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Superior to other spinny rubber sheets!
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Midship SC has soft sponge. When used with speed glue, this rubber has unstoppable offensive power with amazing control.
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By Larry Hodges

Editor's Report

I'm back! After three years of purgatory in the real world (OK, most of it as a full-time table tennis coach, so not really the "real world"), I was rehired as editor of USATT Magazine. My previous tenure was from 1991-95. Since that time, I've picked up a master's degree in journalism, edited several magazines and on-line publications (both TT and non-TT), worked nearly two years as a full-time table tennis coach, began to put together table tennis web pages, and then spent the last year as a full-time programmer during my visit to the real world. However, table tennis is, and always has been, my #1. (For a more complete round-up of my table tennis background, go to my web page at www.erotls.com/ttworld/larry.htm.)

I was hired two weeks after the U.S. Open, so in some ways this issue is rather rushed. I would have liked to have solicited articles, photos and ads at the Open, but at the time I was merely a player, coach and reporter – you'll see my U.S. Open write-ups of men's and women's singles, doubles and teams, as well as the profile of Ulpiano Santo, the oldest player there. There's also a coaching article that I wrote before I knew I would be editor, and one that I co-wrote with Sean Lonergan.

Many thanks to Advertising Manager, Lori Pfister and to Margaret Smith, both of whose help in putting this issue together was greatly appreciated.

My goal is to make the magazine an upbeat product full of player profiles, coaching articles, international results, great photos, and general table tennis news. If you have any suggestions on how to reach this goal, or would like to contribute articles or photos, please contact me at ttworld@erotls.com, 301-460-7906 (ph), 301-460-7990 (fax – call if line is busy), or 14355 Georgia Ave., Apt. 101, Silver Spring, MD 20906.

USATT INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RESIGNS

Linda Gleeson, USATT Interim Executive Director, announced to the Board on July 14 her resignation effective July 31, 1999. Linda has worked for USATT for ten years and will be sorely missed. Linda issued the following statement:

"I leave with fond memories and appreciation for the support I've received, the friendships I've made and the growth I've personally experienced in working for USA Table Tennis.

"In the ten years I've worked for this sport, I've seen tremendous strides accomplished through the dedicated commitment and actions of your Boards, Executive Directors, staff and volunteers. You should be proud of how far you've come and I know you'll continue to do well.

"I leave you in good hands with a competent and hard-working staff and dedicated Board. I wish you continued success."

The USATT Executive Director Search Committee, chaired by Dennis Taylor, is already interviewing prospective Executive Directors, and one will most likely be hired by the time you read this. Check www.usatt.org for more information.

TABLE TENNIS ON TV IN THE U.S.!!!

(Courtesy of ITTF)

The ITTF Marketing Division has made an agreement with Fox Sports World, which includes an agreement to broadcast table tennis in the U.S. Fox will broadcast the ITTF Pro Tour & Pro Tour Grand Finals in their network in the U.S., Fox Sports International, and in their Latin American Network, Fox Sports Latin America, Brazil excluded. Check local listings, or call Fox at 202-895-3200 for scheduling. The ITTF will try to publicize the TV listings on their home page, www.ittf.com. Keep track, and give Fox Sports your positive opinion on the programs.

They Said It!

By Larry Hodges

"That's the idea!" -Tim Boggan, when told by the editor that there wouldn't be room for anything else in the magazine if everything he wrote was published.

Overheard at the U.S. Open

"I lose to her every time." -Gao Jun, just before playing Chen Jing in the semifinals of the U.S. Open. Gao won.

"I've never seen such power!" -Olivier Marmaruk of France, after losing to U.S. Open Men's Singles Champion Chiang Peng-Lung of Taiwan in the semifinals.

"Most of them probably haven't played on cement since they were juniors." -U.S. Team Member Todd Sweers of international players playing first-round matches on cement at the U.S. Open.

"The most ill-considered and ridiculous rule ever passed." -Matthew Syed of England, of the new rules lowering the length/width ratio of long pips.

"I've been playing over 80 for eleven years" -91-year-old Ulpiano Santo at the U.S. Open, complaining that there is no over 85 or over 90 event. He also spoke of an opponent who dropped dead during one over 80 final, giving Santo the title.

This is USA Table Tennis!

Carlos Ko in action at the Spin Open in New York

Photo by John Oros © 1999

Congratulations Homer Brown
31 U.S. Opens in a Row!
USA SWEEPS ALL FOUR GOLDS AT PAN AM S!

WINNIPEG, CANADA July 24-30, 1999

Congratulations to USA Team Members David Zhuang, Eric Owens, Todd Sweeris, Gao Jun, Amy Feng and Tawny Banh!

Complete results, coverage and photos in next issue - final results came in just as we were going to press!

MEN'S TEAMS

FINAL: USA d. Argentina 3-2
- Liu Song (ARG) d. Eric Owens (USA), 12, 10;
- Todd Sweeris (USA) d. Juan Frery (ARG), 12, 8;
- Owens/Zhuang (USA) d. Frery/Tabachnik (ARG), 9, 16;
- David Zhuang (USA) d. Pablo Tabachnik (ARG), 12, 14.

Semifinals: USA d. Canada 3-0; Argentina d. Brazil 3-1

WOMEN'S TEAMS

FINAL: USA d. Canada 3-0
- Gao Jun (USA) d. Lijuan Geng (CAN), 21, -11, 17;
- Tawny Banh (USA) d. Chris Xu (CAN), 17, -19, 22;
- Amy Feng/Banh (USA) d. Geng/Petra Cada (CAN), -20, 15, 13.

Semifinals: USA d. Chile 3-0; Canada d. Brazil 3-0

MEN'S SINGLES

FINAL: David Zhuang (USA) d. Liu Song (ARG), 21,-22,20,20; SF: Zhuang d. J.A. Gambara Said (CHI), 20,9,14; Song d. F. Arado De Armas (CUB), -20,11,12,10; QF: J.A. Gambara Said d. R.E. Costa Sanchez, 19,9,18,15; Zhuang d. P. Peter-Paul (CAN), 14,16,16; Arado De Armas d. Todd Sweeris (USA), 17, -16, 19, 16; Song d. Hugo Hoyama (BRA), 22,-11,18,18;

8ths: Sosa Sanchez d. C. Alvarado Perilla (COL), -21,11,19,18;
- Gambara d. Pablo Tabachnik (ARG), 16, -16, 15, -14, 16; Peter-Paul d. Thiago Monteiro (BRA), -22,16,16,-14; Zhuang d. Dexter St. Louis (TRI), -16,15,16,-14,9;
- Sweeris d. David Fernandez (PUR), 12,11,19; Arado De Armas d. Eric Owens (USA), 11,-17,17,14; Song d. Horatio Pintea (CAN), 17,14,19;
- Hoyama d. A. Morales Marengo (CHI), 16,13,17,16;

16ths:
- Sweeris d. Arado De Armas (CUB), 18,-13,14,-19,10; Alvarado Perilla d. Juan Frery (ARG), 9,15,-15,15; St. Louis d. Xavier Therien (CAN), 13,12,10; Morales d. Guillermo Muyoz (MEX), 17,11,-21,18,22.

WOMEN'S SINGLES

FINAL: Gao Jun (USA) d. Lijuan Geng (CAN), 16,-19,-14,18,2 (not a typo!); SF: Gao d. Petra Cada (CAN), 8,7,11;
- Geng d. Amy Feng (USA), 14,14,-14,10; QF: Gao d. Lyanne Kosaka (BRA), 8,5,15; Feng d. Tawny Banh (USA), 19,16,13;
- Cada d. Chris Xu (CAN), -16,5,8,14; Geng d. Ligia Silva (BRA), 11,7,10; 8ths: Banh d. Olate Rodriguez (CHI), 17,-17,14,8; Cada d. Maricel Ramirez (CUB), 18,-16,-17,13,17;
- Lyanne Kosaka d. S.L. Tepez Cancino (CHI), 19,12,18; Silva d. M. Armas Nuyez, 16,12,9.

FULL RESULTS, COVERAGE AND PHOTOS IN NEXT ISSUE - FINAL RESULTS CAME IN JUST AS WE WERE GOING TO PRESS!

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • July/August 1999
President’s Report

By Sheri Soderberg Pittman

Life can be like a ping pong ball; it goes up and down, sometimes unpredictably. Shortly after we, as a nation, mourned the tragic losses of John F. Kennedy, Jr., Carolyn Bessette Kennedy and her sister Lauren, we, as the national governing body of table tennis, experienced the euphoria of capturing all of the available gold medals at the Pan Am Games. I was fortunate to have been able to attend the team competition of the event.

Our two coaches, Dan Seemiller and Theodor Gheorghe, who I am more likely to refer to as Danny and Doru, have done a wonderful job bringing cohesion and a sense of possibility to the team. They make a perfect pair. Danny has an infectious fighting spirit coupled with his own battle stories. Doru is the quiet type who instills a sense of determination in the players on the women’s team. Together, along with the national team leader Bob Fox, they have brought up the confidence level of our team to help us achieve a first-ever sweep of all four medals (men’s and women’s team titles and men’s and women’s singles titles).

I commend my players, David Zhuang, Eric Owens, Todd Sweeers, Gao Jun, Amy Feng and Tawny Banh for their team spirit and excellent play. The biggest fans who deserve some credit for their rousing cheering and flag waving were Greg Miller and Len Witz of Minnesota. Connie and Dell Sweeers conveyed parental pride to all of our players. Aly Salam, Dr. Michael Scott, Tom Miller, Tim Boggan and Rufford Harrison expanded the scope of Team USA’s cheering section. This was especially helpful when we were outnumbered in the matches against Canada.

As time marches by and we get closer and closer to the objective our association has enunciated to the USOC, to have Olympic medal contenders by the year 2008, this achievement breathes new life into our association’s mission.

As the president, I am entrusted with the responsibility of making sure that our association stays on track (or gets on track) to meet the requirements of successful completion of each of our 1999 markers.

At the U.S. Open and Pan Am Games, I was able to talk with Canadian representatives about harnessing our resources for the good of North America. Expect to see new information on this subject soon. Right now, as I prepare this report, I am getting ready to attend the World Championships. I look forward to having the opportunity to discuss exchange programs and other joint endeavors that will ultimately benefit USATT.

As our association becomes more aggressive and more focused on its big picture, USATT’s need for volunteers increases. Please contact me if you are interested in contributing your talents to the growth of USA Table Tennis.

At the same time, I request your patience as the Board continues our executive director search. With this issue, we bid a sad farewell to the Interim Executive Director, Linda Gleeson. During my first two months as president, she and the rest of the staff have exemplified a strong commitment to assisting with as smooth a transition as possible. I also would like to thank the Immediate-Past President, Jim McQueen, for continuing to stay involved. Lastly, I hope that everyone enjoys the new look of the magazine, with Larry Hodges’ return to the editor’s position.

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Senior Training Camp and Christmas Training Camp

18761-Q Frederick Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20879 • 301-519-8580 (ph) • 301-519-3487 (fax)

- Senior Camp • November 3-7, 1999
- Christmas Camp • December 26-31, 1999

Information
- Senior Camp: For Players over age 40
  (Players over age 30 who are of heart may be accepted).
- Christmas Camp: All Ages, all levels
- Enter Early! Only first 20 players are guaranteed spots.

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Senior Camp Schedule
Nov 3 - 7: 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Christmas Camp Schedule
Dec. 26: 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Dec. 27-30: 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
3:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Dec. 31: 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Coach Cheng Yinghua
- 1996-97 U.S. Men’s Singles & Doubles Champion
- U.S. #1 world ranked player
- Former Head Coach for the Szechuan Province of China
- Chinese National Team Member, 1977-87
- 1985 & 93 U.S. Open Champion
- Full-time coach
- USATT’s 1996 Coach of the Year

Coach Jack Huang
- 1996-97 U.S. Senior Men’s Singles & Doubles Champion
- U.S. #1 player in 1990
- Former Head Coach for the Guangxi Province of China
- Chinese National Team Member, 1976-83
- Full-time coach
- USATT’s 1997 Developmental Coach of the Year

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Senior Camp Nov. 3-7 Christmas Camp Dec. 26-31

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B  

KEITH ALBAN
ON TRACK TO NEW HEIGHTS

By Alan Williams

Keith Alban at 15 already claims an impressive string of accomplishments, a string that got no shorter with his performance at the 1999 U.S. Open in Fort Lauderdale. What’s next for the boy who’s won everything? Sweden.

"Sean Lonergan helped us get in touch with the Angby Club of Sweden back in 1997," Keith’s mom, Ronnie, recalls, "because Keith had just hit the ceiling here. There was just not enough competition to help him grow."

No brag, just fact. In 1995, at the age of 11, Keith scored an unprecedented series of Junior victories, winning the U.S. Open U-12, U-14 and U-16 titles. With his parents’ support and the coaching of the legendary Marty Prager and Terese Terranova, Keith had in three years gone from interested child to Junior Olympic Champ to a sweep of three age groups at the U.S. Open. "If Keith will do the work, I can show him the rest," Prager had promised, truthfully as it turns out.

Now Keith pursues his HS diploma through correspondence courses in Sweden as he rooms with the Morin family and their son Robin, another table tennis hopeful. Both Robin, "like a brother to me," and Keith came back to Florida last month to test themselves against the U.S. Open competition. The result is a clear indication that Keith Alban is still on track to be a U.S. Olympian.

Alban won the U-16 Boy’s Singles, with straight game wins over Jamaica’s Alphanso Murray in the quarters, Indiana’s Mark Hazinski in the semis, and Californian Terrence Lee in the Final.

Alban won the U-18 Men’s Singles, with a three-gamer against Hazinski in the quarters, a 12-,18,16 win over the Pride of Georgia, T.J. Beebe, in the semis, and a straight-game win in the final against his Swedish housemate, Robin Morin.

Alban won the All-Star Junior Men’s title by disposing of Terrence Lee, T.J. Beebe and Freddie Gabriel, losing only one game from the quarters onward.

But most impressive, and the best indication that Alban may be ready for that Olympic team spot, was his performance in the National All-Star Men’s event. Keith took a three-straight victory against U.S. Men’s Team Member Barney Reed, Jr. to reach the quarterfinals. Then he triumphed over Abass Ekun, the muscular New Yorker, by scores of 6, 13, 14, 11. His reward for these outstanding victories was a semifinal match with Cheng Yinghua. Cheng decided not to oblige youth on that day, and the aging warrior finally vanquished the upset-minded teen, 6, 15, 11.

Cheng went on to win the event in a final with Todd Sweeris. Sweeris had this to say about Alban. “He’s 2550... right now.” No one argued with Todd’s assertion. (News flash: Alban’s new rating after the U.S. Open is 2537, making him #16 in the country.)

Keith’s parents are content with their decision of two years past to allow their son to train in Sweden. What began as a 10-week trial has lengthened into a full-blown attempt for Olympic status. Keith’s mother Ronnie points to several factors that make the Swedish environment more effective for Junior training.

“It’s the sheer number of good players in Sweden that is the main difference. We have maybe half a dozen top juniors between 15 and 18 years old. In Sweden there must be 100. In season, (September to April) there are many tournaments each weekend, and the events are carrying 30 to 40 players each. At really big tournaments, like Safir, which attracts an international field, there were 100 players in the U-15.”

“League play is another difference between the state of the sport in America and in Sweden. Since his arrival there, Keith has been playing in Division 3, but when he returns this fall he’ll play in Division 1. That’s just a notch below the elite division, which includes Waldner and Persson. They also have more international play for juniors. Robin, for instance, represented Sweden this year in match play in France, Slovakka and Luxembourg. Training methods are similar, but the increased match play and its frequency makes a decisive difference.”

Ronnie points out that Sweden uses a ranking, rather than a rating system, an approach she considers superior.

“Rankings come out every three months, and are less prone to fluctuations than our system. You can have several bad losses without much change in your ranking. There is less pressure on the Swedes.”

Keith is making good progress on his schoolwork – in fact, Mom wishes he would slow down somewhat. The Swedes allow students from the 10th grade forward to schedule less time in school by eliminating gym, study hall and lunch, freeing their mornings for table tennis instruction.

Ronnie Alban added this statement about the contrast in the sport between the two countries. “You don’t need a population the size of China for the sport to be popular. Sweden’s population is about the same as New York City’s. But they do recruit in the schools. They have hundreds of good clubs, with fine coaches in each. If we could have an equal number of good clubs, we could form successful leagues as well. We need to follow the Swedish example and allow our juniors to train with the top players, the National Team, and the best coaches. Our juniors have to be exposed to more styles of play. They need more international match experience, on a regular basis. Our high-level training needs to be more consistent.”

From an 8-year-old boy with an interest in ‘ping-pong’ to an 11-year-old junior record-breaker to a 15-year-old Olympic hopeful, Keith Alban is still on track. There was no indication from his performance in Fort Lauderdale that this train is slowing down. And if that track runs through Sweden, that’s just where the train will go.
Flash back to North Carolina, circa 1979, where this writer regularly saw Ulpiano Santo at the monthly tournaments at the Butterfly Table Tennis Club in Wilson. Santo was the oldest player at the tournaments, and just about the oldest player around anywhere. He was regularly acknowledged as the model of what others hoped they'd be doing when they too were that old.

Flash back to the present, 20 years later, circa 1999. and Santo is still the oldest player around. Only now he's the oldest at the U.S. Open, at the Nationals, and just about everywhere else, at 91. When asked about his performance at these tournaments, he has one thing to say: "Why no over 85 or over 90 event? I've been playing over 80 for eleven years!"

It's not that Santo hasn't won many of these events. Between the U.S. Open, U.S. Nationals, the U.S. Meiklejohn Senior Championships and the U.S. Senior Olympics, he's won over 70 three times, over 75 three times, and over 80 five times. He lamented about the one where he was up 20-15 championship point, but did not win. He also notes that in one final, his opponent dropped dead during the match, giving him the title.

Santo didn't start playing table tennis until he was 40 or 50 years old - he's not sure exactly when. He first started competing in national tournaments at the 1980 U.S. Nationals. His first memory of table tennis was seeing an exhibition by Lazlo Bellak in 1936. 45 years later, Santo would play Bellak at the 1981 U.S. Open. (He didn't win against the three-years younger Bellak.)

Ulpiano grew up in the Philippines, a territory of the U.S. during his youth. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1929 (where he would eventually become a chief steward), and emigrated to the U.S. in 1930. He met and married his wife, Pequita, 60 years ago in Puerto Rico, and they are still married - with Pequita attending the U.S. Open with him. He retired to Chesapeake, Virginia in 1956 after 27 years in the navy - 43 years ago!
Training For The Pan Am Trials

By Eric Owens, U.S. Pan Am and National Team Member

My preparation for the 1999 Pan Am and national team trials took me to two distinct places. The dates of the trials were March 3-7, and I wanted two solid months of preparation. On January 3rd I started my journey.

The first place I went to was China. The Chinese have been on top for a while so I wanted to see for myself what type of training they did. One thing I can say is that they train like professionals. We trained a minimum of six hours a day, seven days a week. We did a variety of footwork, serve and attack, and multiball drills. The practice they do is precisely what you need to improve your game. I stayed there for one month and played against every possible style you could imagine.

After the intense training, I wanted to compete and try to implement what I had learned. I figured the best place to compete was Sweden. I went to Sweden on February 2nd. I was there for three weeks and played a tournament every weekend. The place I trained was the Halmstad club, home of Jorgen Persson and Fredrik Hakansson. Although I only got to train with these two occasionally, the other training partners were great. But I felt that I had had enough training for now. I wanted to compete.

The first tournament I played in was Safir, which is one of the biggest tournaments in Sweden. I played great, reaching the finals of Class One. The next weekend I played in a league match with my good friend and teammate Randy Cohen. Things didn’t go so well there. I played two matches, losing them both. With the disappointing play, and only one competition and two weeks before the trials, I had to work on my weaknesses.

The last tournament was Boras. I played all right but was not yet satisfied. I returned to the States two days later on February 25th. I had six days to prepare. Due to the extreme travel and time differences, my body felt exhausted. I felt the best way to prepare for the trials was to rest physically and get mentally prepared. My father, Kenny Owens, was coming in to give me physical therapy during the trials.

I hired Christian Lillieroos. I had been working with Christian tactically since the nationals so I knew I was ready. I felt that I had done everything possible to prepare. I just hoped that all this effort would pay off. And it did!

I played my best ever and finished 2nd, which is the highest place finish in a trials that I’ve ever had. That meant that I would get to take part in the upcoming Pan Am Games and World Championships.

Barney Reed, also a team member, and I set out the very next day for the English Open. After two months of hard training and thirteen best of five matches, I have to admit I did not feel like playing. But because of the new national team coach, Dan Seemiller, and his motivating force, I got the desire to play again.

I felt I played well, but the competition there was too tough. I lost in the qualifying group. The tournament was awesome. Most of the top players in the world were there. I needed some more training if I was going to compete with them.

I flew back from England and two days later flew to Merida Mexico for the Merida Open. Razvan Cretu and I represented the U.S. There were players from North, South, and Latin America, including Horatio Pintea and Dennis Su from Canada. Again the training paid off.

I won both singles and doubles with partner Razvan. I beat Horatio Pintea for the first time in the semifinal 3-1, and teammate Razvan in the final 3-1. It was a good payday of $1200.

After all this I needed to take a little time off. The next three weeks I just played a few times a week and did some physical training to stay in shape. After the rest period, my desire to train came back intensified. I was more motivated than ever before.

To prepare for the 1999 Pan Am Games, the place I definitely needed to go was China. This time it was going to be for two months, April 15 – June 11, right before the national team training camp.

The training in China was very similar to the first trip. The schedule was a little different because the university students had class in the morning. So there was training in the afternoon and evening. I took advantage of this by practicing my serves almost every morning from 9 to 10:30 am.

