1st Annual U.S. Table Tennis Youth Cup Champions!
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!
FEATURES
10 Shall We Ever Overcome? by George Brathwaite
12 The First Youth Cup & Junior Development, by Tong Lee
14 Interview with U.S. Men's Singles Champion David Zhuang
16 Interview with World Champions Kong Linghui & Deng Yaping, by Liu Yi
16 Mini-Profile: 1995 Collegiate Champion Sean Lonergan
17 The Todd Sweeris Story, by Don Markus
18 The Killer Cadets--Five 14 & Under Kids Rated Over 2200! Keith Alban, T.J. Beebe, Freddie Gabriel, Sunny Li, Philip Lim by Larry Hodges
20 The "Young" George Hendry, by Tim Boggan, USATT Historian
42 The Racket Sports Heritage Collection Part II (For Sale!)
44 The Reisman, Gunn & Green Story, by Tim Boggan, USATT Historian
46 The Death of the Tiger, Chapter III, by Jamey Hall

U.S. TOURNAMENTS
30 The First U.S. Youth Cup, by Larry Hodges
37 National College Team Championships, by Larry Hodges
38 ACUI College Championships Results
38 Around the USA: Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oklahoma

INTERNATIONAL
39 North American Championships, by Todd Sweeris & Larry Hodges
39 World Rankings
40 1994-95 World Results
40 The Belgium Situation, by Gaëtan Frenoy
40 The European National Champions
41 The English Open, by Gaëtan Frenoy
41 International Results French Nationals, Croatian Open, Russian Open

COACHING
24 Forehand Loop Sequences of the Masters by Diego Schaaf Jean-Philippe Gatien, Kong Linghui, Zoran Primorac, Wang Tao, Jean-Michel Saive, Jan-Ove Waldner, Ma Wenge
26 The Forehand Pendulum Serve of Todd Sweeris, by Larry Hodges, USATT Certified National Coach
27 High Level Training, by Todd Sweeris, U.S. Olympic Team Member
27 The Five C's, Part I: Consistency, by Gary Elwell, USATT Certified Coach
27 Control Over Negative Thoughts During Play, by Jim Annesi, Ph.D, Sports Psychologist
28 The Playing Style of U.S. Men's Singles Champion David Zhuang, by Larry Hodges
28 Weight Training and Table Tennis, by Brian Pace
29 The Forehand Loop (In Both English and the Original Chinese!) by Jack Huang, USATT Certified International Coach

Photos of the Month
Terrence Lee Backhand Loop by Joe Holman ©1996

DEPARTMENTS
4 Reports
6 Short Stuff
6 They Said It!
6 Did'ja Know? by Bob Green
8 USATT Election Results
8 Boos Brothers Top Ten List
9 Letters
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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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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. The first Worlds were held in 1881, and it was not until 1927 that the Championships were held again. In 1976 and 1977 he won Men’s Singles, Men’s Doubles with brother Rick, and Mixed Doubles with Insook Bhushan.

In 1929, Fred Perry won the men’s singles title in Table Tennis. The tennis set was, of course, Fred Perry who won the men’s singles title in Table Tennis at the World Championships 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 Ogimura 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 will fail.”

A newspaper sportswriter 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.

If a player who was around in the 1970s, said: “I’m gonna be late for the City 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 Olympic Triple Jump Champion leaving the Penn Relays in a hurry.”

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 World Championships in 1929. He won from Hungarian Miklos Szabades in the final. A year later he won the Wimbledon Men’s Lawn Tennis Title.

**Did you know?**

**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.

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

"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.

**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 Sirloin 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.
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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.

State-by-State Breakdown of USATT Election

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| Total | 679 | 417 | 276 | 245 | 529 | 203 | 560 | 115* | 20 | 1812 | 18 |

Aiki Anderson Eisner Evans Hogshead Ibraham 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"

1. You know, no one's ever pushed my bbs before.
2. In a basement, that guy is 2600.
3. ...and he holds a full-time job too?
4. Whatever happened to that "best man wins" cliche anyway?
5. I thought the rules were clear that men cannot play in tight speedos.
6. No.......no..............no way..............that can't be Dell Sweeris.
7. Does Madonna still date those guys?
8. Aaaah, who needed those 50 rating points anyway.
9. In a basketball player Elgin Baylor with wife & paddle (L); and NBA star Slam-Dunk Champion Brent Barry, hampering it up (R).
Dear Editor,

I thought your review of Tactics for the Slow of Feet was unnecessarily harsh. I enjoy reading your column and appreciate your contributions to Table Tennis World. I realize the need for competition and the time demands it brings, but it is just a game. Let's enjoy it!

Thank you.
Sincerely,
George Stone
Baldwin, NY

---

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed your article on Tactics for the Slow of Feet (Jun/Feb issue). I hope you kept it. You describe my strategy perfectly!

Thank you once again for your interest in Table Tennis.
Sincerely,
Paul Montville
Executive Director
USATT

---

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 competence in our magazine is to be inappropriate at this time. This ad does not extend to camps, clinics, tournaments, etc., that you or the National Tennis Center may wish to run in the future.

