, the best players are all... foreign players?!

The Belgian championships seems already played. For the moment, there's no other Belgian club which can afford such top players.

It's the consequences of having just a few good players in a very small country. The Belgian Federation is not ready for an evolution of Table Tennis. For the moment, this sport is the **THIRD** most played sport in Belgium (it only reached the top ten a few years ago). With the "Saive phenomena" (he's a real star here!), professionalism has to enter into the habits of our leaders.

Unfortunately, this is not as obvious as it seems. But the more time that goes by, the less chance we have of developing another top Belgian player. Too bad for us... good for the rest of the world!

### ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

September 20-27, 1994

Winner :Kong LINGHUI (China)

Finalist :Liu GUOLIANG (China)

Semi-finalists: Lin ZHIGANG (China), Lu LIN (China)

### EUROPEAN MASTERS

October 10-11, 1994

Winner :Jean-Michel SAIVE (Belgium)

Finalist :Peter KARLSSON (Sweden)

Semi-finalists: Andrzej GRUBBA (Poland), Jan-Ove WALDNER (Sweden)

### ITALIAN OPEN

November 3-6, 1994

Winner :Jorg ROSSKOPF (Germany)

Finalist :SAMSONOV (Belorussia)

Semi-finalists: Kong LINGHUI (China), SMEREKAR (Slovenia)

### YUGOSLAVIAN OPEN

November 18-20, 1994

Winner :Kong LINGHUI (China)

Finalist :Liu GUOLIANG (China)

Semi-finalists: Ding SONG (China), Calin CREANGA (Greece)

### SWEDISH OPEN

November 25-27, 1994

Winner :Ding SONG (China)

Finalist :Zoran PRIMORAC (Croatia)

Semi-finalists: Jean-Michel SAIVE (Belgium), Kim TAEK SOO (South Korea)

### QATAR OPEN

December 3-5, 1994

Winner :Kim TAEK SOO (South Korea)

Finalist :Peter KARLSSON (Sweden)

Semi-finalists: Jorgen PERSSON (Sweden), Jorg ROSSKOPF (Germany)

### WORLD SINGLES CUP

December 15-18, 1994

Winner :Jean-Philippe GATIEN (France)

Finalist :Jean-Michel SAIVE (Belgium)

Semi-finalists: Zoran PRIMORAC (Croatia), Jan-Ove WALDNER (Sweden)

### ENGLISH OPEN

January 5-8, 1995

Winner :Damien ELOI (France)

Finalist :Xiong Ke (China)

Semi-finalists: Thierry CABRERA (Belgium), Erik LINDH (Sweden)

### EUROPEAN TOP 12

February 3-5, 1995

Winner :Jan-Ove WALDNER (Sweden)

Finalist :Erik LINDH (Sweden)

Semi-finalists: Jean-Michel SAIVE (Belgium), Jean-Philippe GATIEN (Belgium)

### WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

May 11-23, 1995

Winner :Kong LINGHUI (China)

Finalist :Liu GUOLIANG (China)

Semi-finalists: Wang TAO (China), Ding SONG (China)

### JAPANESE OPEN

June 8-11, 1995

Winner :Ding SONG (China)

Finalist :Johnny HUANG (Canada)

Semi-finalists: Damien ELOI (France), Nicolas CHATELAIN (France)

### U.S. OPEN

July 5-9, 1995

Winner :Liu GUOLIANG (China)

Finalist :Feng ZHE (China)

Semi-finalists: Jim BUTLER (USA), Wu WEN-CHIA (Taiwan)

### CHINESE OPEN

November 16-18, 1995

Winner :Kong LINGHUI (China)

Finalist :Wang TAO (China)

Semi-finalists: Johnny HUANG (Canada), Xiong Ke (China)

*Here is a ranking of the best players during the 1994 & 1995 seasons. The winner of a competition was awarded 3 points; finalists 2 points; semifinalists 1 point.*

1. Kong LINGHUI (China)	4 0 1 13
2. Liu GUOLIANG (China)	1 3 0 9
3. Ding SONG (China)	2 0 2 8
4. Jean-Michel SAIVE (Belgium)	1 1 2 7
5. Jan-Ove WALDNER (Sweden)	1 0 2 5
6. Kim TAEK SOO (South Korea)	1 0 1 4
Jean-Philippe GATIEN (France)	1 0 1 4
Damien ELOI (France)	1 0 1 4
Jorg ROSSKOPF (Germany)	1 0 1 4
Peter KARLSSON (Sweden)	0 2 0 4
11. Zoran PRIMORAC (Croatia)	0 1 1 3
Erik LINDH (Sweden)	0 1 1 3
Xiong Xe (China)	0 1 1 3
Johnny HUANG (Canada)	0 1 1 3
Wang TAO (China)	0 1 1 3
16. SAMSONOV (Belorussia)	0 1 0 2
Feng ZHE (China)	0 1 0 2
18. Lin ZHIGANG (China)	0 0 1 1
Lu LIN (China)	0 0 1 1
Andrzej GRUBBA (Poland)	0 0 1 1
SMEREKAR (Slovenia)	0 0 1 1
CREANGA (Greece)	0 0 1 1
Jorgen PERSSON (Sweden)	0 0 1 1
Thierry CABRERA (Belgium)	0 0 1 1
Nicolas CHATELAIN (France)	0 0 1 1
<b>BUTLER (USA)</b>	0 0 1 1
Wu WEN-CHIA (Taiwan)	0 0 1 1

*Here is a ranking of what countries earned the most "points" in the system above.*

1. CHINA	7 6 7 40	43.9 %
2. SWEDEN	1 3 4 13	14.3 %
3. FRANCE	2 0 3 9	9.9 %
4. BELGIUM	1 1 3 8	8.8 %

### European National Champions

Europe holds most of its National Championships in March. Here's a listing of the National Championships for each country, courtesy of the ITTF. European countries not yet holding championships are Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Portugal.

Country	Men	Women
Belgium	Jean-Michel Saive	Cecile Ozer
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Mirza Hadziahic	Adela Mesan
Denmark	Allan Bentsen	Pia Finnemann
England	Alan Cooke	Alison Broe
Finland	Linus Eriksson	Katja Nieminen
Germany	Jorg Roskopf	Nicole Struse
Hungary	Zsolt Harczy	Krisztina Toth
Ireland	Jonathan Cowan	Andrea Glover
Luxembourg	Joel Kox	Michele Paler
Netherlands	Trinko Keen	Gerdie Keen
Poland	Lucjan Blaszczyk	Alina Mikijaniec
Slovenia	Robert Smrekar	Biljana Todorovic
Sweden	Jan-Ove Waldner	Pernilla Pettersson
Switzerland	Thierry Miller	Tu Yong
Turkey	Gurhan Yaldiz	Nevin Mutlu

# The English Open

The "King Kong of Pong" is Back!

Kettering, England

April 5-8, 1996

by Gaetan Frenoy



The first surprise of the England Open was the Chinese presence. We had heard they wouldn't be playing international events until after the Olympics.

But, after their disappointing results at the Qatar Open (Kong Linghui eliminated in the 8ths, while Ding Song, Ma Wenge and Wang Tao lost in the Quarterfinals—see previous issue for more details), the Chinese wanted revenge—or at least a good showing going into the Olympics.

The least we can say is that they achieved their goal. Not only did they win the event [men's singles] but they also had an all-Chinese final (and half the quarterfinalists). Lots of people had said that Kong Linghui won his World title because the Worlds were played in China, and that he wouldn't have done it if they held it in Europe.

I think he clearly showed that he not only can beat anybody, but that he can win anywhere! This is very important to note before the Olympics.

With the presence of the Chinese, almost all the best players were in Kettering (England) to play in the first step of the brand new "Pro Tour." Only the Swedes and French weren't there. The ITTF created this Pro Tour to promote Table Tennis around the world. With bigger prize money, they hope that the tournament will be more attractive for players as well as spectators.

The beginning of the tournament didn't give us any oddities as all the favorites

must play his second Chinese opponent of the tournament, Lu Lin. Against the Chinese players, Jean-Mi always has a lot of difficulties. He finally emerged victorious in five sets, 10, -6, -19, 14, 13. It's also a difficult round for Kong Linghui, who came back from down 2-0 against the Czech Petr Korbek in five games, -18, -18, 17, 12, 13.

China's Wang Tao and Germany's Jorg Roskopf won 3-1 against Austria's Werner Schlager and China's Ma Wenge. The "match" between China and Europe began in the semifinals.