We practiced from 2:30 till 5:30 and from 7:00 to 9:00. I found this very difficult because of the little rest period in between. But it was a great way to improve my endurance.

Most of the drills that we did consisted of speed and footwork training. We would usually do one footwork drill and then move on to serve and attack. Each drill we did was 15 minutes in length and we did two drills each and then took a break. After the break we switched partners to play against another style.

We started the second part with serve and attack. We finished the morning practice by playing a winner table. Winner table consisted of five games from 10 all. If you won, you moved to the table to the right; if you lost, you moved to the left.

In the evening practice we would start with a different footwork drill, and then move on to serve and attack. The second half of practice we did multiball. We did five buckets each, 250 balls per bucket. The drills all focused on speed and footwork. That is pretty much what we did every day, with some slight variations.

I felt that my game has benefited more from this training than from anywhere else in the world. I now understand how the Chinese develop so many great players. If you do this for years on end you can’t help but be good.

If anybody is seeking a place to train, I highly recommend China. I know the benefit will be as great for you as it was for me. If you can’t go to China, then maybe you can implement some of these training methods in your practice. I hope some of these ideas will help your game, and I wish you the best for your training.
The San Diego Table Tennis Association has been in existence for 40 years, proudly celebrating that milestone this year. After many years of anticipation and another full year of construction, we are finally in our new and permanent home at the Balboa Park Activity Center. This $4.5 million building is the first constructed in Balboa Park in more than 30 years and is the pride of the city of San Diego.

Table tennis, volleyball and badminton will occupy the 38,000 square feet the building has to offer. Along with the main playing arena, there is a large hotel-type lobby with a desk managed by a city employee, shower rooms available for men and women, separate locked storage units to hold equipment for individual sports, and two newly landscaped courtyards, both front and back, to welcome picnics and relaxation.

The walls were designed to look like marble, even though they are concrete. Large intake and outtake fans rest at both ends of the building. On cold nights, the gymnasium is heated overhead. The high-tech wood flooring is layered underneath with rubber feet to give as it is walked and played upon. The city's yearly Science Fair and Rummage Sale will also be hosted in this facility.

The Balboa Park Activity Center was dedicated by Mayor Susan Golding Saturday, April 24. SDTTA President Stan Wishniowski was one of the many dignitaries on hand who had the chance to deliver an appreciation speech. The city hosted an Open House after the ribbon-cutting ceremony, where cake and refreshments were served in the courtyard of the facility.

Olympic athletes showed off their skills in exhibitions, including our own Louie Kerel and Women's Table Tennis Olympic Champion, Wei Wang. Mike Dempsey, our resident USA and nine-time World Wheelchair Champion, was playfully coerced from the audience to participate in the exhibition.

SDTTA's Pam Ramsey teamed up with Wei Wang in a women vs. men doubles match. Tom Sistrunk, owner of Encinitas Table Tennis Supplies, offered table tennis supplies for sale at the grand opening event. Gil Simons, who founded the San Diego Table Tennis Association 40 years ago this year, was invited to attend the day’s ceremonies.

Overall, the day was one of celebration and the SDTTA was proud to see more than 50 of its members in attendance. All the hard work and planning of the Balboa Park Activity Center had finally become a reality and we are ready to play!
Traverse City, Michigan
May 14-16, 1999
By Larry Hodges

Forty-four golfers/table tennis players congregated at the High Pointe Golf Course (ranked #74 in the U.S.) in Traverse City, Michigan for the annual “2 Much Fun Golf and Table Tennis Weekend Retreat.” With golf all day on Friday and Saturday, a table tennis doubles tournament on Saturday night, a USATT sanctioned (and rated) tournament on Sunday, and 18 more holes of golf Sunday afternoon/night, it was a loooong weekend. (One golfer proved it is possible to play 63 holes of golf in one day!)

Most of the players stayed at the Shoreside Inn, a golf-oriented Inn by the Grand Traverse Bay. The Inn’s owners, the father & son team of Fred and Larry Van Zandt, lead a life of golfing paradise when not running the inn and acting as great and friendly guides to local golf.

Some of the “celebrity” table tennis players golfing included Dan (5x U.S. Men’s Singles Champion) and Randy Seemiller, Dell & Connie Sweeris (many-times U.S. Team members and U.S. Mixed Doubles Champions, with Connie the 1971 U.S. Women’s Singles Champion), Mike Veillette, Chip Coulter, Mark Nordby (a former golf instructor!), TG Enterprises owner Guenther Schroeder, and Bill Lesner (1971 U.S. Junior Champion). Todd Sweeris was also coming, but wrenched his back in a table tennis session two days before and had to drop out at the last minute.

For the table tennis tournament, players were divided into six groups, A-F. Dan Seemiller easily won the “A” division over Mike Veillette, who upset Randy Seemiller for second place. Dell Sweeris and Chip Coulter won the doubles tournament. Complete singles results follow.

A. 1st Dan Seemiller 2nd Mike Veillette
B. 1st Paul Everts 2nd Guenther Schroeder
C. 1st Norbert Brauner 2nd Dennis Miller
D. 1st Larry Garland 2nd Giancarlo Anselmo
E. 1st Gene Poole 2nd Mike Meindertsma
F. 1st Steve Knoll 2nd Darrell Phelps Jr.

In the 4-person team golf “scramble” on Saturday, the heavily favored team of Seemiller & Seemiller, Coulter and Nordby had to settle for a 3-way tie for first place, with three teams ending up 6 under par. Also at six under par were the team of Kevin Johnson, John Jessup, Dave Toski and Roger Hayes.

The event was organized by High Pointe Golf Course owner (and table tennis player) Don Hayden, Dan Seemiller and Mike Veillette. Look for the ad for next year’s “2 Much Fun Golf & Table Tennis Weekend Retreat” in USATT Magazine, and come join the fun!
Table tennis in Houston is flourishing! In the midst of three weeks of consecutive tournaments, (Chinese Community, Vietnamese Community, & USATT) and a very active spring league, the HTTC and Portland TTC brought their junior programs together. Regional Coaches Tim Titrud, from Portland, and Viktor Subonj from Houston coordinated the effort.

The idea was formed at the last USATT National Coaching Seminar in Colorado Springs. The purpose is to give the juniors more events to play in and more goals to focus on. "If we can get them excited and keep them interested," Viktor said, "then we can only help the sport."

"The kids trained hard and were really focused over the last three weeks because they knew they had a chance to come to Houston," commented Tim. Both agreed that it gives the juniors more competition within their own age groups, which is something they crave.

The first exchange saw six juniors come to Houston. The next phase is for Houston to send a group to the great northwest. The free seminar, May 29 through June 2, featured 4 days of intensive training, letting both coaches work with all of the kids. Group clinics and individual training was used during the mini-camp. Competitions were held in quickness and racing as well. The seminar culminated in club to club team competition followed by a USATT sanctioned round robin.

The timing of the seminar also gave the juniors an opportunity to watch the Vietnamese tournament and gave those training for the following week's HTTC Round Robin the chance to catch a little glimpse of the future of table tennis.

It would not have been possible without the generous help of the HTTC and supporting volunteers and parents. Portland's juniors were hosted by willing Houston families and HTTC members added financial support to the program.

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USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • July/August 1999
nterview with USATT President

SHERI SODERBERG PITTMAN

By Tim Boggan

Tim: So Sheri, since no woman in the 70-year-history of organized table tennis in the U.S. has ever been an Association President, does your ascension to the office seem like a dream, or the result of a natural progression?

Sheri: A natural progression. I've always viewed myself as a contributor to our sport. And, if you ask, I'll tell you why that's made my presidency seem more like a natural progression than an out-of-the-blue dream-come-true.

Tim: I'll ask, you tell.

Sheri: I grew up going to Charlie Disney's club in my hometown of Minneapolis where my brothers also played. Charlie and Don Larson, the co-owner of what was then known as Magoo's, promoted - what we kids then could only instinctively understand - table tennis not just for fun, or solely for one's own competitive pleasure, but also for the enjoyment of others.

Tim: How so?

Sheri: They instilled in us societal values - we kids would answer the phone, help paint the place, promote club leagues for high school students, participate in exhibitions, and support other clubs in the area by going out-of-town tournaments. And we always looked forward to reading Topics - the magazine you edited, because we could learn about table tennis all over the world. In those days, when the magazine arrived, it was an event.

Tim: I remember when you were a teenager would help you lead the Board of Directors of our beloved sport.

Tim: I'm sure he would be proud. I'd like to hear how you came to have the background that would help you lead the Board of Directors of an Olympic Sport. You had an excellent education, I assume, supportive parents, and in time an encouraging husband?

Sheri: Yes, that's true. I went to Catholic schools from grade school all the way through Georgetown University Law Center. Even the college I attended was Jesuit, Santa Clara University, which is south of San Francisco. Incidentally, I have a lot of wonderful memories of playing table tennis at Sam Lima's Club. I was a Liberal Arts student, an English major - and, as my father put it, I was learning something about life while preparing to go on to another level - graduate school - to make a career for myself.

Tim: An English major! To think I might have had you in class! Why did you become an English major, and what do you remember reading?

Sheri: I liked reading and writing. I was interested in the formation of a person and books often reveal these details. One of my favorite classes in college was a course on Thomas Merton.

Tim: Ah, a modern-day St. Augustine - the worldly young man who in his mid-20's joined a Trappist monastery. You, yourself, have a monkish side? If so, it's certainly not one given to vows of silence.

Sheri: Oh, you know me so well. And, actually, Merton did not experience the usual monk's life either. Of course, since his days were to be spent in contemplation, he viewed his writing as a distraction that intruded upon his relationship with God. But Merton's urge to write was so strong that the artist in him began to surface. When Merton confessed his urge to write, he was confused by his Superior's directive. Instead of being scolded, he was given what he considered to be an even worse punishment - he was told to continue to write. And so we have his books, including his autobiography, The Seven Story Mountain, and I have my connecting memories.

Tim: Name one, pray tell.

Sheri: I took a "Modern Dance" course in college and wrote a paper relating Merton, Contemplative Zen, and Martha Graham. I was often proud of the papers I wrote and the work I did in college.

Tim: Another memory comes quickly to mind?

Sheri: Well, this wasn't a paper, but it was something I said in class one day. It was a revelation even to the professor. It was in a course called "The Nature of Literature," in which, among other things, we read Shakespeare's Othello. I cited the language in the play that showed how Othello and his jealous betrayer,
Iago, who eventually tricked Othello into strangling his wife Desdemona, had actually made a figurative marital vow themselves. And I remember my professor taking the pen out of his pocket and writing in his book a note on what I had said. That was a big academic thrill.

**Tim:** Heavy stuff — you were learning about life. So you graduated, and...?

**Sheri:** After graduating in ‘83, I went to Washington, D.C., where almost all of my siblings were then living. In the winter of ‘84, Walter “Fritz” Mondale, who’d been Vice-President under Jimmy Carter, was running against Ronald Reagan for the Presidency, and my dad was on his Advisory Board. So, since Mondale’s strategy was to try to blitz the early states, he sent busloads of supporters up to New Hampshire —

**Tim:** And you, I gather, were one of those supporters?

**Sheri:** Yes, I was getting a taste of politics, of people working together to try to accomplish definable ends. And then into my life, on that Feb. 26, 1984 bus I was on, stepped Charlie, and when I first saw him, I said to myself, “That man is going to be an important person in my life.” He too, it turned out, was working in Washington for Congressman John Spratt from South Carolina.

**Tim:** Of course you began seeing quite a bit of one another?

**Sheri:** Yes, only there was one big problem — Charlie had already committed himself to going into the Peace Corps in Africa, to Gabon, for two years beginning that June.

**Tim:** So the lovers parted?

**Sheri:** Charlie did have second thoughts shortly after we met. “Maybe I won’t go,” he once said to me. But I urged him to. I said, “Look, I can’t compete with a dream. This is a dream of yours. Don’t give it up. If you don’t go, you might regret it. And then you’d look at me every day and say to yourself, ‘Was she worth the dream I gave up?’ and it would be very hard for our relationship to survive that.” So, off he went, with my encouragement.

**Tim:** When did you see him again?

**Sheri:** I wanted to meet Charlie some months later, at Christmas time, in Greece. But he said, “Come to Gabon.” So I did. Shortly after I arrived, he led me to a couch, with both of his hands outstretched to my two hands. He was so serious. And he asked me, “Would you please join me here? Say you will.”

**Tim:** And did you?

**Sheri:** Yes, but I didn’t want to just “go” to Gabon. I wanted to have work to do when I got there, so I felt better when we cleared the way for me to become an in-country enrollee in the Peace Corps.

**Tim:** So you went, being an independent woman, to equatorial Africa to Gabon, for two years beginning that June?

**Sheri:** Yes. Saive, for instance, was the President of the CTTF the Players Association. I also liked interviewing Croatia’s Zoran Primorac. I had seen a tape of the world championships and noticed what appeared to be him openly crying after Yugoslavia lost in the final of the team competition. When he talked with me, he showed this very emotional side and spoke freely. I liked that open vulnerability and his willingness to talk about it. And, as I interviewed one player after another and wrote articles that captured their essence without sharing details about their lives that they asked me not to write about, I gained credibility with many of them. If you were to ask me what was the most memorable moment of any of these interviews, though, it occurred when I was interviewing France’s not-yet World Champion Jean-Philippe Gatien. He kept emphasizing how important “regularity” was... until, finally too amused to continue, I explained to him the meaning anyone from the U.S. would immediately give to that word.

**Tim:** In getting these players, and of course some of our own, to talk seriously to you, you learned about many of the problems facing them, and, perhaps conversely, those facing the leaders of their Associations?

**Sheri:** Yes. Saive, for instance, was the President of the CTTF, the Players Association, and when he and others urged me to write about this or that, I became interested in investigating issues that affected Associations everywhere. Soon people were saying to me, “You ought to be a USATT Board member.”

**Tim:** And so you became one, started paying your dues in 1993 as Vice President.

**Sheri:** I did, and I suffered too — even cried on one occasion because I didn’t feel the Board had much of a heart.

**Tim:** But then you came back on the Board in ’98, and now, after being elected USATT President, you’ve made history.

**Sheri:** Yes, and after I’m president, I’d like the history of my administration to show that I didn’t abuse my presidential power and that I worked successfully with both an astute executive director and a strong Board of Directors. If I can do that balancing act for the good of USA Table Tennis, I’ll have nothing to cry about.
**HISTORIC TABLE TENNIS DOUBLES TEAM**

By Michael J. Scott, M.D., Chairman, USA Sports Science Committee

L-R: Coach Zvi Raz (ISR), Zion Ghora (ISR), Dr. Michael Scott (USA) and Abdelgader Abulebda (PAL)

The 1999 Special Olympics Games, held in Raleigh, NC, June 26th to July 4th, had 7,000 athletes with various degrees of mental disability from 150 countries. It was the largest athletic event anywhere in the world in 1999. Table Tennis had a total of 195 players.

Approximately 170 million people, or 3% of the world population, have mental retardation which can be the result of any disorder that impairs the brain’s proper functioning. The etiology varies: some genetic, some traumatic, etc.

During the Games a historic, dramatic episode demonstrated how sport transcends all barriers despite any national, political, or religious differences. This specific event, in my estimation, bridged a wider, deeper, and more functionally. The etiology varies: some genetic, some traumatic, etc.

The USATT Ratings Committee is quite pleased to present a NEW RATING SYSTEM — the culmination of a two-year, volunteer development effort initiated in response to the comments and suggestions of the membership.

The following information about the new rating system can be found on Dr. Marcus’s web site (go to www.davidmarcus.com and click on “USATT Ratings”):

• “Tutorial on New Rating System” describes how the new rating system works.
• “Benefits of New Rating System” compares the new rating system with the current USATT rating system.
• “Improving the Table Tennis Rating System” is the grant proposal that USATT submitted to USOC.
• Windows application that allows you to view any player’s rating history.
• Tournament rating reports, from both the current rating system and the new system, for all tournaments from January 1, 1994 through April 30, 1999.

Those without web access can request printed copies of the tutorial and benefits documents and floppy disks containing the viewer by contacting David Marcus; 25 Beacon St. Apt. 16, Somerville, MA 02143-4336; (617) 492-4317 (H); (781) 942-0080 x2341 (W); davidmarcus@rcn.com.

The decision on whether USATT will adopt the new rating system will be made by the USATT board.

In Memoriam:

EDDIE BRENNAN (1935-1999)
Eddie Brennan of Detroit, who recently succumbed to colon/liver cancer, was a lifelong table tennis enthusiast who, after withstanding a debilitating auto accident, could still be seen as a spectator at the 1997 Manchester, England World’s. For four seasons, from 1949-50 on, he was a top-ranked junior, and later, after becoming Michigan State Champion, was ranked as high as U.S. #6 for the ’59-60 season. Remembering him with their reminiscences were longtime fellow players, Chuck Burns, Danny Robbins, and Tommy Waters. —Tim Boggan

In Memoriam:

JOE BUJALSKI (1930-1999)
Joe Bujalski, well-known to many Chicago players, and who, with his combination racket, was always a formidable Over 40/50 player in the early 1980’s, especially at Bill and Liz Homyak’s Michigan City, IN Duneland Opens, died this summer of cancer. A friendly, engaging fellow (except if someone tried to tell a Polish joke), he was remembered fondly to me by fellow competitor Joe Baltrus. —Tim Boggan

In Memoriam:

DR. RICHARD JOHN PULS (1925-1999)
Nationally ranked tournament table tennis player Dr. Richard John Puls died June 1 of complications following bypass surgery.

Richard was born on July 14, 1925 in Ft. Worth, Texas to George and Ada Puls. He graduated from Arlington Heights High School in Ft. Worth, attended Texas A&M University and graduated from the University of Texas at Austin. After serving as a naval air force pilot in World War II, he attended Washington University Medical School in St. Louis in 1950.

He was in the private practice of internal medicine in Dallas for more than 40 years and was in active practice at the time of his death.

Immediate family surviving include his wife of 49 years, Mary, and three children and their families.

Memorial contributions may be made to Park Cities Presbyterian Church Foundation, 4307 Newton Court, Dallas, Texas 75219-3152. —Tim Boggan

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • July/August 1999
An Official’s View

By Dr. Azmy Ibrahim, 1999 U.S. Open Referee

Every year, we offer two umpire’s seminars — one at the U.S. Open and the other at the U.S. Nationals. The purpose of these seminars is to keep the umpires and the officials up-to-date.

Case studies, actual situations, recommendations, new rules and regulations are some of the issues presented at these seminars.

It is true that many umpires and officials cannot attend these seminars due to family or personal obligations, work assignments, lack of vacation time, and most frequently, financial hardships. Therefore, I decided to use this article to reach those who did not attend the seminar. The theme is, if you cannot come to the seminar, the seminar will come to you.

The International Table Tennis Federation is deeply concerned about the quality of the umpires and officials, and the ability to apply the rules and regulations of the game. There is a proposal which will be introduced at the upcoming BGM to form an ITTF Officials Committee, tailored after one which started at the USATT. They will appoint a task force to draft the duties for that committee.

The umpire’s seminar this year dealt with several issues. The main one was the jurisdiction of the umpire before, during and after the match. Most umpires are aware of their duties during the match. However, the responsibility of the umpires and officials extends far beyond that.

From the time an umpire or official enters the venue, he or she is in a supervisory duty. Once a player enters the venue, he or she has to abide by the rules and regulations of the tournament.

If an umpire sees a player gluing a racket at the venue, that umpire is required to ask the player to leave the venue. Should an umpire see a player changing clothes in public, the umpire has to ask the player to go to the dressing room.

An umpire can ask a player to refrain from damaging or moving equipment in the venue. In the case that a player refuses to accept the request of the umpire, the umpire shall report to the referee, who may take necessary actions against the player.

An umpire can inspect the venue and bring to the attention of the referee inappropriate lighting, air conditioning, tables, nets, or barriers. At the court of play, the umpire examines the surroundings, the table, net, player’s clothes, rackets, numbers, assigned coaches, choices of servers and ends. All of these acts usually take place before the match.

During the match, an umpire is usually following all of the written rules and regulations published in the officials handbooks.

After the match, an umpire may face situations which require action. A player may jump on the table, in joy or anger. Another may take his clothes off in a disrespectful manner. A losing player may throw his/her racket on the table, in the floor, in the surroundings, knock the barriers, argue, threaten, or insult the umpire or his opponent. Some players think that once the match is over, the umpire has no jurisdiction over them. That is not true. In a team match, the umpire can apply the penalty rule. In an individual match, the umpire has to get the attention of the player to refrain from such activities, to inform the referee of the incident, and to write the details on the score sheet. The referee may take the necessary actions toward that player.

Several situations were discussed during the seminar, such as the problem of glue testing while we still have no testing machines, and practicing with an illegal racket during the two minute practice before the match. For more information on those two situations, please refer to USATT Magazine, May/June issue, page 16.

New issues erupted during the U.S. Open. The first one dealt with the choice of the match ball. The new rule states that players are not allowed to choose balls at the match table. However, if the players come before the match, they may be given the opportunity to choose balls in a different location. Players will choose two balls or three.

At the site of the table the umpire will randomly take out one of the three balls and give it to the players as the ball of the match. In the case that the players did not choose the ball in advance, the umpire shall choose a ball from the box of balls at random, and the players have no right to object to it.

Another serious situation came when some players asked for a redraw. According to the rules, redraw has to be avoided as much as possible. It is allowed only if the players did not come to the seminar. Therefore, I decided to use this article to reach those who did not attend the seminar. The theme is, if you cannot come to the seminar, the seminar will come to you.