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

Dear Larry

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). 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 at 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.

I felt that you misunderstood me. 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.),
- Results of tournaments.

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. It is so posted.

Sincerely,

Paul Montville
Executive Director
USATT
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 to abandon diplomacy out of necessity and take a stand in the interest of Human Rights. After decades of restrained enterprise, 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.

Writing this, I account 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 political and economic 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 attract public 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 knowledgeable individuals about leagues in the sport today, such as Christian Lillieroos, Larry Thoman, Terry 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 the Committee, it (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 Association” has been founded on the belief that it will have a direct influence on transforming Table Tennis into a highly regarded and accepted 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 consisted of Terry Thames, 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 input as to what would work.

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 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 1988-89 during the Mel Esiner 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. Simply put...it was the people running the sport. It was the people running the sport.

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 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.

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 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 time. Our main problem is how to overcome this barrier so as to yield the future and success of our sport but the sport benefits we all benefit. 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.
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, Calif., 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 older and elder 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. 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 few of these programs include, 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 training 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. Friendship and fun are 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...”

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

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 a 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 TIC 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. Jing 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, pored better things to come for junior and youth table tennis. The tournament’s 4-day entry fee of $7,900 in prize money helped 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 who know...
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 trend. Unless something more is done in the next few years, we will inevitably lose the 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 must have worked with highly talented young juniors as they are surpassed by foreign players.

Can what 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+ 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 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. 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 improve on the next level. Figure skating, like table tennis, is a highly-skilled sport. If you had watched Michelle Kwan skate 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.
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.

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: How often did you train when you got serious?
David: Big difference. Table tennis in China is very, very serious. It's very popular, the number one sport in China. I became a professional player in 1975, when I was 12. 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.

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

TTWORLD: How old were you when you became a professional player?
David: I became a professional player in 1975, when I was 12.

TTWORLD: How old were you when you became a professional player?
David: I became a professional player in 1975, when I was 12.

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 robin, 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 semi-finals one year.

TTWORLD: Joannie, tell us about your career.
Joannie: Every since I met David, I've improved. David gives me a lot of multi-ball. Sometimes I practice with Anini Lawson.

TTWORLD: How do you train now, and how often?
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.?
David: Big difference. Table tennis in China is 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?

TTWORLD: So it took 10 years to come here?
David: Yes.

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: Joannie, tell us about your career.
Joannie: Joannie Yang got 7, Jim Butler 5, Cheng Yinghua 2, and Todd Swearer 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'd get a few votes!

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: Joannie and I met David, and 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.

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.
INTERVIEWING THE
World Champions

World Men's Champion
Kong Linghui

World Women's Champion
Deng Yaping

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.

TITWORLD: 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.

TITWORLD: 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 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 have something to do with table tennis for I love it so much.

TITWORLD: 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 superiority over European players. There is no easy win in current world table tennis tournaments. However, I wish to win a gold medal in the Atlanta Olympic Games. Becoming an Olympic champion is my next goal.

TITWORLD: What is your training schedule like? Does your coach have a say in your schedule?
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.

Deng Yaping is probably the most followed 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.

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TITWORLD: 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.

TITWORLD: 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.

TITWORLD: 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 Olympic 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 ten 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.

TITWORLD: 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

Name: Sean Lonergan
Age/DOB: 20/5-75
Living: Student & Coach
Current Home: Rockville, Md.
Highest Rating Ever: 2589
Equipment: Butterfly Keystop, Butterfly Ektips 21 mm
Style of Play: Control player with strong backhand
Recent Achievements: 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)
Career Highlights: 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.
Ultimate Goal in Table Tennis: Olympian & National Champion
Nickname: Casper
Favorite Sport(s) Besides Ping Pong: Basketball & tennis
Hobbies: Listening to music, reading, running
Favorite Opponent: Masamichi Kubo
Favorite Psychological Tactic: Positive self-talk
Best Doubles Partner: Brian Pace
Most Memorable Comeback: Winning from down 17-12 in fifth at 1994 Nationals against Jim Butler.
Player I Most Admire: Cheng Yinghua
Most Feared Opponent: Foreign players, because I don't have experience against them.
Strongest Part of My Game: Backhand
Wildest Game I've Been In: 1995 Nationals against Dan Seemiller—kept blowing leads, kept coming back, finally won.
Wildest Shot I've Ever Seen: Backhand chop around the net from off the table with no bounce, by Barney J. Reed, during warm-up
Favorite Tournament: U.S. Nationals
Ping Pong Peeve: Not enough large tournaments, low prize money

May/June 1996
They shared more than two dozen national championships, including women's table tennis players in the country during the 1970s. "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." 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 only recognition the team received was because one its members, Andre Scott, is a paraplegic. Scott recently made the U.S. junior national team. He won a tennis medal at the Sweet 16 in two straight NCAA tournaments before this spring's early exit, Sweeris and his club teammates were leading the Terra-Persson Carbon.