Jean-Michel Saive must first play Wang Tao. These two haven't played each other in 17 months. The recent World #1 (Saive) couldn't digest his third Chinese

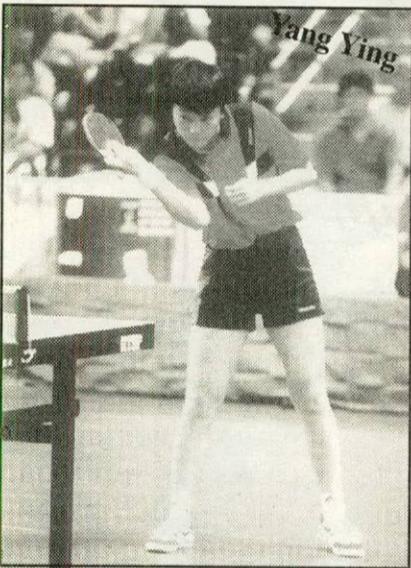


Photo by John Oros © 1996

(and former #1) in three days. But, the final score of the match is impressive—13, 13, 12 ?! It seems that Jean-Mi has a lot to learn about playing the style of Wang Tao.

The score of the second semifinal is equally impressive: Kong Linghui defeats Roskopf, 15, 16, 11! Didn't I say that the Chinese wanted revenge?

The final between the two best Chinese players (and probably the two best players in the world) would yield not only the winner of the English Open and the first Pro Tour tournament ever organized, but (with the defeat of Jean-Michel Saive) would be ranked #1 in the next ITTF World Rankings.

After a good start by the older Chinese, winning the first two at 12 & 14, Wang Tao led 2-0. However, Kong Linghui didn't lose concentration and succeeded in beating his compatriot the next three games, each by identical 21-14 scores!

So we can say that the English battle was won by China, with two of their best players in the men's final, and with their easy wins in the semifinals. China's Yang Ying also won Women's Singles. All the doubts we had about the Chinese team after the Qatar Open have to be forgotten! China has been, is and probably will always be a very strong nation in Table Tennis.

Europe's one great feat this tournament: Austria's duo of Werner Schlager & Karl Jandrik won Men's Doubles, defeat-

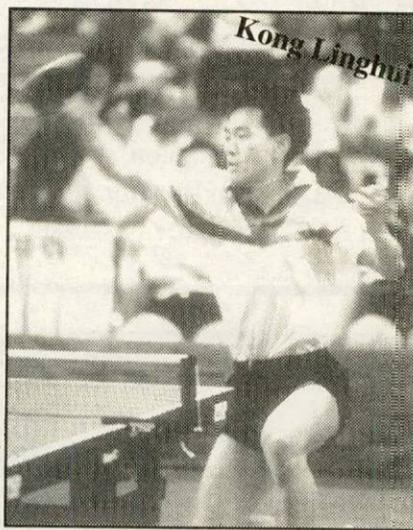


Photo by John Oros © 1996

ing, in order from the quarterfinals, Germany's Roskopf & Fetzner, China's Kong Linghui & Ma Wenge, and China's "invincible" team of Wang Tao & Lu Lin in the final.

**Men's Singles—Final:** Kong Linghui (CHN) d. Wang Tao (CHN), -12, -14, 14, 14, 14; **SF:** Kong d. Jorg Roskopf (GER), 15, 16, 11; Wang d. Jean-Michel Saive (BEL), 13, 13, 12; **QF:** Kong d. Petr Korbek (CZE), -18, -18, 17, 12, 13; Roskopf d. Ma Wenge (CHN), 16, 20, -12, 16; Wang d. Werner Schlager (AUT), -25, 15, 18, 22; Saive d. Lu Lin (CHN), 10, -6, -19, 14, 13; **8ths:** Kong d. Philippe Saive (BEL), -18, 9, 18, 19; Korbek d. Yang Min (ITA), 9, 20, -18, 11; Ma d. Ding Yi (AUT), 12, 16, 14; Roskopf d. Chiang Peng-Lung (TPE), -24, 18, 19, 12; Wang d. Carl Prean (ENG), 12, 14, 14; Schlager d. Toshio Tasaka (JPN), 17, 17, 12; Lu d. Steffen Fetzner (GER), -8, 9, -17, 20, 13; J-M Saive d. Hugo Hoyama (BRA), 12, 9, -13, 15.

**Women's Singles—Final:** Yang Ying (CHN) d. Jing Chen (TPE), 14, -11, 16, 18; **SF:** Yang d. Chai Po Wa (HKG), 19, 12, -19, 19; Chen d. Elena Timina (RUS), 18, 15, 19; **QF:** Yang d. Bettine Vriesekoop (NED), 16, 17, -14, 17; Chen d. Wu Na (CHN), -14, 16, 13, 19; Timina d. Li Ju (CHN), -19, 16, 20, 17; Chai d. Wang Hui (CHN), 23, 13, -9, 11; **8ths:** Chen d. Svetlana Bachtina (RUS), 12, -12, 13, 20; Wu d. Ni Xia Lian (LUX), -19, -18, 18, 14, 21; Timina d. Jing Jun Hong (CHN), 18, 15, -18, 15; Li d. Xu Jing (TPE), 19, -16, 17, 19; Yang d. Tu Yong (SUI), 15, 18, -17, 14; Vriesekoop d. Irina Palina (RUS), 16, -19, 18, 18; Chai d. Alessia Arisi (ITA), -13, 16, 18, 17; Wang d. Lijuan Geng (CAN), 3, 8, 7.

**Men's Doubles—Final:** Werner Schlager/Karl Jindrak (AUT) d. Wang Tao/Lu Lin (CHN), 17, 20; **SF:** Schlager/Jindrak d. Kong Linghui/Ma Wenge (CHN), -19, 15, 19; Wang/Lu d. Jean-Michel Saive/Philippe Saive, n.s.; **QF:** Kong/Ma d. Yang Min/Piacentini (ITA), 8, 8; Schlager/Jindrak d. Jorg Roskopf/Steffen Fetzner (GER), 18, 21; Wang/Lu d. Petr Korbek/Plachy (CZE), 17, -19, 14; Saive/Saive d. Noskov/Fadeev (RUS), 15, 17.

**Women's Doubles—Final:** Yang Ying/Wang Hui (CHN) d. Li Ju/Wu Na (CHN),

-15, 20, 22; **SF:** Yang/Wang d. Keiko Okazaki/Rika Matsuoka (JPN), 9, 12; Li/Wu d. Chen Jing/Chen Chiu Tan (TPE), 11, 22; **QF:** Yang/Wang d. Svetlana Bachtina/Galina Melnik (RUS), 13, 8; Okazaki/Matsuoka d. Jing Jun Hong/Xu Jing (SIN/TPE), -20, 19, 24; Li/Wu d. Elena Timina/Irina Palina (RUS), 17, -8, 13; Chen/Chen d. Ni Xia Lian/Regenwetter (LUX), 21, 17.

**Under 21 Men—Final:** Yuzawa Ryo (JPN) d. Fredrik Hakansson (SWE), 14, -13, 15; **SF:** Hakansson d. Alex Perry (ENG), -21, 13, 16; Yuzawa d. Martin Monrad (DEN), -18, 17, 13.

**Under 21 Women—Final:** Okazaki Keiko (JPN) d. Ruta Garkauskite (LTU), 19, 12; **SF:** Okazaki d. Veronica Augustsson (SWE), 3, 16; Garkauskite d. Nicola Deaton (ENG), 7, 13.

## French Nationals

Levallois, France

April 7, 1996

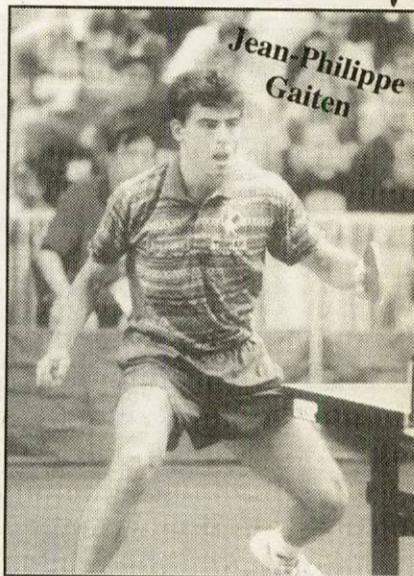


Photo by John Oros © 1996

**Men's Singles—Final:** Jean-Philippe Gaitien d. Nicolas Chatelain, 17, -18, -13, 17, 16; **SF:** Gaitien d. Christophe Legout, 12, 12, 13; Chatelain d. Didier Mommessian, 12, -16, 14, -25, 18; **QF:** Gaitien d. Stephane Lebrun, 8, 14, 16; Legout d. Olivier Marmurek, 16, 11, 16; Chatelain d. Damien Eloi, 14, -19, 22, 18; Mommessian d. Patrick Chila, 16, -20, 17, 17.