The prominent players were aware of the situation. That is why none of them showed up at the jury meeting asking for a redraw. All that happened was informal talk asking us to violate or bend the rules, without any proof that the players were not coming.

To add to our predicament, one day before the U.S. Open, we started the North American Championships. There was a meeting between the representatives of U.S. and Canada, and a special draw was made for that tournament. The next day, the representative from Canada came to me and asked for a redraw. According to the rules, redraw has to be avoided as much as possible. It is allowed only if the absence of seeded players cause serious imbalance to the draw. The prominent players were aware of the situation. That is why none of them showed up at the jury meeting asking for a redraw. All that happened was informal talk asking us to violate or bend the rules, without any proof that the players were not coming.

I am sharing this story with the umpires and officials to emphasize the fact that there are rules for conducting a redraw, and they are very clear about when we can do what. The fact that someone will walk around in the arena with a piece of paper and a pencil in his hand trying to find out how many flies are in the arena and how many scratches are on the floor, and how many announcements are made does not make that information available to the public. I am sharing this story with the umpires and officials to emphasize the fact that there are rules for conducting a redraw, and they are very clear about when we can do what. The fact that someone will walk around in the arena with a piece of paper and a pencil in his hand trying to find out how many flies are in the arena and how many scratches are on the floor, and how many announcements are made does not make that information available to the public. I am sharing this story with the umpires and officials to emphasize the fact that there are rules for conducting a redraw, and they are very clear about when we can do what. The fact that someone will walk around in the arena with a piece of paper and a pencil in his hand trying to find out how many flies are in the arena and how many scratches are on the floor, and how many announcements are made does not make that information available to the public.
EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SPIN BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK!

By Larry Hodges, USATT Certified National Coach

The biggest difference between a serious table tennis player and a basement player is spin. Serious players use spin on both their serves and rallying shots, both to control the ball and to force errors from their opponents. What we are going to do is go over the types, effects, and purposes of the various spins, how to create spin, how to read spin, how to handle spin, and how spin actually makes a ball curve in flight.

The Types of Spin

How many basic types of spin are there in table tennis? The most common answer is four: topspin, backspin, and sidespin in both directions. For many players, this is an adequate answer. However, the more correct answer is seven, plus an infinite number of combinations.

The ball can rotate in three different axes that are perpendicular to each other, and the ball can rotate in two directions on each of these axes. Assume you’ve just hit a ball away from you, and are watching to see how it rotates.

- If the top of the ball is rotating away from you, it is topspin.
- If the bottom of the ball is rotating away from you, it is backspin.
- If the left side of the ball is rotating away from you, it is left sidespin.
- If the right side of the ball is rotating away from you, it is right sidespin.
- If the ball is spinning clockwise (relative to you), it is “right” corkscrew spin.
- If the ball is spinning counter-clockwise (relative to you), it is “left” corkscrew spin.
- If the ball is not rotating at all, it’s no-spin!

Corkscrew spin is rarely seen except in serves and serves with a high-toss serve (i.e. a serve where the ball is tossed 6-10 feet or more into the air). Some- times, a player out of position will scoop a ball off the floor, and when the ball hits the table, it jumps sideways because of corkscrew spin. Lobs and counterloops also may have this type of spin.

The Purposes of Spin

Spin is used when serving or rallying either to control the ball or force an opponent into error. Let’s examine the purposes of each type of spin.

Topspin

When serving, topspin is used primarily to force a high return or a return off the end. If an opponent doesn’t make an adjustment (i.e. aim low), the topspin will force either a high return or a return that goes off the end. Often players use a very fast motion to fake a backspin serve, but actually serve topspin, fooling their opponent into an error.

In a rally, topspin makes the ball drop very fast, and so allows a player to hit the ball very hard and still have it drop down and hit the table. Not only does it allow a player to attack a very low ball, but it gives a larger margin for error on all rally shots, with the topspin pulling down balls that would otherwise go off the end. One way of thinking of it is as follows. If you hit a relatively low ball hard but without topspin, the ball might only have enough time to drop so as to hit the last foot of the table. With topspin, it might be able to drop and hit anywhere on the last three feet. This means your target is three times as large!

Just as when you serve, the topspin you put on the ball will make your opponent tend to return the ball either high or off the end. The loop drive, which has extreme topspin, is the most important rallying shot in table tennis. It forces an opponent into either a defensive return or a difficult counter-attack.

Backspin

When serving, backspin is used to try for an opponent into returning the ball into the net. It is also effective in forcing a defensive return that you can attack. Often players fake either topspin, sidespin or no-spin when serving backspin, trying to trick the opponent into an error.

In a rally, backspin is a relatively defensive shot. Against an incoming backspin, a backspin return (a “push”) is a way to jockey for position, and against many players, it is quite effective. However, it gives the opponent the opportunity to attack, (especially with a loop drive), and so should not be overused.

There are also many defensive players who back off the table and return topspin attacks with backspin (“chop”) returns. Again, this gives the opponent the opportunity to attack, but some players do quite well this way, returning ball after ball with backspin until the opponent either misses or gives an easy ball to put away.

Sidespin

Sidespin is used primarily when serving. The purpose is to try for an opponent into returning the ball off the side, or into returning the ball where you want him to. Also, since sidespin jumps off the paddle relatively quickly, it forces opponents into hitting many off the end as well as off the side. Often sidespin serves are disguised as backspin serves, and opponents push them back, and go off the side. Sidespin is also mixed with topspin when serving to force mistakes - opponents have to worry about going off the side and going off the end.

Sidespin is not used much during a rally except at the higher levels. Top players sidespin loop, sidespin lob and sidespin push. Beginning and intermediate players should learn to do these shots early on as well. That way, when they reach the higher levels, they’ll be able to control these shots.

Corkscrew spin

Corkscrew spin is not too common in table tennis, and is usually only used by advanced players when serving. It is difficult to produce except with a high-toss serve (i.e. a serve where the ball is tossed 6-10 feet or more into the air). Sometimes, a player out of position will scoop a ball off the floor, and when the ball hits the table, it jumps sideways because of corkscrew spin. Lobs and counterloops also may have this type of spin.

When done on the serve, it can be very effective. When the ball hits the far side of the table, it
jumps sideways, throwing an opponent off. Additionally, an opponent’s instincts for returning corkscrew spin are often off. Suppose you serve with a corkscrew spin so that the ball is rotating clockwise as it travels away from you. If your opponent hits under the ball (a push), the ball will jump to your right. If your opponent hits on top of the ball (a drive), the ball will jump to your left. Imagine the rotation of the ball and which way it jumps on contact with an opponent’s paddle, and you’ll see.

No-spin

No-spin serves are extremely effective because it is relatively easy to fake spin, but put no spin on the ball. If you can convince your opponent to react to a spin that isn’t there, you don’t need to put spin on the ball.

Most often, players fake a backspin serve, but contact the ball near the handle (where the racket moves slowest) and just put the ball over the net with a vigorous but non-spin producing serve. If you use a big wrist snap after contact, and a big follow-through, your opponent will probably think there is spin on the ball — when it’s actually “heavy no-spin”!

In a rally, no-spin is also used to fool opponents into thinking there is spin on the ball. Most players open their rackets when returning a backspin push, so if you give them a no-spin push they will pop the ball up. Similarly, you can fool players by using a no-spin loop.

Another good use of no-spin is with a fast serve. If your opponent thinks your fast serve has topspin, he closes his racket slightly. If the serve actually is no-spin, the ball goes into the net. What makes this effective is that the serve must be fast enough so that the opponent doesn’t have time to react to the ball’s spin (or non-spin).

A ball with spin will jump off the paddle with energy both from the ball’s velocity and its spin. A no-spin ball has no spin, and so bounces out slower. This means that players often put no-spin balls in the net because the ball doesn’t bounce out as fast as they expect. Similarly, players often put spin balls off the end by not taking the extra bounce from the spin into account.

Creating Spin

Spin is created at two times: when serving, or when rallying. The main difference is that when serving, you are in complete control of the ball — you can toss it up just the way you want to. In a rally, the ball comes at you in different ways that you have to react to.

To create a good spin, you need three things: racket speed, a grasping contact, and a grippy racket surface. (With a non-grippy surface, you can’t put as much spin on the ball, but you can return an opponent’s spin — but that’s not quite the same as creating spin.) It’s important to be loose and relaxed if you want to create a good spin. If your muscles are tight, your muscles won’t work together properly, and you’ll get little spin. Imagine hitting something with a whip, and then with a rigid stick. Notice how the tip of the whip travels much faster than the tip of the stick? That’s the difference between loose, relaxed muscles and stiff (stick-like) muscles.

Service Spin

There are an infinite number of service motions where you can put spin on the ball — but that’s outside the context of this article. What we want to go over are the principles behind getting that spin when serving.

To get maximum spin, you should use a grippy inverted surface. A less grippy surface, such as pips-out, can create spin, but substantially less. To really spin that ball, you need a surface that really grips the ball.

You need the racket to really be moving at contact — you want to accelerate the racket through the ball. With whatever service motion you use, you need to start with the arm moving, and then snap the wrist as you contact the ball. Most of the racket speed comes from the wrist — perhaps 70% — so work on using as much wrist as you can.

Lastly, you need to just graze the ball at contact. The finer the contact, the more spin you will get. Top players with really spinnny serves can be almost violent as they move their racket to the ball during the serve — yet, since they only graze the ball, the ball moves very slowly, often barely making it to the net. Nearly all of their energy is being used to create spin, not speed. It will take practice.

Get a bucket of balls, and go practice! A good way to practice getting spin on the serve is to serve onto the floor, away from the table. Try to put spin on the ball so the ball bounces sideways or backward on the floor. If you put a good backspin on the ball, it should bounce a few times away from you, come to a stop, then bounce or roll back at you! If you put a good sidespin, it should bounce sideways after a few bounces. Put some targets on the floor and try to spin the ball so it bounces around the targets. (Theoretically, a pure sidespin would not bounce sideways, because its axis of rotation is on the bottom of the ball, so there would be no sideways bounce. However, in bouncing on the table, the axis will move backward, creating a slight corkscrew spin and thus a sideways jump on the second bounce. Isn’t that simple?)

Rallying Spin

During a rally, you normally will use mostly topspins and backspins, with an occasional no-spin or sidespin thrown in.

Most drives have some topspin, but when you want to really produce a heavy topspin, you have to loop the ball. To really get a good topspin, you need to use your entire body, like a tennis player. The technique for looping is outside the scope of this article, but the principles are the same as when serving — racket speed, grazing and a grippy surface. Also, see above about relaxed, loose muscles — be a whip, not a stick!

The nice thing about looping, and topspin in general, is that not only does the topspin give you a wider margin for error, but the topspin often sets you up to attack the next ball as well. Especially on the forehand side, players learn to loop or drive the ball over and over until they see an easy ball to put away, or the opponent misses.

Topspin is also used when lobbing. A high ball with a lot of topspin (and often sidespin) can be hard to smash. The topspin makes the ball take a fast bounce off the table, and the topspin will make it jump out when it hits your racket. At the higher levels, lobbing is one of the most spectacular shots, but it can be quite effective against many players.

Backspin is used during a rally when pushing or chopping. A push is a defensive or neutral backspin shot against an incoming backspin shot. Many players are very good at attacking pushes, so choose when to use this shot carefully. Many players overpower it, especially when returning serves — often trying to push even against a sidespin or topspin serve! Which leads to disastrous return high in the air, off the end or off the side.) However, a good push can be pretty valuable. The key is to make sure it is an effective push. Learn to put a good backspin on the ball, keep the ball low, and push to a wide angle. You should also learn to push quick off the bounce (so the opponent has less time to react), and perhaps to push short by just touching the ball lightly (so that it bounces very short on the other side of the table, making it hard to attack). At the highest levels, most players often push short. But this is a tricky shot, so I’d recommend learning a good deep push first. If you are pushing deep, try to push very deep, so the ball goes within at least a foot of the endline.

Sidespin is used in rallies mostly by relatively advanced players. It can be used when pushing, blocking, looping or counterlooping. It is used basically to throw the opponent off and force a mistake. (Jan-Ove Waldner, probably the greatest player of all time, is a master at this — he is famous for sidespin blocks and sidespin pushes.) When looping, especially against a block or a topspin (especially when counterlooping), you should usually put some sidespin on the ball, normally so that the ball curves to the left (for righties). A stroke with about 15% sidespin is more natural than trying to loop with pure topspin. Advanced players can sidespin both ways.

Reading Spin

The singles hardest thing to learn to do in table tennis is to learn to read spin, especially against a good serve. Because there are no simple, easy-to-follow methods, it takes a lot of practice and experience. However, many players play for years and never gain this experience because they don’t understand the principles of reading spin. Although it is best to read spin from the racket’s contact with the ball, you can’t always do that perfectly. You should use a number of pieces of “evidence” to really read the spin. What follows are eight factors take into account when trying to read spin, especially when returning serve.

1) The gripiness of the racket surface the opponent is using. Inverted racket surfaces usually give the most spin, but inverted surfaces run the range from extremely grippy surfaces that will create huge amounts of spin to very slick surfaces that will not (antispin). Pips-out surfaces will not create as much spin as a grippy inverted surface, but most shorter pips can create a moderate spin. Longer pips normally don’t create too much spin. (Note the difference between creating spin and returning an opponent’s spin — item 8) below.)

2) The amount of spin from the racket’s contact with the ball. The amount of spin is related directly to the racket’s speed and grazing motion...
Handling Spin

Handling spin is mostly an exercise in racket angles and stroke direction. For every spin, there is a racket angle that will compensate for it. There is also a stroke direction that will compensate for it. Choosing which to use is the question. In general, use an upward stroke and open racket to compensate for backspin, while using mostly racket angle to compensate for other spins. (Open racket means aim racket upward; closed racket means aim racket downward.)

Against a sidespin, the more aggressive you are, the less spin you will “take” on your racket, and so the less it will affect you. The softer your contact, the more the ball will jump — so tentative players often have more swapping with spin than aggressive players.

When learning to read spin on a serve, it’s a good idea to wait on the ball, and take it as late as possible to give yourself more time to react. As you improve, you should start taking the ball quicker. However, even advanced players often take the ball later against a player with tricky serves.

Here is a rundown on how to return the various spins.

Topspin: Close your racket (i.e. aim the hitting surface downward). This will compensate for the tendency to hit the ball at the end or pop it up. Against a heavy topspin, you’ll most likely use a simple block to return the shot. Take the ball quick off the bounce — otherwise, you’ll have to contend with the ball’s low, fast bounce.

Backspin: Open your racket (i.e. aim the hitting surface upward). This will compensate for the tendency to hit the ball into the net. If you are topspinning, stroke upward and lift the ball upward. This is the perfect time to loop with heavy topspin!

Sidespin. Aim the opposite way. A good rule to remember when returning sidespin serves is to aim in the direction the server’s racket came from. If you return the sidespin somewhat aggressively with a topspin, you can treat the incoming sidespin almost like it was a topspin, ignoring the sidespin.

Corkscrewservp. Anticipate the sidespin bounce on the table, and be in position for it. Don’t get too caught up trying to learn how to handle this spin too much as it is usually only seen at the higher levels. However, it is interesting to note that if you push against a corkscrewservp (with an open racket, hitting toward the bottom of the ball), the ball will bounce sideways off the racket. If you topspin it back (with a closed racket, hitting toward the top of the ball), the ball will bounce off your racket in the opposite direction. Imagine the incoming spin and how it will “grab” your racket based on whether you hit toward the top or bottom of the ball, and you’ll see this.

Why Does A Spinning Ball Curve In The Air?

Now we get into serious science, so those less science-minded, here’s your cue to leave and go practice!

Imagine a ball with topspin. As it travels through the air, the forward movement of the top of the ball forces air forward (or more precisely, slows down the movement of air over the top of the ball). This causes air to be “clumped” together toward the front top of the ball, creating an area of high air density. Similarly, the backward movement of the bottom of the ball pulls air backward quickly, creating an area of low air density toward the front bottom of the ball. The high density air mass at the top of the ball forces the ball downward; the low density air mass at the bottom of the ball “vacuums” it downward. The result: the ball drops. That’s what makes a ball with topspin drop. The same applies to all spins, but as the spin orientation changes, the movement of the ball changes. For example, a sidespin creates a high air density area on one side of the ball, a low air density on the other, which forces the ball to curve sideways.

Backspin doesn’t really curve up, but that’s because of gravity. The backspin is pulling the ball up; gravity is pulling it down. The result is a ball that tends to travel in a line at first (to float) before the backspin is finally overcome by gravity.

Conclusion

Spin is the biggest difference between “basement” stars and advanced players. Players may learn to rally better than others, but if they can’t handle spin — or create their own — they’re at a huge disadvantage. Learn to use and handle spin, and you’ll quickly leave the basement players (and most tournament players) behind. Get Spinning!
There are two technical elements to master when executing a forehand flip off of a short serve. First are the mechanics of the stroke itself. Second, and equally important, is the footwork involved. It has been my experience that this is the element that many people neglect when learning this technique. For a great example of proper stroke mechanics and footwork, let’s look at U.S. Men’s Singles Champion David Zhuang.

Photo 1 – Here David is in his receive ready position. Notice that his weight is evenly distributed and he is leaning noticeable forward. This forward lean allows him to move quickly forward to cover any short ball. It is important to note that he is also well back from the table, thus allowing him ample room to handle any deep serve.

Photo 2 – In this frame, David has recognized a short serve, probably from the first bounce on his opponent’s side of the table (close to the net). He has taken a short hop forward with both feet and repositioned himself closer to the table. This is the position that many players mistakenly start off in.

Photo 3 – David has seen the final direction of the short serve and has begun to reposition his right leg under the table. At the same time he has begun the stroke itself. Note the open racket angle, almost like he will push the return.

Photo 4 – In this frame, we can see that David has begun to adjust the racket angle as he reads the amount of spin on the ball.

Photo 5 – David is now in the final position just before striking the ball. Note that his racket is higher than the ball. His racket will continue downward until the ball bounces and then snap up with the ball, making contact at the top of the bounce.

Photo 6 – David has just made contact at the top of the bounce, while the forearm is moving upward. Note the amount of forearm and wrist snap, which is critical for generating power.

Photo 7 – In this frame David is recovering back into a ready position. He has pushed off his right leg to get him back from the table. He is covering an expected crosscourt return by his opponent.

What makes David so good at this technique is not only his stroke but his footwork. You cannot go wrong by copying our U.S. Champion’s forehand flip.

Practice Tip: When practicing your short serve-return, have your partner randomly mix in long serves. Make sure that your ready position is far enough back from the table so that you can easily handle any long serve. Good luck and Good Flipping!
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U.S.A.

Entry Deadline postmarked by:
November 12, 1999. Entries accepted up to November 19, 1999 with $25.00 late fee

Tournament Committee:
Tournament President: Richard Lee
Registrations Director: Wendy Troy
Computers Director: Johnny Hess
Media Director: Alan Williams
Tournament Referee: Zhaoming Yang
Assistant Referee: Joseph Lee

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**General Information**

- **Proof of Membership**: All participants must show identification of membership for either USATT, CTTA, or ITTF. Otherwise, USATT membership must be purchased.
- **Tournament Passes**: Will not be accepted.
- **Entry Deadline**: Postmarked by November 12, 1999. Entries postmarked after November 19, 1999 will only be accepted according to space availability, with an added $25.00 late fee.
- **Equipment**: All USATT and ITTF rules and regulations will be followed. Tournament equipment is provided by Martin-Kilpatrick/Butterfly. Butterfly Europa and Centrefold tables will be used with Butterfly orange three-star balls.
- **Early Check-in**: Check-in starts Thursday from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM and from 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM. All teams must check-in before 5:00 PM. Check-in resumes Friday morning at 7:30 AM.

**Teams**: Please select a team name with less than 30 characters. Teams with an average rating over 2400 must select a team name that represents who or where they are from. Teams consist of 3-5 players. Seeding in the tournament will be decided by averaging the 3 highest ratings. Each tie will be 5 out of 9 matches except for Division A players. Each match will be 2 out of 3 games to 21. The Tournament Committee reserves the right to change any team names that are deemed inappropriate without notice. **Teams using other players’ ratings for that particular division.**

**Hardbat Information**

- **Equipment**: Racket and sponge type must follow the rules and regulations of the U.S. Hardbat Association. ** Format**: All first round matches will be round robin with the top finisher advancing to the final single elimination round, excluding doubles events, which will be single elimination.
- **Entry**: Each event costs $15.00. A player may choose only one doubles event. **USATT Ratings from the May/June issue of USATT Magazine will be used. Players enter Hardbat events may also play in the Teams.**

**Tournament Schedule**

**Thursday**: 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM and 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM
**Friday**: 7:30 AM – 11:00 AM, 12:30 PM – 4:00 PM, 5:30 PM – 9:30 PM
**Saturday**: 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM, 12:30 PM – 4:00 PM, 5:30 PM – 9:30 PM
**Sunday**: 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

**Conclusion of Teams Championships**

**Explore Inner Harbor**

**Conclusion of Hardbat Championships**

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- **T-shirt**: $15.00 each: S M L XL XXL
- **USATT Membership fees**: $25.00 adult/yr $8.00 child/yr
- **USATT Rating fees**: $5.00 per player
- **Tournament Entry Fee**: $350.00 per team
- **Hardbat Event Fee**: $15.00 per event
- **T-shirt**: $15.00 each: S M L XL XXL
- **USATT Membership fees**: $25.00 adult/yr $8.00 child/yr
- **USATT Rating fees**: $5.00 per player
- **Total Fees Due**: Make checks payable to North American Teams Championships. $25.00 penalty for returned checks.