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. "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.
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), 2230 (T.J.), 2236 (Philip), 2236 (Freddie) and 2191 (Keith). (Keith may be under 2200 now, but he's been rated as high as 2226!) The ratings are so close, the five are basically dead even. (Just misses 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!

**Keith Alban**

**Age/DOB:** 12, 12/10/83

**Hometown:** Parkland, FL

**Sponsor:** T.G. Enterprises

**Equipment:** SKITT CARBO-TECH BLADE, 2-1 COPPA SPONGE


Keith's the "youngest" 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 Teresa Terranova, and practices with a robot.

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

Keith's playing style is a two-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 boy's 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, 12/17/81

**Hometown:** Atlanta, GA

**Sponsor:** T.G. Enterprises

**Equipment:** SKITT CARBO-TECH BLADE, 2-1 COPPA SPONGE


Quiz question: what does T.J. really stand for? Few know the answer. For the record, it's not "Tiborius 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 this 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 Loyd 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 la, 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 34 exhibitions recently for schools and the Olympics.

T.J. will be a volunteer at the Olympic Atlanta Games, 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 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.pcnet.com/tjbebe/tjhomepg.htm

As to the initials "T.J.," they stand for Thomas John—but it really should have been "Tiborius Johannson"...
Freddie Gabriel
Age/DOB: 14, 6/14/93
Hometown: RICHMOND, CA.
Sponsor: AIREX SPORTS
Equipment: POLARIS BLADE, 2.0 APEX LIGHTSPEED SPONGE

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

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 table tennis, 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 recent U.S. rating lists.

When Freddie was nine and a half, he started playing himself in the garage. From there, he went on to be a regular at four clubs in the Bay area: Concord, Berkeley, Hercules and Millmatters. He plays nearly every day with practice partners Peter Zajac & Terrence Lee, and with his coach, Bill Liu. 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, and the men's doubles 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 2223, 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, 7/26/93
Hometown: PONTOMAC, MD.
Sponsor: T.G. ENTERPRISES
Equipment: PETEER FLANZE BLADE, 2.0 DONIC VARIO SPONGE

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. 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 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 has 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.
The Young GEORGE HENDRY

by Tim Boggan, USATT Historian

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 Hiroyo Saio 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 (TRO-baw), Jr. Tietjin was a good knuckleball server—"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 it, 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 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 his comments about the "breakfast" (under 15) title at the crowd yielded 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 two... Entries: 37, all under 14 years.

Maybe eating (it seemed forever, said George) all those boxes and boxes of Wheaties (and banking the $257) 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 it, would need time to adjust.

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

But now came a new season, the lowered net, and Hendry reached what he'd later call a turning point in his semi's to the Hunga

Top: 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.

down 2-1 and 17-13 in the 4th, he'd also scored an even gutser -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 (Ih-VAN). After which, he immediately “collapsed on the floor at the players’ exit,” then “was carried to his room,

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.

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 Chairman and USTTA Ist Vice-President Dougall Kitterman.

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?) 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
cold, temperature elevation, and lack of rest. Not until assured a place on the team would he consent to remain where Dr. F. Stanley Morest found him suffering from a mediocre 9-6 record (not much better than Price's 4-3).

Later this summer to find out that he was also the St. Louis at Beaumont High wouldn't be at all surprised sooner or later this summer to find out that he was also the St. Louis tournament. 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 Kolár 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 drive the ball, 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.

In the 8th's, Hendry played Bellat, 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. "Bellak was the best I've ever seen," said Hendry, reminiscing. But because it wasn't good enough to win these National's, Bellak's spin 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-city, 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 uneventful day's firstests by the Hendry twin sisters, Margaret and Melba against defending Champions 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 1-0 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, "Puggy 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 go?), who'd taken the attack away from a much faster Nash and Woody in straight games. Pagliaro got the better of Nash, 26-24 in the 31-d. he probably didn't realize Hendry had an "appearance and style of play" as much liked the current World Champion Richard Bergmann, that Sol just did 19 in the 3rd get by him.

Never mind, 12-0 or 12-1, 17-year-old Hendry's record had evidently deserved him the Championship Player Award and a place on the U.S. World Team. USTA 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, he had the ball under control, but the ball for sure winners when the chance came, 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, 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 Swaying Club matches at the 8,000-seat, beautifully tiered-round Albert Hall, Hendry held his own in his 5-2 win over Poland, losing only to 1936 and the World runner-up Alex Ehrlich. Then, in an important match against Austria, which he would lose 5-3, Hendy 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 thecontending teams, the U.S. (8-6) would have finished ahead of Austria (8-8) and England (8-9) 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 1937, there had to be an additional round 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 Bubley, one of the countless individual internationalists of that era, who in the first tie with the U.S. had, 19, 20 beating 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 to give him a better "feel." England's great player Adrian Haywood, who'd earlier taken turns beating Hendry's lack of strokes, hit "rather ugly style," but correctly affirmed it's the player's choice.