## Croatian Open

Zagreb, Croatia

March 8-10, 1996

**Men's Singles—Final:** Feng Zhe (CHN) d. Jaromir Truksa (SVK), 8, 14, 9; **SF:** Feng d. Dong Qimin (CHN), 13, 16, 19; Truksa d. Wang Liqin (CHN), def.

**Women's Singles—Final:** Gong Yuechun (CHN) d. He Lin (CHN), 14, 16, 12; **SF:** Gong d. Maria Fezekas (HUN), -19, 19, 9, 17; He d. Zita Molnar (HUN), 13, 13, 16.

## Russian Open

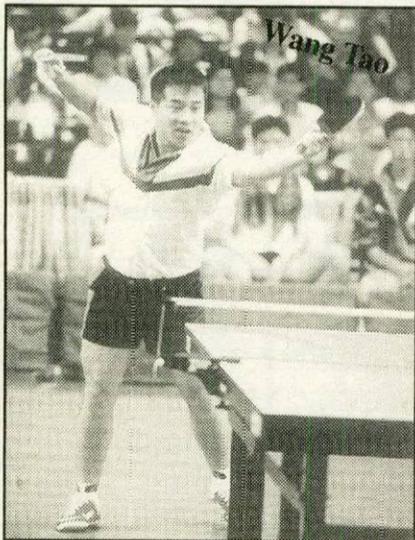
Moscow, Russia

February 13-16, 1996

**Men's Singles—Final:** Yang Min (ITA) d. Denis Gavrilov (RUS), 11, 8, 12; **SF:** Yang d. Sergei Andrianov (RUS), 11, 14, 16; Gavrilov d. Maxim Shmyryov (RUS), -16, 16, 9, -11, 17.

**Women's Singles—Final:** Tatijana Kostromina (BLR) d. Olga Kashulina (RUS), 14, 16, -22, 12; **SF:** Kostromina d. Olga Lisova (RUS), -12, -23, 16, 7, 18; Kashulina d. Ekaterina Edel (RUS), 15, -9, 16, -13, 10.

Photo by John Oros © 1996



reached the final 16. However, Kong Linghui and Wang Tao both lost one game (again Kostadin Lengerov of Austria and Kayode Kadiri of Sweden) while the Europeans won all of their matches 3-0 (with Jean-Michel Saive defeating Chinese player He Zhi Wen).

It continued in the 8ths. We secretly hoped that the younger Saive brother, Philippe, could do something against Kong Linghui. However, after a good start by the Belgian in winning the first game 21-18, the World Champion took the last three sets, 9, 18, 19. The other favorites didn't encounter any major problems.

In the quarterfinals, Jean-Michel Saive

# World Renowned Racket Sports Collection Announces Takeover Opportunity

Part 2

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

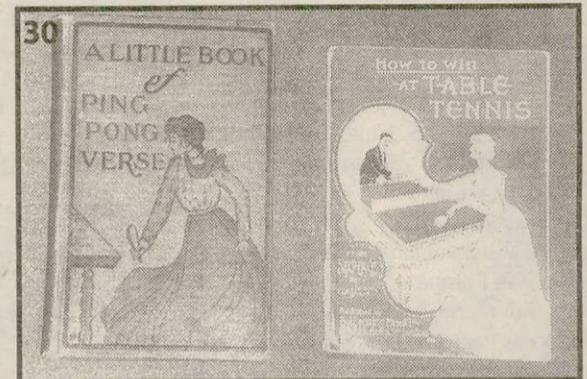
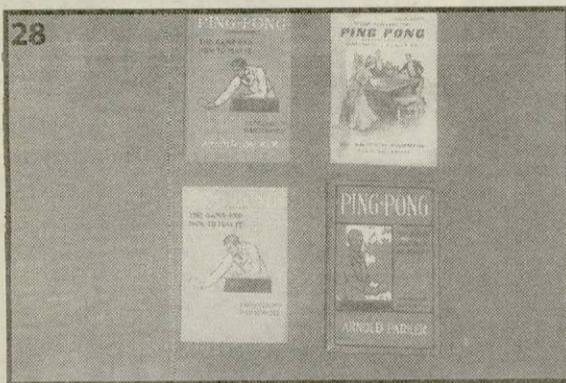
The collection traces the early years and evolution of Lawn Tennis, Badminton and Table Tennis through hundreds of original rackets of

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. Images 1-27 were shown in Part I in previous issue. The collection includes

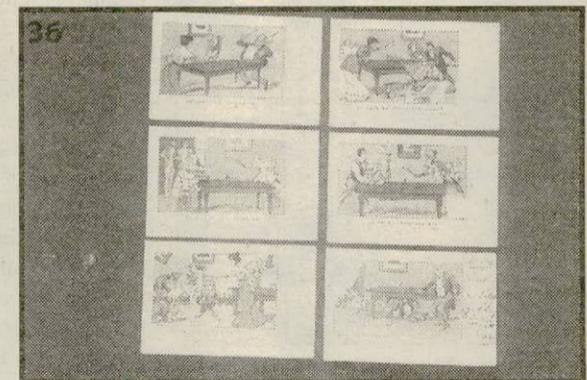
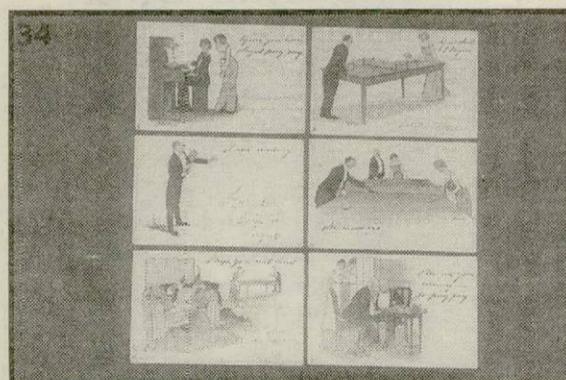
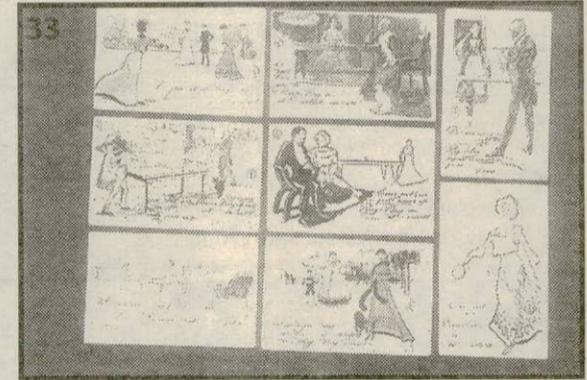
thousands of items in all.

**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.

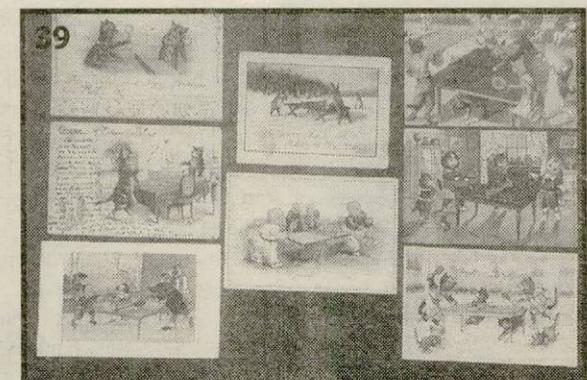
Photos are copyrighted ©1996 by the Racket Sports Heritage Collection.