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**Team Type (circle one):** Open / Women’s / U-18 Girls’ / U-18 Boys’ / O-40 Seniors’ / Collegiate

**For each player, a $5.00 Membership ID Number lookup fee will be charged if ID number is not supplied.**

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1999 US Open Table Tennis Championships
Fort Lauderdale, FL, June 30 - July 4, 1999

By Larry Hodges

MEN'S SINGLES

If the U.S. Open were a cartoon, then the all-Taiwan men's singles final was between Superman and The Flash. Chiang Peng-Lung ("Superman") may be the most powerful player in the game today (it's either him or Kim Taek Soo), and is one of the fastest as well. He made the finals of the Brazil Open the week before, losing in the final in five to Zoran Primorac. Chang Yuan-Su ("The Flash") is inhumanly fast, with perhaps the fastest footwork in the game today. Chiang and Chang are both penhol loopers who, to the casual bystander, play the same. To the more seasoned eye, Chiang has more power, is steadier, and has more control. Chang is faster (despite Chiang's being one of the fastest in the world!), and plays his backhand "jab" block more aggressively - when opponents can find it. To both casual bystander and seasoned eye, they are both powerful looping machines.

"We do five hours of footwork drills every day," said 20-year-old Chang, who had just come off a win over France's Jean-Philippe Gatien (1993 Men's Singles World Champion, currently world #10) a few weeks before at the World Cup Championships. He's been on the Taiwan team since he was 15 after starting to play at age 10. The doubles team of Chang/Chiang, after winning the Qatar Open and getting the bronze medal at the Asian Games, had recently been ranked #1 in the world in doubles (they are currently ranked #2). Chiang, ranked #23 in the world (but probably better than that - he's #4 in points on the ITE Pro Tour Circuit), was seeded #3, but would soon be the de facto #1 seed; Chang, ranked #109 in the world, would rapidly show that that ranking was not particularly accurate.

It was Chiang, with powers and abilities far beyond the rest of us, who leaped tall buildings and won the tournament over his teammate in the final. Chiang had a tough draw, having to defeat 2-time U.S. Open medalist, Han, who leaped tall buildings and won the tournament over his teammate in the final. Chiang had a tough draw, having to defeat 2-time U.S. Open medalist, Han, who had just come off a win over France's Jean-Philippe Gatien (1993 Men's Singles World Champion, currently world #10) a few weeks before the World Cup Championships. He's been on the Taiwan team since he was 15 after starting to play at age 10. The doubles team of Chang/Chiang, after winning the Qatar Open and getting the bronze medal at the Asian Games, had recently been ranked #1 in the world in doubles (they are currently ranked #2). Chiang, ranked #23 in the world (but probably better than that - he's #4 in points on the ITE Pro Tour Circuit), was seeded #3, but would soon be the de facto #1 seed; Chang, ranked #109 in the world, would rapidly show that that ranking was not particularly accurate.

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Welcome to the US Open

Robin Morin (SWE) and Keith Alban (USA)

Allstar Under 18 Boys' Finalist Freddie Gabriel

Barry Dattel

David Fernandez

U.S. Team Member Barney J. Reed

Under 16 Girls' Champion Jackie Lee

Men's Semifinalist Fan Yiyong

Howard Lamb

Allstar Women Finalist Amy Feng

Battle of the High-Toss Serves: U.S. Open Women's Champion Xi Lian Ni vs. U.S. Men's Champion David Zhuang. You make the call!

Future World Champion Patrick, son of USA Women's Coach Teodor "Doru" Gheorghe and USA #2 rated woman Emilia Ciosu

Scenes From the U.S. Open

Photos by Tong Lee ©1999
when he played into Cheng's backhand,” said USA Men's Coach Dan Seemiller. “When he began to play into Cheng's forehand, and began to score more, his eyes sort of lit up.” But, of course, it's not that Cheng's forehand is weak so much as his backhand is a wall - and so it wasn't enough for Marek. In the 8ths, Cheng had a tough time with lefty world #150 Alex Perry of England's backhand smash, but won all three games, 17,19,15.

Before playing Cheng Yinghua, Chiang had to play three other USA players. After a first-rounder against Sharad Pandit of Pennsylvania (5,14,15), he faced USA Team Member Eric Owens (world #324), who had defeated Japan's Shingo Tsuchihashi the round before in a no-contest 5,5,10 match. Against Chiang in the 16ths, Owens actually led much of the first two games. Coach Seemiller said of Chiang, “He doesn't flip well, and so pushes most serves back. This allowed Eric to overpower him a lot.” Following that match, Chiang defeated New York's Abass Ekun at 16, 16, 13. Abass had just come off a spectacular comeback round before against the Swedish lobber/fisher Adam Rasberg. “This guy's got a great defensive topspin,” said Coach Seemiller of Rasberg. Abass battled back after losing the first two games to win this spectacular crowd-pleasing match, -26, -18, 19, 19, 8. After getting lobbed down several times at deuce in the first game, Abass had begun to loop the lobs - and the strategy worked.

After Cheng's exit, Chiang next had to contend with world #61 Olivier Marmaruk of France in the semifinals. Marmaruk had come from behind to defeat Japan's Koji Sanada (world #145) in the quarters, -15, -17, 14, 9, 17, often lobbing Sanada down. Sanada had defeated USA's Razvan Cretu the round before that; Cretu had defeated Florida's Donovan James the round before that; and James had “defeated” the no-show and top seed Jean-Michel Saive the round before that.

“I've never seen such power!” Marmaruk said after his match with Chiang in the semifinals. Not that he didn’t put up a resistance; the left-handed Marmaruk, serving inside-out forehand pendulum serves, often started the rally with a strong loop. But he was rarely able to get in a second as Chiang's pure counter-looping power sent Marmaruk straight to the barriers rally after rally in a futile attempt to stay in the point. After getting 17 in the first game, it was all downhill, with Chiang winning 17, 9, 11. Sometimes Chiang seemed the only one not impressed with his performance, as he would often wave his hand over his head in disgust when he missed a shot, a mannerism he did throughout the tournament.

What happened to the first, second and fourth seeds in the tournament, defending Men's Singles & Doubles Champion Jean-Michel Saive, Wang Tao and Johnny Huang, ranked #13, 20 and 25 in the world? Saive's wife was expecting a baby at any time, and so he returned to Europe after the Brazil Open. Wang Tao didn’t show up for reasons unknown - his association faxed in a last-minute note on this, but it came in too late. With both of these former World #1 players gone, should the draw be redone? No, said Referee Azmy Ibrahim, because 1) since the players are on opposite sides, the draw is not "unbalanced"; and 2) because they didn’t have an official written notice from the players that they were not coming (only word-of-mouth from other players).

"Only at the U.S. Open would they not redo the draw," said third seed Johnny Huang. "Why can't they just get on the phone and call the players and see if they are coming? This would never happen in Europe or Asia - they would redo the draw."
would defeat Cheng Yinghua in the North American Men’s Singles Final shortly afterwards, a separate event from the U.S. Open) withdrew from the tournament (but not before playing and winning his first-round match against Florida’s Nigel Webb). This left third seed Chiang Peng-Lung the highest ranked player left in the draw. It also meant that of the players left, the #1 seed (Chiang Peng-Lung) would play the #4 seed (Cheng Yinghua, world #67) in the quarterfinals.

Neither Cheng nor Chiang were happy about the draw not being redone. Chiang also wasn’t happy with all the people walking around as he played his matches, with all of the events scheduled — “Too many events,” he said. “Playing in the U.S. Open is like playing in a shopping mall.” Johnny Huang and Matthew Syed, upon hearing this comment, agreed that that perfectly described the atmosphere. All three were also disgusted at playing their first-round matches on cement. “Most of them probably haven’t played on cement since they were juniors.” said U.S. Team Member Todd Sweeris.

Of course, what is to some a negative is to others the “charm” of the U.S. Open. Bjorn Borg had similarly attributed his inability to ever win the U.S. Open Tennis Championships to all the distractions there. However, Chiang was able to ignore the distractions and win.

But with the no-shows and withdrawals, the actual matches played was changed. Chang, scheduled to play Johnny Huang (world #25) in the 8ths, instead faced England’s Gareth Herbert (world #374), and won at 14, 8, -19, 12, to advance to the quarterfinals against USA National Men’s Singles Champion David Zhuang (world #116).

Zhuang had coasted into the final 16 without losing a game, defeating Robin Morin of Sweden at 13,12,14 in the 32nds and Daisuke Ishida of Japan at 13, 16, 17 in the 16ths. He then upset world #94 Matthew Syed (with the withdrawals and no-shows, now the #2 seed) three straight in the 8ths, 18, 18, 18. Syed is a long pipped chopper (well-known in the U.S. for his multiple victories at the Sears Invitational tournaments). According to Coach Seemiller, Zhuang played extremely smart, mixing in loops and no-spin drives, and faking smashes and then drop-shorting, catching Syed on his heels over and over. He handled Syed’s very tricky serves very well, and when Syed did attack, he had trouble handling Zhuang’s quick block returns. An interesting tactic by Syed was that he often flipped his racket during the rally so that he could use the long pips side on both the forehand and backhand sides to chop back Zhuang’s drives.

Also of note was the fact that, due to the changing of the rules regarding the length to width ratio of long pips, Syed is the last player to make a legal shot in international play with the now-illegal extra long pips — the last legal one being a chop with his feint long in the last point of his match with Zhuang. The rule took effect on July 1, but since the U.S. Open started the day before, it was ruled that these pips would be legal throughout the tournament. Somebody on Sunday, July 4, made the last legal shot ever — until and if the rules change again — with extra long pips. (Syed was not happy with this new rule — “The most ill-considered and ridiculous rule ever passed” — and wrote an article on this published in the ITTF Magazine.)

Chang won the first game in his quarterfinal match against Zhuang, but with a very partisan USA crowd cheering him on, Zhuang made it to 19-20 in the second. Chang loops, David kills it — but “The Flash” incredibly runs down the smash, loops it back, and David miss-hits an attempted smash. Up 20-17 in the third, Zhuang almost doesn’t hold it, as Chang deuces it to the dismay of the crowd. But Zhuang wins the next two, 22-20 … but doesn’t do so well in the fourth. Match to Chang, 15, 19, -20, 12.

In the semifinals, Chang faces Fan Yiyong, the highest rated player living in the U.S., but with no world ranking. (These American “rankings” are starting to sound like boxing rankings: Fan, the highest rated player living in the U.S.; Cheng Yinghua, the highest world-ranked player and the highest rated player eligible for the USA team; and David Zhuang,

(Con’t on page 34)
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the National Champion and highest rated player eligible for the Nationals.) Fan almost didn’t make it this far. In the 16ths, he’d had some difficulty with Slovakia’s Sziardal Csole (world #331), winning at 20, 22, 13. But it was in the 8ths that he was down match point twice in the fifth to Terry Young (world #364) of England, the beneficiary of the Wang Tao no-show. Fan pulled it out, 16, -15, 15, 14, 22, and then pulled world #162 Shinnosuke Kiho of Japan in the semifinals, 17, 11, 8. Kiho (who would win under 22 men, defeating Chang in the semifinals at 19, -8, 14) had taken out world #72 Chetan Baboor of India the round before, -21, 8, 14, 23, while Baboor had taken out USA’s Todd Sweeris (world #246) the round before that, 10, 18, 15.

The semifinal match between Chang and Fan is probably the match of the tournament (with the possible exception of the Fan-Young match). However, it started as a blowout, with Chang winning the first two at 14 & 13. In the second, after coming back from down 7-13 to 14-15, he doesn’t score another point that game. Fan, now living and coaching full-time in Portland, Oregon, hasn’t played this type of competition recently, and the rust shows. He loops from both wings from right over the table, even backhand counterlooping off the bounce. But he seems to go through stretches where he can only make two or three “point-winning” shots in a row — and against Chang, it takes more than that to score a point.

But in the third game, Fan raises his level. Chang is still miraculously running down and counterlooping (and sometimes making fantastic backhand jab-block winners) most of Fan’s loops, but the pressure’s on now as Fan’s attack is continuous — but so is Chang’s. They play many of the best points ever played on U.S. soil this game — get the video if you can and go to this game. Fan has a small lead most of the way, but Chang keeps closing the gap. Fan pulls it out, 21-19.

In the fourth, the great points continue. Down 20-18, Chang pulls off an incredible down-the-line counterloop. A jab block later, and it’s deuce, to the unhappiness of the USA fans, cheering for Fan and hoping for a fifth game. But it is not to be — after all the great points, it’s a huge letdown to all but the Taiwanese when Fan pushes the serve off to lose the game and match, 14, 13, 19, 20.

So the final is an all-Taiwan affair, Chang Peng-Lung vs. Chang Yuan-Su, Superman vs. The Flash, incredible power and speed vs. incredible speed and power, penhold looper vs. penhold looper. Taiwan, which has already won men’s teams and doubles, has completed a sweep in the men’s events. Someone points out that if Chang were to win, it may knock Chiang down enough notches that he wouldn’t automatically qualify for the Olympics. Are they playing for real, or is this just a practice match for them? It’s hard to tell from the points. Both are so used to playing each other that they know each other’s tricks, and so the points are fast and powerful, with few careless mistakes. Chiang starts out by taking a 9-1, 12-2 lead in the first, and never looks back. “Chiang may have faster footwork, but Chang has better footwork,” says California Coach Masaki Tajima, referring to Chiang’s better positioning. Match to the better positioned Taiwanese, 17, 15, 13.

When the Taiwan stars played, the Taiwan junior team was always there, clapping in unison.

MEN’S DOUBLES

The Canadians Kurt Liu and P. Peter-Paul eked out a 19-19, 20 win in the quarters over USA’s Fan Yiyong and Razvan Cretu, and defeated USA’s Cheng Yinghua and Jack Huang in the semifinals in a 20, -17, 10 battle to reach the final. On the other side, the Japanese pair of Yusa and Harada had been involved in a sort of controversy in the quarterfinals against USA’s David Zhuang and Todd Sweeris. The Japanese pair led 19-16 in the third when, during a rally, the ball apparently hit one of the Japanese players’ shirts. Todd grabbed the ball and stopped the rally, but the umpires didn’t see it, and pointed the ball to the Japanese pair, who denied the ball hit either of their shirts — to the absolute disgust of the Americans and several spectators who said they saw the ball hit the shirt. The American’s walked off the court in protest, so match to Japan, -17, 10, 16. With the Taiwanese, 17, 15, 13.

MEN’S TEAMS

On “Black Wednesday morning” at the Open, both USA I and USA II lost in the first round (8ths) of the men’s team competition to teams they could have beaten. USA I (David Zhuang & Todd Sweeris) lost to England I 3-1, with England’s lefty Alex Perry winning both of his matches. Todd defeated Darren Blake, but England won the doubles. (England did not play Matthew Syed, their world #94 ace, on their team — to give other experience?) USA II (Eric Owens, Barney D. Reed, Randy Cohen), with an easier draw than USA I, was upset by Puerto Rico. The first sign of trouble came when the Puerto Rican #2, Gabriel Santiago (who would win the U2400 event without losing a game), upset Owens deuce in the third in the first match (11-17, 21). Then Reed lost to his former live-in practice partner, David Fernandez (who still lives and goes to college in New York City most of the time), 15-15, 16. But Owens & Reed, the North American doubles champions, should win the doubles — but not this time, losing in three (11-15, 16). So both USA’s are out of the draw.

The English I team would lose the next round to Taiwan (as would Puerto Rico, to India), but it was the English II team (Terry Young & Gareth Herbert) that came out of nowhere, defeating Japan II 3-2, Slovakia 3-1, and India 1-3-2 to advance into the final. India had led England 2-1, but Terry Young defeated the Indian ace, Chetan Baboor (world #72) at 16-16, 18 to force it into the fifth match, where Gareth Herbert defeated India’s #2, Sunil Babras, 16-19, 8.

On the other half of the draw, Taiwan, with their big guns Chiang Peng-Lung and Chang Yuan-Su (who would soon be the men’s singles finalists and doubles champions), advanced to the finals with wins over Guyana, England and Japan — with Japan’s Shinnosuke Kiho’s -17, 16, 16 win over Chang Taiwan’s only blemish. (Chang’s only lossess this tournament, other than to teammate Chiang in the men’s singles final, would be to Kiho, world #162 — here in the teams, and again in the semifinals of men under 22.)

In the final, Chang starts off by defeating Herbert at 11 & 18. Chiang next plays Young, and is down 10-8 in the third. He is visibly unhappy with his play, is waving his arm in the air when he misses a shot. As the players switch sides, the Taiwan junior team files in — nine of them, roughly ages 9-13, in matching uniforms, walking in single file and in perfect unison. They sit down opposite from Chiang’s side, and clap in unison each time he scores. Seemingly inspired by this (or not wanting to lose in front of them?), Chiang scores 8 of the next 9 points, and coasts to a 16-12, 15 win. With the Taiwanese juniors politely clapping every point they win, Taiwan easily wins the doubles at 14 & 8.
Women's Singles

WOMEN'S SINGLES

Somes, watching 1998 & 1999 U.S. Open Women's Singles Champion Xia Lian Ni (world #7) of Luxembourg play, noticed a resemblance between her and a top woman from China from the early 1980s who played in a number of U.S. Opens. Both were penholders with medium-long pips on one side, short pips on the other, and flipped throughout the rally (which is not easy for a penholder — try it). Both used the long pips side about 70% of the time, dead-blocking and rolling ball after ball. Both would suddenly switch to the short pips side to launch all-out point-ending smashes. When I pointed out this fact to U.S. National Women's Singles Champion Gao Jun, who would lose in the women's final here to Ni, she laughed and pointed out that the two were one and the same. In fact, few at the '99 Open realized that 16 years before, as a member of the Chinese National Team, Ni had been the 1983 World Mixed Doubles Champion (with Guo Yuehua). "When I was young," said Ni, who speaks perfect English, "I was the 1983 World Mixed Doubles Champion." Thus, Ni, the 1983 World Mixed Doubles Champion, has played on their national team since 1991.

After a number of years on the Chinese National Team, Ni had moved to Germany in 1989, and then to Luxembourg in 1990, and has played on their national team since 1991. She still trains 4-5 times per week, usually one session per day — but more if there is a big tournament coming up.

Winning her second consecutive Open was a nice present for Ni, whose birthday came the day after the final (she seemed disinclined to say which one). It was not an easy draw, with five former U.S. Women's Singles Champions in it (including all four semifinalists). Ni's opponent in the final, Gao Jun, was the 1994 U.S. Open Champion, back when Gao was #3 in the world. In the semifinals, Ni had faced Jing Xu of Taiwan, the 1988 and 1989 champion (then playing for China). In the round before, Jing had faced Lijuan Geng of Canada, the 1995 champion. In the other semifinals, Gao had faced Chen Jing of Taiwan, the 1993 champion. All five of these former U.S. Open Champions were former members of the Chinese National Team — but now USA, Canada, Taiwan and Luxembourg were their homes.

Ni did not lose a game in winning this year. In fact, it took a while before anyone even got double-figures! After a first-round bye, Ni faced Sue-Ann Leong of Aruba in the 16ths: it was a quick 7, 5, 2 execution. In the 8ths, she faced Yuki Fujita of Japan. After two more single digit games, Fujita broke the spell (barely), losing at 6, 9, 10. In the quarters, Ni faced USA's Lily Yip (world #119), who also had not lost a game to this point — with a nice 15, 17, 12 win the round before over England's Kubrat Owolabi (world #199), and a 14, 10, 8 win over Canada's Jo-Annie Gagnon the round before that. Although Lily would challenge Ni in the first game, it would be another straight-game victory for Ni who still had not lost a single digit gaines. Fujita broke the spell to Gao, 19, 18, -17, 14. USA is in the finals!

In the other semifinals, Ni faced Jing Xu (world #51), a penhold looper. Xu had barely gotten by USA's Amy Feng in the 8ths — Amy had led 15-14 in the fifth before Xu ran it out to win 16, -15, -14, 17, 16. (Amy had defeated Japan's Ryoko Imasaka at 13, 17, 8 the round before.) In the quarters, Xu had defeated Canada's Lijuan Geng, world #23 (who plays like Deng Yaping — a shakehand hitter, with long pips on the backhand) at -18, 19, 19, 17. Geng had taken out USA's Virginia Sung (world #224) the round before, 14, 7, 23.

In the 1980s, Ni and Xu had been strong rivals on the Chinese team, but Ni seemed to have held her level longer. It turned out to be an easy match for Ni who still had not lost a game, winning at 12, 15, 12.

In the final, Ni won the first two games against Gao relatively easily at 17 & 14 as the two exchanged rapid-fire hits and counter-hits, smashes and quick blocks. In the third, Ni took a 9-0, 13-2 lead — it's all over, right? But Gao scores 8 in a row to pull to 13-10. Most of the points were won by smashes after long rallies. "If I can make my smash, it makes a big difference," said Gao afterwards. "But reading the spin against her is confusing because of her two surfaces."

Ni ends Gao's streak, and then the two trade points. Gao can't seem to pull even, and soon she's serving from down 15-20. Five loooooong bang-bang rallies later, and it's 20-20! Deuce! But the crowd's excitement would be short-lived. Seeing enough of these long rallies, Ni serve and kills to get the ad, and quickly smashes out of the rally on Gao's serve to win the tournament. Match and championship to Ni, 17, 14, 20.
WOMEN'S DOUBLES
Of the four players in the women's doubles final, only Peggy Regenwetter had not won a U.S. Open Women's singles title or been a former member of the Chinese national team. But it was Luxembourg's Regenwetter, along with teammate Xia Lian Ni, who took the title over the Taiwan team of Chen Jing and Jing Xu, 19, -10, 11. Luxembourg defeated USA's Gao Jun (another former U.S. Open Singles Champion) and Amy Feng in the semifinals, 14 & 20. In the other semifinals, Taiwan defeated Canada's Lijuan Geng (still another former U.S. Open singles champion) and Petra Cada, -15, 19, 11. USA II, Tawny Banh and Lily Yip, lost to Taiwan in the quarterfinals at 18 & 8.