Though in this second U.S. vs. England tie, Bubley got the better of Pagliaro, 26-24 in the 3rd, he probably found Hendry's close-to-the table defense too uncomfortable for a mirror of his own and irritably accused George of using the now ITTF-banned fingerpips against him. Although some elaborate service wind-ups of the time still allowed players to use fingerspips 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 of seven or deuce games, again lost 5-3. Perhaps, too, the fact that the English speakers were not on our side played a part in our loss. They cheered Bergmann (now living in London) and his unchanged, inscrutable expression. As The Times noted, "they frown on our verbal involvement of "Attaboy!"..."Hot digging..."...and "Jumping Jehoshaphat!" Such exclamations of most of the 5,000 watching found unsorting, abhorrent. But Eric Filby of the English Times was impressed by 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-gatherings calls for an occasional out-of-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 Profill—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 USTA 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 last 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. Hendy, up 1-0, might have won the 24-22 second game as well, the reports went on to say, but he "began overlooking 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..."Whoo!" In the English Open at Blackpool that followed, the Chittent American players—McClellar and Schiff especially, for they'd just beaten Bara and Bellak to win the World Doubles Championship—again made their presence felt. Schiff beat Bellak before losing, like Pagliaro and McClure, to Beclak. And Hendy...Hendy 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. Hendy, 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?

As Schiff on his return from the World's won the Eastern's (in a very controversial expeditious match with Philadelphia's Izy Bellis), so Hendy 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 "outrugged" George to win the finals and win Open).

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


May/June 1996
Missouri State over Nash, 7, 9, 6! in the est and most reliable player in the coun-
described earlier in Topics as “the steadi-
sials promoted an all-expenses-paid East-
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eventually losing in the final to the for-
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The Forehand Pendulum Serve of Todd Sweeris

by Larry Hodges

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 ups a few inches, and the racket moves around to the right of the ball, toward 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 grasps the ball. For backspin, he grasps 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 graps 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 contact, it's hard for them to 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.

May/June 1996
**The Mental Advantage**

**Control Over Negative Thoughts During Play**

Dr. Jim Annesi, Ph.D.

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 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 uncommon. The key is to develop methods which will, quickly and efficiently, cope with these intrusive 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 situation occurs again.

If your intruding thoughts raise your anxiety level, chances are that increased worry will develop. A nonproductive 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 revivify your orientation for success. For example, on reducing errors, or returning serve with enough direction that your opponent’s advantage will be neutralized.

Control over negative, intrusive thoughts are a challenge to most players. Remember, chances are that your opponent, 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 these 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.

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**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.

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**The five Cs:**

Consistency, Control, Confidence, Concentration, Courage

(Part one of a five part series)

by Gary Etwell

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 Cs 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 percent. 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’re 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 “chooses” under pressure at a disadvantage. To do so will eventually ruin your game. The idea is to adjust your mental attitude to better suit the situation. This can be accomplished by understanding and applying the 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.

**Control** - Must have before improvement.

**Confidence** - Determines your performance.

**Concentration** - Where 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 “chooses” under pressure at a disadvantage. To do so will eventually ruin your game. The idea is to adjust your mental attitude to better suit the situation. This can be accomplished by understanding and applying the 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.

**Courage** - Must have before improvement.

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**Concentration, Courage**

Jim Annesi, Ph.D.

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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.

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 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 corner, and 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.

Another 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.,

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, through out 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 overhead 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 still be working, but not fat.  

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 you're now in, all you need to do is to 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 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: Brian S. Pace C/O Table Tennis World 301 West Edmondson Drive Rockville, MD 20852

May/June 1996
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!

近幾年來，世界兵兵球技術正朝着技術全面、特強突出的方
向發展，而正手弧圈球又成爲運動員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。下面就談一談有關
正手弧圈球的幾個問題。

1. 高吊弧圈與前冲弧圈的區別和運用:

正手弧圈球大致分爲高吊弧圈、前冲弧圈、和側旋弧圈二
種。人們通常運用的是高吊和前冲這兩種。高吊弧圈球的特
點主要是旋轉強、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：一是對付弧圈很
低而旋轉很強的下旋球；是在走步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，前冲弧圈球的特
點主要是速度快，但是旋轉並不是很強，弧線也比較低。前
冲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。前冲弧圈球的用途也有兩點：一是對付一
般的下旋球，二是在走步中位置比較好時作爲直接的得分手
段，或者在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:

a. 要掌握球：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。
b. 動作要舒展、放鬆、協調一致，要蹬腳、轉腰、交換重心，
整個動作要一氣呵成。
c. 要有發力，把全身的力量用在擊球的一瞬間。發力主要
來源於大腿和手腕的收缩。
d. 稀稀的站位距離應該比肩稍寬，右手握拍著左脚稍在前，右
腳稍在後，以利於轉腰。
e. 要注意兩腳步後的移動，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，在開始正手弧圈球之前，應當先從基本正手球的
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
一方給球，另一方就固定地一板一板地拉，還是由兩
個對敵，都應該遵循固定的線路，以示和諧和模糊，這樣做
的目的主要是學習和體驗正轉的動作，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，學習弧圈球一定要注意基本動
作的正確性，以利於後來競技水平的提高。否則，一旦錯誤
的動作形成，今後再改就很難了。