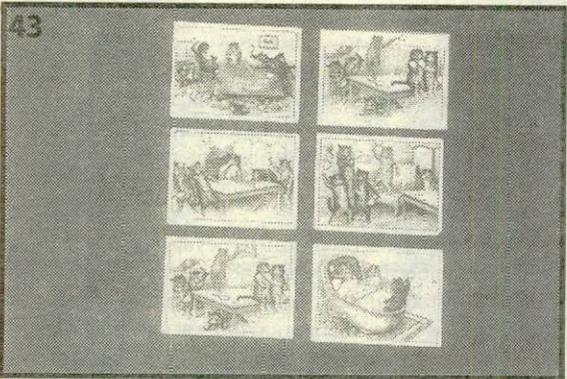
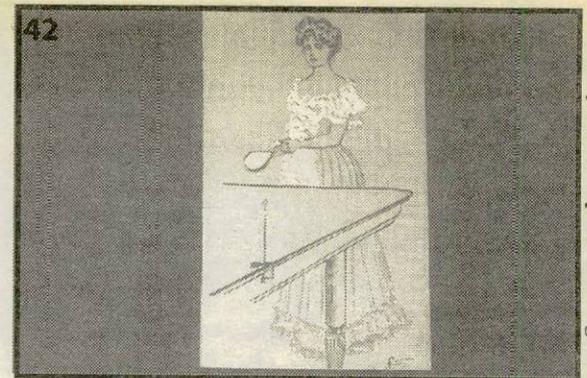


28-32. Some of the earliest books on Ping-Pong/Table Tennis.



33-42. Some of the early picture postcards and greeting cards based on Ping-Pong/TT motif. The collection includes over 100 such cards from around the turn of the century, clear evidence of the amazing boom in Ping Pong popularity.

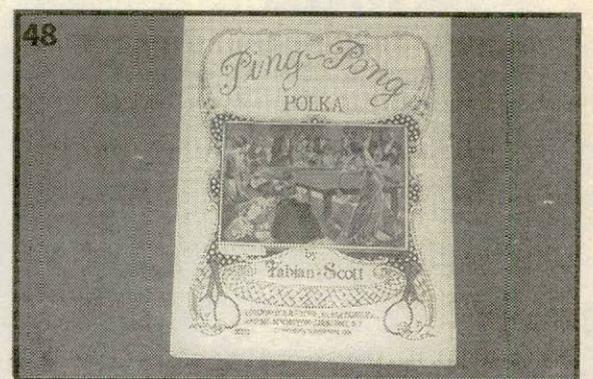
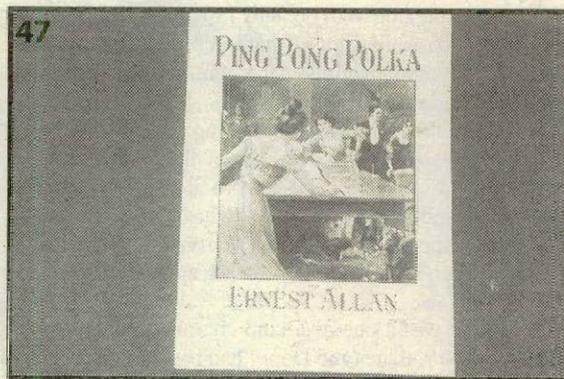




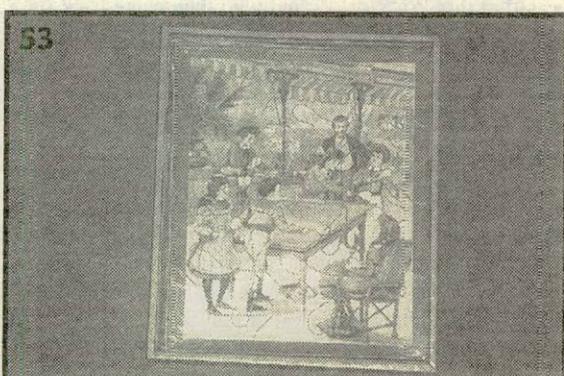
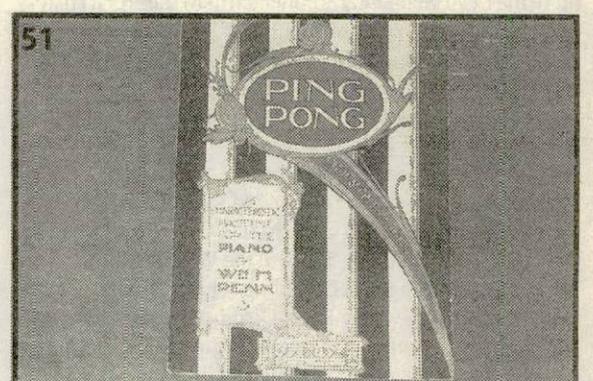
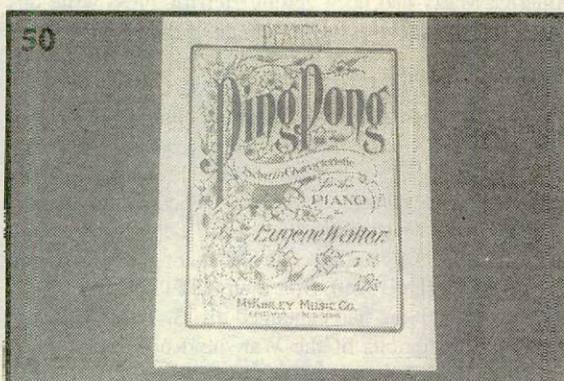
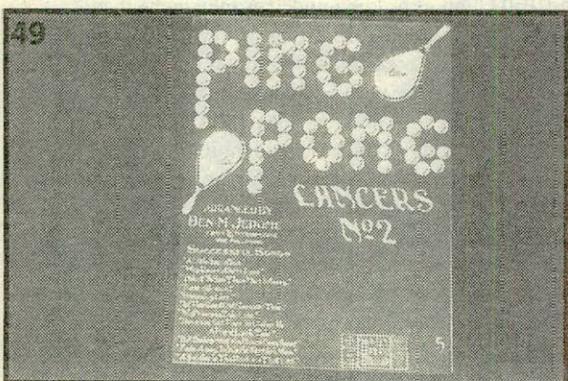
43. Set of advertising cards based on Louis Wain's cats. Very rare.

44. Promotional card signed by World Champion Richard Bergmann.

45. Promotional card featuring U.S. Champ Dick Miles.



46-51. Examples of early sheet music with Ping Pong titles (over 30 exist from 1901-1903, more evidence of the Ping Pong craze).



52. A Ping Pong fan to keep the ladies cool as spectators or players.

53. A Ping Pong jig-saw puzzle!

# ON THE REISMAN, GUNN AND GREEN STORY

by Tim Boggan, USATT Historian



U.S. Team to 1957 Worlds. Front (L-R): Leah "Ping" Neuberger, Sharlene Krizman, Mildred Shahian. Back: Marty Prager, Norbie Van de Walle, Marcel Monasterial, Captain Bill Gunn, Bernie Bukiet, Marty Reisman.

Naturally, as USATT Historian, I was very interested in, and amused by, the "Reisman, Gunn & Green" (RG&G) story that unfolded in the last two issues of *Table Tennis World* (TTW). I do think Bob's much too casual, charged-word initial comments needed a rebuttal, but of course Marty's response, as expected, was more than a little theatrical.

Since TTW is a fun place to put forth points of view, I'm adding my own to the RG&G ones already expressed—my interest having been piqued by Bob's opening charge that former English Open and future U.S. Open Champion "Reisman got away with financial murder" when he showed up at Maguire Air Force Base ready, but with only, as Gunn said, "\$1.50 in his pocket," to leave with the U.S. Team for, specifically, the more than 40-day trip to the '57 Stockholm World's and (in return for the Special Service Branch's round-trip free flight) the obligatory Army Exhibition Tour following it.

Bill Gunn, that "furious" '57 U.S. Team Captain and Delegate to the ITTF Congress, who years later was deservedly elected to the USATT Hall of Fame, as of course was Reisman, is no longer able to speak for himself, so Marty can't take up any rebuttal with him. But thanks to Bob Green, who spent days going through, then boxing up and sending off to me Leah Neuberger's collected materials for a *History of U.S. Table Tennis*, and with the help of documents I myself have accumulated over the years, I can offer interested TTW readers some clarification regarding the Reisman-Gunn relationship and the outcome of Bill's request for disciplinary action against Marty.

But, first, a little background.

In 1948, before the 18-year-old Reisman (National Jr. Champion and Canadian Open Men's Champion) was chosen to be on his first U.S. Team to the World's, the USTTA came out strongly against Gambling—more strongly against Gambling than they did Race Discrimination. Both were frowned on, but while the one transgression specified no penalties at all, the other prompted swift action: "Disqualification and suspension from USTTA if found guilty of gambling at any tournament." Officials, concerned with Image, with Decency, thought that betting on matches was just a disreputable thing to do, especially openly. Of course—talk about a culture clash—a great many intensely competitive players in New York with independent-minded pretensions to greatness wouldn't dream of playing, or maybe even taking an interest in, a match without some kind of wager.