WOMEN'S TEAMS
Of the 11 teams entered in women’s teams, five were obviously very strong: Taiwan, Luxembourg, Japan, Canada and USA. The top-seeded team from China did not show. Since China and Luxembourg both had first-round byes in the 8ths, Luxembourg got a quarterfinal default from China and a free ride into the semifinals.

USA I (Gao Jun & Amy Feng) had little trouble with Canada II in the 8ths, and defeated Japan II in the quarters 3-1, with Amy losing to Naomi Yotsumoto deuce in the third, 13, -20, 21, but Gao winning both her matches and USA winning the doubles easily). In the semifinals, USA I faced the lopsided Luxembourg team.

Luxembourg had Xia Lian Ni, the defending 1998 U.S. Open Women's Singles Champion (who she would soon repeat here). Her partner, Peggy Regenwetter, was a level weaker, but the two were an excellent doubles pair – they would win the U.S. Open Women's Doubles. Ni had little trouble with Amy, winning at 14 & 12, but Gao had equally little trouble with Peggy, winning at 15 & 10. The all-important doubles match, however, went to Luxembourg, 20 & 10. Ni defeated Gao in the fourth match, 11 & 18, to send Luxembourg into the finals.

On the other half of the draw, Taiwan (Chen Jing & Xu Jing) had defeated USA II (Tawny Banh & Lily Yip) in the 8ths without losing a game. In the quarters, Taiwan defeated the second-seeded Japanese team 3-0, 6-1 in games with the only lost game in doubles. In the semifinals, Taiwan defeated Canada (Petra Cada & Wenxiao Wang) 3-0, also 6-1 in games, with Petra getting a game from Xu. Canada, which sat out their #1 player, Lijuan Geng in all their ties (to give others experience?), had defeated England 3-0 in the quarterfinals, also 6-1 in games (losing a game in doubles). Of course, pretty soon players like Petra will be taking over the reigns of the team – and Petra (who spent most of the last year playing in the Super League in Prague) had wins the day before the U.S. Open began over USA players Amy Feng, Tawny Banh and Lily Yip at the North American Championships – her only loss would be in the semifinals to Lijuan Geng. In the final, for Luxembourg to win, Ni would probably have to win both, and she and Peggy would have to win doubles. They did win the doubles (13-11, 10), with Ni dwarfed by Peggy and the two tall Taiwanese players, but Ni suffered her only loss of the tournament here to Chen Jing in the second match, 18 & 18. With Chen and Xu both defeating Peggy, Taiwan won the final, 3-1, preventing Ni from sweeping everything this tournament.

JUNIOR ACTION AT THE U.S. OPEN
Zeid Shaban (L) of Jordan defeated Kristian Kobes of Slovakia in a truly International Under 10 Boys' Singles Final, while semifinalist Sergey Gutkin of California demonstrates the perfect forehand loop. (Junior write-up on page 38.)

Shaban and Kobes photos by John Oros ©1999; Gutkin photos by Tong Lee ©1999

NATIONAL ALLSTARS
By Larry Hodges

National Allstar Men
"There's a storm coming," a top player said, after watching Keith Alban's wins over Barney J. Reed and Abass Eun in the National Allstar Men – not to mention Keith's sweeping Under 18, Under 16, and Allstar Under 18 Boys' Singles and Under 18 Boys' Teams. The storm may be a few years away still, but 15-year-old Keith was the surprise of the Allstar Men's event, making the semifinals.

Of course, that's when Keith met Cheng Yingwall, I mean Yinghua. The storm is coming, but it's a few years away still, as far as Cheng's concerned, who romped into the final with a 6, 15, 11 win over Keith.

On the other half of the draw, David Zhuang had a tough struggle in the quarters with 16-year-old Sunny Li, but after fighting back from two game points in game four, won it at -18, 17, 21, 7. Todd Sweeris defeated Jack Huang in the quarters, 8, 18, 18, to set up a Zhuang-Sweeris semifinals, a replay of their men's singles final at the U.S. Nationals. Zhuang had a long winning streak going against Sweeris, but it was Todd's turn: -15, 14, 17, 18.

In the final, near the end, Todd said, "It's good to get killed like this sometimes. It keeps you from getting a swelled head." Zhuang romped into the final with a 6, 15, 11 win over Keith.

National Allstar Women
While Amy Feng was battling her way into the final, Gao Wall, I mean Jun, romped, defeating Jane Chui in the quarterfinals at 6, 16, 11, and Lily Yip in the semifinals at 12, 9, 9. Feng, however, had to struggle with Virginia Sung in the quarters (14, 23, -20, 17) and Tawny Banh in the semis (-9, 17, 18, -16, 16). Exhausted and tired (at least one of them), they split the final.
HARDBAT EVENTS

Hardbat Final Played In Front of Huge Crowd

By Scott Gordon

Ty Hoff and Lily Yip are fast becoming "classic" rivals. Their feature center-court 1999 U.S. Open championship finals encounter last month in Fort Lauderdale was what many are now calling the highlight of the week. In a wildly entertaining 5-game battle that saw Hoff crashing through barriers retrieving and chopping back Yip's unrelenting attack, Ty again emerged victorious. If Houston's 1998 U.S. Open will be long-remembered for "the point," as umpire Terry Canup dubbed Saive's miraculous lob at match point against Legout in last year's final), this year's Open will likely long be remembered for "the match."

Lily had made it clear that she was intending to avenge her recent 3-0 1998 U.S. Nationals defeat at the hands of Hoff. She had been taking hardbat seriously. Again she breezed to the final without losing a single game, and again most spectators considered her a heavy favorite. But, unlike Las Vegas, Ty too had reached the finals without losing a single game, and in an arguably tougher draw which included wins over 2400+ Ashu Jain and Meiklejohn hardbat champ Barry Dattel. Lily may have improved, but apparently so had Ty.

The preliminary rounds were not without interest. Hardbat legend Marty Reisman lost a close, lengthy quarterfinal battle to Barry Dattel, whose tenacious comebacks foiled Reisman's impenetrable table game. Ashu Jain narrowly got by Maximo Vasquez in the 8s, 28-in-the-3rd(1), before losing to Hoff. Carlos Ko (2400+) easily reached the quarters, but then lost a close match with Larry Hodges, 14,-13, 18, 12. Yip's crushing 10, 14, 5 quarterfinal win over defensive star Steve Berger must have been intimidating. In the semi, Lily defeated Hodges, 19, 22, 10, and Hoff defeated Dattel, 11, 10, 14, to set up "The Match."

The Hoff-Yip final started quietly, with Ty winning a somewhat lackluster first game 21-13. In the 2nd, Lily's attack improved, and at 14-14 Ty started to play defense. Amazingly, he was able to chop and loop his way to a 20-15 lead. But something magical happened; Lily smashed five straight winners, then won the subsequent deuce battle 24-22 in a thrilling Bergmann-esque comeback. She immediately jumped into the air with a huge victory scream.

It was Lily's first game win over her nemesis after four straight losses, and it was as if a burden had been lifted from her ... the guy was beatable. It showed immediately in her enthusiastic play. Her attack strengthened, and Ty was frequently pushed back from the table, chopping and lobbing to the delight of a growing crowd. Fans started climbing to the top of the stands, waving to their friends to come see the match. As the crowd grew it became louder, which drew still more spectators. Although the ball was mostly pro-Lily, Ty's incredible and generally point-winning defense gave him another seemingly insurmountable 19-13 lead. Again, Lily's attack kicked in and she scored off eight straight winners to win game three, 21-19, and go ahead two games to one. Video cameras started sprouting up, and several photographers circled the center court arena.

Ty's mostly-defense strategy continued to work well in game four. 10-5, 13-7, 15-10, 17-13... then the chants of "Lil-ly Lil-ly" started. At 17-14, she smashed an unreturnable ball deep to Ty's backhand that sent him careening through the barrier and landing flat on his back in a failed attempt to return it. A bit shaken, he took a short breather which apparently served him well, as he won four straight points to take game four 21-15 and force a decisive fifth game.

Ty told me after the match that he was becoming badly dehydrated by the fifth game, fearful of drinking too much and becoming fearful of drinking too much and becoming nauseous as he had in the Las Vegas final. It was certainly not apparent, as everything seemed to go his way in the fifth game. He continued his successful mix of attack and defense, and at 8-5 Ty won a tremendous lobbing point which left Lily visibly deflated. Whereas Ty's defense was effective, the same could not be said about Lily, who lost nearly every point when she was driven back. Ty was proving the adage that hardbat play requires both offense and defense, and his more classical style was proving to be the difference. His lead spread to 15-5.

The match was not quite over, though. Lily's streaky game again kicked in, and she took five points in a row to make the score 15-10. The crowd again became excited, as the cheers turned to stomping and rhythmic clapping, the "Lil-ly" chants even occasionally interrupting play. But this time the wily hardbat specialist from Georgia held on, winning match point at 20-14 in another miraculous defensive point to win the match, 13, -22, -19, 15, 14.

With his gutsy one-hour victory, Ty had pulled the equivalent of a hardbat "grand slam," winning both the Nationals and the Open in succession, as well as wins in hardbat doubles (with partner and cornerman Larry Hodges) in both tournaments. Ty has won all four hardbat championships in the past year!

Again the event drew sizable monetary donations, the center court gladiators earning $500 and $300 respectively. There were even enough donations to offer respectable $120/$80 prizes to the hardbat doubles winners (Hoff/ Hodges over Marty Reisman and Houshang Bozorgzadeh). The hardbat committee wishes to thank Berndt Mann, D.G. Van Vooren, and Don Varian of Hock Table Tennis Company for their especially generous donations.

Committee Meeting Reflects Hardbat Growth

So what is next for classic table tennis? Some exciting developments emerged at the recent USATT hardbat committee meeting:

- The N.A. Teams tournament in November will include a whole day of hardbat-only competition.
- A clever scheduling mechanism may allow this year's Nationals to add a couple of more hardbat events, including rating and age events.
- The upcoming North American Tour tournaments (seven in 2000) will include at least one hardbat event at each stop.
- Interest is growing in standardizing the rubber surface, especially if low-cost Leyland-like rubber is once again produced.
- Hardbat is spreading to Europe, driven largely by author and table tennis player Howard Jacobsen, who came to Florida just to see the hardbat event! Watch for an upcoming article in New Yorker Magazine, as well as a novel, and a recent feature article in the European magazine Swaythling Cup International.
- The hardbat web page has moved! Now visit: www.hardbat.com.

Photo by John Oros ©1999
U.S. OPEN JUNIOR EVENTS

By Alan Williams

From around the nation and around the world, they brought their enthusiasm, their spirit and their skills. The 1999 U.S. Open Junior events were filled with great play and great fun as the youngsters pitted themselves against their goal, a U.S. Open title.

The U-10 Girls’ saw Melissa Valenzuela of Peru, a three-game winner over Raven Williams, take on Rita Wu of Maryland in the semifinals. Melissa captured a 15, 9 victory from Ms. Wu. In the other bracket, New Jersey’s Judy Hugh won the war, -21, 12, 20, against her fighting opposition, Claudia R. Sumarriva of Peru. The final saw Ms. Hugh take the title, 19, 17, from Valenzuela. Judy showed great poise in close contests and was rewarded with victory.

The U-10 Boys’ Final matched Kristian Kobes of Slovakia with Jordan’s Zeid Shaban. Shaban had bested Sergey Guklin (CA) 17, 13 in his semifinal, while Kristian had an easier time of it with Peru’s Franks Kastner, 9, 8. Neither boy had an easy time of it in the final, with Shaban emerging as Champion, 19, -17, 18. Only one point difference in a three-game final!

In the Girls’ U-12, two Uruguayans, I-Chen Lee and Chia-Li Hu, met in the semifinals and decided that discretion was the better part of valor. Hu stepped aside and her countrywoman advanced. No such cooperation in the opposite bracket, where Californian Atha Fong went triple deuce in the third game to defeat U-10 Champ Judy Hugh, 15, -18, 22. The respite must have suited I-Chen Lee, who swept to a first-place finish, 5, 5.

A crowded field of Boys’ U-12 narrowed to Eric Finkelstein (NJ), Mikhail Kazantzev (CA), Adam Hugh (NJ) and Giancarlo Cerna (Peru). The good-natured Finkelstein gave his all in a 17, 23 decision for Kazantzev. Adam Hugh showed plenty of fighting spirit when he prevailed 12, -20, 8 over Cerna. These two were fated to meet again. But for now, it was a fist-pumping Adam Hugh who took top honors, 12, 14, against Mikhail, his California counterpart.

The semifinal field of Girls’ U-14 were all intent on the title, and they played it like it. Jordan’s Zeina Shaban went down before Katherine Wu of Maryland, -21, 19, 16, in a war of attrition. Jackie Lee of California faced off with Taipei’s Wan-Ling Lo in a see-saw contest that left Jackie behind, -13, 14, 15. After all the drama of the semis, Lo took a straight-game 10, 14 win from Katherine Wu for the bigger trophy.

A full field of 32 entered Boy’s U-14, but the final four were Wallace Lui of California, Santiago Coste of Peru, New York’s Pan Lin and the ever-present Adam Hugh. Lui’s well-balanced game was cast aside by Santiago’s power, 17, 14. Hugh triumphed in straight games also, 17, 12 over Pan Lin. In the final, Coste shook off a first-game loss to deny Hugh his second Junior title, -18, 10, 11. Coste’s father, in any language, was radiant with joy over the hard-won victory.

In U-14 doubles, Jordan’s Zeid and Zeina Shaban earned a ticket to the final by defeating Jamaica’s Earl Taylor and Katharine Williams, 19, -8, 19, in a match where service rotation played a key role. As promised, Hugh and Cerna met again, as Adam and his partner, Yin Wang of Massachusetts, faced the brothers Giancarlo and Aldo. Hugh and Wang lost the first game at 20, and won the second game at 18. Carrying a large lead in the third, Hugh and Wang recovered just in time to stave off the determined Cerna’s charge, 18 in the 3rd. Shaban and Shaban couldn’t stay with the Wang/Hugh combo in the final, and yielded, 9 & 16.

Pei Pei Zheng, of Texas, had no troubles in the semifinal of Girls’ U-16, beating Patricia Figueroa 4, 3. In the opposite bracket, Jackie Lee shrugged off Zeina Shaban, 14, 13. Jackie managed a 21, 17 victory over Pei Pei in the final.

Thirty young men entered the U-16s, but Keith Alban (see profile in this issue) was clearly the class of the field. Seemiller protege Mark Hasinski of Indiana fought to a 14, 13 loss in the semi against Alban. By topping Josue Squilino of Florida, 15, 12, Californian Terrence Lee met Alban in the final. Alban won the category with a 12, 17 straight-gamer over Lee.

The Women’s U-18 was hotly contested. In one semifinal, Michelle Do of California had her hands full of the self-exhorting, long-limbed New Yorker, Stacey Schoenberg. Michelle pre-
U.S. OPEN SENIOR EVENTS

By Tim Boggan

Over 50 Doubles Champions George Brathwaite and Dave Sakai

Roughly 35% of the “Domestic Athletes” in the 1999 U.S. Open entered the 16 Over 40 through 80 events. Cash prizes for those whose peer expert experience totaled $4,710.

Men’s Over 40 Singles

“Chen” Yinghua – Bye...8, 3...13, 2...2, 7...11, 9 (“a VERY humbling experience,” said the under 2100 quarterfinalist who scored 2 and 7) eased into the final to split the 1st/2nd place prize money. The undefeated finalist, “Jack” Huang (Bye...13, 5...6, 11...7, Def.) says he’s getting too old to loop-win anymore. (Except of course when he’s with Cheng, as in the $450 1st-place 40+ Team’s, or against him, as in the split-the-1st/2nd place-money in the 40+ Doubles.)

Of course not all of the Over 40 Singles matches were runaways.

In the first round, Sweden’s Bo Steiner, former Nisse Sandberg’s Angby Club associate who’s now running his own Vallingby Club for many an Angby veteran, just got by N.J.’s Jim Beckford deuce in the 3rd. N.J. short-pips-penholder Jumpei Misu stood tall on scoring that 23-21 squeaker over FL’s Carlos I. Estrada. And George “The Chief” Brathwaite eked out a (19 - 17, 25) thriller from CO’s 200-point underdog, Bob Jackson. After that, however, there was only the occasional hand-fight-at-the-precipice moviedom finish. Kazuhiro Ohara (13, -19, 20) adroitly sidestepped Homer Brown’s last shuffle and blindsided him to momentary oblivion. Earlier, Homer, teller of tales, was apparently so busy talking to anybody who’d listen – about his new Birmingham-mall BumperNets emporium (5200 sq. ft. of Bumper Pool, Foosball, Air Hockey, and Table Tennis) – that before he knew it he had to hurry over to the Convention Center for his match. And why didn’t he win it? “I didn’t have a good breakfast this morning,” he said. “Usually I don’t lose close matches.” But, hey, after 31 straight U.S. Opens, it can happen, huh? – and, optimistic as ever, Homer began again, “I’ve got five table tennis tables in all, one with enough court space for the good players, and in order to bring both the kids and their parents in,…”

The only tense start to the third-round matches occurred at the beginning of the Dave Sakai-Larry Thoman match when Sakai, judging that the ball given them wasn’t round, requested a new one from the umpire – a request that was denied. Dave, being a politic fellow, didn’t argue, simply put his thumb through the ball, and nothing more was said as of course not even the umpire thought they should continue to play with that. And yet, as Larry went on to scorch Sakai, smashing in set-ups with backhand abandon, Dave was heard mumbling, as if he might not have been at his best in some other matches too, “I haven’t had a tournament like this in 20 years,” and Dave’s wife Donna was heard echoing aloud, “He hasn’t had a tournament like this in 20 years.”

In the only tense third-round match, Hank McCoullum scored a (-15, 19, 14) upset over Dickie Fleisher. After Hank had wall-hopped in a winner at 19-all in that 2nd game, Dickie, his blaster-prone thumb and finger bandedag as so not to lose his grip, might be said to have overplayed his hand. Dickie had, and pips aplenty, but it was unflustered Hank who pulled in a string of rating points.

Only one more 40+ match of note – Barry Dattel’s (-12, 19, 23) look-to-the-gods victory over #4 seed Hui Yuan Liu. Barry said Liu’s often well-angled long-pips spin/no spin play was in the beginning hard to read. But, on losing the first, he told himself, “Relax. Go for the shots.” And go for them he did. At 19-all in the 2nd, he got in a forehand; then the game winner...on a fortuitous bounce. Barry had a tournament like this in 20 years, was suffering some constipation of his own.

Last I heard, Chen had finished his coaching duties for the day – I’d seen him working to make a looper out of poorly built 10-year-old Mingkuang Luo – and he and Jack had left the playing hall to go, as one fellow put it, “on a cruise to nowhere.” A local gambling ship had a great buffet, so why not check it out? – The All-Star Men Over 40

“Chen” Yinghua (Bye...Def....Def...9, 15) reached the final after playing one match – actually he seemed to be spending more time with neurumuscular therapist Kenny Owens having his muscles loosened, getting his clogged, old blood to flow, than he did at the table – and again split 1st/2nd place prize money. Finalist Abass Eknou was extended to 3 only in the semi’s by #2 seed “Jack” Huang.

Last I heard, Chen had finished his coaching duties for the day – I’d seen him working to make a looper out of powerfully built 10-year-old Mingkuang Luo – and he and Jack had left the playing hall to go, as one fellow put it, “on a cruise to nowhere.” A local gambling ship had a great buffet, so why not check it out? –

Women’s Over 40 Singles

Current U.S. Over 40 Champion Judy Bochenski Hoarfrost, Captained, you might say, by daughter Megan, added another Major to her list of ’90 successes. But her progress wasn’t easy, starting from the quarters’ against Andrze – whoops! it was so easy to lose one’s footing on the slippery concrete floor that Danuta took a tumble on her backside, and, as I can reportorially attest to, it was black and blue. Although Andrzejsinska was wearing a Tru Fit brace for her table-tennis elbow, it seemed that Judy, a 229-point favorite, in last-minute having to rally to win that first game at 19, was suffering some constriiction of her own.

Then against 57-year-old Barbara Kaminsky, who’d prepared for this Open by taking two golds in the Virginia Senior Olympics table tennis...and bowling (a 528 series: average game 176) – Judy continued having problems with her forearm. Not only did she lose the first game at deuce but was down 10-4 in the second.

At which point, Barbara’s husband Bob, who’d been our U.S. Team Captain to the ’73 Sanraefo World’s, exercised his authority, rose from courtside to chasistie World #34 Matthew Syed who’d started romping round in the adjacent court prepatatory to a match. But, ah, little did Bob know that just a few days earlier Matt had an article published in the London Times stressing the “poisonous self-doubt” that could hang over a player’s head “like a spider above the bed of an arachnophobe.” Had Bob read this, he MIGHT have been aware of the “distress psychology” Matt was speaking of that could now afflict Barbara’s winning state of mind. For, sure enough, when Bob, on principle, stopped Barbara’s semi’s match to insist that the umpire tell Syed in a world-class manner to get the hell off the court and stop distracting the players, Barbara, it turned out, hadn’t even been aware of Matt’s presence. That she was suddenly very aware of Judy’s, however, was never more noticeable, for as Fate would have it, she lost that game, the next, and the match. “Uh, maybe it was a mistake to have intervened,” Bob said later.