May/June 1996

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Table Tennis World 29
**Hayward, California**

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, 3rd $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 have won both. While Richard Lee, the highest rated player under 2250 at 2241, should win one. Even better for them 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 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. Michael Wah was unable to save them, losing to California's "third," pips-out penholder Phillip 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 Phillip Lim defeating T.J. for the third win (while...
California Allstars winning the other three. Shashin, by throwing a scare into Da-Zhi Guo’s team by winning 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.

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 Dahlhin 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 & Alex Zelenkovsky. In fourth was the team of Stacey Lee & Patricia Hoke.

Group B

The top-seeded team in the division of Bogdan Kucherenko & Terrence Lee romped through the division, winning their three ties 3-0, 3-0 and 3-0. Their only loss was Jack Wahl’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 (1668) 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 ousting Nan (scores lost to posterity). Jeannie followed by upsetting Michelle at -20, 12, 13. Unbelievable—two consecutive “50-point” upsets! So the Chens 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 to win the team match.

In the other semifinal, Virginia Sung easily won her two matches against the Chens, and although Wan-Ling won 9 & 9 against Sally Dahlhin, the doubles were decisive. The Chens won the first at 19, but Sung/Dahlhin...
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-2400 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 Aureia Malek going 4-0 in the round robin, Alain Rudessell second (3-1), and Vincent Cheng third (2-2). This was primarily a California event, with only Allison Seibel of Louisiana coming 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).

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 even most of the way. Finally, Todd pulled away to take a 17-13 lead—but Chi-Sun tied it up, 18-all. Todd led 9-8, 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 of 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 robin, two groups of three.

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

Second Round Robin

Posted on the wall before the preliminaries began were the second round robin groups, showing where the first and second place finishers in each 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 robin groups 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 ripped 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, or the only two top 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 regained his earlier lost 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 11-11; goes up 18-13, 20-21, and 15-22. In the third, Todd is up 24-23, Todd pulled the first game out 2-0 (he’d made this shot.)

Da-Zhi Guo won all three, including a 3-gamer with 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.

Chi-Sun came out swinging—counterlooping everything Chi-Sun could offer as he won the first two games by 11-3 and 11-5. Though Chi-Sun had no match up match point at 10, 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 won his 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.

May/June 1996
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 C

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 D

Here was the group that would shortly cause problems tests. 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 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 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 2-1. 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).

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 highest 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 Shothaathan 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.

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

Under 23 Women’s Champion Virginia Sung

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.

RUBBER SHEETS

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For a complete price list, call or write:
Sunmark Business Products, Inc.
Tel: 216-245-3678 • Fax: 216-245-9995
E-mail markdil@ix.netcom.com
http://www.sunmarkinc.com/products/stiga.html
Semifinals

23rd-seeded 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 tuned by T.J. Beebe, who defeated Sunny in the other semifinal, 11 & 18.

Final

Andy’s hard, quick backhand (with 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 undeleted, 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.

Final

Sunny’s serve, 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 robin, as did Nan Li & Stacy Lee from Group 1 and Vivian Lee & Michelle Do from Group 3.

Second Round Robin

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

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 (B), 15, 16; Lim (A) d. Chang (C), 11, 14.

Semifinals

Under 18 Boys—Final: Da-Zhi Guo d. Sunny Dollar (Bogdan Kucherenko, Terrence Lee), 3-2; Kucherenko (B) d. Dollar (A), 6, 7; Sung (A) d. Lee (B), 2-1 (n.s.); Kucherenko/Lee (B) d. Sung/Dollar (A), 10, 19; Sung (A) d. Kucherenko (B), 19, 18, 11; Dollar (A) d. Lee (B), 16, 11.

Semifinals

Under 23 Girls—Final: Nan Li & Vivian Lee d. Inga Viktorova & Michelle Do, 3-1; Viktorova (2215) d. Do (A), 19, 13, 8; Viktorova & Lee (B) d. Lim (A), 15, 16; Viktorova (B) d. Lim (A), 16, 11.

U.S. Junior National Team Trials

Under 18 Boys:

1. Nan Li
2. Lisa Lee
3. Philip Lim
4. T.J. Beebe
5. Keith Alban
6. Richard Lee
7. Anthony Torino
8. Norman Yeh

Under 18 Girls:

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

Under 14 Girls:

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

Aftermath

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

Many of the parents, coaches, and juniorizers met on Saturday night to discuss junior issues and the future of the tournament. The idea of running a circuit of over $100,000 “Youth Challenges” per year is being pursued, with possible locations in California, Florida, Atlanta, Houston and Maryland. Maryland has tentatively committed to running the second Youth Cup in April, 1997, at the National Table Tennis Center.
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

by Joe Holman ©1996
CONCERNED ABOUT TODAY'S YOUTH?
YOU CAN HELP!
BECOME A BIG BROTHER OR BIG SISTER.