At the '49 Stockholm World's, Reisman made the semi's before losing to two-time Czech World Champion Bo Vana, while Dick Miles, who'd be carrying on a tremendous U.S. and Canadian Open rivalry with Marty in the late '40's and early '50's, lost a deuce in the 5th heartbreaker to the eventual winner, England's Johnny Leach. Marty then went on to win the prestigious English Open over 5-time Hungarian World Champion Victor Barna, and so established himself, along with Dick, as one of the world's best players.

On returning home, Miles again beat Reisman in the final of the National's in 5, after Reisman had downed Sol Schiff in 4. On losing that first semi's game 21-8 to a red-hot Sol, Marty, with the officials' consent, had stopped play "for a-half hour" because he said "the rubber was allegedly peeling off his paddle and he had to have it repaired!" Editor Bill Price, criticizing Marty openly in *Topics*, for, as he saw it, his unsportsmanlike "ruse" that forced Schiff to wait and cool off, also complained about the "unusually heavy betting going on," and wondered why that, too, was permitted. The USTTA E.C. then took up official complaints from Sweden and England that said at the time of the World's Miles, Reisman, and Cartland had failed to appear in scheduled exhibitions in both countries, and (whatever their reasons) they were suspended indefinitely. Marty, though obviously a great player, was beginning to get a bad rep—at least among officials.

Still, he was a one-of-a-kind charmer and showman, and by Oct., 1950, he (and Doug) had been reinstated with the USTTA, and Helene Cinnater, wife of USTTA President Elmer Cinnater, was congratulating Marty in her *Topics* column not only for winning the South American Championships in Brazil but for his "good conduct." And six months later, Price himself was commenting on how in South America Marty had been getting "terrific press write-ups about his sportsmanlike behaviour and general demeanor." Marty was really "a nice fellow at heart," he said. "Of course it was his own fault that he was misunderstood."

The '50 Inter-cities was held in Columbus, Ohio that year, but "Bill Gunn, driving Marty Reisman, got snow-bound 16 miles east of Pittsburgh & never got thru." In the now faded light of their coming controversy, you might want to force a little wintry symbolism here? The two stuck with each other—Gunn wanting control, but not getting through.

As far back as 1940, Bill, then USTTA V.P. and U.S. Over 35 Champion, had captained a U.S. Team to Japan. After the disruptions of the War, he'd been selected to captain the U.S. Team to the Canadian Open, and then, in the spring of '51, was appointed U.S. Delegate to the ITTF Congress and Assistant U.S. Women's Team Capt at the Vienna World's. His home base was the historic Westchester TTA affiliate—which he was the President of. No problems apparently with Reisman (who lost to the eventual winner Leach) at this '51 World's and who then came back (in a match that I believe was umpired by Gunn) to lose to Miles (also reinstated now) in the final of the National's in 5 (after being up 2-0).

After winning the '51 Canadian's, Reisman, accompanied by Cartland, went independently to the Bombay World's (no official U.S. Team was sent either to Bombay or in 1953 to Bucharest). After free-spirited Marty and Doug had been in India, reports came back to the USTTA that there had been a few "unfortunate instances," some possible "ill feeling," between our players and the Indian Association, and they were suspended from international play for three years, until June of '56. If any further damaging incident occurred by

either one of them, the offender was to be "automatically suspended for life."

After touring with the Globetrotters, Reisman and Cartland turned up at two Nov., '53 N.Y. tournaments. Three-time U.S. Champ Pagliaro won the N.Y. Open over Cartland in the semi's and Reisman in the final, both in 5; then Cartland won the Westchester Open over Pagliaro, after Paggy had downed Marty in the semi's in 4. Apparently, Doug and Marty's absence from the tournament scene had not hurt their games much. Indeed, though Marty continues to absent himself from competition and is beaten in the 8th's of the '55 U.S. Open by U.S. World Team Member Harry Hirschowitz, there's no doubt that he and Doug can still play—they lose the final of the Open doubles in 5 to Bergmann and future 4-time U.S. Champ Erwin Klein.

The General Chairman for the '56 National's is Bill Gunn. The tournament is a success for him both as an official and as a player, for he continues to dominate the Esquire's. Now he will captain the U.S. Team to the '56 Tokyo World's. This trip, too, is a success—especially since we've come back with a World title: Klein and Leah Neuberger have won the Mixed Doubles. Gunn, Chairman of the USTTA Selection Committee, does a 4-installment write-up for *Topics* of the U.S. Team's trip and is appointed Capt. for the '57 Stockholm World's. His renown as an official rivals Reisman's as a player.

In the Sept., '56 *Topics* Bill writes an Open Letter to the USTTA membership in which he asks that "many of us should take stock of ourselves, and determine whether we are doing all we can—in fact, anything at all—to further the interests of the organized game." This letter seems to me more than a little self-serving, for he's surely calling attention to all that he's done rather than what he's not done: "Many of us," he says, "are inclined to just sit back and let a relative few take on all the burden of organizing and running the game for our own pleasure." He emphasizes the great amount of work done by the President, the Tournament Chair, and the Ranking Chair. In urging that "each one of us should do at least one thing this year that will benefit the whole association," he closes by saying, "I am willing—are you?"

On Nov. 28, 1956, Bill, writing to his Selection Committee, speaks of "Hirschowitz, Gusikoff, Cartland and Reisman" and speculates that, particularly with the last two, some members "might still have some of their past transgressions in mind." Since Cartland and Reisman have "been under suspension for a considerable time," would it not be helpful for us to know, "and in fairness to them," if they've received "a clean bill of health" from Disciplinary Chair Tibor Hazi.

Why does Gunn write this? Is it possible neither he nor his Selection Committee knows who's currently under suspension by the USTTA? I doubt that. Rather than wanting to be fair to these shady characters Cartland and Reisman, he wants to make sure from the beginning that no taint of impropriety can be connected with him, Bill Gunn, and that he, Bill Gunn, is as fair-minded as they make them? He's a very careful fellow. He has also very responsibly, very carefully, given his Committee copies of a Covering Letter (detailing what the players who make the trip might expect) and the Player's Availability/Players' Agreement Form he's sent out to all those under consideration.

It's quite clear from Gunn's Covering Letter that Hospitality will be provided for the players for every day or (depending on whether the Team plays in the German Open) almost every day of the trip. According to later Reports in *Topics* the players left New York Feb. 28, then played a match in Frankfurt, stayed there overnight (surely as guests of the German Association), then went on to Hamburg, Copenhagen, and by Mar. 4 were in Stockholm where Hospitality would be provided for them until they'd return immediately after the World's to Frankfurt to begin the 21-day Army Tour where Hospitality would again be provided. Since the USTTA Fighting Fund had collected \$1,650, and the expenses were \$2,000, including \$415 for the uniforms, and since presumably players were not yet given any per diem allowance, it's inconceivable to me that anyone was asked, or ever expected to be asked, to pay for so much as a night's lodging on this trip. In his earlier Covering Letter Gunn had indicated that a per diem allowance of about \$6 would probably be given to each player per day on the days they were traveling and on the 21 days of the Army Tour. But, he warned, this money could not be given out until their return, so the players would have to finance themselves. Clearly, Reisman, about to leave on this trip without pocket money, though no doubt confident that someone would loan him money, was from Gunn's point of view (as well as many another's) irresponsible. And no doubt Gunn had every reason to be irritated. But had Marty really

flaunted Gunn's authority so? Was it, from, Marty's point of view, such a big deal?

Should Marty, as Bob Green writes, really have notified the USTTA E.C. he "didn't have the money to make the trip"? What would they have said to him? What Gunn wanted to say to him: "Well, it's not too late to leave you behind, get a replacement"? And when Bob says Bill "financed the trip for Marty"—meaning (what?) that he'd see that Marty had, if not pocket money, food money, though Bob doesn't give that context—isn't that misleading? What exactly did Reisman "get away with"? Financial "murder"? Or an irritating inconvenience to Gunn? For that matter, did Bill have to be the one, the only one, to see that Marty had money? With both Cartland and Miles at the World's? And did Marty "get away with" a scam of some kind? Gunn was out "\$258"? A "good portion of which," he says, "I will probably never get back." Marty wasn't going to pay him back? Why not? Of course, even an official could bet that if the players were going to get \$6 a day for, say, 24 days, the USTTA wasn't going to give that \$144 to Marty but to Bill. If this "forced loan" is Reisman's only offense, would Bob Green (quoting from a Mar. 21, '57 letter from Bill to USTTA President Otto Ek), would anyone, think with Gunn that Marty should "never again" represent the U.S.—indeed, "should be suspended for life"?