In the other semi’s, former Iranian World Team member Mahin Roufeh’s long pips and flat forehand did in the super-fit Suzanna Sanders – but not before Suzanna stubbornly won the 2nd.

The final – with both Hoarfrost and canny combination player Roufeh looking to crack in winning forehands – saw Mahin outscore Judy, but lose the deciding 3rd at 19.

All-Star Women Over 40

Roufeh played only one match (Andrzejewska decided to gingerly sit out her scheduled semi’s) – but it was enough to win Mahin the $100 first prize. “Stupid!” says Judy – and stamps her foot. But that was in her 3-game semi’s when, down game-point in the 2nd, she’d misread Kaninsky’s pips. In her final with Mahin, did Judy, faltering after taking that first game at deuce, pay any attention to what 1971 U.S. World Team Coach Jack Howard now, at the start of the 3rd, felt free enough to tell her? To combat Mahin’s pips-out forehand winners Judy was to engage in over-the-table backhand play, then, with
Mahin anchored in a backhand stance, was to open to the forehand, and take it home from there. But off to a 7-2 lead in the 3rd, Judy played poorly in the end-game as Mahin pulled away for an easy win. “Judy never did like me coaching her,” said Jack ruefully.

**Over 40 Under 1800 Singles**

This 49-entry event offered each competitor three round robin preliminary matches. And yet, strange to say, six eligible players who did not enter this 9:00 a.m. Friday more-play-for-your-money competition were, the day before, perfectly willing to play in the 9:00 a.m. single elimination Over 40 event, where, in each case, they played only one match and did not win a game. Oh well, at least it’s easy to understand how in the final Hawk Lee swooped up the “I just ran out of energy” remains of Simon Jacobson, who wished perhaps that he’d played less well, or, rather, fewer matches in other events rather than more.

**Men’s Over 50 Singles**

Very likely the most bizarre exchange of play in the entire Open occurred here in #1 seed Dave Sakai’s opening match. There was no umpire. And Dave’s opponent was... me.

Already I was a little edgy, for it was now 6:45 in the evening and my earlier match in this event had been at 2:15. A four-hour wait. Was I expected to have a Happy Hour in that time?

I might preface the about-to-be-turn of events by recalling Frank Dwelly’s memorable gesture in the 1970 Detroit National’s where, leading 4-1 U.S. Open Champion Erwin Klein 20-16 in the 5th, he rounded the table, and, shaking hands with Klein, forfeits the match. His explanation? He knew he was going to lose, probably in the next round, but thought Erwin might be able to go on to the next round. (Just as I was playing in the same tournament, did I not know about the 9:00 a.m. event?)

I might also want to point out that Dave and I have been friendly for over 30 years, during which time I was supposedly supported by the USATT official and editor that I’m indebted to him for being as good a friend to my younger son Eric in recent years as he’d been to him years earlier.

Dave is currently rated at least 500 points higher than I am, and I can recall only once, maybe a quarter of a century ago, beating him, even-up, in a money match (I’d kept trying, for I was getting 10-1 odds, $100 to $10). It was thus astonishing to both Dave and me (Dave’s wife, Donna, by this time had taken leave of court) that here in the 50’s in the deciding 3rd I’d come to tie it up at 19-all. Dave couldn’t be tighter, and I was playing by instinct. That is, until I suddenly got the notion of giving Dave a serve I’d not given him before – a short nothing ball to his forehand which I hoped would draw a passive return I could attack.

Unlikely, as it might seem, I serve into the net. Dave’s reaction to this is not what I expect. He comes over to my side of the table, says he can’t accept the point. “You dumped it!” he says. “You dumped the point!”

“David,” I say, “I did NOT dump the point! It’s your ad, 21-20.”

“Yes, you did,” he says. When he serves (out of turn), wins the point, and the match.

As I round the table and shake hands, he keeps repeating, “You beat me! You beat me!”

Now I ask all sane readers, “Don’t YOU believe me?”

In the quarters Dave plays former Czech star Jiří Hlava, whom he’s never lost to. As he did with me, he wins the opening game easily. Then loses the next two at 19--- the first of these against Jim’s forcing backhand table play after rallying to 19-all from 19-11 down, and the next after counter-driving to survive two match points but not the third.

Taking Sakai’s top-of-the-draw place in the final was Brathwaite, whose only persistent (18, 19) struggle had been with Under 1900-rated Tom Wintrich. Tom is well known for his Spin too — was the first to change the name of the official USATT magazine, recognized for fifty years as Table Tennis Topics.

In the bottom half of the 50’s draw, New England’s Kwing Yiu “Albert” Lau endured first-game threats from Jerry Marcum (27-25) and Nick Mintsiveris (21-19) as he moved to the semi’s. Earlier, Marcum had the good fortune to (19, 15, 11) play Miguel Drougnet, a 130-point favorite, who had the bad fortune to play like Jerry’s friend Dick Hicks — only not as well. Not only did the visiting Chilean’s flipped-pips pattern play seem familiar, but Jerry thought his wife Cindy (recipient of this year’s Dr. Michael Scott Umpire Award) of the first game with 21-8 ease. But then he unconsciously stopped taking chances, became less and less aggressive? And finally found himself coming into the end-game third having to play Expedite. When was the last time that happened? Easy under these circumstances to make crucial mistakes, and Brathwaite lost the decider 21-18. Dick pointed out to me that, “Yeah, I used to play Expedite a lot before the loop came in.” Turns out he’s competed in tournaments year after year, uninterrupted for 42 years, ever since 1957!

**Women’s Over 50 Singles**

Barbara Kaminisky (rated 1761), having just spent five days in Naples (that’s Naples, FL) swimming, strengthening her arms and legs (and, given all the rain, spending some stormy evenings with her mentor/husband Bob), made a strange recovery in her opening match against CA’s Irina Borisova (rated 1460). After losing the first at 18 then winning the 2nd at 8, Barbara is down 11-4 in the 3rd. Panic time! Do something, try anything, even what Bob’s told her: play the middle. Whereupon she wins 17 straight.

By Larry Hodges

Juan Revelles, Juan Revelles, Juan Revelles...yes, the Puerto Rican won three rating events, would have won five if he hadn’t graciously dropped out of two. He had an old rating that was under 1900 --- and tournament rules would not allow him to play in the higher rating events (U2550, U2400), despite his request to do so. So, wanting to play, he enters U1900, U2000, U2100, U2200 and U2300. When it became obvious he was way too strong for most of these events, he dropped U1900 and U2000, while winning the other three. Small consolation to Srinivas Ramanathan (PA), Origene Nyanguile (MD) and Steve Berger (NY), the finalists in U2300, U2200 and U2100, respectively.

While he was winning those three events, his fellow Puerto Rican, Gabriel Santiago, won U2400 over Ramanathan—giving Ramanathan second place finishes to the Puerto Ricans, plus a second place finish in Foreign Men’s Singles (to Sweden’s Adam Rasberg). But a win in the Open over Randy Cohen might have consolled Ramanathan, and helped knock his rating into the stratosphere.

Still another Puerto Rican player, 14-year-old Lisa Diaz, won U1750 and made the finals of U1275.

The only other multiple finalist in the rating events was 13-year-old Howard Lamb (TX), the U1900 champion and U2000 finalist.

In the highest event, Brian Pace (FL) overpowered the competition to win U2550 over Shao Yu (NY), 18, 17.
FL’s underrated Jan Kline (928) forced Chile’s Maria Cifuentes (1529) into a 24-22 2nd game. Maria then went on to outplay #1 seed Suzanna Sanders. “I’m not satisfied with myself, my game,” said Suzanna. “Maybe I’ve too high expectations. Anyway, I’m putting too much pressure on myself. I should work on my head.”

Anyway, I’m putting too much pressure on myself. For two games it was a pip of a fight. then Barbara, though tight, built up a 10-3 lead in the third that was decisive. In the final, Maria in shades, though intent on keeping play backhand to backhand, couldn’t darken Barbara’s psyche, and our U.S. Hall of Famer won, as her rating suggested she would, in straight games.

Over 50 Singles

The Brathwaite/ Sakai team struggled, but succeeded. In the quarters, they were 16,20 challenged Farmer won. as her rating suggested she would. in dark, built up a 10-3 lead in the third that was decisive. In the final, Maria in shades, though intent on keeping play backhand to backhand, couldn’t darken Barbara’s psyche, and our U.S. Hall of Famer won, as her rating suggested she would, in straight games.

Over 50 Singles

The quarter’s of this event were played Saturday afternoon at 2:15. But then the semis and final were, without precedent and so without warning, inconveniently scheduled for Sunday morning – at a time when, if anybody was still watching matches, it’d be the parents of the 10-year-olds playing.

Today, though, you might say Lau was in command of a body that hadn’t been commanded on Thursday. After losing to Hicks in the 50’s, he was now open-eyed at the ready to beat him, and did, in a strangely contested, or untested (14, -6, 10), final. In the semi’s, he’d also been able to get balls through Brathwaite for a 14-in-the-3rd win, while Hicks was again outshining and outpicking Dawidowicz.

Ragnar “Ray” Fahlstrom had his 19,19 chances against Bohdan in the eighth’s, but, perhaps miffed at not being able to substitute an available Nick Mintsiveris for his no-show partner in the loss. Radzeli dropped a game to Rubin but wasn’t threatened in the 3rd. Louie, when not in Florida during the wintry weather, enjoys coaching as many as “15 little kids” in his Cleveland Green Road Synagogue. “Nobody taught me the Game,” he says, “and these kids are as crazy to play as I was.”

Over 70 Singles

In the absence of Arthur Chase, 82 this July, who, on doctor’s orders, had to forgo all his favorite events because of an angiogram he was to take on returning home, it was understood that Radzeli and Ruben would meet in the final. And understood by the Tournament Committee that this Championship would be settled off in a far corner (as if “How fitting!”) on Table 80. But this match was not boring and would have been enjoyed by many had it been featured.

Despite Louie’s pride in his defense (along of course with that twinkle in his eye when he says something like, “When I mix the spin they despair. They say, ‘What are you doing?”), Ruben clearly didn’t find him so formidable. In fact, Henry, up 1-0 and up 19-16 in the 2nd, seemed the winner. Then — what? — he was scared to win? On into the 3rd, they played, both very steady, to another deuce. It little mattered, did it, that Radzeli won?

Eighty-year-old men struggle in their way – have hopes, have fears, like anyone else. Why not their high seriousness, their show of passion – the example of their enduring life force – be seen?
1999 U.S. OPEN RESULTS

Men’s Singles - Final: Chang Peng-Lung (TPE) d. Chang Yuan-Su (TPE) 17,15,13; SF: Chang d. Oliver Marmurek (FRA) 17,13; 11,15; Chang d. Fan Youngsong (USA) 14,13,19,21; QF: Marmurek d. Koji Sanada (JPN) -15,-17,14,9,17; Chang d. Cheng Yinghua (USA) 17,20,15,19; SF: Marmurek d. Barry Dattel (NJ) 11,15

National All-Star Senior Women Over 40 - Final: Mahin Roufesh (TX) d. Judy Haarold (10) -20,18,14; QF: Haarold d. Barbara Kaminsky (AV) 10,18,12,10; Roufesh d. Danuta Andrzejewska (FL) by default

Hard Bat Singles - Final: Ty Hoff (GA) d. Lily Yip (14) -22ank 19,15,14,10; Yip d. Larry Hedges (MD) 19,22,10,15; Hoff d. Barry Dattel (NJ) 11,10,14,10; QF: Yip d. Steve Berger (NY) 15,10,14,10; Hoff d. Chen Ao (CAS) 15,22,13,12; Dattel d. Marty Reisman (NY) 17,20,18,16

Hard Bat Doubles - Final: Hoff/Hedges d. Reisman/Bogacz 10,12; QF: Hoff/Hedges d. Bogacz/Andranik 8,13; Reisman/Bogacz 12,10; QF: Hoff/Hedges d. Beauchamp/Thomas 8,8; Bogacz/Andranik d. VanHiel/Morrill 11,17,12; Claffin/Kessner d. Gordon/Waters 22,13,20; Reisman/Bogacz d. Kalager/McDermott 19,19

Over 60 Doubles - Final: Hicks/Mintsiveris d. Fahlstrom/Brown 13,8

Over 50 Doubles - Final: Brathwaite/Sakal d. Brown/Hicks 18,-15,14; QF: Hicks d. Nick 13,18,11; Eckel/Brathwaite 17,16

Over 40 Doubles - Final: Split - Cheng/Sakai and Huang/Cheng

Over 80 - Final: Louis Radzeli (OH) d. Henry Rubin (FL) -21,16,14; QF: Radzeli d. Henry Rubin (FL) 17,-12,10; Borges d. Cifuentes 17,18; QF: Cifuentes d. Suzanna Sanders 15,6; Sanders d. Gail Kendall (NY) by default QF: Cheng d. Larry Thoman 14,-6,10; SF: Hicks d. Bohdan Dawidowicz (CO) 11,11; Lau d. Marty Reisman (NY) 17,20,18; Dawidowicz d. Lei (FL) 19,19;17; SF: Yip d. Steve Berger (NY) 15,10,14,10; Hoff d. Chen Ao (CAS) 15,22,13,12; Dattel d. Marty Reisman (NY) 17,20,18,16

Over 60 - Final: Kwing Yiu Lau (MA) d. Richard Hicks (IN) 18,20,20; QF: Radzeli d. Henry Rubin (FL) 17,-12,10; Borges d. Cifuentes 17,18; QF: Cifuentes d. Suzanna Sanders 15,6; Sanders d. Gail Kendall (NY) by default QF: Cheng d. Larry Thoman 14,-6,10; SF: Hicks d. Bohdan Dawidowicz (CO) 11,11; Lau d. Marty Reisman (NY) 17,20,18; Dawidowicz d. Lei (FL) 19,19;17; SF: Yip d. Steve Berger (NY) 15,10,14,10; Hoff d. Chen Ao (CAS) 15,22,13,12; Dattel d. Marty Reisman (NY) 17,20,18,16

Over 50 Women - Final: Barbara Kaminsky (VA) d. Maria Cifuentes (CHI) 15,6; Sanders d. Gail Kendall (NY) by default QF: Cheng d. Larry Thoman 14,-6,10; SF: Hicks d. Bohdan Dawidowicz (CO) 11,11; Lau d. Marty Reisman (NY) 17,20,18; Dawidowicz d. Lei (FL) 19,19;17; SF: Yip d. Steve Berger (NY) 15,10,14,10; Hoff d. Chen Ao (CAS) 15,22,13,12; Dattel d. Marty Reisman (NY) 17,20,18,16
Multiple Winners at the U.S. Open

QUADRUPLE WINNERS: ****
Keith Alban: Under 18 Boys' Singles, Under 16 Boys' Singles, National AllStar Under 18 Boys, Under 18 Boys’ Teams

TRIPLE WINNERS: ****
Chiang Peng-Lung: Men’s Singles, Men’s Doubles, Men’s Teams
Juan Revelles: U2300, U2200, U2100
Michelle Do: National AllStar Under 18 Girls, Under 18 Girls' Doubles, Under 18 Girls’ Teams
Cheng Yinghua*: Allstar Men, Men’s Senior Teams, Over 30
*Split Over 40 Men's Singles, Over 40 Men's doubles, Allstar Men Over 40

DOUBLE WINNERS: **
Chang Vuong-Su: Men’s Doubles, Men’s Teams
Xia Liang Ni: Women’s Singles, Women’s Teams
Ty Hof: Hardbat Singles, Hardbat Doubles
Louis Radzeli: Over 75, Over 80
Richard Hicks: Over 50 Men’s Singles, Over 60 Doubles
Adam Hugh: Under 12 Boys’ Singles, Under 14 Boys’ Doubles
Kyna Fong: Under 18 Girls’ Singles, Under 18 Girls’ Doubles
Jackie Lee: Under 16 Girls’ Singles, Under 18 Girls’ Teams
Joshua Bartel: Men’s Standing Disabled Open (Classes 6-10), Under 3700 Doubles

NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Men’s Singles – Final: Johnny Huang & Cheng Yinghua 17, 25, 18, Stage 3 Results – Group 1: 1st
Cheng Yinghua 2-0 (d. Liu-17,7,17,11, d. Cohen 6,12,18; 2nd
Kurt Liu 1-1 (d. Cohen 18,-31,20,20); 3rd
Petra Cada 1-1 (d. Barh, -18,18,18,-10,14); 3rd
Tawny Luan

Women’s Singles – Final: Gao Jun & Lisa Diaz 2-0 (d. Sung, 7,12,18; d. Cohen 18,-31,20,20; 2nd
Petra Cada 1-1 (d. Barh, -18,18,18,-10,14); 3rd
Tawny Luan

Women’s Doubles – Final: Gao Jun/Amy Feng 2-0 (d. Xu, 6,12,18; d. Cohen 18,-31,20,20; 2nd
Petra Cada 1-1 (d. Barh, -18,18,18,-10,14); 3rd
Tawny Luan

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • July/August 1999
The North American Championships were held this year in conjunction with the U.S. Open. Those Open participants who arrived a day early were treated to a great show by the top male and female players from both the United States and Canada. At stake was not only the North American Continental title, but also an opportunity for the winners to compete in the World Cup.

**Stage One**
The first stage of play consisted of four round robin groups of men and women. To advance, players had to finish first or second in their group.

In the Women’s Event, all of the top seeds advanced without much trouble. The toughest competition was in Group Two between U.S. Team Members Lily Yip and Amy Feng, and Canada’s rising star, Petra Cada. Petra, who has been competing in the Super League in Prague, defeated both Lily and Amy. Amy went on to defeat Lily for the second spot in three games. Gao Jun (USA) won Group One, with Wenxiao Wang (CAN) coming in second. It was Chris Xu (CAN) over Tawny Banh (USA) in Group Three and Lijuan Geng (CAN) easily winning Group Four over Virginia Sung (USA).

The Men’s Event was far more competitive with a number of upsets and near upsets. Cheng Yinghua (USA) and Johnny Huang (CAN) both won their groups (Group One and Four) without a loss. However, Cheng was pushed hard by Canada’s young Kurt Liu. Kurt took the first game 22-20 before Cheng steadied to take the next two at 19 & 17. Kurt went on to advance by defeating Brian Pace and Horatio Pintea. In Group Two, U.S. Champion David Zhuang took an early loss to Canada’s Peter-Paul Pradeeban. Pradeeban would in turn lose to Barney Reed Jr., creating a three-way tie in the group. David and Barney advanced on game record. In Group Three, Randy Cohen, who was playing much more aggressively than in the past, defeated both Todd Sweeris and Joe Ng to win his group. Todd came in second.

**Stage Two**
The four winners from Stage One in both the Men’s and Women’s divisions moved directly on to Stage Three. Stage Two consisted of all the second-place finishers competing for the final two positions to be filled.

The determining match for the women came down to Virginia Sung and Tawny Banh. This turned out to be the best match of the event. Both players know each other’s game well. Virginia mixed her much-improved loop into her steady chopping game and pushed Tawny to three deuce games. However, two strong forehand loops at the end of game three gave Tawny the match, 20, -22, 20. The difference in the match was Tawny’s ability to repeatedly penetrate Virginia’s backhand chop.

In the Men’s Division, Kurt Liu outlasted a fast start by Todd Sweeris to win in three games, -12, 12, 18. While Kurt continued his fine play of the earlier round and went undefeated in this round robin, Todd’s play was spotty, alternately making great shots and missing easy returns. Todd would advance, however, with wins over Barney Reed and Eric Owens, who finished third and fourth, respectively.

**Stage Three**
Stage Three was also in round robin format. You began to see the fatigue in the faces of the players as this was, for some, their third round robin of the day. Six men and six women remained in the competition. They were divided into two groups of three, with all matches now being the best of five games. The winners of the groups would advance into the finals.

The top two seeded women advanced without dropping a game. Geng Lijuan, ranked 23rd in the world, defeated Petra Cada and Tawny Banh. Gao Jun, ranked 29th in the world, defeated Chris Xu and Virginia Sung. Both Geng and Jun simply had too much ball control and experience for the other competitors.

On the men’s side, top-seeded Johnny Huang, ranked 25th in the world, and Cheng Yinghua, ranked 67th in the world, advanced from their groups. Cheng dropped the first game to Kurt Liu, who can really rip the first loop, but he then steadied to win the next three games, -17, 7, 7, 14. Liu defeated Randy Cohen in an exciting four-game match, 18, -31, 20, 20. Yes, that second game score is correct! Talk about drama — the audience could hardly breathe when Randy finally won that game. It was another great effort from Randy, but Liu had too much backhand loop power.

In Group Two, Todd Sweeris played a respectable match against the fast all-out hitting style of Johnny Huang, but he could not win a game. When David Zhuang had to default with a shoulder problem, Huang was in the final.

**Final**
The Women’s final between Gao Jun and Geng Lijuan featured two very evenly matched players. Both are former members of the Chinese National Team and have been among the best players in the World for many years. Gao plays a close-to-the-table, controlled blocking and attacking game with short pips and a penhold grip. Geng is also a very controlled attacker who uses the shakehands grip and medium pips on the backhand. Both feature great serves and serve return with Geng holding a slight edge on forehand power. In the end, it was more a battle of nerves and stamina as Gao pulled out a crowd-pleasing five game win, 12, -16, 17, -13, 21.

The Men’s final was more antimactic with Johnny Huang controlling play and defeating Cheng Yinghua in straight games, 17, 25, 18 (with Cheng deucing it from down 20-16 in the second!). Throughout the match it seemed Cheng was content to play consistently and hope Huang would make errors. While this strategy kept Cheng close, it allowed Huang to control the majority of points. At the end of each game, Huang always managed to hit more than he missed.
**BRAZIL OPEN**
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
June 24-27, 1999

SF: Primorac d. Peter Karlsson (SWE), -9,14,13,15; Chiang d. Qian Qianli (AUT), 6,17,10.