BE A BIG BROTHER OR BIG SISTER...
CALL YOUR LOCAL AGENCY

BIG BROTHERS
BIG SISTERS OF AMERICA®
Because you have so much to share®
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 Gorinshtein, 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 matches, and 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. Maryland 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 clear tie-between 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, 4-0; University of Pennsylvania defeated Howard University, 4-1; and New York University defeated Harvard, 4-1.

Middle: Finalists Georgia State University (L-R): Boris Gorinshtein, Yogesh Sapre, Melvin Denham, Robert Hyatt, Mark Dubin, Raj Gopal.
Right: Tournament Directors Julie Lu & Tim Neons and Referee Chris Lehman carrying tables up stairway.

Semifinals

New York University took a quick 2-0 lead on Montgomery College, with Eugene Shulteff 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 Pavlovsky. 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 Gorinshtein. 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 Gorinshtein. 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 four all 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 beseemingly 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 the tournament a great success. Also congratulations to MVP Sean Lonergan, who just eked out the title over fellow-undefeated teammate Masamichi Kubo.
**ARIZONA OPEN**

February 17-18, 1996

Open Singles—Final: Marek Zochowski d. Frank Remenyi, 12, 10.

Women’s Singles—Final: Nadine Groenig d. Frank Remenyi, 15, 12.


Junior Under 16: Cindy Whalen d. Tammy Mack.

Senior Doubles: Ragner Fahlstrom/Ralf Schlosser.


NTT MARCH OPEN

**National Table Tennis Center**

Rockville, Maryland

March 16-17, 1996


Women’s Singles—Final: Husain d. Jackie Huang, 12, 13, 17.

Mixed Doubles: Rob Trudell/Marek Zochowski d. Chris Castro/Bertrand Meenensson, 22, 14, 12.

**COLORADO SPRINGS OPEN**

March 30, 1996


**MILENARY CLOSED**

Columbia, Maryland

March 31, 1996


Over 40: Pat Lui d. Mark Davis, 11, 13, 15, 11.
North American Championships

Edmonton, Canada

March 30-1, 1996

by Larry Hodges & Todd Sweets

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

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 Amy Feng 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 Hai Tao Nguyen. 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 Sweets 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, and compensation was made 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 and a 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 missing an easy backhand. It was still 16-15 USA, but that one seemed to leave Nguyen nervous while giving the Canadian’s confidence.

Canada dominated the rest of the way, winning the last 5 games and 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 Gong, World #6, was able to raise her level when it was needed. USA won the first game, 21-18, and led 19-20 in the second. However, Canada pulled out that game—stopping a 3-0 USA sweep since they won the third, 20-22. Obviously, the teams were very evenly matched.

USA led 15-14 in the fifth game, and it looked like they could do it. However, from here on, Gong took over. USA only scored one more point this game, and lost the fifth at 13. 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 Women’s Singles Championships

In the quarterfinals, Canada’s Xinh Thuy Ton upset many-times Canadian Champion Lijuan Gong in the only upset this round.

In the semifinals, USA’s Cheng Yinghua defeated Christmas, 13-24, 8. On the other side, Malaysia’s Jade Huang, world #13, defeated USA’s David Zhung, 10, 16, 16. In the final, Cheng seemed faster and more powerful than he had in years. He was especially important to USA players, as they had made either flip. He might have won. "Said USA Coach Li Zhenshi. From there on, Cheng didn’t seem to progress, and took a 7-4 lead. However, it was not to be. Match to Canada, 21-14, 20-16, 17.15, 16, 14. Cheng Yinghua defeated Christmas, 21-14, 20-16, 17.15, 16, 14.

Meet they did. Equally预-ordained. and unfortunated for USA, was that Gong would win again. Her world ranking as well as her past record against Feng were defeated. Geng won the first two at 10 & 17. Feng de-railed the Geng Express in the 3rd at 14, but Geng’s backhand pips-rolled block and forehanded hitting were just too much for lefty looper Feng. Match and North American Championship for third straight year to Lijuan Gong, 10, 17, -14, 14.
**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.

From a car accident.

**Russia TTF President Dies**

The new 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.O.” It’s not even well-known! Their players were Martin Bratanov, Sebastien Massart & Michael Utilla. If you have heard of them, either you’re from Belgium, or a friend of theirs. (Bratanov, the best of the three, was ranked #22 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 players, 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-Homel” 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 seem already played. For the moment, there’s no other Belgian club which can afford such top players.

It’s the consequence 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 phenomenon” (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!