But of course that isn't Reisman's only offense to Gunn. In his Players' Agreement Form—and this is a Captain who understandably wants to continue to keep his Captaincy year in and year out, and so seeks to protect himself—he has the players in his charge agree to seven conditions, the most important of which are: (1) "will make every effort to conduct myself in such a manner as to reflect credit upon the U.S. and the USTTA"; (2) "will keep myself in good physical condition"; (3) "will hold myself responsible to the Team Captain, and will accept and carry out any instructions given to me by him; (4) "will not gamble"; and (5) "will not...offer for sale, to any foreign person, any goods or articles manufactured in the U.S." The Agreement ends with: "I realize that violation by me of any part of the above agreement may result, in the discretion of the Captain, in my being barred from play at any time during the tournament; further that such violation will be reported by the Captain to the Disciplinary Committee of the USTTA."

This is a Captain who not only prepares for, but expects, and, to exercise his authority, wants the worst to happen? Careful, careful, Tim—surely that would be putting it too strongly?

Now comes an interesting juxtaposition of events:

At the New York Open, held Dec. 15-16, 1956, the 25-year-old Reisman is quite something. In the quarter's he's down 2-0 to U. S. #7 Mike Ralston (who'd just won the Dec. 1-2 Eastern's) but rallies to survive in 5; then in the semi's he's down 20-17 in the 5th to Miles and wins 5 in a row (Dick will avenge this loss in the final of the Washington Heights Open to follow); and finally in the final against Bobby Gusikoff he's down 12-4 in the 5th before pulling it out, 23-21, to win the tournament.

On Dec. 25, 1956, Christmas Day ("Peace on earth, and mercy mild,/God and sinners reconciled") Gunn offers his Selection Committee his own personal paragraph-long comments—"not designed to sway your thinking"—on every possible male candidate for the Team. Here's what he has to say about Reisman:

"Reisman—Our most talented player, not now the fine player he was a few years ago. A good part of his let down is nervousness due to lack of good physical condition. [See Player Agreement #2 above.] However, he is playing better in the last few weeks, and if he will try to train a little, and take better care of himself, he can still make a creditable showing. He has many years of competition all over the world, and this experience will stand him in good stead. I guarantee that, if he is selected for the team, he will behave himself, and keep in condition during the tournament." Will he guarantee also that Marty will pay back a loan?

On the 21-day Army Tour after the '57 World's, the U.S. contingent is split into two sections—Reisman is with the Marcy Monasterial-led group, not with the Gunn-led group. Marty, Gunn says, is a great entertainer whose charming personality has made him friends around the world. He acknowledges what he's heard from Monasterial—that Reisman "performed his job brilliantly and with full cooperation." So no violation there. But, uh, how does Marty do at the World's?

His Swaythling Cup record is 6-4—which includes winning 6 out of 9 19 or deuce games, winning three matches deuce in the 3rd and losing one 19 in the 3rd (the only one that could be considered a "bad" loss, to Australian Phil Anderson—the others being to Ivan Andreadis and Ladislav Stipek,

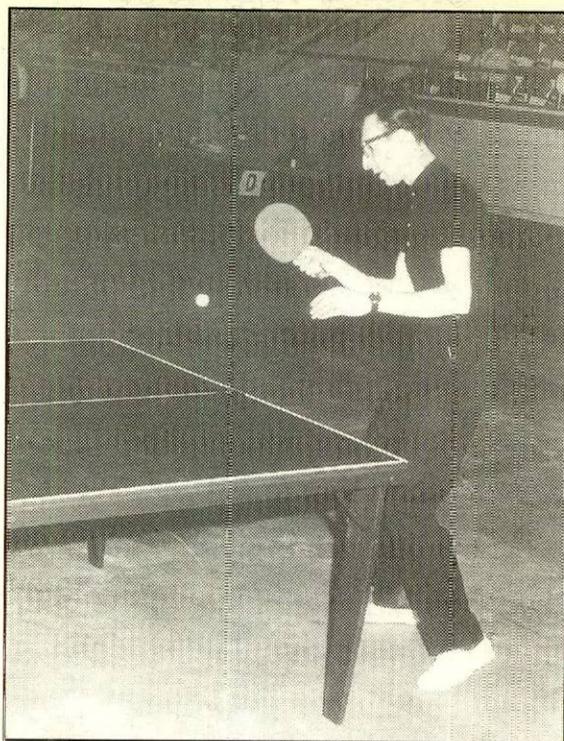


Photo by Mal Anderson © 1996

Reisman, circa late 1950's

'55 World Men's Doubles Champions, and Conny Freundorfer, who'd just won the German Championship for the 5th straight time). Marty's best win was over Ivan Severo of Brazil (who'd beaten Andreadis, Stipek and our Bukiet, but who'd lose to Cartland, 19 in the 5th in the Singles after being up 2-0). According to Monasterial's write-up in Topics, in the Singles the "most popularly applauded match was the second round [one] between Reisman and Tanaka [1955 and '57 World Champion and 1956 World runner-up] for which Marty was awarded a small token by the Swedish T.T.A. for his great, though losing performance, with scores 16, 12, 20. Reisman played brilliantly; he chopped heavily and counter-drove accurately, though his drives served only to show how much harder and more accurate [the sponge player] Tanaka's could be." Marty's showing in the Men's Doubles is creditable. He and Bukiet lost to the 1954 World Champions, Zarko Delinar and Vilim Harangozo. In the Mixed Doubles, he and Leah Neuberger lost to '57 World quarterfinalist Toshihiko Miyata and '59 World Women's Doubles Champion Taeko Namba. (Leah was 3-3 in Corbillon Cup play, lost in the 1st round of Women's Doubles, but did play a marvelous though losing deuce in the 5th 2nd-round match with the Defending World Champion Tomie Okawa of Japan before succumbing in the Consolation to Scotland's '49 World Women's Doubles Champion Helen Elliot.)

Thus, no possible fault could be found with Marty over Player Agreement #2? Au contraire. In his June 10, 1957 "Report on Behavior" of the Team, Gunn accused Reisman of "a complete lack of sense of responsibility and loyalty to the team and to the USTTA." Because Marty did not always observe the "approximate curfew of 12:30" Bill had established (Marty was "on several occasions pursuing the Swedish girls"), Bill gave "serious consideration to removing him entirely from the tournament," but because this would have hurt his doubles partners, particularly Leah Neuberger, who was defending her Mixed Doubles crown, he refrained.

"Reisman's record in Cup play, and in the individual events was not what could be expected from such a potentially great player," Gunn went on to say, lamenting also the fact that Marty "did not have one hour's practice" before leaving N.Y. "I am thoroughly convinced," said Bill, "it [Reisman's record] would have been much better had he not been tired out while playing." Even if Leah thought Marty let her down, and was complaining to Bill, this is a very questionable conclusion to draw by a Captain who in the very beginning proclaimed Marty "not now the fine player he was...[but who] can still make a creditable showing." Marty, just turned 26, might have won a World title if on occasion he hadn't allowed some girls to sap his strength? Yeah? Maybe they were good for him? It seems to me that Marty is guilty, so far, of violating Agreement 3—which, given the needs of the parties in question, ought surely to have been predicted.