**20th**
June 10-13, 1999

Shanghai, China
June 10-13, 1999

FINAL:

PLAICBC (PL) d. Shanghai Edelweiss (SE), 3-1:
Feng Zhu (SE) d. Ma Lin (PL), -15,17,19; Liu Guoliang (PL) d. Wang Liqin (SE), -12,14; Wang Tao (PL) d. Guo Jinshao (SE), 11,9; Ma Lin (PL) d. Wang Liqin (SE), 20,16.

**Semifinals**:

PLAICBC (PL) d. Team Tetra Pak (TT), 3-0:
Liu Guoliang (PL) d. Jorgen Persson (TT), 14,-16,14,16; Ma Lin (PL) d. Jan-Ove Waldner (TT), -20,13,16; Wang Tao (PL) d. Johnny Huang (TT), 14,13.

Shanghai Edelweiss (SE) d. Borussia Dusseldorf (BD), 3-0:
Wang Liqin (SE) d. Koji Matsushita (BD), 18,13; Feng Zhe (SE) d. Vladimir Samsonov (BD), -20,13,16; Guo Jinshao (SE) d. Michael Maze (BD), 7,16.

**Quarterfinals**:

PLAICBC (PL) d. Royal Charleroi (RC), 3-0:

Team Tetra Pak (TT) d. Levalois UTT (LU), 3-2:
Jan-Ove Waldner (TT) d. Patrick Chila (LU), -14,-18,15; Jorgen Persson (TT) d. Jean-Philippe Gatien (LU), -18,-16,16; Wang Tao (TT) d. Johnny Huang (LU), 14,13.

Borussia Dusseldorf (BD) d. Samsung Life Insurance (SL), 3-1:
Oh Sang Eun (SL) d. Koji Matsushita (BD), 18,19; Vladimir Samsonov (BD) d. Lee Yoo Jin (SL), 12,12; Michael Maze (BD) d. Lee Chul Seung (SL), 28,-14,20; Vladimir Samsonov (BD) d. Oh Sang Eun (SL), -18,16.

Shanghai Edelweiss (SE) d. Caen TTC (CT), 3-1:
Peter Franz (CT) d. Feng Zhe, 17,-15,18; Wang Liqin (SE) d. Damien Eloi (CT), 13,17; Guo Jinshao (SE) d. Eric Varin (CT), -14,15,12; Feng Zhe (SE) d. Damien Eloi (CT), 17,12.

**Women's Singles – Final**:

Women's Doubles – Final: Anne Boileau/Patrick Chila (FRA) d. V. Samsonov/Z. Primorac (BLR/CRO), 18,13,19; QF: Tong/Song d. Suk Eun Mi/Lee Kyung Sun (KOR), -20,21,8; Nemes/De Cock d. Chiang Peng-Lung (TPE), 17,20; Gatien/Chila d. Koji Matsushita/Hiroshi Shibutani (JPN), 18,13.

**Women's Doubles – Final**:
Olga Nemes/Eike Schall (GER) d. Tong Fei-Ming/Song Ah Sim (TPE/HKG), 17,16; SF: Tong/Song d. Suk Eun Mi/Lee Kyung Sun (KOR), -20,21,8; Nemes/De Cock d. Park Hae Jung/Kim Moo Kyu (KOR), 18,17; QF: Feng/Cheng d. Koji Matsushita/Hiroshi Shibutani (JPN), 18,13; Chang Yun-Su (TPE), 17,20; Gatien/Chila d. Koji Matsushita/Hiroshi Shibutani (JPN), 18,13.

**CROATIAN OPEN**
Zagreb, Croatia
March 17-20, 1999

Men's Singles – Final: Vladimir Samsonov (BEL) d. Werner Schlager (AUT), 13,15,12; SF: Samsonov d. Jean-Philippe Gatien (FRA), 19,20,-18,17,13; Schlager d. Iseki Seiko (JPN), 14,13,19; QF: Samsonov d. Jorgen Persson (SWE), 14,18,-19,13; Gatien d. Peter Franz (GER), -9,-17,27,21; Iseki d. Kim Taek Soo (KOR), -18,-10,16; Schlager d. Peng-Lung Chiang (TPE), 16,20,17; 8ths: Samsonov d. Peter Korbel (CZE), 14,18,-19,13; Persson d. Yoo Seung Min (KOR), 9,14,12; Franz d. Carsl Prean (ENG), 12,-17,11,18; Gatien d. Lian Song (ARG), -9,-17,27,21; Kim d. L. Blaszczak (POL), 15,18,13; Iseki d. Patrick Chila (FRA), 18,10,16; Gatien d. Choirhot Legout (FRA), 12,16,-15,9; Schlager d. Geir Erlandsen (NOR), 16,20,17.

Women's Singles – Final: Tamara Boros (CRO) d. An Konishi (JPN), -16,12,16,13; SF: Konishi d. Park Hae Jung (KOR), 16,20,19,16; Boros d. Oksana Kusch (RUS), 17,14,13,17; QF: Park d. Jung Tien-Zorner (GER), 13,-16,11,21,22; Konishi d. Ryu Jie Hye (KOR), 16,19,-17,19; Kusch d. Wong (HKG), 18,14,12; Boros d. Kim Moo Kyu (KOR), 19,12,-19,19; 8ths: Jing d. Mihaela Steff (ROM), 17,19,18; Park d. Maria Fazekas (HUN), -22,-17,15,13; Konishi d. Alessia Arisi (ITA), 18,14,-17,18; Ryu d. Kazuko Naito (JPN), 15,14,10; Wong Ching d. Jie Schopp (GER), -14,-18,15,11; Kusch d. Valentina Popova (SVK), 16,14,15; Kim d. Ayumi Umemura (JPN), 15,-16,17,14; Boros d. Song Ah Sim (HKG), 21,13,11.

Men's Doubles – Final: Jean-Philippe Gatien/ Patrick Chila (FRA) d. V. Samsonov/Z. Primorac (BLR/CRO), 15,-11,22; SF: Gatien/Chila d. Peter Franz/Petar Korbel (GER/CZE), 18,13; Samsonov/Primorac d. Trinko Kee/J. De Cock (NED), 10,14; QF: Samsonov/Primorac d. Yoo Nam Ku/Kyu Seung Min (KOR), 19,14,16; Keen/De Cock d. Peter Fazekas/Marton Marsi (HUN), 8,13; Franz/Korbel d. Chiang Peng-Lung (TPE), 17,20; Gatien/Chila d. Koji Matsushita/Hiroshi Shibutani (JPN), 18,13.

Women's Doubles – Final: Olga Nemes/Eike Schall (GER) d. Tong Fei-Ming/Song Ah Sim (TPE/HKG), 17,16; SF: Von/Song d. Suk Eun Mi/Lee Kyung Sun (KOR), -20,21,8; Nemes/De Cock d. Park Hae Jung/Kim Moo Kyu (KOR), 18,17; QF: Feng/Cheng d. Koji Matsushita/Hiroshi Shibutani (JPN), 18,13; Chang Yun-Su (TPE), 17,20; Gatien/Chila d. Koji Matsushita/Hiroshi Shibutani (JPN), 18,13.

**USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE**
July/August 1999
The number of entries is only one of the yardsticks of the 1999 Meiklejohn National Senior Championships, it was a resounding success. Held in Leisure World, currently incorporated as the City of Laguna Woods in California, the management of Leisure World and its local table tennis club put on its usual popular and well-attended event. As a matter of record, this 10th anniversary tournament was successful in every way possible. $14,000 in prize money and 185 entries ensured aggressively fought matches in every one of the 25 events. The tournament lasted three days, with 642 matches played.

The tournament was directed by Olga Feingold Kahan, with International Referee Thomas Miller the referee. Matches ranged from the Under 1100 event to the Senior Elite Round Robin, under 4800 doubles and Over 40 Singles. Players included those who had just turned 40 all the way to players their late 80s. The expected winner, Cheng Yinghua of Maryland, rated 2787, pulled down first place in the seniors event. Cheng won in the finals, 13 & 14. Bella Livshits, rated 2032, won the women’s open, and then paired with Ernest Virgo to win Under 4200 Doubles, defeating David Umel and Bill Ukapatayasakul in the finals, 13 & 14. Bella was gracious enough to help keep the overflow crowd of spectators entertained during one unforeseen break. After the first set of speed, chops and well-timed slams. take the Over 80s with his usual combination of speed, chops and well-timed slams, defeating Malek in the final. Dattel also had a difficult match in the semifinals, defeating Hector Bennett at 19 & 19.

Harry Bloom, 86, of Leisure World, took the Over 80s with his usual combination of speed, chops and well-timed slams, defeating Herb Gilbert in the final.

The most popular event was Draw Doubles, with 72 entries, followed by the 50 in U4200 Doubles, 48 in U3700 doubles, 48 in U1800, 47 in Over 40, and 40 in U2050. Despite the large number of entries in each of the 25 events, most of them finished on time and some early. Herb Gilbert and Ray McLean, the “enforcers” of the tournament, worked to keep tables occupied and locate missing players. Invaluable at the control desk were Marilyn Miller, Ray Kunze, Shonie Aki, Mas Hoshimoto, Len Hauer and Stanley Kahan.

In addition to the players’ party on Saturday night, the California Hall of Fame Induction Banquet drew 100 players and dignitaries to honor the 80th birthday of Bill Meiklejohn, and to induct four distinguished new members into the California Hall of Fame: Gene Roseman, Rich Livingston, Y.C. Lee and George Kelemen. The banquet was organized by Olga Feingold and Mary McIlwain, President of the CTTAOF, with assistance by Alice Bloom.

The tournament sponsors, Bill and Louise Meiklejohn, Nittaku, Home Depot, Paddle Palace, the Golden Rain Foundation of Leisure World and the Leisure World Table Tennis Club, look forward to another successful tournament in the next millennium when the old reliables and the new “just beginning life at 40” gang meet again to contest for the camaraderie and prize money at this distinguished National Senior Table Tennis Tournament.

Over 40 Women: 1: B. Livshits; 2: C. Cooper.
Over 60: Braidhwat & D. Dawidowitz split prize.
U2500: Roberto Byles & Ernest Virgo split prize.
U1500: 1: J. Dart; 2: N. Woo.
U1200: 1: M. McLean; 2: W. Ngai.
U4000 Doubles: 1: Domingo/Liu; 2: Byles/Malek.
THE 25th ANNUAL GOLDEN STATE OPEN
Concord, California, May 29-30, 1999
By Bob Partridge

With 144 entries, the Golden State Open was one of the best-attended table tennis tournaments in the United States, and the tournament ran like clockwork as well. Both Saturday and Sunday events finished before 6:30 p.m., to the approval of players and spectators alike.

So far as the tournament committee knows, there were only two complaints. One was that placing the third and fourth seeds randomly in the upper or lower halves was wrong. However, both the USATT and ITTF assign athletes in this manner.

The second complaint was accepted as a compliment. “This tournament is getting too tough. It’s too hard to finish in the money!”

The Open Singles round robin final was high caliber play. Fan Yiyong (2857) won all three of his matches. Shashin Shodhan provided him with the most competition, staying in and winning some spectacular rallies. It was easy to see that Fan was really motivated by the competition. After winning some of these great rallies, you could hear him “woosh” in appreciation.

Freddie Gabriel finished second by winning his other two matches. He showed great versatility in playing the different styles of the tournament, if we had such an award.

Terrence Lee had an excellent tournament as well. He beat his sometimes practice partner, Freddie Gabriel, in the finals of the Junior 18-and-under an played very well throughout.

The Concord Table Tennis Club has many up-and-coming juniors. We thank Bill Lui, our club coach, for an endless stream of hard bat advocate.

Macy Block Ohio Closed Championships
June 5-6, 1999
By Greg Brendon

Bob Powell continued his domination of the Ohio Closed Championships for the second consecutive year by going undefeated against all comers, including surging Denzil Fleming who upset hard bat wielding John Tannehill in the Open earlier. Powell also won his group in the senior event and opted to split first and second place prize money with hard-hitting El-Hallal Sleiman, who won his senior group.

Powell was behind three points in the fifth game of the Open finals when Denzil served three of his last five serves off the table. Powell himself then served one off but then unleashed his lethal forehand loop for crucial winners to win the match, 15, 17, 17, 18, 18.

Denzil trained hard for the tournament and shined in the high humidity warm weather with a back-from-the-table overhead defense plus sudden forehand and backhand loop drives. He upset first seed Akram Geelani and the higher rated Tannehill, keeping the famed Ping Pong diplomat out of the final four. Akram came in third in the Open by defeating fourth place finisher El-Hallal.

In the Hardbat Open, Tannehill, who is nationally ranked high in hard bat, dominated. Roy Schlabach, Jr., who also uses a hard bat even against inverted rubber, came in second, winning easily over the rest of the field. Rounding out the final four in Hard Bat were El-Hallal in third and John Kizer in fourth. The event’s prize money, equal to the Open’s, was sponsored by Berndt mann, a participant in the event himself and an impassioned hard bat advocate.

In other events, Scott Grimes won the Under 2000 over Rick Akers, who rebounded after an early shaky start in another event and got by Larry Hawkins at 19 in the fifth game. Neil Myers continued to shine in two 2-out-of-3 finals in age events, defeating John Kizer in deuce in the third in Esquire and Al Fish in three games in Senior Esquire.


Over 40: Bob Powel and El-Hallall Sleiman split prize.


Over 60: Neil Myers d. Al Fish, -19,7,15.

U2000: Scott Grimes d. Rick Akers, n.s.;

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • July/August 1999 47
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The USATT National Ratings List

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All ratings-related questions should be directed to Fran Boardman, USATT Headquarters, One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909. To find out your rating, send a self-addressed, stamped postcard with your name and the date of your last tournament. You may also contact us at 719-578-4583 or by e-mail at USATT3@iex.net.

1999 Overseas Chinese Open
Davison April Open
Chattanooga Open
Orlando Firefighters Open
St Louis Spring Open
1999 PA State Championships (Closed)
Arizona State Championship
In the Red Open
Thousand Oaks Classic
Sports Fitness Player Series
Sun City Open Senior TTT
Syracuse Hooters Giant RR
Maryland May Circuit

TOURNAMENTS INCLUDED IN RATINGS

1999 Minnesota Open
1999 NJTC May Open
1999 Nickalaus Open
1999 NJTC May Open
1999 NJTC May Open
1999 NJTC May Open
1999 NJTC May Open
1999 NJTC May Open
1999 NJTC May Open
1999 NJTC May Open
1999 NJTC May Open

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • July/August 1999
Adam Hugh is pretty happy to be ranked #1 in Boys' Under 12.

Photo by Larry Hodges ©1999
Players' favorite source for table tennis supplies

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • July/August 1999 64
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<td>123 Main St, Anytown USA</td>
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<td>Player since 1991</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane Smith</td>
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<td>Team captain</td>
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<td>Mike Johnson</td>
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<td>Coach since 2010</td>
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<td>Lisa Brown</td>
<td>456 Elm St, Anytown USA</td>
<td>467-789-1234</td>
<td>Has won 3 medals</td>
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<tr>
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**Players' favorite source**

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**Plaisted, Thomas**

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USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • July/August 1999
UPCOMING

USA TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENTS

August 21 - 1999 Ann Van Vooren Memorial Cup, Houston, TX. Contact: Roberto Byles, 4997 W. Bellfort, Houston, TX 77035. Phone: 713-721-PLAY. ★

August 21 - 1999 Decatur Open, Decatur, AL. Contact: Michael Wetzel, 1669 County Rd. 164, Moulton, AL 35650. Phone: 256-974-3275. mkwpong@aol.com ★★

August 21 - 1999 Ann Van Vooren Memorial Cup, Houston, TX. Contact: Roberto Byles, 4992 West Bellfort, Houston, TX 77035. Phone: 713-721-7529. ★


August 21-22 - Macy Block Open (formerly Sun TV), Pittsburgh, PA. Contact: Dan Seemiller, 301 W. Front St., P.O. Box 608, New Carlisle, IN 46552. Phone: 219-654-7476. ★★★★

August 21-22 - San Francisco Summer Open, San Francisco, CA. Contact: Charles B. Smith, 836 Templeton Ave., Daly City, CA 94014. Phone: 415-333-0947. ★

August 28 - Davison August Open, Davison, MI. Contact: Jooon Bosika, 2-2140 Fairway Dr., Davison, MI 48423. Phone: 810-658-8155. ★

August 28-29 - Florida State Closed, Orlando, FL. Contact: Olga Soltesz, 1739 Shady Ridge Ct., Orlando, FL 32807-4281. Phone: 407-830-4009. ★★★★

September 4-5 - 1999 Sam Lima Memorial, Palo Alto, CA. Contact: Dennis Davis, 707 Continental Cir. #931, Mountain View, CA 94040. Phone: 650-964-6130. ★★★★

September 11-12 - Pacific Coast Open, Santa Monica, CA. Contact: Ichiro Hashimoto, 20452 Elkwood St., Winnetka, CA 91306. Phone: 818-700-0948. ichiro.hashimoto@csun.edu. ★

September 11 - Sports Fitness TT Players Series, Clemmons, NC. Contact: Danny Hill, 3 Twin Brook Dr., Clemmons, NC 27012. Phone: 336-764-0010.

September 11-12 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

September 18 - Sunbelt Team Championships, Houston, TX. Contact: Roberto Byles, 4997 W. Bellfort, Houston, TX 77035. Phone: 713-721-PLAY. ★★

September 18-19 - Lake Havasu Open, Lake Havasu, AZ. Contact: John Ballard, 1275 Bombay Ln., Lake Havasu City, AZ 86404. Phone: 520-453-8638. ★★


September 25-26 - Arkansas Closed, Sherwood, AR. Contact: Eugene Atta, P.O. Box 6263, Sherwood, AR 72124. Phone: 501-835-5291.

September 25-26 - Daly City Mayoral Trophy, Daly City, CA. Contact: Richard M. Hernandez, 76 Rey St., San Francisco, CA 94134. Phone: 415-469-9718. ★

September 25-26 - 1999 MATTC September Open, Middletown, MD. Contact: Don Vantine, 231 Oakhill Dr., Middletown, MD 21767. Phone: 717-994-7154. yvastine@epix.net. ★

October 2 - Sports Fitness TT Players Series, Clemmons, NC. Contact: Danny Hill, 3 Twin Brook Dr., Clemmons, NC 27012. Phone: 336-764-0010.

October 2 - 1999 Millcreek Open, Erie, PA. Contact: Sam Steiner, 3616 Zimmerly Rd., Erie, PA 16506. Phone: 814-545-7103. ★★★

October 2 - Chattanooga Fall Open, Chattanooga, TN. Contact: Charles Collins, 9218 Windstone Dr., Ooltewah, TN 37363. Phone: 423-266-7400. ★

October 2-3 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

October 3 - Strike One October Open, Burlington, MA. Contact: Lim Ming Chui, 10 Williams Rd., Lexington, MA 02420. Phone: 781-862-1551.


October 16 - Three Rivers TTC Fall Tournament, Ft. Wayne, IN. Contact: Dirk Peterson, 4512 Burn Drive, Ft. Wayne, IN 46835. Phone: 219-485-4218. ★★

October 23-24 - Southern Open, Houston, TX. Contact: Roberto Byles, 4997 W. Bellfort, Houston, TX 77035. Phone: 713-721-PLAY. ★★★

October 23-24 - 1999 MATTC October Open, Middletown, PA. Contact: Don Vantine, 231 Oakhill Dr., Middletown, PA 17057. Phone: 717-994-7154. yvastine@epix.net. ★

October 30 - October Augusta Open, Augusta, GA. Contact: David M. Cole, 251 Lanier Rd., Beech Island, SC 29842. Phone: 803-827-2182. wwjdcole@aol.com.

November 6 - Sports Fitness TT Players Series, Clemmons, NC. Contact: Danny Hill, 3 Twin Brook Dr., Clemmons, NC 27012. Phone: 336-764-0010.

November 6-7 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

November 6-7 - Pacific Rim/All Star, Portland, OR. Contact: Jim Scott, 14049 NE San Rafael, Portland, OR. Phone: 503-261-0672. ★★★


November 25-28 - North American Teams Open, Baltimore, MD. Contact: Richard Lee, P.O. Box 59451, Potomac, MD 20859-9451. Phone: 301-365-8651. nateams@hotmail.com. ★★★

December 4 - Sports Fitness TT Players Series, Clemmons, NC. Contact: Danny Hill, 3 Twin Brook Dr., Clemmons, NC 27012. Phone: 336-764-0010.

December 4 - Friends of Ping Pong, Houston, TX. Contact: Roberto Byles, 4997 W. Bellfort, Houston, TX 77035. Phone: 713-721-PLAY. ★★

December 4-5 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

December 15-19 - USA National Table Tennis Championships, Las Vegas, NV. Contact: USATT, One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909. Phone: 719-578-4583. usatt@ix.net.
The 35th annual St. Joseph Valley Open four-star tournament was once again played at the Joyce Center on the campus of Notre Dame University. The fully bariered 50-table facility is one of the best venues ever to host a championship tournament. Nearly every one of the 235 players who attended remarked about the lighting, floor and overall beauty of the Joyce Center.

This year’s event was sponsored by Newmar Corp. Newmar, a manufacturer of mobile homes, is based in Nappanee, Ind. One of their models, the Dutch Star, was on display at the tournament site. Virgil Miller, president of Newmar Corp., said he was “pleased” to sponsor such a fine event and hopes to continue again next year.

There are several recreational players who work at the Newmar facility, and each year, our junior players give an exhibition for the factory workers who play challenge matches against our best young players.