---

**International Results, 1994-95**

**CHINESE OPEN**

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) 3 1 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. Ken TAEK SOO (South Korea) 1 0 1 4
7. Jean-Philippe GATIEN (France) 1 0 1 4
8. Damien ELOI (France) 0 1 1 4
9. Jorg ROSSKOPF (Germany) 1 0 1 4
10. Peter KARLSSON (Sweden) 0 2 0 4
11. Zoran PRIMORAC (Croatia) 0 1 1 3
12. Erik LINDH (Sweden) 0 1 1 3
13. Xiong Xe (China) 0 1 1 3
14. Johnny HUANG (Canada) 0 1 1 3
15. Wang TAO (China) 0 1 1 3
16. SAMSONOV (Belorussia) 0 1 0 2
17. Feng ZHE (China) 0 1 0 2
18. Lin ZHIGANG (China) 0 0 1 1
19. Lu LIN (China) 0 0 1 1
20. Andrez GRUBBA (Poland) 0 0 1 1
21. SMREKAR (Slovenia) 0 0 1 1
22. Creanga (Greece) 0 0 1 1
23. Thierry CABRERA (Belgium) 0 0 1 1
24. Nicolas CHATELAIN (France) 0 0 1 1
25. BUTLER (USA) 0 0 1 1
26. 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**

Belgium

Jean-Michel Saive Cecile Oser

Bonita Herzenova

Mirza Hadzaahic Adela Mesan

Denmark

Allan Bentzen Pia Finnenm

England

Alan Cooke Alison Broe

Finland

Linus Eriksson Katja Nieminen

Germany

Jorg Rosskopf Nicole Stasse

Hungary

Zsolt Harczi Krisztina Toth

Ireland

Jonathan Cowan Andrea Glover

Luxembourg

Joel Kox Michele Pater

Netherlands

Trinko Keen Gerdie Keen

Poland

Lukac Bialczyk Alina Mikijaniec

Slovenia

Robert Smrekar Biljana Todorovic

Sweden

Jan-Ove Waldner Pernilla Peterson

Switzerland

Thierry Miller Tu Yong

Turkey

Gurhan Yalbiz Nevin Mutlu

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May/June 1996
The English Open

May/June 1996

The "King Kong of Pong" is Back!

Kettering, England

April 5-8, 1996

by Gaetan Frenoy

The first surprise of the English 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 the best team performance in the World.

Kong Linghui/Ma Wenge, achieving their goal. Not only did they win the event [men’s singles] but they also had the best team performance in the World.

Karl Jandrik won Men’s Doubles, defeating Austria’s Korbel in five games. -18,-18,17,12,13.

Kostadin Lengerov of Austria and Leo Fang of Canada won all of their matches 3-0 (with Kayode Kadiri of Sweden) while the European players in the men’s final, and with their victories, showed 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 achieved their goal. Not only did they win the event [men’s singles] but they also had the best team performance in the World.

Karl Jandrik won Men’s Doubles, defeating Austria’s Korbel in five games. -18,-18,17,12,13. The Chinese wanted revenge—or at least a good showing going into the Olympics.

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Karl Jandrik won Men’s Doubles, defeating Austria’s Korbel in five games. -18,-18,17,12,13.

The “K” Open was the Chinese presence.

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 achieved their goal. Not only did they win the event [men’s singles] but they also had the best team performance in the World.

Kong Linghui/Ma Wenge, achieving their goal. Not only did they win the event [men’s singles] but they also had the best team performance in the World.

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Kong Linghui/Ma Wenge, achieving their goal. Not only did they win the event [men’s singles] but they also had the best team performance in the World.

Karl Jandrik won Men’s Doubles, defeating Austria’s Korbel in five games. -18,-18,17,12,13.
The Racket Sports Heritage Collection, one of the world’s finest and most extensive collections of racket sports antiquities and related art, has announced plans for a takeover opportunity. According to the collection’s agent, Roy 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; or by phone: 703-689-0064.

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

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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


J
naturally, as USATT Historian, I was very interested in, and amused by, the “Reisman, Gunn & Green” (RGG) story that unfolded in the last two issues of Table Tennis World (TTW). I also 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 RGG 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 Magazine Air Force Base ready, but only with, 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 deservingly 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 interstTTW reads 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 deplorable 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 semi’s game 21-8 to a red-hot Sol, Marty, with the officials’ consent, stopped play for a “half-hour” because he said the rubber was allegedly peelings 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 demeanour.”

Marty was really “a nice fellow at heart,” he said. “Of course about his sportsmanlike behaviour and general demeanor.” Since Cartland and Reisman have “been under suspension for a considerable time,” would it not be helpful to us, “in fairness to them,” if they’ve “received a clean bill of health” from Disciplinary Chair Harry Cartland.

Why does Gunn write this? Is it possible neither he nor his Selection Committee knows who’s currently under suspension by the USATT? I doubt that. Rather than wanting to be the only shoddy 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 fair fellow. He’s an angry fellow. He’s a thoughtful fellow. He’s a careful fellow. He’s also a careful fellow. Given his Committee copies of a Covering Letter (detailed 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.