Of course there was the "perennial problem," gambling—most noticeably by Leah's husband, the "boorish" Ty ("the root of all evil"), and doubtless by Marty and a number of other Americans. Definitely a violation of Agreement 4. And, since "sensation seeking reporters" played up this gambling, it certainly gave the U.S. a bad image in the

eyes of some. Definitely a violation of Agreement 1—though famous players from other countries, among them, reportedly, 4-time World Champion Richard Bergmann of England, 2-time World Champion Johnny Leach of England, 3-time World runner-up Alex Ehrlich of Poland, 3-time World 1/8-finalist Laszlo Foldy of Hungary, and Europe's current top-player, Zoltan Berczik, also of Hungary, were likewise involved. Gunn says he offered "to withdraw four Americans from the tournament, if also three Hungarians and three English were withdrawn." But the ITTF Advisory Committee was willing only to issue warnings to all Associations. The problem, Gunn admits, was not small wagers in the practice room, which, he says, are not harmful, but open, public gambling. In his official Report Gunn states that "to deal severely with anyone caught gambling, I was not able to see or get enough proof positive to convict anyone in my own mind"—except for "Barry Michelman" and "Albert [Ty] Neuberger." This, however, is not what he had in mind in Stockholm when he "proposed to withdraw four Americans from the tournament" if Hungary and England would withdraw players too. And this is not what he's written in a Mar. 21, '57 letter to USTTA President Otto Ek who'd been "especially pleased" to see on the Players' Agreement Form the prohibition against gambling. In this letter he says, "I never had quite enough proof to satisfy my conscience to justify the drastic notion of taking them [his players] out of competition." So he knew when he took his stand with the Advisory Council that he wouldn't have to withdraw his U.S. players because no way were the strong Hungarian and English players also going to be withdrawn? In this letter to Ek, Gunn definitely convicts "from heresay and overheard conversations...Miles...Cartland, Reisman, Michelman." How openly can they be gambling? Only once, with Michelman and Ty Neuberger, does he see money changing hands.

The problem is presented to the E.C. at their Apr. 13, '57 Meeting and is turned over to Tibor Hazi, Chair of the USTTA Disciplinary Committee. By the July 28, '57 E.C. Meeting—before Gunn, as U.S. Team Capt. and Bukiet and Bobby Fields as players, are to go off on a two-month State Department Tour that will take them to Afghanistan... Vietnam... Japan—Hazi has made no recommendations. The charges against Reisman are: "that he did not keep in training, that he had not practiced before the trip, that he started on the trip with only \$2.50 [sic] disregarding instructions completely about having sufficient finances with him—and that he engaged in gambling." Clearly, 3 of these 4 charges are petty—and the 4th Gunn lacks "proof positive"?

Jump to Sept. 8, 1957—ex-Hungarian International Hazi tenders his letter of resignation as Disciplinary Chair. Why? Without any disposition of the Reisman case. Why?

Jump to June 13, 1958—Si Wasserman, Chair of the Disciplinary Committee since Sept., '57, has Gunn's letters of May 19 and June 11, 1958 "inquiring about the disposition of the Martin Reisman case." Wasserman says he's been trying to find out from Otto Ek "if any action had ever been taken by the EC." It doesn't appear so. If not, he has Gunn's charges and says he wants to give Reisman "an opportunity to answer them."

In a June 19, 1958 letter to Wasserman, Gunn says that "being so opposed to Reisman as a member of any team abroad, I do not want any further delay in consideration of my charges against him."

Then on June 27, 1958 Gunn writes Wasserman:

"Please disregard my recent letter requesting action taken on Martin Reisman by the Disciplinary Committee. I found, at the recent E.C. meeting, that my memory had failed me somewhat. The E.C. acted on this case at the meeting at Columbus, Ohio [Nov. 30-Dec. 1, '57]... at which time it barred [Reisman] in the future from representing the USTTA abroad."

Huh? Bill didn't remember the disposition of this case! Is that possible?

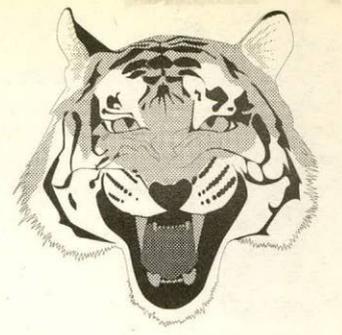
Gunn wants to continue to be the Team Capt. at the '59 World's (there was no World's in '58, they're now held every other year) but loses out to Wasserman and thereafter he resigns all his USTTA positions—V.P., Chair of the International Committee and Chair of the Selection Committee.

Reisman wins the '58 National's, both Singles and Doubles, and, though he's not allowed to represent the U.S. in Team play at the '59 World's—because, though he's "not suspended," he's, "of course, under partial suspension"—he does represent us in Singles and Doubles. Then is suspended again...

Enough said? Not for me, this story needs to be shaped even more—but I haven't the time or space here now to do it. However, it does offer interested TTW readers something more than fragmentary fact or "outrageous fiction."

# The Death of the Tiger

by Jamey Hall



**Editor's Note:** If you're a recent subscriber to **TABLE TENNIS WORLD** who desperately wants to read the preceding chapters of *The Death of the Tiger* from previous issues, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the editor.

## CHAPTER THREE--The Tiger

### Part One - Kee Luke

Kee Luke, head coach of the All-Earth table tennis team, stared out the window of his private car. The slow-moving train was almost completely enveloped by the extraordinarily lush jungle foliage of the Mekong Delta, but the stout old man saw none of it, so lost was he in his own thoughts. Most of his five days of travel from Chungking had been spent this way, turning things over and over in his mind; and now, only two days from Da Nang and his destination, he was no closer to resolving the turmoil inside him. Something was wrong, something was terribly wrong, but he had no clue what it was. It was certainly nothing definite, only a vague feeling, an intuition; but it was strong, and Kee Luke had learned long ago to trust his intuition. And what all his psychic alarms seemed to be telling him now was this: the team wasn't ready.

Something was out of place, distorted, unbalanced. Kee Luke had trained them, drilled them, driven them, harangued them, comforted them, practically raised them; he had been father, mother, confidant, mentor, drill sergeant, teacher, and more to them. They were the best, the brightest, the most gifted young table tennis players from across the world, brought to him by the ever-watchful All-Earth Search committee. And they had given themselves over to him. They were devoted to Kee Luke, had offered up body and soul to the game, had pushed and sweated and toiled and allowed themselves to be driven to the limits of human endurance, had done everything asked of them, and more, for the last ten years. But it was not enough. Deep in his heart, Kee Luke somehow knew this. From their ranks the All-Earth team had been chosen, and Kee Luke was in complete agreement with the five players picked by the All-Earth Selection Committee. There was no question in his mind that they were the five most deserving and the five best out of the scores of players that had been through his All-Earth Camp. In his 35 years of galactic-class coaching, they were as good as any players he had ever seen, alien or otherwise. They had surpassed everyone's expectations, including his. And they were surely the strongest team by far that Earth had ever had; everyone said so. But even as he was being praised by the ITTF, being congratulated as if he had already brought home the Pan-Galactic Crown, he could not escape the feeling that something vital was missing; indeed, with every compliment heaped on him he only felt it the more acutely. But what was it? What had he left undone? In only three weeks they would begin their final six months of preparation before embarking for D'Ron 4 and the Pan-Galactic Championships. Maybe, thought Kee Luke, I can figure out what is wrong by then. But the thought gave him little comfort.

One thing that he had left undone, of course, was to pick the sixth person for the team. ITTF rules gave the coach this pick to make on his own, independent of the evaluation committee. In theory this pick allowed the coach to place any deserving player on the team that he felt the Evaluation Committee had overlooked, or to award it to a deserving player from outside the ranks of the All-Earth

camp who had somehow miraculously escaped recognition by the search committee. The evaluation committee, however, relied so heavily on Coach Po's input that his five picks were almost always their five picks; and in this era of mass communication, it was inconceivable that a top world-class player could go unnoticed by the exhaustive All-Earth Search Committee. So in practice the coach's sixth pick was traditionally an honorary title awarded purely for political purposes, a figurehead team alternate picked only to satisfy some bigwig's diplomatic debt.

Which brings us to the ostensible reason for Kee Luke's long train ride from his home city of Chungking, China to Da Nang, Vietnam. From Da Nang he would be transported by jeep to the remote Nguyen family compound, where he would be the guest of the Nguyens, one of the most famous, and certainly one of the most influential, table tennis families in the world. The father and leader of the clan, Long Nguyen, had donated many of the training devices used at the All-Earth Camp, and in fact, all three of his sons had trained there at one time or another, although none were quite good enough to avoid one of Coach Po's many cuts. And that's why old Kee Luke was headed to Da Nang, to honor the benevolence of Long Nguyen by choosing one of his sons as the team's sixth man. Kee Luke did not relish this aspect of his trip. Though they were superb players, Kee Luke had a pronounced distaste for the Nguyen boys. Like many of the offspring of wealthy men, they had a streak of arrogance and selfishness that Kee Luke could not abide. It was for this as much as anything that they were dismissed from the camp, though Kee Luke would never admit that to the evaluation committee. Kee Luke did not expect much from the parents either, since, as the old saying goes, "the apple never falls far from the tree." But, as he reminded himself, the sixth position was meaningless, and the equipment donated by Nguyen was expensive and useful, so he would complete his task as quickly as possible and return home to try and untangle this knot in his mind.