**Age events:**

Mark Hazinski scored a double, beating Michael Liu in the finals of both the U-18 and U-15 boys events. The U-18 final was a thrilling 24-22 win for Hazinski, as he fought off two match points to pull out the victory. Lee McCool lost in three hard-fought games to Hazinski in the semifinals.

In the girls’ division, Laura Xiao won the U-15s over Kylie Abbott. Christine Telle, an exchange student from Germany, defeated Laura in the U-18 final.

Dave Sakai won both the O-40 and O-50 events. Sakai, who has won the O-50 Nationals multiple times, beat Alan Grambo 2-1 in the final. Grambo won a close match over quickly improving John Curd to reach the final.

The O-40s semifinals saw Sakai beat Paul Pashuku of Chicago in three and Don Brazzelle over Morris Jackson. Jackson upset the No. 2 seed Andy Ibanigor to reach the semifinal round. Sakai won the final over Brazzelle at 14 & 11.

The U-11 boys was a brother affair as 10-year-old Gordon Cochran pulled away at 15-all in the third to defeat 9-year-old Joe Cochran.

**Rated events:**

In the U-800, an improving Ryan Rich won over Dave Permut. Eleven-year-old Eli Kahn won the U-1000 and Jacek Wisniewski was victorious in the U-1200.

Kylie Abbott claimed the U-1400 title over South Bend club member Jerry Metzger, while Philip Mar from Georgia won the U-1550s over Sherry Wilson, also a finalist in the U-1675s.

In the all-South Bend U-1675 final, Jerry Goeller defeated Sherry Wilson, 24-22, 26-24. After losing the first game at nine, John Curd rallied against another South Bend player, Gang Li, to win the 72-player U-1800 event. In the biggest event of the tournament, Jared Lynch, 15, outlasted 74 competitors to best Bob Douglass in the final of the U-1900s.

After a win over Tim Boggan in the semifinals, Mike Barber of Kalamazoo defeated Sam Steiner of Erie, Penn., in the U-2000 final. Soon Chin Lim from Memphis won the U-2350 event over South Bend’s Randy Hewitt, who recently returned from Sweden. Emilia Ciosu won the 2500 event over Brian Pace.

John Tannehill was victorious over Dan Seemiller in hard bat singles, 13 & 11, to win $250.

In the All Star Men event, David Zhuang and Eric Owens won their semifinal rounds over Randy Cohen and Sean Lonergan to advance to the finals. Zhuang defeated Owens 3-0 in the final in a battle between U.S. Team members.

Mimi Bosika claimed the All Star Women event over Hong Artman, 3-0.

In Open Singles, Sean Lonergan lost late game leads in the semifinal against Zhuang in the first and third sets. The other semifinal saw Eric Owens defeat Canadian Team member Kurt Liu in three close games, 20, 16, 19. Zhuang was victorious in the final, 10, 15, 8, to claim another title.

The prize money increased from $6,200 in 1998 to $10,000 this year. The top 10 winners were:


Our tournament staff of Jason Denman, computer operations; Brad Balmer, time schedule and control desk; Phil Schmuker, facility coordinator; Val Seemiller, registration; Mike and Kay Edgeron, results; Matt Hazinski, truck operations; Jerry Goeller and Jim Lynch, club officers; and the many parents and junior players who put in the time, thanks for a job well done.

Thanks also to Dick Evans, tournament referee; and to Butterfly for supplying the 300 barriers and balls for the event. A special thank you to Bob Allshouse and Barney Reed for bringing 20 tables from the Oakbrook Training Center. Also, thank you to Paul George for his artwork on the posters, programs and T-shirts. We would like to thank all the players who attended this year’s event and we hope to see everyone next year.

Once again, we would like to thank our tournament sponsor, Newmar Corp., for their support of table tennis in the South Bend area.

Open Singles: 1st David Zhuang; 2nd Eric Owens.

Open Doubles: 1st Sean Lonergan/Randy Cohen; 2nd David Zhuang/Barney J. Reed.

Allstar Women: 1st Mimi Bosika; 2nd Hartman Artman.

Allstar Men: 1st David Zhuang; 2nd Eric Owens.

Hard Bat: 1st John Tannehill; 2nd Dan Seemiller.

Over 40: 1st Dave Sakai; 2nd Don Brazzelle.

Under 18 Boys: 1st Mark Hazinski; 2nd Mike Liu.

Under 15 Boys: 1st Mark Hazinski; 2nd Mike Liu.

Under 15 Girls: 1st Laura Xiao; 2nd Kylie Abbott.

Under 11: 1st Gordon Cochran; 2nd Joe Cochran.

U2500: 1st Emilia Ciosu; 2nd Brian Pace.

U2350: 1st L.T. Tei; 2nd Randy Hewitt.

U2200: 1st Denzil Fleming; 2nd Michael Liu.

U2100: 1st S.C. Lim; 2nd T. Kalicharan.

U2000: 1st Mike Barber; 2nd Sam Steiner.

U1900: 1st Jordan Lynch; 2nd B. Douglass.

U1800: 1st John Curd; 2nd Gang Li.

U1675: 1st Jerry Goeller; 2nd Sherry Wilson.

U1550: 1st Philip Mar; 2nd Sherry Wilson.

U1400: 1st Kylie Abbott; 2nd Jerry Metzger.

U1200: 1st Jacek Wisniewski; 2nd Joel Rolnick.

U1000: 1st Eli Kahn; 2nd Dave Podrin.

U800: 1st Ryan Rich; 2nd Dave Permut.

U3600 doubles: 1st Flores/Hanna; 2nd Lim/Ellis.

**THE STIGA BIG WHACK**

**Portland, Oregon**  
May 15-16, 1999  
By Jim Scott

This tournament was the culmination of three months of exhibitions and tournaments in the Portland area. 30 schools, boys & girls clubs and various companies held their own qualifying tournaments, with the winners advancing to the Portland Table Tennis Club for the finals. In all, approximately 2600 players, primarily students, participated in these tournaments. Another 20,000 were exposed to the sport through exhibitions. These numbers are similar to those from last year.

There are eight categories: elementary, middle and high school for boys and girls, and adults, men and women. We provide awards for the top three finishers in each category. This year we also awarded perpetual trophies for boys and girls high schools and middle schools for the first time. The high school finals had been played on May 1st at the Portland club.

Our goal is to establish 30 clubs in Portland. Holding a large tournament at the end of the school year gives each prospective club a reason to establish itself. Here are the steps:

1. Contact interested schools, which may or may not have tables already.
2. Provide them with an exhibition. We were lucky to have Fan Yiyong to do most of the exhibitions with. We also were provided with promotional paddles by Escalade Sports to give as prizes.
3. Help the school set up its tournament, which will send its winners to the Big Whack Final.
   Encourage the school to continue play during and/or after school hours, and to establish a school club.
4. Select the best ones to join our high school or middle school league.
5. Play the Big Whack tournament at the end of the school year.

This is a condensed version of the Stiga Big Whack system. I feel that this, along with development of school leagues, is the best way to promote the sport. In a later issue, we will provide more details after consulting with the newly established USATT Board of Directors. There are some new people on the board who are ready to do some revolutionary things which should finally make table tennis one of the nation's most respected sports.

Note below the success of Laurelhurst Elementary — they now have 16 tables!

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**Elementary Boys’ Champion Spencer Shearer (L) and Finalist Charlie MacBean at 19-all in the third during their Final.**

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**$1800 POTOMAC OPEN**

**Potomac Country Table Tennis Club**  
Potomac, Maryland  
May 22-23, 1999  
By Larry Hodges

Said Sean Lonergan, “It’s the best he’s ever played against me,” of his match against Cheng Yinghua. Sean was obviously more happy with his 17 & 19 win over Abass Ekun in the quarters than his 8, 6, 10 loss to Cheng in the semifinals. Cheng was on fire this tournament, with none of his opponents getting more than 15 points in a game, including his finals opponent, David Zhuang. Todd Sweeris, Jack Huang, and Gao Jun usually give Cheng and David a run for their money (although nearly every Potomac Open seems to end with a Cheng-David final), but with Todd out with a wrenched back, Jack busy coaching, and Gao visiting relatives in China, Cheng and David had a relatively near-free ride to the final.

The final was a classic match-up of the looping inverted shakehander Cheng versus the blocking & hitting pips-out penholder David. Some of Cheng’s wind-up backhand loops were down-right scary — but immediately after the match, several local junior players could be seen shadow-practicing this shot! Cheng led the first game 16-4 before “letting up”; in the second, down 8-3, he scored nine in a row. After David tied it at 13-all, Cheng won the next seven points. Match and $500 to Cheng. 12 & 14, with David getting $300.

Junior students of Cheng Yinghua and Jack Huang had a great showing in the com-

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**Elementary School Girls’ Champion Adrienne Hoarfrost “whacks” a winner in her final. Compare forehand with mother Judy’s, pg. 40. Like daughter like mother?**

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**Like daughter like mother?**

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**Adult Results:**

*Men’s Final:* Quang Doan (PCC) d. Dan Luo (Nike), -19,25,9; 3rd, Peter Vincent (PCC).

*Women’s Final:* Oanh Co (PCC) d. Anna Oerding (Ind.), -22,14,11; 3rd, Fumi Onchi (PTTC).

*High School Teams Results:*

*Boys’ Team Final:* Cleveland d. Westview, 8-7; 3rd, Clackamas.

*Girls’ Team Final:* Gregory Heights d. Parkrose, 7-5.

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**Photo by John Oros © 1999**

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12-year-old Han Xiao, Potomac Open Under 2250 Champion
petition, winning four of the eight rating events and advancing far in nearly every event. 16-year-old Sunny Li, a student of Huang's, made the semifinals of the Open (with a win in the preliminaries over 2500+ Abass Ekun). He received a default from 18-year-old brother and fellow-Huang student Andy in the quarterfinals. After also making the semifinals of U2250, Andy would put on a tie and run the tournament on Sunday. 12-year-old Han Xiao, a Cheng protégé, won U2250, the semifinals of U2400 and finals of U4200 doubles with co-tournament director Lixin Lang. 12-year-old Elaine Kwok, a recent arrival from Hong Kong and now a student of Cheng's, won U2000 in her second USATT tournament. 13-year-old Katherine Wu, a protégé of Huang, won Under 14 singles while racking up rating points in making the semifinals of U2000, along with a win over 2049-rated Lixin Lang. 10-year-old Yao Xu won double honors, winning U1400 over 13-year-old Mike Terao (both Cheng students), and U11 over 9-year-old Jeremy Brodsky, a student of Huang's. 10-year-old Mingkuang "Ming" Luo, another Cheng protégé, won U1100.

With several high-powered teams set to take U4200 doubles, it was the team of co-tournament director Stephen Yeh and Referee Paul Kovac that won top honors before both retired to the control desk with smug grins on their faces.


U2400 - Final: Origene Nyanguile d. Larry Hodges, 14,22; SF: Nyanguile d. Han Xiao, 15,20; Hodges d. Andy Li, 19,-13.

U2250 - Final: Han Xiao d. Larry Hodges, 18,17; SF: Xiao d. Origene Nyanguile, 20,12; Hodges d. David Yao, 8,13.

U2100 - Final: Changping Duan d. Inna Laskova, 17,20; SF: Duan d. Morris Jackson, 18,12; Laskova d. Malik Jalil, default.

U2000 - Final: Elaine Kwok d. Michael Master, -18,19,17; SF: Kwok d. Mike Eng, 18,19; Master d. Katherine Wu, -14,10,23.

U1800: John Anderson d. Oliver Thorn, 17,14.

U1600: Kite Lee d. Tom Golah, n.s.

U1400: Yao Xu d. Mike Terao, n.s.

U1100: Mingkuang Luo d. Mike Nestor, 18,13.

Under 14 - Final: Katherine Wu d. Michael Shao, 12,14; SF: Wu d. Charles Fan, 10,11; Shao d. Chao Wang, 15,-19,18.


U4200 Doubles: Stephen Yeh/Paul Kovac d. Lixin Lang/Han Xiao, 15,-15,18.

U3600 Doubles: Julian Waters/Dave Williams d. Paul Kovac/Mike Eng, 22,16.

In The Red Open

M.I.T. University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

April 25, 1999

By David Marcus

The MIT Table Tennis Club named its annual spring tournament the In The Red Open. The name is explained by the fact that the club bought 14 Butterfly Europas this year (we run tournaments to pay for tables and we buy tables to run tournaments - a vicious cycle). Since I didn't want to run tournaments on old tables or, even worse, a mix of old and new tables (suddenly every match produces a discussion between the control desk and the players regarding table assignment), I loaned the club the necessary funds.

This time we had 94 players, down from the 118 players we had at our fall tournament. However, 118 is more than we can really handle considering the number of tables and time we have. On Saturday night I estimated we would finish a bit after 8:00 p.m. (351 entry-points minus 18 events gives the total number of matches; times 23 minutes per match divided by 14+2 tables plus one hour plus the 10:00 a.m. start gives the finish time. The one hour added on is because you can't keep all the tables running all the time in the later rounds). We actually finished a bit after 9:00 p.m. In the last match Stacy Schoenberg defeated Doug Smith 13,9 to win Under 1925. Stacy had come from N.Y. to visit MIT because she will be applying to MIT as her first choice for college. Stacy defeated the #1 seed Yin Wang (1922) in the semi - 18, 10, 16. Stacy also got to the semis of Under 2225, but the result was the same with Kurt winning 18, 18.

Eugene Shuster (an M.I.T. grad student) defeated Inna Laskova -19, 16, 20 to win Under 2125. Matt Despathy won both Under 1025 and Under 1125. Jim Baird helped slow down the tournament by winning Under 1325 and getting to the semis of Under 1425, the final of Under 1525, and the semi of Under 1625. To help speed up the tournament, Jim defaulted out of the quarters in the Handicap. Thanks, Jim. Handicap was won by Garry White, 1583. Garry also won Under 1625 and got to the semis of Under 1725. Michael Atighetchi defeated Hiro Hayashi (from Japan) 12, 15 in the Unrated Singles.

David Cheung made his return to Massachusetts. David graduated from M.I.T., but had been living in Maryland where he grew up. David lost in the semis of Under 2125 to Eugene Shuster 12,19 and again to Eugene in the quarterfinals of Under 2225 - 17, 16, 17.

We sold 28 memberships of which 18 were first-time members. The next tournament the club will host will be the Bay State Games (Massachusetts State Olympics) on July 17. After that, we plan to hold a USATT-sanctioned tournament in the fall.
### Seattle Open
**Seattle, Washington**

**June 12-13, 1999**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Finalist 1</th>
<th>Finalist 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Wei Yang Wu</td>
<td>Sung Yang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 40</td>
<td>Philip Weatherly</td>
<td>William Van Wright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>Louis Giam</td>
<td>Alan Giam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>Norbert Brauner</td>
<td>Steve Hochman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice</td>
<td>Jacek Wisniewski</td>
<td>Kris Wells</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Schaumberg Open
**Schaumberg, Illinois**

**May 8, 1999**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Finalist 1</th>
<th>Finalist 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Wojciech Wolski</td>
<td>Andy Ibanigor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardbat</td>
<td>Mark Nordby</td>
<td>John Oros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U2000</td>
<td>Spencer Lam</td>
<td>Jason Miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U2000</td>
<td>Naved Nazar</td>
<td>Ming Zhang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U1700</td>
<td>Steven Anderson</td>
<td>John Lau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U1600</td>
<td>Steve Collins</td>
<td>Van Le</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U1100</td>
<td>Farhan Devani</td>
<td>Mike Palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U800</td>
<td>A.J. Meunier</td>
<td>Jimmy Do</td>
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**May 8, 1999**

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<td>Jimmy Do</td>
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</table>

### 3rd Annual Palmer Giant RR
**Palmer Auditorium**

**June 5, 1999**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Finalist 1</th>
<th>Finalist 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over 50</td>
<td>Philip Weatherly</td>
<td>Marshall Thompson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>Louis Giam</td>
<td>Alan Giam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>Norbert Brauner</td>
<td>Steve Hochman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice</td>
<td>Jacek Wisniewski</td>
<td>Kris Wells</td>
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</table>

### Michigan Open
**Detroit, Michigan**

**May 22, 1999**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Finalist 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Gbenga Ogundimu</td>
<td>Dennis Cobb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 40</td>
<td>William Casey</td>
<td>Andrew Tatusov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>Phil Van Dusen</td>
<td>William Wang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice</td>
<td>Gerald Reid</td>
<td>Henry Kostowski</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Maryland/Potomac Valley Junior Olympic Regional Championships
**Potomac, Maryland**

**June 5, 1999**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>James Daan</td>
<td>Roger Abbot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U16 Boys</td>
<td>Siberian Boy</td>
<td>Siberian Girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U14 Boys</td>
<td>Khaled Assaragui</td>
<td>Charles Asgarai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U12 Boys</td>
<td>Yao Xu</td>
<td>Ben Comeau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U10 Boys</td>
<td>Jeremy Brodsky</td>
<td>William Wang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U14 Girls</td>
<td>Katherine Wu</td>
<td>Choi Wang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U12 Girls</td>
<td>Rita Wu</td>
<td>Barbara Wei</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Syracuse Hooters Giant Round Robin
Syracuse, New York
May 1, 1999
Open: 1st Gerald Reid; 2nd Charles Gorzech; 3rd Robert Brickell; 4th Ira Goodman.
Group A: 1st Joe Revai; 2nd Leon Penell.
Group B: 1st Leon Penell; 2nd Tom Neal; 3rd Greg Walsh; 4th Al Badger.
Group C: 1st Joe Revai; 2nd Keith Knowlton; 3rd John Ernisse; 4th Ken Greb.

Kennedy Park Spring Classic
Hempstead, New York
May 8-9, 1999

HTTC June Open
Houston Table Tennis Center
Houston, Texas
June 5, 1999

Sports Fitness Players Series June Open
Clemmons, North Carolina, June 5, 1999
Open: 1st Nigel Christopher; 2nd Danny Hill; 3rd Bryan Lusina; 4th Tony Provenzano.
U2000: 1st Jeff Thomas; 2nd Lewis Bragg; 3rd Rick Mundy; 4th Tony Provenzano.
Class A: 1st Bill Neely; 2nd Tony Bonjoko; 3rd Roddy Lee; 4th Steve Johnson.
Class B: 1st Phil Thompson; 2nd Bobby Jones; 3rd Dave Holas; 4th Tim Hoagland.
Class C: 1st Pete Turchi; 2nd Derek Scott; 3rd Marion Tate; 4th Everett Wright.
Class D: 1st Roscoe Whiffen; 2nd D.J. Settle; 3rd Robert Klar; 4th Joe Bozik.
U1400: 1st Joe Bozik; 2nd Doug Brock; 3rd Bryan Horton; 4th Orlando Nieves.

Georgia Junior Olympic Regional Championships
Atlanta, Georgia, June 5, 1999
Under 12 Boys: 1st: Justin Mah; 2nd: Arkady Yagdorov.
Under 12 Girls: 1st: Jessica Alexander.

Pace Table Tennis Center
MAY OPEN
South Plantation, Florida, May 15, 1999
Open: 1st Brian Pace; 2nd Jay Mau.
Women: 1st Damara Andrezejeksa; 2nd Mayra Rivero.
Under 18: 1st Jose Squillo; 2nd Phillip Oliver.
U2100: 1st Chedy Munroe; 2nd Steve Federico.
U1900: 1st Frank Cortes; 2nd Bard Brenner.
U1700: 1st Carlos Zeller; 2nd David Jess.
U1500: 1st Jesus Valdes; 2nd Martin Sundel.
U1300: 1st Ray Lee; 2nd Bill Durbin.
U1100: 1st Ray Lee; 2nd Steffi Torres.
U900: 1st Michael Lessering; 2nd Steffi Torres.

Aitll League Singles
Sherwood, Arkansas
June 26, 1999

Sports Fitness Players Series May Open
Clemmons, North Carolina
May 1, 1999
U2000: 1st Rick Mundy; 2nd Tony Provenzano; 3rd Lewis Bragg; 4th Don Hair.
Class A: 1st Roddy Lee; 2nd Amin Amidi; 3rd Charles Williams; 4th Clyde Vincent.
Class B: 1st Richard Keener; 2nd David Sterling; 3rd Pete Turchi; 4th Earl Roe.
Class D: 1st Vince Green; 2nd Joe Bozik; 3rd Susan Saltgeber; 4th Mark Magitman.
U3500 Doubles: 1st R. Mundy/S. Faminiba; 2nd A. Stewart/R. Lee.

1999 Wichita River Festival
Wichita Table Tennis Center
Wichita, Kansas
May 8, 1999
Open: 1st YuFei Xiao; 2nd Stan Stoddley; 3rd Joshua Bartel; 4th Richard Catlin.
Hardbat: 1st Carl Miller; 2nd Stan Stoddley; 3rd (tie) Paul Olivier & Vic Merideth.
U2100: 1st Stan Stoddley; 2nd Jerry Freelon; 3rd (tie) Richard Catlin & Vic Merideth.
U1900: 1st Richard Catlin; 2nd Jerry Freelon; 3rd (tie) Stan Stoddley & Marty Simpson.
U1700: 1st Peter Chamberlain; 2nd John Browning; 3rd Jonathan Paretsky; 4th Aaron Hendrickson.
U1500: 1st Jim Spencer; 2nd Charles Rucker; 3rd Floyd Gauldin; 4th Larry Rhea.
U1250: 1st Gary Hill; 2nd Phil Deschner; 3rd Laura Xiao; 4th Jeff Martin.
U1000: 1st Arturo Tenorio; 2nd Claudia Bullock; 3rd David Bullock.

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USA Table Tennis Magazine • July/August 1999
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