If 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 the day of 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 the players were not yet earning enough pocket money, 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 $56 would be provided for 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, would pocket money, andCartland and Reisman, 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, 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 behind, get a replacement?" And when Bob says "Bill balanced the trip for Marty"—meaning (what?) that he'd see that Marty had, if not pocket money, enough money, though Bob doesn't give that context—just that misleading? What exactly did Reisman "get away with?" "Financially?" 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 or anyone else. 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 "Reisman—never ever—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 Captancy year in, year out, and so seeks to please 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 on my country. T.T.A.; (2) will not mix with unpersonable individuals, or activities manufactured in the U.S.;" (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 obey the foreperson's orders 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; furthermore that such violation will be reported by the Captain to the Disciplinary Committee of the USTTA." Is this a Captain who not only prepares for, but expects, and, to exercise his authority, wants the worst to happen? Can he be 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 and wins 5 in a row (Dick will avenge this loss in the final of the Washington Heights Open). And in the final against Men's World Champion Gusskov he's down 12-4 in the 5th but 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—not on every possible male candidate for the Team. Here's what he has to say about Reisman:

"Final. Our most talented player, not now the fine player he was a few years ago. A good part of his letdown is nervousness due to lack of good physical condition. [See Reisman: '55 Men's Doubles Champions, and Conny Frendorfer, who'd just won the German Championship for the 5th straight time]. Marty's best win was over Ivan Severo of Brazil who'd already sixed, Sipke and our Bukiet, but who'd lose to Cartland, 19-9 in the 5th in the Singles after being up 2-0). According to Monsteral's write-up in Tott-

in the Singles the "most popularly applauded match was the second round [one] between Reisman and Tanaka [1955 and '57 World Men's Champions 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-driven 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 Richer and Stallman. In the Mixed Doubles, he and Leiah Neuberger lost to '57 World quarterfinalist Toshiki Miyata and '59 World Women's Doubles Champion Tacko Namba. (Leah was 3-3 in Corbillon Singles, '56 World Singles Champion Helen Elliott.)

Thus, no possible fault could be found with Marty with Player Agreement #2! As contrary 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, "[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 he had not 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 put into practice.

Of course there was the "perennial problem," gam-
ing—most notably by Leah's husband, the "boorish" Ty ("the root of all evil"), and doubtless by Marty and a number of other athletes. [See Reisman: '55 World Men's Doubles Champion and '59 World Champion, Zako-Delio, Detweiler-Velazquez Match 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, reported, 4-time World Champion Richard Bergmann of England, 2-time World Champion John Langan 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 Bericz, also of Hun-
gary, 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 warn-
ing and suspension recommendations. The issue of whether there was 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 gam-ling. In this letter he says, "I never had quite enough proof to satisfy my conscience to make 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 with-
drawn? In this letter to Ek, Gunn definitely convicts from "here say and overheard conversations...Miles...Cartland, Reisman, Michelmen,." How openly can they be gambling? Or in his Players Agreement Form (written by Leiah Neuberger and Ty, 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—Viet-
man—England, etc. Hazi has been left with three charges against Reisman: that he did not keep in training, that he had not practiced 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 was engaged in gambling. Clearly, 2 of these charges are petty—and the 4th Gunn lacks "proof positive?" Jump to Sept. 8, 1957—ex-Hungarian International Hassan ters 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, '58 inquiring about the disposi-
tion of Reisman. Martin Reisman says Gunn "seems he's been trying to find out from Otto Ek if any action had been taken by the EC." It doesn't appear so. If not, has Gunn's charges and says he wants to give Reisman "an opportunity to answer them." Gunn, May 19, '58 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 which I was present [Nov. '57]. The EC had 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 '58, they're now held every other year) but loses out to Wasserman and thereafter he's no more a member of the USTTA than he was 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" by the E.C., "of course, can be suspended temporarily"—Barry Michelmen says he doesn't "care a whit" who represents him in Singles and Doubles. Then is suspended again... Enough said? Not for me, this story needs to be shaped even better. What if I don't have the time to read it? It is, however, does offer interested ITTF readers something more than fragmentary fact or "outrageous fiction,"

**TABLE TENNIS WORLD 45**
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: 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.

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 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'Reon 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 international competition, there was little reason to believe 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 this very thing 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, the light of Kee Luke's old age, had sensed her granddaughter's discomfort. Kissing his cheek and pinching him playfully, she had laughed as she boarded the plane. "Do not look so hard," she had said. "Do not look so hard!" She had been a little girl, giving him 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 beast 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)
Sean O’Neill On Lightspeed SP

"Yasaka Mark V, Friendship 729, Butterfly Sriver, Double Happiness PF4 and Juic 999 all claim to be power-punchers. I should know - I tried them all. The problem with these sheets is you always give up spin for speed or visa versa. Luckily, Airedale Sports & Technology came up with a solution - Lightspeed SP. It combines the devastating spin of Chinese style rubber with the forceful speed of their Japanese counterparts. As a power player you should have every tool at your disposal, that means rotation and acceleration. If your game depends on intense loops and potent smashes give it a try. I did and it’s staying on my racket."


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