Kee Luke could, of course, have flown from Chungking to Da Nang in a matter of hours, or even made a simple phone call. But what he had really looked forward to, his primary reason for taking this trip, was the solitude and chance to gather his thoughts that the long, slow train ride would afford. He had even sent his favorite granddaughter and constant companion, Shi Lin Po, on ahead by plane so that he could be alone with his thoughts. Shi Lin, the light of Kee Luke's old age, had sensed her grandfather's discomfort. Kissing his cheek and pinching him playfully, she had laughed as she boarded the plane. "Do not look so hard for the answers, dear grandfather. Be still in your heart, and the answers will look for you." He smiled now, thinking of her farewell. He used to scoop her up in his arms when she was a little girl, giving her the same admonishment when finding her frowning over some problem. Perhaps it was time for the teacher to follow his teachings, Kee Luke thought to himself.

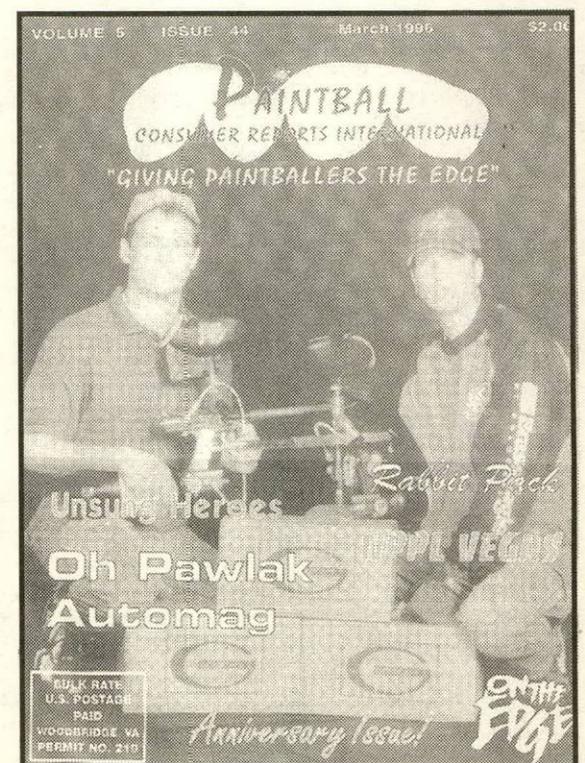
With a heavy sigh, Kee Luke turned his gaze from the window, closed his eyes, and began the process of disattaching himself from his thoughts. His breathing grew deeper and more rhythmic, his neck muscles began to relax, and finally he felt his mind begin to open like a flower blooming in time-lapse photography. When he felt sufficiently centered, he opened his eyes and looked out the window with a new equanimity, seeing for the first time the living maze of jungle around him. It overwhelmed his senses. So full of life, yet so dark and impenetrable, thought Kee Luke, it seemed the Grandmother of all mysteries. He imagined whimsically that if he could leave the train and walk deeply enough into its bowels, he could find that unnamable thing he was seeking. As he nodded off to sleep, he

dreamed he was doing just that, tracking the heartbeat of some dark and terrible force farther and farther into the jungle. His skin tingled as he anticipated the reward of his search, as he sensed Its presence growing nearer and nearer. It was close, very close! But wait a moment, something was not right here. Things were changing. Suddenly the jungle grew darker, everything fell silent, the air grew charged and still. Nothing moved. And then he heard a low, menacing growl that shook him to his soul. That's when it hit him: He was not stalking It—it was stalking *him!* He felt himself go weak with the realization. Then panic seized him. He sensed it drawing nearer, but he could not move, he was paralyzed with fear! It was too late for escape! The beat grew deeper and deeper, and heavier and heavier, until he could smell It, thick and dank in his nostrils; he could taste It, the taste of blood in his mouth; he could feel Its hot breath on his skin and Its heartbeat reverberate through his bones, louder and louder and louder until he thought he surely must go mad. And then suddenly it was upon him, engulfing him, tossing him about like dust in a whirlwind, calling out a name to him in a deafening roar!

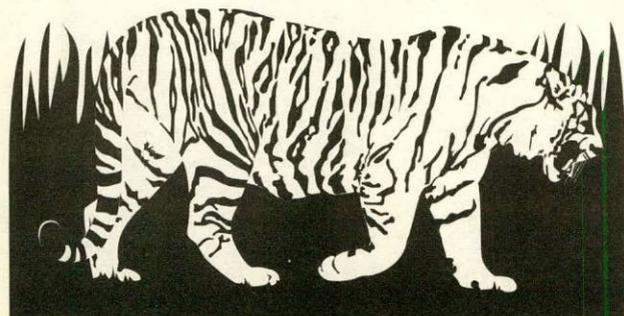
### Part Two - Lo Ng

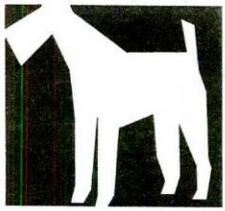
"Lo Ng! Lo Ng, I say! Get your lazy carcass in here at once, or by God, you'll feel my lash! Lo Ng!" A slight whisper of a young man shuffled into the large tiled sitting room, eyes downcast. "What is the meaning of this? Do you call this floor clean? Look at me when I'm talking to you, wretched boy!" Lo Ng slowly brought his eyes up to face his antagonist, Mama Nguyen, a thin and puckered, horse-faced old crone whose expression always looked as if she smelled sewage. The woman tapped a leather-thonged, three-foot piece of green bamboo against her leg while eyeing the boy malevolently. Lo Ng's eyes betrayed no expression. He had found out long ago that showing fear or resentment only encouraged her, so he had learned to turn himself to stone in her presence, indeed, in the presence of any of the Nguyen family household.

(Continued next issue)



USATT member Jeff Shank (R) on the cover of *Paintball Consumer Reports International* in March. He and partner Mike Leffler (L) are ranked 5th in the world in Paintball Doubles.

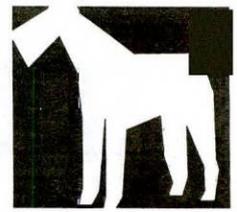




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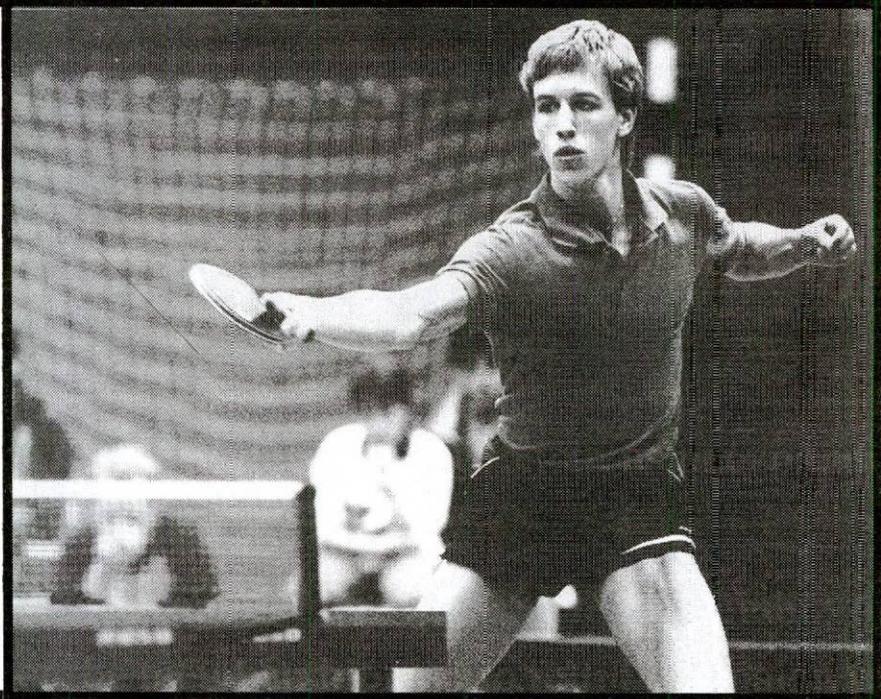


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